

AUTUMN 2020

corrib news

& Oughterard Newsletter



- THE MAGIC OF MUSIC
- FINDING MY FEET AFTER SCHOOL
- LOCKDOWN NEWS FROM OUGHTERARD ACTIVE RETIREMENT
- CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE OUGHTERARD DIASPORA IN THE USA, CANADA AND THE UK

Community voices:

CREATIVE WRITING FROM THE OUGHTERARD WRITERS' GROUP

Reports from

CLUBS, LOCAL BUSINESSES & COMMUNITY GROUPS

PUZZLES & CHILDREN'S PAGES

SPECIAL
FEATURE

IMAGES OF OUGHTERARD IN LOCKDOWN

Heritage:

GUARDIAN OF THE SOULS

New Business:

CONNELLY'S CAFE

Upcoming events:

NOTE THAT ALL UPCOMING EVENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGES DUE TO THE CONTINUING COVID-19 VIRUS OUTBREAK

EDITORIAL

Dear Readers,

On behalf of the Editorial Committee I welcome you all to the Autumn issue of the Corrib News. We hope you find it useful and enjoyable.

The Corrib News continues to bring you local information which is even more important in these times. Less people are going out again and there are few foreign visitors around but there have been many Irish holiday makers re-exploring Ireland, helping to keep the tourist trade alive.

It is now that we need to support each other for our own good and the good of the community. There are many new changes that we will have to live with - how we socialize, how we shop, how we play and watch sport and how we get healthcare. It is great that the children have been able to go back to school. They are delighted to see their friends and to have more structure in their lives.

We Irish love family, music and craic. Let us continue to do so responsibly putting no one else at risk.

Jack McCann

USEFUL NUMBERS

Garda Station	091-557320
The Courthouse	091-557589
Church of Immaculate Conception	091-552320/552290
Kilcummin, Church of Ireland	091-521914
Clann Resource Centre	091-557633/557634
St. Paul's Secondary School	091-552689
St. Cuimin & Caitriona NS	091-552074
St. Annin's NS	091-550316
Doireglinne NS	091-552810

Dr. Peter Harte	091-552449
Walsh's Funeral Home	087-2902377
Health Centre Oughterard	091-552200
Flaherty's Pharmacy	091-557602
Veterinary Clinic (Karel)	091-552366
Oughterard Taxi	085-8429568
D'Arcy Hackney	087-6530417
Post Office Oughterard	091-552201
Bank of Ireland	091-552123



Cover Photo

Uncertain times: The medical staff of Oughterard Health Centre take a moment out of their lunchtime to be photographed as part of a pictorial tribute to the frontline workers of Oughterard. The full picture and many more can be found inside the magazine. The medical staff have been crucial in community efforts, adding to their already busy schedule the increased workload and stress brought on by the pandemic. The ongoing efforts of all our 'Key Workers' are truly appreciated. (Photo by Donal Kelly)

About Corrib News

Corrib News is produced by Oughterard Courthouse Conservation and Heritage Co. CLG, as a volunteer service to the community. The magazine is published four times each year: the Spring issue in March, the Summer issue in June, the Autumn issue in September, and the Winter issue in December.

The current Editorial Committee consists of Deirdre Forde, Jack McCann, Leslie Lyons and Tom Cusack. Sinead Grimes manages the Corrib News Facebook page. The graphics for this issue were designed by Mimi of Myoptix Photography and this issue was printed by KPS Colour Print of Knock. Corrib News is an open access publication and will generally carry any material submitted to it as long as it is not potentially libellous or scandalous. The views and opinions expressed in the articles are not necessarily those of the Editorial Committee. In case of error of fact, we will publish corrections once we become aware of them.

Don't miss out!

Next Issue's Submission Deadline

The deadline for submissions for the Winter 2020 issue is the

20th NOVEMBER 2020

Please send your submissions to corribnews@gmail.com, or to Corrib News, The Courthouse, Oughterard, County Galway H91 XWH9.

Contact Us

Email: corribnews@gmail.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/corribnews

What's On ...?

Keep up to date with What's On in Oughterard by checking the Corrib News Facebook page at www.facebook.com/corribnews. This is particularly important due to the uncertainty related to the current Covid-19 virus outbreak.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

SPECIAL FEATURE

Images of Oughterard in Lockdown	25-35
Creative writing from the Oughterard Writers' Group	11, 18-20, 21, 40, 41, 45, 51

HIGHLIGHTS

Oughterard Diaspora	13, 36
Guardian of the Souls	14-15
Lockdown News from Oughterard Active Retirement	24
Conneely's Cafe opens	42
The Magic of Music	43
Finding my feet after school	45

LOCAL NEWS & UPDATES

The Courthouse Update	16-17
Pete Mullineaux's new novel	21
Kilcummin Parish Church	37
Church of Immaculate Conception	38-39
Oughterard Golf Course	41
Welcome to young Jonny	52

CLUBS & COMMUNITY GROUPS

Oughterard GAA Club	4
Corrib Basketball Club	5
Oughterard Rugby Football Club	6-7
Oughterard Soccer Club (O AFC)	8-9
uachtarARTS	10-11
Oughterard Angling Club	12
Oughterard Christmas Light Committee	17
Oughterard Courthouse Arts Programme	22
Oughterard Youth Centre	23
Oughterard Community Centre	23
Corrib Ramblers	46-49

BRAIN TEASERS

Crossword	44
Answers to Butterfly Quiz	52
Children's activity pages	54-55

Oughterard

GAA Club *update*

A Special thank you

Oughterard GAA would like to thank all the managers, coaches, selectors, helpers, Covid officers, players and parents for all their hard work and dedication throughout a difficult 2020.

As Nelson Mandela once said: "Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does." The importance of sport can not be over estimated and Oughterard GAA would like to thank the whole community for helping us to safely put out players back on the pitch.

Cul Camp 2020

Cul Camp 2020 finished in the last week of August. We hope all the children that took part enjoyed the camps, learned new skills and made new friends. On the last day we photographed the coaches who helped out for the 2 weeks.

To take part in the camp, the coaches were all Garda vetted, took a child safeguarding course and attended a practical workshop presented by Johnny Heaney. Well done to all the coaches for their hard work over 2 weeks. We would also like to thank the club volunteers who were present every day to help out. Thank you to Ciaran and Joey who acted as camp supervisors. A special thank you to John Byrne who put a lot of work in before and during the camp this year. Also many thanks to Fionnuala for her help. We are looking forward to Cul Camp 2021!!!

U16 West Board Shield Winners

Congratulations to the u16 lads team and their coaches on their shield final win v St Michael's. It was a hard fought game which ended on a scoreline of 2-10 to 1-11. Well done to the players and managers. ■



Marie-Hélène is pictured receiving her award from the French Ambassador. From left to right : H.E. Ambassador of France to Ireland Stéphane Crouzat, Marie-Hélène Poudevigne, Roger Biondi and French Senator Evelynne Renaud-Garabedian.

OUT & ABOUT

Oughterard resident receives knighthood

in the French National Order of Merit

Oughterard resident Marie-Hélène Poudevigne, an elected consular councillor for the French community and a resident of the West of Ireland for more than 25 years, was recently made Knight in the French National Order of Merit, by the French Ambassador to Ireland, at the Residence of France in Dublin. The ceremony included a surprise recital offered by the Ambassador himself on the piano and her daughter Shannon on the violin. Knight is one of the highest French honours for service to the Nation. ■

Corrib Basketball Club Update

Corrib Basketball Club (CBC) is extremely excited to embark on the new 2020/21 season. We are busy getting the club ready so that we can efficiently and safely open registration and start training.

AGM and New Committee: We had our first AGM via Zoom this year and it was a great success. Thank you, everyone who attended. At the AGM, a new committee was elected for the 2020/21 season (see the attached screenshot). These include Aisling Faherty (Chairperson), Bernadette Griffin (Secretary), Tina Duffy (Treasurer), Jay Devlin (COVID-19 co-ordinator) Paula Gorham and Mary Walsh (ClubForce Administrator and Registrar), Caroline Walsh (Child Protection Officer), Laura Barkley (Designated Liaison Officer), Michael Walsh (Public relations officer), and Tony O'Connor (GABB representative). A big welcome and thank you to the new committee. We would also like to thank the outgoing committee for all their hard work and dedication they have given CBC over the years namely (Harry Walsh (Chairperson) and Frances Carter (Secretary).

Teams and New coaches

The following teams will be available this year - U8 mixed, U9, U10, U11, U12, U13, U14, U15, U16, U17, and U18 boys and girls. We also have new senior boys and girls teams this year. Training times and venues will be published on our Facebook page and Corrib Basketball website. We would like to welcome and thank the new coaches, Gearoid Hynes, Miriam Clinch, and Glenn McEvoy, along with their associated managers. U12-U18 and senior teams will be entered into the Galway leagues which are due to start at the end of October.

Successes from last season

Although our season was cut short last year we had a successful end to the season with U15 boys, U16 boys, and U16 girls all winning their respective leagues. Additionally, two of our very own club members were called up for international duty, Marta Banek (U17 Corrib team) and Dara Walsh (U17 Corrib team). We are delighted for you both, and very proud.

Again we need to acknowledge that these incredible achievements could not happen if it was not for the skill, passion, dedication, commitment, and tenacity of our players, coaches, community, parents, and management. A big thank you to all.

Inclusion

Corrib basketball club is all-inclusive and encourages all members of the community to get involved in basketball. We have recently committed to the Sport Inclusion Disability Charter which clearly outlines five key areas to endeavour to make basketball more accessible to people with disabilities.

Funding

We are extremely grateful to Galway Wind Park for their grant towards our COVID measures for the club. Also a big thank you to Tony O' Connor for submitting the application.

Clubforce

Last year committee members put a lot of hard work into implementing the all-in-one sports club management platform, ClubForce. This year we will exclusively use Clubforce for registration, communication, training sessions and matches. This will help us immensely with our new COVID measures as well as contributing to the environment.

Contact details

Website: <https://corribbasketball.ie>
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/CorribBasketballClub>
Email: corribbasketball@gmail.com ■



Marta Banek



Dara Walsh

Oughterard Rugby

Football Club *update*

Registration and Training Information 2020 – 2021

New members are always welcome at Oughterard Rugby, at all age levels, so please come on down on Saturday mornings from 10.30am, visit the website at www.orfc.ie, find us on Facebook: Oughterard Rugby, or email oughteradrugbyfootballclub@gmail.com for further information about the club.

Minis' registration (Mixed: U7, U8, U9. Boys: U10, U11, U12. Girls: U10, U12) took place on the first day of the 2020-2021 rugby season, on the 5th of September. Registration this year is online only, through the following link: <http://tiny.cc/08nbz>. Please note that you can also access this website via our Facebook page and website: www.orfc.ie.

- **Girls U12, 14, 16 & 18 training details:** contact Norman Tierney @ 0876181292
- **Seniors train Tuesday and Friday evenings.** Call Niall Walsh @ 0858887457
- **Training for the U17s is on Thursday evenings from 6.30pm.** All welcome. Enquiries to Brandon @ 0851959919
- **Training for the U16s is on Wednesday evenings from 6.30pm.** All new recruits are welcome. All enquiries to Fiona Lowry @ 0861724309.
- **Training for the U14s on Tuesday evenings from 6.30pm.** All welcome, come along and give rugby a try. All enquiries to Alan Dalton @ 0876685809
- **Training for the U13s is on Wednesday evenings from 6.30pm.** Enquiries to Paul Fogerty @ 0866489427

We are following IRFU protocols for return to rugby training. It's a season like no other and we appreciate both patience and co-operation as session regimes are established.



Girls Give it a Try 1- August.

ORFC Youths News

It was a very busy start to the Youth's season this year. Great to see we have 4 teams for Youths Boys - 13, 14, 16 & 17. Along with having, for the first time, Youths Girls at 14, 16 & potentially 18s. Pre-season is well underway for all Youths teams and showing promising numbers for the club. We are always recruiting more for these teams, so, if interested in playing rugby for the first time or looking to start this fantastic sport, please contact Seamus Lowry on 0876613136 for Youths level rugby from 13 to 17s. Stay safe!

ORFC Seniors News

As the season is about to start, we have been back pre-season training since Covid restrictions have been lifted, allowing us to get back onto the pitch. I would like to acknowledge the immense work that has been put in by the club officials to ensure we have the appropriate controls and checks allowing us to get back out. I would also like to acknowledge the work done by some of our squad who got involved within the community, delivering groceries to people who had to cocoon.

Last season we topped the J2 league only to lose in the semi-final before the season was cut short due to Covid19. This season we hope to improve further and again be in a position to be challenging for the League Title. Due to COVID-19, the coming season is somewhat different, starting off with an experimental 10-a-side tournament, which we are looking forward to. Less players on the same size pitch should encourage a more attacking style of play and something the influx of younger members to the squad will relish.

This season we have seen the fruits of our minis and youths sections come to bear with 9 new players who have gone through the system and are now joining the 'older' lads in the squad. They have brought huge enthusiasm and energy, and we really look forward to seeing them progress through the season. It gives some of the 'older' squad members a chance to slowly hang up the boots, although they will not give up their jerseys easily. It makes for a potentially super season to come.

Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page

It's extremely important for a small club like ours that we see progression through the Minis, to the youths and then to the club senior team, and is a testament to the hard work put in by the coaches and parents over the years.

As we start to progress through the season, and allowing for restrictions to be lifted, it would be great to see you down supporting your local club. If there is anyone who would like to join us, you are more than welcome.

Jack Clarke, Senior Team Coach



First Day Minis Training - U12 - September.



First Day Minis Training - September.



First Day Minis Training - Girls U10, 12 - September.

Contact Details

For further details on all matters ORFC go to www.orfc.ie, Facebook: Oughterard Rugby, email oughteradrugbyfootballclub@gmail.com or call Niall at 0858887457. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for training times. ■



O AFC Oughterard Soccer Club Update



U12 Boys



U16 Boys

The upcoming season is possibly the most anticipated in the Club's history with everyone delighted to be back playing, following last season's abrupt finish arising from the Covid 19 Lockdown.

When football resumed, two incomplete fixtures which did go ahead from last season were the U12 and U16 BOYS Connacht Shield semi-finals.

U12 BOYS beat Ballinasloe Town FC in the quarter final of the Connacht Shield, to progress up the table. They then played Cregmore/Claregalway in the semi-final at Newvillage on August 8th in a riveting contest which was 1-1 after extra time. Still tied after penalties, the contest went to a sudden death penalty shoot-out and unfortunately the U12 BOYS lost out.

U16 BOYS played Salthill Devon in the Connacht Shield semi-final on August 9th. Following a slow start, they found themselves 3-0 down early in the first half. With a strong performance in the second half they brought it back to 3-2 but were unable to get the equalising goal to bring the match to extra time.

UPCOMING SEASON

At the time of writing the 2020-21 League season will have commenced on September 12th. Please check the Club's social media for updates and registration dates etc. Development Football, U6 to U11, and COMETS Coaching will also have commenced from September 20th.

O AFC GIRLS

Our GIRLS squads continue to grow in every age group. Numbers, in particular at Women's Recreational Soccer on Thursday nights, are hugely positive for the Club. We are currently seeking to add to the U13 GIRLS squad, so if you know of any girls (born 2008) please get in touch!

Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page

FAI SUMMER SOCCER SCHOOL

Newvillage once again hosted the FAI Summer Soccer School, at the end of July. The camp was a huge success with the largest attendance to date in Newvillage.

FUNDRAISING

The Club is running a number of fundraising events to help meet the costs, including repayments, and maintaining and operating of the playing and coaching facilities.

LAST MAN STANDING

'Last Man Standing' kicked off on September 12 and will continue to entertain our football predicting gurus until their predictive luck runs out. This fundraiser is always a huge hit, costing only €10 to enter with the chance of winning €500.

The Club's main annual fundraiser, the O AFC GOLF AM AM, takes place on October 2nd and 3rd. We would like to Sincerely Thank ALL the local support we have received for this event. Year after year we continually improve our facilities, but we cannot do this without your support which is greatly appreciated.



POWERBALL

Congratulations to Ellen Maloney and Liam Felton, pictured above, our most recent Powerball winners, winning €500 each.

For just €21 a month, you have a chance to win €500 in each monthly draw. For further details log onto <http://cryjq3pu.paperform.co> or contact Pat Mannion at manniop1@gmail.com

REGISTRATION

Online registration has been open since the end of July. Check out the Club's social media for full details. All players must be registered with the Club to take part in all activities.

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

Each new season we invite and welcome new members, be it players, coaches or volunteers. Today we have nearly 400 Members playing and competing at levels from U6 to Senior from Oughterard, Moycullen, Killannin, Clonbur and Maam areas.

If you wish to be part of the Club in any capacity or feel you can contribute to the Club please contact us at oughterard@galwayfa.ie We would love to hear from you! ■



uachtarARTS

It is difficult to believe the changes that have taken place in our village and our community since the onset of Covid 19. A big thank you to everyone for doing what is recommended to keep Covid in check. I believe we are doing well, and I hope we will not become complacent. It certainly challenges us all to look at different ways of doing what we took for granted prior to Covid.

uachtarARTS is no different as we struggle to resume our Tuesday morning meetups which we hope to start again in October. Our group's annual exhibition was showcased online and can still be accessed on www.ocap.ie. Enormous gratitude goes to Maureen Mooney for all her work in ensuring we were live and online. Maureen along with the Oughterard Courthouse Arts Programme (OCAP) are currently planning two exhibitions to be held at the Courthouse: one Solo exhibition in September, showcasing work by Olga Magliocco, and a OCAP group exhibition in October. So keep an eye out for those.

During lockdown, uachtarARTS collaborated with Galway Musical Residency, NUI Galway, and the 'Con Tempo' Quartet, which has resulted in the production of two videos, by Galway Musical Residency, showcasing the artists' response to two very different pieces of music performed by Con Tempo: one by Beethoven and one by Philip Glass. Each video is approximately 10 minutes duration. These will be on show at the Courthouse for Culture Night, Friday September 18th, open from 5 – 7 p.m. On exhibition at the courthouse will be the works by the uachtarARTS artists who responded to the music by Con Tempo. One artist, Olga Magliocco responded by producing a short video just three minutes duration, and this will also be shown along with the collaborated pieces. On Culture Night we will also have an Art Trail showcasing work by local artists in the windows of the local business' throughout Oughterard – the Art Trail will run throughout the week. A BIG thank you goes to the businesses who have agreed to be part of the Art Trail.



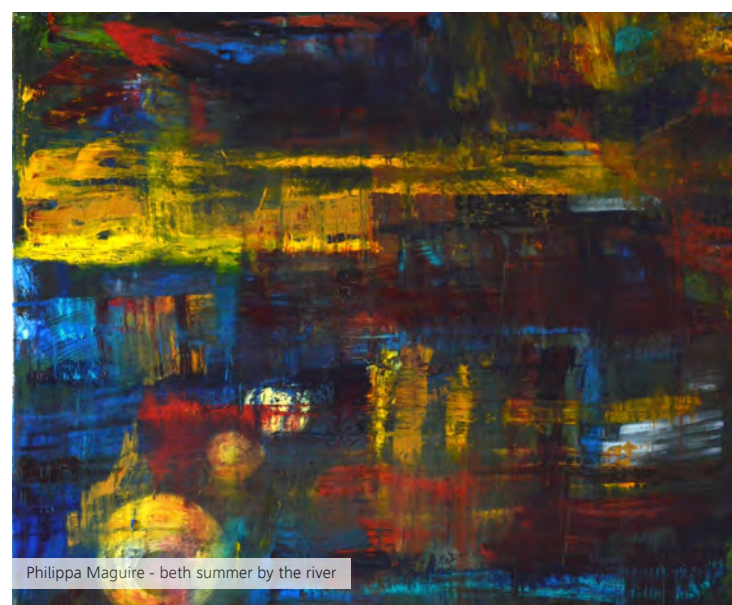
Jess Walsh - Uplifting Beethoven (Böcotton)



Susanne Keane - Beethoven



Clare Hansen Artist Mono Print



Philippa Maguire - beth summer by the river

< Continued from previous page

Huge credit to the artists who have worked and contributed to our Annual Exhibition, the collaboration with Con Tempo, and Culture Night, with special thanks to our volunteer organising committee. It certainly kept us busy during the lockdown and we continue to find ways of being creative and bringing Art to our community.

