

ANNAGH

2023



Foreword



At the time of writing the daylight hours have become noticeably shorter. In just a few days the clocks go back one hour, heralding the official start of winter. In recent days, the south of the country has experienced heavier than usual rainfall, leading to homes and businesses being flooded in Cork. Climate experts tell us that these events will become more common as the temperature of the oceans continue to rise due to climate change.

In his recent Apostolic Exhortation '*Laudate Deum*', Pope Francis reminds us that we are at breaking point in terms of averting a climate catastrophe. He criticises climate deniers, saying that the human origin of global warming is beyond doubt.

Our world is a very troubled place. The war in Ukraine, caused by the Russian invasion, drags on with no end in sight. In the past few weeks, the Middle East has seen an eruption of war following the attack and massacre by Hamas of Israeli civilians on 7th October. Israel has retaliated by dropping hundreds of bombs on Gaza, leading in turn to enormous loss of life of innocent civilians, inflicting further torture of the Palestinian people who have been enduring harsh living conditions for the past seventeen years due to an Israeli blockade of Gaza.

Last week, Ballyhaunis Community School staged 'High School, the Musical', which was highly entertaining. The new logo of BCS - 'Unity in Diversity' - could be extended to our parish. As David McDonagh, Principal of BCS remarked at the end of the show, "The sight of so many pupils from so many diverse backgrounds coming together as a unit on stage is surely a great example of integration that our troubled world could do well to follow". 'Le Cáirde', the new group of musicians and singers who have come together during the past year, and who have enriched our celebration of Sunday Mass, comprised of people of differing nationalities, is a further example of the integration that is happening in our parish and community.

Once again, the 'Annagh' magazine has captured in word and photo so much of what has been happening in our parish during the past year, along with the usual mix of articles of historical interest. I commend the committee on their hard work in maintaining the high standard of previous years. Each year 'Annagh' is eagerly awaited and appreciated by Ballyhaunis people at home and abroad.

Finally, I wish all our readers a very happy Christmas, sending a special greeting to those of you who are overseas or away from home at Christmas time. Wishing you every blessing in 2024.

Stephen Farragher

Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.

Editorial

A very warm welcome to another annual edition of Annagh Magazine, the 46th successive publication about the Parish of Annagh and the town of Ballyhaunis. As we reach readers not only at home, but also across borders and oceans, we send our warmest and best wishes to our cherished readers worldwide. Your loyalty and readership continue to inspire us.

It's a remarkable achievement for all involved down the years in the production of our annual publication to have reached the milestone of forty-six successive editions. I wish to applaud the efforts of our editorial committee in maintaining this wonderful tradition and I congratulate the hard-working team on producing another memorable edition. I also wish to thank our layout artist Sinéad Mallee and our printer Brendan Salmon and his team at KPS in Knock, for their professionalism and attention to detail.

A huge thank you also to all who have submitted reports, articles, poems, photographs and other original images. I would like to remind our contributors that we usually set the deadline for submissions around the second week in October. Meeting this deadline is crucial to the smooth progress of our publication and your timely submissions are greatly appreciated. We cannot guarantee the inclusion of articles, reports and photographs submitted after the deadline. We are grateful to the Family Resource Centre for facilitating our regular meetings in the Friary House.

Annagh 2023 features numerous articles and profiles about local history and heritage. This helps preserve and promote the unique aspects of our community's culture and traditions, ensuring they are not forgotten over time. In this forty-sixth year of publication, our magazine remains an important resource, providing our readers with valuable insights, news, and a sense of connection to our town and parish. Such a longstanding tradition is a testament to the commitment and dedication of our community to preserving and sharing the stories, history and essence of our town and parish. Long may Annagh Magazine continue to foster this sense of pride.

Annagh Magazine also strives in several ways to reflect the community of today, serving as a mirror of its values, interests and concerns. Communities evolve over time and their needs and concerns change. According to Central Statistics Office (CSO)

data which was released in October, 12% (632,000 people) of Ireland's population of 5.15 million were recorded as non-Irish citizens in April 2022. The figures reveal that Ballyhaunis is the most diverse town in all of Ireland, with almost 40% of the population being non-Irish. Annagh Magazine aims to be responsive to these changes and adapt our content accordingly by providing relevant and diverse material, representing today's community's demographics.

We congratulate our Muslim community on the historic milestone of celebrating fifty years of settlement in Ballyhaunis in 2023. Fifty years of settlement is a significant landmark and it's a testament to the positive impact that the Muslim community has had on the social, cultural and economic fabric of our community. This achievement is a testament to the strength of our Muslim community and its ability to thrive and enrich the tapestry of our town over the past five decades.

On behalf of Annagh Magazine Society, I am delighted to extend heartiest congratulations to our esteemed President, Joe Keane of Knox Street, who celebrated his one hundredth birthday in September 2023. Joe has devoted many years of sterling service to our magazine and we were delighted to join with Joe, his wife Marcella and family and the entire community in marking this momentous occasion at a packed event in the Parochial Hall in September. We send our best wishes to Joe for continued good health and happiness.

As we approach the end of another year, it's only natural to pause and reflect on the year gone by, the challenges we've faced and the progress we've made. For many of us the end of the year is a poignant time to remember friends and family who have passed on. It can be a time for reflection, gratitude and paying tribute to the people who have touched our lives. May all of our deceased loved ones Rest in Peace.

And last, but certainly not least, a huge thank you to our generous patrons. Your unwavering support and dedication have been the driving force behind our publication's success.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh agus gach dea-ghuí dár léitheoirí sa bhaile agus thar lear.

Tommy Caulfield
(Chairperson,
Annagh Magazine Society)

*Annagh Magazine Society. President: Joe Keane; Vice-President: John Halpin;
Chairperson: Tommy Caulfield; Asst. Chairperson: Seamus Mulrennan; Secretary: Noreen Ruane Dalton;
Asst. Secretary: Paul Waldron; Treasurer: Edward Mulhern; Asst. Treasurer: John Kilduff;
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Looking Back on the Year 2023	Mike Byrne	3
Wedding Photographs		11
Ballyhaunis Footballing Legend: John 'Doc' Healy	Hugh Rudden	19
Annagh Parish Stations		20
Ballyhaunis Chamber	Tom Forde	21
Fianna Fáil		23
Abbey Male Choir		23
The Rambling House	Murt Hunt	24
USS Patrick Gallagher Update	Martin Durkan	25
St Vincent de Paul		25
Blacksmiths of Yesteryear	Austin Bownes	26
The Tech Reunion - A Night to Remember	Jackie Coyne	28
The Life and Times of Pádraic Ó Gabhláin	Una Ní Ghabhláin	32
Our Father, Pádraig Hughes	Riona Hughes	34
A Childhood Memory of my Daddy	Riona Hughes	36
Stealing The Dawn (Poem)	Anne Irwin (née Hughes)	37
My Time in The Tech	Tom Grogan	37
When The Yanks Came to Visit	Michael Griffin	39
To Ballyhaunis for Knock by Train, 1880s	Oliver Doyle	40
The Devils Basketball Club	Danielle Byrne	44
The Luck of The Irish	Jimmy Cribbin	46
Sister Act	Tommy Caulfield	48
Ballyhaunis Rugby Club	Martin Walsh	50
The £25 Clamp of Silage	John Flanagan (Spaddagh)	52
Worldskills Ireland Award		53
Ballyhaunis Cemetery Committee	Martina Gavin	53
Darkness Into Light, Ballyhaunis 2023	Deirdre Moran	54
Occupations in the Parish of Bekan, early 1900s	Kieran Burns	57
Abbey Partnership and Trust	Mark Godfrey	58
A Year of Blooming Success for Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns	Laura Dinraths & Mary Donnelly	60
The Leaving Cert – Fifty Years On	Eamon Murren	62
My Path to Priesthood: From Artistry to Ministry	Rev. Xanthe Pratt	64
Abbey Pattern		65
Mayo SPCA, Pattenspark	Lucie Kavanagh	66
Moirá's Musical Legacy Honoured	Mike Byrne	69
Memories of Willie Kelly	Fr. Kieran Waldron (Written in 1986)	70
Ballyhaunis Library		72
Ballyhaunis Bridge Club	Leona Connery	73
McNamara Family Photographs		74
Ballyhaunis Scout Group		78
Ballyhaunis Community Council	Mark Godfrey	80
Cartron South Centenarian		82
Holywell Estate and the Dillons 1625-1801	Paul Waldron	84
Baptisms – Marriages – Deceased		92
Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club	Pavel Cervenak	95
Down One Side and Up the Other	Christina Johnston (Erriff)	96
From the Streets of Hanoi to the Shores of Thailand	Dara Healy	100
Season of Creation	Gabriel Smith	102
Ballyhaunis Beekeepers Association	Colm Bohan (Secretary)	103
Ballyhaunis Parent and Toddler Group	Samantha Cleary	104
Ballyhaunis Revisited	Ronan Thomas	106
Vincent A. Keane: A Journey Through the Years	Lindsey Clark	110
Michael Coen Memorial Meeting	Seamus Caulfield	112
Ballyhaunis Men's Shed Association		113
Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group	Paula Grogan	114
Ballyhaunis Summer Festival		116
Murt's Musings	Murt Hunt	119
Ballyhaunis GAA & LGFA Club		120
Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic Football Association	Edel Kinsella and Anne Cunnane	129
Ballyhaunis Golf Club	Kevin Garvey	133
Glynn's Photography Exhibition – Heritage Week	Tommy Caulfield	136
Le Cáirde Ballyhaunis	Ludmila Burcovschi	140
MacHale Park – The Ballyhaunis Connection	Eamon Murren	144
Ballyhaunis Fine Gael		148
Scoil Iosa in the 1990s	Betty Regan (Photos)	150
Ballyhaunis Language Café		152
Family Resource Centre	Merrilyn Winters	154
The Ballyhaunis Art Mural: Celebrating Diversity	Edel Kinsella	156
Diary of a Knockbrack Boy	Noel Lyons	160
Fascinating Footage, Corpus Christi Procession 1967	Peter McHugh	166
Senior Citizens' Party	Aisling Caulfield	169
Margaret Johnston Remembers		170
Scoil Iosa	Kenneth Denny	174
Pied Wagtails (Poem)	Christina Johnston	177
A School Journey (Poem)	Gabriel Prendergast	178
'Sam Maguire' Visits Knox Street	Morley Family Photos	179
A Memorable Visit to Aras an Uachtaráin	Aoife McDonagh	180
Emily Hannah	Poem by Christina Johnston	181
Home and Away: Irish Community in Melbourne	Mary Fitzmaurice McBride	182
Cribbin Family Gatherings 2023	Margaret Cribbin Monaghan	184
We Loved Annagh (Poem)	Anne Hughes Irwin	187
Gaelic Football for Mature Players	Hugh Rudden	188
Threads of Time: Joe Keane's 100th Birthday	John Keane	190
Ballyhaunis Town Football Club	Jarlath Walsh & Tracy Cunnane	195
Ballyhaunis Faith & Light	Anne Lyons	198
Post Office Retirements		201
Patrons		202

Looking Back on the Year 2023

Mike Byrne

November 2022

The month of November is a very sad one for the pastor of Ballyhaunis, Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P., when his sister Marie Pollard dies following an accident in Dublin. A native of Ballyrourke, The Neale, she had retired from her job as theatre nurse at University Hospital Galway just two years ago... St. Patrick's Church is packed to capacity on Saturday evening, 12th November when Geraldine Mullan delivers a powerful testimony of loss, letting go and hope as she speaks about the tragic deaths of her husband and two children when their car plunged into Lough Foyle in Co. Donegal in August, 2020. Geraldine, a native of Williamstown, spoke about how she has coped since that fateful day. She said that her strong faith, along with prayers and support from family and friends has helped her to stay strong in the most trying of circumstances...

The first steps towards setting up a Sustainable Energy Community in Ballyhaunis were taken at The Clock Bar this month when members of the public came along to hear a presentation on the subject delivered by Dr. Orla Nic Suibhne, county mentor, SEAI Sustainable Energy Community Programme, the principle of which is saving/cutting costs on the energy usage in our homes... Mary Higgins from Knockbrack passes to her eternal reward after a short illness. Mary worked for a number of years as house-keeper in the Friary... The death occurs in the Queen of Peace Nursing Home, Knock, of the late Fr. Colm Burke, fondly remembered by many former students of St. Patrick's College in Ballyhaunis where he was among the teaching staff 1964-69... Knox Street native Jimmy Jordan dies in Manchester. Brother of the late Tommy Jordan, Knox St., he was a regular visitor home over the years...

250 boxes donated as part of the Annual Christmas Shoebox Appeal, organised by Scoil Íosa NS. In addition to this, a sum in excess of €1,000 was donated to the cause. This appeal is co-ordinated by Team Hope who deliver the boxes, laden with Christmas toys and goodies, to some of the poorest children in Europe and Africa... Main Street native Fintan Lynch (88) slips quietly away to his eternal reward following a very brief illness, at his daughter and son-in-law's residence in Borrisokane, Co. Tipperary. Fintan, who was a regular contributor to the pages of *Annagh Magazine* in the recent years, lived with his wife, the former Mai Byrne from Clare Street, in Ennis for over sixty years... Former Ballyhaunis Community School students Cian Walsh and Auredas Armonavicus are recipients of scholarship awards from NUIG.

December 2022

The month of December comes in with a real bang and some chill too as temperatures throughout the country plummet to -11°C. Dry weather, however, with little or no rain, snow or sleet, make roads completely accessible... An early Christmas gift for the Mayo SPCA animal shelter at Pattenspark when Government funding is announced for some ninety-nine animal welfare centres around the country. The Ballyhaunis centre receives a tidy sum of €33,375 following the announcement from the Minister for Agriculture, Food and Marine, Charlie McConalogue, TD... The Dome at the Centre of Excellence was the venue, on St. Stephen's Day, for a very exciting day of fun and football where top class football was the order of the day. The Battle of Ballyhaunis Keane Kitchens Parish League 2022 was a fantastic success. The nine-a-side tournament featured teams representing Knockbrack, Doctor's Road, Hollywell, Annagh/Cave, Brackloon, Gurteen, Knock Road, Lecarrow. At the end of the day's exciting football it was Brackloon who overcame all to lift the parish trophy, with Aidan Sloyan being voted the tournament's most valuable player. The competition organisers were Mark Phillips, Adrian Phillips, Shane Healy and William Nestor. The co-ordinators on the day were Darren Conlon, Brendan Donnellan, Ciara Buckley and Tommy Caulfield. The event, sponsored by Keane Kitchens, raised €4,083 which was donated to the local branch of the St. Vincent de Paul Society... The tragic death takes place in Galway following a kayaking accident, of Mark Morley. In his early thirties, Mark was son of John Morley, originally from Island, now living in Galway with his wife the former Claire Talty. John was son of the late Mary Teresa (née Cribbin) and Tom Morley, Began. His mother Mary Teresa also died tragically when, in September 1961, she was fatally injured when struck by a motorist as she cycled home from Ballyhaunis following a shopping trip. John's wife Claire is sister of former Galway senior footballer, Brian Talty... The death takes place in Manchester of the late Paddy Lyons from Redford. Paddy's remains were removed to his native parish of Ballyhaunis where funeral Mass was celebrated on 29th December. He was laid to rest in the local cemetery... Kerryman Dermot Sullivan retires as caretaker at Ballyhaunis Community School where he has been a most popular employee since 1996. A native of Cahirciveen, Co. Kerry, Dermot was most reliable, took great pride in the school and was so popular for helping young students find their feet in their early days at the Knock Road school. He will be greatly missed in this role for sure!

January 2023

Ballyhaunis Town FC appoint Karl Lyons as manager of the senior team for the coming season. Karl is no stranger to the local soccer club as he was prominently involved when the club was reformed back in 2010 and played a big part on the field during the early success of the club coming through the divisions. Karl will have a back-up team consisting of Marcin Balik Nowak (coach), Gerry Gallagher and Niall Richardson, assistant managers... Former employee of Irish Ale Breweries, Tom Cribbin, dies peacefully at his home in Cahir, Aghamore. Tom was a native of Togher, Ballyhaunis... Also on a sad note in the early days of the new year, Chris Caulfield, a native of Carrowkeel, dies in Galway where he has lived for many years... Main Street/Upper Main Street is completely closed off to traffic, from Doctor's Road to The Square, as essential work is being carried out, much of it relating to the construction of the Aldi Supermarket on Upper Main Street, due to open in June... The town of Ballyhaunis and surrounds is deeply shocked and saddened at the news of the sudden death of Anthony Waldron from Clagnagh. Son of the late Val and Olive Waldron, Cave, Anthony was well known in traditional Irish music circles as an accomplished exponent of the concert flute... The month of January is indeed a bleak month for the town and parish when Pierce Higgins (45) from Esker Pines passes to his eternal reward after a hard fought, five-year battle with Motor Neurone Disease. Thousands of mourners from many parts of the country descend on Ballyhaunis for his funeral, paying tribute to a great hurling hero who won fourteen county titles with the red and black of Ballyhaunis in what was a wonderful sporting career... The death occurs in Dublin following an illness of John Crehan, formerly of Clare Street. John was son of Una and the late Martin Crehan, who operated a successful restaurant and concrete products business on Clare Street for many years... Ballyhaunis GAA Club hosts a series of well attended workshops in Scoil Íosa over a number of weeks, where a wide range of topics are discussed by the large numbers who turn out for the events. Topics included coaching, club structure and administration, fundraising, club development and facilities, social health and wellbeing. The project is co-ordinated by club chairman Gerry Lyons... The death takes place in Pearl River, New York of Mary Cunnane. The former Mary Carney from Cloontumper, Began, she operated the well-known and popular Eagle Bar on Bridge Street together with her late husband Tony for a number of years in the 1960s.

February

Derek Walsh is named manager of the Ballyhaunis senior football team. Son of Jimmy and Mary Walsh from

Knockbrack, Derek has previously managed the Mayo senior hurling team with much success until stepping down from the position in 2022... Great news for management and staff at Midwest Radio this February when the independent national JNLR/MRBI radio listener figures are released, which show that their position has been consolidated as the strongest performing local radio station across the country... Parishioners gather in the Community (Parochial) Hall after 10am Mass on Sunday, 12th February, to honour Mary Donnelly and acknowledge her contribution to the parish as secretary for almost thirty years. A bouquet of flowers was presented by her colleague of many years, former sacristan Frances Maye. Tea and light refreshments were served by members of the Parish Pastoral Council and there was a real sense of community among the large gathering of people who turned out for the celebration. We wish Mary many years of health and happiness in the future... The death takes place of Pat Flannery of Tooraree. May he rest in eternal peace... The Peake family in Gurteen celebrate double gold this month when two family members win gold in boxing tournaments... Great sadness on Main Street as news of the very sudden passing of Mary McQueeney is learned by parishioners. She was a very popular member of the local community and worked on the grounds of Knock Shrine for many years with great commitment and loyalty.

March

The Fianna Fáil constituency office on Clare Street was the venue on Sunday evening, 5th March, when Dara Calleary, TD and Cllr. John Caulfield were joined by members of the local party to honour and pay tribute to four members of the party who passed to their eternal reward in recent months: Tommy Waldron, chairman of the Michael Waldron Ballyhaunis Fianna Fáil cumann at the time of his untimely death; Knock natives Michael Carty and Paddy Joe O'Brien; and Pierce Higgins from Ballyhaunis... Great sadness on Knox Street and throughout the Ballyhaunis district following the news of the passing of Tony Greene in Milford, Pennsylvania, USA. The Knox Street native lived in New York for many years where he welcomed, provided accommodation and sought employment for so many Ballyhaunis sons and daughters over the past sixty years or so. A former Ballyhaunis Gaelic footballer, Tony played football for the New York senior team on numerous occasions, won Junior championship medals with Westmeath in 1961 and again, seventeen years later, in 1978 with Connemara Gaels. Following his retirement, Tony turned to referring games at Gaelic Park in the Bronx for many years... Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic Football Association player Chanel Marques completed the LGFA BUA programme this month. Representing Ballyhaunis



GAA Club and the province of Connacht, the graduation ceremony was held in the GAA National Development Centre, Abbotstown, Dublin. A total of thirty graduates representing the four provinces attended the ceremony... Sunday, 26th March was a big day for Ballyhaunis Golf Club members Robbie Hughes and Deirdre Moran when they enjoyed their Captains Drive-in at the Coolnaha club. They were joined by a host of well-wishers from the club as well as the club President for the coming year, Ja Henry from Gurteen... Massive celebrations in the village of Lissaniska, Began when family and relations of Georgie and Margaret (née Murray) Hannan from Drimbane turned out in great style at the Margaret's old homestead, where son David and his wife Iona (née Cunnane) now reside, to celebrate the Ballyhaunis couples fortieth wedding anniversary. A great night of celebration was enjoyed by all... John Healy from Holywell passes to his eternal reward following a brief illness. Son of the late Jim and Mary (née Finn) Healy, John was a resident of Ballyhaunis Western Care for a number of years... Parishioners of Ballyhaunis certainly excelled in their generosity this month as they responded tremendously to an appeal to help the people of Syria and Turkey following the earthquake which devastated their countries in recent weeks. Ballyhaunis has a large number of Syrians living here for many years now and many of those have become central to the life of the parish and district over the past decades. The area of Aleppo, from where many of the local citizens originate, was particularly affected by the earthquake. A sum of €11,660 was donated locally while a further sum of €8,000 was donated from the parish of Kilfenora to add to the Ballyhaunis fund. A great testimony indeed to the generosity of the local people whenever they are called upon to help those in most need.



Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P. in St. Patrick's Church decorated for the feast of the Patron Saint of Ireland and of our parish, 17th March 2023.

April

A sunny and showery Easter Monday brought capacity crowds to the streets of Ballyhaunis on 10th April for what was a very colourful Easter Parade. The winning entry, winning for their trouble a grand prize of €1,000, was Londis Mad Hatters Tea Party, while in second place was The Devils Basketball squad and, in third place, Murphy's Gala supermarket with their version of the Breakfast Roll... Massive occasion for Knock Shrine this month when American President Joe Biden visits the Marian Shrine on a private visit. The president, who is in Ireland to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, also visits his ancestral home of Ballina where thousands turn out to greet him... The death takes place this month of Kitty Fitzgerald, Ballinlough, formerly of Upper Man Street. Kitty was wife of John Fitzgerald, well known throughout the local area as an employee of the ESB... Ballyhaunis Gaelic footballer Jack Coyne plays a major role in Mayo senior team's victory over Galway to win the National Football League in Croke Park with a three-point win over Galway. Jack is son of Paul and Noreen (née Toolan) Coyne, Carrowhawny, Ballyhaunis... The Easter ceremonies in Ballyhaunis are tinged with a little sadness as Moira Delaney directs the music for the last time after twenty years of dedicated service. Moira has been director of the Abbey Male Choir for over thirty years and the parish choir for the past two decades and, during that time, has given her time and expertise voluntarily to the music ministry in the parish... The death takes place of Sean Paul Tighe, late of Carrowbaun, Crossard and Carrowreagh, Ballyhaunis. Sean was a well-known figure in the livestock trade for many years and operated a very successful business in this area during the thriving years of the fairs throughout the country and later on when the buying and selling took place in marts up and down the country... Great sadness in GAA circles in Ballyhaunis following the news of the passing of Patsy Jennings in Hollymount. A former member of the Ballyhaunis GAA Club, Patsy played senior football with the club during the 1970s. Patsy, who lived for some time at Upper Main Street with his wife Eileen, a former employee of Ballyhaunis Community School, also devoted much of his time to coaching under-age footballers at the club... Councillor John Cribbin announces his intention to retire from active politics at the end of his term as local representative with Mayo County Council. The Knockanarra based Fine Gael councillor, who has represented Ballyhaunis and district so well over the past twenty-five years, said it was his decision to make the announcement at this time in order to give his successor ample time to prepare for the next local election... Another gold medal comes to Gurteen and Ballyhaunis when Carlagh Peake

wins her fifth Irish boxing title... The newly elected Ballyhaunis Pastoral Council held their first meeting on the last Monday of the month and, on this occasion, a little bit of history is made when a number of non-nationals make up the numbers of the 2023 council. The new Pastoral Council is comprised of: Malcolm Hudson, Anne Phillips, Ruth Murphy, Mary Ryan, Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P., Siobhán Conlon, Eileen Donnellan, Margaret Monaghan, Gabriel Smith, Carlos Ramao, Eileen Jordan, Kevin Henry, Julia Kelly, Krystina Vukovic, Anne Lyons, Gilmar Neves, Miriam Judge, Irene Nunes, Mary Henry, Carol Keane and Louise Warde... Great news for Ballyhaunis Rugby Club this month when two members of their playing squad, Aidan Healy and Fintan Crawley, were selected on the Connacht Junior Inter Pro panel which played Munster at Tuam RFC at the end of the month...

May

The late Mary Dillon from Ballindrehid is remembered this month in a special way at Scoil Íosa NS where she worked as a much-loved secretary for many years. Fr. Stephen Farragher presides over the launch and blessing of a Meditation Garden on the grounds of the Abbeyquarter school in memory of Mary, while a tree, also in memory of Mary, is planted on the site, by her husband Frankie and children Michael and Martina... Knox Street native Anthony Jordan dies in Dublin after a brief illness. Brother of the late Tommy Jordan, Anthony was well known throughout the country as an author who published many books of a historical nature in the recent years... Great sadness in the Upper Main Street and wider Ballyhaunis parish as news comes in of the passing of Kathleen Caulfield at her daughter Helena's residence in Eden, Knock, the home where Kathleen was born ninety years ago. Wife of the late

Vinnie Caulfield, Kathleen was so well known and much loved by all as proprietor of Caulfield's Shop and Newsagents on Upper Main Street for many years... Tony O'Malley, Holywell dies after a lengthy illness. Tony, who worked in Coventry for several years, was predeceased by his wife Irene...



In May of this year, a tree planting ceremony took place at Scoil Íosa in memory of Mary Dillon (Doctor's Road), Scoil Íosa primary school's dedicated secretary for many years. Pictured are her husband Frankie, son Michael and daughter Martina.



Budding Ballyhaunis footballers who lined out for the Mayo Under 15s Academy against Derry, May 2023, were Adam Kelly, Tom Donnellan, Eamon Monaghan and Fionn Conlon.

Four young members of the Ballyhaunis GAA Club donned the red and green jersey of Mayo for the first time this month when they were selected to line out for the Mayo Under 15s Academy in a match against Derry at MacHale Park, Castlebar. The four young stars of the future were: Adam Kelly, Tom Donnellan, Eamonn Monaghan and Fionn Conlon... Ballyhaunis Gaelic footballer Jack Coyne plays a starring role with Mayo senior team when they defeated the might of Kerry in Killarney in the All-Ireland Championship. Mayo win 1-19 to 0-17. This was the first time that Kerry lost a championship game on home soil since 1995... The sudden death occurs of Mary Feeney of Devlis, formerly from Crossard, Tooreen... Ballyhaunis Community School student Aoife Loftus receives the Papal Cross Award for completing sixty hours of volunteering. Meanwhile, fifth year student Katie Carr receives her Gold JPIL Award for completing forty hours of volunteering... Saturday, 20th May was a most memorable day in the life of Moira Delaney, long time director of music in Ballyhaunis parish when she was presented with the Bene Merenti Medal by Archbishop Francis Duffy, following the administration of the Sacrament of Confirmation in St. Patrick's Church. The Bene Merenti Medal is conferred by the Pope on someone who has given long and exceptional service to the Church... Alma Gallagher is nominated by the Ballyhaunis Fine Gael party for selection to contest the next County Council election. This comes about following outgoing Councillor John Cribbin's decision recently not to contest the next election in 2024. Alma is daughter of Martha and the late Martin Gallagher, Drimbane... Former Main Street businessman Val Byrne

passes to his eternal reward after a short illness. Val, a former eggler and award-winning publican, was known throughout the county and well beyond. A member of the Ballyhaunis senior Gaelic football team which won the Mayo county senior title in 1958 following an historic victory over Ballina, he gave much of his life to Gaelic football as a player and later as coach and mentor... Brian Flanagan from Ballindrehid passed to his eternal reward following a brief illness. Aged 83, Brian, or Bernie as he was affectionately known by family and friends, was a well-known and popular member of the local community... The last week of May brings glorious weather conditions to the west of Ireland with brilliant sunshine and temperatures up to 25°C., perfect for the summer festival which begins at the end of this month.

June

Ballyhaunis Summer Festival gets into full swing with a week-long timetable of festivities that bring throngs of people to the town centre. Glorious weather conditions throughout the week adds greatly to the success of the week-long festival. One of the highlights of the weekend is the visit of RTE Weather Forecaster and Met Éireann Meteorologist Joanna Donnelly who delivered a Forecasting and Weather Science Presentation to a packed house at the First Choice Credit Union Building in Clare Street...



Above: Joanna Donnelly from Met Éireann delivered a Forecasting and Weather Science presentation to a capacity crowd in the First Choice Credit Union Building in Clare Street during this year's Summer Festival. She is pictured with event organisers and staff members from the First Choice Credit Union. From left: Katherine Kilbride, Mark O'Brien, William Nestor, Joanna Donnelly, Anne Cunnane, Mike Griffin, Judith Ryan, Linda Cox.

Great sadness in Carrowkeel and Gurteen areas as news of the passing of Mary Caulfield is learned in the locality. Daughter of the late Martin and Noreen Caulfield, she lived in Ballina with husband Rob and was centrally involved with the Ballina Golf Club, being Lady Captain of the club in recent years... Down in Coolnaha it was Lady Captain's Prize weekend and the fabulous weather added greatly to the enjoyment and success of the competition. In the end it was popular Clare Street

publican Ann Curley who had the best score taking home Deirdre Moran's beautiful prize... What an unbelievable performance it was for John William Burke in the U.S. Kids Golf European Under-14 Championships this month when he finished in second place with a score of seven under par in the Glen Golf Club in Scotland. This is the fourth best score ever shot in the fifteen years of these championships, finishing on 209, just three strokes behind the winner Adrian Friis from Denmark. John William is son of John and Paula (née Jordan) Burke, Devlis... Holywell native Michael Healy dies in Manchester after a brief illness. Son of the late Ted and Delia Healy, he lived with his wife and family in Manchester for many years. Brother of the late Etta and Kieran Healy, he is deeply mourned by his sister Catherine Ronayne, Clagnagh... The annual Corpus Christi Procession attracts a great crowd once again this year as Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. carries the Real Presence of Jesus through the streets of our town. Once again this year, our non-national brothers and sisters from Brazil, Poland and many other nations take an active part in the procession adding great colour and fervour to the event. As was the case last year, the procession ends with Benediction and blessing in St. Mary's Augustinian Abbey... Great crowds gather on Upper Main Street on 22nd June when Aldi supermarket opens for business. The German controlled retail outlet

creates thirty new jobs in the town with the opening of this €7 million store, Aldi's 158th in the country... Ballyhaunis FC soccer team qualifies for the Tuohy Cup final after defeating neighbours Kiltimagh Knock United in the semi-final. The semi-final is a very exciting affair which ended in a draw (2-2) after ninety minutes. Ballyhaunis win through after a penalty shoot-out, 4-1... A special award this month at Ballyhaunis Community School for Leaving Cert student Dean Coyne who completed his five years at BCS without having missed a single day, from first year to leaving cert year. He was presented with his Full-Attendance Award by principal David McDonagh.



Ballyhaunis shoppers Noelle Keegan (2nd from right) and Martha Lucey (2nd from left) were the first customers through the doors of Aldi, June 2023. Pictured here with store management and staff.



Fitzer's Bar, Knox Street, hosted the weekly Ballyhaunis GAA weekly 50/50 Draw for the final time on Sunday evening, 9th July 2023.

Ballyhaunis GAA Finance Chairman Robbie Herr thanked Fitzer's for their support over the years and wished Gary Allen and his wife Anne and family every good wish for the future. Pictured, from left: Gabrielle Lyons, Tom Glynn, Robbie Herr, Ned Murren, Tommy Caulfield, Gary Allen, Gerry Lyons, Anne Fitzpatrick Allen. Front: Zoe Allen, Daniel Allen.

July

The month of July opens with a great celebration for the many parishioners involved in ministry in the parish church, when a night of celebration is held in the Golf Club, with music, dancing and food. The evening was hosted by Fr. Stephen by way of saying thank you to all involved in ministry in one form or another year in and year out... Great sadness on Knox Street as long-time resident Mary Jordan passes to her eternal reward. A native of Greenwood, the former Mary Guilfoyle, operated a very successful and popular grocery store on Knox St. for many years. She was wife of the late Tommy Jordan who departed to his eternal reward back in 2019... A little bit of history in Knox Street this month when Fitzer's Bar closed its door for the last time. A very popular hostelry for many decades in Ballyhaunis, Fitzer's, operated by its owner Anne Fitzpatrick for many years, had several owners in the past few decades including Pat Walsh from Dunmore, John Cumiskey from Galway, and prior to this Peter and Breege Moran, who did a thriving business here in the 1970s and 80s before selling to Peter's brother Tom and his wife Dolly, all of whom have since gone to their eternal reward... Ja Henry's President's Prize for ladies is played for at Ballyhaunis Golf Club and, after a thrilling contest, Mariette Potgieter came out on top with a winning score of 72 nett, just one shot ahead of in second place Fiona Prenty... And, staying with golf matters, on 17th July, John William Burke, became the Connacht Under 14 and Under 16 champion following a fantastic round of 71 at Ballinasloe Golf Club... Following the great turnout and support for the Darkness into Light fundraising event in Ballyhaunis in May, the final tally received reached a grand total of €7,804.90. All proceeds have been

dispatched to Pieta House whose aim is to prevent self-harm and put an end to suicide. Well done to all who co-ordinated this successful event... The death takes place this month of John Fitzgerald, Ballinlough. John, who lived at Upper Main Street for many years was a well-known and very popular employee of the ESB here in this area, working alongside the late Cyril O'Malley of Barrack Street. He was predeceased in April by Kitty, his wife of almost sixty years. May they rest together in eternal peace... The death occurs in Ballisodare, Co. Sligo of Mary Dooley, sister of the late Matt O'Dwyer, former staff member of Ballyhaunis Community School and long-time member of the Annagh Magazine Society... Great night of celebration in Gareth Delaney's at the end of the month as the combined Abbey Male Choir, Parish Choir and newly formed international group Le Cárde come together to pay tribute to Moira Delaney to mark her retirement from the post of Director of Sacred Music in the parish after some thirty years of dedicated service.

August

Barry Freeman wins Ja Henry's Captain's Prize in Ballyhaunis Golf Club. In what was a memorable week for the Freeman family, Barry's brother Shane takes the prize for the best gross score of the Captain's Prize contest while earlier in the week, Shane's son Ruairi takes home first prize in the Connaught under-13 Close Championships in Mountbellew Golf Club... Ballyhaunis resident Frank Loughran dies after a very brief illness. A native of County Monaghan, Frank was hugely popular and well known throughout Ballyhaunis and East Mayo as a veterinary surgeon for over fifty years... Forthill native Gerard Plunkett retires from the postal service after thirty years of service as postman in the local area... A great variety of activities in Ballyhaunis mark Heritage Week. The annual Harvest Mass is celebrated in the Augustinian Abbey by Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. assisted by Fr. Anthony Finn O.S.A., Galway, followed by an historic tour of the church and grounds led by Paul Waldron. Other events include 'Reeling in the Years', a display of photographs from Glynn Photography of people and places of Ballyhaunis over the past fifty years, and 'Pride of Pakistan in Ballyhaunis - Building a Multinational Business and Mosque in Ballyhaunis', a pictorial history of the Pakistani community from their arrival here in 1972... Renowned singer and musician Andy Irvine performs at the Augustinian Abbey, with special guest Brian Flanagan. Andy is best known to followers of Irish traditional ballad and music as a founding member of Planxty in 1972... The death takes place of Drimbane native Chris Mannion. Chris, aged 87, lived in Manchester for many years, before retiring to his native Drimbane a number of years ago... Ballyhaunis, and indeed parish priest Fr. Stephen Farragher, were greatly blessed during the months of July



and August to have the assistance of Fr. Arul Jayaseelan, a priest from Africa, assisting with the sacraments in our parish during those two months. Fr. Arul certainly endeared himself to the local community and integrated so well with the local community that after his two months' stay here. In his farewell letter through the parish newsletter in August, Fr. Arul said: "I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to Fr. Stephen for welcoming me into Ballyhaunis parish and making me feel at home here. He extended his heartfelt thanks, "to the entire community for the overwhelming love, care and support you have extended to me during the months of July and August; it has been a truly enriching experience". He has returned to Rome where he is continuing his pastoral studies... Mary's Meals charity receive a royal welcome in Ballyhaunis on 14th August as they stop off for refreshments at the Communal House in Clare Court on their fundraising walk from various parts of the country to Knock. The organisation is responsible for feeding over two million hungry children every school day across eighteen countries. The talented band of musicians and singers from the newly formed Le C  irde international group added greatly to the welcome, warmth and entertainment of the evening... Former curate in Ballyhaunis, Canon Martin Gleeson, A.P., Belclare, Co. Galway, is laid to rest. Fr. Martin served in Ballyhaunis 1985-87... Upwards of 200 past pupils of the old Vocational School (The Tech) gathered at the Community (Parochial) Hall for a night of reminiscing and sharing, celebrating their years spent at The Tech in the years past. Opened in 1941, the Tech, as it was affectionately known, closed in 1977 following the amalgamation of the three secondary schools in the town forty-six years ago. The celebration, which was attended by a number of former pupils and teachers from the school, was a great success and brought back many fond memories of the years spent at the Knock-Road academy... After over thirty years of great service to the public, Billy and Eileen Nestor retire from active service at The Corner Bar. Billy and Eileen (n  e Lyons) have been hugely popular and held in great esteem by the countless customers who have passed through the doors of their premises over the past three decades.

September

The Community (Parochial) Hall on Main Street was the venue for a fundraising launch undertaken by the Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group. It featured a talk given by Mayo Person of the Year, Darren Forde, on the importance of having defibrillators at various points around our communities. The evening served as a launch for the Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group's upcoming fundraising event which will see three local energetic ladies taking to the streets of Dublin on 29th October for the Dublin City Marathon - Siobh  n Walsh, Alma

Gallagher and Lisa McConn. Of the twelve defibrillators currently in the parish, seven of those will need to be upgraded by the new year... Officials and members of the Ballyhaunis Rugby Club were out in force at their club grounds this month to showcase their newly refurbished clubhouse to a large gathering of visitors from the local community and beyond. Situated on Doctor's Road, the clubhouse is a state-of-the-art premises, with modern bar and dining area facilities. The capacity crowd which turned out for the night of celebration was truly amazed at the standard and quality of workmanship which has gone into the newly refurbished clubhouse which will greatly benefit the community in the years ahead... A very enjoyable afternoon in The Community (Parochial) Hall for the first ever Garda Community Engagement event, where members of An Garda   Sioch  na were present to meet and engage with the public on matters of concern to them. Among the issues raised was the need for an increased Garda presence in the town, longer opening hours at the station, issues with public drinking and anti-social behavior and the increasing danger of e-scooters on the streets. This very successful initiative took place in a relaxed and friendly setting with lots of food and refreshments served throughout the day... A new beginning for Ballyhaunis man Wiktor Siemionkowski who began his studies for the priesthood on 11th September in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. Polish-born Wiktor, a former student of Scoil   osa NS and Ballyhaunis Community School, was one of seven candidates from Ireland who completed their Propaedeutic Year (a year of discernment and preparation) in Valladolid, Spain, last year, before entering the seminary at Maynooth. He is wished well by the parish community as he begins his journey to Priesthood...



Champion golfer Andrew Hickey pictured after his first professional tournament victory at Ardee Golf Club, Co. Louth in September. Andrew is son of James and Mary Hickey, Greenwood, Ballyhaunis.

Former Ballyhaunis Golf Club member Andrew Hickey from Greenwood played the game of his life at Ardee Golf Club this month when he romped home with an eight-shot victory at the CTI Solutions Irish PGA Assistants Championship to clinch his first ever profes-

sional tournament victory. Andrew, who plays with Galway Bay Golf Club, is son of James and Mary Hickey, Greenwood... 100 years of history were celebrated in Ballyhaunis on Saturday, 16th September, when parishioners turn out in great numbers to congratulate and celebrate with Knox Street's Joe Keane on the great occasion of his 100th birthday. A celebratory Mass is held in St. Patrick's Church with chief celebrant Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P., assisted by Ballyhaunis native Fr. Kieran Waldron. Afterwards, an afternoon of feasting and celebrating was held in the Community (Parochial) Hall when many neighbours and friends turned out to wish Joe and his wife Marcella (née Greene) well on this joyful occasion. This was a wonderful community event where Joe greeted all comers with much chat and hearty welcome throughout the day long celebration. As President of Annagh Magazine Society, Joe has contributed tremendously to the pages of this publication for many years through his wisdom and knowledge of the local parish stretching back over many decades... A website on the Augustinian Abbey, giving information on the six-hundred year-old Friary is launched. The site is designed and built by Jorge Alvarez and Tzyy Wang for the Abbey Trust, the formal entity which holds the Friary church and grounds in trust for the community, as well as the Abbey Partnership, the management arm of the Trust. It can be viewed at: <https://ballyhaunisfriary/>... An Bord Pleanála have given the green light for the restoration and transformation of the former convent primary school building in Ballyhaunis into a new community hub. The proposal includes internal modifications to the building layout, a two-story extension at its entrance housing a lobby lift, and outdoor recreational facilities which will include play areas and an open-air amphitheatre. Other associated site development services are also included in the plans. Preparations can now be put in place to make an application for the Rural Regeneration Scheme when it opens. Great news indeed this for Ballyhaunis and the now derelict old convent school on Abbey Street... The Corner Bar, which closed for business last month, is back in action once again as popular Abbey Street publican Gareth Delaney takes over the business, following the retirement of Billy and Eileen Nestor a few weeks ago. Gareth, who operates the family business on Abbey Street with great success, has appointed two well-known local bartenders to operate the well known hostelry, John Morley (formerly of Val's and Paddy Phillips) and Barry Mulligan (formerly of Delaney's Oak Bar on Bridge Street)... The death has occurred after a brief illness of Ann Caulfield, a native of Kilgariff, Knock. Ann has been a resident of Ballyhaunis for many years having worked in SuperValu and, in more recent years, at Sparky's on Main Street (formerly O'Connor's Chemists).

October

John (Sonny) Barrett, a native of Tooraree, living in Threemilehouse, Co. Monaghan, for many years, dies after a brief illness. Sonny had a carpentry workshop in Upper Main Street for some time before taking up residence in Monaghan...



Professor Peter McHugh

The very popular 'High School Musical' takes to the stage at Ballyhaunis Community School and gets rave reviews. Congratulations to all concerned for a spectacular performance and a wonderful night's entertainment... Towards the end of the month the sad news comes through of the death of Clare Street undertaker, Pat Donnellan. Pat was widely known for the compassion with which he carried out his professional duties over many years. He was also a hugely popular and respected member of the Ballyhaunis community...

Congratulations to Main Street native, Prof. Peter McHugh, on his recent appointment as the next Deputy President and Registrar at The University of Galway. Peter will take up his new role on 1st May 2024... Monday, 30th October 2023 saw the unveiling of a magnificent and enchanting art mural in the Friary Field. A family-friendly fun day was organised in conjunction with the unveiling. The mural, forty-two metres long and eight feet tall, is a captivating landscape scene adorned with three diversity trees. It celebrates the rich diversity of Ballyhaunis and symbolises the harmony between nature and the town's diverse population.



The late Pat Donnellan



The new proprietor of The Corner Bar, Gareth Delaney (left) pictured on the opening night in October 2023, with his predecessor Billy Nestor (centre) and owner Gerard McGarry (right).

WEDDINGS



Katie Conroy (Larganboy) and Thomas Talbot (Lugatemple, Claremorris) who married in St. Margaret Mary's Church, Began, 8th Sept. 2023. Pictured with their daughter Emma Talbot.

Fergal Walsh (Knock Road) and Catherine Carney (Cartron, Carrick-on-Shannon) who married in St. Michael's Church, Drumlion, 13th May 2023.



Laura Melvin (Brickens) and Jerry McEvilly (Stillorgan, Dublin) who married in St. Therese's Church, Brickens, 27th May 2023.



Caoimhe Phillips
(Limerick) and Leonardo
Lima (Venezuela) who
married in Cloughjordan
House, Tipperary, 6th
October 2022. Caoimhe is
daughter of Declan Phillips
(Main Street).

Kieran Naughton (Belisker)
and Amy Connell
(Ballinamuck, Co. Longford)
who married in St. Margaret
Mary's Church, Began,
23rd June 2023.



Adrian Judge
(Coolnaha) and
Kelly Ann McKay
(Lavallyroe)
who married
in St. Mary's
Church, Logboy,
2nd May 2023.



Karen Lilly (Johnstown) and Katrina Connolly (Achonry, Co. Sligo) who married in the Radisson Hotel, Sligo, 14th July 2023.



Adrian Herr (Crossmolina) and Natasha Keane (Dublin) who married in Rathsalagh Country House, Co. Kildare, 2nd December 2022. Adrian is son of Michael Herr (Knox Street).



Karl Coyne (Doctor's Road) and Caroline Keane (Dammerstown, Castlecomer, Co. Kilkenny) who married in Kitzbuhel, Austria, 24th August 2023.



Aidan Fitzmaurice (Gurteenbeg) and Alyssa Faltin (Jensen Beach, Florida, USA) who married in Dublin, 27th June 2022.



Orna McLoughlin (Limerick) and Patrick Deshpande (London) who married in Gretna Green, Scotland, 22nd Dec. 2022.
Orna is daughter of Helen Waldron (Cave).



Jenny Beirne (Bekan) and Kyle McNally (Ballincollig, Co. Cork) who married in St. Margaret Mary's Church, Bekan, 10th Sept. 2022.



John Jordan (Johnstown) and Emma Haverty (Dunmore, Co. Galway) who married in St. John the Baptist Church, The Neale, Co. Mayo, 29th July 2023.



Brendan Morley (Bekan) and Rebecca Kemp (Whitley Bay, Newcastle, UK) who married in Castle Dargan, Sligo.



Luke Watson (Shanballymore, Dunmore, Co. Galway) and Adriona Kelly (Tuam) who married in Spanish Point, Co. Clare. Luke is son of Liz Griffin (Clare Street).

Nuala Gallagher (Dooastle) and Gavin Casey (Tubbercurry, Co. Sligo) who married in St. Joseph's Church, Rooskey. Nuala is daughter of Barbara Fitzgerald (Bridge Street).



Catherine Anne Smyth (Dublin) and Lyon Devereux (Wales) who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis. Catherine Anne is daughter of J.T. Smyth (Knox St.)



Patrick Waldron (Cave) and Lorraine Allen (Kilkelly) who married in the Clayton Hotel, Sligo, 23rd Dec. 2022.



Edel Walsh (Tooreen) and John James Fleming (Ballyfarna, Claremorris) who married in St. Mary's Church, Tooreen, 21st July 2023.



Maria Morley (Bekan) and Joseph Boyle (Burt, Co. Donegal) who married in St. Margaret Mary's Church, Bekan, 3rd June 2023.



Sinead Fahy (Holywell) and Daniel Garrett (Crossmolina) who married in the Algarve, Portugal, 7th May 2023.



Martina Mullarkey
(Curnacarta, Tulrahan)
and Paul Cusack
(Glenhest) who married
in St. Mary's Church,
Logboy, 5th Aug. 2023.

Joy Watson
(Shanballymore,
Dunmore, Co.
Galway) and William
Jackson (Lincolnshire,
UK) who married in
the Abbey Hotel,
Athy, 31st Dec. 2022.
Joy is daughter of Liz
Griffin (Clare Street).



Maggie Cribbin (Togher) and
Philip Glynn (Granlahan)
who married in Westport, 6th
July 2023.



Paul Moran (Loughbown, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway) and Claire Browne (Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim) who married in Castle Leslie, 31st Mar. 2023. Paul is son of Gerard Moran (Devlis) and Katherina Cribbin (Knockbrack).



Regina Garrity (Bekan) and Henry Coyle (Geesala, Co. Mayo) who married in Chicago, 23rd May 2022.



Francis Cunnane (Tulrahan) and Aisling Tully (Williamstown, Co. Galway) who married in St. Teresa's Church, Williamstown, Co. Galway, 29th Oct. 2022.



Hannah Donegan (Clooncrim, Ballinlough) and P.J. Keane (Cloonfad) who married in the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Ballinlough.

Ballyhaunis Footballing Legend: John 'Doc' Healy

Hugh Rudden

John 'Doc' Healy is remembered as a great and dedicated Ballyhaunis Gaelic footballer, who also rendered sterling service to his county at both senior and junior grades.

Doc attended Began N.S. and received his secondary education at St. Jarlath's College, Tuam. He commenced his footballing career with Ballyhaunis as a juvenile in 1951. The following year, sixteen-year-old Doc had graduated to the minor team of 1952 which annexed the county minor football crown. Doc's brother Paddy was also a member of this famed team, captained by the late Val Byrne, which defeated Claremorris in an epic final. Two years later in 1954 Doc, now aged eighteen, led Ballyhaunis Minors to win the East Mayo title before exiting the championship with a defeat to Ballina in the county semi-final. By 1956 Doc was selected for the Ballyhaunis Juniors which went under in the county final to a St. Coman's Hollymount side powered by Bob Fox.

The year 1957 was a remarkable footballing year in the stellar career of the Doc. In that never-to-be-forgotten year Doc captained an East Mayo football team to county senior championship and league titles. The great Sean Flanagan was a team mate on this all-conquering side playing in an unfamiliar berth, for him, on the forty and contributing in no small measure to both successes. Charlie Phillips, Pado Moran, Noel Waldron and Johnny Biesty made up the quintet of Ballyhaunis players on this outstanding East Mayo side. Doc also captained Ballyhaunis to the Mayo junior title in 1957 with a victory over Garrymore. For good measure, in the same year, Doc captained Ballyhaunis to Canon Henry success and, to crown a really glorious year, Doc was a member of the Mayo Junior team,

winners of the 1957 All-Ireland title. The winning captain was the late Dr. Mick Loftus of Crossmolina and other Ballyhaunis players involved were Johnny Biesty and Charlie Phillips (RIP). In that memorable final played

across channel, Mayo defeated Warwickshire by two points in a very tense affair. Also lining for the green and red on that day was the evergreen Josie Munnelly of Castlebar, who had won an All-Ireland senior football medal with Mayo twenty-one years previously in 1936, the year in which Doc was born in Killylea, across the road from the new University of Galway Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence.



L-R: Johnny Biesty, Noel Waldron, John 'Doc' Healy.



From left: John 'Doc' Healy, Tom Glavey and Kieran Benson pictured in Coventry in the 1980s. (Courtesy of Vincent Keane).

In 1962 Doc was included on the Mayo team that travelled to the U.S.A. and played in Philadelphia, Boston, Chicago and New York. Doc was appointed captain of the Mayo Junior side which lost to Galway in the 1962 Connacht Final. Doc and Ballyhaunis were back in the limelight in 1963 winning the East Mayo title, only to be overcome by The Neale in the county final. Doc and his team mates suffered a similar fate in 1964, once again at the hands of St. Coman's. Doc played his last game for Ballyhaunis in 1965 when he hung up his boots after

leaving his beloved Ballyhaunis and the staff of Gallagher's on Main St. to join the firm of Liberty Ltd. of Dublin as commercial representative covering the Munster Region.

John 'Doc' Healy loved every second of his footballing days and always had the height of praise for his playing colleagues. He constantly gave of his utmost in courage, commitment and skill and will be long remembered as one of the most outstanding players ever to represent our club.

Annagh Parish Stations



Stations in the home of John and Bernie Gill, Beech Park, Fri., 20th Oct. 2023.

Back, L-R: Ruth Murphy, Mary Gill, James Heskin, Pdraig Murphy, Marie Kirrane, John Gill, Mary McCann-Duffy, Errol Gill, John Christopher Halpin, Breege Halpin, Ann Eaton.

Front: Alex Eaton, Bill Lohan, Miriam Judge, Eilís Duffy, Bernie Gill, Maya Murphy. (Photograph by Fr. Stephen Farragher).



Lecarrow/Curries Stations in the home of Michael J. and Mary Lyons, Lecarrow, Sat., 21st Oct. 2023.

Back, L-R: Marie Jordan, Kieran Connolly, Cillian Browne, Colette Rattigan, Martin Sheedy, Tara Eastwood-Lyons, J.G. Murphy, John O'Neill, Lucy and J.P. Coen. **Second row, L-R:** Ann Cribbin, Dell Murphy, Barbara Sheedy, Patricia Heaney, Maureen Coyne, Breege Cribbin, Murt Hunt, Nuala Higgins, Catherine Higgins, Jack Horan, Michael Regan. **Seated, L-R:** Teresa Lyons, Niamh Lyons, Mary Lyons, Michael J. Lyons, Siobhán Horan, Des Lyons, Aoife Horan, Éilís Horan. **In front:** Sophie Coen, Annie Lyons, Isla Lyons, Méabh Lyons, Rachel Horan, Jane Forkan. (Photograph by Fr. Stephen Farragher).





Ballyhaunis CHAMBER

Tom Forde, President

As President of the Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce it is my great privilege, once again, to update you on some of the activities engaged in, on behalf of the Ballyhaunis community. It has been quite a busy year, with the Chamber involved with many other organisations to promote Ballyhaunis.

I would like to thank William Nestor and his Events Team for their vital input this year. We had a very successful Easter Parade followed shortly after by a ten-day Summer Festival with a packed programme of events. There was something for everyone, and with the fabulous weather on June Bank Holiday, it finished on a real high. Plans are well advanced for next year's festival and I know that William and the team will build on the success of this year's programme. If you have ideas and would like to give a little of your time, please become involved. We are always looking for new ideas and enthusiastic people to join the team.

The Old Convent National School / Public Realm / Library / Fire Station

We are delighted to report that, after a considerable length of time and a lot of hard work, we have finally received planning permission for the Old Convent National School / Public Realm / Library / Fire Station project to proceed (see also *Annagh* 2022, pp. 25-27 and *Annagh* 2021, pp. 168-170). We remain optimistic that funding will be secured to proceed with this vital project

for Ballyhaunis. This new facility will not just house a new state-of-the-art library, but also meeting-rooms and remote working facilities to benefit the town's diverse population and meet the needs of all in the Ballyhaunis area.

The Public Realm will be developed around the old Convent school building with a pedestrian bridge accessing Clare Street car park/swimming pool, allowing ease of access to all public facilities.



Old shelter at the rear of the disused Convent Primary School which has been granted planning for a new state-of-the-art development. (Photograph by Brian Waldron).

The swimming pool, in the ownership of Mayo County Council, is in need of vital funding to keep it operational. Breda Caulfield and her committee deserve a lot of credit for having the pool open this summer under extremely difficult circumstances. A special thanks to Conor Smith, Joanne Grehan, Padraic Flanagan, Noel Gibbons, Orla Kinsella and Mayo County Council for their help also. Hopefully, we can avail of funding from Sports Capital Funding to develop the swimming pool and maybe extend the use of the facility beyond the summer months.

The proposed Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) overhanging bridge on Bridge Street is going to design stage in 2024 with works to be carried out sometime in 2025. This work is essential as the current entrance/exit from the Friary grounds is along a narrow footpath leading



Planning permission has been granted for the transformation of the long-disused convent primary school into a new state-of-the-art library with meeting-rooms remote working facilities to benefit the needs of all in the Ballyhaunis area. (Photograph by Brian Waldron).

onto a very busy road. With the proposed relocation of the library, plans are being developed to convert that building for the benefit of the Fire Service/Station.

I would like to thank Cllr. John Cribbin and officials from Mayo County Council for their ongoing support for this vital project. A special thanks also to Deputy Michael Ring who has been a strong supporter right from the start, and for his passion and enthusiasm in communicating our needs on the National Agenda.

Town Centre First Initiative / Town Centre Plan

Again, working closely with Mayo County Council, we still actively seek to be included in the Town Centre Initiative. Ballinrobe was the pilot town for Mayo with work soon coming to completion there. Killala was nominated last year with work commencing shortly. With the support of Mayo County Council, we are hopeful that Ballyhaunis will be nominated this year. We hope that, with the assistance of the County Council's Town Regeneration Officer, a plan can be formulated to develop and regenerate Ballyhaunis town centre to help assist and attract business to our town.

Ballyhaunis Information Hub

At the time of writing, work is being carried out on the old D.H. Burke building in Upper Main Street, having secured a caretaker's agreement with the County Council. We secured vital funding from the Community Recognition Mayo fund which aims to support the development of community infrastructure and facilities in recognition of communities hosting new arrivals from Ukraine and other countries, along with funding from the Community Support Fund to help fit out Ballyhaunis Information Hub. This funding was secured from Mayo County Council Community and Integrated Development Office. A special thank you to Orla Kinsella and Mayo County Council and our own Anne Cunnane for driving this project forward. Recognising the needs of our diverse population, this Hub will be a one-stop-shop for all community information needs on groups and activities in the area, helping those with little English to fill out forms etc. Once open in the New Year, we will host a public meeting to introduce the Ballyhaunis Information Hub, inviting all local clubs and organisations to attend. We look forward to a strong turn-out. We have worked very closely with BRCIE Ltd. on this project and would like to sincerely thank them for their help in driving this forward and recognising this need for our community.

Smarter Travel/Traffic Management Plan/Centre of Excellence

Another initiative we are currently working on with Mayo County Council is the development of Ballyhaunis walking and pedestrian trails. We are looking at the

potential of walking tourism and the installation of a walking/cycle lane out to the Centre of Excellence (COE) and onto Knock, possibly to include Holywell and the Friary. There is a strong emphasis in government policy to develop smart travel, safe cycle lanes and to encourage people to become more actively involved. It makes sense that the COE would be central to any such plan as it is a widely-used facility on our doorstep. Currently, with heavy traffic on this busy road it's not safe for pedestrians/cyclists to access. We continue to engage actively with MCC and government departments to develop this proposal.

Conclusion

I am very privileged to be Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce President again this year. I would like to thank the Chamber Executive for their hard work and dedication, and all Chamber members for their continued support. Thanks to Anne Cunnane and her hard-working team who carry out administration and support for the benefit of all organisations in our community. We are privileged to have such a dedicated and well-resourced team at our disposal. To Tadhg Buckley and BRCIE Ltd. for their ongoing support and encouragement.

We have a great working relationship with Mayo County Council (as is evident in the foregoing) and look forward to their continued support into the New Year and beyond. To our local and Oireachtas representatives - thank you. A special thank you to Cllr. John Cribbin who has announced his retirement from politics. He has worked very hard on behalf of the community for many years. Nothing has ever been impossible for him and, as a community, we owe Cllr. Cribbin a great debt of gratitude for his many years of dedication.

Finally, we are very fortunate here in Ballyhaunis to have so many active clubs and organisations. Sometimes, we can be critical of ourselves and dwell on what we don't have. We have many vibrant successful businesses supporting over 2,500 jobs locally. With this successful, entrepreneurial spirit, I am confident this will further increase in the coming years.

We are fortunate also to have such well-resourced schools in Ballyhaunis and surrounding area. Consider all the sporting facilities locally - GAA, rugby, soccer, golf and more. All of these are run by local people giving of their time voluntarily to ensure their success. The Tidy Towns, Community Council, Abbey Partnership and all the other organisations working hard, doing their bit for the benefit not just of Ballyhaunis town, but the wider region too. We have a great community spirit and it's my honour to be associated with this enthusiasm.

Thank you all for your support in 2023. I wish you and all your family the very best for Christmas and the New Year.



As 2023 comes to an end, thoughts are turning towards the Local and European Elections that are scheduled to take place in June 2024.

The Ballyhaunis Fianna Fáil organisation is busy preparing for those elections and, at their recent selection convention, Stephen Nolan was nominated to contest the Local Elections for the party in the Ballyhaunis/ Claremorris area. Senator Lisa Chambers has indicated that she will be seeking a nomination to contest the European Election – we look forward to working with and supporting both candidates in their efforts.

Minister of State Dara Calleary TD continues to operate an East Mayo Constituency Office from Clare Street. It is open every Friday from 10.30am to 12pm – it is advisable to call the Ballina office on 09677613 to make an appointment. Despite a heavy Dáil and Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment workload, Minister Calleary makes every effort to attend personally at least one Friday per month.

Ciarán Waldron, following in the esteemed footprints of his father, the late Tom, has taken on the role of chairperson of the Michael Waldron Comhairle Cheantar with Nicola Carty from Knock taking on the role of secretary. The organisation thanks outgoing secretary Lorraine Lowry for her dedication and commitment to the Officer Board over many years. Hugh Rudden continues in the role of treasurer.



Pictured are members of Ballyhaunis Fianna Fáil with Minister of State Dara Calleary. L-R: James Hunt, Martin Brennan, Cllr. John Caulfield, James Waldron, Ciarán Waldron, Bernard Waldron, Hugh Rudden (half hidden), Aoife Nolan, Sean Cleary, Stephen Nolan, Michael Brennan, Shay Walsh, Joe Hosty (half hidden), Margaret Tarpey, Dan Tarpey, Dara Calleary T.D., Sean Waldron.

We are very mindful of the great members, supporters and friends who have gone to their eternal reward during 2023 – may they enjoy the fruits of their labour in restful peace.

Dara Calleary TD, Constituency Office, 19 Pearse Street, Ballina, Co. Mayo.

East Mayo Constituency Office, Clare Street, Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo – Tel: 096 77613

Abbey Male Choir

The Abbey Male Choir perform at the Christmas Carol Service held in the Friary in aid of St Vincent de Paul each Christmas and continue to perform at 10am Mass in St. Patrick's Parish Church, on the second Sunday of each month. This year marked the retirement of our inspiration and Musical Director, Moira Delaney, after many years of dedicated service. We are happy to report that Moira remains available to help out in an advisory capacity. We thank Moira for all of her commitment and leadership over the years. We are also indebted to our organist Paula Donnellan for her dedication to her role and are most grateful for her support and guidance. New members are always welcome and we are delighted to welcome James Clarke of Devlis and Drimbane, who has recently joined our group.

Members of Choir: Michael Grogan, Tommy Grogan, Seamus Grogan, Paul Donnellan, Brendan Donnellan, Brian Hunt, Jimmy Walsh, T.J. McCarrick, Frankie Dillon, Mike Byrne, James Reidy, Alan Henry, Brendan Morrissey, Luke Murray, Eamonn Murren and James Clarke.



Moira Delaney who recently retired as Musical Director to the Abbey Male Choir.

