

Maynooth Newsletter



Recording the Social Footprint of Maynooth since the 1970s



Local News - April 2022 - Issue No. 511 - Online Version

This publication is produced by Maynooth Community Employment Project, supported by the Department of Social Protection, which is funded by the Irish Government.
The views & opinions expressed in this Publication are those of the contributors.



MAYNOOTH ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE 17th MARCH 2022 FÉILE LÁ FHÉILE PHÁDRAIG MHAIGH NUAD 17Ú MÁRTA 2022 Parade Photo Gallery on Pages 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8



After two years without a parade due to the pandemic, the Maynooth St. Patrick's Day Parade made its long awaited return this year. The 2022 St. Patrick's Day Parade was the first large community event since the pandemic and a time for us all to see one another again while supporting our local clubs, organisations and businesses. March the 17th tends to be the most unpredictable day of the year in terms of the weather, but we were lucky this year. The theme was, "Love Our World", this theme was designed for us to celebrate our diversity, our environment and show our support for the Ukrainian people. We honoured the people of Ukraine with a moment's silence and raised their national flag with the Irish flag on the Square.

There were 20 entries into this year's parade ranging from schools to sports clubs and businesses. This is less than normal years, however we were unsure if restrictions would be lifted for this year's event. The parade committee and all participants had just 6 weeks to put on this year's event. Prior to the arrival of the floats, Matthew Lennon entertained the crowds. Matthew has become known to many of us through his busking in the square throughout the pandemic. We also had a rendition by Sophia from Ecuador, while the floats made their way from the Straffan Road to the Main Street. Emeritus Professor John Sweeney was the Guest Speaker on our theme "Love our World".

Paul Croghan was our MC once again this year and kept everybody entertained and informed. The parade started with the customary run through the town of the Vintage cars, however this year there was a slight twist. As society becomes more climate conscious, we are moving towards electric vehicles. Hutton & Meade Garage showed their fleet of e-vehicles which was in a way a transformation from the vintage vehicles. The ONE Colour Party, comprised of former Defence Forces Veterans introduced the parade into the square, followed closely by the St. Mary's Brass and Reed Band.

Community events such as the parade require funding and we were fortunate to receive sponsorship from many local businesses for which we are most grateful.

Our Main Sponsors:

Intel, Thorntons, The St. Patrick Foundation, Brady's Bar & Lounge, Hutton & Meade, AIB, Life Credit Union, Glenroyal Hotel, Manor Mills, Anytime Fitness And all of our other sponsors; Permanent TSB, The Maynooth Bookshop, The Elite, Demesne Architects, Corcom, The Coffee Mill, Taxy, Powderly Solicitors and Coonan Property

The parade is run by a committee of volunteers who run it in the interest of community spirit and participation. Most of the administrative work is carried out in the Maynooth Community Employment Project's (MCEP) office and their assistance and help is truly appreciated.

Our community person of the year was awarded to Richard Farrell. Richard had been at the centre of volunteerism in Maynooth for decades between the Maynooth Tidy Towns, the Maynooth St. Patrick's Day Parade and Community Games. Sadly, a few days before the parade we learned of Richard's passing. Our thoughts are with his wife Mary, who has also been a parade steward for years and all his family. He will be dearly missed by the community of Maynooth. Suaimhneas síoraí dó.

It is the volunteers and stewards who help on the day that make my life so much easier. This year, the Men's Sheds were our anchor Stewards and I look forward to working with them for years to come. They were cordial and excellent on the day. My thanks also to Willie Kiernan for orchestrating the PA system and sound for the day. To Séamas Kennedy and Matty Callaghan for the steps, Eddie Tobin and Mark Colfer for Photographs, Matthew Lennon, The Gardaí, Kildare County Council and everybody who contributed to the day.

An additional thank you to Declan Kennedy and the staff in Brady's Bar & Lounge who provided soup and sandwiches for the Colour Part, the Band and the Parade stewards.

My thanks also to Manor Mills Shopping Centre for hosting the excellent Family Fun Day after the parade and allowing us to conduct the awards ceremony there once again. A particular word of thanks to the Committee, for many of whom this was their first involvement with the parade. They have given countless hours and commitment to running the parade this year; Don Foley, Steve McCarthy, Paul Croghan, Colm Ó Cearúil, Gerry Quinn, Keith McCrory, Francesca Sheridan.

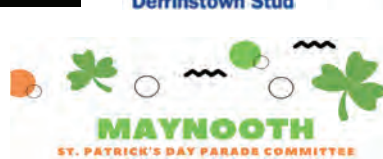
Finally I'd like to commend each and every person that took part in the parade from infants to older members of our community. Without you, there would be no parade and we hope that you had as much fun taking part as everybody else did seeing you all.

Until next year, Beirigi Bua!

Naoise Ó Cearúil

Chairperson - Maynooth St. Patrick's Day Parade Committee

Check Out the prizes winners on page 6!!



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The opinions and statements expressed in the articles are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Editorial Board. All materials to be included in the next edition of the Newsletter should be sent by e-mail or addressed to:

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Letters to the Editor

Letters to the Editor, for publication, should be sent by e-mail to: editor@maynoothcep.com

Mission Statement

The Maynooth Newsletter is a community focused publication available free to the people of Maynooth. It plays an important role in gathering together, recording and distributing community based news.

We encourage all groups and individuals in the community to submit material to let us know about their activities and any upcoming events. The Newsletter exists for your enjoyment and we hope you continue to enjoy your monthly read and keep us informed of your activities.

The Editorial Board endeavours to ensure independence and balance in the Newsletter content and reserves the right to omit/edit or abridge material which in its opinion might render the Newsletter as a promoter of sectional interests.

In addition we undertake the following:

- In the case of errors of fact we will publish corrections when we become aware of such.
- In the case of unwittingly or unfairly impugning the reputation of any person we hereby offer that person the right to reply.

Any contributor seeking further guidelines in this matter is invited to contact the Editorial Board.

Copy date for receipt of articles is published in the Newsletter. We must stress that material submitted after the copy date cannot be accepted.

Maynooth Newsletter Archives

The management and staff of the Maynooth Community Employment Project started a project in March 2011 to acquire and digitise all available issues of the Maynooth Newsletter dating back to 1975. These back issues along with current issues are available by following the archive link on our webpage - www.maynoothcep.com.

The Newsletter Archive can be viewed and searched in pdf format. In addition, there exists the capability to be able to search an entire year. Please be aware the single files associated with the year are larger and will take a little longer to load.

The Archive provides an important historical footprint of the Town and records the community profile of Maynooth from the mid-seventies to the present day. We hope you enjoy using it and that it brings back memories of people, places and times and that it equally provides an interesting insight to the development of the town and university for newly arrived members of our community.

Editorial Board - Maynooth Newsletter

Editorial

While Covid 19 number infections have been growing again to levels of serious concern and impact on hospital admissions, it was said that after the removal of public health restrictions such an increase was inevitable. It was great to see things back to normal in the past two months with businesses open and people attending events such as the Maynooth St. Patrick's Day Parade in such large numbers. Elsewhere in this publication there are photos of people enjoying the parade which is one of the main annual community events in the town.

Another event that took place in March was "The Gathering of Remembrance" which was one of similar events that took place throughout Ireland to celebrate the lives of the people of the town who passed away during the Covid 19 pandemic and recognise all of those who worked in our health and other services during the pandemic. The Maynooth event took place in the Harbour area at the Maynooth Scouts Den and was well attended.



Attendance at the Gathering of Remembrance in Maynooth on March 20th
(photo courtesy Keith McCrory)

Another event that will be back this year is the Maynooth 10K Run which has been held for a number of years and the profits are used to help to fund sports facilities at the Maynooth Education Campus. There is a change to the route this year and there is a special medal this year to mark the fifty years of the Maynooth Post Primary School. Details are elsewhere in this publication.

Lastly this month I want to mention the late Richard Farrell who passed away on March 13th. Richard and his wife Mary moved from Dublin to live in Maynooth in 1978 and raised their three children here. Richard was a key person in community activities for over forty years most especially with Maynooth Tidy Towns and I had the pleasure of working with Richard for twenty-five years in Tidy Towns. Outside of Maynooth Richard was well known in County Kildare as he worked in promoting sport and exercise for recreation as head of the Kildare Sports Partnership and the Fit Line programme.



Richard Farrell

He was known throughout Ireland for his previous work as the National Community Games Administrator. Richard was universally liked by everyone who came into contact with him and his unexpected death was a shock to all who knew him. People like Richard are rare and he will be greatly missed. Our sincere sympathy to his wife Mary, his children Martin, Damien and Deirdre and their families. Rest in peace my friend.

Paul Croghan - Editor

Copy date for the next edition of the Maynooth Newsletter will be 5pm on Tuesday 26th April 2022

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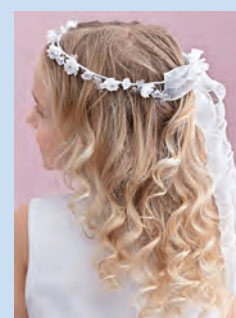
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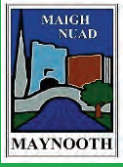
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Maynooth St. Patrick's Day Parade 2022 Photo Gallery

Photos courtesy of Eddie Tobin and Mark Colfer





Mórshiúl Lá Fhéile Phádraig Mhaigh Nuad 2022





Maynooth St. Patrick's Day Parade 2022 Photo Gallery

Photos courtesy of Eddie Tobin and Mark Colfer



Matthew Lennon (Above left) entertained the crowds before the start of the Parade. Matthew has become known to many of us through his busking in the square throughout the pandemic.

The theme of this years parade is LOVE OUR WORLD. In keeping with the theme, singer Sophia (Above centre) is from Ecuador (a student in MU) sang for us in her native language "*Quichua*". Her song was about our planet and promises MOTHER EARTH that we will look after her precious gift to us. Thank you Sophia and thanks to the people of Ecuador who in 2008 voted to amend its constitution to recognise the rights of nature, the first country in the world to do so.

Emeritus Professor John Sweeney (Above right) - Guest Speaker on our theme "Love our World" is well known as a commentator on climate topics who provided us with the information on how some small changes that we can make in our lives can contribute to reducing our impact on our environment.

Best Float Prize Winners:

Best School Float: Maynooth Educate Together School

Best Commercial Float: Dino Experience

Best Portrayal of Theme: Glenroyal Hotel

Best Portrayal of Environmental Awareness: Hutton & Meade

Best Club: North Kildare Club

Best Shop Fronts Winners:

1st Maynooth Bookshop, Main Street

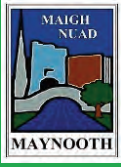
2nd SVP, Greenfield Shopping Centre

3rd The Elite, Main Street

Community Person of the Year: Richard Farrell

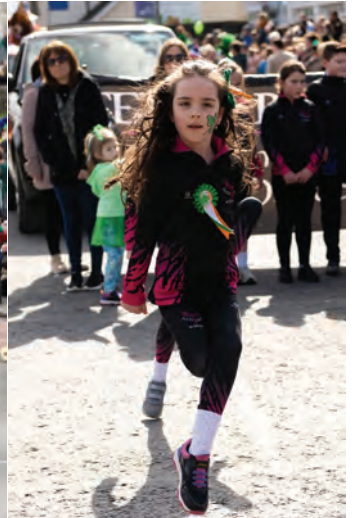
For his lifelong service to the community and people of Maynooth through Maynooth Tidy Towns, Community Games and the St. Patrick's Day Parade.





Maynooth St. Patrick's Day Parade 2022 Photo Gallery

Photos courtesy of Eddie Tobin and Mark Colfer





Mórshiúl Lá Fhéile Phádraig Mhaigh Nuad 2022





Maynooth Town Football Club Launch All Weather Project



Maynooth Town FC has been part of the community of Maynooth for over 50 years.

The club is now embarking on a new development of a full size All Weather Pitch and floodlighting at Rathcoffey Road, together with an upgrade and realignment of the grass pitch area, with contract of works starting in April 2022. At a cost of over €560k this new development will greatly add to the quality of playing facilities for all.

Since formation in 1969 MTFC has grown exponentially as a club, particularly in the past 20 years, to be a major provider of sport and recreation in North Kildare.

With over 45 teams and 825 members from ages 4 to adult and growing female participation, it is a vibrant diverse and inclusive club providing football for all.

This exciting new initiative will add all weather playing capacity to our club facilities at Rathcoffey Road, with an 11 aside flood lit playing pitch, 100m x 60m to FIFA standards, including a spectator viewing area. It will provide a mega training and playing facility for continued growing membership. This major investment in facilities for club and community will enhance the club's social value and impact in the community.

Maynooth Town FC is launching a major fundraising campaign with a series of events happening over the next few months to support this fantastic development. The events will bring club and community together to celebrate and support the club's continued progress.

These events offer something for everyone, including: Golf Classic Carton House Friday 29th April – start the bank holiday in style at the MUTFC Seniors Event supporting the astro development. Book a slot soon to enjoy a round at this top class golf course! Contact mtfcdevelopment@gmail.com for full details.

MTFC Festival of Football 25th June Main Event at home ground, Rathcoffey Road.

Manchester United Legends V Maynooth Town FC Selection featuring Ireland's own Manchester United great, Denis Irwin. If you want a chance to get yourself on the team sheet and play against these greats, register your interest at mtfcdevelopment@gmail.com You never know, you might even get to hang out with the legends at a private drinks reception after the game!

To make sure you are there to see this once in a lifetime game buy tickets here:

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/maynooth-town-v-manchester-united-premier-league-legends-tickets-292278511897>

Festivities will continue on the evening of the 25th June at MTFC Legends Gala Club Dinner Dance in The Glenroyal Hotel 25th June. Tickets on sale soon!

Don't forget to keep an eye on the Maynooth Town Facebook and Instagram pages over the coming weeks see what other Manchester United Legends are coming to our town! <https://www.facebook.com/MTFC1969/>
<https://www.instagram.com/maynoothtownfc>

Lend your support to MTFC by investing in your community through sponsorship or partnership. Contact mtfcdevelopment@gmail.com

MAYNOOTH TOWN FC - V - MAN UTD LEGENDS



25/06/22



FESTIVAL OF FOOTBALL RAISE FUNDS AND GET TO PLAY AGAINST THE MAN UTD LEGENDS.



