

ANNAGH



2021

Foreword



When writing this time last year I remarked that in years to come the year 2020 would be remembered as the year of the Covid 19 pandemic. Little did we realise then that Christmas 2020 would be followed by another prolonged lockdown lasting until the month of May when restrictions were gradually relaxed. On the positive side, January 2021 saw the arrival of the first vaccines and the first to receive the jabs were the cohort who had suffered most as the result of the pandemic, namely the elderly in our nursing homes and our frontline healthcare workers. Celebration of First Communion and Confirmation was put on hold, only to be postponed again at the last minute. Zoom meetings became the order of the day and, while convenient, they lacked the essential element of human contact.

On the social and economic front, workers who had become accustomed to long commutes to our major cities and the accompanying traffic congestion, soon discovered the benefits for themselves and their families of working from home. Being able to work from home will hopefully lead to more balanced regional economic development in years to come. The easing of traffic had positive side-effects for our fragile planet. Climate change and the damage we are doing to our earthly home has become the burning issue of our time. Reducing carbon emissions will be the biggest challenge facing humanity for the foreseeable future if our children and future generations are to have any quality of life.

At a local level, one of the unique aspects of our community for many years has been its ethnic and cultural diversity. People from so many parts of the globe have made Ballyhaunis their home. Our schools, sporting and voluntary organisations have been to the forefront in the work of integration. One person who spent her formative years here in our Direct Provision Centre and was educated locally was Pamela Uba whose family came here from South Africa in 2003. Last September Pamela was chosen as Miss Ireland 2021, becoming the first person of African origin to receive the crown. She works in the Biochemistry department of UCHG. She has acknowledged the positive contribution her education in Gorthaganny N.S. and Ballyhaunis Community School has played in her life story.

Here in our parish, I wish to acknowledge the commitment and dedication of so many people who answered the call to volunteer as ushers, sanitisers and cleaners and who helped to ensure that on their reopening our church buildings were safe places in which to pray and to worship.

At the time of writing, despite being given the green light to resume normal service in our church building, we continue to exercise caution due to the high number of people testing positive with the Covid 19 virus. The lifting of restrictions will particularly be appreciated by families who experience bereavement. Over the past eighteen months many families have had to say farewell to loved ones without the support provided by the usual rituals that are a source of comfort at a time of death.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the hard work of the members of the Annagh Magazine Society who, in spite of the challenges posed by Covid, have ensured that the high standard of publication to which we have become accustomed is in no way diminished. Each year so many people, especially our Ballyhaunis diaspora in so many far-flung places, look forward to its arrival. As we approach the festive season of Christmas may our celebration of the birth of the Christ child bring meaning and hope to our troubled world.

Stephen Farragher

Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P.

Editorial

As we come to the end of 2021, we present the forty-fourth edition of Annagh Magazine, a publication made possible by the love and commitment of many people through their time, contributions of articles, photographs new and old, poetry and storytelling. It is a journal of the happenings and development of our town, parish, townlands, clubs, societies and associations which is important to document for the next generation; a sincere thank you to all those who make this possible every year. If these stories and photographs are not documented they will be lost and forgotten forever. For this reason we always appreciate your contribution no matter how small and insignificant you may feel it is.

Due to Covid 19 restrictions for the best part of the year, there were few happenings in local organisations. Many businesses suffered and some closed their doors for good, which is a great loss to the parish and town. We, however, wish them all the best in the next stage of their journey and thank them for their service and contribution to local life over the years. As a gesture to our loyal and generous patrons, Annagh Magazine Society has not called on them to contribute to the funding of the magazine this year. It has been a difficult year for many, but hopefully we will all be back stronger than ever next year and will be knocking on your doors for the annual contribution.

There were lots of negatives from the Covid 19 restrictions, but there were some positives that emerged over the last few months during lockdown. The restrictions slowed us down and allowed us to think about our lives, spending more time with our family and giving us new direction. Entrepreneurs have formed new businesses as a result of having the time to think. People had the time to read books they had been promising to read for a while but never got around to doing so. People went for walks and developed a new appreciation for exercise and nature. It gave a deeper awareness of things we used to take for granted. Communities came together to help each other and looked out for each other. We thank the people of our parish and town who were frontline workers: health workers, volunteers in the church, shop workers, farmers, drivers, factory workers, the many organisations who volunteered their time and service and who continue to put themselves on the line, to help us

through this traumatic period. Thank you for all you do for us.

Earlier this year we marked the one hundredth anniversary of the killing of Michael Coen of Lecarrow, Ballyhaunis. Michael was dragged from his home, murdered and horribly mutilated by Crown Forces on the 1st April 1921. His death and those of many others serve to remind us of the horrors of war and the huge sacrifices made in gaining the freedom of our country one-hundred years ago. Family members and neighbours from Lecarrow attended a ceremony this year, which had to be low-key due to Covid 19 restrictions, at which the speakers included Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P. and Fr. Kieran Waldron. May his soul rest in peace.

With great disappointment and sadness we saw the closing of the last bank in our town. It is so damaging for a town like Ballyhaunis, with such a high employment level, not to have a banking presence. It is also particularly inconvenient for the elderly who now have to travel to do their financial business in another town and who are given no recognition for their loyalty over the years. We are grateful, however, to the bank staff down the years, and wish to acknowledge the personal touch and compassion they showed to their customers back in the days when bank managers were on first-name terms with their customers. We would also like to pay tribute to those who devoted much time and effort to campaign on all our behalf, and to fight for the bank to remain open. We thank them for their courage and determination to stand up for what is right and for the good of the town.

On this last note we wish you all a healthy, happy and peaceful Christmas and 2022.

Noreen Ruane-Dalton

Pictured below: Annagh Magazine Society members following their interview for 'Ballyhaunis is Open for Business' with Martin Fitzmaurice, 8th Sept. 2021.

L-R: Tommy Caulfield, Edward Mulhern (Treasurer), Seamus Mulrennan (Chairman), Noreen Ruane-Dalton (Secretary), Paul Waldron, John Kilduff, Gabriel Smith, Mike Griffin.

Missing from photograph: Nell Rochford (PRO) and Joe Keane (President). Photo: AK Photography.



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Looking Back on the Year 2021

MIKE BYRNE

NOVEMBER 2020

The annual Remembrance Mass for Deceased of the parish was celebrated in St. Patrick's Church on Saturday, 14th Nov. 2020. The names of all those who died in the last year were read out and a candle, representing the light of faith and enclosed in a miniature lantern, lit in their memory...

It is announced that Ballyhaunis Community School is to receive €4,181 in funding to support integration projects during the pandemic from the Communities Integration Fund, which is now in its fourth year... Students of the same academy hold a 'jersey day' and raise €800 for the benefit of local charities... Joseph Biden is elected 46th President of USA, the great-great-grandson of an emigrant from North Mayo.... News that a discount supermarket is to be developed on an eleven acre site near the town centre is greeted with enthusiasm. Though the identity of purchaser still under wraps, it is seen as a potential major boost to the local economy... Mayo defeat Galway in the Connacht Senior Football Championship Final in Pearse Stadium on a score of 0-14 to 0-13 to claim the Nestor Cup. They will meet either Tipperary or Cork in the All-Ireland semi-final... Ballyhaunis Chamber comes up with a novel way of fundraising to light up Ballyhaunis for Christmas 2020 using GoFundMe, a draw for a great selection of prizes, and making a 10% contribution to local Western Care branch... Local business Madden's Snooker and Pool Tables were given exposure on the Late Late Toy Show. Gerald Madden has been manufacturing quality snooker and pool tables in Gurteen since 1986... Local photographer Mary Henry has her picture of an autumnal scene in Gurteen featured as 'Photo of the Day' on RTÉ TV's 'Today with Maura and Daithí'... The Gurteen Cultural and Heritage Society launch their 2021 Calendar, featuring spectacular images taken by the townland's residents during the past year... Hopkins' famous shop on Upper Main St. came alive again when one of Tom and Noreen's granddaughters, Grace Lavin, open her Christmas 'popup' shop offering fresh flowers and a wide variety of handmade crafts for the festive season.



Remembrance Mass 2020. A miniature lantern, with acorn seed in compost bag that was placed in front of the altar for each person who died during the year.

Pic. Fr Stephen Farragher.

DECEMBER 2020

A great sense of joy when, on 1st Dec., parishioners were permitted to attend Mass for the first time since early October, even though numbers still restricted to fifty... The work of Ballyhaunis artist Eoin Coffey (19) 'Reindeers in Flight' chosen to adorn Western Care Christmas Cards. Eoin is son of Sean and Stephanie Coffey (née Murphy), Brackloon... 'Five O'Clock Fridays' launched by Ballyhaunis Chamber to stimulate business in the region. All businesses invited to submit a video promoting their businesses and uploaded at 5pm each Friday in an initiative to heighten awareness through social media of what is available in the area... Much sadness as Mary Rattigan of Pollnacraoighy dies. A native of Claremorris she was for many years valued member of staff at Western Care... Local recording artist Brian Flanagan (UMAN) is special guest of Maura and Daithí on the RTÉ TV Afternoon Show, where he performed his new single 'Feel Beautiful'... Mayo beat Tipperary in the All-Ireland Senior Football Championship semi-final qualifying once more for a place in the All-Ireland Final to be played on Sat., 19th December... Ballyhaunis Inclusion Project wins a Volunteer Ireland 2020 award in recognition of its work supporting people living in direct provision in Ballyhaunis and connecting asylum seekers with the local community... Ballyhaunis Chamber's Christmas Lights fundraising receives a boost when its €10,000 target is reached thanks to Mairead Ronan of TodayFM and a donation by McDonnell's Curry Sauce who were impressed with the initiative... Heartbreak as Mayo beaten by Dublin in the All-Ireland Final on a score of 2-14 to 0-15... Aldi announces plans to open a store in Ballyhaunis. They are about to submit a planning application to Mayo County Council for a 1315 square metre store on a site off the Main Street... Joe Freeley of 'Joe Doves' plans to release a flock of snow-white doves in Ballyhaunis Cemetery on Christmas Day at 3.00 pm in memory of loved ones who have passed away in 2020 and previous years... Sadly Christmas Masses are affected by ongoing Covid-19 restrictions. Congregations restricted to fifty persons, so extra Masses arranged: A Family Mass at 6pm on Christmas Eve attended by representatives of this year's Confirmation class and parents. Pupils of Scoil Iosa prepared a 'family pack' comprising a candle, prayer card and straw from the crib and distributed to families with children attending the school... Later on Christmas Eve, 9 pm Mass is open to the public but again restricted to fifty. Christmas Day Masses are at 8am, 10am and 12 noon. All Masses viewable on webcam and on parish radio... By the last Sunday of December, the 'Feast of the Holy family', Masses had returned to being broadcast online.

JANUARY 2021

Volunteers from Mayo SPCA brave the elements to head to Erritt Lake for a Christmas Day Dip as a fundraising exercise for the organisation, based at Pattenspark in Ballyhaunis... And, just when we thought that Covid-19 was confined to 2020, we have another thought coming to us as numbers infected with the virus locally and around the country rise significantly. As a result, schools are to remain closed for the month of January (at the earliest). As the days and weeks tick by, there is great uncertainty among both teachers and students as to whether the 2021 Leaving Cert examinations will go ahead. Confusion reigns for students, parents and teachers for the opening weeks of the new year... Mary Webb of Devlis and formerly of Main Street passes to her eternal reward. Daughter of the late Eddie and Noreen, Mary was sister of the late Ted Webb, who died tragically outside Ballyhaunis in February, 1976... Derek Walsh is ratified as manager of the Mayo senior hurling team for the 2021 season. Derek is son of Jimmy and Mary (née Hunt) Walsh, Knockbrack... Fr. Michael Kenny, a native of Skeghard, Ballyhaunis, dies suddenly while walking his dog on the family farm outside the town. Ordained to the priesthood in Tuam Cathedral in 1974, Fr. Mick, as he was affectionately known, served as curate in Recess, Mulranny, Tooreen, and Belclare, before being appointed parish priest in Letterfrack and later in Kilconly, until his retirement in 2018. He was son of the late Michael and Christina Kenny, Skeghard... As the Covid virus continues throughout the country, the government announces that the lockdown period has been extended until 5th March, at least!... The tragic death occurs in an avalanche in the Swiss Alps of ski instructor Matthew Barnaville, son of the former Mary Imelda Waldron from Cave and grandson of the late Val and Olive Waldron... Ballyhaunis GAA star Keith Higgins announces his retirement from inter-county football. Keith, who has clocked up more than 150 appearances for the senior county side in what has been a glittering career, has won no less than four All-Star Football Awards and was named Young Player of the Year in 2006, captaining the Mayo Under 21 team to All-Ireland football championship glory also in 2006. He has claimed eight Connacht Senior Football titles, a Division One title in 2009 and has appeared in seven All-Ireland Senior Football finals. No mean achievement by any standard.



Fr. Michael Kenny,
retired P.P. Kilconly.
A native of Skeghard,
Ballyhaunis, he died in
January 2021.

He is son of Peter and Kay Higgins, Ballinphuill... The death takes place in Las Vegas of the late Billy Fleming (85), formerly of Pollnacrougha, Ballyhaunis. Billy worked as a projectionist at the Star Cinema on Clare Street for a number of years before emigrating to the U.S. in the 1950's... Rising Spanish soccer star John Joe Finn (17) continues to make great progress in the Spanish league. John Joe, whose Granddad Michael Finn lives in Devlis, is being pursued by the Republic of Ireland Under 21 boss, Jim Crawford, with a view to declaring for the Irish squad. Such is the progress that young John Joe has been making in recent years that both the English and Spanish football associations have already interviewed the teenager, hoping that he will declare for either country. John Joe made his La Liga debut for Getafe last December and is widely considered as one of the most promising players in the Spanish top flight. Interestingly, John Joe is also eligible to play for Cameroon, where his mother hails from...

FEBRUARY

The death takes place in Drimalough, Castlerea of the late Martin Hanly. Martin will be remembered by many throughout the Ballyhaunis district having worked as electrician with the late Denis Hannan and later with Georgie at the family electrical business on Bridge Street... Also on a sad note, the death takes place in Manchester of the late David Lyons. A native of Clagnagh, David later moved to Gurteen where he lived for some time with his late wife, the former Bridie Morley from Arderry, Tooreen, before emigrating to live in England. David was in his 100th year... Former Ballyhaunis Community School student Ruth Henry is awarded a prestigious Trinity College Dublin Entrance Exhibition Award. Ruth won the award as an incoming Trinity student with the highest points in the public exams from her school. She is daughter of Alan and Niamh Henry, Annagh and granddaughter of Milo Henry, Knock Road... Great sadness throughout the local community as news of the sudden death of Des Lyons from Turlough trickles through. In his late 60's, Des, son of the late Fine Gael TD (1965-69) Michael 'Dalgan' and Bridie Lyons, worked for many years at the Irish Ale Depot in Abbeyquarter... The government announces that the lockdown due to Covid-19 is now to be kept in place until 5th April. As a result, much anxiety and annoyance among Irish people leading to major protests in Dublin, with an attendance of over 4,000 people... Long time Ballyhaunis resident, Tom McCormack, Clare Court, passes to his eternal reward after a long illness. A native of Tulsk, Co. Roscommon, Tom came to work as a shop boy in Dillon's, The Square, in 1951, and spent the remainder of his working life giving outstanding service and loyalty to the Dillon family. He was a life-

long supporter and committed member of the Ballyhaunis GAA Club, holding a number of positions on the club's executive over many years. Tom was laid to rest in his native Tulsk... In this year, the fiftieth anniversary of the first GAA Football All-Star Awards, the Irish Independent selects their best All-Star Gaelic football team of 1971-2021. Ballyhaunis club man, Keith Higgins, four times winner of the award, is named in the number 4 position... Great sadness in the village of Mountain, Aghamore, following the sudden death of Hazel Niland, formerly Hazel Rattigan from Ballyhaunis... Ballyhaunis native Bernard Keane wins a ground-breaking case in Coventry. Bernard and his family wished to have the inscription on his late wife Margaret's grave 'as Gaeilge', but this wish has been denied by the UK courts. Bernard, however, brought an appeal to the highest ecclesiastical court in the UK, The Court of Arches, where the previous verdict was overturned, allowing for the family to have their wish granted. The inscription the family wished to have on Margaret's grave went as follows: "In ár gcoíthe go deo", meaning: "In our hearts forever". The family claimed that Irish citizens in Great Britain were being discriminated against in this regard, as gravestones in the UK have Welsh and Latin inscriptions, while Irish is not allowed. A landmark case for the Irish in Britain, thanks to the determination of a Ballyhaunis man and his family... Good news for Scoil Íosa primary school in the last days of February as Minister Dara Calleary announces government funding of €1 Million euro for the extension of the Abbeyquarter facility. The funding will provide for the construction of four additional mainstream classrooms, three SET rooms, two SEN rooms and a toilet for assisted users... Doris Kedian from Moneymore is laid to rest after a brief illness. Doris, who passed away at the Sonas Nursing Home in Knock, suffered the tragic loss of her son Private Billy Kedian when he lost his life while serving with the Irish Peace Keeping Forces in The Lebanon in 1999... Also, on a sad note on the last days of February, Seamus Cribbin from Drimbane departs to his eternal reward. May they rest in eternal peace.

MARCH

The first day of March, 2021 will be remembered as another dark day for the business and retail activity in Ballyhaunis as Bank of Ireland announces that it is to close their branch in the town. The bank announced that they are to close a total of eighty-eight branches in the Republic and a further fifteen in Northern Ireland. Other towns in Mayo which are to lose their branches are Kiltimagh and Charlestown... On another bleak note, on 1st March dental surgeon Dr. Bernard Jennings retires



Ballyhaunis Community School looking resplendent in the summer sunshine. AK Photography.

from the practice which he has operated in Knox Street for the past forty-one years. The closure of Dr. Jennings' practice on Knox Street means that Ballyhaunis is now left without a dental practitioner for the first time in many a long year... The death occurs in Manchester of Kevin Finn, formerly of Hazelhill, Ballyhaunis. Son of the late Edward and Agnes (née Biesty) Finn, Kevin was the last surviving of the eleven members of the Finn family from Hazelhill... Jarlath Connell from Gurrane passes to his eternal reward at Mayo Roscommon Hospice in Castlebar following a brief illness... Great sadness also at this time in the parish of Bekan and surrounding areas when Michael Sloyan suddenly departs to his eternal reward at his home in Greenwood... Leaving Cert students return to class at BCS for the first time this year while some primary school students also return to class for the first time since before the Christmas break, having had a long break due to the ongoing spread of the Covid-19 virus... Meanwhile, as we celebrate the feast of our national Saint Patrick, fine, sunny weather is a welcome visitor to the country and to the west of Ireland after the long dark winter days and nights... The late Peggy Daly from St. Gerard's Crescent is laid to rest... Ballyhaunis resident Frank Browne is appointed manager of the Roscommon Junior Camogie team. Frank is a former manager of the Mayo Ladies Gaelic football team...

APRIL

April 1st marked the 100th anniversary of the brutal murder of Michael Coen from Lecarrow. To mark this special anniversary, a small gathering was held at the Coen Memorial in Lecarrow, where local man Seamus Caulfield introduced the proceedings. Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. led the group in a decade of the Rosary for the repose of Michael Coen and for all others who were caught up in the violent events of the War of Independence of 1921. Local historian Fr. Kieran

Waldron spoke about the background to the terrible events which occurred on this day in Ballyhaunis 100 years ago. He described Coen as a 'martyr, who gave his life for the independence and freedom of our country'. Michael Coen from Ballyhaunis and Co. Clare, a grandnephew of Michael Coen, brought proceedings to a close by laying a wreath at the Coen Memorial... Ballyhaunis Golf Club greenkeeper Jonathan Kelly takes up an appointment as greenkeeper at Castlebar Golf Club... Curley's Pharmacy employee Bernie Flaherty achieves the Pharmacy Technician qualification from the Irish Pharmacy Union. This achievement involved an incredible amount of work and knowledge over the past two years. Bernie has been a dedicated member of the staff at Curley's for a number of years now... Ballyhaunis Chamber launch an online petition to help save Bank of Ireland branch in the town from closure. Thousands sign up for the petition in a brave effort in the hope that BOI will rescind their recent decision to close the Ballyhaunis branch... Devlis native Laura Burke takes up a position as health care assistant with Upper Main Street pharmacy, Healthwest Community Pharmacy. Laura is daughter of Breda (née Toolan) and the late Eamon Burke, Devlis... Dr. Michael Neary announces his retirement as Archbishop of Tuam. A native of Castlebar, Archbishop Neary, who celebrated his 75th birthday recently, was appointed Archbishop of Tuam in January, 1995. He will stay on in this position until a successor has been appointed by Pope Francis... Great sadness throughout the local community as news comes through of the death of John Cleary from Johnstown after a brief illness. John was well known throughout the entire local area having served as a dedicated member of the postal service, operating as postman in the district from 1955 until his retirement in 2000... The sudden death takes place in Maspeth, Queens, New York of Tom Moran, formerly of Hazelhill, Ballyhaunis. Tom, who was in his fifties, is son of Anne and the late Tony Moran, Hazelhill. He was laid to rest in his native parish of Ballyhaunis following requiem Mass in St. Patrick's Church.

MAY

The long awaited re-opening of churches, places of worship and retail outlets comes into effect in the early days of May. Public Mass is celebrated in Ballyhaunis for the first time since Christmas Day, 2020. A maximum number of just fifty people, however, are allowed to attend the daily and weekend Mass... Bridget Daly from Clare Court passes to her eternal reward after a very brief illness... Also on a sad note, Ann Coyne from Carramack, Logboy dies after a protracted illness. Wife of Joey Coyne, formerly of Devlis, Ann was the former Ann Lyons from the village of Carramack... A group of local enthusiastic cyclists, calling themselves the

Ballyhaunis Peddlers, come together to launch a fundraising initiative to raise funds for three local organisations: Western Care Association, Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group and Ballyhaunis Rugby Club. The initiative, launched on Bank Holiday Monday, will involve undertaking a cycle from Ballyhaunis to Murrisk, climbing Croagh Patrick and on coming back down from the mountain, making the return cycle all the way back to Ballyhaunis. The cycle and climb is to take place on 17th July... Also on the fundraising note, many dedicated people from Ballyhaunis got involved in the Darkness Into Light walk this month to help raise funds for Pieta House. The initiative, the first one hosted in Ballyhaunis, was co-ordinated by local lady Dee Moran, and turned out to be a great success, raising quite a substantial sum for Pieta House, all in the hope of creating an awareness of and the prevention of suicide... A new management team announced for Ballyhaunis Town F.C. is comprised of Niall Richardson, James Clarke, Lorcan Higgins and Tómas Colleran... The month of May has gone into the records by the Met Office as among the coldest and wettest on record, with weather stations around the country recording record amounts of rainfall. A combination of north and east winds has contributed much to the chill factor during the month where heavy jumpers and jackets were the order of the month, when temperatures for the period fell well below the average for this time of the year. However, as we hit the 25th May mark Met Eireann is predicting better weather to come as we approach the month of June, with temperatures expected to soar to the twenties in the coming days. It's been a long winter for sure between Covid and poor weather, but better things to come... Noreen Caulfield passes to her eternal reward, surrounded by her family in her home in Carrowkeel where she has lived with her late husband Martin for almost sixty years.... 30th May was a special day for Ballyhaunis Community School Leaving Cert student Wiktor Siemionkowski when he received the coveted John Paul II Papal Cross Award. Last year, Wiktor completed the Gold John Paul II Award (forty hours of volunteering). He then decided to work towards the Papal Cross Award, which consisted of twenty-six weeks of parish and community involvement.

JUNE

Covid-19 restrictions begin to ease in the first week of the month as public houses and restaurants/hotels are allowed to return to serving the public, but with outdoor service only... Ballyhaunis golfer John William Burke is crowned Under 12 Kids Golf North of Ireland Summer Tour champion for 2021, qualifying for the World Championships in Pinehurst, USA. John William, son of John and Paula (née Jordan) Burke from Devlis, won the



John Paul II Merit Award recipients 2021. Ballyhaunis Community School pupils who received their Merit Awards for involvement in their parishes on 5th June 2021 from Trish Gallagher, Diocesan Youth Director (Back row on left). Also included in the photo are Ms. Catriona Murphy, R.I. teacher at BCS who co-ordinated the programme and Mr. David McDonagh, Principal BCS.
Pic. Fr. Stephen Farragher.

title after a second place finish in the final round of the six week league, held in various golf clubs around northern Ireland... A number of students of Ballyhaunis Community School receive their John Paul II Merit Awards for involvement in their parishes from Trish Gallagher, Diocesan Youth Director. The programme was co-ordinated by R.I. teacher Ms. Catriona Murphy... Kathleen McBride from Annagh passes to her eternal reward... Main Street native and regular contributor to Annagh Magazine Canon Kieran Waldron celebrates the sixtieth (Diamond) anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. He was ordained for the Archdiocese of Tuam on 18th June 1961 in St. Patrick's College, Maynooth. The late Canon Joe Cooney, former parish priest of Ballyhaunis, was also ordained to the priesthood on the same day... Ballyhaunis Community School student Rebecca Mulligan wins the prestigious 'GAA Future Leaders Sports Journalism Award' for 2021. Rebecca, a Transition Year student at BCS, conducted a lengthy interview with Mayo footballer Aidan O'Shea as part of her journalism module. Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Dom Mulligan, Cloonfad, Rebecca's entry was chosen as the overall winner from a huge entry in the national competition. The initiative was co-ordinated by BCS teacher Orla Phillips (Main Street) and, remarkably, this is the second year in a row that a BCS student has won this award... Gurteen native Brother Augustine Freeley dies at the De La Salle Monastery, Castletown, Portlaoise in Co. Laois.

JULY

Clare Street native Francis (Franko) Glynn dies in Vancouver, Canada. Son of the late Frank and Delia Glynn, Clare Street, Franko emigrated to the US some sixty years ago where he later joined the Royal Canadian

Mounted Police. His father Frank, like his brother Tom in Upper Main Street, ran a butcher business at their residence on Clare Street for a number of years. In later years, in the 1960's and into the 1970's, Franko's mother Delia operated a very successful chip shop, one of the first in town at the time, which was a huge attraction to patrons from all over the town and beyond for several years... Ballyhaunis GAA Club man Jack Coyne makes his senior county football championship debut when he lined out in the Mayo defence in their Connacht Championship tie with Leitrim at McHale Park in Castlebar. Son of Paul and Noreen (née Toolan) Coyne, Jack, who captained the Mayo Under 20 team last year, played superbly in his senior championship debut... As we move into mid-July, temperatures begin to soar from mid-teens to mid-twenties and temperatures up to thirty degrees centigrade are the norm for several days as we move toward the latter stages of the month... A Claremorris man with very strong Ballyhaunis connections, Cormac Hanley made his mark in no small way in the USA this month when he secures a podium finish at a prestigious show jumping event in Michigan. A double clear round from Cormac and RMF Chaco Top saw them take third place in the \$137,000 Meijer Grand Prix CS13* at the Great Lakes Festival in Michigan. He also won the \$36,000 Speed Classic CS13* earlier in the week at the Great Lakes Equestrian Festival, seeing him enjoy five wins on the bounce. Cormac is grandson of Cormac (Snr.) and Eleanor Hanley, Claremorris. His granny is the former Eleanor Fitzgerald from Clare Street, Ballyhaunis, and his great-grandparents were the late Eddie and Eileen Fitzgerald (née Caulfield), Clare Street... In the fourth week of the month, in the midst of the hottest spell of weather we have experienced for some years, Met Eireann confirms that Ireland has

experienced a rare weather event two nights in a row, for the first time in recorded history. What is known in meteorological terms as 'Tropical Night', has occurred in Ireland for two nights in a row. 'Tropical Night' means that temperatures do not dip below 20°C at night. Temperatures of 20.2°C are recorded at Valentia Observatory in Kerry, while daytime temperatures are ranging from 27-30°C at this time... Great win for Mayo senior hurlers when they defeat Tyrone at Croke Park to win the Nicky Rackard Cup. Managed by Ballyhaunis son Derek Walsh, the Mayo team includes captain Keith Higgins, and Adrian and Cormac Phillips.

AUGUST

P.J. Moran from Charlestown wins the Captain's Prize (Kevin Garvey) competition at Ballyhaunis Golf Club. P.J., a brother of Justina Lyons, Upper Main St., won the prize with five shots to spare over budding young golfer John William Burke... The death has occurred of the late Elizabeth Jordan of Annagh, wife of Columba Jordan, formerly of Upper Main Street... Ballyhaunis Chamber launch a series of videos, showcasing everything that is good and positive about the local town. Co-ordinated by Chamber member Martin Fitzmaurice, the series will run over several weeks and will feature local personalities from business, sport and education in the local parish. Brilliantly put together indeed... Great sadness in the community of Ballyglass as popular resident Halyna Wasylac dies after a struggle with terminal illness. Born in London with strong local connections, Halyna has lived in Ballyglass for many years and she was a central figure in the establishment and operation of the Ballyhaunis Beekeepers Association... The death also occurs this month of Tony Rattigan of Pollnacraoaghy. Known far and wide over many years as 'The Singing Cowboy', Tony was a very talented and very highly rated musician and performer throughout the west of Ireland over many years. Back in the 1980s, Tony was invited by an Irish pub owner from the Catskill mountains region in New York State, to come and play at his venue, which he did with great effect for an extended period over a couple of summers... Mary Waldron from Holywell passes to her eternal reward at the end of the month. Mary's late husband Paddy tragically lost his life while walking his animals to the fair in Claremorris early one morning in 1969... And, also on a sad note, one of the towns best known and most beloved citizens John O'Brien from Main Street departs to his eternal reward at the age of ninety-five years. John was a well-known businessman who operated a very successful auctioneering business on Main Street for many years. A former president and captain of Ballyhaunis Golf Club, John was very instrumental in the planning and the building of the clubhouse in Coolnaha... Ballyhaunis native Bertie



Keith Plunkett performing at 'Friary Nights', August 2021.
AK Photography.

Dillon, The Square, dies at his home in Clogherhead, Co. Louth, in his eightieth year... Another Ballyhaunis native, Mike Freeley, a native of Gurteen, is laid to rest in his adopted home of Manchester... 'Friary Nights' brought a weekend of live music to Ballyhaunis on 27th and 28th August. Performers included local artists Brian Flanagan (UMAN) and Keith Plunkett, and two other Mayo acts, Seamus Fogarty and Train Room. Brian is son of Bernie and Phyllis Flanagan, Ballindrehid while Keith is son of Gerry and Patricia Plunkett, Forthill.

SEPTEMBER

Ballyhaunis GAA Club members gather in great numbers at the Knock Road grounds for the launch of the club's monster draw which offers as first prize a Seat Tarraco or alternatively the grand sum of €50,000. The draw is launched by Connacht Council secretary John Prenty and is to be held in January, 2022. A special presentation is made by the club during the launch to Clare Street native Martin Grogan, a life-long supporter of Ballyhaunis and Mayo GAA, who made the journey from his adopted home of Coventry for the event... Monday, 6th September marked a sort of returning to some kind of normality in Ireland as Covid-19 restrictions were eased considerably. Changes include increased capacity at religious ceremonies and indoor events. Church gatherings can now comprise of half of the capacity of the venue, while live music is also permitted to return... Yet another disappointment for Mayo supporters as the Senior County Football team fail once again at the final hurdle in the All-Ireland championship, losing out to Tyrone in the final at Croke Park on a scoreline of 2-14 to 0-15... Life-long Mayo supporter Marian Glynn from Upper Main Street passes to her eternal reward in the Mater Hospital, having taken ill during the All-Ireland Final. May she rest in eternal peace... Aldi Supermarkets have been granted full planning permission to proceed with the building of their proposed supermarket on an eleven acre site off Upper Main Street... In the diocesan appointments and changes announced by Archbishop Michael Neary, Canon Stephen Farragher is to take up duty as parish priest of Ballinlough, while remaining as

parish priest of Ballyhaunis, taking over from Canon Joe Feeney who retires from the position. Fr. Feeney has, however, agreed to stay on as assistant to Fr. Farragher for the foreseeable future... The restoration and refurbishment of the Community (Parochial) Hall continues and, as we approach the end of September, the stage of the hall is dismantled to make way for a new platform for the generations to come. The stage at the Main Street venue has seen so many actors, dancers, musicians and story tellers tread its boards down through the years since it first opened to the public back in 1941. The end of an era for sure, with so many fond memories of people and times of the past... Former Main Street businessman Brian Munro passes to his eternal reward in his native town of Dunmore. Brian operated the very successful newsagents, Munro's Bazaar on Main Street for a number of years. He was also a prominent and popular member of the Ballyhaunis Golf Club... Dee Moran is a popular winner of Jenny Glynn's President's Prize at Ballyhaunis Golf Club. Michael Horan is the winner of the President's Prize for men... As the Leaving Cert results for 2021 are announced, some excellent results achieved by the students of Ballyhaunis Community School, included among them the maximum score of 625 points received by three students, Cian Walsh, Kate Delaney and Auredas Armonaviciua... Former Ballyhaunis Community School student Pamela Uba is crowned Miss Ireland. The South African native came to Ireland with her family as an asylum seeker at seven years of age and settled in the town's Direct Provision Centre (the Old Convent), where she lived for ten years. She has since raised money for educational support for children in direct provision. Pamela earned her undergraduate degree in Medical Science at

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, before graduating with a Masters Degree in Clinical Chemistry from Trinity College Dublin. She works in University Hospital Galway's biochemistry department.



Pamela Uba, Miss Ireland 2021.

OCTOBER

Friday, 8th October is an historic and very sad day for Ballyhaunis when the Bank of Ireland branch on the Square closes its doors for the very last time. Despite many protests over the past number of months by local business people and Chamber of Commerce members, final transactions at the bank are conducted on the day. Remaining staff members are redeployed to the branch in Claremorris. Following the closures of Allied Irish Bank some years ago, and Ulster Bank three years ago, the town is now without a bank for the first time in over 100 years. All banking transactions are now carried out at the Post Office, situated in SuperValu... Rita O'Sullivan passes to her eternal reward at the Sonas Nursing Home in Knock. Rita (née Fleming) was very well known in Ballyhaunis where she lived and operated the very popular Wimpy Bar on Bridge Street from 1972 until 1994, when she retired, together with her late husband John, to her native Cloonfad... Popular Main Street publican Tommy Lyons dies at the age of eighty-eight. The end of an era in Main Street business for the Lyons family: Tommy's parents ran the pub/grocery store for many years before their son James took over the business and operated it with great success until his death a number of years ago.



Some of those who gathered to take part in a symbolic protest at the closure of the Bank of Ireland, Ballyhaunis, on 8th Oct. 2021, pictured with staff members leaving for the last time.

Michael Coen Centenary Commemoration

TOMMY CAULFIELD

Social distancing and public health guidelines were observed as members of the Coen family gathered to commemorate the centenary of the brutal murder of Vol. Michael Coen by Crown Forces on April 1st, 1921. Seamus Caulfield made a presentation of a framed, original print to Betty Coen to mark the occasion and thanked Murt Hunt and the residents of Lecarrow for the upkeep of the monument. Parish Priest of Ballyhaunis Fr. Stephen Farragher recited a Decade of the Rosary for the repose of the soul of Michael Coen and all others caught up in the violent events of The War of Independence. Local historian Fr. Kieran Waldron gave the background to Michael Coen's brutal murder and described Coen as a 'martyr' who gave his life for the independence and freedom of our country. Michael Coen's grandnephew, Michael Coen of Devlis and Co. Clare, brought proceedings to a close by laying a wreath at the Coen Memorial Monument which was unveiled in 1971 near the site of the murder in Lecarrow.



Above: Seamus Caulfield (right), organiser of the Coen Centenary Commemoration Event at Lecarrow, presented Michael Coen Jr. (grandnephew of Vol. Michael Coen) with a limited-edition print by local artist Helena Caulfield. Photograph by Fr. Stephen Farragher.

Left: Michael Coen lays a wreath in memory of his granduncle Vol. Michael Coen.



Left: Pictured at the centenary commemoration of Vol. Michael Coen's murder, on 1st April 2021. L-R: Fr. Kieran Waldron, Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P., Ballyhaunis, Betty Coen and Master of Ceremonies, Seamus Caulfield.



Above:
Residents of Lecarrow who attended the Michael Coen Centenary Commemoration on April 1st 2021. L-R: Colin Jordan, Murt Hunt, Michael J. Lyons, Phil Lyons, Eileen Rattigan, Tom Rattigan, Tom Lyons, John G. Murphy, Mary Hunt, Michael Regan, Peter Concannon.



Left:
The Coen memorial monument, Lecarrow, erected in 1971 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of Michael Coen's murder. Photograph by Fr. Stephen Farragher.

BALLYHAUNIS HONOURS ITS DEAD HERO



MICHAEL COEN

aged 26 years, killed by Crown forces 1st April, 1921.

**A suitable Monument will be
erected on the 50th anniversary
of his death—
1st APRIL, 1971**

Send your subscriptions to:

MR. CYRIL COYNE, Hon. Treasurer, Coen Memorial Committee, Ballyhaunis;

or to

MR. JOSEPH WALDRON, Hon. Secretary, Coen Memorial Committee,
The Moy Hotel, Foxford.

"WESTERN PEOPLE" Edition

A fundraising poster dating back to the 1971 campaign to erect a monument in memory of Vol. Michael Coen, to mark the fiftieth anniversary of his murder. Added in handwriting is the text, 'Donations may be received inside or sent to.... Joe Eagney, Curries, Ballyhaunis.... or Tom Hegarty, The Eagle Bar, B'haunis.'

Courtesy of Tom Eagney.

Golden Wedding Anniversary Celebration

The Keane family gather to celebrate Patsy and Mary's Golden Wedding Anniversary.

L-R: Cora Keane, Patrick Keane, Sandra O'Herlihy, Orla Doyle, Anne Marie Heeley, Mary Keane, Chris Heeley, Patsy Keane, James Molloy, Michelle Molloy, John Doyle, Audrey Montgomery, Jonathan Montgomery, Mark O'Herlihy.

Photograph by Janapix



Left: Robyn Neilan (Ranelagh, Dublin) with her grandmother Bridie Hunt (Larganboy). Robyn recently received her first class honours degree in MSc Digital Marketing at UCD Michael Smurfit Business School, Dublin.



Patsy and Mary Keane on their wedding day, 26th June 1971, St. Joseph's Church, Aghamore.

Right: Fr. Liam Devine P.P. Loughglynn, Co. Roscommon, and Kathleen Hunt (Larganboy) attending their cousin's wedding in Tinakilly Country House, Wicklow.



Far right: Pat Sullivan and May Sullivan (Derrylea) in 1987. Photo courtesy Celia Lyons.



Ballyhaunis is Open for Business

MARTIN FITZMAURICE

You could stand at a shop counter or a bar in most towns in Ireland and meet a customer who would exclaim, "There is nothing in this town". That galls me when it comes to 'Our Town'. I am a proud Ballyhaunis man and have been involved in many clubs, organisations and events over the years. I have seen the effort made by so many volunteers in all the organisations that exist in the town. I have admired the business acumen of so many entrepreneurs that have evolved in the town and environs over my lifetime. It bothered me: do some of us really appreciate what is in front of our noses or is everything measured on what we see on one of the town streets? There is so much going on under the bonnet. Does anyone realise that life has changed? Do we all know the facts? Do we appreciate what we have? I wanted to come up with some way to demonstrate to Ballyhaunis residents – at home and away – the diversity we possess, and to show the world that we are 'open for business.'

We had discussions in the Chamber office with Anne Cunnane and Tom Forde and came up with the idea of a programme of videos and interviews. Realising that this would cost money to do properly, we began to look for support – grants etc. – but nothing was forthcoming. Until one day Adam Kaczmarek made a big mistake. Adam, his wife Anna and family come from Poland and now live in Ballyhaunis. He approached the Chamber office to discuss some drone footage he had of the town. During discussions, we discovered that he did photography in his spare time and had the equipment required to progress our project. We explained to both Adam and Anna what we wanted to do and clarified that

we had no funds available. The only potential benefit for their efforts would be recognition for their work and local support of their business in the future.

Unknown Journey

So, in spring of 2021 we started on an unknown journey. An email was sent out initially to all businesses in the town and environs, to offer them the opportunity to tell their story. Then followed a similar email to all the sport and voluntary organisations in the area. I prepared an introductory video not being sure exactly what we were going to end up with. I asked Fr. Stephen Farragher to do an introductory video also – wanting to get God on our side! Our first interviews were with Kirrane Auctioneers and Julie Gallagher. Both interviews went down very well, even though neither Adam nor I had ever done anything like this before. We decided to upload two interviews per week – one on Tuesdays at 4pm and another on Thursdays at 4pm to Facebook – on the 'Ballyhaunis Life' page. As each interview was published, people would come up to me on the street and say things like, "Well I never knew that!" This reassured me that our work was worthwhile. Just this morning, I received a text from an old school friend, Tommy Joyce who was watching and enjoying in Japan. So it is working. It involves a lot of time preparing for each interview, arranging times and venues and reassuring the 'victims.' Then Adam has to edit them afterwards. We wanted one constant, and I asked a friend of mine, Adam McDonagh, who is a very gifted musician from a very gifted family, if he could compose a short piece of high tempo music for each interview introduction. He duly obliged and I think it's a great addition to the effectiveness of each interview.

At time of writing we have produced approximately thirty interviews and there are twenty published. We have started to upload them onto YouTube. We are considering adding another day of recording to promote local musicians and entertainers, etc. We have so many talented people in the area and with restrictions over the last eighteen months, they do not get much exposure.

Purpose

The initial purpose of the interview series is to inform all who live in Ballyhaunis and its environs about what exists in our town and how fortunate we are. This is also an opportunity to show Ballyhaunis people all over the world, and people from any part of the world, what a diverse and progressive town we have. My hope is that we who live here appreciate what we have and maybe others will recognise it also and want to be a part of it – to live, work and do business here. The facts are,



Ruairí Ó Broin (right) in conversation with Martin Fitzmaurice.
AK Photography.

we have two very modern, well run educational facilities for primary and secondary education. We have facilities for child care and adult education. Approximately 2500 people start work every morning in Ballyhaunis environs – something every rural town in Ireland would love to have. We are quoted as having ‘the highest concentration of indigenous entrepreneurs in Ireland’ at one time. We have sport facilities for most codes which are the envy of most rural towns. We have so many voluntary organisations that keep the town looking well and making progress in spite of all the issues with demise of rural Ireland. Indeed, the volunteer ethos of the town would impress in any other part of Ireland. The greatest message I discovered during the interview process was the diversity and the ingenuity of the people who live and work here – who have managed to cope with all the changes the twenty-first century has placed before them. I would love to see the busy streets back again – where people from miles around came to town to do their shopping a couple of times a week, or at night-time to meet their friends in local hostelrys. They were great memories, but life in rural towns has changed. The night scene has been irreversibly affected by a series of drink driving laws, no smoking in pubs and ultimately Covid. People have gotten out of the habit and the new normal in rural Ireland is ‘a few in the house.’ A lot of shopping is done online and many of the businesses have adapted to both of those changes. Maybe in time we can work on developing a new social agenda in rural Ireland to bring people back on the streets. But in the meantime, the biggest portion of business being transacted in Ballyhaunis is not seen on the streets (sadly). It is, however, going on and going strong.

So if you want to see the story of the Doctor from Donegal who turned the old Ulster Bank into a modern day surgery; or the man who fitted his first machine in his cow house and is now supplying high end kitchens to London; or the story of Jenny Glow which you will find in all the big department stores and pharmacies across Ireland; or the family business who have knocked



Paul and Lisa Finn in their Main Street premises being interviewed by Martin Fitzmaurice (right). AK Photography.

and rebuilt each of their premises on the main street; or the Syrian-born man who is running a business set up by his father who came to Ireland in the 80s with no money and looking for work; you can do so in the series “Ballyhaunis is Open for Business” which can be viewed on Facebook at ‘Ballyhaunis Life’ or on YouTube.

This interview series is a Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce project, supported by Chamber members and, in particular, by our President Tom Forde, Anne Cunnane our CEO and the staff of the Chamber office. The amount of help they have given and their utmost trust to do the job has been invaluable. I do hope you enjoy the product of our labour and, hopefully, you will keep Adam in mind if you have any photography work in the future. (I wouldn’t be upset with a call either). So if you haven’t seen any or some of the interviews, maybe over the Christmas season, you might enjoy some of them or some you missed. So, with that, I wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas and may the New Year grant all your wishes.

Abbey Male Choir 2021

EAMONN MURREN

As with all choirs, Covid-19 put a stop to our activities. However, at the time of writing in October of 2021, and with the recent easing of restrictions, we have been allowed to meet up and sing in groups of four. We live in hope that all remaining restrictions will be lifted very soon and that we will be back to full numbers.

We would like to thank Moira Delaney and Paula Donnellan for continuing to accompany our reduced groups and for all their help and guidance. We look forward to the new year with hope and we send best wishes to Annagh readers everywhere.

Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group

PAULA GROGAN



At the time of writing, the country is slowly starting to re-open after various lockdowns and restrictions were put in place since March 2020 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. For the past eighteen months or so, our group has been unable to organise any training sessions for the community in Ballyhaunis and all we could do was ensure that the defibrillators were maintained regularly and serviced, if needed.

We were fortunate to be able to launch our Community First Responders Group in early March 2020 before Leo Varadkar announced from the US that restrictions and a lockdown were to be put in place. The Community First Responder Group is made up of volunteers who are trained to attend at potential life-threatening emergencies within our parish in the first vital minutes before an ambulance arrives. Their role is to help stabilise the patient, provide defibrillation, if necessary, until the highly skilled paramedics take over the situation. Our Community First Responders Group will liaise with the National Ambulance Service who will notify the group of any emergencies that arise within a certain radius of Ballyhaunis. It is hoped that this group will be up and running again once re-training of our

volunteers can recommence.

Like all other community groups, the pandemic meant no fundraising could take place which is a lifeline for all voluntary organisations. However, we were very fortunate in that individual people approached us to make private donations; prior to lockdown our local Fire Brigade held a fundraiser for our benefit, along with a local group of people who carried out a spooky Halloween fundraiser on our behalf. A big thank you also to Amanda Burns who held a hamper raffle and kindly included our group as a recipient of funds raised. We are also very grateful to Ballyhaunis Peddlers who wanted our Defibrillator Group, along with other local groups, to benefit from their Charity Cycle and Climb held this July and we are so thankful for their generous donation.

We are also very grateful to the following who have sponsored a defibrillator battery: Annagh Medical Centre, Ballyhaunis GAA Club, Dolores Byrne and family, Communicare Healthcare Limited, Curley's Total Health Pharmacy, Dawn Meats Ltd., Finn's Footwear, Fitzer's Bar, Major Equipment International Ltd., O'Dwyer Solicitors, Scoil Íosa Primary School, St. Patrick's Church, Western Brand Group Ltd.

Due to the uptake of vaccines and the easing of restrictions, it is hoped that life will get back to some form of normality for our group and others in our community. The locations of the thirteen defibrillators in our parish are on the map accompanying this article. Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group

Locations of Defibrillators in the Ballyhaunis area:

#	Location	Eircode
1	Bank of Ireland	F35 VY59
2	St. Patrick's Church	F35 ED78
3	Scoil Íosa Primary School	F35 PX94
4	Ballyhaunis GAA Club	F35 RY97
5	Annagh	F35 KP78
6	Ballyhaunis Golf Club	F35 P661
7	Kilmannin	F35 A290
8	Brackloon	F35 CF98
9	Derrynacong	F35 R224
10	Kiltybo	F35 EA21
11	Tullaghaun	F35 TY77
12	Johnstown	F35 VK75
13	Pattenspark	F35 RR71



Granlahan N.S. Principal Retires

The 2021 summer holidays at Granlahan N.S. were that little bit extra special for teacher and Principal, Billy Phillips when, after forty years' service he left the classroom for the last time. His presence will be greatly missed by staff and pupils alike at Granlahan N.S. He is wished a long and happy retirement.

A Retirement Poem for Mr. Phillips

*We'd like to say a great big 'Cheers!'
For all you've done the past forty years.
You've been the greatest principal of all,
And we'd like to say we've had a ball.*

*For all the fun things that you let us do,
We know that many are because of you.
You're a principal that's kind and helps us out,
You're the best without a doubt.*

*Even though you support Mayo,
We will be sad to see you go.
But next time we see you,
We are sure to say hello.*

*Mr. Phillips you're very tall,
When we see you walk down the hall.
Best history teacher of them all,
It's like you were there for it all.*

*You're also very smart,
Always ready and looking the part.
When speaking you're always very clear,
And it's easy for everyone to hear.*

*Without you for the chess,
All the games would have been a mess.
You hand out certificates to make us smile,
The claps commence and we treasure a while.*

*The amazing concerts that we do,
Are for our families and you too.
We appreciate all of your support,
And that you are such a good sport.*



Pupils and staff at Granlahan N.S. and Fr. Joe Feeney, P.P. Kiltullagh, pay tribute to Mr. Billy Phillips as he leaves the school and begins a well-earned retirement.

*Best referee for P.E on Friday,
We think you deserve a big 'Hurrray'.
You always taught us something new,
We would never spell 'retirement' without you.*

*It was amazing the times we climbed Kiltullagh Hill,
But now it's time for you to sit and chill.
You brought us on the bus,
And there was never any fuss.*

*There's just enough time for us to say,
That we will miss you every day.
You loved our school and taught us well,
And this is a story we are sure to tell.*

**All we need to say is.....THANK YOU!!
Happy Retirement Mr. Phillips!**

Written by the pupils of Granlahan N.S., June 2021

Papal Cross Award for Ballyhaunis Student

MIKE BYRNE

Ballyhaunis resident Wiktor Siemionkowski was the subject of much commendation and applause in St. Patrick's Church last May when he was awarded the John Paul II Papal Cross Award at a special ceremony following the 7.30 p.m. Mass. It was presented by Archdiocesan Youth Director, Trish Gallagher and Catriona Murphy, a member of the teaching staff at Ballyhaunis Community School, who heads up the John Paul II Awards project in the school. A Leaving Certificate student in BCS, Wiktor was one of a number of students there who participated in the John Paul II Merit Awards project, receiving their awards at the end of the term.

The Papal Cross Award is at the highest level in the John Paul II Awards, after Bronze, Silver and Gold. It is awarded when an individual goes on to do further voluntary work for the parish and community.

Born in Poland, Wiktor came to Ballyhaunis with his parents Andrew and Bernadette at five years of age, some thirteen years ago, along with younger brother Norbert. During his primary school years at Scoil Íosa, he volunteered as a Mass server in the St. Patrick's Church, along with other members of his class. When he finished his primary school education and graduated to Ballyhaunis Community School, he continued as a server in the Parish Church, and continues to do so to the present time: the first time any individual has done so in this parish.

Speaking at the presentation ceremony, Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. spoke highly of Wiktor's outstanding contribution to parish and community over many years. As well as assisting at Mass and at other ceremonies throughout the year, he is always busying himself throughout the church and grounds, decorating the



Wiktor Siemionkowski (centre) displays his John Paul II Papal Cross Award at the ceremony held in St. Patrick's Church in May, 2021. Also pictured are Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. and Trish Gallagher, Diocesan Youth Director.

altars with suitable arrangements of fresh flowers, planting and tending to the upkeep of the shrubs and the graves around the church.

This young man's work is done quietly, with reverence and humility, away from the public view. A credit indeed to himself and to his parents Andrew and Bernadette, and an award so very well deserved for sure.

Ballyhaunis Cemetery Committee

MARTINA GAVIN

Ballyhaunis Cemetery Committee would like to thank everyone for their continued financial support towards the upkeep and maintenance of Ballyhaunis Cemetery. This continuous support ensures the Cemetery is maintained to a high standard. There is a detailed map at the rear of the Cemetery which can also be viewed online at www.irishgraveyards.ie

Due to Covid-19 restrictions we were unable to carry out the annual collection during 2020, but thankfully we have been able to distribute the collection envelopes for 2021 and are very grateful for donations received to date.

Anyone wishing to donate can do so by giving it directly to any of the Committee Members, listed below, or through Paypal on the website www.irishgraveyards.ie. Just select 'Ballyhaunis Cemetery' and click on the 'Donate Directly to Ballyhaunis Cemetery' link.

Committee Members: Edward Mulhern, Tom Finn, Walter Cleary, Seamus O'Boyle, Martin Gavin, Martina Gavin and Enda Caulfield. Tel. 0876324586 or 0863960943.

Full Steam Ahead for the USS Patrick Gallagher

MARTIN DURKAN



A newly constructed U.S. Navy ship is starting to take shape at the Bath Iron Works shipyard in Maine, U.S.A. It will be named after Ballyhaunis native, Corporal Patrick Gallagher (Navy Cross, Purple Heart), son of the late Peter and Mary Gallagher, Derrintogher. Patrick served with the United States Marines from 1966 until his tragic death in 1967. He was killed in action in Vietnam shortly after having been awarded the Navy Cross for bravery for saving the lives of three of his comrades in an earlier attack. He was aged just twenty-three,

In 2018 the Secretary of the U.S. Navy, Hon. Richard V. Spencer, decreed that the future (DDG 127) Navy ship would be named after Corporal Gallagher. This followed a remarkable celebration of Patrick's life which took place in Ballyhaunis in March 2017 to mark the fiftieth anniversary of his untimely death.

The first significant event in the ship's construction will be the Laying of the Keel, a ceremony marking which will take place at the shipyard in Spring, 2022, and which will be attended by the Gallagher family. Patrick's three surviving sisters have been appointed as the ship's Sponsors by the US Navy. The second event will be the Launch and the third and final event will be the Commissioning Ceremony which is hoped will take place in New York with the Manhattan skyline as a backdrop.

An excellent audio documentary on Corporal Patrick Gallagher was aired in 2017 and can be found with the following google search "Mayo boy Vietnam hero."

A reception was held in the Mansion House, Dublin, hosted by the Lord Mayor on 6th Nov. 2018, recognising the decision of the U.S. Navy to name a ship after Corporal Patrick Gallagher. Pictured above with a portrait of Corp. Gallagher and a model of the ship are – Standing, L-R: Commodore Michael Malone (Irish Naval service), Reece Smith (Charge d'Affaires U.S.A. Embassy), Peter Gallagher, General Walter Boomer (U.S. Marine Corps), Teresa Gallagher Keegan, Vice Admiral Mark Mellett (Chief of Staff, Irish Defence Forces), Major General Kieran Brennan; seated: Pauline and Rosemarie Gallagher.

Pic. Conor McCabe Photography.



The Civil War in Ballyhaunis

KIERAN WALDRON

Since 1913, to mark the Decade of Centenaries commemorations, I have contributed a number of articles to *Annagh* on notable events in our area. With some trepidation I come to the years 1922/23 when the unfortunate Civil War took place in Ireland. I try to be as accurate and balanced as possible. As the old aphorism states: ‘opinions are many, but facts are sacred.’ So, I include some historical background.

The published ‘Correspondence Relating to the Peace Negotiations’ of July 1921 and the meetings in London between Eamon De Valera and Prime Minister David Lloyd George made it clear that the British Government were not going to accept a complete separation of Ireland – or part of it – from the British Empire, which the word ‘Republic’ would have denoted.¹ This was the context that confronted the Irish delegation to London where Ireland was represented by Arthur Griffith, Michael Collins, Gavan Duffy, Robert Barton and E.J. Duggan, with Erskine Childers as secretary. President De Valera opted not to attend. The outcome was the Anglo-Irish Treaty signed on 6th December 1921. The new ‘Free State’ was born.

Through January and February 1922 the gradual withdrawal of Crown Forces from the country aroused great celebrations as ordinary life resumed in Ireland. The Dáil courts continued-on for some time and in Ballyhaunis routine events like the annual Feis were being planned. But controversies about the Treaty soon emerged, even within families. In early February two delegates from Ballyhaunis were to be elected to attend the Sinn Féin Árd Fheis in Dublin to debate the Treaty. Councillors P.J. Waldron (Knox St.) and Liam Coyne were elected – but only after a vote of forty-eight to twenty-two. Both had spoken strongly on the benefits of the Treaty. It was a strained meeting – the national division was already appearing.

The Momentous Treaty Debates in the Dáil

I have in my possession the official Dáil Éireann record of the thirteen sessions of those Treaty Debates – it runs to over 400 pages. They were held from 14th December 1921 to 10th January 1922. Huge questions had arisen: did the Treaty, though incomplete, at least give Ireland ‘the freedom to achieve freedom’, as Michael Collins claimed? The ‘Irish Republic’ had been declared by a small group of revolutionaries in Dublin in 1916 but it was never accepted internationally. ‘Republicans’ subsequently claimed it had been endorsed by their

success in the General Election of 1918. But was a ‘Republic’ – a complete separation for the whole of Ireland from the British Empire – a remote possibility in 1921, given its long history and world-wide status? Was the 1916 proclamation of the ‘Irish Republic’ to remain untouchable forever and for the whole of Ireland? Other questions arose: were the delegates in London really ‘plenipotentiaries’ (which means ‘with full powers’) or were they not? The big question, still hotly debated to this day, was why did President De Valera absent himself from the Treaty negotiations in London in November/December 1921?

The Treaty debates in the Dáil, held in UCD Earlsfort Terrace, were reasonably calm, with only occasional animosity towards the end. Speakers were allowed to continue with few interruptions. Amazingly, there was almost no reference to the anomalous position of Northern Ireland which, by then, had a Parliament of its own. Whatever caused the eventual split, partition was not the main issue. For many present, if a ‘Republic’ was not on offer, then the war had to go on!

But on 7th January the Dáil voted approval of the Treaty, sixty-four in favour and fifty-seven against. On the morning of Saturday, 9th January 1922, Eamon De Valera handed in his resignation as President of the Dáil. Later, he put forward his name for re-election but Arthur Griffith stated that this would mean a revision of the vote for the Treaty. In the subsequent vote, De Valera was again defeated. Arthur Griffith, voting against him, said that the vote was not to be taken as against President De Valera personally but was ‘a vote to help the Treaty’. He added: ‘I want to say that there is scarcely a man I have ever met in my life that I have more love and respect for than President De Valera.’ But their relations had been damaged nonetheless.

Griffith was proposed to replace him, but De Valera claimed that as the ‘Republic’ was still in existence a vote for ‘President of the Provisional Government’ would be out of order. He and his followers withdrew before the vote, so the vote for Griffith was unanimous. Dev and his followers returned later and took part in the rest of the debate.

Michael Collins in Ballyhaunis

Between January and April 1922 relationships began to grow sour. General Michael Collins, Minister for Finance in the Provisional Government and co-signatory of the Treaty, on his way to Castlebar was, however, afforded ‘an enthusiastic reception’ at Ballyhaunis railway station. The *Mayo News* of 8th April reported that a prepared Address of Welcome was presented to him which was

¹ The minutes of the meetings themselves, as taken by the secretary to the Prime Minister and summarised by John Bowman in *The Irish Times* of 10th July 2021, are revealing.

signed by Canon Michael McHugh P.P. and over forty parishioners. Growing up in Main Street I knew most of those signatories, listed in the footnotes.²

The address for Michael Collins read: ‘At this momentous stage in the history of our common country the plain people of this district are with you and your colleagues in the stand you are taking to preserve the wonderful benefits accruing from the articles of the Anglo-Irish Treaty secured by the duly accredited plenipotentiaries of the Irish nation, on the one side, and the British delegation on the other’. Collins replied that he had been told that, ‘...he would be torn to pieces if he entered Mayo’ but, if Ballyhaunis was any indication of the spirit and the feeling of the county, he was in no danger whatever. As the train moved out from the station there were loud cheers for Collins. These were followed by a number of revolver shots from the public road near the station. Collins was to receive a welcome also in Claremorris though he was heckled in Castlebar by people gathered on an opposing platform.

In a diary kept by the late Dr. Michael F. Waldron he recounts the following local events before the war actually started:

- March 7th Patrick Cassidy (Crossard) shot and seriously wounded. Removed to Galway Hospital.
- March 15th Patrick Cassidy, shot dead in Galway Hospital.
- April 3rd Constable Cavanagh (Cranny?) shot dead and Constable Butler wounded.

These three events represented some unfinished business from the War of Independence. Dominic Price, in his *The Flame and the Candle; War in Mayo 1919-24*, covering those events, identifies ‘Trucileers’ – recent joiners to the movement – who went on a rampage against former employees of the British Government. Patrick Cassidy of Crossard, formerly of the Congested Districts Board, suffered two attacks in his home and was seriously wounded on 6th March. He was attended by a local doctor

² Addresses are all Ballyhaunis town except where stated. W.D. Coyne (Chairman of Mayo County Council), Felix P. Murray, Thomas Coyne, M.J. Fitzmaurice, Peter Hannon, James J. Cunningham, James Caulfield, Joseph Cooney NT, Peter Byrne (Bridge St.), James Lydon, Patrick Morley, Michael G. Delaney, James Carney, P.J. Waldron, P.J. Rattigan, Joseph Flatley, Garret Dillon, Patrick Neary, William Eaton, Michael Flatley, Michael Webb, James Waldron (father of the present writer), Patrick Morley (Main St.), John Prenty (Tooraree), Patrick Healy (Holywell), Tom Fitzmaurice (Togher), James Dalton, (Coolnafarna), James Morris MCC, Miss Kate Gibbons, Miss Annie Kilduff, Mrs. Sarah Coyne, Mrs. J.J. Cunningham, Thomas F. Moran, Patrick O’Brien, Frank Moran, John Freeley, Thomas Ruddy, Patrick J. Byrne, John Halpin, John Waldron, J. Buckley.

who extracted four bullets from his body and was transferred to Galway Hospital where it was thought he might be safe. But, a week later, four masked men came into the hospital and he was shot dead in his bed. The shooting of the two former RIC officers was reported in *The Western People* of 8th April 1922. They had returned to their homes in Ballyhaunis after their demobilisation from the disbanded RIC.