The Rambling House

Murt Hunt

"Did you know the deceased?" A man asked me at Paddy Lyons's funeral. "Of course", I replied, "but I always knew him as Paddy Bowler." "How did you know him?" He asked again. "Because I often played card games in his home which was the local 'Rambling House'", I said. "What did ye play?" He asked. "Oh, twenty-five only", I told him, "no poker or other games played." "Was he a good player?" He asked again. "He had to be", I replied, "as he played against card sharks, tricksters and rogues." "Why was he called Paddy Bowler?" He insisted on questioning me. I said, "I don't really know, but it has been said his dad wore a bowler hat and maybe it was to distinguish him from all the other Paddy Lyons' in the area." I moved away before more questions were asked by this inquisitive man, without telling him that I had recently got an answer to the question that made more sense than the others. And that, I was informed, he got the 'Bowler' nickname from his grandfather, Michael Lyons who was a noted player on the road-bowling circuit and won many awards for his prowess at that particular game which has completely disappeared now in this part of the country. Strangely, it is now played only in counties Cork and Armagh. All the questions brought me back to many visits to the 'Rambling House' of card-playing fame, many years ago.

The regular card games took place in Waldron's and Lyons's houses in Redford and there would usually be two tables of eight or six playing. I myself, being young at the time, generally looked-on and only sat-in if they were short one player. I accompanied my father to many games in Redford and we would walk the few miles from Lecarrow on cold, frosty nights, sometimes calling for Jim Maguire and Cathal Lyons, also from the village. We were always made welcome in Waldron's house by Frank and Paddy Waldron, and in Lyons's house by Paddy and his father and mother, and I would be put sitting by a blazing turf fire until the action started.

The usual game was for a goose, but I began to realise after a while and seeing no goose, that there was actually no goose at all, and if there was, he never seemed to turn up. Each player paid so much into the kitty and it was given to the winners of the game. Then a few sweeps would be played for small amounts of money and it was in those games that the small rows and arguments started over maybe sixpence. A great statement often made was, "You should be carted" or "You should be taken outside", which would follow someone making a bad mistake or beating the wrong players and letting the high men out game. Paddy would take all this in with devilment in his eyes and a smile on his face as he loved to see the players

at loggerheads, and he would often play out of turn himself to get the craic going.

Mother Margaret would produce her lovely currant cake and strong tea during the game and I wondered did some players have anything at all to eat all day with all they ate and drank. The pretty Lyons girls would be there at times to fill the tea-cups and distribute the currant cake and join in the friendly banter. A visit would then be made by the card players to a 'fairy bush' outside the back door which was supposed to change one's luck if you walked around it three times.

The neighbours in Redford were very good at helping each other with hay and turf, with calving of cows and bringing cattle to the fair. They would meet up in Phillips' bar adjacent to the Fair Green to 'wet their lips' and talk of days gone-by, and, after a few glasses maybe, to sing a song or recite a poem. However, this would change on the card game night as they reprimanded each other on wrong play or somebody relating a news story incorrectly.

In later years I got to know many of the Redford villagers better as I mowed meadows with my Fordson Dexta tractor and finger-bar mower, brought home their turf in trailer loads from the local bog and brought in their cocks of hay to the haggard.

In 1977 a horse called, would you believe, 'Paddy Bowler', won the Galway Hurdle and the local man of that name had all-and-sundry convinced that the horse was named after him. And a good few pounds were won by local people who backed the horse on account of this.

So, we are left with many happy memories of Paddy Bowler and 'The Rambling House' in Redford. If there is a game of twenty-five to be played in their heavenly abode I am sure all of 'The Rambling House' cronies will be sitting in.

AA Meetings (Alcoholics Anonymous)
Sunday 9.30pm

Family Resource Centre,
Friary Grounds, Abbeyquarter,
Ballyhaunis F35 PF80.

www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie
Tollnaught Telephone Service: 081-767777
Tel: 085 2793345
www.ai-anon-ireland.org



USS Patrick Gallagher Update

Martin Durkan

It has been two years since the last update on the USS Patrick Gallagher and a lot has taken place in that time. In March 2022 the keel of the ship was laid in a ceremony at the Bath Iron Works shipyard in Maine, U.S.A. The U.S. Navy and the shipyard organised the event which was limited to a small number of family members and individuals associated with the ship. The shipyard employs several thousand workers and all work was halted for the ceremony so the employees could attend. Patrick's surviving sisters etched their names into the keel of the ship with the help of a master welder. Patrick's brother Peter was also in attendance and presented an Irish Tricolour to the U.S. Navy. Martin Brennan represented Sen. Chuck Schumer of New York. Sen. Schumer was deeply involved in the campaign to have the ship named after Corp. Gallagher. The ceremony can be viewed on YouTube by searching 'Patrick Gallagher keel laying ceremony'. The ship is now in the advanced stages of construction and is expected to be launched in the summer of 2024. The actual commissioning of the ship will take place in 2025 or 2026. The commissioning marks the point where the ship becomes fully operational.



Above: The Keel plate of USS Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127) inscribed by his sisters.
Below: The ship under construction in Maine, U.S.A.



St. Vincent de Paul

The St. Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) is Ireland's largest voluntary charitable organisation and has been providing assistance for those in need and for homeless people since 1844. The Ballyhaunis Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society would like to remind readers of Annagh Magazine that help is available for individuals and families in our local area by calling 086 264 0969. All communication is treated in the strictest confidence and any assistance is offered by the society in a non-judgemental manner, based on the needs of the family or individual. People may contact our SVP Regional Office in Galway on 091 563233 if they prefer.



We are most grateful to our voluntary committee members who attend our regular meetings and ensure that our important work is carried out. We thank all who continue to support our efforts and your donations are always most welcome. We send our very best wishes to all of our friends at home and away, for a peaceful and safe Christmas and all the very best for 2024.

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

Blacksmiths of Yesteryear

Austin Bownes (Larganboy and Kiltimagh)

I was watching the RTÉ News one night recently. A group of blacksmiths from Tipperary were gathered showing off their skills and it brought me back to my youth in Larganboy, Ballyhaunis where we had a forge.

The smith was a man called Jim Kilduff. He cycled six days a week to work in the forge. He used to bring the coal on the carrier of his bike and he made all the shoes himself. You didn't need to have an appointment - first come, first served! He retired in the late 1950s. The Ferguson tractor came in then.

Other smiths in the area were Brod Boyle of Ballinphuill, Tom Mullen of Cloonbulban, Pat Skerritt in Greenwood, Willie Walsh of Tubber, Aghamore (he was the first to start electric welding), John Quinn in Liscat, Knock and Jim McTigue of Churchfield, Knock. I was also told that years ago there was a forge near Muldoon's house in Coogue.

We never really appreciated these men who kept the village working. They kept the plough and harrow working for the farmer. It now seems so long ago that we forget what they did for the village.

I can still see the line of horses and donkeys waiting to be shod. And then a man would arrive with a broken spade for a new handle. There was no door to the forge. Nobody ever took anything from the forge. I wonder would that rule work today with all the robberies around rural Ireland?

On that note I will finish. Goodbye, Jim Kilduff. Rest in Peace, my hero.



Brod Boyle, at the door of his forge in Ballinphuill in the early 1980s. Photograph first published in *Béacán/Bekan: Portrait of an East Mayo Parish* (Ballinrobe 1986).



Austin and Vera Bownes, Larganboy, Summer 1943.





Above:
Clockwise from front
left: Carole Webb
(Devlis) on her First Holy
Communion Day, 1970,
with her mother Rita,
Sr. Rosario Waldron and
Canon J. G. McGarry, P.P.

Right:
A Western People
cutting from 1958
announcing the death in
London of Fr. Mansfield
who served a large part
of his ministry at The
Abbey in Ballyhaunis.
(Courtesy of Mick
Feeley).

REV. E. A. MANSFIELD,
O.S.A., DIES IN LONDON



Above right: Fr. Austin Cribbin (1929-2017) late of
Bushisland, Grallagh, Ballyhaunis, gives his first blessing to
his parents Tommy and Maggie Cribbin following his
ordination to the Priesthood on 3rd June 1956. Fr. Austin
served in the Diocese of Baker, Oregon USA for sixty-one
years. His father Tommy was a Ballyhaunis Postman for
several decades during the twentieth century as was his
father before him. Some of Tommy's brothers were also on
the staff in Ballyhaunis post office. Fr. Austin's mother
Maggie (Margaret) was originally Lyons from Ballinastoka,
Logboy. (Courtesy of John McNicholas).



Left:
Taken at Stations in the home of
Kathleen and William Waldron,
Tavnaghmore in the early 1990s.
L-R: Canon Costelloe P.P.,
Michael Carney (Mountain),
Johnny Mullen (Tavnaghmore),
Jim Crinnigan (Forthill),
William Waldron (Tavnaghmore).

The Tech Reunion - A Night to Remember

Jackie Coyne

A large crowd gathered in the newly refurbished Community Hall on Friday night, 25th August 2023 to celebrate the Ballyhaunis Tech Reunion. The M.C. for the night, Seamus Hopkins, who first mooted the idea, opened proceedings with a warm welcome for all present.

The Chairman of the organising committee, Michael Kelly, extended a special welcome to past pupils, some of whom had travelled long distances, guests, past teachers and friends, alike. "Tonight", he said, "was a very special occasion, a chance to meet old friends, reminisce and share memories of times spent together." He went on to say that it was also an opportunity to acknowledge the contribution that the school had made over many years and to express our appreciation to the many people who were part of the story.

Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P. Ballyhaunis, accompanied by Fr. Kieran Waldron, conducted a beautiful Prayer Service to mark the occasion. It provided an opportunity to remember classmates who had completed their life's journey.

Following some welcome refreshments, a number of short speeches reflected on the long and fruitful history of the Tech. Fr. Kieran Waldron, an historian of note, gave a very interesting account of the original Tech which opened in 1929 at the back of Forde's Shop in The Square. He remembered vividly the fire which caused its destruction shortly before the new Tech was opened on the Knock Road in 1941.



Jackie Coyne (Carnbeg) and Tommy Keenan (Adrigooole, Knock).

Jackie Coyne spoke about the three principals, each of whom made an enormous contribution to the life of the Tech. Pádraig Ó Gabhláin, born in Tooreen, left school at the age of twelve years. He went to work as a labourer in London, returning sometime later. Even



The beautiful cake specially made and decorated for the occasion.

though he had no little or no Irish in his mid-twenties, he would go on to become a highly esteemed Irish scholar, travelling each summer to Coláiste Chonnacht in Spiddal. He played an active part in the War of Independence, forming a branch of Óglaigh Na hÉireann, of which he was Captain. Later, he would be the recipient of a first-class honours degree in Irish, English and economics. In 1929 he was appointed principal of Ballyhaunis Tech, a post he held until his retirement in 1952. He was a prolific writer as well as a highly regarded translator. Michael Nolan gave a sterling rendition of a recitation written by Pádraig: 'The Dance in the Old School in Crossard'.

Pádraig Hughes was then appointed Principal having taught science in the school since the early forties. He was remembered as a person who had a wonderful knowledge and love of nature and who tried to instil in his pupils an understanding and appreciation of the natural world. Pat opened up a whole new world to his students. He took great pride in having the school garden in pristine condition. He encouraged his pupils to sow their own vegetable gardens which he would inspect during the summer holidays. Achieving a first prize was a source of great satisfaction. He was instrumental in organising the annual Ballyhaunis Agricultural Show, where the standard of presentation and produce was second-to-none. He was heavily involved in the community, organising various talks and events, especially for the farming sector. His daughters Riona and Ann were special guests on the night. Riona read a beautifully scripted piece reflecting her memories of her Dad. Ann, a noted poet, read one of her many poems recounting the wonderful world of nature, to which their much-loved Dad introduced them.



Following Mr. Hughes's untimely death, Eddie Thornton was appointed Principal of the Tech in 1969. Eddie was full of enthusiasm and immediately set about securing additional accommodation and facilities to enhance the existing structure. He was instrumental in providing an opportunity for students to complete their leaving certificate examination. Following discussions with St. Patrick's College a system was put in place whereby students from the Tech could attend the college for some subjects and vice versa. A few years later, his leadership qualities were recognised when he was chosen as Principal of the new Community School. The responsibility of steering the ship at a time of great transition was an onerous one but one which Eddie fulfilled with great success.

Jim Higgins, former teacher in the Tech, spoke on behalf of the teachers, eloquently outlining the contribution that they had made. He extended a warm welcome to the teachers in attendance: Micheál Smyth, Hugh Rudden, Aidan Kelly, Patsy Noone and his own brother Pat Higgins. He remembered with fondness the teachers who were unable to attend and those who had gone to their eternal reward.

Seamus Hopkins again acknowledged the wonderful contribution that the Tech had made and the many doors it had opened for its students. He thanked all who had helped with the organisation of the reunion. He included MidWest Radio and the local media for their coverage, local librarian, Eleanor Freyne, Paul Waldron for his help and assistance, Seamus Mulrennan for supplying photographs, Siobhan Coyne for the display of articles and photographs and Patricia Keenan for looking after the photographs on the night. A special 'thank you' was included for Michael Nolan, Paddy Joe Tighe and Mary Kathleen Henry for providing the music and, of course, Shane and Hazel Lloyd for the beautiful refreshments. He also thanked the local shops for selling tickets. He concluded by thanking the hall committee for making the venue available and the reunion committee for their hard work. A night to remember!



Michael Nolan (Derryvackna), Paddy Joe Tighe (Arderry).



Kevin O'Hora (Gorthaganny), Michael Brennan (Gurteen) and Noel Morley (Woodpark). All photographs courtesy Patricia Keenan.



James Hunt (Derrynacong), Michael Kelly (Cloonlough, Ballinlough) and Seán Caulfield (Grange, Granlahan).



From left: Mike Griffin (Clare St.), Kathleen Fox (Carrowreagh), Mary Waldron (Crossard), Seamus Hopkins (Liscat).



Josie Reddington (Knock), Mary Jennings (Knock), Ita McNulty (Gorthaganny), Carmel Casserly (Clooncrim).



Liam Walsh (Ballinrobe), Margaret Waldron (Crossard).



Terence Campbell (Shanvaghera), John Cribbin (Knockanara),
Michael Robinson (Huntsfield), Pat Higgins (Ballyhaunis).



John Connolly (Killinaugher), Padraic Egan (Kilgarriff).



Frank Greally (Devlis), Phil McNeive, Tina McNeive (Ballykilleen),
Paddy McNeive (Ballykilleen), Jimmy Waldron (Lavallyroe),
Seamus McDonnell (Cloonfad).



Anne Fox (Carrowreagh), Paul Fox (Carrowreagh), Richard Waldron
(Cave), Anne Fleming (Scregg), Michael Plunkett (Forthill), Stacia
Cunnane (Carrowkeel).



Austin Boyle (Ballinphuill), Frank Lyons (Knockbrack), Joe Hosty
(Lavallyroe), Bernie Wallace (Carrick, Ballinlough), Martin Boyle
(Kildarra), Junior Geraghty (Clooncrim, Ballinlough).



Standing, L-R: Michael Nolan (Derryvackna), Michael Robinson
(Huntsfield), Joe Hosty (Lavallyroe), Pat Higgins (Ballyhaunis). Seated,
clockwise: Margaret Hopkins (Liscat), Kathleen Goulding (Currislustia,
Ballinlough), Mary Cunningham, Riona Hughes (Knock Rd.), Anne Hughes
Irwin (Knock Rd.), Frank Greally (Devlis), Mary Sloyan (Kiltaboe).

All photographs courtesy of Patricia Keenan.





Michael Robinson (Huntsfield), Fr. Kieran Waldron (Ballyhaunis), Joe Hosty (Lavallyroe), Joe O'Gara (Ballyglass), Mary Kirrane (Lissaniska, Began), Seamus Mulrennan (Gurteen).



Noreen Campbell (Shanvaghera), Marion Morley (Clagnagh), Josie Reddington (Knock).



Bernard Waldron (Cave), Terence Campbell (Shanvaghera), John Cribbin (Knockanara), Jim Higgins (Ballyhaunis).
All photographs courtesy of Patricia Keenan.



Johnny Morley (Magheramore, Knock), Oliver Cribbin (Togher), Sean Caulfield (Grange, Granlahan), Mary Waldron (Tubber, Aghamore), Michael Kelly (Cloonlough, Ballinlough), Tom Kenny (Acres, Aghamore).



John McNeive (Lurgan, Brickens), Kevin O'Hora (Gorthaganny), Michael Brennan (Gurteen), Dom Murphy (Lecarrow), Noel Morley (Woodpark), Tommy Lynch (Holywell), Oliver Cribbin (Togher), Johnny Morley (Magheramore, Knock).



Rita Moran (Bracklaughboy), Rosie Moran (Bracklaughboy), Noel Mullarkey (Bohogue), Tommy Keenan (Adrigool, Knock), Ann Moran (Bracklaughboy).



Sean Morley (Arderry, Aghamore), Tom Burke (Coolatinny, Ballinlough), Renee Finnegan (Logboy), Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. Ballyhaunis.



Rosie Moran (Bracklaughboy), Terence Campbell (Shanvaghara),
Rita Moran (Bracklaughboy).



Mary
Cunningham
and
Rita Jennings.

*Photographs
by Patricia
Keenan,
(Adrigoole,
Knock)*



Anne Fox
(Carrowreagh),
Stacia Cunnane
(Carrowkeel),
Kathleen Fox
(Carrowreagh).



Back, L-R: Michael Kelly (Cloonlough), Tommy Keenan (Adrigoole,
Knock), Mary Cunningham, Kathleen Fox (Carrowreagh),
Seamus Hopkins (Liscat).

Front, L-R: Jackie Coyne (Carnbeg, Aghamore), Joe Hosty
(Lavallyroe), Josie Reddington (Knock), Mary Waldron (Crossard).

The Life and Times of Pádraic Ó Gabhláin

First Principal of Ballyhaunis Vocational School

Úna Ní Ghabhláin

One of my clearest early memories is watching my dad, Pádraic Ó Gabhláin, preparing for his annual trip to An Spidéal, where he was the headmaster of the summer college there, Coláiste Chonnacht. Out would come the old, battered cardboard case, into which were packed his bits and pieces, while his face showed his delight as he anticipated the next two months when he would renew his friendship with the people of An Spidéal and introduce new students to the joys of the Irish language.

But, who was this Pádraic Ó Gabhláin? How did a boy who left school at twelve years of age and went to England to work as a labourer attain the status of a noted Gaelic scholar and headmaster of both Coláiste Chonnacht and Ballyhaunis Vocational School?

Pádraic Ó Gabhláin was born in Tooreen, five miles north of Ballyhaunis in the year 1892. It was an English speaking area, but the older people still had fragments of Irish which could be heard in places like wakes and fairs. Pádraic himself didn't speak a word of Irish until he was twenty-five years of age. He was on the road one day when Pilib de Bhaldraithe, a *Timire* or Irish Language organiser, saluted him in Irish. Pádraic was so ashamed that he couldn't reply that he instantly decided to learn Irish. He was so successful that, before long, he was teaching Irish himself as a 'múinteoir taistil'. These travelling teachers received no payment for their work. They were driven only by their love of their native language. Then, in 1917, he had his first contact with An Spidéal. He did an Irish course there, walking the eleven miles from Galway railway station out to An Spidéal. (He was able to get a train to Galway – the Western Rail Corridor must have been active at the time). In any event, as a result of the course, he was awarded a teaching certificate, completely unaware as a student of Coláiste Chonnacht that he would spend thirty summers as a teacher in the same college.

At this point, national affairs put a stop to academic achievements and Pádraic took a full part in the War of Independence. He formed a company of Óglaigh na hÉireann and was himself its captain. This company saw action throughout the War of Independence. He was a judge in the Sinn Féin courts and his company was obliged to direct all upcoming court cases to the Sinn Féin courts.



From intelligence gathered from an official document captured by Michael Collins' forces, it became clear that the Authorities were anxious to capture Pádraic, so, like many other young men, he had to go 'on the run'. The local people still have tales to tell of his many escapes from danger. On one occasion, as he was attending Mass in Aghamore, word came through that the Black and Tans had surrounded the church. The celebrant of the Mass, being aware of what was happening, prolonged the Mass by adding countless additional prayers. Meanwhile, some women in the congregation donated items of clothing to give Pádraic the appearance of being a woman. Then, two tall, very brave, women linked Pádraic out of the church and through the cordon to safety!

He took no part in the Civil War. Instead, he returned to his work for Conradh na Gaeilge, his writing and his research into the origin of local placenames. He published articles, stories, plays and translations. These were published in various papers and magazines, including *An Claidheamh Soluis* and *An Chearnóg*. One translation which drew a lot of attention and admiration was that of the poem, "Big fleas have little fleas".....etc. etc. Twenty years after he completed this translation, Pádraic was at a céilí in Connemara when a young man stood up and recited the translated poem in full. The young man didn't know where it came from. He had got it by word of mouth from somebody else. This filled Pádraic with wonder and delight.

In the year 1926 he was awarded a Diploma in Irish Studies by University College, Galway and started teaching in Coláiste Chonnacht in An Spidéal. In the autumn of that year, he commenced a degree course in the University and in the year 1929 he achieved a First Class Honours degree in Irish, English and Economics. At that point, he was offered a position as lecturer in University College, Cork. However, Pádraic wished to remain among his own people and so he refused the offer.

In 1929, a new vocational school was opened in Ballyhaunis and Pádraic was appointed its headmaster, a post he retained until his retirement. He was also appointed headmaster of Coláiste Chonnacht, An Spidéal.

Pádraic enjoyed developing the young minds of his pupils and preparing them for the big world. I remember him telling us about an intriguing event in his classroom. One exercise he had for his pupils was that they transcribe a text as he read it aloud to them. Normally, he would use a textbook, knowing that the students would be familiar with the text he would read to them and have little difficulty in writing it down. On this particular day, he decided to use a book with which they

were not at all familiar. He took a book from the bookcase and selected a passage. In an effort to decide whether the passage was a suitable one, he walked up and down, silently reading the passage. As he paced, he noticed a boy diligently writing in his copybook. Intrigued, he went over to him, only to find that the boy was writing what Pádraic had been silently reading! There must have been telepathic communication between the boy and Pádraic. We never did hear who the boy was or what career he followed in later life. I hope he was very successful and used his unusual abilities to their fullest extent.

Even after his retirement, teaching was in his blood. He used to help out in the post office which was run by the family. A local boy got into the habit of dropping in every day and Pádraic delighted in introducing him to the joys of education. He said that this boy was the most intelligent pupil he had ever come across in his long career in education. Sure enough, the boy went on to have a brilliantly successful career in business.

In his retirement, his mind remained as active as ever. He continued with his writing and his translations. A few weeks before his death he translated the Prophecy of St. Malachy to Irish. In his death bed delirium he recited his translation of "Big fleas have little fleas" and repeated little fragments of Irish he used to hear as a child from the old people. He died in the home of his son, Mícheál, on the 14th of December, 1965 and is buried in Aghamore cemetery among his own people.



Pádraic Ó Gabhláin, first Principal of Ballyhaunis Vocational School.

Our Father, Padraig Hughes

Riona Hughes

Our father, Padraig Hughes, was born in Islandeady on 25th March 1907, one of eleven children. His father, Patrick Hughes (1867-1941), was Principal of Islandeady Primary School and his mother, Eliza Bridget Egan (1875-1962), also taught at the school. Padraig was called Paddy Joe by his mother and Joe by his sisters and brothers; Pat by his friends and Daddy by his five daughters. He attended the Christian Brothers School in Westport and after college, because of his love for farming, he stayed home to farm the lands of Woodville.

In 1935 when he was twenty-eight, and with some degree of pressure from his sisters, Padraig left Islandeady to attend University College Dublin where he studied agricultural science. After he graduated, he became a teacher of science and maths and, in the early 1940s, was appointed to the Vocational School in Ballyhaunis where he became Principal in 1952, following the retirement of Padraig Forkan.

Padraig continued to have a great love of the land, the countryside and nature. He passed on that love to his pupils in Ballyhaunis. Realising that, at this time, farming was a hard way of life with little return, he did his best to support and advance farming in the area around Ballyhaunis. He formed the 'Young Farmers Club' - a forerunner of Macra Na Feirme - and organised talks, debates, slide shows etc. on Friday nights in Ballyhaunis

that were always well attended by local young people. He also produced and directed a number of plays. He was also the founder of the local Agricultural Show which became one of the leading shows in the West of Ireland. He organised dances and social functions to raise funds for the club and the show. The Show Dance was the highlight of the year and brought the best bands in the country to Ballyhaunis.

Padraig had a great interest in new methods of farming. The grounds of the Vocational School were a testament to his many experiments. He grew all the fruit trees and the cherry blossom trees from seed. He had beehives and monitored the daily rainfall in Ballyhaunis for Met Éireann, the Irish Meteorological Service. In his laboratory, he enjoyed conducting experiments. He shared his love of science with his five daughters: picking mushrooms at dawn, hunting hares with his greyhounds, fishing for perch and trout and teaching the names of every tree and flower and every constellation in the night sky over Ballyhaunis. He also wanted to imbue his students with a love of nature and brought an astronomer from Trinity College Dublin to walk the lands and observe the planets and stars and share his observations with the students.

Some lads from the town were given an allotment to grow vegetables and, when space was scarce in the Vocational School (Tech) grounds, they were given mini-allotments in Padraig's own garden at the back of his family home. He and Paddy Cassidy (school caretaker) took great pride in the gardens at the Vocational School which always looked their best under their attentive care.

Like his father before him, Padraig had a keen interest



Patrick and Eliza Bridget Hughes with their family. Padraig is standing in front of his father.





Padraig (left) with his friend Steve in U.C.D.



Nuala, Dyl, Mary, Padraig, Patricia and Anne, at the gate of their house.



Above: Padraig and Dyl on their wedding day in 1945.



Mary, Nuala, Dyl, Anne and Patricia with a litter of greyhound pups.

Right: Riona, a greyhound and Padraig in the front garden of their house.



in greyhounds. He owned and trained them and, with his friends, travelled to various dog tracks around the country. As well as being a gifted teacher, Padraig was a great wit and storyteller. He was a generous man who found joy in giving - a generous man who loved life.

When he moved to Ballyhaunis, Padraig met Dyl Eaton and they fell in love. Their initial relationship was not devoid of turbulence. Dyl was raised in an era in Ireland where girls were taught to play 'hard to get' and she took that advice a little too seriously. For example, she described how herself and Padraig would meet at a dance and dance together all night, at which point he would request to walk her home. She would agree and go to get her coat. She would then slip out the back door and go home, leaving Padraig waiting for her in the hall. She carried this practice out to such an extent that he came to believe that she was not really interested in him. While visiting his friend Steve in Dublin he talked to him about his love dilemma. His friend soon put him right on the wily ways of women and suggested that Padraig should go back to Ballyhaunis and confront Dyl on the issue. In the meantime, Dyl was at home fretting because she also felt that she had overdone it, and that Padraig was losing interest in her. Dyl was always grateful to Steve for the good advice he gave to Padraig.



Padraig Hughes.

Padraig and Dyl were married in Ballyhaunis in August of 1945. Dyl told of how she could not get a hat or veil for the wedding in post-war Ballyhaunis. They had five daughters: Mary, born in 1946, Nuala (1947), Anne (1949), Patricia (1950) and Riona (1959). Padraig and Dyl lived in Dyl's family home at 4 Main Street, Ballyhaunis, for two years after their marriage and Mary and Nuala were born in that house. They then built their own bungalow at Hazelhill, Knock Road, Ballyhaunis.

Padraig and Dyl were a popular couple in Ballyhaunis over the years. Dyl played the organ in the Parish Church for many years and taught music. For many years she produced an annual Operetta in the Parochial Hall.

Padraig died on 5th February 1969 aged just sixty-one. Dyl passed on 28th November 1999. They are still fondly remembered by many who knew them in Ballyhaunis.

A Childhood Memory of my Daddy

Riona Hughes

Just two months after my ninth birthday my Daddy died, far away from me in a cold hospital bed in Dublin; I did not get to say goodbye. The day I was told, a light went out in my life; my best friend, the Lone Ranger to my Tonto was gone. And what a pair we had been, he striding down lanes and over fields with his little side-kick on his shoulder or by the hand, always on another adventure. Every blade of grass and hazel nut was ours to discover. What discoveries we made: the glory of Spring when the earth reawakened, and shy primroses vied with the luxury of bluebells and the cheeky forget-me-nots. Over Neary's field, across the Doctor's Road, across the bog, enthralled by the bog cotton but careful not to fall into a bog-hole, we would go to the old deciduous forests, inhabited by creatures of our wild imaginings and the heady scent of honeysuckle.

I knew every tree and flower and bone in the human body by the time I was four, and Daddy took great pride in getting me to recite the list of bones to any visitors inclined to listen. He brought me to the abattoir behind Cribbin's Butchers to show me the inner workings of a cow. The pickled grass in its numerous stomachs fascinated me, but when Daddy bought a pound of mince and made burgers with parsley a week later, I became convinced the entire cow, stomach contents and all, were ground up to make the burgers.

There were always greyhounds and goats and the eternal battle between the two. If the greyhounds escaped there wasn't a lamb or a chicken safe, not to mention the new kids that our goats produced each spring. So, keeping the greyhounds in check was a full-time job. They were not the most affectionate of creatures, but my Daddy loved them, therefore so did I. Once, when one of our kids had died, he brought me to a shed behind the Tech where he conducted an autopsy and showed me the inner workings of a goat.

He loved the night sky and I learnt all the constellations. In 1973, when I saw the Comet Kohoutec over the Knock Road, I knew wherever he was, he was thinking of me. He loved farming and many a happy hour was spent visiting his many farming friends, tramping down muddy boreens or up at the crack of dawn to bring the greyhounds on a six-mile walk, sometimes raising a hare and, to my relief, rarely catching one.

The Vocational School looms large in my memory:



my personal playground and Aladdin's cave of wonders. From the two sentinel cherry blossoms at the main entrance to the luxurious laburnum trees over-blown in a riot of cascading yellow. The enormous cabbages that proved to be a fine hiding place from the watchful eye of Paddy Cassidy, a kind man but with no patience for messers. The science lab, with its forbidden bottles and test tubes and bunsen burners and, oh the excitement of Daddy conducting a chemical experiment. So many memories of the Agricultural Show, in the school and adjoining field, the preparation, the execution and the prize-giving. Which jar of jam was tastier? Which bouquet of flowers most ornate? Which Donkey most handsome? And the throngs of people and the sun always shining.

The day my Daddy was buried it rained, his pupils lining the way, as we progressed to the graveyard. I in a car holding my mother's hand, knowing that the heavens understood my deep sorrow and were weeping with me.

Stealing The Dawn

My Daddy whispers,
tastiest mushrooms rise with the sun.
We wipe tired eyes,
stretch our waking bodies
into the morning,
walk silently through
the cobwebbed grass
scan for the white caps,
spread out across the field,
gather at Neary's mucky gap,
over the crest of the hill,
through the oak trees, climb the gate,
cross the Doctor's Road
around by Annagh Lake,
and back by the bridge
at Báile an Droichid.

At home, cross-legged
on the countertops,
we watch our mushrooms fry in butter
with a pinch of salt and eggs.
We eat off saucepan lids and
drink tea from jam jars
before mammy wakens
to set the day with
China cups and tablecloth.

She never knew
we stole the dawn.

Anne Irwin (née Hughes)

From her book *A Minor Concerto in Ragoon.*

My Time in The Tech

Tom Grogan (Derreens, Holywell)

I was thirteen years old when I moved from Ballyhaunis Boys' School to The Tech in 1944, presenting me with a great opportunity to meet new people as The Tech welcomed boys and girls from all the surrounding areas. Although the boys had their classes downstairs while the girls had their lessons upstairs, we were all able to go into town at lunchtime. My sister Mary was two years older than I and she was there at the same time. I remember that the girls used to make cocoa and, if we paid a penny a week, we could have a cup every day!

My favourite subject was woodwork. Mr. Cleary (a very firm but fair man) was the teacher and The Tech provided us with a set of tools. I learnt how to use the tools by making a wooden stand to hold a wash basin and a towel rack, but the most important lesson I learned from Mr. Cleary was to always tidy up after myself, a lesson that has served me well throughout my life!

Padraig Forkan taught Irish. I recall him once bringing a gramophone to school. It was the first time I'd seen or heard one! Pat Hughes was the agriculture teacher: a very patient and good natured man who often wore a large trilby hat. He showed us how to plant seeds in drills, then tasked us with doing the same at home – turnips, beans, peas. I wasn't the best at looking after the vegetable patch at home so when Mr. Hughes called to inspect them I wasn't surprised that I didn't come top of the class!

I'm proud of the way The Tech served the Ballyhaunis community over many years, with generations of families passing through – my own nephew Tommy Lynch also attended The Tech during the 1970s. I thoroughly enjoyed my time there and the many lessons learned have certainly served me well in my ninety-two years, both in Ballyhaunis and Manchester.



Tom Grogan, then and now.



Ballyhaunis Vocational School football team, late 1960s.

Back, L-R: Paddy Murphy (Greenwood), Willie Forde (Cloonfaughna), John Cribbin (Knockanarra), Padraig Keane (Clooncrim), Paul Walsh (Granlahan), Jackie Coyne (Carnbeg), P. J. Morley (Cloonumper), Andy Naughton (Belisker), John Burke (Grange), Christy Ruane (coach/teacher).

Front, L-R: Tom Tighe (Larganboy), John Tighe (Larganboy), Dom Byrne (Lakehill), Michael Kelly (Cloonlough), Joe Moran (Brackloughboy), Seamus Hora (Gorthaganny), Tom Commins (Lauralea), Willie Winston (Grange), Gerry Groarke (Mannin).

Spectators in background: Liam Hebron, John Morley. Submitted by Joe Moran, Brackloughboy and Oradell, NJ, USA and first published in *Annagh* 2012.



Above: Miss Kate Cunningham, teacher of typing and book-keeping in the Tech. (Courtesy of Seamus Mulrennan).

Right: Miss Patricia Waldron, home economics teacher in the Tech. (Courtesy of Seamus Mulrennan).



When The Yanks Came to Visit

Michael Griffin

My mind goes back to the late seventies and a visit from the 'Yanks', Bobby Ruane from Salem, Massachusetts and his friend Steve. They were off to the Yeats Summer School in Sligo and called by. We were 'the English', home for six weeks with our Granny Maggie Lyons and Uncle Paddy in Redford. Six weeks every year through our childhood we'd spend in Redford, Granlahan, with the Coggins family, and in our dad's family home in Ballymoe.

The twelve energetic kids were six from Manchester and the five lads and one poor girl, the amazing Teresa Coggins, from Granlahan. The Coggins house was hectic with preparations for days and I think Noreen was about to implode by tea-time on the day of the visitors' arrival. But calming and organised help was at hand. Teresa and Fintan Griffin (maybe they were 10) supervised by Paul Griffin (maybe 13) took control of catering in the kitchen – electric carving knife in hand.

Little did we or our parents know that Bobby (our third cousin, we were told) was a renowned Yeats scholar, while Steve was a concert pianist. After most of the assembled children (apart from the catering team in the kitchen) had done their party pieces a very young Eugene Coggins belted out "I don't like Mondays" and his brother Johnny sang an angelic version of "Red is the Rose."

Noreen, Paul Coggins and Michael Griffin were holding court in the parlour as only they could, with Granny looking on admirably, sipping her brandy. A couple of bottles of beer had been replaced by a very large Jameson.

As they loosened up, Bobby quizzed the assembled attentive ragamuffin kids on Yeats. He recited poems about Maude Gonne. What did we know about Yeats? Not a great deal, I recall. He tried to educate us, but it flew over most of our heads as we thought about Teresa and Fintan's turkey sandwiches, and getting away to play football. He told us of Yeats' great writing and his poems and asked the assembled children if they knew about the salmon... Deadly silence, then one voice piped up - probably sensing the silent tension of his twelve nephews and niece - Paddy Lyons, a man of few words: "Sure I've heard about the salmon myself." The adults in the room erupted in laughter, the Boston scholar looked a little sheepish, but in later life I've thought about those few words from a quiet Redford farmer to a Boston intellectual.

There was a piano in the parlour, not often

played, and Steve went to play the classic tunes he knew. Then the concert pianist uttered the line never to be forgotten in our family: "Noreen, I think your piano is out of tune."

When we were settled back to those dreary autumn school days in Manchester, we were read the first letter since the summer from Granny Maggie to our mum Bridie. Amongst other news was the revelation that, on 'The Late Late Show' the guests had been Bobby and Steve reciting Yeats and playing the piano, this time not so out of tune.

Those were simpler times when us kids would entertain ourselves playing football and rambling around the fields from early morning till late at night. In all families, memories were made and, when the characters are gone like Granny Maggie, dad Michael and uncle Paddy, these simple stories and the fun and laughter they brought into our lives sustain their memories in our hearts.



Taken in Redford on the evening described in the article.
From left: Michael Griffin (Ballymoe and Manchester), Paddy Lyons (Redford) and Bobby Ruane (Salem, Massachusetts, U.S.A.)



Mike and Patrick Ruane, Johnstown who emigrated to Boston, U.S.A. in the early twentieth century.
Brothers of Tom Ruane, Johnstown and Maggie Lyons, Redford.

To Ballyhaunis for Knock by Train, 1880s

Oliver Doyle

The reported Apparition at Knock, a small rural village in East County Mayo, in 1879, became world famous. Thousands travelled there from all over Ireland, many on foot. Some, who could afford the fare, travelled by train to Ballyhaunis station and onward by horse drawn vehicles.

The first pilgrimages by rail

The first Knock pilgrimage by special train was on Easter Tuesday 30th March 1880 when the Midland Great Western Railway provided a special train from Dublin (Broadstone) to Ballyhaunis and Claremorris which departed at 08:30, arrived in Ballyhaunis 14:22, and Claremorris 14:49. Stops to pick up passengers were made at Maynooth, Enfield, Hill of Down, Killucan, Mullingar, Castletown, Streamstown and Moate. The return fare from stations as far as Killucan was 20 shillings (£1) 1st class and 10 shillings 3rd class. From stations Mullingar to Moate the return fare was 15 shillings 1st class and 7s 6d 3rd class. It was a single journey special train and pilgrims could return by any train up to and including Tuesday 6th April. The advertisement quoted the distance from Ballyhaunis station to Knock as 6 miles and from Claremorris station as 4½ miles. These were, of course, Irish miles which are 1.27 statute miles. Ballyhaunis is 7½ and Claremorris 7 using the old road in statute miles. The advertisement advised that an omnibus plied between Ballyhaunis and Knock, fare 1 shilling each way. There is no indication of how many travelled on the special train which was extensively advertised from 10th March in *The Freeman's Journal*, but it was not repeated. From April 1880 the MGWR regularly advertised its scheduled services from Dublin to both Ballyhaunis and Claremorris. The return fares to Ballyhaunis were: 1st class - 38s 9d, 2nd class - 31s 5d and 3rd class - 19s 6d.

A similar special train of all 3rd class carriages was provided by the Great Southern & Western Railway from Cork to Ballyhaunis on Wednesday, 5th May 1880. It departed Cork 07:45 with 150 pilgrims on board. They carried neither banners nor emblems denoting the object of their journey. They were joined by more pilgrims at the intermediate stations. There were two scheduled trains connecting with the special train at Mallow: 06:00 from Tralee and 07:15 from Lismore (the railway eastwards towards Dungarvan had not been built).

Including the stations served by the connecting trains, a total of 33 stations could sell tickets for Ballyhaunis. Sample return fares were Tralee and Lismore 15 shillings, Cork 12s 6d and Maryborough 8s 6d. Because of the large geographical area the trains served, they were advertised in the *Freeman's Journal* and not the *Cork Examiner*.



Ballyhaunis Station, opened in 1861, built with limestone block walls and with a canopy supported by four large, very ornate cast iron brackets. There is a modern extension at the Westport end (now the booking office). The bay window and the window to the right are in the former Station Master's residence.

At this time the Dublin, Wicklow & Wexford Railway advertised that through 3rd class tickets could be purchased at its principal stations to Ballyhaunis, but no fares were quoted. Return tickets were valid for one month. The various steamers arriving at Queenstown (now Cobh) were bringing many pilgrims, mainly well-to-do Irish Americans, on their way to Knock using scheduled trains to Ballyhaunis.

First organised special train for pilgrims

The first organised Knock pilgrimage by train was from Cork departing 21:00 on Saturday, 5th June 1880, bound for Ballyhaunis. At 19:30, 240 young men, members of the Sodality of the Angelic Warfare of St. Thomas Aquin, based at St. Mary's Dominican Church, Pope's Quay, assembled in the church for prayers before they set off at 20:30 walking in procession to the GS&WR Terminus [sic]. Large crowds lined the route and, such was the number of well-wishers at the station, the pilgrims had difficulty boarding their five-carriages train. As the train was departing at 21:00 they sang the *Pilgrim's Hymn*.

The train arrived in Ballyhaunis at 06:00. What horse drawn waggonettes and side cars were available, were



quickly hired and all other pilgrims walked the six (Irish) miles to Knock. The pilgrimage focused on the small chapel with a clay floor and few seats.

At 15:00, the Cork pilgrims gathered to present a handsome sanctuary lamp to the chapel which had been purchased at Mr. Egan's shop in Patrick St., Cork, for £15. The lamp was already hanging and was formally lit for the first time during the ceremony. Some 143 years later the lamp still hangs in its original location and is in daily use. It was professionally restored in 2018. The conservators reported that the lamp was made of brass with silver plating. The inscription on the lamp reads: 'To our dearest Mother, the Most Holy Queen of Heaven, from her loving Children and members of the Sodality of the Angelic Warfare of St. Thomas Aquin, of St. Mary's Church, Pope's Quay, Cork, on the occasion of their pilgrimage to this her Shrine of Knock, Feast of the Most Pure Heart of Mary, June 1880.'

As the pilgrims walked back from Knock to Ballyhaunis station, they were accompanied by the Ballyhaunis Brass Band playing. The train departed at 20:00 and arrived Cork at 06:00 on Monday, 7th July.

Drogheda Augustinians

The Very Rev. Prior James A. Anderson O.S.A., Drogheda, had recently arrived there from the Augustinian Abbey at Ballyhaunis, where he had spent six years, was well respected by the townspeople and knew the clergy at Knock very well. He decided to organise a pilgrimage by scheduled trains from Drogheda to Ballyhaunis and approached both the Great Northern Railway (Ireland) and the MGWR for a group fare. The GNR(I) refused his request but the MGWR General Manager willingly granted the return journey at single fare and arranged extra carriages, described as 'clean and comfortable', to be added to the back of the trains for the pilgrims.

Following prayers at the Augustinian Church in Drogheda on Tuesday, 15th June 1880, at 09:30 the pilgrims marched two-deep to the railway station with a large crowd of well-wishers following. They joined a train to Amiens Street (now Connolly) from where they went in procession through the streets of Dublin to Broadstone Station.

At 13:00 the train bound for Westport steamed out of the Broadstone Terminus and slowly came to a halt at Ballyhaunis 6½ hours later at 19:30. Here a public



The sanctuary lamp presented by members of the Sodality of the Angelic Warfare of Saint Thomas Aquin, Cork, to the Chapel at Knock where it still hangs in regular use 143 years later.

reception awaited them. The principal merchants and traders, as well as the Ballyhaunis Brass Band, were there to greet the pilgrims and all marched through the town to 'The Railway Hotel' on Bridge Street (now 'Renew Barber shop and the takeaway on Bridge Street) where the pilgrims were staying. Fr. Anderson addressed the crowd from an upstairs window of the hotel.

RAILWAY HOTEL, BALLYHAUNIS.

MR. LAVAN begs to inform Commercial Gentlemen and others, that he has now opened an Hotel which will be found replete with the most modern and comfortable improvements.

BALLYHAUNIS is within Five Miles of
KNOCK,

And is the direct route for Parties going there.
20,3,80.

An advertisement in *The Connaught Telegraph* in 1882. At that time 'The Railway Hotel' was operated by Michael Lavan on the north side of Bridge Street, where Renew Barber Shop and Apache takeaway are today. It ceased operations as an hotel in the early 1890s and the name transferred to John Farragher's establishment at the end of the same street (where Delaney's Ltd. are today). This latter premises was re-named 'The Dudley Arms Hotel' in 1903.

Next morning, the party was awoken at 05:00 to be taken to Knock by horse-drawn waggonettes and side-cars in time for 09:00 Mass and breakfast at a hotel afterwards. The pilgrims returned from Ballyhaunis by the 11:00 train on Thursday, 17th June. On returning to Drogheda, the pilgrims were loud in their praise of the directors, management and officials of the MGWR, but no mention of the GNR(I).

A long way round

The second organised Knock pilgrimage by special train was from Limerick taking a circuitous, but the only available, route of 142¼ miles via Athenry and Athlone as the Tuam-Claremorris railway was not yet built. The special, organised by the Archconfraternity of the Holy Family, had 20 carriages and left Limerick at midnight on Saturday night, 26th June 1880, with between 500 and 600 pilgrims who prayed during the seven-hour journey. The band of the Boys' Industrial School accompanied the pilgrimage. As the train departed there were loud cheers from the vast assembly of people present. The train was worked between Athenry and Ballyhaunis by MGWR locomotives and crews.

At Ballyhaunis there were some eighty horse-drawn

vehicles for hire for those who could afford such – the single fare to Knock was 1 shilling. Many walked to Knock in torrential rain which persisted throughout the day, spoiling the enjoyment of the pilgrimage for many. A Mass was celebrated at 09:00 after which the pilgrims retired to the hotel for breakfast which proved disappointing as it was poor quality and the quantity of food available was far from sufficient. Many pilgrims were left hungry. At 12:00 there was a Procession. Benediction was offered at 16:00 after which the pilgrims made their way to Ballyhaunis station. The return train departed Ballyhaunis at 19:00 and reached Limerick Terminus [sic] at 02:30. The railway officials said afterwards they had never carried more respectable and orderly passengers than were the pilgrims from Limerick.

On Sunday, 4th July, the MGWR operated an excursion from Westport, Ballina and intermediate stations to Claremorris for Knock at single fare for the return journey.

Lancashire pilgrimage

A Knock pilgrimage, titled *Lancashire Pilgrimage*, was organised for August 1880 by two priests from the Manchester area: Rev. M.J. O'Callaghan, 61 Ardwick Green, Manchester and Rev. T. Walsh, Hollinwood, Oldham, who travelled to Dublin in advance to ensure all arrangements were in place. They acknowledged the assistance of Mr. John Echlin Ward, General Manager, and the management of the MGWR. One of the priests, Fr. Walsh, originally from Loughnamon, Claremorris, continued to Mayo and arranged 700 beds in Ballyhaunis, Claremorris, Knock and the surrounding area to accommodate the pilgrims. The week selected would have included 'Wakes Week' in some areas of Lancashire, originally a religious celebration but during the Industrial Revolution it was an unpaid week off for the mill workers to allow machinery to be overhauled.

On the day of departure, Monday, 9th August 1880, the pilgrims from the Manchester area, assembled for prayers at St. Chad's Church (now Manchester Oratory), Cheetham Hill, close to Manchester (Victoria) station. The church was filled to capacity and many had to stand outside. After each purchasing a special medal manufactured by Mrs. Lalor, 65 Talbot St., Dublin, for the occasion, inscribed 'Lancashire Pilgrimage, August 9th 1880', the pilgrims walked in procession to Victoria station some ten minutes away. Many invalids, blind and disabled people travelled. One poor woman who appeared to be advanced in consumption[sic] was deemed too weak to travel and was taken back home. The journey from Manchester to Ballyhaunis was by special trains and a special sailing. The pilgrimage train departed at 16:00 with 17 or 18 carriages hauled by two locomotives enroute to Holyhead over the London &



St Chad's Church, Cheetham Hill, Manchester, from where the Lancashire Pilgrimage set off after a short service on 9th August 1880. It was designed by Weightman & Hadfield, Sheffield, in fashionable Gothic style with several Pugin precepts from the 1840s. The tower bell, weighing 18 cwt, was made by the Whitechapel Bell Foundry, London, in 1847 for the opening and, because of the elevated site, could be heard over a wide area.



Manchester Victoria station where the pilgrims joined the train for Holyhead

North Western Railway. Stops to pick up were made at Warrington (Bank Quay) 16:45 where pilgrims from Preston boarded and Chester 17:20 to pick up pilgrims from Liverpool. A total of some 500 travelled, double the original estimate. Once the special sailing left the quayside there was a Divine Service on board. The steamer arrived at Dublin North Wall at 07:00 after which the pilgrims attended Mass at St. Saviour's Dominican Church, Dominick St., before joining their special train from the Broadstone Terminus [sic] at 10:00 bound for Ballyhaunis and Claremorris. Pilgrims were being accommodated at both these towns and at Knock itself. Dublin pilgrims were welcome to join at a return fare of 25s - 1st class or 12s 6d - 3rd class. Tickets were sold at four shops and at *The Nation* office, Abbey St.

By this time the chapel at Knock was boarded-up to



a height of 20 feet as pilgrims had been gouging out the mortar from between the stones forming the wall.

Some of the Lancashire pilgrims had emigrated from Ireland many years previously and, after a day or two at Knock, took the opportunity to visit their former homes. According to *The Liverpool Times* many of the Lancashire pilgrims returned to Dublin by the night train from Claremorris and Ballyhaunis on Sunday, 15th August, and embarked for Holyhead by the 02:30 or 12:30 sailings on Monday. It was important for the pilgrims to be at Knock on that day – the Feast of the Assumption. The paper added: ‘The vast number who poured into Knock on Saturday evening and Sunday, and the character and extent of the services and devotions, can be better imagined than described.’

The return fares from the English stations to Ballyhaunis were 45 shillings – 1st class or 22s 6d – 3rd class. No 2nd class was offered.

Scheduled Train Services

After the Manchester pilgrimage, no further special trains operated but big numbers arrived by scheduled trains at both Ballyhaunis and Claremorris at religious festival times. On 15th August 1885, trains set down hundreds at both stations and there were over 10,000 pilgrims at Knock.

On 30th April 1894, a company with a rather long title, the Athenry & Tuam Extension to Claremorris Light Railway opened its line and, in 1895, the Waterford & Limerick Railway provided ‘special facilities’ and ‘vast numbers availed themselves of the opportunity to visit Knock’. It was then that Claremorris became the main railway station for Knock.

Acknowledgements

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Ballyhaunis Railway Station, 2023

Courtesy of John Kilduff



The signal box.



Taken from the footbridge.



The goods sheds.

The Devils Basketball Club

Danielle Byrne

"The Devils" Basketball Club, Ballyhaunis was first set up in 2019 when a group of ladies from Ballyhaunis and Tooreen, with an interest in basketball, got together to start training socially. Early progress was great, with awareness growing and several new players joining up before the onset of the pandemic.

As restrictions eased off the club picked up where it left off and even started playing in local competitions. Today, the ladies' team is diverse and over the years has become much more than a team - we are a family. With every game played we gain invaluable experience and, with that, are still able to bring some fun into the game. We have played many teams so far and it is so wonderful to encourage women to play sports. In May 2022 we hosted our first ladies blitz in our local secondary school, the Ballyhaunis Community School gym, with the help of Principal David McDonagh. With teams from Mayo and Galway participating and having the support of our ladies' sponsors, Nolan's SuperValu in Ballyhaunis and The Mayo partnership, the event was a great success and we plan to have another one in 2024, but with more teams involved.

This year we have also decided to run a social league that includes teams, like us, that are delighted to have a sporting outlet and an opportunity to play with a team and exercise.

Following the success of the ladies team, we decided to open the club to our local children. The Devils Basketball Club has now expanded to coach under-12 boys and girls and under-14 boys and girls. We had an incredible number of more than eighty children join this year and have already joined the Mayo Area Board



Children's teams sponsorship.

Pictured at back, L-R: Patricia Murphy, Karen Kilbane (Nolan's SuperValu, Ballyhaunis, sponsor), Katherine Kilbride (First Choice Credit Union, Ballyhaunis, sponsor), Mary Nolan (SuperValu Ballyhaunis, sponsor), Danielle Byrne, Tracy Cunnane.

Basketball league. With thanks to Nolan SuperValu, Ballyhaunis and The First Choice Credit Union, Ballyhaunis, we have no doubt that we will be playing for many years to come.



Under-12 Girls Team with trainers and mentors.

Pictured at back, L-R: Tracy Cunnane, Patricia Murphy, Danielle Byrne.





Ladies Senior Team.

Back, L-R: Jeff Nolan (Nolan's SuperValu Ballyhaunis, sponsor), Vivienne Freyne, Danielle Byrne, Patricia Murphy, Aisling Moran, Teresa Fitzmaurice, Aoife Carroll, Valerie Byrne, Michael Moran, Tracy Cunnane.

Front, L-R: Katelyn O'Sullivan, Karen Kilbane, Stella O'Neill, Lorraine Duffy, Brigitta Burke, Rachel Jordan.



Under-14 Boys Team with Mentors and Trainers, Danielle Byrne, Rachel Jordan, Eileen Donnellan, Lorcan Higgins.

The Luck of The Irish

Jimmy Cribbin

As I look out the driveway and yard, I see them filled with fallen leaves. Like every living thing on Earth, they had a life span. A time to live and a time to die but there is no fixed timetable for any form of life. Coming to mind is a discussion I had with the late Martin Crehan in Tommy Lyons's shortly after we met on this subject. Martin was a Galway man who spent his working life working in the construction industry in England. When he retired there, he came to live in Ballyhaunis and set up a concrete business in Clare Street, manufacturing concrete stakes, wall and pillar cappings and garden ornaments. I got to know him shortly after he came to Ballyhaunis. He was an intelligent man and easy to have a conversation with. Meeting him often in Tommy Lyons's we soon found out that we had lots in common. Born the same year, same farming background, same level of education, exchanged notes about teachers. Those who had natural ability to teach and those who had not and who relied heavily on teaching aids to stimulate study and encourage discipline. Those teaching aids comprised of locally sourced ash and hazel plants which were used energetically.

in the conflict because it was luck that we had no oil wells, and neither side saw any strategic value in holy wells.

It was easy to get a job. No CV, no references asked for, none of the tangle of red tape that strangles everything these days. When asking for a job you might be asked, "What can you do?" if you nominated something you thought you could do you were given a chance to prove that you could do it, and would do it. I have an example of where we were asked on a site could we do something and answered no and were given a chance. We had been working on a tower block for a few weeks when the foreman asked us, "can you do stairs lad?" No, we had never done stairs, "well you will never learn younger". He gave us an outline of what was involved and put us to work. Martin and I never met in England but we related experiences we had there to one another, some hilarious, some hair-raising. Like the one when he was told to drive a vehicle from one site to another. He drove to the exit which inclined towards a busy highway, put his foot on the brake pedal which went to the floor and the vehicle sped on until it was hit on the side by a double-decker bus. When he regained consciousness, he was lying on the footpath with two policemen looking down on him. Instinctively he asked, "What's wrong, what's wrong?" The next voice he heard was one policeman saying to the other... "The luck of the Irish".

In last year's edition of this magazine there was an article on a feis and exhibition of local arts and crafts and agricultural produce held in Ballyhaunis a century ago. One of the classes was for a home-made beehive. The second prize was won by Thomas Cribbin from Johnstown. He was my uncle. It would be a century later before the next homemade beehive was built by a man of the same name, not in Johnstown but over ten thousand miles away in a place called *Diggers Rest* in Australia.

My brother, whose given name is Thomas Patrick, went to Australia as a young fellow, stayed there and now lives in semi-retirement in Diggers Rest, so called because it is roughly half-way between Melbourne and where gold was found in the 1850s starting a gold rush, with the 'diggers' resting on their way to the "diggings". I said he lives in semi-retirement now doing what he first learned to do - looking after a herd of cattle and a flock of sheep and, as a side-line, he attends to some beehives.



The author at an abandoned gold-mine in Australia, 1982.

For both of us our second level education commenced when we boarded the *Princess Maud* and sailed away from the Island of Saints and Scholars that we had heard and read about so often in the national school, arriving in England a little more than a decade after the ending of World War II. There was plenty of construction and reconstruction work to be done unlike at home, where we were lucky to avoid being involved



Beekeeping is in his blood. Our grandfather had beehives. His records show that on September 2nd, 1918, for honey, he received four shillings; on the 17th September, six shillings and six pence; and the entry for 25th September 1918 reads 'J. Cunningham, honey £5.'

Pat, who builds his own beehives, left one nearly finished hive in a shed, and when he went back to put the finishing touches on it, found it to be a hive of activity. A swarm of bees had established squatter's rights and were too busy to notice him! When he told this at the local beekeepers meeting it led to a lot of discussion and questions as to how this could happen. One veteran beekeeper summed it all up and answered all the questions with just five words... "The Luck of The Irish!"



Young Australian beekeeper, Patrick Cribbin, 2023.



Above left: Martin, Evan, Roisín and Patricia Fitzmaurice (Derrynacon) in Dubai, December 2022.

Above right:
Local competitors who completed the 'Race to Glory', Kiltimagh, 8th July 2023. L-R: Joey Ganley, Tim Ganley, Philip McGoldrick and Martin Fitzmaurice.



Left: Pictured, from left - Martin Fitzmaurice, Joe O'Gara and Justin McDonagh - on their first running outing of the year, Bundoran, Co. Donegal, 4th March 2023. (Photos courtesy of Martin Fitzmaurice).

Sister Act

Tommy Caulfield

It has been a successful year for the Phillips girls from Limerick and St. Michael's Rowing Club: Laoise (18) and Clóda (16) are the daughters of Declan and Sarah Phillips. Declan is originally from Main Street and is the son of the late Paddy and Una Phillips.

In July of this year, Laoise and Clóda won two national championship titles at the National Rowing Centre in Cork. In an exciting race they overtook Skibbereen Rowing Club on the line to take the U18 coxed four title. This was followed by a dramatic one second win over arch-rivals Enniskillen Royal Boat Club to take the U18 coxed eight. The victory in one of the most coveted titles of the championship was extra special as Enniskillen had narrowly beaten SMRC by two seconds the previous year.

Laoise and Clóda went on to represent Ireland at Homes International, a competition between Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales. The event is hosted annually by one of the participating countries: this year's event was held in Lough Rynn, Co. Leitrim. Clóda was first to take to the course, rowing with her St. Michael's clubmate Aida Hehir and two girls

from Cork Boat Club. They beat England in a thrilling finish to take the Homes International U18 coxed four title. Laoise, accompanied by her St. Michael's clubmate Abbie Cullinane and two girls from Colaiste Iognáid of Galway, had a comfortable win to take the Homes International U18 four title over Scotland.

It is widely acknowledged that the only place success comes before work is in the dictionary and rowing is no exception. The wonderful success of the Phillips girls is down to many hours of character-building toil on the water and in the gym. A typical six-day training week involves weight training on Monday and Wednesday. Tuesday and Thursday are spent perfecting various rowing drills on the indoor rowing machine known as the Erg. Friday is a day of rest before double sessions on the River Shannon on Saturday and Sunday. To put this routine into perspective, over the course of the year, both Laoise and Clóda rowed over 4000 km – this is equivalent to rowing from Limerick to Athens.

A wonderful year was crowned when Laoise received the St. Michael's Rowing Club Rower of the Year Award at their Victory Ball in October.

Well done girls!



Laoise and Clóda Phillips celebrate their victories at the 2023 Homes International Rowing Championship held at Lough Rynn, Co. Leitrim earlier this year.



Once Upon a Time

A fair day view from
The Fair Green,
Ballyhaunis.

Original oil painting by
Eamonn Glynn
(Upper Main St.)





This rare view of Eucharistic Procession in the 1940s shows the 'Children of Mary' and First Holy Communicants in white amidst the congregation gathered at The Square for Benediction. Visible in the background are The National Bank (later Bank of Ireland) and The Arch Bar (Forde's). (Courtesy of Tom Lyons, Clare St.)

342

Parochial Hall, Ballyhaunis.

26th Nov. 1939

Received from Mr. Jim Fleming
Scragg

_____ Pounds
Ten Shillings _____ Pence.
(Signature) Jose Phibbooney

£ — : 10 : 0

With Thanks.

A receipt from the fundraising drive for the construction of the Parochial Hall, 1939. (Courtesy of Anne Plunkett).



In the hayfield, Tavnaghmore, 1950s.
L-R: Helen Carney (Mountain),
Kathleen Hallinan (daughter of Eileen Finnegan)
and John Finnegan (Tavnaghmore).

Ballyhaunis Rugby Club

Martin Walsh

It has been an historic twelve months for the club, on and off the pitch.

The first thing we would like to say is a huge thanks to all the people who support us in any way. Whether it's as a player, member, parent of young players or one of the many people that have supported our fundraising, particularly over the last twelve months. So many individuals and businesses have been so generous morally, financially and with their valuable time.

Several years ago, the club decided to up-grade the club house by adding a gym and storage area downstairs with new toilets, bar and kitchen upstairs as well as disability access and viewing area. We started out with enthusiasm having several 'meitheals' and made a great start to the work. We encountered a few problems and ran out of money so work stalled for a while. Then we had the Covid lockdowns and fundraising became difficult, but we had time and managed to get the gym and storage area finished, and even pushed-on other bits such as rewiring the whole building. Inflation had really taken hold by now and the escalating costs of finishing the project to the standard we wanted was frightening. Peter Gallagher, a man never afraid of a challenge, proposed that we have a raffle for a decent prize, get out and sell the tickets and get the job done as had been done at the very beginning when installing the pitches in the early 1990s. After looking at several ideas from cars to heifers it was decided to raffle a trip for two to the Rugby World Cup final. From the very start the draw got great support both on-line and off. Over the weekend of the Ballyhaunis Summer Festival a huge number of tickets were sold around the town and the momentum carried on till the draw on 4th September. The ticket sales gave us the confidence and cash-flow to get back to work and finish the club house before the deadline of early September. There were

long hours worked by club members and their families to get everything in place for the grand opening, but it certainly was worth it.

We were all so proud of what we finally achieved in finishing the club house to such a high standard and couldn't wait to show it to the community. On the Saturday night of the draw a huge crowd showed up. Music and refreshments were provided and tension was building for the draw. Before the draw, we took the opportunity to make presentations to club members and players for their effort on and off the pitch, then it was time...



We had sold tickets far and wide as the prize appealed to all, especially the rugby fraternity of Dublin and Limerick, but I was really hoping for a local winner, without a Father Ted result! Tom Forde, President of Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce, drew the ticket and I was delighted to announce that local man John Vahey had won. John and his

wife Claire and the huge crowd danced and celebrated long into the night. Unfortunately, they didn't get to see Ireland in the final but certainly enjoyed their trip to Paris and the tension-filled game between two great rugby nations South Africa and New Zealand.

