

ANKA

**BALLYHAUNIS
MAGAZINE**

**CHRISTMAS
1978**



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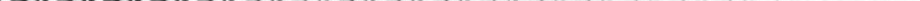
It gives me great pleasure to congratulate our local Junior Chamber on this magnificent magazine, and their other achievements which have brought lustre and fame to our area. *Go mba fada buan a saothar.*

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## Christmas Greetings From Junior Chamber

We wish to thank you for your support during the year whether this was in the form of financial assistance, services provided gratuitously or simply goodwill.

**Donal Ahern, President 1977/78**  
**Matt O'Dwyer, President 1978/79**



People who wish to contribute material for future issues of this magazine are invited to contact any member of the Committee. Correspondence should be sent direct to the Editor at: Knock Road, Ballyhaunis.

**Committee: Marian Conboy; Fr. Des Walsh; John Higgins; Jim Lundon; Dr. Seamus Ryan.**

# ANNAGH

## a Ballyhaunis Magazine



Christmas 1978

### THE REASONS WHY.....

*'Tuige iris pobail? Dar linne is beag an dlisteanu ata de dhith ar iarracht mar seo ach ina dhiaidh sin fein is maith an rud i gconat ag tus aon fhiontar a leagan amach go soileir c'en aidhm ata leis an bhfiontar sin.*

The publication of a yearly community magazine can contribute to the life of that community in a number of different ways. Besides the more obvious benefits of helping to keep the public informed, and perhaps entertained, such a publication can promote a heightened awareness, both within and outside the area, of the richness of life as it is lived in a small, and in some ways self-contained, section of our country. Nor should it end there: a well-balanced magazine can present an overall view of community life which many, in the day-to-day ordering of their affairs, would fail to perceive.

It is in the nature of a Community magazine to look towards the past: for it often happens that our surroundings can only be fully appreciated by reference to bygone times, or that our attitudes and values have been shaped by almost forgotten events. The past is the great repository of our culture: the revivifying of old memories, while awakening our sense of history, leads to the development of that most precious of things: a sense of national and personal identity. Further more,

contemplation of the past and the obstacles overcome by earlier generations promote an awareness of what, with effort and determination, is possible of achievement.

But we must be careful to guard against our justifiable pride in the community degenerating into a narrow and exclusive parochialism: it is well to remember that every local event has its counterpart in the greater world outside. And we should at all times welcome contact with that greater world and extend to its representatives the neighbourliness that we hope our native sons will find in strange cities and in foreign lands.

With these thoughts in mind we present the first of what we hope will be a long-running series of annual editions of "Annagh". Like so much else, its survival will depend on peoples' interest and support, neither of which went lacking while this magazine was in the planning stages. We are happy to entrust its future to the people of Ballyhaunis.

*Agus is feidir leis an todhchai sin a bheith ar fheabhas, mar leas thairbheach soisialta, ar choinnioll go dtabharfaidh siad seo a bhfuil se ar a gcumas an chabhair riachtanach don iris tre altanna a scriobh 7rl. Ta muinin againn gur mar seo a bheidh an sceal.*

Editor

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# Canon McGarry and the Sick

Canon McGarry's concern for the sick was well known not only in Ballyhaunis and the surrounding areas but throughout the country.

Aine McEvoy of R.T.E writes.....

One of the perennial trials in the life of a radio presenter or producer is that there is always so much material which we cannot fit into the programme in hands; but I doubt if either Sean MacReamoinn or myself ever experienced this quite so acutely as when we were making the anniversary tribute to Canon McGarry which was broadcast on 3rd August, 1978.

For it seemed as if the whole world wanted to pay tribute to this man who, in the more sober light of history, may well be recognised as the most important figure in the Irish church in the past half century. Father Godfrey Diekmann of the American Benedictines, an internationally acknowledged authority on liturgy, has described 'The Furrow' as the finest pastoral magazine in the English language, and Father Austin Flannery, the Irish Dominican, says that it led the response of the Irish church to Vatican II and the needs of the second half of the 20th century, 'and our response would have been so much better if we had followed 'The Furrow' more closely'.

So it was inevitable that we should concentrate on his work as founder and editor of 'The Furrow' in that radio tribute.

But it grieved me especially to have to omit what Archbishop Cunnane had said about Canon McGarry's devotion to Knock. I knew that he spent all his Sunday afternoons there, hearing confessions mainly, for always when I was coming to visit him after a broadcast Mass in Tourmakeady or Rosmuc (How many of us took the longest way home in order to spend an evening with him!) he would say: "Six of six-thirty, Aine - I won't be here until then." And then, over tea, he would talk about the grace that was palpable at Knock, and the faith of the people, still so strong and vivid, about his hope that Knock would become a centre of study and discussion, as well as of pilgrimage, and above all, he would marvel at the example and the power of the sick.

There was something peculiarly touching for me about being involved with Sean MacReamoinn in the making of that radio programme, because he was the first person I heard talking about 'The Furrow'. I joined the staff of Radio Eireann in 1957, and very soon after, I horrified Sean when I admitted that I did not know what liturgy was, and had never heard of 'The Furrow' or J.G. McGarry.

Some time after that, Sean showed me a copy of the magazine with a letter from a missionary priest complaining about the infrequency of communion for the sick in a Dublin hospital.

This, he knew, was a sore point with me. I had been writing for the sick in various magazines for over 20 years at that time, and I knew, from correspondence with invalids as well as from my own experience, what a grievous deprivation this could be. I remember saying to Sean that I would have to write a reply, but in those days, it was one thing for a priest to criticise pastoral procedures, but quite another for 'a secular'. Ah, but McGarry was different, he assured me- and so I wrote to the Reverend Editor and pointed out that the letter in question was about weekly communion, but that many sick in hospital could only receive communion once a month, and that there were places around the country where the sick at home were on a quarterly call list ... and if he published this, would he please not give my name and address.

By return, I had a reply. I can't be sure that I ever deciphered all of the characteristic, angular script, but there was no mistaking his concern. He wanted to publish my letter but - this I could read and will always remember - 'I have waged a war of attrition against anonymity since the magazine began' and would I please reconsider that point.

We met soon after, and he spent an evening reading some of the letters from invalids that I had kept over the years. He was vastly touched by them, and often quoted them afterwards; and I was totally captivated by an openness which could only have been a fruit of great humility. For after twenty years' experience of reverend editors, I was more accustomed to a certain clerical omniscience. He had had only a year's pastoral experience after ordination, and no experience of serious illness before we met, but on the other hand, he was Professor of Pastoral Theology in Maynooth, yet he treated me at that first meeting as if I were the expert and he the learner. The little magazines that I wrote for would have earned a supercilious smile from a lesser man, but not from the great McGarry.

Some time after that, he decided to devote a whole issue of 'The Furrow' to the sick, with articles on the hospital chaplain and the sick in the parish, and a number of personal testimonies about illness and hospital life. He asked me to write something about the various organisations for invalids and to suggest material for a leaflet to accompany the magazine. There was a prayer of consecration to Our Lady, written by Pope Pius XII, which was very badly translated, and this he rewrote in elegant English for the front page. (The secretary tells me that about half a million copies of this leaflet have been distributed and that orders still come in).

His retreats on radio for the sick were unforgettable. I remember, in one, he deplored the Americanism 'shut-in'.



Canon J.G. McGarry presents the President's Birthday gift of £100 to Mrs. Bridget Maughan, Lisbane, on the occasion of her 100th birthday, while her grandson, Paul McGuire looks on

(Photo: by courtesy of the McGuire family)

The sick are anything but shut-in, he told them: the world is their parish and intercession their ministry. I never hear the word since without a mental gesture of dissent.

We all know that he had his trials as a parish priest but in these, his sick and suffering parishioners were an immense comfort. Their tributes were probably the panegyric he would have valued most: "I loved that man" said one Ballyhaunis woman, and this sentiment was echoed over and over again in the recordings that, like the one on Knock which I mentioned above, I was unable to use in the anniversary programme.

"He was a lovely man ... when he came first, he was such an intellectual that we all thought he was far above our heads, but he certainly came down to everybody's level, he was so humble.

"No matter how busy he was, he always found time to sit and chat ... he was so encouraging and so consoling ... Many's the time he came to me when I was down and depressed, but by the time he'd leave I'd be on top of the world.

"He got me this house ... kept after everybody for years ... and a good dinner out from the town three or four times a week... and brought me in to a party in town often ...

"His austere appearance was terribly false ... anyone who knew him and saw him smile saw such a different person. He'd always be the first to start a sing-song after the Stations in the houses ...

"He'd walk into the room, no ceremony ... you'd never feel shy in his company. He was a pillar to lean on if you were in trouble ... He'd make you cry, sitting on the bed

after holy communion, saying beautiful prayers that he'd make up himself sitting there.

"He often had to put on wellingtons to get in to some of the houses with communion for a sick person, and he'd be so proud to see them with their prayer books and beads getting ready for holy communion...

"One time he went to visit an old lady who was in bed and had nobody to do anything for her, and he went out into the kitchen and made tea and boiled an egg for her ...

"He was here the night before he died and he talked about death ... he said we had a better understanding now than the generations gone past about death and the next life and we should have no fear of it. His face lit up and he had no fear of death at all...

"The consolation I have is that he died doing the work he loved, and he didn't suffer."

As I said, he had had very little experience of illness when I met him twenty years ago, but before he left Maynooth this had changed. I doubt if even his most devoted admirer would have called him "a good patient", for his own illnesses depressed him and he seemed to be unable to recognise in them the precious coin of redemptive currency that he was so good at pointing out to the rest of us. It is the way of God with his saints: the darksome night, the cloud of unknowing, must hide the gold from their eyes lest it be devalued by any trace of human complacency.

So the invalid parishioner who thanked God that he did not suffer at the last spoke for all of us who loved him, and I think he would want to answer with the words of one of his favourites, St. Thomas More:

*"If anything hap to me that you would be loth, pray to God for me but trouble not yourself: As I shall full heartily pray for us all, that we may meet together once in heaven where we shall make merry for ever, and never have trouble after."*

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## Jack Halpin's Lounge Bar

Telephone: 12

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# REVIEW 1978

*by Jim Lundon*

Ni fhanann aon rud mar a bhi se - pe acu daoine no ait ata i gceist - and so when one remembers the dying year of 1978 one sees a range of events that were as diverse and varied as the effects which they brought about.

If we were shaped by the weather then it would have been gloomy mould indeed - suffice to say that the winter was unique - climaxing in mid-March when for literally a week the town was deserted by motorists while the schoolgoers, freed from the burden of school, relished the snow-laden streets.

Twelve months ago success was achieved in a number of guises when Shamrock's won the County Senior Football Title, Christy Freeman was Ballyhaunis Golfer of the Year, Junior Chamber Town Improvements Sub-committee led by Eddie Mulhern won an Irish Independent/Irish Nationwide Building Society Environmental Award for work done on 'Riverside Walk'; Jim Higgins won the Best Individual Speaker Award in National Junior Chamber Debating while with his team-mates Chris Pratt, John Higgins and Donal Ahern losing narrowly the National Debating Final to Tralee. A Christmas visitor to Ballyhaunis was Bishop Donal Lamont, Bishop of Umtali.

So, on to the glittering New Year's Eve Ball when the first success story of the year was the awarding of the 'Achievement of the Year Award' to Murphy Brothers, Coolnaha.

Delegates from all Mayo G.A.A. Clubs were at the County Convention hosted by the Ballyhaunis G.A.A. club under club chairman John Prenty at the Boyscout's Den in January. Changing times were symbolised also in January when work commenced on twelve new houses in the Fairgreen, while signposts in the town were changed to Metric measurements with the Kilometre replacing the traditional mile.

Ballyhaunis won the County Scor Ballad Group competition in February when Rita Hopkins, Moira Delaney, Tony Flynn, Morgan Jennings, and Seamus Forde sang their way to the Connacht Semi-finals. Rinne an Foireann sincear Diospoireachta on Scoil Phoball go sar mhaith i mbliana i gComortus Diospoireacht Gael Linn - B'iad sin Billy Phillips, Mary Morris, and Pat Delaney.

New Zealander World Vice-President Junior Chamber Murray Bindon was a guest at a Regional J.C. Meeting held in the Convent of Mercy and

hosted by J.C. President Donal Ahern. Theatre goers were treated to "Spokesong" by the Irish Theatre Company making their debut at the Community School.

Monday nights throughout the Winter were '25 Drive' nights, organised by Seamus Durkan in the Boyscouts Den and climaxing in a £1,000 25 Drive.

Drama featured in March when the Good Counsel Players directed by Seamus Durkan staged "The Freedom of the City" by Brian Friel featuring Una Shields, Matt O'Dwyer and Joe Grogan in the leading roles.

Spring Fashion was seen to its full effect at the very successful Fashion Show held in the Boyscouts Den in aid of the New School Building Fund and organised by Junior Chamber.

Ballyhaunis Junior Musical Society under the direction of Kit Keane and Moira Delaney staged extracts from "The Sound of Music" in April.