Start of the Civil War

On 14th April 1922 armed opponents of the Treaty occupied the Four Courts in Dublin, holding out for two months until the new Provisional Government, regrettably yielding to pressure from the British Government, bombarded the building. The shelling of the Four Courts marked the beginning of the Civil War which saw the deaths of many revered leaders from stress or in combat on both sides. July marked the untimely death of President Arthur Griffith, for whom a Solemn Requiem Mass was celebrated in Ballyhaunis. Two Ministers of the First Dáil were soon dead: Cathal Brugha, shot dead in O’Connell Street, and Michael Collins, shot dead in August in an ambush at Béal na Bláth in Cork. Death, during the Civil War, was no respecter of persons or political sides.

No wonder that there was a Civil War. People had got used to violence and some felt the excitement of war should continue! Participants on both sides had come from diverse backgrounds in Irish life including followers of the secret society, the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), to which were added devotees of Irish culture in the Gaelic League and various strands of political and military activists among the Irish Volunteers. There were brave and conscientious people on both sides.

A Moral Dilemma

The critical question now arose: who could claim to be the real government? Was it the elected Dáil and its government, or the IRA members who disagreed with the Treaty? That moral and political question was forcefully confronted by the Irish Catholic bishops in a statement of 26th April 1922 just weeks after the occupation of the Four Courts by IRA Republicans. Previous statements by the bishops in October 1920 and June 1921 had been praised for their strong condemnation of atrocities by British forces. Then they supported the verdict of the Irish people in setting up their own form of government. Unashamedly, they now supported that new government. They directed their outrage, not at the British as they had done previously, but at their fellow-Irishmen. They stated:

‘We think that the best and wisest course for Ireland is to accept the Treaty and make the most of the freedom it undoubtedly brings us for the first time in

700 years... Principles are now being openly advocated and acted upon which are in fundamental conflict with the law of God, and which, as Bishops and Pastors appointed to safeguard Christian morals, we cannot allow to pass without solemn censure and reprobation. Foremost among these principles is the claim that the army, or a part of it, can without authority from the nation as a whole declare itself independent of all civil authority in the country. The army as a whole, and still more a part of the army, has no such moral right. Such a claim is a claim to military despotism and is subversive of all civil liberty. It is an immoral usurpation and confiscation of the people's right. There can be in practice no doubt as long as the Dáil and the Provisional Government act in unison, as they have hitherto done... When in prosecution of these principles they proceed to make shameful war upon their own country they are parricides not patriots; when they shoot brothers on the opposite side they are murderers; when they injure property they are robbers and brigands.'

Their full statement was to be read in every church in Ireland on Sunday, 7th May 1922 and the following Friday was to be a 'Black Fast Day', a day of united prayer for peace. Other religious devotions were suggested. No doubt some people took their advice seriously but on this occasion the bishops' desire for peace went unheeded. The sad Civil War had begun and continued for more than a year until April 1923. Later, church authorities were criticised for their instructing that Absolution was not to be given in Confessions to so-called 'Irregulars' who were determined to continue in their opposition to the Dáil by armed revolt.

An election was to be held on 16th June 1922 but, in fear of violence arising, Michael Collins and Eamon De Valera entered a pact to ensure the re-election of members from both sides on a proportional basis. The pact itself produced its own disagreements but Pro-Treaty Sinn Féin obtained 58 seats; Anti-Treaty Sinn Féin 36; Labour 17; Farmers 7; and Independents 10. Labour and Farmers Party supported the Treaty.

Military Events of 1922 in Ballyhaunis

Thankfully, Ballyhaunis was spared the worst of the savage shootings, executions and reprisals committed elsewhere in the country during the Civil War. Nothing like the Ballyseedy massacre occurred here. But it was not peaceful either. It is difficult to retrace local events during that war. Brothers fought brothers so most people involved kept a life-long silence about their involvement. One perceptive five-page account about the activities of the Aghamore-Tooreen company of the Irregulars has

survived, written by Willie Coen from Bruff.³ He was still very young at the time, so he spoke easily about IRA activities and had no difficulty about naming names. He says that Ballyhaunis town was strongly pro-Treaty. Willie Coen described his excitement when the 'Aghamores', as he said, 'took over Ballyhaunis' early in 1922. The 'Irregulars' had received instructions from their leaders which allowed them to commandeer vehicles or property when required. So, they seized a vehicle owned by Ballyhaunis merchant John M. Conroy in which Willie had his first ever spin in a car around the town. The Irregulars also took over Lyons's Hotel on Main Street as a base but withdrew when they heard that the new Free State army had arrived in Ballinlough and were soon to arrive in the town. Their arrival, under the command of Commandant-General Lawlor was described in the *Mayo News* of 12th August 1922 as the 'Relief of Ballyhaunis'. Captain Peter Lynch remained on as the officer commanding in Ballyhaunis.

The events from the Civil War proper (1922) are listed by Michael F. Waldron as follows:

- June 5th Attack on Ned Webb's house. [*Hazelhill*]
- July 22nd The new Free State forces occupy town amid wild scenes of enthusiasm. Republican forces evacuated town. Attempt to burn barracks. Railway bridge at [*O'Brien's*] Mill [*Hazelhill*] blown up. Great excitement.
- July 23rd National Army move on to Claremorris (Sunday) leaving a garrison.
- Aug. 22nd Sentries disarmed at Moylett's corner and fired on. Uproar.
- Oct. 1st Another attack 11.30pm.
- Oct. 4th Firing at night 11pm.
- Oct. 7th Fierce onslaught starting about 1.30am, Another attack 10pm to 11.30pm.
- Oct. 11th Brief bombardment about 9pm.
- Oct. 19th Brief bombardment about 10.30pm.
- Oct. 20th Vigorous and prolonged attack commencing about 10.30pm and lasting until 5.30am.
- Oct. 28th Flying column visit district and make several arrests, including Maurice Mullins.
- Oct. 29th Several arrests, including John P. Jordan and Johnny Grealy – nine in all.
- Oct 30th Intense bombardment 11pm to 12.30am. Estimated that 20,000 rounds were expended.
- Nov. 1st Brief attack about 11pm.
- Nov. 20th Intense firing 11.15 to 12.45 am.
- Nov. 23rd Brisk attack 10.45pm to 11.30pm.
- Nov. 25th Felix Murray shot dead at Mount Delvin. Fierce attack, beginning 8.30pm.
- Nov. 27th Lively attack for about an hour beginning 8.30pm.

³ Willie Coen, 'When the Achadh Mórs took over Ballyhaunis' in *Glór Achadh Mór*, no. 15 (2003), pp 74-78.

- Nov. 30th Lively attack for over an hour, 1.30am.
- Dec. 1st Vigorous attack for over four hours beginning about 10.30pm.
- Dec. 3rd Attack for over an hour about 11 pm.
- Dec. 4th Vigorous hour's attack beginning about 9 pm.
- Dec. 5th Fierce attack for over an hour beginning about 10pm. Volunteer Moyles killed.
- Dec. 6th Military funeral of Vol. Moyles.
- Dec. 10th Brief attack about 11pm.

The Mayo papers reported on many of those incidents. *The Western People* covered the attack on the sentries at Moylett's Corner (now McGarry's), on 2nd August, possibly by Free State troops who had entered the town on that day. There was also an attack on a travelling shop owned by P.J. Caulfield by two armed men in August in which £34 was stolen. The period October to December was clearly very violent in Ballyhaunis. However, apart from the murders of Felix Murray on 25th November and Volunteer Moyles two weeks later, few of the above incidents merited reports in the Mayo newspapers. The wild shootings listed are thought to have been diversions against the old barracks of the RIC in Main Street and various other locations in order to contain the Free State troops.

The arrest of John Patrick Jordan in August 1922 was recalled by him more than thirty years later when he met the man who arrested him – Bill Mulligan of Ballyhaunis. Both of them were then National School Principals. They were brought together by a relative of Jordan's. Before they shook hands, John Patrick said: 'the last time you spoke to me you put me in jail!' They still had a great evening together!

Fierce attacks on Free State troops became more common throughout the country in late 1922 with the loss of many lives, including one Pro-Treaty TD. In response, the Government enacted a very threatening 'Public Safety Act' on 28th September 1922 which authorised the government to execute anybody caught in possession of a gun. Capital punishment was then a common feature in most countries, so formal executions followed. These lasted up to the end of the war in April 1923. They included such horrific events as the Ballyseedy murders in Co. Kerry and the execution in April 1923 of six prisoners moved from Galway to the old Workhouse in Tuam just a few weeks before the war ended. But the Government of the time, defending the Emergency

Powers Act, said they believed it was the only way of ending the war and saving the country.

These, and other such executions, left many bitter memories in Ireland and will never be forgotten. When I was a young priest in Corrandulla, Co. Galway in 1961 an old Franciscan brother told me that every time he saw my Anglia car with the registration number BIM 77 he could think of nothing except the 'seventy-seven Republicans who lost their lives during the Civil War'.

Murder at Mount Delvin

The murder of Felix Murray on 25th November 1922 was an alarming event. A native of Ballycroy, he had been a van-driver for Patrick Moylett's business in Ballyhaunis before 1918. That van had been painted green, white and gold and was well known as a mobile recruiting office for the Volunteers. Murray had taken the Pro-Treaty side in the Civil War. Now aged thirty-six, married but with no family, he had his own wholesale business, working from Ballyhaunis and serving a wide hinterland embracing parts of Mayo, Roscommon and Galway.

His inquest was held at the Courthouse in Ballyhaunis, with Conor A. Maguire as Coroner.⁴ Captain Peter Lynch of the Free State Army stated that no Free State personnel were in that area on that night, implying that it was a well-planned ambush by Republicans. Murray's helper, Michael Griffin, gave evidence that while travelling from Irishtown, on that

November evening, having delivered Christmas goods to shops in Dunmore and Irishtown, they approached Mount Delvin, three miles from Cloonfad, when they heard a roadside order to halt. Murray asked Griffin, 'was that a halt?' but the van carried on about a hundred yards when another cry of 'Halt' was heard and a volley of shots rang out, smashing the windscreen. Felix Murray was unable to stop as he had been shot dead. The van veered off the road and the lights went out. Griffin was ordered by an armed man to advance with his hands up. He saw more than ten men in trench coats at a distance. One man did help Griffin to take the body of Felix Murray out of the van before Griffin cycled to Cloonfad for a priest.

A monument marks the spot where Murray died near the former National School in Mount Delvin. Nobody was ever charged for his murder. According to an article in the *Cloonfad* magazine of 2019, a contributor recounts that his father, a former member of the local IRA, had



Felix Murray (1888-1922).
Courtesy of his niece, Dolly Murray.

⁴ *Mayo News*, 9 Dec. 1922.



Left: The monument at Mount Delvin, Cloonfad, Co. Roscommon – near where the three counties meet: Roscommon, Mayo and Galway – where Felix Murray lost his life, 25th Nov. 1922.

*It reads: IN LOVING MEMORY OF
FELIX P. MURRAY, BALLYHAUNIS
WHO WAS KILLED HERE NOV. 25TH 1922.
GO NDÉANA DIA TROCAIRE AR A ANAM.*

As recorded by Dr. Michael F. Waldron, there were almost nightly attacks on the Free State troops based in the barracks and around the town in the months of November and December 1922. It was miraculous that there were not several casualties. On 5th December, however, a twenty year-old soldier in the National Army, Volunteer Moyles, a native of Dunlee between Ballina and Crossmolina, who was on duty in Main Street, was found shot dead in the laneway beside the Church. He had been in Ballyhaunis since the arrival of the troops in July and was highly popular. His military funeral to the railway station took place under the command of Captain Peter Lynch OC Ballyhaunis for transfer to Ballina by the afternoon train. All shops in the town were closed for the funeral.

1923 Military Events

The death of this young soldier and the sense of revulsion at the recent murder of Felix Murray must have had a calming effect among activists in the Ballyhaunis area. Dr. Michael F. Waldron, in his diary for the first five months of 1923, lists just the following entries:

- March 8th Civic Guards arrive. Brisk attack from 10pm to midnight.
- March 10th Intense attack lasting over an hour beginning at 11.30pm.
- March 18th Brisk attack starting about 1.30am and lasting for about an hour.
- April 12th Attack for about an hour starting at 12.30 am.

The War best Forgotten

The Civil War formally ended on 30th April 1923 when a republican ceasefire was declared, followed by an order on 24th May from Frank Aiken, Chief of Staff of the IRA to disperse and ‘to dump arms’.

How did Ireland ever come to peace again after such a dreadful civil war? Silence, it appears, was the chosen solution. As a young boy growing up in Ballyhaunis in the 1940s I never heard talk of any Civil War. Most people involved kept silent but remained distant from one another for many a long year. Many had deep misgivings about their activities in those tumultuous years.

Enemies became reconciled through the normal parish life and community activities, including sporting organisations like the GAA. Mercifully, it was a short-lived event and was not based on geographical, economic, social or religious divides. When the Second World War broke out in the 1939 a Local Defence Force and Local

said that the Cloonfad company were not involved, but a party of Irregulars on the run had visited their house that evening. He said they were from Mayo - ‘not a hundred miles from Davitt country’. He suggested that they may have taken the opportunity to halt the approaching van and obtain some food and cigarettes, and perhaps money. If that version was correct it would not explain the indiscriminate shooting.

Felix Murray was something of a local hero. Just eleven months earlier he was hailed as such by a large crowd at Ballyhaunis railway station on his release from Ballykinlar Prison in Co. Down.⁵ His body was laid out in the Courthouse and a great feeling of grief was felt in the Ballyhaunis area. He was removed the next day to the parish church where his funeral Mass was held. His funeral saw a huge turnout. The hearse was dispensed with and his coffin carried by supporters the whole way from the church to Ballyhaunis cemetery. Mr. Liam Sears TD represented Dáil Éireann and the military gave a salute as the cortege passed the present Garda barracks on Main Street. His grave in Ballyhaunis cemetery, twenty yards from the main entrance on the left, lies directly behind the grave of Michael Coen who was murdered by Crown Forces a year earlier. Both were victims of one or other of the two wars which afflicted Ireland between 1921 and 1923.

⁵ Kieran Waldron, ‘Centenary of Ballyhaunis Events in 1921 – A Year of Turmoil and Triumph’ in *Annagh*, no. 43 (2020), p. 19.



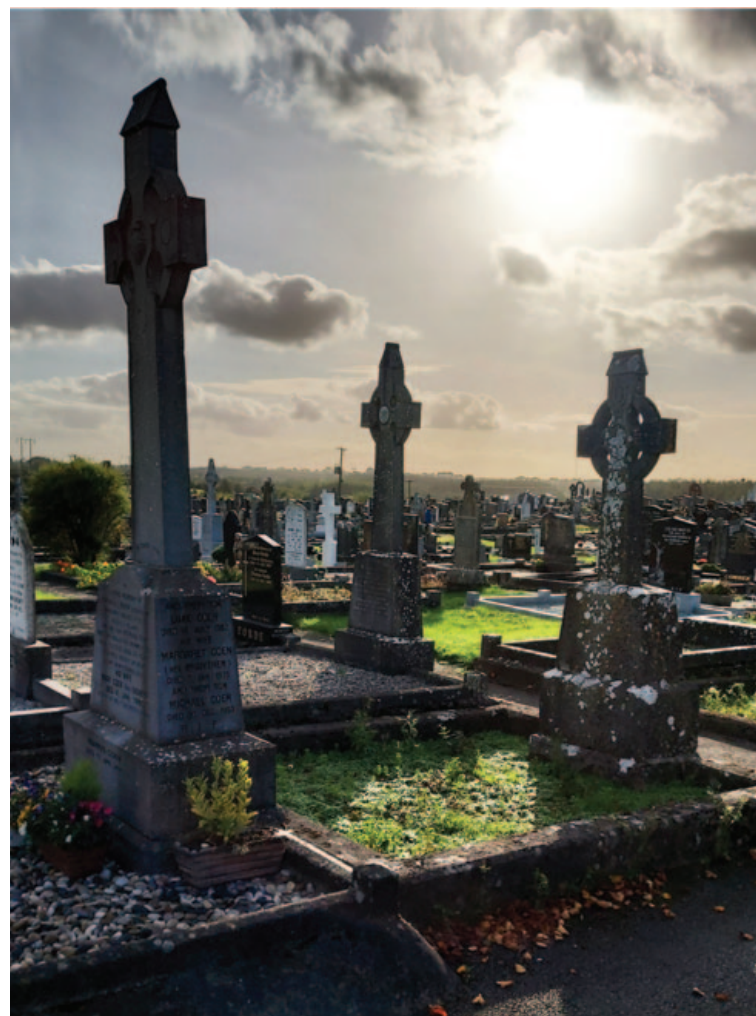
Taken at the Eucharistic Congress of 1932. The principal canopy bearers are newly elected President of the Executive Council Éamon De Valera of Fianna Fáil (right) and his predecessor W. T. Cosgrave of Cumann na nGaedheal (left) – both devout Catholics.

Security Force (LDF and LSF) were set up and people from opposing factions were happy to join – and wear a uniform again. The peace was further advanced in 1949 when the ‘Republic of Ireland’ was officially declared and accepted internationally, albeit still excluding the ‘Six Counties’ in the North-East of Ireland.

During the war, Eamon De Valera spent one year in prison in Arbour Hill barracks so was not in command of the military situation. Four years later, Fianna Fáil, his new party re-entered Dáil Eireann, having secured canonical advice that they could treat the vote of allegiance to the King ‘as an empty formula’. He was to lead his first government in 1932, and his decision to opt for democratic policies has been praised by historians who say that it was his greatest achievement, especially in the 1930s when totalitarianism was spreading throughout Europe in Italy, Portugal, Greece, Germany and Spain.⁶ That 1932 government was to be followed by nineteen other Fianna Fáil governments under eight different Taoisigh. Within the Dáil, however, Civil War antagonisms did continue for many decades, so who could have foreseen that, just short of the centenary of the ‘Split’, the heirs of the opposing political factions of the Civil War, would come together to form a Coalition Irish Government in 2020.

Hopefully, the Irish Civil War is now well and truly over!

⁶ Diarmaid Ferriter, *Judging Dev: A Reassessment of the Life and Legacy of Eamon De Valera* (Dublin 2007), p. 185.



The graves of Felix Murray (right) and Michael Coen (left) in Ballyhaunis Cemetery. Victims of the two wars which afflicted Ireland between 1921 and 1923.

Felix and Florrie: Victims of the Civil War

STEPHEN BALL & PAUL WALDRON

Felix Murray was born in Drumslide, Ballycroy, Co. Mayo, in 1888, son of Thomas and Catherine Murray. He was one of nine children reared on a small farm not far from the sea in an area of outstanding natural beauty with spectacular Atlantic views across to Blacksod and Achill, and landward to the Nephin mountain range. Four of his brothers and a sister emigrated to America – Pat, James, Anthony, Thomas and Margaret; two sisters married locally – Ellen (McGuire) and Mary (Ginty); while the youngest in the family, John, married in the home-place.

Felix was a commercial traveller by profession and worked the length and breadth of the country. On the night of 2nd April 1911, when the census was taken, he was staying in a boarding house in Philipstown (now Daingean), Co. Offaly, where his occupation was given as ‘tea traveller’.

He had moved to Ballyhaunis by 1916 probably through some connection with Patrick Moylett, a Crossmolina man who had a business on Main Street (present day McGarry’s) at that time. Moylett’s story has been well told in recent issues of *Annagh* – his involvement in setting up the Irish Volunteers in Ballyhaunis in 1914, his part in the War of Independence locally and nationally, and his crucial role as secret emissary between Dáil Éireann and the British Government which led to the declaration of the Truce on 11th July 1921.¹

An early recruit to the Irish Volunteers in Ballyhaunis, Felix Murray also took charge of the local Na Fianna Brigade, an Irish Nationalist youth organisation. Gerry Dillon of Abbeyquarter, in *Annagh 1979*, recalled that in 1915-16 nearly every young lad in town was a member and that Murray was at its head: ‘We used to be drilled out the Clare Road to Holywell, across to Agloragh and in by Abbeyquarter.’²

In 1917 Moylett had his motor van painted green, white and yellow. It operated as a recruiting vehicle and, from it, the Sinn Féin and IRA organisations were built up in South Mayo, Roscommon and North Galway. Its driver was Felix Murray, as confirmed in Moylett’s own testimony to the Bureau of Military History 1913-21.

¹ Fr. Kieran Waldron, ‘Centenary Ireland: Ballyhaunis in 1913-14’ in *Annagh* (2013), pp. 94-95; Anthony Jordan, ‘Some Political and Military Events Around Ballyhaunis 1914-22’ in *Annagh* (2013), pp. 96-98; and Fr. Kieran Waldron, ‘Centenary of Ballyhaunis Events in 1921: A Year of Turmoil and Triumph’ in *Annagh* (2020), pp. 14-20.

² ‘Gerry Dillon Remembers’ in *Annagh* (1979), pp. 39-40, and John Durkan, ‘Who Do We Think We Are? Ballyhaunis and the War of Independence’ in *Annagh* (2020), pp. 182-189.



Memorial card for Felix Murray.
Courtesy of his niece, Dolly Murray.

On 30th June 1919, in the Pro-Cathedral, Marlborough St., Dublin, Felix married Florence Mary Gibbons of Bohermeen, Co. Meath. They settled in Ballyhaunis living over their business premises where Curley’s Jewellers are now, on the Square. While she ran the shop and public house – ‘The Connaught Bar’ – he was on the road working as a wholesale supplier, most likely using the twenty horse-power Ford motor van – IZ 38 – he registered just a year earlier on 8th Mar. 1918.

His active involvement in the War of Independence led to their home being raided frequently. He was arrested 22nd November 1920, taken to Galway and was among fifty prisoners shipped out to Ballykinlar Internment Camp, Co. Down. Here he was incarcerated for a year and was released only after the signing of the Treaty in December 1921. He was one of the delegates selected at the last general meeting of the Ballyhaunis Roger Casement Sinn Féin Club to attend the Árd Fheis in Dublin in support of the treaty.

Anthony Jordan, writing in *Annagh 2013*, told of a Dublin friend who had just purchased an autograph book signed by IRA internees at Ballykinlar Camp in the early 1920s. One of the signatures was ‘Fiamaichín Ó Muirí,

Beal Átha h-Amhnais'. Jordan, with the assistance of Joe Keane, was able to establish that the autograph was Felix Murray's.

Florrie's story

The story of Florrie Murray's life following her husband's untimely death is told here by Stephen Ball of St. Ultan's Historical Society, Bohermeen, Co. Meath.

"How Florrie and Felix met or knew each other prior to their marriage is not known, perhaps like many generations both then and now they had both moved to Dublin to seek employment. We do know that soon after their marriage they set up home in Ballyhaunis in his native county, where they conducted a grocer's business in the town. Following the tragic death of her husband Florrie, a young widow in her early thirties, had to organise her young husband's funeral instead of preparing their life together after just three years of marriage.

After her husband's death, she continued to live and run the family business for a number of years in Ballyhaunis. She would have found it quite lonesome despite having many friends there as most of her immediate family lived in Bohermeen, Co. Meath where she was from. A few years later she sold the business and spent many years working for the Irish Sweepstake company in Dublin, living in Ballsbridge. At the end of her working career she moved back to Bohermeen upon retirement where she lived out the rest of her days.

She made many trips back to Ballyhaunis for the annual commemoration of her late husband Felix until time and age wouldn't allow. She also erected a monument on the site at Mount Delvin where her young husband lost his life all those years ago, and a beautiful memorial that marks his grave in Ballyhaunis Cemetery. It reads:

In
Fond and Loving Memory of
Felix P. Murray, *Ballyhaunis*,
Who was killed
On Nov. 25th 1922 Aged 33 years.
Sacred Heart of Jesus Have Mercy
On his Soul
Erected by his Loving Wife Florrie

Florrie, in retirement, lived in a small house at the top of the Church Lane in Bohermeen, beside the local school. Many generations of school children, including this writer, recall her as an old lady. Occasionally a ball



Florrie Murray as a young woman.
Courtesy of Stephen Ball, St. Ultan's
Historical Society.

would cross the hedge into her garden and most times she would throw it back; but the odd time she hesitated, as if to remind the children to ask in a nice manner.

Not many aside from her family and close friends would have known that she was a widow for over fifty-three years at the time of her passing – certainly, none of the school children to whom she often showed kindness by giving them tea and biscuits on cold and wet days as they waited for their parents to collect them.

Florrie passed away in May 1976 at the age of 84 and was buried in the graveyard beside Bohermeen church

not far from her home. Her former home at the top of the Church Lane has changed hands many times over the years, but many locals still refer to it as Florrie Murray's house – to remember her in an affectionate way.

In conclusion, St. Ultan's Historical Society would like to thank the Annagh Magazine committee for allowing us to make a contribution about our late parishioner who once called Ballyhaunis her home."

Stephen Ball.



Florrie Murray in later years, pictured on the right.
Courtesy of Stephen Ball, St. Ultan's Historical Society.

Life in Chile during the Pandemic

LUKE PRATT

My name is Luke. I was born in Galway in 1982 to Chris and Xanthe Pratt of Scregg, Ballyhaunis, and these are my impressions of life in Santiago, Chile, since the Covid-19 pandemic struck in March of last year. Here's the big picture:

Covid-19 arrived at a very difficult and vulnerable time for Chile as, from October 2019, there had been violence and protests on the streets of towns and cities up and down the country, provoked by a vocal and angry percentage of the population who were citing widespread and sustained injustices on the part of government and security services, and discrimination against the poor majority. As a result of the violence and resulting delinquency, many thousands lost their jobs, business properties and livelihoods. January and February 2020 (Chilean summertime) saw a decrease in the violence and protests, which gave Chileans some brief respite before the Covid-19 onslaught.

As soon as the Chilean authorities became aware of the arrival of Covid-19, at the beginning of March 2020, the decision was made to close the borders and put the country — with its population of almost 19 million — on a state of high alert. Despite that, cases began to rise rapidly. Those regions where cases had appeared were placed in strict quarantine. Every non-essential business was closed, along with schools, colleges and universities. Nobody was allowed to leave their homes, even for basic groceries, without a special permit from the police, solicited online and received by e-mail. People were restricted to two permits per week. This was very tough, especially for those living in built-up areas, and in particular for people living in the capital, Santiago — one of the places worst affected by the virus — as they were confined to their (often small) living spaces, unable to leave without a permit. Some districts were in full quarantine for up to seven weeks, making it particularly stressful for those who had not lost their jobs from either the violence and delinquency of the previous months, or from the effects of Covid and who were working from home with children or other dependents present. Protective measures were also swiftly introduced,

including the obligatory use of face masks along with social distancing, the use of alcohol gel and a ban on gatherings.

A plan was later drawn up to allow those regions of the country which saw a decrease in the number of cases of contagion and death to relax the restrictions in place. Some people, as a result of the strictness of the measures, moved out of the capital for good, to less crowded parts of the country which were in a more manageable situation. In June of last year when, at one point, Chile was averaging 6,700 new cases per day over the span of a week, a decision was made to move those people with

life-threatening cases of Covid to other hospitals in other less badly affected parts of the country, so that the number of beds in intensive care units in the worst affected areas would still be available for new serious cases. This successfully ensured that the system would not collapse.

People suffered greatly last year, partly due to the government's slow rollout of adequate financial help and provisions. Those living in the most deprived parts of Chile's cities set up soup kitchens to combat shortages in households and to help the homeless. That said, this year in April saw the highest number of cases since the pandemic's arrival — at one point, averaging 7,320 new cases per day over the span of a week. The government started to get the help

sorely needed to those who needed it. This included giving the people who had one the opportunity to withdraw up to 30% percent of their private pensions in order to shore up against further financial distress. At the beginning of February, the country also began its very successful vaccine rollout program. The government had ensured a large stockpile of different vaccines early on, which turned out to be a very important investment. After only seven months, Chile now finds itself with almost 90% of the population over the age of sixteen vaccinated with both doses, and cases have dropped significantly, which has led to the relaxation of most measures. However, the borders remain closed to people with unvaccinated children, and the vaccine which is available is currently only available



Luke, Penelope and Emily Pratt.

for children over the age of six.

Now, here are some more personal reflections. I live in the capital city. I am married to Penelope, and we have a four-year-old daughter, Emily. Our experience has been made much more bearable because we have been living at my mother-in-law's house almost since the pandemic hit. Situated in a much quieter, less crowded, and greener area of the city, it has afforded us the escape and the concentration levels we have needed to continue with our work and studies. It has also given Emily space to play in, which she would not have had if we had been living in an apartment in the early months. Nonetheless, getting accustomed to life in total lockdown with Penelope working full-time, me studying full-time, and a child not yet in school was difficult, especially without being able to see our families and friends. The uncertainties of how long the pandemic and the preven-

tative health measures would continue, and not knowing when we could get out of the city to be closer to nature, were particularly stressful. As well as this, along with the travel restrictions in place in Chile for families with unvaccinated children, the Irish government currently requires those travelling from Chile and other South American countries to comply with a two-week obligatory hotel quarantine, which is exorbitantly costly. Both these obstacles mean that we cannot yet travel to see our family in Ireland.

In March of this year, Emily did start school, at first with online classes, and then in person. She loves it and, if she had the choice, would be there seven days a week! It also benefits us as we can work and study in a more focused fashion.

Meanwhile, we remain hopeful that we may be able to travel to Ireland at the end of the year. Fingers crossed!

Ballyhaunis Library

ELEANOR FREYNE (LIBRARIAN)

Ballyhaunis Library is back in business! And what a joy it has been to welcome people back into the library. We are open for browsing and borrowing and our public computers are available for use. We will be following public health guidance on this. Opening hours may vary slightly – so contact Ballyhaunis Library for further details.

But you can borrow to your heart's content – and you might be pleasantly surprised at all of the lovely new books just waiting for readers. Our deliveries of new books continued while we were closed, and as staff were working behind closed doors, we were able to get them all ready to go straight on the shelf.

You'll also be delighted to learn that you can get busy requesting all of the books that have been added to your TBR (to be read) pile – our national deliveries are operating again between all Irish libraries, and the online request service has been switched back on.

If you are just a bit nervous about fully emerging into the world just yet, we are still operating our Call & Collect service. Simply contact Eleanor at Ballyhaunis branch (phone and email details given below), let me know what authors or genres you like, and I'll be happy to pack a bag of books which you can collect at your convenience.

All of our online services – ebooks, audiobooks, newspapers, magazines and online courses – are also still available, and you may have heard the news that an additional €200,000 has been invested in ebooks and audiobooks on our BorrowBox service – which will be

welcome news to all of you who have really enjoyed this service during our closure. Phone or email the library if you'd like details on how to access these services. All you need is a library card and PIN.

We never really went away during the lockdown – we were here all along, working behind closed doors and interacting with you all via social media, email and phone. But we're here in person again and look forward very much to catching up with you all. The books are back in town!

Phone: 094 9630161 (Eleanor)

Email: efreyne@mayococo.ie



Noel Gavin, the driver for Local Link Mayo that provided a brilliant service delivering books and DVDs to people during lockdown.

An Account of a Strange Few Months in France

GABRIEL PRATT

Two days after Ireland went into lockdown on 15th March 2020, France followed suit. Hospital admissions were rising exponentially and the health system risked being overwhelmed. President Emmanuel Macron's television address, watched by the largest number of viewers for any television programme ever in France, made several references to France being 'at war' with the virus.

France then entered one of the strictest lockdowns in the world. People were confined to their homes and a form (initially only printable, but subsequently electronic) had to be filled in if one needed to leave the house. Schools, colleges and universities were closed. Public transport was reduced to a skeleton service. We were ordered to work from home ('télétravail') wherever possible. Bars, brasseries, restaurants, anywhere where people might socialise, were shut. Essential services (including supermarkets, filling stations, banks, pharmacies, bakers, etc.) were allowed to remain open, although with much reduced capacity. A vast government support system was put in place for the businesses that were forced to close, including a furlough system for people whose jobs did not allow them to work from home. We were allowed one hour of exercise per day, to be undertaken within one km of our home address. Public spaces, including parks, were cordoned off to prevent people congregating. This first lockdown lasted slightly less than two months.

Working from home

Paris, one of Europe's noisiest cities, fell silent overnight. The streets emptied. The Parisian café culture - terraces filled with people laughing, drinking and smoking until the small hours - disappeared completely. Cinemas and theatres stood empty. Photographs of a silent, car-free, Champs Elysées appeared in the papers. Uncharacteristically orderly queues formed outside supermarkets; paint appeared on the pavements, indicating where people were to stand while queueing. Our friends, whose living room overlooks a local park, sent us a film of the police setting up a cordon around the perimeter.

My wife and I started working full time from home, with the two children at home. We live in a third floor apartment, but we couldn't take the children to the park because these were all closed. We were the lucky ones: at least we had access to the communal garden attached to the apartment building. Doubly-lucky because the months of March-May 2020 had beautiful Spring weather. We set up a family rota: depending on our weekly work meeting schedule, we would alternate

mornings and afternoons looking after the children. Their teachers sent their lessons by email, and these occupied some of their morning time. In the afternoons, we went into the garden.

Some restrictions lifted

On 11th May 2020, schools reopened and some of the lockdown restrictions were lifted. People who could work from home still did so. In the schools, if one child in a class became sick, the whole class had to stay at home for the following week. This happened to one of our children's classes during this time. The government continued to equivocate about the benefits of wearing a mask anywhere other than indoors, or in situations where many people were likely to be present.



Gabriel Pratt and family at Parc de Sceaux, near Paris, just before the third lockdown here, 28th March 2021.

Here in France, everyone goes on holiday for two months starting on 1 July, or it certainly seems like they do. Good luck trying to get any administrative task done during July and August. But in summer 2020, it felt like the whole country breathed a sigh of relief. International travel still being almost impossible, people dispersed to the French holiday hotspots. Unfortunately, this resulted in an increase in the transmission rates and incidence of the virus, leading, for the first time, to the imposition of a full mask mandate for adults - even outside - during August 2020. Initially, this was limited to the larger cities, but it soon became a countrywide order. This mandate, which worked well because of its lack of ambiguity, stayed in place until 17th June 2021.

Second lockdown

The boys started school again on the return from the summer holidays. As expected, infection rates started rising exponentially a month or so after, leading to the

imposition of a second nationwide lockdown on 13th October 2020. Very significantly, and to its great credit, the French government prioritised education. The first lockdown had led to pronounced issues regarding children's ability to follow the curriculum, and so it was decided that schools would remain open as far as possible during this second lockdown period. Non-essential businesses closed again, leading to a lot of argument in the papers and on the radio about the exact definition of 'essential business' (i.e. one that could stay open). The bookshop-owner's union successfully argued their case, and bookshops stayed open. Significantly too, at least for those with small children, the parks were not closed. We continued to work from home.

The second lockdown lasted until just before the Christmas holidays. On 15th December 2020 long-distance travel restrictions within France were lifted, allowing people to visit their family over the Christmas period. France started its vaccination drive on 27th December 2020, initially targeted at those over seventy-five or with pre-existing conditions. The age band was lowered to fifty on 15th March 2021. The vaccine rollout was initially painfully slow, as was the case in Ireland and across Europe.

Third lockdown

The vaccination drive clearly slowed the rate of infection on the return from the Christmas holidays, but not enough to prevent cases from rising again during March. Faced once again with a health service at saturation point, the third nationwide lockdown was imposed on 3rd April 2021, and lasted until 3rd May. In practice this lockdown consisted of a two-week extension to the half-term holidays in schools, a re-imposition of long-distance travel restrictions, and the closing of non-essential businesses.

The vaccination drive picked up from April, and I got my first vaccination in May. For the first time in more than a year, this allowed me to start thinking in concrete terms about buying tickets to fly back home to Ireland, and so I booked a flight for myself and my children as soon as I could. We visited Ballyhaunis for the first time in eighteen months in July-August 2021. On arrival in Dublin on 20th July 2021, the day after the European Green pass was rolled out in Ireland, the airport was quieter than I have ever seen it. The border guard looked at my passport and smiled. He handed me back my papers and said, "Welcome home, sir", and then we walked through the checkpoint.

A Ballyhappiness Odyssey

One summer's day, with hackney ordered,
picnic, swimsuits and towels packed
mum was struck by one of her
Artistic Temperament Headaches
and was forced to bed for the day.
'*Artistic people can't tolerate much commotion*'.
she often explained.

Daddy promptly cancelled the hackney
turned the kitchen table upside down
tied one side of a sheet to the leg
the other to the broom handle
and with the poker as a tiller
we set sail out into the Atlantic.
The wild Atlantic is much rougher than Annagh Lake
with waves higher than the house he explained.

West of Inisbofin, we tacked south
the sea smooth as glass,
yet alive with shark fins, jumping dolphins,
krakens shadowed our course
their enormous tentacles trying to envelope us,
we fought back, poking their powerful suckers
off the boat with our wooden swords.

All was going well 'til we hit a storm off the coast of Spain.
Our ship was thrown hither and thither by the swell.
Reef the sail, batten down the hatches
our captain shouted over the ferocious wind
and the deafening sea. The giant waves thrashed about us.
Drenched in spray, we huddled below
gallantly weathering the storm.

Gradually the wind died down, the sea calmed.
Trim the jib, hoist the main sail our captain ordered.
We tacked southeast to the Azores.
Out of the mist on the starboard bow, a mast,
its flag hazy in the grey foam.
As it drew closer we saw the skull and crossbones.
In seconds, it pulled alongside.

With a cutlass in one hand and a sword in the other
the pirates leaped aboard our vessel.
We fought bravely, four heroic sisters, Amazonian warriors,
our weapons unequal to theirs', our strategy superior.
We forced their retreat, commandeered their vessel,
threw them overboard.

Exhausted and starving, we dropped anchor.
Let's have a banquet to celebrate our victory
our captain said producing a basket
Try a salted hog and ostrich egg sandwiches.
It was delicious, unlike anything we had ever tasted.
A sweet truffe biscuit from the forest floor,
or a fig roll from the oasis
and sip the sweet sap of the Maobi tree.
The juice tasted a bit like red lemonade but more exotic.
After eating our fill, we played *Snap* and *Fish*.

Towards evening Mother recovered and cooked supper.
With a wink from daddy, we ate with pretended relish,
we didn't tell her about the delicious banquet,
in case her headache returned.

**Anne Irwin (née Hughes) of Galway and formerly of
Upper Main Street, Ballyhaunis.**

Wishing Emmer All The Best!

Emmer Dooley managed the Western Care Residential and Respite Services in Ballyhaunis for many years and has recently started work with Ability West in Tuam. All her colleagues and friends wish her every success in the future. We had a lovely lunch to wish her good luck, to thank her for all her hard work throughout the years and to wish her well. Here are some photos as we enjoyed a beautiful meal in Val's Bistro along with service users, family members, staff and friends.



L-R: Rita Flatley, Mary Anne Lydon, Emmer Dooley, Julia Byrne, Eileen Doherty and Deirdre Baggott.



Emmer Dooley (left) being presented with gift from Julia Byrne.



From left: Carmel Brady, Stacia Carney, Linda Hopkins presenting flowers to Emmer Dooley (right).



Left: L-R:Emmer Dooley with her 'Time to Shine' balloon.



Above: Clockwise from front: Noreen McGarry, Mary Callaghan, Noreen Ruane and Christina Concannon all enjoying the celebrations.



Emmer Dooley with colleagues and friends at her Farewell Function. Back, L-R: Carmel Brady, Mary Callaghan, Anne Lyons, Mary Anne Lydon, Christina Concannon, Eileen Doherty, Deirdre Baggott, Ellen Garvey, Noreen McGarry, Rita Flatley, Lydia Biesty, Stacia Carney. Front, L-R: Noreen Ruane, Julia Byrne, Emmer Dooley, Linda Hopkins, Megan Morley.

Golden Wedding Anniversary

Bernie and Mary Freyne (Gurteen) pictured with Fr. Stephen Farragher, PP, at the renewal of their marriage vows, marking fifty years of married life, in St. Patrick's Church, on Sunday, 24th October 2021.



On 25th Oct. 1971, Clare Street native Bernie Freyne and the former Mary Mulkeen from Kilbeg, Claremorris, said their 'I Dos' in the presence of celebrants, the late Canon Hugh Curley, P.P. Claremorris and Canon J. P. McGarry, P.P. Ballyhaunis, in St. Colman's Church, Claremorris. To mark their Golden Wedding Anniversary they renewed their marriage vows in St. Patrick's Church in Ballyhaunis in the presence of Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P., prior to the family gathering in Gurteen.

Their many friends join in wishing the couple heartiest congratulations on this great occasion and wish them every blessing with much health and happiness in the years ahead.

Dreaming Big Dreams in Ballyhaunis

FRANK GREALLY

During a year that marks the 40th anniversary of Irish Runner, the magazine I founded back in 1981, I have often found myself thinking back to the days when I worked as a Junior Postman in Ballyhaunis - a time that will always have a special place in my memory.

At the time I had dropped out of formal schooling and I was lucky to get top marks in the exam for the vacant position of Junior Postman. Then, after a medical examination by Doctor Eamonn Waldron, I was deemed suitable to be splendidly decked out in a new uniform and assigned a brand new bicycle complete with a fine front carrier.

Those days in the late sixties were peak times for telegrams. The busiest days were Thursdays and Fridays as money orders - also known as wires - arrived from Britain and I would be in full flight delivering good news and welcome income to families in the villages dotted to

north, south, east and west of our town. These families might have a father, son or daughter working in England, Wales or Scotland, and every week, without fail, the money would arrive by telegram to Ballyhaunis Post Office.

The downside of the job was having to deliver bad news - telegrams bringing tidings of a sudden death were always hard to deal with; the pedals would turn more slowly when I was given a confidential prompt that the message I had on board was a sad one.

I soon knew every village within a wide radius of the Post Office and I came to know almost every family living in those villages. It was a time of lovely innocence when all I needed to do was ride my trusty machine, whistling and singing as I sped along my merry way.

The late Johnny Henry, Chief Clerk in Ballyhaunis Post Office, had a couple of titles for me. 'The Wire Boy' was one and 'the Boy Messenger' was another. On a busy Friday, with the Post Office packed to the door, Johnny could be heard shouting up the chute whence the telegrams were dispatched from the telephonist's upstairs office.

"Send down the Wire Boy!" was the order aloft to Myra Fitzgerald and I would duly arrive down to the front counter to be greeted by a gaggle of convent school

girls who would be queueing for stamps. "Make way for the Wire Boy!" one or more of them would cry, and as the giggles erupted I wished the ground would open up and swallow me. It was bad enough to be nicknamed 'The Mouse Greally' in National School because I was small and puny for my age.

Mighty Mouse

The Mouse moniker had followed me around town for a good while, but then an incident occurred that rendered it obsolete, at least in my mind. For months I had dreaded the walk from my home in Devlis to the National School, because every morning as I approached the Lisheen, a bump in the road, I would meet a certain Tommy on his way to work for a farmer up the road.

Tommy was about fifteen and I was about eleven and the ritual was always the same; he would block my path and push me around, often with a few thumps and kicks to drive home whatever point he was trying to prove. When he had satisfied his perverse urge, he would continue on his way laughing loudly as he lit a cigarette. It was bad enough to be heading for a classroom where fear ruled, but Tommy's approach made me feel sick to the pit of my stomach because I always knew what was coming.

Then one morning I snapped, kicking him in the shins with all my force and following with an almighty punch that hit Tommy flush on the nose. I was only a puny thing but I made a powerful impact on much bigger Tommy, who roared in pain and hopped around on one leg while trying to stem the blood pumping from his nose.

I felt great satisfaction that morning and Tommy never bothered me again, except for a few expletives thrown my way as we passed on the road. I was duly pleased when word of my giant-killing reached the schoolyard courtesy of a few children who had witnessed it.

I rarely got into fights in school, but whenever I subsequently did, bolstered by that showdown, I held my ground - like the mouse that roared.

Eternal optimist

If those secondary school girls were giving me a hard time and messing with my self-image during my 'wire boy' days, Mick Nestor - our athletics mentor, motivator and transport manager - was a great man to rebuild confidence, and most mornings I started my working day in the Post Office with a stroll round the town and a visit to his barber shop on Bridge Street.

Mick was an eternal optimist, a lively and engaging character who was regarded by some as a 'blow-in'. Within a few months of his arrival he had set up as a barber and revived the boxing club that years earlier had



Frank Greally in Post Office uniform.

enjoyed much success, even hosting an international tournament in the Friary Field.

From our first meeting, when I turned up for sparring practice, Mick seemed to believe in me. He soon figured I was unlikely to make a World or even a Mayo boxing champion, but right from the start he maintained I had the talent to become a distance runner worthy of the name.

I'd sit in the big chair and Mick, the eternal optimist, would playfully spin me around while talking big dreams. On leaving Mick's shop I would wander up the town, stopping at Webb's the butchers and Pat Keane's the cobblers before heading farther up Main Street to Rita Flatley in the newsagents. Then I'd cross the road to Michael 'Ronnie' Curley in the Medical Hall, then visit my Mayo football hero Tom Fitzgerald in his shop, before returning to the Post Office and my room with a view onto Bridge Street.

I loved those idle moments looking out that first-floor window, observing the comings and goings of townsfolk and village folk in the street below, their quirks and mannerisms, watching small human dramas unfold – and all the time dreaming the big dreams Mick the Barber had been spinning for me as I spun around in the big chair.

Some of those dreams did come true. I became reasonably successful as a distance runner, making it on



Budding athlete Frank Greally with a table-full of trophies.

to the Irish Senior Men's cross-country team for the World Cross Country Championships in Cambridge in 1972 and then gaining an athletics scholarship to East Tennessee State University. Two of us from Ballyhaunis Athletic Club: myself and the late Pádraig Keane, were selected to run in the World Cross Country Championships and it was Mick Nestor who first set the fire lighting for both of us in our athletic careers. I was also privileged to cover five Olympic Games as a journalist – something that I feel in some small way compensates for me not having made it all the way to the Olympic Stadium as an athlete.

Later on in life, I founded *Irish Runner* magazine and a decade ago -

in association with Athletics Ireland, I started up the Remembrance Run 5K: a Walk or Run event that takes place annually in the Phoenix Park. Three years ago, before Covid restrictions, this unique event – which includes choirs, music, song and a special Wall of Remembrance – attracted over 5,000 participants. I'm delighted that the event goes LIVE again this year on November 14th. I owe a lot to Mick Nestor, because if he had not set up shop in Ballyhaunis, I might never have laced on a running shoe. It shows how one person can help propel you in the right direction.

Frank Greally's book - *Running Full Circle* - is available from Frank at: frankgreally@gmail.com or Mobile: 087 25 69 690.

Bottle to the Rescue

MURT HUNT

Dear Sir,

A recent conversation with my grandson.

Grandson – *Grandad, thank you for the lovely GAA book. It gives all the winners and runners up in all the All-Ireland football finals.*

Grandad – Hope you enjoyed it and were not too disappointed to see all the matches Mayo have lost. I was at most of them.

Grandson – *Where were you at these matches that Mayo lost, Grandad?*

Grandad – Usually in the Hogan stand, or Cusack; one year on Hill 16 with the Dubs.

Grandson – *How did you cope at all with the losses?*

Grandad – Usually with a small bottle in the hip pocket.

Grandson – *Where were you when Mayo last won the final?*

Grandad – Jack-knifing around in a tea chest, with a half spilled bottle.

This is one of a selection of letters Murt Hunt has contributed to *The Sunday Independent* in the past year.

George Dee, a Kerryman in Mayo!

SIOBHÁN COYNE AND GEORGINA COSTELLO

Occasions of celebration have been few and far between since that dreaded word 'Covid' marched into our world in February 2020. But in a small rural townland outside of Ballyhaunis town in the parish of Began – the townland of Brackloon-West – that trend was bucked on October 2nd., 2021. A small gathering of family, friends and neighbours (and a few holidaying emigrants – Paddy and Florrie Murphy!) congregated in their local bar, Ronan's, to celebrate the 90th birthday of the esteemed George Dee.

George, his wife Kathy, and their family have lived in Began since returning from London in 1966 to help on the Morley family farm where Kathy was born and reared.

How did George, a staunch Kerry man come to settle in county Mayo? Well, he has had an eventful and varied life since he left his own family farm in the little village of Ballylongford, Co. Kerry, homeplace to the recently deceased poet Brendan Kennelly, whose brother attended school with George.

George was born in 1931 to Jerry and Norah Dee and was one of a family of nine. Life was hard but happy and, after attending secondary school George, like many of his peers when work was scarce, emigrated to England in 1951. He had hoped to work on the trams but they were decommissioned in that year and so in 1952 found himself working as a bus driver in Birmingham. He worked several jobs including one in the Cadbury's factory in Bourneville. He has an abiding sweet tooth as a result!

In 1956 he met Kathy Morley who had also emigrated to Birmingham and was conducting on the buses. They loved dancing and attended many of the dancehalls which were in full swing at the time. George loved music and drama, and Kathy was dragged along to many cinemas to watch all the swinging musicals of the time. Some, such as *The Student Prince* and *The Great Caruso* starring Mario Lanza, were viewed many times.

In 1956 Kathy and George were married in Harborne, Birmingham. There were no 'bridzella' antics in those times and Kathy's sister May and John Walsh, a native of Clonbur, County Galway, joined Kathy and George for a wonderful double marriage celebration.

George and Kathy moved to Bexley Heath in Kent where two daughters Pauline (sadly deceased in 2019) and Siobhan were born. Their son Jeremy (deceased in 2012) was born in New Cross. George, at this time, was driving a mail van in King's Cross. Their final move was to Edmonton in London. Siobhan recalls being transported to primary school in London sitting on a little seat on the front of George's push bike. Pauline sat



IRISH PIPERS AT WEDDING April 2nd 1956
Birmingham Irish pipers, Kevin McCaughy (left) and Dennis Sweetman (right), piping for the double wedding of John Walsh and May Morley (left) and George Dee and Kath Morley (right) at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, Harborne, today.

A newspaper cutting with photograph of the double wedding of Kathy Morley and George Dee, and May Morley and John Walsh, in St. Mary's R.C. Church, Harborne, Birmingham in 1956.

in a secure seat at the back! Family was always important to George and there were many visits to the Mill Hill convent where his sister Patricia was a nun and to Twickenham where his sister Sally lived. His family settled far and wide: a brother, Jackie to the States; a brother Tommy to the Irish Christian brothers in England, Gibraltar and Africa; a brother, Paud, in London; a sister Teasie to the St. John of God convent in Australia; Katy Mai to Drogheda; and a brother Jerome who tended the family farm in Ballylongford. Family holidays were family visits.

Mayo

In 1966 George, Kathy and their three children moved to Brackloon-West in Began and built a new bungalow. A man of many talents, he did all his own painting and decorating and wallpapering. He loved gardening and to this day he still grows his own flowers from seed. On the farm George was progressive, installing electric milking units and sending milk to the creamery in Claremorris. He showed cows too on many occasions at the annual Agricultural Show in Claremorris. In 1972 George secured a job in what was then the NCF stores in Claremorris. Three more children were born into the family: Annemarie, Michael Gerard and Georgina. George was transferred to the Ballyhaunis branch of the NCF stores towards the late seventies where he proved to be a most popular manager with staff and customers alike.

In 1987, with Michael Gerard taking over the family farm, a mushroom growing enterprise was established. George and Kathy worked full time and long hours to develop this business, hiring many local workers, until it closed in 2006. There was never an idle moment. George was on every committee. He was involved with NCF, the local hall committee, Church committees, the graveyard group, water scheme committees and there were always meetings to attend. He was involved with a local fundraising group to get the old school in Began turned into a community hall and many a pound was raised travelling to towns on the Wren Boys with all the local talent, entertaining in every pub. He was involved with local drama groups and took part in many stage productions. In his role as the Bishop in John B. Keane's famous play 'The Field', so credible was his acting that when he came to the stage pulpit and blessed himself before delivering the sermon, the audience followed suit and answered as if they were in church! In recent years he re-enacted his role in the same play with the Ballyhaunis Drama group and could still remember most of the words by heart.

George has always been a man of great faith. Before Covid he attended daily Mass and strove continuously to raise funds for the education of young men to the priesthood. He started a branch of St. Joseph's Young Priests Society in Began in 1982. He travelled to meetings in many parts of the country, setting up local branches and drove to Dublin on several occasions for conferences. He had a knack for securing funds from many sources for the promotion of the education of young men to the priesthood. He was honoured to be elected national President of the society in 2011, a post he held until 2016.

George is now retired, though he can still be seen doing the odd school run or some shopping in his local supermarket. He takes a keen interest in the farm and often lends a helping hand. He loves sport of all kinds and is known to study the form carefully, taking a few euro from his local bookies every now and then. He loves to see his grandchildren and great-grandchildren coming to visit and always has time for them. A true gentleman, his positive outlook and cheery nature is an example to us all. *Go maire tú i bhfad George.*

The longer we live,
The more of your presence
We find laid down,
Weave upon weave
Within our lives.

(*Benedictus. A book of Blessings,*
by John O'Donohue, 2007)



Tony Carney and George Dee.



George and Kathy
Dee, sixty-five years
married,
2nd Apr. 2021.



George as the
Bishop in 'The
Field' in the
Parochial Hall,
Ballyhaunis, with
his eldest
grandchild Maria
Coyne.

First Baby in almost 100 Years

MIKE BYRNE

The birth of any baby is always a time of great joy for the parents and family of the new-born, and so it was for first-time parents Adrian and Emma Brennan of Holywell on Wednesday, 18th August 2021. On that day, Emma (née Jenkins) gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, Freya Louise. On the baby's arrival to her new home a couple of days later, there was great rejoicing in the Brennan and Jenkins family circle.

The home in Holywell, into which Adrian and his new bride moved following their marriage a couple of years ago, is the former residence of the Tarmey family, Adrian's ancestors who occupied the dwelling for many years. It had been vacant since the passing of the last member of that family, the late Mick Tarmey, over twenty-five years ago. Over the past two years it was refurbished and transformed into a modern and beautiful home by Adrian (with much help from his dad Micky) and now stands proudly on the main Ballyhaunis-Claremorris road.



The Tarmey home in the 1940s. (Courtesy Marianne Hackett)



Michael Tarmey holding his nephew Martin Whitehouse of Birmingham (son of his sister Mary Tarmey Whitehouse) outside the family home in Holywell. (Courtesy Marianne Hackett)



Emma and Adrian Brennan with new-born baby Freya Louise at their home, the former residence of the Tarmey family in Holywell. Photograph: Mike Byrne.

When baby Freya Louise was carried over the threshold into the Brennan home last August, it was the first arrival of a new-born infant into the house since the birth of the late Nell Tarmey (later to become Nell Waldron), ninety-nine years ago, a grand aunt of the proud dad, Adrian. A nice bit of history indeed and wonderful to see the Tarmey family tree continue to blossom in the Holywell townland.

CELEBRATING 40TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY



Left: Congratulations to Joe and Helen Byrne, Johnstown, who celebrated their fortieth Wedding Anniversary on 20th April 2021. They are pictured with their daughters and sons-in-law. L-R: Kenneth and Clare Egan, Joe and Helen Byrne, Laura and David Brogan.

Below: Joe Byrne (Johnstown) and Helen Loftus (Levallyroe) on their wedding day. They married in St. Patrick's Church, Cloonfad, Easter Monday, 20th April 1981. The reception took place in The Beaten Path, Claremorris.

POST OFFICE RETIREMENT



Above: Helen Byrne, Johnstown, retired from An Post on 17th Sept. 2021, having given twenty-eight years' service as Postal Operative. She was an active member of Castlerea branch of the Communications Workers Union having served on the committee for many years. Helen is pictured with her husband Joe and daughters Laura and Clare on the occasion. Her many friends in the locality congratulate Helen and wish her and husband Joe many years' happy retirement.

Right: On the occasion of her retirement from An Post, Helen Byrne was presented with a Cúchulainn statuette from Pat Kelly, D.S.U. Manager, Ballyhaunis.



Jack Coyne makes Senior Championship Debut

MIKE FINNERTY

Sunday, 11th July 2021, is a date that probably doesn't ring too many bells for most people. But it's a day that Jack Coyne will remember forever more. Because that was the day when the young Ballyhaunis man made his senior championship debut for Mayo, coming on as a substitute during the course of their extremely one-sided 24-points victory over Leitrim in the Connacht SFC semi-final in Castlebar. It was a game that made headlines mostly for the Covid issues in the Mayo camp in the lead-up to the match that disrupted the squad's preparations and left James Horan without some of his key men on the day. But it also presented opportunities for the likes of Jack, who was thrown into the fray in the 65th minute to become the latest Ballyhaunis footballer to wear the Green and Red of Mayo in championship action.

It was no more than Jack deserved either; he had worked hard to get his chance and had waited patiently as everything from Covid lockdowns to some injury setbacks and the ferocious battle for places in the Mayo backline all combined to delay his long-awaited debut. James Horan had liked what he saw of Jack in the spring of 2020 when he captained the Mayo Under-20s against Galway in their only game of that championship. That was the infamous day when a storm ripped across the country, and biblical-style rain fell on MacHale Park as Galway won a penalty shoot-out at the end of a game that was as bizarre as it was dramatic. A few weeks later we learned of Covid-19 and the whole country ground to a halt. But when football returned later in 2020, Jack had been drafted into the Mayo senior panel and he's been there ever since.



Jason Coyne
in action.
Photograph by
Fergal Durkan.



Jack Coyne. Photo courtesy of Pauline Flatley

The *Mayo News* had this to say about Jack's display in that aforementioned Under-20 clash with Galway. "The Mayo captain delivered an excellent and disciplined defensive display all through, bombing forward when the opportunities arose too. He has the cut of his club-mate Keith Higgins about him, and the University of Limerick student is desperately unlucky not to have been given a better chance to lift some silverware for his county." Fast forward a year and it was James Horan who was singing Jack's praises.

It's always easy to tell when the Mayo manager is genuinely excited about an up-and-coming young footballer and, judging by his comments back in March, he's a big fan of the Ballyhaunis defender. "Jack was pushing for a lot of last year and we'd be really excited about his potential," Horan remarked. Enough said.

The sight of Jack's name in a series of Mayo's match-day squads during the season, including for the All-Ireland semi-final victory over Dublin back in August, was the latest sign that his meteoric rise is continuing. His displays for Ballyhaunis this season show how much he has developed in terms of his strength and conditioning, while his assured performances also won him plenty of admirers. Given the way that Jack Coyne has developed over the last 12 months, it seems only a matter of time before he takes the next step on his journey as a Mayo senior footballer.

Jack's older brother Jason is another player to watch out for, coming through the ranks in Ballyhaunis. He captained the Ballyhaunis footballers Under-21 team to county success when he played at that level. Jason is also a talented hurler who won two All-Ireland minor hurling medals with Mayo and was a member of the Mayo side that won the Nicky Rackard Cup earlier this year.

Jack and Jason are sons of Noreen and Paul Coyne and brothers of Danielle, Ballyveale.

Ballyhaunis Boxing Club

SUE PEAKE

As 2021 comes to a close the Ballyhaunis Boxing Club, like every other sports organisation, is still processing, recovering and clawing its way back from the Covid pandemic. We've had numerous set-backs, rent increases, missed fundraising opportunities and have endured everything that should have shut down a tiny organisation like ourselves. With the help of our members, our committee members and in particular our Covid officer and confidant Susan Lavin, we put in place a structured return to training plan. We formulated a risk assessment specific to our facility and we soldiered on.

Our boxers have missed out on so much. Our European silver medallist Eoghan Lavin has potentially missed out on three Irish titles, a European medal and the opportunity to represent Ireland at the World Championships. Our European bronze medallist Carlagh Peake has missed out on a potential three further Irish titles and the chance to enter at European level in the European Championships that were to take place in Belfast in 2020. A heartbreak I don't think these two highly decorated boxers will ever forget.