There still are a few improvements we would like to make to the main hall in the club house, but we have hosted a few events since and have plans for a few more including Stuart Moyles and his band on 25th

November and a big night between Christmas and New Year, so leave space in your diary.

It has been great even in the few months since opening, to have the facility available for other clubs and groups and allow events stay within the town.

Again, we'd like to thank everyone for their support.

On the pitch our seniors, newly promoted to the J1B League, didn't just survive their first year at this new level but finished in joint third



Aidan Healy (left) and Fintan Crawley (right) being presented with memorabilia marking their participation on the Connaught Junior team, by Gabriel Gallagher.



place. They also had another great run in the Curley Cup getting to the final. This success hasn't gone unnoticed by Connaught rugby and we had two players, Aidan Healy and Fintan Crawley, selected to play with the Connaught Junior team. Both players started in all the interprovincial games and Fintan was voted Player of the Year by the team players - a huge honour! These two players show the level to which we have climbed, thanks to hard work and great coaching.

Our minis continue to train every Friday evening from September on and continue to perform well at local blitzes and games with Mayo and Galway clubs. We are fielding U8, U10 and U12 teams. More players and coaches are always welcome.

Last season was the first that we fielded a girls-only team. We had a good core of committed girls who had played mixed up to U10 and more joined when we had a girls-only side. We played several games locally before travelling to Creggs for a large blitz against several of the strong Galway clubs. The girls certainly gave a great account of themselves and came away with a draw and a win once they settled into the big time! This year, we have increased our numbers significantly with new girls and are looking forward to some up-coming games.

At youths level we are fielding U14 and U16 boys. They train on Wednesday nights and are involved in the very competitive Connaught leagues.

Like all clubs we have a great core of people, but always need more help. Volunteers are vital to keep the club functioning. If you have any interest in getting involved, please contact a member. It doesn't matter what your experience is, there's a place for everyone and I guarantee you will get more out of it than you put into it. New players at all levels are always welcome and if rugby is something you or your child is interested in then please come along and give it a try.



From left: Robert Duffy, Patrick Gallagher, Martin Walsh, Gabriel Gallagher and Mark Curley with the Triple Crown and Sun Nations Cup on display at Ballyhaunis Rugby club house.



William Cunnane (right) being presented with his Young Player of the Year award by Gabriel Gallagher.



Martin Walsh (left) presenting the winning World Cup Rugby ticket to John and Claire Vahey, with Mark Curley and Peter Gallagher on the right.



Bruce Robertson (left) being presented with Volunteer of the Year by Martin Walsh.

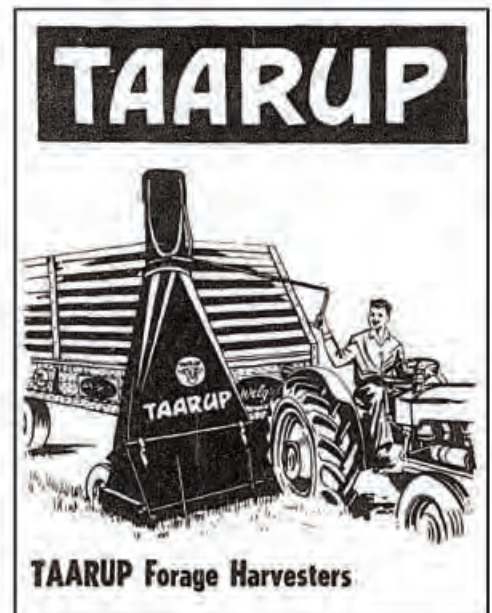
The £25 Clamp of Silage

John Flanagan (Spaddagh)

If memory serves me right, it was 1970 or 1971 when I first decided to make silage. Trench's of Ballindine were doing silage for Morley's of Kilmannin and, after having a couple of long, wet summers haymaking with the rake and fork, I decided to give the silage a go. I talked to Trench's drivers and asked if they'd do a bit for me. I tried four or five acres in Gurteen. Martin Lyons of Brickens (known to his friends as Máirtín), who was operating Trench's outfit, said they'd do it and gave me a day. They arrived with the big tractor of the day, the David Brown 996, and the single chop Taarup forage harvester. Martin told me that their trailer was on its first season. It was made from a cut down P&T lorry. And he proudly told me it would take a good acre to fill it four times. (It would take a good acre to fill the trailers that are on the go nowadays once.) He had the four or five acres completed within the day and when I asked him the cost, he said £20. I asked him about the covering and he measured the clamp. He told me George Delaney would cut part of a roll of 250 gauge clear, white plastic which cost me £5. It turned out perfect and that led to the redundancy of the rake and fork.



Above:
Martin Lyons
(on right) with
Michael
Naughton (left).
Both worked
with Trench's
agricultural
contractors in
the early
1970s. First
published in
Annagh 2015.



Right
Taarup single-
chop forage
harvester.
Ad from 1969.

Below left:

Across the generations... Joe Keane, Knox St. photographed on the occasion of his one hundredth birthday with six-month-old Freddie Theo Herr, great-grandson of the late Fred and Maura Herr, Knox Street.

Below right:

Layla Madeline Herr, born to Adrian Herr (son of Michael and Christine Herr, Crossmolina) and Natasha Keane on 30th August 2023.



WorldSkills Ireland Award

Congratulations to Kevin McHugh (Abbey St., Ballyhaunis) on winning the Construction Plant Fitting Competition at WorldSkills Ireland 2023 which was held in the RDS in September this year. Kevin is son of Mary and Padraic McHugh of Abbey Street and is employed by The Harrington Group.

Kevin was one of the six finalists who competed in this category, which involves working on machinery in specific construction sites and ensuring proper function. He received his medal and a certificate of excellence for his outstanding performance in the competition.

Kevin was trained and mentored by Munster Technological University (Cork) lecturers J. J. Buttimer and Ryan Higgins, who are both extremely proud of their student's achievement remarking that, "Kevin is a shining example of the talent that drives the Irish construction industry."

Top:

Kevin McHugh is pictured (second from right) with Pat Twomey (Chief Examiner), Michael Hourihan (Head of Centre for Craft Studies at MTU Cork) and Mr. Colm O'Reardon (Secretary to the Minister of Higher Education).

Below:

World Skills Plant Construction winner Kevin McHugh (second from right), pictured with his mother Mary, Ryan Higgins (MTU lecturer) and J.J. Buttimer (MTU lecturer).



Ballyhaunis Cemetery Committee

Martina Gavin

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

There is a detailed map at the far end of the Cemetery which can also be viewed online at

www.irishgraveyards.ie

There is also a donation link on this website, giving anyone an opportunity to donate directly through paypal to support the maintenance of Ballyhaunis Cemetery. Just click on 'Donate Directly to Ballyhaunis Cemetery'. Alternatively, donations can be made through any committee member.

Committee Members: Edward Mulhern, Tom Finn, Walter Cleary, Martin Gavin, Martina Gavin and Enda Caulfield.

Darkness Into Light, Ballyhaunis 2023

Deirdre Moran (Chairperson)

Where do I begin? It went above and beyond our expectations. It was the most amazing event to take part in and be part of!

Following on the massive success of 'Darkness into Light 2022', preparations for this year's event started before last Christmas (2022) and the committee came to the decision that perhaps a bigger venue was required to gather our participants and provide refreshments following the walk. The Community School seemed the ideal venue and when we approached Principal Mr. McDonagh, he was more than happy to accommodate us. Huge thanks to School Secretary, Mrs. Lyons, and the caretaking staff for all their assistance. We contacted our volunteers and posters and banners began to appear.

We again approached the Transition Year (TY) co-ordinator, Mr. Caulfield, to see whether the students would like to get involved again this year, and that was met with a huge 'YES'. They did an amazing job repurposing old T-shirts into reusable bunting and decorated the entrance to the school gym. They put in place the wonderful HOPE sign that last year's students built.

We also asked the students of Scoil Íosa if they would like to get involved again this year, and they were delighted to do so. The children decorated stones with inspirational quotes and wishes and laid them at the entrance to the walk in the Friary Field. Honestly, their stories and quotes would do any heart good. Thank you to Deputy Principal Mr. Henry for his assistance with this again this year.

The committee and volunteers rose very early Saturday morning (in all honesty very little sleep was had anyway – everyone was too excited and nervous) and began putting out tealights in various places along the route, despite the rain. Burco boilers were filled and scone-buttering began. Water, fruit and snacks were ready for the walkers on their return. Thankfully, the weather behaved: the rain stopped and it was just a beautiful morning to walk into the sunrise.

To say we were amazed at the turn-out would be an understatement. We expected maybe five hundred, but the numbers well exceeded seven hundred. It was just so lovely to see the community of Ballyhaunis, and indeed further afield, coming together with one common goal – to raise awareness of suicide and self-harm and raise money for Pieta House.

Tracy Cunnane led a very invigorating warm-up to get the hearts pumping and to wake people up – it was lovely to see so many smiling faces that early in the morning. The Chairperson, Deirdre Moran, read a letter from Pieta and read-out their manifesto. Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. blessed the walkers and set everyone on their way.

We are truly blessed in Ballyhaunis that our complete route is well lit, and our stewards kept an eye on the crowds and showed them the way. You could hear laughter all along the route. The Reflective Kilometre was around the Friary Walk at the end of which the participants were greeted with beautiful music and song provided by the very talented Evan Fitzmaurice and friends.

Upon our return to the school gymnasium the walkers were provided with refreshments and the odd hug if required. It was wonderful to see entire families taking part and the very young people were delighted to pick up goodies in the wee hours of the morning. Young and old, and those in between, seemed to really enjoy the walk and the meet-up afterwards. Some found it very moving, remembering those gone before us and thinking of those we know who are struggling with their mental health. Everyone took part for his or her own reason.

After what seemed like a blink of an eye, the last of the walkers headed home and the stewards and volunteers helped with the clean-up. By 6.30am you would never have known that anything had taken place.

The committee would like to sincerely thank each and every person who took part in the walk, made donations, sponsored and donated refreshments, hung signs and took them down, decorated their premises, left lights on in their windows, and wished us well in the lead-up. Thanks to Ballyhaunis Community School for the use of their premises, all the volunteers and stewards and parking attendants. Honestly, it's because of all of you that we could have this fantastic community event. It was a common phrase on Saturday morning: "Ballyhaunis is a mighty little town". And we can't disagree with that.

A special word of thanks to the sponsors of all the refreshments: Nolan's Supervalu, Corrib Oil Ballyhaunis, Communicare Medical, Cunningham's Londis, McHugh's Café. Without these wonderful sponsors we would not have been able to run the event (without any costs), thus enabling us to raise a fantastic €7,804.90.

Preparations are already underway for next year and we are hoping to build on this year's massive success, although looking back we wonder how we can make it any better. If you would like to volunteer next year, please let a committee member know and we would be delighted with any assistance we receive or perhaps ideas on how we can improve. Information is available on www.darknessintolight.ie or by emailing ballyhaunis@darknessintolight.ie

Committee: Deirdre Moran, Elma Kilbride, Anne Cunnane, Aisling Caulfield, Eavan Caulfield, Tina McGoldrick. Looking forward to 4th May 2024!



Ballyhaunis Darkness into Light committee, from left: Deirdre Moran, Tina McGoldrick, Aisling Caulfield, Anne Cunnane, Elma Kilbride, Maggie Finnegan, Eavan Caulfield.



Occupations in the Parish of Began, early 1900s

Kieran Burns

Most city dwellers would have been under the impression that all rural people were farmers. During the various lockdowns I did some research on the 1901 and 1911 censuses and found that this was not the case. These are my findings on a townland basis for the parish of Began. This refers to the civil parish which included townlands transferred to Annagh (Ballyhaunis) church parish in 1893.

In the townland of **Ballinphuill**, Austin Boyle was a farmer/blacksmith. Also here, Galway-born Bridget Ruane was a washerwoman.

Austin F. Crean, in the townland of **Ballinvilla Demesne**, was a farmer/magistrate and James Crean was a clerk of petty sessions.

Richard and Bridget Tarpey in the townland of **Bekan** were schoolteachers. Also here, Mary Grogan was a postwoman, Peter Connolly and Mary Prendergast were schoolteachers and Richard Prendergast was a grocer. Also in the townland of Began, Bernard Freely was the Parish Priest and Martin Doogan another shopkeeper.

Owen Lyons of **Belesker** was a railway milesman.

Bridget Egan of **Bracklagh** townland was a schoolteacher and Ferdinand Waldron was a railway milesman. Also here, Matthias Morley was a tailor and James Hunt a carpenter.

In the townland of **Bracklaghboy**, Thomas Kelly and his sons Thomas and Dominic were stonemasons.

In **Brackloon East** Denis Sloyan was a carpenter and John Joseph Sloyan was a stonemason.

Bernard Dyer from the townland of **Brackloon North** was a farmer/ganger for the CDB (Congested Districts Board).

In the townland of **Brackloon South**, John J. Waldron was a farmer/tailor. Also here, Martin Waldron (aged 14) was a blacksmith, while the only other occupant of the house was his 16 year old sister Julia Ann who was down as head of household. Patrick Dyer also from this townland was a plasterer.

Willie Kelly from **Brackloon West** was a parish clerk. Also here, John Hyland was a clergyman.

Patrick Gilmore of **Brickeens** was a farmer/carpenter as was his brother Peter.

In the townland of **Carrownluggan**, Charles Edward Crean was a justice of the peace, private medical practitioner and licentiate of the Irish College of Physicans and Surgeons. Augustine Joseph Crean was a solicitor. Also in this townland, Thomas Francis Moran was a relieving officer and Jane Moran a shop assistant.

In the townland of **Cherryfield**, John Joseph Coyne was a clerk in the CDB (Congested Districts Board). Michael Hunt was stationmaster; John Byrne, a native of Dublin, was a signalman; John Doorley of Co. Roscommon was an engine cleaner. Also in this townland, Thomas Murray was a postman, John Murray a mechanic, Patrick Murray a rural postman and John Cahill a railway porter.

John Duffy of **Cloonbookoughter** was a farmer/tailor.

John Thomas Waldron of **Cloonbookoughter** was an ex-National School teacher.

There were three blacksmiths in the townland of **Cloonbulban**: Michael Mullen who was a blacksmith/farmer, his father and brother, both named Thomas.

Michael Lyons of **Coolloughra** was a mason.

In the townland of **Cuilbeg**, Peter Whelahan a native of Dublin was a stationmaster (Began Station).

Mary Canton was a shopkeeper in the townland of **Cuiltcreghan**. Also here, Patrick Boyle was a farmer/blacksmith.

In the townland of **Cullentragh**, John Caulfield and his son Thomas were masons. Also here, Mary Cunnane owned a corn mill.

In the townland of **Devlis**, James Plunkett was a miller; Owen Leonard, a signalman; Michael Waldron, a farmer/rate collector; and Martin Atkinson a special bailiff. Also here, Attracta Fleming was deriving her income from the spirit trade, Thomas Naughton was a grocer, as was Bridget McHugh. Her nephew John McHugh was a railway engine driver. Anthony and Michael Griffin were carpenters as was Patrick Forrester.

Kate Flatley of **Gorteenmore** was a farmer/teacher.

In the townland of **Island** there was a carpenter called Patrick Carney.

John Hunt of **Keebagh** was a grocer's assistant.

In the townland of **Kilknock** brothers Denis and William Neiland were blacksmiths and Michael Coghlan was a farmer/tailor.

Timothy Eaton in the townland of **Killylea** was a land valuer.

In the townland of **Larganboy East**, Owen Kilduff was a carpenter and his brother James was a blacksmith. Also in this townland, Patrick and Bridget Mullins were school teachers as was Bridget Fahy. Here too, Michael Kilduff was a joiner/farmer.

In the townland of **Lassanny**, Martin and Thomas Horkan were carpenters and Thomas Flatley was a weaver.

There were three shoemakers in the townland of **Liscluman**: John and James Smyth and Michael Bailey.

Thomas Morley in the townland of **Lissaniska** was a farmer/miller. Also here, Thomas Tighe was a blacksmith and his three sons John Thomas and Michael were carpenters.

In the townland of **Reask**, Austin Lyons was a shoemaker.

John Ward of **Tawnagh** was a shopkeeper /farmer.

In the townland of **Tawnaghmore**, Martin Waldron was a carpenter.

In **Togher** townland, Celia Hannon was a milliner and her brother Peter a shopkeeper.

Thomas Flanagan of **Tooraree** was a farmer/road contractor. Also in this townland, Patrick Deignan was a civil bill officer and carrier.

In the townland of **Treanrevagh**, Anthony Smith and his wife Mary A. were teachers.

Abbey Partnership and Trust

Mark Godfrey

The cultural life of Ballyhaunis was enhanced no end by a new working group established to oversee works and events in the historic Friary church in Ballyhaunis. Irish folk music star Andy Irvine brought his performance of songs like 'Arthur McBride' – sung by Irvine in the Planxty trad supergroup of his earlier career – to the Friary on 26th August after the popular classical trio, The Three Tenors, played a pleasing show to a full house in April. They will be making a return visit in December. This and the other concerts are organised by a working group established under the Abbey Partnership, a voluntary body which handles requests for use of the facilities while also taking care of maintenance issues. The concerts, it's hoped, will raise a local fund which will in turn enable drawdown of public funds for preservation work on this ancient church.

Engineering surveys have shown that preservation work is urgently needed on several aspects of the church and its contents. The different periods of building and rebuilding and the very different materials and methods used are not always compatible causing structural tension and partial subsidence that needs what will be costly rectification. The phosphorus lights system is out of date and unsuitable, embedded as it is in an ancient roof and ceiling. Likewise, the whole electric wiring system badly needs replacing. The heating system, which is much needed in such an ancient building, is in urgent need of upgrading. The beautiful stained-glass windows, one of which is from the renowned studio of Harry Clarke, need re-leading and sealing. The ceiling, wall and Stations of the Cross paintings require preservation cleaning while the whole building is in need of repainting.

Meanwhile, much activity continues in the Friary Grounds. A highlight of the site is the Ballyhaunis Community Garden which continues to keep exalted company after securing the renewal of its green flag for 2023 and 2024. The garden is one of a select few in Connacht to have achieved the award from An Taisce thanks to the high level of local involvement and educational programmes provided to the community in organic gardening. In their written report on the garden the An Taisce judges lauded the quality of vegetables produced by over a dozen active gardeners and commended its maintenance as well as the regular gardening workshops and education programmes run there. The judges, however, did note some potential improvements to the signage, wheelchair accessibility and communications. These are issues which will be addressed in the coming year by the Community Garden subcommittee which also reports to the Abbey Partnership.

Elsewhere on the grounds, lights have been switched on at a covered sports facility following a long running effort by the Partnership and a petition by local secondary school students. Mayo County Council hired outside lighting specialists to install the wiring and lighting for the multi-use games area (MUGA), which is located near the derelict Scout Den building. The project, which cost approximately €20,000, did not require new cabling from the church as originally envisaged, as a connection was brought from an existing point near the Scout's Den. In March last year over 100 students and teachers of Ballyhaunis Community School signed a petition for the installation of lights in the MUGA which has become a popular site for basketball and indoor soccer. The installation of lights would, said a letter accompanying the petition, encourage more people to use the facilities during the winter months and would help children and adults to keep fit. The lighting would also help prevent anti-social behaviour, noted the letter.

Primary and secondary school students will be planting a small native woodland in the grounds of the Friary this Autumn thanks to a programme led by An Taisce forestry experts. Teachers from the local schools and members of the community met recently at the Friary with Robert Nelson, Green Schools officer at the environmental education unit of An Taisce, an Irish environmental protection charity. Nelson met with Abbey Partnership and Trust representatives and walked the site, looking at a few locations to host the Choill Bheag ('small wood') and chose a location. Featuring various native Irish tree species – like alder, birch and hazel – the Choill Bheag will be 10 metres x 20 metres in area. The first day of the planting will feature a workshop with the students and teachers with soil tests, mapping and planning for the planting providing a great educational experience to the young pupils. Then days two and three will be spent tree planting and mulching with a fourth day to teach locals tree identification skills and to talk about plant identification as well as biodiversity and habitat features of native woodlands.

While there's a lot of positive activity going on in the Friary and grounds the site is also not immune from bad behaviour. In response to instances of vandalism – initial lighting equipment was damaged with sports balls, and the polytunnel in the Community Garden slashed earlier this year – local Gardaí conduct a daily foot patrol of the Friary Grounds at the request of the Abbey Partnership.

A voluntary body, the Abbey Partnership is chaired by a staff member from Mayo County Council. Anyone who'd like to join in any of the projects described here can contact ballyhaunisabbey@gmail.com.





Triple baptism in the Brazilian community.

Henrique Dias Ferreira (Old Racecourse), Maeve Mendes Rodrigues (Cashel, Ballinlough) and Arthur Henrique De Souza Silva (Sherwood) with their parents and godparents. Baptised by Deacon Wando Araujo in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, Sun. 24th Sept. 2023.



First cousins all. Members of the Caulfield family, Carrowkeel.

Back, L-R: Ronan Chilvers, Caroline Caulfield, Marcus Caulfield, John Caulfield holding granddaughter Willow Kilkenny, Ruairí Caulfield. **Front, L-R:** Mary Caulfield, Helen McGrath (née Caulfield), Orla Caulfield, Tara Caulfield, Siobhán Corrigan (née Caulfield), Dierdre Heskin (née Caulfield), Emmett Caulfield, Brian Macnamara, Greg Caulfield, Enda Caulfield.

Missing from photo: Alan Caulfield, Diarmuid Caulfield, Brian Caulfield and Loman Caulfield.



A Year of Blooming Success for Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns

Laura Dinraths and Mary Donnelly

In 2023, Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns rolled up their sleeves for a year filled with community spirit and environmental care. Many volunteers showed up to make St. Brigid's Crosses for our fundraising event and, on the 7th of April, for our annual Good Friday clean-up, doing such good work gathering and triaging litter. Residents let nature take its course, allowing wildflowers to flourish in gardens and along roadsides – a sight to behold! These vibrant meadows became havens for local pollinators, enriching our park and beyond.

Thanks to the generous support of Dawn Meats, the town was adorned with beautiful blooms in time for the lively Ballyhaunis Summer Festival. In August, a nature walk led by Aengus Kennedy from Naturenorthwest captivated all who attended. We are also designing a map of the town centre showing public places of interest which will be displayed in The Square.

Our entry in the National Tidy Towns competition this year brought a sense of pride. We earned a commendable eight-point increase from the previous year, a true reflection of our dedicated volunteers. With an eleven-point leap from 2021 to 2022, we're on an upward journey! And for the first time, we proudly secured the regional Waters & Communities Award, thanks to our Citizen Science Programme. This partnership with the Local Authority Waters Programme has firmly put Ballyhaunis and Mayo on the map.

Embracing Biodiversity

In 2022, our commitment to biodiversity took flight. Thanks to the Community Foundation for Ireland, we enlisted the expertise of ecologist Dr. Mary Tubridy. Together, we crafted a comprehensive Biodiversity Action Plan for Ballyhaunis, identifying and mapping plant and bird diversity, freshwater species, and geological and ecological features of interest.

This research laid the foundation for a dynamic five-



Citizen scientists, Merrylin Winters, Liam Lyons, Hazel Murphy, Mary Donnelly, Laura Dinraths, Shayla Rasmussen, Kay Curley, Tom Lyons and Mike Cleary, in the Friary Park after a water quality sampling of the River Dalgan.

year plan aimed at preserving and enhancing these treasures. Our main focal points: The Friary Park, neighbouring waterways, local green spaces and schools. This plan, forged in collaboration with the community, will be launched in the coming months.

Citizen Science and Water Monitoring

The first area of focus for Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns revolved around water quality. We are lucky to have the beautiful River Dalgan – tributary to the Clare River flowing into Lough Corrib – flow through the Friary Park and the town, its course almost unchanged since the Ice Age. So, we set out to understand the pressures and threats affecting this beautiful watercourse surrounded by agricultural land and factories.

Thanks to the backing of the Local Authority Waters Programme, we launched a water monitoring citizen science initiative, the first in County Mayo. Every quarter, our dedicated group ventures to specific sites along the river, sampling and comparing water quality to inform initiatives to improve it. We're also organising events in local schools and raising awareness about the importance of our waterways.

Our citizen scientists are like underwater detectives, catching and releasing aquatic creatures for identifi-





Above left: Members of the Citizen Science group - Shayla, Peter and Merrylin - sampling the Dalgan river at the Friary Park, Ballyhaunis.
Right: Merrylin Winters, Shayla Rasmussen and Hazel Murphy learning to identify aquatic creatures indicating water quality in the Dalgan.

cation. As on land, where the presence and diversity of bees and butterflies reflect the health of an ecosystem, so underwater. Certain species of mayflies and stoneflies indicate low levels of pollution, whereas the presence of leeches, waterlouse and snails indicate a more polluted environment. Like in everything, balance is what matters. Our results so far show moderate water quality levels along the different sites, with a marked decrease in good indicator species south of Ballyhaunis.

Be the Change: Join Our Journey!

The decline in biodiversity and water quality is a concern that touches us all. It's a battle that needs local warriors, and that's where you come in. Join us for our nature walks, community biodiversity days and engaging activities like bird/bat boxes creation and flower-insect counts, pollinator-friendly practices and tree planting in gardens and public spaces.

We can all give a hand to nature and biodiversity and take action and responsibility to increase our ecosystem's resilience for future generations. Follow us on Facebook

or check out our new website, ballyhaunistidytowns.ie, for a calendar full of exciting events.

Gratitude and Cheers to Our Champions

To all who supported us this past year – our sponsors, Dawn Meats, SuperValu and First Choice Credit Union, Cllr. John Cribbin MCC, the Mayo County Council team, the RSS team for looking after the hanging baskets and maintaining the Town Well, and each and every volunteer – you are the true architects of Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns. Your contributions are the heartbeat of our thriving community!

Committee: **Chairperson:** Kay Curley. **Secretary:** Mary Donnelly. **Treasurers:** Frances Mulhern and Moyra Patterson. **PRO:** Tzyy Wang. **Members:** Teresa Grogan, Frances Maye, Merrilyn Finn, Ann Curley, Laura Dinraths, Sean Freyne, Connie Gildea, Mary Higgins, Mike Griffin, Gabriel Smith, Nell Rochford, Shayla Rasmussen, Citizen scientists Meghan, Mignon, Liam, Padraig, Mike, Mark and Hazel.



The Dawn Meats Ballyhaunis crew helping plant flowers for the hanging baskets around town. Included are Dawn Meats volunteers: Aoife Doherty, Andre Agighioleanu, Marcel Cioscaru, Floare Feraru, Cristian Feraru; and Tidy Towns members, Mary Donnelly, Frances Mulhern, Frances Maye and Kay Curley.

The Leaving Cert - Fifty Years On

Eamon Murren

1973 was the year when Liam Cosgrave was Taoiseach. The sounds of T-Rex, Slade, Creedence Clearwater Revival and Rod Stewart filtered through the airwaves. The wearing of bell-bottom trousers and platform shoes was the norm among my peers. Colour TV was just arriving in most homes. There were no mobile phones, no videos or DVDs. It was the year I sat my leaving certificate examination at St. Patrick's College on the Knock Road.



St. Patrick's College, 1973.

*Back, L-R: Kieran Folliard, Gerry Lyons, Terry Keenan (Knock).
Front, L-R: Eamon Murren, Anthony Hegarty, Alex Eaton.*

Looking back, I can say that we received a wonderful secondary education at St. Pat's. I recall that we had Fr. Kieran Waldron as our English teacher in first year. He gave us our first taste of Shakespeare. He also gave us lessons in elocution: 'The tip of the tongue, the lips and the teeth'. At the end of first year we voted for our favourite poem. 'The Highwayman' by Alfred Noyes - a gothic narrative which tells the story of the highwayman, the red coats who wanted to capture him and his lover - was the clear winner.

We also studied Music with Fr. McMyler. Some went on to study general musicianship for the leaving cert. David Dwayne of Clare Street was the only higher level student in our ranks. The rest of the class sat the ordinary level exam. At the time, we were the only school in Ireland offering both music and economics to leaving cert. Inevitably, these two subjects clashed on the exam timetable. This meant we sat the music exam from 2-5 pm, took a short break and commenced our Economics exam at 5.30pm.

Other teachers for our junior cycle included Fr. Costelloe (French), Morgan Jennings (Irish), Jarlath Fahey (geography), Fr. Kennedy (science), Terry Coleman (science), Fr. Burke (Irish) and John Cleary (English). A big change came once we hit senior cycle and joined up with the Vocational School across the road and St. Joseph's Convent of Mercy in Abbey Street. I recall some of the lads going across to 'The Tech' to study biology with the late Eddie Thornton. At the same time some of the students from the Vocational School were attending St. Pat's for certain subjects. Freddie Herr, John Coyne

(Devlis), Jackie Coyne (Tooreen), Caroline Conboy (Aghamore) and Annie May Flatley (Cullintra) were some of the students involved.

We travelled to the Convent School for the first classes of the morning while some of the girls came to the college at the same time. This gave us a greater choice of subjects and made for smaller class size. The only snag was that the bus returning us to the college after morning break was

usually late. This was mainly down to our bus driver Jimmy Kearns who always had the bus faced towards the railway station. By the time we were loaded up and the bus turned around and back at St. Pat's we were usually late, much to the annoyance of the teachers whose classes were interrupted by the late arrivals. All of this changed when Mick Mulhern took over as driver and the bus was faced for Knock. Enough said.

In those distant days state exams results were simply graded as pass or honours. Points were what Fr. J.J. and Fitz scored for Mayo. I am sure there was less pressure on us than on present day exam candidates. We also had lots of extra-curricular sporting activities with Gaelic football and soccer, basketball, volleyball and athletics. Despite having small numbers, our teams were always competitive on the field. Martin Kelly (Ballinlough), Vinnie Kelly (Bekan), Jarlath Lyons (Ballinacostello), Tomás Phillips (Urlaur), Tom Fitzmaurice (Tonragee), Kevin Tighe (Aghamore) and local lads Kieran Folliard, Anthony Hegarty (Bridge St.), Alex Eaton and Pat Freeley were all handy team mates of mine.

I recall taking part in a charity walk organised by teacher John Cleary to raise funds for a basketball court adjacent to where Tadhg and Kay Buckley now reside. We reached a Mayo Basketball final in 1973 and were narrowly pipped by a great team from Ballinafad College. Kieran Folliard was our tallest player while Alex Eaton, Anthony Hegarty and myself were no Goliaths! Other major extra-curricular events included the annual school play and concert. Jimmy Hopkins (Coogue) and Tommy Jordan (Cummer) were the leading men in one



play I recall, appropriately titled, 'The Happiest Days of our Lives'. The school choir performed at the annual concert. I remember our rendition of the New Seekers hit song, 'I'd like to Teach the World to Sing'.

Sadly, along the way we have lost some of our dear classmates. John Keane (Urlaur), Vivian Murphy

(Tooreen), Jarlath Lyons and Fr. John Mulligan (Aghamore) have all left us too soon. The rest of the class of 1973 soldier along hoping for Mayo footballers to bring home Sam. They had better do it soon.

Tempus Fugit!

Parish Mission 1923

At Night, say your night prayers, examine your conscience, and make an Act of Contrition. Say the three "Hail Marys" and the little prayer to Mary, as in the morning.

When in bed, fold your arms in the form of a cross, and say to yourself: I must die—I do not know when—nor how—nor where—but if I die in mortal sin—I am lost for ever—O Jesus, have mercy on me.

Acts of Faith, Hope and Charity.

ACT OF FAITH—My God, I believe in Thee, and all Thy Church doth teach, because Thou hast said it, and Thy word is true.

ACT OF HOPE—My God, I hope in Thee for grace and for glory, because of Thy promises, Thy mercy, and Thy power.

ACT OF CHARITY—My God, because Thou art so good I love Thee with my whole heart, and for Thy sake I love my neighbour as myself.

What every Christian must know.

1. There is one God. 2. In God there are three Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. 3. God the Son, the Second Person, was made man, and died to save us. 4. God rewards the good in heaven, and punishes the wicked in hell—for ever.

Baptism makes us Christians, and washes away the sin in which we are born. **Penance** forgives the sins we commit after Baptism. **The Holy Eucharist** is the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine. **In Confirmation** we receive the Holy Ghost in order to make us strong and perfect Christians.

He that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved."—*Matt. xxix, 13.*

PRaised BE JESUS AND MARY.

O'Brien & Ards, Dublin.

BEHOLD !



HOW HE LOVED **HE DIED FOR ME !**

REMEMBRANCE OF THE MISSION
 Preached by the Redemptorist Fathers,
BALLYHAUNIS, CO. MAYO,
 Sept.-Oct., 1923.

Ballyhaunis
Parish
Mission
Prayer
Leaflet
1923.

(Courtesy of
Seamus Forde,
Knock).

REMEMBER

DEAR CHRISTIAN,

YOU HAVE BUT ONE SOUL TO SAVE,
 ONE GOD TO LOVE AND TO SERVE,
 ONE ETERNITY TO EXPECT,
 DEATH WILL COME SOON,
 JUDGMENT WILL FOLLOW,
 AND THEN
HEAVEN or HELL for Ever!

THEREFORE, O Child of Jesus and Mary,
 Keep the good resolutions of the Mission.

Avoid Sin and
All Dangerous Occasions of Sin;
Pray without Ceasing;
Go frequently to Confession
and to Holy Communion.

Be faithful to the Christian Practices
 which have been recommended to you
 during the Mission.

DAILY ACTS.

In the Morning, when you awake, say;
 ✠ In the Name of the Father, and of the
 Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.
 Jesus, Mary, Joseph, I give you my heart
 and my soul.

O my God, I believe that Thou art here present—I adore Thee—I love Thee with my whole heart—I thank Thee for all the blessings thou hast bestowed upon me—I offer Thee all my thoughts, words, and actions of this day—I intend to gain all the indulgences I can—and I place them in the hands of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Our Father. Hail Mary. Creed.

Say also three "Hail Marys" in honour of the Immaculate Purity of Mary, and then—

O Mary, my mother and my hope—I take refuge under thy mantle—there will I live and die—deliver me from sin—and grant me thy holy blessing.

During the Day

When you begin your work, say: All for Thee, O Lord!—O my Jesus—all for Thee.

When you are tempted, say: Jesus and Mary, help me! or a "Hail Mary."

When inclined to anger, say: O my Jesus give me patience!—My Mother Mary, restrain my tongue.

When you have committed a fault, say: O my God, I am very sorry—that I have sinned against Thee—because Thou art so good—I will never sin again.

Before and after meals, bless yourself and say grace.

My Path to Priesthood

From Artistry to Ministry

Rev. Xanthe Pratt

My husband Chris and I arrived in Ballyhaunis for the first time on 28th August 1973. This was our second wedding anniversary. We had left Nottingham where Chris's parents lived and had travelled by train via Holyhead on the ferry overnight, and from Dublin on the morning train. We had rucksacks and our three cats in baskets and found our way to Liam and Josie Smyth's house on Knox Street where we were to collect the key to the house on Clare Road where we were to live. It was a lovely day and we were on an adventure. Chris was due to start teaching in the Convent Secondary School and I would be at home awaiting the birth of our first son Gabriel the following January.

As we settled in and opened the windows and looked out across the countryside (we would later hear a corncrake very close by) we thought we were in paradise! We had both been to art college, where we had met and had trained as art teachers, so there was something very Bohemian about us with our long hair and arty clothes!

From the moment we arrived we were welcomed, a little curiously and shyly maybe at first, but very soon we were meeting people and being invited to their homes. Those first friendships we made, and so many others over the years, have lasted and have been so supportive from the beginning of our lives here through good times and very difficult and sad times too. And I would like to say a big 'thank you' to them all here as their openness and generosity has never wavered over the fifty years we have lived among you.

I was born in London. My Mum was an Irish Catholic from a small rural village, Kells, in Co. Kilkenny. My Dad was a Protestant Londoner, and how they met and married is another really great story in itself! My brother Patrick and I, and sisters Aletheia and Persephone all attended Protestant schools and my secondary school was attached to Southwark Cathedral in South London. So, I was primarily brought up in the Protestant tradition, but my Mum had a big input too! We would go to Mass with her regularly. And I married a Methodist. Today, my brother is married to a Greek

Orthodox, my sister Aletheia married an Orthodox Jew, our eldest son is married to an Algerian girl from a Muslim background, Saida; our son Luke is married to a Chilean Anglican, and his twin, Seth, is married to a northern Protestant! And we have six beautiful grandchildren. Ethan and Aksel live in Paris. Theo, Caspian and Shiloh live in Lisburn and Emily has recently returned from Chile to live in Sligo where Luke has recently become the Bishop's Curate in Drumcliffe.



Rev. Xanthe Pratt at her Ordination with husband Chris (left), son Rev. Luke, his wife Penny and daughter Emily.

On November 12th 1984 our beautiful son Adam died. He was five. My first reaction was anger against a God who would rob the world of such a beautiful child. I didn't want to know a God who would allow such suffering and pain to exist. Caleb our son, who is autistic, was also somehow lost to us too at that time, unreachable and in constant distress. But he has returned to us too over the years. The Church and community in Ballyhaunis were wonderful at this time. We had a Service in St. Patrick's Church in Ballyhaunis with Father Costelloe, Parish Priest at the time, and Father Des Walsh who officiated. A true coming together.

The twins were seven when they started school in Ballinlough.

It is probably through the school's association with the church there that I started attending services in Ballinlough church initially, and the familiarity with the hymns and prayers brought me back. But I was still angry, still sceptical and not a regular in church at all. Gradually, over the years, I became involved in the readings and helping during the services. Several clergy came and went, some travelling very long distances to take the service on Sunday and to a very small and aging congregation. Then the Rev. Liz McElhenney arrived in Ballinlough and everything seemed to change. Her personality - generous, warm and extremely open and with an enormous heart of faith - touched so many. Tragically, she died of Motor Neurone disease.

She was a huge loss to us and had influenced me greatly. I then found myself becoming more active in the services, training as a Diocesan reader, then Ordination





Pictured when Luke and family arrived in Drumcliffe, Co. Sligo earlier this year. L-R: Xanthe, Caleb, Ethan, Chris, Aksel, Lizzie (Seth's wife), Caspian, Theo, Emily, Luke, Penny, Seth, Shiloh and Gabriel. Absent from photo was Saïda (Gabriel's wife) who was in Paris.

as a Deacon and last August, on the 27th - the day before the fiftieth anniversary of our arrival in Ballyhaunis and our fifty-second wedding anniversary - I was ordained a priest in the Church of Ireland by the Bishop of Kilmore. Bishop Ferran Glenfield. My ordination in Ballinlough was preceded in the morning by a Service of Welcome in Drumcliffe for Luke who had returned from Chile to live in Ireland with Penny and Emily.

It was a wonderful day. So many friends from Ballyhaunis and the surrounding areas came. It was such an inclusive service. We welcomed Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P., Ballyhaunis. A truly joyous and humbling occasion.

So, this is where I find myself now and, in a way, coming full circle in my life. I have been journeying far and wide, and it is in the true realisation that goodness and faith and generosity live in the kindness and the caring of all those whom I have met and worked with and have lived amongst all these years, through times of great sadness and desperation, through times of great happiness and joy. Truly, the Holy Spirit lives in all of us and comes to us in the lives we all lead, in the times that we share with our families, with our friends, in our communities. This constant love in all our lives, keeping us all together as brothers and sisters.

So much more unites us all as a family that can ever, ever divide us!

Abbey Pattern

The 2023 Abbey Pattern proved to be a great family day out which was enjoyed by the hundreds of people who attended on Sunday, 27th August. Over 150 medals were awarded to children and adults in almost forty separate races and activities.

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

While all of the athletic and novelty events were taking place, the children had a great time trying out the many bouncy castles and fun activities available on the day, including the children's puppet show, face painting and other events.

Finally, the Abbey Pattern committee would like to express its sincere thanks to all those local businesses and individuals who kindly donated sponsorship for the Pattern and to all those who helped continue the tradition by volunteering and helping out, on the day itself. In particular we would like to acknowledge the hard work and organising skills of Tracy Cunnane, Ballyhaunis Sports Hub co-ordinator, who was the primary organiser of this year's event.

This year's organising committee comprised of: Stephen Grogan, Brendan Donnellan, Tracy Cunnane, Merrilyn Finn and Muhammad Usman Sarwar.

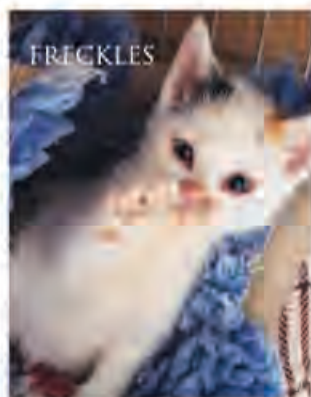
Mayo SPCA, Pattenspark

Lucie Kavanagh

Once again it has been a busy year at the Mayo SPCA shelter in Ballyhaunis. To date this year (October 2023) we have re-homed sixty-five kittens, twenty-eight cats, seven puppies, fifteen dogs and four rabbits. We are very thankful to all of our adopters and all of the people who contact us daily about adopting the animals in our care. Animal rescues tend to face a lot of criticism over the often-seemingly rigid conditions attached to adopting rescue pets, dogs in particular. But every animal in our care has very specific needs and in order for a successful adoption we need to carefully match people and animals. It makes us so happy when the match is successful and we receive updates about our ex-residents in their wonderful forever homes. As always, we remind people that any animal, especially rescues, need time and space to adjust to a new environment. Skills that the animal has previously mastered such as housetraining can take a while to re-establish. The new pet might need to hide and live a very quiet life until the home starts to feel safe and familiar. On balance, it takes about three months for the animal to see the new environment as 'home' and to fully relax and adjust. We are always happy to advise in the initial stages and the most important thing we would say is... please bear with your new housemate. It will be so very worthwhile when your new companion is fully part of your household and family.

We always say to anyone who is thinking about introducing a pet to their household for the first time, please think very carefully about the breed of dog that will best suit your lifestyle. This is, on average, a fifteen-years commitment and if your living situation is unpredictable or your house is empty for much of the day, this might not be the best time to bring a pet into the home. In relation to dogs, we can't emphasise enough the need to think about breeds and even the age of the dog which might suit your daily life. Puppies and young dogs are very hard work and need full time attention and commitment for the first few months. If you plan to purchase a puppy, please research your breeder and seek references from your vet. Backyard breeders might be able to supply a dog quickly and at a lower price, but the price is deceiving and paid mostly by broken mother dogs who are discarded like rubbish once their bodies

become worn out. The resulting puppies, sadly, will inherit issues due to poor health and socialisation. Never buy, sell or rehome an animal on social media. By going to a rescue, you might have to wait longer for your ideal canine companion, but you are guaranteed advice, knowledge of the dog, vaccinations, chips and everything the dog needs in place by the time of their adoption and, better yet, the knowledge that you have freed up space at the rescue for another dog who badly needs it. And you will become part of the very special group of people who are loved and cherished by a rescue dog.



As always, kitten season presents us with huge challenges and we continue to appeal to the public to neuter and spay their cats, including any stray cats or feral cats that you feed and give shelter to. We are always on hand to help with loaning traps for catching feral cats and we love to hear updates from our supporters who have done this and have been rewarded by a healthy cat who enjoys the outside life and takes care of any potential rodent problems. TNR (trap, neuter and return) is so important for feral cats and the very sad reality for us is that it is an essential part of rescue, but one that is very costly and, unfortunately, resources are always needed: people to help to trap and transport cats to and from the vet, vet fees and people to commit to caring for cat colonies in their areas.

Our supporters can help us by promoting the practice of neutering and spaying with anyone they know who has cats. Pet kittens must never be let outside until at least six months old and neutered. Feral cats can be helped, no matter how wild or unapproachable they are. Each year we continue to see the suffering caused by unwanted litters of kittens. We take in kittens, such as Freckles, who are found alone and freezing at an age when they should still be with their mothers. The shelter volunteers work around the clock to ensure that sick kittens recover and thrive to grow up and find their forever homes. But a lot of the time the number of kittens born far exceeds the available homes. We have young cats in our care who are last year's kittens and haven't had a chance at life outside of the shelter. We really urge people to give these young boys and girls a chance. We also have elderly animals such as Iggy and Pheobe who are two senior ladies who dearly deserve a

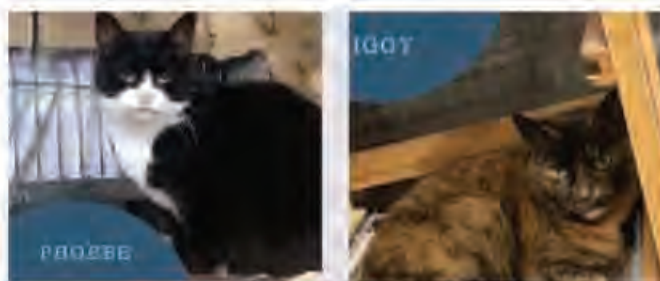


loving home in which to retire and enjoy life. Please help us by watching our social media platforms and sharing far and wide when you see us advertising for homes.

We would also ask that everyone supports the continued campaign to have an ISPCA Animal Welfare inspector in Mayo. We are one of a few counties without one and it greatly limits what can be done in cases of animal neglect or cruelty. The addition of an inspector would be such a help throughout the county where we receive so many reports from concerned people about animals in their communities which might be at risk. Unfortunately, cruelty to animals happens daily and we see so many results of it such as Ash and Honey, two lurchers rescued in separate circumstances with injuries so severe that both needed very specialist and ongoing vet treatment. Thankfully, both are doing well now and awaiting their forever homes. But we worry about the animals that no one has found or helped yet. With more resources and the help of an inspector, more animals could be helped before they get to the stages of severe suffering.

As always, we would like to thank the people who

support us throughout the year – first and foremost, our volunteers who show up every day in all weathers and care for our residents with such love and concern, the people who donate food and money or support our fundraisers, the people who raise money, everyone who shares our social media posts, the Gardaí, the vets who treat our animals with such care and compassion, Laura and Darragh, our excellent Dog Wardens, the people who give us the grants that make our work possible: the Dept. of Agriculture, DRCD (Dog Only Department of Rural Development), CRESS, Mayo County Council, Councillors Richard Finn, John Caulfield and John Cribbin, ADCH, as well as those who foster and adopt our residents and give them such wonderful lives.



Ballyhaunis Songs Celebrated



Two songs rooted in Ballyhaunis were celebrated and performed at the All Ireland Fleadh Cheoil in Mullingar this year. Frank Greally's song about his aunt Dell Hughes (Greally) from Drimbane titled 'The Last One In Your Line', and Marianne McAleer's song 'Tunes In The River', set in her mother's ancestral home in Ballyveel. Both were published in a book - *The Singing of Songs* - a lavish publication that was officially launched at the Mullingar Fleadh Cheoil.

On 11th October 2023 there was a further celebration of the two songs at a gathering in Gareth Delaney's Bar in Abbey Street where visiting Marianne McAleer performed 'Tunes In The River' and Katelyn Clarke gave a beautiful rendition of 'The Last One In Your Line'. Anne Irwin (Hughes), another Ballyhaunis native, also read from her published poetry collection 'A Minor Concerto In Ragoon'. Photo shows some of those gathered at the songs celebration in Delaney's.

Back, L-R: Evan Fitzmaurice, J.T. Smyth, Willie Coyne, John Stephen Greally, Martin Fitzmaurice, Ruairí Ó Broin, Brian Mannion, Patricia Mannion (Galway). **Front, L-R:** Seamus Kelly, Anne Kelly, Marianne McAleer, Dymrna Greally, Frank Greally, Anne Irwin (Hughes).



Taken in the late 1940s.

Left to right: Sarah Lyons (Bunnadober), her parents Delia (née Kearns) and Owen Lyons, Mrs. Ellen Grogan (Classaroe) and Nora Glynn (Bushisland).

Nora and Owen were sister and brother.

(Courtesy of Eugene Freeley).

Right: Eugene Freeley of Clagnagh (left) pictured with local artist Johnny O'Shaughnessy following the completion of a mural depicting Eugene's old home in Clagnagh where the family lived until 1959. In the foreground is a horse-drawn plough which is currently being restored by Eugene.

Below: Eugene Freeley has had a life-long interest in vintage machinery and has a phenomenal knowledge of tractors and farming implements from the past. He is pictured here with his Monaghan registered 1958 Fordson Dexta.



Eugene Freeley (left) and Terry Sweeney with Eugene's vintage International B414 tractor.



Moira's Musical Legacy Honoured

Mike Byrne

Anne Curley presenting a bouquet of flowers to Moira Delaney on behalf of the Parish Choir, Abbey Male Choir and soloists, marking her retirement as Director of Sacred Music in the Parish at the end of the Easter ceremonies, 2023.

Back, L-R: T.J. McCarrick, Seamus Grogan, Paul Donnellan, Brendan Morrissey.
Centre: Kay Healy, Sally Higgins, Frances Mulhern, Martina Kelly, Geraldine Collins.
Front, L-R: Yuliia Makarchuk, Eileen Nestor, Anne Curley, Moira Delaney, Ita Fahey, Katelyn Clarke, Mary Lyons, Isla Lyons.



The joyful Easter ceremonies of 2023 were tinged with a little sadness when Moira Delaney took charge of the choirs in the Parish Church for the very last time, having dedicated her time and energy as Director of Music in the parish for the past twenty years. This involved directing both the Parish Choir and the Abbey Male Choir, taking rehearsals, deciding on the programme for each Sunday, along with special occasions like Confirmations, First Holy Communions and, of course, so many funeral Masses over those years. All of this, she has done voluntarily and with a cheerful heart.

Throughout her life, Moira has been steeped in the best traditions of music of all sorts. During her many years as Principal of Began National School, she was instrumental in making music very much part of the school's programme. As a result of this, so many students have come to love and to learn the skill of playing a musical instrument. Indeed, music has been running through her veins for many years having won awards at various competitions over the past fifty years or so. Back in 1972, Moira was part of the Ballyhaunis Folk Group which won the All-Ireland title at Senior Scór in the Ballad section of the hotly contested national event. She is a long-time member of the award-winning choral groups Cantairí Béal Átha hAmhnais and, in more recent years, the all-ladies group Gracenotes.

For some thirty years Moira has been Director of the Abbey Male Choir, a group which set out on their musical journey in St. Mary's Abbey back at Easter, 1991. Both choirs and the congregations in the Parish Church will certainly miss Moira's musical enthusiasm and expertise.

We join with the parish community in congratulating Moira on her outstanding contribution to the musical life of the parish over those three decades and wish her happiness and continued health in her retirement years.



On Saturday, 20th May 2023, following the Confirmation ceremony, Archbishop Francis Duffy (right) presented the 'Benemerenti' medal and scroll to Moira. The 'Benemerenti' is conferred by the Pope on someone who has given long and exceptional service to the Church. Moira is therefore a most worthy recipient. Archbishop Francis read a translation from the Latin of the citation that accompanied the award. Moira 'Ad multos annos' 'Go mairfidh tú an céad', wishing you many years of health and happiness. Also in the photo is Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.

Memories of Willie Kelly

Fr. Kieran Waldron (*Written in 1986*)

Willie Kelly, who died on 14th February 1971, at the age of 83, was surely one of the most colourful characters in the history of Began. The recipient of a special Papal decoration, 'Benemerenti (pro ecclesia et pontifice)', which was bestowed on him in 1967 in recognition of

his remarkable 63 years as sacristan of the church in Began, a veteran of the First World War, as well as postman in the Began postal district for a lifetime, Willie Kelly surely lived several lives in one. While serving as a priest in Began, it was my good fortune to put on tape a few hours of Willie's inimitable views of life in his time, both in Began and as far afield as Baghdad. I recently listened again to the tape: for the most part the quality is remarkably good after all those years and the indomitable, unique

character of Willie Kelly comes across clearly. A zealous gatherer of folklore and an inveterate reader of the most abstruse subjects, he often regaled people with his recollections – both real and imaginary – after Mass on Sunday or at any opportunity that he got a willing listener. My own first recollections of Willie were when, as a boy, I often saw and heard him in the 'snug' of my grandfather's shop in Ballyhaunis which he visited in order to collect sanctuary requisites for Began church.

On the tape Willie speaks eloquently of the ancient history of Began parish and extols the supremacy of St. Béacán over St. Jarlath who, Willie thought, had unfairly stolen the limelight from the local patron in public estimation. St. Béacán, he said, was a hermit of the early 6th century who had built his cell near the old graveyard, very close to the site of Canon Geraghty's house (now Maloney's land, I think). There was a story of St. Béacán being inspired while he wrote, by a fly which moved along the page guiding his pen.

Willie had no doubt whatever as to the authenticity of the story. Indeed, he could tell of incidents that happened to St. Béacán and St. Patrick as if he knew them and as if the events had happened only yesterday. He told of the prayer of St. Béacán as a result of which nobody died of

hunger in the parish during the Famine. The area in St. Béacán's time was called 'Rathfarnan' and the chief of the day lived 'in Paddy Culliney's fort'. The chief, he said, was converted and gave land to the saint for the support of himself and his own community. All this folklore is recounted here to show the extraordinary interest that was displayed in these matters in times past. Willie's informants for these things, he told me, were principally an old man called Seán Mhártain Morley from Began and a Miss Cassidy from Brickens.

St. Patrick's exploits in the area were recounted by Willie with equal attention to detail. The national apostle, he said, had first come to Mannin and then

to Annagh in A.D. 437. The Larganboy people had shown St. Patrick 'that they were intelligent and educated people and that they could make up their accounts'. One up for Larganboy! Willie's great regret was that St. Patrick had not come to Began itself but had journeyed to Holywell, Logboy and Kilvine.

Willie claimed he was the first to discover the 'true' account of the martyrdom of the Venerable Fulgentius Jordan, an Augustinian priest from Ballyhaunis friary who, according to Willie, was murdered while was visiting Redpark to say Mass. The account goes that, on the day prior to his murder, while officiating at a marriage in the Dillon house in Holywell, the priest had upbraided a young girl who was keeping company with a Cromwellian soldier: this apparently provoked the awful deed. Fr. Jordan was buried at Redpark, in Cloontumper,



Willie Kelly (centre) holding the Papal Medal 'Benemerenti' awarded to him by Pope Paul VI for outstanding service to the Christian religion having served as sacristan in Began church for sixty-six years. With him are Fr. Thomas McEllin, P.P. Began (left) and Fr. Kieran Waldron, Ballyhaunis. The award was formally presented at a special ceremony on Sunday, 27th Sept. 1970. Photograph first published in *The Western People*, 19th Sept. 1970.



but the remains were exhumed at night and reburied at the old church in Holywell, near McManus's. The body may have been removed again but Willie recounted a story of an old man warning a farmer who was tilling the land centuries later that the tradition was that the priest was buried there. Bartley Nolan, he said, confirmed this account and that was good enough for him. That was the sort of thing that Willie revelled in.

The pity is that such telling of folk tales and recital of folk traditions is now almost a lost art. Coming to more recent events, we can, of course, check many things that Willie has recounted on tape. But the same attention to significant detail persists, together with the unique style that generations of Mass servers and parishioners of Began found so engaging.

Willie was born in Spotfield in 1889, the year after Began school was built. Boys, he said, went to school at that time until they were eighteen or nineteen; they often went to England during the summer, returning in the winter to resume their schooling. There were classes in every corner, he said on account of the huge numbers. There were four or five teachers, including Mr. Byrne, Richard Tarpey and John O'Donnell. He remembers with special affection a great concert on 5th January 1898, to which people came from all over the county. A local celebrity, a Mr. James A. Cavanagh of Cloonbulban who had returned from his world tours – notably in Swaziland where he was reputed to have built a new town – produced at the concert a 'talking machine' and magic lantern, to the delight and fear of the local people. Then comes a very typical Willie Kelly comment about the people of Began: 'You never in your life met a place that had so much logic and humour – and they were that way ever.'

This Mr. Cavanagh, who later wrote a book called *My Vindication*, was certainly a colourful character. He had the first buggy ever seen in Began and later the first motor car and from the proceeds of the 1898 concert he was able to purchase the clock that is still in the sacristy – at least it was when I was in Began – a chalice and the stained-glass window which were in the old church.

When Willie was about fifteen years of age, the parish priest at the time, Fr. Freeley, asked him to take over the job of sacristan in the church. So began a lifetime of service. He rang the bell in the belfry on the hill each morning at 6am and for another sixty years and more – with the exception of the three years' absence during the Great War – he laboured away in this post, giving absolute loyalty to all the priests who came to Began. I can vouch for this loyalty. Often I thought that the words of Shakespeare about a character in one of his plays fitted Willie Kelly well:

*'O good old man, how well in thee appears
The constant service of the antique world
When service sweat for duty not for meed!'*

Enlistment as a soldier in the War gave Willie an opportunity to visit some of the far-flung places of the globe which he could not otherwise have ever hoped to see. Having worked in the postal service, he was generally employed as dispatch rider or messenger, but he was 'in the thick of many battles at all hours of the night'. He visited exotic places like Baghdad and Babylon. His journey to war took him through Europe to Persia and Mesopotamia, from Baku on the Caspian Sea to Batum on the Black Sea and on to Constantinople. He came home by way of Salonika, Athens and Taranto. As a young lad going to school, he had an extraordinary fascination with faraway places and his interest in consuming facts from the Encyclopaedia Britannica left others in a way that they did not know what to make of him. Now the magic of the East, recalling such tales as the exploits of Nebuchadnezzar, the Hall of Belshazzar, the four Chaldean words written over the gates of Babylon, the old curiosity shops of Baghdad – these all now came to life for him and he no longer needed the printed page with its miserably inadequate representation of the glories of the East. To the end of his days, he never tired of re-living those eventful years and recalling the exotic places he had been. With that simplicity that was so characteristic of him, he confided in me one day that he 'intended to write a history of Persia' before he died.

Back home in Ireland again in 1918, Willie resumed work as postman and as sacristan – the latter job done, no doubt, for a pittance, more as an honour than as a profession. Speaking of his work in the post office, he told me of the great fun they had when, after the introduction of the Old Age Pension, it became very important to discover one's true age. The old people were very vague about matters such as the date of birth so clues such as 'the year of the porheen' (The Famine) or 'the year of the big wind' (1839) were generously interpreted by Willie in favour of the applicants.

People in Began who remember Willie Kelly with affection – and they are many – will no doubt recall his total belief in strange events and strange people including the fairies. Tales like the one of Fr. Paul McGreal who allegedly came back from his new parish the morning the building of the old church was completed (in the 1830s) and got in through the window of the church in order to be the first priest to say Mass there; the young lad who, while ringing the bell for morning Mass, mysteriously encountered an old priest who had come back from the grave and sought permission to say Mass; the 'fact' that the priests had to

leave a residence because they 'were run out of the place by ghosts'; the 'fact' that Fr. Hyland (about 1910) was taken off his bicycle there in the broad daylight by a 'certain bloke that was no good' – all these stories and the inimitable way they were told were the essence of this great character from Began's past. He was the sort of character who would have been well suited as an interviewee for Jim Fahey on the Raidió Éireann programme, 'Looking West'. (Jim Fahey himself, while doing valuable work in preserving folklore and other traditional material which would otherwise have been lost, believes, I understand, that he started his programmes twenty years too late). Willie's rendering on that treasured tape of mine of his favourite party-piece 'Rafferty's Racing Mare' and 'I didn't like asking her father' are real gems.

Local patriotism is a fine thing in any person and Willie Kelly was richly endowed with this quality. He was a man of great good humour, a devoted father and husband. One of my saddest tasks in Began was to tell him of the tragic death of his son P.J., who had been killed in an accident in England. His fortitude and resignation in accepting that cross will always be an inspiration to me. May his great soul rest in peace with the Lord.

Previously published in Béacán/Began: Portrait of an East Mayo Parish, edited by Fr. Michael Comer and Nollaig Ó Muraíle (1986). Reproduced courtesy of Mrs. Frances Maye, Aisling Drive, daughter of Willie Kelly, and by kind permission of the author.



Tom's Best Christmas Present.
Tom Greally (right), who grew up in Drimbane and Devlis, always has *Annagh Magazine* at the top of his Christmas gifts wish-list. Last May Tom's brother Frank paid Tom and his wife Cathy a visit at their home in the Blue Mountains near Sydney, Australia. Tom's parting words to Frank after that lovely visit were: "Don't forget to mail me *Annagh Magazine* in good time this year. It always makes my Christmas."



Shane Healy (Doctor's Road) at *The Criterion Hotel*, Sydney, Australia, 2023, standing beside a reminder of home!

Ballyhaunis Library

CLARE ST., BALLYHAUNIS

Opening Hours

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	12 noon to 7 pm
Wednesday	12 noon to 7 pm
Thursday	11 am to 4 pm
Friday	Closed
Saturday	11 am to 4 pm

The library is also closed on Saturdays preceding Bank Holiday weekends.



Photo by AK Photography



Ballyhaunis Bridge Club

Leona Connery

Ballyhaunis Bridge Club meet in The Clare Court Centre every Thursday night with the game commencing at 8pm. We welcomed several new members this year. There are classes for beginners which are facilitated by Donal Geraghty. We are grateful to Donal for his contribution to our club and setting up our computerised Bridge system.

Our AGM was held in May, 2023 and the following officers were elected: President - Mary Murphy, Hon. Secretary - Leona Connery, Asst. Secretary - Breege Halpin, Treasurer - Rita Lundon, Asst. Treasurer - Nell Rochford. Committee: Olive Lyons, Michael Gallagher, Gerry McLoughlin, Mary Walshe, David Spellman. Handicap Committee: Leona Connery, Mary Murphy, Mary Walshe.

This year we sadly lost a long-time and valued member of our club, Mary McQueeney. We wish to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the McQueeney family and to all other members who lost a loved one during the year.

Mary Walshe and Rita Lundon represented Masters Players of the North-Western Region and Leona Connery and Michelle Gallagher represented the Intermediate 'A' Players in competition at the Falls Hotel, Ennistymon.

New members are most welcome. If you need a playing partner, please contact Leona Connery at 086-873 2923.



Members of Ballyhaunis Bridge Club at the Bridge Masters competition, 2023. L-R: Mary Walshe, Rita Lundon, Leona Connery, Michael Gallagher.



A magical picture of the Glore River (known locally as the Annagh River), taken beneath the bridge at Annagh by local teenager Liam Hill.



The Lyons family, Knockbrack, after the Darkness into Light walk 2023. L-R: Morgan, James, Michelle, Gerry and Anne.

McNamara Family Photographs



Photograph taken in Tullaughane, circa 1920.