Bluebell Ireland Ltd., Ballyhaunis was officially opened in May by Mr. Denis Gallagher T.D., Minister for the Gaeltacht and blessed by His Grace Dr. Cunnane, Archbishop of Tuam. Popular bank official Jack Kelly was transferred to Gorey.

'Val's' won an Irish Quality Control Association Award for Hygiene.

In June Ballyhaunis Community School Year Book and Prospectus was launched and a very successful 'Open Day' for parents and friends of the pupils was held.

The Presidents Prize for Golf was won by Mr. Michael Glynn while the Captain's Prize was won by fifteen year-old Noel Henry.

Mayo Senior footballers lost to Carlow by 4-8 to 2-10 in a game played at Ballyhaunis while Mayo met Tyrone in the N.F.L. also in Ballyhaunis in November.

An extra Garda was stationed in Ballyhaunis in July following a Junior Chamber deputation to the Minister for Justice demanding extra manpower in the area. Sr. Angela, Principal of the Convent of Mercy, moved to Westport and was replaced by Sr. Rosario.

Bluebell Ireland Ltd. held an 'Open Day' in mid-July at which over 300 guests attended. Swimming lessons continued throughout the Summer under the guidance of Kieran Durkan while Bluebell Ireland Ltd. sponsored the Annual Swimming Gala in August.

A beautiful day ensured a packed attendance at the Abbey Pattern at which the appearance of the Claremorris Convent of Mercy Band was thoroughly enjoyed by the basking crowds in the sunshine.

An anniversary R.T.E. Radio Tribute in early August to the late Canon J.G. McGarry received widespread praise in the media.

September's theme was that of victory when Ballyhaunis over 30's team captained by Alan Delaney beat Claremorris in the County Final replay, while the All-Ireland Minor Champions Mayo made their first stop in Ballyhaunis on their way home with the Cup.

In October the Junior Chamber Debating team won the National Debating Final at the N.I.H.E. Limerick and thus will represent Ireland in the Tripartite Debating Competition. Captained by Jim Higgins, who again won the Best Individual Speaker Award, team members were Chris Pratt, John Higgins, and Donal Ahern. Matt O'Dwyer was elected President of Junior Chamber.

Change too as the N.E.F. Mart switched to a weekly mart in October while work progressed on thirty-two new houses at Cherryfield.

Expansion continued to be at Hal Al Meatpackers throughout the year while the new National School at Abbeyquarter progressed towards completion.

Ballyhaunis Rehabilitation Committee founded last May had a fine year, and a very successful Autumn Fashion in the Boy Scouts Den in October.

Ballyhaunis Soccer Club under Eamon Murren had a very successful year.

Change, progress, expansion have affected the area during the year ..... a few familiar faces are gone from us, quite a few new ones appeared as is evidenced by the birth rate; business and farming continued to improve in the area.

So, coming up to Christmas we must wish this fleeting year a 'bon voyage' as we prepare for a brand new 1979 - the Year of the Child.

*Nollaig faoi shean is faoi mhaise dibh! Go sbeirimid go leir beo ag an am seo arís.*



### ALL-IRELAND CHAMPIONS

The Debating Team with supporters after their victory in Limerick.

Front Row (L. to R.): Donal Ahern; John Higgins; Chris Pratt; Jim Higgins.

Second Row: Mrs. Marita Ryan; Sr. Assumpta Flannery; Sr. Teresina Daly; Mrs. Kay Ryan; Mrs. Rita Mooney; Joe Rochford.

Third Row: Joe Ryan; Seamus Durkin; Fr. Des Walsh; Joe Greene; Anto O'Malley; Mrs. Mary Higgins.

Fourth Row: Jim Lundon; Mrs. Rita Lundon; Mrs. Nell Rochford; Matt O'Dwyer; Mrs. Ann Cribben; Mrs. Una Shields; Mrs. Marion Higgins.

Fifth Row: John Mooney; Mrs. Xanthe Pratt; Mrs. Eleanor Ahern; Tony Cribbin; Michael Smyth; Mrs. Mary Smyth; Declan Shields.

Sixth Row: Mrs. Mary O'Brien; Miss Bernadette Hett; Frank Tivnan; Mrs. Virginia O'Mahoney; Mrs. Maureen Lyons; John O'Mahoney.

*(Photo by Dr. Seamus Ryan)*

# Ballyhaunis

## a Town on the Move....

by Seamus Forde

**BALLYHAUNIS**, the centre of Connaught (one hour's journey from Galway, Sligo, Westport, Ballina, Carrick-on-Shannon, Roscommon, Athlone) is a thriving business town. Ballyhaunis district has a population of approximately 6,000. About 1,500 of these live within the town boundaries. The many new homes and the modern commercial atmosphere in the town indicate a spirit of confidence. The efforts of the past have paid dividends. Ballyhaunis has fought and struggled against the continual frustrations, disappointments and setbacks which were the lot of similar towns in the neglected West. Emigration, unemployment and dashed hopes dogged the efforts of the people until they finally realised that the solution to their problems lay in their own hands.

Junior Chamber was founded in Ballyhaunis in 1970. It channelled the hopes and aspirations of the younger generation giving them an ideal opportunity of training in leadership by becoming involved in projects which benefited the community. Today Junior Chamber is to the forefront in any development in the community and is involved in major projects for the continued advancement of the town. It gives the leadership which any community needs - in this case a community which welcomes progress.

The Government agencies, The Industrial Development Authority, The County Development Team, The National Manpower Service, Anco, The Industrial Training Authority and the County Council have played their separate and successful roles in the development of our town by acting positively and constructively when their services were required.

Due to its location Ballyhaunis is an ideal distribution centre. Many companies have recognised this. In fact fifty-five lorries set out from the town five mornings every week. They cover the entire west and can get back on time each evening.

Irish Ale Breweries, Irish Industrial Gases, Bolands, Millbrook Eggs, Hazelhill Eggs, John Durkan & Sons, Electrical and Pump Services Ltd. and Connaught Scaffoldings are using the town as a western base.

### INDUSTRY

#### List of Industries in Ballyhaunis

| Name & Address of Company     | Product                      | No. |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-----|
| Bluebell (I) Ltd.<br>Tooraree | Clothing                     | 110 |
| Confab Ltd.<br>Clare St.      | Concrete System<br>Buildings | 20  |
| James Connell<br>Devils       | Wood Furniture               | 4   |

|                                      |                   |    |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----|
| T. Donnellan<br>Clare St.            | Wood Furniture    | 6  |
| A. Grogan & Sons Ltd.<br>Cave        | Concrete Products | 22 |
| Halal Meat Packers<br>Clare Road     | Meat Processing   | 75 |
| M. Keane & Sons Ltd.<br>Clare Road   | Kitchen Units     | 22 |
| Mr. P. Kelly<br>Drimbane             | Wood Furniture    | 8  |
| Major Steel Products<br>Coolnaha     | Engineering Works | 40 |
| M. Sloyan Joinery<br>Reisk           | Wood Furniture    | 6  |
| Western Brand<br>Chickens, Greenwood | Poultry Process   | 24 |
| Westport Shirts Ltd.<br>Tooreen      | Clothing          | 28 |

Local initiative has not been lacking in setting up industry. The County Development team and the I.D.A. were quick to recognise this and encouraged local business people to expand and develop giving grant aid where possible. The I.D.A. were also successful in bringing a major industry to the town - Bluebell Ireland Ltd. (part of the Wrangler group). It was officially opened this year. The size of the factory has been increased from 12,000 square feet to 22,000 square feet and they hope to increase the labour force to 220 by the end of next year.

Major Steel Products, a company which has shown considerable growth in a short time, has further plans for expansion. They recently acquired another premises at the end of Knox St. (M.A. Keane's old factory) and here they plan to employ a further twelve people in manufacturing a new product: J.C.B. and Hymac Buckets.

Halal Meat Packers are fully committed to the success of their business venture. This should be good news for the people of the district and particularly for the farmers who are rearing cattle and sheep for killing. To date they have 60,000 square feet of buildings which include abattoirs, freezers, storage, compounds for stock and offices at a cost of one million pounds. In the next two years their projected investment is £7 million which will give them ½ million square feet of buildings - approximately ten times what they have at present. From now to 1980 they expect the work force to reach 220 and by 1981 this should reach 300. A second factory is also planned: it will operate under the name of Halal Meat Tannery which will be a separate company and will employ thirty people. The budgeted turnover for 1978 was £7 million - this has already been exceeded and is now at £8 million plus. Rapid progress has been the trend since the commencement of their operation. The turnover for 1981 is expected to be £65 million. An official opening for Stage One will be organised in the near future.

All the other companies expect to increase their labour force in the coming year. Increases in Western Brand Chickens and Westport Shirts could be as high as fifty per cent.

The Bluebell factory is the only one on the 6½ acre industrial site at Tooraree. The site is fully serviced with roads, water supply and public sewerage. There is plenty of room for additional factory buildings on the site if these are required by other industries.

### HOUSING

The County Council has realised the need to provide housing and are currently having thirty-two houses (twenty-four two-storey and eight single storey) built at Cherryfield. Private housing sites are available for purchase in different parts of the locality for those who wish to build to their own specifications. People who have rooms to spare in their homes should consider taking lodgers or converting their spare rooms into flats as there is an increasing demand for this type of accommodation at present.

### SERVICES

The town is well served by engineering, maintenance, electrical, building and other contracting firms as well as builders' providers. The Post Office, telephone exchange and two banks give a good service. There are two churches which serve the spiritual needs of the community. There is also a public library. There is a Garda Station manned by one sergeant and five guards. The town has a piped water supply but the present pumping facilities are not adequate to meet the total requirements. There is an excellent water supply at source with space capacity of approximately 80,000 gallons. The authorities are aware of this situation and have plans to remedy the problem. There is a public sewerage system in the town. The town has a fire station with fire brigade and equipment. The crew are on call twenty-four hours per day. There is a weekly refuse collection. The town lighting, however, could be improved. The present system for allocating lights is not satisfactory; consideration should be given to extending the lighting system to housing which is beyond the town limits.

The approach roads from Knock, Ballinlough and Charlestown are good but the Claremorris and particularly the Cloonfad Road, which is a national secondary road need urgent attention. There is a C.I.E. rail and bus passenger service to the town; the freight service operates through Claremorris. T.V. reception for RTE, UTV and BBC colour and black and white can be obtained.

The town has long been recognised as a late night shopping centre. Any stranger must be impressed by the number of shoppers and cars to be seen. For those needing refreshments or entertainment many licenced premises, singing pubs, restaurants as well as late night films and dances are available. However, it is likely that business enjoyed at present will suffer unless provision is made for better parking facilities in the town. Business people should act positively to help provide ample parking.

The cattle mart is well supported by the farming community and is attended by the leading buyers.

### EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

The town's educational needs are well catered for. There are two primary schools: St. Joseph's Convent

Primary School and the Boys Primary School. The construction of a new primary school is nearing completion. There is one post-primary school, a Community School, which has a staff of thirty-nine. It has excellent facilities and is one of the best equipped schools in the country with a wide range of subjects for the students to choose from. It can cater for 575 pupils. Adult Education has not been neglected. During the winter months night classes have been held in Typewriting, Handcrafts, Woodwork, Art, French and Music.

For third level education the University College, Galway and the Galway Regional Technical College cover the areas needs. Courses are run both on a full-time and a part-time basis. Courses at the Regional Tech are geared towards the educational needs of the region, ensuring the best opportunity for students to obtain employment in their own areas.

Industrial training is given by ANCO, the Industrial Training Authority, which has centres at Galway, Ballina and Sligo to meet the industrial training requirements of the region. The courses available (which last, on average; six months) include milling, grinding, capstan lathe, welding, radio and T.V. servicing, machine sewing and building construction skills. The authority keeps abreast of the training requirements of the region by regular consultation with educational and Industrial bodies.

### SPORTING FACILITIES

Ballyhaunis has a range of sporting facilities which is unique for its size. It has a new G.A.A. pitch with dressing rooms and showers, public toilets and shelters for the press and substitute players. It's now a popular choice venue for Club Games, College Games and has already hosted important inter-county games at various grades. The Club is very active fielding teams for county fixtures at different grades arranging its own Goodfellowship Tournament and organising competitions for under-age players. They also support and take part in Scor, a national talent competition sponsored by the G.A.A. to promote Irish music, dancing, singing and drama.

The Soccer Club is also active and has a proud record to date. In their first year they won the Mayo League Division 11.

The Athletic Club has also had its successes in helping young athletes to develop their talents by organising training sessions and entering them in competitions.

Ballyhaunis has the best inland nine hole Golf course in Ireland. It has a modern clubhouse valued at £40,000 approx. with changing rooms, toilets and a bar, and a functional rooms overlooking the course. Because of the nature of the course and facilities available it is much sought after for tournaments. The Club has a good membership and caters well for its members by providing party competitions.

Since its formation the Rugby Club has acquitted itself quite well in the friendly matches arranged to date. This season they have entered the Junior A League where they will find the opposition much tougher.