As we hopefully put Covid behind us and try to recover in the sport of Boxing we are renewing our appeal for new members as we enter a new season. We train Mondays and Wednesdays from 6.30 to 8pm in Began Community Centre F12C9P5. We welcome any child above the age of 7 and are very proud of our inclusive ethos. Please do not hesitate to contact us no matter how great a physical or intellectual disability your or your child may have. We have extensive experience with ASD children and strive to include people from all walks of life. **BOXING IS FOR EVERYONE!**

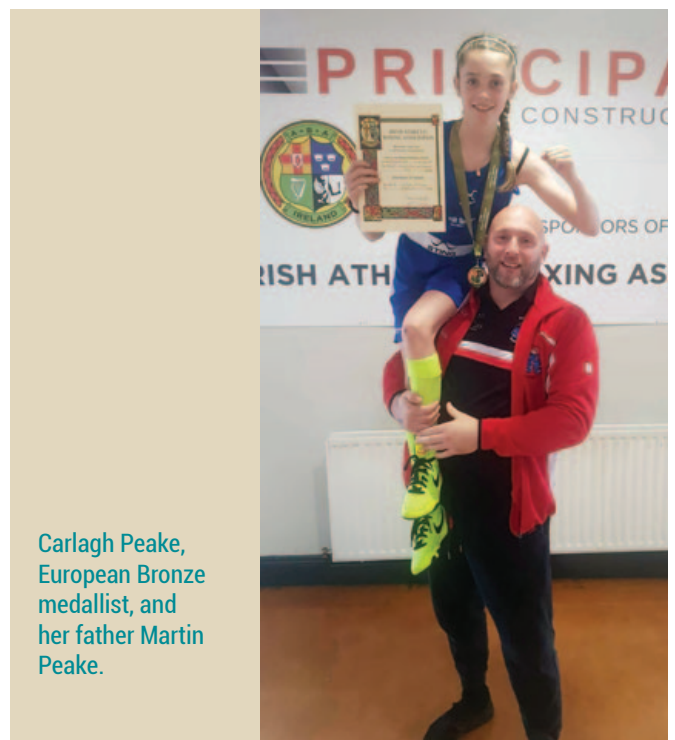
We would also like to take this opportunity to seek out sponsorship for the club and its upkeep. Any business that is interested in coming on board can contact Sue on 085-8108152.

We would like to wish all our boxers the very best of luck for the season ahead.

Martin Peake (*President*); Sue Peake (*Secretary*); Vinnie Moran (*Vice President*).



Eoghan Lavin,
European Silver
medallist.



Carlagh Peake,
European Bronze
medallist, and
her father Martin
Peake.

The Abbey Pattern

JOAN FLANAGAN

Like many other events affected by public health restrictions, the Abbey Pattern did not take place in 2020 or 2021. As most Annagh readers will know, in pre-pandemic times the Pattern was a fixture in the Ballyhaunis calendar, usually happening on the last Sunday in August in the Friary Field. The Pattern Committee sincerely hopes that this traditional family sports day will take place again in 2022.

Ballyhaunis Macra na Feirme 1991-96

PAUL MORLEY

Founding of the Club

On 15th October 1991 a meeting was called by Ann McNamara (training officer) and Ann Marie Geraghty (development chairperson) in the Manor House Hotel, Ballyhaunis to see if it was possible to set up a local Macra Na Feirme club. Eleven people came to the meeting.

At that meeting a club was duly set up and the following officers elected: Chairman: Paul Morley; Secretary: Gerald Walsh; PRO: Sharon Walsh; Treasurer: Darragh Shields. The first thing the club was very busy with was trying to recruit new recruits, and by the end of the year there were twenty-one members. On 8th November the new Ballyhaunis Macra na Feirme club attended a 'New Members Night' in Knockmore where clubs from the county met up and got to know each other.

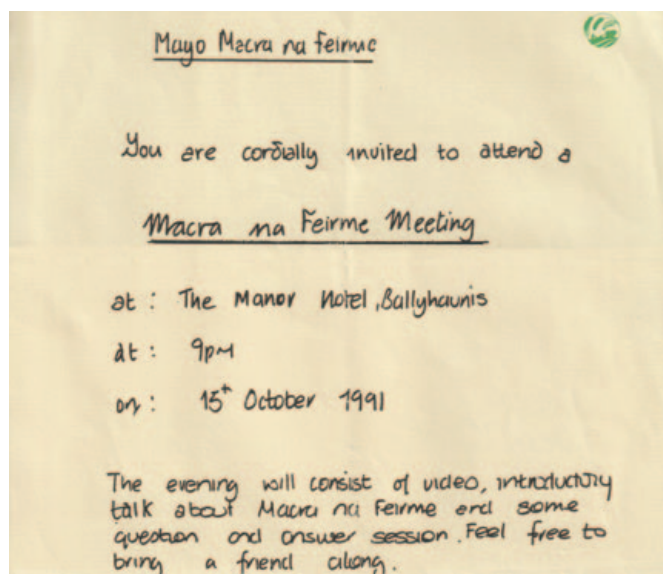


Macra na Feirme
Ballyhaunis 1991-1996

The club exchange with Meelick Macra na Feirme took place on 13th November and some of our members attended. On 9th December the club received our club flag in Castlebar.

The club was now up and running with an exchange visit to Meelick Macra na Feirme, who later made a return visit to Ballyhaunis Macra na Feirme. The club also

took part in a 'Novice Debating' competition with the following team members: Michael Dee, Bernie Burke, Stephen Finn and Gerard Cuddy. We were narrowly beaten by Erris Macra na Feirme. The club entered a float in the St. Patrick's Day parade in Tooreen and we took first place in the Club Float section. Activities finished up at the end of April and we planned to resume in September 1992.



1992-1993

In September 1992 the club resumed and there were twenty-two members. This year the highlight was entering a drama competition and representing Mayo County Macra na Feirme, in which a lot of members were involved. The club had an exchange visit to Glin Macra na Feirme, Co. Limerick and we also took part in many different events including a Senior Debating competition. Members got involved in Tooreen's St. Patrick's Day Parade and the Ballyhaunis Easter Parade. The club wound up again at the end of April.

1993-1994

In September 1993 the club resumed with sixteen members. Úna Lavin, a member of the club, took part in the 'Queen of the Land' competition in Tullamore. The club also took part in the Trade Fair in Ballyhaunis.



Mayo Macra Club representatives pictured with club flags which were presented to them by the Right Rev. John Neill, Bishop of Tuam, Killala and Achonry, at a special Macra pre-Christmas Service held in Christ Church, Castlebar, 9th Dec. 1991. Back, L-R: Jim O'Brien (Mayo Abbey) Michael Heffernan (Crossmolina), Right Rev. Bishop John Neill, Paul Morley (Ballyhaunis), Seamus Ormsby (Ballycastle). Front, L-R: Pat Ruddy (Erris), Pauline Rutledge (Moy), Helen McGeever (Meelick), Diane Jackson (Addergoole), John Munnelly (Killala).

1994-1995

The club was back again in September with twelve members. This year was a busy year as some of the club members got involved at county level in Mayo Macra na Feirme.

The club attended the annual Mayo Macra na Feirme dinner dance and again entered a float in the annual St. Patrick's Day parade in Tooreen. This year some of the members had a weekend visit to Scotland to meet a Young Farmers club in Ayr. Members also took part in debating, farm tasks, stock judging, an agri-quiz and a national quiz. A club member took part in the 'Ideal Batchelor' competition in Castlepollard. Co. Westmeath. A highlight of the year was that Ballyhaunis Macra na Feirme won the Club of the Year in Mayo and Best Club Chairman and Secretary.

1995-1996

We were back again in September 1995 with eighteen members. Five members were involved with Mayo Macra na Feirme at county level. Some of the members got awards in Certificate Applied Leadership in 1994 and 1995.

Ballyhaunis Macra na Feirme took part in various competitions and won a bowling competition. A member of the club took part in the 'Ideal Batchelor' competition in Castlepollard in 1995 and 1996. I want to say that I enjoyed my years in Ballyhaunis Macra na Feirme, meeting people from different parts of the country, taking part in all the different activities and I especially enjoyed the social part of it.

Right: Pictured at the Annual Mayo Macra na Feirme Dinner Dance 1994.

Back, L-R: Michael Jordan, Stephen Finn, Paul Morley, Declan Kirrane, Gerald Cuddy.
Front, L-R: Michael Dee, Una Lavin, Willie Gleeson (National President), Breda Oliver, Michael Oliver.



Ballyhaunis Macra leaders amongst those who received awards in Certificate Applied Leadership in 1994-95. L-R: Ann McNamara (Macra na Feirme Training Officer), Patrick Duffy, Paul Morley, Michael Dee, Michael Oliver (Mayo Macra Na Feirme Chairman).



Mayo Macra na Feirme County Officers 1994-95.
Back, L-R: Patrick Duffy, Stephen Finn, Paul Morley, Ann McNamara, Joe Healy (National President), Gerald Cuddy, Michael Dee.
Front, L-R: Valerie McKinley, Una Lavin, Willie Gleeson (former President), Anne Reddington, Dympna Rochford.



Jabbing the Way to Freedom

MARY RUANE-RYAN

Mary Ryan, formerly known by her maiden name Ruane, is one of many Irish nurses vaccinating in Australia. Mary travelled from her home in Johnstown in 1990 to pursue her nursing career in Australia. Since commencing Covid vaccinations in March 2021, she has personally vaccinated over 2,500 people against Covid. This is Mary's story.

I began the year eager to restart clinical work after twenty years off the wards. With an increasing media focus on the need for vaccination to end the Covid pandemic, I decided to join the campaign in Australia. My journey started with a rigorous 120 hours of online learning with the Australian College of Nursing.

Enrolling was the easy part. Getting motivated was harder. I finally finished the course during our family holiday in February to Kangaroo Island in South Australia. My holiday finally began when I closed my laptop. The holiday bliss was short-lived. I quickly landed a job with Aspen, who gave me the keys to a seven-seater SUV hire car and told me to meet my team 100km south of Sydney in Wollongong. I felt a heavy sense of nervous excitement on the drive down. I was about to step into the unknown and be a part of a team which was setting out to fight this pandemic.

My team and I bonded easily and worked efficiently in numerous nursing homes. When my team and I weren't vaccinating the elderly, we were sharing dinner and wine or enjoying coastal walks. Our teams were changed over time, but I still keep in touch with my original fellow team members and we have remained great friends. By June we had finished vaccinating in aged care and had moved on to those with a disability. Having covered the south coast of New South Wales, we began working our way north, a full 600km to the Queensland border, and over 400km to the far west.

Just when Sydney was enjoying a return to normal life with zero community Covid, the Delta variant arrived. In July, Sydney was once again locked down with police and military maintaining strict 'stay at home' orders. Those who ignored the lockdown rules were given a \$5,000 on the spot fine and some even faced

criminal charges. Despite our strict lockdown measures the Delta variant still spread rapidly throughout the state. The cases were concentrated in western Sydney, so I was re-located there.

My current role involves managing a vaccination centre in the Liverpool area of western Sydney. Yesterday, we vaccinated 300 people. My team and I are constantly under pressure to keep up with the demand for vaccinations.

Motivators

A key motivator throughout my Covid vaccination journey has been my three daughters Ciara, Fiona and Maeve, with support from my husband Martin. My eldest daughter, Ciara, changed her university degree to Paramedicine in light of the pandemic. Maeve is currently majoring in immunology at Sydney University and would like to progress into medicine. Fiona will be the third-generation nurse in our family, following her nana Bridie Ruane and me. I can't wait to see her graduate with a Bachelor of Nursing in December this year. Fiona has already been doing her part to fight Covid, on the front lines in the Covid testing team at our local hospital.

I have been observing how each of my daughters has dealt with the difficulties of the pandemic. Learning which should occur face-to-face in a lab has been a struggle on-line, and they all miss the interaction with their friends. But it has also been enlightening to see them thrive within the health sector. It has given me great hope for Australia's future when we learn to live with the virus.

At the time of writing, in late September 2021, 60% of our state (New South Wales) has been fully vaccinated. Our Premier has promised to remove a majority of restrictions once we hit 70%. I anticipate that my work with Aspen will continue to the end of the year and into next year with booster shots. Hopefully, enough Australians will be vaccinated by then to allow international travel, and a well-deserved holiday for all our family to Ireland.



Mary Ryan (née Ruane) drawing up Pfizer vaccines for the elderly.



Fiona Ryan (daughter) doing Covid tests for New South Wales (NSW) Health.

It's hard to believe that it's October 2021 and Covid-19 is still with us! Having spent most of 2020 held to ransom by this invisible but deadly virus, a combination of vaccinations, frustration with lockdowns and a desire to resume our mission of making Ballyhaunis beautiful lured some of us out of our cocoons (sadly not as butterflies!) and brought us back to something resembling normal in 2021.

The Old Town Well

Our Town Well Restoration Project is now complete and the engraved plaque giving a brief history of the well was unveiled by Frances Maye, our member of long standing, and blessed by Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. on 27th September 2021. Our thanks to RSS workers Tom Carney and John Biesty who carried out the restoration work with great dedication and attention to detail, to Delaney's Hardware for supply of materials and to Annagh Magazine Society for sponsoring the plaque.

Flowers

Earlier in the year we looked into securing supplies of flowers for the hanging baskets and planters as our former supplier - Mellifont Abbey – and a number of others had gone out of business due to Covid-19. Thanks to Nolan's SuperValu and Delaney's Garden Centre we were able to decorate the town with beautiful floral displays in the planters in the Square and the hanging baskets throughout the town, adding colour and vibrance to the streetscape as businesses reopened after lockdown.

Clean-ups Litter and Dumping

During the summer we resumed our weekly clean-ups on Wednesday evenings, meeting at the Square at 7.00pm. Although our annual Good Friday clean-up did not take place this year due to public health restrictions, the void was more than adequately filled by members of the Rugby Club who carried out a comprehensive clean-



Members of Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns and Annagh Magazine Society at the unveiling and blessing of the plaque on the Old Town Well.

L-R: Mary Donnelly (Tidy Towns), Regina Carney (Delaney's Hardware), Connie Gildea (Tidy Towns), Fergal Delaney (Delaney's Hardware), Geraldine Devine (Tidy Towns), Eddie Mulhern (Annagh Magazine), Mike Griffin (Annagh Magazine and Tidy Towns), Tommy Caulfield (Annagh Magazine), Paul Waldron (Annagh Magazine), Nell Rochford (Annagh Magazine), John Biesty (Rural Social Scheme), Tom Carney (Rural Social Scheme), Kay Curley (Tidy Towns), John Kilduff (Annagh Magazine), Seamus Mulrennan (Annagh Magazine), Cllr. John Cribbin, MCC, Frances Mulhern (Tidy Towns). Seated: Frances Maye (Tidy Towns). *Photograph by Janapix.*



New lights along Doctor's Road, Ballyhaunis. AK Photography.

up in April. We appreciate this goodwill gesture – well done guys! A shout out also to the many individuals who approached us offering to carry out litter-picks in various areas. We are happy to supply bags, pickers etc. and to dispose of the litter collected by groups and individuals who are prepared to roll up their sleeves and do their bit for the community. Unfortunately, illegal dumping is an ongoing problem and we have reported several instances to the Litter Warden during the year. It is infuriating and disheartening to find boxes and bags of waste material dumped especially at the recycling banks even when the containers are not full. With so much emphasis on the damage being inflicted on our planet by the indiscriminate dumping of plastics, the recent announcement that all plastic waste, including wrappings, can now be recycled is good news.

Footpaths

We are happy to report excellent progress on two footpath projects that we have been pursuing for some time. Work is now complete on the footpath and lighting on Doctor's Road, and the new stone wall and road widening on the opposite side has added a new dimension to the environs of the neighbourhood and to road safety for locals and other road users. This is the first phase of this project; the next phase will bring the footpath as far as the Rugby Club grounds, and we will be pursuing this phase next year.

The second project is on Knock Road – in particular the stretch of road from the Gurteen road entrance to the existing footpath leading out to the GAA Club grounds: a distance of approx. 50 yards. A commitment was given to us by Mayo County Council some years ago that a footpath would be provided on this section of the Knock Road where there was no safe place to walk. We are delighted to see that this has now been done, and work is also under way on a whole new footpath and lighting extending from the Gurteen road towards town as far as the bypass road. We acknowledge the efforts of

Ballyhaunis Chamber, Ballyhaunis GAA and Cllr. John Cribbin in securing this project, and Mayo County Council area engineer Conrad Harley for making it happen.

National Tidy Towns Competition 2021

The National Tidy Towns Competition is back this year having been cancelled completely last year due to Covid-19; the big difference is that adjudicators are not visiting towns as heretofore, but are carrying out adjudication remotely based on the material submitted with the entry. We submitted the entry for Ballyhaunis before the deadline of 2nd July, and we are grateful to Adam Kaczmarek of AK Photography for taking photos for us and for giving us permission to use his excellent pictures of the town. We await the announcement of results in November.

Fundraising

Like most voluntary organisations we have been unable to hold any fundraising events this year, so we are more than grateful for the many donations we received from businesses and individuals, topped off by a donation of €2,000 from Ballyhaunis Peddlers who raised a phenomenal amount of money on their Croagh Patrick climb and cycle, and were kind enough to include Tidy Towns in their list of beneficiaries. Thanks also to Cllr. John Cribbin for his ongoing support and allocation of funds.

Volunteers

Our Facebook page is very effective in creating awareness of local environmental issues and keeping us in touch with the general public. Thanks to Mark Godfrey and Tzyy Wang who continue to update it with photos and items of interest. We would like to encourage those who engage with us on Facebook to join us as volunteers and help us to expand our activities.

There is much more to Tidy Towns than picking litter and planting flowers. For instance, Tidy Towns groups are encouraged to make ourselves familiar with the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals which were adopted by the United Nations member states in 2015 as a universal set of actions to help combat poverty, protect the planet and improve our world for future generations. (See gov.ie/sustainable-development-goals). It may seem like a tall order, but a good example is that eliminating the use of pesticides will be beneficial to our land and atmosphere, and by growing more plants for pollinating insects we are providing habitats where they can survive and thrive, and in turn pollinate crops to feed animals and provide food for humans. These actions alone can impact on Goal 2 (No Hunger), 12

(Responsible Consumption), 13 (Climate Action) and 15 (Life on Land).

The National Tidy Towns Competition places much emphasis on reducing/eliminating waste particularly products containing plastic, composting, recycling, promoting biodiversity, mowing less or leaving corners or wild areas for wildlife, protecting natural habitats and features of historical interest.

Our meetings now take place in the Friary House while renovation works are under way in the Parochial Hall, and new members are very welcome.

Committee: Chairperson, Kay Curley. Secretary, Mary Donnelly. Treasurers, Frances Mulhern and Moyra Patterson. Members: Teresa Grogan, Frances Maye, Merrilyn Finn, Ann Curley, Connie Gildea, Mary Higgins, Mike Griffin, Gabriel Smith, Nell Rochford, Breda Burke, Una Shields.

GOOD COUNSEL PLAYERS

— present —

KNOCKNAGOW

Scout Den, Ballyhaunis.

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, 23rd,
24th, 25th March

CAST

Phil Lahy	— Jimmy Cribbin	Beresford Pender	— Pat Greene
Honor Lahy	— Pauline Doherty	Darbhya Ruadh	— John Lyons
Nora Lahy	— Kathleen Hunt	Bessie Morris	— Teresa Cribbin
Tommy Lahy	— Lorcan Higgins	Phil Morris	— Noel Dalton
Fr. Hannigan	— Paddy O'Connell	Peg Brady	— Breege Comer
Capt. Butler	— John Simons	Nellie Donevan	— ———
Billy Heffernan	— Noel Morley	Sergeant	— Eamon Cunnane
Matt Donevan	— Gerry Markham	Policeman	— Tom Cunnane
Barney Broderick	— Michael Conlon	Wat Corcoran	— Noel Dalton
Mick Brien	— Jim London		

Production and Sets — Seamus Durkan

Commencing 8.30 p.m. - Admission £2.

Children 50p on ~~Wednesday~~ night.

~~WEDNESDAY~~
THURSDAY

Above right: How we amused ourselves before the radio (Radio Athlone, 1933); before television (RTÉ 1961); before the internet (1990s). A poster from Ballyhaunis entertainments in the past. Knocknagow 1986. Courtesy of John Durkan

Ballyhaunis in Mayo

*I am far away tonight from old Ireland,
In this city I hear the traffic flow.
But I hope it won't be long until I'm with you
In the town of Ballyhaunis in Mayo.*

*It's many years ago now since we parted,
For employment from you I had to go.
But my heart is still in dear old Ireland,
In the town of Ballyhaunis in Mayo.*

*You know I often think about you,
And of days so very long ago.
When we ran and played there together,
In the town of Ballyhaunis in Mayo.*

*I'd love to walk round town in the morning,
And listen to the local radio.
And the trains pull in to the station,
In the town of Ballyhaunis in Mayo.*

*I'd like to watch the sun set in the evening,
And visit lovely pubs I used to know.
To hear again the Irish songs and music,
In the town of Ballyhaunis in Mayo.*

*You know I often think about you,
And of days so very long ago.
When we ran and played there together,
In the town of Ballyhaunis in Mayo.*

*Once more I'll walk the fields around Annagh,
Out there where gentle breezes blow,
To talk again with all those friendly people,
Around the town of Ballyhaunis in Mayo.*

*Soon I will return to my homeland,
There's a plane to take me there I know.
It will touch down at Ireland West Airport,
Near the town of Ballyhaunis in Mayo.*

*You know I often think about you,
And of days so very long ago.
When we ran and played there together,
In the town of Ballyhaunis in Mayo.*

I love you Ballyhaunis in Mayo.

— Michael O'Grady, Kilkelly

Ballyhaunis Peddlers

MICHAEL JORDAN



Ballyhaunis Peddlers presenting a donation of €2,000 to Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns committee, proceeds of their sponsored cycle to Croagh Patrick, July 2021. L-R: Joseph Lyons, Michael Regan, Michael Jordan, Noel McGuire, Karl Coyne, Frances Maye, Geraldine Devine, Anne Curley, Pdraic Murphy, Leo Forkan, Mary Donnelly, Tomás Murphy, Frances Mulhern, Kay Curley, Declan Murphy, Paul Ruane, Fintan Crawley.

Photograph by Mike Byrne.

It all began on a crisp, Spring morning over a cup of coffee in Murphy's Garage, when friends Leo Forkan and Declan Murphy began talking about their new-found love for the sport of cycling. Both had recently taken up the sport as a way of keeping the winter pounds off and keeping within the guidelines set by the government during the Covid lockdowns. Declan suggested that they should get out for a cycle together, and so began The Peddlers. Over the next few weeks the lads started to go for a few cycles together and began to gather a crew of cyclists who had either never cycled or who hadn't been out in a few years. Later, over another cup of coffee in the same filling station with the same two men, one bright-spark suggested that, "We should cycle to Westport when everything opens up." This suggestion was quickly met with the response, "If we cycled there and back, we could do it for charity and raise a few quid." As all this was happening Pdraic Murphy walked in for his morning coffee and, hearing the tail end of the conversation, suggested, "If you're going to do that you might as well make it a challenge and climb the Reek as well." And that's how it all began.

Preparations

Over the next few weeks and morning coffees the gents started to work out the logistics of the challenge ahead – how they would organise the crew, select

charities or organisations to fundraise for, and when this would all take place. As word spread of the challenge, more people became interested in joining, especially when it was decided which organisations would benefit from fundraising. It was decided that we would go with three local organisations who, over the Covid period, had struggled to keep their funds coming in and were in need of a helping hand. Ballyhaunis Defibrillator group, Western Care and Ballyhaunis RFC were chosen as all three had very close ties to the hearts of the participants.

A WhatsApp group was formed and a meeting organised the week after Easter, again in the new 'clubhouse' of the Ballyhaunis Peddlers – Murphy's Garage. A date was set – 17th July – right in the middle of summer. "Surely the weather will be alright around then", someone muttered. A target of €12,000 was set and jobs handed out to make the challenge official to the public. A route was decided, logos were designed, signs were printed, social media accounts started, a GoFundMe page set up, local media were contacted, and organisations informed of the plans.

Training

Next came the small matter of training for the challenge. Many of the participants didn't own bikes and some still don't own bikes. We went out and borrowed and bought bikes for our first group cycle. It was on a

Sunday morning, leaving Ballyhaunis, heading to Knock, on to Kiltimagh, over to Balla. On then to Mayo Abbey, into Claremorris and home – a cool 65km which, to some, was nothing, but to others might as well have been to Cork and back. Ten lads set out and nine made it back. The other fella is still in Kiltimagh trying to get the warped wheel on his mountain bike fixed!

From there, weekly meetups took place in smaller groups and regular 20km, 30km, 45km, 60km cycles were taking place in the mornings before work, in the evenings and on the weekends. Some of the group even brought their bikes on holidays to get the all-important miles on the legs before the big day.

As the days went by and the challenge got closer the GoFundMe page started to gain some traction and, with two weeks to go, we had almost €4,000 in donations from people all over. We had many more meetings along the way making sure everyone was on the same page, and weekly check-ins to make sure everyone was getting on okay with their training in preparation for the big day.

Concerns were raised that we might not reach our target of €12k so everyone was given sponsorship cards and told to get out and harass every living relative and neighbour into sponsoring us. And from there began the harassment of every business within a 15km radius of Ballyhaunis.

The Big Day

The week of the cycle was upon us and final preparations were being put in place. Safety cars and support vans were organised and amazing volunteers came on board to help with whatever they could. Enda Caulfield, Noel Maguire, Dom and Geraldine Murphy, to name just a few. There are too many others to thank but you know who you are! Thanks for everything.

The morning arrived. All the work had been done. It was time to set off and we all agreed to meet in the Square for 6.45am and leave at 7am. However, there had been one little twist thrown into the equation. That day was to be the hottest day of the year so far with a temperature of 29°C and not a breath of wind or a cloud in the sky. We set off – a group of twenty-two – and made our way out through Knock, Kiltimagh, Bohola and on to Castlebar where we stopped briefly for some refreshments before continuing on to Westport. Once we arrived there we headed down by the Quay and out to Croagh Patrick. Surprisingly, in spite of the heat, everyone was fresh and looking forward to heading up the Reek, something which was definitely made easier by the support of family and friends who had made their way there to give us much needed encouragement.

A quick transition was made from bike to hiking boots. Water, jelly, bananas were loaded into bags. Sunscreen and Sudocrem were applied and we set off, on the hottest day of the year at 11.30am with temperatures

already at 25°C to climb Croagh Patrick. Man was it tough! Not a bit of shade or a breath of wind for the next three hours. Eventually, after many water and sunscreen stops we all made it to the summit and the sense of accomplishment was almost over-whelming... or perhaps it was sun stroke! Either way it was strange. We had made it to the top, taken our photos and then realised we were only half way through the challenge! So, we set off down and were met at the foot of the mountain by the Murphy clan who had spent the entire morning in a camper-van preparing spaghetti Bolognese for us all – much needed fuel for the trip home.

Accomplishment

We decided to take a different route home and came back through Killawalla, Ballintober Ballyglass and Claremorris. We weren't long on the road when we realised the homeward pace would be much slower than on the way over. Just outside Westport, on the Ballinrobe road, we had our first puncture of the day, much to everyone's relief, as we were able to dismount, sit in the shade for a few minutes and gather our thoughts before setting off again. As the puncture occurred towards the tail of the group, we actually got separated and four members had continued on without realising what had happened. Thankfully, there was a pub open in Killawalla where they were able to take shelter and wait for the rest to catch up. From there we made our way across country, slowly edging closer to home and, with every kilometre closer, the legs got less tired and the smiles a little bigger.

As we entered town from Claremorris the feeling of accomplishment was immense. We made our way up the new road and were greeted by people with banners from the Western Care Association centre beside the Community School. Realisation of our achievement began to sink in as cars greeted us, honking horns all the way downtown, and we could hear people cheering from the Square with hundreds out to welcome us home.

I don't know if it was the heat or the exhaustion or the pit stop in Killawalla, but we were all overwhelmed emotionally as we made our way downtown, to see many people in the Square to welcome us back. And still, to this day, we cannot get over the generosity shown by the people and businesses in this town and surrounding district. The support we received when we knocked on doors of businesses and individuals eventually raised over €31,000. It is an amazing community we have in Ballyhaunis and long may it continue!

The Peddlers haven't gone away. We're just bulking up over the winter getting ready for next year's challenge, whatever that may be. But when it does come feel free to come and join us, the more the merrier!

Thanks for everything Ballyhaunis: we literally couldn't have done it without you.

Reflections on the Town Well

PAUL WALDRON

Earlier this year Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns erected a plaque on the wall of the Town Well, one of the oldest landmarks in the locality. Situated beside the now closed Post Office on Bridge Street, many of those who pass it daily are unaware of its existence, not to mind its significance. It was the only source of fresh water in the town for centuries until the inauguration of the public supply in 1933 (though some of the bigger business premises had pumps in their own yards). With such a constant supply of spring-water so close to the strategic river crossing that gave the town its name, it's little wonder that Ballyhaunis - Béal Átha hAmhnas - started out here in the first place.

The Town Well is fed by a natural spring bubbling up from underneath the post office. Jack Grogan of Holywell told George Delaney that when he was a young lad there was much discussion about where the water came from. As an experiment, chaff was thrown into O'Brien's Well in Hazelhill and, after some time, it appeared in the Town Well solving the mystery and proving that the two are connected by underground watercourses. Despite being only a few yards from the Dalgan the only connection between the two is a run-off system that safely diverts to the river any rain flowing down the steps before it reaches the well.

The first edition O.S. Map, surveyed in May 1837, shows the well clearly. There was no building beside it then nor for many years afterwards until the Post Office was built in 1903. A low stone wall surrounded it up till the 1970s when it was raised-up to its present height. And there was no gate into it either until one was installed in the early 1980s.

What follows are some bits and pieces about the Town Well taken mostly from old newspaper cuttings and *Annagh* back-issues, along with reminiscences collected in recent times.

Memories

The Town Well figures largely in the memories of many *Annagh* contributors down the years, regardless of how long they were gone away. It was the only source of fresh drinking water in the town, though rainwater collected in barrels or water taken from the river might be used for other purposes such as cooking or washing. "There was no running water; everyone had to get water from



Taken at the Town Well, 1933.

the well in Bridge Street", wrote Barrack Street native Kathleen Walsh Finneran in *Annagh 1997*. Ellen Peel (néé Wynne) visited Ballyhaunis in 1980 for the first time since 1920, when as a twelve-year old child she emigrated with her family to Leeds. In *Annagh 2002* her daughter Anita Lucas recalled her mother's emotional visit to her old home in Abbey Street and on that occasion she pointed out to her daughter all the important landmarks: "... the Abbey, the school where she was educated for a while, and the well at the bottom of the hill, from where she used to fetch water for her mother."

Its purity and constancy of supply are recalled over and over again. So

reliable was the Town Well that it was often resorted to when the public supply failed due to drought, frost or leakage. Anthony Robinson (Clare St.) recalled in *Annagh 1991*, amongst his earliest memories: "... availing of the pure, clear water in the Town Well at the Post Office, and in emergencies, filling cans to take home." In the 1992 issue the same writer elaborated on its importance: "On many occasions, the people of the town were delighted to avail of the spring water from the well beside the post office. The same well came to the rescue of most households in the town, especially when the town supply itself was out of order, by providing a regular supply of fresh and clean water. I am sure that in this age of awareness of all things pure in our environment, that the people of Ballyhaunis must count themselves lucky to have such a source of drinking water in the centre of the town."

Constantly in use, sometimes queues formed as the narrow steps allowed access to only one person at a time. It was something of a meeting place where community ties were developed and strengthened. Long after the introduction of the public supply in 1933, the well remained in use. Like many youngsters Rita Byrne, who grew up in Bridge Street in the 1940s and 50s, helped her elderly neighbours by going to the well for them. Writing in *Annagh 2015* she said, "I remember townsfolk drawing water from the town well at the post office. As children my sisters and I carried cans of water to elderly neighbours in the street."

Besides being a source of water for drinking, cooking or washing, it was sometimes called into service in

emergencies. Jimmy Byrne of Devlis (retired postman), when he wrote in *Annagh 1991*, recalled the disastrous fire in Kenny's furniture shop, Main St. (present day Greene's) in November 1915. The owners, Thomas and Ellen Kenny, made it outside safely as the fire grew in strength. Tragically, Mrs. Kenny rushed back in to retrieve some property, made it upstairs, but the floor collapsed and she lost her life. Jimmy said, "Of course there were no fire brigades in those days and I remember a 'human chain' passing buckets all the way from the Town Well beside the Post Office up to the house to try and quench the fire."

Another fire in the town in the summer of 1930 occurred in another Kenny property, that of John Kenny, Main St. (today's Phillips Shoe Shop). John P. Healy wrote in *Annagh 1996* of how water from the well, from the river nearby, and from every available barrel and tank in people's backyards, was pressed into action to keep the blaze under control until the arrival of a fire tender from Athlone. Fortunately, there were no fatalities on this occasion.

A particularly unpleasant memory connected to the Well was recalled by James Drudy (Drimbane) when he wrote in that same issue of *Annagh (1991)*. "Another memory I have is of seeing the Black and Tans one day in Ballyhaunis. I had heard previously of their savagery and their many drunken atrocities. They were, that day, watering their horses with buckets from the Town Well, while others stood with fixed bayonets on their guns and revolvers hanging from holsters on their hips." Moments later, without warning, they started firing into the air, charging up and down the street. The writer concluded: "After booing them I made myself scarce believing that retreat was the better part of valour!" Truly, the Well has witnessed all of Ballyhaunis history, good and bad!

Some drew water for themselves, while some earned their livelihood doing so for others, amongst the last generation of whom were Paudge Brennan, Ellen Finnegan, Bridget and Mary Ellen Lyons. The photographs in the Lawrence Collection, taken in 1903 and published in *Annagh* over recent years, show several people, mostly youngsters, carrying buckets and cans to and from the well. Of particular interest is a curious barrel-on-wheels in the photograph of Bridge Street in *Annagh 2020*, pages 200 and 202.

Back in 1922 one particular water carrier made a big impression on a then fourteen year-old lad serving his apprenticeship to carpentry during the construction of the Hibernian Bank (today's [former] Bank of Ireland). One of John Cunnane's (Coogue) responsibilities was to make the lunchtime tea for all the workers. The biggest problem was getting water from the well. As he describes it himself in *Annagh 1987*, "The snag was the town's water carrier, a lady of uncertain age by the name of Ellen



"The Town Well that from time immemorial has supplied Ballyhaunis with water and in all the centuries of its existence, has never run dry. A new water supply system was opened last year."

A newspaper cutting from 1934.

Finnegan. Ellen carried buckets of water all day to the homes of the town for a fee (said to be 1 penny per bucket, or 240 buckets for a quid). She was a lady of daunting countenance and she resented others taking water from the well. She would go down the steps, fill her bucket, and wait there for someone to frighten away. If she was on guard when I went there I had to go away and find another source which I had to keep secret from the men. There was a soldier in the barracks, a veteran of World War I, who for some misdemeanour, was made to carry water all day to the garrison, and he had to spend

half his time dodging Ellen. No wonder I was scared of her!"

Others in more recent times who carried water from the well and would rely on water from no other source included Maureen Higgins of Bridge St. and Paddy Tully of Tooraree, who carried water every morning to Lynch's, Main St., where he worked.

Time for change

The extraordinary growth of the town through the 1870s and 80s, following the arrival of the railway in 1861, put enormous pressure on the Town Well as the only fresh water supply for Ballyhaunis. There was also a growing danger of contamination too due to the poor sewerage system that evolved as the town extended on all sides. The water supply was the responsibility of the Board of Guardians of the Claremorris Union and later of the Claremorris District Council and the Board of Health. The need for a satisfactory, safe water supply for Ballyhaunis was discussed at their meetings and letters appeared in the local press on the matter over many years.

Eventually, through the persistence of the Ballyhaunis Town Improvements Committee and the co-operation of P.J. Bartley, the Commissioner appointed to carry out the functions of the suspended Mayo County Council, the Ballyhaunis Public Water Scheme was brought to fruition. An electric pumping station was established at O'Brien's Well in Hazelhill and a main installed connecting it to a 45,000 gallons capacity reservoir built on land purchased from the Cooney family, just off the Knock Road. The new supply was blessed and opened by Fr. Colleran P.P. on Sunday, 12th Mar. 1933.

Some were cautious of the new water source at first, but over time came to realise its benefits, as outlined by Michael Gavin of Tooraree and Manchester in Annagh 1993: "At that time drinking water was collected by bucket from the well. So, I am sure that one can imagine people's concern when it was announced that a water main was to be laid to supply fresh water to the town. How could this be as fresh as the water available from

the spring? However, we now know that all those acres of land which were excavated to build the reservoir and to lay the water main changed the lives of everyone. Would we look forward to a couple of miles walk for a bucket of water? I very much doubt it!"

However, the cool, fresh water from the well was hard to beat and many townsfolk continued to draw water

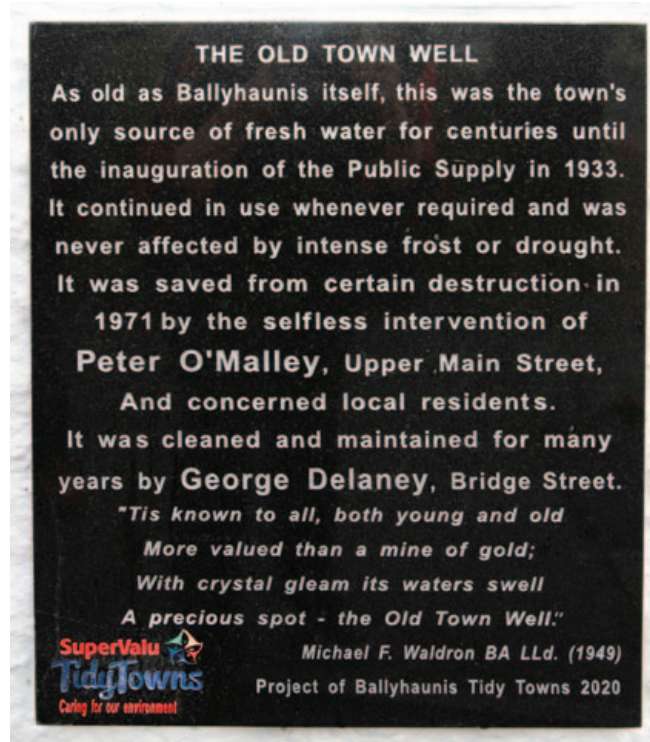
from the well for drinking and making tea. Schoolchildren too relished the refreshing spring water. Kathleen and Mary McBride of Annagh were happy to share with the readers of Annagh Magazine their memories of the Ballyhaunis Town Well dating back to their school days at the convent in Ballyhaunis during the 1940s. Paddy Tully worked for Lynch's of Main Street and both ladies recalled him going to the well each day for his employers and carrying back a bucket of water in each hand. They also remember running to the well after a long day at school. There would be a long queue of children stretching up the steps of the well and along the bridge waiting to scoop up

handfuls of the cool, delicious water to slake their thirst.

Amazingly the well never ran dry even during the longest summer drought. Nor did the water freeze over during the blizzard of 1947. At this time all the pipes in the town were frozen and all the townsfolk once again had to return to the Old Town Well for their daily supply of water.

Disuse

Gradually, as the older generation passed away and plumbing facilities improved, the Town Well fell into disuse. In 1971 Ballyhaunis Junior Chamber formally requested Mayo County Council to clean it, but there must have been a breakdown in communications as, on a day in June 1971, council workmen arrived on site to close it in. What happened next is best described by George Delaney from the shop across the road: "They came one day with a lorry, backing in there. Pete O'Malley was in the shop here talking – at the door – and I remember him saying, "What's this George, what's



The newly erected plaque on the Town Well, initiated by Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns with wording by Annagh Magazine Society. Photo by Janapix.

this?" "I don't know Pete", I said, "it looks like they're going closing up the well." "What?!" he cried, "Over my dead body!". And I remember him running across the street. There was no gate then and he went down the steps and the lorry was overhead tipping up... they were just going letting the back board down. "Come on", he said, "Come on, I'm staying here... this isn't going to be closed in!"

Mr. O'Malley remained on-site guarding the well and was joined in his protest by other concerned locals. Apparently, some material was tipped into it, but was removed by the workmen, when, on Monday, 28th June 1971, they suspended work acting on orders from their superiors to 'leave the well the way they found it.'

And so, the well was saved. Down the years since it was cleaned regularly by concerned locals including George Delaney of Bridge Street and Mick Tarmey of Holywell. Lime was added to clean the well itself, while the surrounding wall would be whitewashed or painted from time to

Want Ballyhaunis Town Well Retained

County Council workmen engaged in filling in the town well at Barrack Street, Ballyhaunis, one of the few historic landmarks left in the town, suspended work on Monday following protests by Ballyhaunis residents. Prime mover behind the protest was an old resident of the town, Mr. Peter O'Malley, Upper Main St., who remained on picket duty for most of Monday and on Tuesday morning the workmen were engaged in removing the filling from the well.

Work foreman Mr. Thomas Moylett, told our representative on Tuesday that his instructions were to leave the well the way they found it. It is understood that the well was being cleaned out due to representation by the Ballyhaunis Junior Chamber. A spokesman for the Chamber told our representative that the chamber requested the Council to clean the well and to render it safe but there was never an suggestion that the well should be closed in or that a pump should be installed."

The town well is said locally to be centuries old and is one of the very few features of the town that has not changed down through the years. It has not been in general use since the water scheme was put into operation in 1931, but when heavy frost sets in it is often used and it was the sole water supply for the town and district during the blizzard of 1947. It is known locally as "The Town Well" and is a main tourist attraction. So the well will remain as part of old Ballyhaunis.

From *The Western People*,
3rd July 1971.

time. In the past year a full restoration has been carried out under the auspices of Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns by local craftsmen Tom Carney (Classaroe) and John Biesty (Carrowkeel), leaving it in top condition. Materials were sponsored by Delaney's Hardware, and the plaque by Annagh Magazine Society, who also devised the wording thereon. The new plaque was unveiled by Frances Maye of Ballyhaunis Tidy Towns, and it, along with the well, was blessed by Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P., on 27th Sept. 2021.

In the words of local correspondent, Mick O'Connell, 'When the late Peter O'Malley of Upper Main Street assumed his right as a citizen of the town and stopped Mayo County Council workmen from filling in and doing away with the old town well in Ballyhaunis some years ago, he did the town a service which, many feel, should be appreciated to a greater extent' (*Western People*, 14th Sept. 1983). The recent restoration work and installation of the commemorative plaque has gone a long way towards fulfilling this aspiration and should act as a memorial to the countless generations who used and maintained this source of life-giving water right at the heart of Ballyhaunis.



A view of the Town Well taken from an upper storey window in Delaney's Hardware. The River Dalgan is seen to the left, and the now disused Post Office to the right. *Photo by Janapix.*

“A Free Gift of Bounteous Nature...”

Historian and writer Dr. Michael F. Waldron of Knox Street composed a poem in honour of the Town Well, published in the 'Poets' Corner' section of the Western People, 20th Aug. 1949, with an introduction that leaves the reader in no doubt as to its importance. It's well worth reprinting here in full:

The Old Town Well:

According to tradition, the Ballyhaunis town well is as old as the founding of the town in the fourteenth century. Up to the inauguration of the present public system in 1933, it was the main source of supply for the inhabitants – a free gift of bounteous nature, and an incalculable blessing to the community at large. It has never yet been known to run dry, even in seasons of the most prolonged drought. Its sparkling water has been analysed and pronounced to be the purest and best to be found anywhere. Though now regarded mostly as a historical landmark, the old well still serves its original purpose in times of emergency when other sources fail, as happened during the intense frost a couple of years ago. Such a venerable and faithful old friend deserves a few commemorative lines:

**‘Tis known to all, both young and old,
More valu’d than a mine of gold;
With crystal gleam its water swell –
A precious spot, the Old Town Well.**

**Its gushing springs for ever flow,
Thro’ storm or sunshine, weal or woe;
Blessings more rich than tongue can tell
Have flowed from out the Old Town Well.**

**Its icy waters, pure and bright.
Sparkling like jewels in morning light.
The fiercest thirst would quick dispel;
Sweet fount of health – the Old Town Well.**

**No drink so soothing, cheap and rare,
Could with its limpid drops compare;
A gift from bounteous Heav’n that fell,
Undoubted is the Old Town Well.**

**What countless years its stream has sped.
How many generations fed?
Who lone within the tomb now dwell.
And need no more the Old Town Well!**

**Those deep-worn steps bear witness strong
To constant traffic by the throng.
That up and down like endless chain,
Trudg’d year-by-year, sunshine or rain.**

**Those feet that wore those steps so bare
Have died away from earthly care;
No more they’ll come at morn or noon
To seek the free God-given boon.**

**They’ll loiter round the top no more,
With brimming buckets dripping o’er.
To meet old friends to laugh and chat
And views exchange ‘bout this and that**

**A dear, romantic, quaint old spot.
By countless thousands ne’er forgot;
But tho’ the crowds come here no more
It smiles and gushes as of yore.**

**The exile, forc’d perhaps to roam
Afar from friends and happy home
Might still recall the magic spell
That drew them towards the Old Town Well.**

Dr Michael F. Waldron, MA, LL.D

Ballyhaunis Rugby Club

MARTIN WALSH

It has been a difficult couple of seasons, but we're back!

Like everything else rugby suffered from stop, start, stop again, try with new regulations, stop completely. For the last two seasons it has been very challenging, to say the least. Things had been going really well. Our underage teams had been gathering momentum and were looking forward to blitzes in Sligo and Castlebar which are always great days out; and our senior team was flying.

In 2018 the seniors had made the play-offs for promotion to division two but lost the play-off narrowly. In March 2019 we were top of the table with only three games to go and only one we felt would be difficult; even if we lost it was straight promotion – no tricky play-offs this time! Then the postponing started. It was going to be hard to hold the momentum. The lads just wanted to get on with the games and finish the job. It dragged on a while and then the season was stopped and everybody stayed as they were – no promotions; no demotions. The whatsapps said it all – bitter disappointment. Then it was all about 2020 and getting back to the top, but 2020 never happened either.

Coupled with the disappointment of all this, the club had the same problems as everyone else regarding finance. We had been in the middle of developing the clubhouse and carrying out other improvements but all work had to stop. Our main fundraising had been a weekly bingo in Midfield every Thursday night for almost thirty years. This kept us ticking over but now had stopped entirely, as had all other fundraising. These problems weren't unique to us and, like everyone else, we found new ways. We had a Virtual 5K and were lucky enough to receive a large donation from the local group that cycled to Croagh Patrick, climbed it and cycled home. A phenomenal achievement which received huge support from the locality. The group included several of our senior team and all their efforts have helped keep us afloat.

In the beginning of lockdown Gutsy Gallagher, senior coach, joked that we would have to get used to playing without a crowd! We would only ever have a small group of supporters, mainly family friends and some former players. However, everyone missed the connection and banter as, of course, did all the players, coaches etc. at all age groups. It was not till it was all taken away that we realised the huge importance these clubs play in our everyday lives. We have managed to keep the connection alive, thanks to technology and love of the club. Our

underage is back up and running on Friday evenings and we would welcome kids to come and try it out.

Our senior team has been back training and doing well with several good wins. Some players, who were in the twilight of their careers, missed a couple of seasons that would have been their last but have hung on after the long rest. Several younger players missed those transition years where lads are blooded off the bench and are now thrown straight in, but are coping well. We have a young team and are getting good numbers out training. People are just so happy to get out and enjoy themselves.



The big plus from Covid has been that several new players who now work remotely have been able to move back to the area. Some have a connection with the club from years back before having to leave, but others are completely new to the area and trying to get to know people. This is the best thing to come out of it all: rural communities can attract people into the area and they help breathe new life into all parts of the community. If you are one of these people or families and want to get to know people while getting some physical exercise, please come along. All are welcome. We look forward to getting back to our normal business of playing and promoting our game in the area while catching up with old friends and rivals.

Ballyhaunis Rugby Club would like to thank all the people and businesses of the area that helped and supported us throughout the years but particularly during the last two years.

AA Meetings (Alcoholics Anonymous)
Sunday 8.30pm
and Friday 8.30pm

Venue: School Iosa Primary School,
Abbeyquarter, Ballyhaunis.

www.alcoholicsanonymous.ie
Connaught Telephone Service: 091-767777
Tel: 085 2793345
www.al-anon-ireland.org

The Celebrated Piper Groarke

PAUL WALDRON

“The piper Jim O’Rourke (or Grouke) was undoubtedly a versatile musical genius, and a competent performer on several instruments including the violin, flute and bagpipes. I have heard the number of tunes he could play from memory but forget the exact total just now. It was something wonderful.”¹

Before the advent of the gramophone about the turn of the twentieth century, and the arrival of radio about twenty years later, if you wanted to hear music, or dance to it, you had to do so ‘live’. Every part of the country had its own musicians on the instruments of the day – fiddle, flute and pipes. Of these, the union pipes (now called the uilleann pipes) was supreme. In the right hands a set was as good as an orchestra – the melody issuing from the chanters with accompaniment from the regulators and drones – and with a volume often wanting in the other instruments available at the time.

When talk turns to pipes and piping certain names come to the fore. In this part of the country Johnny Gorman (1861-1917) was a huge name. Born in Derrylahan just below Gorthaganny, Co. Roscommon, he was cited as a major musical influence by Michael Coleman, no less, arguably the most famous Irish traditional musician of all time. Gorman played regularly in the Ballyhaunis area, indeed, he performed at a concert during the famous Gaelic League Feis of 1903 billed as ‘John O’Gorman, the famous Irish Piper’.

Talk of pipers in the Ballyhaunis area, however, inevitably leads to a local man from an earlier generation: James Groarke (c.1820-92) who was born in Lisduff (townland of Agloragh), two miles south of Ballyhaunis on the road to Irishtown. Popularly known as ‘Piper Groarke’, his was a household name during his lifetime and long after his death 130 years ago.

The opening quotation was penned in 1927 by Dr. Michael F. Waldron recalling a concert that took place in Ballyhaunis in 1885. It was he who published much of what is known about the piper, including the only certain description of his appearance, in a newspaper article promoting a recital by Groarke’s ‘last surviving pupil’ in 1941:

James Groarke was one of the best - if not the best - of the pipers in Ireland in his day. Born in the twenties of the last century in Lisduff, Ballyhaunis, he became at an early age a master of many musical instruments – but the pipes were his glory and joy. A tall, clean-shaven, handsome man, he roamed the world and his music was sought after by the highest in every land. They said he played to royal ears betimes.²

Little is known of Groarke’s world-wide travels. Some say he was bandmaster in a British Army regiment and that he spent time in Egypt. An army career would account for his world-wide travels and might explain some level of formal musical training. Searches of army records to date, however, have not uncovered details of any soldier to fit his description.

Another possibility is that he lived much of his life in and around Birmingham working as a professional musician throughout the English midlands. A highly regarded Irish uilleann piper named James O’Rourke operated there during the mid-nineteenth century and his story dovetails neatly into the known life of the Ballyhaunis piper.

Though nothing is recorded about his early years and a possible stint in the army, one aspect of his early life is certain – that James Groarke, the piper, of Lisduff lived for some time in Cape Town, South Africa.

South Africa

Dr. Waldron wrote in 1941: ‘It was in the Cape, South Africa, that Mr. John Waldron, father of Mr. James Waldron of Devlis, found him and induced him to return to Lisduff, where they both came from.’³ The writer didn’t say what brought Groarke to South Africa nor did he explain why he should be induced to return home. Research by musical historian Sean Donnelly of Dublin has, however, uncovered references to a piper named ‘O’Rourke’ from County Mayo who was employed as a professional musician in Cape Town, South Africa in the mid-1840s.

The Honourable Hamilton Ross, a wealthy Galway-born merchant and ex-army captain of Scots parentage, was keen to employ an Irish piper at his home in Cape Town – ‘Mount Nelson’ – and country estate, ‘Sans Souci.’ In a letter dated 14th July 1845, he set out the conditions under which he would retain one.⁴ Preferring a ‘good piper’ without a family to support, he would pay for his passage to South Africa and offer him a salary of £30 a year with board and lodging. ‘He would have to play in the evenings for us when we had company or when we wanted him, but on other evenings he might go out to other families, and if a real good player, he would no doubt get plenty of calls and plenty of money.’ Capt.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Sean Donnelly, ‘From Croagh Patrick to Table Mountain: A Mayo Uilleann Piper at the Cape of Good Hope (1845)’ in *Cathair na Mart – the Journal of the Westport Historical Society*, no. 31 (2013), pp 26-39. (henceforth cited as *Donnelly*).

¹ *Mayo News*, 13 Aug. 1927.

² *Connaught Telegraph*, 5 Apr. 1941 (later cited as *CT* 1941).

Ross promised to keep him for one year certain, and if it didn't work out would pay for his passage home.⁵ Within a few short weeks, in a letter dated 12th Aug. 1845, Ross was able to report:

*...I have got a beautiful Piper; all the way from the County of Mayo; I have never heard a better: his having neither wife nor child, and being only 26 years old, makes him quite a treasure to an old fellow in the dumps. His name is O'Rourke, or O'Rourke, a descendant from the Kings of Ireland, so that my piper has better blood in him than half the lords in your land.*⁶

Piper Groarke from Lisduff was often given as 'Rourke' or 'O'Rourke' and it seems likely that it is he who is referred to in this letter. Though the two are distinct surnames historically,

Groarke and O'Rourke often occur as spelling variations of each other in written records. The Cape Town piper's age suggests 1819 as his year of birth, quite close to Dr. Waldron's claim that the Ballyhaunis piper was born in 'the twenties of the last century'. Waldron stated categorically that Groarke spent some time in 'The Cape', South Africa, and it seems unlikely that two pipers of the surname Groarke/ O'Rourke from Co. Mayo, both born around 1820, spent time in that city. Waldron's assertion that Groarke '...played to royal ears betimes', might refer to this period of his life when his patron's guests in Cape Town would have included resident and visiting dignitaries.

Many years later the Captain's grandson Dr. William H. Ross recalled family gatherings in his childhood. He would have been ten years old when O'Rourke from Mayo came to Cape Town in 1845, so the piper he describes might well be him: '...he could also make his pipes do more than reels and could speak "Polly put the kettle on", could play many jigs and country dances and even sing a comical Irish song.'⁷

Another item uncovered by Donnelly describes an Irish piper in Cape Town around the time O'Rourke was there. It is a part-fictionalised account of events said to have taken place in and around The Cape, including a New Year's party that took place in 'Lismore Hall' which Donnelly identifies as 'Sans Souci', the country residence



Capt. Hamilton Ross (1774-1853) who brought piper 'O'Rourke or O'Rourke' out to Cape Town, South Africa in 1845. From Eric H. Bolsman's, *The Mount Nelson* (Cape Town, undated), p.55.

of Capt. Ross, O'Rourke's patron. If it is O'Rourke (with his surname misremembered or deliberately changed) it shows him to be a showman as well as musician:

... Master James Blake, with his Irish bagpipes, made his appearance, and with a touch of his forelock and a back fling of his right leg, requested to know what tune would be most acceptable. The fellow, with his laughing eyes and thoroughly Celtic face, was evidently a 'character', and decidedly popular; for after getting permission to play what he liked, he immediately struck up 'Polly put the kettle on and make me quick some teal' By some means he managed to make these very words issue from the body of his instrument in such a comical manner, that the company fairly screamed with delight, and gave instant orders for the desired beverage. Jigs, melodies, and polkas followed in quick succession...⁸

This piper's skill of mimicry accords with what is known of the Ballyhaunis piper's ability to imitate the human voice and other sounds from the natural world, as outlined below.

It's not known how long O'Rourke remained in South Africa. Capt. Ross died in 1853 and it is unlikely his successors kept the piper on. The present writer's line of enquiry suggests that O'Rourke/Groarke was gone from Cape Town certainly by 1850, though having made such an impression there, may have visited on other occasions.

Birmingham

In the mid-nineteenth century there was an Irish uilleann piper in Birmingham named James O'Rourke, identified as tutor of a later well-known piper Thomas Garoghan. O'Rourke was described in 1896 as '...one of the best pipers of the last generation'⁹ and in 1913 as '...well known in the midland counties of England half a century ago.'¹⁰ He seems to be the James *Rourke* described as an Irish born 'musician' in nineteenth century records in Birmingham and Staffordshire. Sometime in 1851 this man married Mary Ann Hall, daughter of Henry Hall, theatrical manager and one-time actor. They had five children: James (1852), Henry (1853), Jane (1856), Ellen (1859) and Maria (1865). Census returns consistently suggest 1821 as this man's year of birth and these, with

⁵ Dr. Jacques P. Malan (ed.), *South African Music Encyclopedia* (4 vols, Cape Town, 1984), iii, p. 371. Thanks to Seán Donnelly for supplying this reference.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ 'December in the South', *The London University Magazine*, iii (Jan. 1858), pp. 14-17. Quoted in *Donnelly*, pp 30-33.

⁹ *Dublin Evening Telegraph*, 28 Nov. 1896.

¹⁰ Capt. Francis O'Neill, *Irish Minstrels and Musicians* (Chicago, 1913), p. 284-6 (henceforth cited as *O'Neill*).

other records, show that the family lived at various addresses in what is now inner-city Birmingham – Park St., Dale End, Lancaster St. and Coleshill St. – up to the early 1860s. In 1865 they were living in Wolverhampton and by 1871 in Wednesbury, Staffordshire. English newspapers so far available throw no further light on James O’Rourke or his musical career. The English Midlands in the nineteenth century had a huge Irish population and, no doubt, musicians were always in demand to play at dances and wedding parties; in public houses and music halls; at fairs and other gatherings. No definite record of James Groarke/Rourke/O’Rourke, his wife and family have been found anywhere in England later than 1871, except the second son Henry who married in Birmingham in 1891. What became of them all? By 1881 the surviving children would be living independently, some probably married, so that they would not be easily identified in the census of that year outside of the family unit.

Significantly, however, James Groarke, the Ballyhaunis piper, first came to public notice in his native County Mayo later in the 1870s. Could he be James O’Rourke ‘one of the best pipers of the last generation’ and James Rourke of the English census returns, who left the English Midlands to return home? It seems very likely, for several reasons. Firstly, the similar surnames O’Rourke/Rourke and Groarke were occasionally used back-and-over in the same family; secondly, contemporary records of the Birmingham piper are confined to the period 1841-71, while the only written references to the Ballyhaunis piper in his home district date from 1877 until his death in 1892. Thirdly, and most convincingly, however, is the connection with Thomas Garoghan the piper who not only cited James O’Rourke of Birmingham as his first tutor but claimed him as an uncle.¹¹

London’s Irish Piper

During the late 1890s Thomas Garoghan (1849-1922) of Covent Garden, London was probably the best-known Irish traditional musician in England. Born in Coventry, Warwickshire in 1849, just a year after his family came there from the parish of Began, County Mayo, his father was John Garoghan, a linen weaver, and his mother Winifred Groarke or O’Rourke. Baptism records for two of Thomas’s sisters in Began in 1842 and 1844 establish the family’s connection to that parish, the boundaries of which, at that time, were much different to those of today. Regrettably, those entries contain no address and the sponsors’ names don’t help pinpoint any particular townland within the parish.

Sometime around 1860 the Garoghans moved from Coventry to Birmingham, then one of the world’s centres of manufacture. Here, young Thomas worked as a brass

and silver polisher and in his spare time learnt to play the uilleann pipes from his uncle James O’Rourke and Michael McGlynn, a blind piper from Aghamore (the parish immediately north of Began).

At the height of his fame in 1896 Garoghan was profiled in *The Dublin Evening Telegraph*, where it was said that ‘...his uncle and first tutor on the pipes was James O’Rourke of Birmingham, one of the best pipers of the last generation... Another of his teachers was McGlynn of Aghamore, and from the proficiency of their pupil we can well believe Mr. Garoghan’s declaration that his tutors were “two first raters”’.¹² Garoghan’s profile in O’Neill’s *Irish Minstrels and Musicians* (1913) confirms the Mayo connection: ‘[He] was born in Coventry..., his parents being natives of County Mayo, Ireland. He learned to play the Union



Thomas Garoghan, ‘London’s Irish Piper’ pictured in costume as ‘Lynch the Piper’ in the opera *Seamus O’Brien* in 1896. Born in 1849, just a year after his family arrived in Coventry from Began parish, he learnt the pipes from his uncle James O’Rourke of Birmingham ‘... one of the best pipers of the last generation.’ From an unprovinanced press-cutting in *The Mander and Mitchenson Theatre Collection*, reproduced in Reg Hall’s “A Few Good Tunes of Music” published online 2016, p.167.

¹¹ *Dublin Evening Telegraph*, 28 Nov. 1896.

¹² *Ibid.*

pipes from James O'Rourke of Birmingham and Michael McGlynn of Aughamore, who were well known in the midland counties of England half a century ago.¹³ Garoghan was not their only pupil, however: John Edwards (b. 1830), a native of Artane, Co. Dublin living in Birmingham is listed as having been '...taught by McGlynn and Groarke'.¹⁴ This reference, significantly, gives the surname 'Groarke' rather than 'O'Rourke' for the Birmingham piper.

Since Thomas Garoghan's mother was Groarke/O'Rourke, his uncle James O'Rourke of Birmingham must have been her brother. And since the Garoghans lived in the 'old' parish of Began before emigrating it seems likely that O'Rourke of Birmingham was none other than the piper James Groarke (c.1820-92) whose birthplace at Lisduff was in the adjoining 'old' parish of Annagh.