Seated are Austin McNamara (known as 'Affie') and his wife Bridget (née Dyer, formerly Meehan). Standing on left is their son James McNamara; and on the right, Bernard Meehan, son of Bridget and her first husband Pat Meehan.

Affie was a stonemason by trade and was uncle of the late Mike McNamara, Tullaughane and Upper Main Street. Bridget, originally from Brackloon, married Pat Meehan in 1884. He died young and she married Affie McNamara in 1895.



Left:
Nora Doherty
(Derrintoher),
aunt of Pake
Doherty.



Above: Kay McNamara (left) with her grandmother Bridget Doory (Killinaugher) and her daughter May Doory holding baby Paul McNamara (Tullaughane).



Above: Patrick Gallagher (Derrintoher).



Left:
Gerald
McNamara,
Memphis,
Tennessee
and late of
Tullaughane,
pictured with
his grandson
John
Kenneth.
Taken April
1983.





Top left: Back, L-R: Kathleen McNamara (née Doory, Killinaugher), Mike McNamara (Tullaughane), Bridgie Doory (née Neary, Brackloon North) and Jack Doory (Killinaugher). Front, L-R: Michael Joe, Eamon, Gerald and Kevin McNamara.

Top right: Gerald McNamara and his wife on their wedding day. Gerard left Tullaughane at a young age and emigrated to the U.S.A. settling in Memphis, Tennessee, where he operated an automobile spare parts business for many years.

Left: Jim Finnegan (Derrintoher) and Eileen McNamara (Tullaughane) on their wedding day in Birmingham, 4th Feb. 1950.

Above right: Kathleen McNamara with sons Vincent and Paul.

At the Coolnafarna N.S. Reunion, 1994.

L-R: John Waldron (Scragg), Mike McNamara (Tullaughane), Mary Feerick (née McNamara, Tullaughane), Willie McNamara (Irishtown), Dominick Moran (Coolnafarna and Dublin), Mick Keane (Kiltaboe).



Left:
Jim and Eileen Finnegan (née McNamara) with Mrs. Maher (née Diskin, Tullaughane) on left. Photograph taken in Castlerea 1980s.



Above: Taken in Boston, U.S.A. in the 1970s.
L-R: Mike McNamara (Tullaughane), brothers Vincent and John Joe Quinn (Tullaughane) and Larry Sullivan (husband of Mary Margaret Mullarkey, Tullaughane).

Right:
Ellen McNamara (née Flatley of Leow) with her son John McNamara, Tullaughane.



Far right:
Brothers Willie McNamara of Irishtown (dark suit) and Mike McNamara of Tullaughane (light suit) pictured at the family home in Tullaughane with their sons Michael (on left pillar) and Michael Joe (right pillar).





Patsy McCormack, Station Rise, with four of his grandsons. Now retired, Patsy was a gifted and hardworking gardener who worked in the town and throughout the district for many years.



Ballyhaunis Scout Group



In June of this year a meeting to re-start the Ballyhaunis Scout Group was held in the Family Resource Centre office in the Friary House.

The Ballyhaunis 4th Mayo Scout Group was re-established in 2013 after laying dormant for many years. Unfortunately, Covid 19 put a stop to the group's activities, but over that ten year period since 2013 the Ballyhaunis Scout Group has grown in numbers and gradually started to acquire tents, cooking gear and a range of scouting material and knowledge.

Scouting depends on trained adult volunteers and our local work in Ballyhaunis was supported by Scouting Ireland and its Mayo branches.

The meeting in June was organised by some of the former scout leaders in town who began the process of looking for new people who are prepared to support and work with them to get the Ballyhaunis Scout Group back on its feet, providing our young people with a fantastic opportunity to be part of the scouting movement.

The Ballyhaunis Scout Group is seeking persons over 18 years of age, interested in becoming scout leaders as

part of our work to re-start the Ballyhaunis Group.

There has been a long history of scouting in Ballyhaunis and the current group of adult leaders came together almost ten years ago to re-start the group. Since then, over twenty adults trained up with Scouting Ireland and became scout leaders, while over 150 young people ranging in age from six years to eighteen have taken part in all the wonderful activities that scouting provides.

Over these last ten years the Ballyhaunis group was also able to obtain grants, raise money and purchase a range of camping and other equipment which is available to use, if we can recruit enough adults to train-up as leaders and bring this opportunity for our children back to the community.

If you, or anyone you know, would be interested, please feel welcome to make contact with the organising group: Marion Feeney, Edel Conway, Anne Patterson, Anne Marie Reynolds, Oisín Bishenden, Kevin and Paul Carney, Grahame Cleary, Mark Connelly and Stephen Grogan.



Above: Pictured at the final Ballyhaunis GAA weekly 50/50 Draw held in the Corner Bar under the management of Billy Nestor and family, on 23rd July 2023. Ballyhaunis GAA would like to thank Billy and family for hosting its draw and for all their support over the past thirty years. We wish Billy and Eileen all the best in the future. Pictured (L-R) are: Tom Glynn, Eamonn Murren, Robbie Herr (Draw committee members) and Billy Nestor.



Above right: Pictured in Curley's Bar, Clare Street: L-R: Deirdre Lally, Noreen Byrne (Farnaun, Tulrahan) and Pauline Curley (Clare St.). (Courtesy Anne Curley).



Below right: Members of the Dillon family, formerly of the Square, Ballyhaunis, on a recent family holiday in Portugal. Clockwise from front: Norrie, Joan, Frankie, Hilary and Paddy.





Corpus Christi Procession, Ballyhaunis, 10th June 2023: First Communion children scatter petals during the Corpus Christi procession from St. Patrick's Church to the Friary. Children from the local Scoil Íosa Primary School were involved in street art where they painted religious symbols on the footpaths and road surface along the route. Members of the Brazilian community made beautiful carpets with Eucharistic symbols that were placed on the aisle of the church. (Photograph by JanaPix).



Above: Alannah Herr, daughter of Michael and Christine (Knox St., Ballyhaunis and Crossmolina) graduated from ATU with a BSc (Hons) in Forensic Science and Analysis.

Left: Ballyhaunis friends in Sydney, Australia, 2023. Back, L-R: Liam Duffy, Michael Waldron, Gerry Freeley, Joey Fahey. Front: Morgan Lyons, Shane Healy, Clare Fahey, Saoirse Caulfield. (Courtesy of Helen Healy).



Ballyhaunis Community Council, in October 2023, made the final payment to the contractor and engineer for what was a €460,000 refurbishment of the Community/Parochial Hall, a building transferred to the Community Council in 2018 by the Archdiocese of Tuam for development as a community facility. The project has taken over five years to complete, from the planning stage. 65% of the cost of the project was provided by a LEADER grant, with the remainder – at this stage approximately €150,000 – sourced from borrowings which will be repaid as a long-term loan. Debt repayment will be made from fundraising and fees collected from use of the hall. In this regard the Community Council has been very active in organising events which are of value to the community. These range from a monthly Irish Night to a monthly bicycle repair café and an arts and craft training programme.

We have been very happy to give a comfortable, modern and warm space to our regular users who include Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club and the local Parent and Toddler Group, as well as the fitness and yoga groups who meet weekly at the hall. Of course, the hall is also a centre of activity throughout the year for the youth who attend Ballyhaunis Youth Project run by our tenant Foróige's full time project workers.

Another year-round presence in the hall is the Ballyhaunis Language Café whose nomination by the



Main image: Community Policing Day in the Community Hall. L-R: Gary Diamond, David Donnelly, Julie Horan, Mark Godfrey, Mike Griffin, Alma Gallagher, Garda Brian Murphy, Sgt. Maureen Flynn, Sasha Taraniuk, Ruairi Ó Broin, Garda Karen Weymouth, Tanya Kiev, Eric Kilcourse, Merrilyn Finn, Garda Edel Toolan, Stephen Grogan, Mary Donnelly, Inspector Naomi de Rís, Garda David Reilly, Garda Brian Carroll, Ildiko Ignacz, Sgt. Sean Cunnane.

Above: L-R: Chris Lynskey, Anne Osgood, Anne Connolly and Mohammed Rizwan Ali fine-tuning brakes during a bicycle repair workshop in the Community Hall.

Community Council for this year's (Mayo County Council) Cathaoirleach's Award saw the group emerge from a group of nineteen nominees to win the Social Inclusion prize at the awards. The group has been a beacon of friendship and inclusion at the hall, enabling people from all walks of life to gather each week to share conversation in various languages over tea and coffee. Its members have also been a great help in the maintenance and running of the building.

The Community Council's goal is to use the hall as a space that allows people of all ages and backgrounds to come together to learn and to socialise. Some of our



programmes are supported by various local or state agencies. We are grateful for instance to the local Family Resource Centre for supporting the bicycle repair workshop which trained a group of locals in bicycle maintenance – a group which has since run a monthly drop-in service for locals who can get their bicycles repaired for free. Other programmes, such as the Irish and salsa dance classes, pay for themselves.

The goal behind the bicycle repair café is to empower locals in making healthy and sustainable transport choices. A similar goal of empowering locals informs the English Language Café and Irish classes at the hall which have been supported by Conradh na Gaeilge and Southwest Mayo Development Company. These have given locals a great space in which to socialise and learn in an era when public spaces are disappearing.

Festival

During Ballyhaunis Summer Festival the hall hosted a capacity crowd for an Intercultural Night of music ranging from Slovak gypsy pop to Syrian synth-pop and Brazilian country music. National events like Heritage Week and Culture Night meanwhile gave the Community Council an opportunity to host events of value to the local public. Our Reeling in the Years slide show of photos from the Glynn Photography Collection drew a large crowd, as did a presentation by the family of industrialist Sher Rafique on the legacy of the deceased industrialist in Ballyhaunis.

Our refurbished, modern space with a state-of-the-art heat pump heating system allows the Community Council to host useful public meetings with rural transport provider Local-Link and representatives of the district and regional Garda force. A regional meeting for the Community Futures programme (Mayo County Council) allowed the Community Council to mingle with other similar groups from across the south and east of the county in October 2023.

The hall has also become a venue for gatherings organised by community groups like the reunion of the past pupils of Ballyhaunis Vocational School who gathered there in August. Other gatherings included the screening of a documentary about Corporal Gallagher by film maker Kathy Raftery. The 100th birthday party of local centenarian Joe Keane was also hosted at the hall. Fund raising events for Cancer Care West and a Daffodil Day for the Irish Cancer Society were both held at the venue. The hall was similarly used by Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group as a venue to launch its fundraising activity and hosts the meetings of Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns. Hall management is likewise happy to host the files of the Annagh Magazine Society.

An important community social point and facility

was added to the hall in the winter months of 2023 when its historical role as a cinema (in the 1950s and 60s) was resurrected with a €22,000 grant received under the Community Centres Fund in 2022. We applied for the grant to set up a community cinema and conference facility at the hall. The funds cover the technology but not a refurbishment of the hall's gallery as originally hoped. This repair work will require more funds on a new project which will also require a solution for the new safety barrier, required by regulation, which obscures a view of the stage.

Aside from running the hall, members of the Community Council also serve as community pillar on the Abbey Trust, which holds the Friary and grounds in trust for the community. Sitting alongside Mayo County Council and the Augustinian Order, our representatives help preserve and promote the property as an historical site and a community asset. Members of the Community Council who serve on the Abbey Partnership, the management body of the Trust, make similar efforts in the day to day running of the site.

We are happy that the Community Garden at the Friary was revived and re-invigorated through the Community Education funding from Mayo Sligo Leitrim Education Training Board which delivered a series of training programmes in 2022 and 2023 in vegetable gardening, enabling locals free access to the knowledge allowing them to grow their own food.

A registered charity, Ballyhaunis Community Council is a transparent body whose monthly meetings are open to all and our accounts are presented at each meeting. We welcome contributions and suggestions - and assistance. We hope to hear from those in the area and from the area who'd like to serve as directors on our board or as directors and representatives of the Community Council on the Abbey Trust and Partnership.

Thanks in particular to our very diverse team of volunteers who run the facility and go out to find the funds that keep our debts paid. We look forward to promoting a new series of events promoting the social and environmental well-being of the area in 2024. Our challenge is generating enough funds to keep on top of our long-term debt while also continuing to organise activities of value to the community. We look forward to seeing you often during the year ahead.

See www.ballyhauniscc.ie or get in touch by writing to ballyhauniscommunitycouncil@gmail.com.

Chairperson: Mark Godfrey; **Vice-chairperson:** J.T. Smyth; **Secretary:** Mary Donnelly; **Treasurer:** Marie Cribbin; **PRO:** Tzyy Wang; **Abbey Trust director appointees:** Mary Donnelly, J.T. Smyth, Ruairí Ó Broin.

Cartron South Centenarian

Teresa Folliard was born in Cartron South, Ballyhaunis on the 13th of October 1923, daughter of Jack and Bridget (née Waldron) Folliard. She attended the nearby Carrownedan National School and after leaving, worked in Forde's of The Square. She married Bernie Cunnane of Crossard in 1946 and the couple moved to Boston, U.S.A. where they reared their family of four sons. Teresa was joined for her 100th birthday celebrations in October by her Irish-based nieces Maureen Hunt, Joan McGuire and Martha Walsh, and nephew Ray Folliard and his wife Bridie (Greally), along with Johnny and Bernie Cunnane (Crossard) who travelled to Boston for the very special birthday party.

The following tribute in verse comes from Teresa's nieces, nephews and grandnieces from Ireland, England, New York and Nashville who travelled to Boston to be with Teresa for her 100th birthday party.

Annagh Magazine would like to send our best wishes to Teresa and congratulate her on this wonderful occasion.



Teresa Folliard Cunnane, who celebrated her 100th birthday in Boston in October 2023.



A Tribute to Teresa on her 100th Birthday

Jack and Bridget Folliard were happy as could be
When Baby Teresa was born on 13th of October '23.
The Autumn leaves fell to the ground,
there were smiles all about
One hundred years ago today back in Cartron South.

This lovely lass became a girl unafraid to flaunt her skill,
She walked to Carrownedan School
by climbing Big Mary's Hill.
She was a true Perfectionist in everything she did
Serving her time after leaving school, back then still just a kid.

She had a fine High Nelly bike that she cared for and adored,
It was this mode of transport that took her in to Forde's.
As she grew into a lady, she was the prayer of every man,
But only one was successful, her soulmate, Bernie Cunnane.

In 1946 she married her one true love
At the age of twenty-three with blessings from God above.
They made their home in Boston across the Atlantic Sea
With their family of four boys, they were happy as can be.

Teresa kept her home shining with great pride and care
An expert in the kitchen where she cooked with class and flair.
She had her own way of doing things
that was simply very proper
Like serving muffins for breakfast and loading the dishwasher.

She lived not in the world of mugs
and you dare not ever cross her,
For her 'twas all or nothing', you drank from cup and saucer.
There always was a side plate that shone like the morning sun
With a folded napkin placed nearby to catch any
wandering crumb.

Teresa, you are a Perfectionist,
our special Auntie proud and tall
One hundred years of beauty, an inspiration to us all.
Today you are a centenarian, an occasion reached by few
And we are honoured to be here to spend this time with you.

You've accumulated a lifetime of memories
over your century on this earth
So full of life, so full of love and so much achieved
since your birth.
So, it's time to light the candles on your special birthday cake.
There will be china cups and saucers and we will all partake.

So, Happy Birthday Auntie Teresa, we are all so proud of you!





Teresa Folliard Cunnane on a trip home to Cartron South in the 1960s, pictured with her siblings and their spouses.

Back row: Mary and Paddy Folliard.

Front, L-R: Teresa and Bernie Cunnane, Tom and Phil Rattigan, Kathleen and Ned Madden, Lawrence and Maureen Murphy.



Teresa with family on the occasion of her 100th birthday celebrations.

Back, L-R: Bridie Folliard, Imelda Burke née Cunnane (Crossard and New York), Maureen Murphy (England), Eamon Madden (Dublin), Johnny Cunnane (Crossard). *Centre, L-R:* Martha Walsh, Maureen Hunt, Joan McGuire, Bernie Cunnane, Niamh Cunnane (Nashville), Emer Burke (New York), Hilary Madden (Dublin). *Front:* Ray Folliard and Teresa Folliard Cunnane.

Holywell Estate and the Dillons

1625-1801

Paul Waldron

Two miles from Ballyhaunis stands Holywell House, an elegant Georgian, two-storey-over-basement dwelling, just visible into the left, on the way to Claremorris. Its exact age is not known, but the design suggests it belongs to the eighteenth century, at which time it was home to the Dillons, then owners of an estate of thirteen townlands and 2620 statute acres in extent.

That family died out in 1801, their estate was divided into three and, through most of the nineteenth century and into the first decade of the twentieth, Holywell House was home to the Burke family whose much reduced estate contained just three townlands and 562 acres of land. Dr. Crean, the local dispensary doctor, took over the running of the estate around the turn of the twentieth century and, when the last of the Burkes died in 1911, the land was divided up by the Congested Districts Board and Holywell House became home to the Healy family, remaining occupied until the 1970s.

The records typically kept in running a landed estate don't survive for Holywell, and only brief, isolated references exist to those who lived there and those with whom they interacted. Bearing this in mind, what follows is an attempt at a history of this small landed estate and its owners. Part one takes the story from the 1620s, when the Dillons were first documented here, down to the death of Edmond Dillon in 1801. Its subsequent division into three smaller estates and the story of the Burkes will be covered in part two next year.

17th Century

The Dillons of Holywell descended from Edmond Dillon (died 1629), a brother of Theobald, the first Viscount Dillon, but were landowners on a much smaller scale than their titled relatives. They came from 'Dillon's Country', north of Athlone, Co. Westmeath, and were born in the mid-sixteenth century.

The *Strafford Inquisition* details that, as of the last day of June 1625, **Edmond Dillon 1st** (d. 1629) was 'the reputed possessor or owner of the castle of Annagh with 10 small quarters of land thereunto adjoining, viz. the ½ qr of Tobber [*part of Hazelhill*]; the ½ qr of Clunblingge [*Cloonbullig*]; the qr of Caldragh [*part of Hazelhill*]; the qr called Carrowpicolt [*Pattenspark*]; the qr called Carrownarnane [*unidentified*]; the qr called Carrowkeile [*Carrowkeel*]; the qr called Carrownebarnedrigge [*Woodpark*]; the qr of Derrinoghter [*Derreens*], the qr of

Derrinoghter [*Lisduff and Agloragh*]; the qr called Carrowencoller [*Holywell Upper*]; and the ½ qr of Annagh [*probably Churchpark and part of Holywell Lower*]. He also owned 'the castle and town' and corn mill of Ballyhowley in Knock parish and the adjoining townlands of Killeen, Eskerymorilly and Cloonlavis.¹

The site of 'the castle of Annagh' is not known for certain, although it was somewhere within Dillon's Holywell estate. A seventeenth century map shows a church symbol alongside the text 'Annagh' about where the old church ruins are in Churchpark and it seems that this was an earlier name for that townland and the place from which the parish takes its name.² Hubert T. Knox, writing in 1911 about earthworks in the Ballyhaunis area, described a number of features in Cloonbullig, including traces of an earthen rampart in a field then known as 'Parkacashlaun' – *Pairc an Caisleán*. He also says that, 'On rising ground, 100 yards to the north, part of a small castle stood within living memory.' He further wrote that, 'A low wooded mound, 200 yards east of St. Patrick's Well, is known as "The Castlegrove"', but since there was apparently no trace of stone-work, dismissed any possible significance with the comment, "As any little strongly built stone house of ancient date is called a castle, the name does not imply great importance."³ Could the last mentioned be the site of Annagh Castle? It certainly was close enough for its stones to be re-used in the building of Holywell House years later, and relatively close to Churchpark to be called 'Annagh'.

All this speculation aside, this Edmond Dillon is associated with Ardnagragh Castle, Drumraney, Co. Westmeath, so might never actually have lived in 'the castle of Annagh' - he was its 'possessor or owner', not necessarily its occupier. He married Susan O'Ferrall and it was their son Bartholomew who was the first of the family to settle west of the Shannon. On 13th June 1627, two years before he died, Edmond conveyed his Mayo estate to his son **Bartholomew Dillon** who is named as proprietor in 1641.⁴ Lodge's *Peerage of Ireland* states that he settled in 'Ballacowla' (Ballyhowley), that he was a 'judge itinerant of Connacht in the reigns of James I and Charles I' (i.e. 1603-49) and that he lost two-thirds of his estate in the Cromwellian settlement.⁵ His name occurs amongst those landowners in the barony of Costello who were transplanted within the barony, being decreed 316 Irish acres in the parish of Annagh. Confusingly, his



original address was also given as 'Annagh' – possible a reference to the mysterious castle?⁶ It might be that his title to the Holywell estate, then in his ownership, was simply confirmed in this transaction.

In local folklore the Dillons of Holywell figure in the story of the murder of Fr. Fulgentius Jordan and another unnamed Augustinian friar at Redpark (townland of Cloontumper, within a mile of Holywell) during the Cromwellian persecution in 1649. Apparently, Fr. Jordan officiated at the wedding of his cousin, Miss Dillon, at her home in Holywell. His friends warned him that soldiers would be present and that his life was at risk. The day went well and word spread discretely that he would celebrate Mass in Redpark the following day, Sunday. It's said that a woman who had been rebuked by Fr. Jordan for some misdemeanour, passed this information to the soldiers who lay in wait for the priest and killed him in cold blood as he said Mass. Perhaps the bride was a daughter of Bartholomew's? But of her, nothing more is known, nor of the suggested kinship between Fr. Jordan (whose original name was Walter) and the Dillons.⁷

Bartholomew married Mary O'Kelly and they had a son **Edmond Dillon (2nd)** who is said to have 'settled at Lisduffe, in county of Mayo, where he was living in 1692'.⁸ This is likely to be Lisduff beside Holywell, although it's not clear where exactly his house was. He married Miss Dillon of Clonbrock, Ahascragh, Co. Galway, and they had at least two sons and two daughters: Lucas (his heir), Theobald (who remained in Lisduff), Margaret and another daughter (name unknown). Margaret Dillon married Walter Jordan of Island Castle in 1692 and their son was the last of that family – Myles Jordan, known in local folklore as 'Myles Bacach'.⁹

Lucas Dillon was the first of the family described as, 'of Holywell'. He married Juliana Browne of The Neale and they had ten in family, the names of four of whom are known: Barbara (married firstly, John Dillon of Mannin in 1721, and secondly, Christopher Bellew of Mountbellew), Edmond 3rd (his heir), Josias (married Mary Dillon of Mannin) and Joseph who lived at Kilkelly; the other six, whose names are unknown, included four daughters - Mrs. Hynde, another who was unmarried and two more who were nuns; along with



The Dillon Browne Kelly Chalice, circa 1700.
(Photograph Pat Higgins)

two unnamed sons, one a physician and the other an 'ecclesiastic'.¹⁰ Lucas and Juliana are probably the couple who, along with Bartholomew Dillon and his wife Elizabeth Kelly, donated a chalice to St. Mary's Abbey (The Friary), Ballyhaunis where it is still to be seen. It bears the inscription: *Pray for the souls of Messrs Luke Dillon, Julian Brown his Spouse, Barthow Dillon and Elizh Kelly his Wife, who caused this Chalice to be made for the Convent of Ballyhavenus.* The chalice's design accords with the late seventeenth / early eighteenth century, when Lucas and Juliana were living.¹¹ The identity of the other couple is not known, but perhaps Bartholomew was Lucas' brother, the otherwise unnamed physician.

Lucas' son **Edmond Dillon 3rd** (died 1777) succeeded his father at Holywell. He married twice: firstly, Jane Blake of Coolcon (near Garrymore), Co. Mayo; and secondly, Eleanor Lyster of Corkip (near Brideswell), Co. Roscommon. In the second marriage at least one son and four daughters were born: Edmond 4th (his heir); Elizabeth (married Hugh Kelly of Creggane, Ahascragh, Co. Galway); Eleanor (married Andrew Higgins of Claremorris and later of Galway); Julia (married Robert Browne of Ellistron, Kilmaine); and Barbara (married Edmond Conry of Hermitage, Co. Roscommon). In 1757 Edmond (3rd) advertised part of the estate to be let for twenty-one years: see below.¹²

TO be LET, for 21 Years from the first of May next, the following lands, lying and being in the Barony of Costello and County of Mayo, Part of the Estate of Edmond Dillon, Esq; of Hollywell in said County, viz. Lisduff 220 Acres Arable and 39 Acres of Pasturable Bog and River side, Carrownedon 200 Acres Arable and 70 Acres of Pasturable Bog, Carrowkeil 135 Acres Arable and 40 Acres of Bog and Mountain, Gurtindrifagh 160 Acres Arable and 100 Acres of dry Mountain, Cloonbulloge 50 Acres Arable and 69 Acres of dry Bog, Carrow-necaldry 77 Acres Arable and 50 Acres of good Bog and River side, and 44 Acres of choice Mountain, Lecarrow-intobber, Part of Ballyhsynnis, 65 Acres Arable and 20 Acres of Mountain; the above lands are fit for every use a Farmer chuses, and are a great part of them Meadow. Proposals to be received by said Edmond Dillon at Hollywell untill the 10th Day of April next.

From *Pue's Occurrences*, 22nd Feb. 1757.

Letters

The next owner of Holywell, and son of Edmond 3rd, was **Edmond Dillon 4th** (died 1790s). He married Bridget Cormack of Mullinmore, Crossmolina and they had just one son, yet another Edmond – no. 5. In addition to his Holywell estate, Edmond 4th held the townlands of 'Claghagh, Cherryfield, Devliss, Knockbrack and Currys' – 914 acres, 2 roods and 13 perches (Irish plantation measure), which he leased from his distant kinsman Viscount Dillon in 1781, for thirty-one years, at a yearly rent of £160 sterling.¹³ However, the lease was re-assigned not long afterwards.

A handful of letters written by Edmond 4th survive from the period 1767-1777.¹⁴ Written to his cousin Michael Bellew of Mountbellew, they deal mostly with financial matters and show that the Dillons, like many of the minor Catholic gentry in the West 250 years ago, were better-off than most, but never far from debt. There are glimpses into everyday life, though, and this small family unit – Ned, Biddy and 'the child' – emerge from the letters as real people with real hopes and concerns.

The first is dated 16th Nov. 1767. 'Ned' contracted a Mr. Ward to build him a chaise (carriage), but he explained to his cousin that the carriage-maker told him it was finished only to be painted, and that it would be ready in three weeks. Dillon urged Bellew to put pressure on Ward and make sure he (Bellew) could bring the completed chaise with him the next time he visited Holywell. Evidently, Bellew planned going to Dublin and, later in the letter, Dillon makes a request on behalf of his wife: "*I inclose you a letter to Finly the mercer in Parliament Street and pray you'll bring me a cupple of the newest fashioned silks for Biddy, as much as will make a neglegee and petticoat of each. Go as far as forty pounds for them but for the difference of five pounds bring what is most fashanable.*" Andrew Finlay of Parliament Street, Dublin was a dealer in the latest fashions and fabrics at that time.

In a letter dated 1st May 1768, Edmond Dillon wrote of his wife: "*Biddy was pretty well until this day. She seems to be a little feverish and has a great headache. This has been a great disappointment to her as she propose'd to herself vast happinefs in shortly seeing her friends in the County Gallway which she has much longed for.*" Bridget came from near Crossmolina, but her Galway connections were through her mother who was Mary Blake of Doonmacreena (near Irishtown) whose family later lived in Oranmore, Co. Galway.

Another letter, dated 1st Sept. 1771, begins: "*Dear Mick. I wd have answered your letter from Dublin but expected to lave town every day for a fortnight after I recd.*

it, and hoped to have the pleasure of seeing you at Mt. Bellew in my way, but was delayed at Newpark where we paid a visit a cupple of days longer than we expected, and then the great longing we had to see the child made us resolve to push for home, and made the journey in one day." He closes, "*Until I see you, I am, Dear Mick, with duty to my aunt, love to Mrs. Bellew and the children, in which Biddy joyns, yours most affectionately, Edmd. Dillon.*" The Dillons had been in Dublin and hoped to visit Mountbellew on their way home, but were delayed at Newpark (near Kiltoom), Co. Roscommon, where Edmond's mother's people – the Lysters – then lived.

The last letter in the collection is dated 7th April 1777 and was written in Toulouse, France. The various landed Dillon families had many connections with France at this time, but the letter reveals nothing of the circumstances of the Holywell family's visit there. Edmond writes that the recent deaths of his father (Edmond 3rd) and his brother-in-law obliges him, "*...to bring my family to Ireland much sooner than I wish.*" It outlines his proposed itinerary and makes an interesting reference to the house in Hazelhill which appears to have been used in the family about that time. "*I therefore sett out for Bordeaux the 13th of the month, expect with God's afsistance to arrive in Cork about ye 25 where I shall stay a few days, as the house of Hazelhill is intirely naked and that you may be certain I will not bring much money from France.*" Asking his cousin for financial help he continues, "*I cannot well go home without sending some kind of furniture before me. You will direct to me at Mr. Martin French's, Cork. Biddy and the child are thank God very well and joyn me in aff. Love to you and all the family. I am, Dear Mick, Yours most sincerely, Edm^d Dillon.*"

Not much is known about the house at Hazelhill, but both it and Holywell are marked as Dillon residences on Taylor & Skinner's 'Maps of the Roads of Ireland' (1778).¹⁵ It probably stood where buildings are shown on the 1838 OS map, about where Madden's is today, but all traces were gone by the late 1800s. It seems to have been occupied at different times by members of the Holywell family. Messrs. Dillon of Hazelhill and Lung (Ballaghaderreen) were 'kin' of the Misses Jane and Elizabeth Mary Dillon of Cottage and were amongst those who rallied to support them in a land dispute in 1786.¹⁶ Edmond Dillon 4th is described in different deeds from 1791 as 'of Hazelhill' and 'of Hollywell'; while Edmond 5th is given as 'of Hazelhill' in 1800 and 'of Hollywell' in 1801. By 1802 it was the home of Henry E. Taaffe.¹⁷

The Court of Chancery Bill Books contain indexed references to a case in 1788-89 involving Edmond Dillon





Ballyhaunis as shown on Taylor and Skinner's Maps of the Roads of Ireland, surveyed in 1777 and published the following year. North is to the right, so the main road shown running top-bottom runs to Knock (top) and Ballinlough (bottom).

'the elder', his wife Bridget and son Edmond Dillon 'the younger' (then a 'minor') and members of Bridget's family, the Cormacks. The court records to which they refer were destroyed in the Public Records Office, Dublin, in 1922, so details of the proceedings are unknown.

Little is known about how these early generations of Dillons ran their estate. No doubt they kept much of it as their private demesne (as the Burkes did later) farming cattle, sheep and tillage. With no shortage of people, labour was cheap. Like their nineteenth century successors, some of the estate was probably leased as large grazing farms, notably in Derreens and Lisduff, while other farms were held 'at will' or on short leases by groups of partnership tenants and smallholders, as in Gurteen and Woodpark. Sadly, nothing is recorded of these ordinary people, the tenants of the Holywell estate, in or before the eighteenth century.

Edmond the younger

In September 1789 Edmond Dillon 4th put nearly half of the estate up for sale, i.e. Agloragh and Lisduff in the south; with Gurteen, Carrowkeel and Knockroe in the

north (totalling 1120 statute acres).¹⁸ It was sold on 22nd August 1791 to Edmond Taaffe of Woodfield (near Kilkelly) for £5442. 1s. 6d, sterling,¹⁹ adding to his existing Ballyhaunis property - Carrownluggaun, Tooraree, Bracklaghboy and Bohogerawer, which he held on a long lease from the Knoxes. Maybe the Dillons were in debt, or perhaps they were raising funds to build the present Holywell House? The younger man, **Edmond Dillon 5th** (c.1765-1801) was about to get married and, just one week after the sale, a deed was drawn up which disclosed that a marriage was "... intended to be shortly had and solemnised" between Edmond Dillon the younger and Bridget Taaffe, daughter of the same Edmond Taaffe. Dated 29th Aug. 1791, the deed established that Bridget would have a dowry of £2,000 and that the remaining lands of the Holywell estate would be held in trust by Christopher Dillon Bellew (Mountbellew), Arthur Browne (Moniforester), Henry Taaffe (Woodfield) and John Nolan (Logboy), so that if Edmond died first, Bridget would receive an annuity of £150, amongst other conditions.²⁰ They married by licence,²¹ however, Bridget may have died young as she is not mentioned after that.

TO be SOLD, the fee simple and inheritance of the lands of Lisduff, Carrowkeel, and Goiteen, situate in the barony of Costello and county of Mayo, part of the estate of Edmond Dillon, of Hollywell, Esq; containing 680A. 2R. 15 P. of arable, meadow and pasture; said lands are now set under short leases for years, at the yearly rent of 190l. 12s. 9d. and will rise considerably on the expiration of said leases.

Proposals for the same, to be made to the said Edmond Dillon, at Hollywell, near Castlereagh, and to Mr. George Jennings, attorney, in Dublin, in whose hands the title deeds, map, and survey, may be seen, and who will satisfy a purchaser as to the goodness of the title.

Advertisement in the *Dublin Evening Post*, 29th Sept. 1789.

Signatures of Edmond Dillon the elder (top) and his son Edmond Dillon the younger, from the 1791 marriage settlement.

On 18th July 1800 Edmond Dillon 5th given as 'of Hazelhill', leased the townland of Churchpark to Fr. Peter Waldron, then P.P. of Annagh and Began, for the annual rent of £62. 2s. 7½d. There were thirty-seven (Irish) acres of good land plus one rood and sixteen perches of waste, along with the right to cut turf in 'the bog of Baracholare', which may be part of 'Collere' an old name for the present Holywell Upper.²²

Politics, law and order

As landlords and establishment figures, the Dillons were expected to take an active interest in politics and to uphold law and order. Edmond 4th was entered on the Catholic Qualification Rolls in August 1779 when he took an oath of loyalty and allegiance to the King and promised, 'to promote peace and industry in the kingdom.'²³ This way, he could carry on business unhindered by the restrictions of the penal laws, even though he was a Catholic.

It was probably young Edmond 5th (here called 'Edward') who was a co-signatory, with many other Mayo landlords, of a letter dated 7th Jan. 1792 to the Lord Lieutenant asking for further repeal of laws affecting Catholics,²⁴ and was one of the Mayo representatives at the Catholic Convention which assembled in Dublin on 3rd December of that year.²⁵ On 20th Apr. 1793, he took the same oath as his father did fourteen years earlier and was entered on the Catholic Qualification Rolls.²⁶ Three days later, on 23rd Apr. 1793 he took the 'test' or pledge of the Dublin Society of United Irishmen, though it's not known if he became an active member.²⁷

Nationalist feelings intensified in the aftermath of the French Revolution (1789), leading to the growth of the United Irishmen and the development of secret societies throughout the country. Viscount Dillon (distant cousin of the Holywell family) and the biggest landlord in the barony of Costello, convened a meeting of prominent landholders and residents of the barony, at Loughglynn on 27th Nov. 1794. Resolutions were passed to support the law and help to bring offenders to justice. Amongst the sixty signatories were father and son, Edmond Dillon, senior and junior.²⁸ In May 1796, Edmond (probably no. 5) conveyed to Lord Dillon, several threatening letters written by members of the 'Ribbon Men', one of the new secret societies then active in East Mayo. Amongst their threats was to burn the town of Ballyhaunis and kill members of the yeomanry, vowing that they would '...no longer obey the tyrant Dillon' (referring to the Viscount).²⁹ Later that same year, Lord Dillon formed the Loughglynn Cavalry, a militia drawn from the local landed gentry. Interestingly, the name

Edmond Dillon doesn't feature on the list of recruits at its establishment on 28th Dec. 1796,³⁰ which leads one to wonder what if any part he played two years later in the events of 1798?

The Will

Edmond Dillon (5th) made his will on 10th Oct. 1801, and died later that month, possibly in Dublin. In addition to his Holywell estate, he left houses in Galway city and a farm in Carrowbrown on the outskirts. For all its detail, some questions are left unanswered. He refers to one Mary Kirwan as his 'late wife', suggesting she was then deceased. There's no record of any such marriage and, if there was, it seems that they had separated since, just two months earlier, he had granted an annuity of £36. 2s. 6d to one 'Mary Kirwin, late of the town of Galway, but then of the city of Dublin, widow'. It's possible that the validity of the marriage was in question as, in a deed of 1818, it is declared that this Edmond Dillon died, "...intestate, unmarried and without issue." The will was registered in the Registry of Deeds the following 16th Mar. 1802, suggesting that there were concerns it might be contested.³¹

Dillon appointed Theobald Mahon as his executor. Mahon lived at Castlehill near Crossmolina and was married to Edmond's aunt Mary Cormack, to whom Dillon left £2000. He left £1000 each to their daughters Catherine, Bridget and Mary Mahon, and an unspecified amount to their son Richard. He left £1000 to John Dillon, son of John Dillon (deceased) of Athlone. To each of his aunts on his father's side – Elizabeth Kelly, Eleanor Higgins and Barbara Conry – he left £200; and £500 to his cousin Arthur Browne of Ellistran (son of another paternal aunt, Julia Dillon).

He appointed his cousin, Coll Dillon, heir to his estate, "*after ... debts and legacies be paid and to be my heir to the remainder without law or trouble, if any should be, I leave him £2000 sterling...*" Along with other concerns, he made over to Theobald Mahon his title of houses in Galway city and the farm in Carrowbrown that he held, "*in right of my late wife Mary Kirwan and under the will of her brother Revd. Patk. Kirwan*", making provision for him to support "*Mr. Dillon at the election*".³²

A number of smaller bequests were made: "*I leave my Nurse £50 and ten pounds to each of her children, and £20 to Tim Cain, and £10 to Ellen Campbell. I leave the poor friars of Ballyhauness ten pounds each in the cause of charity and to pay any of them any money I may owe them.*" All his debts in Ballyhaunis and elsewhere, "*at Mrs. Hughes', my nurse's, the convent*", were to be dealt with by his "Aunt Mahon." And he stated: "*If I die in Ireland I wish to be buried in*



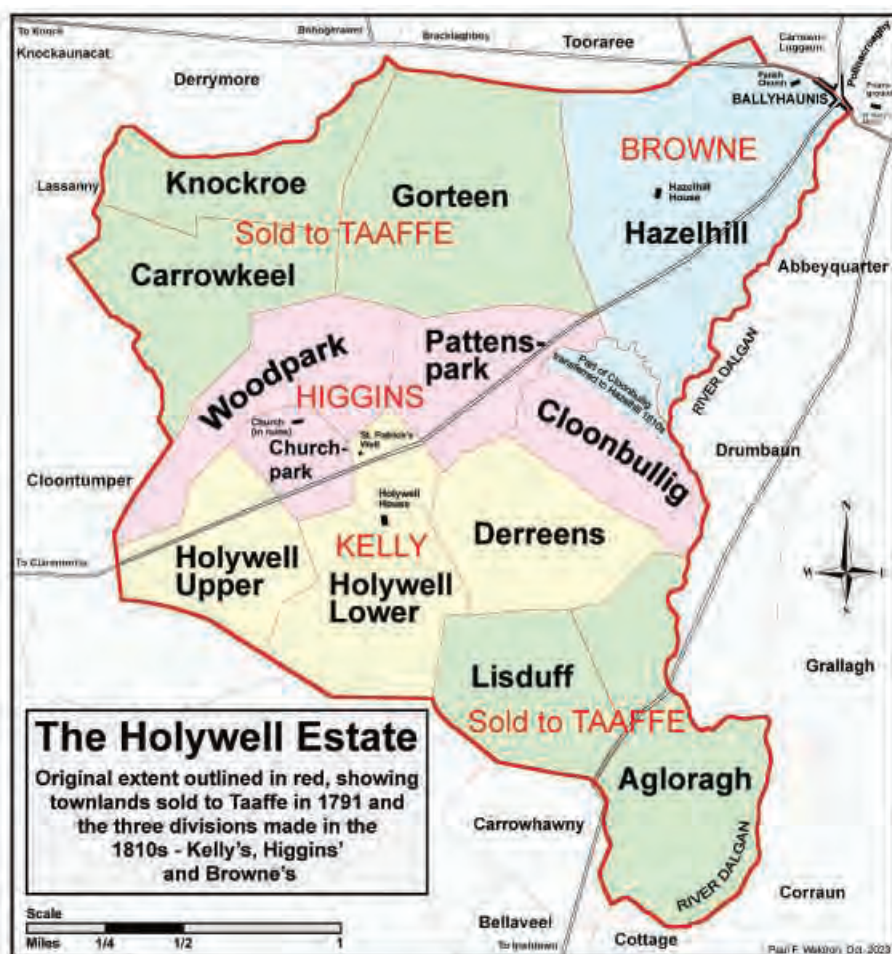
Ballyhauniss without expence." In a codicil to the will he left to, "my friend Taafe £100 for the trouble I have given him", and £400 to Miss Julia and Anne Bodkin of Galway, "from the desire I have to keep my promise to them."

Outcome

Coll Dillon, Edmond's cousin whom he nominated as heir, seems to be the 'Colonel Dillon of Hazel-hill' named in McParlan's statistical survey of Mayo (1802), as one of the non-resident landlords in the county.³³ It appears that either he died not long after Edmond, that the will was contested or that other issues arose in the succession because, later in 1802, the Holywell estate was deemed to be held '...in three undivided parts, as tenants in common' by Edmond's two surviving aunts (his father's sisters) – Mrs. Elizabeth Kelly and Mrs. Eleanor Higgins – and his first cousin (son of another paternal aunt) Arthur Browne of Ellistron, Kilmaine, all of whom Edmond had named as cash beneficiaries in his will. Another aunt on his father's side mentioned in the will, Mrs. Barbara Conry and her husband both died shortly after Edmond.³⁴

In 1803 one John Dillon of 'the city of Londonderry' (probably the 'son of John Dillon of Athlone' to whom Edmond left £1000 in his will) secured a loan from his father-in-law to help 'establish his title and to recover possession' of the Holywell estate.³⁵ This being further evidence of a disputed will. The whereabouts of any surviving court papers that might throw light on proceedings from this period are not known and the few registered deeds that survive are insufficient to reveal the story in full. It may be that there simply wasn't enough funds to meet all the bequests in the will.

By the year 1818 the Holywell estate had been divided up into three parts. In October of that year Hugh Kelly and Andrew Higgins (widowers of Edmond Dillon's two aunts) were parties to separate deeds concerning their divisions of the estate. Kelly obtained a mortgage on his division, described as 'the towns and lands of Upper and Lower Holywell and Upper and Lower Derreens' for the sum of £800 sterling.³⁶ The mortgagee, William Burke of Tuam may have been the man whose generous bequest of land and money established the Presentation Convent in Tuam in 1835. What is significant here is that one of



the witnesses to that document, executed on 21st Oct. 1818, was one 'John Burke of Marlborough St., in the city of Dublin, gent., one of the attorneys'. He it was too who lodged the document with the Registry of Deeds one month later. Ten years later this same John Burke was living in Holywell House with his family, owners of the estate over which they would preside for the next eighty years.

But that's a story for next year's *Annagh*.

The Dillon Vault

The Dillons of Holywell were generous benefactors of St. Mary's Abbey - the Friary. Battersby, in his history of Augustinian foundations in Ireland, wrote of Ballyhauniss: 'The family of Dillon of Holywell, bequeathed to the Convent £200, with obligation of Masses yearly.'³⁷ In his will Edmond Dillon (5th) wrote, "I leave the poor friars of Ballyhauness ten pounds each in the cause of charity and to pay any of them any money I may owe them."

The Dillon family had their burial vault right at the heart of the church, beneath the main altar (not to be confused with Viscount Dillon's vault, above ground, between the sanctuary and the present sacristy). Francis Grose, describing the church's interior around 1791, wrote: "Beneath the eastern window is the altar, with the Dillon

arms under a crucifix, and in the vaults many of this noble family rest."³⁸ Those 'arms', carved in limestone, are still to be seen in the Friary church, now in the side porch. The vault was accessed from within the sanctuary through a trap door, but this was blocked by reconstruction work during Fr. Walter Kelly's term as prior in the 1830s. A new entrance was made through the gable wall from the graveyard outside (beneath the great east window), where the ground is considerably lower than the church floor.

One reference to the vault implies that the Dillons of Holywell did not die out entirely after Edmond's death in 1801. When John Burke inherited part of the estate in the 1820s, he claimed the right to use the vault because the other co-inheritors were absentees and wouldn't need it. Writing to the Augustinian Provincial - Fr. Bernard O'Neill - he protested that, sometime after the interment of his own mother there, circa 1830, "... some persons insisted on opening the vault to bury a person of the name of Dillon, son of an illegitimate son of Mr. Dillon, formerly of Holywell." They were prevented from doing so by the then prior, Fr. Robert Dore, who later confirmed in writing the Burke family's exclusive rights to the vault. It continued in use by them with the last interment in 1911.

Placenames

The original Holywell estate contained thirteen townlands recognisable today. However, other placenames from the past and divisions of townlands that crop up in old records are long-since out of use and hard to pin down. Eighteenth century deeds often give more than one name for a townland and so the original Irish forms of English names, such as Woodpark, Pattenspark, can be discerned easily. Some townlands, like Hazelhill, were made up of divisions each with their own name. In all the pre-1800 references uncovered for the old Holywell estate, Knockroe and Agloragh are never mentioned. This is because they're not listed in the *Strafford Inquisition* (1635) and practically every deed or lease between then

Dear Mick

Toulouse April 9th 1777

I am very sorry my first letter to you from France is to give an account of the death of Andrew Fiench's Daughter, however think proper to give you the earliest notice of it, least there should be anything requisite for you to do on the Occasion, she died the 6. the next day twelve months her sister died, the Lord have mercy on her, there is no one more to be pitied than Miss Fiench, both for the loss of her, and her distressful situation here, she is no more but what than a state prisoner, without anything in her pocket, owed money to every creature she could get it from, I am certain her debts in France amount to three hundred and fifty pounds, every one murmuring against her, in short I fear she will be exposed if not soon relieved, it will be an Act of Charity of you to write to her Bro^r of her situation, if I had money I would try to relieve her, but it is not in my power. the death of my Dear Father with that of my Bro^r in Law obliges me to bring my family to Ireland much sooner than I wish, I therefore set out for Bordeaux the 13. of the month expecting God's Assistance to arrive in Cork about y^e. 25 where I shall stay a few days, as the house at Hazelhill is entirely naked and that you may be certain I will not bring much money from France, I am infinitely obliged to you if you w^d. permit me to Cork your bill on Dublin for my Student of 100^l. Gerald money, I cannot well go home without sending some kind of furniture before me, you will do well to me at all! I am sure Fiench's Cork Biddy and the Child are thank God very well and join me in Affection to you and all the family. I am Dear Mick

Yours Most Sincerely
Edm^d. Dillon

Letter written from Toulouse, France, 9th Apr. 1777, by Edmond Dillon (4th) to his cousin Michael Bellew, where he mentions the recent death of his father, and the state of the house in Hazelhill (Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland).

the early nineteenth century, is ultimately based on that listing. Knockroe must have been regarded as a part of Carrowkeel, while Agloragh apparently was part of 'East and West Lisduff' also known as Derreenighter.

- **Annagh:** probably centred on the townland of Churchpark.
- **Carrowkeel:** occurs in different spellings.
- **Churchpark:** first recorded in 1800.
- **Cloonbullig:** occurs in different spellings.
- **Derreens:** sometimes given as Derreen, but usually the two forms Derreenighter or Derreenoughter (lower and upper). Today's official townland of Derreens was Derreenoughter because Derreenighter always occurs as an alias of 'East and West Lisduff', which included Agloragh townland.
- **Gorteen:** also Gorteendrishagh in different spellings.
- **Hazelhill:** occurs with slight spelling variations. Two subdivisions were: Tubber or Lecarrowantubber, after the big well from which the town now takes its water, anciently called *Tobar a'Dúiche*. *Caldragh* also Carrownecaldry, Coolderry or Cordragh: the official

Irish form of Hazelhill townland is *An Chealtrach* referring to a burial ground. *Ballyhaunis*, also Ballyhavness: most of the town lies at the very north-east of Hazelhill townland.

- **Holywell:** Also occurs as Collere / Carrowcollere / Carrownecallagh / Carrownesallagh / Clear / Baracholare. Bald's Map of County Mayo (surveyed 1809-17) shows 'Collere' where Holywell Upper is now.
- **Lisduff:** usually given as 'East and West Lisduff' or Derreeneighter/Derryeighter.
- **Pattenspark:** first mentioned in a deed of 1791. Its original Irish name given in anglicised forms including Carrowpiggott, Carrowpicolt and Carrowficoll. Its recognised Irish form is *Ceathrú an Phiocóidigh* said to mean 'quarter of the pikes'.
- **Woodpark:** first mentioned in a deed of 1791. Usually given along with two alternatives, probably divisions within the townland: Barnaderrig, Carrowbarnaderrig or Carrownabarnaderrig and Edan, Carrowedan or Carrownedan. Bald's Map of County Mayo (1809-17) gives the name 'Ballynakiellue', and the place where Woodpark, Carrowkeel and Gorteen meet as 'Coachgap'.
- **Agloragh:** Not mentioned before 1800. The reference: 'Derryeighter otherwise Derreeneighter otherwise Lisduffe and the mill thereon' confirms that this included Agloragh, where there was a corn mill for centuries.
- **Knockroe:** Not mentioned before 1800. Probably regarded as part of Carrowkeel.
- **Unidentified:** One placename within the old Holywell estate remains a mystery. It usually occurs in three alternative forms, with spelling varying from deed to deed, something like, 'Farnane otherwise Carrownarnane otherwise Carnane'. It must derive from the Irish *Fearnán*, a reference to alder trees.

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- ³ H.T. Knox, 'Some Connacht Rathes and Motes' in *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, vol. 1, no. 3 (Sep. 30, 1911), p. 211.
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- ⁵ John Lodge, *The Peerage of Ireland* (4 vols, Dublin 1739), iv, p. 174.
- ⁶ Robert C. Simington, *The Transplantation to Connacht 1654-58* (Dublin 1970), p. 203.

- ⁷ Gerry Cribbin, 'Fr. Fulgentius Jordan O.S.A.' in *Annagh 2003* (Ballyhaunis 2003), p. 95.
- ⁸ *Lodge*, p. 174.
- ⁹ Registry of Deeds (ROD), memorials, book 34/page 505/deed no. 22670.
- ¹⁰ *Lodge*, p. 175.
- ¹¹ The chalice does not feature in J.J. Buckley's otherwise comprehensive series 'Some Irish Altar Plate' published in issues of *The Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 1939-1943.
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- ¹³ ROD 485/334/305618.
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- ¹⁶ Michael Kelly, 'An 18th Century Land Dispute at Cottage and Levallyroe' in *Annagh 2019*, pp 46-7.
- ¹⁷ ROD 563/320/376969.
- ¹⁸ *Dublin Evening Post*, 29 Sept. 1789.
- ¹⁹ ROD 443/238/285930.
- ²⁰ ROD 435/507/285391.
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- ²³ Catholic Qualification Rolls, 1700-1845. National Archives of Ireland.
- ²⁴ *Dublin Evening Post*, 21 Jan. 1792.
- ²⁵ C. J. Woods, 'The Personnel of the Catholic Convention, 1792-3' in *Archivium Hibernicum*, lvii (2003), pp 26-76.
- ²⁶ Catholic Qualification Rolls, 1700-1845. National Archives of Ireland.
- ²⁷ R. B. McDowell, 'Personnel of the Dublin society of United Irishmen' in *Irish Historical Studies*, ii, no. 5, (Mar. 1940), pp 12-53.
- ²⁸ *Dublin Evening Post*, 6 Dec. 1794.
- ²⁹ Máire McDonnell-Garvey, *The Ancient Territory of Sliabh Lugha: Mid-Connacht* (Manorhamilton 1995), p. 42. SPO Rebellion Papers 620/30/225.
- ³⁰ 'Loughglin Cavalry 1796' (Dillon Papers, microfilm, N.L.I. n.5208, p. 5312).
- ³¹ ROD 545/127/338869.
- ³² Probably a reference to Henry Augustus Dillon-Lee (later 13th Viscount Dillon), elected MP for Mayo in the general election of 1802.
- ³³ James McParlan, *A Statistical Survey of the County Mayo* (Dublin 1802), p. 106.
- ³⁴ ROD 549/357/364110; 576/422/392842; 733/506/500241.
- ³⁵ ROD 554/196/366822.
- ³⁶ ROD 734/415/500751.
- ³⁷ W.J. Battersby, *A History of all the Abbeys, Convents, Churches, and other religious houses of the order particularly of the Hermits of St. Augustine in Ireland* (Dublin 1856), p. 72.
- ³⁸ Francis Grose, *The Antiquities of Ireland* (2 vols, London 1791), i, p. 40.

Baptisms Marriages Deceased

BAPTISMS in the Parish – November 2022 to October 2023

Oisín Liam Rochford, Doctor's Road
 Rachel Helen Margaret Byrne, Belcarra
 Ella Sheila Waldron, Upper Main St.
 Precious Kimberley Crean Allen, Kiltiboe
 Cian Matthew Walsh, Coogue South
 Ivy-Marie Higgins, Hazelhill Downs
 Amelia Rose Cleary, The Maples
 Seamie Kenny Waldron, Bracklaghboy
 Finbar Tadhg Buckley, Bracklaghboy
 Terence Joseph Daly, Cherryfield
 Sheriese Latashia Maughan, Abbeyvale
 Katie Doyle, The Maples
 Cúan William Gallagher, Doctor's Road
 Harry Joseph Murphy, Gurteen
 Saoirse Béibhinn McGuinn, Classaroe
 Chloe De Oliveira Guerra, Abbeyquarter
 Austin Benedict Maughan, Abbeyquarter
 Molly Croia Brennan, Holywell
 Darla Marie McDonagh, Tooraree
 Ellery Tarnik, The Maples
 Setanta Hodge, Athlone
 Martin Pihik, Hazelwood
 Klaudia Pihikova, Hazelwood
 Victoria Balbino Romao, Knox St.

Aoibh Margaret Tarpey, Carrowkeel
 Freddie Theo Herr, Doctor's Road
 Anna Rena Lynch, Annagh
 Oisín Patrick Lynch, Annagh
 Alicja Koralewska, Manor Brook
 Adrian Koralewski, Manor Brook
 Henrique Dias Ferreira, Old Racecourse
 Maeve Mendes Rodrigues, Cashel, Ballinlough
 Arthur Henrique De Souza Silva, Sherwood
 Alex Sustr, The Maples
 Páidí John Kelly, Abbeyquarter
 Harvey Sidhu, Kiltimagh



MARRIAGES

in the Parish Church

– November 2022 to October 2023

Catherine Smyth (Dublin)
 and Lyon Devereux (Wales)

Mary Louise Collins (Ardara, Co. Donegal)
 and Leon Ward (Ardara, Co. Donegal)

DECEASED of the Parish – November 2022 to October 2023

Mary Higgins, Knockbrack
 Bridget Egan, Abbeyquarter
 Anne Flanagan, Clare Court
 Joe Mullarkey, Carrigaline, Co. Cork
 and Ballybeg, Tullaghane
 Fintan Lynch, Ennis, Co. Clare and Main St.
 Martha Culliney, Lassiney and Knox St.
 Rose Christine McDonagh, Kent, UK
 Paddy Lyons, Manchester and Redford
 Frank Fetherston, Abbeyquarter
 Anthony Waldron, Clagnagh and Cave
 Pierce Higgins, Esker Pines
 Patrick Flannery, St. Gerard's Crescent
 Mary McQueeney, Main St.
 Fiona Rabbitt, Tuam, Derby, UK and Larganboy
 John Healy, Holywell and Western Care
 Séan Paul Tighe, Carrowbawn, Crossard
 and Carrowreagh



Tony O'Malley, Holywell Upper
 Kathleen Caulfield, Upper Main St.
 and Eden, Knock
 Mary Flanagan Feeney, Devlis
 and Crossard
 Val Byrne, Kilkenny and Main St.
 Brian Flanagan, Ballindrehid
 Mary Caulfield, Ballina and Carrowkeel
 Mary Jordan, Knox St and Greenwood
 Frank Loughran, Upper Main St.
 Chris Mannion, Drimbane
 Ann Caulfield, Hazel Lawns
 and Kilgarraff, Knock
 Keith Jarman, Gurteenmore
 Noreen Dowd (née O'Boyle), Dublin
 and Carrowreagh
 Pat Donnellan, Clare Street

DECEASED of elsewhere, prayed for at Mass – November 2022 to October 2023

John Lyons, Enfield, Celbridge and Skeghard
 Paul O'Neill, Inniskeen, Co. Monaghan and Doctor's Road
 Fr. Colm Burke, formerly of St. Patrick's College, Ballyhaunis
 Elizabeth Hunt, Boston
 Marie Pollard, Castlegar, Galway and Ballyrourke, The Neale
 James Connolly, Dublin
 Jimmy Jordan, Manchester and Knox Street
 Austin Whyte, New York and Dunmore
 Catherine Flynn (née Doherty), Castlebar and Derrintogher
 Pat Moloney, Cratloe, Co. Clare
 Brigid Bonner, London
 Roman Wiktor, The Maples, Ballyhaunis
 Tom Cribbin, Cahir, Aghamore and Togher
 Brid McGrath (née Rabbitte), Knock and Derrylea
 Fr. Martin Newell, Retd. PP Corrandulla
 Fr. Michael Goaley, Retd. PP Glenamaddy
 John Crehan, Dublin
 Jack Brophy, Dublin
 Catherine (Kitty) Connell (née Donnellan), Devlis
 Chris (William) Caulfield, Galway and Carrowkeel
 Margaret Ramsey (née Griffin), Newcastle, UK and Gurrane
 Frank Regan, Leicester and Killinaugher
 Paddy Godfrey, Moate, Ballyhaunis
 Teresa Walsh, UK and Castleconnor, Co. Sligo
 Eileen Meehan, Brownsgrrove, Tuam
 Paddy Moran, Galway and Castlebar
 Nora Teresa Concannon, Ballymahon, Co. Longford
 Margaret Garner, Devon, UK
 Josie Rattigan, Birmingham and Knockbrack
 Ann Dillon (née Smith), Claremorris
 Mary Maughan, Tarmon, Blacksod
 Pat Mulkeen, London and Tulrahan
 Mary Whelan, Castledermott, Co. Kildare
 Tony Greene, Pennsylvania, USA and Knox St.
 Louise O'Callaghan, Cork
 Ann Connaughton, Granlahan and Carna
 Enda Gallagher, Crossmolina
 Breege Jordan (née Kelly), Ballina and Island
 Ciarán Walsh, Lisacul
 Thelma Monaghan, Upper Main St. and Dublin
 Frances Fanning (née Molloy), Dundalk and Ballyhaunis
 Catherine (Kitty) Fitzgerald (née Keane), Ballinlough and Upper Main Street

Margaret McGrath (née Hannon), Coventry and Togher
 Patricia (Patsy) Kilrairie (née Toolan), Galway and Knockanara
 Colm Forkan, Tooreen
 Dr. Mickey Loftus, Crossmolina
 Mary Teresa Lowry, Manchester and Castlebar
 Pat Carr, Manchester
 Joe Maxwell, Louisburgh
 Anthony Jordan, Sandymount, Dublin and Knox St.
 Christina (Teen) Carney, Bekan
 Eveleen Phillips (née Sloyan), Manchester and Kiltaboe
 Pat Carr, Burnage, Manchester and Newbridge, Co. Galway
 Noreen Gilson (née Meleady), Carbury, Co. Kildare and Devlis
 Michael Healy, Manchester and Holywell
 John Fleming, Loughglynn and Lisacul
 Kathleen Cogan, Riverstown, Co. Sligo
 Angela Niland, Kilkelly
 Rita McLoughlin (née Rogers), Larganboy and Ballybeg
 Joan Connell, Gurrane
 Pdraig Sloyan, Reisk and Station Rise
 Edith Loftus, Crossmolina
 Chris Catz, Washington DC, USA
 Salvacion Gutierrez, Phillippines
 John Fitzgerald, Ballinlough and Upper Main Street
 Mary Dooley (née O'Dwyer), Ballisodare and Ballyhaunis
 Joe Whelan, France
 Luke Cameron, Ballinrobe
 Kathleen Hussey, Larganboy and Enfield, Co. Meath
 Ray Smyth, Ballintubber, Co. Roscommon
 Kevin Molloy, Minnesota, USA
 Noreen Hyslop, Durban, South Africa
 Mohamad Ghzi Faddwi, Devlis
 Catriona Burke, Cloongoonagh, Tooreen
 Josephine Lyons, UK and Devlis
 Jeanie Higgins, Williamstown
 Liam Judge, Clooncrim, Ballinlough
 John Broderick, Luton, UK and Castlerea
 John (Sonny) Barrett, Threemilehouse, Co. Monaghan and Upper Main St.
 Bernard Fetherston, Manchester and Cloonfenian, Ballinlough
 John Joe Ryan, Pallasgreen, Co. Limerick



Right:
Ploughman Mick Jordan of Annagh
at work on Austin Jordan's land at
Upper Main Street, with the newly
built Parish Church in the
background (c.1915).
(Courtesy Oliver Jordan, Annagh)

Below:
The newly opened Aldi Store
photographed from the same
spot in 2023.



Left:
Cathal Fleming,
Christened on
26th August
2023 in
Cloonfad by Fr.
Stephen
Farragher, P.P.

Right:
Cathal and James
Fleming, sons of
Aoife McDonagh
and Jason Fleming
(Cloonfad),
grandsons of
Michael McDonagh
(Grallaghgardens),
supporting Mayo in
this year's
championship.



Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club

Pavel Cervenak

Passers-by on Main Street have become accustomed to the rhythmic thwack of plastic ping-pong ball on ball, punctuated by sharp squeals of rubber soles on polished floor. The sounds are to be heard every Monday and Wednesday evenings when the only table tennis club in Mayo meets at the Community Hall on Main Street.

It's been six years since the club moved its tables from Kilkelly in the car trailer towed by club coach Shay O'Reilly who had moved west several years earlier after a life in the Dublin construction trade. The club's staying power is down to a combination of Shay's persistence, and capacity for encouragement of newer players, alongside club chairperson Mark Godfrey's ability to bring in the funds that keep the club going.

I myself am thirteen and coming to the club has been a great way of meeting and making friends. The coach Shay is very friendly and considerate towards me and the other members. Shay always teaches every new member that joins the club and introduces them to new friends. I live around the corner from the hall, in St. Gerald's Court, with my family which is originally from the Czech Republic.