This includes:

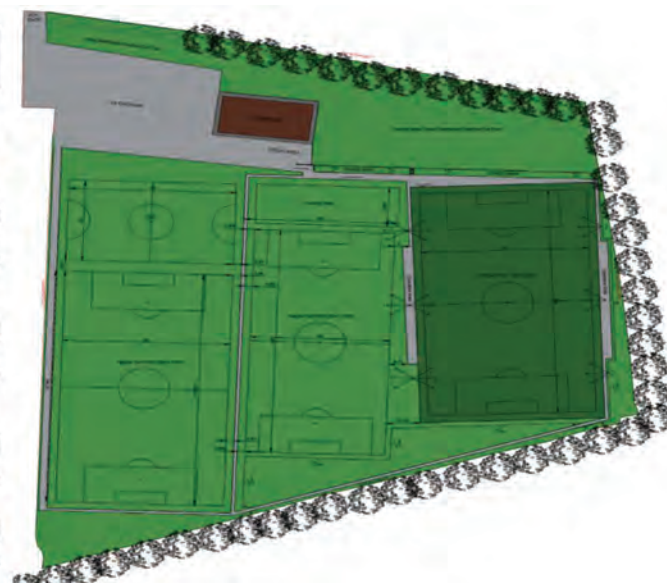
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Maynooth University Town Football Club



F.A.I. Intermediate Cup Quarter-Finals Town 2 - Carrigaline (Cork) 1 (AET)

Town advanced to the Semi-Finals of the Intermediate Cup with this extra-time win. Town shaded the early exchanges but were severely rocked when influential midfielder Conor Foley was controversially sent off for a second yellow card. The Cork side scored direct from the free-kick to set Town a stern task.

Town dug deep however and pushed forward in search of the equalizer. Handball on the goal line provided Town with a penalty. The offending player was sent off and Jackson Ryan duly converted his kick to level matters. Town commanded the rest of the half and were looking confident when pushing forward.

Half-time arrived with the sides deadlocked and the game developed into a hard midfield slog. The second half followed the pattern of the first and the game became stagnant at times.

The ninety minutes elapsed and we went into extra-time. Town made some changes which livened matters and contained the Cork side whilst creating good chances.

With eight minutes remaining Town won a free kick outside the penalty area. Alex Fitzgibbon took the kick and landed it at the feet of Darragh Gannon who expertly finished to the roof of the net. Celebrations were short lived when the referee disallowed the goal on the grounds that he had not blown the whistle. Alex retook the kick and placed it into the area where Darragh Gannon placed his header wide of the keeper. This proved to be the winner of a game which had the crowd on tenterhooks throughout.

Leinster Senior League Senior Division

Town 1 - Sacred Heart 1

This game was a disappointment following the heroics of the previous week in the Intermediate Cup. Town trailed for most of the game and it was only a late Paddy O'Sullivan goal gave Town a fortunate share of the points.

Don't forget to get your teams organized for our Golf Classic - details opposite.



Friday, 29th April 2022

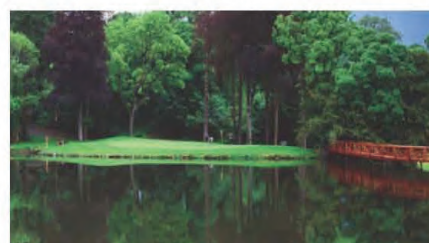
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- * Covid - 19 related queries

*“Happy
Easter
To All”*



Phone



E-mail



Cllr. Angela Feeney

Tel. 087 238 1962

Email. angelafeeney@gmail.com

Stay safe everyone.





Cllr. Angela Feeney Maynooth Labour News

E mail: angelaemfeeney@gmail.com - Phone: 0872381962



Accessibility Audit of Dublin Road Maynooth

At the March MD Council meeting Cllr Feeney asked the Council to carry out an assessment of the Dublin Road in Maynooth from Doctor's Lane to Carton Retail Park to identify and address accessibility issues on this section of the town. Cllr Feeney welcomed the response from the Council confirming that the on-going Transport Strategy for Maynooth is looking at accessibility throughout the town including the Dublin Road. Any barriers to walking or permeability will be identified and new permeability links will be proposed if needed to improve the walkability of the town and promote a shift to more sustainable travel.

In addition, the Maynooth Transport Strategy is also going to identify issues with the road network in the town and come up with ways to decrease traffic in the town centre, including along the Dublin Road. Cllr Feeney stated that is certainly something everyone will welcome. This will be achieved through a strategic transport model which will examine various roads interventions to determine what will be required in Maynooth to reduce these traffic issues. Cllr Feeney added that while it is certainly good to hear that the Transport Strategy is happening but in the meantime, while we are waiting for that Transport Strategy to run its course she requested the area engineer to look at the problem sections of this path. Cllr Feeney said that they are not fit for purpose, are very narrow; pedestrians and wheelchair users have to go out onto a very busy road to pass. Cllr Feeney thanked the area engineer who agreed to see what can be done in the meantime to improve it.

Leinster Street Footpath extension

Cllr Feeney asked the Council to extend the footpath on Leinster Street, Maynooth as far as the Health Centre. Cllr Feeney explained that while there is a footpath on part of this street, her motion is calling on the Council to continue it due to the fact that Leinster Street has heavy pedestrian use, to the train station, to the harbour field, to the playground, to the health centre, to the community unit, and by all ages. Cllr Feeney said it comes up as an issue of safety for many users. There is high footfall from the train station into the town centre particularly at peak times and pedestrians just do not feel safe using this shared space as it is called.

Cllr Feeney said that the reality is that at the moment it favours cars. So while the street is theoretically shared, the car is king and in her view, if a footpath is needed or warranted for two thirds of the street then why not final section. The Council said it has no plans at the moment to extend the footpath and that the surface is designed as a shared surface for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists. However, the Council said it would look at providing some better signage such as stenciling on the surface to make it safer and clearer to everyone using it that it is a shared space. Added to this, I asked that given any future development of the car park that was recently sold on that street that consideration be given to the safety of pedestrians and cyclists.

Carton Avenue Master Plan

Cllr Feeney asked the Council to provide an update on the Master Plan for Carton Avenue. She said that Carton Avenue is such a special historic public amenity that is treasured by all Maynooth residents. The Council confirmed that it is engaging a consultant to prepare a conservation plan for the site, the timeframe it is talking about is September to December this year. In the delivery of the Urban Regeneration and Development Funded Master Plan for Maynooth, the Strategic Projects and Public Realm in the Council team will work with the Parks department on the development of appropriate and sensitive design interventions for Carton Avenue.

Flood Relief Measures

Cllr Feeney asked the Council to provide a report on the implementation of the flood relief measures between Brookfield Avenue, Meadowbrook and Parson Street, Maynooth. She reminded the Council that the OPW produced a Flood Relief Plan (CFRAMS) for this area back in 2017. As far as Cllr Feeney is aware, none of the works in the Plan have been implemented. So Cllr Feeney asked the Council to come back to her with what that report recommendations were and if any of those recommendations were implemented and if not, why not.

Draft County Development Plan Public Consultation

The Draft Kildare County Development Plan is now available to view online at <https://draftkildarecdp2023-2029.ie/> and also at the following locations:

- Online at <https://consult.kildarecoco.ie/>
- Planning Department, Kildare County Council, Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co.

Kildare during opening times of 9.00am–4.00pm, Monday to Friday (closed Bank Holidays). Appointments can be made online by phoning 045 980200 or at <http://kildare.ie/countycouncil/OnlineBookingSystem/> Submissions or observations can be made online or in writing until 4 p.m. on 24th May 2022.

Three online Public Information Sessions to facilitate a discussion and to provide an overview about the policies, objectives, actions and targets within the Draft Development will be held at the following times and dates:

- Wednesday 6th April 7pm - 9pm
- Wednesday 27th April 10am -12pm
- Wednesday 11th May 2pm - 4pm

Seniors Alert Scheme

Please spread the word about 'The Seniors Alert Scheme' which provides funding for a free personal monitored alarm for people aged 65 and older, to support older people to live securely and independently in their homes. If you are over 65, living alone or living alone for significant periods of time during the day or living with someone who meets the criteria or caring for someone else in your household, you can apply. All equipment and installation under the scheme is free. Funding is available to buy and install monitored personal alarms, which can be worn as a pendant or around your wrist like a watch. These alarms connect to a national helpline through a base unit installed in the home.

For application details: <https://www.pobal.ie/programmes/seniors-alert-scheme-sas/>

Email me if you need any assistance on this afeeney@kildarecoco.ie

Meetings attended by Cllr Feeney since last Newsletter:

- March 4th: 9:00 am Joint Policing Committee (online)
- March 4th: 10:00 am MD Council Meeting (online)
- March 7th: 9:30 am KCC Protocol Committee (online)
- March 10th 12:00 pm KCC Finance Committee (online)
- March 10th 7:30 pm BOM Coláiste Chiaráin (online)
- March 11th: 2:00 pm KCC County Speed Limit Review (online)
- March 15th 10:00 am County Kildare Access Network (online)
- March 28th 3:00 pm Plenary Council Meeting (Chamber)

**Happy Easter to all our Advertisers,
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From all the staff at Maynooth Community
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St. Mary's Brass & Reed Band

Last month marked the Band's long awaited return to St. Patrick's Day Parades starting off with the Parade in Dunboyne on Sunday 13th followed by Parades in Maynooth, Kilcock and Clane on St. Patrick's Day. Needless to say there were a lot of very tired bodies by the end of the three parades with everyone being grateful for the Bank Holiday on the following day.

These parades are the main source of income for the Band and we were delighted to have them back particularly with the present increases in electricity, heating oil and insurance costs.

We have started back rehearsing for our Summer programme the first of which is a special Band Mass on Sunday 8th May at 1oc which is to make up for the two Annual Masses which were unable to be held due to Covid so we hope to see as many relatives and friends of deceased members joining with us on the day.

Later in the month we will be paying a return visit to Castletown House in Celbridge on Sunday 22nd at 2pm as part of the Bealtine Festival and we hope you will join us in what is a lovely setting.



Karl Gormley photography

Band at the Kilcock Parade.

ZERO WASTE MAYNOOTH

Monthly Drop In Event

2nd Saturday of the month 2-4pm

Maynooth Community Library

Join us for this drop in event where you can check out the stalls & learn more about how to reduce waste.

Stay for a chat or just simple browse !

Ladies Clothes Swap Shop - Bring one, take one

Toy Swap - Bring one, take one

Up to 3 items for either the toy or clothes swap- must be in usable and good condition

Cloth Nappy Library Ireland - See reusable nappies & chat to volunteers

Sustainable Swaps - learn some ideas on how to reduce waste, save money & care for our planet

Bare Necessities - collection point for this package free food shop (no shop on the day, pre paid orders only)



**Next event date:
April 9th**

OPEN ALL THE WAY CANOEING ON THE ROYAL CANAL IN THE 1950s

By D.M. HARTFORD

About the Author

Diana Mary Hartford nee Barton was born in 1918. The trip described here was undertaken in 1955 just after Douglas Heard completed the last official boat trip before closure of the canal. The trip was undertaken in two stages; Clondra to Mullingar and Dublin (Blanchardstown) to Mullingar. The city centre areas of the canal were not navigable at this time. This article was originally published in a number of Royal Canal Newsletters in the 1970s. The author had a children's book published after this trip, which is still widely used in primary schools today. The author of a number of other books, Diana passed away in 2002.

Part. 4 Longford to Ballymahon

The next morning, we waited in the old Guinness store for a heavy shower to pass and for a goods train that was in our way to leave for Dromod. Two porters then shifted some trucks, also in our way outside, and lifted the canoe to the water for us, and after rewarding them with Gold Flake we paddled off in good spirits with our luggage between our knees and the sun coming out after the shower. From the second straight I took a snapshot of St. Mel's Cathedral behind us. Taking turns to walk the high towpath we hurried back to the Junction. Turning left there we continued on the main line to the next lock.

It had a newly dashed lock-cottage glistening in the sun. This was Ards Lock and the keeper's name was Rogers and he gave us an account of the 'Hark' going down the previous month, filming, with accompanying cars and equipment. At the next lock, the 41st, we also had friendly help from a mother and small sons. Here the high hedges along the canal were full of primroses and violets. Then we came to a high level of bogland and smelt the myrtle. Old heather banks and golden gorse dipped in the water and we let the wind drift us past them as the curlew rose and wheeled. At one

point, where a tarred road crossed a bridge, a Longford registered Hillman Minx came to a halt and a man put his hands out and clapped, when I said we were going to Ballymahon he wished us luck. A contrast, my friend thought, to the man on the first day who called out "Where do you think you're going?"

Soon after the second lock of the day the woods of Hosstown House looked many-coloured on our left. We paddled past beech trees to the grey stone edging of Keenagh Harbour and on under a newly concreted bridge. After this we knew and felt the canal to be skirting higher ground with a wide stretch of land below us on our right. We were approaching what sounded like the sensational bit of the route where Caffrey told the Rolts they would have 100 feet of rock on one side of them and 100 feet drop to the bog on the other. The canal began to twist and turn round the edge of the hill and we saw ahead a great quarry in the hillside. From the path on our right, it was worth getting out to see the silver gleam of Lough Ree away below.

Then round the next bend in rocks like Connemara we saw at last Mullawornia Lock, perched on the edge of a big drop. By now it was 5 p.m. and after Archie's Bridge came Longford Bridge where the road to Ballymahon crosses the canal, but we pressed on to Brannigan Harbour. Sooner than we expected we saw a gaunt warehouse, a wide stone-lined harbour and Chaigneau Bridge. Beyond the bridge wall a grassy bank and a little cottage with a thick low hedge round it and Mrs. Nolan of the cottage let us leave the canoe under it for the night.
(To be concluded)

The Royal Canal Amenity group are grateful to Diana for submitting this article for publication at the time.



Sunday Lunch

At just €30 per person, our Sunday Lunch set menu is a 3-course variety of exceptional food using the finest local ingredients while showcasing the talents of our Executive Head Chef, Bernard McGuane.

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We would like to express our condolences to the family of Richard Farrell on his recent death in March, Richard was one of the founding fathers of Maynooth Tidy Towns.

He was so delighted when we won our first Bronze Medal in 2013 after years of slowly gaining points. He will be missed by all who knew him for his knowledge and expertise in all aspects of life in Maynooth.

Condolences to Mary, Damien, Deirdre and Martin, may Richard rest in peace, he will be remembered as a gentleman and a scholar, he taught us all so much.



We had our AGM in March, thanks to all who attended. There will be some changes to the Committee going forward, John Kavanagh has resigned as Chairman but will remain on as a committee member. John has been in the Chairman's role since 2016, we thank him for all his hard work and dedication. Mary Jennings has resigned as Treasurer, Mary was also elected to the Treasurers role in 2016. Mary will not have any role on the committee going forward but will remain on as a volunteer with Tidy Towns. As well as her role as Treasurer, Mary had the arduous task of completing the Tidy Towns Application every year, for which we thank her profusely.