So, what is known of 'Piper Groarke' back in county Mayo?

'The Immortal Groarke'

When Ballyhaunis Gaelic League hosted a *Scoraidheacht* on Easter Monday, 14th Apr. 1941, one of the highlights was a recital by local musician John Tarpey of Lecarrow, hailed as 'the last surviving pupil of the immortal Groarke'.¹⁵ The Tarpey brothers – John, better known as 'Greece', and Malachy – were fiddle-players and both taught music, while another brother Michael in the U.S.A. also played fiddle.

Dr. Michael F. Waldron's *Connaught Telegraph* article, and an item in *The Irish Press*, included stories about Groarke when promoting the event. Waldron described some of the tunes on Tarpey's playlist, all said to be learned from the piper: the reels 'The Devil among the Tailors' and 'The Fourth of June'; and jigs 'Saddle the Pony' and 'The Geese in the Bog'. In this last piece, the writer states, you will hear '...the wild birds calling and answering.' 'The Fox Hunt' (probably 'The Fox Chase') was also on the programme, '... in which you hear the horns sounding, the dogs crying, the race of the hunt, and all its speed and clamour', declared the writer. Difficult enough on the pipes, it must have been quite a challenge on the fiddle! Waldron relates that Tarpey described Groarke's greatest masterpiece as 'The Battle of Aughrim', another epic, descriptive piece. Towards the end, the writer said, '...you will hear the awful lamentation of the old women over the dead of their clans. As Groarke used play it, when he came to this part,

he'd cry "Cailleach" as he gave the cry of the women of Mayo over the slain of her county.'¹⁶

Mrs. Mary Keane (1857-1950) of Cloontumper told Dr. Waldron that Groarke, '...once played with a famous piper abroad for a great wager, and that he won on his last note that he learned from a thrush at daybreak.'¹⁷ Mrs. Keane's father, Harry Smith (c.1821-87) of Cloontumper, was a fiddle player and contemporary of Groarke's. The *Irish Press* gives a slightly different version of that story, stating that, 'In South Africa once, *Groark* seemed to have met his match; for he tied with another great piper, until there was a second contest... in the interval between the two contests, *Groark* heard a thrush singing at daybreak. His notes reproduced the thrush's song, and so he was victor.' 'Roddy the Rover' in *The Irish Press* elaborated on this aspect of Groarke's skill:

*Groark could imitate all wild animals and birds. He would pipe the calling and answering of the wild geese and the baying of dogs... Sometimes [he] would call the hens from their roosts in the middle of the night with the cackling and crowing of the pipes.*¹⁸



Mary Keane (née Smith) outside her home in Cloontumper, July 1934, at the age of seventy-seven. Daughter of fiddle-player Harry Smith – Groarke's contemporary – she was the source of much of Dr. Michael F. Waldron's information on the piper. Photo courtesy of the Nolan family, Cloontumper.

Groarke's ability to mimic sounds from the animal kingdom, and even the human voice on his pipes, has come down in local lore. Paddy Lyons of Gurrane, fiddle-player, whose sisters were pupils of John Tarpey in the 1930s, heard that Groarke's piping could start farmyard fowl calling at unusual times of the day and night. Mike Brennan of Agloragh, the piper's great-grandnephew, recalled his father say he could, 'Make the pipes talk', not just in the figurative sense but literally, 'Like a person talking', he emphasised. While other pipers could do this too it seems to have been a memorable feature in the performances of the Cape town piper O'Rourke and of

¹³ *O'Neill*, p. 284-6.

¹⁴ NLI, MS 1692. An Index of Pipers compiled by Séamus Ó Caiside and Éamonn Ceannt of the Pipers' Club. Thanks to Michael Kelly for this reference.

¹⁵ *CT* 1941.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Irish Press*, 11 Apr. 1941.

Thomas Garoghan, both of whom could, according to several commentators, make the pipes appear to speak the words, ‘Polly Put the Kettle On.’¹⁹

The claim that Tarpey was Groarke’s last surviving pupil in 1941 was not entirely correct, however, because when the blind fiddle-player Martin Salmon (also known as Tadhg Salmon) died at his home in Lakehill, Knock three years later, his obituary disclosed a strong connection to the piper: ‘He was for sixteen years a pupil of the world-famous Groarke and played Scotch as well as Irish music on the violin. He was one of the last who could play Groarke’s famous tune, “The Foxhunters’ Chorus.”’²⁰ The reference to Scotch music is interesting and, if Groarke was the source, it might evidence time spent as an army musician or perhaps reflect the musical tastes of Capt. Ross – patron of the Cape Town piper O’Rourke – Galway-born but of Scottish parentage? Martin Salmon was born in 1871 and lost his sight at the age of six.²¹ If he first came under the tutelage of the piper at that early age – circa 1877 – the sixteen years he is said to have spent with Groarke would coincide with the last years of the piper’s life, and the years he was known to be resident back in Mayo.

‘...A Power of Music...’

An insight into Groarke’s musical life and outlook is preserved in an account of his friendly rivalry with another Knock musician, the piper John Carney (c.1837-99) of Churchfield, related by the latter’s grandson Frank Carney (1914-98) who lived in retirement in Devlis:

Groarke was a great friend and colleague of my grandfather, the piper Carney... He’d come to our old house a couple of times a year... a cottage above at the cross of Churchfield. Anyway, the story goes that he [Groarke] would always make sure to land at my grandfather in the summer time. The old people would make out he’d arrange it always at the height of the summer, in good weather, when everyone would be haymaking and so on.

*They reckoned anyway that the two of them – Groarke and my grandfather – would sit outside on the wall or on forms and play away together all day, afternoon and evening, right into the night and beyond. They’d go inside I suppose when it turned dark or thereabouts. Some said they’d try to be ‘besting’ one another for tunes, but that it was hard to separate them because each one was supposed to have a power of music. It seems the general opinion was that both must’ve been very good pipers, well above average.*²²

¹⁹ Donnelly, pp 33, 34 and 39 (footnote 12).

²⁰ *Connaught Telegraph*, 24 June 1944.

²¹ *Western People*, 24 June 1944.

²² Correspondence from Joe Byrne, dated 30 June 1998.

Groarke’s character and sense of devilment may be glimpsed too in the following item from *The Mayo News* in 1926:

An old piper named Jim Groarke was wending his way homeward one fine Sunday, after having played at an all-night spree. The parish priest met him on the road and, after rebuking him for his dissipation, asked him was he at Mass? ‘No then father, God forgive me’, answered the piper. ‘What?!’ thundered his reverence, ‘Not at Mass and playing your pipes all night? Tell me sir, do you know the Ten Commandments?’ Getting his pipes ready, the old musician meditated a few moments. ‘The Ten Commandments is it? Well, father, I’m a bit mithered after the night, but if you’d just whistle a few bars of it, maybe ‘twould come back to my fingers!’²³

Return home

The absence of local written references to James Groarke until the late 1870s suggests he returned to his home district sometime during that decade. In 1941 Dr. Waldron said, ‘It was in the Cape, South Africa, that Mr. John Waldron... of Devlis found him and induced him to return to Lisduff, where they both came from.’²⁴ Groarke’s association with South Africa was evidently well known locally at this time (1941) but perhaps it was mistakenly believed it was from here he returned to Mayo? There is no knowledge in John Waldron’s family linking *him* with South Africa, and it seems more plausible that the piper was in England when he tracked him down. Perhaps Groarke fell on hard times and his old neighbour, learning of his plight, helped him to come back home where he might make a fresh start?

Groarke’s death certificate states that he was a ‘widower’, but there is no record to account for wife or children in Ireland. The Birmingham ‘musician’ James Rourke, however, was married with family (see above). Perhaps his wife died in England and he then retired back home, their children being old enough to make their own way in the world? Or maybe there were domestic issues and that he left them behind?

Having returned to Mayo the piper lived for at least some of the time in Cloontumper about a mile across country from his native Lisduff/Agloragh. Not listed in valuation office records, he must have lodged in someone else’s home or had a small dwelling not liable for rates. The evidence suggests he stayed with the Smith family, where the head-of-household Harry Smith was a fiddle player, and with their close neighbours, the Fergus family to whom he may have been related. The last-named was a musical household over several generations and included two noted concertina players: Martin Fergus –

²³ *Mayo News*, 10 Apr. 1926.

²⁴ *CT* 1941.

known as ‘Uncle’ (1893-75) and his nephew also Martin Fergus (1920-94), better known as ‘Ginger’ (both are featured in a photograph on page 87. Groarke was also said to have stayed sometimes in Knock.²⁵ Perhaps he lodged there with his friend piper Carney in Churchfield, or in the family home of his protégé Martin (Tadhg) Salmon in Cloonernane? Another possibility is that he boarded with a branch of the Cloontumper Fergus family then living in Eden and Coogue (parish of Knock).

‘...The Famous Jim Rourke, “The Irish Piper”’

What appears to be the earliest written reference to James Groarke back in Mayo is found in records of the Ballyhaunis Petty Sessions. A case was brought against Michael Ganley for having, ‘on the night of the 30th of June 1877, at Agloragh in the County of Mayo, violently assaulted the complainant James Groarke by striking him with a tongs on the head.’ After a couple of sittings the case was dismissed on a technicality.²⁶

From the following year comes the first local written reference, found so far, to Groarke as a musician. The ‘commercial young men’ of Ballyhaunis hosted a function in the Court House on St. Patrick’s night, 1878. The following week’s paper describes the venue for the ‘Ballyhaunis Commercial Ball’ suitably decorated for the feast of the national saint. Dancing commenced ‘with a polka’ and continued until daybreak. The musicians get a brief mention at the end, almost as an afterthought: ‘I have to add in conclusion that the music was of the most excellent kind – the operators being the celebrated piper, *Groark*, and a violin player equally as good.’²⁷

For the next seven years, the written record is silent until, at Ballyhaunis Petty Sessions, ‘James *Roarke* of Cloontumper’ appeared for being ‘drunk on the public road at Hazelhill, in the County of Mayo, on the 27th of June 1885.’ He was ordered to ‘pay a fine of one shilling and costs of court, or in default to be imprisoned in Castlebar gaol for seven days with hard labour.’²⁸

Later that same year the first ‘Ballyhaunis Amateur Dramatic and Variety Entertainment’ was held on St. Stephen’s Night, 1885. Most of the items were songs with piano accompaniment, recitations or comic sketches, but item 18 was a ‘Duet, Bag Pipes and Violin – Messrs. *O’Rourke* & *Biesty*’.²⁹ *The Connaught Telegraph*

concluded its report the following week: ‘In the course of this performance a splendid instrumental duet was given by the distinguished musicians, Messrs. *O’Rourke* and *Biesty*.’³⁰ This was the concert recalled in 1927 by Dr. Waldron, from which the opening quote is taken. Mr. *Biesty*’s identity has not been discovered, but perhaps he was related to a local fiddle-player from a later generation – Michael *Biesty* of Carrowkeel.

Six months on, in June 1886, Groarke joined an excursion to Ballintubber Castle, Co. Roscommon, organised for the Confraternity and Temperance organisations associated with the Augustinian Abbey, Ballyhaunis. *The Connaught Telegraph* reported that, ‘Messrs. Thomas Cooney, Smith, and the famous *Jim Rourke* “The Irish piper,” rendered their services as musicians in splendid style’ playing for dancers within the castle ruins.³¹ Cooney has not been identified but Smith was almost certainly fiddle-player Harry Smith of Cloontumper. Another ‘Variety Entertainment’ was staged in Ballyhaunis the following year, on 16th April 1887. Once again ‘Musical Duet – Messrs *O’Rourke* and *Biesty*’ appeared on the programme, though their instruments were not mentioned.³² *The Connaught Telegraph*’s detailed report makes no mention of their performance nor indeed of any instrumental item in the concert.³³ Two years later a similar event took place on 10th Jan. 1889, but the programme makes no mention of Groarke, nor indeed of any item of traditional music, song or dance.³⁴ The piper would then be in his late sixties/early seventies and may have retired from public performance or have been suffering from poor health.

James Groarke died in Cloontumper on 6th Apr. 1892. The registrar, who was also the local medical practitioner, Charles E. Crean M.D, gave cause of death as ‘kidney disease, eighteen months, no medical attendant’. The death certificate gives his name as James *Roarke* and the informant as Tom *Roarke*, brother, Agloragh. His age – 60 years – suggests c.1831/2 as his year of birth, somewhat later than that implied in other sources, but such ages are often suspect, especially if rounded to the nearest ten as may be in this case. Remarkably, his occupation was recorded as ‘farmer’. Maybe this was

Michael F. Waldron, in private hands.

²⁵ *Connaught Telegraph*, 2 Jan. 1886.

²⁶ *Connaught Telegraph*, 12 June 1886.

²⁷ Programme: ‘Variety Entertainment’, 16 Apr. 1887, in National Library of Ireland Ms. 16,417, ‘Random Collections’, scrapbook of Michael F. Waldron of Ballyhaunis.

²⁸ *Connaught Telegraph*, 30 Apr. 1887.

²⁹ Programme: ‘Ballyhaunis Grand Variety Entertainment’, 10 Jan. 1889, in National Library of Ireland Ms. 16,417, Scrapbook of Michael F. Waldron of Ballyhaunis.

²⁵ Information from Michael Nolan, Cloontumper.

²⁶ Petty Sessions Order Books CSPPS 1/1033, Ballyhaunis, entries 10 and 75; CSPPS 1/1034, entry 14 Accessed through www.findmypast.ie

²⁷ *Connaught Telegraph*, 23 Mar. 1878.

²⁸ Petty Sessions Order Books CSPPS 1/1048, Ballyhaunis, entry 13. Accessed through www.findmypast.ie

²⁹ Programme: ‘A Grand Concert’, 28 December 1885, in ‘Ballyhaunis and Environs’, a scrapbook compiled by Dr.

what his brother said, or perhaps the registrar didn't consider 'piping' or musical performance as a real occupation? There was no death notice or obituary in any of the local newspapers.

Dr. Michael F. Waldron says that Groarke lies in an unmarked grave in the Abbey cemetery in Ballyhaunis and adds, '...Fr. Doran, it was, who gave him the last rites and preached his panegyric the Sunday after.' This was Fr. William Doran, O.S.A., Prior of St. Mary's Abbey where the piper was a regular and welcome visitor, and who described Groarke as, '...A man whose music came from heaven to delight the hearts of men.'³⁵

Legacy

Little is known of the music actually played by Piper Groarke, except the names of pieces attributed to him by John Tarpey in 1941. As for his musical technique and style, in the absence of recordings we must trust the testimonials of those knowledgeable in traditional music who knew him, all of whom held him in the highest esteem.

Writing in 1927, Dr. Waldron implied that 'Jim O'Rourke (or Grouke)' was musically literate when referring to the man who inherited his manuscripts:

*Mr. John McNamara is the only one I know at whose fingertips are all the particulars relating to the famous Jim, about whom he can reel off anecdotes by the score. Most of his musical MSS., Jim, when dying, bequeathed to Mr. McNamara, the only one of his acquaintances most likely to appreciate the gift.*³⁶

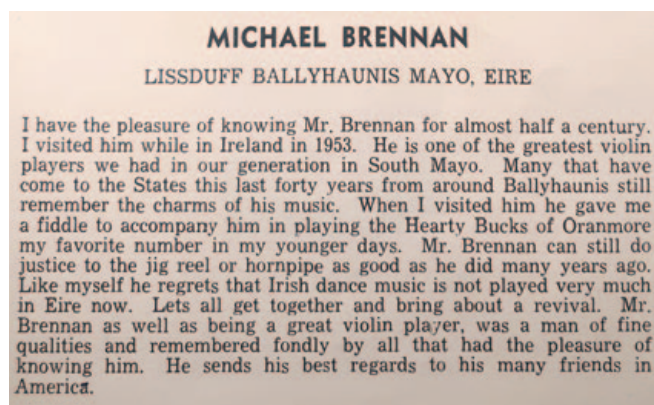


Above: John and Rose McNamara (née Prenty), Clare St., Ballyhaunis, 11th Aug. 1927. A close friend of Groarke's, John McNamara was bequeathed his musical manuscripts on the piper's death in 1892. Photo courtesy of the late Máisín Meath.

Right: Michael Brennan Snr. (Agloragh) tucking into his Christmas Dinner, 1968. A grandnephew of Piper Groarke and a fiddle-player himself, Michael taught music to youngsters in the locality over many years. Photo courtesy of the Brennan family.



This photograph of Michael Brennan (Snr.) and biographical note (below) featured in a 'Business Directory' produced in Chicago in 1957 by P.J. Concannon, a native of Cuiltycrehan, parish of Began. Concannon was well-known in Irish circles in Chicago and presented the 'Irish Hour' radio programme there from the 1930s to the 1950s. He emigrated to the US in 1924 and paid his first visit home to Mayo in May 1953 when he visited Michael Brennan and they played a few tunes together. Courtesy of Michael Kelly.



³⁵ CT 1941.

³⁶ Mayo News, 13 Aug. 1927.

Such a pity that neither those anecdotes nor the manuscripts were preserved. John McNamara (c.1854-1927) and his brother Patrick established a thriving clog and boot-making business in their native townland of Annagh, later moving to extensive premises on Main St., Ballyhaunis. It's not known if he played an instrument himself, but his daughter Eileen (Mrs. Dalton) was a gifted pianist and played for the silent movies when they first came to Ballyhaunis before 1920.³⁷

Amongst Piper Groarke's pupils were the Tarpey brothers, fiddle-players and music teachers – John 'Greece' (1873-1951) and Malachy (1874-1939) – and Martin Salmon (1871-1944). Malachy Tarpey based himself at the family home in Lecarrow, Ballyhaunis and taught 'by ear'. 'Greece' travelled around the district, staying in the homes of his pupils, using a written notation system in his teaching. Martin 'Tadhg' Salmon of Cloonernane and Lakehill, Knock, was a blind fiddle-player and his obituary writer's declaration that '...many of the present-day (1944) players owe their success to his tuition'³⁸ would hold true for the Tarpey brothers as well. Indeed, many of their pupils continued playing into adulthood carrying the legacy of Groarke's music down to relatively recent times.

Martin Brennan (c.1840-1905) of Drimbane was a fiddle player who almost certainly played music with Groarke. He married the piper's niece Honora Groarke (c.1841-1925) in 1872 and they inherited her homeplace in Agloragh townland. Their son Michael Brennan (Snr.), who would have been a young child when his granduncle the piper died, was an excellent fiddle player and teacher, and he – along with neighbour Joe Mannion of Drimbane, another top-class fiddle player – provided music for the Ballyhaunis Gaelic League céilis organised during the 1940s. In 1942 it was noted that, 'The open-air gatherings on Sunday evenings form the pivotal point of the summer campaign. The band which is being formed in memory of the great piper Groarke will rescue his memory from oblivion and save the true traditional mode of music for this district.'³⁹ A month later the same paper, in its report of an open-air céili in the Abbey Grounds, stated that the music was supplied, '...by Groarke's Céilidhe Orchestra.'⁴⁰ Michael Brennan taught many youngsters to play the fiddle and the music passed down to the next generation in his own family, to his son Michael Brennan (Jnr.) who played fiddle as well.



Michael Brennan Jr. (Agloragh), great-grandnephew of Groarke's, playing the fiddle at home in Agloragh, 1968. Photo courtesy of the Brennan family.

Nothing so far has been discovered about Groarke's uilleann pipes: what they looked or sounded like, who made them, where he got them, or what ultimately became of the set. They may have been sold or given away as they didn't remain in the family. Is there a chance that they somehow passed to Thomas Garoghan, the Birmingham piper's nephew and pupil, whose own career as a professional musician took-off in the years immediately following Groarke's death in 1892? Enquiries to date, by this writer, have failed to uncover the present whereabouts even of Garoghan's own set so this remains unproven.

The same Thomas Garoghan was one of the first Irish traditional musicians to have their music recorded – by the Gramophone Company in London in 1898.⁴¹ Three recordings of an anonymous piper, but generally believed to be Garoghan (who lived only a short distance from the studio and was, at that time, probably the best-known Irish piper in England), were issued on single-sided Berliner disks, featuring 'The Irish Washerwoman', 'The March Past' and 'The Low-back'd Car'.⁴² A further three

³⁷ Information from Máisín Meath, Clare St. The whereabouts of Groarke's music manuscripts are not known to McNamara's descendants.

³⁸ *Connaught Telegraph*, 24 June 1944.

³⁹ *Connaught Telegraph*, 30 May 1942.

⁴⁰ *Connaught Telegraph*, 20 June 1942.

⁴¹ Nicholas Carolan, *Courtney's 'Union Pipes' and the terminology of Irish bellows-blown bagpipes* (Irish Traditional Music Archive, Dublin, 2012) (<https://www.itma.ie/digital-library/text/courtneys-union-pipes-and-the-terminology-of-irish-bellows-blown-bagpipes-b>) (18 May 2020).

records were issued in 1904, this time with the piper clearly identified, on the Zonophone label: ‘The Steamboat Hornpipe’, ‘Miss McCloud’s Reel’ and (again) ‘The Irish Washerwoman’.⁴³

Perhaps when these are restored and made accessible, the interested listener may hear in those ancient recordings of his protégé, echoes of the music of a much earlier musician, born just 200 years ago, ‘the Celebrated Piper Groarke’.

Postscript – a Prime Minister in the family

Thomas Garoghan (1849-1922) was nephew of Birmingham piper James O’Rourke who, as stated above, was almost certainly the same man as James Groarke, the Ballyhaunis piper. It follows that Garoghan’s mother Winifred Groarke/O’Rourke (c.1819-75) was the piper’s sister. The Garoghans came from Began parish; the Groarkes from adjoining Annagh parish (though the boundaries between the two were changed significantly in 1893).

Thomas’s younger brother James Garoghan (1851-1905) had a son also James who changed his surname to ‘Callaghan’, which was already in use as a variant of the family name (other variants included Garrigan, Galligan and Gallagher). The younger James Callaghan (1877-1921) served in the Royal Navy and later the Coastguard. His son, Leonard James Callaghan (who later dropped the first name ‘Leonard’) was a trade-union official before entering

politics in 1945 as Labour MP for Cardiff South. His political career was long and eventful coinciding with difficult times in Anglo-Irish relations. He served as Chancellor of the Exchequer 1964-67, Home Secretary 1967-70 and Foreign Secretary 1974-76 in various Labour governments before becoming Prime Minister in 1976. James Callaghan MP, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and Leader of the Labour Party, and the only person to have held all four ‘great offices of state’ in that country, was the great-grandson of emigrants from the old parishes of Began and Annagh – the linen weaver John Garoghan and his wife Winifred Groarke/O’Rourke – and, as the evidence suggests, great-grandnephew of Piper James Groarke.

It should be noted that Began parish, before 1893, took in many of the townlands to the north and north-east of Ballyhaunis, as well as the northern half of the town itself, while much of the Logboy/Tulrahan area was then in the parish of Annagh.

⁴² ‘A Few More Piping 78s’ in *An Piobaire*, ii, uimh. 18/19, Samhain 1983, p. 6.

⁴³ http://www.eresbil.com/web/uploads/archivosGeneradorWeb/Catalogos/erelib_NF1-0705_v.pdf (7 Aug. 2021).

The Boat Stays on the Water

(Post All-Ireland Final 2021)

The dreamers weep as the weepers dream,
But our boat stays on the water.
I’m numb today and I cannot feel,
And I don’t know if I ought to.

The reason for this misery,
Is wrapped within a mystery.
But I can rise today to see,
The boat stays on the water.

I gaze out onto Blacksod Bay,
The waves just smile and turn away.
You cannot live in yesterday,
If your boat stays on the water.

The wishers await their wishing well,
As the boat stays on the water.
The road ahead now who can tell,
Not the lonely ocean’s daughter.

The reasons of our destiny,
Are blinded so we cannot see.
The roadblocks of what is meant to be,
As our boat stays on the water.

The ghosts of paradox remain,
Each solitary thought insane.
Each painful loss another gain,
As our boat stays on the water.

For each enigmatic thrill,
The ball will bounce, may spin or spill.
All in a game of heart and will,
While the boat stays on the water.

– NOEL LYONS, 2021



James Callaghan (1912-2005), former Prime Minister of the U.K. with roots in the parishes of Annagh and Began.

This Indenture

WITNESSETH That

Mark Murphy

Consent of his

Parents

of his own free Will and Accord, and with doth put himself Apprentice to

Patrick Henry of Ballyhaunis

to learn his Art and with him (after the manner of an Apprentice), to dwell and serve from the ~~1st~~ day of *9. Oct 18.34* until the full End and Term of *Three years*

from thence next following, to be fully completed and ended; during which Term the said Apprentice his said Master faithfully shall serve, his Secrets keep, his lawful commands everywhere gladly do. He shall do no damage to his said Master nor see it to be done of others, but that he to his Power shall let or forthwith give warning to his said Master of the same. He shall not waste the goods of his said Master nor give or lend them unlawfully to any. He shall not commit Fornication, nor contract Matrimony within the said term. Hurt to his said Master he shall not do, or cause or procure it to be done by others. He shall not play at Cards, Dice Tables, or any other unlawful game whereby his said Master may have Loss with his own or others' Goods during said Term. Without license of his said Master he shall neither buy nor sell. He shall not haunt or use Taverns, Ale-Houses, or Play-Houses, or absent himself from his said Master's Service Day or Night unlawfully, but in all things, as an honest and faithful Apprentice, he shall behave himself towards his said Master and all his during the said Term. And the said Master his said Apprentice in the same Art which he useth, by the best way and means that he can, shall teach and instruct, or cause to be taught and instructed, with due Correction; finding unto his said Apprentice.

Board and Lodgings to get

befitting such an Apprentice during the said Term, according to the custom of the

Town

And for due performance of all and every the said Covenants and Agreements either of the said Parties bindeth himself to the other by these Presents. IN WITNESS whereof, the Parties above-named to these INDENTURES have interchangeable put their Hands and Seals the day of *16 Oct* in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Nine Hundred and *18.34*

Signed, Sealed and Delivered in presence of

Austin Henry

Thomas Murphy

Markie Murphy

The contract binding Mark Murphy of Cloongoonagh, Aghamore as apprentice to Patrick Henry, joinery works, Knox St., Ballyhaunis, dated 1934. The witnesses were Austin Henry of Tooreen and Thomas Murphy, the apprentice's father.



Taken at a Western Farmers' Co-op function in The Beaten Path, 1976.

Back, L-R: Jimmy and Mary Walsh, Maureen Neary, John Joe Keane (Cuilmore, Claremorris), Mike Walsh, Paddy Neary.
Seated, L-R: Gerald and Mary Frances Walsh, Marian Keane, Myra Walsh. *Photo © Liam Lyons Collection.



Pictured at the opening of the 'More Power to Mayo' exhibition in the Traveller's Friend Hotel, Castlebar, 7th Mar. 1967.

L-R: Dalgan Lyons (TD), Denis P. Hannan, Jim Connell, Bill Campbell, Michael A. Keane, all of Ballyhaunis.
*Photo © Liam Lyons Collection.

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



Above:
Lyons sisters from Redford, Noreen Coggins (left) and Bridie Griffin (right), meet Mrs. Mary Higgins, their teacher from Derrylea N.S. Photo courtesy Bridie Griffin.

Left:
An informal gathering on Knox Street. From left:
Kieran Moran, Tony Morley, Eamonn Murren, Tommy Glynn.



Paddy Lyons, Redford (left) and his nephew Mike Griffin, Manchester. Photo courtesy Bridie Griffin.



Paddy Lyons, Redford (left) and Paddy Gildea, Johnstown in the 1960s. Photo courtesy Bridie Griffin.

L-R: Bridie Griffin,
Noreen Coggins,
Bridie Ruane.
Photo courtesy Bridie Griffin.



A Salute to Clare Street of old – Surely the best street to grow up in?

GARVAN DWANE

In times past, there was so much to enjoy and appreciate while growing up in our street – Clare Street – in the 1960s, 70s and 80s. Where to begin?

We had so much on our doorstep. We had a cinema. Two in fact. Within touching distance there was the magical world of films and all the excitement which they brought. We were the envy of Mayo, and Connacht even! Star 1 and Star 2 provided entertainment for us and so many throughout the years. In our younger years, we had the thrill of Sunday afternoon matinees before we ‘grew up’ and earned the right of passage to be admitted to the night time films, even if it was just the 8 p.m. viewing. Admission to the late-night film was longed-for and we knew it would eventually come.

The cinema was also used for plays in the 1950s and 60s where the talented Ballyhaunis actors and actresses of the ‘Good Counsel Players’ achieved national acclaim with productions such as ‘City of Kings’.

sides of the street, bumper-to-bumper. As children, looking out the window and sometimes even allowed to stand at the front door, you could feel the buzz, the excitement, as the crowds gathered. The tunes and melodies of the great showbands drifted through the night air right into our homes.

So, between the romantic nights out in the cinema and dance hall, Clare Street is probably responsible for many a marriage and many a reader of this magazine. Of course, many a heart was broken in those venues too, but let’s not go there!

Perks’ Carnival came to our town, annually I think, and to our street naturally, setting up around Mac’s hill. As a child, I remember being in awe of this wondrous event. It gave rise to no end of excitement and thrills along with shouts and screams from the bumper cars, swinging-boats, chairplanes, hobbyhorses and all sorts of stalls where you could shoot at targets and throw rings

with the faint hope of winning some prize or other.

We had a Library on our street also. A world of books to fascinate and educate ourselves. Next door was the Fire Station. When the station siren sounded it was time to gather and watch the Fire Brigade departing. I guess the seriousness of the situation didn’t dawn on us as children. We marvelled at the Fire Station practice tower, a ‘high rise’ building on our very own street

probably the tallest building in town. Behind that we had the swimming pool, a hive of activity in the summer months with the Annual Gala held as the summer ended. Beside the swimming pool we had a playground. And if my memory serves me correctly, we had an ESB office or sub station (or maybe both) located beside the cinema. Clare Street was even listed on the national bus network as we had a bus stop outside Curley’s bar!

Well served with Shops and Bars

We had numerous shops to feed ourselves. But much more importantly we had sweet shops galore where we happily spent our ‘hard earned’ pocket money. From the



‘City of Kings’ newspaper cutting 1953 – seating for 1000 people in the Star Cinema.

But for us young ‘Clare Streets’ the cinema also doubled as our playground, from gazing at the fascinating and ever changing film posters hanging on the walls or just ‘hanging around’ Eddie Murphy’s sweet shop with its treats, its jukebox and video games. Across the hall was a pool table. And we could even try our hand at table tennis at the entrance to Star 2!

And from light entertainment in the cinema to more serious matters like romance in the dancehall next door. When Saturday night came, our street was filled with people and cars, parked in every available spot, on both



candlelit world of Mrs. Murray's with her sweets in their silver cans to Byrne's Grocery and their other sweet shop a few doors away. We had Conway's and Grogan's shops as well as my favourite sweet shop which belonged to Mrs. Lyons. In all of these it was next to impossible to choose between Curly-Wurlys, Bon-Bons, Sherbets and Cola bottles. And we were always greeted with smiles and a friendly chat.

Of course, the adults had to have their fun too and there was no shortage of bars on the street with Bernie Byrne's, Curley's, Mulhern's and Regan's. To prepare for those nights out and social gatherings, the street provided the hairdressing services of Kitty Healy's, Meath's and Alma's Salon.

As young teens we could sharpen our skills on Pac Man and Space Invaders in Crehan's chip shop and the cinema shop. Here, hours of fun were spent competing for the highest scores in the latest and greatest video games. As adults of course, Crehan's also provided us with tasty food and vital sustenance after a night out. In earlier times, on the other side of the street, we had the delicious chips cooked to perfection by Mrs. Glynn. I can still taste them after all these years.

Everything you could need

Dare I say, Clare Street provided more than its fair share of employment in Ballyhaunis. We had business expertise to help build our homes such as Donnellan's Woodwork and Joinery and Crehan's Concrete Products and Stonemasonry, along with Dillon's who provided extensive Builders Providers requirements. We had Freyne's Garage to buy, repair or fuel cars. Across from

Clare Street 1973, L-R: Conway's, Curley's Bar, Kitty Healy's (hairdresser), Pat Meath's (Barber), Smyth's, Hunt's, Mulhern's Bar, Glynn's Chip Shop, Byrne's, Levins' B&B, Bill Eagney's Volkswagen mini-bus, entrance to Mac's Hill area, Joe Regan's shed, swimming pool under construction, school bus – driver Michael Mulhern, Library and Fire Station yard.

the cinema we had an Electrical and Pump Services outlet. Beside that we had a warehouse used for storing and selling antiques and furniture.

Also on the street, there was Glynn's photography service, capturing special moments in time. Close to Glynn's, visitors to our town could avail of accommodation from an 'overflow' house used by the Central Hotel or, better still, across the road in Levins' Guest House. We also had taxi services on the street provided by Bill Eagney, Mike Griffin and Edward Mulhern. And when people passed to their eternal reward, we had Donnellan's Undertaking Services and Funeral Home.

Further down our street and out Clare Road, we had our 'Industrial district' with the Halal Meat factory empire headquartered there, along with Keane Kitchens, both providing employment for so many. We were ahead of the times, what with being a multicultural street and we even had Europe's most westerly Mosque! So, with all that employment from industry and entertainment, Clare Street must have generated more than its fair share of the Ballyhaunis GDP, to use financial parlance.

An outdoors childhood

Most of our young lives seemed to be spent outdoors. We played street soccer even though we were told a thousand times not to. But with so many doorways and



Dwanes of Clare Street – our back garden, c. 1970.
Back, L-R: Eamon Snr., Eamon jnr., Rosaleen, David.
Front, Garvan, Jacqueline.

gateways it was just too tempting – all seemed perfectly suitable for goals, such as the dancehall doorway, Dillon’s gate by Byrne’s sweet shop and a warehouse door near Jimmy O’Brien’s. And by the way, not a window did we break on the street. I swear!

Of course, this was all practice for ‘proper’ games with two sets of goals. We played in the swimming pool itself, many moons before it was filled with water. I doubt today’s swimmers realise that many a great goal was scored in the deep end by us ‘Clare Streets’! We played in the grounds beside the Library. Sometimes we ventured further out Clare Road to a fine-sized grass pitch beside Cleary’s house, I think, which was kept in pristine condition by John Cleary himself. As we got to be ‘big lads’ in our early teens, we ventured a bit further again out our road to the official Ballyhaunis soccer pitch.

Our ‘messing around’ areas extended from the laneway by the cinema up to Brod Byrne’s hill at the back of Freyne’s Garage. If lucky enough to get even a brief snowy day or two in winter, we could sleigh down that hill, albeit on a cardboard box. Across the street we had clandestine gatherings in the wilderness of Mac’s Hill. It seemed so high in those days, towering over the street. Mac’s Hill and surrounds provided so much to explore, tunnelling through what seemed like a mini dense woodland, primed for outdoor adventures where you could lurk in the shadows and play and hide from the prying eyes of pestering adults.

Beside the hill, we had the Clare Dalgan River. You could remain hidden and travel covertly along the river’s edge, in the deep undergrowth, making your way unseen, a crucial

part of the entertainment, from the Post Office to Jimmy O’Brien’s field. And the river even acted as a natural line of defence for the street against marauding gangs from rival streets during ‘raids’ onto our turf for bonfire-night tyres. Then again, no ‘gang member’ worth their salt would be deterred by a river when the scent of raided tyres was in the air! It is funny how ‘raided’ tyres seemed to burn better and brighter than ‘donated’ old tyres. At least, I think that adults ‘donated’ them from their garages and sheds. Moving swiftly along!

Clare Street had it all

Yes, indeed, Clare Street had it all. There was so much to do and see, so much happening on the street. Why, we were almost self sufficient. Okay, we may not have had a school or church, but sure you couldn’t pack anymore into the street. However, you could always feel the watching eyes of the Convent School as it gazed down on our street from across the river as we played. Especially during holidays, a constant and annoying reminder that it would have us back soon, forcing us to count down the days until the end of holidays and not squander any of them. And who could forget the majestic Convent, and its candlelit windows on the night before Santa arrived, perched on the lofty heights of Convent Hill, looking down over our street? When you were ‘knee high to a grasshopper’, there was something magical about that.

Surrounded by all of the above certainly made our young lives lively and exciting. Boredom was unheard of. We had ample play areas for all sorts of shenanigans which provided endless entertainment with never a dull moment from our childhood days to teens to young adulthood. And those areas were needed as there were lots of children on the street in those days of the 60s and 70s. It was a close knit community and great friendships



Ballyhaunis Swimming Pool under construction in the early 1970s, with a game of handball in progress.



Above: Clare Street 1973. L-R: Levins' B&B, Bill Eagney's Volkswagen mini-bus, entrance to Mac's Hill area, Joe Regan's shed, Swimming Pool under construction, school bus – driver Michael Mulhern, Fire Station and Library, Forde's, Cleary's, John Freyne's, Vincent Freyne's, Dwane's and Donnellan's joinery yard.



Left: L-R: Jimmy O'Brien's house and yard; Paddy O'Brien's, Milo Henry's joinery; Keane Kitchens.

were formed. My best friends on our street were my neighbours the Flatleys and Donnellans.

So just in case I forgot to mention it, Clare Street surely was the best street in town to grow up in. Of course, I may be biased, seeing as I grew up there. Some streets may retort with their list of amenities – it will be a much shorter and inferior list I do think! And we 'Clare Streets' even had the good grace to allow other Ballyhaunis natives (and those from further afield) to use our facilities!

Of course, some of this is tongue in cheek. It was the

residents and characters who made it a great street. There were indeed and still are countless characters in every street throughout Ballyhaunis. So, in truth, it was a fantastic town in which to grow up, full of great people and characters. However, the march of time transforms things and many of the people, buildings and businesses which I then knew are long gone, but happy memories linger on. I'm sure that it's still a fantastic town to grow up in. Perhaps a more fitting article title should be 'A salute to Ballyhaunis – surely the best town to grow up in!'

Abbey Partnership – Approaching its 20th Year

MARK GODFREY

A pandemic isn't the easiest time to welcome new tenants but in March and April the arrival of Mayo Autism Camp to the Friary House in Ballyhaunis was a source of great satisfaction for the Abbey Partnership. As the body which oversees the buildings and grounds of St Mary's Abbey (the Friary) for the community, the Abbey Partnership meets every month to agree maintenance and management issues, including requests to use the property.

Mayo Autism Camp helps autistic children and their parents through sports camps and activities. A perfect tenant, then, for the Friary House. It is already used by several entities serving the community, including the main tenant, Ballyhaunis Family Resource Centre. Other tenants on the wider property include Ballyhaunis Men's Shed, which operates out of a shed built by the friars on what was once their farm, now the parklands and riverside walk enjoyed by many locals every day of the year.

Located at the end of a tree lined avenue directly opposite the six hundred year old Augustinian Abbey, the Friary House was once the residence of the friars who ministered in the abbey, known locally as the Friary – a place inhabited by friars or members of a religious order. When the last friar left Ballyhaunis in 2002 the property was bequeathed to an Abbey Trust which in turn set up an executive body, the Ballyhaunis Abbey Partnership, to carry out day to day management.

Now nearly two decades in existence, the Partnership is proud of the facilities it developed for the community, like a playground, riverside walk and outdoor exercise park. Made up of representatives of Mayo County Council and members of community groups like Ballyhaunis Chamber and Ballyhaunis Community Council, the Partnership handles the booking for use of the church and Friary House by local groups. Also, as a member of the Partnership, the Augustinian Order is keen that the property is put to good use for local community, cultural and social development.

Among the requests to use the abbey and grounds that the Partnership granted this year was one to 'Friary Nights', a two-night series of concerts in the grounds of the abbey, organised by Ballyhaunis Community Council and sponsored by the national government to help local musicians and technicians get back to work after Covid related lockdowns. Visitors to the concerts (27th and 28th August) were impressed by quality local acts like Brian Flanagan, Keith Plunkett and Seamus Fogarty, with professional sound and lighting

technicians hired from around the county.

More culture was brought to the Friary in September when the multipurpose covered sports pavilion (known to many as the MUGA) hosted a Culture Night exhibition of doors painted with messages in various languages and curated by Ruairí Ó Broin. The exhibition was representative of the various ethnic communities living locally.

Other users of the Friary in 2021 included the Health Service Executive (HSE) which ran pop-up Covid testing centres in the church. Mayo County Council meanwhile used the property and grounds to conduct training for its horticultural and landscaping.

While Mayo County Council takes care of complex electrical and engineering works, much of the maintenance at the Friary is performed by workers attached to the Rural Social Scheme (RSS), managed in Ballyhaunis by Mayo North East Development Company. Several RSS workers are based in the Friary. Another scheme operated locally by Mayo North East, TÚS places a worker in the Community Garden who ensures planting, weeding and harvesting of the vegetables in the outdoor plots and the polytunnel are both seen to. TÚS works alongside the Garden Committee of the Abbey Partnership. Ballyhaunis Community Garden is one of a select few in the west of Ireland to have achieved An Taisce Green Flag status two years in a row. The latest Green Flag – which recognises green community spaces of value to nature and humans – was raised at the garden in November. With a new rainwater collection system installed this summer a big task to be undertaken this winter by the garden committee is the installation of a new cover on the polytunnel in the Community Garden, much of which was unfortunately damaged by vandals. We hope the new cover will yield even greater crops of tomatoes, cucumber and courgettes and other heat-needing vegetables as the polytunnel has cultivated to date under the care of TÚS workers Inga and Stephen.

Given the principles of the Partnership it's fitting that the Friary House is being used as a meeting place by local voluntary groups. The board room in the Friary House has been busy this Autumn as community groups like the Annagh Magazine, Tidy Towns and St. Vincent de Paul hold their weekly and monthly meetings in the board room.

Meanwhile, the church has been host to the Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club and a yoga training group this autumn and winter. This has facilitated regular



airing and lighting of the church after so much time during the Covid pandemic when the building was closed. If restrictions allow it's hoped that the church can host events for National Heritage Week and Culture Night in 2022 – as it did in 2019 – as well as the annual Ballyhaunis Art Exhibition and the Christmas Choral Concert.

After over a year of online meetings the Ballyhaunis Abbey Partnership held its first in-person gathering of members in November. New members in attendance included the chief executive of Mayo North East Development Co., which administer LEADER funding and various employment schemes in the region.

It's hoped that the Partnership can be expanded further with working groups who can pursue and develop individual issues like heritage, gardening and arts. If you'd like to join the Partnership or the Community Garden - or if you'd like to use any of the meeting rooms for your group - contact us via email to:

ballyhaunisabbey@gmail.com

Chair – Jim Power;

Vice chair – Mark Godfrey;

Treasurer – Anne Cunnane;

Administrator – Mary Commons;

Augustinian representative – Pat Higgins.



Top right Poster advertising 'Friary Nights', August 2021. An initiative of Ballyhaunis Community Council facilitated by the Abbey Partnership.

Above: Pictured at the close of the 'Friary Nights' concert, Community Council volunteers with singer Keith Plunkett: L-R: Mark Godfrey, Brendan Hurley, Bianca Doufene, Keith Plunkett, Evan Fitzmaurice, Ruairí Ó Broin, Martin Fitzmaurice, Pat Higgins, Mary Donnelly.



Above left: Michael Tighe, Arderry, Aghamore, father of Paddy Joe Tighe (died August 1973, RIP). He was an uncle of Joe Keane, Knox St. This photograph was taken in 1956 at a house party. Standing in background is a neighbour Mary Cassidy.



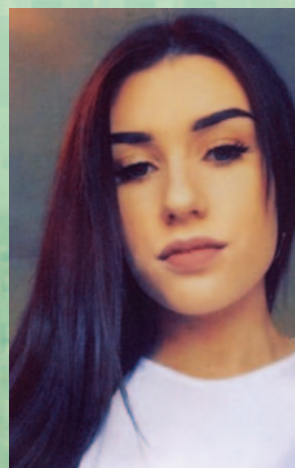
Above right: Nell (Bange) McLoughlin, Kate (Naughton) Tighe, Rosaleen (Cunnane) McGrath. Taken in McLoughlin's, Larganboy early 1990s. Kate, a noted musician and exponent of the accordion, was Paddy Joe's mother.



Paddy Joe Tighe's grandparents Michael and Bridget (Coleman) Naughton, taken in New York, USA, in the early 1900s before they returned home to Ballinacostello, Aghamore. Michael's father Micky Naughton came originally from Knockroe, Carrowkeel, Ballyhaunis.



Paddy Joe Tighe, Ballyhaunis, taken 29th December 2007 on his 65th birthday.



Mary Naughton, born in Leeds, England. She is great-great-granddaughter of Michael and Bridget Naughton, Ballinacostello, Aghamore, Paddy Joe's grandparents.



Ballyhaunis Post Office Dinner Dance 1976

Standing at back, L-R: Mary Greene, Dominick Murphy, Michael Lyons, Donal Fitzpatrick, Billy Lyons, Bridie Brennan, Pat Kilroy, Joe Fitzmaurice, Paddy Brennan. Seated at centre, L-R: Florrie Kenny, Joe Byrne, Anne Egan, Gerry Larkin, Anne Cribbin, Patricia Glennon. Front, L-R: Margaret Finnegan, Eileen Waldron, Breege Fleming. *Photo © Liam Lyons Collection.



Taken at the Ballyhaunis Farmers' Dinner, 1974

L-R: Maura Herr, Maria Cribben, Nora Sweeney. *Photo © Liam Lyons Collection.



At a Castlebar General Hospital Nurses' Dance in Breaffy House Hotel 1973

L-R: Dr. Declan and Una Shields (Ballyhaunis), Dr. Ken and Colette Egan (Ballindine). *Photo © Liam Lyons Collection.



Helen Freeley (Ballindrehid) and Sean Horan (Ballintubber, Co. Mayo)

*Photo © Liam Lyons Collection.

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

The BEY Project Ballyhaunis Foróige has been in operation since June 2018, and this year it has extended its services to Swinford. The project is funded and supported by the Mayo, Sligo and Leitrim Education and Training Board (ETB). Together, Foróige and the ETB provide programmes for young people aged 10 to 24 years through the BEY Project.

Over the past three years young people have enjoyed a range of activities from STEAM, NFTE, Art, Drama, Cookery, Driver Theory as well as LGBTI+ group and social activities for the 18 to 24 age group. Covid-19 impacted on face-to-face activities, but with the help of technology, groups grew even stronger over the last eighteen months with online participation. The Project provided equipment and the leaders upskilled to provide the best activities possible for young people online. Now, with the easing of restrictions, the BEY Project is looking forward to welcoming back young people face-to-face.

The BEY Project is delighted to work with such amazing young people in Ballyhaunis who come from all over the world. The Project is very proud of the talented young people who volunteer their time to help out when community projects arise. We are delighted when that work is rewarded as it was recently when a member of the Project won a Community Award in the National Garda Awards! Young people from the Project participated in Culture Night in the Friary Field in September of this year, highlighting different features of each culture.



Cupcakes as part of the online baking group.

The BEY Project has had numerous award winners throughout the Covid-19 pandemic for Art, Photography and Top Quiz Master. The BEY Project enjoyed trips to Mayo Adventure Centre, Clew Bay Horsemanship Centre and Ballinglen Art Centre in Ballycastle.



Above: Trip to Ballinglen Art Centre.

Right: A door painted for Culture Night.



LIAM HENRY

Fianna Fáil in Ballyhaunis and Mayo again saw its activities drastically curtailed by Covid-19 during 2021. The usual Cumann and Comhairle Cheantar meetings have not been able to proceed but at Comhairle Dáil Cheantar level a number of meetings took place via Zoom.

Despite the challenges of COVID and its restrictions, the Fianna Fáil Team in Mayo has continued to work hard on behalf of the county. At Local Authority level Cllr. Michael Smyth from Swinford is the Cathaoirleach of Mayo County Council until June 2022, with Kilkelly-based Cllr. John Caulfield the Leas-Cathaoirleach and a number of Council-supported initiatives have been undertaken and developed in the wider Ballyhaunis region.

Senator Lisa Chambers and Deputy Dara Calleary TD continue to represent Mayo in the Oireachtas and have used their influence at Parliamentary Party level to

help shape policy in areas such as Health, Agriculture, Regional Development (the new National Development Plan) and Housing.

Deputy Calleary's East Mayo Office on Clare Street Ballyhaunis reopened in August after the lifting of restrictions and is manned every Friday morning – social distancing, mask-wearing and sanitising measures are in place. Appointments can be made by contacting 09677613 or by emailing dara.calleary@oireachtas.ie

Thankfully, the Vaccine Rollout has been extremely successful and we are beginning to emerge from the nightmare that has engulfed all our lives since March 2020 – here's to a healthy and prosperous 2022!

We are very mindful of the great friends and supporters who have gone to their eternal reward in 2021 – may they rest in peace.

Dara Calleary T.D., Constituency Office, 19 Pearse St, Ballina, Co. Mayo. Tel. 096 77613



Paddy Fanning's, Lisbane West, the last traditional thatched house in the parish of Began.

(Courtesy Mike Griffin).

The Knockbrack – Lecarrow Wars

NOEL LYONS

I stood upon the Seven Hills of Rome where I saw the power of former dreams. My dearest friend, with whom I once shared a womb, looked upon me with disdain that I was not a pilgrim of a solely Christian nature. I felt I only saw the cold stone of history. He was right of course in ways but failed to see my journey of a different source. I was there to dance in the dreams of my youth.

You could not find a more complex contradiction than St. Patrick's College in Ballyhaunis in its latter days. A dilapidated prefab building awaiting replacement by the sumptuous palace of the Community School. In contrast there was an energetic, sophisticated, dedicated staff who creatively imbued the essence of education for far more than mere academic success.

John Cleary, Jarlath Fahey, Fr. Paddy Costelloe, Sr. Dolores, Morgan Jennings, Fr. Des Walsh, Terry Coleman all stood upon pedestals of which they were probably not aware, but the gem for me was Fr. Francis McMyler who waltzed us through Latin grammar as if it were a crossword puzzle and exposed us to Roman wars as if they were happening around us – which of course they were.

A magical palace of blue-grey smoke...

I travelled in his energy to the Punic Wars and fought in Gaul with Julius Caesar. I sailed to Egypt with Mark Anthony and never left my university which started in Knockbrack of the Seven Hills and ended up on the Knock Road where other hills awaited.

The centre of Knockbrack's existence was Brod Boyle's Forge. A magical palace of blue-grey smoke, of dust and darkness with the glowing fire fuelled by a bellows. The sturdy anvil stood awaiting the fired golden iron. Here were my greatest learning experiences, for not only could Brod transform base metal into gold with his Midas skills, but he was also my seanchaí and professor of mirth. He spun such marvellous yarns from thin air, captivating my wonder and imagination. The golden works spun with such conviction that the Abbey School of Actors could have completed a module on theatrical excellence. His son Austin and my older brothers were welders of note and had great expertise; I know because they never let me near the apparatus. Brod encouraged me enough one day to weld the frame of a transport box for some unfortunate farmer; the rod stuck and spluttered! It certainly did not resemble the line of weld I had seen the experts create. It seemed to me that welding was not my vocation but my beautiful uncle did not bat an eyelid. No convulsions of laughter as he said, "That's as fine a job as I have ever seen".

He was married to my father's sister Peg, a second mother to us and the most beautiful angel on the planet.

Such a generous heart and soul, whose voice and smile still bring a tear. She never wanted me near the forge because of the dust on my school clothes, not realising that for me it was the dust of dreams. She fed and foddered all who approached. I remember Martin Mongan of "The Beautiful Lanterns" calling to her house, drenched on a wet day. He received the welcome of a Pope. "Come in out of the rain and sit by the fire". His reply, as ingenious as it was beautiful, "It can go no further than the skin, Ma'am". She treated him and so many others with the hospitality of royalty. Their son Austin once declared that I had put on weight with the expression, "You're as fat as a butcher's dog and no wonder – eating all day and doing nothing". I guess the apple does not fall far from the tree.

The battles of youth

I stood upon the hills of Rome by the banks of the Tiber reflecting on the battles of my youth. We did not have the luxury of possibilities or expectations the present generation define or expect. We gathered in the summer evenings often after a twelve-hour shift of physical labour in the bogs and hayfield which provided the basics for house and farm. Lecarrow and Curries, the overlooking neighbours remind me of the phrase about the "valley of the squinting windows" for surely a cuckoo could not lay an egg in Knockbrack without being lamped in Lecarrow.

We gathered, we played, we laughed together and we contested games. No referee ever controlled our games and none was ever available or brave enough to stand between us. The only rule - the golden rule - was often quoted... "No broken leg, no free". How there was never a free, I look back upon with amazement!

The Cribbins, the Murphys, the Ruane of Lecarrow /Curries formed their central line. Ourselves, Sean and Tomás Cribbin and the Leonards stood in defiance and, of course, the many tourists by connection, like John Donnellan of Knock, John Lyons and the Rattigans from Birmingham, were involved unknowingly, unwillingly or in a blatant partisan match of committed rivalry.

As Caesar stood at the Rubicon, the famous river of Carpe Diem, we too seized the day. Constantine observed that the desire of immortality is of a temporary nature. In spite of momentary gain, the end results are the same, so too the battles of youth.

We arrived in all manner of attire. The working clothes of different trades. No adidas or uniforms of marketed suggestion. The mechanics arrived in steel-capped boots and played. The rest of us in the gear in which we played out our daily lives.

"No broken leg, no free" applied. Kieran Ruane would

shout, “Let’s play Gaelic”. We would accommodate. Mike Murphy met his shin with a steel-capped boot and down he went roaring for a free. “I never touched you”, the steely response. He turned to team-mates in jubilation, “I could feel it boring in”. No free was allowed as the x-ray machine was too far away. We were not concerned about gear; Liam Lyons played in bare feet and it made no difference, for we knew they were as lethal as the Cuban missiles which played in the Cold War. You wanted him on your team for health and safety reasons.

The Romans had a most fearsome and organised army. The most unheralded division was their slingshot units which were a military forerunner of artillery brigades. They were organised at the forefront of many battles and wreaked havoc. I remember a running battle on the Knockbrack-Curries front. We, as younger soldiers, were kept in reserve probably to protect us as much as to undervalue our contribution. Stones rained in both directions. I remember my father being made aware later of what had occurred and another war was declared which my dad won.

Every army or team needs a combination of skills and assets. We were no different. Austin Cribbin decried the “fancy footballers” even though his own house, himself included, was full of them, both male and female. He was a welder too and had no inhibitions about redefining a soft tackle. We had more than a few welders and while I was not gifted with such assets, I could run and I was brave, for I learnt at an early age that brave people were found in our family.

Parish Leagues

The natural progression of successful education is that the learner transfers knowledge, skills and experiences to new situations. This was facilitated by some genius in the GAA Club who decided that a Parish League would be a wonderful idea. I was fortunate to see many of the Ballyhaunis senior footballers of the early 70’s in action. The team of the late 1960’s too was blessed with talent, the Cribbin brothers Tony, Tom and J.J., Tom Fitzgerald, Pdraig Prendergast, Tony Morley, Des Lyons and Al Madden to name a few, who were later followed by Micheál and Mike Webb, Ger and Mike Lyons. The Prenty brothers also lit up many a field. The Parish Leagues of the late 70’s and early 80’s saw a blend of many of these guys pitted against us younger blades who had played on successful Community School teams, encouraged under the watchful gaze of Micheál Murren, Hugh Rudden and Aiden Kelly. As if there were reputations at stake or points to prove, there was much competitive play.

I remember one parish league encounter and Tommy Curran giving a pep talk to my opposing team, as if it were needed. “Right! Backs, stick to your men. Mine will be too fast for me but I will soon slow him down to my own pace”.



‘We gathered, we played, we laughed together and we contested games’, taken during a summer in the seventies. Standing, L-R: Dom Morley (Bekan), Ger Lyons (Knockbrack), John Rattigan (Birmingham). Centre, L-R: Sean Cribbin (Knockbrack), John Joe Lyons (Knockbrack), John Lyons (Birmingham). Front: Geraldine Lyons (Birmingham).

I lined out at left half forward to see the Colossus of Rhodes that was Tommy Curran, trundling over in my direction. It suddenly occurred to me that I might play better on the other wing and I arranged a switch to find Seán Barrett with similar artillery awaiting me. Nowhere to hide, I kept my engine warm and took him for a few spins until he got low on diesel.

Energy of Connection

The summer would arrive with all its smiles and beauty. The touch of wet turf, the wildflowers and the smell of new mown hay takes years off me.

The supermodels of my youth included the beautiful Mary Boyle Donnelly, Peg Galvin Byrne and Patty Morley. They lit up the place with their smiles, their joy and their gaiety. Their arrival seemed to switch on a nuclear generator of laughter and chatter. Their joy, their energy of connection reminded me that their mothers Peg, Maimie and Kitty had once shared our sacred space, our land, our family of dreams, hopes and aspirations. Their arrival and departure greeted with smiles of joy and of loss.

I walked the ruins of Rome, of Caesar, Augustus, Tiberius Nero and so many others who existed in another time and thought of Mike Mulkeen and Mai, of Frank Leonard, Paddy Joe and Kathleen Cribbin and Ned Plunkett who threatened me with his stick after a prank phone call my twin had made, pretending to be P.J. Morley T.D. and asking who he voted for, and of course also enquired how his dog Rex was keeping. They were warm and friendly and smiled and showed the true love of community. They are still alive much more so than all the Roman statues. I thought too of the word nostalgia which derives from the Greek meanings of home and pain. For there they are, my people.



Unfortunately, another year has passed without being able to gather for our Faith & Light Fiestas due to the pandemic. We tried throughout the year to stay in touch in various ways - like WhatsApp and 'friendship' parcels for Valentines and Easter (see photos attached). We will continue to keep in touch in these ways until we are able to meet face-to-face again, hopefully early in 2022. (We are putting together the Halloween parcels as I'm compiling this report).

Please take a few minutes to reflect on the verse that follows -

Beatitudes of a Person with Additional Needs

I bless you when you take time to listen to me because I have something to say.

I bless you when you walk with me in public places because I like your friendship.

I bless you when you never say 'hurry up' because all I need is time.

I bless you when you do not take a job away from me, I will surprise you when I get it right.

I bless you when you stand beside me when I try new things because I know I can do it.

I bless you when you ask me to help because I like being wanted.

I bless you for accepting me as I am because I was formed in God's image.

Let us all rejoice, that by giving me support you are treating me just as Jesus would treat all his children.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank Fr. Stephen, our Chaplain, and all our supporters for their continued support. We wish all our Ballyhaunis Faith & Light friends a very Happy Christmas and every blessing for the New Year.

Anyone interested in getting to know more about our Faith & Light group contact Orla (086) 0858122, Julia (086) 0764709, Geraldine (086) 1730445, Anne (087) 6892848.



Orla and Paul with their Valentine cards and items from the Faith & Light Easter envelope



Bridget, Rosemary and Annette enjoying their Hallowe'en gifts. Some of our Faith & Light friends also took part in the Team Hope Christmas Shoe Box appeal

National Award-Winning Herd

Tom Fitzmaurice of Derrynacong won First Prize in the first ever Irish Charolais Suckler Herds Competition this year, in the category for herds of twenty cows or under.



Some superb cows from the top herd in the country.
Photograph by Tricia Kennedy

Launched by the Irish Charolais Cattle Society earlier this year, the competition set out to identify and recognise the best suckler herds in the country using Charolais stock bulls as the main sire within their herds and Charolais-cross breeding cows. Entrants were required to submit a maximum two-hundred word profile of their herd along with other supplementary information. Based on these submissions, the ten best performing herds were selected for on-farm visits at the end of July, and judged on the quality of their stock, efficiency, overall performance of the cattle on the farm and the paperwork provided. When the Society concluded their judging, they remarked that the quality of qualifying herds exceeded all expectations.

Tom Fitzmaurice farms in Derrynacong, a holding characterised by rolling green pastures enclosed within perfectly maintained stone walls, where an excellent grassland management regime is practised. He keeps approximately twenty suckler cows, a mix of Simmental, Limousin and Charolais breeding; all run with the herd's Charolais stock bull, and all calving in springtime.

Tom is well known for producing top quality Charolais weanlings. For the last four years he has sold his weanling bulls at the show and sale in

Castlerea Mart and, three out of four of those years has picked up the overall champion award of the show, as well as achieving the top price on all three occasions. Last year (2020) they sold for an average of €1,152 at an average weight of 390kgs, aged seven to eight months old. His overall champion of the show weighed 445kgs and sold for €1,440. The weanling heifers are usually sold off-farm to repeat customers: at an average weight of 300kgs and just seven months old. Last year they averaged €900. The current stock bull is Oghamstone Leo, son of Pirate out of a CF52 bred dam. All replacement heifers are bought-in, using careful and judicious selection.

Not only is this herd producing outstanding weanlings, its overall efficiency is exceptional, as stated on the Charolais Cattle Society's website. The average calving interval of Tom's herd is 356 days, placing it in the top 10% nationally. The number of calves/cow/year being produced sits at 1.03, placing the herd in the top 5% nationally. The last four cows to be culled within the herd were sold in Castlerea Mart, selling for an average of €1,680 at an average weight of 880kgs.