Another constant presence at the club Monday and Wednesday night meetings is Eriks Dunkurs, a carpenter who sees the sport as 'great exercise'. Eriks has been twelve years in Ballyhaunis and regrets he didn't find the table tennis club sooner. "If only I'd known about it, I'd have been here for years!" said Eriks, who played the sport growing up in the Latvian capital Riga and takes his son along after finishing work at a Swinford furniture manufacturers.

Second year student at Ballyhaunis Community School, Pavel Cobzaru is Moldovan-Irish and playing table tennis since he was nine years old. An athletic teenager, Pavel likes coming to table tennis, "because it's fun. You don't have to use all your energy like you do in basketball or Gaelic football." More of his school friends would come, "but they don't live in Ballyhaunis."

One who makes the trip in from Beken for the ball game is Patrick Culliney, a leaving cert student guided to the club by teacher Paul Ryan. "We were encouraged in our final year to try something new, like a sport, and Mr. Ryan told me about table tennis. I love it, it's such a friendly atmosphere in a lovely hall and it's a great sport."

The club welcomes players of all ages and we've invited the men's sheds in both Ballyhaunis and Cloonfad to join us. One of our more experienced players, Steve Hale, came back to table tennis in 2021 after a fifty-year break. "I used to play it in Leeds when I worked at Leeds City Transport where there was a very big league," he explains. Steve played a range of sports while running his own business after his five-year career on the Leeds bus network. Now retired and living in Granlahan, he's hoping to see more retirees joining him at the Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club. "Table tennis is great exercise for everyone, no matter what your level." Steve's skill and enjoyment of the game in his late sixties are hopefully a model for others to follow. He believes the easy pleasures of smartphones and social media have diminished the appetite for sports like table tennis, or maybe there's too much choice. "Maybe the internet has killed interest, but also there are so many different sports now and some of these used to be elitist. Tennis used to be elitist but now lots of people play it, as it's more accessible through school."

The club's senior player and its mentor, Shay O'Reilly, has purchased a house in Redford. He's keen for more locals of all ages to join. "Our officers are Garda vetted and the club is affiliated to the national federation, Table Tennis Ireland. We charge annual membership of €10 and €3 for every two-hour session. It's great value." So, if you're passing the Community Hall and hear the table tennis ball on bat come on in and say hello!

Contact the club via our Facebook page or call
087 9777899.



"Table Tennis is a sport for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds."

Down One Side and Up the Other

Main Street, Ballyhaunis, Late 1950s (Part 1)

Christina Johnston (Erriff)



A postcard view of Main Street in the 1950s, featuring Dillon's iconic gable, painted by Tom Barry. Originally published by Flatley's, Main Street.

In this age of drones, twirling turbines and electric noiseless cars, it refreshes me to reflect back to the late 1950s when, as a ten-year-old, I regularly walked to town with my mother. She was never comfortable cycling and we both enjoyed the walk from Erriff and often treated ourselves to a trip home in a hackney car with Tommy Flatley, PD Freeley or George O'Malley, all long at rest with the Lord.

I recall in those days Ballyhaunis started with Pat Hughes' bungalow at the top of the Tooraree Road on the left, with Greene's and Guard Kelly's large houses on the right. I will take you on a trip which I will name 'Down One Side and Up the Other'. I am so grateful to have received wonderful, detailed information from Eamonn Murren who was able to recall and name almost every house. I have decided to refer only to the houses that were prominent for me as a child.

I recall Ms. Annie Freeley and Stensons. Tommy Stenson was the sacristan at the parish church. Next was Martin and Mrs. Flatley and their daughter Moira. Andy Egan NT lived in the big house where Loughrans now reside. The next terrace started with Gus Levins and family and further down was the home of Guard

McNaught and family, Sergeant and Mrs. Nally, Jim and Rita Forde and family, Smyth's and Curley's private residence.

Kenny's woodwork assembly shop was a fascinating place, especially when the ass-carts with their rubber-tyred wheels emerged and I hoped that my father might rise to the latest model next time. I remember Johnny McGuire from Ballindrehid, a master craftsman proudly displaying the wonderful bright orange and blue brand-new model. Sadly, with progress over the years, carts have become obsolete and the business has long closed down.

Next was the short terrace where a small number of the same families still live. Morans, Cullineys and Mrs. Waldron and daughter Carmel were all neighbours there. A cluster of shops followed, Mulhern's, Shryane's and a favourite for us young people, Tom and Noreen Hopkins'. These shopkeepers knew us all by name and were all so good-humoured and friendly. Later, as teenagers, this was our assembly point where each evening we enjoyed Flash and Macaroon Bars, Penny Toffees, Perry Crisps and Choc-ices. We also had fun eyeing-up the boys from St. Patrick's College and the



Vocational School and many dates were arranged for the cinema and the local céilís. I often took home shopping for Mrs. Finn of Erriff and Mrs. Lannon of Derrymore, who had a young family at the time. Ending the terrace were M.A. 'Mult' Waldron's Insurance and Greeley's.

The next terrace (the other side of the junction with Doctor's Road) included P.D. Freeley's hackney business, other private houses and ended with Larry Moran's 'The White Horse' public house. Down the side of this terrace was Moran's Terrace and further in, 'The Dardanelles' where our neighbour The Dancer Waldron rented an upstairs room for two-shillings a week and Mrs. Keegan, a well-known lady and a rather colourful character was also a resident. The Tailor Hopkins, Tom Barrett, the Devaneys and Town-Crier Tom Sharkey were some of the others who all lived here for very many years. Tommy Flatley, an ardent Republican, Irish dancer, and hackney driver lived in one of the two-storey houses opposite the church. The sturdy and ageless residence owned by Tom Freeley and still largely unchanged, stood with grace and majesty.

The Parochial Hall, occupying its own site, was a very popular gathering place, much used as a cinema, snooker and billiards hall, a venue for meetings and for céili dances. My brother Paddy enjoyed many a John Wayne western there for a one shilling admission. The hall has been recently refurbished and continues to be a great asset to the town and is used for various meetings, community events, celebratory functions, political meetings and so on.

Main Street

As you continue towards The Square, the next block began with Pat, Joe and Luke Tighe's shoe repair business. The Tighe brothers hammered away at their lasts daily and were highly respected men and craftsmen by their customers and by all who knew them. Tommy and Eamonn Phillips' butcher shop did a thriving trade. They both attended the local fair days sourcing top class animals for their quality meat products. Eamonn's son Pat proudly continues the business in his impressive, modern shop where, having moved with the times and catering for modern tastes, one can order burgers, stir-fries, chicken Maryland, beef Stroganoff as well as the traditional prize steaks, roasts of beef and lamb.

Another Phillips, though no relation, Paddy Phillips busily operated his public house next door. Before Paddy bought the premises it was known as 'The Cape of Good Hope', named by a previous owner who had spent time in South Africa. Paddy and his wife Úna were very popular and welcoming to all customers. Sadly, the pub, like so many others in Ballyhaunis and throughout the country, served its last pint and we bade a fond farewell in 2022.

Shoes are always a necessity and next door was Neary's shop. Phyllis Neary married Charlie Phillips, a brother of Paddy. Their children have expanded the business and now operate outlets in Ballyhaunis and Claremorris as well as online sales. Tom and Mrs. Murphy, Eddie's parents, also ran a pub with help from their daughters Miriam and Rita. This was one of the



Upper Main Street in the 1960s. First published in *Annagh* 1987.

first chip shops, along with Mrs. Glynn's of Clare Street, that I can recall in the town.

Mike McGreal's was a different type of shop. This was a popular haunt especially for the teenage boys. Here, they would gather regularly and drink Thwaite's red lemonade, enjoy ice cream, Scots Clan, liquorice sweets and Bon-Bons. Tess Kelly owned the last shop on this block. Tess was a charming and generous lady with her own band of loyal customers. Tess married Eddie McHugh, her motor-factor neighbour from across the street.

Businesses

Two thriving and very successful businesses start off the next section of our journey towards the centre of the town. These were Caulfield's and Byrne's. Both were Egg Merchants and Exporters and also ran licensed premises. Pakie Caulfield was also a prominent auctioneer and presided over many sales of landholdings and the striping of land, a common exercise by the Land Commission in the 1950s. Pakie and his wife (née Greally) had a beautiful daughter Bridget Mary who passed away while only in her early forties. Bridget married local photographer Jack Halpin and two of their six children, John and Hélène are popular residents in Ballyhaunis. Jack and his eldest daughter Mary ran Halpin's Bar for a number of years. Mickey Moran was the family's devoted, lifelong egg-lorry driver, friend and employee.

John and Bridie Byrne also ran a very busy egg business with lorries driven by local men who made almost daily trips to the Dublin market. Jimmy Hickey and Mick Biesty were two of the drivers that I can recall. Byrne sons, Mike and Val, operated the travelling shop and bar and both were greatly liked by their many customers. It's nice to see the name 'Val's' (only recently deceased, RIP) still over the door of the former Byrne's premises which remains a very busy bar and restaurant. Another son, Tommy Byrne, operated his dental practice from an adjacent private house.

Lynch Motors and Garage, owned by Bertie Lynch, held the Ford Dealership for many years. It was here that dear Billy Rochford of Cullintra cut his entrepreneurial teeth. Billy later courageously started his own business in the motor industry and secured the agency for Mitsubishi. The success of this business speaks for itself. Now run by Billy and Nell Rochford's son Liam, he has added the Seat and Opel dealerships to his business on the Knock Road for his customer base in Mayo, Connacht and beyond.

Long gone but not forgotten was Kate and Mercy Flatley's Café. Noted for its wholesome lunches and teas, local shop-boys and girls dined daily here and discussed

trade, romance and all the local gossip of the day. To the great surprise and sadness of all, Kate and Mercy emigrated to Australia to make a new life there with Kate's other daughters Mary and Betty, all now deceased, RIP.

Michael A. Fahey and family were the proprietors of a drapery shop and also stocked Foxford blankets and made curtains to order. Michael promoted quality items and brands. My mother bought my first pair of Start-Rite shoes here, ignoring my pleas for Hornpipes. I was sent in to purchase Long-Johns for my father's wintertime comfort, much to my teenage embarrassment.

A busy newsagent, Joe Flatley's, was located around the centre of this long block. You were always guaranteed a laugh in Flatley's where sharp-tongued Rita frequently directed colourful humour at customers and daughter 'Maryeen'. Sean Corcoran and his wife Alacoque (Lynch) ran a nice café during daytime business hours. This is now the location of Main Street Veterinary Practice and Animal Centre.

Sonny Phillips and his brother, known as Yank, ran a public house and lived next door to Captain Lyons. Their sister Tilly McQueeney ran a popular sweet shop across the street. I always went to her for my Christmas box of delicious chocolates. James Lyons' large premises remains largely unchanged and has recently changed hands. It was reputed that a customer once asked for an orange and a blade for a scythe in Captain Lyons'. How about that for versatility and product range! James Lyons was a lovely quiet-spoken gentleman from whom I regularly purchased gut hooks, line and bait for our fishing escapades – here you can perceive even more diversity of items stocked in Captain's.

The Cribbin family, Tony and Mariah and their three boys (Fr. J.J., Tony and Tom), were popular family butchers and their staff members Mick McDonnell and Michael 'Dinjo' Cameron were legendary, known far and wide. Pat Kilroy and Pat Keane (Kiltiboe) had a shoe repair shop, a popular meeting place for local lads, next-door to Edward Webb's butcher shop. The Webb family for generations has been closely associated with the cattle trade and meat business in Ballyhaunis. A select grocery shop, James Waldron's, supplied their many customers with delicious rashers, sausages as well as loose biscuits and loose grain that is no longer available in shops. Their son Noel and his wife Mary ran the business in more recent times and continued to serve their many long-standing customers. James and Mrs. Waldron were parents to three sons who became priests Fr. Kieran, Fr. Jarlath and Fr. Peter. Their daughter Patricia qualified as a Home Economics teacher and taught in the local Vocational School and later in the Community School.



The end of the block was marked by a very large business store with hand-painted name and advertising on display on its expansive gable wall. Local man and gifted artist Tom Barry was responsible for this display and sign-writing. This wide-ranging business was founded by Jack Dillon, a farsighted and courageous businessman. Dillon's was well known for hardware, builders supplies, timber, cement, floor coverings and so much more. The delivery lorries were driven by Jack's sons and I remember daughter Hillary playing Hide and Seek with us as children in Erriff. Jack and daughter Norrie established one of the first travel agencies in the west of Ireland and arranged countless trans-Atlantic trips for travellers in the days before on-line bookings. The Dillon sons and their long-time employee and friend Tom McCormack were capable salesmen, especially in the line



Eileen Nestor at the door of her childhood home, Main St., Ballyhaunis. (AK Photography)

of fancy goods and were always good for a couple of bob discount.

May all who have passed from this side of Main Street and Upper Main Street enjoy eternal rest and next year, le cunamh Dé, we will continue our tour 'up the other side'.



Above: Former Ballyhaunis Community School students Cian Walsh (left) and Auredas Armonavicus (right), who were NUIG scholarship recipients November, 2022. They are pictured with Mr. David McDonagh, Principal of Ballyhaunis Community School. (Courtesy of Mike Byrne).

Right: Cousins Meet Up. L-R: Margie Hoban Moore, Mary Mulrennan, Georgia Freeley Miller.



From the Streets of Hanoi to the Shores of Thailand

A Journey through Southeast Asia

Dara Healy



I don't think anything in this world can prepare one for arriving in the mystical lands of Southeast Asia. The smell of exotic street food, along with the throngs of people and roads heaving with mopeds, certainly gives one a sensory overload, but one that has a sense of mystery and excitement.

My first stop in the East was in the capital of Vietnam, Hanoi. This is where I rendezvoused with my brother Shane (Luigi) Healy, who was on his own travels, with Australia as his final destination and a place where he would call home for the foreseeable future. Hanoi had a lot to offer, with stunning French-infused food and architecture. Crossing the road was an experience in itself in Vietnam, with a famous local saying: "red means go."

The next part of our trip was biking the famous Hai Van Pass, which was featured on 'Top Gear' a few years ago. It's known for its stunning views and for being the longest mountain pass in Vietnam. We followed our moped adventures further when we completed the bucket-list-worthy Ha Giang Loop. This was the trip highlight, taking an unforgettable three-day, 350km round-trip adventure that led us through majestic landscapes of pinnacle limestone cliffs, deep valleys and traditional villages. One of the more memorable parts was having lunch with the local, on-duty Kung Ho policemen, who gave us delicious homemade food and insisted I do seven shots of 'happy water' (moonshine) in honour of each member of the force. This had me testing my backbone, similar to nights I've had in the Corner Bar. Although there was a big language barrier, we shared great laughs with the lads. Police Chief Mr. Linh even asked if I knew Queen Elizabeth or Liverpool dynamo Michael Owen. The cost of living is quite low,



Inset pic: The beauty of the Ha Giang loop. *Above:* Chang Mai Elephant Sanctuary in Thailand. From left to right: Eamon Phillips, Patrick Kiely, Adrian Phillips and Joe Sutton.

allowing us to live like kings, with 20,000 dong beer (80 cents) and delicious two-course dinners costing 130,000 dong (€5).

To finish our time in Vietnam, we went to the city of Ho Chi Minh, formerly known as Saigon. This city had it all, certainly living up to its name as the 'New York City of Vietnam.' We visited the War Remnants Museum and the Cu Chi Tunnels, which showed us the tactical movements and traps of the Viet Cong that aided their victory over the United States. These were both horrifying and eye-opening experiences, detailing the casualties of the war, but also something everyone should see as a reminder for history not to repeat itself. The most important thing I will take away from Vietnam is the kindness and friendliness of the people and how they made forgiveness a virtue after all they had been through during the war. The smiles, gifts and the welcoming into local family homes is something that shows human nature at its best and something we could all learn from.

Thailand

Next on the list was the Kingdom of Thailand, where two Ballyhaunis men became six as we welcomed Eamon Phillips, Adrian Phillips, Patrick Kiely and Joe Sutton on our travels. Thailand brought something totally new to





the table with great temples and Buddhist landmarks central to the place. We followed the notorious Thai trail for backpackers, starting with island hopping. It brought something unique to each island. There was Ko Tao with the clearest water in Thailand, home to giant turtles. Koh Phangan was where we attended the legendary Full Moon Party, where every full moon, ten thousand visitors gather on the beaches of Koh Phangan to indulge in the moonlight and celebrate life. The final island was Ko Phi Phi, where we took a rocky boat ride to Monkey Beach, a place home to hundreds of indigenous monkeys who enjoyed our offerings of bananas. History was to take place later that night when Joe 'Chow' Sutton took part in a traditional Thai boxing exhibition match. Joe was faced with a daunting task when matched against Jake, a Belfast man who was a cousin of two-time Olympic boxing bronze medallist Paddy Barnes. But years of training with the Ballyhaunis GAA team and nights spent in the gym all came into fruition when Joe landed a deft haymaker to Jake, winning the match in the third round and bringing another big boxing accolade to Ballyhaunis.

The heart of Thailand is in its religion and spiritual beliefs, and central to their culture are elephants. In Chiang Mai, we visited an elephant sanctuary, which allowed the public to interact with the elephants ethically and provide funds to keep these beautiful creatures away from inhumane treatment via circuses and riding. A cookery class in Chiang Mai gave us all a bit of Thailand we could bring home with us. It showed that Eamon Phillips was a dab hand with the wok and will be the chief chef at the next Gurteen bonfire, serving Pad Thai.

To complete our adventures, we ended it sensibly in Bangkok, the party capital of Eastern Asia. The nights on Khao San Road were great craic, filled with characters and new friends, all embracing the craziness and fun that epitomised Thailand at night. Overall, the trip was a great success and left memories to last for a lifetime. If there is anyone ever thinking of making the trip, I'd tell them to book the flight and enjoy the ride. You certainly won't regret it.

1. Dara Healy having Lunch with the local Kung Ho police.

2. Victorious Joe Sutton with trainer Patrick Kiely (right) and Coach Shane Healy (left).

3. Shane harvesting the corn with the Nguyen family.

4. Healy brothers at the Hai Van Pass - Dara and Shane.



Ballyhaunis boys and friends, clockwise from left: Joe Sutton, Eamon Phillips, Shane Healy, Dara Healy, Mikey Hallie (Nenagh), Michael Costello (Nenagh), Patrick Kiely, Adrian Phillips, May (Ko Phi Phi).

Season of Creation

Gabriel Smith

"The Season of Creation had a special significance for the Catholic Church, particularly since Pope Francis established September 1st as an annual World Day of Prayer for the Care of Creation. The Season of Creation was marked throughout the Christian world from September 1st to October 4th (Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi) and celebrated the joy of creation as well as encouraging awareness-raising initiatives to protect the natural environment."

On Sunday afternoon, 1st October, on a summer-like day, at the Community Garden on the Friary Grounds in Ballyhaunis, and organised by the Parish Pastoral Council, an event was held to mark 'The Season of Creation'.

Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. welcomed everyone present and then said an opening prayer, after which a scripture reading was read by Rev. Xanthe Pratt.



Violinists Ita Fahey and Moira Delaney provided an appropriate musical accompaniment to the Season of Creation event.

After this, Jenny Glynn, spoke about the Community Garden remarking that it was such a fitting place to celebrate the Season of Creation. She explained how the garden is open to everyone who wishes to grow vegetables, and all that's asked in return is that users help with the general upkeep of the place. The emphasis is on achieving a clean, green space, using no pesticides in the process.

Colm Bohan (secretary of the Ballyhaunis Beekeepers Association) spoke about beekeeping and the importance of bees as pollinators. He explained the parts and workings of a beehive to all present (see the Association's report on the next page) and stressed how important they are in maintaining ecological balance.

Mary Donnelly (secretary of Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns) explained that there is probably a perception of Tidy Towns as volunteers picking litter and planting flowers, which is ongoing, but in recent years the emphasis is more on protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the community. Over the years Tidy Towns nationally are now encouraged to let grass grow in certain areas, and to plant certain types of flowers to provide food and habitats for pollinators and other insects on which people depend. Mary mentioned the Biodiversity Action Plan for Ballyhaunis, which was the main project of Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns, over the past year with the assistance of ecologist Dr. Mary Tubridy from Dublin. Dr. Tubridy visited Ballyhaunis several times to meet the committee and other people with an interest in nature and wildlife. The Biodiversity Action Plan is a blueprint for actions particular to Ballyhaunis and contains recommendations for a five-year programme of actions relating to improving awareness of biodiversity, protecting habitats and sites and improved landscaping to enhance their biodiversity value.



Centre: Mary Donnelly (left) and Jenny Glynn (right).

Above: Pictured at the Season of Creation event, L-R: Rev. Xanthe Pratt, Kevin Henry, Mary Donnelly, Colm Bohan, Moira Delaney, Jenny Glynn, Ita Fahey, Mary Henry.



Mary Henry read an excerpt from 'Hieroglyphic Stairway', a poem by Drew Dillinger, and Kevin Henry read 'The One', a poem by Patrick Kavanagh. 'When Creation was Begun' and the 'The Coolin' were played on violins by Moira Delaney and Ita Fahey. Prayers of Intercession were read by Mary Henry. After this, pets were blessed by Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P., who afterwards read prayers and gave a blessing, bringing to a close what was a very fulfilling and enriching afternoon.

A Message from Fr. Farragher



Thanks to all who took part in the 'Season of Creation' event in the Community Garden in the grounds of the Friary on 1st Oct. 2023, and who brought along their pets to be blessed. Thanks to the members of the Parish Pastoral Council under the leadership of Kevin Henry, who organised the event. Thanks to the various speakers: to Jenny Glynn, who spoke about her involvement in the community garden. Thanks to Colm Bohan, a member of the Beekeepers Association in Ballyhaunis, who spoke about the important role that bees and other insects play in pollinating. Thanks to Mary Donnelly, a member of the Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns Association, who spoke about the various projects being undertaken by the committee as part of the Mayo Biodiversity Plan. Thanks to Moira Delaney and Ita Fahey for providing music and to all who read poems and otherwise contributed to the success of the event.



100km Mayo Pink Ribbon Cycle

Sean Webb (Devlis and Dublin) and his sister Marita Webb Shannon (Kiltimagh) who completed the 100km Mayo Pink Ribbon Cycle on 29th April 2023 in aid of Breast Cancer Research.

Ballyhaunis Beekeepers Assoc.

Colm Bohan (Secretary)



Ballyhaunis Beekeepers Association came into being when a group of like-minded people got together in 2012 at a sociable occasion in The Cape. After a juddering start, slowly the association took shape, and we affiliated ourselves with the

Federation of Irish Beekeepers Associations, which covers our insurance and continued education in all aspects of beekeeping.

Jenny Glynn mentioned earlier that she entered into gardening accidentally. The same can be said for myself. I showed an interest in Michael Brogan's bees across the road and agreed to throw on a bee suit and inspect the bees with himself and Tadhg Buckley on a sunny June afternoon. It was equally terrifying and fascinating to inspect a hive of bees.

This is the case for a lot of beginner beekeepers. Our club offers beginners' courses and there is a club apiary to practice in, that also supplies local businesses with honey throughout the year. However, I believe it's most important resource is the experienced members who offer advice and support as you begin your beekeeping journey.

Beekeepers keep their bees in a man-made hive generally. Basically, there's one lower, bigger box for the queen (an chráinbheach' i nGaeilge, nó, 'the sow bee' i mBéarla, ach sin scéal eile) and brood. There is one smaller box on top for storing honey from which the queen is excluded. And a roof, to keep the rain out.

The honey bee is one of many, many insects in Ireland that pollinate our plants. Let's embrace imperfection, enjoy our weeds, protect our waterways agus an dúlra s'againne a cheiliúradh.



Above: Irish Honey Bee
Right: Colm Bohan





Samantha Cleary

Well, what a year (or two) it has been for our Parent and Toddler group! After all the restrictions of Covid-19 which forced its closure in March 2020 the toddler group had remained closed until November 2021 due to the ongoing guidance.

Our future was in jeopardy at that stage as most of the parents who had been attending and running the group in 2020 had 'grown out' of this stage and their children had moved on to preschool and primary school. Thankfully, Tzyy Wang, who had been involved in the running of the group previously made it her mission to get it restarted. The Community Hall was undergoing a massive renovation at the time so we couldn't meet there, but the Friary House was generously opened up to us so that a small number of families with young babies could start meeting again. This small group provided a lifeline for these families and our 'Covid babies' so that they could actually experience a little bit of the real world and interact with others their age.



Willow Morris and Luna Costello

When all the hard work done to renovate the Community Hall was completed, our group was finally able to start meeting there again in October 2022. And thank goodness we could - the babies who had started attending the group in the Friary had been busy growing and developing and were now fully-fledged toddlers who needed a lot more space and wanted to run, climb and explore. The group flourished during the 2022/23 academic year and our numbers swelled to fill the Community Hall. The newly renovated hall provides the

perfect place for us to meet - light, airy and incredibly warm! This group of parents also planned a very successful paediatric first aid course which took place at the end of September where eighteen parents/carers attended a six-hour course led by Rose Ward from the Irish Red Cross. This was funded by the Mayo Childcare Committee grant we had received this year. We also had a day trip to Rascals in Kiltimagh to celebrate the end of the academic year; the toddlers had a super time on the soft play area and eating all the snacks!

The group reopened in September 2023 and as usual our clientele has changed, with most of our 'Covid babies' having moved on to preschool. (It never ceases to amaze me how quickly the children grow out of the toddler group!) My own covid baby has finally started to socialise with the other children and asks if it's 'playgroup' today. This signifies to me the importance of this group: it provides children with an opportunity to socialise and start to learn how much bigger the world is than just their immediate family. It has also supported parents, carers (myself included) in our parenting journey which doesn't always run smoothly. However, this sort of group doesn't just happen unless people do a little bit of work and I would like to say a huge 'Thank You' to all the people who have helped over the years it has been in operation. There are too many names to mention (and I'd probably miss out loads of people by accident) but thank you to all the past, present and future parents and carers who make this group the success it is!

If you or anyone you know would like to join us, you'll find us at the Community Hall every Wednesday during term time between 10 am and 12 noon. The hall is filled with all the toys a baby or toddler could want and tea/coffee and snacks are provided for all. We hope to see you there!



Finn Cleary

Ruby Waldron

Moran Family Photographs



Upper Main Street 1951. L-R: Philomena Caulfield, Tom Moran and Marie Flatley.



Brod Moran
Annagh and
Main Street

*(Courtesy of
Tom and Nora Moran,
Knock Road).*



Eddie Fitzgerald and Brod Moran
Annagh



Tom Moran with his mother Frances
holding her niece Helena Caulfield,
Upper Main Street, Summer 1958.



Tom Moran with one of his father Brod's greyhounds

Ballyhaunis Revisited

Ronan Thomas

Childhood Holidays in Ballyhaunis 1970s

In 1925 novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) famously wrote: *"So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past."* As for Fitzgerald, so for many of us. The past can linger powerfully in the memory. For me, childhood holidays in Ballyhaunis, in the early to mid-1970s, still evoke vivid recollections, almost half a century on.

Bridge Street Beginnings

Ballyhaunis was the birthplace of my mother, Monica Thomas (née Byrne). Her parents were Edward Byrne (1895-1938) and Ellen (Nellie) Byrne (née Conway) (1906-1950). In the 1930s they owned and ran the thriving Byrne's Pub and grocery/convenience store on Bridge Street. In more recent years this became Nicholson's Pub and in 2023 it is under refurbishment. Mary Monica Byrne was born there on 9th August 1938 and baptised on 16th August at the nearby St. Patrick's Church. She was the youngest of four sisters – Noreen, Hannah, Rita and Monica. Sadly, she never knew her father, who died before she was born, and her mother died when she was just twelve years old. Thereafter, she grew up in Ballyhaunis and Mannin where she described happy holidays in the early 1940s with her sisters at her mother's childhood farm (see *'Monica's Mannin', Annagh 2010*). She was educated, along with her sisters Hannah and Rita, at the Convent National School, Abbey Street. The school was administered and run by the Mercy Sisters and teaching staff of the nearby St. Joseph's Convent (opened 1898, closed 1995). The Byrne siblings gained their leaving certificates in the 1950s. Monica and Hannah – like so many of their generation – then left the town for London and the USA, respectively.

Monica was recruited to train as a nurse in the UK's National Health Service. In 1957, she took the ferry to Liverpool and travelled by steam train to London. She saw through the train window the industrial grime of post-war Crewe, Cheshire, and the approach to the metropolis for the first time. It was a world away from County Mayo, but she was young and the future beckoned. She commenced her studies and placements



Taken during a 1970s summer.

Back, L-R: Damien Webb, Agatha Clarke, Joanna Webb, Emily Clarke, Carole Webb, Helen Thomas, Olive Webb, Marita Webb, Helen Moran, Ronan Thomas, Edward Webb, James Clarke, Joseph Webb.

Front, L-R: Aisling Webb, Enda Moran, Seán Moran.

at Croydon Hospital during 1957-58. She did not complete her training, but her medical appreciation nevertheless equipped her for a later position at the Middlesex Hospital (University of London), as medical secretary to a psychiatrist. Monica soon found her feet in 1950s London and worked in the city centre in the Shaftesbury Hotel WC2 and for a solicitors' practice on Portland Place W1. She lived in Hampstead and Maida Vale, before meeting my father, Gareth Thomas, and marrying at the Church of Our Lady, Lisson Grove in July 1961. She spent the next fifty years in London, with regular trips home and to the USA. My sister Helen and I were born in St. John's Wood and lived in Maida Vale before moving to the family home in Beckenham, Greater London. It was from here that we travelled to Ireland on holiday in the 1970s.

Free range in Ballyhaunis

1970s Ballyhaunis appeared a place of total freedoms to me. My father Gareth (a History lecturer), my mother, my sister and I travelled to Ireland by ferry from Holyhead in a white Renault 4. We made visits to Ballyhaunis in 1972, 1973 and 1976. It was the era of Taoiseach Liam Cosgrave in Ireland and Prime Ministers Edward Heath and James Callaghan in Britain. Both Ireland and Britain had recently entered the European Economic Community (EEC), forerunner of today's



European Union (EU). In Northern Ireland, The Troubles were at their height. Ballyhaunis then was a place startlingly memorable to children from London suburbia. In the first place, my mother was meeting her sister Rita (Webb) and we were meeting our aunt, her husband Joe Webb and family of nine: Olive, Edward, Sean, Carole, Joanna, Marita, Joseph, Aisling, Eavan. They lived in Devlis, on the approach to the town (today's N60). We were welcomed into the Irish embrace. Winston's convenience shop along the road supplied the children with ice creams and fizzy drinks in Irish money, in denominations unusual to a British-born schoolboy, at first. They had many of the same symbols but were called *Punta* and *Pingin*. I was vaguely aware that something called "decimalisation" had also taken place in Britain in 1971, but these coins had unfamiliar, attractive, animal designs (birds, horses, dogs, fish, livestock, stags and harps on the obverse). My favourite was the Florin (10p) with its leaping salmon and reverse harp marked "Eire". I soon mastered the purchase of my Fanta and wafer and brick of ice cream.

Fields from the back of the Webb family home led to the railway line of the Dublin-Westport route. Along these dual lines appeared strange orange and grey liveried Coras Iompair Eireann (CIE) diesel locomotives, passenger and good trains. They were vastly different from the suburban railway I knew back in Beckenham. I was endlessly fascinated by the distinctive sound and look of these trains. I had a field day enjoying their sights and sounds. The sheer power of the engines and their varying, juddering noises soon attracted me to see them up close, passing through Ballyhaunis Railway Station (built in grey stone in 1861). I found out years later that they were American, made by General Motors in Illinois in the 1960s (Class 121, 001, 101 and 181 locomotives).



Above: Cousins, 1976. Standing, L-R: Ronan Thomas, Marita Webb, Helen Thomas, Aisling Webb. Seated: Joseph and Eavan Webb.

A vanished species now, the Railway Preservation Society of Ireland keeps several running.

The Station was a place of youthful exuberance, where one could play completely freely and uninterrupted. As a rural service, trains passed periodically, not intensively. The twin lines were not electrified or rigidly fenced off, as in London. They were accessible and beckoned. I remembered the steel arched footbridge, the wrought iron water tank, used in the days of steam. I was photographed in 1976 climbing the wires dangling from the Signal Box. I ran happily with my cousins and other children across the tracks and up into the approach cutting snaking off to the southwest. It seems incredible now, but my sister discovered and propelled herself and a cousin on a hand operated pump trolley used for inspecting the lines. She also rapidly developed an interest in ABBA pop music for the first time in the mid-70s. One still summer's afternoon I recall vividly the heat shimmering off the steel rail lines as we looked back at the station and the rising scent of tarred sleepers below. I loved it. We boldly jumped off the platform onto the lines, crossing without censure. The station staff must have been benignly and endlessly tolerant. Or perhaps it was just that the trains were few and far between. In any case, it gave me an immediate sense of freedom. Life, it seemed, might be unfettered. Much like our family fishing trip across Lough Corrib, the same year, where my father simply hired an outboard motorboat, without lifejackets, and we sailed out from Headford right into the centre and caught flapping perch with a rod and spinner lure, under dramatic skies which turned to rain.



Left: Ballyhaunis Station Signal Box 1976. Helen Thomas, Eavan, Aisling and Marita Webb, and Ronan Thomas.



Monica with children Helen and Ronan Thomas in Co. Kerry 1976.

I had never done that before. There was little of the Health and Safety culture so prevalent today across Britain and Ireland.

There were other happy memories. Each morning my Aunt Rita would release her children, my sister and me to embark on the day's adventures. County Mayo does not breed faint hearts. We always were in large, boisterous groups, unleashed and contentedly unsupervised. My sister remembered being placed on a cow in the Friary field and playing near a local quarry. She was warned not to play in haystacks in the open fields, as there might be a pitchfork left inside them. We returned in the late afternoons to a vast plate of sandwiches kindly set out by my Aunt Rita and soon devoured. The Bells of the Angelus – then as now – chimed softly from the television set at 6pm. The fireplace burnt peat (turf), lit by firelighters and emitting a comforting smell.

On one visit I competed in the Abbey Pattern races, held in the shadow of St. Mary's Augustinian Friary. We gathered at the start in a loose group of runners. The track ran up the grass slope. It was more of a contact sport rather than a traditional sprint and taught me early on that the path to sporting glory does not necessarily run straight! In hindsight, I can see they were all valuable life lessons. In 1976, my sister Helen did better, she won an Abbey Pattern medal.



Returning

This year, 2023, I returned to Ballyhaunis after forty-seven years, to pay my respects at my mother Monica's grave, where her ashes are interred in the family plot (in Ballyhaunis Cemetery). She died in London in July 2013. It was also an opportunity to see my Aunt Rita after many years, and her offspring who live locally. As I stood beside the plot's grey Celtic cross and inscribed memorial, as light rain began to fall, I

observed that it lay within sight of the hilltop convent and school where my mother had been educated all those years ago.

In 2023, Ballyhaunis keeps its happy associations for me. Then, as now, it appears a place of close-knit families, tight connections, and entrepreneurial vigour. To me, County Mayo has its own very particular light and freshness of air, the varying moods of its weather and the beauty of the landscape so evident from the window seat of any airliner approaching Knock Airport.

The world does not, of course, stand still. Compared to the 1970s, Ballyhaunis is a far more diverse place, with a doubling in population since factory expansion from 1976 and successive migration. Today, around 42% of the populace were born overseas. The latest estimates put the town's population at 3,495, with a youthful profile, an average age of around 35 (Central Statistics Office, 2022 Census). The burning of turf is now banned in urban smokeless zones and there are increasing restrictions on its cutting and sale on environmental grounds. Yet, walking on the town's outskirts I thought I still detected its faint, pleasant, aroma, transporting me back.



Monica, Helen and Ronan Thomas 1976.

These days, Ireland is a longstanding and enthusiastic member of the EU and Eurozone (from 2002). Aunt Rita chose flowers for my mother from Delaney's Garden Centre on Bridge Street, paid for in Euros, not the Punta and Pingin (of my childhood memory).

It was extraordinary to see for the first time the weathered grey stone buildings of the former primary



and secondary Convent School on Abbey Street, which my mother and her sisters attended in the 1950s. Derelict for over a decade, this 'Abbey Quarter' is now set for redevelopment from 2023. Mayo County Council have granted planning permission to refurbish the buildings as a community hub, public plaza, and open-air amphitheatre. The former hilltop St. Joseph's Convent was repurposed in 2001 and is now a Direct Provision Centre. It retains its 19th century aura. To someone born in Britain, it was also more than interesting to pass a wall post box in the town centre, still marked "ER" (Eduardus Rex), installed during King Edward VII's reign (1901-1910). Originally red, it was repainted green after the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1922.

For me, the past does not hang heavily over Ballyhaunis, but happily. The town's history has not yet been rejected by the passing years (as sadly evident in several places I have observed in the United Kingdom).

I can only tell of my delight in seeing Ballyhaunis Station largely unchanged from my memory, with its Signal Box closed but with levers intact, its impressive green wrought iron parcel weighing scale untouched and water tank exactly where I remembered. The slopes of the cutting where we sat curving away still. And to feel the silence of the interior of St. Patrick's Church where my mother was baptised in 1938, with its statue of Our Lady with lighted halo, unique to Irish Catholicism. The Friary field has a new covered children's play area, and the Abbey Pattern still flourishes. The castellated Augustinian Friary, though now closed, is still the evocative place I remember.



Ronan Thomas at Ballyhaunis Railway Station Signal Box, September 2023.

I am a good deal older now than my parents when they brought us on holiday to visit our relations half a century ago. I look back with gratitude to have enjoyed such riches, in a place of happy childhood memory. I can say that the warmth of a County Mayo family welcome is also unchanged, to put it mildly. Like Fitzgerald, I am happy to be "borne back ceaselessly into the past."



Left: Margie and John Gallagher, Knock Road, Ballyhaunis, who celebrated their 50th Wedding Anniversary on 17th Sept. 2023.

Above: Mary, Adam and Andrew Hickey enjoying the 'Traditional Fair Day' 2002.

Vincent A. Keane: A Journey Through the Years

Lindsey Clark

In the hallowed pages of *The Catholic Virginian* newspaper, dated 9th May 1975, there lies a captivating story about a charismatic young priest named Fr. Vincent Keane. The headline reads, "Gospel of Jesus Comes Alive in Children's Liturgy." The article describes a moment in time when Fr. Keane, then an Associate Pastor at Saint James in Falls Church, VA, held a microphone to a young boy, and embarked on a lesson that would foreshadow the remarkable journey of a man who has changed countless lives by carrying the same message of love and service.

In the quaint parish of Falls Church, Fr. Keane engaged the young minds of his congregation with a simple but profound demonstration. He held two pieces of paper, one white and one yellow, and announced his intention to write on the yellow sheet without touching it. As he scribed the words 'God is love' on the white paper, the anticipation in the room grew palpable. Then, to the amazement of the young parishioners, he revealed the yellow paper with the words 'God is love.' A chorus of voices erupted, "You used carbon paper", chimed in one boy, proudly surmising Keane wasn't a magician. "Ah, you guessed it," replied the priest, adding, "but the point is, I can write on the yellow paper without touching it. Now Jesus tells us a story this morning about people who touch other people. When we touch the lives of others, particularly the hungry and needy, we're actually touching Jesus."

The essence of this charming lesson was more than a clever demonstration. It was an early glimpse into Fr. Keane's unique ability to connect with people, especially children, and convey profound spiritual truths in simple, relatable terms. Little did anyone know that this children's liturgy would set the stage for the legacy of Vincent Keane – a legacy of love and service that transcended the confines of a church, and touched countless lives.

Born in the townland of Annagh, Ballyhaunis, Vincent was raised in a family of cabinet makers. The expectation that he would join the family business was swiftly overturned when he made an expensive error while working on a cabinet. His father, Michael A., known for his frankness, admonished him, saying, "Vincent, you better stick to your theological studies, because you will never become a cabinet maker." Luckily, he had always yearned for something different. At twenty-three he was ordained a Catholic priest, driven by a calling to teach and inspire, much like he did that

memorable day in Falls Church. Having been assigned to the Diocese of Richmond, VA, U.S.A., he left his parents, three brothers and one sister. Although Vincent was excited about his future ministry, his family felt the sadness of the physical distance between them. He often tells the story about the last moment he looked back as he left for Shannon Airport, he saw his parents waving white handkerchiefs and he too was overcome with sadness.



Family and Friends join Vincent for his departure to USA from Shannon Airport, 1969. L-R: Tom and Terrie Keane (friends from Galway), Vincent Keane, Teresa Keane, Bridget Reid (Galway), Patsy Keane, Marion Quigley and Seamus Durkan.

For the next eighteen years, Fr. Keane served as a celebrated pastor in Northern Virginia, where his sermons, which shared the good news of the gospel, preaching a message of love, healing and forgiveness, endeared him to his parishioners. During his pastoral ministry he met Cheryl Clark, a single mother of three young children who, at the time, was receiving treatment for cancer. Over the course of a few years love blossomed between them and when he asked her to marry him, she responded with a simple but profound statement: "I'm a package deal," referring to her sons and daughter. After many months of prayer and reflection, Vincent made the courageous decision to leave the priesthood to follow his heart, marry and start a new phase of life.

In 1990, he began his new career as President and CEO of Unity Health Care, Inc., a non-profit organisation in Washington, D.C., focused on providing medical care for the underserved and homeless. Under his leadership, Unity experienced unparalleled growth strengthening the organisation's ability to meet the needs of medically vulnerable men, women and children in the





Top left: First Lady Michelle Obama addresses Unity Health Care, Inc. management and staff, with President and CEO Vincent Keane looking on.



Centre right: Vincent with President and Mrs. Obama at the State of the Union Address, 2012.



Top right: Vincent Keane (extreme right) and his friend Fr. Gerry Creedon (second from right) meet former Taoiseach Enda Kenny (second from left) at the Irish American Fund Dinner.

Right: The Keane family.



District. Over the course of Vince's thirty years as CEO, and with the support of a visionary Board of Directors and committed staff, Unity grew from a dedicated staff of fifty to nearly 1,000 employees. Services expanded to include comprehensive healthcare in DC Public Schools, a state-of-the-art program serving residents in DC Department of Corrections facilities, and the establishment of a Physician Residency Program to train and build the healthcare workforce of the future. Vincent welcomed First Lady Michelle Obama to a Unity health center where she announced the expansion of Community Health Centers nationwide through a large grant from President Obama's administration.

In December, 2021 Vincent retired from Unity as planned, but not before securing a strategy to address the needs of Unity patients in the face of the Covid Pandemic. Unity was a critical link in addressing the unique needs of unhoused patients by placing them in hotels and other safe settings. Regretfully, Vincent was unable to celebrate with his friends and colleagues at his retirement gala which he had chosen to cancel in the interest of protecting staff and guests. On the occasion of his retirement, Paul Kealey, Unity Board Chair, issued the following remarks: "Vince Keane has been the heart of Unity Health Care for more than thirty years. Under Vince's exceptional leadership, Unity grew from a relatively modest operation into one of the largest, most successful federally qualified health centers in the country. He has been an inspiration and a tireless champion, addressing the health needs of people with

low incomes and those experiencing homelessness. Unity will miss him dearly, and we wish him the very best in his well-deserved retirement."

Recently, speaking to my Dad, I asked him if he missed being a priest, and he responded, "Lindsey, I have been blessed to have had two very fulfilling careers where I had the opportunity to positively impact the lives of many people, that's a gift for which I am deeply appreciative."

I decided to write this article about my Papa for *Annagh Magazine* because one thing that does not go unnoticed about Vincent is his love of his native Annagh and his fanatical dedication to Mayo Football. Sunday mornings have been disrupted for the past thirty years due to his shouting expletives during games. After a recent loss, he said to me, "Lindsey, my great hope is that Sam Maguire will visit Mayo before I die." Now that all the former players from 1950-51 are deceased, the 'curse' of the old lady may finally be lifted. Our hope here is that Mayo wins Sam Maguire soon and restore peace to our household.

UP MAYO! My Papa's influence has not only reached numerous lives in his work, but has brought love, laughter and light to our family and I'd like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to his family in Ireland for sharing Vincent with us in America.

Michael Coen Memorial Meeting

Seamus Caulfield

The following are recently discovered minutes of a meeting that took place in June 1970, during the campaign to raise funds for and to erect a fitting memorial to Michael Coen who was murdered near his home in Lecarrow, Ballyhaunis, by crown forces, 1st April 1921. We are indebted to Seamus Caulfield, Chairman of the Michael Coen Centenary Memorial Committee, for making them available to the Annagh readership.

Seamus Coen (nephew) presided at the monthly meeting of the Michael Coen Memorial Committee held in *The Eagle Bar and Restaurant* on Thurs. night June 4th at which there was a very large attendance. It was announced that the fund for the memorial had now reached over £390. It was decided to run a number of functions to swell the memorial fund and the chairman and vice-chairman, Mr. Michael Keegan, decided to travel at their own expense to cities in England including Birmingham, Manchester and Nottingham, etc. to inaugurate fundraising campaigns amongst Irish clubs and societies.

The memorial to the memory of Michael Coen will be erected in his native village of Lecarrow, near Ballyhaunis, and will be unveiled on the 1st of April next, to mark the 50th anniversary of his death.



The Michael Coen memorial, unveiled in 1971 on the fiftieth anniversary of his brutal death.

The following poem was published in the issue of *The Mayo News* dated 21st November 1921, seven months after the brutal murder of Michael Coen by Crown Forces. We are indebted to Mr. Tony McLoughlin, Cloondace, Knock, a relative of the dead patriot, for the elegy which follows:

The Star of Michael Coen

To God and country ever true
Your spirit knew no fear.
Your life cut short by tyrants' hand
But manhood's flower just sown.
May God have mercy on your soul
Lamented Michael Coen.

They came in darkness in the night
All silent as the grave
To satisfy their passion
For the blood of Ireland's brave.
On equal terms - man to man -
Well know we you'd have shown
The blood o' Erin's bravest sons
Was in you Michael Coen.

Dragged out from home and parents
Your fate you little knew.
But in your heart now beating fast
There nature's fear it grew.
You walked to death - oh what an end!
Erect, uncovered and alone,
'Twas all a part of Ireland's trial
Well knew you, Michael Coen.

You're gone but not forgotten.
Your earthly task is o'er.
You've left us but to join
The brave band gone before.
And there in Heaven your just reward
Before Almighty's throne
Shall shine resplendent for all time
The Star of Michael Coen.





Above: Michael Coen framed presentation prints.

Right: Seamus Caulfield delivering an oration at the ceremony to mark the 100th anniversary of Michael Coen's death, on 1st April 2021.



Ballyhaunis Men's Shed Association

Ballyhaunis Men's Shed is a not-for-profit organisation located in the Friary Grounds, behind the Community Preschool. The aim of the shed is to provide a meeting place for men who want to engage in projects to maintain and enhance the local community.

From humble beginnings the Shed has grown into a group which is open Monday to Friday, with small core group of men who attend daily and who are willing to assist the town's community and local organisations in any way possible.

This year we have carried out some essential repairs – to our electricity supply in the Shed itself – and have returned to normal after Covid. We were very happy to have assisted the Ballyhaunis Animal Shelter through the provision of a wooden garden bench for their visitors and workers.

Some of the projects carried out in previous years have included painting and repairs on communal town facilities. Other examples of ongoing projects include designing and making of picnic benches, flower planters, bee hives, bird and bat boxes and other timber made products.

The Ballyhaunis Men's Shed is always open to new ideas and projects and would be only delighted to assist



in the design and making of such items. The Men's Shed is home to any male over the age of eighteen who wishes to enjoy a cuppa, have a chat and maybe reveal a hidden skill or talent to inform and teach its members.

The Shed is open Tuesday and Thursday 10am until 2pm and is always looking for volunteers and people to donate tools and timber for their next big project in 2024.

If you would like to become a member or have some tools or furniture to donate, then further details are available from the Men's Shed at 087 6168294

Over the last few years, the group has purchased some new equipment thanks to the support of groups like Mayo County Council. We have made and sold garden benches, bird boxes, prepared bags of kindling and carried out furniture restoration. We would also like to acknowledge the support of groups like the Family Resource Centre and the Abbey Partnership.

The following are the Ballyhaunis Men's Shed officers for 2023/2024. **Chairperson:** Jim Goulding; **Treasurer:** Seamus Freeman; **Secretary:** Stephen Grogan.

Follow **Ballyhaunis Men's Shed Association** on Facebook.

Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group

Paula Grogan (Secretary)

Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group was founded in 2009 with fantastic financial support from our local community, including businesses and private donations, so we could provide public-access, life-saving defibrillators for Ballyhaunis Town and surrounding areas, along with CPR training for all.

Our Group is entirely voluntary, relying on the generosity of donors and fundraisers to ensure these devices remain available to everyone in the community in the event of a medical emergency. Currently, there are fourteen defibrillators available at various outside locations throughout Ballyhaunis town and surrounding areas, with Ballyhaunis GAA Club, Ballyhaunis Golf Club and Ballyhaunis Rugby Club also making their own defibrillators available for public access. Darren Conlon is our main Instructor who runs our training classes and he recently held two very successful training sessions in October 2023 which provided Community First Responder training to twelve local people. A big thank you to Darren who voluntarily gives of his time for the training classes and who is always so positive and encouraging in our group.

There is now a need to upgrade the current defibrillator devices located in our community as most have been in use since 2009 and so a fundraising initiative is currently taking place. Next January, seven of our devices will need upgrading. We were delighted to be approached by local runners from Ballyhaunis, namely, Siobhán Conlon, Alma Gallagher, Lisa McConn and David McConn who kindly offered to run the Dublin Marathon on Sunday, 29th October 2023 in order to raise funds for our initiative. We are so happy to have been chosen by them and delighted that it is they who will be running the twenty-six miles, come rain, hail or sunshine, for our cause! An i-Donate page on the various social media platforms has been set up and, at the writing, a sum of €5,320 has been raised through numerous donations received on-line from people far and wide. We are truly thankful to everyone for their support.

As always, local businesses in Ballyhaunis have also played their part in supporting our fundraiser with some contributing towards the full cost of a defibrillator such as SuperValu, Ballyhaunis, Fr. Stephen Farragher, St. Patrick's Church and Homecare Medical who have donated a defibrillator device and a heated storage cabinet. We are sincerely thankful for these large donations. To date, other businesses have also made donations of choice towards our cause namely EPS Pumping & Treatment Systems, Agri-Spread



Ballyhaunis athletes who ran the Dublin City Marathon this year to raise funds for the upgrading of defibrillator devices in the locality. L-R: David McConn, Lisa McConn, Siobhan Conlon, Alma Gallagher.

International, Johnston Machinery, Eddie Murphy Menswear, Major Equipment International Ltd., Grogan Concrete. We sincerely thank these businesses for their donations. We also received a generous donation from the family of the late Tommie Carroll of Knox Street, who sadly passed away suddenly in October 2022. We will upgrade the defibrillator and storage cabinet located at the 4-D's premises together with a plaque in Tommie's memory. Thank you to Tom Forde for facilitating the placement of the defibrillator device and plaque. We offer our grateful appreciation to members of the Carroll family for this generous donation. As a result of the wonderful generosity from all those who gave financial support, as at the date of this article, we have reached our goal of raising €10,000.00 and we are truly delighted and appreciative.

Defibrillators save lives. One could be needed to save your life or that of a family member, a neighbour, friend or work colleague. All contributions to our fundraiser will be greatly appreciated and will help us to continue to provide this valuable resource to the community.

Donations can be made by contacting any committee member; or through our email address of:

ballyhaunisdefib@gmail.com

or by making a donation of choice on the **i-Donate** page currently on all social media platforms.

Committee Members: *Chairperson*, Orla Moran; *Secretary*, Paula Grogan; *Treasurer*, Mary Sykes. Manar Cherbatji, Darren Conlon, Edel Conway, Marina Coyne, Karl Coyne, Marie Cribbin, Mike Griffin, Aoife Keane, Maura Kelly, Michael Kelly, Eddie Mulhern, Aileen Murray, Rose Nolan.



The Eircodes of the various Defibrillators currently available to the public in Ballyhaunis and surrounding areas are:

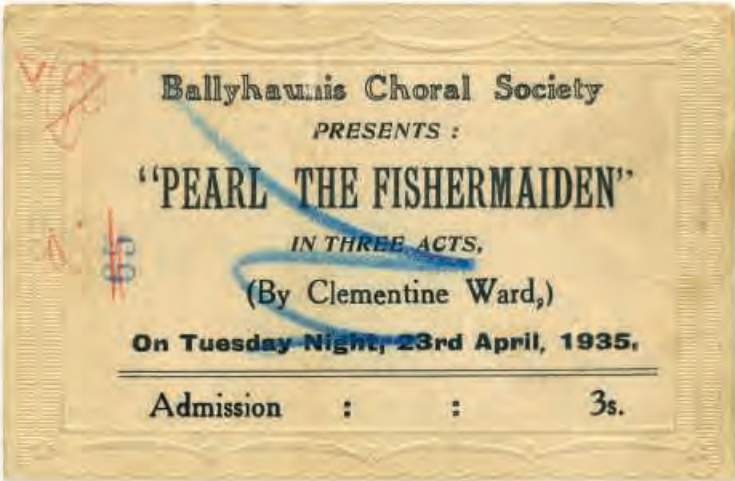
Annagh	F35 KP78
Brackloon	F35 CF98
Derrynacong	F35 R224
Forde's Off-Licence	F35 VY58
Ballyhaunis GAA Club	F35 RY97
Ballyhaunis Golf Club	F35 P661
Ballyhaunis Rugby Club	F35 CX24
Johnstown	F35 VK75
Kilmannin	F35 A290
Kiltybo	F35 EA21
Pattenspark	F35 RR71
Scoil Iosa National School	F35 PX94
St. Patrick's Church	F35 ED78
Tullaghaun	F35 TY77



Katie and Niamh Conlon supporting their mother Siobh  n Conlon at the Dublin City Marathon 2023.



Congratulations to Billy and Eileen Nestor (n  e Lyons) who celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary this year.
(   Glynn's Photography)



Ticket for 'Pearl the Fishermaiden', presented by Ballyhaunis Choral Society, 1935. (Courtesy of Edward Mulhern).

Ballyhaunis Summer Festival

All photographs are by AK Photography

'A picture paints a thousand words', and with this in mind, here is a gallery of photographs documenting this year's highly successful Summer Festival - a week of events from Monday, 29th May up to and including Bank Holiday Monday, 5th June 2023.



CRAZY BINGO in The Dalgan on Monday, 29th May, with compe, 'Mrs. Brown'.



The competitors in the '**CELEBRITY BAKE-OFF**' in the Dalgan Restaurant on Tuesday, 30th May, were (from left): Alannah Nolan, Gareth Delaney, Anne Fitzpatrick, Declan Doyle.



An **ART EXHIBITION**, hosted by the Rural Irish Artists Group on Main Street (below Epic Nite Club) ran all during festival week until Monday 5th June.



The newly refurbished Community (Parochial) Hall looked splendid for the **INTERCULTURAL NIGHT** on Wednesday, 31st May.



STREET MARKET AND INDIE WEST FEST. All the activity was on Main Street for the Street Market and Indie West Fest on Sunday, 4th June.



EVENING OF SUMMER DELIGHTS RECITAL Pianist Darragh Brogan (Doctor's Road) with Hilda O'Mahony on violin were in perfect tune presenting their 'Evening of Summer Delights' recital in St. Mary's Abbey on Thursday evening, 1st June.

Ballyhaunis Summer Festival

All photographs are by Adam Kaczmarek – AK Photography



FAMILY FUN DAY

The sun shone brilliantly on the Family Fun Day held in the Friary Field on Saturday, 3rd June.



WEATHER FORECASTING PRESENTATION

Met Éireann forecaster and presenter, Joanna Donnelly, delivered a fascinating talk on Forecasting and Weather Science to a captivated audience at the First Choice Credit Union Building on Clare Street on Wednesday, 31st May.



Murt's Musings

Letters by Murt Hunt published in *The Sunday Independent*

Not one for everyone in the audience

Sir,

As Christmas approaches the constant stream of begging letters continue on a daily basis through my letterbox. The numbers get bigger year after year, the reason being that many charities contact others to direct them to a soft touch for donations (me included). I decided some years ago that I would concentrate on reliable Irish charities as a pensioner like myself could not give in to all the demands being forced on us.

I have always done the best I can to accommodate the most deserving cases and over the years have given generously to so many. I always felt that one would be repaid (in this or another life) in many ways for one's kindness to those less fortunate in life.

When I looked at the sorrowful faces staring out at me from the letters I received I was moved to pity and would send a donation to so many of said charities. What a disappointment then to find out, in the past few weeks, that the pictures of many of the sad looking and supposedly hungry and starving children that appear in the begging letters are actually posed by models, and that the Johns, Marys, etc. one supports are not those in the pictures at all.

I fully understand that there are so many displaced, hungry and abandoned people worldwide, but have we not the same problem in our own country? And how does a person decide which charity or charities to support when hundreds are looking for donations at the same time?

I really don't know what the solution is, but I know definitely that unlike, *'The Late Late Show'* there won't be one for everyone in the audience.

Snakes and Ladders

Sir,

With all the debate about the Leaving Cert exams and what the solution may be to solve the problem in these dark and unique virus days, it was sanctioned that teachers may assess pupils on their previous results and capabilities. So, in other words, there would be a top and bottom of the ladder effect. A particular pupil boy/girl

may have been down the line in the teacher's opinion with their knowledge of subjects and work rate in the previous year, or even earlier in the year, but is there not the possibility that the particular boy/girl has put in a strenuous amount of work/study whilst laid up at home, with the schools in lockdown, and would now have advanced up the ladder without the teacher's knowledge? The particular teacher/teachers, not having been part of the pupil's education system for months, might not know they had advanced so much in their study and new knowledge of subjects.

God's Pointed Finger

Sir,

When I was a young boy, if I was bold or did something wrong, my mother would say that God was watching me. She would make me look up at the Sacred Heart picture on the wall saying that God's raised finger was pointing directly at me. I fully believed this and would be very wary about doing something bold or using a bad word again. This went on for several years instilling in me the fear that God was out to get me if I misbehaved. Whenever we had thunder and lightning, torrential rain or bad storms, my mother would say the reason was that God was vexed with people for doing bad things to others, missing Mass or working on a Sunday, or one of many other reasons. I often wonder if my mother was alive now what would she have to say about all the killings in Ukraine, Israel and other parts of the world? So many devastating earthquakes. One part of the world on fire; one part flooded. Starvation all over the world, and all these causing hundreds of thousands of deaths annually, in addition to the many diseases becoming so prevalent at the moment.

What would be her explanation for all this? Would she say that God was vexed with the people? I don't think 'vexed' would be an appropriate word to describe God's consternation with the way His people are behaving in this once beautiful, peaceful earth that He created for us all.

The Sacred Heart picture is still on the wall seventy years after God first pointed His finger at me, but it is some small consolation to know that His finger is now pointed at more people than me.

Ballyhaunis GAA & LGFA Club

Chairman's Report

Ballyhaunis GAA & LGFA Club deeply appreciate the support of its players, members and community throughout 2023. I congratulate our members and players who represented our club at county level both on and off the field of play and wish to acknowledge their achievements and successes. In addition, we are proud of the growth and success of the female section of the club. This growth has seen the club embrace the 'One Club' model that sees all three GAA codes being promoted within the club, namely football, hurling and Ladies football.

This success provides further challenges within the club, such as use of facilities, the running costs of the club and additional resources required to maintain the efficient running of the club as a whole. We also face challenges in supporting and coaching of all our under-age games within the club and we encourage more volunteers, adult players and parents to get involved.

We are fortunate to have great volunteers within the club who support and coach our under-age boys and girls. Volunteers who support and actively help out in fundraising for the club. Volunteers and club officials who ensure we follow and support areas of safeguarding, garda vetting, child protection, central register of trustees. Volunteers who maintain the club grounds all year around and prepare for our games. Volunteers who promote our social health and well-being. The club values the contribution made by all our volunteers to help promote our games, Irish culture and heritage and give freely of their time, energy and experience.

Being part of the GAA is about being part of a strong tradition that prides volunteerism and our amateur ethos. Everyone involved in the GAA is there because they share in a passion for our games, love for our culture and desire to be part of a sporting and cultural organisation.

It was great to see the club once again involved in Senior Scór this year. Many thanks to Margaret Nestor-Monaghan and her talented team for competing and achieving success with our Ballad Group and well done to Kevin Henry who took home the Recitation Award.

The club also plans to be more active in the development of the Green Club initiative for 2024. The club is in the process of finalising an application for a feasibility study to help with an application for further funding to upgrade facilities for our players and members. We hope this will identify and plan for the needs of our club over the coming five years.



The club's plan requires updating and a time-line from 2024-2028 has been established to ensure a reasonable time-scale. We started this process last year, but various factors arose that did not allow enough time to follow this through. A planning workshop later this year would help the process for 2024-2028. Areas we have targeted are a sports hall, ball wall, community walkway, astro turf area and upgrade of existing stand area and car park. We welcome suggestions from our members and community and help to bring this to fruition.

As always, our club continues to support our schools in the promotion of our games and ensure our facilities are available for our students. Ongoing maintenance can sometimes prevent games being played, but we wish all school teams every success on the field of play.

My sincere thanks to our adult players who give of their time in playing and also promoting our games at under-age. Indeed, our senior players contributed to and were active in supporting fund-raising activities on behalf of the club.

We are currently running a Grounds Development Fundraiser with a draw for a trip to New York for the Mayo v New York senior football game next April. The fabulous prize includes flights, accommodation and match tickets. See our Facebook page for more details.

Grounds Development Draw
Ballyhaunis GAA

- WIN A TRIP**
TO NEW YORK
X 2 PEOPLE
MAYO VS NEW YORK
GAME
- 5 NIGHTS**
(Phipps Hotel)
Central Hotel
(Deluxe Queen
Room)
- FLIGHTS**
Thursday 4th April
Tuesday 12th April
2024
- \$1000**
SPENDING
MONEY
- TICKETS**
€10 Each
(€5 for €50)

Ticket No:
Permit granted
Price is in euros. No cash in return. Copyright © 2023 by Ballyhaunis GAA

**DRAW WILL
TAKE PLACE
SUNDAY 3RD MARCH**

Congratulations to our senior footballers and management team on retaining senior status for 2024 and my best wishes to our senior hurlers who, at the time of writing, are preparing to meet Tooreen once again in the Mayo County Final.

Finally, our intermediate Ladies footballers were within one game of an intermediate county final. Hopefully, 2024 will see them get there. My appreciation



and thanks to the players and their management team throughout this year.