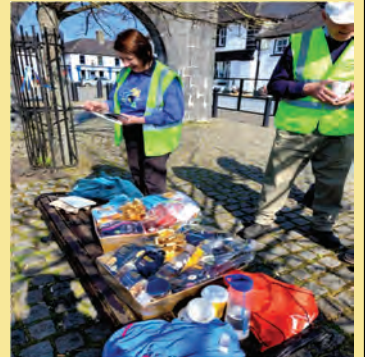
New officers will be elected on to the committee at our next committee meeting on the 7th April 2022.

Thanks to Nally and Casey's Supervalu Maynooth for the 2 Hampers they presented to us recently, they were raffled amongst the volunteers. They also gave us flowers to plant at the Harbour. Thanks to Eimear Hoare from Physiofit Maynooth for the 2 vouchers she presented to us, they were also raffled amongst the volunteers.

Our volunteers have been very busy, litter picking, sweeping and sowing many trees in different areas around the town but especially in Meadowbrook and Old Greenfield.

***Follow us on Facebook for all up to date information.
If anyone wishes to become a volunteer please contact us on WhatsApp
or you can join us in the Square any Saturday morning at 9am,
weather permitting of course.***

Mary Molloy , Secretary Maynooth Tidy Towns



Wishing
everyone a
Happy Easter

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Education ~ Heritage ~ Recreation

The annual tour is at an advanced stage of preparation. It will take in areas of the canal not visited on the previous trip and also a visit to a stately home and gardens. It will also include evening dinner. As always, the committee are working very hard to get the best possible value for our members and guests, despite the current high inflation levels.



WATCH THE NEXT ISSUE FOR MORE DETAILS

We take this opportunity to remind members that membership fees, which were not sought during the lockdown now fall due. Annual family membership is very reasonable at €30.00 while a three-year family membership is also very good value at €80.00. People living in Maynooth and surrounding areas who would like to join can do so online at www.royalcanal.ie. Those who have relocated to the area to live more recently are also welcome to join.

FOR THOSE WHO LOVE TO READ

An alternative way to look and examine the Universe - Infrared Astronomy

'An alternative way to look and examine the Universe - Infrared Astronomy.' | 5 April | 10am | Zoom | [Maynooth University \(geckoform.com\)](https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/geckoform.com)

This talk is about why infrared astronomy is important, what an infrared telescope looks like, and we show some interesting examples of what we can learn. We will see some relevance of why studying Science (Physics, Chemistry, Biology) and Maths is really important here to understand the Universe, and to maybe learn how life started on Earth.



This month we feature some pictures from the archives. The first is of the old “Royal Canal Bus” traversing Maynooth Harbour. On this occasion it was being piloted by the late Hugh O’Sullivan of Kingsbry Maynooth.



Royal Canal Bus Maynooth Co Kildare
© FitsFoto Maynooth

This venerable old boat was used, on both the Royal and Grand Canals to give rides along the waterways. It was used by almost every branch along the Royal canal at various times during its long life. An old tug boat, it was refurbished and converted. While it was well maintained and presented it did not conform to all of the current stringent regulations with regard to passenger boats on our waterways. The cost of bringing it up to standard was prohibitive and alas it is now ‘rusting in peace’

The second is of the reopening of Maynooth Harbour on 27th.May 1980. This was the culmination of years of work cleaning, refurbishing and restoring the Harbour and surrounding areas. As can be seen a flotilla of boats big and small arrived for re-opening.



Reopening of Maynooth Harbour
© Tom Darcey Dublin

Note the absence of the Glenroyal Hotel / Shopping Centre and the almost submerged Island.

One important question is where did all the water come from on Earth? Have other objects like comets and asteroids the same type of water?

Dr. Neil Trappe graduated with a B.Sc. in Applied Physics from the University of Limerick before completing a Ph.D. in long wavelength optical analysis techniques in the Experimental Physics Department at NUI Maynooth. He has worked on the HIFI instrument for the European Space Agency's Herschel Space Observatory (ESA PRODEX funded), Band 5 & 9 optical design for ALMA (SFI Research Frontiers funded) and currently is working on and managing a number of Technical Research Projects for the European Space Agency. This work is developing efficient analysis techniques, instrument design, and focal plane pixel architectures for future Cosmic Microwave Background space missions. He also recently obtained an SFI Infrastructure Award to establish a THz frequency measurement system.



Herschel Space Observatory (ESA)

DIVERSITY MATTERS WORKSHOP
(Facilitated by Immigrant Council of Ireland)

Are you managing a Community or Voluntary Organisation in Co. Kildare?

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County Kildare

Irish Government, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

An Roinn Leasra, Comhionannais, Meathais, Loughaithe agus Oige
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth

This Project is Funded by Communities Integration Fund 2021 Department of Children Equality Disability Integration & Youth

Maynooth I.C.A. Notes

The I.C.A. are back up and running again in Maynooth. All members are delighted to be back.



Our Committee now are: President: Mary O’Gorman, Vice President: Catherine O’Reilly, Secretary: Doireann Caden, Crafts Officer: Mary McMahon, Arts Officer: Mary Murphy, Treasurer: Patricia Farrell, PRO: Norah McDermott, An Grianán Representative Eilis O’ Malley. Guild members will be collecting for Daffodil Day. The Guild will hold it’s usual Easter Raffle. Congratulations to Margaret Houlihan on winning 2nd place in the baking competition. Kildare Federation Grianán weekend will take place from 17th to 19th June and a further one from 21st to 23rd October.

Some members attended the Regional meeting in Clonmel in March. The National A.G.M. will take place the Knightsbrook Hotel in Trim on 28th May. Craft classes take place on Monday nights 8 - 10p.m. and Tuesday mornings 11a.m. to 1p.m. Congratulations to the Quiz team of Rosemary Hanly, Margaret Houlihan and Mary Mac Namara on winning the Federation Quiz. They will now go forward to the National Final in An Grianán.

We wish them every success in this competition. The members also made donations of goods to Simon Charity. The Federation A.G.M. takes place on the 26th April in the Slip Hall in Celbridge at 8p.m. Guild meetings take place 1st Thursday of each month and new members are always welcome to our hall in the Harbour.



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THE MIRACLE PRAYER

DEAR Heart of Jesus, in the past I have asked you for many favours. This time I ask for this special one (mention favour). Take it dear Heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your Father sees it. Then, in His merciful eyes it will become Your favour not mine. Amen

Say this prayer for three days, promise publication and prayer & favour, will be granted, no matter how impossible.

Never known to fail.

Thanksgiving for favour received. (P.B.)

THE MIRACULOUS PRAYER

DEAR Heart of Jesus, in the past I have asked you for many favours. This time I ask for this special one (mention here). Take it Dear Heart of Jesus and place it within your own broken heart where your Father sees it. Then in His merciful eyes it will become Your favour not mine. Amen. Sacred Heart of Jesus I place all my trust thee

Say this prayer for three days. Promise publication and favour will be granted. Never known to fail. (E.P.)

SAINT THERESE

Saint Expedite Prayer for Urgent Needs Prayers

(This prayer is to be said daily until your request is granted, Be sure to publish this prayer thanking Saint Expedite, so that his name and glory will grow.)

Saint Expedite, you lay in rest. I come to you and ask that this wish be granted.
(Mention your urgent request)

Saint Expedite now what I ask of you. Saint Expedite now what I want of you, this very second. Don't waste another day. Grant me what I ask for.

I know your power, I know you because of your work. I know you can help me. Do this for me and I will spread your name with love and honor so that it will be invoked again and again. Expedite this wish with speed, love, honor, and goodness.

Glory to you, Saint Expedite! (P.B.)

Easter Hot Cross Buns

This Hot Cross Bun recipe is filled with warm flavors like cinnamon and nutmeg, and raisins or currants add a touch of fruitiness.

These scrumptious little rolls are sweet but not overly sugary, and they can be enjoyed at breakfast, as a snack or enjoy a steaming bun with a cup of tea or coffee in the afternoon for a little pick-me-up.

And if you're planning to be a guest at someone else's house, these buns travel well and are usually a big hit!

Ingredients

For the buns

- 625g/1lb 6oz strong white flour, plus extra for dusting (see tip for alternatives)
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsp ground mixed spice (or a combination of ground spices such as cinnamon, allspice, nutmeg, cloves and ginger)
- 45g/1½oz unsalted butter, cubed, plus extra for greasing
- 85g/3oz caster sugar
- 1 unwaxed lemon, finely grated zest only (alternatively use finely grated zest of ½ orange or 1 tangerine/satsuma)
- 1½ tsp dried fast-action yeast
- 1 free-range egg
- 275ml/9½fl oz tepid milk (non-dairy milks are also suitable)
- 125g/4½oz dried mixed fruit of your choice



For the topping

- 2 tbsp plain flour (see tip for alternatives)
- 1 tbsp golden syrup or runny honey, gently heated, for glazing (see tip for alternatives)

Method

- For the buns, sieve the flour, salt and mixed spice into a large mixing bowl, then rub in the butter using your fingertips. Make a well in the centre of the mixture, then add the sugar, lemon zest and yeast. Beat the egg and add to the flour with the tepid milk. Mix together to form a soft, pliable dough.
- Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured work surface. Carefully work the mixed dried fruit into the dough until well combined. Knead lightly for 5 minutes, or until smooth and elastic.
- Grease a large, warm mixing bowl with butter. Shape the dough into a ball and place into the prepared bowl, then cover with a clean tea towel and set aside in a warm place for 1 hour to prove.

- Turn out the proved dough onto a lightly floured work surface and knock back the dough. Shape into a ball again and return to the bowl, then cover again with the tea towel and set aside for a further 30 minutes to rise.



- Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured work surface and divide into 12 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a ball, then flatten slightly into a bun shape using the palms of your hands. Cover the buns again with the tea towel and set aside to rest for 5–10 minutes.

- Grease a baking tray with butter and transfer the buns to the tray. Wrap the tray very loosely in baking paper, then place inside a large polythene bag (or cover loosely in lightly oiled cling film). Tie the end of the bag tightly so that no air can get in (if using) and set aside in a warm place for a further 40 minutes to rise. Preheat the oven to 240C/220C Fan/Gas 8.

- Meanwhile, for the topping, mix the plain flour to a fairly thick smooth paste with 2 tablespoons cold water (you may need to use slightly less or more water to get the right consistency). When the buns have risen, remove the polythene bag and the greaseproof paper. Spoon the flour mixture into a piping bag (or a plastic food bag with a corner snipped away) and pipe a cross on each bun.

- Transfer the buns to the oven and bake for 8–12 minutes, or until pale golden brown. As soon as you remove the buns from the oven, brush them with the hot golden syrup, then set aside to cool on a wire rack.

Recipe Tips

For the dough, you can use up to half wholemeal or spelt flour instead of all white, but you may need to add a little extra milk or water. You can even use plain flour at a push, but be aware that the dough won't rise as much and the end result may be a tad heavy. For the topping, any white-coloured flour will work, from cornflour to rice flour. Feel free to use what you have in – just ensure the paste is thick enough (different flours will absorb differing amounts of water). If you haven't got golden syrup or honey for glazing, any sugar syrup will do (agave syrup, maple syrup etc). Or try dissolving 1 heaped tsp of any granulated sugar in a little hot water.

Source: www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipes/hotcrossbuns

Traditional spiced, sticky glazed fruit buns with pastry crosses. Served as a classic Easter treat, the buns can also be enjoyed at any time of year.

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Maynooth: a Socio-Economic Community Profile - 1901-1911

Highlights from the past. (Continued)

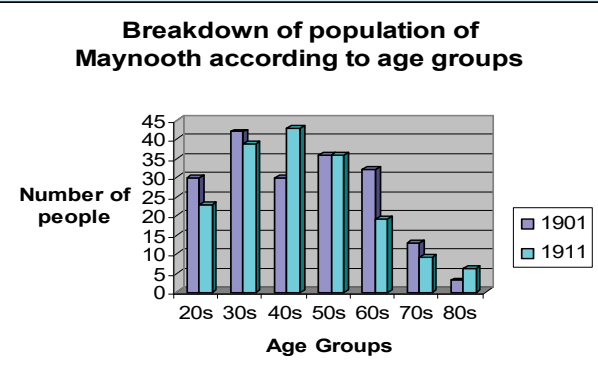
Population

Our Census forms for 2022 are being delivered to households and will be filled in on the 3rd of April. This happens to coincide with this planned article on the study of the 1901 and 1911 censuses for Maynooth.

The population figures noted by Arnold Horner in the Historic Towns Atlas for Maynooth are for Maynooth Town only, which accounts for 91 acres. Maynooth Town is a townland within Maynooth area. Maynooth’s population increased from 1375 in 1901 to 1586 in 1911. The chart below shows the male, female and scholar populations as calculated from the online census excluding Collegeland. The total figures in brackets refers to Maynooth Town only and not the surrounding areas. While the hinterland of Maynooth increased in population, the Town showed a decrease. (excludes Collegeland)

Year	Males	Females	Scholars	Total
1901	671	704	337	1375 (948)
1911	792	794	354	1586 (886)

The following chart outlines the breakdown of the population according to age groups. The number of people in their 80s was five or less in 1901 and 1911. There was more people in their twenties, thirties, and seventies in 1901. In 1911 there was less younger people in their twenties, much more in their forties, much less in their 60s and more in their eighties. Less of the younger generation may point to lack of diverse employment opportunities in the locality. The census returns for college servants, clerical students and academic staff in St. Patrick’s College Maynooth accounts for a further 600 individuals. The Collegeland will be dealt with separately. Of the total population for Maynooth (1316) in 1901, the vast majority of the population came from Kildare, Meath,



Dublin City and Westmeath which accounted for 359 people. There is a strong representation from Scotland and England and these are accounted for by employees at Carton Estate. The same trend continues in 1911. However, there are increases in 1911 to 25 counties and we also see countries such as America, Germany, South Africa, England, Scotland and India added to the list.

In 1901 and 1911 the number of widows outnumbered widowers considerably. There were 70 widows and 24 widowers in both 1901 and 1911. The average age of widows in 1901 was 58. The average age in 1911 was 62. Three hundred and fifty one people are described as married in 1901 and 425 in 1911, an upward trend.

Housing

The population of Maynooth Town appears to have decreased. There is an increase in the number of houses in the wider Maynooth area. The total number of houses in Maynooth in 1901 is 326. Maynooth Town accounts for 227 houses. The 1911 census shows an increase in the total number of houses to 342 which includes 13 that are uninhabited. The number of houses for Maynooth Town decreased to 207 which included 7 uninhabited.



There was no fourth-class housing in Maynooth which would have been a one roomed, thatched mud cabin with one window. First class houses typically were built of stone or brick, roofed with slate, had at least five or six rooms and eight windows to the front. Second class housing which made up the majority in Maynooth and consisted of brick or stone buildings, roofed in slate, had two to four rooms and had two windows to the front. Third class houses were built of stone or brick, were roofed in slate or iron and consisted of one or two rooms with one window to the front.