In the judges' opinion this herd has just about everything you could possibly want in a suckler herd. The cows provide milk, fertility, calving ability, longevity, low maintenance and cull value. The Charolais stock bull brings calving ease, weight gain, shape, colour, style and quality. The combination of both makes this herd sustainable, efficient and profitable.

Congratulations to Tom on creating and managing this wonderful suckler herd.



Tom Fitzmaurice with some of his prizewinning herd. *Photograph by Tricia Kennedy*

Ballyhaunis Golf Club

MARGARET DYER

Ballyhaunis Golf Club was founded in 1927 and was developed as 9-hole course. Many improvements were made over the years to make it an interesting, mature parkland course with mature trees and strategically placed bunkers all coming into play while playing to the elevated greens. Since 1927 the golf course and clubhouse were leased and a rental fee was paid yearly. Over the past number of years our committees have worked tirelessly in generating revenue, cutting costs and running the club with one target in mind: that one day we would own the land. Earlier this year that dream came true when an opportunity arose and we were in a position to buy the lands with the generosity of members and friends buying into a "Bond Scheme" to generate the necessary funds. On 25th February 2021 the members of Ballyhaunis Golf Club became the proud owners of their club.



The golfing year resumed in April under strict regulations and guidelines from Golf Ireland. The Junior Golf Programme was a big success this year with 121 juniors joining as members of the club. Coaching lessons for juniors were held every Wednesday morning over the summer school holidays and the Juvenile sessions took place on Wednesday evenings from 7pm to 8pm. The Junior Programme usually begins during the Easter school holidays. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for all information regarding these lessons.

John William Burke, a junior golfer at Ballyhaunis Golf Club, is a huge inspiration to all our golfers. He was crowned the overall champion in the Flogas Irish Junior Open Golf Summer Series winning the prestigious 'Gary Player Trophy'. He won the 'Payne Stewart Trophy in the under-12 Schools Tournament, and the 'US Kids'



John William Burke was crowned overall Champion of the Flogas Irish Junior Open Summer Series in which over 500 young golfers competed. He is pictured here with the Gary Player Trophy at Ballyhaunis Golf Club with members in the background. Back, L-R: Roy Johnstone, Catherine Johnstone, Emmett Keane, Tom Dillon, Eileen Donnellan, Margaret Monaghan, John Dillon, Brendan Donnellan, Dermot Finnegan, John Ryan, Norrie Dillon, Paul and Conor Hickey, Willie Coyne, Kevin Garvey, Tony Grennan, Seamus Cox, Mary Lyons, Oisín Henry, John Burke, Patricia Fitzgerald, Jenny Glynn, Paula Burke, Cait Webb, Kevin Henry, Breda Burke, Erika Webb and Reyna Waldron, Kian Burke, Pearse Keadin, Freddie Herr, Attracta Jordan, Fiona Prenty, Marina Coyne, Eugene Kilbride, Martin Finnegan, Barry Freeman, Grace Lyons, Siobhán Herr, Liam Lynskey. Centre, L-R: Seán Monaghan, Darragh Freeman, Shane Freeman, Ruairí Freeman, Aideen Burke, Kate Monaghan, Aibhe Donnellan. Front, L-R: Eoin Freeman, Oisín Finnegan, Andrew Burke, John William Burke, Seán Donnellan, Eamon Monaghan, Tom Donnellan. (Glynn's Photography, Castlereagh)

tournament which was played on different courses all over Ireland. He was the winner of the 'Order of Merit' – top spot in the Irish Kids Golf. In all, John William played twenty-six tournaments over the summer, winning twelve.

Congratulations to Ruairí Freeman and Kevin Heneghan who finished in the top three at the Wee Wonders competition which was played in Rosses Point.

Andrew Hickey competed in all of Ireland's Men's Championships this year, travelling all around the country. He had a season low (-4) at the West of Ireland Men's Open. He is currently just outside the top twenty in the Irish Men's Bridgestone Order of Merit heading into the last two championships of the year. This year, Andrew played consistently well only missing one cut in the highest level of Irish amateur golf.

Beginners Golf classes started in June this year and were held every Monday evening from 7pm to 9pm for seven weeks. The classes usually start in May each year. Keep an eye on Ballyhaunis Golf Club Facebook page for details.

Our Lady Captain, Norrie Dillon, held her prize days in July and Marina Coyne won top prize. Captain Kevin Garvey's prize days were held on August Bank Holiday weekend and Patrick Joseph (P.J.) Moran won his prize. Winners of the President Jenny Glynn's prizes were Dee Moran and Michael Horan.

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

The future looks bright for Ballyhaunis Golf Club as we head towards a new year. It is a wonderful facility where you can practice your irons and woods at our newly erected driving bays or practice putting on the putting green before heading out on rolling hills of Ballyhaunis Golf Course to play your game of golf. It is a game you can play alone or with your friends. Why not consider joining? Ring 0949630014 for further details.

We remember Alo Reddington past Captain and President, Mary Webb past Lady Captain, Hans Van De Putt and John O'Brien past Captain and President of our club who died during the year. Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha dhílse.

All images: *Glynn's Photography, Castlereagh*



The Burke family: John and Paula with Aiden, John William and Andrew.



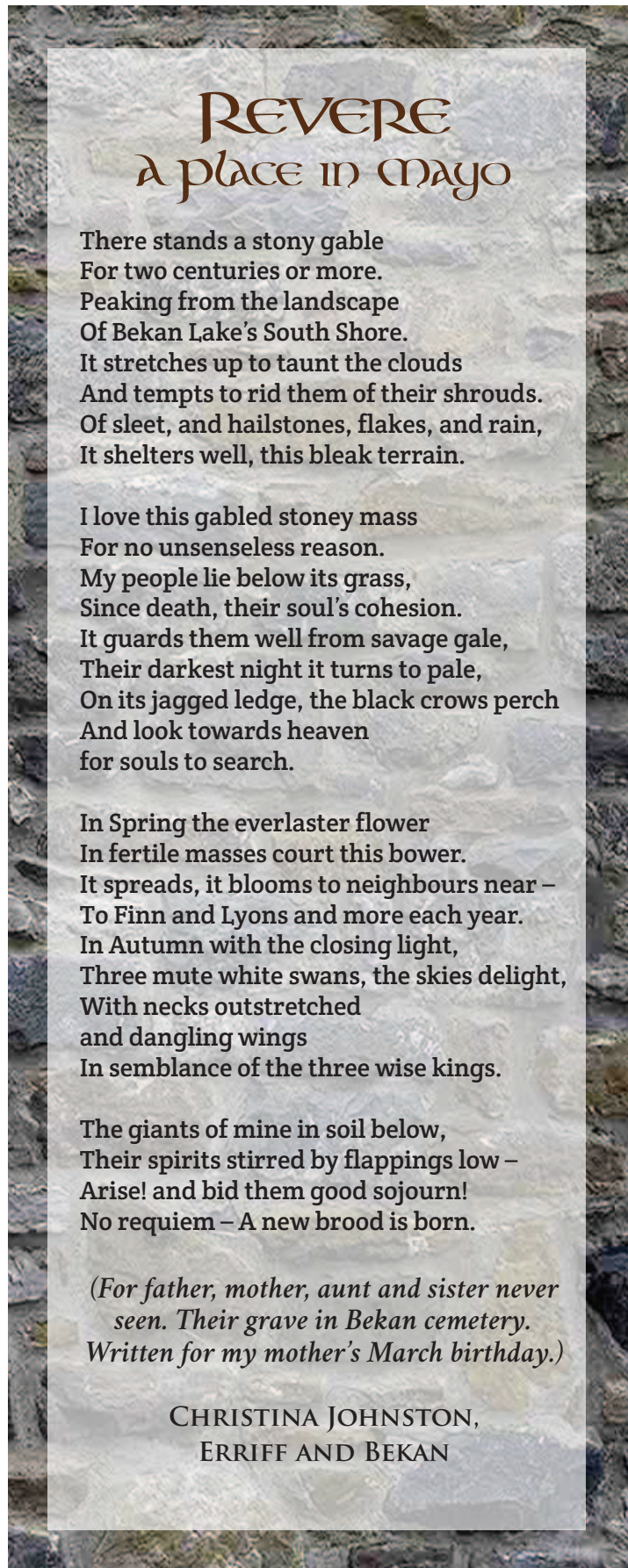
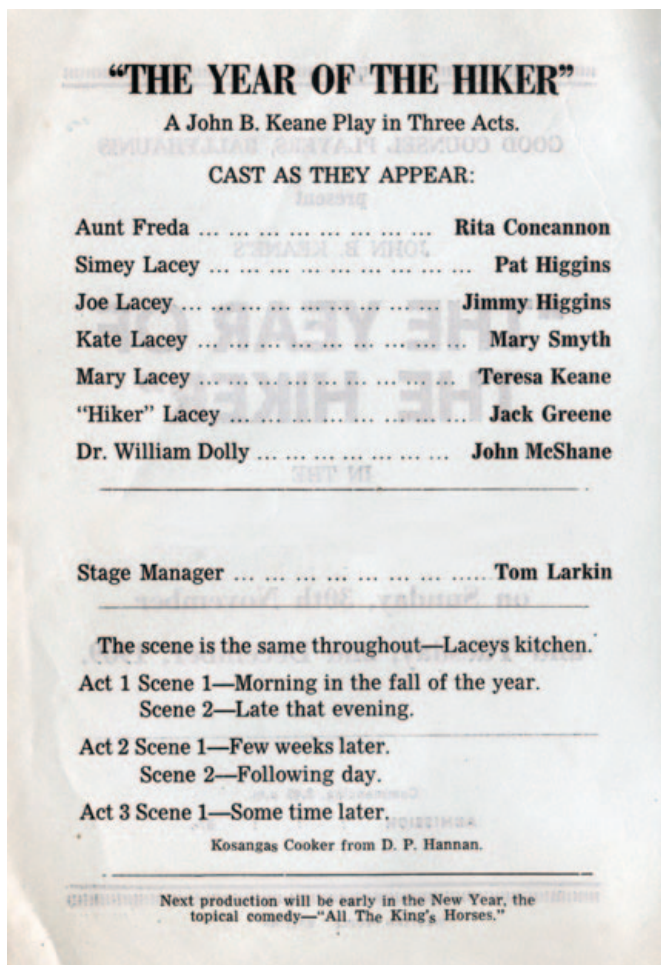
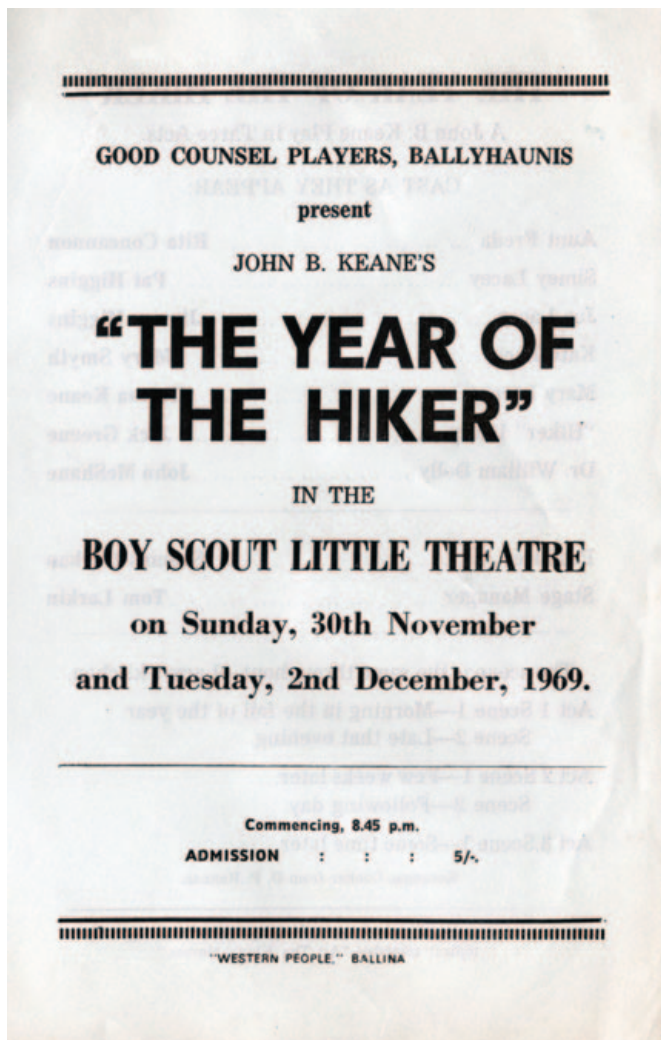
Breda Burke poses proudly with her son John and grandson John William at Ballyhaunis Golf Club.



Dee Moran (left), winner of the President's Prize to the Ladies at Ballyhaunis Golf Club, receiving her prize from Jenny Glynn (President).



President's Prize Juvenile Winners. Back, L-R: Oisín Casey, David Delaney, Jake Glavey and Jenny Glynn (Club President). Front, L-R: John William Burke, Pierce Keadin and Ruairí Freeman



REVERE A place in Mayo

There stands a stony gable
For two centuries or more.
Peaking from the landscape
Of Began Lake's South Shore.
It stretches up to taunt the clouds
And tempts to rid them of their shrouds.
Of sleet, and hailstones, flakes, and rain,
It shelters well, this bleak terrain.

I love this gabled stoney mass
For no unsenseless reason.
My people lie below its grass,
Since death, their soul's cohesion.
It guards them well from savage gale,
Their darkest night it turns to pale,
On its jagged ledge, the black crows perch
And look towards heaven
for souls to search.

In Spring the everlaster flower
In fertile masses court this bower.
It spreads, it blooms to neighbours near –
To Finn and Lyons and more each year.
In Autumn with the closing light,
Three mute white swans, the skies delight,
With necks outstretched
and dangling wings
In semblance of the three wise kings.

The giants of mine in soil below,
Their spirits stirred by flappings low –
Arise! and bid them good sojourn!
No requiem – A new brood is born.

*(For father, mother, aunt and sister never
seen. Their grave in Began cemetery.
Written for my mother's March birthday.)*

CHRISTINA JOHNSTON,
ERRIFF AND BEKAN

Left: A programme from 'The Year of the Hiker' 1969.
Courtesy of John Durkan.

Appointed to Gaisce Awards Council

TOM CAULFIELD

Congratulations to Samantha Glynn Briody of Oldcastle, Co. Meath and formerly of Doctor's Road, Ballyhaunis who was appointed in January to the Gaisce Council by Roderic O'Gorman, the Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth. The Gaisce Council comprises fifteen members who are appointed for a three-year term.

Council members are drawn from current President's Award Leaders, Gaisce awardees, business leaders and skilled professionals representing a breadth of Irish society. Yvonne McKenna, CEO of Gaisce, said, "We are incredibly lucky with the calibre of council members supporting the work of Gaisce and we are delighted to have Samantha on board." Other appointees include Justin McAleese, son of former president Mary McAleese and Dublin football star Philly McMahon.

Samantha is a past pupil of the Convent of Mercy National School and Ballyhaunis Community School. She is a chartered accountant by profession with over twenty-five years' experience across a range of industries and brings a depth of financial, accounting, tax and audit knowledge to her new role. Originally trained as a tax consultant with KPMG, Samantha holds a Bachelor of Corporate Law degree from NUIG and a Professional Diploma in Accountancy from DCU. A mother of three girls, Samantha appreciates the challenges faced by young people today.

Gaisce or 'Great Achievement' is a self-development programme for young people between ages 15-25 and

has been in existence since 1985. The Awards initially flourished under the patronage of former President Patrick J. Hillery and have been promoted by each president since. The President's Award is a self-development programme for young people which is proven to enhance confidence and wellbeing through participation in personal, physical, community and team challenges. Gaisce is a direct challenge from the President of Ireland to young people to dream big and realise their potential.

The Gaisce programme is delivered by almost 1,500 President Award Leaders working and volunteering in a variety of organisations across Ireland. There are three levels of award – Bronze, Silver and Gold. To date over 300,000 young people have participated in the Gaisce programme across all levels and in every county in Ireland and, today, near to 25,000 young people participate annually.

Samantha has been a supporter of Gaisce for many years and first became involved with The President's Award as a teenager at Ballyhaunis Foróige Club. Samantha strongly believes in Gaisce's core values of empowerment, respect, inclusion and equality. Samantha explained that each award is individual to the participant and she maintains that the challenges involved will stand to the young people in their adult lives. Samantha feels that the organisation is more relevant in these strange times than ever before. "While everything is about what you can't do right now, the Gaisce awards are firmly about what you can do", said Samantha. We wish Samantha every success in her new role.

Samantha is the daughter of Jenny and Patsy Glynn of Doctor's Road and granddaughter of Eileen and Eddie Fitzgerald, late of Clare Street. She travels to Ballyhaunis regularly to visit family and catch up with friends.



Samantha Glynn Briody



Left: Mary McBride of Annagh (centre) accepts a presentation on behalf of her late sister Kathleen from John Brady (left) and John Dillon Leetch (right) of Dillon Leetch and Co. Solicitors, in recognition of Kathleen's sixty years of distinguished service as Legal Secretary and Office Manager with the firm.

Nolan Family Photographs

Cloontumper



Left: Bridie Nolan with Mike Hunt at his home in Bracklagh, with Rosie the pony and dog. Taken Oct. 1994.



Left: A family get-together at Nolan's, 1972.

L-R: Bridie Nolan (née Regan), Mary Nolan, Maggie Phillips (Leow), Nora Nolan, Delia Regan (Cloonbook), Mike Nolan with baby Michael Nolan and Sean Phillips (Leow).

Below right: Thomas 'Joss' Regan (Cloonbook), Nancy Regan and Tom Regan (Ballindine). Taken 1984.



Left: Jimmy Shannon, Mike Nolan, Bridie Nolan and Mary Shannon (née Nolan). Taken 1992.





Above: Taken at O'Donnell's house, Scrigg, mid-1980s. From left: Mike Nolan, Mary (Nolan) Shannon, Mary O'Donnell (Jim O'Donnell's sister) and Bridie Nolan.

Left: Taken on Clare Street, early 1970s. From left: Bridie Nolan (née Regan), her sister Mary Bromley, Patsy McGarry, Mike Nolan, Martin Fergus (Ginger). Mary Nolan in front.



Above left: Taken outside Nolan's, Cloontumper in the 1950s. From left, Michael Nolan Snr., Mary Keane (née Smith) and Nora Nolan (née Keane).

Above right: Neighbours get-together, 1972. From left: Nora Nolan (née Keane), her grandson baby Michael Nolan, her son Mike Nolan and neighbours Martin Fergus (Ginger) and Martin Fergus (Uncle).



Below left: Bernard Keane originally from Coolnafarna, moved to Cloontumper on his marriage to Mary Smith. This was taken outside what is now Nolan's, Cloontumper in the 1950s.

Sixty Years of Priesthood

FR. KIERAN WALDRON MARKS DIAMOND JUBILEE OF ORDINATION

Congratulations to Fr. Kieran Waldron who marked the sixtieth anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood earlier this year. A native of Ballyhaunis, Fr. Waldron returned to his home-town on retirement in 2011 having ministered in the Archdiocese of Tuam for fifty years.

Below is a short account of the life of Fr. Kieran Waldron. It is based on a book 'The Light of Life: Memories of a Diocesan Priest' which he published in 2015 with a limited print-run. The book was for private circulation among family, colleagues and friends but some copies were made available to Mayo County Library for its branches.

Kieran was born in 1936 over the family-run bakery, grocery and provisions shop on Main Street, son of James and Rita (Freeley) Waldron. He received his early education in the Convent of Mercy and St. Mary's Boys National School, after which he attended St. Jarlath's College, Tuam from 1949 to 1954. He entered Maynooth College, the National Seminary, in September 1954 and, at the end of seven years study and formation, was Ordained to the Priesthood on 18th June 1961. One of sixty priests Ordained that day, he celebrated his first Mass at a side-altar in St. Joseph's Chapel, Maynooth. The ordaining prelate was Cardinal Agagianian, the Papal Legate, who was presiding at ceremonies in Ireland marking the Patrician Year.

His first assignment was to the Grove Hospital, Tuam, as Chaplain in a temporary capacity, before being appointed Chaplain to the Franciscan Monastery, Corrandulla, serving also as assistant priest in Annaghdown parish. Whilst here, he gained a Higher Diploma in Education from University College Galway and also had a brief stint teaching English in St. Jarlath's College where, amongst his pupils, was the recently retired Archbishop of Tuam, Dr. Michael Neary.

In September 1962 he was appointed to the teaching staff of the newly established St. Patrick's College, Ballyhaunis, and as assistant priest in Began parish which had Canon Moane as P.P. and two curates based in Brickens and Logboy, respectively. English was his main subject and in his teaching was keen to impart a love and appreciation of that subject as well as history and drama to his pupils. An annual school magazine was also launched through his initiative and he produced several plays staged by the pupils including 'The Winslow Boy',



Fr. Kieran Waldron, on the day of his Ordination, with his mother Rita Waldron (née Freeley)

'Arsenic and Old Lace' and 'Dry Rot'.

Martin Joyce was a pupil of Fr. Waldron's for several years from 1967 and credits him with igniting his love of literature. "Fr. Kieran Waldron was an inspirational teacher. His passion for drama, novels and poetry was contagious and he could teach it too. He was never pedantic or boring. Long before *Dead Poets' Society* or Frank McCourt were heard of, he was communicating with boyish enthusiasm the joy of good writing and the intense pleasure derived from reading great poetry. Keats was a favourite of his. I learnt a lot from him and am grateful for it." That view is shared by Martin's classmate, Michael Kelly, who also credits Fr. Waldron with generating enthusiasm for local history by identifying local topics for students to research and write about for the school magazine, *Lorica*.

The introduction of 'free education' in 1967 focussed attention on the provision of secondary education in the region and Fr. Kieran was involved in early efforts to bring together the three post-primary schools in Ballyhaunis. Over the next ten years his successors carried on this work which culminated in the opening of the Community School in 1977.

Inspired by the efforts of Fr. McDyer in Donegal, he developed an interest in community development during his time in Ballyhaunis and Began and helped carry out a base-line survey to provide a development plan for Ballyhaunis – more than fifty years ago.

Louisburgh 1970-87

In 1970 he was appointed Priest Chaplain to Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh – the first Catholic co-educational secondary school in the country – where he taught English and Religion, taking on some parochial duties in addition.

He was involved in the renovation of Louisburgh parish church, which included the re-ordering of the sanctuary in line with Vatican Council enactments, an extension and a new heating system. Here he gained valuable experience in planning, fundraising and management that would stand him in good stead with building projects in the future.

During his seventeen years here he promoted the huge

tourist potential of the region as member of the Louisburgh Tourism Association and in the development of Louisburgh Holiday Cottages. Other involvements were with the local Drama Group, where he produced sixteen plays; and with the Youth Club which was affiliated to Macra na Tuaithe. He was involved in the local Rural Housing Organisation; helped acquire sites for the telephone exchange and an advance factory; and fostered relations with the College of St. Scholastica, Duluth, Minnesota who deliver their Irish Studies programme in Louisburgh each year since 1980.

In the early 1980s he was involved in the extension of Sancta Maria College and it was this work that prompted his first publication, a booklet chronicling the school's history.

While in Louisburgh, he was elected to the Diocesan Council of Priests, advisors to the Archbishop, and chaired that body 1985-88.

Belcarra (Parish of Balla) 1987-93

Fr. Kieran came to Belcarra in the parish of Balla in 1987. After twenty-six years of priesthood he was now a curate for the first time with a greater involvement in parish work. Once more his aptitude for building projects came to the fore and he was involved in the provision of an extension to Belcarra N.S., the building of Clogher Community Hall and the refurbishment and re-ordering of the sanctuary in Belcarra church. He was instrumental in coaxing Mrs. Judy Coyne, a resident of Belcarra, to record her life and many years' service to the Marian Shrine at Knock. The centenary of the birth of Belcarra native Fr. John Blowick, co-founder of the Maynooth Mission to China (Columbans) occurred during this time and Fr. Kieran organised a special centenary commemoration in Belcarra, producing a booklet for the occasion.

Killiererin (1993-2011)

Fr. Kieran was appointed Parish Priest of Killiererin in July 1993. In addition to day-to-day ministry and running of the parish, he had the parochial house renovated and a car-park laid out beside the church. The church was refurbished under his management: the sanctuary re-ordered, new heating, lighting and sound systems installed, the sacristy extended and the baptistery modified. All was completed in 1997, retaining the best features of the original 1849 church and an earlier renovation of 1960. The following year, 1998, saw the car park tarmacadamed and, for the Millennium year of



The Waldron family in 1943. Back, L-R: Imelda, Patricia, Vona, Jarlath, Josephine, Eithne, Noel. Front, L-R: Peter, Rita and James Waldron, Kieran.

2000, a new three-light stained glass window was installed in the west Gable on the Jubilee Year theme, 'Christ Yesterday, Christ Today and Christ forever'. Some years later he had the structure of the church's copper spire renewed.

Being the only priest in the parish brought its challenges, but the active support of parishioners heralded an increasing lay involvement in parochial work. 1994 saw the introduction of lay Ministers of the Eucharist and female altar servers, extending lay involvement in the church. A further welcome development was the introduction of Pastoral Councils in 2002.

Around 2000 he initiated efforts to have the diocesan archives conserved and catalogued. He holds the position of Diocesan Archives at the present time.

His role as Chairman of the Boards of Management for the two primary schools in the parish brought further responsibilities and he oversaw the extension and upgrading of Barnaderg school, opened in 2006, and commenced work on the extension of Cahergal School. In 2005 he was appointed member of the Cathedral Chapter, though is reluctant to use the honorary title of Canon this position bestows.

One of the highlights of his time in Killiererin was the Ordination to the Priesthood of Patrick Burke in Killiererin Church, on 11th June 2006. Sadly, his ministry lasted just over twelve years and Fr. Patrick died 25th June 2018 aged 38. May he Rest in Peace.

In the fiftieth year of priesthood, in January 2011, Fr. Waldron offered his resignation to the Archbishop. At a

special Mass on Saturday, 2nd July, Dr. Neary offered kind words of gratitude for many years' service, after which a farewell function was held in the Community Centre.

He left Killererin on 12th July 2011, after eighteen years, and returned to Ballyhaunis where he has lived since. He is strong in his appreciation of the support he received from hundreds of parishioners and helpers in the various parishes he worked in. Without their help, he says, he could have done nothing.

Literary output

Fr. Kieran has five books to his credit. Four of these reflect his lifelong interest in education and history: 'Out of the Shadows: Emerging Secondary Schools in the Archdiocese of Tuam 1940-69' (2002), 'Archdiocese of Tuam – An Illustrated History' (2005), 'The Archbishops of Tuam 1700-2000' (2008), 'Collect the Fragments: Ballyhaunis Historian Michael F. Waldron, LLD 1876-1954' (2013). The biographical 'The Light of Life: Memories of a Diocesan Priest' (2015) was published for limited distribution and is available in the library. Earlier works in booklet form included a history of Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh and a commemo-



Fr Kieran Waldron marked 60 years of Priesthood in 2021.

rative publication marking the centenary of Fr. John Blowick's birth. He also edited and prepared for publication his brother Fr. Jarlath's best-selling work, 'Maamtrasna – the Murders and the Mystery' (1992); and assisted in the production of the first seven issues of the 'Tuam Diocesan Directory' (1990-2010), edited by his brother Fr. Peter.

He has been a regular contributor to *Annagh* having written many articles on historical, educational and biographical subjects to date, among them his evocative account of growing up in Ballyhaunis in the 1940s – "He's in the Kitchen", Main Street in the Forties' – which was

published in *Annagh* 1999, pages 20-22. A contributor to many other publications and periodicals, he has featured on radio broadcasts on topics of local and national historical interest. Most recently he contributed an article to *The Irish Times* in which he argued that the Catholic Bishops of Ireland were not ambivalent in the War of Independence. His meticulously researched and well-presented literary output contributes enormously to our knowledge and understanding of the past – long may it continue.



The Waldron Family in 1996 – Golden jubilee of Fr. Jarlath's Ordination to the priesthood. Back, L-R: Fr. Peter, Noel and Fr. Kieran Waldron. Front, L-R: Vona (Garvey), Eithne (Meagher), Sr. Imelda Waldron, Fr. Jarlath Waldron, Josephine (Colthurst) and Patricia Waldron.

An Chumann Lúthchleas Gael: Tioncharach, Dionshbháilte agus Rathúil

LIAM Ó RIAIN



Tá meas mór agam ar an Chumann Lúthchleas Gael. Sílim go bhfuil sé an ghluaiseacht mhór in Éireann. Eagraíocht tioncharach, forásach agus uaimhianach is ea é. Is aoibhinn liom fealsúnacht na h-eagraíochta. Is é mo thuairim go bhfuil tréithe níos tábhachtaí air mar thimire ár gcluichí, ár gcultúr agus ár dteanga. Spreagann sé díospóireacht agus bíonn conspóid ann uaireanta. Taispeánann sé misneach ar na fadhbanna le sárú mar eiríonn leis réiteach a fháil i gcónaí. Seachas seo, tá fíis mhór agus radharc dearfach aige.

Nuair a bhí an Covid a naoi déag ag scaipeadh in Éireann sa bhliain 2020 agus 2021, thug sé ceannasaíocht agus siamsaíocht do na daoine mar sholáthraigh sé peil agus iománaíocht dóibh d'ainneoinn an dianghlasáil agus na srianta a bhí ann. Ar an am seo, bhí meanma agus muinín an phobail níos lú. Bhain an paindéimic stangadh astu. Bhí gach eachtraí ar ceal agus dé dheasca, ní raibh aon roghanna rompu. Ceapaim go bhfuil éifeachtaí na dianghlasála deacair a ghlacadh mar shéanann sé saoirse an phobail agus tá imní ar a meabhair shláinte freisin. B'iontach an lá é nuair a fhilleadh ar ais an chluiche cheannais. Thug sé dóchas don phobal.

Ar dtús, bunaíodh an chumann lúthchleas gael coiste covid a naoi déag sa cheanncheathrú Páirc An Chrócaigh agus sholáthraigh sé nasc leis an rialtas agus NPHE. Bhí comhar sármhaith eatarthu mar ní raibh easpa soléireachta ann faoi na srianta agus na moltaí. Bhí na srianta curtha i bhfeidhm roimh na cluichí a leanadh. Thosaigh said sa deire fómhair agus chríochnaigh siad an tseachtain roimh an nollaig. Thug an chomórtas peil agus iománaíocht siamsaíocht agus sceitimíní áthais don phobal sa bhaile agus thar lear. Chonaic siad iad ar an telefís dé satharn agus dé domhnaigh. Ná déan dearmad ar na híobairtí a dhein na h-imreoirí, ach oiread.

Ar an bhliain seo, thosaigh an chluiche cheannais sa mhí mheithimh agus chríochnaíodh é sa mheán fómhair. Ar an t-am dar gcionn, bhí an staid ag feabhsú agus níl na srianta chomh suntasach mar a bhí sé. Fuair an CLG cead do na sluaite a fhilleadh ar ais sa mhí Iúil ach bhí

limistéar níos daingne ann. Bhí áthas ar an lucht leanúna mar sholáthraigh sé deis mhór tacaíocht a thabhairt do na fóirne arís. Bhí atmasféar speisialta ann. Nuair a tháinig cluichí cheannais peil agus iomána na héireann, bhí na huimhreacha ag meadú níos suntasaí agus dá bharr, bhí sceitimíní áthais ann. Sháraigh an Chumann Lúthchleas Gael na dúshláin ón

phaindéimic agus deirigh leo na cluichí a bhronnadh don phobal. Teastaíonn uaim comhghairdeas a thabhairt dóibh agus deirim, 'an cumann lúthchleas gael go deo na ndeor.'

Ba mhaith liom aitheantas a thabhairt do Chumann Lúthchleas Gael i mBéal Átha hAimhnais mar dhéanann na hoifigí, na feidhmiúcháin, agus na hoibrí deonacha obair forbacha sa pháirc Dawn Meats. Sílim go bhfuil an páirc lárnach, an páirc oiliúna, an carr chlós agus an córas tsolais ar fheabhas. D'éagair said an 'Cúl Camps' sa samhradh agus bhí siad níos rathúla. Thug sé deis mhór do na cailíní agus na buachaillí páirteach sa cluichí agus a chárde a chasadh freisin. Cloisim go bhfuil said ag eagrú tionsnaimh nua ar an bhliain seo chugainn. Go neirí an t-ádh leo.

The title of this article translates to: 'The GAA, Influential, Determined and Successful'. It praises the Gaelic Athletic Association for how well it organised and brought to a successful conclusion the 2020 and 2021 championships, whilst remaining fully compliant with government restrictions and NPHE guidelines.

The writer also refers to the great entertainment it provided, in addition to the great joy it brought to people during the pandemic. The writer also praises the efforts of Ballyhaunis GAA Club for the excellent development work they have carried out and are planning to do over the next year, in addition complimenting them on how successfully they organised CÚL Camps over the summer, once again strictly adhering to Government restrictions and NPHE guidelines.

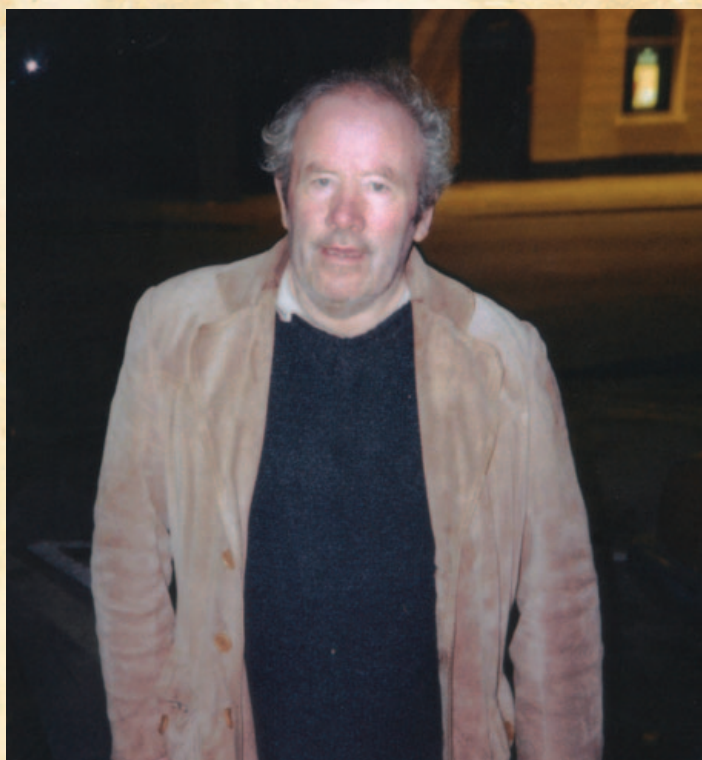


Left: Taken in the 1960s.
From left: Tom McCormack,
Tony Greene, Frank Webb.
Tom McCormack collection.

Below: L-R: Paddy Hunt (Larganboy),
Paddy Lyons (Gurrane), Bridie Hunt
(Larganboy), Celia Lyons (Gurrane),
Anne Lynch (Holywell), John Lyons
(Gurrane), Larry Lynch (Holywell).
Photo courtesy Celia Lyons.



Mick Tarmey, Holywell, taking the turn
at the Square, 1940s.



Jimmy Ruane, Curries.
Tom McCormack collection.



Top left: Traditional barrel-top caravan outside Bank of Ireland, 1990s. *Tom McCormack collection.*

Centre left:
From left: John Meehan, Kathleen McBride and Sylvester McBride, all of Annagh, on the newly constructed runway at Knock Airport in 1985.

Centre right:
On an Active Retirement visit to Scotland. L-R: Bridie Brennan, Kathleen Caulfield, Carmel Waldron, Pauline Curley.



Above: Mayo Celebrations, 1990s. L-R: Sharon Greene, Jack Greene, Billy Nestor. *Tom McCormack Collection.*

Bottom right: All God's Creatures... 'Sandy' waits patiently at the door of St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.





Mayo Supporters 1996, from left - William Nestor, Patrick Waldron, Colm Gallagher, Ciarán Waldron



From left: Tom and Anne Waldron (Crossard) and Eamon Brennan (Kiltybo).
Photo courtesy Celia Lyons.



Left:
Dympna Greally (left) and Eileen Nestor pictured at Colleen and Ronan Waldron's wedding, Aug. 2016.

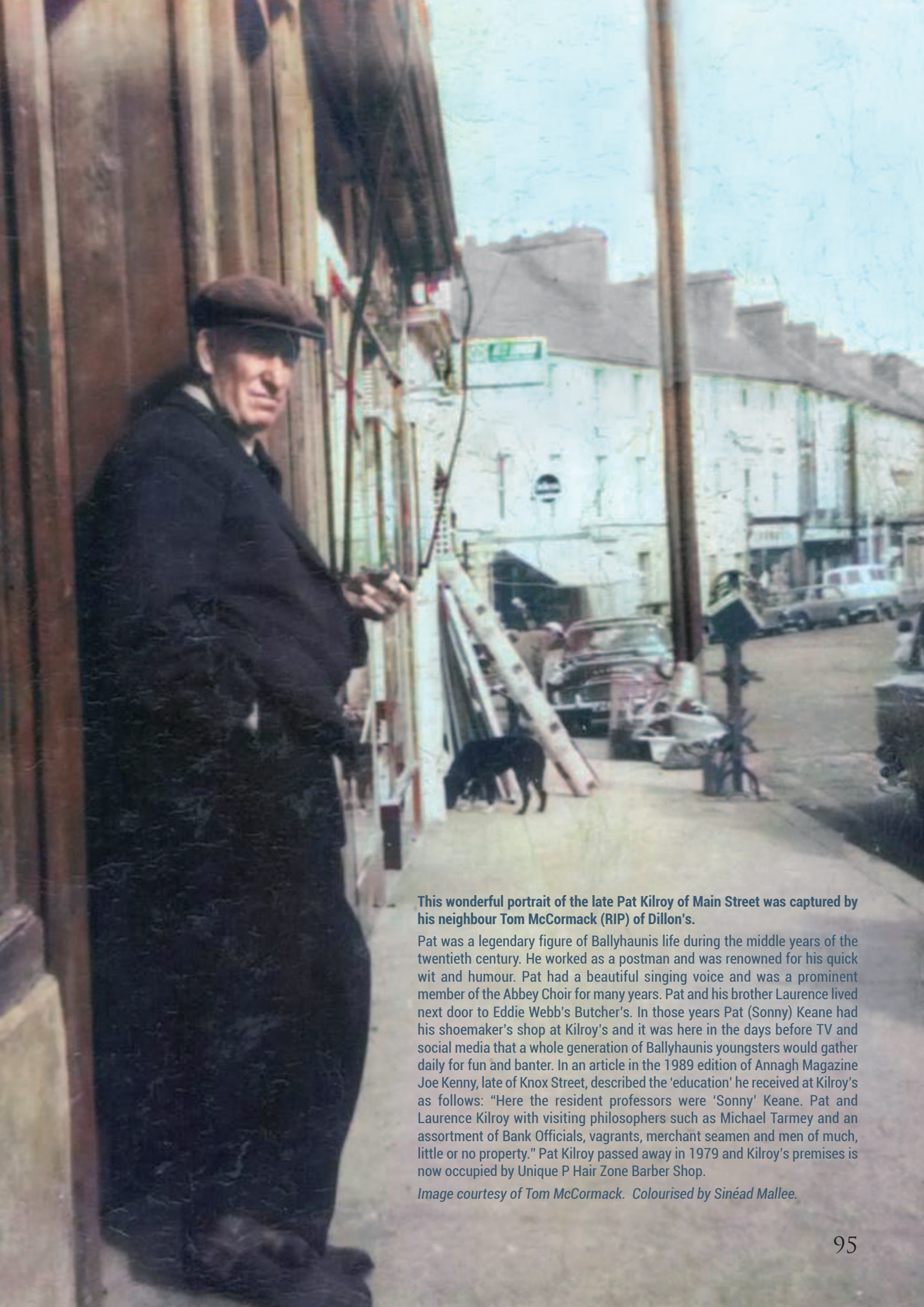
Right:
Neighbours in Gurrane.
L-R: Mary Costello, Celia Lyons, Kate Costello, Mary Lyons, Evelyn Cotton.
Photo courtesy Celia Lyons.



Right:
Pictured at a function to mark John Stephen Greally's retirement after thirty-three years of service as an Irish Ales Breweries driver in 2002.

L-R: Dan Tarpey, Murt Hunt, Mike O'Loughlin, Mary Burke and John Stephen Greally.





This wonderful portrait of the late Pat Kilroy of Main Street was captured by his neighbour Tom McCormack (RIP) of Dillon's.

Pat was a legendary figure of Ballyhaunis life during the middle years of the twentieth century. He worked as a postman and was renowned for his quick wit and humour. Pat had a beautiful singing voice and was a prominent member of the Abbey Choir for many years. Pat and his brother Laurence lived next door to Eddie Webb's Butcher's. In those years Pat (Sonny) Keane had his shoemaker's shop at Kilroy's and it was here in the days before TV and social media that a whole generation of Ballyhaunis youngsters would gather daily for fun and banter. In an article in the 1989 edition of Annagh Magazine Joe Kenny, late of Knox Street, described the 'education' he received at Kilroy's as follows: "Here the resident professors were 'Sonny' Keane. Pat and Laurence Kilroy with visiting philosophers such as Michael Tarmey and an assortment of Bank Officials, vagrants, merchant seamen and men of much, little or no property." Pat Kilroy passed away in 1979 and Kilroy's premises is now occupied by Unique P Hair Zone Barber Shop.

Image courtesy of Tom McCormack. Colourised by Sinéad Mallee.

Ballyhaunis & District Gun Club

DAVID HERR (SECRETARY)



The wildlife of our country is not ours to dispose of as we wish, we are the guardians for the generations to come.

Aerial view of the Ballyhaunis and District Gun Club grounds at Annagh, Ballyhaunis.

2021 has been a good year for the Ballyhaunis and District Gun Club. The club is growing year by year with new members and different projects. The clay shooting grounds got an overhaul including drainage and the repair of trap houses and huts. There have been regular open and club clay pigeon shoots there with excellent turnouts. The grounds are in top class condition which is a credit to all those involved.

The annual Eamon Burke Memorial Top Shot was held. This involves fifteen horseshoes, fifteen darts, fifteen rifle shots and fifteen clays. Congratulations to Padraig Kiely who won the event. Some of our members travelled to Ardagh to take part in the Tony Doocey Memorial Shoot. Mark Kelly was successful on the day winning first prize. This year's Long Tail competition was held in The Clock Bar. Declan Murphy won longest tail. David Herr won best variety of birds and Padraig Waldron won heaviest bird.



Curlew conservation

Its distinctive call was once the sound of summer, echoing across the bogs and meadows, in an era when farming was less intensive and birds enjoyed the freedom of the Irish countryside. However, the curlew's cry has been silenced in many parts of Ireland over the past forty years. Its habitat now survives in just a few remote regions where this majestic long beaked bird was once so popular. Con Farrell, from the National Parks and Wildlife Services (NPWS) explains that

Winners of this year's 'Long Tail', pictured with Adrian Murray, proprietor of The Clock, Ballyhaunis. L-R: David Herr, Adrian Murray, Declan Murphy, Padraic Waldron.

there are estimated to be 138 pairs nationally with two pairs in the Tooreen area. He has been involved in a conservation project which shows a worrying decline of 96%. Curlew in Ireland require an open habitat such as bogs and grasslands, with little disturbance. The problem is that their habitats are being lost or fragmented and, when this occurs, predators become a serious issue. Curlew then find it impossible to rear their young chicks.



Curlew Willow Sculpture by artist Aidan Crotty

Thousands of curlews come to Ireland from Europe and Russia each winter. People often see them in turloughs and presume they are natives. However, this is not the case due to the decline in the Irish population. It is thought the Irish breeding population will be lost within 5-10 years. The key to survival of the curlew is the protection of its nesting grounds. Curlew usually lay their eggs in bog or Moorland in April or May. The

Curlew's form of defence is to stay rooted to the spot. The chicks cannot fly until they are five weeks old. The first five weeks, therefore, is when the curlew is at its most vulnerable to predators and modern farming methods. These birds need a helping hand to survive. In losing our native curlews, we are losing a part of our heritage, which would be a terrible shame.

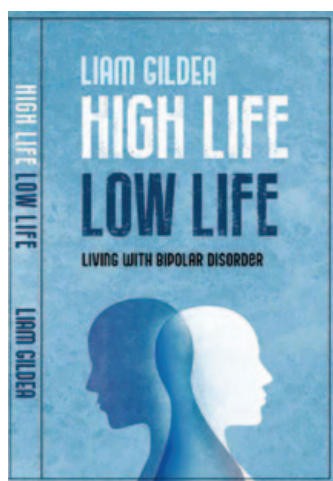
The distinctive call of the curlew has been the harbinger of summer for as long as man has farmed the fields. Its shrill cry may be less frequent these days, but it still echoes across the Mayo countryside. An ancient sound that is worth preserving for future generations.

Ballyhaunis and District Gun Club would like to thank all our sponsors who have supported the club. Without ongoing sponsorship and dedicated members, we would not have such a successful club.

High Life, Low Life

LIAM GILDEA

I'm thirty-eight years old and was officially diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder in 2013. I have suffered with mental health issues since the age of sixteen. Having been well since 2019 I decided to write a book looking at my own personal experiences over the last two decades.



In my book I look through the past twenty years, living with mental illness. I look at stories of paralyzing lows to frenzied highs that mark a condition called Bipolar illness. I reflected on the devastation of these episodes leading to troubles with authorities, online dating addiction and culminating in suicide ideation.

If you are living with bipolar illness or have a family member with the illness, this book may prove to be of some assistance. I hope the book will be of some help to those who are suffering with mental health issues and to reduce the stigma that



From Left, Liam Gildea with family members, Sean, Samantha, Robert and Karen.

shrouds Bipolar illness. Whilst living with a mental health condition can be extremely difficult it can be a great teacher. I hope at the end of this book people realise that a mental health illness is no different than another illness, it can be treated and you can live a normal life.

Ballyhaunis Parish Choir

Little did I think, when writing last year's report, that we would find ourselves still unable to sing with a full choir in church. But that is what has happened so far in 2021. The Parish Choir has not sung together since March 2020. We are still missing those weekly choir rehearsals and we look forward to singing together when it is safe to do so.

In the meantime, music continues to be provided for weekend Mass by small groups of singers and musicians, usually six people in total. As the singers are unmasked, they must stand as socially distanced as possible and any musicians present must wear a mask. Indeed, choir members must be congratulated for continuing to give their time under such difficult conditions. It is hard to sing as such a small group when we are used to having the support of over twenty people in normal circumstances.

Once churches reopened their doors for Mass, music has been provided every weekend. Moira Delaney has been responsible for co-ordinating and organising music, musicians and singers every Sunday, and we would like to thank her and acknowledge all the time and energy she gives to this task. Together with Ludmilla and Ita Fahey she also provides the music accompaniment for the singers. Thanks also to Paula Donnellan for filling in, in times of need.

We are pleased that things are going in the right direction as regards church services. It has been a privilege to provide music for funerals, Confirmation ceremonies and First Holy Communion over the past few months and we look forward to doing the same in the months ahead.



Left:
Sean Griffin and Lauren Gallagher with baby Rían Patrick Griffin, christened in St. Patrick's Church, 29th May 2021.



Right:
James Fleming, son of Aoife McDonagh (Grallaghgardens) and Jason Fleming (Cloonfad), grandson of Michael McDonagh (Grallaghgardens), supporting Mayo in the 2021 championship.

Right:
Taken in the 1960s.
L-R: Margaret Kavanagh,
Celia Lyons,
Brian McHugh,
Breedha Toolan,
Josephine Kavanagh.
Photo courtesy Celia Lyons.



Croí Oscailte – Western Care Association

Staff from Western Care Association, working with Michael, John, Mark and Rosemary, organised a graduation ceremony where they were presented with their Participation Certificates for both Autumn/Winter and Spring/Summer Semesters 2020/2021 from the Mayo Recovery College, GMIT Castlebar, Co. Mayo.

Normally, the graduation ceremony would take place in GMIT, however, due to the pandemic this was impossible this year so graduation took place in their own home.



Croí Oscailte, Western Care Association Graduation ceremony 2021.
L-R: Michael Drudy, John Healy, Rosemary Rogers, Mark Mahon.

Michael Drudy



John Healy



Mark Mahon



Rosemary Rogers

My Life With Trad

CONNIE GILDEA

My earliest memory of music was our local postman Bill 'Fitz' Fitzpatrick coming to our house in Garrymore on Christmas Eve, getting his bottle of stout and playing Miss McLeod's Reel on a black Clarke's tin whistle. It was wonderful!

Later on, when I was about eight, a young teacher named Sean Nestor came from Belcarra. He played a piano accordion, loved music and started a school band. He was also interested in drama and we held a little Christmas concert in Hollymount Hall. He encouraged me to compete in a Fleadh Ceol in Tuam. Previous to this we



Connie Gildea.
Photograph by James Fraher.

had never heard of such a festival. My father and I would walk up to Garrymore on Friday nights to a house where John Mangan and his mum lived. John had a black accordion which he got from America and he had a beautiful, sweet style of playing. I can still recall his mum always having beautiful ginger-bread.

At the Fleadh competition, a great accordion player went on stage. He was excellent. His name was John Joe Forde and he came from Loughrea. I had never heard the tunes which he played so well. After much persuasion I went up and played my reel 'Drowsy Maggie' in key of 'C'. At a later stage that night I met the adjudicator in the Imperial Hotel. His name was Sean Reid of the Tulla Céili Band. He gave me some tips on how to play in the key of 'D' and how to use the bass keys. I would have thrown the accordion in the corner only for him! We lived in a quiet, rural area of Garrymore where there wasn't much activity in the evening, so I practiced diligently as he told me.

We didn't have electricity in 1959 so the only energy supply for the radio was a 'wet battery' charged-up by



Guest musicians at the concert in Kilmovee Heritage Centre celebrating the fortieth anniversary of the local branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, 27th Apr. 2018. Back, L-R: Paul Waldron (Ballyhaunis), Michael Howley (Dunmore), Geraldine Seery (Ballymote), Pat Richardson (Castlebar), Margaret Waters (Swinford), Ray McGeever (Ballaghaderreen), Paddy McDonnell (Swinford), Joe Dunleavy (Kilkelly). Front, L-R: Connie Gildea (Ballyhaunis), Jimmy Murphy (Swinford), Patsy Hanley (Roscommon), Paddy Joe Tighe (Aghamore), Richard Waldron (Ballyhaunis). *James Hunt Photography.*

going on the bike to Paddy Gilmore's in Ballindine. On Tuesday evenings Ciarán MacMathúna used to broadcast 'Job of Journey Work' where you might pick up a tune or two. Elvis and Buddy Holly were going strong at this stage and I was trying to hang on to my few tunes. Teenage years weren't easy. I tried the piano in school but didn't like it. I worked in Galway and you could not say you played Irish music at that time as there wasn't the same level of interest in it. The Seapoint Ballroom beckoned on a Sunday night. My sister and I stumbled on Comhaltas sessions in Lower Salthill where we met Eddie Maloney and members of De Danann and Shaskeen. Tommy Mulhare of Mulhare's Céili Band asked me to join them and we had great fun going to céilis everywhere. I met Joe Cooley, the renowned accordion player, who had returned from Chicago in poor health. He was lovely and encouraging. I met my late husband Pat in Peterswell. His brother-in-law Paddy Lyons was a lovely, sweet fiddle player and had travelled up that night too.

In Ballyhaunis in the 1980's Dr. Michael Brogan, a

fiddle player, started a music session in Jack Halpin's Bar and it was a great success. Good musicians came from far and near. Austin Grogan of Manor House, a great lover of traditional music, had music sessions on Wednesday nights. Mike Byrne's in Clare Street was always good for a tune too. Our latest port has been Paddy Phillips on Main Street where we enjoyed the finest sessions and hospitality from Una and Margie, not to mention our genial host and barman John Morley; nobody goes home hungry! The three Waldron brothers, Richard, Anthony and Paul along with Michael Plunkett and Eddie McDermott encouraged me back into music and helped me learn new tunes. Paddy Joe Tighe and I go to Kilmovee Cois Tine once a month. I miss Paddy Lyons for his tales and folklore of the 'Yanks' parties. Pat, my husband, and Paddy played around Cloonfad and Dunmore for many years, and Celia Lyons would dance to the 'Stack of Barley'.

I have met a lot of lovely people along the way. I still chase a nice reel when I hear one and I can still remember Annie Mangan's beautiful ginger-bread!

FBD Farm Safe Schools Connacht Champion

MEGAN GAUGHAN

David Nally Jnr., Castleplunkett, Co. Roscommon, grandson of Kathleen and the late Pat (Scholar) Regan, Derrynacong, Ballyhaunis, was recently crowned the first ever FBD Farm Safe Schools Connacht Champion. The champions were selected after being nominated by their teachers and were awarded a certificate of achievement and a family pass to Dublin Zoo. The judges stated that, "This champion was truly demonstrating excellence, innovation and commitment to improving farm safety awareness".

David was nominated by his teacher Ms. Madden, who said, "David has shown exceptional interest and dedication to his farm coursework, shows knowledge beyond his years and is only too pleased to share this with his peers." David and his sister Sara have both completed a beekeeping course. David regularly shares information and videos of his bees and specifically educated his classmates on the dangers of pesticides in relation to the survival of bees and the safety procedures in gathering honey.

David tries so hard with everything he does in school, but in this particular area, he has excelled. He has surprised his teacher with his wealth of knowledge and his willingness to share ideas about farm safety.



Once again, it has been a busy year for Mayo SPCA and, for the second year running, we have been impacted, like so many others, by the restrictions and lockdowns. Despite this, our wonderful volunteers continued to show up and people have been very good donating money and pet food to us and holding small fundraisers where possible. Without the support of the public we wouldn't be able to function.

Something which all animal lovers know already has really been highlighted in the last two years and that is how much our beloved pets support us and care for us unconditionally through difficult times. We have heard so many stories from people telling us how their dogs and cats were their company throughout the lockdown periods and how lonely they would have been if not for their companionship. Rescue is never one sided. Your pet will return the support, patience and love in multiples. Sometimes the initial stages of adoption – the first days and nights with a new pet – can be difficult and lead to lots of, 'what have I done' type thoughts. Rescue organisations advise that with any new pet, particularly one who has been through trauma and/or upheaval, it takes three days to settle in, three weeks to begin to feel safe and three months to start to feel trust and security. There's nothing like the sense of joy and achievement when you start to see the signs of that trust.

Every year is a struggle throughout kitten season as we see dozens of unwanted kittens and pregnant females needing help week by week. This year was particularly hard and we saw some heart breaking sights of sick kittens found alone and struggling. Throughout the sadness there is always comfort in the knowledge that there are such caring people around who find these kittens and mind them until they can get them to us or to a vet. There are also the amazing examples of resilience and survival such as little Nettie who was found alone at two weeks old with a badly infected eye.

Kittens struggle to survive even being hand reared at such a young age, but Nettie came through surgery to remove her eye and is now thriving.

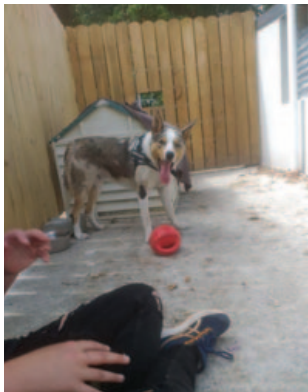
The pregnant cats that come into us are so clearly relieved at having a safe place to have their young and make fantastic mothers, caring beautifully for their babies. When the kittens are reared, the mothers will be spayed, be able to 'retire' from motherhood and live their lives in comfort and peace. As always, we urge everyone

to neuter and spay their cats. Whether it's your pet, a stray cat you feed, a cat that arrived into you and wants to stay, please, please organise to neuter as soon as possible. No cat needs to have 'just one litter' and every litter prevented stops so much hardship and suffering. Unwanted kittens often become members of colonies of feral cats and these cats live a miserable life of ill health, breeding and injuries from fighting. We are grateful to everyone who helps us organise TNR (Trap Neuter Return) projects for some of these colonies. By trapping, neutering and returning them to their habitat where kind people look out for and feed them, they have a chance to live a

comfortable life and enjoy better health.

Rehabilitation

Some of the animals that come to the shelter need a long period of rehabilitation before they can be assessed and re-homed. This work is very slow and having our volunteers is so crucial to help these animals begin to trust and socialise. Sometimes all you can do at the beginning is simply be present at a distance, not looking, not directly interacting but just slowly trying to prove that you are not a threat and that the animal will not be hurt or harmed. An animal that has suffered trauma often just needs a period of quiet, safe space. No eye contact or talking, just the most silent communication through body language and care. Our volunteers are such a tremendous help with teaching animals the skills they will need to thrive in a new home: playing, walking



on leads, socialising and simply just learning that the world is not all bad and that there is love and kindness if they can give it a chance.

To this end, we have had some exciting and greatly anticipated new developments at the shelter this year. We now have three secure play areas where dogs can be safely out of their kennels for a good portion of the day. This is making a huge and positive difference in terms of behaviour, socialising and interacting skills. They are hearing and seeing more of the activity around them and are not dependent solely on their walks for a chance to explore and play. It is also a safe and fun space for a dog to meet potential new owners. The play areas are a huge help in preparing dogs for life in their new homes and of course, simply to give them extra enrichment and activities over the course of the day. We would like to thank Austin Finn for all of his hard work.

With the winter coming we would like to remind everyone to keep your pets warm and safe. Now is the time to prepare for (hopefully not many) weather

warnings and storms by securing fences and ensuring that your pets are wearing ID and are microchipped. Each year we have so many reports of missing and stray dogs. A phone number on a collar and a microchip are the quickest ways of finding your dog if you get separated. Our dogs must always be under our control and within the confines of their home where they keep us safe and secure just as much as we do them.

As always we want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has helped and supported us throughout the year: our amazing volunteers who show up in all weathers to clean out, walk and feed, Ken Wallis who does such brilliant work around the shelter fixing and building, Laura Mulligan (dog warden), Marie at the pound, the local Gardaí, Midwest Radio and all of our friends in the local communities who donate, share posts, fundraise, adopt, foster and encourage us to keep doing everything that we can to help the animals of Mayo.



John Fitzmaurice of Gurteenbeg celebrated fifty years of living in Melbourne, Australia, on 5th Oct. 2021. Prior to emigrating, John worked for the late Noel and Mary Waldron in Spar Supermarket, Main Street. John's brothers Patrick Joseph and Thomas Vincent and his sister Mary Philomena also reside in Melbourne, while his brother Martin lives in Derrynacong and brother Kieran resides in the family homestead in Gurteenbeg. John is pictured with his wife Teresa, daughter Mary Claire and grandchildren C.J., Oceana, Taj, Dakota, Eva, Maverick, Jax, Brooklyn, Ziggy and Andy.

U20 Connacht Champion and All-Ireland Finalist

MEGAN GAUGHAN

Pictured (right) is Dylan Gaughan as an underage player for Ballyhaunis GAA Club and (right) as an Under-20 Connacht Champion and All-Ireland Finalist 2021. Dylan started playing for his club Tulsk Lord Edwards in 2012 and has been a key player in their success over recent years. He has been involved with Roscommon development squads since Under-14s all the way up to to Under-20s. His older sister Megan re-joined Ballyhaunis LGFA earlier this year and is part of the Ladies Squad.



Dylan Gaughan U20 Connacht Champion and All-Ireland Finalist 2021



Dylan Gaughan with fellow Ballyhaunis Under-10 footballers in 2010. Back, L-R: Aidan Byrne, Dylan Gaughan, Cormac Phillips, Neil Carney, Luke Walsh, Barry Cribbin, Ethan Keane, Pierce Nestor, Kevin McHugh. Front, L-R: Conor Keane, Dylan Maughan, Zouhir Rahmani, Dara Healy, Jack Coyne, Conal Caulfield, Patrick Caulfield, Soheb, Jack McGoldrick. Photo: Tommy Caulfield.



Knockbrack Coffee Morning

Gerry and Anne Lyons hosted a Hospice Coffee Morning at their home in Knockbrack on 23rd September 2021. They would like to thank all who contributed and an amazing €1010 was raised.

Pictured above, clockwise from left: Bridget Killeen, Michael Goulding, Mary Finnegan, Mary Walsh, Tina Kirrane, Michelle Lyons, Mary Goulding, Gabrielle Lyons.

Bridget Killeen (left) and Anne Lyons hosting the 'Drive-Thru and Sitting Outside' Hospice Coffee Morning at Lyons', Knockbrack.



Left:
Meabh Mulrennan Cahill with Santa Claus in Ballyhaunis, Christmas 2020.

Right:
It's good to meet.
L-R: Pat Donnellan, Pauline Curley, John Morley.



Right:

Pictured at Stations in Upper Main Street in 1998. Back, L-R: Noreen Hopkins, Mary Gildea, Kathleen Caulfield, Celia Lyons, Paddy Lyons. Front: Peg Culliney, Carmel Waldron, Geraldine Regan, Anne Molloy. Photo courtesy Celia Lyons.