2023 also saw the development of a nursery for our young players and my thanks to the parents and coaches who are involved in promoting this project.

I also extend my appreciation and thanks to my fellow officers, Peter Healy (Secretary), Fergal Walsh (Asst. Secretary), Tomás Murphy (Treasurer), Robbie Herr (Asst. Treasurer), Noelle Barrett-Colleran (Vice Chairperson), Ciara Buckley (PRO), Anne Cunnane and Stella O'Neill (Joint Registrars), Padraic Murphy (Safety and Grounds Dev. Officer), Brendan Donnellan (Bord na nÓg Chairperson), Lisa McConn/Alma Gallagher (Health and Wellbeing Officers/Children's Officer), Marie Henry (DLP officer), Anne Cunnane (Chairperson of Ballyhaunis LGFA) and Padraic Regan (Club Delegate) for their support and commitment throughout 2023.

And especially my sincere thanks to our club members who give of their time for all the unseen work they do on behalf of the club.

I also acknowledge the support of Eastern Gaels in promoting under-age football under the banner of St. Jarlath's to ensure our young players are getting quality games and also developing their skill set.

I acknowledge and thank our sponsors who support our teams and club through the year, to all our members and supporters who supported our games, our draws and other activities within the club.

Give Respect - Get Respect, is a campaign that applies not only to players, but to coaches, clubs, parents, referees and supporters. Respect means being Responsible, Encouraging, Supportive, Positive, Enabling, Considerate and Tolerant. We are a club that meets and maintain these standards and sets a standard to our fellow Gaels.

In conclusion, I wish the club every success on and off the field for 2024 and, again, my thanks for all the help and support in 2023.

**Gerry Lyons,
Club Chairperson.**

Ballyhaunis GAA Club would like to extend our deepest sympathy to the Higgins family on the passing earlier this year of a loving husband, father, son and brother, Pierce, RIP.

We would like to acknowledge Pierce's contribution to Ballyhaunis GAA both on and off the field of play over a lifetime of commitment to our club. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

U6 to U9 Hurling

Our U6 to U9 hurling boys and girls began this year with indoor hurling in January and moved outdoors in April through to September. We took part in games and blitzes against teams from all around the county and did our club proud. The number of children involved is great to see. Big thanks to all the mums and dads for their support. Special mention to Michael, Dave, Sinead, Mark and Lisa for their work this year.

U12/U13 Hurling

We started indoor training for this age group in the school gym on Saturday mornings which stood to them for the rest of the year. We entered the U13 Táin League which got us four competitive games against Manorhamilton, Carrick-on-Shannon, Tourlestrane and Westport. The lads got plenty of hurling and we could see what skills we needed to work on. Next then was the Mayo League for the U12 team where we had four games against Castlebar, Westport, Tooreen and Claremorris. We decided to play in the 'A' Division so these were all tough games, but were delighted with the way we showed fighting qualities when behind in games. We played Castlebar on the final day in Hastings Insurance Park where we got our reward winning a tight battle, 5-5 to 4-2. Thanks to the team for all the hard work throughout the year and to the senior players who gave up their Saturday mornings to train. Coaches: Jane O'Connor and Peter Healy.

Underage Football

2023 was a very rewarding year indeed for all our underage players. After two summers of Covid restrictions, all age groups got to enjoy regular training. Training for U7, U9 and U11 footballers took place from March through to October and players made excellent progress overall. U7 footballers trained on a weekly basis and enjoyed their end-of-season challenge games against Eastern Gaels and Swinford with some great skill on display. Our U9 players made excellent progress also and competed in several Go Games fixtures against other East Mayo clubs. The U11 players improved immensely with excellent performances by all against Michael Glavey's, Shrule-Glencorrib, Ballina, Kilmovee, Crossmolina, Aghamore and Ballaghaderreen.

St. Jarlath's

Over the past number of years player numbers at underage level have been a concern and we were unable to field teams at certain age groups. After much deliberation it was agreed by the Executives of both Ballyhaunis and Eastern Gaels clubs to amalgamate from U13 to U18. The objective of the new club structure was

to ensure that: (1) We retain as many players as possible; (2) Players will get the opportunity to compete at a higher standard; (3) Both clubs would have a sufficient number of players in a position to play senior football for their respective clubs in the coming years.

2022 was the inaugural year for St. Jarlath's and, thankfully, it has proven hugely successful. Coaches from both clubs have worked very well together. Both the U17 and U15 teams won county titles and U13s missed out narrowly in their county final. Hopefully, competing at Division 1 will stand to our young players in the coming years. Overall, our young players got plenty of game time this year so many thanks to Bord na n-Óg Maigh Eo for organising the fixtures.

Great credit is due to our underage players for their dedication to training, at matches and home practice. We would like to sincerely thank Padraig Murphy and the groundsmen who always ensure that our pitches are in pristine condition. We are very fortunate to have some of the finest facilities in Mayo at our disposal. Many thanks also to our coaches who give so generously of their time. Without them it simply wouldn't be possible to continue with our club activities.

Nursery and U8 Football

It was a stop-start year for our grassroots level players due to a wetter than usual summer. Despite the long spells of inclement weather, the club encouraged boys and girls from five years old and upwards to football practise on Saturday mornings. The U8s played a number of games and blitzes over the summer and made great progress in their skills development. We were delighted to partake in a county-wide blitz held at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence in September. The club hopes to recommence nursery and U8 training early in the new year with weekly indoor sessions. Please contact club coaches Sinead Lilly, William Nestor or Lisa McConn for more information. Many thanks to our club coaching officer, Kevin Gallagher, for his support this year.

Nursery players 2023: John Jordan, Chloe Kenny, Ellie Hogan, Oisín Kilcourse, James Rochford, Patrick Keane, Oisín Wallace, Tadhg Lilly, Blaithín Jordan, Jack Richardson, James Powers.

U8 players 2023: Seán Lilly, Kyle Kilbane, Killian Fahy, Luke Marigliano, Archie Curley, Finín McKermitt, Harry Buckley, Jean Lucas, Charlie McConn, Owen Cleary, Mark Caulfield, Rory Jordan, Fiadh Cleary, Jade Swanick, Evie Murphy, Emily Lynch, Grace Nolan, Chloe Finn, Sophie Waldron, Jessica Singh, Sophie Coen, Ellie Higgins.

Coaches: Sinéad Lilly, William Nestor, Lisa McConn, Michael Jordan.

U12 Football

We had a very busy year with our group of U12 players. We were entered in an U12 Spring league which took place in April and May. We played six games in this league winning four and losing narrowly to Kiltimagh twice in two very good tight matches. Our wins came against Eastern Gaels and Kilmovee Shamrocks.

The Summer League proved to be a tougher test for our lads. We had six great matches against Shrule-Glencorrib, Burrishoole, Louisburgh, Achill, Hollymount and finally against our close neighbours, Aghamore. All games were evenly contested with great scoring, team play and skill showed by all teams.

The highlight of our summer was a trip to Naas GAA for a national U12 blitz, with sixteen teams from all four provinces. After winning the three games in our group, we reached the 'B' final and came out on top against Newbridge. The players represented themselves and the club at this tournament with great distinction and played their hearts out in a truly memorable day which ended with a marvellous welcome party in Ballyhaunis GAA grounds late into the evening.

Thanks to all who attended the homecoming and helped in organising this great welcome. Coaches: Padraic Murphy and Paul Finn. Fitness coach: Martin Finnegan.

Under 12 Boys panel: Charlie Finn, Cian Murphy, Evan Feeney, Shane Nolan, James Lyons, Ben Gallagher, Jeff Nolan, Noah Maughan, Matthew Waldron, Ted Murphy, Ronan McGuire, Patrick Gallagher, Keith Caulfield, Oisín Finnegan, Zayd Idrees, Ahsan Asif, Heath McDonagh.

Ballyhaunis GAA Parish League 2022

A novel fundraiser in aid of our local St. Vincent de Paul Society proved to be a huge success on St. Stephen's Day in the Connacht GAA Airdome. More than 150 club footballers, both past and present, competed in a 9-a-side tournament which was sponsored by Keane Kitchens. Teams from Gurteen, Knockbrack, Holywell, Annagh/Cave, Knock Road, Brackloon, Lecarrow and Doctor's Road, contested two groups with eventual finalists Brackloon defeating Knock Road. Congratulations to Player of the Tournament, Aidan Sloyan, and Brackloon captain, Brian Hunt. The tournament was very well attended by a large crowd of supporters and raised over €4,000 for SVP.

Many thanks to the organising committee and gate collectors: Mark Phillips, William Nestor, Adrian Phillips, Shane Healy, Tommy Caulfield, Ciara Buckley, Darran Conlon, Brendan Donnellan, Helen Healy, Kevin Kilbride, Dearbhla Phillips, Cáit Phillips, Lauren Walsh. Thanks also to John Prenty, Connacht GAA, and referees



on the day John Glavey and Tadhg Morley. We also wish to thank John Prenty for hosting the event at the Centre of Excellence.

Senior Football

Our Senior Footballers were grouped with Aghamore, Knockmore and Castlebar in the Mayo senior football championship of 2023. Unfortunately, we ended up in a relegation final play-off in October against The Neale. The team succeeded in maintaining senior status and we can look forward to competing for the Moclair Cup once again in 2024.

Ballyhaunis played in the very competitive Div 2A of the Mayo Senior Football League and won four of the seven games played. The victories came against Kilmeena, Ballaghaderreen, The Neale and Bonniclon, while we lost to Balla, Crossmolina and Kilmaine.

Senior Hurling 2023

Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling started the Genfitt League later than usual. Our matches against Castlebar and Westport did not go ahead so that just left ourselves and Tooreen. We played Tooreen on 23rd April and, unfortunately, lost by two points with a scoreline of 0-17 to 2-13. The Genfitt final was played on 7th May in Tooreen. A thrilling match to watch with Ballyhaunis taking the honours 0-19 to 0-16. Well done to all players, management and both captains Patrick Kiely and Sean Gildea.

Senior Championship started in early September. The championship consisted of Ballyhaunis, Tooreen, Castlebar and newly formed St. Ciaran's. St Ciaran's was made up of players who competed in the Junior A and Junior B Hurling Championship. We played Tooreen at home first and lost by 1-10 to 3-19. Next up was Castlebar away. Ballyhaunis had a convincing win with a scoreline of 3-22 to 1-3. St. Ciaran's was our last game, and a win would put us through to another County Final. Thankfully, another convincing win with a scoreline of 1-21 to 0-5. Tooreen had a win over Castlebar, so the County Final was set between Tooreen and Ballyhaunis. The final was played in Ballyhaunis with good weather conditions and a great crowd showing up to cheer-on their teams. At half time there was only a point separating the teams. Our lads gave it everything in the second half but, unfortunately, we lost the game with a scoreline of 0-8 to 0-13. A huge effort was put in by players and management throughout the year. Well done to all involved.

A big thanks to our sponsors Gurteen Kitchens and EPS Group for their continued support and to the Club for all their help throughout the year.

Congratulations to Patrick Kiely on receiving Player of the Year award. Patrick returned home in late 2022 after three years working in Canada. His attitude, commitment, work rate and leadership throughout the year was outstanding. Well done Paddy and well deserved.

Parish League Teams 2023



Annagh-Cave. Back, L-R: Shaun Morley, Pakie Waldron, Vincent Healy, Stephen Nolan, Darren Coyne, Danny Hill, James Doyle, Cian Henry, Oisín Henry, Aidan Hill. **Front, L-R:** Vinnie Caulfield, Brian Waldron, Rob McCormack, Piarais Caulfield, Brendan Morrissey, Ciaran Griffin, Enda Griffin. *AK Photography.*

Parish League Teams 2023



Brackloon. *Back, L-R:* Frank Browne, Ja Carney, Tadhg McGinty, Isaac Carroll, Clayton Nolan, Ruairí Finan, Aiden Fitzmaurice. *Front, L-R:* Paul Carney, Hugh Carney, Aidan Sloyan, Brian Hunt, Cathal Carney, Neil Carney, Stephen Hoban, Padraic Carney.



Knockbrack. *Back, L-R:* Peter Higgins, Keith Higgins, David Hannan, Joseph Lyons (Skeaghard), Joe Lyons (Knockbrack), Sean Herr, Declan Murphy, Derek Walsh, Robert Herr. *Front, L-R:* Johnny Burke, Shay Walsh, Morgan Lyons, Gary Higgins, James Lyons, Liam Herr, John Lyons. Missing from photo: Micheál Óg Lyons.



Doctor's Road. *Back, L-R:* Shane Healy, Karl Coyne, Brendan Rudden, Paul Finn, Will Nestor, Mark Phillips, Brian Flanagan, Denis Hogan, Liam Rochford, Diarmuid Phillips, Tommy Grogan. *Front, L-R:* Conor Freeley, Kevin Gallagher, Seamus O'Dwyer, Kevin Kilbride, Adrian Phillips, Dara Healy, Eamonn Monaghan, Peter Healy, Vincent Freyne. Pictures AK Photography.





Gurteen. *Back, L-R:* Mike Henry, Pat Phillips, Conor Keane, Conor Henry, John Cunnane, David Cunnane, Adrian Brennan, Brian Mulrennan, Conor Mulrennan, Gearóid Keane, Ja Henry. *Front, L-R:* Marty Keane, Tomás Murphy, Padraic Murphy, Jack Madden, Eamonn Phillips, Cormac Phillips, Kevin Moran.



Holywell. *Back, L-R:* Patrick Kiely, Niall Richardson, Eoin Ryan, Jason Coyne, J Richardson, Mike Dixon, P.J. Fleming, Joey Fahey, P.J. Moran. *Front, L-R:* Joe Freeley, Lee Dixon, Damian Kedian, Andrew Cunnane, Zouhir Rahmani, Micheál Richardson, Aiden Richardson, Kieran Kiely, Jack Coyne.



Knock Road. *Back, L-R:* Paul Webb, Emmett Keane Jr., John Prenty, Kevin Nestor, John Gallagher, Ethan Keane, Calum Gardiner, Joshua Webb, John Prenty, Daniel Murray, Fergal Kelly, Brian Murray, Craig Hughes. *Front, L-R:* Micheál Walsh, Kevin Morley, Fergal Walsh, Christy McCrudden, Frankie Nolan, Niall Prenty, Eoghan Collins, Kieran McDermott. *Pictures AK Photography.*



Parish League Teams 2023

Lecarrow. Back, L-R: Kian Burke, Barry Cribbin, Jason McGoldrick, James Cribbin, Michael Jordan, Luke Walsh, Kevin Durkan, Declan Doyle
Front, L-R: Martin Finnegan, Joe Sutton, Jack McGoldrick, Paul Jordan, Sean Gildea, Sean Griffin, Darren Nolan. *AK Photography.*



Emmett Keane Jr. (left) presents the Keane Kitchens Cup to winning captain **Brian Hunt** of the Brackloon team.
AK Photography.



Herr brothers Liam and Sean Devlis/Knockbrack do battle with **Kevin Gallagher** and **Mark Philips** of Doctor's Road. *AK Photography.*



The thrill of victory!



Ballyhaunis GAA U12 National Blitz Football Champions



Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling panel 2023. Captains: Adrian Phillips and Damien Keadin.

Back, L- R: Frank Browne, Gary Conway, J.P. Coen, Jack Coyne, Mark Phillips, Cormac Phillips, Sean Griffin, Kevin Kilbride, Donal O'Brien, Eoghan Collins, Shaun Morley, Stephen Hoban, Eoin Ryan, Diarmuid Phillips, Danny Hill, Joe Flynn, Trevor Kelly, Tadhg Buckley, Adrian Brennan, Kevin Morley, Lorcan Higgins, James Lyons.

Front, L-R: Micheál Walsh, Michael Farrell, Brian Hunt, Sean Gildea, Micheál Richardson, Eamon Phillips, Adrian Phillips, Kieran McDermott, Patrick Kiely, Keith Higgins, Jason Coyne, Dara Healy, Hannan Iqbal, Gearoid Keane, Damien Keadin, Christy McCrudden, Katelyn O'Sullivan.



Left:
Ballyhaunis GAA Club Chairman Gerry Lyons pictured with winners at this year's Senior Scór County Finals. L-R: Gerry Lyons, Margaret Nestor Monaghan, Colm Bohan, Kevin and Anna Henry, Treasa Norrby and Brian Flanagan.



Above right
Ballyhaunis GAA Club Chairman Gerry Lyons (left) and Scór Development Officer Margaret Nestor Monaghan accept the trophy for Best Overall Club at the Mayo Scór Finals in Balla, October 2023.



Ballyhaunis GAA Nursery and U8 football team.



U10 team, after match again Davitts (July 2023). Panel Includes Ava Gildea, Hannah Waldron, Hazel Murphy, Jade Swanick, Lilly Curley, Lily Healy, Niamh Conlon, Nora Lyons, Phoebe McNamara, Siobhan Waldron.



U12 team. Abbi Norrby, Abigail Dixon, Aibhe Donnellan, Ava Gildea, Cara Henry, Cara Walsh, Hazel Murphy, Isabelle Finn, Kate Monaghan, Katie Conlon, Lauren Henry, Lilly Murphy, Michaela Kavanagh, Molly Thompson, Olivia Feeney, Orla Healy, Roisin Murphy.



U13 team. Roisin Murphy, Oliva Feeney, Molly Thompson, Micheala Kavanagh, Lily Murphy, Lauren Henry, Katie Conlon, Kate Monaghan, Isobel Neary, Erin Higgins, Cara Walsh, Ava Gildea, Anna Kelly, Alice Curran, Aibhe Donnellan, Abigail Dixon, Abbie Gildea, Abbi Norrby.

Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic Football Association

Edel Kinsella & Anne Cunnane

This year the LGFA has seen great growth and positivity. The number of registered players continues to grow year after year. It fills us with pride as we look back on our journey since our inception in 2013. We appreciate everyone who plays a role in our success: our dedicated managers, coaches, selectors, liaisons, supportive parents, and our hardworking committee. Their unwavering help, support and steadfast commitment has catapulted us to the remarkable position we hold today. As we reflect on the past, we anticipate many more challenges and triumphs and look forward to the exciting future of Ballyhaunis LGFA.

Ballyhaunis LGFA Committee

Anne Cunnane (Chair and Registrar), Sandra Waldron (Vice-chair), Edel Kinsella (Secretary), Stella O'Neill (Vice-chair, Assist. registrar, fundraiser and Assist. Child Protection Officer), Marina Carney (PRO), Megan McKenzie (Child Protection Officer), Ciara Buckley (Photographer).

Management, Coaches, Liaison Officers and First Aiders

Siobhan Conlan (U10s coach and Female Liaison Officer), Samantha Cleary (U10 coach), Michael Dixon (U12 manager), Anna Patterson (U12/U13 coach/Female Liaison Officer), Eddie McLoughlin (U13/U14 manager), Clare Higgins (U13/U14 coach and Female Liaison Officer), Pat Neary (U16 manager/coach), Sharon Lyons (U18 manager/U16 Female Liaison Officer), Michael Finnegan (U18 coach/U16 backroom team member), Neville Hughes (U18 coach/U16 backroom team member), Michael McLoughlin (Intermediate Ladies/U18 coach), Declan Doyle (Intermediate Ladies manager), Margaret Monaghan and Lisa Carney (Female Liaison Officers of Intermediate Ladies), John Joe Hoban (Intermediate Ladies coach), Tom Colleran (First aider for Intermediate Ladies), George O'Neill (Intermediate Ladies backroom team member).

U10

Siobhán Conlon and Samantha Cleary served as the coaches for the U10 football team. This season proved to be quite eventful for the squad as they resumed play following the Easter break. They thoroughly enjoyed themselves while refining their skills through training sessions and friendly challenge matches. Throughout the season, they dedicated themselves to training hard and occasionally even joined the U10 boys' training sessions to enhance their skills. They also participated in a variety of matches, including games against the U10 boys, U11

and U12 girls, as well as competing against other U10 girls' teams. It's truly been remarkable to witness the significant improvement in their skills!

U12

Our under-12 girls had a motivating season. Two under-10 players joined the team, providing valuable development opportunities and a chance to challenge themselves.

The season kicked off on a positive note, as we secured victories in some closely contested games. However, what stood out most was the girls' resilience when faced with adversity. They consistently displayed respect for the referees and their competitors. Along the way, we had some memorable adventures, including a bus trip to Belmullet that featured a singing session.

The season's pinnacle was reaching the quarter-finals, where the girls exhibited grit, determination and teamwork. Though we eventually fell to Burrishoole, this year has shown the girls what can be accomplished through hard work, commitment and, most importantly, by supporting each other. It has been a privilege to be part of their developmental journey and we eagerly anticipate the challenges and successes of the upcoming year.

U13

In 2023, our U13 team comprised nineteen talented girls who showed determination and commitment from the beginning. They only came together as a cohesive unit in July after the conclusion of the U12 and U14 matches and it was heart-warming to witness the formation of strong bonds and friendships among them. Our first match pitted us against local rivals Aghamore, and we emerged victorious. From there, each Monday evening in August and September was dedicated to either travelling to face opposing teams or hosting them on our home turf. Out of the seven matches we contested, we only suffered one defeat, ultimately finishing at the top of the league table. Unfortunately, our streak of good fortune came to an end when we faced Kilmovee Shamrocks in the Cup semi-final. On a miserable day with challenging weather and some tough calls against us, our girls narrowly fell short towards the end, conceding a goal to Kilmovee. It was a heart-wrenching moment for our team, but we made sure to express our immense pride in each and every one of them. This group boasts much talent and the future of Ballyhaunis football looks very promising. With gratitude and anticipation, Clare, Eddie, and Anna.

U14

Following some indoor winter training, our U14 girls resumed outdoor training in February, and right from the outset, their dedication to enhance their football skills was clear. Our squad consisted of twenty girls and our primary objective was to provide them with ample playing time. In April, our first match took us to the Dome, where we faced a team from Coventry. This was invaluable experience for the girls and helped strengthen their bond as a team. League games commenced in early May, starting with a formidable Ballinrobe team. The girls showed remarkable determination, resulting in a hard-fought draw. The subsequent two games had us travelling to Louisburgh and Tourmakeady, where we secured two resounding victories. There was some exceptional football and the girls continued to improve with each passing week. We clinched the top spot in the league, earning a place in the Cup semi-final against Westport. Although the girls played their hearts out, unfortunately, the evening didn't favour us. In late May, the championship season kicked off with two games against Ballinrobe and Balla, both ending in narrow defeats. However, in our final round match against St. Brigid's, the girls secured a fantastic win in a thrilling display of football. Unfortunately, our U14 season for 2023 ended in the shield semi-final against Aghamore. Nonetheless, the girls had a remarkable season, and we eagerly await their return to the football field next year.

U16

The U16 Ladies' League in 2023 kicked off with an away game against Kilmeena. Despite the terrible weather, the Ballyhaunis girls emerged victorious in a hard-fought battle. Their next encounter, a home game against Shrulë-Glencorrib, saw them secure a comfortable win. However, their home fixture against the group favourites, Davitts, turned out to be a competitive clash, with Davitts ultimately prevailing. In the final group game, played away against Louisburgh, fans were treated to an entertaining match, resulting in a win for Louisburgh. Davitts, having won all their group games, advanced to the league cup final, while Ballyhaunis, Louisburgh and Kilmeena all finished with the same number of points. It was Ballyhaunis, with their superior points' difference, who earned the right to face Davitts in the league cup final. The grand finale took place at the Centre of Excellence in Bëkan and proved to be an intense and gripping contest. In the final quarter of the game, Davitts gained the upper hand, ultimately clinching the U16 league cup. Despite this loss, the Ballyhaunis girls had shown their competitiveness throughout the league and were eagerly anticipating the upcoming championships.

The U16 championship began with a home game against Kilmeena, where the Ballyhaunis girls put on an impressive performance, securing a notable victory. Their following group game, an away match against Shrulë-Glencorrib, resulted in another comfortable win for Ballyhaunis. The last group game saw them on the road again, this time facing Louisburgh, and they maintained their winning streak. Finishing at the top of the table after the group games, Ballyhaunis earned their place in the Championship cup final against Louisburgh, played at the Centre of Excellence in Bëkan. The match showcased two highly skilled teams locked in a tit-for-tat battle. With just ten minutes left, Ballyhaunis found themselves trailing by a single point. A display of outstanding football skills and a high level of fitness propelled Ballyhaunis to seize control of the game in those final minutes, securing a commanding seven-point victory. This remarkable group of girls, who had demonstrated their competitive spirit throughout two years, had narrowly missed out on silverware a few times. This time, their captain, Orla Smith, delivered an eloquent acceptance speech and received the championship cup on behalf of her teammates and the club. The entire team put on superb performances and Erin Higgins was honoured with the Best Player award for her remarkable contributions to their success.

As they look ahead to the future, Ballyhaunis U16 Ladies remain determined to build on this season's achievements, eagerly anticipating the challenges and opportunities that the next year will bring.

Minor Ladies

Despite a challenging beginning to our league, our Minor ladies demonstrated remarkable resilience as they secured a well-deserved spot in the league shield final. This match took place in the Centre of Excellence, where they faced a formidable Kilmeena team. Our ladies were brimming with enthusiasm as they embarked on their Championship journey. They put on an impressive performance, claiming convincing victories against Kilmeena, Louisburgh, and Ballinrobe. They advanced to the semi-final, hosted on our home ground, although, on that day, victory eluded us. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated ladies for their unwavering commitment and hard work throughout the year. Their persistence and teamwork have truly shone brightly.

Panel; Geri Mae Henry, Miah Phillips, Sophia Marque, Chanelle Marque, Erica Byrne, Kate Doyle, Treasa McDermott, Sinead O'Neill, Keleigh Cullen Roddy, Kate Madden, Katelyn McLoughlin, Amy Waldron, Eva Boyle, Emma Swanick, Orla Smith, Sara Brennan, Melissa Clarke, Ava Neary, Jorja Hession, Leah Finnegan, Emma Henry, Grace Heneghan, Erin Higgins, Amy Clancy.





Ballyhaunis LGFA Intermediate team. Back, L-R: Helen Gallagher, Treasa McDermott, Geri-Maye Henry, Niamh Foody, Roisin Lyons, Erin Murray, Aoife Conway, Marina Carney, Sinead O'Neill, Shauna Murray, Orla Smith, Katie Madden, Treasa Norrby, Katelyn O'Sullivan. Front, L-R: Kate Mannion, Chloe Ryan, Danielle Coyne, Gemma Foody, Leah Johnston, Aibhinn Herr, Siofra Murray, Eva Henry, Laura O'Connell (Vice-Capt.), Mae Hession (Capt.). Photograph by Ciara Buckley.

Intermediate Ladies

What an incredible year 2022 was for the Ballyhaunis LGFA Intermediate Ladies team! We proudly clinched the treble, winning in the Memorial League, Division 3 League, and emerging as County Champions at Junior level. Stepping up to Intermediate level was a thrilling new chapter for our ladies. Our initial strides in the 2023 season were steady, adapting to the elevated pace of the game. The Memorial League presented a slow burn for us, but our team rose to the occasion. Confidence grew with each game, as we continually aimed to enhance our skills, gearing up for the upcoming league and championship matches.

The league was a test that allowed us to gauge our mettle under the pressures of intermediate competition. Our backline showed remarkable improvement throughout the season, while our midfield and forwards worked tirelessly to keep us on an upward trajectory for 2023. We secured a mid-table finish, an achievement worth celebrating. We even qualified for the League Shield final, where we faced the formidable Louisburgh, who had been county finalists the previous season. It was a

nail-biter, with only one point separating us.

Our backroom team and players entered the next phase with renewed confidence, bolstered by our league performances and a full squad ready to give it their all. We finished second in the group, just behind Moy Davitts, and advanced to the semi-finals against the strong MacHale Rovers from North Mayo in the semi-final in Ardagh. Although the result didn't go our way, we are immensely proud of the commitment and dedication displayed by our players throughout the year and we eagerly anticipate the challenges that lie ahead in 2024.

A heartfelt 'Thank You' goes out to our dedicated backroom team, including John Joe Hoban, Michael McLoughlin, Tom Colleran, Margaret Monaghan and Lisa Carney, for their tireless efforts and unwavering support throughout the season. Your hard work has been the driving force behind our achievements and we could not be more grateful.

*With positivity and determination,
Declan Doyle, Ballyhaunis LGFA Intermediate Manager.*



U14 team.
Sara Brennan, Katie Conlon, Ruth Cunnane, Alice Curran, Aibhe Donnellan, Lauren Feeney, Abbie Gildea, Roisin Heneghan, Lauren Henry, Erin Higgins, Kyrar Jordan, Micheala Kavanagh, Anna Kelly, Katelyn McLoughlin, Lily Murphy, Isobel Neary, Abbi Norrby, Minki Roos, Lily Thompson, Amy Waldron.



Ballyhaunis LGFA U15 team. Abbie Gildea, Alice Curran, Amy Clancy, Amy Waldron, Ava Neary, Emma Henry, Emma Swanick, Erin Higgins, Eva Boyle, Grace Heneghan, Jorja Hession, Katelyn McLoughlin, Lauren Feeney, Leah Finnegan, Lilly Thompson, Melissa Clarke, Orla Smith (Capt.), Roisín Heneghan, Sara Brennan.



Siblings Rita, Ann, John and Rosie Moran (Bracklaghboy).



Mother and daughters Orla Cahill, Mary Mulrennan and Aoife Mulrennan at the Late Late Show, Sept. 2023.



Mick Feely of Coogue (centre) who celebrated his ninetieth birthday earlier this year. Pictured with neighbours, members of the McDonnell family. L-R: Vincent McDonnell, Bernie Keane, Lelia Walshe and Pat McDonnell.



James Mulrennan, Gurteen, visiting Anfield where Liverpool defeated Toulouse 5-1. James is a big Liverpool supporter.



Ballyhaunis Golf Club

Kevin Garvey (Secretary)

2023 will be remembered in Ballyhaunis Golf Club as the year of ownership, development and talent. In the Autumn of 2022, the management of the club secured the full ownership of the course and clubhouse on behalf of its members. This purchase was facilitated by benefactors and a bond scheme, and the club will be forever grateful to all those involved. Owning the golf club means that, among other things, we are now free to apply for grant aid and develop the club within our financial constraints.

This mention of 'development' leads us into our second memory. The club successfully applied for sports capital funding to develop the piece of waste ground between the clubhouse and the road into a state-of-the-art short game practice facility. DAR Golf from Wicklow was commissioned to undertake the work on this project and the finished article would not be out of place in Adare Manor or The K-Club. The complex comprises two chipping greens and a putting green as well as three tee-boxes and a bunker. The car park was also extended and fenced to accommodate the use of this area. Many people were involved in the initial application for the grant and in overseeing the project and we sincerely thank them all.

Before we get to the talent part of our memories, I want to congratulate the Management Committee and sub-committees for all their work during the year. Apart from the general maintenance required on a golf course, the management committee and staff oversaw the construction of a badly needed machinery shed and staff



facilities, as well as the removal of several dangerous trees from the course. A major irrigation project was undertaken on our greens and all of the manual labour involved in this project – laying of pipes, pumps and sprinklers throughout the course – was carried out on a voluntary basis by a 'meitheal' of our hardworking and committed members. This voluntary work resulted in a major saving for the club, and we shall be forever grateful to them all. Once the irrigation project was complete this team of volunteers began a revamp of our men's locker room. The money saved on labour costs of these and other projects around the club meant that this work could be undertaken where otherwise it would have to be put on the long finger until income allowed, so thank you all very much indeed.

Ballyhaunis Golf Club needed to replace its greenkeeper in 2023 as Paul Charnock decided to return to Scotland for personal reasons. However, the club was fortunate that former club member and highly qualified greenkeeper, Rody Kilbride, following interview and consultation, was available and willing to take up the position. We wish Rody the very best of luck in his new role.

Tony Grennan vacated his position as custodian of the clubhouse and bar in March 2023 and he is sadly missed by all members. However, it gave him the opportunity to return to the course for a game of golf on a more regular basis. The club wishes Tony the very best in the future and thanks him for his years of service.

Following a period of consultation and interviews, Kieran Kiely was offered the tenancy of the clubhouse and bar. We wish Kieran the very best in his new role.

The officer positions for 2023 were held by Robbie Hughes as Men's Captain, Deirdre Moran as Lady Captain and Ja Henry as President. All three worked extremely hard to represent and lead the club in the manner their respective roles demanded. The club congratulates them and thanks them all for their time and service. Our officers held their respective competitions during the year with Vice Captain Barry Freeman winning the Captain's



From left: Ja Henry (President), Eugene Lannon, Western Brand (sponsors), Joan McGuire (Masters winner), Robbie Hughes (Men's Captain). Glynn's Photography.

Prize and Mariette Potgieter winning the Men's Captain Prize to the Ladies. The Junior Captain's Prize was won by Kevin Heneghan. The Lady Captain's Prize went to Ann Curley with the Ladies Prize to the Men going to Joe Kelly. The President's Cup was won by Shane Ganley. Congratulations to all the winners and a big thanks to all our sponsors without whom we could not survive let alone run our weekly competitions and major events.

Talent

And finally, the best memories that the Club will have of 2023 are the achievements of its talented young golfers - Andrew Hickey and John William Burke. Andrew qualified as a PGA Professional during the year and provides lessons by appointment at the club on a regular basis. He is the first professional golfer that the club has had in its almost 100-year history and we are all very proud of his achievements. Those achievements became even more relevant in September when Andrew had his first PGA victory in the CTI Business Solutions Irish PGA Assistants Championship in Ardee, Co. Louth. He was the only player to end the week in double figures after rounds of 69, 68, 64 and 68 gave him a 16-under par total and Andrew credited an aggressive approach as the foundation for his challenge.

To appreciate John William Burke's talent, you need only look at the fourteen year-old's achievements in 2023: won the Darren Clarke Irish Junior Open; came second in the US Kids Junior Championship; equalled the course record in Ballyhaunis by shooting a 5 under 65 which brought his handicap to plus-2; won in all four of the Irish Kids Junior Championships, held throughout the country; played a major part in securing a Fred Daly Connaught title with Ballinasloe Golf Club; was part of the Connaught team in the Interpros and got the winning putt to claim the title for Connaught for the first time in eight years; won the Connaught Open Championship at both under 14 and under 16 age levels. This is the result of many hours of practice and dedication to the game. John William's determination and ability to succeed is an inspiration to us all and the club is so proud to have him as a member. Ballyhaunis Golf Club can boast of an excellent junior coaching programme, co-ordinated by Shane Freeman and Kevin Henry, of which John William is a member and all we can say is 'watch this space' for more names to appear on the podium in the very near future.

Finally, our deepest sympathies to the families and friends of members who passed away during the year. May they all rest in peace and be playing to their handicap in a higher realm.



Andrew Hickey's first professional win at Ardee Golf Club was marked by a special presentation to him at Ballyhaunis Golf Club, where he started his golfing career. L-R: Barry Freeman (Vice Captain), Andrew Hickey, Ja Henry (President) and Deirdre Moran (Lady Captain). *Glynn's Photography.*



Left to right: Ja Henry (President), Barry Freeman (Captain's Prize winner) and Robbie Hughes (Captain). *Glynn's Photography.*



From left: Ja Henry (President), Junior Captain's prize winner Kevin Heneghan and Robbie Hughes (Captain). *Glynn's Photography.*





President, Ja Henry (left) and winner of the President's Prize, Shane Ganley, sponsored by Masterlift. Glynn's Photography.



Lady Captain Deirdre Moran (left) presents her prize to winner Ann Curley. Glynn's Photography.



Enjoying a Christmas Drink, December 2022. Clockwise from left: Garvan Dwane, Paul Hannon, Robbie Herr, John Finnegan, Kieran Moran.



Above: Tommy Joyce, formerly of Abbey St., golfing at Dromoland Castle after a visit to Ballyhaunis in May 2023. He is wearing his 'Make Ballyhaunis Great Again' cap, presented by Tom Ford, Forde's Ltd., The Square.



Left: Friends and neighbours meet up, May 2023. From left: Martin Fitzmaurice, John Finnegan, Padraic McHugh, Kieran Moran, Cathal Phillips, Enda Moran, Marty Hunt, Tommy Joyce, Donal Moran.

Glynn's Photography Exhibition

National Heritage Week, 2023

Tommy Caulfield

National Heritage Week is a celebration of Ireland's natural, built and cultural heritage. The main aim of the week is to promote awareness of our heritage, thereby encouraging its conservation and preservation. All sorts of events and projects are organised throughout the country. As part of Heritage Week 2023 in Ballyhaunis, Glynn's Photography recalled the past fifty years with a photographic review of the social, sporting, business, educational and political life of the town and locality during the period. The 'Reeling in the Years' style trip down memory lane was sponsored by Communicare and was presented by Patsy Glynn and Tommy Caulfield. Over the course of the three-hour presentation more than one thousand photographs were viewed and discussed. The event was held in the newly refurbished Community Hall (Parochial Hall) on Friday evening 18th August 2023 and was very well attended.

Glynn's Photography is a photography company based in Castlerea, Co. Roscommon, and is run by husband-and-wife team Pat and Jenny Glynn, photographers with many years of photographic experience between them. The company was established by Patsy's late father Pat Glynn in 1953. On Glynn's Historical Photography Website you will find photographs covering the period from 1953 from counties, Roscommon, Galway and Mayo and surrounding areas.

With images from all aspects of life in the town and parish, the exhibition provided a very special insight into the Ballyhaunis of yesteryear. The enjoyable evening gave those in attendance an opportunity to consider how

much of ourselves we have left behind and how much we have taken with us over the past half century. This collection of photos is very important in telling the story of our town and parish as the images provide a visual representation of our past. The images help us understand how people lived and worked and interacted with each other.

Photography is an important tool for preserving memories. It's easy to think you'll never forget things, but memories have a way of disappearing over time. Old photos allow us to call up stories from years gone by, to look back on our biggest achievements and on our smallest moments. Photographs play an important role in everyone's life because they allow us to keep in touch with our heritage and bring back fond memories of special times, people and places and keep precious memories alive for generations to come.

Photography is a very good method of storytelling. We are all familiar with the expression, "a picture is worth 1,000 words." Old photos are a great way to preserve personal memories and pass on historical information. Of course, we mustn't live with our heads stuck in the past, but this exhibition as part of Heritage Week provided an opportunity to take a look in the rear-view mirror and understand how the town has changed over time and how our community has developed into what it has become today.

All photos from the exhibition are available to view and purchase at historical.glynnsphotography.com



Gathered at a function twenty years ago. Back, L-R: Breda Waldron, Tom McCormack, Mary Keane, Patsy Keane, Tom Waldron. Front, L-R: Ann Marie Meehan, Tom Meehan, Michael Waldron, Tommie Glynn, Marian Glynn. *Glynn's Photography*.



President Mary Robinson met Tommy Carroll during her visit to Avonmore Meat Processors, Ballyhaunis in 1992. *Glynn's Photography*.





Organising committee of the Ballyhaunis Senior Christmas Party, 2001.

Back, L-R: John Morley, Mary Elwood, Michael Caulfield, Mary McGuire, Matt O'Dwyer, Sr. Assumpta, Teresa Healy.

Front, L-R: Eileen Rattigan, Kathleen McBride, Helen Meehan, Bernie Lyons.

Glynn's Photography.

Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce hosted a highly successful Trade Fair in May, 1984, which was officially opened by Mr. Liam Kavanagh, T.D., Minister for the Environment.

In the *Annagh* magazine that year, the TradeFair was said to have, "surpassed all expectations with a nationwide attendance of over 5,000 people." It was held in and on the grounds of the IDA advance factory in Tooraree. Pictured at the event were, from left: Jimmy Fleming, Liam Kavanagh TD (Minister for the Environment), Hugh Rudden, John O'Neill, Bob Fox, Peadar Walsh, Michael Waldron, John Prenty. *Glynn's Photography.*



Photographed on Main Street during Marian Harkin's campaign in the run up to the European Parliament elections in 2004. She was elected to represent the Ireland North-West constituency.

L-R: Mary Smyth, Denise Moran, Tom Cribbin, Marian Harkin, Matt Healy, Orla Nevin, Anne Fitzpatrick. *Glynn's Photography.*

Programme for 'DAUGHTER FROM OVER THE WATER', a Good Counsel Players' production, 1972

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(By M. J. MOLLOY).

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"DAUGHTER FROM OVER THE WATER"

A Comedy in Three Acts

By M. J. MOLLOY.

CAST

In order of appearance.

Kit Higgins	Maisin Meath
Tul Higgins	Jimmy Cribben
Tuppenny Hayes	Paddy Kelly
Larry Burke	Noel D'Alton
Sibby Hayes	Mary Timoney
Nicholas Burke	Tommy Grogan
Rita Higgins	Helen Grogan
Nellie Flood	Peggy Curran
Ram Rooney	Michael Cameron
Pete Higgins	Jimmy Egan
Alan Page	Michael Smyth

WILLIAM CAMPBELL

LOUNGE BAR.

AUCTIONEER and VALUER.

KNOX STREET, BALLYHAUNIS.

Scene—Higgins's Kitchen.

Period—Present Day.

Time—July.

Act I

Act II

Scene I

Scene II

Act III

Produced by	Seamus Durkan
Make-up	Tommy Smyth
Setting	Seamus Durkan
Decor	Mary Smyth

B. BYRNE

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Le Cáirde Ballyhaunis

Ludmila Burcovschi

"We are here to make our world a better place."

Following a very successful event to mark International Women's Day (8th Mar. 2023) in the Community Hall, a new group was established. Ballyhaunis Le Cairde Group, is a voluntary non-profit association who want to have a Friends Group in the community of Ballyhaunis, which will provide a safe, secure, friendly and open environment where people from all sections of our diverse community can meet and engage in positive activities that will enhance their overall well-being. The objectives of the Group are to advance the well-being of our members by providing a safe and happy environment where people can pursue hobbies, pastimes and interests, learn new skills, practice and pass on old skills, especially in the areas of music, arts, crafts, cuisine and DIY, learn about their own and other people's traditions, experiences and interests. It operates from the Friary House on Saturday afternoons (4-6pm) and has been involved in a wide range of music and art and craft type activities throughout the last year. Please feel welcome to join us any Saturday afternoon, to find out more.

Slavic café, English café, Valentine's Party, International Woman's Day and Art and Craft Display, this is where the *Le Cáirde* group started on its journey. After these events, I saw great interest emerging and a need to gather together and continue meeting on a regular basis. Stephen Grogan from the Family Resource Centre was very happy to support this project and accommodated us on Saturdays from 1st April 2023.

The name of the group was thought up by a member of Language café, Angie, reflecting the friendly atmosphere that exists at our group. We are happy to

welcome everyone, as inclusion and diversity is part of our mission statement and a core goal we all share.

Ballyhaunis is the most diverse town in Ireland, consisting of more than 40% of immigrants, which continues to increase with the Ukrainians we are welcoming into our community. I have travelled a very similar path and know very well what challenges may arise upon settling into the new place. We want newcomers to feel at home by supporting them and making their integration into Irish society as smooth as possible. It's my belief that immigrants can benefit each other and the local community by sharing their life experiences, talents and culture.

Le Cáirde was established as a music group which takes part in broadcast Masses and a broad range of local community and charity events. We welcome new people to join.

Our Art and Craft group took part in Mayo Social Inclusion Awareness week. We organise salsa classes which are held every Sunday at the Community Hall at 7.30pm (collections go towards maintenance of the hall). A stylist workshop had been delivered by Yuliia Bolohova from Castlebar to bring local fashion lovers together. We are currently planning a lot of workshops and masterclasses: clothes alteration, singing, guitar, beads embroidery, crochet, art, reading music notation and much more. *Le Cáirde* is also open to more talent and skills being shared by local people.

Le Cáirde group is very diverse. Our members are from Germany, Poland, Egypt, Brazil, Latvia, Romania, Japan, Moldova, Lithuania, Ukraine, Philippines, India and not forgetting Ireland.

Below are comments from some of our group members about what *Le Cáirde* means to them and why they got involved:

Natalia from Ukraine, hostess of the group

For me, the opportunity to get to know people in the group has been very interesting. It's not only the exchange of words in different languages, but it's also an exchange of different ways of thinking. It's interesting to observe how interaction with other cultures can change us, how we can change each other. It's a creative process where I can express myself. This type of socialising gives you opportunities to explore your talents and receive joy from watching others do the same.

Breege from Ballyhaunis, soloist

I joined *Le Cáirde* group in May 2023. *Le Cáirde* is a



Le Cairde members at a birthday party, July 2023.

Back, L-R: Tetiana Dolbiiva, Breege Keogh Kenny, Reda Manke, Ainars Feierabends, Volodymyr Cherniavskyi, Moira Delaney, Teodor Dragomir, Oliver Jordan, Elizabeth Burcovschi, Victoria Burcovschi, Angie Seamróg, John Dave Halasan. **Front, L-R:** Marc J-R Dimayuga, Rita Keogh, Ludmila Burcovschi, Magda Manke.



group with a deeply woven fabric of music. Being a member of Ballyhaunis and Logboy church choirs I love to sing, and what music and song brings is the absolute bread of life. In the group, each individual musician is very talented and creative. Music has a profound influence on shaping our identities by providing a soundtrack to our lives. Music serves as a universal language connecting people on a deep level, and providing a sense of community. *Le Cáirde* has brought an absolute bread of life to so many in our parish of Ballyhaunis. There are so many solutions found in music, and *Le Cáirde* has put it all together. There is an open invitation to everyone to join in music and song, play musical instruments, relax, have fun and enjoy.

John Dave from the Philippines, guitar player

When I arrived in our humble town of Ballyhaunis, I felt so alone and lifeless in a small town so quiet and having no friends at all. I imagined going to a bigger town or city hoping to find peace and joy. That was my original plan from day one, but since I've joined *Le Cáirde*, everything has changed. I found a family; I found friends so dear to me. Ballyhaunis, once a quiet town, became joyful and a home to me. The plan to leave changed into a plan to stay. *Le Cáirde* is not just a casual group that meets every weekend, it's more than that. Yes, we all love music and arts, but the most important thing is we enjoy doing it together, for the friendship, the bonds and the love of one another. Success for one is success for all because we support each other. We share our laughter and tears together. We help each other during tough times because we have got each other's back. *Le Cáirde*, we are not a group - we are a family.

Gosia from Poland, crochet in art and craft group

Le Cáirde for me is a group of fantastic people who have created a friendly environment where I can develop my personal skills and where I receive support from every member. It is an excellent opportunity for personal growth and a possibility to discover new hobbies and opportunities. It's a mutual exchange of inspiration, a place where I can share my ideas and support other members with their ideas. The group *Le Cáirde* is a testament to the power of collaboration and shared passions, serving as an invaluable asset in my journey of self-improvement and creative exploration.

Moira from Ballyhaunis, violin player

The formation of a new international music group, *Le Cáirde*, under the direction of Ludmila Burcovschi, has added greatly to the religious ceremonies in the Parish Church. I have joined them at Masses, community events, concerts, variety shows, even karaoke birthday parties. Members of the group aged eleven to eighty-six years, from home and abroad, happily combine to take us on a wonderful musical journey. Life is the song; Love is the music.

Angie from Germany, soloist

Being with friends and sharing what you love the most is a privilege. Growing into a thriving, creative group, *Le Cáirde*, and then putting a smile on other people's faces by doing what you enjoy is healing, enriching and a blessing to experience. Each day of the week I spend time with the members of this wonderful community by either sharing new ideas, practising or preparing further for events, and also when the actual events are taking place. The lovely, warm-hearted people of this group have become a family. Partners and children are becoming more involved. We support each other in daily life and I'm grateful for every precious memory I have been allowed to be part of with *Le Cáirde*. These are friendships for life. Thank you!

Andrei from Romania, guitar player

Had a lovely evening meeting the beautiful *Le Cáirde* group. It was amazing to see how people of so many backgrounds and of different ages can meet as equals and communicate through the universal language of music. Even if it was my first time meeting them, I can foresee many magical and electrified performances as part of this greatly talented group of musicians.

Magda from Ballyhaunis, soloist

Joining the group last Spring was quite surprising for me but I knew I would fit in the moment I met everybody. I was very scared of people, crowds and conversations with strangers, but after tagging along every Saturday, I realised that I was finally able to come out of my shell. These people are like family to me, one that can unite no matter what it be, in song, or simply sitting around and having a laugh. These people are hardworking and just so compassionate and I just feel like I have finally found my second home.

Reda, Magda's mom from Lithuania

My daughter and I joined the *Le Cáirde* group in Spring 2023. It was quite a surprise to us to meet so many different personalities, nationalities, hobbies and interests that can all come together and work on projects in harmony, respect and love, despite their differences. My daughter loves singing and she has been singing since



At rehearsal before a Mass broadcast in St. Patrick's Church, Summer 2023. From left: John Dave Halasan, Teodor Dragomir, Oliver Jordan, Marc J-R Dimayuga.



Le C  irde after their first broadcast Mass, 18th June (Father's day) 2023. Back, L-R: Victor Burkovskiy, Angie Seamr  g, Ludmila Burcovski, Yuliia Makarchuk, Oliver Jordan, John Dave Halasan. **Front, L-R:** Teodor Dragomir, Marc J-R Dimayuga.

she was very small. But ever since joining the group she finally began to open up and fight her fears. During those meetings on Saturdays, I feel at home.

Oliver from Ballyhaunis

When I was invited to join the group, *Le C  irde*, I soon realised that I had something to offer from my long musical journey and I was not thinking of retirement just yet. I wholeheartedly embraced these multicultural friendships inspired by music and song.

Nadia and Tatiana from Ukraine, beads embroidery in Art and Craft group

From experiences from our previous work, we have this interesting and fun activity, leaving skills for future generations in beads and embroidery. We put our souls and effort into every piece of embroidery we make. *Le C  irde* group gives us the opportunity to meet people, pass on our skills and learn new skills from others. Big thanks to everyone for participating in this project. Wishing health and happiness to everyone.

Junis, German-Egyptian drummer

I enjoy making music with my friends and the warm and friendly atmosphere of the group. Since I recently came to Ireland with my family, *Le C  irde* helped me a lot to feel at home quickly.

Evelyn from Ballyhaunis guitar player/soloist

I've adored singing since I was a very small child, but in recent years I sing only at the weddings of friends and sadly, at some family funerals too. So, when I saw that *Le C  irde* had formed a music group, the desire to sing somewhere other than the shower led me to their door. What a fantastic, positive group of musical souls I found there! The atmosphere is relaxed and welcoming and everyone understands if, some weeks, you can't be there. I'm looking forward to our next set of events and to rediscovering the joy of singing in public with this lovely group of people.

Mac from Philippines, soloist

Le C  irde, a home, a family. It started and hit fast for me. I came here from the Philippines to Ireland to work last April, 2023. All I expected were challenges and tiring days in Ballyhaunis, but then I was invited to sing and join an event that eventually opened very big opportunities for me. I am very happy to meet these wonderful people who love to smile, help, guide and especially sing. With those lovely instruments such as piano, guitars, flute, violin, harp, cajon, chimes, melodica, etc. I can say that times with these wonderful people is such peace. The Saturday gathering is something to look forward to every week. I love singing with them. I hope this will go further and further until our family, our home, achieves our goals and mission. Thank you, *Le C  irde*. Smiles from the heart.

Yoshies from Japan, soloist

I think it's wonderful to have a place where we can meet as equals. People of different races, religions and nationalities, young and old, male and female, to talk about our lives here in Ireland and to share our music and cultures.

Rodrigo from Brazil, guitar player

I am very happy to participate in this group. Even though I have been absent recently, I intend to return very soon, because for me the *Le C  irde* group is a family who welcomed me as a musician. Even though I don't know much about the native language, they believed in my work and helped me progress a lot and gave me many opportunities. It would have taken me a century to get to where I am by myself, doing what I like. I thank you Ludmila for being such a concerned and dedicated person in what you do, since everything you demand from us is to see us at our best... Thank you.

Yuliia from Ukraine, Secretary of the group and soloist in the Music Group

When I arrived in Ireland, namely in Ballyhaunis, I was lonely and empty without my favourite hobby of singing. But this *Le C  irde* group found me. I adore the collective of the group *Le C  irde* and will continue to sing with them.

Victoria from Ballyhaunis, violin player

Mum was the one who introduced me to this group. Music was the thing that made me stay, accompanied by the undeniable sense of family and community generated from each and every person there. Every rehearsal is filled with laughter and smiles. Every music note fills our hearts; hearts that have been so empty during these troublesome times in the world. *Le C  irde* will always be part of my life and my family. It's an honour to give whatever I can to the numerous Masses and concerts we do and it's a pleasure to be surrounded by the wonderful members that support and build each other up, no matter what.



**Ludmila from Moldova
/Ballyhaunis, Chair of the
group and Musical Director of
Le C  irde**

Personally, for me *Le C  irde* group is a place where I can see life from different angles, learn new things and just have fun! Also, I like to see people happy and changing their lives for better.

**Comments from people Le
C  irde work with:**

Anne from Ballyhaunis

Le C  irde added a wonderful atmosphere to our Faith & Light Summer Fiesta. Everyone enjoyed the beautiful singing, playing and interaction. We look forward to them joining us again at another Fiesta in 2024.

**Yuliia from Ukraine, stylist
master class facilitator**

There were very active and interested master class participants in Ballyhaunis. And, unexpectedly, there was even a man present. Thank you for the new experience, many questions and such keen interest.

Mark from Ballyhaunis

Le C  irde group is a lovely group of people with musical talent and good intentions which was born out of the Language Caf  . It creates a welcoming space for creativity and friendship for people from various backgrounds who may otherwise struggle to find an anchor in a new place. Like the Language Caf   it also gives local people the chance to meet with and get to know newcomers to our community through a shared interest, such as language or music or crafts. I have a great memory of seeing John Dave, a multi-instrumentalist from the Philippines synching effortlessly with local traditional musicians on Irish tunes at one of our Irish Nights at the Community Hall earlier this year. I hope that *Le C  irde* members will also continue to attend the Language Caf   and continue as a creative space for friendly, generous people.

Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.

The arrival of *Le C  irde* has enriched our parish and community. The diversity of nationalities in the group is truly representative of the great diversity in our parish, which in turn means that our celebration of Sunday Mass is all the more authentic because of the music and



Above: At Moira Delaney's retirement party, Delaney's bar, July 2023. Clockwise from left: Oliver Jordan, Fr. Arul Jayaseelam, Ludmila Burcovski, Ainars Feierabends, Carmel Patterson, Breege Keogh Kenny.



Right: After Fashion Masterclass from Yuliia Bolohova, Sept. 2023. L-R: Nataliia Litovchenko, Ludmila Burcovski, Yuliia Bolohova, Breege Keogh Kenny, Yuliia Makarchuk.



Pictured after the International event in June 2023.

Back, L-R: Teodor Dragomir, Ainars Feierabends, Ludmila Burcovski, Moira Delaney.

Front, L-R: Yoshie Terada Comer, Mary Comer, Michiko Davenport-Kotera, Breege Keogh Kenny, Angie Seamr  g, Cathriona Naughton, Nataliia Litovchenko.

singing of *Le C  irde*. It means that our parish is a place of welcome for all who feel they have something to contribute to the building up of our parish and community.

Le C  irde group gives local people opportunity to meet in informal atmosphere, explore other cultures, learn new skills, make friends and just have a friendly chat with a cup! You are welcome to join in every Saturday from 4pm to 6pm in the Family Resource Centre. Check our Facebook page *Le C  irde Ballyhaunis*.

"Diversity in all its forms is the path to greatness."

James D Wilson

MacHale Park – The Ballyhaunis Connection

Eamon Murren

MacHale Park, Castlebar was officially opened on 24th May 1931, with about 4,000 spectators in attendance. The Mayo senior footballers played a challenge game against Kildare, a match that ended in a draw on a scoreline of Mayo 1-6, Kildare 2-3. On the day Jim Forde, late of Upper Main Street, lined out for Mayo.

The senior game was preceded by a minor match between Castlebar Mitchels and Ballyhaunis who were represented by: J. King, W. Lyons, T. Caulfield, T. Moran,

J. Carroll, J. Lyons, P. Jordan, J. Conroy, A. Carney, W. Waldron, P. Regan, M. Merriman, M. Greeley, J. Griffin and A. Freeley. Castlebar won the game with four points to spare (3-2 to 1-4). The Connaught Telegraph reported that the game, '...was marred towards the end by a boxing match which was quickly suppressed'.

On 13th May 2001, to mark the 70th anniversary of the opening, Mayo again took on Kildare, while Castlebar minors renewed rivalry with Ballyhaunis. On

this occasion Ballyhaunis lined out as follows: Pdraig Carney, Christy Burke, Paul Jordan, Brian Mulrennan, Alan Lyons, Jason Powers, Keith Higgins, Andrew Shanaghy, Stephen Shanaghy, Declan Warde, Packie Waldron, John Prenty, Hugh Carney, Ian Prenty, William Nestor. Subs: Kieran Griffin, Stephen Kelly, Liam Lyons, Shane Buckley.

One of the main driving forces behind the development of MacHale Park was the then Fr. Hugh Curley, who was curate in Castlebar at the time and later served as Chairman of Mayo GAA for a number of years. Fr. Hugh, who had strong connections with the Ballyhaunis/Tooreen/Aghamore area, distinguished himself within the church and was elevated to the ecclesiastical title of Monsignor.



Jim Forde, Upper Main Street (centre), photographed in Philadelphia with Willie Biesty, Knox Street (left) and Pokey Murray, Devlis (right) during the Mayo GAA tour of U.S.A. in 1932. (Courtesy of Johnny Biesty).



Taken in New York in the late 1960s.

Back, L-R:

Brendan Rattigan,
Tom Fitzgerald,
Gabriel Rattigan,
Tony Greene.

Front:

Val Rattigan,
Eamon Curley.



Mary and Jim Goulding, Doctor's Road, hosted a Coffee Morning which raised €3,400 for the Irish Pilgrimage Trust on Saturday, 11th Feb. 2023. The Irish Pilgrimage Trust brings children and young people with special needs on a week-long Pilgrimage Holiday to Lourdes each Easter for a unique and often life enhancing experience for all those involved. The Trust started in 1972 when a group of volunteers brought fourteen young people with special needs on holiday to Lourdes in France. The Trust has travelled every year since and now brings over 500 young people on holiday every Easter. Pictured are, from left: Jim and Mary Goulding with their granddaughter Siobhan Gallagher, daughter Julie and son Michael.



Right:
Siobhán Gallagher pictured at Easter at our Lady's Grotto, Lourdes remembering all who supported the Coffee Morning.

Left:
The latest mural to appear at The Square features a pilgrim ascending Croagh Patrick.



Below left:
The precision art of Sign Painting lives on in Ballyhaunis in the capable hands of Johnny O'Shaughnessy, pictured here at work on Main Street, July 2023.



The joy of the Easter Season was celebrated in this year's
BALLYHAUNIS EASTER PARADE
(Photographs by Fr. Stephen Farragher)



Right:
Keeping
Knockbrack clean.
L-R: Mary Walsh,
Teresa Grogan,
Anne Lyons, Alexander
and Killian Bradley
(Macclesfield, England,
nephews of Anne Lyons)
Bernadette Lyons and
Gerry Lyons.

Far right:
Freddie Herr,
(Ballindrehid).



Once again, many volunteers throughout
the parish took part in the annual
'Spring Clean' of their own townlands
and localities which took place,
as usual, on Good Friday, 7th Apr. 2023.



Left:
Siobhan Herr
(left) and
Geraldine
O'Dwyer,
Ballindrehid
taking part in
the annual
Ballyhaunis
Spring Clean.



L-R: John Griffin, Frankie Dillon, Aiden Hill
and Joe Healy, Annagh.

Right:
Jenny and Patsy Glynn,
Doctor's Road.

Far right:
Neighbours Susan Hill
and Ildiko Ignacz of Annagh
taking part in the annual
Ballyhaunis Spring Clean
in April.



The Fine Gael party started 2023 celebrating the fact that our leader, Leo Varadkar, was appointed Taoiseach for a second time on 17th Dec. 2022. He will now hold that office until the next general election which is scheduled to take place in the Spring of 2025.

On 13th April Leo, as leader of the Government, had the joyous task of welcoming the President of the United States, Joe Biden, to Ireland. During formal talks they discussed the strong and historic connections between our governments and peoples, including the robust trade and investment links between both countries. They discussed U.S.-Irish co-operation on a range of global issues. They also marked the 25th anniversary of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement and reaffirmed their steadfast support for preserving and expanding its peace dividend.

President Biden's four-day visit was a huge event throughout the country, but it took on a whole new dimension when he visited Mayo. As a self-proclaimed 'Mayo Man' his 'homecoming' was a very special occasion. We, in the Ballyhaunis area, were delighted that he visited Knock Shrine and many from the area travelled to the Shrine on Friday 14th April to see one of Mayo's favourite sons. It was a source of great joy and pride to the people of Ballyhaunis when President Biden paid tribute to one of our own heroes, Cpl. Patrick Gallagher, a Ballyhaunis man who lost his life in the Vietnam War and in whose name and honour a U.S. Naval Destroyer is currently under construction in Maine.

Another major event took place in the Ballyhaunis area on 21st April when Cllr. John Cribbin informed the Fine Gael branch members that he would not be putting his name forward for re-election in the upcoming local elections, which are due to be held in 2024. Having had the honour and privilege of representing the area since 1999, he had decided the time was right for him to retire. As a result of this announcement the branch held a meeting on Wednesday, 10th May for the purpose of putting in train a schedule for selecting a candidate from the branch area. At the next branch meeting on Monday, 2nd May two candidates were nominated and ratified - Alma

Gallagher and William Nestor - to go forward to the Fine Gael selection convention for the Claremorris Municipal District. Subsequently, William Nestor withdrew his name thus leaving one candidate, Alma Gallagher, going forward from the Ballyhaunis area to the selection Convention.

On Friday, 30th June at its selection convention, Fine Gael selected three candidates to go forward to represent the party at next year's local elections: Alma Gallagher (Ballyhaunis), Cllr. Michael Burke (Ballinrobe) and Cllr. Tom Connolly (Claremorris). Many tributes were paid to Cllr. Cribbin by the delegates for his dedicated service to his constituents and to his party during a career which spanned over twenty-five years. Cllr. Cribbin's retirement has now paved the way for Alma Gallagher's nomination as Fine Gael candidate for next year's local election. Alma's professional experience in rural and community development, coupled with her volunteering ethos, equips her with an understanding of the challenges faced by our constituency. Alma was employed by Moy Valley Resources IRD as Development Officer for North Mayo/West Sligo tasked with delivering the LEADER Plus Programme and Social Inclusion Programme and, more recently, as Manager of Clár ICH delivering social services, housing and retrofitting projects. Her experience in accessing funding and working with local and national government is a powerful asset for our region. Alma's priority is to retain the seat and continue the legacy of Cllr. Cribbin, pursuing increased investment in the economic and social infrastructure of our constituency.