Since our last article we have lost another wonderful local artist, Johnny Corbett. We will miss him so very much. He was a joy to meet and often, when he popped in to visit the uachtarARTS group on Tuesday morning, he would join us in a cuppa and was always interested and enthusiastic about what we were working on. Over the years, Johnny partook in many exhibitions and had many successful solo exhibitions. He was a gifted artist and is a great loss to his family, friends, and to the community. May he Rest in Peace.

All events are subject to change and notice will be given as soon as possible of any change in events on our social media site listed below. We look forward to seeing you on Culture Night at the Courthouse, Main Street, Oughterard.

If you would like to be involved with uachtarARTS just let us know, new volunteers and members are always welcome to our meet-ups at the Courthouse. uachtarARTS aim is to raise the profile of the arts in the Oughterard area, support artists, and craftspeople, and develop innovative ways of engaging with the arts.

Watch out for upcoming uachtarARTS events by liking us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/uachtarARTS or contact uachtararts@gmail.com for more information.. uachtarARTS would like to thank Galway County Council, Clann Resource Centre and the Oughterard Courthouse for their continued support. ■



Shona Butler - Textiles - Philip Glass



Mary Byrne - Con Tempo after Glass



POETRY

You

I visualise you
Slowly counting every stitch
Unravelling your life

Every single part
A joyful reminder of
A life well lived

*Jess Walsh,
Oughterard Writers' Group*

OUT & ABOUT



Aoife Dowd, Connemara artist, pictured with her son Cayden at her exhibition in Power's gastro pub, Oughterard, on Saturday 14th August. Aoife donated 100% of the money from the exhibition to the Crumlin children's hospital in appreciation of the care which they gave to Cayden during his illness. ■

Continued on next page >

The Oughterard

Angling Club *update*

The Oughterard Angling Club held their annual John Gill competition on Saturday, 12th Sept.

This event is casting and dapping, and was the only competition the Club have held this year, due to the Covid outbreak. Anglers braved what was inclement weather conditions to take part and, because of the fall-off in membership, it was for Club members only in an effort to encourage people to renew their membership.

Thank you to committee member, Martin Noone, for organising the event, Rynes Walker, for the photos, and the Gill family.

All prizes were sponsored by the Club.

Result:

1st - Jonnie Deacy (2 trout)
2nd - Aidan Kelly (2 trout)
3rd - Mike Faherty (2 trout)

The attached pictures, by Rynes Walker, show Katie Gill presenting the Cup to Jonnie Deacy and the smiling winner with the Cup. ■

Kevin Prunty - Secretary
secretary@oughterardanglers.com
Mobile: 085 1694930



SULLIVAN'S
Country Grocer

Oughterard, Co. Galway



OPENING HOURS

Monday: Closed
Tuesday - Saturday: 9am-5pm
Sundays & Bank holidays: 10am-4pm

Daily range of breads, baked in our very own Bread Shed! And irresistible treats coming from our shop kitchen! Country interiors and accessories: selling natural textiles and handmade leather bags which are sourced locally and from small producers around the world.

Phone: 091 866522
Website: www.sullivancountryliving.com

**TAPES TO
DIGITAL**
CONVERSION
SERVICE

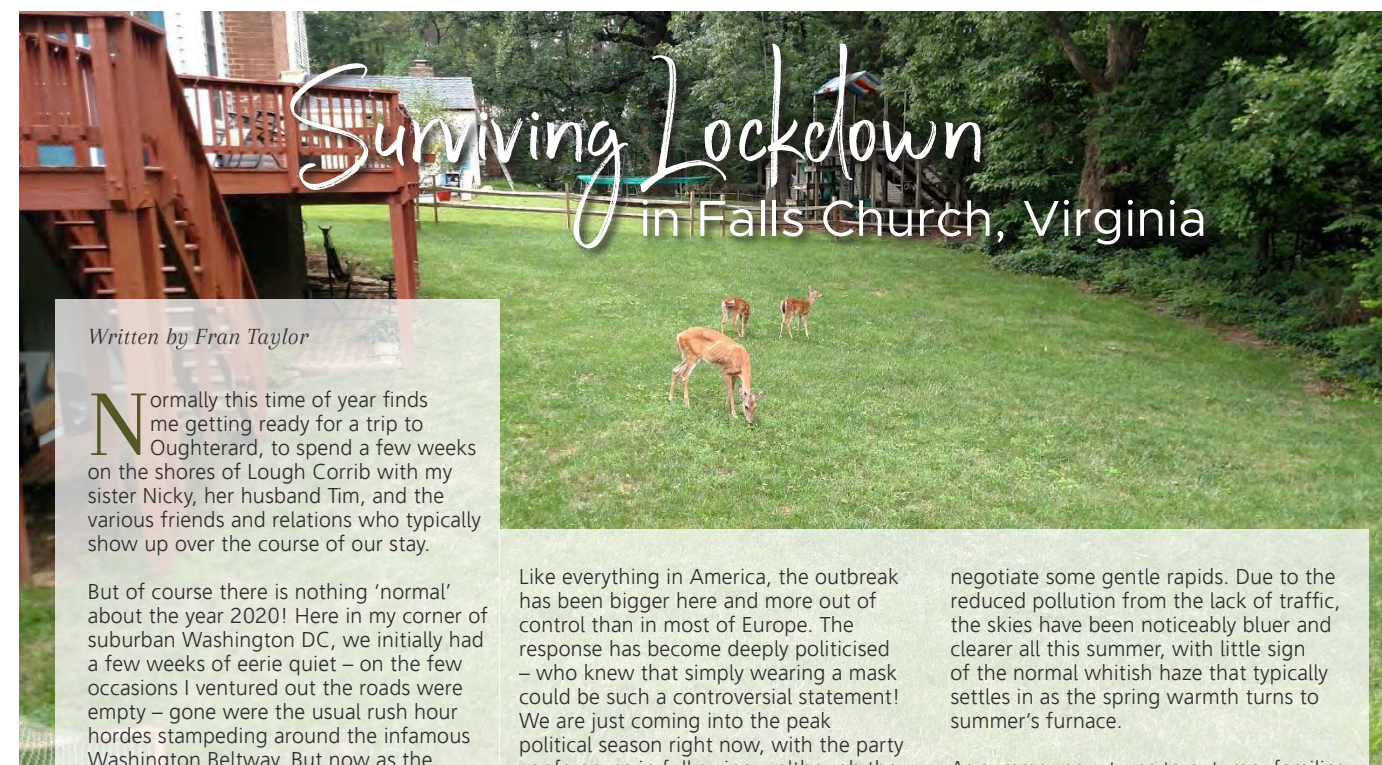


**VHS Tapes may be forgotten,
but don't let their memories die.**

Convert your old tapes to playable digital format,
and share them with family and friends.

Contact Alex at
0870984219
info@myoptixphotography.com

Myoptix Photography and Imaging Service is
based in Oughterard, Co. Galway



Written by Fran Taylor

Normally this time of year finds me getting ready for a trip to Oughterard, to spend a few weeks on the shores of Lough Corrib with my sister Nicky, her husband Tim, and the various friends and relations who typically show up over the course of our stay.

But of course there is nothing 'normal' about the year 2020! Here in my corner of suburban Washington DC, we initially had a few weeks of eerie quiet – on the few occasions I ventured out the roads were empty – gone were the usual rush hour hordes stampeding around the infamous Washington Beltway. But now as the lockdown has eased, much of the traffic has returned, even though many people who can, continue to work from home.

Like so many of us, I have stuck close to home since the start of the pandemic, only going out when necessary to the grocery store or for the occasional socially-distant outdoor get-together with a few close friends. Fortunately I have a fair sized garden, or 'yard' as they call it here, with a deck running along the back of the house, from which I can watch the birds, squirrels, and other wildlife.

I live just inside the Washington Beltway at about 9 o'clock on the map, but it looks surprisingly rural here, especially in summer when the leaves screen out the neighbouring houses. Although suburban, there is plenty of wildlife in our area – it's very common to see foxes and deer wandering through our unfenced yards, as well as a wide variety of colourful birds – chief among them the bright red cardinals as well as woodpeckers, blue jays and robins. It's been delightful watching a doe with her two fawns who first appeared in late June – so tiny then, but growing fast – as they browse the lawn at dusk looking for a tasty morsel or two. I have to spray my more treasured plants with deer repellent to prevent them being devoured!

Like everything in America, the outbreak has been bigger here and more out of control than in most of Europe. The response has become deeply politicised – who knew that simply wearing a mask could be such a controversial statement! We are just coming into the peak political season right now, with the party conferences in full swing – although they too look very different this year. Gone are the great conference halls full of cheering and banner-waving delegates, with confetti and balloons descending as the candidates formally accept their nominations and fire up their supporters to spread the message ahead of their hoped-for triumph in November. In their place are videotaped messages and live speeches made to eerily silent rooms attended only by a smattering of reporters spaced at appropriate distances. But the televised formula has actually been surprisingly effective and has had the huge benefit of keeping the speeches focused and short!

To escape the madness, some friends and I will be spending the coming weekend in a cabin about an hour and a half's drive west of here, where we reach the start of the Blue Ridge Mountains – the Virginia section of the Appalachian mountain chain that runs up the east coast of the US from Georgia to Maine. This series of ridges are interspersed with broad valleys and snaking rivers – the first being the Shenandoah, where our cabin is located. One of our favourite summer occupations is to float lazily down the river on an inner tube, stopping occasionally to admire the scenery, grab a beer (typically from a cooler towed in its own tube!) or

negotiate some gentle rapids. Due to the reduced pollution from the lack of traffic, the skies have been noticeably bluer and clearer all this summer, with little sign of the normal whitish haze that typically settles in as the spring warmth turns to summer's furnace.

As summer now turns to autumn, families are wrestling with decisions around whether to let their children go back to school in person. As is true of much of government in America, policies such as these are made at the state and county level, rather than nationally. We will find out in time whether the local bars and restaurants will be able to stay open as it becomes cooler and less comfortable to sit outside, and I expect Thanksgiving and Christmas will look very different this year.

Meanwhile we continue to endure this strange existence, hoping to stay healthy as we await the development of a vaccine, maintaining our friendships and connections over Zoom and similar apps.

I am so looking forward to being able to see all our Oughterard friends in person once more and also our baby donkey, Jonny, who was born right at the beginning of August. But I also reflect how lucky we are with today's technology compared to our ancestors who left the Old World with little expectation of ever again seeing or hearing the voices of the people they once shared their lives with. ■

Photo: The doe and her two fawns

Tidy Towns

Dear Oughterard,

Thank you for keeping our beautiful town litter free. We appreciate your hard work. Please keep up the efforts. We welcome new members & suggestions. Find us on Facebook and Instagram at Oughterard Tidy Towns. Stay healthy, safe & tidy.

Warm Regards,
The Oughterard Tidy Towns Team

Guardian of the Souls



Written by Bill Daly

In the early hours of morning, about two to three times per week, I walk from my house to the village of Oughterard. Along the way, I pass the old Famine Graveyard at Canrawer West. It looks like any other field in this part of Connemara, a bit stony and boggy. The hundreds of people buried here have no names or markers, apart from a few rocks and stones to distinguish their time on this planet. The sole occupant of the field is a beautiful white horse, and as I go over to her, I say a little prayer in memory of the forgotten people buried here. On one particular morning, I started to reflect on why they ended up here in this lonely field.

Many of the accounts in the Schools Folklore Collection 1937/1938 dealt with the famine under the title 'An Droch Shaol'. All the accounts were in the folk memory of the elderly people and were recorded for the first time under the auspices of the Irish Folklore Commission. The senior pupils in the National Schools aged 12 - 14 took down the stories from their parents and grandparents, who would have been the generation born after the Famine in the 1850s and 1860s. I will insert some local examples under the paragraphs as we proceed through the article.

Between 1780 and the Census of 1841 the population of Ireland is believed to have increased by 172%; the corresponding increase for England and Wales at this period was 88%. The huge increase in Ireland is all the more remarkable when one considers that we were not affected by the Industrial Revolution, and had little commercial activity.

If then, unlike England, not having the benefits of an industrial economy to increase population and improve social conditions – what were the factors that caused the Irish population to explode so rapidly during this period?

Families were in a state of constant motion, freely mobile, in any particular place or area. They were free to move around from one part of the country to another, offering their labour for a small plot of land in which to cultivate. Young people tended to marry at a very early age. This was helped by the ease at which a cabin could be erected almost overnight – not the most comfortable of dwellings, but nevertheless clean and practical.

'The Famine was very bad around Oughterard. There were more people here that time than there are now. Three hundred people died of starvation in Oughterard during one year of the Famine alone.'

- Julia Clancy, Oughterard (1938)

Their English counterparts tended to marry later in life as it took many years of sweat and saving in order to erect a house into which they could be married. In Ireland, earlier and younger marriages invariably led to a greater amount of children per family. These offspring would in turn marry early also, giving rise to a young and increasing population.

'When people died that time, and many died, they were placed on two boards and they were put in the graveyard at Tobar Cuana. Sometimes they had a coffin. The person was taken out of the coffin when they reached the grave and was buried without any coffin. One coffin would do for twenty persons or more.'

- Mary Mc Donagh, Collinamuck, Roscahill (1938)

The average family size during this period was usually from fifteen to twenty children, living in cramped conditions inside primitive cabins and constantly filled with the smoky smell of burning turf. Families lucky enough to possess a cow or a pig kept these animals inside the cabin with the rest of the offspring.

'The Famine was very bad in Oughterard in the year 1847 and it was said that two thirds of the people died. All that did not die of starvation died of yellow fever. Blight came on the potatoes when they were growing. People had to live on Indian Meal, dock leaves, grass and anything they could find to keep them alive. Mrs. Murphy of the Hotel and her family were very kind to the starving.'

- Kitty O'Brien, Oughterard (1938)

However, a large number of children were not considered a burden to their parents. Indeed, the greatest social burden was not to have any at all. A large amount of children were considered by their parents as an investment for their old age, as they were dependant on their offspring to look after them in later years when they would not have the benefit of our modern day pension system.

'There was a household in Carrowndulla and they had nothing to eat. They left the house at night when there was snow on the ground, the marks of their feet were to be seen in the snow and they never came back, and nobody knows where they went.'

- John Walsh, Doon (1938)

In all, the potato must be seen as the primary cause of the pre-famine population explosion. It had replaced all other foodstuffs to become the central item in the diet of the Irish people. The potato could be grown almost anywhere: the boggier and rougher the soil, the more it thrived. The potato gave a greater yield per acre than any other vegetable. A small potato plot could feed family and animals for most of the year, and by selling a pig or a cow, a little grain could be purchased as a supplement, until the potatoes were ready for the spade again the following year.

Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page

'The people of Oughterard suffered greatly in the time of the Famine. There were graves all the way back from the top of town, near the Church by the side of the mountain, back nearly as far as Glengowla, in which people who died that time were buried. The other people were so weak they could not bring them to a graveyard. There was a woman coming from Leam to Oughterard and she saw a woman dead by the side of the road and a baby alive in her arms, and when she was coming from Town again the baby was dead, they are buried near Glengowla and the place where they are buried is green all the year round.'

- Anne Joyce, Oughterard. (1938)

People began to depend too heavily on this crop, and when disaster struck in the form of the blight, their one and only source of food was destroyed. Apart from milk, they had nothing else, as knowledge of the cultivation and cooking of other crops was unknown to them. The rivers and seas were also full of fish, but the tragedy was that nobody knew how to fish. By literally having to place all of their eggs in one basket, they could not hope to emerge as survivors when the blight struck continuously from 1845 to 1847.

'A man called Patrick O'Malley from Birchall, Oughterard, his wife and seven sons and two daughters were put out on the side of the road, they all died and were buried in the same grave. One day a woman was walking and when she reached the graveyard in Killoola, she stood and she died of hunger and tiredness - and her name was Mary Coyne.'

- Eileen Moloney, Porridgetown (1938)

Millions died from starvation and disease, while countless others perished on the ships bringing them to the new promised lands of America and Canada.

There was a woman coming from Leam to Oughterard and she saw a woman dead by the side of the road and a baby alive in her arms, and when she was coming from Town again the baby was dead...

John Mitchel gives a harrowing account of the sights that he saw on a visit to Galway in 1847..

'We saw sights that will never wholly leave the eyes that beheld them, cowering wretches almost naked in the savage weather, prowling in turnip fields, and endeavouring to grub up roots which had been left, but running to hide as the mail coach rolled by: groups and families, sitting or wandering on the highroad, with failing steps, and dim, patient eyes, gazing hopelessly into infinite darkness and despair.'

Sometimes, I could see, in front of the cottages, little children leaning against a fence when the sun shone out- for they could not stand – their limbs fleshless, their bodies half-naked, their faces bloated yet wrinkled, and of a pale greenish hue – children who would never, it was too plain, grow up to be men and women.'

Those lucky enough to survive such a nightmare could not bring themselves to face the prospect of having to live through such an ordeal ever again. From then on, Ireland began to export her people to other lands, countries to which they have since added folklore, history and values. A hush came over the Irish landscape, the cabins were empty, and people who had once graced the land were either dead or had emigrated.

The Barony of Moycullen and the Oughterard Union Districts lost over 25% of their population between 1841 and 1851. The Parish of Kilcummin (Oughterard) lost roughly 35% of its people.

	Population	Population	Houses Inhabited	Houses Inhabited
Townlands	1841	1851	1841	1851
New Village	157	39	39	8
Magheramore	280	118	61	21
Clydagh	260	43	49	6

Examples of some Townlands' losses of population and inhabited houses between 1841 and 1851. (Source: Murt Molloy)

From an Archaeological perspective, the Famine years have not been studied in any great detail and that is possibly because it is of fairly recent origin. In time to come it will be examined in a greater depth and the following will be used to enlighten our knowledge of this awful period in our history: Mass Graves, Workhouses, Fever Hospitals, Soup Kitchens (Pots), Public and Private Relief Schemes, Abandoned Cabins and Deserted Villages, and Potato Ridges (Lazy Beds).

The difference between 1850 BC and 1850 AD is stark. In the Bronze Age we were a small Country but a big player in the export and manufacturing of copper, bronze and gold. The Famine brought the ancient people of one of the finest nations on the face of the Earth to their knees. Violet Martin, of Ross House, wrote in her diary that 'by 1853 the Famine yielded like the ice of the northern seas, but it ran like melted snow in the veins of Ireland for many years afterwards.'

If you happen to be walking past the Famine Graveyard at Canrawer West (adjacent to Oughterard Hostel & Angling Centre) maybe we can say a short silent prayer in memory of our forgotten men, women and children who lie without inscriptions in lonely fields across the land of Ireland. ■

'May the rains from the heavens fall gently upon all who rest there, May the wildflowers and grasses whisper their wishes into light.

May we reverence the village of presence,

In the stillness of the silent field.'

John O Donohue





THE COURTHOUSE UPDATE

Written by Leslie Lyons

As 2020 was welcomed in with so much excitement who would have thought that with the end of the year in sight we would be living in such extraordinary times with severe restrictions still in place as teachers, children and students hope to get back to work not knowing how things will work out.

When writing the update for the Summer edition of Corrib News we were hopeful that the easing of restrictions from 26th June would have allowed the planned events and associated exhibitions to proceed. The Courthouse should have been a hive of activity over the summer months but, sadly, all was silent. There was no lovely art on display and no visitors or tourists to admire it and enjoy spending time in the area.