Casadh na Taoide - *Mac Duach* - A Musical Cruise

MICHAEL BROGAN



MacDuach approaching Achill Sound in full sail.
© Michael McLaughlin Studios 2020

Achill Island harpist and TG4 Musician of the Year, Laoise Kelly, contacted me in Autumn 2019 with an unusual proposition. She had in mind a voyage reconnecting five islands off the Galway, Mayo and Donegal coasts, through music, song and story, hopefully travelling on an Irish traditional boat. Laoise had already commenced work on the project, having commissioned an artist on each island to compose new bodies of work in the forms of music and poetry. Sponsored by the Arts Council of Ireland, their aim was also to document the islands' history of shared heritage and culture and to forge connections for future collaboration.

Three Achill Island musicians: Laoise (harp), Diarmuid Gielty (fiddle) and Freda Hatton (concertina) would form the heart of the project, being joined occasionally by other artists. Of course, as a musician and owner of *Mac Duach*, I didn't have to be asked twice. In order to facilitate extra numbers, Jarlath Cunnane also came on board with *Nimrod*.

Casadh na Taoide (the Turning of the Tide) – an epic voyage reconnecting the five islands – was launched. However, due to Covid, the project had to be deferred until the summer of 2021. In deference to the Hooker tradition, we decided to add one more island to the

project. *Mac Dara* is the patron saint of fishermen and sailors in Connemara, and every year in July there is a pilgrimage to Mac Dara's island, followed by the All-Ireland Hooker Race.

As *Mac Duach*, and *Nimrod* sailed out of Roundstone with our musicians on board, a dense fog descended on the bay. We quickly lost sight of the rest of the fleet heading towards the island, five miles from Roundstone. One hour later, as we approached the Island, the fog began to lift to reveal a flotilla of hookers, half-deckers and currachs ferrying pilgrims from the mainland. Lacking a pier or proper landing spot, we had the precarious task of getting our musicians ashore together with their instruments, including a full-size harp. While the musicians joined with the local church choir, the fog lifted completely, to be replaced by blue skies and sunshine. The promised July heatwave had begun.

Next day, the music filled the air as we rounded Slyne Head sailing toward Inishbofin – an island renowned for its traditional music. That evening, outside Day's bar, the atmosphere was electric as the first post-lockdown session got up and going. It was like 'Macnas' – a Gaelic

word used to describe young calves leaping around a field of spring grass after being locked up for the winter. The excitement of the first real session was palpable in the energy created by the musicians and punters alike. Local musicians, Francis O'Halloran, Kevin and Seán Abeyta (fiddle), and many others, were joined by Chieftain Matt Molloy and his son Peter (flute), together with Laoise, Diarmuid, Freda and a raft of other musicians, to the background call of the visiting corncrakes.

Inishturk, our next island, has always been renowned for its hearty welcome and we were truly overwhelmed as we were joined by the islands' fleet of fishing boats, currachs and visiting yachts. Turk is often bypassed in favour of its larger neighbours Bofin, to the south, and Clare Island, to the north. As always, the local ferry crew went out of its way to allow us to tie up alongside the pier. The weather may have been Mediterranean but the welcome and music was truly Inishturk.

As we departed, sailing towards Clare Island, we were accompanied by a visiting yacht full of musicians for yet another night of music and craic. Approaching Achill Island, I handed the helm to local sailor and musician, Tom Moran. Near Achillbeg Island we were met by a local flotilla that included RNLI, Achill Coastguard, Achill Yawls and Bellacragher Bay Boat Club. Achill was an emotional homecoming for our musicians, and after a week of sunshine, to add dramatic effect to the occasion, the sky lit up with thunder and lightning and the heavens opened. The weather had truly broken as *Mac Duach*, left Achill heading towards Arranmore Island, and *Nimrod* returned to Westport. Freda continues, "Plain sailing it was not; we had a fairly rough



William Dillon-Leetch on board *Mac Duach*.

and testing night but it was good for us." Everybody was relieved as we picked up our mooring off Arranmore Pier the following morning.

The close relationship between Achill, Arranmore and Scotland, through language and music (especially piping) was evident. It's no coincidence that Achill Island is home to no less than five pipe bands. The Gaelic spoken in Achill is closer to that of Donegal than that of its nearer neighbour, Connemara. For generations, island Tattie Hoakers (Gaelic slang for potato pickers) have been making the journey to Scotland each year, mostly by sea, for seasonal work. Sometimes tragedy struck, as in 1894, when thirty-two young people leaving Achill for Scotland drowned after their Hooker capsized near Westport. One hundred years later, in 1994, I sailed *Mac Duach* to Achill, together with Paddy Barry in *The Saint Patrick*, to mark the anniversary of that sad event. In 1937, ten young Achill people died tragically in a fire in a bothy in Kirkintilloch (Scotland), where they too were picking potatoes. Those generations of migrant workers and fishermen who forged links between the islands, did so out of necessity. Their legacy lives on, and it was a privilege to be part of Casadh na Taoide as we explored the shared love of music, story and culture that continues to flourish between these Island communities that are bridged by the sea and shaped by the tide.

Mac Duach crew included: Dominic O'Dwyer, Finbarr Brogan, Paul Monahan, Christian Coady, Conor Coady, Ryan Lavin, William Dillon-Leetch, Conall Ó Domhnaill, Gary Finnegan, Tom Moran.



Mac Duach negotiates Achill Sound. Kildownet Castle in the foreground and Corraun in the background. ©Terry O'Brien OBRIENS IRELAND Bunnatty, Co Clare

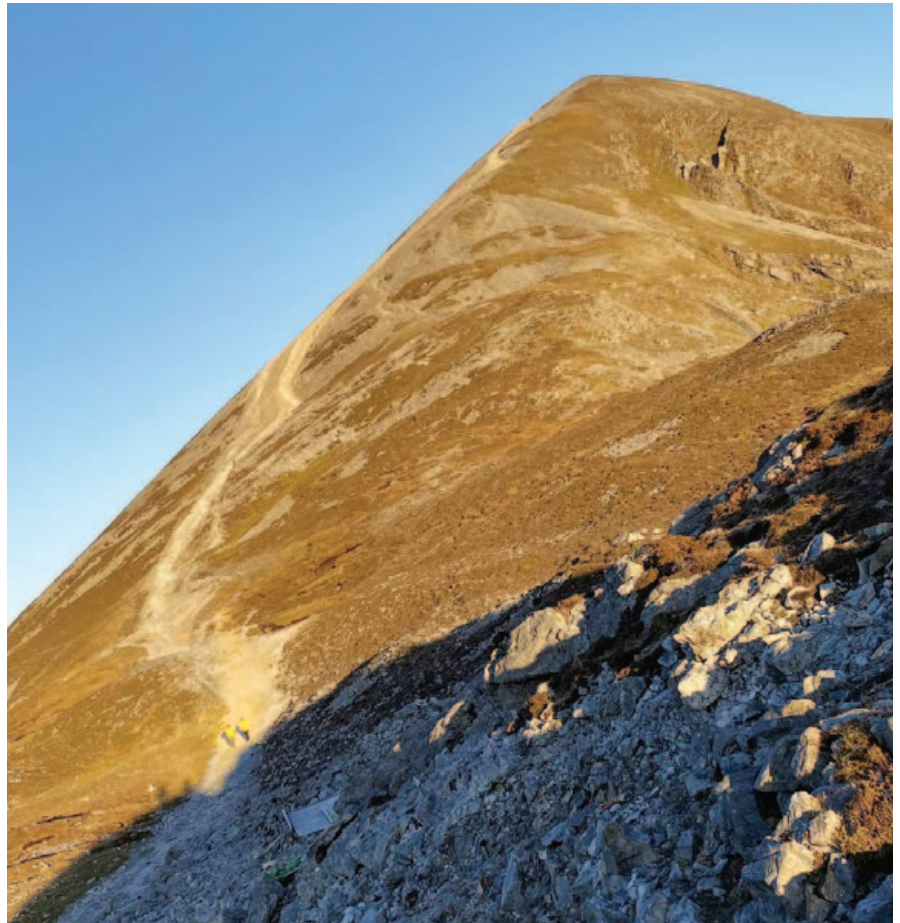
Well, we finally got to host Darkness into Light after it was called off last year because of Covid. However, this year was not as we would have wished for as it was a 'virtual' event. Even if it meant that we couldn't gather together, we were determined to make it a special community event. We would all share the same sunrise even if we were apart.

Preparations began in April with signs and posters being erected through the town and around our virtual route (the intended route if Covid had not struck). Local businesses and homes decorated their windows and videos were created by Gerry Glennon of Midwest radio and local GAA legend Keith Higgins, along with his vice-captain Stephen Coyne (Mayo Hurlers), all sharing the news of Darkness into Light on 8th May and the amazing work that Pieta House do each year. William Thabeng and Tracy Cunnane composed and recorded a song. The BEY Project (Ballyhaunis Engaging Youth) created the most amazing sign for our Tree of Hope and a memory box for those who wished to leave a note for a loved one. The artwork involved was truly spectacular. The notes were buried beside the Tree of Hope after the event. The people of Ballyhaunis were asked to make the town Sunshine Yellow 🟡🟡 and they did not disappoint.

SPIRIT AND ENTHUSIASM

7th May was a beautiful day and it looked as if the Gods were on our side, but darkness brought a storm and one of the coldest nights ever to strike in May. Nevertheless, the committee forged ahead with putting tea lights out in various places along the route and succeeded in putting them in places where they would not take off in the gale force winds.

I am still astounded at the amount of people who walked. People of all ages and nationalities rose from their beds at 4.30am, braved the elements and walked the route. Wet to the skin you could hear people's laughter as they forged ahead in the wind. I received a text later in the day from someone who had never taken part before and he said, *'The weather may not have been great but the spirit and enthusiasm of those taking part shone*



Darkness Into Light participants climbed Croagh Patrick at sunrise.

through. It's my first time as a participant and I am truly touched and empowered by the power of the people'. A sentiment shared by many, I feel.

DIL is not just for walkers: some very brave people swam; others climbed Croagh Patrick; more ran or cycled; local businesses and classes in Ballyhaunis Community School raised money. They all shared the sunrise their way – all for one goal – to raise vital funds for Pieta House.

NEXT YEAR'S EVENT

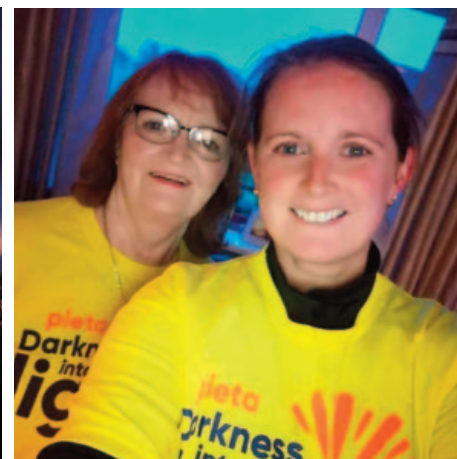
Plans are already in place for next year with DIL2022 to make it a bigger community event for Ballyhaunis, one where we hope to get more of our various nationalities involved and students to assist. All going well we will walk together as a community in May 2022 and raise funds and awareness for Pieta House and help those affected by suicide and self-harm. And hopefully Covid will not stop us gathering as a community. The pandemic has been tough on everyone, and more and more people are struggling with their mental health. Organisations

such as Pieta need more funds to keep offering their services. If you would like to volunteer to help next year, please contact a member of the committee – the more the merrier! We hope to have local choirs and musicians involved and we will need stewards and bakers, posters and signs put up and removed once the event is over. So, lots of help will be required.

There are plenty of photos from this year's event on our Facebook page **Darkness Into Light Ballyhaunis** and Instagram page **dilballyhaunis**. Information about DIL2022 will be on those pages when it becomes available.

www.pieta.ie
www.darknessintolight.ie

Committee: *Chairperson* – Deirdre Moran; *Secretary* – Anne Cunnane; *Treasurer* – Elma Kilbride; *Other members* – Aisling Caulfield, Eavan Caulfield, Tina McGoldrick and Tracy Cunnane.





The Castlereá Céili Band, 1964.

Back, L-R: Tom Walsh (fiddle), Frank Connally (flute), Paddy Lyons (fiddle).

Front, L-R: Tadhg de Brún (piano), Mike Hanmore (drums), Mike Walsh (fiddle), Eddie Kelly (accordion).

The Castlereá Céili Band was one of the foremost Irish traditional music ensembles in Mayo, Roscommon and Galway for a number of years during the 1960s. Three of its members came from the parish of Bekaá – Paddy Lyons of Gurrane and the Walsh brothers, Mike (Drimaderra) and Tom (Castlereá). All are now deceased except the Walsh brothers who retain fond memories of their time with the band. The bandleader was Eddie Kelly (accordion and fiddle), a native of Ballinasloe who lived in Castlereá, as did the other three members. They generally played céilis and functions from the Castlereá area up towards Ballinasloe, though their first commercial booking was for a céili as far away as Cloghan, Co. Offaly. They featured three times on RTÉ radio's flagship programme 'Céili House', travelling to Dublin for the live half-hour broadcasts in two estate cars driven by Castlereá-based music enthusiasts John O'Toole and Frank McDonnell. The band was also successful in competition and the cup pictured on the piano was won at a Connacht Fleadh in Mountbellew in the 1960s. *Photo courtesy of Celia Lyons. Thanks to Miko, Myra and Tom Walsh for background information.*

Taken in Halpin's, early 1990s. From left: Dominick Rushe, Anthony Waldron, Terry Coleman, Paul Waldron. *(Photo courtesy of Celia Lyons).*



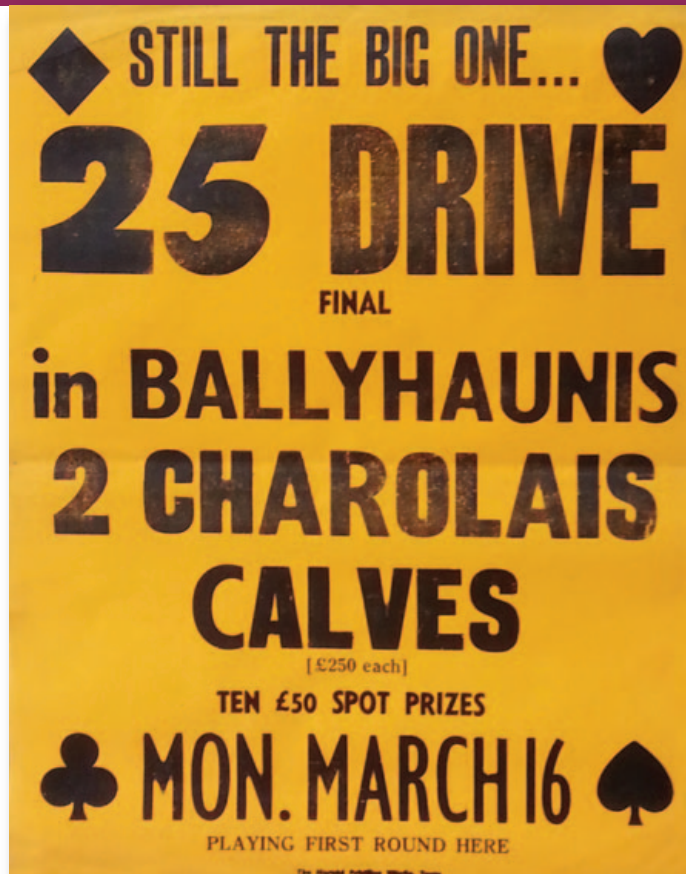
HOW WE AMUSED OURSELVES BEFORE THE RADIO (RADIO ATHLONE, 1933);
BEFORE TELEVISION (RTÉ 1961); BEFORE THE INTERNET (1990s).

A selection of posters from Ballyhaunis entertainments in the past.

Courtesy of John Durkan



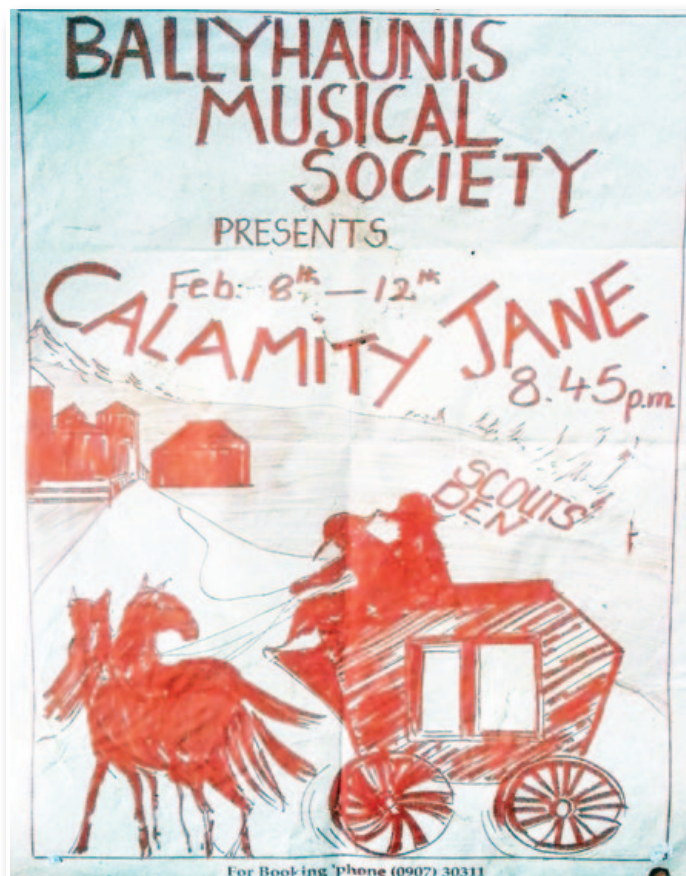
Scout Den Disco 1982



25 Card Drive 1981



25 Card Drive 1980s



Calamity Jane 1994

Blessing of the Site of St. Patrick's Church, 1903

OCTOBER, 1922.

OUR BOYS.

57

Historic Landmark at Ballyhaunis.

Ballyhaunis, a flourishing town in the Archdiocese of Tuam, has the proud distinction of having an exclusively Catholic population. It is within easy reach of Tuam, the great Catholic stronghold in the West.

The new church, dedicated to our patron, St. Patrick, was started by the Very Revd. Canon Canning, P.P., in 1903. It was the Canon's great life-work, and

his great ambition was to live to see it completed.

The imposing and beautiful structure, which now covers the space in photo., provides a lasting monument to the memory of a faithful and loving pastor. His remains were laid to rest beneath the altar, by a special permit from the Pope.

The Convent of Mercy and the spacious

schools were also built by the late Very Rev. Canon Canning. Prior to his advent to Ballyhaunis he built a church in Lecanvy, Westport, at the foot of Croaghpatrick.

The group contains many great Irishmen. The late Archbishop Healy of Tuam can be seen, assisted by the Very Rev. Canon MacHugh, at present pastor of the parish, and a worthy successor to the saintly Canon Canning.



His Grace Most Rev. Dr. Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, blessing the site of the new church of St. Patrick, Ballyhaunis, Sunday, September 27th, 1903.

This historic picture was taken by local photographer Edward A. Biesty from the embankment above the sacristy of St. Patrick's Church, looking towards the north-east. The cross marks the site of the present main altar. Chapel Street can be seen on the left, while Barrack Street (rere) extends from the centre background to the right. St. Mary's, the old parish church, is just out of shot to the left. The *Western People* of 3rd Oct. 1903 devoted several print columns to its coverage of the ceremony, stating that, during the laying and blessing of the foundation stone, by the Archbishop, Dr. John Healy, '...the entire grounds were filled by the parishioners and large numbers of Catholics who availed themselves of the excursion trains from Tuam and Claremorris or drove from various parts of the diocese. His Grace went through the ceremony as described by the reverend preacher, the people all the while kneeling lowly in reverence.' A record on parchment of the day's events was placed beneath the corner stone, and on it were the following words: 'Do chum Glóire Dé agus onóra na h-Eireann. Cuireadh síos an chloch bhuinn Dhe Eaglaise Naoim Padraig I mbéal Áth Tamhnais, leis a ghrasa, Seaghan Ó h-Ealaihthe, Ard-easbog Thuama, ar Dia Domhnach, an 27 adh la de'n Seacht mhí, 1903' which translates to, 'To the honour of God and the Glory of Erin the foundation stone of the Church of St. Patrick, Ballyhaunis, was laid by his Grace, John Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, on Sunday, 27th September 1903.' The silver trowel used by the Archbishop also had an inscription in Irish: 'Tugadh e seo mar bhronntanas d'á ghrása Seaghan Ua h-Eilighthe, Árd-easbog Thuama nuair a leag se an chloch bhuinn de Shéipeál nuadh Naomh Padraig, an 27 adh la De mheadhon fogmhar, 1903', which is translated, 'Presented to His Grace the Most Rev. Dr. Healy, Archbishop of Tuam, on the occasion of his laying the foundation stone of the new Chapel of St. Patrick, on 27th September 1903.' That newspaper also reported that, 'Several excellent snapshots of the scene and ceremony at the laying of the corner stone on Sunday last were taken by Mr. E. A. Biesty who was also fortunate in securing a group photograph of his Grace the Archbishop and several of the clergy at the Parochial House in the evening.' From *Our Boys*, October 1922. Image courtesy of Fr. Stephen Farragher.

Childhood Memories of the Mart

SHARON GREENE

The NCF (North Connaught Farmers) Ballyhaunis mart was in Carrowreagh, on the site now owned by Agrisread beside Homeland. NCF owned marts all over the province and a sale was held somewhere six days a week. Ballyhaunis mart day was originally on a Tuesday but later was moved to a Saturday. We lived up a lane beside the mart and Dad – Jack Greene – worked for NCF.

The mart was a huge playground for my sisters and I during the 1970s and 80s. We used to play hide-and-seek inside and pretend we were gymnasts on the bars outside. My favourite place to hide was in the canteen kitchen cupboards because I was small enough to crawl in and wait to be found. In the summer we spent hours playing tennis against the wall and pretending we were competing at Wimbledon. One day when I was playing tennis, Dolly – John Morley – was cycling by and stopped and played too for a while. He then tried to teach me to cycle his ‘High Nelly’ bike, but with very little success. I was too little for the bike but that didn’t stop Dolly trying. It’s no wonder I didn’t learn to cycle until I was thirteen!

Twice a year Duffy’s Circus would come to town and set up in the mart car park. Dad would give them access to the pens and water for their animals and caravans. In return they would give Dad free tickets for the show and they must have thought he had lots of children because



A view of Ballyhaunis Mart from Kilmannin Hill in the 1980s.

we always got to go the shows on both days! I met a girl from the circus once while playing nearby. Her mum was a trapeze artist and we became pen friends for a few years. Recently, I met one of the Duffy family and they remembered visiting Ballyhaunis very well.

Mart Work

Dad’s work involved many jobs and on mart day he would register the cattle coming to be sold at a little kiosk at the back. Each animal was assigned a numbered label that was stuck to its back with a black glue called Bostik. Then the cattle were put into pens and queued to be brought into the sales ring. Anytime we were at the mart we always managed to come home with Bostik stuck to us somewhere, on white socks, dresses and sometimes even in my hair, thanks to my sisters! It was very much like tar and very difficult to remove so you can imagine the trouble we used to get into with our mum.

During the week before the next sale, Dad would clean the mart inside and out. He would white-wash the ring where the cattle would be paraded and sold and I loved to watch it change from being really dirty to pure white again. I used to help him sweep out the terraces where farmers and cattle dealers stood to make their bids. It was a job that really should have only taken me half an hour but somehow it took me all day. I would be rewarded with 20p, which would buy you four Mr. Freezes from Herr’s in Knox Street.



Jack Greene, Caretaker at Ballyhaunis Livestock Mart.



The late Brian Cullinane, NCF's auctioneer in Ballyhaunis Mart for many years.



Above: Pat Lyons (right), Classaroo, Ballyhaunis, a regular prize-winner at Show and Sales in Ballyhaunis Mart, receiving his cheque from Mart Manager Thomas Jordan on behalf of the sponsors, Cribbin's Victuallers, Main St., Ballyhaunis, 1980's.

Left: Siobhán, Attracta and Sharon Greene, 1970s.

Canteen

When I was about thirteen, Dad told me that they were looking for someone to help out in the canteen. The next Saturday I went and met Winnie and Michael Kearns from Cloonfad. They put me to work straight away. They served soup and sandwiches, tea, the odd coffee, minerals, chocolate and crisps, but it was Winnie's home baking, especially her butterfly buns, that were the most popular. I started at 9am and the first job was to make the huge pot of oxtail soup. Michael would make an endless amount of sandwiches required for the day while Winnie and I served the customers. It was a busy day but I really enjoyed it. They were lovely people who were very kind to me and they paid me well for all the hard work.

When it was quiet Winnie would let me out to look down on the sale from the big windows in the canteen. The cattle would be brought in through a weigh bridge

into the ring to be sold. The auctioneer would take the bids from the buyers and agree with the seller when the ideal price was reached. Then the next animal would be brought in. Sometimes I used to go out and bring Dad half a Twix - the full pack would never last the walk out to find him! He would show me the cattle that would get the best prices.

There are so many other great memories of those who attended the mart, of Dad's colleagues and the annual shows but I think I will conclude with this. As is customary anywhere in Ireland, the first question when meeting someone new is, "Where are you from?" And I would answer, "Ballyhaunis... a mile out the Tooreen road". That never seemed clear enough, so eventually I would have to say, "Beside the mart", and inevitably they would ask, "Do you know Jack Greene?"



Ballyhaunis Community Sports Hub

Ladies Gaelic Football
Association Under-10 team
with Tracy Cunnane

Ballyhaunis Community Sports Hub

TRACY CUNNANE



Top: Activator Pole Walking in action.

Left: Youth Sport Leaders in action in Community School gym.



Left: Participation and enjoyment are important in outdoor activities.



'Soccer Sisters'

Ballyhaunis Community Sports Hub (BCSH) is a community network to enable more people to enjoy a healthier and more active life. Tracy Cunnane is Co-ordinator with Mayo Sports Partnership since 2019. BCSH has introduced many initiatives to the area. Soccer Sisters from Ballyhaunis Town FC worked with Ballyhaunis LGFA to get a Girls Under-10s team established. Both were a great success. Now that activities are coming back we have a very successful Men-on-the-Move Programme and Couch-to-5k will be returning soon, as well as indoor Table Tennis for women in collaboration with Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club which is sponsored by Mayo Sports Partnership.

Activator Pole walking, a new programme for seniors, has been a huge success. Through 2021 classes have been given outdoors in four locations with more than eighty participants, and there are more classes being held elsewhere in Mayo.

We work with clubs and organisations to help increase participation in sports and activities. If there is need to introduce a new sport in the area, we will look into it. We hold sports inclusion days, fun days, come and try events, etc. We work with schools including training in soccer skills in Scoil Íosa, a six week programme with FAI Development Officer. In Ballyhaunis Community School we are running a Youth Sport Leadership course with transition year students, which is a nationally recognised certification course.

If you have any queries on the above or want to introduce some new activity, feel free to contact me at tcunnane@mayococo.ie, or any of the Mayo Sports Partnership team.

Greeley's of Upper Main Street

TOMMY CAULFIELD

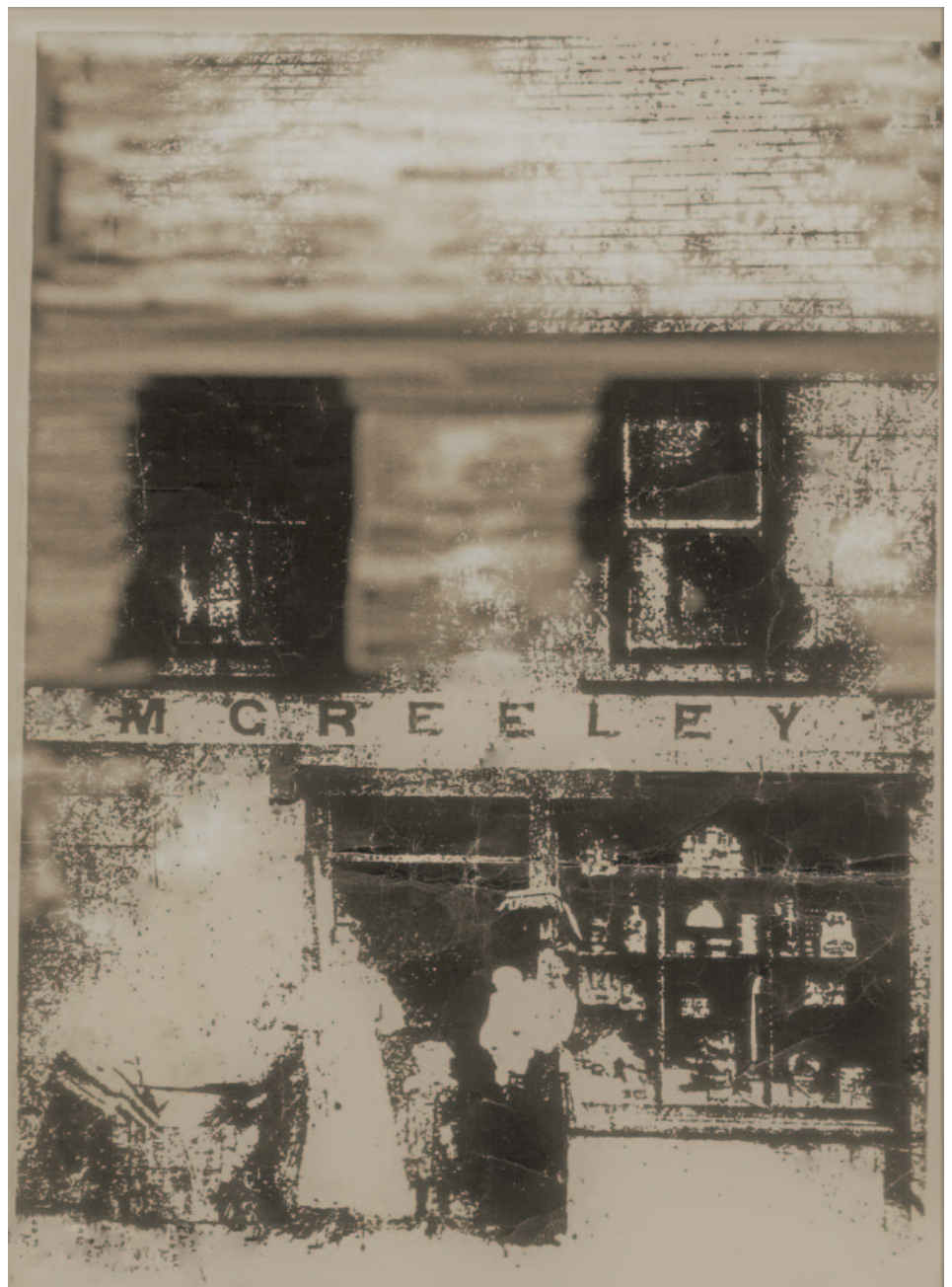
In October Seamus Mulrennan and Tommy Caulfield of Annagh Magazine spent a very enjoyable hour in the company of Teresa Greeley O'Riordan and family friend W.F. (Frank) Godfrey in the old Greeley family home and former business premises at the top of the Doctor's Road in Upper Main Street. Teresa has been visiting the family homestead all her life and is very knowledgeable when it comes to her family tree and her Ballyhaunis roots and connections. Teresa brought our two Annagh Magazine committee members along on a whirlwind tour of the Greeley family history, taking in Ballindrehid, Chicago, Upper Main Street, Birmingham, Barrow-in-Furness, Newcastle West and Dublin.

Teresa's late mother Josephine (Josie) Greeley was born in Upper Main St. in 1925 and was one of a family of six daughters and one son born to Michael Greeley and his wife Teresa (née Ford from Fairymount). Teresa's grandfather Michael was born in Ballindrehid in the year of the Knock apparition, 1879, and died aged 86 years on 21st Feb. 1965. Her grandparents met in Chicago and returned to Ireland in 1912 with their two very young children, Teresa and Kathleen. They purchased a newly built premises from James Lyons (Main St.) where they set up home and ran a thriving grocery and provisions business for many years at the junction of Upper Main St. and Doctor's Road. The other houses along the terrace from Hopkins' shop upwards were added later. The couple were blessed with five more children: Michael, Lucy, Monica, Bridie and Josie, all born directly opposite the presbytery in Upper Main Street. Sadly, the first-born child Teresa died in December of 1919 aged just 12 years.

A feature of the shop was weighing flour and meal for the loyal customers who parked their

horses and carts on the Doctor's Road. There was always a cup of tea and a chat before the journey home. In those hard days of mass emigration from Mayo, customers often borrowed the fare to England or America from Greeley's. This was a common practice with shopkeepers in those days. The money was repaid when the emigrants settled into their new homes in faraway lands and started earning.

During the War of Independence, the Black and Tans were stationed a short distance down the street from Greeley's. Josie Greeley often told her daughter Teresa



An early picture of Greeley's shop, Upper Main St.

about the nightly raids on their home by the notorious Tans and how Teresa's grandparents dealt with the unwelcome visitors. Stories of bloodshed in Upper Main Street and deeds of savagery by the Tans have been passed down through the generations in the Greeley family.

Contribution to education facilities

A large barn and hay loft at the back of the house was purchased from James Lyons in 1926 for the sum of £85 and used as a dairy for cows which were kept on the four hectares (about 10 acres) of land owned by the family at Tooraree and Ballindrehid. Teresa's mother Josie remembers bringing the cows in each evening from Ballindrehid to the barn for milking. In those days the roads were virtually free from motor traffic, except on Sundays when a steady stream of buses from all over the country travelled through Ballyhaunis ferrying thousands of pilgrims on to Knock. The barn was used later by Sean Lannon of Western Brand as an early premises for his poultry business. In more recent times, up to about 1970, the building was used as a garage by Paddy Folliard of Cartron South, by Mick Keegan, and later by P.D. Freeley for parking his hackney car. Every year Michael Greeley, his neighbour Tom Hopkins and other men from the town used to save turf and bring home their winter fuel from the bog near Sonny Curran's in Annagh.

In 1970 the family land at Tooraree was purchased by St. Patrick's College for the sum of £950 for use as a playing field for the pupils. In 1975 the Minister for Education bought the ten acres from St Patrick's College for £2,500 for the planned Community School. The Greeley family was always proud of the role they played in the provision of secondary education and playing fields for the boys of St. Patrick's College and subsequently for the co-education of all students at the new Community School on the Knock Road.

Teresa's aunt Lucy married schoolteacher Miko Waldron and they lived in Logboy. They had a family of three boys, Ralph, Eamonn and Walter and four daughters, Kathy (RIP), Gina (RIP), Kathy, Ursula and Valerie. Monica married Sonny Lyons and they lived in Greenwood before moving to Birmingham with their children Pauline (RIP), Marian and twins Noel (RIP) and Joan. Bridie worked in the fashion industry and was employed by Newell's Department Store of Grafton Street and also worked in Tramore, Co. Waterford before leaving to further her career in Barrow-in-Furness in the Lake District of Northwest England. Teresa's mother Josie also spent time in England and worked at Lewis Fashion House on Wolverhampton Square in Birmingham. Josie married Patrick O'Riordan from



Michael Greeley and his wife Teresa taken in Chicago early 1900s.



Josie Greeley (left) with neighbour and good friend Noreen Waldron (Hopkins).



Josie Greeley pictured in the 1940s.

Mallow, Co Cork in 1952 and they ran a very successful retail business in Newcastle West, Co. Limerick before re-locating to Drumcondra. The only son in the Greeley family, Michael Jr., emigrated to Birmingham and worked as an electrician. There Michael met his wife, Patricia. They returned to live in Clontarf, Dublin, where Michael died soon afterwards aged just in his forties. Kathleen spent most of her life in Ballyhaunis and retired to Dublin where she died in 1996 and was buried alongside her beloved brother Michael in Sutton Cemetery in Co. Dublin. Teresa's mother Josie passed away in 2011 and is interred in Glasnevin Cemetery.

Corner House

Growing up in Ballyhaunis, Teresa's mother Josie was a very popular girl with lots of friends. Teresa has lots of stories from her late mother and from her aunts about their childhood in Ballyhaunis of old. Girls who were close friends of her mother and aunts include Monica and Carrie Webb of Main St. and their sisters, Anna Marie Jordan (Leneghan), Bernadine and Margie Phillips, Rita Caulfield, Noreen Waldron (Hopkins) and her sister Carmel, Amy Ruddy and so many others.

Teresa's grandmother died on Nov 21st, 1958, aged 75 years. Following the passing of her grandfather Michael Greeley in 1965, the business was wound up and her aunt Kathleen retired to Dublin. The impressive corner house was subsequently rented out. For a time in the 1960s Moira Flatley operated a busy hairdressing salon at Greeley's. Among those to have rented the house down the years were Frank and Yvonne Loughran and family, Eddie and Maureen Thornton and family, Mike and Bernie Waldron. Mike and Ann Egan and family also lived at Greeley's. They spent a number of years in Ballyhaunis in the 1970s before returning to Philadelphia where the Egan children went on to have very successful careers as Irish music recording artists. Seamus Egan had won the all-Ireland championship on four different instruments by the time he was fourteen and, in 1995, he recorded music for the wonderful film *The Brothers McMullen*. His younger sister Rory is a gifted concertina player and another sister Siobhan was the principal fiddle player in the Irish American women's band *Cherish the Ladies* for many years. Teresa also recalls that District Nurse, Viola Lowry lived in Greeley's for a number of years during the 1980s.

Much of the credit for the recent road widening and laying of footpaths along the Doctor's Road must go to Teresa. She has long championed the interests of



Greeley's corner house, 2021.

pedestrians and other road users on the increasingly busy thoroughfare and has engaged over many years with Mayo County Council to ensure the safety of all. Teresa wishes to acknowledge the role played by Councillor John Cribbin and Conrad Harley, Senior Executive Engineer with Mayo County Council, in the recent implementation of improved safety measures at the busy junction at Greeleys.

Teresa has always kept up her close links with Ballyhaunis and with her family, friends and neighbours in Upper Main Street. She would like to give special mention to Kathleen Caulfield and her son Seamus and his wife Aisling who ran a wonderful and busy shop across the road from Greeley's. Kathleen Caulfield was always very welcoming and kind both to Teresa and to her mother Josie. Teresa has happy memories of many childhood visits to the impressive family home which has been maintained in excellent condition down the years and still stands in all its glory at the head of the Doctor's Road. In the run up to the 2020 All Ireland Football Final Frank, a Meath man with a great interest in Gaelic Games, painted the side gates on the Doctor's Road in the Mayo colours, much to the delight of all the neighbours and Mayo GAA supporters.

Annagh Magazine would like to thank Teresa for kindly taking the time to share some old family photographs and other historical material and recount the story of the Greeley family and their busy shop, which was an integral part of a thriving business district that was once Upper Main Street.



Josie Greeley (left) pictured at Knock with Bernardine Phillips.



Josie Greeley pictured in her Red Cross uniform outside Carmel and Noreen Waldron's house during *The Emergency*.



Josie Greeley (right) with her neighbour Anna Marie Jordan.



Above: Josie Greeley, Upper Main St. (centre) with neighbours, sisters Margie and Bernardine Phillips.



Right: Josie Greeley on Doctor's Road in 1940s.



Pictured at the blessing of the Gurteen Grotto marking its fiftieth anniversary in 2004, were, L-R: Pat Biesty, Martin Caulfield, Tom Henry and Johnny Brennan (all RIP), Jimmy Finn, Michael Caulfield and Enda Caulfield.

The blessing and rededication ceremony was performed by then Ballyhaunis curate, Fr. Kieran Burke.

Photo: Mike Byrne.

Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club

Membership Reflects Demographic Trends in Ballyhaunis

MARK GODFREY

Ballyhaunis Table Tennis met again on 20th September 2021: it was the commencement after nearly half a year of lockdown. It was too long for Dominik Vidovic who plays at the club opposite his compatriot Vojtech Sulpok on one of the club's professional sized tables. Covid was a tough time for the hulking Slovak. "There was nothing to do during Covid; this is my social life; it was really hard," he said. Vidovic has lived in Ballyhaunis for thirteen years, Sulpok for three. Both came to work at Dawn Meats.

The eagerness of both players was palpable as they played under the hanging globe-style lights and a fading Autumn sunlight filtered through the stained glass windows of St. Mary's Abbey where the club is based until its usual locale, the Parochial Hall, is refurbished. The subdued lighting of the church is not ideal for table tennis but "better than nothing", Vidovic explains, "because it was so hard" when the club closed for nearly a year during the Covid pandemic. "We were playing three days a week and then nothing, no game, nothing to do," he said.

The make-up of the club is illustrative of deepening demographic shifts in the East Mayo town where employers are going further east to find workers for industrial jobs as the wave of Poles who came here in the early 2000s has subsided. The Covid officer at Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club is Bart Ilczuk, a father of one who works in Dawn Meats and one of a now dwindling population of Poles, the others drawn home by rising wages and an economic boom helped by a €9 billion transfer in EU cohesion funds and a deluge of investment from western European manufacturers. Ilczuk left his hometown of Olsztyn, a handsome city on the Lyna River in northern Poland, for Ireland in 2005. In 2008 he found himself on the slaughter line at Dawn Meats. He's been there twelve years and bought a house in Hazelhill, on the southwest perimeter of town. "I was playing table tennis since I was seven in Poland. I got to the third division in the national league. Table tennis is very popular in Poland. We have a very good academy in Gdansk. In Ireland it's not such a big deal but the Gaelic sport is very big here." Ilczuk is here to stay - "I'm nearly Irish now, I am here to stay," he said. But he's seen others stay away. Poland's economy is strong, wages are rising fast. Polish wage growth averaged 5.6% in the period 2017-19 compared to an EU average of 0.4% according

to accounting firm Grant Thornton. "There's a lot of Polish people going to Germany, or Sweden or Holland, not so much to Ireland."

Polish influx

Ilczuk is reticent but a much more verbal compatriot in Ballyhaunis, Jakub Grabiasz, tells the Polish migrant story with eloquence. "In 2004 I came with four colleagues to work on the buildings. We worked for a local developer. At that time there were hundreds of thousands of Poles moving here. I remember in the 2005 or 2006 census it said more than 400,000 Polish people in Ireland. In those first few years of EU membership Ireland, the UK and Scandinavia were the only countries to open the job market to us." A monthly wage was equivalent to a weekly wage in Ireland when Grabiasz arrived. "At that time Poland was completely different from what we now know. We were just coming out of the post-Soviet economy. We had freedom of speech but still [had] bad wages."

Much has changed. After first being enamoured by all the cash its emigrants were sending home, "the [Polish] government quickly realised this is not good. Because it was mostly people with skills who left - entrepreneurs, hardworking people." A flood of investment into Poland means wage gaps have narrowed by half: two weeks in Ireland equates to one month's salary here, according to Grabiasz. He calculates that out of the 400,000 here in 2006 there are now 100,000 Poles in Ireland. The turning point was 2008 when the Celtic Tiger started to collapse. "The recession cut a lot of jobs and people went back to Poland. A lot of construction workers had come to Ireland to build the Celtic Tiger Dream. I remember our company, there was eight Polish on the team and no Irish... A lot of the guys were going home two or three times a year and didn't want to stay here and be on the welfare. They were people of work and proud of being Polish."

Demographics

As Poles go home, local employers are going further east in search of workers. A new member of Ballyhaunis Table Tennis Club Sasha Pyatov is Ukrainian and came this summer to Ballyhaunis having been recruited by Dawn Meats. Sasha is settling into his first autumn outside Ukraine. Table tennis has given continuity and allowed him to return to a sport he played well in Kiev



two decades ago. The influx is often transitory however. Workers like Sasha – whose colleagues at Dawn include a growing Brazilian population – are on short-term contracts linked to temporary visas for those without EU passports. That transitory nature makes it difficult to cultivate talent according to the club’s coach, an enthusiastic retiree named Shay O’Reilly whose story of searching for a house to buy confirms that Ballyhaunis, like many other towns in the west of Ireland, has enjoyed a surge in population which belies the frequently repeated complaint about rural decline rehashed by some political parties. A native of Phibsboro in north inner city Dublin, O’Reilly moved to Ballyhaunis two years ago after buying a farmhouse on the Cloonfad side of town. Ballyhaunis has a shortage of housing due to the influx of foreign workers and asylum seekers housed in a direct provision centre centred on the former campus of a girl’s secondary school run by the Mercy order of nuns.

Because of its universal appeal Table Tennis offers a microcosm of the demographic changes in the town. Irish teenagers are coached by head coach O’Reilly. “We first started the club to give teenagers something to do, and to train them up. We had a lot of kids from the asylum centre too.” Ballyhaunis Table Tennis club will run a training programme for women this autumn, sponsored by Mayo Sports Partnership which is keen to get women more active. The programme is “attracting great interest” said O’Reilly.

Members of the Pakistani and Syrian community come in groups. But the keenest players are Slavs, explains O’Reilly, who played competitive table tennis over several decades in halls across Dublin. However Slavs may be in shorter supply locally. The largest Slavic grouping by numbers, Poles, aren’t coming to Ireland any more, according to Grabiasz. “I see no new Polish faces here in the past five years. Whoever is going to Poland is going back. During Covid I never saw so many going back.” There’s plenty of work in Poland – and in nearer, neighbouring countries. “Ireland is a far away country for us,” explains Grabiasz. “You have to fly here. Or you can drive 380 kilometres to Vienna. All my wife’s cousins are working there. They drive four hours every Sunday night but spend the weekend at home. It makes no sense to fly three hours to Ireland.” Germany, which didn’t originally admit Polish migrants in 2004, is now short of labour and has become the favoured destination for Polish workers. Companies organise accommodation, but many Poles want to stay home. “There’s a different mentality now. I see young people with the equivalent of their Leaving Cert and they are not looking to emigrate,” says Grabiasz.

Hungarian immigrants

If Polish immigrants see opportunities at home it’s a similar situation for migrants from Hungary, the other large eastern European state in the 2002 enlargement of the EU. Ballyhaunis-based Ildiko Ignacz from the Jász-Nagykun-Szolnok county in central Hungary says Hungarians are still coming to Ireland – she’s part of a Facebook group for new arrivals. “But you have a better chance now to build a better life in Hungary.” The average wage in Hungary is twice as high today than in 2006 when Ignacz moved to Galway at the age of twenty-one. “I was studying conservation engineering. My partner was studying wood products engineering.” A trained roofer, he’s currently working as a garden machinery mechanic while Ildiko runs her own baking business from their home in Annagh, a few kilometres north of Ballyhaunis town centre. Hungary is also keen to hold onto its young. Hence it’s easier for young couples to buy a house in Hungary thanks to a government backed mortgage scheme, explains Ignacz. “Buyers can get €30,000 to help you buy if you’ve got three children and then you can get a low interest mortgage.” Such supports almost drew her and her young family back to Hungary a few years ago when they wanted to buy their own home. But her family settled in Ballyhaunis three years ago when the estate agent in Galway said, “once you go over the border the price drops in half.” After looking in Cloonfad and Claremorris they settled on a hundred year old farmhouse in Annagh that had been empty for over ten years. “We had four good walls. We did the work ourselves and added an extension.”

Higher living expenses in Mayo are driving others back to Eastern Europe from the west of Ireland, believes Jakub Grabiasz. “Housing is mega expensive in Ireland... you spend half your wages to live... Nobody in Ireland got a dramatic pay rise but look how much we pay for petrol or milk and vegetables compared to five years ago.” Life may be expensive but there are social benefits to living in Ireland. While healthcare is free in Hungary the minimum wage in Ireland “means you have security no matter where you work,” explains Ildiko Ignacz. Wages in medical or IT jobs in Hungary are comparable to similar roles in Ireland but lower wage retail jobs are paid as little as €700 per month. Ignacz says she knows a few Hungarian families in Ballyhaunis. “They’re working in Bpod [bathroom fixtures factory] and Dawn Meats and Western Brand.” The EU freedom to move and work has given a younger generation of Hungarians a curiosity for travel. “Nearly everyone has a family member who has moved somewhere in the EU.”

This article was first published in The Connaught Telegraph, 26th Oct. 2021.

Ballyhaunis Community Council

MARK GODFREY



The ongoing refurbishment of the Parochial Hall remained the preoccupation of the Ballyhaunis Community Council throughout 2021. Our weekly project meetings have proceeded this year in a mess of uprooted floor boards, building blocks and bags of cement, as work on the refurbishment finally got underway. Having been prevented by Covid regulations from starting works earlier, the machines and workmen finally moved in during late spring and ground works were completed. After a builders' break in late summer the works were back underway in earnest from late August with heavy structural works and adjustments in the front part of the building, which requires new access facilities for disabled users of the hall. Block laying on the extension of the building commenced in November, something we were relieved to see proceed given the inflation in building materials caused by the pandemic – and a shortage of skilled construction workers.

Inside the main hall, the replacement of the floor wasn't in the original plan, but when rotting was discovered in some of the under floor joists a camera inspection confirmed our worst fears for the old sprung maple floor. Pricing and sourcing an environmentally friendly and efficient heating system has required lots of meetings with

The refurbishment of the Parochial Hall will transform it into a comfortable, modern community space.
Photograph by Adam Kaczmarek.

plumbers and energy assessors – and took us to Gorthaganny Hall to view a heat pump system similar to that which we plan to install.

Costing in excess of €425,000, the refurbishment project will deliver a comfortable, modern community space. Major boosts to our fundraising efforts came throughout the year with pledges from local businesses and a €10,000 donation by Eugene Lannon of Western Brand Group. Other donors who approached us recently wish to remain anonymous. We appreciate them all equally.

Ongoing activity

Away from the hall, meanwhile, we continue to promote and coordinate the Local Link service and we organised a very successful music event, Friary Nights, with the backing of the Department of Arts and Culture. We also continue to monitor the implementation of the Community Futures Plan which was drawn up with the Chamber of Commerce and Mayo County Council.

We were very happy to nominate Nuala Fitzgerald as our liaison officer with the Public Participation Network set up by Mayo County Council to encourage cooperation in and between communities and local authorities. This will ensure we're aware of various funding and cooperation schemes that might benefit our community.

Established in 2003 to promote community development, the Community Council in 2021 also formally achieved charitable status. This is really useful in the running of the hall which the Community Council in 2019 took over on a long-term lease from Tuam Archdiocese to be run for the community.

The grounds of the historic abbey in Ballyhaunis were alive with music on 27th and 28th August as the scenic venue was host to Friary Nights, a series of concerts sponsored by the Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media, and organised locally by Ballyhaunis Community Council with funds managed by Mayo County Council. Local musicians Brian Flanagan and Keith Plunkett drew a large crowd to the event which was held in a marquee in the Friary car park. Other performers included the Balla pop rock group Train Room, and Seamus Fogarty from Swinford.

The concerts came about when the Community Council was approached by a local music and audio-visual producer Brendan Hurley who helped us make the application to Mayo County Council which was administering the scheme for the Department. The idea was to support Mayo musicians and the live music technical crews who didn't have much, if any, work during the pandemic. The Community Council had spoken with Brendan, head of Cruachan Productions, to organise a

benefit concert for the refurbishment of the Parochial Hall, but then Covid got in the way and that didn't happen, but Friary Nights was a great collaboration with the Community Council securing the venue and promoting the event while also organising the ticketing locally. We also organised volunteers to be stewards and reached out to the Ballyhaunis Defibrillator Group who offered first aid attendance on both nights of the event.

Ballyhaunis Community Council expects to re-open the Parochial Hall to the community in late spring 2022 and we hope it will serve as a focal point for lots of community occasions for years to come. Various requests – including several from wedding planners – a musical society and an Orthodox Christian church pastor – have come in for use of the hall in recent months so we expect the refurbished venue will be busy and full of life.

The Community Council is very grateful to the Abbey Partnership – of which it is part – for the permission to use the Friary House for our monthly general meetings.

If you'd like to join the Community Council and participate in our activities – including the management of the hall – you can come along to our monthly meetings, check out our website www.ballyhaunisccl.ie and email us at ballyhaunis-communitycouncil@gmail.com

Chairperson - Mark Godfrey; *Secretary* - Mary Donnelly; *Treasurer* - Marie Cribbin; *Public Relations Officer* - Tzyy Wang; *Representatives on Abbey Partnership* - Kay Curley, Mark Godfrey; *Representatives on Abbey Trust* - Mary Donnelly, Ruairi Ó Broin, Michael Kelly, Pat Higgins; *Representative on (Mayo Co Council) Public Participation Network* - Nuala Fitzgerald.

Focus

**Some days I don't focus,
Some days I might not even try,
But I need to keep thinking about what I want to achieve,
To be able to I hold my head up high.**

**It is easy to get distracted,
And spend hours messing around,
But I need to use my opportunities well,
and choose to ignore my surrounds.**

**It may be tough right now,
But I must listen to the words I preach,
So I can enjoy my future luxuries,
Laying on a beach.**

NESSA RUANE-DALTON

Ballyhaunis GAA Club officer Robbie Herr (left) presents Martin Grogan, Coventry, with a specially crafted Foxford Blanket in the Mayo colours, for his contribution to the GAA both in Warwickshire and in his home club of Ballyhaunis. Martin made the trip from Coventry to the GAA grounds in Ballyhaunis for the launch of the club's fundraising initiative, which offers a Seat Tarraco as the first prize. Son of the late Clarence and Delia Grogan, Clare Street, Martin has contributed enormously as club officer to the Roger Casements GAA Club in Coventry since taking up residence there in the early 1970s.



Right: Des Lyons (Turlough) and Alice Lyons (Clare Street) with Maria Lyons (Clare St.) in the 1980s.
Courtesy of Tom Lyons, Clare St.

Annagh Readers Down Under.
Left: Robert, Laura and Leah Grogan, Knockbrack and Australia, Christmas 2020.



Sinéad, Ciaran and Molly Mulrennan-Rogers, Gurteen and Australia, Christmas 2020.



Mike Morley (Knox St.) at Knock Airport, as featured on an RTÉ TV news feature on emigration in the 1980s.

BCS Teacher Retires



Best wishes to our friend and colleague Mr. Sean McHugh who retired from Ballyhaunis Community School in October 2021. Sean has been a stalwart of the school, and of the 'D Area' in particular, since his arrival as Woodwork, Construction Studies and Technical Graphics teacher in 2005, and will be sorely missed by students and teachers alike. Sean is also a past pupil of BCS so his connection and affinity to our school and community dates back even further. A man of many talents and interests, no doubt Sean will be kept busy during his retirement, but we look forward to welcoming him back to visit in the near future.

He is pictured above with his colleagues from the 'D area' who presented him with a hand-crafted time-piece. L-R: Colin Quinn, Colm Caulfield, Sean McHugh, Pat Noone and Patrick McGarry.



Sean McHugh (left), on his retirement, with Principal of Ballyhaunis Community School, David McDonagh.



Society of
St Vincent de Paul

The St. Vincent de Paul Society (SVP) is Ireland's largest voluntary charitable organisation and has been providing assistance for those in need and for homeless people since 1844. The Ballyhaunis Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society would like to remind readers of Annagh Magazine that help is available for individuals and families in our local area by calling 086 264 0969. All communication is treated in the strictest confidence and any assistance is offered by the society in a non-

St. Vincent de Paul Society

judgemental manner, based on the needs of the family or individual. People may contact our SVP Regional Office in Galway on 091 563233 if they prefer.

In line with government guidelines our meetings have been continuing remotely via Zoom throughout the past year. We would like to thank all committee members for facilitating these meetings and enabling us to continue to provide our important service. We are most grateful to all who continue to support our work and we send our very best wishes to all of our friends at home and away.

Our confidential helpline number is 086 264 0969.

'Play On' – Local Bands and Musicians that I recall

EAMONN MURREN

The passing of The Singing Cowboy, Tony Rattigan, earlier this year brought to mind the very many great entertainers we have had in Ballyhaunis down the years. Tony played the pub scene all over the West of Ireland for many years, ably assisted by drummer Mick Hopkins of Island. Mick was also able to keep the audience entertained with tunes on the accordion. Marcus Caulfield also played with Tony as did Tony's neighbour Jimmy Fleming on drums. Tony also spent a number of summers in the 1990s playing alongside Anna McGoldrick in McGrath's Irish Pub in the Catskills Mountains in upstate New York. A wonderful entertainer, Tony will always be remembered fondly and forever associated with his own composition 'Freddy the Fisherman's Son'.

Other local bands on the pub scene included Johnny McGarry and The Royals, and Tom McGowan and The Glenside Folk. Paddy Hunt from Larganboy played sax with Pat Noone and The Mariners from Claremorris. The late John Brady, also of Claremorris and father of Helen Healy of Doctor's Road, had a band called The Brady Bunch. Seamus Cullinane of Knock played with Pauline and The Bambies while Paddy Waldron of Cherryfield was a fine accordion player and played with a group called Three Gems during his time in England. Also on the pub circuit in those days was the colourful Paddy Fanning.

Before the advent of the Singing Pub era, Gus Lannigan (of Moran's Terrace, Upper Main Street) and



The Riviera Showband 1966. L-R: Kevin Maloney (Charlestown), John Conway (Bridge St., Ballyhaunis), Brendan O'Grady (Charlestown), Shay Cribben (Kilkelly), Gerry Foley (Charlestown), Patsy Haugh (Castlerea), Malachy Tiernan (Charlestown). © Seamus Mallee Photographic Collection

his band played in the dancehalls of the late 1950s and early 60s. Tom Swift played alongside on drums. In those days Gus might get a booking up the country for, say, a six-piece band. It could well happen that Gus might only have five musicians available. A sixth person would be rounded up and brought along and put on stage to mime and pretend to play an instrument!

Tom Jones arrived in Ballyhaunis in the mid-1970s. No! Not that Tom Jones who enjoyed great success with hits such as 'Delilah' and 'The Green, Green Grass of Home.' Our Tom Jones was a Kilkenny man who came to manage the Skin and Hide Depot in Ballinlough and he boarded in Jack Morley's Pub in Knox Street. Tom was a great musician and singer and he fronted a band called Country Comfort that played in pubs and also entertained at weddings and dinner dances. Vinnie Kelly retired NT from Began played with Tom and so did a lad from Swinford called Padraic Boran.

The earliest showbands I recall from our area was The Riviera which featured John Conway of Bridge Street. Pat Halpin of Main Street along with Tony Dolly and John P. Kelly from Knock played in another local band called The Niagra Showband.

On the local scene nowadays, we have Martin Fitzmaurice and his son Evan with Tempo. David Godfrey and his sister Anne Marie have a group called Harmony, while the Lyons brothers from Gurrane have a fine



The Ballyhaunis Star Orchestra, 1950s.

L-R: Martin Hopkins (accordion), Paddy Morley (drums), Bridie Judge (vocals), Johnny McGarry (accordion), Paddy Boland (fiddle).

band called Diesel. Keith Plunkett, son of Gerry and Patricia of Forthill, is another lad who is making a name for himself on the music scene in Dublin.

Nationally, Brian Flanagan of Ballindrehid is a very well-respected singer/songwriter who has recorded numerous albums and has played alongside renowned artists such as Eric Bibb, Finbar Furey and Sharon Shannon. Tomás Concannon, son of Christina of Upper Main Street, plays with a Galway outfit under the wonderful name Bury Me with My Money! They have also produced a number of albums. Olwyn Murray, daughter of The Clock proprietor Adrian and his wife Breedra, continues to ply her trade in Dubai where her beautiful voice is a delight to all.

I am sure there are many other singers and musicians that I have omitted in this short review but I will leave the final word for now to the late, great Paddy Fanning. Paddy was enjoying a drink in Paddy Phillips Bar in 1998 when word of Sinatra's passing was announced on The News. Paddy instantly quipped, "Another one of our gang gone!"

May Paddy and Frank and all the other wonderful local musicians who have departed this world for the Heavenly Stage rest in eternal peace.



Western Dixie Flyers

Back L-R: Michael Plunkett, P.J. Foley, Michael Murphy. Front L-R: Brendan Walsh, Terry Griffin and Pat Blake. Taken in Charlestown, 20th March 1970.



The Singing Cowboy, Tony Rattigan.



Paddy Fanning



Left: The Niagra Showband at ruins of Ballyhowley Castle, Knock in 1968.

L-R: Gerry Fahy, Aiden Staunton, Pat Halpin, John Kelly, Tony Dolly and Vinnie Somers.

© Seamus Mallee Photographic Collection.



Above: An aerial view of Ballyhaunis from over Doctor's Road looking to the south-east. Taken by John Conway, on 28th August 2021.

Left: Fr. Fergal Cunnane, P.P. Dunmore (left) and Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P. Ballyhaunis, who celebrated Mass on Croagh Patrick and heard Confessions during this year's extended pilgrimage season. The annual Pilgrimage usually takes place on the last Sunday in July but this year, however, to allow for numbers permitted for outdoor gatherings due to covid-19, it was extended to four days per week during the month of July: Wednesday – Saturday. This is the first time in the history of the pilgrimage that such an extended programme was offered to facilitate those wishing to fulfil the obligations of the pilgrimage on St. Patrick's holy mountain.