The Ballyhaunis Fine Gael branch is proud of the fact that among our members we have a centenarian in the person of Mr. Joe Keane, Knox Street. Joe is a life-long, active member of Fine Gael. Cllr. John Cribbin, on behalf of the branch, made a presentation of Galway Crystal to Joe at a function in the Ballyhaunis Community Hall on Saturday, 16th September, to mark his 100th birthday.

The members of the Ballyhaunis Fine Gael Branch would like to express their gratitude to Cllr. John Cribbin for the service he has provided since he was first elected to Mayo



Cllr. John Cribbin, who has announced his retirement from politics, pictured with Alma Gallagher who has been selected Fine Gael candidate at next year's local elections.



County Council back in 1999. He became Mayo's first citizen in 2009 when, on the 19th June, he was honoured by his fellow councillors when they elected him as Cathaoirleach of Mayo County Council. John has worked tirelessly for the people of Ballyhaunis and the surrounding area. Cllr. Cribbin has been a loyal servant

to his constituents and to the Fine Gael Party. The slogan *'Elected by some to serve all'* describes Cllr. John Cribbin's time in public life. We wish him health and happiness in his retirement. Ballyhaunis Fine Gael would like to wish everybody a Happy Christmas and a prosperous and healthy New Year.



Left:
Tom Moylett (Curries),
hunting on McGuire's
Mountain, Lecarrow.
Year unknown.
(Courtesy of Oliver
Ruane).

Below:
Tom and Agnes
Ruane (Bargariff).
Photo taken 1988.
(Courtesy of Oliver
Ruane).



Above: Frank Glynn (Clare St.) with his greyhound pups. Circa 1950s.
(Courtesy of Oliver Ruane).



Scoil Iosa in the 1990s

Photos taken by Mrs. Betty Regan, Scoil Iosa.



**Scoil Iosa class photo,
25th June 1992.**

Back, L-R:
Áine Cribbin,
Orla Mulrennan,
Janine Gallagher,
Alison Ruane,
Sinéad O'Hagan,
Louise Lilly.

Front, L-R:
Sandra Waldron,
Lorraine Brennan,
Elizabeth Rabbittie,
Ciara Buckley,
Laura Byrne.



Above: Scoil Iosa pupils, 11th July 1994.
L-R: Derek McConn,
Tadhg Buckley,
Declan Ward.

Above left:
Scoil Iosa class photo,
Back, L-R: Claire Healy, Jacklyn Moran,
Orla Ryan, Fiona Murphy.
Front, L-R: Siobhán Lyons,
Karen Jordan, Tara Nevin, Annie Tighe.

Bottom right:
Scoil Iosa classmates.
L-R: Jason Coffey, Paul Jordan,
Martin Coffey, Christy Burke.
Taken 4th Dec. 1995.

Thanks to Áine Cribbin for naming.





Scoil Íosa trip to Achill Adventure Centre, 17th June 1992.

Back, L-R:

Paul O'Neill,
Tomás Murphy,
Derek McConn,
Gary Nolan.

Front, L-R:

Michael Plunkett,
Noel Frayne,
Adrian Lilly,
James McGuire.



Above: Taken in Coventry, June 2022.

Back, L-R Tom Cleary (Johnstown), Martin Grogan (Clare Street), Tom Forde (Reisk), Michael Meehan (Annagh).

Front, L-R: John Lyons (Devlis), Bernie Keane (Annagh), Kevin Meehan (Annagh).



Left: Martin Grogan, formerly of Clare Street, pictured with his daughter Clara and granddaughter Sorcha pictured behind the bar at Páirc na hEireann GAA Stadium in Birmingham. Martin is a member of the Roger Casement's GAA Club and is an officer of the Warwickshire GAA County Board and remains a loyal supporter of his native Ballyhaunis and Mayo GAA. Martin has been closely associated with the promotion and development of Gaelic Games in the UK since his arrival there in the 1970s.

Ballyhaunis Language Café

Mark Godfrey, Malgorzata Cieslikowska,
Manal Fadawi Kezze and Shayla Rasmussen

Ballyhaunis Language Café was described as 'unique' by the judges of the Pride of Place Awards, who visited the group and listened to our members and the Le Cáirde music group, born out of the Language Café, at the Community Hall in August after our group was nominated for these all-island awards by Mayo County Council. This followed our selection as winner in the social inclusion category at this year's Cathaoirleach Awards presented by the Chairperson of Mayo County Council.

Ballyhaunis Language Café was born in late 2018-early 2019 after a conference on integration organised by the national government with local groups. We sought to create a tangible local platform that allowed locals of all backgrounds to meet and engage. What better way than to share and help each other learn our languages? During Covid we added a French and a Spanish conversation group which met in the local Community Garden during the sunnier days of the pandemic. Our weekly meetings moved to local Cafés and pubs once rules allowed and began to attract a trickle of enthusiastic language learners and newcomers to the town. At English Café on Thursday nights, in the meeting room of the Community Hall, friends from Brazil, Georgia, Latvia, Poland, Spain, Ukraine and various parts of Africa come for cups of tea with Merrilyn and Tomás, retirees and great teachers and listeners. Stephen, the

local beef farmer, and Mary, the retired parish secretary also lend a hand in guiding the conversation, to give learners the confidence to chat in English in a relaxed and friendly environment. There's no charge, but so much value has been generated in understanding and integration.

The Language Café, while being informal and friendly, is also inclusive. We cater to those wishing to learn English, but also engage the locals who want to revive or practise French and Spanish with new members of our community for whom those languages are native tongues. Thus, the Morales family from Guatemala – based in the local direct provision centre – helped us speak Spanish for an hour every Thursday. Raj, manager of the local Supermacs and from Mauritius, talked to us in French on Fridays. More recently David, from the Congo, comes to our English Café but he also joins the French conversation group on a Sunday evening, giving the native Irish the invaluable chance to speak French with a native speaker. Who can forget the lovely sight last winter of Tommy, a care worker who travels all the way from Longford to practise Spanish on Thursday evenings, sending a care package of vegetables to Zinthia, our Venezuelan friend, when she got the flu?

In the early days of the Language Café some of the founding members sought to give a weekly lesson in Irish grammar to newcomers. This effort was cut short by Covid but then revived with an Irish Night organised to mark Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022. A bi-weekly comhrá or conversation group was started for those wishing to practise their Gaeilge in a relaxed Sunday evening setting at the local Gill's Bar. This group continues. But to promote and preserve our native language the Language Café partnered with Conradh na Gaeilge to run a series of Irish classes for beginners and those new to Ireland. These were very well attended and we marvelled at the ability and enthusiasm of learners like Usman from Pakistan, who has a remarkably good pronunciation in the Irish language. The quarterly Irish Night, full of Irish music, dance and storytelling is very popular with locals but also with newcomers to the community seeking to understand Irish culture.

Friends from dozens of nationalities have come to the Language Café and below are the words of a few of them.



Taken at the presentation of Mayo County Council Cathaoirleach's Award (Social Inclusion category) to Ballyhaunis Language Café in March 2023.

L-R: Alan Dillon TD, Ludmilla Burcovschi, Mark Godfrey, Teodor Dragomir, Cllr. John Cribbin.



Malgorzata Cieslikowska

"My journey with the Language Café began back in 2018 when I attended the very first meeting. Currently, I attend the English, Spanish, Slavik and Italian Cafés. I moved to Ireland a year after Poland joined the EU, with my husband and then six-year-old twins. We have lived in Ballyhaunis ever since. Upon our arrival in Ireland, none of us had any English. I picked up English at work, but when I had to go on invalidity because of health issues, I almost stopped speaking English. I didn't have many opportunities to talk in English and began feeling less confident when speaking the language.

When I read about the Language Café, on Facebook, I knew I had to join and I have loved it since. Our Language Cafés have given me the opportunity to practise my English and, more importantly, the confidence when speaking English in my everyday life. It has also given me a lot of meaningful friendships.

I think, our Language Café fosters patience and compassion as we stumble through sentences, laugh at our mistakes and cheer each other on with encouragement. It teaches us that communication is not just about words, but about the intent to connect with one another. Our Language Café teaches perseverance as we push through challenges in an attempt at achieving fluency in a language.

In my opinion, our Language Cafés are bridges between cultures, and vessels of human connection, which I am very grateful to be a part of."

Manal Fadawi Kezze

"At a Language Café meeting, you practise your language skills and culture by talking with the other people over a cup of coffee or tea. English Café provides different types of courses for people from different parts of the society without any age barrier. Most of us are coffee lovers, food lovers, and some of us like to explore new places. Most of us go there to experience a change in our busy lives. These days, I like the idea of birthdays, and at the Language Café we like to surprise our friends on their birthdays."

Shayla Rasmussen

"I joined the Ballyhaunis Language Café late last year when I saw a social media post offering free Irish classes in the Community Hall. As a U.S. citizen who hadn't lived long in the country, I was excited to learn more about Irish culture through the language and hopefully meet some people from the community. Any expectations I had of the class and the people I met were completely exceeded in every way. Our Irish teacher, Colm, is knowledgeable, passionate and exudes a calmness which invites us to easily engage in this seemingly difficult language without stress. His

exuberance as a teacher has made it easy to fall in love with the language.

The group also led me to join the Spanish Conversation Café. While I have been studying Spanish for over a decade, these weekly meetings have transformed me from a high beginner to an intermediate speaker of the language in less than a year. It is crazy to think how I've learned more Spanish in Ballyhaunis, Co Mayo, than I did in the previous year while living in Spain. Through the Café, I was also able to meet so many people from the local community, many of whom have become friends who I can hardly imagine not having in my life. I am so grateful to live in a town with such an engaged community."

Follow the 'Ballyhaunis Language Café' or contact 087 9777899 if you'd like to join the Language Café WhatsApp group.

Graduation



Proud parents Geraldine and Gerry Benson of Letterkenny pictured with their daughter Ruth who was conferred with her PhD in Medicine and Health at UCC in June, 2023.

Gerry, formerly of Upper Main Street, is a member of a family steeped in the sporting history of the town and starred on the Ballyhaunis GAA team which captured the Mayo Masters' Title in 1978.

Family Resource Centre

Merrilyn Winters reflects on her year at the helm as Chairperson of the Family Resource Centre.

What I learned over this year as Chairperson of the Family Resource Centre Chairperson: firstly, let me say, I lasted longer in the role than Liz Truss did as UK Prime Minister. Secondly, I regretted not a minute of this opportunity to learn, and in a way to display my gratitude to our community that welcomed me so completely. Thirdly, I would like to share the awe I feel for the accomplishments of the FRC, despite its limited resources. I hope by highlighting the work of the FRC, it will garner interest and subsequently more community participation in the FRC's mission.

In September 2022, Seamus Grogan stepped down as Chairman after twenty years and overseeing the tremendous projects still in existence, including the Ballyhaunis Community Pre-School and the Greater Tomorrow crèche. Out of 121 FRCs nationwide, only the Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre hosts these valuable resources. Left with the void following Seamus stepping down, I put my hand up to serve.

As with any education, mine started with the ABCs... TUSLA, POBAL, ECCE! Stephen Grogan, FRC Coordinator and Tracey McDermott, FRC Administrator, were gracious and patient as I tackled the scope of the workload ahead: twenty-two policies and

procedures, ten+ job descriptions, organisational structure, financial reports, the National FRC model and how other FRCs organised themselves.

It was with great pleasure and pride I witnessed the Ballyhaunis FRC's many offerings this year. A flavour of which includes: parenting courses, kids' yoga, Scouts' Den Mural Project, exploring hair and culture with African Women in Mayo, Sports Hub activities and co-projects with Foróige, the International Woman's Day event, English conversational group for parents from Scoil Íosa National School and Ballyhaunis Community School and an event to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of welcoming our Muslim Community to Ballyhaunis.

The number one priority for 2024 is the completion of a new permanent building for the pre-school. This is in co-operation with the Abbey Partnership and Mayo County Council. The structure will be on the Friary Grounds and the design must be consistent with the Augustinian aesthetic. The Board of the FRC has established a working group and requires more talent in architecture, finance and the political nuances needed. The more local involvement in this project, the greater the chance for success.



International Women's Day celebration at the Community Hall (Parochial Hall) in Ballyhaunis.

Back, L-R: Natalila Litovchenko, Oksana Hanenko, Anna Kaczmarek, Ludmila Burcovschi, Olena Nimchuk, Anatolii Nimchuk, Sofia Soloshenko, Serhii Soloschenko, Victoria Burcovschi, Oliver Jordan, Volodymyr Cherniavskiy, Levgeniia Ovdil, Ivan Sokolov, Noel Lyons, Sergei Konovalov, Yuliia Makarchuk, Volodymyr Kuznietsov, Teodor Dragomir, Lucilene da Cruz, Angie Seamróg, Malgorzata Cieslikowska, Ainars Feierabends, Janusz Cieslikowski, Oleksandr Taraniuk, Maria Cieslikowska, Guilherme da Cruz, Rodrigo da Cruz, Mike Griffin.

Front, L-R: Robert Soloshenko, Merrilyn Finn, Tatiana Dolbiva, Nadia Kotzegub, Brenda da Cruz, Irene Nunes, Fernanda Nunes, Claudiane Lima, Ayla Louise, Luiz Felipe da Cruz, Stephen Grogan. Photograph by Adam Kaczmarek.



Speaking of success, it was great to see the Abbey Pattern return at the end of August after a three-year hiatus. The fun that the young (and not so young!) people had on the day was a joy to behold. Hopefully, having restarted the Pattern it will continue to be a day that people in our wonderful community look forward to. The Abbey Pattern is a real demonstration of community spirit at work and shows what the FRC and the people of Ballyhaunis are capable of.

Having completed a year as Chairperson of the Family Resource Centre, I decided to hand the reins over to our new, very talented Chair, Tzyy Wang. I will continue to be involved as a member of the Board of Directors and am looking forward to the year ahead with great enthusiasm for the work that's planned.

I hope that by giving a flavour of some of the work done by and through the Family Resource Centre, it may have whetted some appetites for joining us. We need

talent of course, but also the enthusiasm of those with a desire to contribute to improving the lives of families in our community.



Merrilyn Winters (left) and Manar Cherbatji pictured at the Family Resource Centre National Forum.



Above left: Jimmy O'Brien of Clare Street pictured outside Alice Lyons' shop in the early 1960s. (Courtesy of Thomas Lyons).



Above right: Tony Greene (left) and John Morley of Knox Street (right), pictured with two young Morley cousins in New York, 1963.



Bottom right: Goal mouth action in the Town Park, Clare Road, 1970.

The Ballyhaunis Art Mural: Celebrating Diversity

Edel Kinsella

The Ballyhaunis Art Mural was a true labour of love for project managers Mairead Murphy Damron, Rachel Jordan and Edel Kinsella. It illustrates the unity and diversity that define the community of Ballyhaunis and is testament to the power of collaboration and the commitment of all those involved. This project has been about community pride a sense of togetherness and making connections.

Thanks to Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre for generously providing the necessary funding, to the Abbey Trust for granting permission for the mural's installation at the Friary grounds. Ballyhaunis Community School played a vital role, with Pat McGarry's approval and the participation of art teachers, Marie Flaherty and Ciara Hunt, who guided TY students and many more in designing and drawing up the mural with over 100 students involved.

The project evolved into a true community effort, starting off with local artists Ruairi, Arunas and Theodore painting the backgrounds,

followed by students from Scoil Íosa among the first to contribute their artistic talents, soon followed by many Ballyhaunis residents, who eagerly picked up their paintbrushes to make this mural a reality. People from all walks of life were involved: some of whom had never picked up a paint brush; some of whom were experienced artists.



Thanks to Brendan Kelly and Eibhlín Murphy who diligently worked on planning permission paperwork and submission. Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce and Anne Cunnane, for providing the workspace for creating the mural at the old D.H. Burke's premises and courthouse buildings. They also sponsored treats for young participants of the Halloween parade during the unveiling celebrations.

The mural itself, a captivating 42-metre-long and 8-foot-tall landscape scene, is adorned with three diversity trees. Each tree's leaves display flags representing the numerous nationalities and cultures that call Ballyhaunis home. There are also fun, interactive butterflies at either end of the mural, along with bright, colourful representations of Irish flora and fauna.

The installation of the mural itself was a remarkable achievement, thanks to the precision and skill of the Padraic and Michael Kilcourse. Their dedication ensured that this mural will stand the test of time, reflecting the enduring spirit of Ballyhaunis and its people.

On 30th Oct. 2023, the Art Mural was unveiled on a day that brought hundreds of



Art Mural project managers and special guests.

L-R: Edel Kinsella, Rachel Jordan, Chris Pratt, Mary Smyth, Mairead Murphy Damron.





Above: Views of the vast attendance at the unveiling of the Art Mural.
Below: The Ballyhaunis Art Mural project is unveiled.

All photographs by Fr. Stephen Farragher.



residents and visitors together. The atmosphere was electrifying. The event began with an inspiring speech by Mairead Murphy Damron, who summarised the project's progress and acknowledged the dedication of the three project managers who had poured their hearts into bringing the mural to life - "Don't underestimate the power of three determined women!"

Edel Kinsella then expressed heartfelt gratitude to all those involved in this labour of love, stating that the beauty of this project extended beyond its artistic grandeur. It was about the unwavering support and unity of the community.

Rachel Jordan then introduced two esteemed guests of honour, Mary Smith and Chris Pratt, who had played pivotal roles in inspiring and guiding the project. Mary Smith, a local artist and designer, had been a source of constant encouragement to all. Her speech emphasised

that we potentially stand at the dawn of a new beginning, this mural signifies the start of more remarkable projects and celebrations to come. While Chris Pratt, a former secondary school art teacher at Ballyhaunis Community School, emphasised the profound truth that Art transcends all barriers and serves as a 'universal language'. He showcased the power of art through the mural, uniting people from all walks of life. Together, they cut the ribbon and unveiled the mural, allowing its magnificence to be revealed.

The day's activities wouldn't have been complete without the contributions of many, including MC Adam Walsh, singers, photographer, bakers for the cake sale, The Sultans Grill's hot food, Brewpoint coffee van, a talented face painter and those who ensured the smooth flow of the event.

In closing, a resounding 'Bualadh Bos' to the people of Ballyhaunis, as the event served as a testament to the town's uniqueness and pride. The mural represented diversity, and the community stood tall, symbolising the beauty of unity. The day reaffirmed that Ballyhaunis is an incredible, supportive, and inspiring community, and its future looks bright with continued endeavours to embrace diversity and creativity. In a world plagued by discord and division, this project emerges as a shining example of how collective efforts can transcend barriers and bring people together. It serves as a powerful reminder that despite our differences, we are all interconnected and can achieve great things when we unite.

Young entrepreneurs at the unveiling of the Ballyhaunis Art Mural.

Photograph by Fr Stephen Farragher.



Liam Connell (Devlis) (left) and Mike Webb (Main Street) enjoying a winter break in Lanzarote in January 2023.



Left: Congratulations to Eoin Durkan who obtained his degree in Applied and Computational Mathematics from University College Dublin.

Eoin was awarded first class honours and an outstanding 3.89 GPA. Son of Ballyhaunis native Stephen Durkan and his wife Patricia (a native of the Aran Islands), Eoin is grandson of Dorothy and the late Seán Durkan, Abbey Street, Ballyhaunis. (Courtesy of Mike Byrne).

Right: Old friends John Brennan (Gurteen) (left) and Martin Grogan (Clare Street) pictured in London.



Far right: Members of the Morrissey family of Devlis pictured recently at a family get-together. Brendan, Áine (left) and Genevieve (centre).





Cunningham's Londis' 'Mad Hatter's Tea Party', the winning entry in the Ballyhaunis Easter Parade on bank holiday Easter Monday 2023. (Photo courtesy of Mike Byrne).



Above left: Feeding the multitudes at the Gurteen bonfire back in June, 2011. From left: Bridget Lynskey, Orla Moran, Anne Phillips and Mary Mulrennan. (Courtesy of Mike Byrne).

Above right: School mates Joe Coyne of Devlis and Declan Murray, formerly of the Ulster Bank, Ballyhaunis, meet up after 43 years. (Photo by Robbie Herr).



Left: The Brennan family at the Gurteen Bonfire in June, 2011. From left: Michael, John, Marian and Martin. (Courtesy of Mike Byrne).

Diary of a Knockbrack Boy

Noel Lyons

The Outset: October 2022

Dublin Airport lounge at 4 am. We are fighting sleep while awaiting departure to Cyprus.
"Why do you talk so much?" Sez she.
"It's an exercise in tolerance and patience for you", sez I.
"Well, it's not working", sez she.
"Well, isn't that the point of the exercise?" Sez I.
"Sit still for a photo", sez she.
I sit and smile dutifully. She casts her laser like Latvian artistic eye on the result.
"Your smile looks as if you just stood on something", sez she. "Come here for another".
"You do know I will write about this", sez I.
"You should consider yourself lucky that I give you such inspiration", sez she.
I do indeed, so I sit and I smile as I write.

Summer 1972, Knockbrack: The Yanks Are Home

Like a scented candle of memory
The laughter of Auntie Kit and Uncle Jack
Who left from Cobh in 1923.
They now are welcomed back
To tread the land, the bogs and roads of long lost youth.
Stories repeated from decades far away.
Voices ringing in their histories of truth,
Like rosary decades of yesterday.
Was it war or fear or hopelessness
That filled the sails of their obsession?
Wild geese flown from emptiness
Into a dustbowl of chance and of depression.

Taste Buddies: Cyprus, October 2022

Setting: A restaurant called Pelagos on the shores of the Mediterranean near the city of Larnaca some 6000 years old (the city, not the restaurant).
"Who was Pelagos?" Sez she.
"It was more of a place rather than a God or a person", sez I.
"Now order food you have not tried before. You are not in 'Blue Thunder' now", sez she.
"Can I at least order one thing I recognise?" sez I.
"What do you recognise?" Sez she.
"Fresh orange juice", sez I.
"You can order orange juice so", sez she.

Orders placed. "Who lived in Larnaca?" sez she.
"Noah's grandson Kition; St. Helena, the mother of Constantine; Lazarus, who may have died here. If he didn't, he got a raw deal because they buried him here. There is another claim to his burial in the Holy Land so perhaps there were two of him or maybe they buried him twice", sez I.
"What did you order?" Sez she.
"I don't remember", sez I.
"Well, how will you know what to eat?" Sez she.
"Well, there's a good chance that whatever is brought to the table is yours or mine so start eating before they take it back or bring it to another table", sez I.
"I can bring you no place", sez she.
She goes to the 'Teach an Asail'. Plates arrive. Some olives... OK, I recognise them. Some red stuff on a plate that looks like the liver starter that I thought we had changed our minds about, and beautiful naan bread. I start. The liver is red and bloody and cold. I am not impressed. She returns.
"Did you try that?" Sez she.
"Yes", sez I.
"What was it like?" Sez she.
"OK", sez I.
The main courses arrive. I recognise potatoes. There is what looks like the leftovers of a hip replacement on my plate, but at least it's cooked. It's delicious along with two glasses of fresh orange juice. I can't touch dessert.
"How was that?" Sez she.
"Delicious. Better than the cold liver", sez I.
"Who else lived here?" Sez she.
"The Mycenaeans", sez I.
"Where are they?" Sez she.
"In our sitting room", sez I.
"Oh those. By the way that cold liver was beetroot", sez she

(The Mycenaeans in the living room refers to a memory trick I taught her to learn the different eras of Greek culture by placing them in different rooms to get the sequence into memory).

Knockbrack Summer of 1973

The Tulrahan Yanks are Home

The Sweeney clan arrives with joyful noise
Their raucous accent inscribed within my ears.
The celebration for all young girls and boys
Fading memory imprisons precious years.



My Yankee cousin Kath has one request
Teach me in Gaelic how to say 'hello'
I will try, says I, at least to do my best
"Póg mo thóin", we say here in Mayo

The laughter rises as she practices in vain.
To curl the *síneadh fada* on her tongue
"Pawg mee hawn", she tries again.
The older souls far wiser than the young.

Because they left their own, our little isle
Could never, would never be the same
Hybrid child with the future in her smile
Precious flower with my mother's name.

Cyprus: October 2022: Shopping trip up

Today we travelled the neighbourhood of Larnaca to Aiyia Napa and its surrounds. The breakfast table beside the Mediterranean with its silken waters kissing the sand just feet from our table. There's a nip in the night air with a breeze filled day at 25 degrees Celsius. It's warm but comfortable considering Christmas is just around the corner. It's perfection. Today, she held me prisoner in a shoe shop. My uncle Brod Boyle was a blacksmith who could fully clothe a horse in shoes faster than my female could purchase a pair. It is a known fact that, when the fairer sex go shopping, their pulses slow down like therapy gone wrong. The opposite for the weaker sex as we struggle to understand that if we go to shop for nails we don't return home with soap bars. It was difficult for me to understand who was the shop assistant. The nice lady bent on foreign sales or my beloved who stated anew that beautiful phrase, "I'm not wrong, I am just being realistic". We purchased a pair of runners for me having set out for flip flops. I would have left with stilettos to escape the realistic experience before my heartbeat reached a new olympic record. We have learned to travel light but there was a deficit in my footwear department for several reasons. Firstly, I was not allowed to bring my walking boots. Secondly, my sandal count has reduced to zero ending up I guess in a charity shop, the bin or perhaps used for lighting a fire. I can guess the culprit, but I could be wrong while she is being realistic.

"Whatever happened to your beautiful leather sandals? They were lovely and what did you do with them?" sez she.

"They were automatic", sez I.

"What do you mean automatic?" Sez she.

"They walked away by themselves", sez I.

Knockbrack: Summers of the seventies

Hotel Freeley or Hotel Cribbin is packed. The Rattigans, the Birmingham Lyons clan, The Duffys of Gort have arrived to populate temporarily where their mothers left. The adults, I am sure, delighted to chase us out into the open spaces so they can chat in peace. Josie Rattigan has recently gone to meet Kathleen and all the neighbours from Knockbrack who once filled the place with vibrancy and laughter. I contributed the following to her going away celebration in memory of her and of a host of hard working mothers and wives of the times. Due to the absence of a brother, the Freeley girls ploughed and harrowed and saved hay with horse drawn machinery.

Lament

She came from a land of artists and sculptors
Who etched their talent upon the soil.
They who knew the poetry of the plough and harrow.
They who wore with pride the blisters of their toil.

Travelled the birth canal of knowledge in labour.
Rich bankers of seed of turf and straw
Drawing jewels of the earth into their harbour.
Shelters of survival until the Winter thaw.

She was energy oozing from love's halo.
Neighbour, Mother, Aunt, Sister and Wife.
A halo that shone from Birmingham to Mayo
Prompting jigs of joy, of empathy, of love and life.

Bonded sisters wrestling with new mown grass.
Chatter, laughter in their work and play.
Tossing, building, weaving until new cloud pass
Their Midas touch turning green into golden hay

She knew each footstep sharing the *boithrín*
Until the salute of the *síneadh fada* waved its goodbye
Returned for spells to where she was seen
The golden apple of each loving eye.

To where she had fought bouts with buttermilk
To force it to surrender precious ware.
Hands kissed by Knockbrack wet turf silk
Return now to the earth that knew her there.

Catastrophe in Cyprus: October 2022

"You don't love cats, do you?" Sez she, as the little monster was scratching my exposed leg under the table. I couldn't very well say that her adored doggie didn't like them very much either as she does her doggie nut in at the mere sight of one in the back garden. They seem to adopt every stray here in Cyprus. Nobody owns them,

yet they wander 'willy nilly' loved by all as they search out innocent tourists to ooh and aah over them while they sharpen their claws on exposed shins.

I tried to explain that I was raised on a farm where all the animals, and indeed children, were functional, and each had different roles to play. I told her that we even had a kitten that tried to milk a cow while my brother Liam was milking her (the cow, not the kitten). The kitten tried to climb up the back leg of the cow with its sharp little claws and, for some reason or other the cow objected and lashed out. Liam, the stool and the milk headed off in different directions and he wasn't well pleased. He ejected the kitten out of the cowhouse somewhat like a pilot out of a warplane except, of course, without the seat or the parachute. It could be described as my first sighting of a UFO. The kitten landed on top of the trampoline or rather the manure pit and ran away confused. We thought it was hilarious and had every sympathy for the kitten. So, you couldn't say we didn't like cats.

She didn't really seem amused, and I couldn't figure out why the cat wouldn't sneak over and scratch her shins instead.

Knockbrack circa 1975

Eight Lives

In a little house in Knockbrack
Where a mother was house proud
Spotless yet full of children
But INSIDE, "no cats allowed"

For she deemed them unhygienic
And we rarely saw a mouse
And there were so many children
There was no room in the house.

One morn as she was sweeping
out the door. A pussy sped
In efforts to defeat her rule
She swished and caught its head.

She didnt mean to hurt it
To any great amount
But down it stayed all corpse-like
Or at least out for the count.

She pondered just what she would do
For we would be upset
At Mom, our cat murderer
The tears and the regret.

So, swiftly she decided that
She would just pretend
She didn't know how pussy met
Its catastrophic end.

She would sweep out later
When her kittens we were up
And sigh in disbelief that
Poor kitty had no luck.

It later on transpired that
Pussy disappeared
Without an undertaker
A coffin or a bier.

Oh there's a little part of heaven where Knockbrack
people go.
I can see her sitting smiling there somehow.
Waiting there to welcome the people we all know
And I bet that she can hear a soft miaow.

Writer's ammunition in Cyprus: October 2022

"Today, I will not give you any ammunition for your stories", sez she.

In fact, "I will not speak at all". Now that is ammunition in itself, I thought to myself.

It reminded me of the time she got laryngitis for a whole week. I kept poking at my ears for a few days until she croaked, "What are you doing to your ears?" Sez she.

"I am just checking to see have I gone deaf", sez I.

My brothers suffered at my writing hands at their weddings with satirical poems and songs. They became very furtive in the days and weeks beforehand as I quietly sought ammunition, as my beloved calls it. Gerry caught me asking innocent questions of his beautiful fiancée Anne as to where they met, etc., and said, "Tell that fellow nothing". My reply was simply that I would make it up anyway.

We visited the fabulous archaeological site of Kition in the heart of Larnaca and explored the holiest of holy stones over three thousand years old. The day also presented the opportunity to visit the church of St. Lazarus himself, buried there many years after his resurrection. It is a beautiful place to be buried and the church is exquisite although I am so much happier to visit while I am alive.

Carrowmore, Tulrahan: A summer of the 1970s

My Uncle Dick Sweeney from Carramore, Tulrahan gave me books, riddles and maths problems to solve and was so interesting with his encyclopedic knowledge. He was



well known on the pub quiz circuit and was a member of Keane's of Cloonfad team which won the highly competitive Ballyhaunis GAA/Rehab competition. He really was quite academic, but never got the opportunity to pursue his ability. The family of builders and farmers probably had the resources to send him to further education, but they used those for emigrating children instead.

Dick Sweeney was a farmer just in name
Who lifted me to light upon a star
I walked with Armstrong on the moon
And travelled light years to afar.

He taught Pythagoras was within my reach
From his well of knowledge of a thousand years
How fox and goose would cross a lake
In gentle voice without contempt or fear.

He hooked a berry to a thread and saw
The future bright and would engage
The child's mind with a prophetic word
Yet never spoke in anger or in rage.

His priest's collar that he never wore
His teacher's call, the one that never came
Was couched in every word he spoke
His every gesture embracing it in name.

The words that poured from his learned tongue
Like the crops he always sowed in reams
Like his heroes he remains forever young
Where I harvested the food of dreams.

Battle of the Sexes: Cyprus: November 2022

A dear friend Tony Carney once described the difference between a man and a woman. A woman, he said, was designed by God to be soft, gentle, caring and nurturing. Just look at the curves in all directions which prove a mastery of divine engineering creation. I could only concur, but asked what about a man? He wrapped his answer succinctly in one short sentence. Man is only a monkey. Of course, I couldn't fully let him away with that, so I landed him with a simple riposte. Speak for yourself, I stated, and his response is unpublishable.

What we didn't discuss were the challenges between us that occur on particular occasions such as shopping and the strategies we use to cope with the endurance. My dear lady brought me shopping here in Cyprus and not for the first time led me a merry dance. I am always reminded of the Roman army in the reign of Marius who decided to spare expenses when it came to transporting equipment, food, weapons or whatever they needed on

campaign. He used his soldiers to carry all. They became known as Marius mules. That is part of the male role in shopping with a partner. I accept that, but what the female half does not realise is that while she is raising her dopamine levels buying stuff, her other half is going into survival mode using silent strategies while figuring out the logistics to get the stuff home. So, my beautiful Queen is there in the shop in Larnaca wondering if a souvenir is too pink, not pink enough, or a millimetre too small or too big for wherever it's supposed to end up. I am there considering, do we need a furniture removal truck to get it to the airport?

I also use another strategy while she is perusing. I play a film in my head, and this is not as easy as you might think. For example, should I play a Tom and Jerry cartoon for a quick sale or do I need a series of them? If I play 'Once Upon a Time in America' - my favourite film - it is three hours and forty-five minutes. I might never get near the end and feel exasperated and become moody and she might think I am unhappy with her shopping spree and the resultant dopamine hit is missed and I, therefore, am a most selfish, uncaring man.

I digress because there we were in the shop when she decided I needed new shorts for swimming and stuff. She picked this garish, orange glow-in-the-dark type. I was just about to object when I caught myself just in time and put on the airbrakes. Guys, remember you are not brought shopping to do the thinking. I have them now and that's that, but I can't help wondering did she think she would lose me on the beach like a pet dog who escaped the collar, and I would be easier to find, or was it because the sun sets early now, and it would be easy to find me in the dark? Whatever the reason, it is a *fait accompli*.

Camel traders: Cyprus: November 2022

Every journey creates opportunities for new experiences. I am an explorer at heart, perhaps reincarnated from Marco Polo or Columbus, so I rule nothing in and nothing out. When my beloved was here some time ago, she and her friend visited a camel park or farm or harem or whatever you might call it correctly. The owner was very taken by my beloved and I can't say I would blame him, and offered two camels to her friend in exchange for her. She declined his kind offer but now that she is back in the fold, so to speak, she is discussing the possibility of meeting up with her old flame or flames if you count in the camels. I am stuck in preponderance of the likely outcomes and possibilities. We are here, after all, to study history and intercultural exchanges of millennia, and what is older or more worthy of exploring

than trading? I also would like the experience of tackling an old coot of a trader for there is a competitive streak within me that defies belief. Loathe as I would be to lose her, I feel I must consider all the possibilities and weigh the outcomes, at least to give value to the new experience. What would I do with two camels in the west of Ireland? The back garden is enclosed at least, but she who is realistic has it planted with exotic flowers instead of the figs and dates or whatever the camels would need. I wonder if they could survive on silage? Then there is the manure issue, for indeed it might be magical and provide income for their maintenance. I hear they build houses out of camel manure out there abroad and we do have a housing crisis in Ireland. Would they be an answer to the call for Ireland. Would they contribute to the GDP and, more importantly, is there an EU grant available? This is not a simple evaluation. I am perplexed, perturbed and perhaps poleaxed. I am having doubts and perhaps the greatest one is not of me leaving with two camels and leaving my beloved behind, but rather of her leaving with two camels or maybe only one and leaving me behind.

My Monkey: Cyprus: November 2022

I really need to be more careful about what I write because it can be weaponised by clever Latvians. My beloved and I spent the day on Nissi beach, and I even went topless. I had to pinch myself that this was possible on the 19th of November. The view was spectacular. My new title is my monkey which means her monkey, if you get my drift. Now I have many titles for her such as my beloved, and my sweet. The list is endless, but she has capped them all with my monkey. She innocently asked me today where I got all the hair from, as if I know. I told her I wasn't born, I was knitted. I don't think I convinced her much. We captured every ray of sunshine available as we start the trek back to Ireland tomorrow. We stood on Lover's Bridge. There we watched the sun setting or rather being gobbled up by the Mediterranean in a matter of minutes. We sang a song we translated from Latvian in both languages: Balta Saule or White Sun in English, and it seemed so appropriate. The chorus says... "Words cannot fly from the lips when the heart is swollen and joyful. Like a Summer of joy, it lives in pure ecstasy. Where the sky meets the sea in the white sun of love, it unites us. There we live in the light of our love for eternity". The rain and wind await us. But we shall return.

Culture Clash: Cyprus: November 2022

Our last night in beautiful Cyprus. A strange little man called to our door this evening and, in a strange voice, announced: "I am staying here tonight". He looked somehow familiar but not familiar enough to share the pad with.

"No you are not", sez I.

"I am coming from Egypt; I have booked in", sez he.

His wife stood down on the path behind him.

"My good man I am for booking this place Bella Ciao and I am staying here tonight", sez he.

"Not in my bed you're not", sez I, raising my voice for emphasis. "There must be some mistake". "Have you booked number 3?" He checked and his booking was for number 5 around the corner. I helped them with their bags and was happy that we didn't have to share.

"I am for thanking you", sez he with a big grin showing a dental arrangement like a grand piano that had fallen off a skyscraper. His face did look familiar, and I later realised he looked like a mummy I had seen in the museum in Rome a while back. The one that visited my dreams for months.

Anthem for a Hometown: Ballyhaunis: July 2022

To the mouth of the ford of the river they came
From the countryside all around.
For market and prayer for love and for game
Our fathers there founded the town.

Just as blood returns to the heart
And river returns to the sea
Love returns to the seed of its start
That's Ballyhaunis for me.
Oh oh oh, Béal Átha hAmhnais.

A light on a hill has for centuries shone
A sentinel standing on guard
The friars in their faith stood feeding their flock
When times were hungry and hard.

Keane, Greally, Webb, Campbell they carried our flag
To hilltops far far away
Morley and Nestor, Keith Higgins as well
As Tom Fitz and beloved J.J.

I spoke to the Dalgan down by the town well
To the ghost of *An Caisideach Bán*
Neither he nor the river could readily tell
Where had all the yesterdays gone.

Oh Oh Oh, Béal Átha hAmhnais





Michael Caulfield, Raymond Finn (son of Martin and nephew of Richard Finn, Gurteen), Seamus Mulrennan, Marcus Caulfield.
(Courtesy of Seamus Mulrennan).



Sinead Rodgers (née Mulrennan) with children Luke and Molly and husband Ciaran Rodgers saving the turf on Cloonbook Bog.
(Courtesy of Seamus Mulrennan).



Left:
Marie Caulfield Macnamara (left) and Mary Caulfield, both from Carrowkeel, pictured a number of years ago in the U.S.A.

Right:
L-R: Marcus Caulfield and Michael Caulfield from Carrowkeel pictured with their neighbour Seamus Mulrennan of Gurteen. (Courtesy of Marie Macnamara).



Neighbours and cousins.
L-R: Jackie Lyons Caulfield, Ruairi Caulfield, Patricia Caulfield Judge, Seamus Mulrennan, Marie Caulfield McNamara (U.S.A.), Siobhan Corrigan, Fergal Corrigan.



Fascinating Footage

Corpus Christi Procession, Ballyhaunis, 1967

Peter McHugh

My father, Edward McHugh, had a great interest in technology of all sorts throughout his life and sought out the latest developments in modern technologies to the extent available in Ireland at the time. Amongst many interests, he had a very strong interest in home movie making and he bought a Super8 home movie system (movie camera and projector) when the Super8 system was launched in 1965, replacing the older 8mm system. Through the 1960s and '70s he made a number of movies, recording family events and excursions to relatives' houses, etc.

At this point in time my parents have passed on, God rest them (Edward McHugh in 1991 and Teresa McHugh in 2003), and I have had the movies in storage for many years. While the old projector system still works – with the original bulb from 1965 still operational! – I decided earlier this year to have the movies restored and converted to digital format, to preserve them and so that they could be shared easily.

Most of the movies are family focused, but there is one that I thought would be of interest to Ballyhaunis people generally, as is featured here, and that is a movie of the Corpus Christi Procession from 1967. I can recall the Procession as always being a major event in our house on Main Street, with my mother fully focused on making sure that the house-front, window altars and flowers were looking their very best. On the day featured in the movie clip, we were certainly blessed with lovely early summer fine weather, and with everyone looking their best.

I hope people will find the movie clip and photos featured here interesting, as I think it gives us a very nice glimpse back into what life was like in Ballyhaunis almost 50 years ago. Finally, I want to acknowledge the foresight of my father in making these movies, for generating such valuable records of times gone by.

The film footage of the Corpus Christi Procession in Ballyhaunis can be viewed and downloaded from the Vimeo website using this link

<https://vimeo.com/832341078/4666cbe291>

Some images from the film

Many of those taking part in the Procession will be instantly recognisable to our more senior readers, but it is important to note that the youngest participant of the one hundred and fifty whom the editorial committee has identified, recently turned sixty!

Some stills from the film are published here and those in them identified as far as possible by the editorial committee. We would be delighted to hear from anyone who can help identify all of those featured in this historic film, for posterity. Please email us at info@annaghmag.ie with names of those you can identify. Please note, when viewing the film, that person's description and let us know the minute and second on the timer along the bottom of the screen.

Procession stewards Bertie Curley and Bill Eagney with First Holy Communion class strewing petals.





Top Left: Fr. Costelloe carrying the Monstrance with visible canopy bearers (L-R) Gerry Butler, John Gallagher and Tom Murphy; and boy scouts Mike Griffin, Ger Cleary and Kieran Ruane. Also visible in the background are: Brendan Byrne, Tom Forde and John Morley (Kilmannin).

Centre left: Altar boy Joe Grogan and Standard bearer Micheál Murren lead the Procession.



Mrs. Bridie Byrne, Mrs. Mary Dillon Leetch and Mrs. Fadden from The Legion of Mary.



Steward Tom Hopkins with brothers Mike, Billy and Tom Phillips, and Mike Grogan and Gerry Butler Jnr. at back.



Johnny Lyons, M.A. (Mult) Waldron, Paddy Waldron, Sean Durkan, Charlie Phillips, Sean Griffin, with Mick Kenny and Paddy Folliard in background.



Friary Altar Boys in black soutanes:

Justin Joyce, Kevin Healy, John Lyons, John Durkan, Brendan Morrissey, Mike Byrne, John Fitzgerald.

Parish Servers in red soutanes:

Padraic Moran and Tommy Caulfield.

Right: From left: Bertie Cribbin, Eamon Smyth, Jarlath Kenny, Ollie Cribbin, Gerry Lyons, Joe Byrne.

Below: Mrs. Coyne (Devilis) with son Paul and neighbours Mrs. Morrissey with daughters Áine and Genevieve.



Bottom right: L-R: Oliver Jordan, Johnny Maguire, Kevin Barry and Mick O'Connell.



Senior Citizens' Party

Aisling Caulfield

The annual Ballyhaunis Senior Citizens' Party made a welcome return last Christmas (2022) following a two-year absence brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. Advised and supported by Eileen Rattigan of Lecarrow, a committee was formed to organise this very popular pre-Christmas social gathering. The very well attended party took place in the Communal House at Clare Court on the first weekend of December 2022.

We would like to thank all the local traditional Irish musicians who entertained the guests on the day and also the local businesses who generously donated funding for the event and lots of spot-prizes which added to the fun and enjoyment of our get-together.

A special word of thanks to Eileen Rattigan, Irene Healy and Teresa Healy, all former committee members, for all their endeavours in organising the annual event over the past number of years and we wish them all the very best of good luck and good health for the future.

This year's party will take place on Sunday, 10th December 2023 in Clare Court and we look forward to seeing all our friends from the parish together again to get the Christmas celebrations under way.



Connie Gildea and Paddy Joe Tighe were amongst the musicians who provided entertainment on the day.



Some of the raffle spot prizes.



Enjoying the festivities.

Margaret Johnston Remembers

Members of the Annagh Magazine Society, Eddie Mulhern and Tommy Caulfield, were warmly welcomed into the home of Margaret Johnston of Knox Street in August of this year to speak with Margaret about her memories of her life and times, and to take a look at her fabulous collection of photographs dating back over one hundred years. The interview took place just three months shy of Margaret's ninetieth birthday and Annagh Magazine is happy to report that she continues to enjoy good health and is blessed with a memory that remains as sharp as ever.

Margaret took her two visitors on a historical tour of the Knox Street of her childhood from The Square to the edge of the town, and back up again on the other side. Just a few of those families of yesteryear remain in situ with many of the former strong surnames, so intimately associated with our town's history and development, now consigned to memory and to articles in Annagh Magazine.

Margaret recalls a Moran/Murphy family in the premises opposite her home which, up to recently was known as Fitzers. The premises was later owned by Callelly's. Some of the teachers who came to work in the town used to stay here in the B&B run by Mrs. Callelly. Later, the public house was back in the ownership of another Moran family (Tom and Peter) and, more recently, Pat Walsh of Dunmore was proprietor. Margaret recalls a bakery in the business of Hubert Lyons and his wife, before she guides us along the street



Sisters Bridie and Katie McGreal, Westport, 1912. Bridie later married John Byrne (Main St.) and Katie married Tommy Johnston (Erriff and Knox St.).



Above: Bridget Greally (née Nolan) and James Greally.

to Kenny's (home of Ado and Joe) and McGillicuddy's. McGillicuddy's were related to the O'Malleys of Barrack Street.

As Margaret regales us with stories of the town, we are beginning to appreciate the web of relationships that entangle the families of Ballyhaunis, bestowing legitimacy upon the old warning to all newcomers to "be careful where you are talking once you come under that bridge". Johnny Gilmore the undertaker and his family are recalled as are Waldron's (Mult, Syke, Joe, Stephen, etc.), Smyth's, Foudy's and Byrnes at the end of Knox's Line, as the street was known in olden times.

As we cross the road to continue our tour back to the town centre Margaret mentions Forkan's and a commercial traveller by the name of Kelly where John and Dorothy Durkan and children lived in the sixties, and families still with a presence on the street, namely Jordans and Keanes. As we move along, we pass Brod Morley's butcher shop, O'Malley's, Crean's and Eddie Biesty's grocery and bicycle repair. Next, we pass the home of famed Ballyhaunis scholars and characters Dr. Michael and P.A. Waldron, before reaching Carney's, originally from Ballindrehid, with sisters Nora and Kathleen and their ladies' clothes shop. Kitty Mitchell's is next, previously owned by a Mrs. Cunnane, a connection of the Cribbins of Togher, Mrs. Mary Waldron (Devlis) and Cait McCormack (Cloonfad).

The next house was Loftus', followed by Forry's and Garvey Moran's. Finnegan's pub was formerly owned by Waldrons with Byrne's Pub next door and then Dom Moran's drapery shop. You then passed Harry Dillon's and Greally's. Margaret's neighbour Tony Morley is another lifelong resident of the street. Rattigan's, previously owned by Neary's, were next-door to Johnston's. This business was bought by Tommy Rattigan and his wife Sadie in 1943 and continued to be





Above: Katie McGreal seated at right with friend Miss O'Malley (Upper Main St.). Standing are Katie's brothers Andy and Michael McGreal.

Right: Katie McGreal and Tommy Johnston on their Wedding Day in 1930.



run by their son Val until his passing a number of years ago. Next is Herr's Shop. Now run by Sarah Herr, this is one of the few old family businesses remaining in the town. Morley's, once a thriving public house, is now closed as is Tarpey's and the National Bank (Bank of Ireland) and we arrive back at Forde's of The Square, still trading in the third generation under the management of Tom Forde.

In our conversation with Margaret, we were struck by the number of businesses that once flourished not just on Knox Street, but on each street of the town. It is hard to believe that the number of licensed premises still serving a drink in town has now dwindled to a mere handful.

Family

Margaret was born in 1933 to her parents Tommy and Katie (McGreal) Johnston. Her older brother Patrick died at just six months. Her mother Katie was born in Peter Street, Westport in 1899 and lived to the ripe old age of 100 years, her life spanning three centuries. Katie's mother Margaret (Greally), a native of Knox Street, died at the young age of thirty-seven leaving a grief-stricken husband and eight young children. The eight children were taken in and reared by aunts and uncles in Westport

and in the Ballyhaunis area. Katie and her brother Joe came to live with their aunt Anne Marie (Greally) and her husband Roger Folliard of Coolnaha. In the mid-1920s Katie emigrated to America and remained there for a number of years.

Margaret's father Tommy Johnston of Erriff was the son of Patrick and Bridget (Guilfoyle) Johnston. Tommy came to work in Ballyhaunis in 1912 to Morley's at No. 4 Knox Street, where £30 was paid to 'serve his time'.

During her time in Philadelphia, Katie McGreal and Tommy Johnston continued to correspond. When Michael Delaney's premises at No. 7 Knox Street came up for sale in 1927 Tommy consulted with Katie before buying the place. A short time later, Katie received a letter from home asking her to return to Ballyhaunis to care for her sister Mrs. Bridie Byrne who had fallen ill. Thankfully, by the time she reached Ireland, her sister had fully recovered. The spark of romance was reignited and Katie and Tommy Johnston were married in Carraroe, Co. Galway in 1930. The officiating celebrant was Fr. McHugh, a close friend of Tommy's, who had previously served as curate in Aghamore.

The couple returned to No. 7 Knox Street where they operated a bar along with a grocery and light hardware business. Tommy's sound business acumen and vision, along with encouragement from his wife led to a foray into the farm machinery business for which Johnston's were to become renowned throughout the country. Over the years many employees, including John Gibbons of Upper Main Street and Michael Gilligan of Fairymount worked for Johnston's in the shop, yard and on the land. Mary Ellen Walsh helped out in the Johnston household with the domestic chores.

In the 1950s Margaret and her sister Carmel and brother Tommy joined the business which continued to grow from strength to strength, its reputation spreading by word of mouth as little or no advertising was used at the time. As the business expanded Johnston's acquired agricultural machinery agencies from Pierce, Garvey, Lely, Lister, International Harvester and others. Margaret's father Tommy died in 1986 and her beloved sister Carmel passed away in 2013.

Margaret has seen many changes in Knox Street and in Ballyhaunis over the course of her lifetime. She has wonderful memories of growing up and living in the town and feels blessed to have had such wonderful, kind and loyal neighbours and friends as well as numerous caring and supportive relatives. Margaret is particularly grateful to her carer Bernie and to her home help assistant Betty for all of their kindness.

Annagh Magazine would like to thank Margaret for taking the time to share her reminiscences and recollections with our readers and we offer our best wishes to Margaret for continued good health and happiness in the years ahead.



Pictured at the ordination of Fr. Willie Byrne (Main St.) in 1960. L-R: Fr. Thomas Heraghty, C.C., Katie Johnston, Mrs. Morley (Kilmannin) and Bridie Byrne (Main St.).



Knox Street neighbours: L-R: Kitty Mitchell, John Morley, Josie Morley, Katie Johnston, Marcella Keane.



Katie Johnston (centre) with Peter and Hélène McCafferty.



Katie Johnston on her 100th Birthday with Jack Halpin (left) and Paddy Ryan.





Marking her 100th birthday is Katie Johnston with daughters Margaret (left) and Carmel (right) and Fr. Joe Cooney, P.P.



Knox Street stations in the 1980s. L-R: Mary T. Rattigan, Catherine Morley, Helen Hoban and Carmel Johnston.



Above left:
Margaret (left) and Carmel Johnston.

Above: Pictured on Knox Street
in the 1990s:
Noreen Morley (left)
and Carmel Johnston.



Cousins all, at a family wedding.
L-R: Christina Johnston, Babs Johnston,
Mary Johnston (née Waldron), Dick Johnston,
Carmel Derbyshire (née Johnston),
Carmel and Margaret Johnston.

Scoil Íosa

Kenneth Dennedy, Principal



Sixty-seven pupils received the sacrament of Confirmation from Archbishop Francis Duffy in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, on Saturday, 20th May 2023. They are pictured here with Most Rev. Dr. Francis Duffy, Archbishop of Tuam, Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P., Dónall O'Brien and Ciara Byrne of Scoil Íosa. *AK Photography.*

Once again we have experienced a busy year at Scoil Íosa and one in which we have seen much development in our school. We have seen major expansion in terms of the number of teaching staff and opportunities for our pupils, not just in academic terms but in the whole area of extra-curricular education, music and sport.

Sacraments

In 2023 the month of May was very busy with the children in second class receiving their First Holy Communion and the pupils in fifth and sixth classes receiving the sacrament of Confirmation. In all, twenty received their First Holy Communion on Saturday, 13th May, with sixty-seven children being confirmed by Archbishop Francis Duffy the following week, on his first sacramental visit to Ballyhaunis Parish. The children were a credit to the school and to their parents. Sincere thanks to Lisa Watchorn, Sharlene Ruane and Róisín Freeman for their work with the Communion preparations and to Dónall O'Brien and Ciara Byrne for preparing the children for Confirmation.

Sports News

Early 2023 was a very busy time for our school sports teams with all of the main football and hurling competitions taking place. This year we entered teams in football (boys and girls), hurling, camogie and soccer. Our teams proved to be very competitive in all areas reaching the Girls Cumann na mBunscol semi-final and, for the first time ever, winning the East Mayo Boys Soccer competition. Thanks to all our coaches, Kevin Henry, James Cullinane, Dervla Phillips and Marissa Brett for working with our football and soccer teams,

and Dónall O'Brien, Maria Coyne and Séan Kenny for hurling and camogie.

In September we entered teams in the East Mayo Cross Country competition held in Swinford. Congratulations to Éabha Donnellan and to Ted Murphy who qualified for the county finals and to all of the children who competed well and were great ambassadors for the school.

Scoil Íosa's hurling met with mixed results this year. Once again, the children had three competitions: the Mini-7s in March, the 13-a-side in May and the Vinny Judge Tournament in June. This year saw a lot of new pupils taking up a hurley for the first time and, combined with more experienced children such as Sean Donnellan, Cathal Conlon and Jeff Nolan, they made a formidable force.

In the Mini-7s, the boys travelled over to Began to play in what was a very well organised tournament. In total, there were eight teams divided into two groups. The first game was a very close affair against our near neighbours Tooreen and, in the end, Tooreen squeezed over the line. This game was followed by two more, but with the initial win Tooreen made it out of the group. In a friendly afterwards, newcomer Jas Singh experienced the thrills of pulling on the red and black for the first time and capped off his day with a green flag and a win.

In the 13-a-side, the team made best use of what proved to be an excellent camogie squad in making up the hurling team. Sixth class girls Erin Higgins, Abbie Gildea and Alice Curran looked to be at their ease competing against Tooreen and Ballinrobe on a sunny day in Tooreen. Many of the fifth class children, both



boys and girls, performed admirably on the day and came away with a win and a draw for their efforts. A good result against Ballinrobe on the day might have been the undoing of the team as they struggled to get up to pace on the big pitch in their second consecutive match.

The last blitz of the year was the annual Vinny Judge Tournament. The boys competed on their own for this and, in their group, they came out undefeated, setting up a final against Tooreen. Just prior to throw-in, our captain for the day, Sean Donnellan, was laid low with illness but heroically stood into goals and put in a standout performance, complimented by all who were there to witness. Tooreen once again came away victorious, but the performances of many of the Scoil Íosa boys provided strong hope for the future. The performances of Ben Gallagher at full forward and newcomer Charlie Finn were worth highlighting, considering the fact that they were playing against sixth class children and made it look easy.

After School Activities

The school also introduced a new programme of after-school activities for all children from first to sixth classes. This was a very successful venture under the auspices of the DEIS scheme with the vast majority of children taking part. The children were able to choose from a variety of pursuits from sports, board games, music, drama and cookery.

In Memory

In May of this year, a tree planting ceremony took place at Scoil Íosa in memory of Mary Dillon (Doctor's Road), the school's dedicated secretary for many years, who died last year. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a h-anam dílis.

School Staff 2023-2024

Kenneth Dennedy (Principal), Kevin Henry (Deputy Principal), Dónall O'Brien (Asst. Principal), Lisa Watchorn (Asst. Principal), Ciara Byrne, Dervla Phillips, Caroline Campbell, Eimear Finn, Carole Freeley, Joanne Forde, Miriam Judge, Ciara Richardson, Sharlene Ruane, Orla Killeen, Niamh Connolly, Elaine Burke, Emer Ryan, Olivia Burke, Emily Worden, Tara Cusack, Claire Walshe, Annie Kelly, Elaine Brady, Marian Byrne, Anne Durkan, Sean Kenny, Karen Boyle, Labhaoise Cunnane, Michelle Flatley, Úna McCabe, Diane Marigliano, Thomas Corless, Maria Campbell, Edel Maher, Sarah Scully, Josh Ronayne, Monica Shalley, Breda Slattery, Samantha Cleary, Geraldine Fahey, Sheena Flanagan, Marian Nally, Roisín Prendergast, Marina Coyne, James



Scoil Íosa pupils who received their First Holy Communion in May 2023, pictured with Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P. and their teachers Sharlene Ruane and Lisa Watchorn.
Photograph by Carmel Williams.

Cullinane, Roseanne Nolan, Matthew Cummins, Barbara Murphy, Carmel Cassidy (Secretary), Helena Gill (Secretary).

School Board of Management 2019-2023

James Reidy (Chairperson), Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. (Vice Chairperson), Kenneth Dennedy, Eddie Murphy, Eileen Donnellan, Darren Conlon, Marian Feeney, Samantha Cleary.

Christmas Wishes

Finally, on behalf of everybody in our school community, we wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2024.



Enjoying the outdoors
at the Friary playground



Above:
Scoil Íosa Hurlers.

Right: Pupils from Scoil Íosa decorated stones with inspirational quotes and wishes and laid them at the entrance to the walk in the Friary Field for this 'Darkness into Light' walk.



Above: Pupils who chose cookery for after-school activities at Scoil Íosa.

Left: Scoil Íosa Girls Football team.



School friends meet up to Support the Boys in Green! Some Ballyhaunis Rugby fans supporting Ireland at the World Cup in Bordeaux, France, 2023.

L-R: John O'Connor (New Jersey), Stephen Nolan (Kilmannin), John Fitzgerald (Dublin), Thomas Moran (New Jersey), John Dillon-Leetch (London) and Seamus Grogan (Ballyhaunis).

Pied Wagtails

Square windows of the
exam hall.
Outside, a dreary patch.
Rough clod and ugly thistles,
Untended weedy mess.
A male pied wagtail
Twitters to young fledglings
Beak laden with fresh midges
In ritual feeding prance
Wings in lifting dance
Like figures of eight
It put me in mind
Of Michael Flatley in the Riverdance
Without the glitter
Of bright lights and lavish colour;
Or maybe more so
Like Nureyev of Salome
With seducing grace,
Coaxing, tempting the fledglings,
Showing off his wingspan
Ringed neck, white underbelly
In majestic dance flight
Up from the weeds and applemint
In this neglected place.
He made you perfect,
Happy, hardworking.
Swoop down on seeking young
With kisses of worms
To gorge their greedy beaks.
So welcome is your trespass
To the tedium of my duties,
Dress up a dull grey morning
In this barren stagnant place.

– Christina Johnston

(Wagtails feeding young outside the exam hall,
while supervising examinations).



Pictured at the Ronan Clarke Memorial Run for Hospice, 2023, were Brian Mulrennan, Gurteen (left) with Joe Brolly (centre) and Brian Gallagher (Crossmolina). The ever-popular fundraiser took place in Killala on Sunday, 23rd July 2023. This year's event was the ninth staging of the run which is organised annually by Killala GAA Club and raises funds for the Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation. Special guest on the day was two-time All-Star footballer, All-Ireland SFC winner and GAA pundit Joe Brolly who got this year's race under way at 12pm. The two Brians took part in the event in memory of the late Enda Gallagher, Crossmolina, father of Brian Gallagher and father-in-law of Brian Mulrennan. The Gallagher family are most grateful for the wonderful palliative care that Enda received at The Mayo Roscommon Hospice, Castlebar. (Courtesy of Seamus Mulrennan).



Mark Mulrennan (Westport), grandson of Seamus and Mary of Gurteen, pictured on Eugene Freeley's McCormack International vintage tractor.



Pictured at the Ballyhaunis GAA fundraising event in aid of the local conference of St. Vincent de Paul in the air dome at Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence on St. Stephen's Day 2022. *Back, L-R:* Clare Kelly, Peter Feeney, Aoife Mulrennan, Katie Moran, Donal Moran, Mary Mulrennan, Michael Brennan, Claire Moran, Tara Phillips, Carol Keane, Erika Byrne, Anne Phillips, Katie Madden, Rita Madden, Seamus Mulrennan, Albert Madden. *Front, L-R:* Pippa Loughrane, Marie Brennan, Orla Moran, Marie Henry, Ciaran Cunnane. (Courtesy of Seamus Mulrennan).

A School Journey

Gabriel Prendergast, Irishtown

A group of young fellas
To Ballyhaunis they went
To Saint Patrick's College
By their families were sent,
Twas nineteen sixty-seven
Fifty-six years ago
Cycling in rain, in hail
And in snow.

I was up every morning
Before seven o'clock
And out to the farmyard
To feed some farm stock.
Hop on the bicycle
School bag on the back
Meeting students from Tulrahan
And on the road from Carramack.

It was a long, long journey
Twas nine miles for me
Sunny days were lovely
There was so much to see,
Farmers were busy
Working every day
Some were crowning sugar beet
Others thatching hay.

When the school day was over
We were out the door real fast
With the sound of that school bell
We were gone like a blast,
Down to Hopkins' shop
Or Waldron's on Main Street
To buy an ice cream cone
Was a very special treat.

Then one Friday evening
My bicycle broke down
And what a long, long journey
All the way to Irishtown,
But I met a kind lady
A broken chain? Says she
You can have my bicycle
And return it back to me.

So off I go on Sunday
To Bridgie Grogan's shop

To buy a little gift
And say, "thanks a lot"
She was the kindest lady
That I had ever met
And I always remember
The joy that I felt.
"Rest in Peace dear Friend"

Well, Christmas was approaching
With holidays for you and me
But it was an awful time
With Foot and Mouth disease.
Visitors were lodging
In the Central on Main Street
And I was invited
To go in for a treat.

I was with a friend of mine
His sister was staying there
We had Goldgrain biscuits
And Cidona we did share.
Lots of people calling
To visit their families
A Christmas to remember
With Foot and Mouth Disease.

A New Year, with excitement
A school bus on the run
Mick Mulhern was the driver
And we had lots of fun.
It sure was so much better
A shorter cycle each morn'
But still a four-mile cycle
To the bus stop in Farnaun.