The Gun Club is going from strength to strength. It has now been recognised that they own the best shooting

grounds in the West. These are situated on the Charlestown Road. The grounds present an excellent view of the surrounding countryside and with its spacious car park facilities were selected again this year as the venue for the Mayo/Sligo Association team shoot. The Club also release game birds and provide ground with crops for winter feeding. They are also very successful in their control of vermin.

There is also an active Angling Club. Members are very conscious of the dangers of water pollution to fish life and are quick to report matters which require preventive action.

The town's outdoor swimming pool is open during the summer months and is utilised to the full by the youth of the locality. The Club always ensures that there is adequate supervision and arrange coaching sessions for beginners.

Badminton and Billiards are popular indoor sports while Basketball, Volleyball and Tennis enthusiasts are also catered for.

### **SOCIAL CLUBS AND ORGANISATIONS**

Ballyhaunis has many thriving Social Clubs: Junior Chamber; The Bridge Club; Drama and Debating Societies; Youth Club; The Boy Scouts as well as the St. Vincent de Paul Society; The Legion of Mary; The Apostolic Workers; The Mentally Handicapped Association; The Rehabilitation Institute and The Social Services Council.

### **TOURISM**

Towns of far greater renown as tourist centres do not possess a fraction of the resources and attractions which are to be found in Ballyhaunis. The town is situated in a

fine angling district. There are one hundred and ten fresh water lakes within a ten mile radius of the town with abundant supplies of pike, perch, roach and bream. Six of the lakes were stocked ten years ago with trout. The Fisheries division also constructed jetties on a number of them. The plentiful supply of game has begun to attract continental shooting parties. The Shrine of Our Lady of Knock which was visited by over a million pilgrims last year is only seven miles from the town. The local Augustinian Abbey founded in 1348 is a must for the historically-minded passerby. Ogham Stones and Holy Wells are among the many other features of historical significance.

The sea-side resorts of Salthill, Enniscrone, Killala and Westport are approximately one hour's journey from the town.

Excellent hotel, guest house and farm guest house accommodation are readily available.

### **TIDY TOWNS**

The Town is entered annually in the Tidy Town Competition. As a result of this people have become more aware of their responsibilities in training the youth to follow their good example by keeping their premises looking attractive and the streets and footpaths free from litter. Results in the competition have shown a marked improvement in recent years and this is a very encouraging sign. Well it has been said that a tidy town is a thriving town.

Ballyhaunis is on the crest of a wave with a wide range of job opportunities on the way. We hope our good fortune will continue for the sake of our youth and also for the sake of our many emigrants who are anxious to return home.



**Mr. Denis Gallagher, T.D., Minister for the Gaeltacht, cuts the tape at the official opening of Bluebell, Ballyhaunis. Left to right: Mr. Jake Sheppard, Vice-president Bluebell (Europe); Mr. Wiley Ward, Divisional Manager (Ireland); Mr. Joe Ryan, Plant Manager (Ballyhaunis); Fr. Patrick Costelloe, P.P.; Most Rev. Dr. Cunnane, Archbishop of Tuam; Rev. Donaldson Rodgers, Methodist Church, Galway; Fr. Thomas Hand, O.S.A.; Fr. John Ball, C.C.**

*(Photo: by courtesy of Mr. Joe Ryan)*

---

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# *Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club*

*by Mick O'Connell*

It has now been authenticated from old documents that there had been a G.A.A. Club in Ballyhaunis shortly after the Association was founded in Hayes Hotel, Thurles in 1884. While it cannot be claimed that a G.A.A. club has existed in an unbroken line since that period, it can be stated that Ballyhaunis played a significant part in the upsurge of gaelic football in the early years of the century.

There are stirring tales told of the deeds of the Annagh Rovers and later of the skills of the boys from Killinagher, as well as of the great men who represented Ballyhaunis in the 1918 County senior football final when they humbled the mighty Ballina Stephenites. Men like Jack Waldron, George Delaney, Tommy Forde - a trio who wore the green and red of Mayo with distinction - Mick Finlan, 'P' and Aughtie Kenny, Pete O'Malley, J.P. 'Brod' Kenny, Jack Gavin, John and James Byrne, Larry Moran and a host of others kept the G.A.A. flag flying in Ballyhaunis at a time in which it was not politically expedient to play the National games.

Other great Ballyhaunis footballing figures emerged as the years progressed including Rev. Fr. Martin Hannon, Jim Forde, Jimmy Dwyer and many others. Indeed, reams could be written about the G.A.A. in Ballyhaunis, but with the limited space available for this article I would like to pinpoint the Mayo senior football championship victory of Ballyhaunis in the modern era when Ballyhaunis again proved victorious over Ballina Stephenites in 1958.

## **New G.A.A. Park - Realisation of long cherished dream**

But first a word about the greatest development ever in Ballyhaunis G.A.A. circles - the fulfillment of a long cherished dream with the purchase and development of the G.A.A. Park at Tooraree adjacent to the Ballyhaunis-Knock road.

Over the years the Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club's fondest hope was to own and develop its own ground and while fields at Prenty's, Tooraree; the racecourse, Tooraree; Gurteen and Lisduff as well as the Town Park served the club well over a long span of years, the purchase and development of its own ground was the ultimate aim of the G.A.A. officers and committee in Ballyhaunis, especially in the late '50's and early '60's when it was given top priority.

At a meeting of the Club executive committee in the Central Hotel, Ballyhaunis on May 25th 1966 the fateful decision was unanimously taken and later that night the deal was finalised.

The cost of the Ground was £2,000 and since then upwards of £15,000 has been spent on the development of the area which consisted of levelling, seeding, enclosing the playing area, the erection of gates, entrance gates and car park, the erection of modern dressing rooms complete with showers and toilets; the erection of a Referee's Room

the erection of Ladies and Gent's Toilets, and a Substitutes Bench and Press Box. It is one of the very few club grounds in the Province which has modern toilet facilities for both sexes.

The Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Park has in recent years been favoured with Connaught G.A.A. Council; Connaught G.A.A. Colleges; Mayo and Connaught Vocational School; National League; Challenge and Mayo G.A.A. Championship fixtures and is proving a decided asset to the sporting and business life of the town.

For the record the Trustees of the Park for the local G.A.A. Club and for the Association are Dr. Mickey Loftus, Crossmolina vice-chairman of the Connaught G.A.A. Council; Very Rev. Fr. Leon O'Morahan P.P., Rosmuc, Mayo G.A.A. Representative on the Central G.A.A. Council and Messrs. Johnny Biesty, Paddy Waldron and Mick O'Connell.

## **Historic Title Win of 1958**

We must now return to the central theme of this article which is the Mayo County senior football final of 1958 which was played on a wet and windy September Sunday in McHale Park, Castlebar, and this date certainly proved a red-letter one for the Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club.

The opening paragraph in one of the Provincial newspapers reporting the match which Ballyhaunis won by 2-5 to 2-1 gives some idea of the form upset caused by the Ballyhaunis win: "Sensational is the only word that can describe the Ballyhaunis victory over Ballina Stephenites in the county senior football final played at Castlebar in deplorable conditions on Sunday. Ballyhaunis, who have been described as the 'Babes' of Mayo football, were not given an earthly chance of humbling the Stephenites, and certainly confounded the critics by giving an impeccable display in annexing the 'Blue Riband' of Mayo football for the first time in 41 years."

The captain of the team was P.J. Moran of Lavallyroe, Ballyhaunis the well-known cattle trading figure who set an example of dedication, sacrifice and determination rarely apparent in this modern sophisticated age. The match has been described as P.J. Moran's finest footballing hour and the following was written about him at that time:

## **P.J. Moran played a Captain's Part**

"The captain of the team P.J. Moran who lined out at right full back must get very honourable mention. He has given ten years of solid service to the club since it was reformed in 1948, and while at this stage he might be seriously considering hanging up his boots he can always look back on the 1958 final and say 'This was my finest hour'. He certainly played a captain's part all through, and his great performance had an inspiring effect on his colleagues."

### **Pado Moran's Great Come-Back**

The match was a personal triumph for Pado Moran, the present Mayo senior selector, and the fact that he was playing at all proved beyond a shadow of a doubt his immense love of the game, and his complete and utter dedication.

Two years previously he had broken his leg while playing for Ballyhaunis in Ballinlough, but during the long months while his leg was on the mend, he thought only of again wearing the Ballyhaunis Jersey. He slowly but surely trained to peak fitness, his natural talent did the rest, and he regained his place. He played top of the right in this historic encounter and contributed in large measure to the success.

Val. Byrne the captain of the Ballyhaunis Minor Football team winners of the Mayo title in 1952, and three others John 'Doc' Healy, Bernard Lyons, (Bridge St.) and Paddy Healy provided the only link between the 1952 minor side and the 1958 senior side. Val and 'Doc' were also on the 1957 Junior team, winners of the County title and Paddy Healy was also on the panel of players. Bernard Lyons was also a 'stand by' in 1957 and 1958 and he actually replaced John Dillon who was injured in the closing stages of the 1958 final. Those players have the distinction of winning County medals on three occasions with Ballyhaunis within the space of ten years.

### **FITNESS**

Fitness was regarded as the keynote for the Ballyhaunis victory and the following is embodied in a report of the 1958 final: "The biggest factor in the defeat of the Stephenites was the fitness and grim determination of the Ballyhaunis men who entered the fray with the firmly implanted idea that they had everything to gain and nothing to lose. While their supporters may have considered that it was beyond the orbit of the Ballyhaunis team to oust Ballina, at no time did they accept the view that the game would be a 'cake-walk' in Ballina's favour. It is for that reason that one would say that the fruits of victory are all the more sweet when they are unexpected."

Ballyhaunis dominated the exchanges in the first half and even though they had a goal disallowed they led at the interval by 2-4 to nil.

Ballina improved considerably in the second period and after Ballyhaunis had a second goal disallowed, Ballina moved into top gear and were reaching for victory with some fierce onslaughts. They got through for two goals and a point and as the game came to a close the motto of the Ballyhaunis defence seemed to 'thus far and no further'. Ballyhaunis grimly held on to record an historic win on the score 2-5 to 2-1.

Scorers for Ballyhaunis were: Peter Waldron and Tom Langan (1-0) each; Johnny Biesty (0-2); Val Byrne, John Dillon and Pado Moran (0-1) each.

Scorers for Ballina were Kieran Denvir and J. Brogan (1-0) each; P.J. Downey (0-1). The Ballina team included Kieran Denvir the Down and Ulster star of that period; Willie Casey the Mayo and Connaught star as well as Mick O'Boyle, Tommy (Nipper) O'Boyle and Paddy McMenamen all of whom had donned the green and red of Mayo while only 'Doc' Healy, Charlie Phillips and Johnny

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Biesty of Ballyhaunis had had outings with Mayo and they helped the Mayo Junior football team to annex the All-Ireland Junior football title the previous year - 1957.

The teams were:

**BALLYHAUNIS:** Charlie Phillips; P.J. Moran (Capt.); 'Doc' Healy; Christy McGrath; Jarlath Fahey; Noel Waldron; Gregory Mulkeen; Paddy Moran; John Dillon; Johnny Biesty; Mick Ryan; Peter Waldron; Pado Moran; Tom Langan; Val Byrne. Sub. Bernard Lyons for Dillon.

**BALLINA:** Eamonn Waters; Mickey O'Boyle; Willie Casey; P.J. Lacken; T. Gilvarry; M. Barrett; Jackie Higgins; M. Robinson; P. McMenamen; P.J. Downey; Kieran Denvir; Tommy O'Boyle; E. Melvin; J. Brogan; P. Cunningham. Subs. P.J. Cunningham for Cunningham; J. Rowe for Gilvarry.

Referee - Tommy Lyons (Castlebar)

The five official subs on the Ballyhaunis team were listed as Jimmy Mulligan (Devlis), Paddy Waldron (Redford), Paddy Healy, Kieran Benson and Bernard Lyons.

### The Lavallyroe Connection

Since 1948 when the Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club was reformed under the chairmanship of Michael Tarmey (Holywell) the village of Lavallyroe near the Roscommon border has played a very significant part in the honours gained by the club.

Frank Fahey from Lavallyroe (now Fr. Frank Fahey C.C. Knock) was the first member of the Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club to win an All-Ireland medal in the past twenty years. He was a member of the All-Ireland winning Mayo minor football team in 1953.

His brother Jarlath Fahey (now attached to the teaching staff of Ballyhaunis Community School); Paddy Moran (now a top ranking E.S.B. Executive in Ballinrobe); and, of course, the captain of the team P.J. Moran all from Lavallyroe were on the victorious Ballyhaunis 1958 side.

### All-Ireland Medal Holders (Football)

Members of the Ballyhaunis G.A.A. club who are All-Ireland medal holders include: Frank Fahey (Minor 1953); Johnny Biesty, 'Doc' Healy and Charlie Phillips (Junior 1957); Tom Fitzgerald (Minor 1966 & Under 21 1967); J.J. Cribbin (Under 21 1967); Ted Webb R.I.P. (Under 21 1974); John Buckley, Joe Salmon, Tommy Hannon R.I.P. (Minor 1935); All Ireland Colleges Anthony Jordan and Tom Cribbin (St. Jarlath's College, Tuam)

### Minor Football Champions 1952

The members of the Ballyhaunis Minor Football team winners of the Mayo title in 1952 - Mal Nally; John Forde; 'Doc' Healy; Tommy Jordan; Arthur Foudy; Frank Fahey; Andy Smyth; Denis Curtis; Paddy Healy; Anthony Robinson; Val Byrne (Capt.); Henry Forde; Bernard Lyons; Paddy Benson; Sean Smyth. Subs. Tony Healy; Joe Flatley; Willie Byrne; Gerry Cribbin.