Our AGM was held as soon as possible on 6th August with those who managed to attend being obliged to follow the recommended sanitising advice and sit two metres apart. Having welcomed all, the Chairman, Thomas Welby, said that the outbreak of Covid 19 had put a damper on everything that had been planned, and suggested that it will now be necessary to work on consolidation for the rest of 2020 and perhaps for part of 2021. He emphasised the fact that the building is there for everybody and it would be necessary to spread the word that with open space and improved kitchen it was available for a wide variety of activities. He referred in particular to the very successful art exhibition involving the late John Corbett.

The secretary listed the many and varied events held during the year including an Art and Design market, meetings organised by Oughterard Heritage Group, numerous art exhibitions, as well as Heritage Week talks by David Geoghegan on Bee Keeping, by Ultan Macken on his father's 'Brown Lord of the Mountain', by Kathleen Villiers-Tuthill on Alexander Nimmo, and by Bill Daly on Stone Age Oughterard which included a fascinating exhibition of his Mesolithic & Neolithic Replica Material.

Another highlight was the well attended Culture Night event with Curlew Theatre performing their play "The Muses of James Joyce" after which there was a showing of John Heuston's film "The Dead" - all kindly supported by Galway Co. Council.

Over the year, Uachtar ARTS Art Group continued to use the building on Tuesday mornings for meetings and workshops and, since Covid 19 restrictions were introduced, the space available at the Courthouse enabled the Board of Clann Resource Centre to hold a number of socially distanced meetings. Loss of income associated with Covid 19 and the closure of the Study Centre was most unfortunate but, with increased publicity regarding the availability of the space for meetings or other purposes, further additional income could be generated.

Directors elected to serve for the coming year are: Thomas Welby, Leslie Lyons, Tom Cusack, Deirdre Forde, Philippa Maguire and Geraldine Bresnihan. Following the three month lock-down,

Contempo Quartet were able to meet together in June and make a fantastic recording of one of Beethoven's works. The Shubbery also featured in that video which was widely circulated on the internet. The Galway Music Residency now consider the courthouse to be an ideal venue for such performances with further recordings being made at the end of July, during the last week of August and with further provisional bookings for November and December. Also, the Study Centre has now been able to open with reduced numbers.

Our web page - Oughterard Courthouse .com - gives information on what is available and as well a link to an efficient booking system to facilitate groups or individuals who might like to make use of the building.

In addition to Antoinette Lydon, Bobby Tierney and Bill Daly who work from the upstairs room, we are delighted to welcome back Ruud Wijnen who did so much good work in looking after the place when he was previously working on the CE scheme.

In order to ensure the safety of all who work or visit the Courthouse, we have put the attached procedures in place in accordance with current government advice.

Strange times indeed! Let's hope to see some semblance of normality in 2021.



OUGHTERARD COURTHOUSE CONSERVATION AND HERITAGE COMPANY LTD.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: COVID 19 (10th Sep. update) REQUIRED READING FOR ALL USERS OF AND VISITORS TO THE COURTHOUSE

THE MAXIMUM NUMBER OF PEOPLE ALLOWED IN EACH ROOM OF THE COURTHOUSE TO MAINTAIN MINIMUM SOCIAL DISTANCING IS AS FOLLOWS:

18 in the main hall; 4 in the upstairs office; 1 in each of the kitchen and small bathrooms; and 2 in the large disabled toilet downstairs. There is no access to the library itself.

The designated COVID "safe room" is the large disabled toilet downstairs.

The upstairs office can be accessed without going through the main hall, by using the "library door".

In cases of emergency when the hall is being used, library and upstairs office occupants can access the downstairs toilets/ kitchen/safe room via the back door.

The external doors of the Courthouse are normally kept locked, and public access is only allowed with prior arrangement with Courthouse staff.

In the interests of the safety of all workers and the public using the Courthouse, we have developed the following requirements which apply to users of the Courthouse:

- Everyone entering the Courthouse must wear a face mask and sign in at the entrance sanitiser station at the front door, giving a contact phone number.
- A group leader may sign in on behalf of the group members, provided the group leader has access to the contact coordinates of each group member.
- Members of the general public must follow a one-way system in the Courthouse, entering the building only through the front door, and leaving the building only through the back door.
- Use the sanitiser provided as you enter.
- Wear a face mask when moving around.
- Sanitise your work station and equipment, including table tops/chairs, before and after use, and wipe with paper towel provided.
- Visitors are encouraged to bring their own sanitising materials.
- Practise social distancing as advised by health authorities.
- Ensure that your work station is at least 2 metres from that of others.
- Practise respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette as advised by the health authorities.
- Remove unnecessary chairs or clutter from your work area to reduce any risk of contamination.
- Bring minimal personal belongings into the building
- Take away any waste associated with your visit.
- Leave internal doors open where possible to avoid lots of people touching the handles.
- Do not share cups or glasses and please ensure that your own is thoroughly washed with hot soapy water.
- Visitors should bring their own water bottles and drinking vessels.
- Do not share headsets, laptops, mobile phones or other such equipment.
- Use liquid soap provided in toilet areas.
- If you feel unwell please do not enter the building.
- If you begin to feel unwell while using the building, leave the building and take the necessary precautions as advised by the health authorities.
- All bookings are to be completed online via email.

The Board of Directors

A letter from the Oughterard Christmas Lights Committee

Hi all,

It's come around again; Christmas Lights Season is upon us & what changed times we have this year due to Covid 19! We will see a number of changes to our Christmas lights set up this year.

We will most likely have to cancel our annual Santa visit to the village and our lighting up ceremony due to Covid Restrictions. We will also have to restrict our on-the-street lighting; we will endeavour to light as much of the town as our Budget and Labour requirements allow.

This year we will have to continue with our investment in new LED Replacement Lighting as some of our ageing cables threw up some frustrating outages last year. Our funds are low and our prospects of fundraising through our normal channels are pretty much eliminated. **If you are in a position to donate through Banking on Line our BOI Oughterard IBAN is IE20 BOFI 903939 72544189.** All Donations will be greatly appreciated. Also, if you have some time to spare on Sunday mornings your help would be greatly appreciated.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates. Hopefully, all going to plan we will light up the town on Sunday the 6th December at 6pm

Contact any Committee Member

Chairperson: Mike Gibbons 0879784556
Secretary: Regina O Toole 0876302719
Treasurers: Gerry Gibbons 0868054459/ Ann Gibbons 0879230673
PROs: Niall Walsh 085887457/ Lavina Gibbons 0879737949
reginamotoole@gmail.com

Help us Brighten a Dark Year! ■



Receive the joys
of Oughterard
even if you are
far away!

corrib news

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION SERVICE

4 ISSUES PER ANNUM

€26 to Ireland €38 elsewhere

(prices include postage & packaging)

"How great it was to get the Corrib News to day,
I sat with a coffee and read every bit.."

(Part of an email received in July from a
Corrib News subscriber in Canada)

To subscribe, please email
corribnews@gmail.com or call The
Courthouse at 091-557589.



Seagypsy

Scríofa ag Geri Slevin, Oughterard Writers' Group

D’oscaíl sí an ríomhaire glúine a bhfuair sí óna gar-íonónacha don Nollaig. Ag 95 d’airigh sí bródúil go raibh sé ar a cumas an teicneolaíocht nua seo a úsáid chun dul i dteagmháil leis an domhain. Chuir sí a pasfhocal isteach ach ní bhfuair sí ach teachtaireacht ar an scáileáin ag rá go raibh an pasfhocal mícheart. Thriáil sí arís é ach bhí an toradh céanna aici. I gceann uair an chloig bheadh an cúntóir cúraim deas óg ag bualadh isteach chun seiceáil uirthi.

Bhí róbaí PPE agus mascanna N95 á chaitheamh ag an bhfoireann ar fad. Chuir na mascanna deireadh le beola a léamh. Bhí dhá ghléas cloisteála á chaitheamh aici anois, ach le na cosainteoirí éadaine bhí sé an-dheacair daoine a thuiscint.

Bhí Whatsapp níos éascaí le n-úsáid ach ní raibh creidmheas ar bith fágtha aici agus bhí an wifí lag san ospidéal. B’fhéidir gurbh é sin an fáth nach raibh an pasfhocal ag obair. B’fhéidir gurbh é seo a thugtar ‘Connectivity Problem’ air.

Phioc sí suas an chianrialtóir agus chuir sí an nuacht ar siúl. D’athraigh sí idir RTÉ/BBC/CNN/RT/SKY/EURONEWS...

Bhí droch scéalta ann gach lá faoi láthair na huaire. Bhí COVID 19 ag déanamh scrios ar sochaí ar fud an domhain. Bhí na h-uimhreacha sna tithe altranaise do-chreidte, na mílte ag fáil bháis. Cailleadh 35 inné i dteach amháin sa chontae béal dorais.

Níor shamhlaigh Gráinne ariamh go bhfaigheadh sí bás in áit mar seo. Ag teacht chuig deireadh a laethanta I dteach altranaís ach théis an teipeadh ghéilleagair domhanda i 2008, d’imigh a muintir ar fad ar imirce don Astráil ar thóir oibre agus saol úr. Bhí Gráinne aithneach ar imirceacht agus artús nua. Bhí sé déanta aici go minic. Níor chur sí fuithí riamh aon áit agas glaoitear seagypsy uirthi....

D’airigh sí an fharraige go mór uathí. D’airigh sí uathí na dathanna, an boladh, agus íomhánna na spéire os a cionn go mór mór...

Bhí si i bhfad ón áit in a rugadh

í. Cheap sí i gcónaí go dtógfadh an fharraige í. Rugadh i 95 bliana ó shin í ar bhád mór idir Inis Meán agus Ros a’Mhíl ar mhaidin álainn gréine i dtús mhí Iúil. Bhí an t-aistear sách ciúin ach d’imigh a máthair chun breithe an-luath. Bhí an teaghlach ar fad ag fágáil an t-oileán chun cónaí ar an mhórthír, áit a mbeadh obair ar fáil dá h-athair agus a dearthaireacha, a bhí ina saor bháid.

Ba é an portach an chomhair Zodiach do mhí Iúil... ainmí a bheadh beo ar thalamh agus san fharraige...

Níor airigh Gráinne ariamh compordach ró-fhada ón uisce. Is Cumas cén áit ar dhomhain a mbíodh sí ina cónaí, theastaigh uaithi bheith gar don uisce, nó ar an t-uisce. Ar an t-uisce don chuid is mó... Báirsí in Utrecht agus i bPáras... an sean bhád seoil i bhFitlyde agus an Bád cónaí gleoite I gcontae Marin ar an taobh thoir den Droichead Óir ... In Alaska agus an Iorua i rith séasúir na h-iascaireachta bhíodh cónaí uirthi díreach ar an gcuan ag breathnú amach ar an fharraige.

Bhíodh sí i gcónaí neirbhíseach agus mí chompordach dá mbeadh sí rófhada óna timpeallacht dhúlrach... an t-am a thiomáin sí idir Nevada agus Cailifórnia, nó thrasna sr an Mhóraic. Shíl sí nach n-éalódj sí ón ngaineamhlach go deo. Ach bhí achar fada imithe ón am sin...

Bhí an teach Altranaís cosúil le na ghainimhlithe sin... Folamh, Steiríl, le bás timpeall uirthi i ngach áit.. Ba é Gleann an Bháis an t-ainm ar ghleann amháin i Nevada.

I freann ar Dhomhain.. Shamhlaigh Gráinne gurbh í an t-aon rud a bhí a bhí ag an bhfáitheas ná uisce. Uisce flúirseach, san fharraige, sna h-aibhneacha, sna lochanna, sna h-aigéain ollmhóra, sna tuille ag anáil an saol ann féin... cuisle an domhain é féin. Thabharfadh an t-uisce mothúchain nascach leis an domhain do Ghráinne...

Mhúch si an teilifís agus dhún sí a súile. Bhí a cuimhniúcháin ag preabadh isteach agus amach as a h-aintinn, díreach cosúil le bheith ag athrú canálacha ar an teilifís.

Ba chuimhin léi an lá a d’fhág si chun dul go Baile Átha Cliath. Ní raibh sí ag iarraidh dul ann. Bhí post faighte ag a -haintín Nora di i monarcha éadach. Bhí sí croibhriste agus í ag dul ar an mbus leis an cás beag donn. Chaith a máthair braon bheag uisce coisricthe as Lourdes uirthi chun í a chosaint.

D’fhág sí slán ag a dearthaireacha agus an bus ag tarraingt amach ón stáisiún, ag déanamh tréan-iarracht stop achur leis na deora a bhí ag síleadh óna súile. D’fheach sí amach ar an cuan agus an fharraige ag lonru faoin ngrian. Da mba bhuachaill í ní bheadh uirthi fágáil.

Bí brionglóid aici freastal ar Meánscoil, rud nach raibh ar fáil sna laethanta sin gan airgead, ach bhí plean aici dul ag obair ar na báid iascaireachta chun táilli na scoile a íoc. Bhí costas ard ar oideachas sna laethanta sin.

Bhí sí chomh ábalta ar bháid le fear ar bith, agus níos fearr ná cuid dá dearthaireacha. Smaoinigh sí ar Ghráinne Ní Mháille. Ba bhreá léi dá mbeadh a h-athair níos cosúil le athair an sean-laoch ceilteach.

D’ainmníodh í ar son an fhoghlaigh mara cáiliúl a d’imigh go chúirt Bhanríon Éilís i Londain chun impi a dhéanamh ar son a mic. Ba bhean cróga, neamhspleách í, agus mairnéalaigh iontach.

Níor cheap Gráinne riamh go mbeadh sí ag dul go Baile Átha Cliath chun dul ag obair i monarchan ag táirgeadh éadaí. Bhí oideachas ag teastáil uaithi. Cé chonh minic a chuala sí a máthair ag rá léi gurbh é an rud is tábhachtaí ar domhain le haghaidh cailín ná oideachas mhaith a fháil.

Bhí sé cloiste aici chomh minic thar na blianta... “Ní bheidh tú riamh neamhspleach má bhraitheann tú ar fear... níl oideachas ó fir chun airgead a thuilleadh. Is féidir leo obair ar láithair tógála, ag tiomáint leoraithe, iascaireacht. Ach níl sé mar seo do mhná... tá oideachas uait chun fáil ar aghaidh.”

Ach seo í anois ag 14 bliana d’aois agus í ar a bealach go Baile Átha Cliath chun dul ag obair i monarchan. Nuair a chas an bus ag siopa Mhic an Iomaire agus Oifig an Phoist fuair sí a radharc deireanach ar a muintir ag fágáil slán aici...

Rinne sí macnamh ar Rásaí na mBáid, nach bhfeicfeadh sí an samhradh sin. I mí Iúil bhíodh sráidbhailte Chill Chiaráin, An

Chaiseal, Oileán Mhic Dara, Cloch na Rón agus Leitir Mealláin mar ionaid do na rásaí ab fhearr. D’aireodh sí uaithi ardú na seolta álainn dhearga, an bonnán ceo ag cur tús leis na rásaí, agus an mhothúcháin iontach den bád ag casadh isteach faoi lán sheol agus tú ag dul thar an chéad baoi máirceála. Bhí an Húicéar, nó an Bád Mór mar a thugtar uirthi, mar siombal.

Is í an samhailchomhartha ar bhrat na Chontae, bhí beoir ainmnithe ina diadh, agus bhí athbhéochain ag teacht ar Chumann Húicéirí na Gaillimhe. Anois bhí na báid a bhí mar chuid mhór de blianta a hóige ar lár-stáitse nuair a tháinig na luaimheanna a bhí ag glacadh páirt san Aigéan-rás Volvo bhí cabhlach Húicéirí sa chuan chun iad a fháiltiú.

Bhí a lán chuimhniúcháin ag teacht chuici agus í ag macnamh ar na báid. A mamó ag cniotáil leis an t-ollan nádúrtha, Báiníní Arainn dá h-athair agus a dearthaireacha. Cábla shimplí fuáilte iontu a raibh cuma rópaí na mbáid orthu agus patrún criathrithe chun dea-ádh a mhealladh. Níor thatin a geansaí le Gráinne riamh mar churfadh an t-ollan tochas uirthi.

Tháinig cuimhniúcháin eile aníos faoin mbealach a n-úsáidtear na báid chun fir a bhí ag teitheadh le linn an Chogadh Sibhialta. sheol a col-ceathrar Séamas Ó'Máille trasna an loch chun bualadh lena chomhleagthaí in Áth Cinn nuair a ghabhadh iad le reidhfil agus urchair. Cuireadh Chun Bás iad dá bharr. Ba bhaill de Chathlán na hUachtar Áirde de rannán an t-Iarthar den I.R.A. iad Séamus agus a cháirde. Ar an 11ú d'Aibreáin 1923 tógadh Seamus agus a chairde chuig Bearaic Míleata Thuama agus cuireadh chun bás iad roimh scuaid lámhaigh.

Tháinig deireadh leis an cogadh Mí Bhealtaine, cúpla seachtain ina dhiaidh seo. Ní bhfuair Aintín Gráinne an corp ar ais go dtí an Deireadh Fómhar, nuair a aischuradh é ag searmánais i mbeairic Áth Luain, áit a d’aistríodh na corpeanna tar éis dúnadh Bearaic Thuama.

Tháinig íomhá eile chun cinn go tobann. Chuimhnigh sí uair a col ceathrar, an tógáilí bád as Litir Mealláin. Tá Plaic Chomórtha Alainn anois ann i gcuimhneacháin ar na Tógálaí Bád ón gceantar idir 1840 agus 1983.

Smaoinigh sí faoina dearthaireacha arís. D’airigh sí fós go mór uaithi iad, fiú tar éis na

< *Continued from previous page*

blianta. Ba fíor ceardaithe iad, a thóg baid den scoth. Chuimhnigh sí orthu ag tarraíl an churrach bheag a d’imeodh sí amach ag iascaireacht inti agus í in a cailín óg, agus an boladh uaidh ag cur fonn múisce uirthi. Ba iascaire mhaith í Gráinne. Nuair a bhí na ronnaigh ag rith d’fheadfadh sí líne a chaitheamh isteach gan ach roinnt corráin air agus thiocfadh sí abahile le buicéid lán le tabhairt ag a máthair chun sáiliú. B’aoibheann léi na h-éisc beag blasta seo.

Ba chuimhin lei freisin an céad haileabó a rug sí air, ag Carraig Homar díreach ar an leithinis Kenai, i gCuan Kachemak in Alaska. Bhíodh iolair maola ina suí go foighneach ar na píolóiní mara sa chalafort bheag. Ba é an leithinis an bóthar ab fhaide amuigh sa airgéan ar domhan, ag tógáil fiche nóiméad le trasnú i gcarr.

Is í an áit í freisin as a dtagann na báid amach go dtí Dutch Harbour i gcóir seasúir na bportáin. Tá Cáil air anois mar gheall ar an clár teilifíse ‘The Deadliest Catch’. Níor chaill Gráinne riamh leagan den chlár, ba mic le go leor da sean-cháirde iad cuid de na Skippers ar na báid.

Ba é an haileabó fathach na leathóga. Ba é an phríomh foinsé bia freisin do na Alascaí dúchasacha agus na céad Eorpaigh a chur futhui i gCeanada. Chuala sí uair amháin faoi déadiasc amháin a ghabhadh san Iorua a bhí 8m ar fhad agus 235Kg de mheáchain.

Ba chuimhin léi oícheanta sa salty dawg saloon agus a cead íocaíocht mhór. D’airigh sí saibhir agus thug sí sean-nóta deich scilling don freastalaí. (Bhí an dath céanna ar an nóta agus ar na ríphortáin, agus seolta na húicéirí crochta taobh thiar den beair..

Ba í an t-aon bhean ar criú I bhfarraige Alasca, agus bhí aithne ag gach duine uirthi, agus d’aithníodh í mar duine de na leaids, í cróga, dílis agus díograsach, I ann líne a chaitheamh go cruinn, chomh maith le bheith ina cócaire mhaith sa ghealaí.

Chuimhnigh sí ar an leabhar a thóg sí léi ar ceann de na turais iascaireachta. ‘Rain on the Wind’ le Walter Macken. Scríobh sé faoina muintir, a scéal de streachailt leis an fharraige, le bochtanas, agus an choimeadaíocht polaitiúil in Éirinn ó bhunú na Saorstáitse.