The breakdown of the class of house indicates some improvement by 1911. Third class housing reduced from thirty-four houses in 1901 to seventeen in 1911. First class housing rose slightly from forty-five in 1901 to forty-nine by 1911. Second class housing rose considerably from 206 in 1911 to 265 in 1911.

In almost all of the outlying farming areas that make up Maynooth there was a first class house e.g. Ballygoran, Crewhill, Dowdstown and Blakestown to mention a few. There were eighteen first class houses in these areas in 1901. This figure had risen to 26 by 1911. The number of houses increases in these areas during the decade for example Blakestown, Barrogstown West, Mariavilla and Greenfield. This indicates an expanding and developing farming community. Dublin Road had no third class houses and had additional three first class houses by 1911 which began to give a solid approach to the town. In 1901 first class houses in the town were in Leinster Street (6 houses) and Main Street (16 houses) which was much the same for 1911.

Third class housing was to be found in three main areas. In particular Parson’s Street Upper, is listed as having thirteen of the twenty four houses as third class. Doctor’s Lane had three third class houses out of ten and School Lane had five houses out of twenty seven. There was some contraction in the number of houses in parts of the town. In particular Parson’s Street Upper saw a reduction in the number of houses from twenty four in 1901 to twelve in 1911. Leinster Street was reduced from twenty two to seventeen. The number of unoccupied houses dropped from seventeen in 1901 to 8 in 1911.

Literacy

The question asked in the census for both years says ‘State here whether he or she can read and write, can read only or cannot read’. There were variations in the

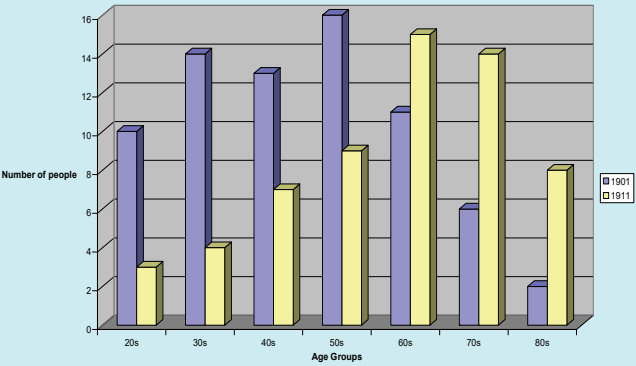
replies. For example cannot read or write, read only, can’t read and write, etc. For the purposes of ascertaining literacy levels all those who could not read and or write were taken into account. The vast majority of people answered that they could read only.

In 1901 there were 114 people over the age of 23 who could not read, four of whom stated they could not read or write. Most of the individuals who could not read fell into the 40 plus age group. This figure reduced to 63 in 1911. These represented people over fifty years of age. The following chart shows a breakdown of the ages of people who could not read. Literacy levels improved greatly in the lower age groups between 1901 and 1911. However they increased in the older age group from the sixties on. This may have been because illiteracy levels were at their highest in the fifty year age group in 1901. The occupations of people in this group were non-skilled. The men were mainly labouring. One was a butcher, another was a mason and another described as a ‘dealer in delph’. The women described themselves as housekeepers, charwomen, domestic servants or laundresses.

Cannot read according to age

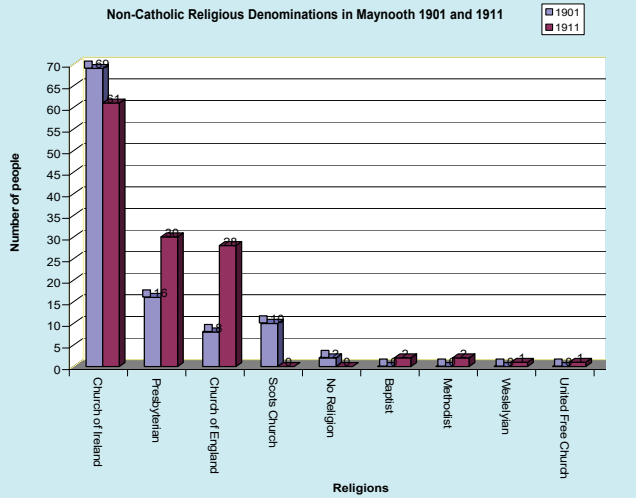
Religion

The non-Catholic population of 106 persons accounted



for 7.7% of the total in 1901 and similarly 126 persons accounted for about 7.9% in 1911. These figures do not include those of St. Patrick’s College Maynooth. This figure is mainly due to the number of non-Catholic employees in Carton Demesne who came from Scotland, England and Northern Ireland.

(Sean Durack)



To be continued...

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Loan examples are for illustrative purposes only.

1. €15,000 loan over 5 years. €308.25 per month for 60 months. Representative APR 8.57% variable rate. Total Cost of Credit €3,495.26
2. €10,000 loan over 5 years. €205.50 per month for 60 months. Representative APR 8.57% variable rate. Total Cost of Credit €2,330.17
3. €8,000 loan over 4 years. €202.63 per month for 48 months. Representative APR 9.93% variable rate. Total Cost of Credit €1,726.33
4. €60,000 loan over 10 years. €671.26 per month for 120 months. Representative APR 6.17% variable rate. Total Cost of Credit €20,550.81
5. €18,000 loan over 6 years. €320.63 per month for 72 months. Representative APR 8.57% variable rate. Total Cost of Credit €5,085.47

APR stands for Annual Percentage Rate. Loans are subject to approval. Lending criteria, terms and conditions apply. Over 18s only

Warning: If you do not meet the repayments on your loan, your account will go into arrears. This may affect your credit rating, which may limit your ability to access credit in the future

Warning: The cost of your repayments may increase

Life Credit Union is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland.



Writers’ Corner - Short Stories/Articles from our Readers

Silence

There is an Irish *seanfhocal*, literally old saying, *Is binn béal in a thost*, sweet is a voice in its silence. Conal learned the truth of that the hard way. It happened during an elocution class in City College. Each student had to recite some poem he or she liked. Being a recent immigrant from West Galway in a class with a large contingent of Harlem students, he decided that Longfellow’s *The Slave’s Dream* would be ideal. After all, this slave was no mere downtrodden black man but someone who had been a prince in his native Africa. Now in his final moments he was back again in that great continent, riding a powerful stallion as he travelled south. From roaring lions and screaming hyenas to flocks of bright flamingos the wildlife of his former domain passed before him, ‘till he saw the roofs of the Kaffir huts and the ocean rose to view’ – but something was wrong! Conal was aware of shocked amazement on his listeners’ faces. It must have been triggered by that word ‘Kaffir’ – but why?

‘You don’t expect us to listen to that drivel?’ a surly voice demanded above the outburst of outraged protests from the seated fellows and girls.

‘Wait!’ Ken the lecturer admonished. ‘Let the speaker explain.’

‘I always thought a Kaffir was an Arab,’ Conal began, to a chorus of mingled boos and jeers. ‘Anyway, Longfellow obviously didn’t intend to insult Africans.’

‘Then he should have stopped writing romantic drivel about a continent he had never seen,’ the surly fellow declared, sparking a chorus of general support.

“OK”, Conal raised both hands shoulder high. ‘If you find the poem offensive then I apologize for my poor choice of material.’ Saying which he resumed his seat.

That wasn’t the only occasion where his lack of savvy betrayed him. In his workplace there was a fellow, Scotti, who never lost an opportunity to humiliate him, starting from the time he had asked him what size circuit breaker he should indicate on the plan he was drawing.

‘Listen to this chancer!’ Scotti announced to the entire office. ‘He doesn’t know the most elementary thing about electricity and he’s supposed to be designing a layout for this building. Why should we have to bailout a klutz like that?’

Notwithstanding Scotti’s sarcasm, Conal kept silent, that

is until the day Scotti declared that Irish women were ugly. ‘What about Grace Kelly?’ he asked.

‘Grace Kelly is an American,’ Scotti pointed out.

‘Yes,’ Conal conceded, ‘but her parents were Irish. ‘Her grandfather came from Mayo.’

‘Big deal!’ Scotti scoffed.

‘Well, what about Maureen O’ Hara?’ Conal remarked.

‘Another American and not exactly – ‘

‘If she’s American, how come her real name is FitzSimons and she was born in Dublin?’

‘So what? With her red hair she’s no looker.’

‘Well, what about Maureen O’Sullivan? She was Irish and had black hair.’

‘Never heard of her.’

‘She used to play Jane in Tarzan films and her daughter is Mia Farrow, Frank Sinatra’s wife.’

‘Big deal!’

‘Maybe not, but millions of Americans wouldn’t agree with you.’

‘I still maintain that Irish broads are no lookers.’

‘You know the old saying’, Conal declared, ‘There are none so blind as those that will not see.’

Scotti had no comeback to that remark, so Conal dropped the subject.

His liaison with Irish-American Charlie, a Manhattan high flyer, still rankled. Conal had taken her to the cinema, then to a four-course meal in a French restaurant, where she had ordered frogs legs, coq au vin and a really expensive Bordeaux Chardonnay. The next day he had arranged to meet her in Times Square but she had stood him up. Like a fool, he had accepted her explanation that her employer was short-staffed and she couldn’t refuse him for fear of losing her job.

‘Why didn’t you ring me?’ he nevertheless protested. “It would have saved me a lot of trouble.’

‘I’m truly sorry,’ the way she said it over the phone sounded glib, but he was too smitten to upbraid her.

The upshot was that he took her on a date to Greenwich Village, where they had a meal in The White Horse Tavern, followed by attendance at Under Milkwood in the Circle in the Square theatre. Afterwards it was clear that neither the hard seats nor Dylan Thomas’s mellifluous English had been to her liking. That should have been proof enough for Conal that he and Charlie weren’t compatible but, ever hopeful, he reckoned his firm’s annual

dinner in the Four Seasons Restaurant would really bowl her over. Imagine his chagrin when, on her failure to turn-up, she informed him over the phone that her boss had insisted that she work that evening.

‘But you’re down on the guest list as my partner,’ he protested.

‘I’m really sorry,’ she apologized. ‘But my secretarial job’s on the line.’

The thought occurred to him that he should arrange another date for the following week and then, when she was all decked out, cancel it. That would pay her back for her highhanded attitude.

‘Would you like to see a really good play? Brian Friel’s *Philadelphia Here I Come* is opening on Broadway.’

‘What’s it about?’

‘It’s about an Irish fellow emigrating to America.’

‘That sounds interesting,’ the way she said it showed she had her doubts.

‘Fine then. I’ll book seats for Saturday night week – if that’s ok?’

‘There’s a really good film on in Lincoln Center – ‘

‘No, Friel’s play got great reviews. You’ll enjoy it.’

‘In that case, why not?’

He took a friend’s sister, who was dating a New York cop, to the dinner in The Four Seasons, then on the following Saturday went to a dance in City Center ballroom. During a slow waltz with Jenny, an attractive Belfast Loyalist, he realized they had much in common, including an interest in The Beatles. While Jenny visited the bathroom he got on a pay phone to Charlie and apologized for not meeting her.

‘You could have phoned, instead of letting me get ready for a date,’ she fumed.

‘It was like that Simon & Garfunkel’s song, *The Sound of Silence* ‘,

he began, ‘you know, *Hello darkness my old friend* – ‘

‘Are you trying to be funny?’

‘No, I’m trying to explain’.

‘Oh, get lost!’ she snapped. ‘I should have known you’re a loser.’ Saying which, she hung up

I’ll take Jenny to the Brian Friel play, he decided. After all, politics apart, he and she are both northerners, so she’s bound to enjoy it.

P.G. Nerney

Night Lines
To Aidan

Despite your angry strength
You could not best a foe
Entrenched within the body’s cells,
And so I write to you,
As I wrote this night three years ago,
Trying to realign
The fragments of your shattered self:

Emblazoned with horns
Your image prowled our college talk,
Fiery champion of Saint Nathy’s
Panting to assail our goalposts.
Then in Galway foe turned friend,
Generous, warm, volcanic,
Outpacing Pre-Med cynicism
To anatomise hypocrisy,
While scoffers, wild men, pseudo-rebels
Sniped at codes that would ensnare them.
But you, last son of an ardent father,
From a town born of a quarrel,
Were even then skirmishing
With the peddlers of complacency,
Lie hater, truth lover,
A man incapable of peace,
A thorn in every gobdaw’s side,
Tearing up my rooted icons,
Davis, Hyde, Pearse, Dev,
Like a crop of deadly nightshade;

Yet, when you most reviled your countrymen
Then were you most the Celt:
Joyce jeering at the timid mummerns,
Drunken, loud, outrageous Behan,
Cuchulainn, the small dark man of passion,
Fighting unaided half of Ireland.

Torn by endemic conflicts,
Your spirit raged like theirs,
Whipping you to new endeavours:
County forward, golfer, team manager,
Actor, pianist, public speaker,
Friend of Bolshevik and anarchist,
Rescuer of the lost and wounded...

Discovering foes in previous friends,
You turned your strength on me,
A Ferdia who, it appeared,
Became a pillar of the “Emerald Junta”,
And so for ten long years
Our natures locked and wrestled:
Past versus future,
Thought versus action,
Dream versus reason,
All the unbridgeable dichotomies –
But that is just a surface truth,
For surely you knew well the dreams
That you so scathingly disparaged?
And I the dreamer could out-reason you
When truth was swamped by passion.

No doubt, as might have been expected,
We both were true and false
To our positions,
For life proceeds by contradiction;
Yet all this time
Like the strife of those two cowherds
Who fought as birds, sea monsters, worms
And finally turned into bulls
Bellowing and butting
Across the breadth of Ireland,
Our quarrel raged in endless guises:
Rebel charging at conformist,
Marxist trampling capitalist,
Agnostic goring Catholic,
Expat disembowelling patriot,
Until bile almost smothered friendship,
Leaving just a smouldering core.

But now that you have passed
Beyond my reach for ever
And all that baffles me is known to you,
I unreservedly proclaim
You ennobled people by your combat:
Treating plodders as your equals,
Compelling fence sitters to make a stand,
Firing ‘bourgies’ with the joy of battle.

No, you were never really bested,
Cove, ‘matey’, old friend, daemon...

Colin Scott



Writers' Corner - Short Stories/Articles from our Readers - Cont.

Dear Editor,

We learned an Irish version of the Scottish 'Skye Boat Song' in college, which I am hoping some of your readers may recall. The words went something like this: Siúl a bhfoirling mar éan ar á sciath / Siúl a ghéibh na Seoighe / Gualann an laoch ba chóir bhí ina rí / Thairis go Tír na Seoighe. (Please excuse spelling.)

If I'm correct, Tír na Seoighe is the Joyce Country in Connemara. Does anyone recall the proper version of this song?

Many thanks,
Pádraig Ó Duibheannaigh.