### Ballyhaunis Senior Football Team 1958 County Champions

**Back Row (L. to R.):** Peter Hannon; Tommie Byrne; Pado Moran; Paddy Waldron; Noel Waldron; Greg Mulkeen; Charlie Phillips; Paddy Waldron (Chairman); Peter Waldron; Paddy Moran; Tom Langan.  
**Front Row (L. to R.):** John Healy; Mick Ryan; Jarlath Fahy; Mickie Moran (R.I.P); Chris McGrath; Val Byrne; John Dillon; P.J. Moran (Capt.); Johnny Biesty.

(Photo: by courtesy of Mr. Paddy Waldron)

### **Junior Football Champions 1957**

The members of the Ballyhaunis Junior Football team winners of the Mayo title in 1957: Charlie Phillips; P.J. Moran; 'Doc' Healy; Michael Byrne; Michael Murphy; Tom Langan; Gregory Mulkeen; Paddy Healy; Paddy Moran; Val Byrne; Mick Ryan; Johnny Biesty; George Delaney; Noel Waldron; Sean Smyth.

### **Intermediate Champions 1967**

The Ballyhaunis Intermediate football team Mayo Intermediate champions 1967: Al. Madden; Jimmy Higgins; Robert Kelly; Pat Curley; Tony Cribbin; John Kennedy; John Cleary; Noel Morley; John Costello; Johnny Biesty; Aiden Kelly; Tom Fitzgerald; Tom Cribbin; Peter Waldron; Tommy Lyons (Capt.).

### **Four Chairmen in 30 years**

Ballyhaunis has had only four chairmen since the club was re-formed in 1948: Michael Tarmey; Paddy Waldron; Johnny Biesty and the present chairman John Prenty.

### **Ted Webb R.I.P.**

The tragic death of Ted Webb in 1976 was a cruel blow to gaelic football in Ballyhaunis and Mayo. An under 21 All-Ireland medal holder in 1974 he was without doubt one of the brightest stars on the Mayo football firmament and his untimely passing in the full-flower of manhood will be mourned always by G.A.A. followers everywhere.

*Go ndeanaidh Dia torcaire ar a anam*

---

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To John & Rita Mooney, Doctors Road  
a daughter - Hilary Shiela

To Jarlath & Ita Fahey, Devlis  
a daughter - Aine Marie

To Vincent & Veronica Freyne  
a son - David Thomas Gerard

To Patrick & Susan Nally, Tullamore  
a daughter - Tara Anne

To Patrick A. & Shiela Byrne, Johnstown  
a daughter - Sinead Teresa

To Dr. Seamus & Marita Ryan, Knock Road  
a son - Conleth Seamas Liam

To Patrick & Anne Biesty  
a son - Stephen Oliver

To Thomas & Maureen Finnegan, Tullaghane  
a son - Michael Gerard

To Patrick & Kathleen Regan, Killinagher  
a son - Patrick Joseph

To Gerard & Pauline McGarry, Devlis  
a daughter - Maria Pauline

To Patrick & Genevieve Glynn, Clare Street  
a son - Stephen Patrick

To James & Mary Higgins, Devlis  
a daughter - Tara Michelle

To James & Teresa Healy, Johnstown  
a daughter - Maree Teresa

To Brian & Phyllis Flanagan, Ballindrehid  
a son - Brian Noel

To Michael J. & Cait Webb, Main St.  
a son - Edward Joseph Mary

To Peter & Valerie Sweeney  
a son - Denis Peter

To Micheal and Della Webb, Upper Main Street  
a son - Simon James Edward

To Michael & Kathleen Waldron, Johnstown  
a son - Brendan Michael

To Larry & Kathleen Pelecchea, Main St.  
a son - Mario Loretto Joseph

To Eugene & Una Collum, Main St.  
a daughter - Nathalie

To Michael & Mary Morris, Abbey St.  
a son - Paul Michael

To Sean & Ann Hanley, Upper Main St.  
a son - Shane

To Michael & Margaret Hopkins  
a son - Martin Oliver

To Seamas & Beatrice Coen, Devlis  
a son - Michael Jarlath

To Eamon & Brieda Burke, Devlis  
a son - John Edward

To Thomas & Mary McDonagh, Tooraree  
a son - Owen

To John & Mary Neenan, Coolnafarna  
a son - Mark Patrick

To Patrick & Catherine Higgins, Curries  
a daughter - Catherine Teresa

To Hugh & Rosaleen Curley, Bridge St.  
a son - Mark Laurence

To Patrick & Sally Higgins, Devlis  
a son - Conal Patrick

To Martin J. & Martha M. Gallagher, Drimbane  
a daughter - Alma Valerie

To Michael & Sadie Cameron  
a daughter - Carol Anne

To Patrick & Maire Murphy, Avvey St.  
a daughter - Sharon Maria

to Seamas & Mary Maguire, Johnstown  
a son - Fergus Michael

To Michael & Marian McNamara, Tullaghane  
a daughter - Caroline Maria

To Patrick & Kathleen Curley, Hazelhill  
a son - Patrick Christopher

To Noel & Myra Patterson, Knock Road  
a son - Mark Robert

To Flannan & Serena Moroney, Abbeyquarter  
a son - Denis Francis

To Thomas & Maire Curran, Devlis  
a son - Thomas Anthony

To Peter & Rita Hannon, Bridge St.  
a daughter - Sorcha

To Terence & Ellen Maughan, Cherryfield  
a daughter - Geraldine Mary

To Vincent & Irene Healy, Ballindrehid  
a daughter - Ciara

To Patrick & Suzanne Laffey, Abbey St.  
a son - David John

To Walter & Mary Cleary, Pattenspark  
a son - Oliver Gerard

To John & Tina Kirrane, Ballyveale  
a son - Kenneth John

To John & Geraldine O'Neill, Main St.  
a son - John Daniel

To Thomas & Nora Moran, Devlis  
a daughter - Regina Frances

To Tony & Joan Flynn, Abbeyquarter  
a daughter - Imelda Ann

To James & Alacoque McManus, Hazelhill  
a daughter - Denise Pauline

To John & Shiela Forde, Clare St.  
a son - Bryan Gerard

To Timothy & Elizabeth Rabbitte, Derrylea  
a daughter - Katherine Margaret Mary

To Timothy & Margaret Byrne, Johnstown  
a daughter - Ethna Helena

To John & Carmel Vahey, Chelsea, London  
a son - John Edward

To Dr. Michael & Brid Cleary, Tralee  
a son - Cormac

To Dr. Alan & Joan Delaney, Doctors' Road  
a son - Alan Gerard

To Dermot & Anna Marie Eagney, Main St.  
a son - Daire Martin McHugh

# MARRIAGES

## TRAOSLU

Marriages in the Parish Church from 1st November 1977 to 31st October 1978

Yvonne McGarry, Abbey St.  
 Patrick J. Groarke, Longford  
 Kathleen Finnegan, Bohogue  
 Michael A. Hegarty, Creggs  
 Mary T. Scargill, Bridge St.  
 John Brennan, Lanesboro'  
 Angela M. Byrne, Clare St.  
 Andrew Kelliher, Castleisland  
 Eithne M. Curran, Main St.  
 David O'Riordan, Greystones  
 Brid Rabbite, Derrylea  
 Brendan McGrath, Knock  
 Winifrid Maughan, Tooraree  
 Martin Mongan, Abbeyquarter  
 Mary C. McNamara, Tullaghane  
 Timothy M. Buckley, Banteer  
 Mary C. O'Connor, Doctors' Road  
 William A. Coyne, Ballyveale  
 Margaret J. Carney, Island  
 Martin Cunnane, Carrowkeel  
 Margaret Fitzmaurice, Brackloon  
 John A. Henry, Curry  
 Therese Fitzgerald, Clare St.  
 Patrick Walkin, Ballina  
 Mary E. Waldron, Brackloon S.  
 Daniel A. Byrne, Spotfield  
 Anne Marian Halpin, Main St.  
 Thomas Murray, Stirling, Scotland  
 Una Lyons, Holywell  
 Michael Shanahan, Rathbane, Limerick  
 Ita Herr, Knox St.  
 Patrick L. Comer, Kilgarraff, Began

### Marriages elsewhere

Justina Moran, Carracastle  
 William Lyons, Brackloon  
 Marian Dyer, Brackloon  
 Anthony Hopkins, Castlebar  
 Patricia Henry, Upper Main St.  
 Patrick Ryan  
 Patricia Glennon, Athleague  
 Jarlath Heaney, Bargarriff  
 Noreen Flanagan, Knock Rd.  
 David Moran, Derrymore  
 Pauline McGrath, Ballina  
 Andrew Waldron, Ballindrehid  
 Noreen Gallagher  
 John Kilduff, Barrack St.  
 Mary Lyons  
 Oliver Mullarkey, Tullagane  
 Gerardine Fagan, Knock  
 Seamus Forde, Upper Main St.  
 Eileen Gunning  
 James Sloyan, Brackloon

Kay Bourke, Sligo  
 Eamonn Curley, Upper Main St.  
 Joan McSweeney  
 Dom. Byrne, Clare Street  
 Mary O'Toole  
 Michael J. Lyons, Lecarrow  
 Deirdre Murphy  
 Joseph Diskin, Killinagher  
 Ina McGinley  
 Thomas F. Barrett, Moran's Terrace  
 Ellen McDonagh, Ballyhaunis  
 Thomas McDonagh  
 Anna M. Dillon-Leetch, Main St.  
 Michael Browne, Westport

# DEATHS

## Ar Shli Na Firinne

1st November 1977 to 31st October 1978

Bartley Boyle, Carrownedan  
 Mrs. E. McGuire, Cherryfield  
 Michael Lyons, Ballindrehid  
 John Lyons, Redford  
 Peter M. Cooney, Upper Main St.  
 Martin Lyons, Larganboy  
 Austin Tarpey, Pattenspark  
 Thomas Rattigan, Island  
 Mrs. Mary Noone, Barrack St.  
 Michael Frehill, Brackloon  
 Mary E. Walsh, Barrack St.  
 Baby Gallagher, Knock Road  
 Mary Gallagher, Knock Road  
 Mary Lyons, Spaddagh  
 Thomas Sharkey, Moran's Terrace  
 Mrs. Nora Regan, Killinagher  
 Mrs. Mary Fleming, Devils  
 Mrs. Mary Hannan, Bridge St.  
 Winnie McDonagh, Charlestown  
 Mrs. Sally Keane, Kiltaboe  
 Stephen Browne, Coolnafarna  
 Mrs. Delia Healy, Holywell  
 Mrs. Margaret Carney, Classaroe  
 Margaret Tarpey, Knock Road  
 Mrs. Honoria Fox, Bradford, G.B.  
 Mrs. Catherine Ronayne, Knock Road  
 James Morley, Clagnagh  
 John Lanigan, Barrack St.  
 Patrick Grealy, Drimbane  
 Sean McNicholas, Abbey St.  
 John Hunt, Lecarrow  
 James Hunt, Derry  
 James Hunt, Enniscrone  
 Mrs. Kathleen O'Malley, Carrowkeel  
 John McGuire, Brackloon S.  
 Edward Brennan, Kiltaboe  
 James Kedian, Moneymore  
 Patrick Connell, Redford  
 John Kilduff, Barrack St.  
 Mrs. Ann Waldron, Doctors' Road  
 Mrs. Mary Phillips, Abbeyquarter  
 Thomas Rattigan, Knox St.  
 James Lyons, Spruce Villa, Kiltaboe

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# *Eighty Years of Mercy*

**In September of this year the Sisters of Mercy celebrated the bi-centenary of the birth of their foundress, Mother Catherine McAuley, the first Sister of Mercy. In Ballyhaunis this event has an added significance - 1978 marks the eightieth anniversary of the founding of the Mercy Convent. Sister Teresina Daly examines the early years.....**

To-day there are over 20,000 Sisters of Mercy in more than twenty countries. In schools, convents and hospitals all over Ireland and the world these Sisters are carrying on the tradition of mercy established by Catherine McAuley.

The Mercy Sisters were first invited to the West of Ireland by Archbishop John McHale, "The Lion of the Fold", who in his rejection of the National School system as "pernicious" sought men and women religious to instruct, educate and assist the poor of his diocese in the harsh pre-famine days of the 1840's. However, it was towards the close of the century before Mercy reached Ballyhaunis.