2020 a bhí ann anois, agus ní raibh Éire fós saor. Bhí chun éagadh gan Éire Aontaithe a fheiceáil agus chuir sé seo fíorbhrón uirthi.

‘Gráinne, ‘bhfuil tú ceart go leor? An féidir liom aon rud a dhéanamh duit?’. Bhí an cúntóir cúram cineálta díreach tagtha isteach in a seomra.

(‘You can peteen... can you help with my password?’)

‘Is Féidir a mhuirín, an dtabharfá cúnamh liom le mo phasfhocal?’

Rugadh Geri ar húirceir ó chósta na Gaillimhe. Tógadh í bPáirc an Fionnuisce. Áit ar oibrigh a hathair mar tiománaí ambasáid. Bhog an teaghlach chuig eastát comhairle chondae Baile Ath Cliath. Nuair a bhí sí 14 bhí a céad post í monarcha éadaí. Fuair sí scoláireacht chuig scoil chónaithe agus chuaigh sí chuig Coláiste na hOllscoile Gaillimh. As Chonnemara a bhí a mháthair, níor thaitin Baile Ath Cliath léi ariamh. Bhí Gaeilge aici i gcónaí. Labhraíonn Geri ceithre theanga. D’oibrigh sí sna amharclann agus sna scannáin go h-idiráisiúnta agus tá sí ina stiúrthóir ealaíne ar Just4Kids Theatre Company. Scríobh sí roinnt drámaí do leanaí. Scríobh sí freisin an drama ‘Invisible Women’ atá suite i bpríosún Ard Mhacha. Tá conaí uirthi ar go leor báid agus nuair nach bhfuil sí ar an mórtír is féidir í a fháil ar a bád Grainne Mhaol.

Written by Geri Slevin, Oughterard Writers' Group

She opened the laptop her granddaughters had given her for Christmas. At ninety-five, she felt proud. She could use this new technology, this new way of communication with the world. She typed in the password. “This password is incorrect” flashed up on the screen. She tried again and once more “This password is incorrect” appeared.

It would be another hour before the nice young care assistant would pop in to check on her. All the staff wore PPE gowns and surgical masks. The masks made it impossible to see lips; Gráinne was now wearing two hearing aids and the face shields blurred speech. What’sApping was the easiest way to communicate. No password necessary. But she was out of credit and the WiFi signal was down - maybe that’s why the

password didn’t work. Maybe it was what they called a connectivity problem.

She leaned over to the bedlocker, picked up the remote for the TV and switched on the news. She channel hopped RTE1/ BBC/CNN/RT/SKY/EURONEWS. Every day now the news was bad. A virus called Covid-19, a lethal form of pneumonia, was making its way around the world with devastating consequences. Nursing homes were having huge numbers of deaths. Thirty-five people had died in a home in the next county. Gráinne never imagined dying in a place like this, ending her days in a nursing home. But after the 2008 global financial crash, the last of her family emigrated to Australia for work and a new life. Gráinne knew all about emigrating and new starts. She had done it many times. She had never really settled anywhere. She was what they called Down Under a sea gypsy.

She missed the sea, the smell of the water, its colours and reflections of the huge sky above.

She was such a long way from where she had been born. She always thought the sea would take her. Ninety-five years ago, she had been born on a Bád Mór between Inis Meán and Rossaveel on a beautiful sunny July morning. It was a calm crossing; her mother had gone into labour early. The whole family were leaving the island for good and moving to the mainland where there would be more work for her father and brothers, who were boat builders.

July was the water sign in the Zodiac Calendar and its symbol was the crab, an animal that could live on land and in water. Gráinne never felt right too far from water. No matter where she had lived in the world, she lived beside it or on it. Mostly on it. Barges in Utrecht and Paris, the old sailboat in Finiki, Turkey, and the beautiful house boat in Marin county on the other side of the Golden Gate Bridge. In Alaska and Norway, during the fishing season, she lived right on the harbour looking out to sea.

She always got nervous and claustrophobic if she was too far from her natural habitat. Like the time she drove across Nevada or Morocco. On both those occasions, she thought out of the desert she’d never get. But that was a long time ago. The nursing home felt like those deserts. A

sterile emptiness surrounded by death. One valley in California was named Death Valley. Hell itself on earth.

Gráinne imagined the one thing heaven had, was plenty of water. Rivers, lakes canals, giant oceans, waterfalls all gushing and breathing life itself. The very pulse of planet earth. Its heartbeat its moods in all their wonderful complexities. Water gave Gráinne an inner sense of harmony with the world.

She switched off the TV and closed her eyes. Memories passed like an old movie, frame by frame, not unlike switching channels with the TV remote. Memory hopping. She remembered the day she left for Dublin. She hadn’t wanted to leave. Her Auntie Nora had got her a job in a sewing factory. Broken-hearted she had stepped onto the Galway bus with her little brown suitcase. Her mother had splashed her with holy water from Lourdes to protect her. She waved to her brothers as the bus pulled off, biting back the tears. She looked out the window at the bay sparkling in the early morning sun. Had she been a boy she could have stayed. She had had big dreams of going to secondary school, which wasn’t free in those days. But she had planned working on the fishing boats to pay the fees. Education back then was an expensive business. She could fish and row as good as any man and better than some of her brothers. She thought of Gráinne O’ Malley. She wished her father was more like her namesake’s father. She had been named Gráinne after the infamous 16th century pirate, who had visited Queen Elizabeth in London to plead for her sons’ lives. A brave, independent woman and great mariner.

She had never dreamed of going to Dublin to work in a factory making clothes. She had wanted an education. How many times had she heard her mother say the most important thing in life for a girl was to get an education. She had heard it so often over the years “You’ll never be independent if you’re financially dependent on a man. Men don’t need an education to earn money. They can work on building sites, drive trucks, fish. But for a woman it’s different Gráinne, you need an education to get on”. Yet, here she was just turned fourteen, and on the bus to Dublin to work in a factory. When the bus turned the corner

Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page

at Mac Con Iomaire's shop and post office, the family still waving disappeared from view.

She thought about the Hooker races she was going to miss this year. In July, the villages of Kilkieran, Cashes, Mac Dara island, Roundstone and Lettermullen hosted the best races. She would miss the hoisting of the beautiful russet sails, the fog horn signalling the start of the race and that exciting feeling as the boat keeled sharply approaching the first buoy race marker. Nowadays, the Galway Hookers had become an icon. It is the emblem on the county crest, an ale had been named after it, and the Galway Hooker Association had been revived. The old work boats of her childhood were suddenly centre stage and when the Volvo Ocean race came to Galway: a flotilla of hookers greeted them.

So many memories the boats carried. She remembered her grandmother knitting the natural wool, off-white aran sweaters for her dad and brothers, a simple cable stitch that looked like the Hooker ropes and was so scratchy against her skin.

Another memory floated up on how the boats were used to move the men on the run during the Civil War. Her cousin Seamus O'Malley had crossed the lake to meet up with his friends in Headford when they were arrested, charged for possession of a rifle and ammunition, sentenced to death. Seamus and his friends had been part of the Oughterard Battalion of the 4th Western Division of the I.R.A. On 11th April 1923 Seamus and his friends were taken to Tuam Military Barracks (Workhouse) and executed by firing squad. He was 20 years old.

The war came to an end a few weeks later, in May. Gráinne's aunt had never got Seamus's body back till the following October, when he was handed over in a ceremony at Athlone Barracks where the bodies had been moved when Tuam Barracks closed. He was laid to rest in the Republican plot in the graveyard in Oughterard.

Another frame of her life flashed past. She remembered her cousin the boat builder from Lettermullen. Now a lovely marble plaque commemorated the boat builders between 1840 and 1983. Again, she thought of her dad and her brothers. She missed them all even after all these years. They were true craftsmen and built beautiful boats. She

remembered them tarring the small curragh she fished in as a young girl, its smell making her vomit. Gráinne was good at fishing. When the mackerel were running, she could just drop a piece of string overboard with several hooks attached and she'd bring home buckets full for

at 235 kilos had been caught in Norwegian waters.

She remembered evenings in the Salty Dawg Saloon and her first big pay share. She felt rich and she gave the barman an old Irish ten-shilling note (the paper the same colour as the King Crabs

with her on one of the fishing trips, Walter Macken's "Rain on the Wind". He wrote about her people, their story of constant struggle with the unpredictable sea, with poverty and with the political conservatism of post-independent Ireland.

It was 2020, and Ireland still wasn't free. She was going to die without seeing a united Ireland and she felt a deep sadness. "Gráinne are you all right? Can I do anything for you?" Her favourite care assistant had just come into her room. "You can, peteen, can you help with my password."

Geri Slevin was born on a Hooker off the Galway coast. She grew up in the Phoenix Park Dublin, where her father worked as an embassy driver. The family moved to a Dublin council estate when Geri was fourteen. Her first job was in a sewing factory, when she received a letter that would change her life - awarding a full scholarship to an exclusive Dublin boarding school, paving her way to university.

Her mother, a Connemara woman, never settled in Dublin and always spoke Irish. Geri speaks four languages. Having worked professionally in theatre and film production internationally, she is the artistic director of Just4Kids theatre company. She has written several plays for children. Other works include 'Invisible Woman' a play set in Armagh Gaol during the troubles. She has lived mostly on boats, and when not on land, she can be found on her lake boat The Gráinne Mhaol. ■

She remembered the day she left for Dublin. She hadn't wanted to leave. Her Auntie Nora had got her a job in a sewing factory. Broken-hearted she had stepped onto the Galway bus with her little brown suitcase. Her mother had splashed her with holy water from Lourdes to protect her. She waved to her brothers as the bus pulled off, biting back the tears.

her mother to salt in the brown wooden barrels. She loved this little silvery, tasty fish.

She remembered her first halibut, caught off Homer's Spit at the tip of the Kenai Peninsula in Alaska, jutting out into Kachemak Bay. Bald eagles sat patiently on the pylons in the small harbour. The Spit was the longest road into ocean waters in the entire world and took 20 minutes to drive across. It's also where the boats leave to take crew out to Dutch Harbor for crab season. Made famous by the TV reality show The Deadliest Catch, Gráinne never missed an episode; many of the captains were sons of old friends. Halibut was the giant of flatfish and chief food source for native Alaskans and Canadian First Nations people. She had heard once on the news a whopper measuring eight metres and weighing in

and the hooker sails) to tack onto the wall behind the bar. She was one of very few female crew in Alaskan waters. Everyone knew her and she was treated as one of the lads, a hardworking, fearless, no-nonsense fisherwoman who could throw a line with unerring accuracy and was a good cook when in the galley.

She remembered the book she had brought

POETRY

Conversation

I'm out in the garden, replenishing the feeder, listening to the birds and their conversations. Do they sense something different in the air – know what is happening? Or is this peanuts to them with their own uncountable losses. Even now do we really get it?

Pete Mullineaux – 2020. Oughterard Writers' Group

Pete Mullineaux publishes a new novel



Pete Mullineaux, Oughterard-based writer and facilitator of the Oughterard Writers' Group, has just published an exciting new novel "Jules and Rom", which he describes as "science fiction meets Shakespeare" and which is available via Troubadour Publishing and Amazon/Kindle.

The book is set in 2040 when artificial intelligence poses a growing challenge to society. Kerry Tracker, a newly qualified teacher is appointed to oversee a US high school production of *Romeo & Juliet* for end of year open day. It's a tall order, the 10th grade kids in the cast previously caused an emotional meltdown in the android teacher originally assigned to the task. Making the situation worse, the 15 year old ringleader of the rebels is the daughter of the man whose company supplies all the AI resources in the school.

Things move from difficult to sinister when a suspicious death takes place in the school. As special agent Floyd Linton from Homeland Security pursues the investigation into what happened, the drama group continue to rehearse and the play's story of young love and social division unfolds against a background of political intrigue and global conflict.

Jules & Rom defies simple categorisation: while undoubtedly science-fiction it's set in too near a future to offer the more typical dystopian scenario. It's also a detective story, but again, atypical of that genre. While the central focus is on AI, this is also an exploration of emotional intelligence and at its heart's core are both human beings and androids discovering themselves in the process of putting on Shakespeare's timeless masterpiece.

"Jules and Rom" was reviewed by Dr Sean Crosson, Huston School of Film, NUIG:

"Pete Mullineaux's new novel is one of the most enjoyable books I've read in the past year. It features a cast of fully-formed and meticulously drawn characters convincingly developed within an entertaining, thought-provoking, and always engaging narrative. It effectively combines a very believable science-fiction scenario with illuminating insights into theatre and theatre practice. *Jules & Rom* shines a fresh and innovative light on one of Shakespeare's finest plays, re-imagined to have contemporary resonance and impact in an age of AI and challenges to humanity such as war and catastrophic climate change."

Long Walks

Written by Claire Ruane, Oughterard Writers' Group

The smell of old seaweed was in the air, the road was covered in sand, and a carpet of daisies and dandelions decorate the unmowed grass in the city parks. It is the beginning of Spring and the weather is unusually good, a spell that has lasted since early March, dad said he would have planted the carrots had he known but the garden is locked now.

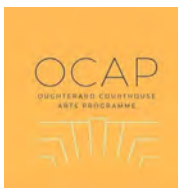
A couple of pigeons occupy an empty St Nicholas Churchyard, the market canceled for the first time in hundreds of years. The corner at tigh Neacthain sits empty and there are no fiddles playing in tigh Choili. Perched on the window at Easons, the usual suspects are nursing cans of Rosies dew and Galahad from Aldi, another lies flat outside the old bank on the square. I wonder how they feel now that the whole country and world has taken to their homes.

I'm reminded of a day, waiting at the 409 bus stop, one of Galway's characters was sitting on a nearby wall. He looked about 60 but could well have been 50 under his well-worn coat, red scarf and tanned weathered face. He would usually hang out by pub doors a can in hand watching the mash of workers, locals and tourists buzzing up and down shop street, I'm sure he could tell a few stories. I often thought it was unfair that he couldn't go inside on cold grey days to sit by the fire and enjoy a nice hot whiskey with cloves and lemon. He had a good way with people and he looked content with a depth in his gaze. We made eye contact and he said something about the weather being grand, and it was. He told me he came from a small town about an hours drive from the city. He'd had a good childhood, played football for the county and had

hardworking parents. He told me they'd passed away in an accident and his only sister took over the house. They didn't get on so he moved to the city and the next time he went home, his parents' house had been sold and his sister had run off to America. He stared at the ground, a memory absorbing his demeanor, he let out a low sigh and his can of beer cried under his tight grip. 'It is my birthday today' he said as the number 409 pulled in. I waved and wished him well on his birthday.

A high pitch call from a gang of gulls brought me back to my surroundings, I crossed over out of the shade and into the light on Merchants road, I let out his low sigh echoing in my mind, not sure whose pain I felt. My feet carrying me toward the Spanish Parade, another circle, the second long walk of the day. ■

Oughterard Courthouse Arts Programme



I once was there (oil on canvas). Philippa Maguire



A Calm Spring Morning In Ballinacra (watercolour). Gil Cusack

Written by Mo Mooney

OCAP has had a very busy programme of events over the Summer, albeit online. The GALWAY 2020 Small Towns Big Ideas project, SET IN STONE, was based around the research of local Archaeologist Bill Daly who has traced the history of Oughterard back to Neolithic times. The Visual Arts Programme responded to Bill's work by implementing four exhibitions. The first opened with uachtarARTS Group show, RIANTA (traces of our past), and featured the work of Catherine O'Leachain, Clare Hansen, Deirdre Stephens, Gil Cusack, Grainne MacManus, Jess Walsh, Kathleen Hinde, Lelia NiChathmhaoil, Mary Byrne, Maureen Mooney, Maria Hutton, Molly McHenry, Olga Magliocco, Philippa Maguire, Shona Butler, Simon Hammell, and Susanne Keane. The second Exhibition, CUIMHNI (memories), featured new work by local artists Kathleen Furey and Leah Beggs. The third Exhibition, AIMSITHE (discovered), presents the

work of County Galway Artists' Collective AKIN, including Jay Murphy, Dolores Lyne, Leonie King, Margaret Irwin West, and Sioban Piercy. All the Exhibitions are still available to view on our website www.ocap.ie as the Galway 2020 programme has been extended to March 2021. We plan to showcase the Artworks in The Courthouse in the Summer of 2021 alongside some of the events which had been originally planned for the SET IN STONE Project. We would like to thank everyone who visited, shared and supported our website over the last few months.

OCAP plan to hold at least one short Exhibition in the Courthouse, in line with Covid-19 restrictions, over the Autumn months.

In October, TRACING THE LAND, (a group show featuring the work of Artists Gil Cusack, Jess Walsh, Maureen Mooney, Philippa Maguire, and Renske Boef), will run from Friday 23rd to Monday 26th of October. Each of the artists have interpreted their environment over the last few months in their own individual styles and media exploring pattern, movement, texture, structures, and their own connection to the spaces they occupy. The body of work in this exhibition ranges from felted art pieces to painting using natural dyes and vibrant abstraction, to embrace and empathise the language of the natural and manmade worlds, and how this impacts on their daily experiences.

OCAP (Oughterard Courthouse Arts Programme) is a voluntary group that was formed to run visual art programmes in Oughterard Courthouse with support from Oughterard Courthouse Conservation & Heritage Company, Galway County Council and Galway 2020. If you are interested in joining us, assisting with organising or invigilating, please let us know.

For more information on upcoming events contact oughterardcap@gmail.com or follow us on www.facebook.com/OughterardCourthouseArtsProgramme and don't forget to visit www.ocap.ie. ■



Oughterard Youth Centre



Welcome to the latest edition of the Youth Cafe newsletter. In this month's news, we look ahead to our



programme of Autumn activities. There is loads happening for young people of all ages. For more info about supports and services in the youth café and resource centre please contact Barry@ 086 1049684, or Devworker.clann@gmail.com



Summer Camps & Activity Updates

We've had a busy few months in the middle half of the summer, delivering a number of outdoor based summer camp activities for young people across the region. For 6 weeks, the Oughterard youth café worked with 50 young people, engaging them in a range of exciting, fun, social, educational, and challenging outdoor activities.

The activities involved hiking, kayaking, forest arts, nature sensory, orienteering, sports, and games. The groups were aged between 12 and 16 years of age and everyone involved had a blast.

It was a fantastic opportunity, in the midst of all the Covid 19 issues, to bring the young people together in a safe and social manner to participate in a selection of physical and healthy activities. This camp would not have been possible without the help of our staff and volunteers Els, Renske, and Aisling. We would like to thank them so much for all their help, energy, and enthusiasm, and we'd like to wish all the young people well for the year ahead.

Coming into the autumn months, we are now busy getting the youth café in order to welcome groups of young people back in a Covid friendly manner. In the coming weeks, we hope to have a range of activities from guitar, arts and photography, to our outdoor group and yoga mindfulness, back up and running. Some groups will be run in person, while some will be run virtually. Follow us on facebook to stay up to date with times, dates and schedules.

Oughterard Community Centre

The Community Centre is open by appointment only Monday - Thursday 10-1 and 2-5, and Fridays 10-1. Appointments can be booked on 091 557633.



Autumn courses are 6 weeks in duration and cost €40. Places are limited due to Covid restrictions, and prior booking on 091 557 633 is necessary.

Felting starts on Friday 25th September from 10.30am to 12.30pm. Sewing will be starting with more details to follow!

Lockdown News

from Oughterard Active Retirement Association (ARA) Members

Written by June Threlfall, with contributions from members of ARA.

It is six months since the announcement of 'lockdown' for all and 'cocooning' for anyone over seventy came into being. The restrictions we thought we would manage for a few months, have now become part of our every day life. We have had no meetings since the beginning of March and we await the time when we can safely and happily resume them. Some members have given an insight into their activities and their feelings during this time.

Home improvements, decluttering, gardening, walking and baking, are just a few of the things that have kept members active. 'Zooming' had never been part of my vocabulary prior to Covid -19, but it soon became a regular part of my life and I know it has for others. It just goes to show, you can 'teach some old dogs new tricks'!