The 'Cape' Connection



Maureen Crosbie (centre) with daughter Ann Marie (right) and John Morley (left).

Maureen Crosbie (née Flanagan) pictured above with John Morley in Phillips' Bar, Main Street. Maureen was born in this house, daughter of the late William and Bridget Flanagan, under whose proprietorship in 1940s and 50s, it was known as 'The Cape of Good Hope'.



Maureen Crosbie relives old memories pulling pints in Phillips' with her daughter Ann Marie.

Maureen Crosbie (centre) with daughter Ann Marie (right) and Noelle Keegan (left).



Left: Tommy Carroll, Carrowreagh, aged 9. Courtesy of Denis Hannan.



Right: Pado Cunningham (Abbeyquarter) with the Sam McGuire Cup.

My Part in the 100th Anniversary Commemoration of Michael Coen's Death

MURT HUNT

A commemoration was held on 1st April 2021 to mark the 100th anniversary of Michael Coen's death at the hands of British Crown forces at Lecarrow. It was to be a large ceremony with numerous activities but due to the infamous covid epidemic it had to be curtailed and confined to friends and neighbours only. A large celebration was held on the 50th anniversary of Michael Coen's murder in 1971 with defence force personnel, band and military dignitaries present, and a huge crowd in attendance from all over Ireland and overseas. We had hoped for similar activities this year on the 100th anniversary but due to circumstances beyond our control that, unfortunately, was not to be.

A committee was set up in 1971 to raise funds for the erection of a suitable memorial. Money poured in from all over the world, U.S.A., Britain and elsewhere, mostly from exiles who were aware of the atrocity that had taken place at Lecarrow in 1921 and who wished to be part of the fund-raising effort. A flyer I have seen from 1971 promoting those efforts names Cyril Coyne, a shopkeeper on Bridge Street, and Joe Waldron, a local business man, at the head of the committee as Treasurer and Secretary, with the assistance of Seamus Coen, a nephew of the late Michael Coen.

Over the course of a number of years a FÁS scheme built a perimeter wall, cleaned up the surrounding area and covered it with stone chippings. Picnic tables were put in place and beds laid out for trees, shrubs and flowers. The area was maintained and looked after by the late Betty Regan, and visitors were encouraged to stop and spend some time at the scene. Michael Coen (another nephew of the deceased) kept the memorial painted yearly until his death. Over the years, as these schemes fell away and with the passage of time, grass and weeds engulfed the area and it became an eye-sore.

Presentable

As I passed each day and saw the weeds and grass getting worse I decided to take the job in hand on my

own. I spent days mowing, strimming and spraying until the site became presentable once more. That was many years ago and, to this day, I have done the same job several times a year. I told Betty Coen, the late Seamus Coen's wife, after Mass one Saturday night, that I would continue doing so while I was able and I qualified for a free pint in Paddy Phillips' bar that night. I sowed cuttings in the beds in later years and flowers, having received a small donation from Mayo County Council per John Cribbin MCC.

Being notified by Seamus Caulfield and Cathal Carroll (both dedicated to the Coen story) about a small ceremony taking place on the 1st April this year, and that they had arranged for Martin Gavin to clean and power-wash the memorial, I spent extra time at the monument and had the area as clean as a whistle for the anniversary

Proud Lecarrow natives gathered on the day for a blessing by Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. and a short talk by Fr. Kieran Waldron on the late Michael Coen's murder, the latter being a mine of information on the history of that era. I was happy to

have my picture taken by Cathal as it was the first picture taken at the newly refurbished monument. Many pictures were taken that day but we had to wear our face masks and keep the obligatory distance apart.

Master of Ceremonies was Seamus Caulfield and he introduced and welcomed all those in attendance. He presented a flyer to all present as a memoriam of the late Michael Coen, and a framed copy was given to Fr. Farragher, Fr. Waldron and Betty Coen. It was so nice to see another Michael Coen (a grandnephew) lay a wreath at the memorial and, as it was a beautiful sunny afternoon we all had time for a chat with our neighbours. If this epidemic ever passes over it would be so nice to have a larger ceremony and maybe use the picnic facilities for a cup of tea and some reminiscing.

I am not an authority on the story of Michael Coen but I know he was a member of the IRA and was wrongly accused of the murder of a Black and Tan member in Ballyhaunis. From what I have heard he was a furniture



Murt Hunt pictured at the Coen Monument, Lecarrow, 1st April 2021.

maker. He had travelled by horse-and-cart and sold a table and chairs in Swinford that day and he was wrongly identified by a 'lady' in Ballyhaunis as the assassin. He was dragged from his house in the middle of the night in front of his family and actually mutilated by the Tans. His remains were discovered the next morning by his heartbroken father.

Cathal Carroll is an authority on the IRA and Black and Tan activities in the locality. His grandfather Charlie (who was also my uncle) was involved in many skirmishes with the notorious Tans. He was on the run and lucky to escape with his life on many occasions,

having hidden out for a time in a secret compartment in a reek of turf at his homeplace in Erritt, Gortaganny. His brother Tom was dragged to the water's edge and his head held under water until it was discovered they had the wrong man. Many atrocities were committed by both sides during this particular period. The Black and Tans, introduced to Ireland to supplement the police and army, were prisoners released from jails and other institutions. What was done to Michael Coen is beyond description and caused much bitterness in the families of those men who suffered similar fates.

The Long Wait Goes On

MIKE GRIFFIN (MANCHESTER)

We gathered as we have done every year since '89. This year a strange air of confidence... not good. As young Mancunian boys we fell in love with GAA during our long summer visits to Ballyhaunis, six 'English' lads training and playing with Michael Glavey's club in Ballinlough and Granlahan. Lifetime friendships formed and one of my greatest sporting moments, meeting those friends and cousins in Croke Park to watch Glavey's play in an All-Ireland club final.

We met in several pubs and bars in Manchester down the years, the same old faces from our youth – their Mayo parents, some living in hope and some long gone. 1989 was Cork: close but not close enough. So long away from Croke Park on All-Ireland Final day... we will be back. Ten finals later still striving, but this year was different. The Dubs banished in the semi', and now favourites – God help us!

The week before the final we travelled around Mayo from our Johnstown base, a sense of optimism, even confidence prevailed. Even the die-hard Roscommon lads in the pubs in Ballinlough said it was time for Mayo to win it. The Green and Red was everywhere from Ballyhaunis to Achill Island. Thirty other counties willing Mayo to victory. The one county that did not was the one which mattered most – Tyrone.

Tough and uncompromising, they said, but used to winning in Croke Park and, most important of all, some very good players, well coached with a simple game plan. It worked against Kerry; would it work again?

As always the media spoke of 'the curse'. There was no curse: Paddy Prendergast confirmed there was no funeral in Foxford. One of Mayo's greatest sons, his prolonged life written about by lazy journalists each year Mayo reached the final. A week after the '21 final, Paddy Prendergast breathed his last.

A Saturday evening in September, we met in The Union pub in Stockport; a strange afternoon. It was the day Ronaldo came back to Man. United and the pub bounced all afternoon. By 5pm they were gone or leaving and the Green and Red had taken over the pub. Strange looks as the pub stood for *Amhrán na bhFiann*. Cars passed by oblivious to the corner of South Manchester transformed into a County Mayo pub. Oh yes, there were even a couple of guys shouting for Tyrone.

Looking back, the match was a blur. Tyrone in control, but two first half goal chances squandered, but only two points behind and still in the game. The victory still on. A good start to the second half. Another goal chance and then a penalty... a soft one, but still a penalty. O'Donoghue hits the post and wide! Within five minutes Tyrone's first goal and with twenty-five minutes to go, the game is gone. As always Mayo battled on, but to no avail. Another loss.

In Croke Park, throughout the county, throughout the world, tears are shed and heads held in hands. In South Manchester we drowned our sorrows as we relived tales of days gone by. We said we'd be back and when they finally win... we'll be there to share in the glory. The pilgrimage to Croke Park will go on. The annual gatherings of childhood and teenage mates will go on in some Manchester pub. Our kids decked out in the Mayo jerseys now share our pain. They've bought-in and they want to be there when Sam finally comes to rest in McHale Park.

As the fading chords of 'The Green and Red of Mayo' filled the air we drifted off into the Mancunian night and back to our suburban homes. Thoughts of Mayo, where we all have come from, where we are, and where we are going in the future - Mayo God Help Us!

Ballyhaunis Town Football Club

JARLATH WALSH AND BRENDA KRUSINA

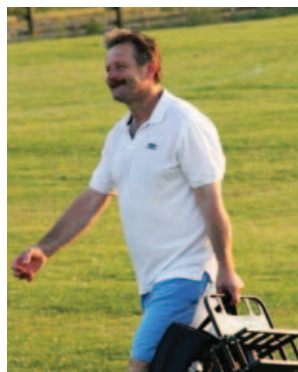
The 2021 season AGM of the club was held 27th May 2021 by Zoom due to Covid and the following officers were elected: *Chairman* - Jarlath Walsh; *Vice-Chair* - Chris Pratt; *Secretary* - Elaine Carney, *Treasurer* - Tom Colleran; *PRO* - Richie Crinnigan/Tracey McDonagh; *Management Committee members* - Jonathan Powers, Brenda Krusina, Tracy McDonagh, Michal Krusina, Adam Kaczmarek and Michael Waldron.



This is our twelfth season in the Mayo League since the club was reformed. We are playing in the Super League for the third season after the Mayo League called off the 2020 season due to Covid after the first-round games were played. All teams maintained their position in their respective divisions which left us in the Super League for the 2021 season. The Teams in the Super League for 2021 season are: Westport Town, Castlebar Celtic, Ballina Town, Manulla, Ballyglass, Swinford, Glenhest, Claremorris, Ballyheane and Ballyhaunis Town. Niall Richardson was appointed Team Manager and James Clarke his Assistant Manager with Lorcan Higgins and Tom Colleran on the Management Team also. Team captain for the season is Andy Cunnane.

To say it has been a tough year in the Super League would be an understatement for a number of reasons, but as we prepare this article for *Annagh* it is mid-September and the team is third from the bottom of the table with one game left in Round 1 and four games to go in Round 2. At the end of the season the top five finishing teams in the division play each other to see who wins the League and who are runners up, with similar play-offs in the bottom half to see which two teams are relegated. We have every confidence in the team and the managers that we will stay up and play in the Super League again next year. It is a difficult job in normal times but in these Covid times it is a particularly tough job and Niall, James and the lads are carrying it out brilliantly. It's great to see most of the team carry on from season to season and every year a few new faces are added. We wish them all the very best for the rest of the season and our hope is to be playing in the Super League again in 2022.

We were so saddened in April to say goodbye to Karl Briem who passed away after a long battle with ill health. Karl and Tommie



Karl Briem

Page managed Ballyhaunis Town for a number of years and brought great success to the club winning various cups and leagues and eventual promotion to the Mayo Super League. We are privileged to have known Karl and he will never be forgotten at the Club. He is greatly missed around the club and we offer his wife Romy, sons Ronan and Daniel and their families our heartfelt condolences.

On a brighter note the club was contacted by the FAI's Stephen Kenny, Jim Crawford (Ireland's U21 Manager) and Tom Mohan (Ireland's U19 Manager) last year to see would we help with a video presentation from the club in their efforts to secure a commitment from John Joe Patrick Finn to play for the Irish Republic U21's. Thanks to the efforts of James and the team we were told by the FAI that the video was instrumental in convincing John Joe to opt to play for Ireland. John Joe lives in Madrid but is a regular visitor to Ballyhaunis and to the club: his grandfather Mike Finn lives in Devlis. John Joe was snapped up by Real Madrid to join their youth academy as a youngster after scoring five of the six goals for his team in trials at Real Madrid, aged just eight. He is now aged eighteen and on loan to La Liga team Getafe with whom he made his debut last December and, at the age of seventeen, was one of the youngest to ever play in La Liga. He is now playing regularly with them as well as studying in university. It was fantastic to see him declare for Ireland as he could have also declared for Cameroon (his mum's country), England or Spain. We wish him a long and successful association with Irish football and hearty congratulations to his grandad Mike who is so proud of him.

As a thank you from the FAI for making the video presentation for John Joe, Tom Mohan (Irish International U19 Manager) attended the club for an afternoon in August and took a series of training sessions with the players in all age categories. He imparted a lot of wisdom to our coaches and players alike, is a true professional and very approachable. Brenda, Johnny and Tracey, our underage managers, really felt it was very beneficial for all.

Underage

2021 has seen us take a step closer to the normal running of the underage at the club. Thankfully, we managed to participate in two successful leagues, at U13 and U15. The children enjoyed the competitive games. We wish two of our U14 players - Desmond Yobouet and Jake Powers every success with their call up to the Mayo team. They are representing the club very well. Next season we hope to facilitate children from U10 to U16.



Desmond Yobouet.



Jake Powers.

Tracy Cunnane, Ballyhaunis Community Sports Hub's Co-ordinator, along with Nigel Naughton FAI Mayo Co-ordinator ran a very successful girls Soccer Sisters Camp over the summer to encourage girls in the locality to get involved in sport. We hope this camp will be the foundation for setting up girls' teams in the coming seasons.

Underage would not operate without the dedication of our volunteers. Thanks to Johnny Powers, Brendan Carroll, Michal Krusina, Brenda Kilcourse, Tracy Cunnane and Taiwo Ayinde. A special thanks to Jeff Nolan from SuperValu, for his generous donation of a new sets of jerseys for our U15 team.

Thank You

Most of our income stream has disappeared again this season due to Covid. It is very challenging because we still have to pay the regular bills. We mention this is to highlight the support we get from locals attending the games and also the shops and businesses who sponsor

signs at the pitch, home games, kits, football, and so on.

We thank all our supporters most sincerely because without you we would not be able to continue. We wish to acknowledge our two main sponsors MacSiúrtáins Bar (Stephen Nolan) and Rochford Motors (Liam Rochford) and we urge everyone to always try and support local shops and businesses in Ballyhaunis because they are called on to support every club and organisation and they have never let us down.

We thank all the people of Station Rise for putting up with the disruption and noise caused by matches and training and thank you for all your support for the club since it was started back in 2009 by our own Brian Kilcourse.

We would like to extend a huge thank you to Austin Lyons and John Larkin who keep the pitch cut and marked and do a host of other tasks at the grounds. Well done lads, we would be lost without ye! A big thank you also to the scheme supervisor Ann Moran for all she has done at Station Rise in the past number of years. We would like to thank all who have helped in any way with the club over the past year and also with the underage which is led by Brenda Kilcourse.

The club is looking to expand year-on-year. Next year we would like to start girls' teams along with expanding the boys by adding an U16 team, and are seeking more volunteers to help. If you would like to volunteer with the club for our local children, please contact us via our Facebook page, or by contacting any committee member.

We would love to see new faces at the club for next season and everyone is welcome to attend our AGM



Ballyhaunis Town FC.
 Back, L-R: Niall Richardson (Manager), Pat McGhee, James Reynolds, Michael Waldron, Michael Goulding, John Morley, Sam Olabude, Owen Cunnane, Daniel McCormack, Adnan Hamze, Dean McGarry.
 Front, L-R: Prince Owusu, Ethan Cleary, Andy Cunnane (Capt.), Fergal Walsh, Aiden McTigue, Moh Rahmani, Peter Redmond, James Clarke (Asst. Manager).
 Taken in Station Rise, Aug. 2021

which takes place at the end of January each year (except for the Covid years). We are always looking for new club officers and management committee members and people to run/coach teams. We usually have a monthly management meeting to run the club which is held in the Friary house, for the use of which we thank Stephen and Tracey.

The club can be contacted through any committee member. For the underage please contact Brenda Kilcourse at 086 3950743.

It only remains for all of us at Ballyhaunis Town F.C. to wish all the people of Ballyhaunis and surrounding areas a very happy, holy, healthy and safe Christmas and hopefully we will see the end of Covid in 2022.

Photo credits: Brenda Krusina and James Clarke.

John Joe Finn (centre) pictured during a recent visit to Ballyhaunis Town FC grounds, Station Rise. Also pictured, Carlos (left) and Michael Marigliano (right).



L-R: Johnny Powers, Tom Mohan (Ireland's U19 Manager), Brenda Krusina and Tracy Cunnane McDonagh.



Ballyhaunis Town FC, Under-13 team.



Ballyhaunis Town FC_U15 team with Jeff Nolan
 Ballyhaunis Town FC, Under-15 team with Jeff Nolan (left) of Nolan's Super Valu who sponsored the jerseys and Team Manager Johnny Powers (right).

Ballyhaunis FINE GAEL

Johnny Logan's winning song in the 1980 Eurovision Song Contest 'What's Another Year', written by the late Shay Healy, coined a new phrase into the vocabulary of the Irish people. This phrase can and is used to describe many situations both joyous and sad. Unfortunately, this phrase has negative connotations when used in conjunction with Covid 19. When this scribe sat down to pen Fine Gael's contribution to the *Annagh* Magazine of 2020 little did he think that in twelve months' time we would still be battling this life changing virus that is Covid 19. The late Nelson Mandela, President of South Africa, when asked on his release from prison in 1990 what his thoughts were on his twenty-seven years of captivity, he replied, 'One must take the positive out of every situation'. If we look we will see that there have been positives in the last twelve months. As a people we had to slow down which gave us more time to spend with our families. We have the regeneration of that great Irish tradition we call 'The Meitheal' – people, clubs and organisations have got together to help out in their local community.

Phrases like 'zoom meeting', 'holding a webinar', 'working from home', have entered our world, probably to stay, in the past year. Prior to Covid 19 restrictions

being lifted on 22nd October 2021, zoom and webinar meetings were used by the Fine Gael party both nationally and locally to keep in contact with its members.

Having cancelled the Árd Fheis in 2020 due to Covid restrictions Fine Gael held its Árd Fheis online in 2021 using zoom and webinar meetings to debate the issues of the day with its members. The Árd Fheis opened on Tuesday, 15th June 2021 at 7.30pm and concluded on Saturday, 19th June with a keynote address by our party leader, An Tánaiste Leo Varadkar, at 5pm. Members of the Ballyhaunis Fine Gael branch took an active role during the week in many of the debates bringing local issues to the attention of the relevant Ministers.

The branch would like to express its gratitude to local Councillor John Cribbin on his tireless work, in these difficult times, in servicing the needs of the people of Ballyhaunis and surrounding areas. John is available to meet constituents by appointment at a time and place of their convenience and can be contacted at 087-2920368.

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

Pushing an Open Door – Culture Night 2021

RUAIRÍ Ó BROIN

Culture Night falls on the third Friday in September and is an ideal opportunity for communities to get behind projects that showcase cultural activities in their area. In pre-Covid days we were able to bring the best of the town to the fore with concerts, recitals and exhibitions, but these last two years this was not to be. The schools had already broken up for the holidays before we could engage with them and the timeframe from when they returned to the actual event was far too short. The theme for this year's Culture Night nationwide was Diversity, Inclusion and Human Rights and given that we can boast the population with the greatest diversity on the island great things could have been done were it not for the short preparation time and, more frustratingly, the ever changing regulations regarding Covid. Having spoken to quite a few community groups it was evident that the will was there to unite all the cultures in Ballyhaunis, to celebrate what we all have in common. But the constraints under which we laboured meant that it had to be an outdoor event, food could not be served and the

situation regarding live music and dance became a bit of a moveable feast, with no clear guidance from on high.

Having consulted with community leaders, Ballyhaunis Community School, the Abbey Partnership, Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce, the Family Resource Centre, Foróige and Mayo County Council, we discovered that there are at least thirty languages spoken in the town and doors were sought on which the basic greetings in those languages could be painted. Doors present opportunities and Ballyhaunis has been presenting open doors for almost fifty years so 'Pushing An Open Door' seemed a good title for our project.

Courtesy of Ballyhaunis Life Facebook page, a call for help went out and though it was slow to start we got a great response with people from many communities lending their skills and giving their time. Every day that people turned up, all strictly adhering to guidelines, we had a ball. The buzz just from painting a few words on doors together was incredible. Of course, people were not restricted to writing a few words, many were painted



'...Doors present opportunities and Ballyhaunis has been presenting open doors for almost fifty years so "Pushing An Open Door" seemed a good title for our project.'

and presented as works of art in themselves and, I'm pleased to say, we also provided doors to groups representing the LGBTQ and Neurodivergent communities.

When the doors were finished (the day before the event), we brought them to the MUGA in the Friary grounds and exhibited them under bunting and the flags of those represented along with recorded music from all those represented. The co-operation and camaraderie between the different nationalities in making the stands for the doors and putting them in place is something that will stay with me forever.

The weather was glorious on the day and we genuinely had no idea how many people were likely to turn up, but we were as packed as Mr. Covid would deem safe for most of the four hours that the display was up and, whilst we may have started the project as a group of communities, we most certainly worked and finished up a one big community.

It would be impossible to name and thank everyone who helped and/or contributed, from eight-years old to the more mature, but while the sun shone down on us, Ballyhaunis shone straight back at it.

Fit4Life

MARY HENRY

After a number of very successful years and continuing growth in numbers, 2021 has been much quieter due to Covid restrictions. Our members continued to train alone initially and, as restrictions were lifted, in small groups. Towards the end of summer, a number of our members completed 10k's, Half and Full Marathons.

Well done to Paul Damron who completed the Berlin Marathon and to Martin Fitzmaurice who completed the Mullingar Half Marathon achieving a personal best time of 1:52. At the end of September all roads led to Galway Bay. Eileen Donnellan, Siobhan Conlon, Janette Webb, Elaine Patterson, Patricia Waldron and Liz Walsh completed the Half Marathon with Alma Gallagher completing her first marathon on the day.

We look forward to regrouping in 2022.



Top right: A group of participants in the Galway Bay Half and Full Marathons. Back, L-R: Janette Webb, Alma Gallagher, Eileen Donnellan, Elaine Patterson, Sarah McMorrow, Liz Walsh. Front L-R: Siobhán Conlon, Patricia Waldron.

Left: Martin Fitzmaurice, who completed the Mullingar half marathon.

Below right: Paul Damron of Annagh, pictured in front of the German Reichstag building, after completing the Berlin Marathon on Sunday, 26th Sept. 2021.



‘Fragile Life’

‘Fragile Life’ is a beautiful, free standing, stain glass artwork, that has been recently installed in an enclosed courtyard in the heart of Ballyhaunis Community School. It was created from a desire among the staff and students to commemorate those we have lost tragically from our school community in the last number of years.

The school received a Creative Engagement grant to help finance the project and commissioned Westport based stain glass artist Linda Grieve-Mulloy to design and create the artwork. The artist collaborated with the art department and the artwork of sixty students has been embedded in the piece.

The medium of glass was chosen as it symbolises fragility, vulnerability but also invisible protection. Both the glass and the flowers represent fragile beauty while the tree reflects strength and growth. Together, we will face storms and emerge stronger albeit shaped by our trials. The roots from the tree is the legacy we leave, forever concreted into the earth.

The art installation also allows us to positively remember those we very much miss and it is a reminder to us of the fragility of life.

The school wishes to extend our gratitude to David Murphy (Agri-Spread International) for kindly designing and donating the frame for the artwork, and also to Gerry Glavey and Keith Curry for assisting in the installation.



‘Unfold Your Strength’

Every year during the preparations for Wellness Week, Ballyhaunis Community School takes one class out to help create a collaborative art display. This year, our theme for the week was ‘Unfold Your Strength’. The idea in developing the artwork is that each member of our school community prepares his or her own small part and, when all of the pieces are assembled, we have a piece of artwork that is both inspiring and greater than the sum of its parts.

All students and members of staff were invited to make a small origami pigeon. These were then collected by our Transition Year students who, with great patience, tied the hundreds of birds to hula hoops that had been carefully painted by our Leaving Cert Applied students.

The crucial step of hoisting the resultant mobiles up to the ceiling was carried out by Gerry Glavey. Now the beautiful origami mobiles that resulted from this project are proudly suspended from the ceiling in the assembly area.

Thoughts of one teacher about the process

‘When I made the final fold of my ‘pigeon’, I looked at the specimen I had created and wondered if I had done it correctly at all. It didn’t look exactly the same as the one on the video. But then I looked around the class I had at the time – 1A as it happens – and I realised that while we had all clearly made a collection of birds, no two birds were exactly the same. They were all

handmade, with slightly different folds from one artist to the next. But they all looked perfectly sound. And that made me wonder: did everyone else consider their pigeon to be the imperfect one, until they looked around and saw that none of the pigeons were perfect, and yet they were all perfectly fine in their own way. Now that they have been assembled, in the assembly area, appropriately, we see the impact they have as a group – like starlings in a murmuration. We see no imperfections, just an impressive display to enjoy.'

Ballyhaunis Community School assembly area, with the 'Unfold Your Strength' art installation.



Above: Congratulations to Alana Steegstra who graduated from Curtin University, Perth, Western Australia, with a First Class Honours Degree in Pharmacy. Alana is pictured here (second from left) with her mother Mary (née Walsh, Johnstown), father Geoff and brother James.



Above right: Taken at a function in Logboy N.S. after the ordination of Fr. Tom Cleary to the Priesthood, 6th Apr. 1969, and shortly before he went on the Missions.

L-R: Fr. Tom Dooley CC Brickens, Fr. Tom Cleary (Logboy), Mrs. Mary Donovan (née Murphy), Fr. Eoin Ó Cleirigh (son of Micheál Ó Cleirigh TD), Fr. Kieran Waldron (AP, Began). Mrs. Donovan, sister of the late Mickie Murphy, Logboy, was on a visit home from New York at the time.

Far right: To The Rescue. Taken outside Jordan's Shop, Upper Main St. in 1986. L-R: Oliver Jordan (Jr.), Paula and John Jordan on their way to the vet with an injured cat. The animal had just been run down by a car and the three youngsters brought it to Frank Loughran's veterinary surgery. He didn't charge on the day but said come back and pay me if it lives. Sadly, the casualty didn't survive. (Courtesy of Siobhán O'Connor-Herr).



Scoil Íosa Ballyhaunis

KENNETH DENNEDY (PRINCIPAL)

Ar son chuile duine í Scoil Íosa ba mhaith liom Beannachtaí Na Féile a bhronnadh chuig gach duine I bParóiste Béal Átha hAmhnais agus thar lear. Go raibh míle maith agaibh go leir ar son an méid tacaíochta a bhronntar ar ár Scoil arís í mbliana. Tá súil agam go mbeidh sár 2022 ag chuile dhuine agus go mbeidh deireadh leis an ngalar uafásach a bhí ag cuir ceal ar ár ghnáthshaoil i rith an thréimhse seo caite.

As we come to the end of another calendar year we take a look back on what has been in truth another disrupted, less than ideal school year where most of our normal pursuits have been curtailed due to the restrictions imposed around Covid-19. On behalf of all at Scoil Íosa, may I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2022.

Sports News

Sporting pursuits have been very much curtailed for much of 2020. While, thanks to Mr O'Brien and his team, we did manage to organise a successful School Sports Day in early June, opportunities to engage in competitive sport have been few and far between. However, we did see some light at the end of the tunnel in September with the return of the Primary School Cross Country competition which took place in Swinford. In truth, the competition was secondary to the occasion: the sense of relief around once again travelling to an event and participating with other schools was palpable. While we didn't feature in the medal positions on this occasion we had some notable competitors and, more importantly, all involved represented the school well. Thanks to Kevin Henry for his input to the occasion.

As the promotion of health, fitness and positive mental health now forms an integral facet of the school curriculum we have continued to participate in the 'Daily Mile' initiative which we signed up to during the 2018/2019 school year. This is an extremely beneficial pursuit given that it provides for all children to engage in physical activity during the course of the school day, regardless of ability. As a non-competitive activity the aim is firmly on active participation with the aim of promoting exercise as a means towards developing a healthy lifestyle.

At the time of writing we are all confident that the football, hurling and other sporting pursuits will recommence in the New Year. Mayo Sports Partnership in cooperation with the FAI has restarted their annual

coaching programme which has been running with the children in third class. This involves the children receiving intensive coaching over a six week period in the finer points of the game.

In terms of achievements over the course of the year we had two pupils who excelled in their respective sports: third class pupil Ted Murphy winning Athletics Gold in the under 10 Boys 60m at the All-Ireland Children's Games and John William Burke securing first place in the Irish Junior Golf Open School's Cup. It's a great honour to have had two All-Ireland champions within our ranks. Well done to both boys.

Sacraments

After a couple of false starts due to the restrictions, our pupils finally managed to receive both their Confirmation and their First Holy Communion in mid September. The Confirmation ceremony took place in St. Patrick's Church on Friday, 10th September. In comparison to previous ceremonies, this year the confirmation was a simple affair with Fr. Stephen officiating at the service. Given that there were over fifty candidates to receive the sacrament, it was necessary to hold two services – one for our current sixth class and another for our 2020-21 sixth class who had moved to the Community School. Even though the ceremony was somewhat restricted, perhaps the greatest compliment paid by many of the participants and their families was that the ceremonies were far more intimate and personal than the traditional Confirmation ceremony, focussed more on the sacrament with all attendees considering themselves to be more included and, as a consequence, a greater part of the overall event. Food for thought for the future perhaps! Thanks to Dónall O'Brien and Labhaoise Cunnane for the work done in preparing the pupils.

First Communion 2021

On the week following the Confirmation, the following nineteen children from the current third class received their First Holy Communion in St. Patrick's Church in a ceremony rescheduled from 18th May. Thanks to Sheena Flanagan and Sharlene Ruane for their work in preparing the children. Oisín Higgins, Silmara Cristina Da Silva Nunes, Jaide Isaac Squire, Santana Ryan, Olivia Feeney, Edward Murphy, Patrick Gallagher, Nina Stojakovic, Ronan McGuire, Jamie Collins, Keith Caulfield, Estreya Ivaskeviciute, Stejpan Romaric, Evelina Ciutaite, Cara Henry, Ava Gildea, Emma Connery, Isabel Finn, Ayla Louise Lima Rocha.



Pupils from Scoil Íosa who received the sacrament of First Holy Communion in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, September 2021. Pictured with Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P (centre) and their teachers Sharlene Ruane (left) and Sheena Flanagan (right). *Glynn's Photography, Castlereagh.*



Children from the First Communion Class who made their First Confessions in Scoil Íosa with Fr Stephen, 15th June 2021. *Photograph: Fr. Stephen Farragher.*

Confirmation 2021

Miguel Cala, Pavel Cervenak, Pavel Cobzaru, Thomas Curran, Alex Dunkurs, Lauren Feeney, Joshua Maughan, Senan Heaney, Terry Maughan, Bethany Warde, Ema Mesnjak, Seamus Mongan, Ciara Morley, Maya Murphy, Liam Nolan, Jozo Spajik, Lochlan Waldron, Edgaras Zayanckauskas, Nikodem Zborowski, Joe Cleary, Sebastian Sesazni, Thomas McDonagh, Dominik Manke, Camile Caetano D'Oliveira, Gustas Lukosevicius, Brandon Sweeney, Naomi McDonagh, Bridget Allen, Kamile Zizunaite, Patryk Manke, Ana Posaric, Luka Posaric, Tom Donnellan, Alana Mongan, Amelia Gryczuk, Cillian Caulfield, Cristiano Manke, Fionn Conlon, Connor Reynolds, Ellen Murphy, Eamon Monaghan, Lukas Bacys, Aaron Jordan, Emma Caulfield, Nicole Allen-Forde, Liam Hill, Cian Moran, John William Burke, Jack Nolan, Jamie Nolan, Jason Powers, Viktoria Balik-Nowak.

School Staff 2016/2017

Kenneth Dennedy (Principal), Kevin Henry (Deputy Principal), Dónall O'Brien (Assistant Principal), Aishling Toal, Anne Durkan, Olivia Burke, Sheena Flanagan, Marian Byrne, Ciara Richardson, Lisa Watchorn, Michelle Flatley, Joanne Forde, Ciara Byrne, Sharlene Ruane, Elaine Brady, Annie Kelly, Miriam Judge, Emily Worden, Diane Marigliano, Aisling Toal, Karen Nolan, Maria Coyne, Tara Cusack, Josh Ronayne, Edel Maher, Dervla Phillips, Labhaoise Cunnane, Marissa Brett, Elaine Burke, Niamh Connolly, Oisín Henry, Róisín Prendergast-Freeman (SNA), Marian Nally (SNA), Marina Coyne (SNA), James Cullinane (SNA), Carmel Cassidy (Secretary).

Board of Management

James Reidy (Chairperson, Patron's Nominee), Fr. Stephen Farragher (Patron's Nominee), Kenneth Dennedy (Principal/Secretary), Eileen Donnellan (Community Nominee), Eddie Murphy (Community Nominee/Treasurer), Samantha Cleary (Teachers' Nominee), Darren Conlon (Parents' Nominee), Marian Feeney (Parents' Nominee).



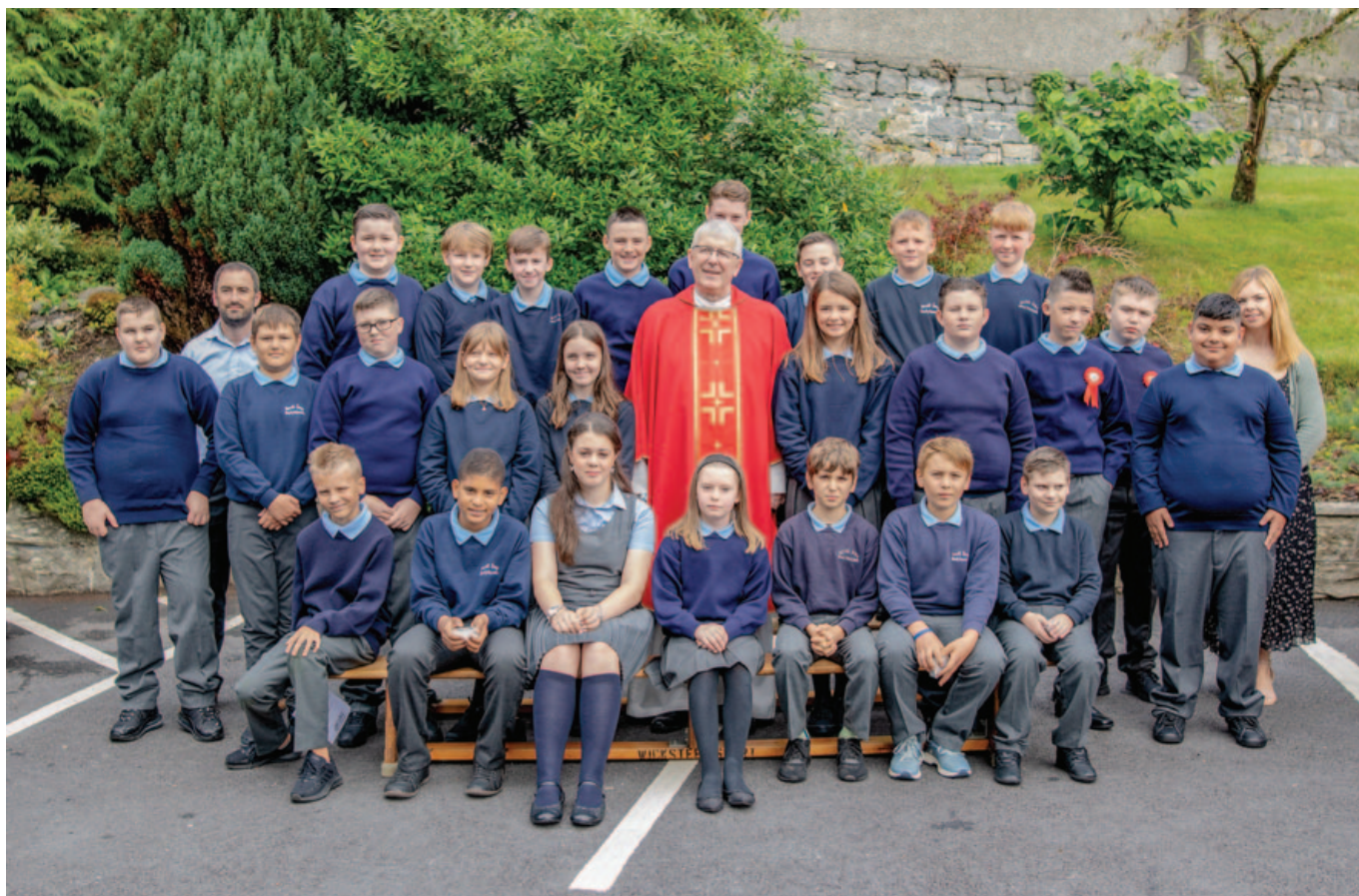
Scoil Íosa Cross Country runners represented the school this year.



Pupils of Scoil Íosa enjoying the good weather on Graduation Day. Photograph: Fr. Stephen Farragher.



John William Burke who won the Irish Junior Golf Open School's Cup 2021.



Pupils from Scoil Íosa (current sixth class 2021-22) who received the sacrament of Confirmation in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 10th Sept. 2021. Pictured with Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P. (centre) and their teachers Dónall O'Brien (left) and Labhaoise Cunnane (right). *AK Photography.*



Pupils from Ballyhaunis Community School (Scoil Íosa sixth class 2020-21) who received the sacrament of Confirmation in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 10th Sept. 2021. Pictured at centre are Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P. (Centre) and teachers Labhaoise Cunnane, Caroline Burns (Chaplain, BCS) and Dónall O'Brien. *AK Photography.*



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

**Ballyhaunis GAA Club
 Dinner Dance, 1968.**

L-R: Paddy Waldron (Upr. Main St.),
 Cecily Garvey-Moran (Knox St.),
 Tony Cribben (Main St.),
 Dan Moran (Knox St.).

**Photo © Liam Lyons Collection.*



**Pictured at the Ballyhaunis Projects Committee Annual Dinner
 in The Eclipse Ballroom, 5th Feb. 1970.**

L-R: Seamus Durkan, Sighle and John Forde, Rosaleen and Hugh Curley, Johnny Biesty.

**Photo © Liam Lyons Collection.*



Attending the Ballyhaunis Farmers' Association Dinner, 24th Jan. 1974.

L-R: Noreen Moran, Tom and Joan McLoughlin, Mary Elwood, Mary, and Jim Hopkins.

**Photo © Liam Lyons Collection.*



**Pictured at an FCA function in The Moy Hotel, Foxford, 1971,
where Ballyhaunis won the FCA Darts Cup.**

L-R: Pvt. Michael Fitzmaurice (Johnstown), Capt. William Lyons (Devlis), Sergt. John Cleary (Johnstown),
Comdt. Frank O'Connor, Comdt. Martin Loughnane, Sen. Dalgan Lyons.

**Photo © Liam Lyons Collection.*



Catheriona Quinn (Classaroe) and Pawel Zaborowski (Straszów, Poland) who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 23rd July 2021.



David Grey (Surrey) and Laura Crowley (Surrey) who married in St. Barnabas Church, East Molesey, Surrey, 26th Sept. 2020. David is grandson of the late Alice Lyons, Clare St. Laura's grandmother was from Curraghroe, Co. Roscommon.



Gean Henry (Tooreen) and Rob Kavanagh (Leopardstown, Dublin) who married in St. Mary's Church, Tooreen, 22nd Oct. 2020. It was the only wedding in Tooreen in 2020 due to the restrictions of Covid-19.



Elizabeth Burke (Bohogue) and Gerard Cawe (Derryfad, Claremorris) who married in Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Robeen, 10th Sept. 2021.

WEDDINGS

Tara Haverty (Cloonfad) and Peter Quinn (Mount Delvin, Cloonfad) who married in St. Patrick's Church, Cloonfad, 28th Aug. 2021.



Anne Marie Mulkeen (Carramore, Tulrahan) and Damien Keane (Garryedmond, Claremorris) who married in St. Mary's Church, Logboy, 29th May 2021.



Joanne Grogan (Bekan) and Gerard Regan (Breaffy) who married in St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Church, Began, 13th Aug. 2021.





Jacklyn Moran (Main Street, Ballyhaunis) and David Northridge (Blackrock, Co. Dublin) who married in All Saints Church, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, 21st of August 2021.



Janine Gallagher (Knock Road) and Gareth Duggan (Carrowbeg, Claremorris) who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 27th Aug. 2021.



Jennifer Lyons (Cloonfaughna) and Michael Regan (Midfield, Swinford) who married in St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Church, Bekan, 16th Oct. 2021.



Sharon Lyons (Carrmack) and Kieran Swanick (Ballinlough, Co. Roscommon) who married 26th Mar. 2021.



*John Daly (Ballyhaunis) and Marie Cleary (London)
who married in St. Sebastian and St. Pancras Church,
Kingsbury, London, 3rd July 2021.*



*Roseanne McNeive (Brickens)
and John Sweeney (Kiltimagh) who married
in St. Therese's Church, Brickens, 7th July 2021.*



*Teresa Cleary (Gurrane) and Thomas Lawrence (Ballina)
who married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis,
7th July 2021.*



*Sarah Buckley (Knock Road) and Fionán Ó Muirheartaigh
(Dublin) who married in Borris House, Carlow,
4th September 2021. Photography by Ciara Cassidy.*



Brian Waldron (Cave) and Haley Mahoney (New York) who married at Cop Cot, Central Park, Manhattan, New York, 23rd Jan. 2021.



Lisa Kelly (Bekan) and Jason Tone (Mullingar) who married in St. Margaret Mary Alacoque Church, Began, 30th December 2020.



*Niamh Lyons (Lecarrow) and Cillian Browne (Clare) who married in Ballintubber Abbey, 31st July 2021.
David McClelland Photography.*



Peter Moran (New Jersey) and Tina Wixon (New Jersey) who married in Madison, New Jersey, 2nd Oct. 2021. Peter is son of Thomas Moran, formerly of Knox St. and Pauline (née Carty) of Strandhill, Co. Sligo, and grandson of the later Peter and Breege Moran.

Baptisms Marriages Deceased

BAPTISMS in the Parish – November 2020 to October 2021

Clodagh Etta Ronayne, Bunnadober
Kayla Mae Waldron, Old Racecourse
James Patrick Healy, Waterford
Paddy Gerard Burke, Old Racecourse
Brody Gerard Plunkett, Forthill
Dara Rochford, Old Racecourse
Sadie Paige Gill, Carrowkeel
Shauna Anne Quinn Curran, Hazel Court
Julianne May Rose O'Reilly, Coogue North
Munachimso Jayce, Ezeokafor Nwafor, Old Convent
Rían Patrick Griffin, Bargarriff
Alex John Lyons, Leow
Cara Leigh Sweeney, Bargarriff
Patrick Joseph Maughan, Station Rise
Naoise May Mulrennan, Bracklaghboy Village
Pádraic Heaney, Ballyglass
Dylan Thomas Lynch, Bohogue

Iarla Seán Keary, Brussels, Belgium
Shayla Alice Nolan, Brackloon
Freya McNamara, Knockbrack
Ella Ann Richardson, Larganboy
Gráinne Marie Potts, Dublin
Grace Mae Madden, Claremorris
Lucy Gena Coen, Lecarrow
Rimgaile Marija Staniulyte, Esker Pines
Reyna Shay Waldron, Hazel Lawns
Zach Asante Adu, Dublin
David Patrick Cleary, The Maples
Bowie Lee Freeley, Abbeyquarter
Kaelynn, Eala Tevenan O'Boyle, Ballinlough
Owen Brendan Maughan, Abbeyvale
Hannah Marie O'Boyle, Carrowkeel
Freya Louise Brennan, Holywell



MARRIAGES

in St. Patrick's Church November 2020 to October 2021

Thomas Lawrence, Ballina
and Teresa Cleary, Gurrane

Pawel Zaborowski, Claremorris
and Catheriona Quinn, Classaroe

Gareth Duggan, Claremorris
and Janine Gallagher, Knock Road

Marriages Elsewhere

Aidan Dermody, Derrynacong
and Emma Loftus, Derrynacong

Winnie McDonagh, Tooraree
and James McDonagh, Castlebar



DECEASED of the Parish November 2020 to October 2021

Irene O'Malley, Holywell Upper
Mary Rattigan, St. Gerald's Crescent & Pollnacraoaghy
James Healy, Johnstown
Denise Nolan, Togher
Jerome Murphy, Knock Road & Began
Mary Webb, Devlis & Main St.
Fr. Michael Kenny, Skeghard
Tom McCormack, Clare Court
Seamus Cribbin, Drimbane
Doris Kedian, Clare Court
Jarlath Connell, Gurrane
Peggy Daly, St. Gerald's Crescent
John Cleary, Johnstown
Tom Moran, USA & Hazelhill
Bridget Daly, Clare Court
Noreen Caulfield, Carrowkeel
Kathleen McBride, Annagh
Josephine O'Brien, Claremorris
Elizabeth Jordan, Annagh
Tony Rattigan, St. Gerald's Crescent & Pollnacraoaghy
Nuala Kenny, Abbeyquarter
Margaret Mulligan, Surrey UK & Barrack St.
Mary Waldron, Aisling Drive & Holywell
John O'Brien, Hazelhill Downs & Main St.
Margaret Healy, Devlis
Marian Glynn, Upper Main St.
Mike Freeley, Manchester, formerly Gurteen
Tommy Lyons, Main St.
Michael Nolan, Togher
Bernie Moran, Tooraree

DECEASED from elsewhere (Prayed for at Mass)

Maggie Farrell, Ballycastle
 Tom Geraghty, Manchester
 Walter Grogan, Hazelhill & Ballina
 Bakri Cherbatji, Bracklaghboy Village
 Sheila Doherty, Ballinlough
 Colm Coyne, Claremorris & Ballindine
 Tom Walsh, Manchester, formerly Johnstown
 Kathleen Gallagher (née Brennan), Castlebar, formerly
 Barrack St.
 Josephine McCann (née McGuire), London, formerly
 Ballindrehid
 Imelda Murphy (née Sloyan), Douglas, Cork, formerly
 Brackloon
 Helen Stockdale (née Biesty), Manchester, formerly
 Pattenspark
 Gus Kearns, Kilgarraiff, Knock, ex-NT St. Mary's NS
 Tom Mitchell, Manchester & Irishtown
 Sr. Angela Dempsey, Loughrea, formerly Mercy Sisters,
 Ballyhaunis
 Thomas Kelly, Cortoon
 Cyril Collins (Snr.), Kilmihil, Co. Clare
 Paddy Cunnane, Aghamore
 Matthew Barnaville, Switzerland & London
 Michael Francis McDonagh, Enfield, UK
 Billy Fleming, New York, formerly Pollnacraoghy
 Michael Grady, New York
 Rita Garvey, Ballinlough
 David Lyons, Manchester, formerly Clagnagh & Gurteen
 Ger McHugh, Castlebar & Sligo
 William Jarlath Grogan, Cloontumper
 Fr. Enda McDonagh, native of Bekan
 Hazel Niland, Aghamore
 Denis Squires, Woodfield, Kilkelly, formerly St. Gerald's
 Court
 Kevin Finn, Nottingham, UK, formerly Hazelhill
 Teresa Ann Sewell (née Burke), Canada, formerly Dublin &
 Gurteenmore
 Sr. Monica Henry, Sisters of Mercy, Wanstead, London
 Kathleen Smith, formerly Lissaniska, Bekan
 Martin Mulkeen, Leeds, formerly Kildarra, Tulrahan
 Sean Hyland, Knock
 Canon John Fallon PP, Kilmaine
 Jean Healy, Mullingar
 Rosana Costa, Brazil
 Tom McManus, Leeds, formerly Cottage
 Tom Ryan, Cavan

Anne Coyne, Carramack
 Matt Gilligan, Claremorris
 Morgan O'Connell, Tuam
 Muriel Sweeney (née Higgins), New York, formerly
 The Square
 Mary Campbell, Manchester
 Eoin Mulkeen, Achonry
 Annie Smyth (née Fitzmaurice), Birmingham, formerly
 Spaddagh
 Bermie Compton (née Doyle), Strokestown, formerly
 Derrylea
 Bro. Augustine Freeley, De La Salle Brothers, Portlaoise,
 formerly Gurteen
 Kathleen Hurley, Clooncan, Ballinlough
 Delia Harrison, Shammer, Kilkelly
 Kathleen Curran (née McGinty), Headford
 Frank Glynn, Canada, formerly Clare St.
 Mark Munnelly, Swinford
 Terry McDonagh, London, formerly Tooraree
 Bid Byrne, Kilkenny
 Prionnsias Boyle, Kilcar, Co. Donegal
 Jim Flanagan, USA
 Hans Van de Put, Gurrane, formerly Holland
 Suzanne Ginty, Kiltimagh
 Walter Grey, London
 Mary Hughes, Sallins, Co. Kildare
 Bertie Dillon, Drogheda, formerly The Square
 Bridie Donnellan (née Mulkeen), Knock, formerly
 Knockbrack
 Luke Lyons, Erriff
 Martin McDonagh, England, formerly Tooraree
 Tarina Sloyan, Greenwood
 Tom Hopkins, Derby, UK
 Ann Tevnan, Tooreen
 Brian Munro, Dunmore, Co. Galway
 Rita O'Sullivan, Cloonfad, formerly Bridge St.
 Linda McEnroe (née McGuire), Dublin, formerly
 Ballykilleen
 Sean Dooner, Clare Court & Keenagh, Co. Longford
 Norrie McCoy (née Hoban), Dundalk, formerly
 Derrynacong
 Sean Hurley, Dublin, formerly Clooncan
 Mary Clarke, London



Golden Wedding Anniversary



Saturday, 4th Sept. 2021 marked a very special day in the lives of Michael John and Kathleen Walsh, Knock Road, when they celebrated the joyous occasion of their Golden Wedding Anniversary – fifty years of married life together. They celebrated the occasion in great style when they renewed their marriage vows in the presence of Fr. Stephen Farragher, P.P., together with members of their family, at the Saturday evening Mass in St. Patrick's Church.

Kathleen (née O'Toole) and Michael John, who travelled from his home place of Kilmaine, met by chance at a dance in a marquee in Kathleen's home town of Headford, Co. Galway, where Larry Cunningham was performing.

Their marriage ceremony was celebrated in St. Mary's Church, Claran, Headford on 1st September 1971, by Kathleen's cousin, Fr. Fursey O'Toole (R.I.P.). The reception was held afterwards in the Salthill Hotel, Galway.

After nine years of marriage, in 1980, Michael John and Kathleen came and settled here in Ballyhaunis, when he was appointed by the ESB to take up the position of Linesman to fill the vacant position following the retirement of the late Cyril O'Malley (R.I.P.) of Barrack Street.

Their friends and all the members of the Ballyhaunis community wish Michael John and Kathleen heartiest congratulations on this most special occasion and wish them both every blessing and happiness in the years to come.

Above left: Michael John and Kathleen Walsh on their Wedding Day, 1st Sept. 1971, in St. Mary's Church, Claran, Headford, Co. Galway.

Above right: Michael John and Kathleen Walsh with family members on the occasion of the renewal of their marriage vows in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 4th September 2021. From left to right. Back: Catherine Carney, Fergal Walsh, John Twomey, Darran Conlon, Muirna Twomey. Centre: Cathal Conlon, Siobhán Conlon, Fionn Conlon, Micheál Walsh, Tracy Walsh. Front: Katie Conlon, Kathleen Walsh, Michael John Walsh, Niamh Conlon, Cara Walsh.



Pictured with Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P. are Michael John and Kathleen Walsh, following the renewal of their marriage vows in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis on Saturday, 4th Sept. 2021, on the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary.



Above: Peadar and Yvonne Walsh and family, Australia. L-R: Tristan, Peadar, Yvonne, Chloe and Dallon. Peadar and Yvonne celebrated their 25th Wedding Anniversary on 13th Sept. 2021.

Left: Michael John and Kathleen Walsh light candles during the renewal of their marriage vows in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, 4th Sept. 2021, on the occasion of their 50th Wedding Anniversary.



Above: Reyna Shay Waldron pictured at her Christening on 24th Sept. 2021 in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis, with her parents Padraig Waldron and Erika Webb.



Above: Mike and Bridgie Daly on their wedding day in Manchester, 1959.



Left: Mike and Bridgie Daly who celebrated their Diamond Wedding Anniversary (sixtieth) in 2019.

Retired from Western Care

ANNE LYONS

I retired from Western Care Association in June this year. I started working in Hazel View in July 1994 but left for a number of years and worked in the Preschool for Travellers for ten years until it closed in 2010. After working in the Queen of Peace Nursing Home for two years I returned to Western Care Association in September 2014 and worked in both Croí and Hazel View until my retirement. I really enjoyed my time and miss all my friends, but I plan to always keep connected. My wonderful neighbours in Knockbrack took me on a mystery tour as part of a retirement celebration! After being taken on a drive blindfolded I ended up in Gareth's on a beautiful sunny afternoon in July. I'd like to thank all my relations and friends for all the cards, gifts and best wishes I've received.



At work with Western Care Association. L-R: Mark Mahon, Michael Drudy, John Healy, Anne Lyons, Rosemary Rogers.



With work colleagues at Croí. L-R: Annmarie Duffy, Ann Morley, Claire Dodd, Brid Moran, Louise Kelly, Lisa Boyle, Anne Lyons, Catherine Morley.



Above: With Croí colleagues.
Back, L-R: Annmarie Duffy, Bríd Moran, Louise Kelly, Lisa Boyle, Anne Lyons.
Front: Marita Byrne, Marina Carney.



Left: With Knockbrack neighbours at retirement function in Gareth's. Clockwise from left: Gabrielle Lyons, Bernadette Lyons, Mary Walsh, Kathleen Egan, Joan McNamara, Anne Lyons, Teresa Grogan, Bernie Lyons, Tina Kirrane.





Left: Margaret Healy (centre) pictured with nieces Carmel O'Neill (left) and Marie Patten (right). Margaret was born 29th Dec. 1922 in Kilbrogan, Tooreen, daughter of Celia and John Healy. She worked most of her life in the Civil Service in London and retired to Devlis, Ballyhaunis in her sixties. She lived just over eight years in Ave Maria Nursing Home Tooreen and passed away 6th Sept. 2021 aged 98 years (R.I.P.).

Right: Johnny Mullarkey (Bohogue)



Pictures from Ave Maria Nursing Home, Tooreen



Left: Phil Rattigan (Island) with her niece Joan McGuire and grandniece Molly Curran, pictured during a visit to Ave Maria Nursing Home, Tooreen.



L-R: Fr. Stephen Farragher P.P., John O'Brien RIP (Main St.) and Johnny Mullarkey (Bohogue), pictured in Ave Maria Nursing Home, Tooreen, February 2021.



Martha Culliney (Knox St., Ballyhaunis) supporting Mayo.

Ballyhaunis GAA Club

Chairman's Address

Greetings to all our club members, players, officers, sponsors and our active volunteers who ensured that the club was run in a professional manner throughout 2021. While it was a challenging year governed by Covid-19 restrictions we nevertheless responded to the challenges of a dual club and are looking forward to 2022.

At Bord Na nÓg level under the guidance of Brendan Donnellan, his committee and coaches responded to the challenges from U6 upwards and in spite of the lack of numbers from U15 upwards, nevertheless the under-age structure competed successfully in all competitions. Our Junior football team, under the management of William Nestor, reached a county final and after some great displays in the lead up to the final, narrowly lost to a strong Mayo Gaels team. Our intermediate team lead by Paul Jordan won their league section, with promotion to Div. 2 for 2022 and are in the semi-finals of the championship, at the time of writing. We wish them every success in the remaining games.

Pierce Higgins and Tadhg Buckley lead our Senior hurlers to success last year and are currently on target to repeat success again this year. Having already won the Genfitt cup this year, we wish them success in their remaining games of the championship.

Our Ladies football teams competed at all levels with success at U14 and U16 level. I acknowledge the great work by Anne Cunnane, Edel Kinsella and Stella O'Neill to ensure success on the field of play. Our Junior ladies' footballers under the guidance of Justin McDonagh, Michael Cleary and Sinead Johnson put in some great performances but were unlucky at the latter stages of the championship.

Our grounds and facilities are maintained on a regular basis and thanks to Peter Higgins and his grounds committee in ensuring our games are successfully played all year around. We have our grounds available to our primary school and Community School and I acknowledge the commitment our teachers make to promote our Gaelic games in Ballyhaunis.

Our finance committee under the guidance of Robbie Herr and club Treasurer Tomás Murphy has successfully promoted the weekly 50/50, club development draw, secured sponsorship and with support from the football, hurling and ladies' players have ensured that the club's running costs are manageable.

The successful launch of our Monster fundraiser www.winansuv.ie in September focuses on the further development of our grounds out the Knock Road. We look to all Ballyhaunis people at home and abroad to support



this fundraiser which is driven by Ann Phillips and Noelle Barrett, who have both put an enormous amount of work into the project since April 2021. With a super first prize of a **Seat Tarraco** OR a **€50,000** cash alternative, we hope that the fundraiser will be a major success. Funds raised via our Monster Draw will go towards the ongoing development at Ballyhaunis GAA Grounds. We plan to use the funds to develop the following areas at Ballyhaunis GAA Club:

- Develop the ball alley to cater for indoor games, meeting room, kitchen facility and storage area.
- Develop a ball wall and astro turf area.
- Develop a walking path around the perimeter of the GAA Grounds.
- Replace the old stand area with seats.
- Tarmacadam the car park area.
- Erect fencing and seats facing into the training pitch area.
- Erect four new ball stop nets.

Tickets for the fundraiser can be purchased on-line via Ballyhaunis GAA Facebook page www.winansuv.ie or from any of the club officers, executive members, and other members of the club. Tickets cost just €25 **each** or 3 for €70 or 5 for €100, we encourage and ask all past members, players and family members at home and abroad to support our draw.

Our Health and Wellbeing officers Lisa McConn and Alma Gallagher have promoted and kept members up to date with current best practice protocols and have added an additional support service to our club members. Aoife Murray, our PRO, has kept our members up to date with ongoing fixtures, match results and other activities within the club. She has been ably assisted by Tommy Caulfield and Ciara Buckley. In acknowledging our excellent officers Peter Healy Secretary and Tomás Murphy Treasurer who both give voluntarily of their time and commitment to the club. It is a difficult task combining family life and work commitments and we at times do not appreciate their workload in the club. The role of coaching officer is sometimes forgotten in the club but Kevin Gallagher has brought new ideas and enthusiasm into the role. We invite new team mentors/coaches for the coming year to join the club. I wish to also acknowledge the role of our club players at county level, Mayo hurlers winning the Nickey Rackard cup lead by Keith Higgins and Manager Derek Walsh and Jack Coyne representing Mayo footballers in the All Ireland Final.

As Chairperson, I thank club members for your support throughout 2021. It makes my job a whole lot easier and

sharing the work load brings together a more balanced working group committed to running the club's affairs. In conclusion I would like to wish everyone associated with the club and all readers of Annagh Magazine a wonderful Christmas and a 2022 that we can truly look forward to.

Yours in Sport,

Gerry Lyons (Chairperson, Ballyhaunis GAA)

Ballyhaunis GAA Monster Draw

On 1st Sept. 2021 Ballyhaunis GAA launched our exciting Monster Draw to raise funds to finance the ambitious plans for the development of facilities and infrastructure at the club grounds on the Knock Road. The Draw was officially launched by John Prenty, Secretary of the Connacht GAA Council. Mr. Liam Moffatt, Chairman of Mayo GAA County Board, was also in attendance and other speakers included club chairman Gerry Lyons and Noelle Barrett-Colleran, chair of the Monster Draw Fundraising Committee. MC for the launch was Tommy Caulfield. Top prize in the draw is a brand-new top-of-the-range Seat Tarraco supplied by Rochford Motors or cash alternative of €50,000. Tickets are available online at WWW.WINANSUV.IE and are also available locally from members of the committee and in many of the shops and pubs in town. Tickets cost just €25 each or three for €70 and five for €100. Tickets may be purchased on behalf of friends and family members and would make an ideal birthday gift or Christmas present. Monster Draw Committee: Noelle Barrett-Colleran, Robbie Herr, Ann Phillips, Brendan Donnellan, Gerry Lyons, Peter Healy and Tommy Caulfield.



Intermediate Football

Ballyhaunis Intermediate footballers enjoyed a most successful year in 2021 securing top spot and promotion to League Division 2 with an unbeaten run of games against Bonniclon, Ardagh, Kilmeena, Parke, and Balla.

In the Egan's Jewellers Mayo Intermediate Football Championship 2021, Ballyhaunis advanced from a very tough group to the knockout stages with wins over Ballinrobe and Castlebar Mitchells B. In the quarter-final our good run continued with five points to spare over a fancied Parke outfit. A one-point semi-final victory over championship favourites Louisburgh set us up for a showdown with an emerging Mayo Gaels fifteen. The final was fixed for Saturday, 20th November, in Fr. O'Hara Park, Charlestown, the same venue where we won the club's second Intermediate title back in 1988.