Rev. Canon Waldron, Parish Priest of Annagh, died in 1892 and in his will, among other charitable bequests, he bequeathed £1,000 to aid in the foundation of a Convent in his native parish. Speculation immediately began as to which of the existing convents would be called upon to make the foundation. The two priests eligible for the parish were Fr. Willie McHugh, Tuam and Fr. John Canning, Westport. If Fr. McHugh were chosen he would without doubt select the Tuam Sisters while Fr. Canning would be equally sure to invite the Westport Sisters. In the event, the Archbishop conferred the vacant parish on Fr. Canning, who, during the next years, frequently travelled to Westport by tandem to consult with the Superioress of the Westport convent regarding the proposed foundation at Ballyhaunis.

Fortunately, a suitable location was readily available: a large tract of arable land was leased by the Sisters from

Viscount Dillon, an absentee landlord, whose mansion at Loughlynn is now the convent of the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary. A hill overlooking the town was selected as the site for the convent building. The architect Mr. W.H. Byrne, Suffolk Street, Dublin prepared the plans and recommended Messrs. Glynn Bros. as builders.

Fr. Canning eventually invited Mother Bernard Davis of Westport to visit and inspect the site. Mother Bernard and Mother Paul Cullen - who had founded the convent in Westport in 1842 from the Carlow foundation was a near relative of Cardinal Cullen - visited Ballyhaunis early in 1895 and later that year were present at the laying of the Foundation Stone. During the progress of the building Mother Bernard visited Ballyhaunis frequently, staying overnight in the Parochial House. Under the direction of Fr. Canning and Mother Bernard the work of collecting funds was carried on with great energy. A house to house collection in the town and parish brought in a goodly sum and specially designed collecting cards were sent all over the world. Most Rev. Dr. McEvilly, Archbishop of Tuam, contributed £1,000. Later on completion Mother Bernard organised a Bazaar in the new building. This was warmly supported by the people of the town and patronised by a number of people from Westport. The venture realised £1,000 a remarkable sum in those days. Overall the total cost of building the new convent was about £7,000, half of which was obtained by contribution and the rest borne by the Sisters of Mercy, Westport.



**Convent School 1900**

The convent school in the early 1900's. The building marked 2 is Dr. Davis's Coach-house, later known as Miss Cannings.

It took three years to complete the building owing to the great difficulty in finding water. The Archbishop also caused some delay by objecting to the plans as being too elaborate. His view was that the Sisters should be content with small and simple dwellings while Mother Bernard held that it would cost less to build a large house at first and avoid expensive extensions afterwards. To conciliate Archbishop McEvilly the second wing reserved for the chapel had to be abandoned and a large room on the ground floor was used as an oratory.

The Ballyhaunis convent is a handsome stone building. The Roman arch of the main door is supported by pillars of polished red Edinburgh granite, while the steps are of unpolished grey Aberdeen granite. The limestone used in the building was quarried in Hollymount and Hazel Hill. The woodwork in the interior is mainly pitch pine. The long delayed chapel was completed in 1927. It was designed by the eminent architect Professor Butler of Dublin. The five beautiful stained glass windows in the sanctuary are the work of another celebrated artist, Michael Healy. They were designed in Sarah Purser's studio "An Tur Gloine" in Dublin. The images depicted on the windows are Naomh Ite, Naomh Brigid, the Good Shepherd, Naomh Colmcille and Naomh Padraig. The latter was on exhibition in New York in 1928 and was awarded second prize. The altar is of white marble and the stalls are made of oak.

During Easter Week 1898 to satisfy the growing curiosity of the Westport Sisters Mother Bernard brought a party of six sisters to Ballyhaunis to see the new convent. On arrival at the station they were met by Fr. Canning with side cars on which they were driven to the new

convent and from there to the Parochial House. The javeys, only too willing to honour the nuns, drove at full speed through the town with the result that a crowd of boys rushed after the cars shouting "A Weddin" "A Weddin" to the intense disgust of Mother Bernard and the uncontrollable laughter of Fr. Canning.

The feast of the Assumption 1898 was the date fixed, with full knowledge and approval of the Archbishop, for the opening of St. Joseph's Convent, Ballyhaunis. The opening was postponed for another ten days until 27th August. Four sisters were sent from Westport on the 2 p.m. train: Mother Columba Carr, Superior elect; Sr. Angela, Sacristan; Sr. Vincent Gibbons and the organist Sr. Evangelist Cronin who died only in 1963 and who is still remembered by some of the people. Their numbers were augmented by Sr. Baptist O'Rourke, Sr. Joseph Duane, Sr. Ignatius Cronin and Sr. Berchmans O'Donnell (Christmas 1898) and Sr. Michael Flynn (Christmas 1899) and later by Sr. Scholastica O'Reilly (May 1900). The "nine choirs" as they styled themselves was broken up by the election of Mother Columba Carr to the Mother Superiorship of Westport and the appointment of Sr. Berchmans as Superior in Ballyhaunis.

For the first few months in Ballyhaunis while awaiting work to commence on the new convent school, the sisters taught in a small building on the grounds, formerly the coach house of Dr. Davis. The ghost of Dr. Davis was said to "walk" but he was too gentlemanly to intrude on the nuns and it is quite possible that he was very useful as no one dared to enter the grounds at night. In October they took responsibility for the girls' education in the existing primary school which consisted of one spacious room, half of which was occupied by the boys under Mr. Fahy. Up to this point Mrs. Heavey had taught the girls.



**School Photo Junior Class 1952**

**Back Row (L. to R.):** Brigid Comber; Mairead Forkan; Bernadette Freyne; Nancy Duffy; Nina Dyer; Marion Morley; Josie Lyons; Margaret Healy (R.I.P.); Delia Spellman.  
**Front Row (L. to R.):** Kathleen McDermott; Peggy Grogan; Noline Fitzgerald; Patsy Dalton; Mary Concannon; Eleanor Fitzmaurice; Mary T. Concannon; Ann Roche; Monica Byrne.

## Convent of our Lady of Mercy,

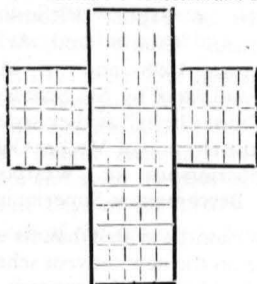
MOUNT ST. JOSEPH'S,  
BALLYHAUNIS, Co. MAYO, IRELAND.

*"I have loved O Lord the beauty of Thy house;  
and the place where Thy glory dwelleth."*

By the direction and with the cordial sanction and generous support of His Grace the Most Rev. John MacEvilly, Archbishop of Tuam, Father Canning has undertaken to build a Convent and Schools to be placed under the care of the Sisters of Mercy at Ballyhaunis.

He confidently appeals to the people of Ballyhaunis and to the faithful children of Erin in all lands, particularly to those devoted to the Education and Religious Training of Youth for help to accomplish this meritorious work.

Masses will be offered for Collectors and Contributors.



A Penny given on earth is a Pearl gained in Heaven.

God bless the Donor and the Collector

Mayo News, Westport

**The collection card which was sent all over the world as part of the fund-raising campaign while the convent was being built.**

A piano, handsome pictures and pots of flowers were introduced to the classroom. Sr. Ignatius was besieged all day with music pupils in a corner which had hitherto been the "Turf Hole". The sisters endured great hardship and fatigue going through the fields and across the railway to the old school which was sited near the present Boy's school. A lean-to-shed, dignified by the name of a classroom, had soon to be erected to relieve congestion. The old coach house near the convent gate was roofed and fitted up as an Infant's and first standard department. This building later known as Miss Canning's, was demolished about 1949.

Great indeed was the joy of the sisters when their beautiful new school was ready for occupation. As in the case of the convent local labour was almost exclusively employed. Fr. Canning acted as contractor under the Dublin Architect W.H. Byrne and employed John Charles Fitzmaurice as Clerk of Works. The school was partly financed by a bequest of £800 which according to the will of Miss Elizabeth Taaffe, Roscommon was to be used for some charitable work in Ballyhaunis.

The school had been built in the same style as the convent. Dr. Healy when welcomed there as Archbishop declared it to be the finest in Connaught while Dr. Douglas Hyde called it "not a school but an academy". Mass was celebrated in the large infant room and every room was solemnly blessed by Fr. Canning on 24 October, 1901.

In the Spring of 1903 the use of the school was requested by the Gaelic League, a request warmly welcomed by Fr. Canning who was himself an enthusiastic advocate of the Gaelic revival. The first Mayo Feis was held in the Convent school Easter Week 15-16 April 1903. Among the notabilities who gathered were: Douglas Hyde, President of the Gaelic League who delivered and address and announced the names of the prizewinners each night; Padraig Pearse who dealt with the subject editorially in "An Claidheamh Soluis"; Fr. Bewerunge the eminent Maynooth Professor of Music, who was one of the adjudicators and the future Countess McCormack who was then a shy simple school girl - Lily Foley.

The convent school children in their pretty costumes of cream Foxford flannel won several prizes, especially the juniors who were known as the "Shamrock Choirs". The following year a handsome gold medal was to be awarded to the school which presented the highest number of pupils for examination in Irish. It was won by St. Joseph's, Ballyhaunis with seventy five, thus scoring a victory over all other national schools in Mayo.

The first fruits gleaned by the Westport Community from the Ballyhaunis vineyard were May Flynn and Maggie Waldron, daughters of two of the oldest families in the town. They were followed by Minnie Coyne, Maggie Delaney and Tessie Henry - alias Sr. Borgia a grand-niece of Canon Waldron who had left the first bequest towards the founding of the convent. Later recruits were Sr. Stanislaus Judge, Sr. Bernard Byrne, Sr. Oliver Byrne and Sr. Bernadette Forkan.

Many sisters have come and gone as the needs of the school required: Srs. Gabriel, Antonia, Aidan, Laurence and Louis. Others had come to stay Srs. Ita, Aloysius, Borgia, Aquin and later Srs. Benedict, De Ricci and Benignus, who has spent almost sixty years in Ballyhaunis.

It is at this stage that the past catches up with the present and it would be wiser to defer the writing of present history to another time when so much more can be said so much better by another.

(Photos and Card by courtesy of The Sisters of Mercy,

Ballyhaunis)

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# Down Memory Lane



Mr. Eamon De Valera addresses a public meeting at The Square, Ballyhaunis in 1927.  
(Photo: Courtesy of Mr. Michael Waldron, Cave.)



MAIN ST. BALLYHAUNIS, CO. MAYO. 6078 W.I.

Bridge Street and Lower Main Street in the 1890's  
(Photo: National Library.)

# COMMUNITY EDUCATION

*Perhaps more than anything else the Community School symbolises progress in Ballyhaunis. Eddie Thornton, the Principal, writes*

**BALLYHAUNIS COMMUNITY SCHOOL** with its many comforts and conveniences, its heated gymnasium, its two football fields and four basketball courts is now a reality. Without the fullest unselfish co-operation of the Department of Education, The Sisters of Mercy, The Diocesan Clergy, Mayo Vocational Education committee, Ballyhaunis Post-Primary Teachers and many others, Ballyhaunis Community School would still be an unfulfilled dream.

As I look back over the past year, I derive great satisfaction from the knowledge that Ballyhaunis Community School has:

- (a) Eliminated outmoded and artificial barriers between the Secondary and Vocational Schools.
- (b) Provided comprehensive facilities to help us cater for the varying abilities and aptitudes of our pupils.
- (c) Ensured that equal educational opportunities are available for all our children.
- (d) Made it possible to utilise the resources available to the best advantage.
- (e) Enabled us to offer a very wide choice of subjects to our pupils.
- (f) Blended together a united, efficient and highly dedicated team of teachers, which will endeavour to care for the spiritual and physical well-being of the student, as well as his or her intellectual development.

We now live in a more dynamic world where education is a life-long process and must be provided at all levels. Our school has taken its commitment to adult education very seriously indeed, and I am pleased that 306 adults enrolled for our night classes last year. During the coming years, the needs and interests of the community will be taken into consideration when the Adult Education Programme is being planned. Allied to Adult Education, is the growing community consciousness of, and increasing demand for, school facilities (gymnasias, meeting rooms, playing fields etc.) for the adult community. We are happy, as far as is possible, to respond to this demand.

This coming season the Adult Education programme consists of thirteen courses, which we hope will cater for the educational needs of the area. The school Gymnasium will also be in use by local organisations every night from Monday to Friday, right through the season, and this facility will help to bring people together socially as well as educationally and should prove to be a real unifying force in our Community.

At this point, I must compliment the students of the three former Post-Primary Schools, who have combined together to form a first class student body. Students know that school rules are necessary and have been framed with full regard for their rights and liberties. These rules have ensured that discipline within the school is excellent.

Discipline however is not just a matter for the school, but for many others outside the school, especially parents, who must bear a heavy responsibility for the behaviour of our young people. The new Students' Council, elected by the students themselves, will provide a channel for the energies, enthusiasm and ideals of youth. Although still very much in the embryonic stage, the Council can offer students and teachers a means of breaking down outdated formalities and provide a competent structure where both teachers and pupils can work together in purposeful co-operation.