If anyone has driven along the N59 towards Clifden, I am sure you will have been impressed by Chairman Mildred's beautiful wild flower garden at the end of her driveway. The colourful display is so eye catching, it truly lifts the spirit. Mildred has also been busy with improvements to her home; inside and outside. A new roof and a change of colour on the outside walls has given the house a smart new look. There is always a warm welcome when you call on Mildred and this has been made even warmer with the addition of great new wood burning stove in her living room.

New skills came to the fore for our secretary Maria. Chris has been sporting a new haircut thanks to Maria's dexterity with the scissors. By her own admission, trimming around the ears was tricky but she feels she has mastered it now; the front will take a little more practise. As they say, it grows back eventually!

Carmel is great for taking on projects and 'lockdown' gave her the motivation and time to transform some pieces of furniture which she has had for over fifty years. Mahogany furniture took on a whole new look when it became a modern shade of grey; thus complementing the decor of the room. Gardening and decluttering also kept Carmel active. As for many of us, it also became a time to reconnect with old friends.

Anyone who knows me, will

confirm that I don't particularly enjoy gardening; all that weeding! When my husband John informed me that he was going to create more raised beds and increase our vegetable produce this year, I have to admit, I let out a groan. However, with time on my hands (in between rereading many books), I succumbed and got stuck into looking after the vegetable beds. We had more successes than failures and we are already discussing how we will increase and improve things next year. I was particularly proud of our beetroots even though I am the one family member who doesn't eat them!

I got a lovely brown bread recipe passed on to me by Nora Kelly and we are now all eating more bread than prior to lockdown! You will find the recipe at the end of this article; thank you, Nora, for sharing your delicious bread recipe!



Mildred's Garden

I walk my dog every day and thank God for the beauty that surrounds me. Keeping in touch with family in England was made more fun by using 'Zoom'. We have taken a break from our family quizzes, but enjoy being able to get together and share news, and see one another via a different medium.

During lockdown, being a member of the Meals on Wheels team took on even more importance. It became the highlight of my week to see the clients and know that they were all keeping well and managing, despite the restrictions. I missed the companionship and chat with my co-driver, as of course there can now only be one person in each car and we split the run. Like so many things with Covid, this has become a new way of life.

An activity which has given me great joy is beginning to learn the tin whistle. It is something I said I would do when I retired. I have always admired (and been slightly envious) of the way Irish musicians play such fantastic music without a note in front of them. However, until February this year, I had never made the time to do this. One of the teachers in Oughterard National School put out feelers to see if there would be any interest in a beginners' music group for adults and put up flyers around the village; I couldn't believe my luck! A group of about seven or eight of us met at the back of Keogh's bar with our different instruments and made a start. Four weeks later came lockdown; how disappointing! Technology came to the rescue once more. A few of us continue to meet each Tuesday via Zoom. The meeting combines chat, catching up with one another's news and of course,

a weekly musical challenge. I have to admit that the family isn't quite as enthusiastic as myself. The dog puts his paws over his ears and howls to go out (especially when I am playing the high notes) and my son politely asks, "Do you keep getting stuck on one particular bit?" as I persevere to learn a tune by ear. It's an enjoyable challenge but I don't think

anyone will be booking me for a session just yet!

One member's account of over-Seventy Cocooning

During this time, I practised gratitude. Thankful that the family was ok, the numbers of Covid cases in the west was low and that I live in Oughterard. Within the 5km boundary of lockdown there was Lough Corrib, Patrick's Rock and forest walks: so much freedom. I felt sorry for our Italian friends confined to balconies. We over seventies were born during World War II. We are a resilient bunch with our ration books.

I baked, I laughed, I prayed. I baked to feed the grandchildren during home schooling; scones, bread and lentil soup.

I thought of the extended families of the frontline workers - unsung heroes who minded and home schooled their nephews and nieces when grandparents and childminders could not. They increased the risk to their own families so the health care workers could continue to work.

Like the rest of the nation I decluttered, cleared out presses and attics. I removed ivy from trees and painted houses. I laughed as I went socially distanced walking with friends, along quiet, unlit roads. No lights on in the houses and only ourselves walking; thankful for friendship. I zoom called with the family. I admired the Milky Way on the new app we downloaded to learn about the stars. I prayed for the grandchildren across the Atlantic who have walked and talked since I last held them: heartbreaking! Being a zoom granny is no fun. I prayed again for the results of a second Covid test that a family member had to take, hoping it is negative.

I feel I have to end here with the words of the song from Dame Vera Lynn:
"We'll meet again, don't know where, don't know when....."

As soon as it is safe to do so, we will resume meetings. Members will be notified by email or phone call. Stay safe everyone!

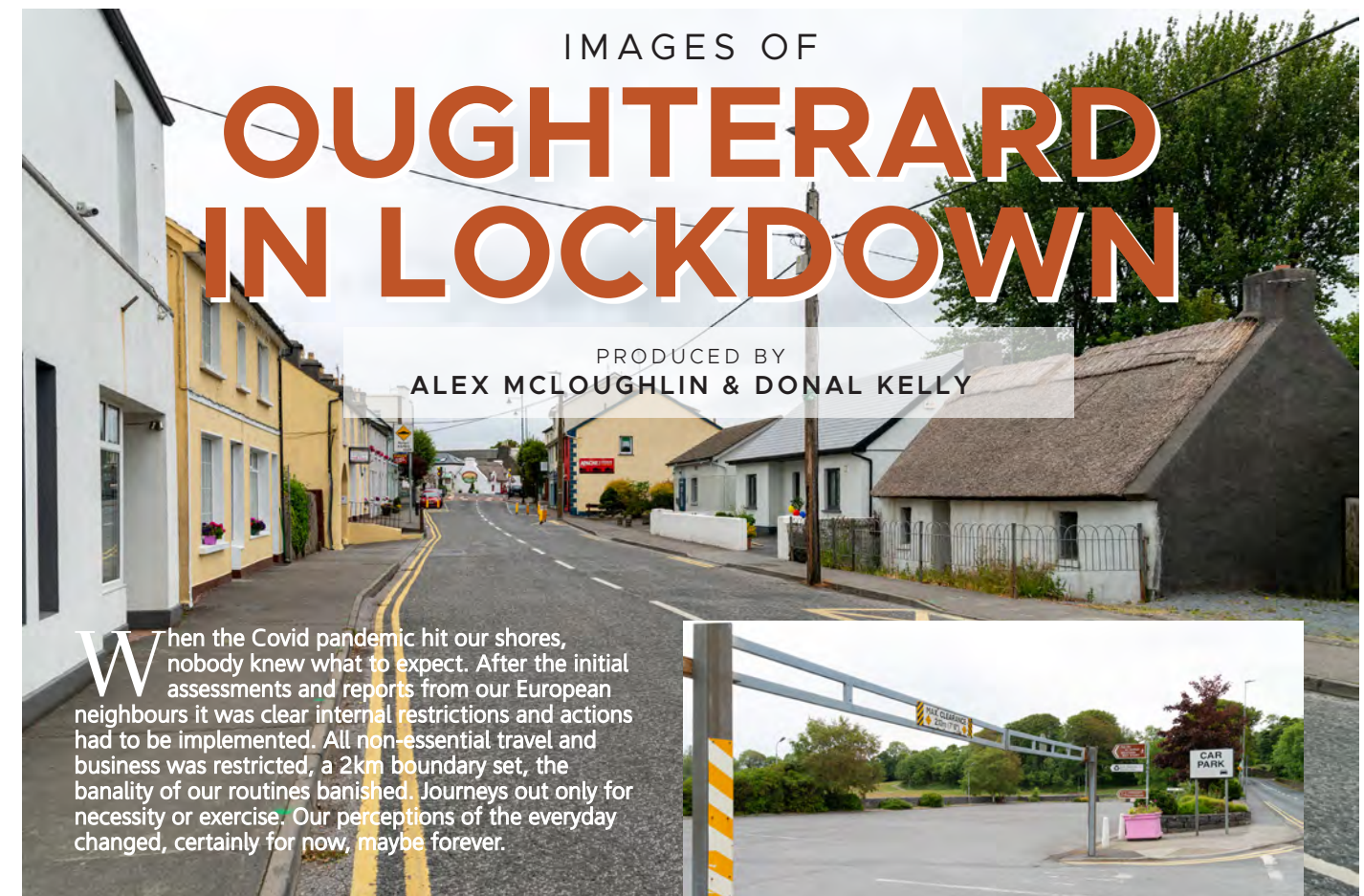
Nora's delicious bread recipe.

Ingredients

250g wholemeal flour
150g plain flour
1 teaspoon bread soda
1 teaspoon salt
Handful mixed seeds
Handful walnuts
2 tablespoons treacle
1egg
500mls milk.

Mix all the ingredients together and put in a greased loaf tin. Bake in a preheated oven at 180 degrees for 40-45 minutes; enjoy!

This recipe can be adapted to suit personal taste. I always use the seeds but don't put in walnuts every time. I use a little less milk and usually use buttermilk or a combination of the two. It is so easy: thanks Nora! ■



But in our communities, a group of often overlooked individuals now designated as key or frontline workers. These are not the extraordinary superheroes that are centre in fictional popular culture, but the workers that go about their day to day business, and now faced with covid.

Something unquantifiable except with the ever increasing statistics, the key R number and the 24 hour news stream we have become accustomed to. With unknown lasting effects and the seemingly never ending terminology and jargon that quickly became accepted and adopted into daily life, these people continued their work with calculated risks to friends and family alike. They relied on us to do our part so that they and their families could remain safe, a small price for those of us under restrictions.

A trip to the shops became a big event, no longer simply hopping into a car and away we go, lists meticulously planned so as little time was spent in shops as possible, hand sanitizers and masks quickly becoming essential. But these key workers still continued, the plexiglass and sanitization stations the last barriers between them and potential infection. There was of course some good to come out of this pandemic, the community response coming together to help those most vulnerable, and the respect that grew towards those on the 'frontline'.

Myself and Donal Kelly took time to document some of the frontline workers from Oughterard. The next few pages highlight a few of these workers during this unprecedented time. It was not possible to document all the key workers during this period, but this collection represents these workers that are so often overlooked. The whole community are proud of the work you do and recognise the service that you provide to all, going above and beyond what would be expected in these difficult times.

- Alex



Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page



< Continued from previous page



Continued on next page >

Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page



MCGEOUGH'S BUTCHERS



CIARAN HANLEY
Delivery volunteer, CAA



JUSTIN KEOGH
Centra home delivery



MARTIN IRONS
Delivery volunteer, Rugby club



STEPHEN MEEHAN
Delivery driver



MEALS ON WHEELS
Food delivery for the elderly

< Continued from previous page



SULLIVAN'S
COUNTRY GROCER



GERRY McDONNELL
Food delivery, Carrown tober Foods

Continued on next page >

Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page



Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page



Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page



ROBERT NAUGHTON &
LARA KENNEDY
Top Oil Filling Station/Mace



< Continued from previous page



OUGHTERARD HEALTH CENTRE
Left to right: Marie Collins (Clerical), Marie Harie (Nurse), Dr. Peter Harie, Eleanor Reddington (Public Health Nurse), Septa Carey (Receptionist), Bridie Lucey (Receptionist), Irene Fahy (Public Health Nurse), and Dr. Lisa Ryan.



KEOGH'S CENTRA



GRACE CROKER
Staff, Keogh's Centra



SHARON KEANE
Deli staff, Keogh's Centra



FLAHERTY'S PHARMACY

Continued on next page >

Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page

It is St Patrick's Day, 2020. Lá Fhéile Pádraig. What's expected? The wearing of green, the wafting over of tin whistles and crackling PA speakers, the parading by of satirical dioramas and sputtering vintage cars, the first pouring out of people as winter finally begins to cede to daffodils, rustling hedgerows, and signs of the grand evening stretch.

But.

Main street is empty. Parking places on Camp Street are free. Doors are shut, lights off, only a few supermarkets alive for a rare person, skipping conversation, avoiding eye contact, furtively washing hands, darting in and out for essentials.

The essentials. How much can society pare back and still function? How much of our lives can be paused; what matters most?

We are still learning. With remarkable speed, via supply chains of global demand, touch by touch, cough by cough, from food markets and ski resorts via air conditioned tubes of jet planes, a microscopic pathogen takes over. It is scarcely alive at all, strands of RNA packed inside a tiny ball decorated with 'spike' proteins, but is just the right shape to latch on to human cells, and spreads in just the right way to evade detection.

Around the planet it appears, as slowly, then suddenly, countries notice and react, with coordination across nation states confused and complex. It is already too late to contain. News becomes saturated by this one issue, and words like unprecedented become so overused they lose all distinction. "I hope this email finds you well in these strange times." Streets across the globe empty as area after area goes into lockdown.

Lockdown.

We have 2km. We draw circles around our houses on maps, marking abrupt invisible borders on quiet roads. Our given limits: essential journeys only. Each of us asks - what is essential? Engagements and expectations fade. Our homes become our whole worlds. We are now more of this local place than ever before. No visitors, no visiting. We sit in pyjamas scrolling numbers on phones. Numbers of tests, of cases, of ICU beds occupied, of deaths. We want to know more - where exactly? Spread how? We watch as swallows arrive, flowers appear, spring emerges. We forget which day is which, confuse Tuesday with Thursday, marvel at how weeks pass so swiftly, days so slow. And we are lucky ones, if we successfully hide from the virus and the damage it can wreak in our bodies. Hospitals teeter on high nerves. A global storm plays out on the most local of scales: touch by touch.

All this time, there are those who do go to work, and services that have not skipped a beat. At 7am delivery trucks arrive on the square to stock up shelves. An Post vans and couriers begin to buzz by along boreens. The Health Centre starts fielding calls and arranging appointments. Tests. The vet drives out to tricky calf-deliveries. Meals on Wheels deliver hot meals at lunchtime. Volunteers from clubs deliver from supermarkets, punching eircodes into their phones. Home help carers continue to call. The nursing home reorganises and carries on.

Workers drive a near empty N59 to their roles in UHG. This is the front line of society. Bins are collected. Medicines are prepared. Babies are born. While many of us knuckle down into hiding, others are out keeping the show on the road. Everyone faces challenges. The ease of 'doing nothing' morphs into a cocktail of cabin fever and 'stuckhome syndrome'.

As the year moves steadily on there are no festivals, no events. Arts and sports shut down. RTE drifts into reruns of reruns. There's a fine May, a wet June, mixed July, and some sun again in early August. Lockdown gradually eases. We are released to 5km, then the county boundaries, then the country. The N59 bumper to bumper with staycationers, kayaks and bikes strapped across cars. Every week, a new normal to get used to. It does not end, it has not ended. It goes on. It changes and we change. We who have never worn a face mask now don't leave home without. We learn how you feel like an eejit when you smile behind one, and figure out instead to focus on eyes and hands. We become unsettled by footage of crowds, no

matter how old. We struggle not to police each other into animosity as regulations are issued and interpretations vary. We get used to muffled speech, yellow signs, clear plastic dividers, and tap tap tapping with bank cards. Two metres. Two metres. We squirt alcohol gels, endlessly wipe our hands, follow arrows painted to floors, sign our names in restaurants.

As schools warily reopen and we wind back towards the winter end of the year, we struggle for perspective: we are still inside the hurricane. We crave the innate comfort of touch and the warmth of a welcoming crowd, and tire of measuring our distance to others. But we can continue to learn, recognise what and who keeps the community ticking over, and commit to showing up, focusing on the essentials, and getting through to the roar of some parade on the other side.

- Donal



< Continued from previous page



FR. MICHAEL CONNOLLY
Priest, Church of Immaculate Conception



DERMOT WALSH
Funeral director



REV. LYNDIA PEILOW
Reverend, Kilcummin Parish Church

End of article

Finding a recipe in Malaga

by getting lost and being rescued by the priest and two policemen

In response to our appeal for readers to send us their "recipes with a story" that they would like to share with other readers, Hen - a former resident of Oughterard now living in Canada - sent us the following chicken recipe.

When we arrived in Malaga on February 1, 2020, it was 23 degrees, having left Toronto in a deep freeze at minus 35. A swing of 58 degrees, the holiday was off to a good start. We rented an Air B&B which was perfect in location, had lots of space and a wonderful patio.

I decided to go to Mass at the local Church, St Gabriel's, down the road. Of course I did not understand a word of Spanish but stood up and sat down like everyone else. Communion came (I am Celiac, and cannot have the host) and I went for a Blessing to one of the parishioners giving out communion. I crossed my arms for the Blessing, but the man giving communion kept saying Tomalo. I kept saying Blessing. He raised his voice and the other man giving out communion came over to see what the commotion was about. Then it started, Blah, Blah, Blah, Si, Si, Si. She won't Tomalo (take it). Yikes. Then the priest came over. Blah, Blah, Blah, Si, Si, Si. Oh no, here we go again. Celiac I say. OH AHH, Vino. I fully understood that word and someone comes with a bottle of wine and a glass. I took a sip and the priest said Terminario (finish the glass). At this point one glass was not enough, as it seemed that the entire congregation had stopped praying or whatever else they were doing to intently focus on my embarrassment at the altar. I crawled back to my seat wishing they had given me the bottle.

Across the street, my husband Johan was waiting for me. How was it? he asked. You should have come for the wine I said!

The next day Himself decided it was time to go to the Museo Picasso (Picasso was born in Malaga). We already had done over 20 out of the 34 museums in Malaga and I was not about to see another one. He likes museums, I like cooking schools. We said we would keep in touch by phone and meet back at the house. On my way back I decided to take a different route and see what I would find. What a great city to wander, lovely boulevards to walk, people out for a stroll, mild breeze, lovely sights, the aroma from restaurants. It was time to go back to our Air B&B, as it was getting dark. I had walked so much and now I was lost. I tried to call Johan but discovered my phone was out of juice. Dead. Panic started to creep in.

I saw a Police car parked with two policemen in it. They opened the window and I said do you speak English? Si Si. I am lost and my phone is out of juice. The one with a little English said Juice, Juice, no entiendo. Then I showed him my phone and empty battery sign. Si, Si, where do you live? Don't know the address. Then he asked where is your husband? He left me for Picasso I cried. Blah Blah to each other. I went to Mass on Sunday in a church near the house I said. We have 30 Churches in Malaga he said rolling his eyes. It's near St. Gabriel's Church I said. The Policeman said you remember the name of the Church. Si, I said. Now my Spanish is starting to improve. I did not tell him there is a Church in Toronto called St Gabriel's of the Sorrowful Virgin. I did not want to upset them. We will take you and perhaps on your way you will remember the house. So there I sat in the back of the car with two good looking policemen, Miguel and Carlos, humming Get me to the Church on Time.

The Church was locked, but the priest's house was right beside it. The priest opened the door. Blah blah. Then he looked at me and said Celiac. Yes, yes that's me I'm lost, no phone. No English. The Police took over and we were invited in. As my phone was charging out comes the wine. The priest was getting dinner: bulls' tails and pork cheeks. Please taste. No hungry I said, but I liked the Vino. Then my phone rang. It was Himself, where are you? I told him. Silence at the other end. Come and get me I said. He arrived and thanked the 3 of them. Before I left the priest said "Mass and Vino Sunday?" For sure I said, maybe Johan will come for the wine.



Chicken Provençal

Saying good bye to the policemen, Carlos said dinner at my house tomorrow everyone. My wife, Juliette, is French and a good cook. So the next night off we go to a Spanish home. We had a wonderful evening with good food, wine and lots of laughter. And I learned a few more Spanish words.