JESUS AND THE 12! EASTERTIDE

Jesus himself was the lesson which he constantly strove to teach his disciples. He always stood apart – was never one of them. Even when he ate with them he was still the centre of the entire experience. He was always almost out of reach of them as they often did not understand what he was saying. He was frequently apart from them. He rose early in the mornings to pray. Sometimes he spent the whole night in prayer.

Then at least once he sent all the disciples off in the boat and went away by himself to pray. When he came to them in the middle of the night and they battling with a storm, they scarcely knew him. Once, having heard that the pharisees were in a dither over his followers' baptizing more people than John, he was on his way back to Galilee. He was apparently alone, and was passing through Samaria when he came to Sychar where he met the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob. He had a long talk with her and declared himself not only to be the source of living water but also the Messiah.

When the disciples arrived they were amazed to find him talking to a woman and a Samaritan woman at that. They dared not question him but appeared to be totally at sea as to what was going on. They offered him food but when he refused and told them that he had food to eat that they knew nothing about they wondered whether someone could have brought him food. A Jew in Samaritan territory? He then explained to them the nature of the food he was referring to, to do the will of his Father.

What riches he had brought to that village! At the last supper when he said that one of them was going to betray him they were afraid to ask him directly but used John as a go-between as he was just beside Jesus. Again they didn't understand what was going on when he handed the piece of bread to Judas and told him to be quick about his business. They thought he was off to give alms to the poor.

After the resurrection perhaps Thomas was speaking for all of them when he declared his lack of faith without some real proof. He got that proof when Jesus used Thomas's own challenging words referring to the reality of his wounds.

If those incredulous, unschooled, ordinary Galilean men finally threw in their lot with Jesus shouldn't we do likewise? We know through the evidence of these men and their companions that Jesus is the Light of the world, the Way, the Truth and the Life, The Bread of life, has the Words of Eternal life. He is surely worth believing in! Much sounder bet than anything I see around here! He is nearer to us than ever he was to those closest to him two thousand years ago!

GM

The Grey Knight—A Review

This book was my introduction to the writings of Patrick Devaney and I really enjoyed it. It was an easy read not only due to the fluency of language, but because it is printed on good quality paper in large clean type face and well laid out chapters.

The story line is simple and well developed, although I was confused at first as to whether The Grey Knight was a horse or a painting. In fact it was both.

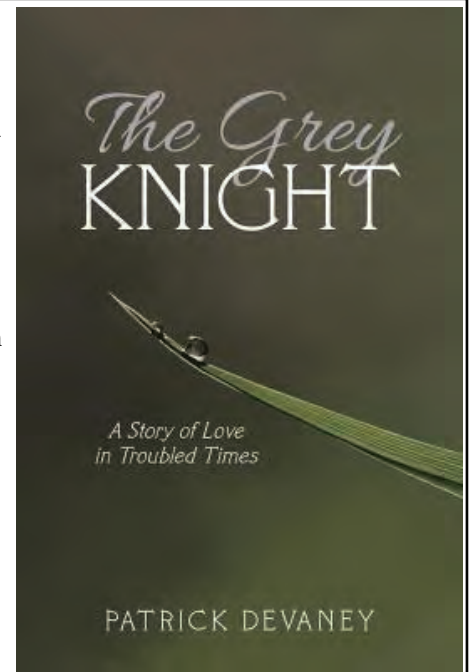
What struck me as a reader the book was the way it reminded me of writers like Maurice West, Frank O'Connor and Patrick Kavanagh, all good storytellers. It highlights the beauty of ordinary things in rural Ireland that has almost disappeared.

The author is gifted with acute powers of observation, where buildings, birds and animals are concerned, although sometimes the details of these seem to be introduced in a rather arbitrary fashion. Similarly the gripping dialogue is occasionally interrupted by the insertion of detailed descriptions of domestic chores which may give the scene a homely setting but actually slow down the narrative.

In a pre-mobile phone age the use of the letter as a means of communication is fully utilised yet occasionally it seems a little contrived. The subtitle of the book. "A Story of love in Trouble Times" gives a good overview of the theme that knits the various strands of the story together. However, I found myself hoping for more detail of how the Northern Troubles impact on the rural community. One had to wait until Chapter XXXII before it burst on us with a vengeance. The car bomb detail was obviously drawn from the tragic scenes in Belturbet - December 1972, where two young people lost their lives in similar circumstances. Patrick Devaney deals with it in a very sensitive and moving way which brings his story to a powerful and emotional climax.

As I read the book I formed the opinion, although I did not know anything about the author at the time, that he was certainly a teacher. His familiarity with a wide range of poetry and the insertion of snatches of poems here and there give this work a touch of class, which we don't always find in contemporary literature. I am not familiar with Author House - the publisher, but they did a really good job in the layout and production of the book. Much credit is also due to proof-readers. This book needs to be more widely published and would make a welcome Christmas present for readers of all age groups. I look forward to seeing more of Patrick Devaney's work

Owen Collins



Maynooth University's Festival of Food Sovereignty



When: Wednesday, April 13, 2022 -
10:30 to 15:30

Where: Callan Building Room 8

Against the backdrop of pandemics, war, and a food price crisis, the case for food sovereignty is stronger than ever. Food sovereignty is about prioritising small-scale and sustainable and regenerative food production to benefit communities and their environment. Instead of policies and practices that reflect the demands of markets and corporations, food sovereignty is about trying to put the aspirations, needs and livelihoods of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies. On April 13, come to Maynooth University to think about how to build food sovereignty in Ireland, with inspiring and interactive discussion, music, and more.

Register here: [Maynooth University's Festival of Food Sovereignty Tickets, Wed 13 Apr 2022 at 10:30 | Eventbrite](#)

Session 1:

10:30 to 13:15, CB8 (Callan Building, room 8):

Building food sovereignty in Ireland and beyond, with music from Ashling O'Reilly and contributions from David Wolfe (Proprietor, Wakelyns Farm, Suffolk, UK), Rose Hogan (Sustainable Agriculture Adviser, Trocaire), Breda

Larkin (artist, Talamh Beo), and Jason Horner (seed grower and Ireland Coordinator for the GAIA Foundation Seed Sovereignty UK and Ireland Programme). Hosted by Davie Philip (Cultivate, Cloughjordan Ecovillage), with Dr. Louise Fitzgerald and Dr. Alistair Fraser, Dept of Geography, Maynooth University.

Session 2:

13:30 to 15:00, School of Education building, Room 129:

A regenerating session of talk, learning, and Tai Chi about, and ending in, Maynooth University's edible garden. Hosted by Dr. Patricia Healy-Kettle, Maynooth University, and with Tai Chi from Nicole Mills. Also includes a 'make a pot and plant a seed' activity.

Notes:

- Tea and coffee will be provided. Please bring your own lunch and/or something to share. Gardeners or those with green fingers are welcome to help weed the edible garden during session two, so feel free to bring your gardening gloves!

- Maynooth University is best accessed by public transport, however the campus has some paid car parks and there are some more affordable parking options in Maynooth town.

- Maynooth University's Festival of Food Sovereignty is kindly supported by: Afri (www.afri.ie); Maynooth University Social Science Institute; Maynooth University Green Campus Committee; Department of Geography, Maynooth University.

April Events at Maynooth Community Library

For further information contact: www.kildare.ie/library maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie Ph: 01-6285530



facebook.com/KildareCountyLibraryService



twitter.com/kildarelibrary

Events for Children

Spring into Storytime Event: Create Your Own Fairy Tale Forest!

Saturday 2nd April 3pm-4pm

In-person children's workshop at Maynooth Community Library for children aged 6-12 years.

Join storyteller Simone Schuemmelfeder for this special in-person craft workshop. With card-board and paper, we will create our own pop-up fairy-tale forest. Who lives in your dark, dark woods?

A witch? A wolf? Some fairies? Or something completely different? There's no limit to your imagination! Places are limited. All children under the age of 8 attending this workshop must have a parent/guardian remain in the library building during the workshop.

Booking required through Eventbrite: <https://fairytaletalestartworkshop.eventbrite.ie>

In-Person Storytime and Nursery Rhymes for 2-5-year-olds

Friday 29th April 10am-10.30am

In-person storytime for pre-schoolers is back at Maynooth Community Library!

Join the staff of Maynooth Library for our first in-person story time, with stories, nursery rhymes and songs. This Friday's story time theme is 'Down on the Farm', so come along to learn all about what you can see and hear on the farm!

Booking required: <https://inpersonstorytimefriday29th.eventbrite.ie>

Anyone4Science Harry Potter workshop for ages 7-10 years: In-person children's workshop at Maynooth Community Library

Tuesday 19th April, 12.30pm-1.30pm

Join Maynooth community library and Anyone 4 Science on the 19th of April for some fantastic literature-themed science.

Learn about magnets and magnetism and become Harry Potter by making your own "magic" wand. Suitable for children 7-10 years.

All children under the age of 8 attending this workshop must have a parent/guardian remain in the library building during the workshop.

Booking required through Eventbrite: <https://anyone4scienceharrypotter.eventbrite.ie>

Anyone4Science Gangsta Granny CSI In-person workshop at Maynooth Community Library for ages 10+

Tuesday 19th April, 3.00pm-4.00pm

Learn about crime scene investigation and forensic science so you can stop Gangsta Granny in her tracks. Suitable for children 10+ years.

Booking required through Eventbrite: <https://anyone4sciencegangstagrannycsi.eventbrite.ie>

Easter Activity Pack

Bundle of easter themed activities available to collect from Maynooth Library. Design your own EGG-CITING Easter egg, using collage and colours; make your own Easter bookmark; and other activities to keep you entertained over your Easter break!

Suitable for ages 4-10

Available from 6th April

Events for Young Adults

Maynooth Library: Try a Teen Book Club Afternoon

Friday April 22nd /4pm and 4.30pm/ On Zoom

Maynooth Library has two book clubs for Teens for ages 12-14 and ages 15-17. It's common for young people to veer away from reading when joining secondary school or around age 12-13, so Maynooth Library is keen to draw them back in with a new Book Club for ages 12-14. This book club will meet once a month for 30 minutes and there will be a choice of book each month. For the older more picky teens, there is a book club with a difference for ages 15-17. There is always the option of suggested reading, but teens can read and recommend whatever they like. Contact Maynooth Library at maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie or 045 980 493 for more information.

Events for Adults

In celebration of Poetry Day Ireland: 'Written in the Stars': An evening of sharing poetry

Thursday 28th April, 6.30pm, via Zoom

Join us on Poetry Day Ireland with the theme 'Written in the Stars'. If poetry is a constellation, which poems have guided and inspired you along the way? Some of you may wish to read a poem aloud, and others might like to just listen as we look to the stars through poetry.

Hosted by Maynooth and Ballitore Libraries.

All welcome. Booking via Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/poetry-day-ireland-written-in-the-stars-tickets-293821787877>

Beginners Sewing Machine Classes

Commencing 5th April from 6.30pm-7.30pm

Must have own sewing machine.

If you have an unused, unloved sewing machine then this class is for you. Learn to thread,

adjust tension, change needles, use different stitches and make some very simple projects. If interested, please contact Maynooth library on 045 980 493.

Wednesday Morning Book Club from 11.00-12 noon on the 3rd Wed of month:

Wednesday 20th April

If interested contact Maynooth library on 045 980 493

U3A Book Club on the 2nd Mon of the month.

Monday 11th April 10.30 - 11.30am

If interested contact Maynooth library on 045 980 493

Knitting / Craft Club

Every Monday from 12.00 - 13.00.

Come and join likeminded people for an hour of chat, knitting and crafting.

Maynooth Library 045 980 493

Regular Events

Online Story Time & Sing Along Nursery Rhymes via Zoom for 2-5 year olds.

Every Friday 10-10.30am

Join the Staff of Maynooth Library for some online storytelling and nursery rhymes!

Please be aware that a parent/guardian must be present for the duration of the event.

Booking required through Eventbrite.

Friday 1st April 10am: <https://onlinestorytimefriday1stapril.eventbrite.ie>.

Friday 8th April 10am: <https://onlinestorytimefriday8thapril.eventbrite.ie>.

Friday 22nd April 10am: <https://onlinestorytimefriday22ndapril.eventbrite.ie>.

Bookclubs

Readers of the Lost Ark Scifi Bookclub For Adults

Tuesday 12th April 6.30pm

The Readers of the Lost Ark Scifi Bookclub meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6.30pm via Zoom. The April meeting of the bookclub will be on Tuesday 12th of April at 6.30pm. The bookclub will be discussing 'Skyward Inn' by Aliya Whiteley. If you are interested in joining the book club, please email maynoothlib@kildarecoco.ie or telephone 045 980 493.

How to make Easter Chicks from pompoms

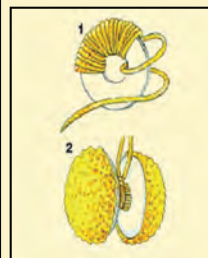
Create these cute Easter chicks to hang in your windows. Children will enjoy helping to make these Easter chicks – let them make the pompoms, then you can finish them off with their felt beaks, feet and wings.

You will need

- card
- yellow wool
- scissors
- orange felt
- glue
- googly eyes



How to make the Easter chicks



1. Cut two card circles measuring 7.5cm in diameter with a 2.5cm-diameter hole in the centre of each. Place the card rings together and wind wool around both rings (see diagram 1) until the hole is almost full.

2. Cut through the wool around the outer edge, tie a 30cm length of wool between the discs and pull away the rings (see diagram 2). Repeat the process to make the smaller pompoms for the chicks' heads, using 6.5cm diameter circles with 2.5cm-diameter holes.

3. Join the pompoms together with the ties. Cut four felt rectangles, shaping one end for feet and wings, and fold a diamond shape in half for the beak. Glue in place and stick on eyes. Hang up with a length of wool.



Source: www.prima.co.uk/craft/easy-craft-ideas/news/a22196/easter-chicks-pompoms/

Easter Chicks can sit in an Easter basket, be attached to gifts, or be used as decorative items.



Catherine Murphy T.D. Social Democrats, Kildare North.

Constituency Office ph: 01-6156625 Dáil Office ph: 01-6183099 - e-mail: catherine.murphy@oireachtas.ie

Mullen Park homes offered to buyers, but with 25% price hike

A number of houses in the Kildare estate came on the market last week, nearly a year after the outcry over a €1 billion global investment fund's plans to bulk-buy 155 of its properties. New-build homes in the Kildare housing estate Mullen Park, which were due to be sold to an investment fund, are back on the market at €499,000 – nearly 25 per cent more than the original asking price in April 2021.