All of us here at the school are very pleased with this year's results in the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate examinations. The honours class did exceptionally well, but the pass classes deserve just as much credit as they worked very hard indeed and their efforts were richly rewarded. This year has seen the introduction of school uniforms for boys. The parents were consulted before this step was taken and they indicated that they were very much in favour of the idea. The junior boys look very smart indeed in their mid-grey pants and navy pullovers.

Parents are partners in the educational process and must play their part in the education of their children. They should keep in regular contact with the school and provide suitable facilities for study, so that the time spent at homework is utilised to the very best advantage. In some cases, a pupil's behaviour can only be fully understood after parents have visited the school. No one can claim to know children as well as their parents, so it's perfectly understandable that teachers would welcome more contact with parents. In my view, children should be allowed a reasonable amount of recreation. The school is anxious and willing to provide suitable facilities, outside of school hours, where students, parents and teachers can meet and enjoy themselves in a relaxed atmosphere.

I believe that every member of the Community should be familiar with the Institutions which serve it and for that reason I will endeavour to introduce you to the school building. Ballyhaunis Community School is one of six sister schools which were commissioned to the design team by the Department of Education. The commissions were made following the success of the design team in gaining the first premium award in the Secondary School Ideas Competition held by the Department of Education in 1974.

In drawing up plans for Ballyhaunis Community School, the aim was to provide a building that would provide a stimulating environment by giving a sense of individual and group identity, be capable of flexibility in use and adaptable to change in educational methods.

The plan is ordered to form a hierarchy of spaces from the main assembly and library area through the four social/resource areas to the peripheral teaching rooms.

The library has been located in the central area of the school, not only as close as possible to all teaching areas, but also to emphasise the importance of its function in the school curriculum. The social/resource areas are spaces taken from what would otherwise have been circulation corridors. They provide areas which can be used as year bases, and for recreational activities, exhibition purposes, or joint teaching projects in conjunction with the teaching areas around. Those teaching areas in turn provide quieter surroundings for group or individual teaching and have a vision window giving contact with the outside.

In the general teaching and lecture areas dual use of space has been sought. The dining/assembly area for study or social functions; the drama room as a stage for the assembly area; social areas doubling as team teaching or private study areas. Whereas walls have been provided around social areas and between classrooms they are readily removable and in future can be replaced by sliding folding acoustic partitions to give greater combinations of spaces. The heating system has been kept largely at a high level to maintain this flexibility. The structure has been designed so that as few internal columns as possible are used, thus giving large uninterrupted areas for a more open plan approach to teaching should this at some time be required.

A high level of daylighting has been achieved throughout by use of north facing high windows which also ensure no glare from direct sunlight. Almost all teaching areas have vision windows to the outside which allow sunlight into the rooms in locations which cause no problems due to glare. The Central Area, Social Areas are lit by large glazed screens giving them a relaxed open atmosphere and highlighting their function as "activity areas". Artificial lighting is seldom required in most areas during normal school hours.

Linear strip ceiling panels provide radiant heat whilst adding considerably to the visual impact of the building. They have a rapid control response and are 'zoned' so that any quadrant of the building can be used without having to heat other areas.

We are fortunate in having a first class Gymnasium with an observation area. This area can be used for several recreational activities. Underneath the observation area are three large showers, toilets and store rooms.

May I conclude by stating, that our aim is to create an excellent educational establishment, where every student is important, and one which will fully provide for the Community it was instituted to serve. I am confident we will succeed.

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# *Ballyhaunis Rugby Club*

*by Dr. Alan Delaney*

**AT** the end of the Rugby Season in April I was asked to put together a few lines concerning the local club, for this first Junior Chamber Magazine. I was very pleased to accept the invitation, particularly when we had just finished what we considered to be a highly successful season, and I knew (or thought I knew) that I would have the article written before we would commence the serious business of playing the Connacht Junior League (A Level). However, more about that later.

Rugby is not new to Ballyhaunis and we understand that in the 1930's there was a fine team in the town for a short time, with some excellent players. Names of players and facts of the team have been hard to get, so perhaps some of our Senior Citizens could fill us in on the early history of this Club.

The Ballyhaunis Rugby Club as we know it to-day was born at a meeting held in the Central Hotel in March 1977. It was decided that there were a sufficient number of players and potential players in the area to warrant the formation of a Club. While none of us could foresee the future, we were able to give a commitment that the Club would be properly formed and efficiently run. It was envisaged that for the first 2-3 years a considerable amount of effort would be required from the founding members to direct and sustain its growth and expansion and after that period there should be a large enough number of players and new members interested in the game to ensure the permanency of the Club. If this interest does not emerge then those of us who have played for the 2-3 years will be pleased to allow the Club to disband, knowing that we have had a number of years of incomparable sporting pleasure.

In my opinion Club Rugby for the spectator can be one of the most boring sports imaginable but for the player, every single match is the essence of pleasure. I am confident that there is no other team game in the world where each individual player has as much opportunity to be involved with the play. I feel that there are many young men, who retired from sport in their early 20's, who could enjoy a number of years of Rugby yet, without any previous experience of the game. If they would like to give it a go, they are very welcome to come and train with us on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings at 8 p.m.

However, to ensure a continuing supply of young players, we hope to win some recruits to the game in our new Community School with its increased concentration on Sports and Physical Education.

For our very existence we owe an immense debt of gratitude to Thomas Forkan, Coolnahagh, who has allowed us to use his land for our Pitch. At the moment Tom is in England but we hope before the end of the season we will have the pleasure of hearing him blow his "Isle of Wight" whistle in opposition to some confused referee. We would like Tom to know that we fully appreciate his generosity to us.

Another person without whose kindness we could not exist is Mr. Mick Morris of the Horse Shoe Inn, who has allowed us to use the rear of his premises for our changing rooms and in which we have installed very efficient hot showers. Mentioning Mick Morris reminds me of our greatest achievement to date, which was the winning, in its first year, of the Mick Morris Trophy presented by Mick for an annual competition on St. Stephen's Day between Ballyhaunis and Creggs. We know that Creggs have expressed considerable interest in reversing the result next St. Stephen's Day.

Having referred to our limited success I must now acknowledge that we have taken a heavy hammering in each of our matches so far this Season. It was not unexpected that we would be beaten but the amount by which we have been beaten and the ease with which opposing teams scored against us have been most disappointing.

We require to become a great deal fitter and to train consistently together if we hope to seal off these gaping holes in our defence. While we are disappointed, we are not down-hearted and we will spend the rest of the Season correcting our errors. We expect our players to be totally committed to training, to be sportsmen at all times, to be punctual and to accept a high standard of discipline on the field and for the most part we have achieved this. If we in Ballyhaunis Rugby Club continue to turn out properly-attired teams who fulfill their fixtures in a sportsman-like manner and who show gradual improvement in this most complex of games, we will be very content.

I would like to thank all our players and members and our Ladies' Committee who have given us a name for a high standard of catering all over Connacht.

Thanks are also due to Dr. Declan Shields, our Selector, who has watched over our training on some very cold nights and finally to you the people of Ballyhaunis who have supported us in many different ways.



Seated L to R: Brendan McGrath, Hugh Curley, Jimmy Finn, Tony Cribbin  
 Seated 2nd. Row. L to R: Peter Gallagher, Oliver Fitzpatrick, Johnny Cleary, Alan Delaney, (Capt.)  
 Junior Geraghty, Tom Moyles, Sean Moylan.  
 Back Row L to R: Mick Morris, Tony Morley, Mick Culkeen, Georgie Hannon, Brendan Morrissey, Noel  
 Patterson, Dom Geraghty, Dr. Declan Shields.  
 Peter Walsh and Tom Henry who were not available for photo were valuable members of the team.

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# BALLYHAUNIS - B.C and A.D

A survey of archeological sites in the Ballyhaunis area by Bernie Freyne.

**T**HEY call it Archaeology. It is the study of man-made objects ranging from a hairpin to Galway Cathedral. People tend to be frightened off by the term Archaeology but there is no need to be afraid of it. The only thing archaeology will do to you is grow on you.

Now, let's face it, outside the Sligo region Ballyhaunis is the most interesting archaeological area in Connaught, and if the truth be known it might even surpass Sligo.

Having said that Ballyhaunis is an interesting place, let me try and prove it to you. To do this, I must bring you on a little tour of the archaeological sites in the area. Imagine it - if you will - from your armchair; better still get up and go visit those places.

As far as ancient tombs go Ballyhaunis has more than its fair share. Starting with Altoir over near Granlahan we have one of the most magnificent ancient graves in the West of Ireland. It has remained untouched for the past few thousand years or so. I hope it remains that way. Then we move on to Currasluista to another grave. Not by any means as elaborate as Altoir but never the less an ancient tomb. Incidentally if you look into the field across the road from this tomb you will see an inscribed stone or Leachtain. Then come back into town and to Duffy's Cross on the Claremorris Road and on top of the Esker Ridge that runs parallel with the road you will see a crematorial mound. Chances are you travel that road almost every day and never even knew it was there! Carry on out to Brickens and up to Tulrahan water reservoir and there right beside the reservoir you will see what I believe was a look-out post in olden times. Locally this is called Cnocan na Shuille - The Hill of the Eyes. Now look towards the south-west and you will see a large earthen mound; this is known locally as Cnocan na gCeann - The Hill of the Heads. A burial mound? I think so, and a magnificent one at that. By the way, on a clear day you can see six or seven steeples from here. The new church at Knock stands out very impressively. On your way back into town cut up through Began Village, turn right at Greenwood crossroads and on the top of the hill right there on the side of the road is yet another ancient tomb. This one is known locally as the Mass Rock or Diarmuid and Grainne's bed.

Finally come back into town and go down to Cappagh just below Tooreen to see yet another fantastic grave. It's in a poor condition, I admit, but for it's age it's keeping up well. This one is known locally as the Giant's Grave. There are plenty of others, some I have forgotten about, others I have yet to be told about.

Now to our OGHAM STONES. At this point I think we can all stand up and take a bow, as there are certainly two in the area and possibly a third, more about that third one later. About three hundred yards off the Granlahan road in the townland of Tullaghaun we have our first

Ogham Stone with the writing clearly visible on it. If you look over the valley to Kiltullagh church and then to the right of it you may see the remains of the three standing stones which have a modern as well as ancient tale to tell. The modern story concerns a Sergeant Lyons, who was attached to the R.I.C. at Ballyhaunis and who had a great interest in Archaeology. The only way a few of the lads who held a grudge against him could get under his skin was to blow up one or two of those stones. By the way, Sergeant Lyons did a lot of research into local history and archaeology, I wonder what happened to his findings?

After all that we come back into town and carry out to Bracklaghboy. Here we have our most interesting Ogham Stone - it is placed right in the middle of ringed Barrow. And what may you ask is a Ringed Barrow? From what I gather it is a crematorial burial mound with an earthen ring around it. The ring may also contain the remains of cremations. The Ogham Stone came as a later addition.

Now regarding that third stone I mentioned earlier on. I regret to announce the disappearance of standing stone. I know not where it is but I do know where it was. It stood on our Golf links, somewhere around the fourth men's Tee or at the Seventh Tee. Can anybody tell me where it is buried or hiding? It is really a pity to lose such a monument.

Ballyhaunis, too, has its fair share of church sites. Kiltullagh has an age-old claim to be an original Patrician church. Then we have Urlaur Abbey, a Dominican monastery on the shores of Urlaur lake, Kilonan church and grave-yard and Holywell on the shores of Mannin lake, Kildonnagha on Mr. Johnson's land at Coolnaga and then Kilmannin on the way back into town. On the



An Ogham stone in Bracklaghboy on which the writing is still clearly visible.



The entrance to a souterrain, situated in Larganboy, which has at least two chambers.

Claremorris Road we have the two at Holywell and also noteworthy is the old sandstone cross at the well. It is believed that a martyred Augustinian Friar is buried here, and speaking of Augustinian Friars we have our own very beautiful Friary.

Our Friary was founded in 1348. A local chief called MacJordan Duff gave one hundred and fifty acres of land to the order. He was later to be buried there in 1364. The Abbey flourished and grew for three hundred years. It developed into a large community of monks, lay brothers and priests who not only looked after the spiritual needs of the local people but also had a college, a hospital, and a hostel for the traveller. Its doors were always open to the needy. The Augustinian Order at Ballyhaunis has served the needs of the people of Annagh right down through the ages through fire and persecution, death and destruction.

In 1586 the Abbey lost all its lands to the Crown. In 1606 the Abbey was totally destroyed by Crown forces. When the soldiers left it is said that the Friars built lean-to-huts against the inside walls for shelter. In 1641 the monastery was rebuilt, this time on a much bigger scale as they were encouraged to do so by Archbishop McQueely of Tuam who recognised the need for it in the locality. In 1649 English soldiers attacked again; this time from their station at Dunmore. The Friary was burnt down and two of the Friars were martyred by hanging in the Friary grounds. Yet despite all this the line of Friars at Ballyhaunis has never been broken and continues to the present day.

Our Friary has many beautiful features. The ceiling and wall paintings are the work of Fr. Foran as are the Stations of the Cross. The Abbey is an Archaeologist's dream. It has beautiful carved windows and doors, and beautiful carved stone crosses. Where did they all come from? There is a single clue: Holywell is written beside one of the crosses but to me it looks the same as the cross which was over the main door before the last major renovation.