The recipe Juliette cooked was the following:

Chicken Provençal

4 Chicken legs, skin-on and bone-in, or skin-on chicken thighs
1 tsp salt
1 tsp pepper
1/2 to 3/4 cup of flour (I use rice flour)
3 tbsp olive oil
3 to 4 tbsp herbes de Provence
1 lemon quarter
8 to 10 cloves of garlic, peeled
4 to 6 medium size shallots (I use onion quartered)
1 cup of vermouth. (use chicken stock if you don't have vermouth)
4 sprigs of thyme for garnish (if you have it)

-Pre heat oven to 200C
-Season chicken with salt and pepper. Put flour in shallow pan and lightly dredge the chicken in it, shaking the pieces to remove excess flour
-Swirl the heated oil in large pan (one that can go in oven) and place the floured chicken in it
-When the chicken is in the pan, gently cook on both sides until golden brown, before adding rest of ingredients
-Season the chicken with herbes de Provence
-Arrange the lemons, garlic and shallots around the chicken and the add the vermouth to the pan.
-Put the pan in the oven and roast for about 30 minutes, then baste with pan juices
-Continue roasting for another 25 minutes until the chicken is very crisp and meat is cooked through
-Serve it in the pan, garnished with sprigs of thyme.

Disfrutar

Teresa Krijgsman (née Hennelly)

Kilcummin Parish Church Latest Update

Church of Ireland in Communion with
The Anglican & Episcopal Churches



The Very Rev LYNDA PEILOW

Rector of Saint Nicholas' Collegiate Church, Galway,
Kilcummin Church, Oughterard & Provost of Tuam

e: rector@stnicholas.ie t: +353 (0)91 521 914 w: stnicholas.ie
The Rectory, Taylors Hill Road, Galway, H91 ENN3

Times of Service

At the time of writing the church has been closed since 22nd March and six months have passed with Sunday worship being available by way of Zoom – firstly from the rector's home in Taylor's Hill and more recently from St Nicholas' Church, Galway, which opened on 5th July with numbers attending restricted to 50 and strict safety measures in place.

It is now intended that Kilcummin will open on 4th October where similar Covid 19 precautions will apply with all Sunday services scheduled for at 11am.

Carole Reynolds, a former Diocesan Reader and current Education Officer with the National Parks and Wildlife Services at Letterfrack who was ordained deacon last year, is to be ordained to

the priesthood in St Nicholas' Galway on 27th September. As an ordained Local Minister she will serve primarily in Oughterard, but there will also be a blending of Ministry with the Rector. This will ensure that all services can be at 11am rather than having some at 9.30am and others at 11am.

Maintenance matters

Church grounds: Thanks go to the CE workers who continue to keep the grass cut and the churchyard looking good.

Bell: A detailed inspection of the wooden block on which the bell is mounted has yet to be carried out. The bell, cast by Thomas Hodges of Dublin in 1853, probably weighs between 800 and 1000kg. It has been temporarily secured with two five tonne ratchet

straps and, for the moment, must remain silent.

Roof: It will also be necessary to do some work on the ridge capping on the high part of the roof as it has been found the capping installed following re-slating some years ago does not adequately cover the top row of slates. Considering the height of the roof this work will involve the use of scaffolding which adds significant costs to this project. Earlier in the year it was hoped that the matter might be attended to during the sunny days of summer but with Covid 19, the fact that we have had little dry weather since mid July, and the expense involved, nothing could be done. Funds need to be raised and Diocesan approval must also be obtained. ■

Post Covid

*Written by The Very Rev Lynda Peilow
Rector of Saint Nicholas' Collegiate Church, Galway,
Kilcummin Church, Oughterard, & Provost of Tuam*

If a year ago, we were told about the events of 2020, would we ever be prepared, and what would we squirrel away as necessary for life and living? There would be an urgency about preparation, postponing and planning. Perhaps if we had a chance to prepare we may not have had so many disappointments, we could have taken control. It's incredible to reflect on what we have 'lived' through and witnessed – the cost and loss to so many, the disappointments. In the last few months there are many who have shouldered and carried their cross in their own particular and unique way.

Yet, there were some silver linings.

We realised that we had plenty and that there was joy in the simple things in life; we could sit as a family and share meals; we could hear the birds sing and how wonderful that was, we thought there were more birds, but actually there wasn't, we just had the time to stop and listen, or the world was not so crammed with noise. We marvelled at beauty in nature; we realised the importance of a phone call, a text message, a letter. We became aware that all we had taken for granted was indeed very precious, including the impact and the power of the human touch, of a hug, of seeing our loved ones and friends in person. We all came to our realisations, through the sacrifices of losing what was.

In losing part of life as we knew it, ironically we discovered a new way of being. When life is stripped bare – what is important?

What we crave and what we yearn to own is often clutter. The real and important things in life can never be bought and actively changing our mindset can bring so much good to our village and world. In all of this I pray we come to realise the impact for good we as individuals can have on others, of how we can make a huge difference in the lives of others known and unknown, of how precious we are to one another, to our loved ones and to God.

As we have rediscovered what is important - be it friends or family, personal faith, the ratio between leisure and jobs, time spent at home, or perhaps it's something else. May we celebrate, cherish, respect and hold tight to the marvellous ordinary in every day that actually makes life and living extraordinary. ■



The Church of the Immaculate Conception

Restoration Fund

Restoration Update, September 2020

Written by the Restoration Team

Now that we are 'living with Covid-19', life is settling into a new norm what is difficult in that it is impossible to see the end of the tunnel! If we could it would be easier to pace ourselves, and with a growing infection level it is clear the winter may bring further restrictions on occasions in certain parts of the country.

We are very conscious that parish events have been severely curtailed and due to the rules required to safeguard the parishioners, and the church is open throughout the day as a sacred place to come and pray or contemplate in silence.

Despite this, the restoration project continues although work has slowed significantly due to the priorities to protect each other but also have the church open for Mass in a safe environment. We did have a further visit from the Conservation architect to address some water ingress from the towers and are planning work to address this shortcoming.

With all the recent rainfall it has also been a good opportunity to assess the lack of capacity on the gutters and downpipes which is very evident from the moss growth and dampness of the pebble dash (see the attached photographs). We have identified a significant leak that is currently being repaired and the related guttering is being addressed at the same time.

There are a number of pot holes that are also a hazard for our parishioners and these will be fixed shortly.

In order to minimise long term costs, the provision of three phase electricity is necessary to enable safe operation of the new air to water heating system. We were fortunate to be able to get the major works over the line without it last year as otherwise we would not have secured the significant SEAI grant – but this needs to be done and it is planned to address this along with the external lighting in the coming weeks.

Clearly other issues such as the fire escape and other works that require planning will not be progressed for the moment – this needs further engineering and design due to the significant restrictions imposed on modifying a listed building. Despite all this we are really pleased with all that has been achieved since the first donation presented to the church in March 2017.

It is very difficult to articulate just how important the sacrifices of the community in terms of personal donations have been in getting the church to its current state. It is very encouraging but of course we need the donations to continue. Our borrowings still stand at €130,997.98 from the Meitheal fund.

However, with the monthly Restoration Fund' envelopes now finished and Mass attendance severely curtailed along with the switch to cashless transactions, we anticipate less cash donations.

We are asking that anyone wishing to contribute to the project to please use either an envelope in the Church located near the altar (and the safe in the wall) or by direct transfer to the restoration account. Name of Account: Oughterard Church Restoration Fund; Bank Identifier Code BOFIE2D (that's 2 capital 'I's); IBAN: BOFI 9039 3931 1177 11 and please make sure to put your name on the 'text line' to identify the source of the donation. Once off donations and monthly standing order commitments can be made using this method. It is again worth stressing that an additional 31% can be claimed from the Revenue when in excess of €250 is donated from a tax payer in a calendar year.

We have recently issued a large number of receipts for donations made in the 2019 calendar year. If you didn't receive it – we may not have your correct address – just drop us a line as everything has been recorded and we have receipted over 1,000 separate donations since 2017. The overall cost of the restoration is still in the region of the original estimate of €600,000.

Finally, there are a large number of coin collection boxes distributed



throughout the parish. We are accepting these now if you wish to hand them in after Mass – but make sure to check all the nooks and crannies for all that unwanted loose change first. If anyone is like me the space under the driver's seat in the car can be a gold mine. Keep safe and look after your family and neighbours – addressing the disease is no longer a sprint - it's a marathon, and we need to be able to withstand the pressures prolonged restrictions bring. This is best achieved as a community. In the meantime, continue wash your hands thoroughly, stay your safe distance; wear your mask when required and stay home if you are feeling unwell and call your GP. ■

Sacramental Life

at the Church of the Immaculate Conception

Written by June Threlfall

Holy Communion

April 25th dawned bright and sunny. What a beautiful day for Oughterard National School to celebrate First Holy Communion. May 9th was just the same for Scoil Muire Doireglinne to celebrate their First Holy Communion. However, this was not to be. As with Confirmation, the celebration of the Sacraments had to be 'put on hold' due to Covid-19. How disappointed we all were!

Instead, on the above dates, we marked the occasion by lighting candles and praying together at 11.00am, which would have been the time of the mass. Fr. Michael put a message on the Parish Facebook page, and messages went out to the children from the principals, teachers and the sacramental leaders of the parish. We encouraged one another to keep well until restrictions were lifted and we could safely be together again.

Thankfully, as society began to return to some semblance of normality, tentative dates were set for the celebration of the sacrament of First Holy Communion. If in the coming weeks it remains safe to do so, the children from Scoil Muire Doireglinne will celebrate the sacrament on Saturday 26th September. Oughterard School look forward to celebrating the sacrament on Saturday, 3rd October.

I look forward to being able to write about two happy celebrations in the next issue of the Corrib News.

Confirmation

March 27th should have seen the children from Oughterard, Doireglinne and Collinamuck Schools receive the Sacrament of Confirmation, but like so many others, this had to be postponed due to Covid 19.

The children had attended seven group sessions in the Boat Inn, facilitated by parent and parish volunteers, Fr. Michael, and Fr. Robert. The sessions were enjoyable and enlightening with great contributions from all involved. We walked away from the final session on the 5th March feeling that between the schools and ourselves, the children were ready!

As the information regarding the Covid-19 Pandemic monopolised all forms of media, it became evident to everyone that our sacramental life would have to be 'put on

hold' until further notice. We were all so disappointed! The young people accepted the situation in a mature and humble way; a great sign of their development into young adults. The day was marked with a prayer and message on the Parish Facebook page, and a lovely WhatsApp video message from Mr. N Dhomhnaill. We all had to wait and stay safe until we received further information.

Fr. Michael sent a message to everyone on Easter Sunday. He made materials available online so the children and parents were able to access information and keep themselves informed. Parents were also proactive with suggestions of appropriate reading materials and activities. There was great support among the group.

Due to the situation, priests in the diocese were given the authority to confirm children and in July, we received the great news that Confirmation would take place on Saturday, 5th September. A meeting was held and a core group of parents volunteered to take responsibility for liaising with school. A lot of time and effort was put into organising the day. Seating plans were created for the possibility of one mass for all, or the inevitability of two masses due to Covid restrictions, health and safety.

Schools, the core group and the parish agreed on two masses. A lot of 'behind the scenes' work was done by a very reliable group of parents so, when the day arrived, both masses ran very smoothly. It was a spiritual occasion for all. Thanks go to Denis Geoghegan for providing the music for both masses. Thank you also to the ladies who came to church on Friday morning to create the beautiful flower arrangements. To the volunteers from school who came after each mass to clean the church, we were very grateful.

Since church re-opened for mass, parish volunteers clean the church after each mass; stewards ensure only the allowed number of people attend and that contact numbers are taken. Mass would not happen without these people. However, there are currently not enough volunteers. If you feel you could help out with either of these jobs, please contact the Parish Office. ■

Right: A selection of Confirmation photos which were sent in.





A project aiming to achieve UNESCO Global Geopark status got underway in January 2020. The Joyce Country and Western Lakes (JCWL) Geopark Project is a two-year €1.19 million initiative to support development of the area surrounding Joyce Country on the Galway-Mayo border and Loughs Mask, Carra and Corrib. The region has fabulous beauty and impressive heritage but is somewhat overshadowed by other areas and urban centres.

Geoparks are places of internationally important geology which are managed with a holistic concept of protection, education, and economic and social development. UNESCO Global Geopark status carries no additional legal status or planning restrictions to those already in place by local, national or EU legislation. The intention is to better promote the area and in doing so boost local jobs and income in its 17 communities, **Oughterard being one of those 17 communities.**

The project is supported mainly by the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund (part of Project Ireland 2040), with significant financial and in-kind support also from Geological Survey Ireland (lead partner), Údarás na Gaeltachta, Mayo and Galway County Councils, Coillte and a cross-community group JCWL Geoenterprise.

Four project staff have been contracted through public tender – a Geopark Manager (Michael Hegarty) and a Geopark Geologist (Benjamin Thébaudeau) based in Tourmekeady, a Tourism Officer (Dominic Ó Móráin) based in Oughterard, and Amrine Dubois Gafar (Project Geologist and Administrator) who is based in the Geological Survey Ireland, Dublin. This will ensure that the project will be developed in a structured and timely manner.

The main activities so far have included:

- Development of a new logo and brand identity
- Contracting for a modern interactive website
- Preparing tenders to provide training on social media and tour guiding to local communities and entrepreneurs

- Preparation of orientation and geology maps
- Development of narrative on geology, landscape, local heritage and culture for the website and information panels for sites of interest.

All communities in the area have provided feedback via physical meetings before the Covid-19 lockdown or subsequently by videoconferencing. The Board of the Oughterard Courthouse has engaged in this process so far. Corrib News Facebook Page and Corrib News/Oughterard Newsletter will keep you informed of any further developments. This is a project that should interest anyone who is involved in tourism or who would like to develop a tourism service/product or anyone who is interested in this area of great natural beauty and distinction. You can contact the project team directly by email or phone.

Contacts: 094 9000 245,
info@jcwlgopark.ie and
www.jcwlgopark.ie

Photo (Top): Lough Corrib
and the Maam valley



TIONSCADAL GEOPHÁIRC
**Dhúiche Sheoigheach
& Lochanna an Iarthair**
JOYCE COUNTRY & WESTERN LAKES GEOPARK PROJECT

POETRY

Transformation

Written by Jess Walsh,
Oughterard Writers' Group

Recognise our fragility
See it as a sign of strength
Minding us

Watch the way it speaks to us
In a voice soft but clear
Soothing

Prompting us to go inside
To face our fears one by one
Cocooning

Gently leading us from harm
Down a path seldom trod
Transforming us

News from Gortreevagh, Home of Oughterard Golf Course



It is a tradition in Golf Clubs to start the new Year by holding a "Drive-In" where the Captain and the Lady Captain formally drive-off to open the new season. But 2020 started out wet and windy and the Captains' Drive-In was postponed twice before the outbreak of Covid 19 lead to the course being closed from the end of March to May 18th. People passing the course may have noticed that the course was maintained to its usual high standards by the committed greenkeeping staff. During this time, migrating whimbrels ("maybirds") were noticed feeding on the fairways and four to five hares were also regularly seen about the course.

Unfortunately during this time, Captain Jones Ferriss succumbed to the dreaded Covid Virus and was hospitalised for many weeks which was a very worrying time for both his family and friends. Gratefully, he overcame the horrors of this virus and hearing him describe his fears and worries is a sobering experience. Jones, we are glad to have you back. Incidentally, Lady Captain Barbara also had her own woes – tripping on her patio step – and had to undergo surgery for a fractured patella. Lockdown with two crutches was no joy!

Although casual Golf resumed on 18th May, competitive Golf did not resume until 8th June. But one unexpected benefit of the restriction on team sport was the very welcome increase in new members (ca 180). These new members availed of the very attractive "New to Golf" rates that the club provides.

In the meantime, it was decided by the Captains (Jones Ferriss and Barbara Buckley) and the President (Ita Green) in consultation with the newly formed Council that, due to the shortened year and the restriction on social gatherings, they would carry on their roles through 2021. Consequently their "majors"



(Captain's Prize, Lady Captain's Prize and President's prize) would be held in 2021.

Captain Jones returned to competitive golf although he did admit that 18 holes were very tiring but he returned to his winning ways and even featured in his category two weeks ago. He has been present at Inter-Club matches and at the recent Junior Captains' Prizes. Junior Boys Captain 2020 is Colm Cunningham, Loughannon, and Junior Girls Captain 2020 is Gillian Keane, Galway.

But recovering from Covid is slow. So in consultation with his medical support team he will not be carrying on next year. As a result, he will be hosting his 2020 Captain's Prize on 25th, 26th and 27th Sept (Qualifiers) with the final on Sunday 4th October. The Captain's prize to the Ladies will be held on Weds 3th Sept..

So far 2020 has been a year of ups and many downs. But all golfers love nothing more than to meet their friends, play nine or 18 holes and have a tea/coffee/meal afterwards. Aidan Deering (chef) continues to provide wholesome food and his Sunday lunches are known for their quality and value and are of course, open to all. ■

Barbara Buckley, Lady Captain 2020.

POETRY

The Olive Branch

I gave you some food

You gave me an olive branch

I gave you my love

Meet my family

All hard working, life loving

Sharing laughs and tears

Look me in the eye

Tell me Lord, what do you see?

Have I pleased Thee?

Your smile warms my heart

Your presence exalts my soul

Love runs through my veins

Jack McCann,
Oughterard Writers' Group



THE LOCAL SVP GROUP (ST CUIMIN CONFERENCE) IS LOOKING FOR NEW VOLUNTEERS TO HELP OUT WITH OUR WORK IN THE OUGHTERARD AREA.



IF YOU THINK YOU COULD HELP AND MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN YOUR COMMUNITY AND HAVE SOME SPARE TIME, PLEASE CONTACT 087 1506824 FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

FULL TRAINING WILL BE GIVEN TO SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS.

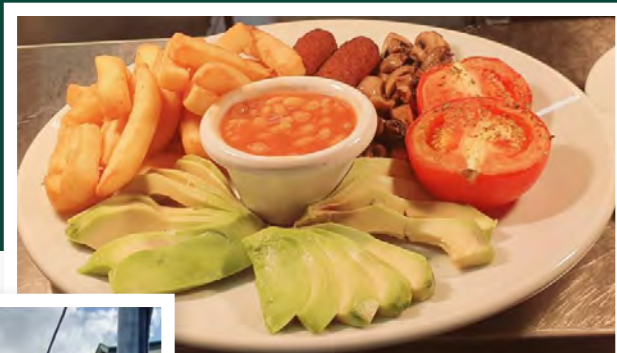
New local business:

Conneely's Cafe

A new business is always a daunting prospect but opening the doors for the first time amid a pandemic some might regard as pure crazy! Nothing daunted, following a false start on April 3rd, even the "crazy label" could not stop the dream of Conneely's Café being realised on Friday July 31st 2020. Conneely's Café is the result of many random dinner table chats down through the years between local brothers Ciarán and Francis Conneely.

Francis, an experienced Barista, has worked in the café and restaurant business for years, and as fate would have it, spent some of his early working years in the very premises Conneely's Café is located, when he worked in the Riverside Cafe in the early 90's. Ciarán, through "years of market research" was quietly confident that even in these strange times we live, a café providing high quality, good value breakfast, lunch & pastries had good prospects in the town. The combination of the local brothers' experience, market understanding and hard-working determination has ensured Conneely's Café has started as they mean to go on; providing locals and passing trade alike, with the best quality Barista

coffee from 7am, and a well thought out hot and cold food offering throughout the day.



The local influence and its importance is evident when you walk into the café. The walls are decorated with many images of Oughterard in bygone days which Ciarán sourced with the help of Antoinette Lydon, Pat McGrath and the Oughterard Heritage Group.

Oughterard has a rich history in businesses trading under their family name, so it was never a question what name was going over the door and the brothers are very proud to add the Conneely name to the tradition. The warm and friendly atmosphere in this family run café is enhanced by the staff which the brothers were delighted to find locally. As a new local business, the brothers placed a huge emphasis on sourcing their products from local suppliers e.g., Finnerty's Butchers, Faherty's Wholesale Ltd., Walsh's Bakery, Clifden, and Mary's Fish, Galway, and during the café renovation, availing of the talents of many local tradespeople.