Last May, the *Business Post* revealed that a global property investment firm with a €1 billion war chest had pushed out first-time buyers by bulk purchasing 115 homes in the Maynooth estate. Round Hill Capital, the fund that was in line to block buy the homes as part of a €54 million deal, subsequently backed out of the arrangement and the homes are now back on the open market. Last week, Hooke and MacDonald, acting on behalf of the developer of Mullen Park, said there would be a small release of houses in the estate. "We have a selection of two-bedroom houses from €410,000, three-bedroom houses from €463,000 and four-bedroom houses from €499,000," the email to prospective buyers said. The new prices of homes in the Kildare estate are significantly ahead of the prices advertised last year, when most properties in the development had an asking price of €400,000.

The prices of new-build homes in the housing estate are now between €60,000 and €95,000 more expensive compared to last year. Records from April 2021, seen by the *Business Post*, show the asking price of a four-bed home in the development was €405,000 at the time. According to the Residential Property Price Register, the average price paid for a home in Mullen Park in 2021 was more than €423,000. Catherine Murphy, co-leader of the Social Democrats and TD for Kildare North, said the rise in the cost of homes in Mullen Park could not be explained away by inflation in the prices of building materials. "The homes are being sold for what the market can bear. It's a shockingly large increase and I don't think anyone who was keeping an eye out for these homes when they came back to the market will be happy after seeing the auctioneer's email," Murphy said.

Last year, when the planned sale of three and four-bedroom houses in the estate to Round Hill Capital was revealed by this newspaper, it caused a political furore. It led to the government bringing in new legislation in May to impose a higher stamp duty charge of 10 per cent on investment funds if they bought up ten or more houses in housing estates. In July, Kelston Properties, the developer of the estate said the deal with Round Hill Capital would no longer go ahead and the 115 remaining homes would be offered to individuals for sale. (From Independent today)

House prices soaring by €100 a day as property heats up to boom-time levels.

The Q1 *Irish Independent* REA Average House Price Survey has found that average house prices rose by 3.16pc nationally in the first three months of the year, matching the 1pc-a-month increases experienced during the boom. Almost 60pc of all purchasers were first-time buyers, a figure which rose to 76pc in Dublin as people with mortgage approval scramble to get a foothold on the housing ladder. Two other property price surveys, released from Daft.ie and MyHome.ie, also show a continued property market squeeze with rising asking prices nationwide.

The *Irish Independent* REA Average House Price Survey concentrates on the actual sale price of Ireland's typical stock home, the three-bed semi. This is intended to provide an accurate and up-to-date picture of the second-hand property market in towns and cities countrywide. Today's report shows that the price of a three-bedroom semi-detached house across the country rose by almost

€9,000 over the past three months to €278,500. That's the equivalent of about €100 every day. There has been an annual increase of more than 14pc, closing in on the €300,000 average level at the height of the boom in 2006. There continued to be big price rises in counties outside of major urban areas, amid a new focus on working-from-home brought on by the Covid pandemic. Actual selling prices in Dublin, however, remain highest at an average of €481,250. "We are now approaching and, in many cases, exceeding Celtic Tiger prices in the capital, with the market being driven by frustrated first-time buyers," said REA spokesperson Barry McDonald.

"Despite signs of a rise in available stock over the last couple of weeks, sale prices are still increasing at all price ranges. "Affordability is now key, and the highest growth levels are being experienced in areas where homes are available for less than the average county figure." The country's other major cities saw rises of 2.2pc on average, mostly in line with Dublin, while Waterford city returned a 6pc price increase with the average three-bed semi up €15,000 to €265,000, driven by high demand from outside buyers.

Counties in Dublin's commuter belt saw prices increase of 4.47pc, or an average €13,000 to €305,000. This was double the rate of increase seen in the capital. In the rest of the country, where prices rose 3.4pc to €196,569 on average, the survey found that one in every three buyers were from outside the county as new working conditions enable a rethink on home bases. In Carrick-On-Shannon in Leitrim, two-thirds of purchasers are new to the area, according to REA Brady, Carrick-on-Shannon. There were significant price rises in counties Cavan (8.3pc), Mayo (8.2pc) and Galway (8.7pc) where agent REA McGreal Burke has noted the return of younger generations to rural Ireland, bringing with them increased purchasing power. Meanwhile, 75pc of house sales were to first-time buyers in Cavan town. Homes there rose €15,000 in three months to €175,000 and sales were being agreed in an average of two weeks, according to REA Peter Donohoe. In Killarney, agents REA Coyne and Culloty are reporting just 19 houses for sale amongst all estate agents in the town – the lowest figure on record, with no new developments coming on stream.

It comes as housing prices rose by 2.4pc on average during the first three months of 2022, according to the latest Daft.ie Sales Report released today. It says the average listed price nationwide in the first quarter of 2022 was €299,093, up 8.4pc on the same period in 2021 and just 19pc below the Celtic Tiger peak. Just 10,000 homes were listed for sale on March 1, another new low in a series stretching back to July 2006.

Ronan Lyons, economist at Trinity College Dublin, said: "Inflation in housing prices remains stubbornly high – with Covid-19 disturbing an equilibrium of sorts that had emerged, with prices largely stable in 2019 but increasing since. "As has been the case consistently over the last decade, increasing prices reflects a combination of strong demand and very weak supply.

"Both new and second-hand supply remain weaker than expected before the pandemic. Combined with unexpected strong demand, due to accidental savings during lockdown, this has driven up prices. "Additional supply – of all types of homes, for sale but also market rental and social rental housing – remains the only real solution to solving Ireland's chronic housing shortage."

And a separate report from MyHome.ie/Davy also suggested no let-up in the property market squeeze for the first quarter of the year. It has national annual asking price inflation now running at 12.3pc. Conall MacCoille, chief economist at Davy, said that double-digit inflation was now likely to persist until at least the middle of the year.

"The broad picture of the market in early 2022 remains similar to last year: impaired supply coupled with robust demand due to Ireland's strong labour market."

Government Must Fast-Track Bill To Ban Demanding Sex For Rent

Social Democrats' Bill, "Ban On Sex For Rent 2022", was debated by the Dáil.

The government must fast-track legislation which makes demanding sex in lieu of rent a specific criminal offence, according to Social Democrats co-leader Catherine Murphy TD. "As the rental crisis deepens, there have been reports of a minority of landlords demanding sex from prospective tenants in lieu of rent. Last week, it was revealed that Ukrainian refugees were being deliberately targeted by grossly exploitative landlords. "This shows the depraved depths of the housing crisis, where some despicable landlords expect sexual favours in return for putting a roof over people's heads. The fact that refugees fleeing war could be subjected to such disgusting demands shows the urgent need to legislate in this area. "Our Social Democrats' Bill, Ban On Sex For Rent 2022, was debated by the Dáil. I was pleased that Tánaiste Leo Varadkar confirmed in the Dáil that it is a piece of good legislation and the government intends to support it.

"However, the government must do more – and fast-track this Bill through the Dáil. There is a gap in the law, when it comes to sex being demanded in lieu of rent, that urgently needs to be filled. This Bill can do this. "The Ban On Sex For Rent Bill 2022 creates an offence of requiring or accepting sex as a condition of accommodation and also creates a second offence, for anyone including publishers, of facilitating the requirement or acceptance of sex as a condition of accommodation. These offences carry penalties of up to seven years in prison or a €50,000 fine. "This Bill is not a panacea – it is one aspect of the required State response to protect renters. Protections for tenants can also be bolstered by a nationwide ban on rent increases; a deposit protection scheme; an end to no-fault evictions and the establishment of a rent register. Crucially, the supply of affordable housing must also increase as a matter of urgency."

Government Must Act On Fuel Costs and Price Gouging

Oil prices are now at record levels while the wholesale price of gas has doubled in just a week.

The government must immediately act to reduce the cost of fuel – and must also ensure that price gouging at the pumps is not taking place, according to Social Democrats Catherine Murphy TD. "The cost of fuel is skyrocketing to unprecedented levels and the government must take immediate action to support families and businesses who are crippled by these additional costs. "The Social Democrats previously called on the government to cut VAT to reduce the cost of energy, but it refused. Senior ministers have now stated that excise duty may be cut, but there appears to be no urgency to act.

"I was concerned to read media reports today which suggested the government wants to lock in prices at their current unsustainable level and cut excise duty only if prices continue to spike. This is not a credible response. "Oil prices are now at record levels while the wholesale price of gas has doubled in just a week. This is causing extraordinary hardship – to workers, families and businesses – all over the country. "It is also regrettably the case that some retailers may be taking advantage of large fluctuations in global energy costs to engage in price gouging. The government must ensure this is not taking place. The Irish Competition and Consumer Protection Commission should have a role in monitoring wildly fluctuating prices at the pumps to guard against price gouging."

(Continued on page 28)



Catherine Murphy T.D. Social Democrats, Kildare North Cont/.....

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(Continued from page 27)

For Written Answer on : 24/03/2022
Question Number(s): 242
Question Reference(s): 15729/22
Department: Foreign Affairs
Asked by: Catherine Murphy T.D.

QUESTION

To ask the Minister for Foreign Affairs the amount collected in passport application fees in the past ten years to date; and the breakdown of the fees collected in respect of first-time applications, renewals, emergency passports and so on over the same time period.

REPLY

The total amount of passport fees collected by the Passport Service since 2012 is outlined below in tabular form. A breakdown of the fees collected by application type as requested by the Deputy is not available as our current system does not easily facilitate this. This is further complicated by the many other factors which would need to be taken into consideration including the channel used to apply for the passport, where the person resides and if there was a reduced fee applied when a bundle of passport book and passport card were applied for at the same time.

The Department of Foreign Affairs has been urged to provide

Year	Passport Fees Collected
2012	€39,634,921
2013	€38,369,783
2014	€39,055,198
2015	€42,051,536
2016	€46,744,825
2017	€50,227,847
2018	€51,379,655
2019	€53,612,645
2020	€26,745,948
2021	€40,258,356
2022 (to date)	€13,841,356

more accurate information on expected waiting times as people fear they will be forced to cancel trips. Irish holidaymakers have been warned that a massive backlog in the passport office for those waiting on first-time passport applications could cause some to miss their flights. The Department of Foreign Affairs has been urged to provide more accurate information on expected waiting times as people fear they will be forced to cancel trips. A technical issue with the system in recent weeks added to the problem, causing difficulty in getting passports to first-time applicants.

Social Democrat co-leader Catherine Murphy said she has never received such volumes of passport queries from the public. She said: "I can't recall anything like the volume of passport inquiries that I'm getting -and I'm presuming that it's the same with every TD. So at this stage, there is a degree of chaos that people are feeling. "I think the Department have to come out and be very honest with people about the length of time they're going to be waiting. Or else they've got to augment the number of people who are working in the passport office to try and bring down waiting times." Following the lifting of Covid restrictions, the passport office received over 137,000 new applications, the highest volume ever received.

There are currently 160,000 passport applications in the system, of which 20,000 are first time applications from within the State. Travelers' have been advised that the current processing time for a first-time application is up to 40 working days, but Deputy Murphy said this timeframe is longer in reality. She said: "The automatic passports, where somebody is looking to renew and doing it online, that's working well. "And in fact, it's one of the better initiatives over the last few years that the passport office has done. "But there isn't a day goes by that we don't get multiple requests in relation to information on passports now.

It is one of the dominant issues that's cropping up for us. "It's mainly for people who are applying for a first-time passport or a passport for a child. "These take 40 days, but what is not clear is that they take 40 days from the time it's checked, and they may well be with the Department a significant length of time before it's checked. "So the Department need to give accurate information out to people because they're making decisions on should they cancel or postpone trips and things like that if there isn't a chance of getting a passport."

In response to this Foreign Affairs Minister Simon Coveney said: "The Passport Service regrets that the passport tracker recently experienced technical issues which resulted in the tracker not correctly updating a small number of applications. The Passport Service became aware of the issue earlier this month and initiated an investigation at that point. This issue has been identified and is now fixed. "While it has not been possible to immediately update all affected applications on the tracker, this will happen automatically when these applications reach the next stage of the process. "It is rare for the passport tracker to experience this kind of technical issue. The Passport Service regrets any inconvenience caused to applicants who have been affected."

Government home building fund gave 90% of Momentum Fund to big developers

A key Government lending body set up to increase the supply of small scale housing developments nationally delivered 90% of one of its funds to large-scale developers and corporate investors. Home Building Finance Ireland (HBFI) told the Public Accounts Committee that some €242 million of the €274 million it lent under its Momentum Fund had gone to such large-scale private concerns. That figure, committee members suggested, would mean that instead of providing finance for smaller developers HBFI is instead fueling development which is in turn being bought up by corporate investors and cuckoo funds. Chief executive of HBFI Dara Deering argued that it was necessary to prioritise those larger developers due to the Covid pandemic, which had led to an "ongoing problem of a lack of finance in the market". She acknowledged that of the 1,018 units constructed under the Momentum Fund, 841 had become rentals within investment funds, 92 went to private owner-occupiers, and just 85 went to social housing.

She further admitted that HBFI does not require proof from firms applying to it that they were unable to source funding from Ireland's main banks, a fact which led to an accusation from Sinn Féin's Imelda Munster that "no checks or balances" are in place. "I am sure they were rubbing their hands that they got the funding so easily," Ms Munster said. Ms Deering said that HBFI does not look for proof of such refusals as "we don't believe that encourages the creation of supply". Average rents for the one-bed apartments constructed under the Momentum Fund were €1,800 per month for a one-bed, €2,100 for a two-bed, and €3,100 for a three-bed. Sinn Féin TD Imelda Munster. Picture: Sam Boal / RollingNews.ie The €300 million Momentum Fund was set up in May 2020 at the height of the pandemic to "specifically help house builders commence large housing developments in prime locations in cases where funding may not have been available", Ms Deering said.

Committee vice-chair Catherine Murphy remarked that the provision of finance to large developers "was not the expectation for HBFI". "This was supposed to be small or medium developers," she said. "Why can't these big developers source money in the market?" Ms Deering, who acknowledged that her overall salary totalled €314,000 in 2020, said that five schemes had been funded under Momentum, three of which went to the private rental market with one sold to the private market. "Based on our market analysis, if we had not funded those homes we are categorical that they would not have been built," she said. She said that the Momentum Fund is "not a case of either/or" in terms of funding both small and large developers. "We were still sure we could fund small-sized developments," she said adding that Momentum "didn't compromise" HBFI's ability to fund smaller concerns. Some 65% of what HBFI has funded "are

on small or medium sites of less than 50 houses" she said. Despite the body having an "initial expectation" that it would be supplying finance to smaller developers outside Dublin, 37% of the units it has funded to date are in the capital, Ms Deering said. To date, HBFI has yet to fund a single housing development in six counties - Cavan, Longford, Roscommon, Sligo, Tipperary, and Limerick.

(Killian Woods article Sunday Business Post)

State body has been criticised for lending to large-scale private developers for homes bought in advance by investment funds. A wider review of a state agency that financed the construction of homes bought by investment funds is required after the agency "tore up its remit", members of the Dáil's financial watchdog have said.