In the north-west area of Ballyhaunis we seem to have a great gathering of dwelling sites, both under and over-ground. Under-ground dwellings or Souterains are mostly to be found in the Carrownedan, Coolnaha and Aghamore areas, and people lived in those up to the sixteenth century. They seem to be located mainly in the limestone lands of those areas. Adjacent to the souterains we normally find cashels, not to be mixed up with ringforts. The cashel is stone built whereas the ringfort is built of earth and timber. Normally the cashel provided overground dwellings and shelter for domestic animals and the souterain was used for storage of food and as a place of refuge. The entrance to a souterain is by a narrow opening on the surface. This leads into a fairly large room. Most souterains have another chamber off the main chamber access to which is obtained through a small opening about eighteen inches square - only space enough for one person to squeeze through with difficulty. An intruder was rendered completely helpless as he entered and was at the mercy of the people inside.

Souterains are often known locally as robbers caves or hide-outs. They carry stories of dogs, sheep and even men going down into them and never coming out. They generate an enormous sense of discovery in the explorer as he is probably the first person to enter one of those since our political troubles at the beginning of this century.

Souterains are also to be found in ringforts but to a lesser extent. The majority of ringforts to be found in our area are out towards Knock, Began and, to a lesser degree, towards Cloonfad.

Moving on now to Cashels and Castles which are completely different things and not to be confused.

A Cashel is only ground level and is of dry stone walling whereas a Castle is made of mortar and stone and is usually two or three stories high. The finest Castle in the vicinity is Ballyhowley, on the Knock to Claremorris Road. Then we have Reath Castle. Some very interesting finds have been made here. Nearer home we have our very own Island House. Of all three I find Island House the most interesting because there are two different time periods involved. Island House is a T-shaped house with the leg of the T facing Mannin Lake and the top of the T facing Ballyhaunis. The "leg", if you will pardon the expression, was the first to be built. It was built as a defence tower as its walls are about three feet thick and it has pistol holes facing every direction on both floors and the parapet. It also has two large doors on its east and west walls, large enough to accommodate three men walking abreast. Coming from the adjacent field is a man-made water way. It goes under one wall through the middle of the floor and exits underneath the other wall just beside the slop stone which comes out from the kitchen. Now could this water way have been used as a power source for a mill inside the tower? Or, was it just a rich man's sewage system? The largest section of the house is the top of the T. It was built in much friendlier times as the walls are much thinner than the walls in the tower section and there are no signs of any pistol holes.

Forgive me if I do a little bit of rambling at this point, but it is my belief that this particular area i.e. all townlands



### ISLAND HOUSE

What appears to be a ditch in the foreground of the photograph is in fact part of a water-way running through the tower section of the house.

around Mannin Lake and what was Island Lake is absolutely steeped in history and man-made objects. To begin with there is Mannin House, the big house of the area, then Kilronan's church, graveyard and Holywell. You have the Myriad of Cashels, Souterains and Ringforts on Carrownedan Hill and over in Larganboy, then the Ogham Stone at Bracklaghboy and of course Island House. You have what I think is another tomb called Fairy Hill between the two lakes. Also you have a Crannog - a lake dwelling site at Island Lake. There is also the remains of a man-made pathway through the marsh or bog which was there before Island Lake came into being. It consisted of a line of stakes on either side, the center being filled with solid material. The stakes can still be seen today. It is not unusual for locals to find man-made objects or weapons

while ploughing or cutting turf in the area. The most important find to date being, of course, the Annagh Sword. It was found stuck in the bank of the Annagh river. There has been only one other of its type found in the country and that was found at Ballintubber, Co. Mayo. It, too, was made of Bronze and was roughly between 1500 and 2000 years old.

Well the trip is over and I hope you have enjoyed it. There remains a great deal more to be seen and as discoveries are continually being made perhaps a second trip would be in order. You know it's ironic that the lack of knowledge of those things in our own area is such that an interested tourist might well believe we were acting selfishly and were trying to keep them to ourselves.



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# The Friar

Seamus Durkan looks back on the life and times of Fr. Edward Mansfield.....

**T**HE man who became known to hundreds, perhaps thousands, outside the immediate area of Ballyhaunis as "The Friar" was appointed Prior of the ancient Abbey of St. Mary's, Ballyhaunis at the Chapter of the Irish Augustinian Province in July 1930.

Very Rev. E.A. Mansfield, O.S.A., to give him the full title which his position as Prior of the Abbey now conferred on him, was known in the parish and the surrounding area as Fr. Mansfield, but to his many associates in the various organisations and clubs to which he belonged, he was known less reverently but more affectionately as Fr. Ned.

Young tall, slender, impeccably dressed he succeeded Very Rev. Fr. Crowe. (Fr. Crowe O.S.A. was the man who had built the footbridge at Bridge St.; he also made the first real assault on the weeds and briars in the old cemetery). Born at Philtown Cross, Ardmore, Co. Waterford, Fr. Mansfield studied at the local National School, the Augustinian College, Dungarvan and St. Patrick's College, Rome.

His arrival in Ballyhaunis opened up a new era for St. Mary's Abbey and for the town. But even by 1930 things had come a long way. Just over fifty years earlier when a predecessor of his, Fr. Anderson, arrived to take charge at the Abbey, he commented in the house book about the deplorable state of things: "Not a penny in the purse" he wrote, "not even a dung heap". Fr. Anderson was the man who set the wheels in motion and they have been kept going by successive Priors.

On his arrival and in his early years Fr. Mansfield was the proud possessor of a powerful motor bike, about which many tales were told, the best known of which is: "in the front door and out the back door". He always wore a tonsure coat, rimless glasses ..... as a Mass server he would tell you he could see behind him and would threaten a 'box' if you stepped out of line on the altar. A gentleman to his finger tips, the outstanding mark of his old world courtesy was the constant lifting of his hat to everyone he met and the gracious smile that went with it. Charity, of word and of deed, was the hallmark of the man: it could be said he was a 'soft touch'.

The Lord with the vineyard and Fr. Mansfield with the hay had much in common. Apart from the cutting with a horse mower, the rest of the work was by man power and indeed the seasons were few and far between when "the friars didn't break the weather by cutting hay". Saving it was often a long drawn-out process. In the thirties Ballyhaunis had a big population of poor people; many of the men glad to get a day's work anywhere. As many as eight or ten men would set to work in the morning, but

often when the Prior came down at midday he would find one or two more looking longingly over the wall, and indeed several times during the day he would find other men in a similar position; no matter what the hour they all got the start and the full day's wages.

No doubt it took some time before his many traits became obvious; his dignity, his piety, his ability as a peace-maker, as a confessor and as a healer. Gradually his fame as a confessor spread until on a Saturday night there would be a queue of people outside his box, many of whom had travelled thirty or forty miles. The lights in the Abbey would still be on at midnight.

No less prominent was his reputation as a healer. My earliest recollection of an event which gave rise to this concerned a young woman, the mother of a large family, who lay dying in Drimbane. Her condition deteriorated suddenly; a neighbour dashed into the school to bring her children home in a hurry. At the house somebody suggested to the distressed husband that he should send for the 'friar'. Fr. Mansfield was sent for, he went into the sick room to see the dying woman, read an office, came back fifteen minutes later to the husband and said, "young man, your wife will be up and about in a week". She lived another thirty years.

Years later a friend of my own family from Shraheen, between Foxford and Ballina, a young woman with long auburn hair, who had a good job in Dublin suffered from a strange and worrying complaint: her hair began to fall out. She consulted specialists in Dublin, Belfast and Cork and they all told her that she would have to reconcile herself to the fact that she was going to lose her hair. She went home and became a recluse who, when some one called to the house, would retire into her room. Friends told her she would drive herself and her mother insane and advised her to go and see Fr. Mansfield. She did so and met him as she stepped in the hall door and told of her affliction. He put his hand on her hair and said "Girlie, there is nothing wrong with your hair, go back to your work". She had no trouble with her hair from then on.

A good example of the trust and faith in which Fr. Mansfield was held was the arrival at the Railway Station of a dozen itinerants from Ballina. They wanted to know where the friar lived; they had brought a sick child with them. They called to the Priory and returned home on the next train to Ballina.

People came at all hours of the day and night and were always received with the same courteous and friendly manner, people were known to come in their bare feet, with their boots over their shoulders in the manner of pilgrims.



Fr. Mansfield is seated fourth from right in this photograph of a Feis Committee taken by Halpin's Photographers, Ballyhaunis on the 29th June 1939.

Standing (L. to R.): Mr. Michael O'Cleirigh T.D.; Mr. Patrick Fahy; Mr. Jimmy O'Dwyer; Mr. Bill Mulligan; Mr. John O'Leary; Mr. Sean McNicholas; Mr. J.P. Jordan; Mr. Patrick McDonagh; Mr. Joseph Cooney; Mr. Willie Smyth; Mr. Padraic Forkan.  
Seated (L. to R.): Mr. Joe Redmond; Miss Maire O'Sullivan; Father Tom Burke; Mrs. Monica Flood; Ven. Archdeacon J.G. Prendergast, P.P.; Father Edward Mansfield O.S.A.; Miss Peg Corkery; Mr. Philip Waldron; Fr. Hugh Curley.

(By courtesy of Mr. Michael Smyth)

His reputation as a peace maker was no less famous. Those who remember the thirties will recall that neighbours went to law at the drop of a hat; any excuse, even trespassing hens, was good enough. Obviously there was ample scope for his talents in this field.

But aside from his priestly duties, he was a leader in the community. 1932 was a memorable year for Ireland and for Ballyhaunis. It was the year of the Eucharistic Congress and it was the year Ballyhaunis had the electricity switched on and the year its very fine water supply was put into operation. In the Abbey grounds the first ever carnival was held. Toft's amusements were there with a magnificent set of hobby horses which was placed in the middle of the field. A set of coloured lights from the avenue gates to the railway bridge was a new and eye catching addition. Part of the programme was the first ever boxing tournament with the ring sited in the open air amphitheatre at the back of the hill. I remember the late Jim Coffey playing with Pat McAllister like a cat playing with a mouse.

With spades and shovels a 'meitheal' of volunteers shifted a small hill on Morley's land in Clagnagh to provide a football pitch. A children's fancy dress and a number of dances had been held in the weeks preceeding the carnival and when the books were balanced there was a handsome profit of just over £990 and that was in 1932.

Due to Fr. Mansfield's interest in boxing and his efforts to promote it, Ballyhaunis became the leading boxing centre outside Dublin. In the glorious days of the B.B.C. (Ballyhaunis Boxing Club) during the mid-thirties, the French, British, German and Italian Boxing Teams boxed in Ballyhaunis. On such visits they boxed three tournaments, Dublin, Ballyhaunis and Cork or Dublin, Ballyhaunis and Belfast.

From his arrival Fr. Ned took over the Abbey Dramatic Society and his first production was entitled "Mountain Dew". His talent as a producer was unequalled and in the art of make-up he was an expert. The Abbey Dramatic Society became known as the Good Counsel Players in the 1959/60 season and as producer he will be remembered for his outstanding presentations of "Professor Tim", "Knocknagow" and "City of Kings". In the mid-thirties he branched out into a new field with the Abbey Choral

Society and produced the musicals "Pearl the Fishermayden" and "The Country Girl" running to packed houses for a week. From local musicians he built up a very fine orchestra. He was a fine singer himself and performed regularly in the annual St. Vincent de Paul concert.

Fr. Mansfield's stint of three consecutive terms of office left an imprint on the Abbey and its grounds that will never be effaced. In fact his third term in Ballyhaunis had to be sanctioned by Rome, and during this time he had the church extended to take in the original area covered by the old monastery. New altars and new altar rails were installed and the sanctuary was done in mosaic. It was inevitable that in 1939 he would be changed and the change was to London. Pakie Kearns volunteered to drive him to Dublin; as he left the house hundreds of people gathered about the friary and down the avenue to wave a last farewell, even though he had to come back a month or two later to receive an illuminated address and many presentations from various groups and from the community as a whole.

His sojourn in London was not for long. Never a very robust man his health soon deteriorated in the big city. He was off sick for a considerable time and eventually arrived back in Ballyhaunis to convalesce and finish out that particular term.

At a later Chapter he was appointed a Definitor and this gave him the freedom to stay at any house of the Order. Need I say that he stayed in Ballyhaunis.

He was Prior in Galway for a short time before being transferred to Hoxton, London, where he died on November 27 1958, before his term was over. Immediately a move got under way in Ballyhaunis to have his remains brought back here for burial. But the Order was adamant and stood by the rule that a man is buried where he died.

Nearly two decades after his death letters still come for Fr. Mansfield. I know of one occasion where a young woman dressed in black, her eyes red with tears came looking for him, for the comfort and consolation which only he could give, but alas, Fr. Mansfield was sixteen years in the cold clay of foreign land.