The brothers have been overwhelmed with the support for their new business from both local customers and businesses alike. They are very appreciative for all support and specifically like to acknowledge their immediate neighbours; Conor McNamara, Mike Walsh and surrounding residents have been very understanding throughout the renovation works and beyond. The Conneely brothers look forward to serving the people of Oughterard, Connemara, and visitors to the area for many years to come! ■



The Magic of Music

Written by Maeve Bryan,
General Manager, Galway Music Residency



I was fortunate enough to come from a musical household. My mother is a piano teacher for one thing, but more than that, there was a love of music in the house always. From my Dad's constant singing (much to mum's consternation); to my brother's encyclopaedic knowledge of the Beatles, Bob Dylan and Neil Young; to my mother's renditions of Chopin's great works for piano; music was almost the invisible fifth family member. I was taken to ballets, orchestra concerts and jazz gigs, I listened to old records on the HiFi... It was just part of life. Unsurprisingly,

I took up piano as a young child and felt an instant affinity with the instrument. When I was 12, a family friend suggested I take up a stringed instrument to give me more opportunity to play with others. I chose the double bass – perhaps an unusual choice for a 12-year-old girl. But I had been to see the Lynn Ariel Jazz Trio and knew this big beast of an instrument was for me. However, it wasn't jazz I was destined to explore, but classical music. And it wasn't long until I found myself in the Galway Youth Orchestra, nervously bowing away behind the cellos, terrified and exhilarated all at once. Who knew, classical music was so cool!

It was during my time in the Galway Youth Orchestra that I first encountered ConTempo Quartet. They must have been in Galway only a year or two by this time. Through their work with the Galway Music Residency, they would come to rehearsals to tutor and, to our amazement, sit down and play along with us. The four members would each bring the same passion and precision to these rehearsals as they would to their own string quartet performances. Looking at them, it seemed as though nothing would make them happier than to sit amongst these young teenagers, emitting their beautiful melodies alongside our tuneless attempts! They were like nothing any of us had seen or heard before. They were alive with passion and dedication for music, their instruments and their ensemble. Energy poured out

of them and you felt you just wanted to be in their presence. They encouraged us, made us feel special and as though, one day, we could perhaps perform like they could (I'm still working on that one!). Their generosity of time, encouragement and inspiration seemed infinite.

I continued to encounter them over the years, through the NUI Galway Concert Orchestra and ConTempo Summer School, and this generosity never ebbed. In every instance, they gave everything they had. Ever professional, ever encouraging, ever inspiring.

I graduated from NUI Galway with a degree and masters under my belt, and toddled off to work first in publishing and then in language services. All the while, music called to me and I knew I had to make myself a career in it somehow. I started volunteering with the Galway Jazz Festival, the National Symphony Orchestra and the Galway Music Residency, the organisation responsible for bringing ConTempo Quartet to the city of tribes. When a position with the Residency became available, I knew I had to give it a shot. What better organisation to dedicate my professional time to than that which had given me so much as a young adult? I was lucky enough to be offered the position of Administration and Communications Assistant with the organisation in 2016, and have had the honour of overseeing the organisation as General Manager since 2018.

Galway Music Residency was established in 2003 with the aim of bringing music and musicians of the highest quality to as many people in Galway City and County as possible. ConTempo Quartet has been our resident ensemble since the beginning and, through them, we have been able to achieve our mission consistently for 17 years now. The quartet and the organisation are probably best known for live concerts (pre-Covid of course) – including four monthly lunchtime concerts in St Nicholas' Collegiate Church, our ConTempo Countywide series (which has often visited Oughterard), '3 Kinds of Music', and many special projects. It is on this side of things we hear ConTempo Quartet in all their glory; it's where magical moments of pure beauty are created.

But, some of my favourite work revolves around our Education and Community programmes. This is undoubtedly because I benefited from

them myself so significantly as a young person, a time when we are deeply shaped by our experiences. Being aware of the impact that inspiring musicians can have on children, young adults and community groups, I can't help but get excited when I see ConTempo Quartet join rehearsals with Symphonic Waves, the new Youth Orchestra for the West of Ireland, or sit down in front of a classroom of Leaving Cert students. Because I know that lives are being enriched, futures are being written and a love of music is blossoming.

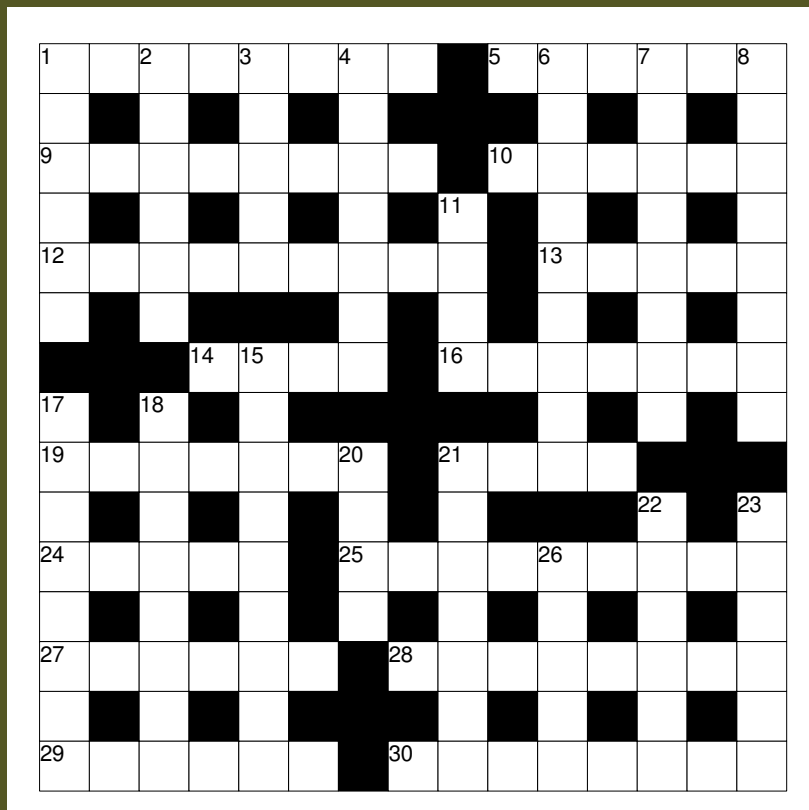
In these uncertain times, which are difficult for so many, music seems more important now than ever. Little else can penetrate the darkness and shine a pure and beautiful light like music. I am more grateful than ever that Galway Music Residency brought ConTempo Quartet to our great county. I am more grateful than ever that ConTempo have stayed. And I am more grateful than ever that I get to work with this small but impactful organisation and do my part in helping others to Listen, Learn and Love Music. ■



The Galway ConTempo Quartet & the Voldemort Quartet

AUTUMN 2020

CROSSWORD



DOWN

- 1 You could find these in your printer or on your bed. (6)
- 2 A person who discriminates against people of a different colour. (6)
- 3 Miss Dolittle from My Fair Lady. (5)
- 4 Widely spoken language in many places. (7)
- 6 60s Music group who had hits with Good Vibrations and The Sloop John B. (5-4)
- 7 Not knowing the answer to this clue will make you so, at least in this case! (8)
- 8 How a venue is when it's full almost to capacity. (8)
- 11 Could be a granny or a slip or a hitch. (4)
- 15 They are extreme reactions to ordinary things like some food or pollen. (9)
- 17 Imperil or put in harm's way. (8)
- 18 Kind of modern art that is not representational. (8)
- 20 Made a picture or went to collect the dole. (4)
- 21 Ward off a blow or direct criticism at someone else. (7)
- 22 Obstruct or get in the way of. (6)
- 23 Full of spirit and not easily subdued? (6)
- 26 Leslie _ _ _ _ , French actress of yesteryear. (5)

ACROSS

- 1 Magician or wizard who uses occult powers. (8)
- 5 One who plays in the woodwind section of the orchestra. (6)
- 9 Works of art made by cutting into soft metal with acid. (8)
- 10 The flag of Co. Clare. (6)
- 12 Person who was born and reared in Hobart or Launceston may be a bit of a devil. (9)
- 13 Large fish-eating bird with long legs and neck. (5)
- 14 What a silly, unwise way this is to develop a skin condition! (4)
- 16 Beat badly in a contest, though not necessarily violently. (7)
- 19 Ate little pieces of a larger piece of food, like a mouse. (7)
- 21 Hurry to find part of the morse code. (4)
- 24 Member of Equity. (5)
- 25 It describes something that achieves the desired results. (9)
- 27 It's free for a Latin speaker. (6)
- 28 An island chain of which Lewis, Harris, Benbecula and Uist form part. (8)
- 29 If the first check gives an inconclusive result, one may have to do this a second time. (6)
- 30 Dangerous swimmer that killed Australian naturalist, Steve Irwin. (8)

ANSWERS TO SUMMER 2020 CROSSWORD



Finding My Feet After School

Written by *Natasha Lynch*



Finding your feet after school and coping with the pressures to plan your future is undoubtedly one of the most nerve wracking times of a young person's life. The uncertainty, confusion and constant self-doubting are but a few of the bumps along the emotional rollercoaster ride. My personal experience with college was not a straightforward one, but definitely worth it for the course I pursued and ended up really enjoying.

Having first completed my Leaving Certificate in 2016, I remember hastily scrolling through several university websites searching for courses that somewhat appealed to me. I knew that solving X and Y never really piqued my interest as I preferred analysing the poetry of Robert Frost and discussing the build up to the 1913 Dublin Lockout, so I leaned towards a humanities college course.

When the morning of the Central Applications Office (CAO) deadline approached, I managed to scrape a minimum of five courses on my list; my first choice was an open Arts degree in Maynooth University and when the offers finally came out, that's the one I got. Although I was relieved, I couldn't ignore the impending fear that it might not be the right course for me. I didn't attend any college open days bar this one, so although I knew I liked it, I had nothing to compare it to. The atmosphere on campus plays a really significant role as some people flourish in larger and more open environments whilst others prefer smaller, more intimate ones. This particular course allowed you to try a wide and diverse range of subjects before making a final decision, and even though I went to several lectures in English, Law, Anthropology and Criminology, I ultimately knew I wasn't interested in any of them. I swiftly decided there was no point in spending three years pretending I liked my chosen course when in fact, I felt the complete opposite.

After one month I found myself withdrawing from Maynooth, packing up my room in student accommodation and going back home, right back to square one. Seeing my friends having the time of their lives in their first year of college wasn't easy to say the least; I felt lost, secluded and somewhat embarrassed, and it took time before I realised that I made the right choice. I decided to repeat the Leaving Certificate in 2017, knowing that the more points I attained, the greater the choice of courses available to me;

as I was that much older, I went to an institute for further education, rather than return to my old school. This time around I put the hours aside for researching courses and attending open days, and thankfully I was offered my first choice again: Journalism in Dublin City University.

I'm now entering my final year in October and although I'm looking forward to returning to a routine, the absence of normality will be hard to ignore. Students around the country are facing uncertainty about online learning having spent the months of March to May studying from home when Covid-19 closures and restrictions began. Universities have now had to adjust to this new system of online zoom lectures and video presentations. Of course, it isn't the same experience as being in front of your lecturer and interacting with your peers for group work in person, but it's necessary to adapt for the sake of everyone's health. Interviews are a crucial aspect to my assignments and whilst nothing compares to being face to face, phone calls and skype calls will have to do. Although it will not be a regular final year of college, I'm happy to be finally pursuing a degree in an area that I have a real passion for.

For those who have just entered sixth year and are planning on going to college, it's ok to stray from the 'normal' system of going into university straight after secondary school. I felt this option wasn't encouraged whilst I was in my final school year, but - if anything - it makes more sense. Taking a year out to consider your options and discover your interests outside of the confines of the classroom can be really beneficial. Choosing to do a Post Leaving Certificate course (PLC) is also a popular and really sensible option as it allows you to gain an insight into a college course before making that three-year commitment. In my opinion, a year of self-exploration is nothing in the scheme of your whole life, but well worth it in every sense. ■

POETRY

Lunasagh at Furbo Church

I follow the curves
slowly inwards to pause
at the centre, spiralling

I walk the labyrinth
barefoot caressing
Earth's delicate skin

I walk the same paths
visiting the same places
from new perspectives

where sky and land touch
blue horizons and bleach
washed walls white

over the horizon clouds
heavy with new hope
rain down joy

church statues stand guard
watching the tides turn, smiling
at the carved Clare coast

as I dance the labyrinth
of life on light feet hands
raised in benediction

walking and breathing
moving towards the
everlasting now

Barbara Dunne
Oughterard Writers' Group

CORRIB RAMBLERS: Belmullet Adventures

4-7 September 2020

Corrib Ramblers finally managed to have our "Summer Weekend Away" in September - Covid 19 having delayed us! Belmullet beckoned for its range of scenery and variety of walking terrain.

Friday

We headed off in ones and twos, still reluctant to share cars in these current times. Our first stop was at Ginger & Wild Café in Ballycroy National Park. Here we had a delicious lunch prepared by Jean Pierre and served by Nicola who is responsible for some of the amazing art work displayed on the walls. This was followed by a very convenient loop walk around the visitor centre which only takes about 35 minutes and allows lovely views across to the Nephin range. A well-made board walk and a gravelled path permits easy access to all to cross the bog and go up a small hill to see the surrounding countryside in full.



On the boardwalk at Ballcroy

On arrival in Belmullet we checked into the Broadhaven Hotel and then headed off for a very pleasant ramble along a beach and then a lake – part of the Cross Lake green loop. We continued to have the luck we have had since restarting our walks post lockdown in that we had no rain though it was somewhat windy.



Three times around the holy well of St Deirbhile.



Standing Stones at Blacksod.



Skirting the cliffs on the Benwee walk

< Continued from previous page



Picnic with a view, Benwee walk

Saturday

The next day we headed off to the southern end of the Mullet Peninsula to explore the Fallmore area. We began with a visit to Deirbhile's Twist – a sculpture based on the local legend of St Deirbhile and created by artist Michael Bulfin. Large granite boulders quarried from the area stand in an impressive spiral, almost like a miniature version of Stonehenge. It is located on the top of Cnoc na gCnámh which provides commanding views across Blacksod Bay.

From there we went to visit the holy well of St Deirbhile. Deirbhile, a contemporary of St Columcille, founded a convent here in the 6th century. She devoted her life to caring for the sick and the poor. The water from the well is reputed to have healing properties, particularly for a variety of eye complaints, so many of the group circled the well three times while taking the water. One of our group also said that crawling under the arch into the well area three times ensured one would never drown – I am not sure about the veracity of this but a number of the group decided to try it out!

From there we continued on our way past Gloshtower, now an impressive ruin. It was one of a chain of signal towers built by the British around 1805 to warn of any impending French naval invasion of Ireland. We wandered along quiet country roads and down onto the long, beautiful sandy Glosht beach where we

had our picnic in the company of a very friendly labrador dog who had joined us for the walk! We were looking across at the Iniskea Islands which might have formed part of our itinerary if the weather had been less windy!

We ended up at Blacksod lighthouse where an enterprising woman has set up a coffee caravan and we were able to avail of very welcome hot drinks. Blacksod has an interesting history - weather forecasts sent by the lighthouse keepers here caused the Normandy landings to be postponed. D day had been scheduled to commence on 5 June 1944 but a report warning of approaching bad weather fronts caused Eisenhower to delay the invasion by a day until 6 June 1944. Blacksod continues to be a fishing harbour with lots of lobster pots and nets in evidence.

When driving back to the hotel we made a detour to visit the very impressive blow hole at Dún na mBó on the north west end of the peninsula on Doonamo Point. By this stage the weather had become even more windy and froth from the sea was blowing up onto the cliff and up through the blow hole creating a dramatic effect. There is a sculpture around the blow hole which is dedicated to those lost at sea off the Erris coast and it forms part of the North Mayo Sculpture Trail. The uninterrupted view of Eagle Island and the Atlantic has led to this being called one of the wildest points in Ireland. We then returned to the hotel where we had an excellent dinner that night.

Continued on next page >

Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page



A bright evening on Cross Beach



Loitering on Glish beach.



A dog's picnic.

Sunday

This was the walk we had been awaiting and which some people had come for specifically. Thanks to Tom's weather interpreting skills this walk was planned for the Sunday which turned out to be the best day of the weekend and got progressively sunnier as the day went on. The target was the Benwee loop – a spectacular five hour walk climbing gradually up to some of the most wonderful cliff scenery in Ireland before returning back along tracks and bogs!

We started from Carrowteigh – a small village about a 40 minute drive from our hotel. From the village we walked a short distance along the road until we got to a track which brought us gradually up onto the cliffs. There we paused for 15 minutes or so to allow a shower to pass over before climbing higher onto the next section of the cliffs. From there we continued on until we felt it must definitely be lunchtime. However, Tom encouraged us to climb one more slope before we got to our "dining room" – a ridge perched high up on the cliffs (about 255 metres) along which we could all sit to eat our picnic. We all agreed that the views more than justified the delayed lunch!

Having enjoyed the smell of the sea, and watching the seabirds wheeling below us, we began gradually wending our way back down till we got to a headland with "Eire 63" written in stones on it. This is one of the 82 sites around Ireland set up by the Coastal Watch in 1939 to guard against invasion of Ireland. A team of men carried out watch duties over the sea from these sites. Initially they were housed in tents but, as these did not provide sufficient shelter, a "pill box" was erected on each site. These were small shelters with room for a small fire and six windows facing towards the sea and each was equipped with a telephone. The men kept a constant watch over the sea noting the movements of ships and aircraft during the war. In 1942-43 they were required to build marker signs near their look out posts so hence the "Eire 63". "Eire" indicated to aircraft that they were flying over Ireland – a neutral country and the "63" indicated where exactly they were as each had a unique number. We rested on the concrete base of this building – all that currently remains - but there is evidence of work due to begin on rebuilding some kind of a structure there again. We then walked along a track by Portacloy Beach and just when we thought we had done the brunt of the walk we took off over a bog and had to clamber through a number of bog holes before eventually arriving back at Carrowteigh, tired but happy. We found a pop-up van selling fresh mussels and mackerel which a number of the gang enjoyed. That night at dinner some were amazed to hear that one couple amongst us had celebrated their last night in Belmullet with sex on the beach and we feared that moral standards were dropping amongst the Ramblers - until the cocktail menu was spotted!

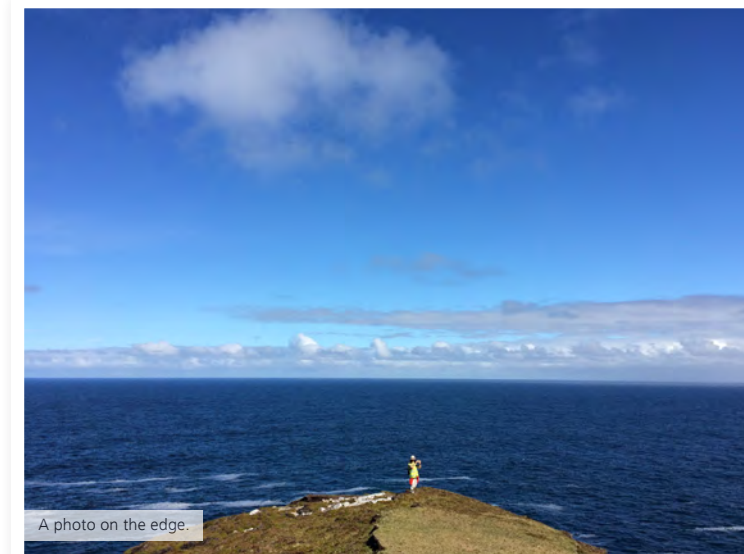
Continued on next page >

< Continued from previous page

Monday

On the way home we of course took in another walk, this time part of the Keenagh Loop in a lovely spot amongst the Nephin range. Rosaleen and Tom took off at breakneck speed to cut across the mountain, splashing through bog holes to complete the full loop. Most people were happy to do varying distances along small roads and somewhat muddy tracks. Then - following impossibly narrow and scenic lanes by Loughs Conn and Cullin - we travelled to The Museum of Country Life in Turlough Park, just outside Castlebar, where we had lunch, and a wander around the museum and Victorian gardens. The museum provides an interesting look at life in rural Ireland in past times. After this, most of the group continued directly home but a small hard core decided to include a stop over at Ballintubber Abbey for a short walk to explore the beginning of Ireland's oldest pilgrim path - Tóchar Phádraig - which is more than 3,000 years old, and to visit the Abbey which has been a wonderful historic and continuous place of worship since the time of St. Patrick. Finally we all got home safely after a fun packed and adventurous few days.