The calls from two members of the Public Accounts Committee have come after Home Building Finance Ireland (HBFI), which was set up in 2019 to lend to small and medium-sized builders struggling to get access to finance, presented its financial statements to the Oireachtas group on Thursday. Last year, the Business Post revealed that HBFI provided hundreds of millions of euro to fund the construction of more than 900 homes that had already been purchased in advance by funds.

The development finance was given to builders through a new product launched by HBFI in May 2020 called the Momentum Fund. In total, €242 million of the €274 million lent through the Momentum Fund went to large-scale private developers, which represented a large chunk of HBFI's total finance pool of €750 million.

Catherine Murphy, the Social Democrats TD and member of the Public Accounts Committee (PAC), said a wider review of HBFI is now required to see how the Momentum Fund was devised. "I will be making that call myself for a wider review of HBFI, and I would be surprised if that is not a general call among other committee members. The Momentum Fund has ceased, but the very fact it emerged in the first place shows that there isn't a limit on their remit. And by moving away from that remit, the whole emphasis on small builders isn't happening as intended." Imelda Munster, the Sinn Féin TD and Public Accounts Committee member, said she would like clarity on why the board approved the move by HBFI to finance the construction of homes being sold to funds.

"The buck stops with the government at the end of the day. It turns out HBFI is acting in the complete opposite manner to what the government said would be its remit." She added that although HBFI stopped taking applications for its Momentum Fund at the end of 2021, the agency's decision to provide any finance to large developers meant it has "torn up its remit". "The momentum fund is closed now, but the guts of €300 million came out of its initial €700 million in funding that we were told was meant for small-time builders, but a big portion has been given to large developers."

When the fund was launched in 2019 by Eoghan Murphy, then Minister for Housing, and Paschal Donohoe, the Minister for Finance, it was said that the agency would "target its loans at small builders". Last week, Dara Deering, chief executive of HBFI, said she believed the agency was still acting within its remit through the Momentum Fund.

In contrast to the ministers' comments, she said HBFI was not set up to target funding at a particular segment of the market and its "initial remit was to increase supply".

She added that HBFI only backed three private rental schemes through the Momentum Fund and only a third of homes it has financed to date are now in the rental sector.

When contacted for comment, a spokesman said HBFI was making a "significant difference in the market" by providing homes for owner-occupiers, renters and social housing tenants.

A spokeswoman for the Department of Finance said HBFI is designed to have an "agile business model, with flexibility to respond to temporary market challenges".

She added that HBFI's product offering has developed from an initial core product designed to fund residential projects of ten units or more, to a current offering of five products covering developments of five to 300 homes including houses, apartments and social units.

An Nuadha Players

After more than two years of an absence An Nuadha Players are back in action. It is brilliant to be back rehearsing again for a show that goes to stage on May 19th.

We are presenting “Twisted: A Wicked Fairytale”. This is a hilarious fantasy musical written by Martin Higgins based on a concept by Caitriona Carr. You need to imagine what would happen if summer never arrived – ok this is Ireland so let’s put it another way: imagine the grand stretch in the summer evenings being stolen. Imagine the King of Darkness, Crom O’Boo, trying to upset the order of the seasons, just for the craic like! Imagine what humans might have to do to get the grand stretch back: sending Thoughts and Prayers to bore the dark forces into submission (yes Thoughts and Prayers are actual people) or sending the feisty Saoirse (not Ronan – the budget does not stretch that far) ‘to terminate the patriarchy of the Celtic pantheon’ (we do hope that she knows what she is doing!). Will there be a happy ending? Well happy endings are seriously overrated so who knows!

This musical may have a quirky theme but it also has a guaranteed feel good factor and goodness knows that is much needed these days. Do you feel that your spirits need lifting and a good laugh would do you the world of good? Then this is the show for you.

The show will be presented in the Aula Maxima, St. Patrick’s College, Maynooth on Thurs. 19th May 7:30, Fri. 20th May 7:30, Sat. 21st May 2:30 and 7:30 and Sun. 22nd May 2:30. Tickets are on sale online at buytickets.at/annuadhplayers or at the door on the day of performance. The tickets are €15 adult, €12 concession or groups of 10+ and €45 family (2 adults and 2 children).

Follow us on Facebook or contact us by email at annuadhplayers@gmail.com

Hope to see you in May! Bring your biggest smile!

An Nuadha Players
proudly present
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A Wicked Fairytale
(And hilarious fantasy musical)

Aula Maxima, St Patrick’s College, Maynooth

Thursday 19th May 7:30pm Saturday 21st May 2:30pm & 7:30pm
Friday 20th May 7:30pm Sunday 22nd May 2:30pm

Adult €15 Family €45
Concession €12 Group (10+) €12

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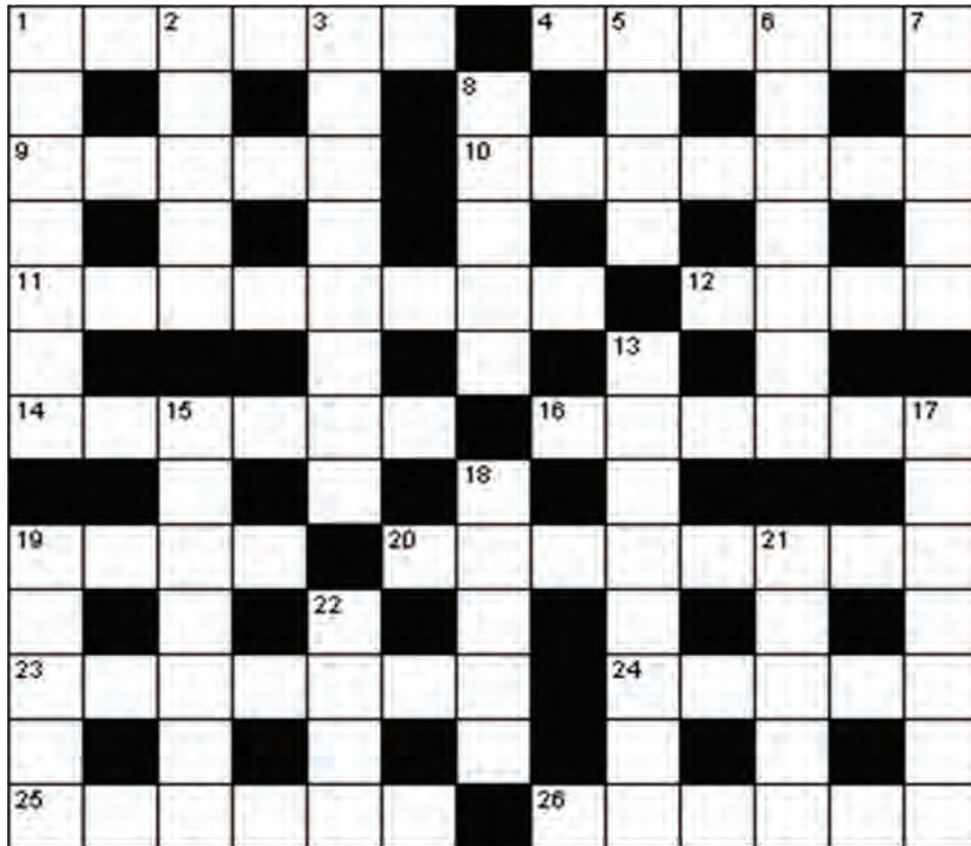
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Kildare Planning Applications for Maynooth Area Planning Applications received from 24/02/2022 to 29/03/2022 Information from Kildare County Council Website

App #	Authority	Applicant Name	Development Address	App Date
22339	Kildare County Council	Tesco Ireland Limited,	Tesco Store, Carton Park Retail Campus, Dublin Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.	28/03/2022
22321	Kildare County Council	David Dunne	Clonfert South, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.	23/03/2022
22242	Kildare County Council	Liam & Bairbre O'Toole	Pike Bridge, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.	07/03/2022
22248	Kildare County Council	Flor Mc Carthy	Crinnstown, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.	07/03/2022
22237	Kildare County Council	Cairn Homes Properties Ltd.,	Limewalk, (also knows as Carton Avenue), Maynooth, Co. Kildare.	04/03/2022
22220	Kildare County Council	Lidl ireland GmbH,	Lidl, Straffan Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare W23 FV34.	01/03/2022
22221	Kildare County Council	Cairn Homes Properties Limited	Dunboyne Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare.	01/03/2022

April 2022 Crossword - No. 511



Solutions to Crossword - No. 510



Clues Across

- | | |
|--|--------------------------|
| 1. Cultivated plot (6) | 19. Part of the neck (4) |
| 4. Written musical compositions (6) | 20. Resident (8) |
| 9. Film (5) | 23. Inactivity (7) |
| 10. Refrain from voting (7) | 24. Play (5) |
| 11. Listlessness (8) | 25. Excused (6) |
| 12. Meat or vegetables cooked slowly (4) | 26. Deferred payment (6) |
| 14. Shrink (6) | |
| 16. Evaded (6) | |

Clues Down

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. Risk taker (7) | 17. Take away (7) |
| 2. Stud (5) | 18. Large expanse of water (5) |
| 3. Panache (8) | 19. Dissonance (5) |
| 5. Monetary value (4) | 21. Accolade (5) |
| 6. Responded (7) | 22. Pace (4) |
| 7. Tendon (5) | |
| 8. Freight (5) | |
| 13. Flatfish (8) | |
| 15. Use up (7) | |



Difficult

Sudoku Challenge

Super Difficult

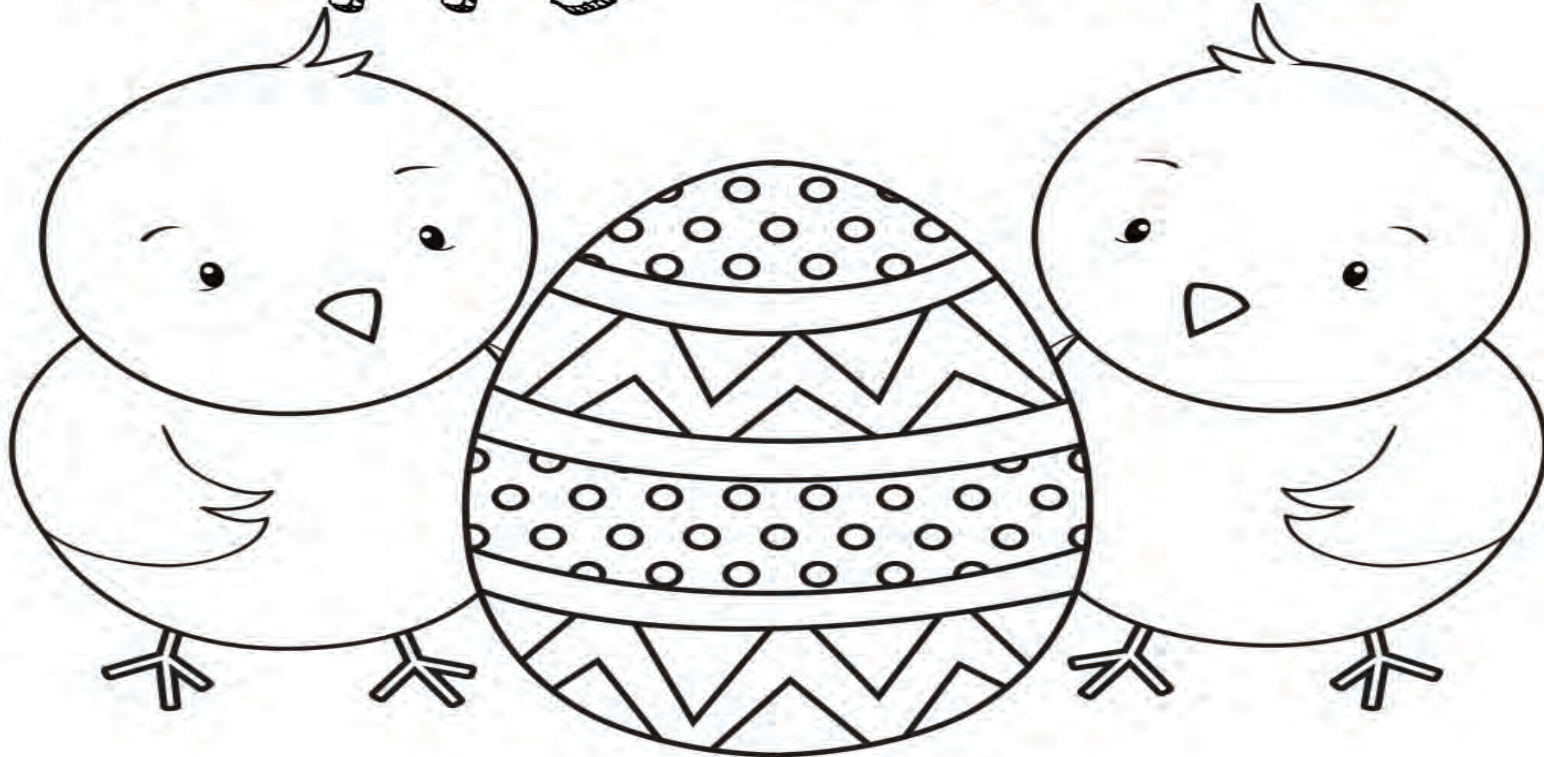
							3	
			5	3		7		4
		9			1	5	8	6
	9						4	5
2			3		5			7
1	5						2	
7	8	5	6			9		
9		6		5	2			
	3							

			1					6
				9	4		1	7
						3	8	9
				5			6	2
	4		8		7		3	
3	7			6				
5	1	4						
2	6		9	3				
7					8			

If you have access to a printer and wish to complete the Crossword and/or Sudoku for fun you can print the single page by going to File -> Print and print the single page number only.

Junior Puzzle Corner

Happy Easter



Children's Colouring

If you have access to a printer and wish to complete the colouring or Puzzles for fun you can print the single page by going to File -> Print and print the single page number only.

Be sure to avoid printing ALL the pages of the Newsletter unless you intend to do so.