A lady who lives in Farnaun
She never made a fuss
Had our coats and caps all dry
When we got off the bus.
"Fond Memories dear friend, thank you"
Some of those students
We remember with love
For the wonderful times together
We pray they're with God above.



'Sam Maguire' Visits Knox Street

Photos courtesy of the Morley Family



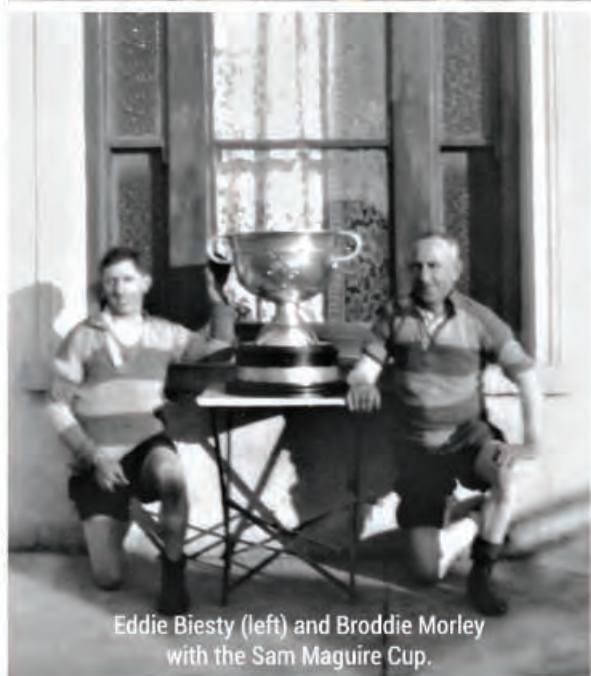
Joe Waldron, Knox St. (left) with two workers from Dyer's Bakery, Castlereagh and a young Anthony Jordan, Knox St., admiring the Sam Maguire Cup at Broddie Morley's butcher shop, Knox St. in late 1950.



Broddie Morley (left) and Liam Smyth, both of Knox St., with the Sam Maguire Cup at Broddie's butcher shop, in late 1950.



Pictured with the Sam Maguire Cup in 1951 are, Back, L-R: Liam Smyth and Joe Webb; Front: Anthony Jordan, Tony Morley and Ian Wilson.



Eddie Biesty (left) and Broddie Morley with the Sam Maguire Cup.



Tony Morley (left) in action for Mayo v. Sligo, 1971.

Culture Night 2023

A Memorable Visit to Áras an Uachtaráin

Aoife McDonagh

Culture night (22nd September) 2023 is a night I won't forget for a long time. I had the honour of attending a reception hosted by President Michael D. Higgins and his wife Sabina in Áras an Uachtaráin. How do you get invited to a reception like that, one might ask? I had seen a post on the President's social media in August inviting the public to apply for tickets for this event. All you had to do was send in an email with your name and address. The tickets were then allocated on a lottery system. I applied for tickets when I saw the post and thought no more of it. A few weeks later I got an email from the executive assistant to the President to say that I had been successful in my application for two tickets to attend Culture Night.

The big day finally arrived - Friday, 22nd September was Culture Night. Culture Night is an annual all-island public event which takes place on the second last Friday of September. It celebrates culture, creativity, and the arts. We were requested to arrive at the main gates of Áras an Uachtaráin off Chesterfield Avenue in the Phoenix Park at 6pm. This was a strict 6pm. If you arrived a minute beforehand you were refused entry. When we drove through the gates, we were greeted with beautiful, well-maintained gardens with a multitude of colourful flowers. We were guided to the visitors' car park where a shuttle bus was waiting to bring guests up to the main entrance of the house.



Jason Fleming and Aoife McDonagh
outside Áras an Uachtaráin.

The entrance hall of Áras an Uachtaráin dates to 1751 when Nathaniel Clements built the original park ranger's house. It has a magnificent coffered barrel-vaulted ceiling and fluted Doric columns. Busts of James Clarence Mangan and Daniel O'Connell are on either side of the door that leads you into the State Reception Room via the Francini Corridor. Along the Francini Corridor are busts of all the past Presidents of Ireland. Our coats were taken on entry to the Francini Corridor. As we made our way further down the corridor to the State Drawing Room there were tables on the left with glasses of red and white wine along with pints of Guinness. Áras an Uachtaráin isn't the typical place you would expect to be drinking pints of Guinness in on a Friday night!

The reception was held in the State Reception Room and State Dining Room which are adjacent to each other. The main table in the State Dining Room, which is usually used for the first meeting of new governments after their members receive their seals of office from the President, was lined with a variety of sandwiches, cheeses, canapes, desserts, tea and coffee. After an hour of eating, drinking, and talking to many of the other guests it was announced that President Higgins and his wife would be joining us. A few minutes later they entered the room through the door from the Council of State Room. We were advised to stay where we were in the room and that President Higgins and Sabina would mingle amongst the crowd. Within a few minutes we were standing face to face with President Higgins and his wife. After a few brief words with President Higgins his assistant asked us if we would like a picture with him. Once the picture was taken, he moved on to talk to the many others in the room who were waiting for him. Our conversation with Sabina was for much longer and we spoke about her hailing from Ballindine and her family connections to Ballyhaunis. Again, after a few minutes Sabina's assistant asked us if we would like to have a picture taken with her and of course we did!

Following an hour of mingling with the many guests, President Higgins and Sabina left the State Reception Room. It was announced that we would be moving outside to the Hyde Room where we would be treated to a performance by the White Horse Guitar Club. The door to the Council of State Room opened and we made our way through into the State Drawing Room and finally into the President's Study where our coats were ready for us as we proceeded out the back door to the



gardens. The lights along the garden happen to be green and red, which I think may have been Sabina's nod to her Mayo roots. As we made our way towards the Hyde Room (named after our first President, Dr. Douglas Hyde) we passed the Peace Bell which was unveiled at Áras an Uachtaráin to mark the tenth anniversary of the Belfast Agreement by President Mary McAleese in 2008.

The Hyde Room was set up with a stage and just enough chairs for the 180 guests in attendance. There were eleven chairs on the stage for the members for the White Horse Guitar Club band. The White Horse Guitar Club is an eleven-piece band formed in the Cork music venue 'Upstairs at The White Horse'. Formed in early 2012, the band evolved from an open invitation for guitar players to come and jam together into a fully-fledged musical touring group of eleven friends. They played for an hour and, to say the place was "rocking" wouldn't even do it justice. Even the staff of Áras an Uachtaráin were up dancing.



Jason Fleming and Aoife McDonagh pictured with Mrs. Sabina Higgins (left) and President Michael D. Higgins (right) at Áras an Uachtaráin

Once the band had finished their performance, we were invited back into the State Reception Room for more Guinness, wine, tea, coffee and food! President and Mrs. Higgins mingled amongst the crowd for another hour until the night came to an end.

So that's my story of how I ended up at a "Party" at Áras an Uachtaráin. It was an experience and night I will remember for a long time.

Emily Hannah

Christina Johnston

I'm imagining an Emily
Because I have not seen
This little babe - my grandniece
Perhaps her eyes are green?

Her world each day emergent
With words and shades new-born.
Blues and greens and crimson reds
Rainbow her dawning morn.

A third generation - she's the first
Though knowing not this mark
Sleeps suffused with innocence
Dawns musiced by the lark.

I long to see this growing babe
And squeeze her fleshy hand
Marvel at genetics' treat
One pebble from the sand.

(Grand-niece Emily Hannah's Christening)



Cassie Evans (centre) of Hertfordshire, England visited Ballyhaunis in September 2023 and is photographed outside St Patrick's Church with her cousin Mike Griffin (left) and his wife Mary T. (right). Cassie is the daughter of Mike's aunt Teresa (Griffin) Bond and is a frequent visitor to Mayo.

Home and Away

Irish Community Involvement in Melbourne

Mary Fitzmaurice McBride

I went to Melbourne in 1979 and was luckier than many in that I had plenty of family established there already, and a full circle of friends right from the start: three brothers, aunts and uncles and lots of cousins. I loved going to and supporting all sorts of event, and most of all, I loved meeting people.

After coming back to live in Ireland for a few years in the mid 1980s, I returned to Australia. With a young family it's easy to get involved in different groups and organisations - it just happens. I was on the committee of a Gaelic Football Club, St. Kevin's. I organised displays demonstrating aspects of Irish culture at different events including St. Patrick's Day and the Melbourne Irish Festival at Edinburgh Gardens. I was one of the presenters on our Irish Radio Programme on 3ZZZ Community Radio Melbourne, which goes out for an hour every Saturday and Sunday. I was the first Irish outreach worker in Melbourne who, along with many volunteers, visit and keep in contact with the aged and sick in our Irish community. I was also a member and President of Comhaltas Melbourne for years. I received the Melbourne Irish Person of the Year award from the Irish Australian Support and Resource Bureau (IASRB) a few years ago.

2023 has been a very busy and exciting year. I was delighted to be at home in Gurteenbeg, Ballyhaunis, for my uncle Michael Feeley's (Coogue) ninetieth birthday celebrations. It timed in perfectly with Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann in Mullingar. I attended there over two days and was thrilled to see our Melbourne Céilí Band getting such a rousing welcome - the first Céilí band from Australia to participate in the All-Ireland Fleadh. It was also wonderful to see two Mayo Ceili bands come first and second in the same competition. What took me by complete surprise, and came as a great shock, was to receive the honour of the Comhaltas 'Gradam na hÉigse' award on that occasion. This award is presented in appreciation of service to Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann and the promotion of Ireland's cultural traditions.



Picture taken at Order of Australia Medal award presentation ceremony.
L-R: Pat Fitzmaurice (brother), Mary McBride and her son Padraic.

OAM Medal

The Order of Australia Medal (OAM) award is announced each June in the King's Birthday Honours. There are also New Year's Honours Awards. My name was put forward and I was honoured to be selected and awarded for services to the Irish community. The medals were presented by the newly elected Governor, Margaret Gardiner, at Government House in Melbourne on the 14th September. It was a very formal event. There are a number of medals, each to be worn on different occasions. There is also a tie-pin press-stud which you can wear at any time, but the bigger medals are for certain events or occasions.

Many people along the way have inspired me: a lot of wonderful neighbours, friends and,

of course, my family. On 4th October we were invited to another event as part of the Order of Australia Association.

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

Being President of Comhaltas Melbourne is a great honour for me. We are not like a Comhaltas branch back in Ireland, being so far away on the other side of the world. We are more a social branch. We attend festivals, put on concerts, organise dance workshops, do set dancing and have a family ceili with sets and different ceili dances. Many of our members would have never danced before. Others have come each year, bringing along their children like their parents brought them.

We also participate in community events in local city councils and get involved with other Irish groups. Our Irish and Comhaltas groups in Australia are very far apart: Adelaide and Canberra are an eight-hour drive away, with Sydney ten hours, Brisbane eighteen hours and Perth thirty-seven hours. So, as you can see, things are very far apart in Australia!

Comhaltas Melbourne celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2020, during the Covid lockdown and so, like so many other things during that time, there were very few celebrations.



Being from Co. Mayo myself, I would love to invite any musicians, singers and set dancers from the West of Ireland to visit our branch in Melbourne. They will receive a great welcome. We started a children's music class last year, given by lovely young Irish musicians. After going to Mullingar and seeing how the young musicians enjoyed playing on the street, we would love to bring a little of that joy to Comhaltas Melbourne.

During my Irish trip this year I met up, as always, with many friends. We went to a few ceilis in Julian's of Midfield and visited the Pattern of Urlaur and the Síamsa Sráide Festival in Swinford. I paid a visit to Midwest Radio and met Michael Commins, Patsy Browne and Mildred Beirne. Thank you, Joe Byrne, for having me as special guest on your Tuesday night programme, along with my brother Martin and nephew Evan. It's wonderful to enjoy all the news, music, sport from Ireland in Australia on local radio, and also Fr. Stephen's Mass from Ballyhaunis which I watch on webcam.

During my visit home we had a lovely sing-song at my brother Martin and Trish's home. We had a big gathering of family and neighbours at my brother Kieran and Theresa's house which I enjoyed thoroughly. Thanks to you one and all.

Melbourne

There is a welcome for everyone in Melbourne. There is tea and a chat every Wednesday night in Collingwood and we hold many events throughout the year. Our first night back in the New year, on the last Wednesday in January, has an Australian theme. Then we have St. Brigid's on the first Wednesday in February. March is full of Irish events. In April we have a Comhaltas Melbourne Weekend at Queenscliff, two hours from Melbourne. In May we have our Set Dancing Weekend with guest



Members of the Fitzmaurice family of Gurteenbeg together in Melbourne, Australia, during a visit by Martin and family in December 2022. Left to right: Thomas, Martin, John, Mary and Pat. John went to Australia in 1971, Pat in 1973, Thomas in 1977, Mary in 1979.

Left: Medal and Certificate presented to Mary at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann 2023 in Mullingar for her contribution to Comhaltas in Melbourne.

teachers from Ireland. In June there is the National Celtic Festival, Portarlinton. Then for many it's holidays to Ireland during July and August. At the end of August we have our Lughnasa Harvest Feast and Bacon and Cabbage night. There is a concert and Halloween celebrations in October, and a concert in November. Then the opening of the Australian Irish Film Festival, the Christmas Dinner and mid-December holidays - so it's a full schedule. There is something for every season. Please come and join us.



Cribbin Family Gatherings 2023

Margaret Cribbin Monaghan (Knockanara & Claregalway)

2023 was a memorable year for the extended Cribbin family of Knockanara with visits by two American cousins looking for information on their family lineage.

In October 2019 Gretchen Spangle Adams sent an email to Councillor John Cribbin wondering if they were related. Attached were copies of memorial cards of Maria and John Cribbin, Knockanara, Ballyhaunis. Gretchen's grandmother was Margaret Ellen Cribbin eldest daughter of Maria Carney Cribbin from Carrowkeel and John Cribbin, Knockanara. Margaret emigrated to the United States at the age of seventeen and arrived in New York on the 'St. Louis' on 21st May 1914 to her cousin Agnes Halloran. She never saw her homestead again. Margaret had seven siblings: John (Ballyglass), Mary Anne Duffy (New York), Delia Duffy (Moate), Winifred Tighe (Aghamore), Tom Cribbin (Knockanara) my father, Tony Cribbin (Main Street, Ballyhaunis) and Kathleen Fleming (Lavallyroe). Kathleen was only one year and five months when her eldest sister emigrated and obviously had no memory of her.

Margaret married Charles Vanner Spangle in 1922 and they resided in Taft, California. They had three children: Charles, Elaine and Danny. Margaret remained in contact with her parents in Knockanara and, every Christmas, sent three large homemade Christmas cakes to Knockanara to be distributed amongst all the Cribbin



Maria and John Cribbin, Knockanara – great-grandparents of Gretchen Adams and many others.

families. Margaret died in 1964. Her eldest son Charles married Vanda Cheetham and they had four children: Roderick, Peter, Gretchen and Amanda.

Gretchen and her family lived in New York and so she never really got to know her grandmother as they lived 3,000 miles apart, but she had a special quilt she made for her. The inside of the quilt is half of a blanket which was sent to Margaret Ellen as a wedding gift by her parents. The wool was from her parents' sheep shorn by her Dad John Cribbin, carded, spun and woven by her mother Maria Carney Cribbin. Gretchen is a quilter by profession and a lover of all fibre arts. She runs her own quilting business in Afton, New York. Finding a letter from her grandmother is what led Gretchen to look for her Irish roots. Gretchen and her husband David Adams were due to visit Ireland in November 2020 but the trip was cancelled due to the Covid 19 pandemic. After many aborted attempts they finally arrived in Ireland in May 2023. On Wednesday, 17th May, Gretchen and David visited Knockanara to view the remains of the house from which her grandmother had emigrated in May 1914 – 109 years previously. It was an emotional visit as Gretchen was the first member of Margaret's family to visit her homeland. They visited Ballyhaunis Cemetery to see where many relations were buried. Later in the day they met many of Gretchen's father's first cousins in Val's Bar and Bistro.



A Cribbin family get-together.

Back, L-R: John Cribbin, Seamus Fleming, Ann Cribbin, John Coyne, Breege Fleming Halpin, Mary Fleming Coyne, Tony Cribbin and Michael Monaghan.

Front, L-R: Tessie Cribbin Prendergast, Margaret Cribbin Monaghan, Nancy Duffy Murtagh, Gretchen and David Adams.





Above: Margaret Cribbin Spangle and Charles Spangle – grandparents of Gretchen Adams.

Centre: Cousins, Margaret Cribbin Monaghan (Knockanara and Claregalway), Diane Jones (U.S.A) and Seán Cribbin (Knockbrack and Dublin).

Far right: Gretchen Adams (left) and Margaret Monaghan at the site of the house where Gretchen's grandmother was born.



Gretchen was presented with an album of photographs spanning four generations of the extended Cribbin family, together with a crystal plate bearing the Cribbin family crest. Gretchen and David enjoyed their Irish trip, visiting Dublin, Belfast, Donegal and Galway. For Gretchen the highlight of their trip was their visit to Ballyhaunis and meeting family members.

Another American Cousin

In September 2021 Diane Jones and her husband Tom made a short visit from the United States to Ireland looking for her Irish roots. The only information she had was that her great grandmother Winifred Cribbin was born on 1st August 1868 in Knockanara, Ballyhaunis. After some research it was discovered that Winifred was the youngest daughter of John Cribbin and Margaret Regan of Knockanara, Ballyhaunis. Winifred had six siblings: Anne, Mary, Margaret, Bridget, John and Thomas. I have no information on either Anne or Mary. Margaret married Patrick Regan of Knockanara and they were parents of Mary Ann Regan Toolan, grandmother of Marguerite Toolan Moran (Knockanara) and Noreen Toolan Coyne (Ballyveale). Bridget married Martin Grogan and they were parents of Clarence Grogan, Clare Street. John married Maria Carney Carrowkeel (my grandparents) and Thomas married Honoria Connolly of Ballyglass and they resided in Ballyglass.

Winifred emigrated to the United States and resided in Newark, New Jersey. She married Timothy James Fitzpatrick on the 7th February 1895. They had four children: Nicholas, John, Thomas and Anna. Anna married Frank Thorn and they had three children: Frank, Dorothy and Robert. Dorothy married Frank

Mahr and they had two children: Patricia and Diane. Diane decided to check out her Irish family connections. She made a brief visit to Knockanara and met Councillor John Cribbin. Later in Dublin she met Seán and Sallyanne Cribbin, Leixlip and Ballyglass.

Diane made a second visit to Ireland in August 2023 for the Naval Academy v Notre Dame football game in the Aviva Stadium. As their trip was based in Dublin they were unable to visit the West of Ireland. On Saturday, 26th August, Diane and Tom were guests at a gathering of the extended Cribbin family of Ballyglass hosted by Kevin Langford son of Freddie Cribbin Langford of Ballyglass and Limerick, at his home in Dublin. On Sunday, 27th August, Diane and Tom were taken to Athlone by Seán Cribbin to meet with myself. An enjoyable afternoon was spent in their company sharing family information and exchanging photographs.

Truly Remarkable Women

Meeting my two American cousins made me think of my grandaunt Winifred and Auntie Margaret leaving Knockanara at the age of seventeen and making the long journey across the Atlantic Ocean to an unknown destination. I admire their bravery and sense of adventure in undertaking such a mission.

I include in this as well my own mother Bridget (Delia) Lyons Cribbin of Holywell and Knockanara who also emigrated at the tender age of seventeen years to her aunt Delia Tighe Waldron in New York in 1930. She returned in March 1946 and married my father Tom Cribbin in November of the same year. They, like many more women of their generation, were truly remarkable *Mná na hÉireann. Suaimhneas síoraí dá n-anamacha go léir.*



**At the Coffee Morning hosted by Anne and Gerry Lyons, Knockbrack on 21st Sept. 2023,
€1,000 was raised for Mayo Roscommon Hospice.**

Pictured, clockwise from left: Rosemary Rogers, Sam Chapman, Mary Finnegan, Bernadette Lyons, Gabrielle Lyons, Mary Goulding, Mary Donnelly, Joan McNamara, Mary Walsh, Bridget Killeen, Linda Kirrane and (in front) Julie Gallagher.



**Above: Pictured at the Coffee Morning in Lyons', Knockbrack.
L-R: Anne Lyons, Gerry Lyons, Bernie Lyons, Mary Donnelly,
Kevin Higgins, Joan McNamara, Mary Walsh, Bridget Killeen.**

**Left: Congratulations to Margaret Johnston (Knox St.)
who celebrated her 90th birthday recently.
She is pictured here cutting the cake with her cousins
Hélène McCafferty (left) and Christina Johnston (right) and
neighbour, Sarah Herr.**



We Loved Annagh

Anne Hughes Irwin

Down the Cottages Road we walked
after Sunday dinner,
past Tooraree
we skirted the gable that shouldered the road
avoided the snarling collie,
along the grassy boreen,
all the way to Annagh

We, in our gingham dresses, holding hands
passed the boys with scabby knees
who teetering on the bridge at Baile an Droichead
they teased us, and we laughed.

On the stoney shore at Annagh
as our mummies spread Foxford rugs
for the picnic
we dashed into the lake,
splashing and swimming,
our giggles and noisy banter
echoing off the misty hills.
before feasting on sandwiches,
biscuits and red lemonade.

On different days our daddies
taught us how to fish
to hook a string for perch and trout.
In winter we skated on the frozen ice.

Then farmers dredged the river
that fed Annagh, its waters drained away
all that is left is an empty basin of black rushes
surrounded by blue misty hills
and our memories

They killed her
for of a penny worth of sodden soil
on banks of heavy clay
where nothing grows.



Pauline and Tony Greene, on their Wedding Day joined by
Tony's sister Marcella Keane (right).
(Courtesy of Vincent Keane).

50th
Anniversary



Anne Fleming (Scregg) and Michael Plunkett (Forthill)
were married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis,
9th June 1973.



Anne and Michael Plunkett (Scregg) celebrated their
Golden Wedding Anniversary this summer,
9th June 2023.

Gaelic Football for Mature Players

Hugh Rudden

1978 saw the publication of the first edition of Annagh Magazine. Since then, the magazine has grown from strength to strength. In 1978 I was a member of the Ballyhaunis Gaelic Football team which captured the County Masters (Over 30s). Ballyhaunis became the Mayo County Masters champions of 1978 with a victory over our neighbours Claremorris in the final. The game was played in McHale Park, Castlebar, on Sunday, 10th Sept. and preceded the county senior decider. The late Dr. Mick Loftus of Crossmolina was the referee and the match programme cost the princely sum of 10p. Little did I think back then that I would still be lacing up the boots in 2023!

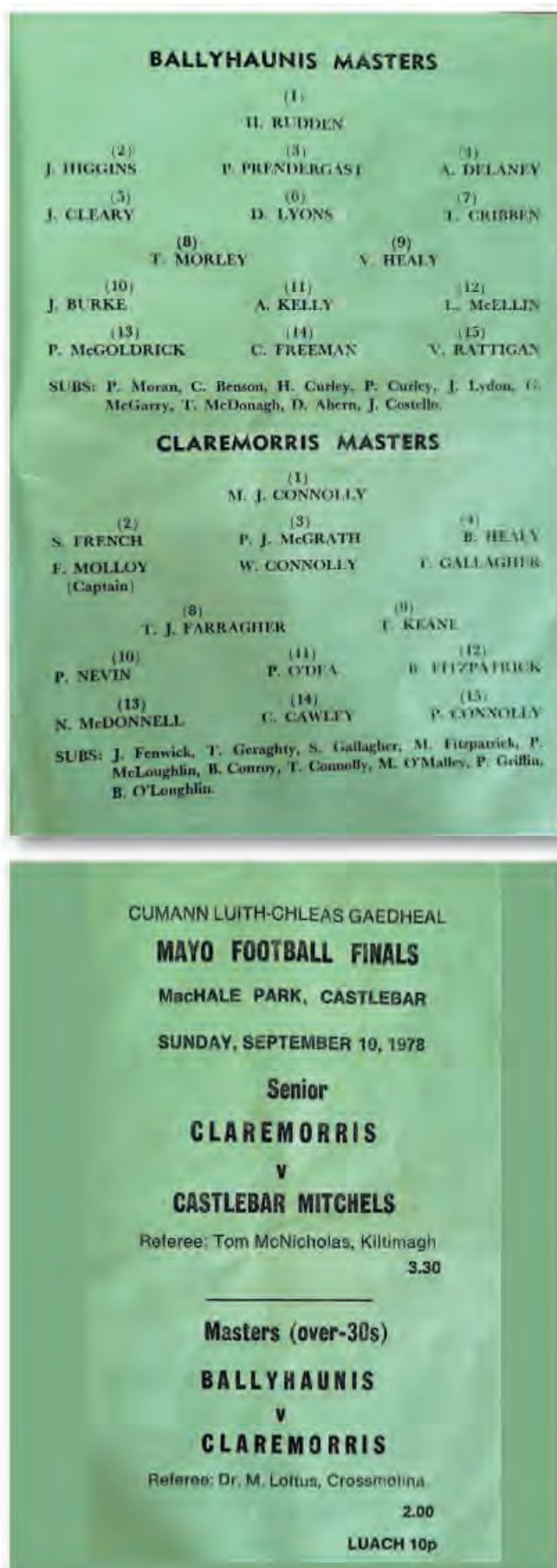
History was made earlier this year at the University of Galway Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence on Wednesday, 5th July, when the first ever game of Walking Gaelic Football for more mature players in this venue took place. It was the culmination of a sixteen-week exercise programme organised by the GAA Community and Health Department, Connacht GAA and 'Alone', and facilitated by UPMC, a renowned international healthcare provider based at the Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence in Began. It was part of a drive to provide practical social and exercise opportunities for an older demographic, many of whom have given years of service to the Association as volunteers. The initiative also tied in nicely with the Connacht GAA's desire to make their world-class facility more accessible to all members of the community.

Thirty participants took part in exercise classes twice a week at the UPMC facilities on site. The training sessions were overseen by qualified UPMC physiotherapists and focused on strength, mobility and cardiovascular health, with all participants first getting clearance from their GP before signing up.

Others who took part in the programme included Ballyhaunis footballing legends John Cleary and Aidan Kelly along with Mary Frances Cleary, Mary Prenty, Marian Regan, Phyllis Flanagan, Nell Rochford, Oliver Jordan, John Mooney and Tommy Prenty.

This pilot programme has been so successful that it seems inevitable that Walking Gaelic Football has a bright future. I believe that all GAA clubs could replicate it easily enough for the more senior members of their community. Any clubs interested in Walking Gaelic Football can email Stuart Moloney, the GAA's Regional Community and Health Coordinator for Connacht and Munster at stuart.moloney@gaa.ie

Right: Programme for the Mayo Senior and Masters finals, 1978.





Above: Ballyhaunis Mayo County Masters champions of 1978.

Back Row L-R: Hugh Curley, Pado Moran, Padraic Prendergast, Tony Morley, Aidan Kelly, Hugh Rudden, Vinnie Healy, Gerry Benson, Christy Freeman, Val Rattigan, Pat Curley.

Front Row L-R: John Cleary, Larry McEllin, Phillip McGoldrick, Jim Higgins, Alan Delaney (Capt.), Johnny Burke, Des Lyons, Terry McDonagh, Tony Cribben.



Left: Hugh Rudden soloing during a Gaelic Football for Mature Players training session.

Below: The Connacht White and Connacht Blue teams who lined out for the first ever game of 'Walking Football' held in the University of Galway Connacht GAA Air Dome, Began, on Wed. 5th July 2023. The referee was Eoghan Collins.

Connacht White: Aidan Kelly, Christy Loftus, Cyril Feehily, Frank Burns, Ita Hannon, James Rocke, John Gilmore, Marian Regan, Mary Frances Cleary, Mary Prenty, Michael Hopkins, Michael Kelly, Michael McLoughlin, Michael Sweeney, Phyllis Flanagan, Teresa Bermingham. **Manager:** John O'Mahony.

Connacht Blue: Ann Martin, Anne Lowy, Denis O'Boyle, Hugh Rudden, Joe Dillon, John Cleary, John Mooney, Kathleen Cunnane, Mary Kelly, Nell Rochford, Noreen Burns, Oliver Jordan, Philomena Moran, Tommy Prenty, Victor Burcovskif. **Manager:** John Prenty.



**Walking Gaelic Football Tournament
Connacht White vs Connacht Blue**

Threads of Time: Joe Keane's 100th Birthday

John Keane

From a tribute penned by his son John Keane and delivered at the special celebratory Mass in St. Patrick's Church, Sat. 16th Sept. 2023.

The opening line of Christy Moore's song *Ordinary Man* could very easily describe Joe Keane.

*I'm an ordinary man, nothing special, nothing grand.
I've had to work for everything I own.*

Joe Keane: An ordinary man in many ways, but an extraordinary man in many ways too.



Joe Keane pictured with his cheque and congratulatory letter from President Higgins on the occasion of his 100th birthday.
(Photograph by Mike Byrne).

Joseph Keane, Born September 20, 1923

The new state of Ireland was barely born itself when Dad arrived into the world. A turbulent time that was filled with Civil War politics and events that shaped our history. Joe's father Patrick Keane came from Crossard near Tooreen, and his mother was Annie Tighe, from Arderry, Aghamore. Patrick was a tailor also and had a business in Knox Street. Annie lived to be ninety-nine and I have vivid memories of her.

Dad had one brother John and two sisters Mary and Kit. Both John and Mary emigrated to the States early in

their lives and never returned except for holidays. John joined the US Marines and fought in Korea. He passed away in 2007. His ashes are buried in our family grave close to another US Marine from Ballyhaunis who was killed in Vietnam – Corp. Patrick Gallagher. Mary died in 2021 and her ashes are also buried in the family plot.

Kit lived all her life in Ballyhaunis and was very close to Dad. She was a great character in her own right and helped to rear us as if we were her own. Kit herself was also a very active community member, helping to run the local bingo and drama society for many years. She passed away in 2009.

Dad spent some time in Dublin and in the UK as a young man, but returned to work for his father in Ballyhaunis and never again left Knox Street. There he met a neighbour's daughter, Marcella Greene, who worked as a seamstress for his dad. They were married in January 1961.

They had eight children: Pat, Tony, Karen, Joe, John, Rob, Stella and Gillian. We, in turn, have given them fifteen grandchildren. Growing up in Knox Street we had many cats and dogs in our little house. It was a very busy house and, to add to it all, Mam minded children for neighbours and friends when they were working. Five of those children in particular stand out. We even call these five 'family' as we grew up together in each other's houses. One person in particular stands out whom we lost earlier this year and will always remember – another brother – Pierce Higgins. We will always miss you Pierce, R.I.P. Keith Higgins, Lorcan, Conal and Cian Higgins were other brothers to us. Mam minded many children over the years, so we always had plenty of children to play with and call family.

It is still hard to believe, when I visit home, that we all fitted in that small, three-bedroom house. When my kids ask me where we all fitted, all I can say is that every spare nook and cranny was used. The yard and the fields around us were the breakout rooms and where we expended all our spare energy playing Cowboys and Indians and whatever sport we could think of. P.A's Hill, The Lochán, Forkan's Field and The Friary Grounds were all used to the maximum for all sorts of devilment. Fond memories! When that didn't work out, the handle of the brush maintained discipline. Not so fond memories!

Dad and Mam deserve all sorts of medals for rearing us all. A fact we only realise now as we are rearing our own children. But no medals were given out or sought in those days. Dad and Mam just got on with it and did their best for us all through hard work and sacrifice. No





Marcella and Joe Keane (seated) with their family, from left: Pat, Joe, Stella, Tony, Karen, Rob, Gillian and John. Photograph by Janapix

car. No holidays. No electronic gadgets. I would like to think we have inherited their work ethic as all the family have done well in our lives and for that we are very appreciative.

I can honestly say that Dad and Mam have a beautiful relationship to this day. To say that he loves her would be an understatement. In the few times that Mam is not at his side you can see how much he misses her. It's a lovely thing to witness. Every morning Dad greets Mam with, "Who is this beautiful girleen?" followed by a kiss. He has never failed to start the day this way. Years ago, when we would be watching telly in the evening, something like Hawaii 50 or The A Team, Dad would still be working in his shop in our sitting room. He would pop into the kitchen occasionally and give Mum a kiss and a big hug. We would look away in embarrassment. But what a lovely tender memory.

Master Tailor

Dad worked all his life as a tailor. A Master Tailor. Bespoke. Our house was a constant flow of people calling to drop off clothes or collect altered or mended items. Dad kept no business hours. People called all the time and that was the norm. He loved a chat and would always be welcoming. He loved his work and took huge pride in it. To see him sit cross-legged on his bench sewing a piece of cloth was like watching a painter paint or a

sculptor sculpt. There was a beauty to it and it was a sight to behold. I think he was never happier than when he was engrossed in his work. Making something that would last a lifetime and be appreciated by its owner gave him great satisfaction. He definitely didn't do it for the money! He was always working and tried to retire about five times but people kept calling and Dad kept tailoring. He loved it all though, so it was no hardship.

Dad had other interests that kept him going in whatever spare time he had. He was a lifelong member of the FCA. He joined as a young man during the Emergency or World War II. Then it was known as the LDF or Local Defence Forces. Young men from the town and parish joining together to protect the community. We have several pictures of Dad standing proudly in uniform. He kept a rifle at home for years and as young lads this was a source of great fascination for us. Thank God we never found the ammunition!

Dad loved going on camp during the summer and weekends in Finner, Galway and Castlebar. He retired as Quarter Master Sergeant after forty years' service. All his sons served too and I always thought we were treated better than other recruits when they discovered who our Dad was. He loved the craic and banter with the FCA, but most of all I think he loved serving his town and country. I have a picture in my mind of Dad standing guard with his rifle in our town protecting the people.

His neighbours and friends. The town was in safe hands.

Dad is a deeply religious man and worked as sacristan in St. Patrick's Parish Church for many years. He just followed his beliefs. He spent every spare minute in the church doing countless jobs. We all helped as much as we could and it was a real team effort doing all the tasks necessary to keep the church going. Opening and closing the church, ringing the Angelus bell twice daily (usually five minutes late if one of the children was bell-ringer), laying out the vestments, cleaning after services, cutting the grass. The list of jobs was endless and Dad completed them all without complaint or drama. My own favourite task was setting up the crib in the church before Christmas. This was always a magical evening. I loved installing all the animals, shepherds, Mary, Joseph and putting out the straw. The manger was left empty and I would leave the church happy that Christmas was just around the corner.



Pictured with Joe's FCA and Army colleagues.

Back, L-R: Paddy McDonnell, Oliver Hannon, Seamus Burke, Tommy Currihan, Mick Reynolds, Michael Duffy.

Front, L-R: Brendan Conwell, Michael Ryder, Marcella and Joe, Tommy Kearns and Brian Egan. *Photograph by Janapix.*

Politics was another of Dad's interests. A lifelong Fine Gael supporter, he has kept a great interest in current politics to this day. He still reads all the papers front to back and is as well informed as any political pundit. One of his favourite sayings for many years has been, "What is this eejit doing now?" as he reads a particular piece or hears something on TV or radio that he knows is political spin. His hero always has been and still is Michael Collins. Dad would often speak of him and continues to as if The Big Fellow were still alive. He would soon sort out those particular eejits in short order. If only he could. If only he could...

Dads' biggest passion though is the Annagh Magazine. It is fitting that we write this piece about his life for our local annual publication. He has been part of the hardworking committee for many years and is currently President of the Annagh Magazine Society. Every Christmas the magazine is posted by Mam to all our siblings and family across the world. It's a bit of home coming through the door and is eagerly awaited. It's a remarkable work that is a constant in our lives. Dad has a fantastic memory and never ceases to amaze me how he can recall people and so many events, no matter how trivial. No detail is too small and no person is forgotten about. Dad's memory is unbelievable and would put any Google search to shame. To this day his memory is a vast reservoir of people, events, and figures of our town and beyond. Memories forged through 100 years. Wars, recessions, pandemics, politics, sporting events (three All Ireland wins!), weather events. All logged in Dad's head. Because he has lived them. What is history to us, is life to him. And what a life he has lived so far? Not bad, Dad. Not bad.

Celebrations

On September 16th this year we celebrated our father Joe Keane's 100th birthday. It was an event we in the Keane family have looked forward to for many months. As it crept closer the planning started in earnest and the excitement of the big day becoming a real thing was palpable.

The WhatsApp family group and Zoom calls put a rough plan into a better one. The call went out to all and sundry inviting anyone who knew him to a celebratory Mass and celebrations afterwards in the Parochial Hall. Coming up to the event we wondered how many people would attend? From the start I knew the numbers would be large. And large they were. We filled the church and Community Hall afterwards. Relations, friends and neighbours. Faces and memories that spoke of Dad's life and legacy.

All the great neighbours from Knox St, the Jordans, Morleys, Herrs, Higgins, Byrnes, Morans and so many others. His colleagues from the Annagh Magazine Society who made a lovely presentation to Dad. His comrades from the FCA who arrived in smart uniform and colour party to present Dad with a commemorative service medal which he loves. His old political party members in the Fine Gael party were not found wanting either. They gave Dad a lovely presentation with Mayo TD Alan Dillon also in attendance. Alan drove from Limerick especially for the event and this was much appreciated. Earlier, Keith Higgins called in before going off to play a championship match against Mitchels of Castlebar. So, we had two All Stars present together. We also received lovely handwritten letters from Enda



Kenny, Leo Varadkar and President Higgins. And the big cheque too!

But mostly the day was about all the people of Ballyhaunis and beyond who came to see Dad on his special day. It was brilliant to meet and chat to all our close neighbours and friends. Our town is full of great people. As I watched all the different people come up and shake his hand and wish him well, I was struck by how one man can have such an impact on so many people. On reflection it was a lovely summation of Dad's life.

Many people have remarked on how well Dad looked. His physical and mental health is unbelievable for a man of his age. He looks no different now than when he was eighty. What's the secret, everyone asks? Well, Dad is a bit of a conundrum. He has never been to a gym or exercised for as far back as I can remember. He never did yoga or drank six litres of water a day. He is definitely not a vegetarian and does not follow any special diet. He has worked hard all his life and money was always tight.

But what he has is a loving wife who feeds him well, a bright enquiring mind and a large circle of good friends and neighbours. His philosophy is based on family and community. He has a great sense of humour and loves a laugh. He still loves a visitor and will happily chat all day. His mood is always good and is never too up or down. His interest in daily events locally and nationally has never wavered. All this has kept him young at heart and in mind. Bottle that if you can!

The celebrations went on for hours capably supported by our cousin Paddy Joe Tighe and his musician friends. It gave everyone in our family a chance to appreciate how many people Dad's life has touched. The amount of cards (well over 200 and still coming!), presents and well wishes was unbelievable. We even got a bottle of poteen (for his cough). Dad has featured in the newspapers and on local radio. All brilliant touching tributes to him; all so well deserved and true. Yes, an extraordinary man is our Dad Joe Keane.

Our family is extremely grateful to everyone who helped make Dad's celebration a very special day. We are grateful to Fr. Stephen and sacristan Irene for use of the church and for organising a lovely ceremony. We thank Paula Donnellan (organist) and Martina Kelly with the Parish Choir whose music made the Mass so special, and, as an added special touch, they even sang 'Happy Birthday' for Dad after Holy Communion, with the entire congregation joining in. Special thanks to Mary Donnelly and her committee for the use of the Community Hall. We also express our gratitude to photographer Jana, Again, Paddy Joe and friends for the great music all afternoon. Well done to Collette Jennings and Londis for the wonderful catering and for your attention to detail. Well done to Georgina (Dee) Costello for the fabulous balloons and Sinead Mallee who created the most beautiful Mass booklet and our appreciation to all who helped on the day.



Marcella and Joe Keane with grandchildren. Back, L-R: Georgina, Adam, Luke, Kieran, Cillian, Jamie, Rob, Harvey, Cian and Tara. Centre: Joe and Alex. Front: Lauren and Juliet. Photograph by Janapix.

A word of gratitude to all our extended Keane family who did Dad and Mam proud, and huge gratitude to our cousin Kathleen for making the trip over from the U.S. It was brilliant to reconnect with everyone again. Life is going by very quickly and all these special moments are so precious. I would especially like to thank our sisters Karen and Stella who led the way in preparing the day and sorted the hundred tasks that required care and attention. No better women! To Stella, who is our sole sibling living in Ballyhaunis, a really special thank you. I have no doubt that Mum and Dad would not be so happy and healthy if it wasn't for your loving care and attention over the years. No task is too big or small for you. You take all the stress out of their lives, and they live far easier in their retirement knowing you are there for them. You were reared well.



Joe and Marcella Keane pictured with members of the Annagh Magazine Society, past and present.

Standing, L-R: Gabriel Smith, Jim Lundon, Peter McCafferty, John Kilduff, Nell Rochford, Paul Waldron, Seamus Mulrennan, Edward Mulhern, Noreen Ruane Dalton, Joe Hosty, Tommy Caulfield.

Seated: Marcella and Joe Keane with presentations from the Annagh Magazine Society. **Missing from photograph:** Mike Griffin.

Photograph by Janapix



Above left: Brothers Mick (left) and Kevin Meehan from Coventry visited their former neighbour Mary McBride of Annagh in August 2023.

Above: Tommy Caulfield, Carrowkeel and Co. Galway (front) with his cousin Raymond Finn (son of Martin and nephew of Richard Finn, Gurteen).



Left: Brothers Greg, Michael and Tommy Caulfield from Carrowkeel. (Photographs courtesy of Marie Caulfield Macnamara)

Ballyhaunis Town Football Club

Jarlath Walsh and Tracy Cunnane

The 2023 Season AGM of the Ballyhaunis Town Football Club was held on 30th Jan. 2023 in the Friary House and the following officers were elected:

Chairman: Jarlath Walsh; Vice-chairperson: Ann Marie Reynolds; Secretary: Richie Crinnigan; Treasurer: Tom Collieran; PRO: Michael Waldron. Management Committee: Jarlath Walsh, Jonathan Powers, Tracey McDonagh, Marcin Balik Nowak, Karl Lyons, Niall Richardson. Chairman Jarlath

Walsh expressed the wish to step down after many years in the helm, but as no definite proposal for chairperson was made he chaired the meetings on an ad-hoc basis and as the season draws to a close that's still the situation.

This is our fourteenth season playing in the Mayo League since the club's formation. We are playing in the Premier Division after getting relegated the previous season from the Super League, along with Claremorris. The teams in the Premier League for the 2023 season are: Ballinrobe Town, Westport Utd. B, Ballyglass, Moy Villa, Kiltimagh/knock Utd B., Kilmore, Swinford, Claremorris, Fahy Rovers and Ballyhaunis Town. Karl Lyons and Marcin Balik-Nowak were appointed team managers for the season. Team Captains during the season were Michael Waldron and Robbie McCormack.

We had a challenging season in the Premier Division

after losing some of our senior, established players for one reason or another. We struggled in the first half of the season but picked up in the second half finishing third from bottom with seventeen points, so we play Premier League football again next season. We thank Karl, Marcin and all of the senior squad for their commitment and dedication all season. We are building season-on-season and the future looks bright with some of our U18 lads making the transition successfully this season up to Senior level.

Thanks to Tracy Cunnane and Nigel Naughton (FAI and Mayo League) we had a very successful Summer Camp again for the children with nearly 100 participating. It is growing every year. Tracy again ran and organised our online shop with GRG and also ran the very successful cash-for-clothes shop. A big thank you to Catherine Moran for providing all the half-time goodies for the lads all season.

The club received €37,000 funding under the Sports Capital Programme (2017/18) which we used to develop a new training/pitch area and also to erect ball stop netting. It should be ready to use for the 2024 season. We have applied under the current Sports Capital Programme for €60,000 funding to carry out phase two



Ballyhaunis Town FC, Senior squad and managers.

Back, L-R: Marcin Balik Nowak (Coach), Daire Caulfield, Sean Burke, Richie Crinnigan, John Morley, Adam Noone, Wayne Maughan, Kevin Byrne, Joshua Webb, Dylan Lyons, Jimmy Cribbin, Pat McGhee, Daniel McCormack, Ljubo Spajic, Karl Lyons (Manager).

Front, L-R: Seamus McDonagh, James Connaughton, Evan McNamara, Robbie McCormack, Mike Waldron, James Reynolds, Mohammad Alom, Tony Batista, David Owusu, Lukasz Roda. *Photograph by Adam Kaczmarek.*



Ballyhaunis Town Under 13 team which won the League this year in Solar 21 Park, pictured with Coach Tracy Cunnane (left) and Manager Marcin Balik Nowak (right). Photograph by Tracy Cunnane.

of our main pitch drainage scheme and to purchase a pitch cutter and install a storage shed and dugouts under the equipment section of the programme.

We said goodbye at the turn of the year to Austin Lyons who retired as groundsman at the pitch. He was with us for a number of years and will be sorely missed by all as he was a true gentleman who always worked above and beyond the call of duty for the club and we thank him for that. Happy Retirement, Austin. We also said goodbye to John Larkin who also retired also as groundsman early in the new year. He too was a gentleman and did a lot of great work for us and he will be greatly missed at the club for his commitment to us. Thank you John and a Happy Retirement to you as well.

We were very fortunate to have the help of Ann Moran (scheme supervisor) in obtaining the services of John Eaton to work as groundsman at the club. John is a dedicated worker who ensures the pitch is spick-and-span and ready every weekend for games. He also goes above and beyond the call of duty to keep the machines running and all the bits and pieces done at the grounds. For that we thank you John and welcome you to the club.

Ballyhaunis Town FC hosted a Blitz at its grounds in Station Rise as part of the Summer Festival 2023. Ten local businesses organised teams. A lovely day was had by all and there was great help on the day from club coaches, parents and the festival committee.

July 2023 saw Ballyhaunis Town FC start training their first ever Under 8s team. Training took place every Tuesday evening. The first week there were ten children,



Some Ballyhaunis Town FC Under 14s team members with Jersey Sponsor, Tracy Cunnane (left) of TC's fitness, Ballyhaunis.

building up to a maximum of twenty-three and a consistent eighteen every week. There was a positive response from parents and the work rate from players each week, watching them progress, was overwhelming. The group is managed by Michael Marigliano and Damian McDonnell. They had challenge games against their peers from Knock-Kiltimagh Utd. and another home-and-away game against Claremorris Town FC. We were fortunate to have Damien Waldron from Waldron Carpentry kindly sponsor a set of jerseys for the season. Nolan's SuperValu sponsored drinks and sweets for all the children on the last game of the season which was a lovely gesture. Thanks to Tracy Cunnane, club coach and committee member, all parents and children who were involved in the success of the Under 8s first season. We look forward to more success over the seasons ahead. Michael Marigliano.





Photographed with Tracy is the TC's Fitness Team who won the Blitz Cup. Photograph by Tracy Cunnane.



In the Connacht Cup Ballyhaunis Town Under 12s took the trip to Killoe Celtic in Longford winning the game 2-1. Photograph by Tracy Cunnane.

We again thank our two main sponsors MacSiúrtáin's Bar (Stephen Nolan) and Rochford Motors (Liam Rochford) and we urge everyone to always try and support local shops and businesses in Ballyhaunis. They are called on to support every club and organisation in the area and they have never let us down and again we thank them for that. We thank Ann Moran, Scheme Supervisor at the pitch, for all her work and help over the years. We thank all the people of Station Rise for putting up with the disruption and noise caused by matches and training and for all your support for the club since it was started back in 2009 by one of you own, Brian Kilcourse.

The club is looking to expand year-on-year and will be entering an exciting phase later in the year joining with Clubforce which will have many benefits for the club - online shop, lotto and lots more. To that end we are seeking more volunteers to help with developing the club.

We would love to see new faces at the club next season and everyone is welcome to attend our AGM which we hold at the end of January each year in Friary house. We usually have a monthly management meeting to run the club which we hold at Friary House. We thank Stephen and Tracey for the use of that facility. If you would like to volunteer as a coach with the club, please contact us via our Facebook page or by contacting any committee member. We always welcome new club officers and management committee members and people to run/coach our teams. The club can be contacted by talking to any committee member. For more information contact Tracy Cunnane at 086 0618126.

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 you all at Station Rise in 2024.



Damian Waldron (back, centre) of Waldron Carpentry, sponsors of the Under 8 team with Managers Michael Marigliano (right) and Damian McDonnell (left). Photographs by Tracy Cunnane.



Ballyhaunis Town Under 18 team with managers Richie Crinnigan (back, extreme right) and Ken Carrick (back, second from right). In August 2023 they became the Helen Johnson Under 18 Division 2 champions after a 5-2 win over Ballinrobe Town in a play-off at Solar 21 Park. In October they beat Fahy Rovers 3-2 to reach the Quigley Shield Final for the first time.

Ballyhaunis Faith & Light

Anne Lyons



2023 was another enjoyable year for our Faith & Light group. We hosted a number of Fiestas: February's was based on Saint Valentine's Day; in March we celebrated Easter and our Summer Fiesta was held in early July. As I write this we plan our Halloween Fiesta on Sunday, 15th October. Our Fiestas are held in the Community Hall in Clare Court. It is a lovely venue which really suits our group. We plan to host two more Fiestas before the year is over: in November we will be remembering our dead and we will celebrate the birth of Jesus in December.

In March we also held our Annual Church Gate Collection, our first collection since the lifting of Covid restrictions. We would like to thank all those who supported it.

On 20th May we joined our fellow Faith & Light friends for the Annual Pilgrimage to Knock. After catching up with everyone in St. John's Rest and Care centre over a cuppa, everyone attended Mass in the Parish Church. The Mass was concelebrated by Bishop Brendan Kelly and Fr. Fergal Cunnane who is Faith & Light's National Chaplain. Many of those attending played various roles – sang, played music, read the readings and even acted out the gospel – On the road to Emmaus – which really brought it to life and was so moving.

On Saturday 21st October we will be attending the Faith & Light Provincial Day in Moate.

A special word of thanks to Fr. Stephen for his continued support. Thanks to Fr. Arul for joining us at our Summer Fiesta and to 'Le Cairde' who played and sang for us, helping to make our Fiesta such a memorable occasion.

A note of thanks to our chairperson Julia, who spent a lot of time putting together the Safeguarding Pack which all members received and signed for. Thanks to all the committee members for their continued work and support.

We are looking forward to 2024 and welcome anyone interested in joining our local Faith & Light Group.

I would like to wish everyone a very happy and peaceful Christmas and every blessing for 2024.

Anne Lyons – *Secretary* (087) 6892848.

Julia Kelly – *Chairperson* (086) 0764709.

Geraldine O'Dwyer – *Treasurer*.

Committee members – Orla Phillips, Christina Concannon, Mary Stanley.



Taken in Knock at the Faith & Light Annual Pilgrimage.

Back, L-R: Orla, Liam, Mary, Christine, Julia, Anne.

Front, L-R: Thomas, Annette, Bridget, Geraldine.



Sacred Space





Ballyhaunis Faith & Light



Playing Musical
Chairs.



Bridget & Anne.



Fr. Arul.



Rosemary joining in.



Le Cairde
performing, with
Barry listening
closely.



Ballyhaunis Faith & Light Group at the
Halloween Fiesta in Clare Court,
Sunday 15th October.

Post Office Retirements



Alan Quinn (Mount Delvin, Cloonfad), Ballyhaunis-based Postman, retired on 29th Sept. 2023 after thirty-four years' service.

He was joined by colleagues and retired colleagues at the DSU Ballyhaunis on his last day at work where he was presented with a Cú Chulainn statuette by Pat Kelly, An Post Ballyhaunis DSU Manager. David Madden, CWU Branch Representative, him with his union scroll. Alan was an active member of the Ballyhaunis branch CWU having served as branch treasurer for many years; he served on the committee as well. All his colleagues and those on his postal routes wish Alan all the best in his retirement.

Top: Pictured at the presentation ceremony on 29th Sept. 2023, retiring postman Alan Quinn with colleagues: **Back, L-R:** Liam Lyons, Tom Fitzpatrick, Liam O'Boyle, Michael Connolly, Helen Byrne, Tom Murphy, Chris Brennan, Noel

Heneghan, Willie Broderick, Gerard Plunkett, Emily Murphy, David Murphy. **Front, L-R:** Joe Byrne, Liz Flanagan, David Madden, Alan Quinn, Pat Kelly, Geraldine Flynn, Norma Jean Folliard.

Centre left: Alan with Cloonfad Postmistress Geraldine Finnegan on his last day delivering to Cloonfad Post Office.

Bottom left: Alan is presented with his Cú Chulainn statuette by Pat Kelly, DSU Manager, Ballyhaunis, and his union scroll and badge by David Madden, union representative. **L-R:** Geraldine Flynn, Pat Kelly, Alan Quinn, David Madden.



Post Office Retirements

Ballyhaunis based Postman, **Gerard Plunkett** (Forthill) retired on 3rd August 2023 after thirty years' service. He was presented with a Cú Chulainn statuette by Pat Kelly, DSU Manager, An Post, Ballyhaunis, while David Madden, CWU Branch Representative, presented him with his union scroll. Gerard was an active member of

Ballyhaunis branch CWU having served on the committee for many years. To mark his retirement from An Post he was joined by family members and colleagues at a most enjoyable retirement function in The Clock, Knox St. His colleagues and all those on his postal routes wish Gerard every happiness on his retirement.



Pictured at retirement function for postman Gerard Plunkett were his colleagues from An Post, Ballyhaunis:

Front, L-R: Pat Kelly, Geraldine Flynn, Gerard Plunkett, Emily Murphy, Michael Connolly, Tom Fitzpatrick.

Centre: David Madden, Liz Flanagan, Norma Jean Folliard.

Back: Noel Heneghan, Liam O'Boyle, Chris Brennan.



Retired postman Gerard Plunkett with post van.



Gerard and Patricia with retired Post Office colleagues.

L-R: Patricia Plunkett, Geraldine O'Donnell, Gerard Plunkett, Helen Byrne, Joe Byrne, Willie Broderick.



The Plunkett family. **L-R:** Damien, Jason, Gerard, Patricia and Keith. Gerard holds his Cú Chulainn statuette, presented to him by Pat Kelly, DSU Manager, Ballyhaunis.

PATRONS

All landlines are (094) prefix, unless otherwise stated.

4-D's Carryout Off-Licence, The Square (Best Value Selection of Wines, Spirits, Beers).	www.fordes.ie
Agri-Spread International, Coolnaha, Ballyhaunis	9631808
Adam Kaczmarek Photographer office@akmediaservices.com www.akmediaservices.com	083 0460755
Álainn Cafe & Bar, Riverside Park Centre	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 Korrane Auctioneering, Main St./Galway. www.daft.ie/korraneauctioneering	9630240 / 091705555
Avondale B&B and Holiday Homes, Clare St. (Prop. Bridie Levins)	9630345
Ballyhaunis Chamber, Enterprise Centre, Clare Road. www.ballyhaunischamber.ie	9630311
Ballyhaunis Plant & Tool Hire, Abbeyquarter	9630979 / Mob: 087 2548355
Ballyhaunis Rugby Football Club	
Ballyhaunis Sports Injury Clinic	Mob: 086 8741107
Ballyhaunis Transport Services (to and from Dublin)	9630477 / Mob: 087 2549077 / 086 3898535
Ballyhaunis Veterinary Clinic, Main St. Padraig Hennigan, MVB.	Mob: 087 3781643 / 9630113
BK Engineering Design, Abbey St.	Mob: 087 7743327
Brackloon School & District Reunion Group	
Bridge Club, Clare Court. Thursdays at 8.00pm	
Byrne, Mike. Local Correspondent, Connaught Telegraph	9631381
Carroll's Bus Hire (Cathal and Cathy)	Mob: 087 2042653
Caulfield Enda, Tiling	Mob: 087 8238788
Caulfield, Helena, Upper Main St.	
Caulfield, Seamus & Aisling, Ballindrehid	
Caulfield, Tommy & Eavan, Annagh, Ballyhaunis	
Claire Fontayne, Womens Fashion Clothing, Bridge St. info@clairefontayne.ie	
Cold Call Refrigeration. Seamus Coffey, Carrowkeel	086 7282800
Colleran's Pharmacy, Bridge St.	9630028
Community School, Knock Rd. www.ballyhauniscs.ie.	9630238
Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence, Began. 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: 087 2625254
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
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
Duffy's Pharmacy, Upper Main St. pharmacy@duffyallyhaunis.com	9630766
Durkan family, Devils & Abbey St.	
Eagney Insurance Services Ltd., Bridge St.	Tel: 9630793 / 9630794, Fax: 9630795
EPS Group Ballyhaunis. www.epswater.ie info@epswater.ie	9633500. Fax: 9630761
Express Scaffolding, Tully, Carrowbehy, Castlereagh. kevinwebbexpress@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
Fianna Fail Cumann, Dara Calleary T.D. dara.calleary@oireachtas.ie	096 77613
Finn Footwear Specialists (Ballyhaunis & Kiltimagh). finnfootwear@gmail.com	9381970 / 9630141
First Choice Credit Union Ballyhaunis. www.firstchoicecreditunion.ie	9022969
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.	
Gavin, Martin, Undertakers, Funeral Home, Headstones & Grave Care, Knox St.	9633448, Mob: 087 6324586
Gem - Costcutters (Newsagents, Toys, Jewellery, Grocery), Bridge St.	9630840
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, Pauline, Box 127, Sholola, PA 18458, U.S.A.	Tel: 001-914-4712548
Griffin, John & Teresa, Annagh	
Griffin, Mike, 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	
Hazelhill Family Practice, Hazelhill. Hazelhillmedctr@eircom.net	9632170 / 9632171
Hazelhill Timber Products Ltd., Europallets. alan@hazelhilltimber.ie	Tel: 9630094 / 9630250, Fax: 9630825
Healy, Helen, Doctor's Road	
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
Homeland, Cave	9630166
Hopkins' Shop, Upper Main St.	Mob: 087 6375091
J.G.'s Barber Shop, Barrack St.	Mob: 087 2450079
John Higgins Auctioneer, Main St. www.johnhigginsauctioneers.com	9631372, Mob: 086 8292603
Johnston, Christina, Bekan	
Johnston, Margaret, Knox St.	089 9545208
Jordan, Oliver, Annagh	
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 2569155
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 & Noreen, Derrynacong	
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
Lilly, John Joe, Plant Hire, Johnstown	9630352
Lundon, Séamas www.sketchesbylundy.com	
Lyons, Anne & Gerry, Knockbrack	
Lyons, Michael, Coach & Minibus Hire, Lecarrow. lyonsbushire@eircom.net	9630347, Mob: 086 2338419
MacSiurtain's, Live Music & Sports Bar, Main St. (Prop. Stephen & Nuala Nolan).	9630854, Mob: 086 2457001
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, Gerard & Pauline, Devils	
McGarry's Ladies Wear, Main St.	9630084
McGuire, John, Kittredge St., Roslindale, MA, USA	
McHugh's Café, Main St.	087 3978722
McNamara Car Dismantlers, Knockbrack	9630439, Mob: 087 2615828
McNamara, Eamon, Car/Tractor Repairs (24-Hour Service)	9630386, Mob: 086 6061739
Midwest Radio, Clare St. www.midwestradio.ie	9630553 (Ads), 087 9004141 (Text requests)
Mobile Ink Store, Main St.	9633411
Moran Coaches & Minibus Hire, Knock Rd. moranscoaches@yahoo.ie	Tel/Fax: 9630346, Mob: 087 7665556
Moran, Donal, Gurteen	9630569
Moran, Kieran, Building Services, Knox St.	9630079
Moran, Tommy. Sweets, Ices, Fancy Goods, Fuel Merchants, Main St.	9630493

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, Seamus & Mary, Gurteen	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, Dr Diarmuid C., Medical Practitioner, Knock Medical Centre	9388385
Murren, Eamonn, Hazel Court	
Nestor & Co., Accountants, Dalgan House, Oakmount Ave.	9632000
Nestor, Billy & Eileen, Doctor's Road	
Nicholson, Christy & Vera, Knock Road.	
Nico Café, Knox St.	Mob: 087 3979363
Nolan, Madeline & Mike, Derrymore	
Nolan's Supervalu, Newpark, Ballyhaunis	9630359
Noone, Dr. Caroline, Hazelhill Family Practice. hazelhillmedctr@eircom.net	9630091
Noone, Dr. Patrick & Moira, Ardpatrick. 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
Paddy's Bar, Clare St.	9630039
Patterson, Moyra, 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 Victualer, Main St.	9630381
Phillips, Paddy. Publican, Main St.	9630118
Post Office, Nolan's Supervalu, Newpark, Ballyhaunis	9630230
Rochford Motors. Main Opel/Seat Dealers, Knock Rd. www.rochfordmotors.ie	9630350 / 9630163
Ruane Dalton Family, Johnstown	
Scoil Íosa Primary School, Abbeyquarter. iosaballyhaunis@gmail.com	9630310
Seven Oaks B&B, Knock Rd. Contact Martina Gallagher. sevenoaksguesthouse@gmail.com	9630605
Supermacs, Main St.	9632855
Switch to Solar, David Doherty, Ballinlough	087 3416900
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 Square). School Books, Novels, Party Balloons, Stationery.	Mob: 087 6475075
Tom Burke Veterinary Services Ltd., Knock Road	9630017
Tynan Dillon & Co., Chartered Accountants, Clare St.	9630261
Valerie's Ladies & Gents Hair Salon, Barrack St.	9630681
Vanessa's Nails vanessaegan10@gmail.com	087 4662983
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, Joseph, Co. Meath and Devlis	
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

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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 2024 is Friday, 11th October, 2024. 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 omitted 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). Hard copy photographs will be returned as soon as possible once the magazine goes to print.

Cover Images

This year's front cover features one of the truly iconic buildings of Ballyhaunis. Originally the Ulster Bank, it was built to designs signed (1904) by Blackwood and Jury of Donegall Place, Belfast and completed in 1905, replacing that bank's earlier premises which occupied part of present day Delaney's Ltd., Bridge Street. It was occupied in 1911 by Patrick James Halfpenny, Bank Manager, who had previously resided at the former presbytery in Upper Main Street at the top of Doctor's Road. Overlooking the meandering Dalgan River, this listed building on Abbey Street represents an important component of the early twentieth-century built heritage of Ballyhaunis with a rich architectural value. The Ulster Bank closed in 2017, but, fully refurbished and given a new lease of life, the building opened as 'The Old Bank Medical Centre', the modern medical practice of Dr. Glen Lecky GP, in 2019.

Adorning the back cover is a striking image of 'Curran's Wood' with its ancient hazel trees and bluebell-covered floor, in the townland of Annagh. Both photographs by Tommy Caulfield.