In the build-up to the County Final the general feeling was that it was going to be a very close affair, with the result in the balance right up to the final whistle. This is exactly how it panned out. Ballyhaunis were pitted against the men from Mayo Abbey in the final of this year's Mayo Intermediate Championship. The game was played in Charlestown's Fr. O'Hara Memorial Park. It was always going to be a hard game to call and that's how it turned out. Two top sides in the intermediate ranks, evenly matched, made their way through to this year's Intermediate football showpiece. Ballyhaunis, who were without the services of a number of key players due to injury, quickly settled into the game and were four points to the good at the interval. However, Mayo Gaels never gave up and, in spite of late Ballyhaunis pressure, they emerged two-point winners – on a score of Mayo Gaels 1-11, Ballyhaunis 1-09 – to bridge a twenty-three year gap since last being crowned Intermediate champions. After all the hard work and commitment, this was a disappointing result for the boys in red and black but we must say well done to players and management on reaching the county final and congratulate them on gaining promotion to the second tier of the Mayo Senior Football League. We can look forward to the new season with confidence. Béal Átha hAmhnais Abú!

The Intermediate footballers would like to thank Sean and Mark Sutton of MTD - Machinery & Tools Direct – for their kind sponsorship of training tops and T-shirts. They would also like to thank O'Dwyer Solicitors for their generous sponsorship of gloves ahead of the county final.

Left: In the driving Seat. Ballyhaunis footballer and hurler, and former Mayo footballer Keith Higgins ready to test-drive the Seat Tarraco, the winning prize in the Ballyhaunis GAA Club's Monster Draw, which takes place at the end of January 2022. Also pictured are Eoghan Collins (passenger seat), Liam Rochford of Rochford Motors, suppliers of the car, Tommy Caulfield (Monster Draw committee) and Gerry Lyons (Chairman). Photograph by Mike Byrne.



Ballyhaunis Senior Football Team.

Back, L-R: Paul Jordan, Brian Mulrennan, Joey Fahey, Ethan Keane, Piarais Caulfield, Mark Phillips, Neil Carney, Jack McGoldrick, Diarmuid Phillips, Cormac Phillips, David Cunnane, Patrick Caulfield, Sean Gildea, Jarlath Carney, Kieran Kiely, Kevin Byrne, James Lyons, Jack Coyne, John Prenty, Jr., Eamon Phillips, Jason McGoldrick. Front, L-R: Frankie Nolan, Kevin Durkan, Conor Keane, Joe Sutton, Eoghan Collins, Brian Hunt, Cathal Carney, Danny Murray, James Cribbin, Keith Higgins, Conor Freeley, Morgan Lyons, Adrian Phillips, Jason Coyne, Kevin Gallagher, Callum Gardiner Liam Herr, Patrick Keane. *Photograph by Ciara Buckley.*



Ballyhaunis GAA is grateful to O'Dwyer Solicitors for their generous sponsorship of gloves for our Intermediate Football Team ahead of this year's county final. Picture shows Conor O'Dwyer (left) with Intermediate Football Team manager Paul Jordan.

Huge thanks also to team manager Paul Jordan, selectors John Prenty, Brian Mulrennan, Jason McGoldrick, Patrick Keane and Frankie Nolan, trainer Ronan Kenny and physio Shane Morley, and to all who supported and encouraged the team during the year.

Junior Football

The foundations laid for junior football in the club in 2020 were strongly built upon this year, as our panel maintained, and competitive games kicked back into action following the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions in May. Opponents came at us thick and fast - sometimes fulfilling two fixtures inside a week between the East-Mayo

Exclusive Junior competition and the New Junior 'C' Football Championship.

We began with a loss at home to Kiltimagh in the group stage of the East-Mayo competition but knew that a sufficient victory over Kilmovee Shamrocks in this round robin series would ensure us a place in the semi-final. A minimum 13-point win was required to advance and this we achieved with a strong team putting in a big display on the night.

Meanwhile, the championship proper had commenced and we got off to a flying start in our group with a comprehensive victory at home to Ardagh on a final score line of 5-25 to 0-7. Next up, we faced a youthful Knockmore team in the senior county champion's home ground. For various reasons we were missing a number of influential players on the day and our opposition, littered with Under-19 starlets, comfortably secured the 2 group points.

The heavy defeat in Knockmore could have potentially derailed our hopes of an extended summer, but a heroic display in our final group game against Islandeady in Parke put us into a county quarter-final. Late goals from Dara Healy and Liam Herr secured us the points difference which we needed to advance on a final score line of 4-09 to 1-11.

Next, we played Charlestown in the semi-final of the East-Mayo Exclusive Junior competition at the Centre of Excellence, Began. At this point we had racked up a number of injuries and our understrength side were no match for a dominant Charlestown as we were heavily defeated.

Focus again switched back to the Championship as we travelled to Ballinrobe for a quarter-final meeting. A fine display of football saw us progress to the semi-finals on a score line of 1-12 to 1-06. A big task awaited us against Westport who came to Parke with a large, strong panel. It



Ballyhaunis Junior Football team and management

Back, L-R: Emmett Keane, William Nestor, Joey Fahey, Daniel Murray, Luke Walsh, Piarais Caulfield, David Cunnane, Ciaran Griffin, Barry Cribbin, Kevin Kilbride, Jarlath Carney, Tayyab Idress, Soheab Arshad, Dara Healy, Diarmuid Phillips, Patrick Caulfield, Sean Herr, Eamonn Monaghan, Declan Doyle, Jason Reinhardt. Front, L-R: Liam Lyons, James Lyons, Ethan Keane, Sean Gildea, Conor Keane, Kevin Durkan, James Cribbin, Andy Cunnane, Kevin Gallagher, Liam Herr, Niall Prenty, Shane Healy, Cathal Carney, Eamonn Óg Monaghan, Neil Carney.

was a tit-for-tat contest and one which saw the return of club legend, Declan Doyle, come back into the fold after injury. His half-time introduction to the defence was pivotal in our second-half performance and a slender one-point victory meant we were now in a county final. This game finished 1-10 to 0-12.

Our county final opponents, Mayo Gaels, arrived in Claremorris bolstering an experienced panel of players. Individual match-ups proved to be important for this contest in order to keep in touch for the contest. Notably, David Cunnane and James Lyons in defence had a busy evening whilst Kevin Gallagher in midfield and James Cribbin in attack put in huge shifts. Right up until the final water break the game hung in the balance, but as Mayo Gaels rolled their bench, they had just too much for us on this occasion. We battled to the end but alas came up short on a final score line of 4-11 to 2-13.

It is worth noting that many of our junior players have progressed to the senior panel and some even securing regular starting berths in the first team. The junior team has become something of a mix as a development panel and also serves as an outlet for players at the latter end of their careers to continue playing football. We hope to continue in 2022 in the spirit and the enjoyment of the game.

Sincere thanks to Eamonn Phillips who coached the team this year whilst he recovers from injury. We earnestly look forward to seeing him back on the field of play.

Panel: Neil Carney, Daniel Murray, Jason Reinhardt, Diarmuid Phillips, Declan Doyle, Piarais Caulfield, Jack McGoldrick, John Gallagher, James Cribbin, James Lyons, Jarlath Carney, Mark Phillips, Shane Healy, John Prenty Jr., Ciaran Griffin, Conor Keane, Patrick Caulfield, Liam Herr, Joey Fahy, Sean Gildea, Dara Healy, Tayyab Idress, Ethan Keane, Niall Prenty, Kevin Gallagher, Andy

Cunnane, Jason McGoldrick, Shaun Morley, David Cunnane, Oisín Henry, Sean Herr, Cathal Carney, Damien Egan, Barry Cribbin, Luke Walsh, Michael Jordan, Connor Freeley, Kevin Kilbride.

Management: William Nestor; Eamonn Phillips, Emmet Keane, Eamon Monaghan, Liam Lyons.

William Nestor

Underage Football

Following a long winter lockdown our underage footballers got back into action in the spring with great anticipation. U7, U9, U11 and U13 training took place every week. Our U13 and U11 teams did extremely well in their respective summer leagues with fixtures in every corner of the county from Shrulce to Belmullet! U9s took part in a number of very enjoyable matches which were played in blitz format.

Our U14 and U12 teams did very well in their autumn leagues also. Well-done to our U14 team who gave a sterling performance against a very strong Ballaghaderreen side in the East Mayo County Final. Overall, our young players got plenty of game time this year so many thanks to Bord na n-Óg Mhaigh Eo for organising the fixtures.

Great credit is due to our underage players for their dedication at training, at matches and the home practice. We would like to sincerely thank Pete Higgins and the groundsmen who always ensure that our pitches are in pristine condition. We are very fortunate to have some of the finest facilities in Mayo at our disposal.

Many thanks also to our coaches who give so generously of their time. Without them it simply would not be possible to continue with our club activities.

Brendan Donnellan

(Chairman, Ballyhaunis Bord na nÓg)



Ballyhaunis U11 Football team.



Keith Higgins, captain of the Mayo Senior Hurling team, accepting the Nickey Rackard Cup from GAA President Larry McCarthy. Photograph by Ciara Buckley.



Ballyhaunis U13 Football team.



Ballyhaunis U11 Hurling Team



The Ballyhaunis Football team that won the County Intermediate League, 24th Nov. 1981, defeating Kilmaine on a score-line of 1-7 to 1-6.

Back, L-R: Sean Moore, Tony Morley, Ivan Freeley, Denis Swift, Micheál Webb, Teddy Webb, Jimmy Ronan, John Cribbin, Gerry Lyons.
 Front, L-R: Des Lyons, Tommy Grogan, Billy Phillips, Pat Freeley, Tommy Prenty, John Prenty, Sean Cribbin, Tommy Caulfield, Billy Lyons. Seated, L-R: Eamonn Murren, Tom Maguire, John Durkan.



The Ballyhaunis Senior Hurling Team.

Back, L-R: Mark Phillips, Diarmuid Phillips, Cormac Phillips, Eoghan Collins, Danny Hill, Calum Gardiner, Sean Griffin, Kieran Kiely, Eoghan Roe, Sean Herr, Stephen Hoban, Haroon Shabbir, Hannan Iqbal, James Lyons.

Front, L-R: Austin Lyons, Adrian Phillips, Jack Coyne, Sean Gildea, Adrian Brennan, Keith Higgins, Morgan Lyons, Shane Healy, Gearid Keane, Dara Healy, Brian Hunt, Donal O'Brien.

Senior Hurling

After a successful year in 2020 and a well-earned break, we started the Genfitt League in June '21. This turned out to be very successful League for us, winning all our games. We beat Castlebar by 1-14 to 1-5, Tooreen by 1-16 to 0-5, Westport by 1-18 to 0-8 and Ballina Stephanites by 0-18 to 1-16. Well done to all players, management and both captains, Calum Gardiner and Morgan Lyons. A special acknowledgement to Dara Healy, Haroon Shabbir, Mohammad Ahmad and Kevin Kilbride for joining the Junior panel this year.

The Senior Championship started in early August. First up was Westport with a win by 6-25 to 1-10. We played Castlebar Mitchells in round 2 and won by 3-18 to 1-8. Our next round was against Tooreen losing by 0-16 to 1-16. Having beaten Castlebar Mitchells Hurling in the semi-final we went on to meet near neighbours and rivals Tooreen in the final. The Mayo Senior Hurling Final was played on Saturday, 13th November. Ballyhaunis narrowly lost, however, and Tooreen picked up their thirty-first Mayo title regaining the T.J. Tyrrell Cup with one point to spare on a score line of 0-15 to 1-11.

A big thanks to our sponsors Gurteen Kitchens and EPS Group for their continued support and to the Club for all their help during the year.

Management: Pierce Higgins, Tadhg Buckley, J.P. Coen, Paul McConn, John Joe Hoban, Frank Browne, Trevor Kelly, Gary Conway, Kevin Morley, Peter Higgins and Micheál Walsh.

Tadhg Buckley

UNDERAGE HURLING

U7/U9 Hurling

Training commenced for U7/U9s in early June and continued through to the end of August. The U7s were mixed boys and girls and they received a good introduction to the game with the help of ex-players and current senior players. The U9s played games against Ballyvary, Westport and Tooreen, and also played in blitzes in Tooreen and Ballyhaunis which Claremorris and Westport also participated in. These games proved very beneficial to the players, improving their skills and getting some wins along the way. Thanks to all players and parents for their commitment.

The teams acquitted themselves and their club very well throughout 2021.

Darran Conlon



Ballyhaunis U13 Hurling Team

Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic Football Association - A Year in Sport

A message from Chairperson Anne Cunnane and Secretary Edel Kinsella



As with Season 2020, Season 2021 was hampered again by the pandemic, but this hasn't stopped Ballyhaunis LGFA going from strength to strength and growing in numbers. This year, with thanks to Tracy Cunnane, Aibhinn Herr, Marina Carney and Megan we have fielded an U8s and U10s girls' teams. As always, we would like to express our thanks to all our managers, coaches, selectors, liaisons and our very dedicated committee, for without their help, support and input we could not continue to promote women/girls in sport, and without their voluntary commitment to the club, we would not be where we are today!

Committee: Anne Cunnane (Chair), Edel Kinsella (Secretary), Aideen Murray (PRO, Feile Manager), Stella O'Neill (Child Protection Officer, female liaison U16s team), Justin McDonagh (Development Officer, Manager/Coach Jnr. Team and Coach of Minor Team), Tracy Cunnane (Fundraiser, First Aider Jnr. Team, Manager/Coach U8s and U10s), Michael Cleary (Committee Member, Manager/Coach Minors, Coach Jnr. Team), Sinead Coakley Johnston (Photographer, Female liaison Jnr. Team), George O'Neill (Manager/Coach U16s team), Brian O'Neill (Coach U16s team), Conor Kinsella (Manager/Coach U14s team), Katelyn O'Sullivan (Coach/Manager U14s, U13s and U12s team), Hugh McKermitt (Manager/Coach U12s and U13s team), Olivia



Evan O'Dwyer of O'Dwyer Solicitors presenting a set of jerseys to Ballyhaunis LGFA Senior Ladies Captain Aibhinn Herr (left) and Leah Johnston, Ladies Minor Captain (right).

Cleary (Female Liaison Minor Team), Aibhinn Herr, Marina Carney, Megan (Coaches U8s and U10s). As we are a small club, most of the coaches/backroom team double up to form Ballyhaunis LGFA committee. We are extremely grateful to all for your dedication and commitment to the club.

We would like to say thanks to Gerry Lyons, Chairperson of Ballyhaunis GAA, and to the executive committee who are always there to support us, and this year we became a One-Club Model. A special thanks to Pete Higgins who has the unenviable role of looking after the grounds and managing training and game times. This is certainly not an easy role but one which he does so effortlessly. To all our players, we are ever so proud of you all. We have gone through many highs and lows together. We accept the wins and losses which come in all sports but you have all delighted and thrilled us with your commitment to your team and club and with your behaviour on and off the pitch. We are grateful to our sponsors, Cllr. John Cribbin, Gareth Delaney, TC Fitness, O'Dwyer Solicitors, Total Health Pharmacy and to you, the public. Without your generous donations and sponsorship throughout the years we would not be where we are today. A special thank you to Sinead Johnston for providing photographs and also a special thank you to Ciara Buckley for promoting our games and for capturing action shots through her social media platform "sportpics by ciara". As a club are very lucky to have you both helping out.



Sinead O'Neill of Ballyhaunis Ladies Under-16 footballers (left), being presented with County Final Player of the Match Award by Des Phillips, County Chairman.

As each year comes around, we again would like to take this opportunity to ask other parents or interested parties to contact us to become involved with Ballyhaunis LGFA as a coach, committee member or liaison. We will make sure you are looked after!

Please email: ballyhaunis.mayo@lgfa.ie or contact any of the above-named committee. Again, a big thanks to you all and we look forward to 2022.

Ballyhaunis U10 Ladies Football team

In what has been a three year wait, Ballyhaunis LFGA, under the influential and diligent guidance of Tracy Cunnane, set up an Under 8s/ 10s Ladies football team. Like any club we aim to support the participation and development of the underage players as it is these youngsters who will be the future of our club. Throughout the year Tracy and her comrades ensured that all the activities were structured in a manner which optimises the level of fun, friendship, fair play and achievement derived by participants. These are vital ingredients to any underage structure and, with Tracy's experience, we can safely say that our club is headed in the right direction. We want to congratulate the girls and looking forward to seeing you all develop into the fine footballers you have the ability to become.

Ballyhaunis U12 Ladies Football team

Numbers at training were excellent and grew week on week under the fantastic guidance of Hughie McKermitt and Katelyn O'Sullivan. With these fantastic numbers and much improved skill levels throughout the year the future is very bright for this age group. They competed extremely well to reach the quarter final stages but were defeated. However, this isn't to be taken from what these girls achieved from a practical and skill level. The most influential factor in this year's campaign, and something that these girls will bring with them as they develop

through the age groups, is that they really enjoyed the fun. They further developed their skills and made great friendships – and as a developing team for the future, you can't ask much more.

Ballyhaunis U14 Ladies Football team

The transition from Under 12 to 14 comes with a host of changes in the game. The main difference is the pitch size and 15-a-side teams. In this year's campaign, half of the team playing U14s were introduced to the full-size pitch and with that came a slow start to the league. The more experienced girls adapted and as a team they re-grouped – and with that came momentum and victories. Following an excellent win over St. Bridget's in the Shield semi-final, the Shield final vs Kiltane was on the cards. The increased tempo in training paid off and the girls came out victorious that day with an impressive win by 12 points despite, trailing at half time, and brought home the club's first piece of silverware of the year, with hopefully more to come.

Unfortunately, the girls were unable to build on this success in the championship with the games coming thick and fast. It was the shield competition again with Islandeady the opponents in the semi-final. Despite a slow start to the game, the girls displayed great grit and determination to draw back level with only minutes left. Unfortunately, late goals from Islandeady put an end to a topsy-turvy season. The girls progressed on their skills immensely throughout the season, made everlasting friendships and hopefully memories which will last forever.

Team: Nicole Forde, Emma Swanick, Melissa Clarke, Ellen Murphy, Amy Waldron, Orla Smith (Captain), Eva Boyle, Leah Finnegan, Emma Henry, Roisín Henry, Jorga Hession, Grace Heneghan, Amy Clancy, Sara Brennan, Katie Damron, Emma Caulfield, Rebecca Clancy, Leah Nyland, Ava Neary, Saoirse McKermitt.

Management: Conor Kinsella, Katelyn O'Sullivan, Sharon Swanick.

Ballyhaunis U16s Ladies Football team

The U16 girls has had a very successful season under the guidance of George and Brian O'Neill. The girls have a small but committed panel and acquitted themselves very well in the league reaching the semi-final stages. They were unlucky to come up against a very strong Kilmeena outfit and lost by the narrowest of margins. However, they re-grouped and decided to train hard for the championship. Their hard work paid off they won the County final on 18th Oct. 2021 overcoming Kilmaine, on an impressive scoreline of 4-12 to 0-4.

We want to congratulate Sinead O'Neill, a member of the team, who made the county U16 panel and got playing time in these games. We also



Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic Football Association Player of the Year 2019 Siofra Murray (left) with Chairperson Tracy Cunnane.



Leah Johnston (left) accepting the Ballyhaunis Ladies Gaelic Football Assoc. Young Player of the Year 2019 award from Tracy Cunnane.



Ballyhaunis Ladies Under-16 Footballers who won the County Final in October 2021, pictured with trainers and mentors George, Stella and Brian O'Neill.

would like to welcome Faye Mallekoote to the panel. Faye and her family have recently moved to Ballyhaunis from Tipperary and we welcome them to our GAA family.

Panel: Chanel Marques, Grainne Waldron, Kate Doyle, Erica Byrne, Orla Smyth, Sophia Marques, Maia Phillips, Sinead O'Neill, Geri Mae Henry, Emma Henry, Treasa McDermott, Leah Finnegan, Sarah Gill, Katie Madden, Tara Phillips, Kayleigh Cullen, Lucy Phillips, Alannah Hession, Jovanna Drobic, Faye Mallekoote.

Management: George O'Neill, Brian O'Neill. Female Liaison: Stella O'Neill.

Ballyhaunis Minor Ladies Football team

Our minor team got their Division 1 league campaign off to a great start with victories over Knockmore, Kiltimagh and Moy Davitts. They also had wins over Aghamore and Swinford, followed by a narrow defeat to Kiltimagh in the championship. Our minors have also qualified for county semi-finals in both league and championship. At the time of writing, we are waiting to find out our opposition in both semi-finals.

Panel: Leah Johnston (Capt.), Eva Henry, Laura Madden, Geri Mae Henry, Nikita Tighe, Rachel Cleary, Erin Murray, Sarah Ronayne, Alannah Hession, Katie Madden, Treasa McDermott, Mae Hession, Kate Delaney, Saoirse Waldron, Laura Godfrey, Chanelle Marquez, Kate Mannion, Hannah Clarke, Sinead O'Neill, Chloe Kirrane, Megan McGuire, Rebecca Lyons.

Management Team: Michael Cleary, Justin McDonagh, Sinead Coakley, Johnston, Olivia Cleary, Aibhinn Herr.

Ballyhaunis Junior Ladies Football team

The ladies are now in their fifth year as a Senior Ladies Team, a young team with a growing panel of thirty players. This year we reached the semi-final in both league and championship. However, we just couldn't make it over the line. The most important thing we can take from all this is that the potential is there with an outstanding panel of women. Every game is as exciting as the last and we look

forward to watching the future unfold for these girls. We know that with this young panel of players the future is bright. It has been a great journey and we have made great memories and most importantly we have enjoyed every minute. A massive thank you to our management, players, families and all the supporters along the way

2021 Panel: Aoife Conway, Rachel Cleary, Laura O'Connell, Chloe Ryan, Niamh Foody, Mae Hession, Marina Carney, Aibhinn Herr (Capt.), Erin Murray, Siofra Murray, Kate Mannion, Leah Johnston, Brenda Krusina, Niamh O'Neill, Gemma Foody, Katelyn O'Sullivan, Katelyn Concannon, Chanel Marques, Shauna Murray, Olivia Cleary, Roisín Lyons, Laura Madden, Lauren Walshe, Katie Madden, Hannah Clarke, Laura Godfrey, Meghan McGuire, Saoirse Waldron, Meghan Gaughan, Nikita Tighe.

Manager: Justin McDonagh; Selector: Michael Cleary; Liaison: Sinead Johnston; First Aid: Tracy Cunnane.



Brian, Sinead, George and Stella O'Neill.



Francis Cruise who, for many years, brought calves from the South to be sold at The Square, Ballyhaunis on Tuesdays.

Tom McCormack collection.



The Morley family home, Lissaniska, Bekan, in the 1940s. *Pic courtesy of Paul Morley.*



Brendan, Pat and Patrick Regan (Derrynacong) with their mobile forge at a Traditional Fair Day in the Square, Ballyhaunis, 1990s.

Tom McCormack collection.



Tom Cribbin and Eddie Webb in the 1980s.

Tom McCormack collection.



Above: Friends meet outside Dillons, The Square, in the 1990s. L-R: Tom McCormack, Mike Fleming, Emmet Keane, Johnny Biesty. Tom McCormack collection.



Ballyhaunis CHAMBER

TOM FORDE (PRESIDENT)

Once again as President of Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce it gives me great pleasure to address you all on some of the many activities we - The Ballyhaunis Chamber - are actively involved in locally. Covid certainly had a big part to play in the cancellation of many of our annual activities including Mayo Day, Summer Festival and Easter Parade, to name but a few. With a considerable amount of our businesses closed for over five months this year and the lack of normal social activities you would think there was little to report. This, I am glad to say, is not the case.

Things are looking up, however, and I would like to thank to Paddy Phillips and Anne Cunnane who are at present organising the Christmas Lights for Ballyhaunis, to light up the town for the festive season.

Old Convent School Realm

As reported last year we were successful in obtaining €168,000 from the Urban/Rural Regeneration Scheme towards an engineer's design and sustainability study on the Old Convent School and surrounding site. At the time of writing, the engineer's report and proposed plans are nearing conclusion and will be available to our Chamber organisation and to all other interested local organisations for perusal. We hope to develop this site with a modern library facility, digi-hub with facilities and supports for remote working, conference/meeting rooms, a public Plaza and footbridge connecting the site with the swimming pool and car park. A new design has also been proposed to utilise the river-walk area. Once the consultation process has been finalised and proposed plans have been agreed, it will be

submitted to the relevant government departments to secure funding. Although this process is far from over it is important to recognize that our securing funding last year shows a commitment to this project which will be most beneficial to Ballyhaunis and its hinterland. I would like to thank Councillor John Cribbin and Deputy Michael Ring, Mayo County Council officials and Matthew Stephens



Views of the proposed 'Old Convent School Realm', to include a modern library facility, digi-hub with facilities and supports for remote working, conference/meeting rooms, a public Plaza and footbridge connecting the site with the swimming pool and car park.

(Mayo Co. Co. Architect) for all their support and commitment so far.

Ballyhaunis Fire Station

With the development of the Old Convent School site it is hoped to secure funding for the much needed upgrade of our local fire station. The proposal is to include the library (when it becomes vacant) in plans for the development of this site for our fire service. The library/fire station are both in plans for upgrades as is the swimming pool which is in urgent need of repair. It is hoped that all this work can be carried out while the Old Convent Realm project nears completion.

Active Travel Corridor

As most of you will have noticed, after a considerable time, the footpath to the GAA pitch has been completed. Ballyhaunis Chamber, along with the Community Council, Tidy Towns and Ballyhaunis GAA, have all worked together to complete this vital project for the benefit of the community. Our local councillor, John Cribbin, was instrumental in securing the €60,000 funding necessary for this pathway and, under the Active Travel Corridor funding scheme, a further €350,000 for pathway and essential lighting on the bypass. Most of this work, with the exception of the footpath, has also been completed. When completed we will have footpaths around the town up to the GAA pitch making the roads safer for all pedestrians and cyclists.

We have now submitted proposals to the National Draft Development Plan for the development of an active travel corridor linking Ballyhaunis to the GAA Centre of Excellence in Began and on to the Marian Shrine at Knock. We are working on this in conjunction with other organisations and groups in Began and Knock providing a safe pathway for pedestrians with an accompanying cycle lane. Sometime in 2022 an active travel feasibility study will be carried out in Ballyhaunis to explore viable solutions to benefit pedestrians and cyclists. With the development of greenways and safe walking trails we hope this vision will make Ballyhaunis an attractive destination for walking tourism. We would like to sincerely thank Padraic Flanagan, Conrad Harley and all other Mayo County Council officials and councillors for their support in all these projects and look forward to continuing working with them for the betterment of the town. In 2022 the overhanging bridge across the river should also be complete on Bridge Street.

Information Centre

We again thank Mayo County Council as we now have the keys for the old D.H. Burke (Larry Moran's) building on Upper Main Street. It's hoped that, by sometime in 2022, we will have a general information centre here staffed by a Development/Integration officer who will liaise with all the different nationalities in our diverse community. Understanding the needs and requirements for all our citizens will make Ballyhaunis a better place for us all. This premises will also be a one-stop-shop for information on all local activities and organisations. Whether you want to know training times, where auditions will be, what's on locally, you'll get all your information from this one location. As we get closer to opening next year we'll be inviting all our organisations and clubs to submit all their information to us.

The Bank

We have all been let down by the decision by Bank of Ireland to close its branch here in Ballyhaunis. From 2017, when Ulster Bank closed its doors here, we in Ballyhaunis Chamber worked with Bank of Ireland soliciting business for them as the only major bank left in the town. We received a commitment from them that they were 'here to stay' and were assured that Ballyhaunis (the successful industrial hub) was always going to be important within the bank's structure. Then in 2018 they deemed the branch cashless, robbing the community of basic banking facilities and making it necessary for all their customers to travel to neighbouring towns to carry out necessary financial



Tom Forde, President of Ballyhaunis Chamber, communicates the disappointment and anger at Bank of Ireland's closure of its Ballyhaunis branch – the last bank in the town.

transactions. Since our initial contact in September 2018, we have sent countless communications to them requesting a meeting, to express our concerns about the reduced service available at their branch here in Ballyhaunis. On all occasions we were refused a meeting.

After the announcement on 1st March 2021 that the branch was indeed to close we spent a considerable time campaigning to keep it open – to retain the only bank left in our community. We lobbied all our political representatives. We organised online petitions and instore petitions (for those with no access to computers). We continuously tried to secure a meeting with BOI. On 1st October our request was finally granted, after some considerable time and effort. I would like to thank Jim Higgins (spokesperson), Eugene Lannon (Western Brand Chickens), John Collins (Dawn Meats), Áine Lecky (Major International), John Prenty (Connacht GAA Secretary and COE), Tadhg Buckley (EPS and B.R.C.I.E. Chairman), John Dillon-Leech (Dillon-Leech & Comerford) and our C.E.O. Anne Cunnane. We put together a two-and-a-half-hour presentation outlining why this was not just the wrong decision for the community but also for BOI. Our industrialists profiled their businesses with sales/employee numbers and future prospects. John Prenty gave a detailed insight into Centre of Excellence future activities and the exciting developments planned for the dome there. It was a positive, constructive and very professional pitch and I felt we had done more than enough to convince BOI that this was indeed a wrong decision. But we were completely snubbed. And as we left that meeting (having failed in our objective) we were all quite angry.

When the branch closed on 8th October 2021 we organised a symbolic protest to coincide with the branch closing its doors at 1pm for the last time, to show Bank of Ireland that the whole community of Ballyhaunis was very angry that, despite generations of continuous loyalty, they would turn their back on this community. With considerable exposure from MidWest Radio and RTÉ we articulated the anger and frustration of the community in a very professional manner. It was fitting that, despite eighty-eight branches of Bank of Ireland closing that particular day, Ballyhaunis was the one that put up the biggest fight.

Again, I would like to thank all involved: those who signed our petition, our industrialists and

fellow chamber members for all the help throughout our campaign. I hope that the anger, frustration and disappointment shown will convince the general public and businesses to do likewise – leave Bank of Ireland – and consider An Post and our Credit Union for their banking needs into the future. Also, since March we have been in consultation with Ballyhaunis First Choice Credit Union (FCCU) to install an ATM service in the town. They have committed to carrying out a viability report on this and are in talks with ATM providers at present.

I am sorry that we were not successful in retaining BOI but, as I write this article, we are exploring the option of securing the bank premises for the benefit of the community and maybe have an ATM machine restored to the building.

In conclusion

As you can see despite Covid it has been quite a busy year for our Chamber of Commerce organisation. I would like to thank our CEO Anne Cunnane and her office staff, the Chamber executive and members for all their support throughout the year.

As a community we've taken some knocking this year. Ballyhaunis is a successful, vibrant town. We will find a solution. We will continue to work hard and lobby relevant authorities for improvements. We wish ALDI well as they have finally secured planning permission to build here and here's hoping that this will be the start of many more exciting developments to be announced in the future.

To all our businesses and our community (here and abroad) I take this opportunity to wish you all a safe, peaceful and pleasant Christmas and New Year.



View of Main Street, Ballyhaunis, in the winter fog 2021. AK Photography.

We Bail out Banks and they Close on us

This town and its people abandoned

This letter was published in The Sunday Independent, 10th Oct. 2021.

Sir – My late father Tom Kilcullen had his bank account with the National Bank, later named Bank of Ireland, in Ballyhaunis. I was about 10 years old when I was with him one day and I met the bank teller – a young man, barely twice my age, from Co. Kildare. The bank teller and my father appeared very close and shared jokes across the bank counter. That young friendly bank teller was called Christy Moore, the same Christy Moore who later became one of Ireland’s greatest songwriters and performers. I remember clearly a day in early May 1966 when Christy advised my dad to withdraw cash in case he needed it over the next few weeks, as the banks would all be closing due to the national bank strike. It was the first time I heard the word ‘strike’, but it was added to my vocabulary that day. I remember Dad asking Christy if he was going home to Newbridge during the strike but Christy said no, he would instead go over to England and do some work on the buildings. The rest of Christy’s career is history. During the same period, Ballyhaunis was home to another Kildare man, future Finance Minister, Charlie McCreevy. He was a trainee accountant with Tynan Dillon and Co. in the town.

All this brings to me the “now” – when the Bank of Ireland closed its doors for the last time on the unique history of this lovely progressive town in the West of Ireland. Ballyhaunis is unique in many ways – besides Christy and Charlie starting their working lives there. In 2016, the population of Ballyhaunis was 2,312 with 42% of residents non-national – the highest rate of any town of Ireland. The first mosque built outside of Dublin is in Ballyhaunis.

Sean Flanagan, RIP, the last Mayo GAA captain to lift Sam Maguire, was from Ballyhaunis, and Midwest Radio transmits from its station in the town. When I was a young man, Ballyhaunis had three banks. Today, it has none despite the many businesses in town, and the industry giving employment in the area, and the modern and progressive farming community in the hinterlands.

There’s no compelling reason why the last bank closed on Friday. The State recently saved this bank from collapse. Their decision to abandon us should be reversed without delay.

– Walter Kilcullen, Dunboyne, Co. Meath

End of an Era

MIKE BYRNE



The Bank of Ireland, Ballyhaunis, October 2021.
Photo by Mike Byrne.

Despite months of protests, meetings and discussions, which involved Ballyhaunis Chamber, local and national politicians and business leaders, the local branch of Bank of Ireland ceased to operate as a business on Friday, 8th October 2021.

One of some eighty-eight branches around the country to close on that day, the closure of the local branch means the end of retail banking as we know it in the town, for the first time in over one-hundred years. With the closure of Allied Irish Bank and Ulster Bank in recent years, this closure leaves the east Mayo town with no bank to service its customers into the future. Staff at Bank of Ireland, some of whom served at the local branch for over thirty years, were disheartened and most upset at the prospect of walking out of the centre which they had served so faithfully for such a long time, as they turned the key on the door at the end of the day’s business. Countless were the customers too who dropped in to share and recount their own stories of trading at the local branch, some for seventy years and more.

A very sad day for the business sector of the town for sure and also for the many people from the local region who have been banking here for so many decades; the end of an era for the centre of the East Mayo capital.



Ballyhaunis from the air, looking towards the west, taken in August 1954 by Capt. A.C. Campbell. From the *Irish Independent* archives.

**Ballyhaunis from
the Air, 1954**





Members of the Halpin family (Main St., Ballyhaunis) pictured at Ave Maria Nursing Home, Tooreen. L-R: Diarmaid Keane, John Halpin holding granddaughter Caoimhe Connor, Siobhan Connor, Damien Connor, Aoife Connor, Breege Halpin.



Dr Diarmuid C. Murray with Orla Loftus Moran, the Advanced Nurse Practitioner at Knock Medical Centre, Mayo, who won the 'Practice Nurse of the Year 2021' award at the Irish Healthcare Awards which took place on Monday 15th November. The Irish Healthcare Awards awards recognise innovation and excellence across the Irish healthcare sector. *Pic Sinead Mallee*



Left: Michael Sloyan of Reisk, the inspirational founder and leader of East Mayo Ramblers, who sadly passed away this year. He was instrumental in setting up the walking group in 2012, generously sharing his extensive knowledge of history and geography as he led the way along the highways and byways of Mayo and further afield. He will be sadly missed by all his friends.

Left: Cheering for Mayo, Olivia and Mark Mulrennan with Ryan Kilgallon.

Right: East Mayo Ramblers at the Ballycroy Visitors Centre. L-R: Michael Sloyan, Geraldine Lyons, Mairéad and Jerry King, Martina Lyons, Bridie Kearns, Margaret Cunniffe, Margaret Delaney, Grace O'Connor Lyons, Bernie Cawley, Mary Cunnane, Noreen Coyne, Marian Moloney, Breda Kilkenny, Mary Forde, Noelle Staunton, Theresa Sloyan. Front: Miriam Judge.





Ballyhaunis footballers (from left) Johnny Biesty, Noel Waldron, John 'Doc' Healy, pictured in Charlestown, in the late 1950s.
Courtesy of Johnny Biesty.

Pictured at a function celebrating Ballyhaunis GAA club's victory in the 1958 Mayo Senior Football Championship. At back: Johnny Biesty and Pat Keane; seated, from left: P.J. Moran (Capt.), Fr. Tom Heraghty C.C., Paddy Waldron.
Courtesy of Johnny Biesty.



Officers of Ballyhaunis GAA Club examine plans for the new grounds on Knock Road in September 1966. L-R: Pado Moran, Paddy Waldron, Charlie Phillips, Johnny Biesty, Dan Moran, Johnny Lyons.
Courtesy of Johnny Biesty.



Maureen and Pat Finn (Gurrane).
All photographs courtesy Celia Lyons.



L-R: Mary Durr (Churchpark), Kathleen Niland (Agloragh), Maggie May Judge (Agloragh).



Musicians meet. L-R: Anne Conroy Burke, Joe Burke, Celia Lyons, Paddy Lyons. Legendary accordion player Joe Burke of Loughrea, Co. Galway, died earlier this year.



L-R: From left: Nina Burke, Rita Burke, Celia Lyons, Pat Burke (Redford).



L-R: May Burke (Redford), Kathleen McGuire (Lecarrow), Pat Burke (Redford), Michael Moore (Derrylea). Taken in the 1980s.

Photographs courtesy Celia Lyons.

If you wish to contribute an article or photograph for consideration in next year's magazine, you can contact Annagh by email at info@annaghmag.ie, or visit our website www.annaghmag.ie

Deadline: The deadline for contributions to Annagh 2021 is Friday, 14th October 2022. The eventual inclusion of any article is subject to the discretion of the Editorial Committee.

HOW WE AMUSED OURSELVES BEFORE THE RADIO (RADIO ATHLONE, 1933);
BEFORE TELEVISION (RTÉ 1961); BEFORE THE INTERNET (1990s).

A selection of programmes from Ballyhaunis entertainments in the past.

Courtesy of John Durkan

BALLYHAUNIS ABBEY
DRAMATIC SOCIETY

PRESENTS

“Mountain Dew”

AT CASTLEREA,
On Wednesday, 29th April.

PROGRAMME.

Mountain Dew 1931

MOUNTAIN DEW,
A Play in Three Acts.
By GEORGE SHIELS.

CHARACTERS:—

Henry Moylan (An Old Stiller)	E. Biesty.
Mrs. Moylan (His Wife)	Miss A. Kennedy.
Tessie Moylan }	Miss A. O'Loughlin.
Anna Moylan } Daughters	Miss D. Donnellan.
Mike Duddy (A Farmer)	T. McGuire.
Mrs Duddy (His Mother)	Miss K. O'Loughlin.
Kate Duddy (His Sister)	Miss B. Fitzmaurice.
Brian Mulvenna (A Bank Robber)	A. Griffin.
Mark Malone (a Motor Driver)	M. Lyons.
Two Policemen	T. Moran & J. Leo.

ACT I—Moylan's Back Kitchen.

ACT II—Moylan's Sitting-room.

ACT III—As in Act II.

Six months elapse between Acts I. and II. A few days between Acts II. and III.

Time:—1922—1923.

WESTERN PEOPLE.

Mountain Dew 1931



KNOCKNAGOW

Presented by the
Good Council Players,
BALLYHAUNIS
in the
Boy Scout Little Theatre

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Sunday
29th., 30th., 31st. January, & 2nd February
Nightly at 8.30 p.m.

BOOKING: MARY ELLWOOD.
PHONE—34, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. ADMISSION: 5/-.

One of Ireland's best known Plays. A dramatisation of Charles Kickham's novel, "Knocknagow" or "The Homes of Tipperary", by W. P. Walsh.

Knocknagow 1969

Programme

A PLAY IN FIVE SCENES

Scene 1.	Lahy's Parlour / Workshop.
Scene 2.	The Roadside.
Scene 3.	Lahy's Parlour / Workshop
Scene 4.	Churchyard.
Scene 5.	Lahy's Parlour / Workshop.

★ ★ ★ ★

CAST
(In order of appearance)

Phil Lahy	Jimmy Cribbin.
Honor Lahy	Mary Timoney.
Nora Lahy	Maureen Foliard.
Tommy Lahy	Justin Joyce.
Fr. Hannigan	Paddy O'Connell.
Capt. Butler	John McShane.
Billy Herrefnan	John Clifford.
Mat Donavon	Jack Greene.
Barney Broderick	Martin Grogan.
Mick Brien	John Cleary
Beresford Pender	Tom Grogan
Darbhy Ruagh	Michael Cameron
Bessie Morris	Teresa Hopkins
Phil Morris	Noel O'Driscoll
Peg Brady	Rita Concannon
Nellie Donavon	Mary Hunt
Sergt.	Paddy Kelly
Policeman	Tom Cribbin
Wat Corcoran	Chris. O'Driscoll

Fiddlers.

★ ★ ★ ★

Producer	Seamus Durkan.
Costumes	Bourkes Ltd., Dublin.
Lighting effects	Strand Electric Ltd.
Stage Manager	Tom Larkin.
Sets by	Seamus Durkan.

TIME:— Mid 19th Century.

Knocknagow 1969

PATRONS

4-D's Carryout Off-Licence, The Square (Best Value Selection of Wines, Spirits, Beers). www.fordes.ie	
Agri-Spread International, Coolnaha, Ballyhaunis	9631808
AK Photography akphoto@gmail.com	083 0460755
Álann Cafe & Bar, Riverside Park Centre	9630099
Aleppo Authentic Foods, Main St.	9631533 / 086 2174969
All About You, Beauty Salon, 7A River Park Centre. clare.higgins@live.ie	9632605
Alma's Ladies & Gents Hair Salon, Clare St.	9630354
Annagh Medical Centre, Doctor's Road. Dr Donal Delaney	9632232 / 9632322
Aoife's Beauty Bliss, Clare St.	087 9888316
APP Kirrane Auctioneering, Main St./Galway. www.daft.ie/kirraneauctioneering	9630240 / 091705555
Araby Restaurant, Main St.– Araby at the Dalgan	9632030
Avondale B&B and Holiday Homes, Clare St. (Prop. Bridie Levins)	9630345
Ballyhaunis Bouncy Castles	086 2772156
Ballyhaunis Chamber, Enterprise Centre, Clare Road. www.ballyhaunischamber.ie	9630311
Ballyhaunis Plant & Tool Hire, Abbeyquarter	9630979 / Mob: 087 2548355
Ballyhaunis Rugby Football Club	
Ballyhaunis Sports Injury Clinic	Mob: 086 874 1107
Ballyhaunis Transport Services (to and from Dublin)	9630477 / Mob: 087 2549077 / 086 3898535
Ballyhaunis Veterinary Clinic, Main St. Pdraig Hennigan, MVB.	Mob: 087 3781643 / 9630113
BK Engineering Design, Abbey St.	Mob: 087 7743327
Brackloon School & District Reunion Group	
Bridge Club, Clare Court. Thursdays at 8.00pm	
Brookvale Manor Nursing Home, Hazelhill. www.brindleyhealthcare.ie	Tel: 9631555, Fax: 9631655
Burke, John, Heating & Plumbing Ltd., Devlis	086 6035126
Byrne, J.J. Craft Shop, Knock. jjbyrne@eircom.net www.knockreligiousgoods.ie	9388184
Byrne, Mike. Local Correspondent, Connaught Telegraph	9631381
Carroll's Bus Hire (Cathal and Cathy)	Mob: 087 2042653
Caulfield Enda, Tiling	Mob: 087 8238788
Caulfield, Kathleen & Helena, Upper Main St.	
Caulfield, Seamus & Aisling, Ballindrehid	
Caulfield, Tommy & Eavan, Annagh, Ballyhaunis	
Claire Fontayne, Womens Fashion Clothing, Bridge St. info@clairefontayne.ie	
Colleran's Pharmacy, Bridge St.	9630028
Community School, Knock Rd. www.ballyhauniscs.ie	9630238
Connacht GAA Centre of Excellence, Bekan. www.connachtgaa.ie	9630335
Connacht Rigging Services (Georgie Hannan), Drimbane	Mob: 086 2532601
Connacht Scaffolding Ltd., Knock Rd.	Tel: 9630198, Fax: 9630336
Connolly, Kieran, Lecarrow	Mob: 0872625254
Corrib Oil Filling Station, Devlis	9632999
Cribbin, Cllr. John, Fine Gael	Mob: 087 2920368
Cunniffe Construction, Tooreen	Mob: 087 2612838
Cunningham's Londis Plus, Foodmarket, Abbey St.	9649035 / 9630730 / 9630162
Curley, Pat & Kathleen, Hazelhill	9631827
Curley's Bar, Clare St.	9630077
Curley's Jewellers, Bridge St.	9632799
Curley's Total Health Pharmacy, Main St. curleys@totalhealth.ie , www.totalhealth.ie	Tel: 9630110, Fax 9631191
Dara Calleary TD (FF) Clare St., Ballyhaunis & Ballina office	096 77613
Dawn Ballyhaunis, Clare Rd.	Tel: 9632400, Fax: 9630561
Delaney's Ltd., Hardware, Paint, Household, Gifts, Bridge St. and Hazelhill	9630296
Delaney's, Gareth, Select Bar and Lounge, Abbey St.	9630024
De-Luxe Cleaning, Carpets, Upholstery, etc. (Prop. Vincent Higgins)	9630284, Mob: 086 1038288
Dillon-Leetch & Comerford Solicitors, Main St.	9630004
Donnellan's Joinery, Undertakers & Funeral Home, Clare St.	9630045
Dr. Glen Lecky, Old Bank Medical Centre	9630752
Durkan family, Devlis & Abbey St.	
Eagney Insurance Services Ltd., Bridge St.	Tel: 9630793 / 9630794, Fax: 9630795
Elwood School of Irish Dancing (Mary Elwood)	086 2337193
Emo Burke & Coyne Oil, Coolnaha	9632665
EPS Group Ballyhaunis. www.epswater.ie info@epswater.ie	9633500. Fax: 9630761
Erika Louise Beauty Specialist, Clare St. 086 8826793	
Express Scaffolding, Tully, Carrowbehy, Castlerea. kevinwebbexpress@gmail.com	Mob: 087 2898042
Fahy Opticians & Contact Lens Centre, Main Street. jarlathfahy@gmail.com	9630212
Farragher, Fr. Stephen, P.P., Parochial House	9630006. Mob: 087 9210305
Fastway Couriers (Frank Burke)	Mob: 087 2163008
Fianna Fail Cumann, Cllr. John Caulfield	Mob: 087 3134446 / 096 77613

Finn Footwear Specialists (Ballyhaunis & Kiltimagh). finnfootwear@gmail.com	9381970 / 9630141
First Choice Credit Union Ballyhaunis. www.firstchoicecreditunion.ie	9630998 / 9633965
Fitzer's Bar, Knox St.	9631974
Fitzmaurice, Martin & Patricia. www.newireland.ie	Mob: 087 2455989
Flanagan Motors, Tooreen, Car Sales & Repairs. www.flanaganmotors.ie	9649433, Mob: 087 2545950
Fleming, Seamus & Annette, Lavallyroe, B&B	Mob: 087 7643727 / 086 8848333
Forde's Ltd., The Square (The House for All the Family). Embroidery & printing specialists.	9630013
Freyne Family, Clare Road.	
Garvey Moran, C., Knox St.	
Gavin, Martin, Undertakers, Funeral Home, Headstones & Grave Care, Knox St.	9633448, Mob: 087 6324586
Gem - Costcutters (Newsagents, Toys, Jewellery, Grocery), Bridge St.	9630840
Gill's Pub, Clare St. (Props. John and Bernie Gill)	9630039
Glynn's Photography, Doctor's Road	9630026 / 9620094 (Castlerea)
Godfrey Mark & Tzyy Wang, Derreens	Mob: 087 9777899
Goulding, Jim & Mary, Doctor's Road.	9631272
Greene, Tony & Pauline, Box 127, Sholola, PA 18458, U.S.A.	Tel: 0019144712548
Griffin, John, Orthodontist, Upper Main St.	9630534
Griffin, Mike, Clare St. / Devils.	9630213, Mob: 087 9047466
Grogan, Austin, & Sons, Concrete Products, Cave	9630072
Gurteen Kitchens Ltd., Gurteen. www.gurteenkitchens.com.	Tel: 9630797, Fax: 9630751, Mob: 086 8244386
H.E.R. (Photo Supplies Ltd), Kilmannin Business Centre. helenfreeley@gmail.com	Tel: 9633389, Fax: 9633476
Halpin, John & Breege, Floral Occasions (Teleflorist), Main St.	9630012, Mob: 087 6883383
Hazelhill Family Practice, Hazelhill. Hazelhillmedctr@eircom.net	9632170 / 9632171
Hazelhill Timber Products Ltd., Europallets. alan@hazelhilltimber.ie	Tel: 9630094 / 9630250, Fax: 9630825
Healthwest Pharmacy, Upper Main St. Ballyhaunis@HealthWest.ie	9630766, Text: 085 2546630
Healy, Helen, Doctor's Road	9630841
Heneghan's Carpets & Furniture, Main St.	9630770, Mob: 087 2245661
Henry, Anna & Kevin, Ballindrehid	
Herr Robbie, Ballyhaunis	
Herr, Fred, Grocer, Knox St.	9631305
Higgins, Pat & Sally, Devils.	
Homecare Medical Supplies, Tooraree. www.homecaremedicalsupplies.ie	9633800
Hopkins' Shop, Upper Main St.	Mob: 087 6375091
Hunt, James, Photography, Kilmovee. hunt.jms@gmail.com	Mob: 086 0680702
J.G.'s Barber Shop, Barrack St.	Mob: 087 2450079
Janapix Photography, Ballyhaunis. www.janapix.com	Mob: 086 1775352
Joe Doves. Professional Dove Release, Hazelhill	Mob: 087 9931931
John Higgins Auctioneer, Main St. www.johnhigginsauctioneers.com	9631372, Mob: 086 8292603
Johnston, Margaret, Knox St.	
Jordan, Oliver, Annagh	
Jordan's Windows & Double Glazing, Clare St.	9630641
Kay's Beauty Salon, Knox St.	9630065
Keane Kitchens Ltd., Kitchen/Bedroom Furniture, Clare Rd. www.keanekitchens.ie	9630038
Keane, Joe and Marcella, Knox St.	9630751
Keith Revins, Tyres, Batteries, 24hr breakdown service, Clare Rd.	9630573, Mob: 086 256 9155
Kelly, Padraic, Bar Furniture Manufacturer, Abbeyquarter	9630089
Kieran Johnston, Agri Services Ltd. (Agri sales & repair), Knock Rd.	9633383 / Mob: 087 9175856
Kieran Whelton Motors, Knock. www.kieranwheltonmotors.ie	9388371
Kilduff, John & Noreen, Derrynacong	
Kirrane Bros., Seamless Gutters, Fascia, Soffitt. Ballyglass, Ballyhaunis.	9646079, Mob: 086 3858922
Knock Laundrette	086 6082005
KPS Colour Print Ltd, Knock. www.kpscolourprint.com	9388231
Life Pharmacy, Main St., Knock	9376968
Lilly, John Joe, Plant Hire, Johnstown	9630352
Loughran & Burke, M.V.B., M.R.C.V.S., Upper Main St.	9630017
Lundon, Séamas www.sketchesbylundy.com	
Lyons, Anne & Gerry, Knockbrack	
Lyons, Michael G., Agricultural Contractor, Cloonfaughna, Knock	9880249
Lyons, Michael, Coach & Minibus Hire, Lecarrow. lyonsbushire@eircom.net	9630347, Mob: 086 2338419
Lyons, Michelle, Knockbrack	
MacSiurtain's, Live Music & Sports Bar, Main St. (Prop. Stephen & Nuala Nolan).	9630854, Mob: 086 2457001
Madden, Gerald, Snooker Tables, Gurteen. www.maddensleisure.com	9630228
Main Street Framing. Picture framing service (Prop. Edward Mulligan)	9632692, Mob: 087 6738964
Major Equipment Intl. Ltd. www.major-equipment.com, info@major-equipment.com	Tel: 9630572, Fax: 9630788
Mallee, Sinead, Graphic Designer, Knock. sineadmallee@gmail.com	Mob: 087 2204296
McGarry Development Consultants, Engineers, Architects, Clare St.	9630170
McGarry's Ladies Wear, Main St.	9630084
McGuire, John, Kittredge St., Roslindale, MA, USA	

McNamara Car Dismantlers, Knockbrack	9630439, Mob: 087 2615828
McNamara, Eamon, Car/Tractor Repairs (24-Hour Service)	9630386, Mob: 086 6061739
Midwest Radio, Clare St. www.midwestradio.ie	9630553 (Ads), 087 9004141 (Text requests)
Moran Coaches & Minibus Hire, Knock Rd. moranscoaches@yahoo.ie	Tel/Fax: 9630346
Moran, Deirdre, Hazel Downs	
Moran, Donal, Gurteen	9630569
Moran, Kieran, Building Services, Knox St.	9630079
Moran, Tommy. Sweets, Ices, Fancy Goods, Fuel Merchants, Main St.	9630493
Morley, M.J. & Sons. Electrical & Plumbing Cont. Boiler/Pump Repairs, Lissaniskea, Bekan	9380315, Mob: 087 6116372
Morley, Tony. Exterior and Interior Decorators, Pollnacraoghy	Mob: 086 2648673
Mulberry Lodge Guest House, Upper Main Street. www.mulberrylodge.ie	Mob: 086 3858929 / 086 2457001
Mulhern, Edward and Frances	9630249, Mob: 087 6961579
Mulrennan, James & Sons, Ltd., Fitted Kitchens/Bedrooms (Keane Kitchens). mulrenns@gmail.com	Mob: 086 8535661
Murphy & Sons Autosales Ltd., Service Station & Shop, Dublin Rd.	Tel: 9630307, Fax: 9631440, Mob: 0872490634
Murphy Carpentry & Building Services Ltd., Knock Rd.	Mob: 087 6446734
Murphy, Eddie, Menswear/Formal Wear, Main St. www.eddiemurphy.ie	9630651
Murphy, Paddy & Mary, Knock Rd.	Mob: 087 7161335
Murray, Dr Diarmuid C., Medical Practitioner, Knock Medical Centre	9388385
Murren, Eamonn, Hazel Court	
Nestor & Co., Accountants, Dalgan House, Oakmount Ave.	9632000
Nestor's Corner Bar, The Square	9631011
Nicholson's Bar, Bridge St.	9630357
Nico Café, Knox St.	Mob: 087 3979363
Nolan, Madeline & Mike, Derrymore	
Noone, Dr. Caroline, Hazelhill Family Practice. hazelhillmedctr@eircom.net	9630091
Noone, Dr. Patrick & Moira, Ardpatrick. hazelhillmedctr@eircom.net	Mob: 085 1580407
Nour Foods, Quality Halal Irish Meats, Clare St.	9632765, Mob: 086 3880017
O'Brien Motor Factors, Knock	9388211
O'Connor, Fr. John O.S.A., Duckspool House, Abbeyside, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford	
O'Dwyer Solicitors, Bridge St. www.odwyersolicitors.ie	9630011
Order of Malta, Knock	Mob: 087 2515422
Our Lady's Shrine, Knock. www.knockshrine.ie, info@knockshrine.ie	9388100
Parochial Hall, Main St. Available for Meetings/Events. For bookings contact Mike	Mob: 087 9047466
Patterson, Noel, M.R.C.V.S., Knock Rd.	
Phillips Clothes Shop, Dalton St., Claremorris	9372020
Phillips Menswear, Main St.	9630368
Phillips Shoes, Main St. www.phillipsshoes.com	9630368
Phillips, Eamon. High Class Victualler, Main St.	9630381
Phillips, Paddy. Publican, Main St.	9630118
Post Office, Nolan's Supervalu, Newpark, Ballyhaunis	9630230
Rochford Motors. Main Mitsubishi/Seat Dealers, Knock Rd. www.rochfordmotors.ie	9630350 / 9630163
Ruane Dalton Family, Johnstown	
Scoil Íosa Primary School, Abbeyquarter. iosaballyhaunis@gmail.com	9630310
Seven Oaks B&B, Knock Rd. Contact Martina Gallagher. sevenoaksguesthouse@gmail.com	9630605
Sparkey's Discount Store, Main St.	Mob: 086 8106276
St. Mary's Accommodation, Main St., Knock	9388119
Supermacs, Main St.	
Nolan's Supervalu, Newpark, Ballyhaunis	9630359
TC's Fitness, Abbey St., B'haunis. Personal Training, Group Classes, Adults, Kids, Krav Maga FB: TC's fitness	086 0618126
The Clock Tavern, Knox St.	9630344
The Courthouse Accommodation & Val's Bar & Bistro, Main St. www.courthouse.ie	9630068
The iClinic, The Square. Computer and Phone Repairs	9631983
The Old Ground Restaurant, Main St., Knock. (Props: Michael and Thelma Morley)	9388957
The Shop (above Fordes Ltd., The Sq.). School Books, Novels, Party Balloons, Stationary.	Mob: 087 6475075
Tynan Dillon & Co., Chartered Accountants, Clare St.	9630261
Valerie's Ladies & Gents Hair Salon, Barrack St.	9630681
Waldron, Anthony, Excavation Contractor, Clagnagh	Mob: 087 4141462
Waldron, Fr. Kieran, Devlis	
Waldron, Pearse & Paula, Vermont, USA	
Walsh Seamless Gutters, fascia and soffit	Mob: 087 2213553 / 087 2763256
Webb McLeod, Olive, Devlis & Co. Antrim	
Webb, Carole, Devlis & London	
Webb, Edward, Devlis & Dublin	
Webb, Mike & Cait, Main St.	
Webb, Sean, Devlis & Dublin	
Webb Shannon, Marita, Devlis & Kiltimagh	
Western Brand Group Ltd., Knock Rd. www.westernbrand.ie Info@westernbrand.ie	Tel: 9630069, Fax: 9630834
Winston, Gerard (Top Oil), Devlis	Mob: 087 6793990

Disclaimer

The views expressed in this magazine are those of the individual authors and are not necessarily endorsed by the Annagh Magazine Society. While every care has been taken to ensure that the information contained in this magazine is up-to-date and correct, no responsibility will be taken by the Annagh Magazine Society for any errors which might occur.

Some photographs have had to be reproduced smaller than hoped for, due to poor quality of original image supplied. Regrettably we could not include all photographs submitted due to large volume received.

Some Guidelines for contributors of articles and photographs:

If you wish to contribute an article or photograph for consideration in next year's magazine, you can contact Annagh by email at info@annaghmag.ie, or visit our website www.annaghmag.ie

Deadline: The deadline for contributions to Annagh 2021 is Friday, 14th October 2022. The eventual inclusion of any article is subject to the discretion of the Editorial Committee.

Articles

Articles should not exceed 4000 words. Hand-written or typed submissions are acceptable. Articles submitted by email should preferably be in WORD format. We cannot accept material in Microsoft Publisher format. It is the policy of the magazine not to include obituaries or memoriam notices. Due to space constraints, not all photographs or articles can be guaranteed inclusion.

The list of baptisms, marriages and deceased comes directly from the Parish Registers. The deceased list includes everyone whose funeral Mass takes place in the Parish Church.

The earlier in the year that material is submitted, the better.

All work done on Annagh Magazine is done on a voluntary basis. New members, or any help you can give, will be most welcome.

Photographs

All photographs should be fully named and dated, if possible, and the owner's name included on the back, if it's an original photo. The contributor's name will be omitted only if this is requested. Photographs sent digitally should be in jpeg format, and scanned at a minimum resolution of 300 dpi. If they are any smaller, it may not be possible to publish them at an appropriate size. Resolution determines the sharpness / clarity of the image, and low resolution pictures will appear blurry and pixelated when printed. Email photographs directly to info@annaghmag.ie choosing 'actual size' where it asks for the 'image size' (max 3 at a time). For wedding photographs, alternatively, ask your photographer to email it at large file size: 'high resolution for printing'. Photographs should not be imbedded in WORD documents: they can be sent separately as jpegs. Captions should be typed at the end of the article, with clear reference(s) to the relevant photo(s). Hard copy photographs will be returned as soon as possible once the magazine goes to print.

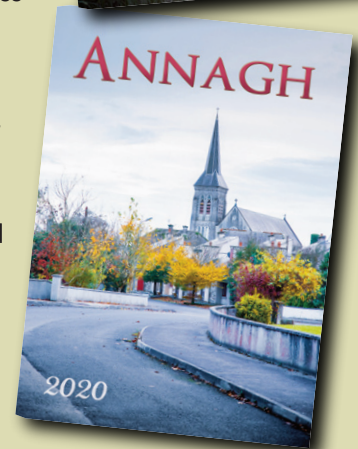
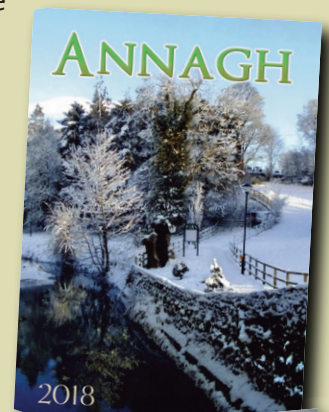
Cover Photographs

Front Cover: River Dalgan, Bridge Street, Ballyhaunis in Autumn.

Photograph by Sinead Mallee

Back Cover: Michael Coen Commemoration – limited edition print.

Artwork by Helena Caulfield





Michael Coen was brutally murdered at his home in Lecarrow by British crown forces on 1st April 1921. A monument to his memory was erected by public subscription in 1971, the fiftieth anniversary of his death. Members of his family and neighbours gathered (observing Covid-19 guidelines) to commemorate the 100th Anniversary of his death this year.

Artwork by Helena Caulfield