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# *Eddie Biesty Remembers...*

**Mr. Eddie Biesty is one of the few people in the area who can clearly recall life in Ballyhaunis almost seventy years ago.**

I well remember going to school as a child. I went to the Boy's school from the start although younger boys sometimes went to the Girl's school. Mr. P.A. Waldron was the Master and other teachers in the boy's school during my time were Messrs. Smyth and O'Dwyer who were local men; Mr. Hunt from Sligo; Mr. Stack, a Kerryman and Mr. Thomas Waldron, a native of Coogue. At that time a young lad would take off his shoes on the first of May and leave them off until around the first of October. We used to wear patent collars; they were very hard and left a mark on your neck every time you turned your head. Some of the boys wore petticoats until they were in third or fourth class, nobody took a bit of notice of them. The pupils had to pay turf-money or else supply turf to the school. As well as that we brought in one penny a month as ink-money. We used to love it when a cart of turf was delivered to the school, it was great fun bringing it in and we made the job last as long as we could.

Ballyhaunis has changed a lot during my life-time. I have seen every show-board in town changed with the exception of ten. I remember when there were three hotels, one in Bridge Street and two on Main Street; at the time there were five bakery shops and seven travelling shops in the town. There were five cobblers, two tin-smiths, three blacksmiths shops in town when I was growing up. There were three weigh-bridges in Clare Street; a fourth on the Square and a fifth on the Fairgreen. A man in the town used to make nails and was known as "Tom the Nailer". At that time Ballyhaunis had only one doctor - Doctor Crean.

The oldest families in the town are Noel Waldron's people; Paddy Freeley's family; the Glynnns and Rattigans and Murphys of Upper Main Street; the Coyne's and Gerry Dillons of Bridge Street; the Morleys of Knox Street; the Byrnes of Main Street; Michael Smyth's people and my own family. My grandchildren are the sixth generation on my mother's side to be born in the town.

In 1916 Ballyhaunis saw its first motor-car. It was a Ford, owned by Mr. J. Waldron. My uncle, P.J. Caulfield was the first to own a lorry - it was chain-driven and had solid tyres.

Ballyhaunis had one of the best race-meetings in the West of Ireland. The last one was held on the 23rd June 1917 at the Race-course in Tooraree. On that day a horse called Kingstown was a "hot tip" and I backed him. The jockey was a local lad named Farragher but he finished well down the field and brought my shilling with him.

Life was hard in the Ballyhaunis area during the War of

Independence; a number of local people were shot. Before the troubled times, young people used to gather on the Water Bridge beside the Bank and enjoy themselves singing and dancing. But the Black and Tans wouldn't allow any of that; they broke up the street amusements. I remember a Black and Tan being shot in Knox Street - but he didn't die. I also recall the first R.I.C. man who was shot. The volunteers were raiding an office opposite the Post Office; shots were exchanged and Sergeant Carroll was injured. It was one of the first shots fired by the Volunteers in the West.

We had a play for the Abbey every year. "Autumn Fire" "Professor Tim"; "Paul Twining" and "Mountain Dew" are just a few of the many works performed.

There were two sports events each year, one was held in the Fairgreen, it was called the "Big Sports". Competitors from all parts of Ireland took part. The other one was known as the "Abbey Pattern" sports. It was always held on 28 August, the feast of St. Augustine.

We had a very good Boxing Club in the town. Many of our members became All-Ireland Champions. There were International Boxing Tournaments in Ballyhaunis with teams from Italy, Germany and Spain participating. One of the best contests I remember was a fight between a German boxer, Rinoch and a Ballyhaunis man called Sharkey. Sharkey won the fight in the third round by a knock-out.

I remember the 17th March, Pattern Day and Fair Day in Ballyhaunis. It was a very big day for the town and a large crowd of people used to gather. It was a day for settling old scores; there was always a lot of fighting on that day with the result that large forces of R.I.C. men were drafted into the town to keep law and order. But it did not matter how many R.I.C. were there, there was sure to be a few fights. The people who took part in the fights were never summoned for the simple reason that they took the boat for England on the following Friday. Different villages were involved in this faction-fighting: Coogue, Larganboy, Cloonfad, Johnstown and many others. There was never anyone seriously injured, thank God.

Shrove Tuesday used to be a wonderful day in Ballyhaunis. It was a great day for throwing salt at one another. This was an old custom, the idea being to keep you fresh for the coming year. It was also a great day for match-making, many a good match was made on that day.

We had a Ball-Alley, but alas! it went to make a site for the Parochial Hall in 1939. The Parishioners were promised a new alley but we are still waiting for it. Many

Since the Society have taken up their abode in the Parochial Hall they have rewired and fitted with power points the stage auditorium and dressing rooms. The stage, which had hitherto been on the small side, has been extended and is now adequate to the needs of the Society. This has been an enormous drain on the finances of the Society and now that we need a set of lights, costing in the region of £800, maybe there is a fairy god-mother around. I just thought I would mention it.

Finally I think that any account of Drama in Ballyhaunis would be incomplete without mentioning Mrs. Dill Hughes. While not involved directly with the production of plays, she was nevertheless responsible for giving many young people in the town during the 1940's and the 1950's their first steps on the stage and a grounding, not only in music, but also in elocution and stage deportment at a time when such things might very well have been neglected or have fallen into less capable hands. However that is another story - hopefully to be told at a later date.



Cast of "All Souls Night" at the All Ireland Rural Finals in Loughrea 1962  
 Front Row (L. to R.): Tony Rattigan; Joan Dillon; Oliver Jordan.  
 Back Row (L. to R.): Michael Waldron; Joe Greene; Jack Green; Maisin Meath.

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# Our Role in the Community

Donal Ahern outlines the aims of Junior Chamber and examines its achievements over the past eight years.....

**B**ALLYHAUNIS Junior Chamber was founded eight years ago. During those eight years many projects have been undertaken by the organisation and their success has made a significant contribution towards the development of the town both from an economic and a social point of view. Yet to some Ballyhaunis Junior Chamber remains an enigma. Hopefully this article will go some way towards providing satisfactory answers to the usual questions which are posed concerning our organisation.

In 1970 a meeting was convened at the suggestion of T.J. Tyrell, a well-known member of Ballina Junior Chamber, to discuss the feasibility of establishing a Ballyhaunis Branch of Junior Chamber. Within the organisation each individual branch is known as a Chapter. A committee was formed and Eddie Thornton was elected as first President of Ballyhaunis Junior Chamber which was subsequently formed. The Chapter was affiliated to Junior Chamber Ireland which in turn is affiliated to Junior Chamber International. Members of Junior Chamber are drawn from all walks of life and are aged between eighteen and forty years. It is a strictly non-political, non-sectarian organisation which means that no individual need have any reservations about joining on political or religious grounds.

The people who attended the first introductory meeting saw the organisation as one which would afford them the opportunity to gain experience by playing an active role in community affairs. One of Junior Chambers prime aims has always been that of personal development through community service.

In its first year the Chapter involved 90% of its members in debating exercises. These debates provided both excellent training for the participants and first rate entertainment for the audiences. In that year also the idea of acquiring an industrial site for the purpose of building a factory was put forward as a suitable project to be undertaken. This project, based on the needs of the community and the interests of the members, was typical of the type of project that was to follow. Seamus Forde led the team which eventually had the satisfaction of seeing the I.D.A. purchase the site and build an advance factory. Bluebell (Ireland) Ltd. occupied this factory in 1977. Over one hundred people are now employed in this beautifully landscaped plant in clean modern conditions and are provided with excellent facilities.

Our Chapter was instrumental in having the partially constructed swimming pool taken over and completed by Mayo County Council. A plan for the area surrounding

the pool was agreed and changing-rooms have been constructed. When the development is completed it will incorporate a children's playground. Fr. Des Walsh was the project leader.

In the early 1970's the downgrading of the road passing through Ballyhaunis to Charlestown resulted in a situation in which any improvements or maintenance work on the road would have to be financed by Mayo County Council. A project sub-committee led by Ger McGarry set about having this undesirable position redressed and after long negotiations they succeeded in achieving their aim, one which most people considered a lost cause. The Department of Local Government decision was reversed and the road was regraded to National Secondary Status. This, of course, means that National funds are now allocated towards improving and maintaining the road.

Junior Chamber was also involved in the establishment of the Community Care Centre in the Parochial Hall thereby providing care and facilities in a central location for the aged citizens of our community. Jim Higgins, Rita Webb and Mary Smyth were involved in this worthwhile project.

In 1975 our Chapter decided to undertake a project on housing in conjunction with a Junior Chamber Ireland National Environmental project. Working in co-operation with the St. Vincent de Paul Society and the Social Services Council the fairgreen site was acquired and twelve housing units are now nearing completion.

During the past few years the Chapter's debating team has made quite an impact on the Junior Chamber Ireland National Debating Competition. In 1974 the team of Andrew Dillon, Matt O'Dwyer, Maura McHugh and Michael Smyth led by Jim Higgins reached the National Quarterfinal stage of the competition. Last year the team again led by Jim Higgins with Chris Pratt, John Higgins and myself reached the National Final only to be narrowly defeated by a team from Tralee Junior Chamber. Our disappointment was relieved on that occasion by the announcement that Jim Higgins had been chosen as the winner of the 'Outstanding Speaker Award 1977'. This year this same team entered the field again and won the competition defeating a team from Drogheda Junior Chamber in the Final. It was a double success as Jim Higgins again received the 'Outstanding Speaker Award.'

Over the years our 'Town Improvements' sub-committee has been actively engaged in collecting information concerning the needs of the different sectors of our town. From time to time memoranda are drawn up and submitted to the County Council detailing what we

consider to be priorities. Deputations are sent to meet County Councillors and County Council officials concerning the pursuance of these matters. Arising out of these activities many improvements, such as the provision of footpaths, road-widening and the provision of more street-lighting, have been effected in the town and its surrounding area. This sub-committee, presently led by John Higgins, enters the town annually in the Tidy Towns Competition. The voluntary work undertaken by the members and the people of Ballyhaunis in connection with this competition has helped Ballyhaunis to improve its appearance and its place in the results each year.

In 1976 the Chapter undertook the building of a riverside walk at Bridge Street. After much hard work the enthusiasm of Project Leader Edward Mulhern and his hardworking sub-committee was rewarded when the project won a special merit award in a National Environmental Competition sponsored jointly by the Irish Nationwide Building Society and the 'Irish Independent'.

This year our Spring Fashion Show organised by Marion Conboy drew an attendance far in excess of all our expectations. Its outstanding success was guaranteed by the enthusiastic work of Dr. Declan Shields. The proceeds of this venture which amounted to £350 were donated to the New Primary School Building Fund.

In December we organised a sponsored fast which raised £300 towards the relief of hunger in the Third World. We sent a deputation led by Dr. Seamus Ryan to meet the Minister for Justice to seek an increase in Garda Personnel. Since that meeting two new Gardai have been appointed.

Our Chapter has made a significant impact at National level apart from its Debating activities. For 1975 the year

when John Higgins was President we won the 'Best Chapter in Ireland' award. Each year the national organisation conducts two programmes to be implemented by all the Chapters throughout Ireland. In 1976 a National Programme entitled 'Accent on Youth' was proposed by John Higgins and adopted. This programme, promoted throughout the country by John, involved the establishment of Youth Councils and Clubs, Career Guidance Panels and various other activities designed to cater for the needs of our youth. The 'Anti-Vandalism Campaign' was one of last years National Programmes which had as one of its co-directors Past-President Sean Freyne. This programme was considered a great success thanks to the efforts of Sean and his co-director who conducted seminars throughout Ireland dealing with the problem of Vandalism in a positive manner.

Each year at our A.G.M. the Chapter members elect officers to manage and direct the affairs of the Chapter for the year. Our custom of not re-electing individuals to the same office provides an opportunity for the maximum number of members to benefit from the experience of serving as an officer of the chapter. This policy also ensures that the Chapter is kept alive and vibrant and is not dominated by individuals who, having been in office for too long, have lost their enthusiasm.

Clearly, therefore, Junior Chamber activities cater for various interests. Most of our members enjoy doing something constructive to develop themselves while at the same time making a positive contribution towards improving the community in which they live. If you are aged between 18 and 40 and interested in joining Junior Chamber we invite you to attend our next meeting.



**The Presidents of Junior Chamber in order of succession.**

**Back Row (L. to R.): Eddie Thornton; Dr. Alan Delaney; Tony Flynn; Seamus Forde; John Higgins.**

**Front Row (L. to R.): Sean Freyne; Moira Delaney and Donal Ahern.**

*(Photo by Dr. Seamus Ryan)*

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First Quality Bedroom and Livingroom  
units in Teak and Mahogany made to order

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# **I.A.B.A. INTERNATIONAL BOXING TOURNAMENT AT BALLYHAUNIS FRANCE V. IRELAND**

## **Thursday, 15th August, 1946.**

**First Bout 6.30 p.m.**

**Admission: Ringside, 7/6 (Reserved); 5/- and 2/6.**

**Seats may be Booked from Hon. Secs., Ballyhaunis Boxing Club.**

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Printed at the O'Donnell Telegraph Office, Galway.

*(Photo: by courtesy of Mr. Michael Smyth)*

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