We adhered to Covid guidelines having no more than 15 people in the same group on any one walk; also, options were on offer for every walk – a long version and a shorter version to suit all walkers. Mary and Christina were particularly delighted to get to Mayo and to partake of exhilarating walks in these different areas at their own pace.



A photo on the edge.

Corrib Ramblers meet up in Oughterard Carpark on almost every Sunday morning at 10:30am, for interesting, varied and social walks within one hour's driving distance. We occasionally walk further afield, including The Burren, other parts of Ireland, and in other parts of Europe. Usually, the walks are 2-3 hours long on established paths, with plenty of opportunities to loiter along the way - including a picnic lunch break and great camaraderie. Also, many take refreshments at a local hostelry immediately after the walk. We welcome new members and visitors at any time: email corribramblers@gmail.com, just turn up at Oughterard Carpark on a Sunday morning, or ring Mary Kyne (086 0779114), Barbara McSharry (087 3531535), or Joe Murray (087 2192682) for more details. ■

ROGER FINNERTY & SONS

TRADITIONAL FAMILY BUTCHERS

A Member of the Associated Craft Butchers of Ireland



NOW IN STOCK

Aberdeen Angus Striploin Steaks

Lamb from "Kinvarra"

Belly Pork from Elphin, Roscommon

Shin Beef with Marrow Bone

The Square, Oughterard,

Co. Galway

091-552255

Two poems by Chris Mayhew

Chris Mayhew, a much loved member of Oughterard Writers' Group, passed away in April (see "Condolences" in the Summer issue of Corrib News). Chris' warm personality and wonderful writing skills are greatly missed. To help celebrate Chris' life, the Group presents here two beautiful poems written by Chris and taken from "Shadows", a book published by the Group in 2018.



The Waterfall

We are ready to jump, to fly.
This is what we have been trained for
from infancy.
Born from rain in quiet pools,
tumbling and laughing our way down the
mountainside,
feeling the warm sun touching our surface,
and the flecked trout tickling our
undersides.

Now as we draw closer,
we hear a strange sound.
A hum that transforms into a roar.
This is what we were born for,
the glory, the exhilaration of the plunge!
The crowd urges us on
as over the edge we fall.
Incandescent in light,
making rainbows
making children smile
and gasp in awe.

Tumbling away free.
Free of bank, of bed,
of weed.
Into the pure element of air,
reborn.
Then emerging out through froth and foam,
to carry on our journey home,
on towards the sea.
To the great rewarding
and to tranquility.

Temporary Lives

Thank you for sharing
your temporary life with me.
We breathe the same air,
feel the same sun on our faces,
share touch, sight,
hearing, smell.
We move our limbs,
mine so lithe,
yours so strong.

We walk upon this earth of ancient days.
We are flowers of the field,
a brief moment
in the long procession of history,
coinciding perfectly in the here and now.
Like sunbeams slanting through the curtain,
or moonlight shimmering
upon the ever changing sea.
Light motes,
having our moment of glory.
We breathe out, we breathe in,
we sleep, we dream.

All that is seen is temporary.
All that endures is unseen.

Four Saints Lookout

Written by Diana Van de Kamp, Oughterard Writers' Group

"How much longer? I am so tired. My feet hurt", she groaned trudging along in her new hiking boots.

"Not too far. Pick up your feet and they will hurt less", he answered flatly. She would never make it in the army he thought to himself. It was a perfect day to be outside. The air was cool and crisp, and it cleaned out his lungs from all the city toxins. This was about a 4 mile hike at best, that would ideally bestow an appreciation for nature upon his daughter. Perhaps that was too ambitious a goal, but he was giving it his best shot nonetheless. Nature had been his classroom and he wanted the same for her. He had taken her for a weekend at the James Reserve in the San Jacinto Mountains. A 29 acre ecological reserve and biological field station, just outside of Idyllwild, California.

They stayed overnight in the Trailfinders Lodge, named after the school he attended as a boy. They ate frito pies and slept on bunk beds in sleeping bags, which both of them secretly loved. But, the novelty was starting to wear off.

"C'mon, Dad, my feet are killing me. Why do we have to do this?" she shrieked in a pitch that only a twelve year old girl can muster.

"You can manage. Almost there." He kept focused and kept his pace up the trail. He tried to distract her by pointing out the California spotted owl perched in a pine, the ancient oak woodlands, and the eye-catching red bark of the manzanita trees. "Manzanita means little apple in Spanish", he informed her proudly.

She was going crazy in her head. What the hell did almost mean to him? Who cares about little apples! Why was everything always so far away? If she was actually dying, would he even stop or care? She ACHED, and it was getting worse on every step. Her right foot was really starting to throb, and she had been fighting tears for the last half mile. The last thing she wanted to do was cry in front of her dad. She wanted to practice stoicism, like her dad did, but she was still struggling with the concept. He was the master of enduring hardship without complaining, and she merely a novice. Despite all the whining, she secretly treasured her daddy/daughter time. For once he was all hers, not a man of the law, not a servant to the public, and not an elected official. He was just her dad today. She tried to keep up to his pace, but something suddenly burst and she had to stop.

"DAAAAD!" she sobbed falling down in a heap on the trail.

He stopped, doubled back and knelt down over her as she was clutching her right foot.

"Owww, owwwwww, owwwwww dad!". He looked at her sympathetically and could tell she was in a fair amount of pain.

"Let's take off that boot for a second and have a look?"

She nodded and he slowly removed it. She winced at the sight of her bloody sock underneath. At the same time a relief washed over her as much of the pressure had been relieved. She took a deep breath and slowly peeled the sock off her foot to reveal two large blisters, that had apparently popped.

"GROSS!!!!", her echo carried through the valley and beyond. She turned her head away, so as to not have to look at the carnage.

"Oh dear, it must have been the new boots that caused this" he lamented while she nodded knowingly. "Perhaps we should have broken them in a little before our hike?"

"DUH!" she sighed with an exaggerated eye roll. In that moment of sarcasm, she suddenly remembered the stoics acceptance of misfortune. Amor fati- a love of fate. This was her opportunity for a practical application of that philosophy.

"Let's get you down the mountain, to a first aid kit. we can get you fixed up there. You can lean on me", as he helped upright his daughter.

She got to her feet, dusted herself off with her boot in hand. She had a sudden surge of adrenaline. "How much further to the top dad?" she persisted.

"About a quarter mile".

"Let's keep going. I can carry the devil shoe." She had her resolve face on and there was no changing her mind now. Amor fati, she rallied. He tried to hide his proud smirk.

"Are you sure?"

She pulled up her bloody sock and nodded. Much was said in their silence. They hiked the rest of the trail in the peace of the San Jacinto mountains. It was a good day. ■

On the record...

John Hume's visit to Oughterard May 2008

The recent death of John Hume, one of Ireland's most distinguished citizens, brings back memories of his and his wife, Pat's, celebrated visit to Oughterard on 24th May, 2008. As reported by Dick Gilbert in the Oughterard Newsletter of June 2008, Hume gave a speech in a marquee at the Connemara Gateway Hotel, which was warmly received.

Hume explained the principles which had guided him throughout his public life and especially for his work for peace in the North:

1. You must respect differences. All conflict is about differences.
2. Any institutions of government must be constructed so as to respect differences.
3. Once the institutions are formed, you must work together to break down barriers further.

"Look at the Good Friday Agreement", he said, "and there you will find these three principles at work".

Appreciation was shown to the many people who had made this visit possible and so successful, particularly to Kay Watson who had chaired the event, and to Michelle and Denis Doherty, and John Nolan, of the Connemara Gateway Hotel. ■



The front cover of the June 2008 issue of the Oughterard Newsletter

OUT & ABOUT

Advice from the year 1490 on using your feet to achieve virtue

Corrib Ramblers, always on the path of virtue, recently rambled to Ballintubber Abbey, and found the following food for thought at the beginning of Ireland's greatest pilgrim trail, the Tóchar Phádraig:



Welcome to young Jonny!

It's nice to have some good news to celebrate in these difficult times. On 4th August 2020 our family of donkeys in Glann welcomed a new member: Jonny arrived into this world safe and sound.

Jonny has a shock of black hair, a pale nose and long legs, and looks similar to his mum, Milly. Both foal and mum are doing very well indeed. His grandmother, Phoebe, his uncle, Charlie, and his adopted aunt, Delia, are delighted with the new arrival.

Thank you to everyone (you know who you are!) who has been keeping an eye on things for us. ■

Fran and Nicky Taylor

(Photo kindly supplied by Richard Barton)

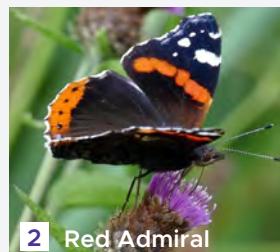
Butterfly Quiz

These are the names of the butterflies that were shown in the summer issue of the Corrib News.

Photographs by Anne Gallen



1 Peacock



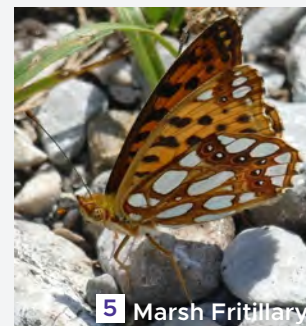
2 Red Admiral



3 Small Tortoiseshell



4 Orange-tip



5 Marsh Fritillary



6 Clouded yellow



7 Cabbage white



8 Green-veined white

JOYCE'S
passionate about food

Winter Warmers at Joyce's Oughterard



4 FOR
€19

BORD NA MONA BRIQUETTES



ONLY
€29.95

CALOR BUTANE GAS 11.34KG (REFILL)



4 FOR
€40

SUPER THERM COAL 20KG



3 FOR
€29

POLISH COAL 20KG

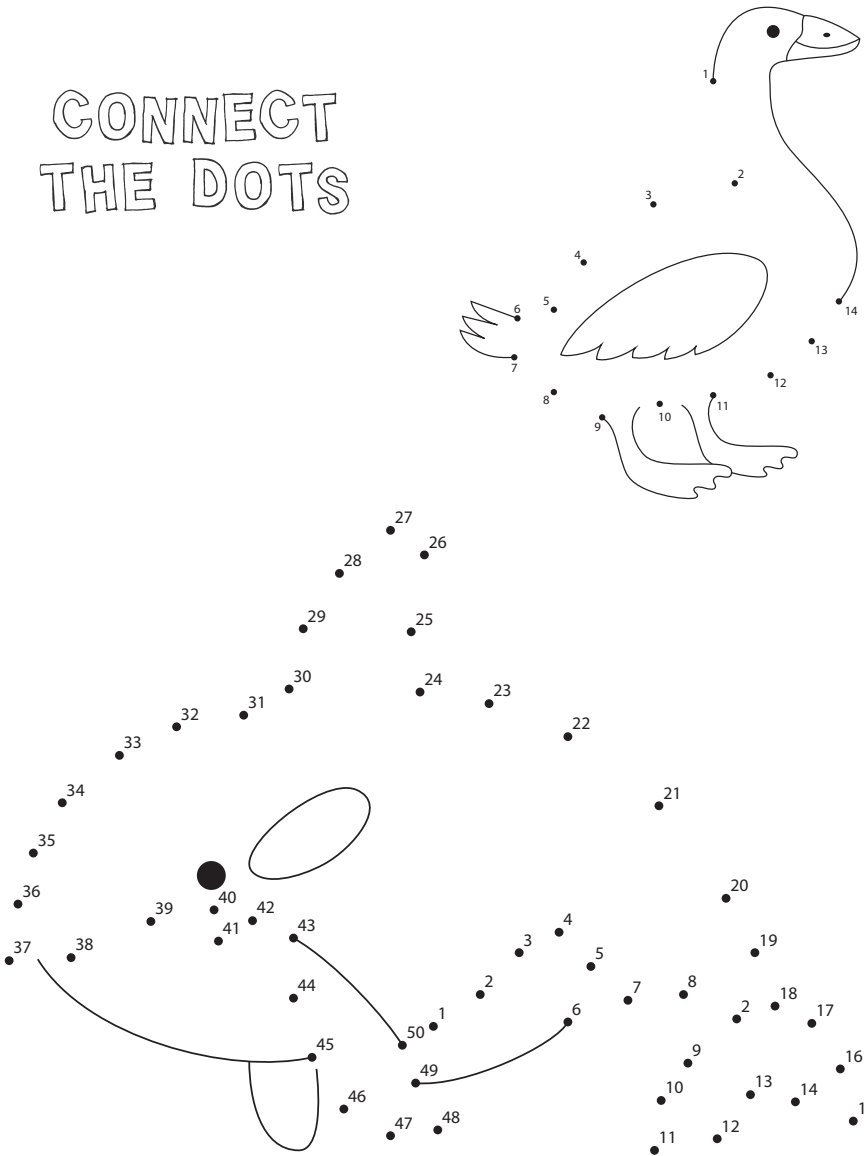
ATHENRY, BALLYBANE, DOUGHISKA, FR GRIFFIN ROAD, HEADFORD, INVERIN, KNOCKNACARRA, ORANMORE, OUGHTERARD & TUAM

Terms & conditions apply. See in store for details. Images for illustration purposes only. Offers valid until 31/12/20 unless otherwise stated. While stocks last. Limits apply. Offers valid in Joyce's Supermarkets only, excludes Joyce's Service Stations Athenry (formerly Cloonan's).

COLOUR THE PICTURE



CONNECT THE DOTS



Liam Felton

085 8429 568

VISA MasterCard



Diana's Art Gallery

Original Paintings & Fine Art Prints by Leading Artists

Fashion
Crafts

Custom Framing Service by Val

Wide choice, best quality, fast service, unbeatable price

089 491 6998

No. 2 Main Street, Oughterard beside Hair Salon

Email: dianapivovarova@gmail.com

ASTA ALTERATION & UPHOLSTERY

Clothing alterations
Car seat/steering wheels repairs
Furniture upholstery

5 Camp Street Oughterard
Tues-Fri: 10am-6pm
Sat: 10am-3pm
085-2368110

EXPERIENCE A HASSLE-FREE,
PROFESSIONAL SELLING PROCESS

YOUR LOCAL AGENT
MOYCULLEN & OUGHTERARD



DNG

MARTIN O'CONNOR

www.dng.ie 091 866708

SALES:

Residential, Commercial & Land Required in all Areas

LETTINGS:

Houses & Apartments Urgently Required in all Areas

VALUATIONS:

Carried out for all purposes

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE GUARANTEED
LOCAL EXPERIENCE - NATIONWIDE COVERAGE



Currarevagh House, Glann Road, Oughterard



Situated 6kms out the Glann Road, Currarevagh House has been welcoming guests to Oughterard for over 125 years, offering an oasis of privacy and comfort on our 180 acre lake shore estate. Dinner each evening is a highlight, serving 4 courses using the best of regional and local produce on an ever changing set menu. Non residents are always most welcome by advanced booking. Private parties and small groups can also be catered for subject to availability.

Phone: **091 552312** Email: **rooms@currarevagh.com** Website: **www.currarevagh.com**

Tripadvisor Traveller's Choice Top 10 Small Hotels in Ireland 2019, 2018, 2017
Member Ireland's Blue Book Member Historic Hotels of Europe

WALSH'S FUNERAL DIRECTORS

Serving Oughterard,
Killannin, and
Moycullen



Contact Dermot

091-552933
087-2902377

WEST SHORE STUDIO

Access through
Abhainn Ruibhe Estate
Off Camp Street, Oughterard

- Paintings
- Prints
- Memorabilia
- Sports Shirts
- Fishing Flies
- Medals
- Photographs

Complete picture
framing service by Guild
Commended Framer.

Framing to Conservation
Standard

Original Paintings &
Prints by
Kathleen Furey

091-552562
086-8190908

westshore@eircom.net

Like us on Facebook
"West Shore Studio - Oughterard"

McGEOUGH'S CONNEMARA FINE FOODS



In our McGeough's Connemara Fine Foods shop,
we sell meat and a wide range of individually
selected specialist foods - Fresh sausages,
puddings, dried meats, turkeys, ducks, geese,
hams, spiced beef, wines, etc...

**HOME DELIVERY NOW
AVAILABLE ON REQUEST**

091-552351
ordersmcgeough@gmail.com

McNamara's
Day-Today

Bridge St, Oughterard
Open 7-10, 7 Days

- Grocery
- Wine
- Lotto



McNamara's
Day-Today

LOCAL PHARMACY



Main Street, Oughterard, Co. Galway
Tel: 091-557602 Fax: 091-557603

Open: Mon-Fri 9.30am-6.30pm
Closed for lunch: 1.15pm-2pm
Saturday: 9.30am-6pm

*For all your medical needs
Plus cosmetics, photographic & veterinary
requirements.*

Passport & ID photos

Aftershave & Perfume

Fine selection of jewellery & watches

JOHN P. KEOGH & SONS

Established
in 1945



Established
in 1945

MAIN STREET, OUGHTERARD, CO. GALWAY
T: (091) 552170 E: jpkeoghands@gmail.com

NEW LARGE SELECTION OF BABYWEAR
Babygrows, bibs, blankets, toys, gifts.

- ❖ Yankee Candle Medium Jars RRP €24.99, now €9.99 ❖
- ❖ Yankee Candle Large Jars RRP €29.99, now €19.99 ❖
- ❖ Greeting cards for all occasions only €1 each ❖

BEDWARE

Pillows, quilts, quilt-covers, blankets, mattress-protectors, sheets.
Track bottoms, Jeans, Cords, Trousers. Also, large selection of work pants.

UPSTAIRS

Huge selection of outdoor wear & workwear. Boots, jackets, & wellingtons.
Wellington sizes from child size 4 up to adult size 13.
Rainwear sizes from children age 3-4 up to men's size 4XL.
Comfortable wide-fitting footwear for ladies and men, by DB Shoes.
Ladies' sizes up to 8. Men's sizes up to 13.
Beautiful selection of ladies' and men's casual knitwear.
Large selection of slippers for men and ladies.

Find out more on our new website:
www.keoghsirishgifts.com
See updates on Keoghs Irish Gifts on Facebook

CONNEMARA Greenway Café & RESTAURANT

OPEN FOR LUNCH & DINNER

• RESTAURANT • CAFE • WINES • CHEESE

Open for Dinner every evening
Tuesday to Saturday
with a Full Wine and Beer Menu.
Lunch Tuesday to Sunday.



TripAdvisor No.1 Restaurant
in Connemara

Main Street, Oughterard, Co. Galway
091 866645

facebook.com/connemaragreenway

www.connemaragreenwaycafe.ie



MAKE SURE YOU
**TUNE IN
TO WIN!**

**WIN A
€300
SWEENEY OIL VOUCHER** Every Week!

This year is for giving back and as a thank you for your continued support
here is your chance to win. **Tune into the radio stations listed below every
week for a chance to win a €300 Sweeney Oil voucher!**

Running September 14th until October 23rd!



M MAGNUS.

Never run out of oil again with the
Magnus monitor.

Exclusive to Sweeney Oil.



Call us on **1800 555 999**
or visit us online at **sweeneyoil.ie**

THINKING OF MOVING?

SELLING YOUR PROPERTY - OUR PROMISE

YOUR LOCAL PROPERTY EXPERT

FOR RESIDENTIAL, COMMERCIAL & AGRICULTURAL SALES,
LETTINGS AND PROPERTY VALUATIONS.

At Spencer Auctioneers we still urgently require residential sales for finance approved clients, along with residential lettings and grazing land for waiting tenants throughout 2020.



Spencer Auctioneers
Main Street, Oughterard, Co. Galway
091-552999
info@spencerauctioneers.com
www.spencerauctioneers.com