Easter Word Search

Sunshine and
HURRICANES
Smart Reading with Purpose

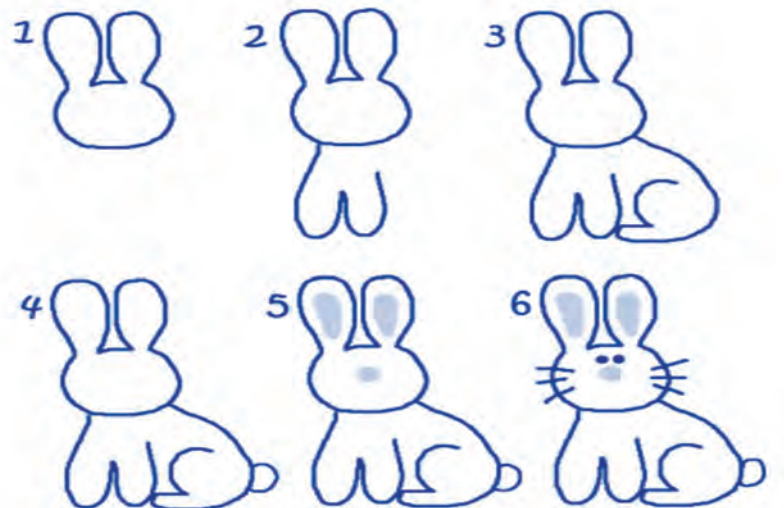
Easter
Word Search

M	U	Q	O	E	U	A	P	E	I	C	P
X	H	Y	W	E	O	E	E	G	S	A	U
G	I	P	S	P	R	I	N	G	M	C	J
C	H	O	C	O	L	A	T	E	C	B	B
P	C	Y	U	G	E	Z	O	B	H	A	C
E	S	P	A	R	R	C	N	U	I	S	F
E	K	I	U	A	H	O	O	N	C	K	A
P	H	E	A	S	T	E	R	N	K	E	M
S	E	U	Y	S	G	O	G	Y	S	T	I
Y	S	B	N	F	L	O	W	E	R	S	L
F	M	R	S	T	E	R	V	O	I	D	Y

GRASS	CHICKS	FAMILY	FLOWERS
EASTER	BASKETS	SPRING	CHOCOLATE
HUNT	BUNNY	EGGS	PEEPS



Draw your own Bunny



Once I saw the Easter
Bunny,
Come hop, hop, hop,
So I cried "Dear Bunny,
will you stop, stop, stop?"

I ran to the window
To say, "how do you do?",
But he shook his fluffy
tail,
And said, "Happy Easter to You."



April Gardening

April is finally here and now the clocks have gone forward we have an extra hour of gardening time to play with in the evening. It also heralds the start of the growing season as leaf buds and flowers burst into colour and the circle of life begins again. Before the last frost plant fruit trees. Till your vegetable garden as soon as the soil is dry and crumbly. Grow cool-season vegetables such as spinach, lettuce, broccoli, beets, radishes, peas, and carrots. Plant asparagus, rhubarb, and berries. Start seeds indoors for summer vegetables and annual herbs. Plant lily bulbs now in pots! If you want to get ahead with your summer lily display, start planting now! I'd always recommend planting in pots. You can simply move them around the patio or into gaps in your borders as they come into flower! Use a good, multi-purpose compost and half-fill a container at least 30cm (12") in diameter and is sufficient for 3 bulbs. Cover with more compost and water in. Once the plants begin to shoot, move them to a sunny position. Feed with a liquid plant feed each week from the beginning of summer.

Dig in compost or manure to prepare for the growing season.

Dig in a 5cm (or more) layer of compost or well-rotted manure into your beds to prepare for the growing season. You can also work in a general purpose fertiliser such as pelleted chicken manure or fish, blood and bone. Apply a layer of mulch around your perennials, trees and shrubs before the hot weather arrives. Use organic matter such as well rotted manure. Lift and divide perennial plants now to improve their vigour and create new plants for your garden.



If any of your garden plants will need supporting this year, put the supports in now so the plants grow up through them. Adding supports afterwards is difficult and may damage the plant. Tie in climbing and rambling roses to their supports. Honeysuckle and Clematis will now be putting on growth, tie in new stems to train the plant along



its support. Check any tree ties to make sure the tie is not cutting into the trunk. Loosen any that are tight to allow the trunk room to expand. Prune your Penstemons now - cut all the old shoots back to the base provided there is new growth at the bottom of the plant. If there are no new shoots at the base, cut just above the lowest set of leaves. If you haven't done so already, finish cutting back any dead foliage left on your perennials and ornamental grasses to make way for new growth. Trim winter-flowering heathers as the flowers disappear, to prevent the plants becoming leggy. Continue to remove any faded flowers from your winter pansies to stop them setting seed. This will encourage flushes of new flowers throughout the spring. Deadhead daffodils and tulips as the flowers finish but leave the foliage intact allowing it to die back naturally.

In the vegetable garden: Dig in a 5cm (or more) layer of compost, well-rotted manure or green waste into your beds to prepare for the growing season. Growing potatoes in grow bags - top up compost as the plants grow. Plant your chitted potatoes outside in the ground or in potato grow bags. Harvest asparagus spears when they are no more than 18cm tall. For quick and easy pea supports push some twiggy sticks around your pea plants now. Thin your carrot seedlings to achieve good-size



carrots do this in the evening when fewer carrot flies are around. Many crops can be direct sown into the ground now including parsnips, cabbages and radishes Prepare vegetable seed beds by removing all weeds and forking in plenty of compost. Cover prepared soil with sheets of black plastic to keep it drier and warmer in preparation for planting. Build raised beds to take the bending out of growing your vegetables.



In the fruit garden: Plant out strawberry beds, making sure you enrich the soil first with plenty of well-rotted manure. Place cloches over your strawberry plants for earlier crops. Protect your fruit blossom from late frosts by covering them with fleece on cold nights. Spray the emerging leaves of peach and nectarine trees to prevent peach leaf curl. Sheltering your plants from the rain will also reduce the risk of peach leaf curl. Mulch fruit trees with well-rotted manure or garden compost taking care not to mound mulch up around the trunk. Top-dress patio dwarf fruit trees with fresh compost and a slow-release fertiliser. Apply a slow-release fertiliser around the base of your raspberry canes, fruit bushes and fruit trees to encourage good crops this season. Try hand-pollinating your peaches and nectarines with a soft-bristled paint brush for better crops this year.



Again, waiting as long as possible to rake leaves out of perennial beds is the best idea. Hold off on your spring garden clean up until daytime temperatures consistently reach the 50s, if possible. Scores of beneficial insects – ladybugs, assassin bugs, and damsel bugs, for example – hunker down for the winter in leaf litter as adults. Others do so as eggs or pupae. And, adult butterflies, such as morning cloaks, question marks, and commas, nestle into leaf litter for the winter. Luna moths spend the winter in cocoons that look just like a crinkled brown leaf. As you clean up your leaves keep a sharp eye out for these insects and do your best not to disturb them.

Always store tools inside in a dry, well-ventilated area, even if you'll be using them the next day. Store small spades and trowels by keeping them in a pot filled with sand that has been soaked in motor oil to keep them lubricated and well-conditioned. You can also hang smaller tools on a pegboard to keep them organized and easy to spot. Larger tools can be hung on the wall, or also on a pegboard. Keep the most frequently used tools within arm's reach.



“Spring is Nature’s way of saying *Let’s Party!*”

Easter Chick Fairy Cakes

Ingredients

110 g (4oz) butter or margarine
110 g (4oz) caster sugar
2 medium size eggs
110 g (4oz) self-raising flour - sieved
2–3 drops natural vanilla extract
dr. oetker baking cases
130 g (4 1/2oz) unsalted butter
250 g (9oz) icing sugar
a few drops of natural vanilla extract milk or warm water
jelly diamonds
silver balls



Method

Pre-heat oven to 180°C (350°F/Gas 4). Place the Baking Cases into a bun tray.

Cream together the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the eggs and Natural Vanilla Extract, if the mixture starts to curdle, add a little flour. Fold in the remaining flour with a metal spoon.

Place spoonfuls of the mixture into the baking cases and bake for 15 - 20 minutes until well risen and firm to the touch. Remove from oven and leave to cool on a cooling rack. Take a sharp knife and cut a slice off the top of each cake. Cut each slice in half and set aside.

To make the icing place the butter in a bowl and beat until soft. Gradually sift and beat in the icing sugar. Mix in the Natural Vanilla Extract and enough milk/water to make the icing fluffy and spreadable.

Use a small star nozzle and the icing to pipe rosettes on the top of each cake.

Pipe a larger rosette on one side to resemble the chick's 'head'. Push two halves of cake into the icing to resemble wings. Cut the Jelly Diamonds into half and place on the 'head' to resemble the chick's 'plume' and place another half to resemble the 'beak'. Finish with two Silver Balls for 'eyes'.

Frosted white chocolate Easter cake

Ingredients

250g butter , plus a little extra for greasing
140g white chocolate , broken into pieces
250ml milk
1 tsp vanilla extract
250g self-raising flour
¼ tsp bicarbonate of soda
300g caster sugar
2 large eggs , lightly beaten
For the frosting
300g tub Philadelphia cheese
85g butter , softened
100g icing sugar , sifted
mini eggs , to decorate (or use 50g/2oz chopped hazelnuts)



Method

STEP 1

Heat oven to 160C/fan 140C/gas 3. Grease a deep 23cm cake tin and line the base with greaseproof paper. Place the butter, white chocolate, milk and vanilla extract in a small saucepan, then heat gently, stirring, until melted. Combine the flour, bi-carb and sugar in a large bowl with a pinch of salt, then stir in the melted ingredients and eggs until smooth. Pour the batter into the tin, then bake for 1 hr, or until the cake is golden and a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean. Cool in the tin. Once cool, the cake can be wrapped in cling film and foil, then frozen for up to 1 month.

STEP 2

To make the frosting, beat together the Philadelphia, butter and icing sugar until smooth. Spread over the cake, then decorate with mini eggs.

Courtesy of www.bbcgoodfood.com



FILM/DVD MONTHLY BY BERNIE CLAXTON

Classic Easter Movies



There has been a veritable feast of Easter-related films down the years, covering the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The following is a list of some of the most popular robes and togas epics ever to grace the big screen. So grab your chocolate eggs and indulge in some great classic movies time this Easter.

The Ten Commandments (dir. Cecil B. DeMille, 1956)



This Cecil DeMille grandiose saga sees Charlton Heston back on familiar biblical ground as Moses, the man tasked with liberating the Hebrew people from captivity and bringing the Ten Commandments down from the mountain. The story of this classic religious film depicts the pre-Easter world of the Old Testament and the life of Moses — before the advent of Jesus Christ.

Yul Brynner plays Egyptian pharaoh Ramses, Moses' friend turned foe. Plagues and parting seas ensue. Charlton Heston's iconic performance as Moses carries this epic story of faith, and is matched by Brynner's compelling performance as his great adversary. DeMille directed this Best Picture Oscar winner, which is the peak of the sweeping, widescreen grandeur of classic old Hollywood. Ben Hur's ground-breaking (for its time) special effects are as impressive as the storytelling. The parting of the Red Sea is a thrilling feat in the movie-making era before the CGI world of modern times.

RISEN (dir. Kevin Reynolds, 2016)



This 2016 religious epic is a gritty, Game of Thrones-style period piece, with Joseph Fiennes in the role of Roman Centurion non-believer Clavius, on the hunt for Jesus' body after it mysteriously disappears following his crucifixion. In the days after Jesus' crucifixion, Pontius Pilate orders Clavius to investigate the rumours about Jesus' resurrection and locate his body.

Risen is in its essence a biblical detective story, told from the point of view of Fiennes' leading character. It is an intense movie which will have you on the edge of your seat at every turn. The film offers a unique perspective on the familiar story with an uplifting message. With incredible production value, gore galore, and Britain's finest actors, it's the Easter story by way of Gladiator.

The Passion of the Christ (dir. Mel Gibson, 2004)



Mel Gibson directed this hugely popular film that chronicles the agony of Jesus' final twelve hours. Gibson's film moved audiences to tears during its initial run in 2004 and became an unexpected blockbuster, taking in the largest ever box office gross for an X rated film. The film earned its rating (unusual for a religious epic) because of its extremely graphic and unflinching depictions of torture and violence.

The Passion of the Christ was a very personal project for Gibson because of his own strong, zealot-like religious beliefs. Gibson's hoped to bring audiences closer to the reality of Jesus' suffering and to bolster the Christian faith worldwide. The film is also notable for its use of the biblical Aramaic and Latin languages with subtitles in English, which serves to give the story a degree of authenticity. James Caviezel gives a stunning central performance as Jesus. For believers, The Passion of the Christ offers a moving, painfully graphic reminder of the life, suffering and death of the Christian Messiah.

The Last Temptation of Christ (dir. Martin Scorsese, 1988)



Martin Scorsese's radical take on the story of Jesus was controversial when it premiered, but this cult film has survived the criticism. It has a very different focus than previous incarnations of the Messiah figure. The film depicts the life of Jesus Christ and his struggle with various human forms of temptation including fear, doubt, depression, reluctance and lust.

The Last Temptation of Christ is a breath-taking portrayal of human flaws and temptations as portrayed by Willem Dafoe. This is a Jesus who is conflicted and tortured by the difficult path ahead of him and his desire to live as a normal man.

Dafoe excels as the troubled, sensitive Jesus while his co-star Harvey Keitel gives a superb, nuanced performance in the tricky role of Judas. Barbara Hershey is equally impressive as Mary Magdalene who received a Supporting Actress Oscar nomination for her performance. David Bowie makes for a quirky Pontius Pilate. The Last Temptation of Christ is a colourful, hallucinatory, uncensored depiction of the Jesus story, as Scorsese imagines it with brilliant performances from all the cast.

Ben Hur (dir. Cecil B. DeMille, 1959)



Ben-Hur tells the story of Judah Ben-Hur, a member of Jerusalem's Jewish nobility living at the time of Judea's Roman occupation. It offers historical context for the life and crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

This sword and sandal epic was part of the Hollywood trend for grand, sweeping widescreen blockbusters that dominated the 1950s. It featured huge set pieces, thousands of extras, and elaborate props and costumes. Ben-Hur is also considered one of the best biblical epics to watch at Easter.

The highlight of the film is undoubtedly the spectacular chariot race action scene between Charlton Heston and Steven Boyd. It still packs a punch on repeated viewings of Ben-Hur. Charlton Heston (who won the Best Actor Oscar) gives a riveting performance as the heroic leading character. This hugely popular classic film won 11 Academy Awards, including Best Picture in its day.

The Greatest Story Ever Told (dir. George Stevens, 1965)



The story of Jesus Christ's life from birth to Easter-weekend resurrection is dramatised in the lengthy, classic epic film The Greatest Story Ever Told. The film wondrously recreates the life events of Jesus of Nazareth, from his birth in Bethlehem to his baptism by John (Charles Heston), the raising of Lazarus, the Last Supper and finally his death, burial, and resurrection. It features an all-star cast in cameo roles, with Swedish actor Max Von Sydow brilliantly hypnotic in the leading role of Jesus. Von Sydow had never appeared in an English-language film previous to this pivotal role. Director George Stevens had wanted an actor largely unknown to audiences to play the role of Jesus and Sydow was the perfect fit. Veteran actor Claude Rains appears as Herod in his final movie role. The film has an epic sweep and reverence, as befitting the subject matter, and was nominated for five Academy Awards.

