

CCN NEWSLETTER

Comhar Comaraigh Network.

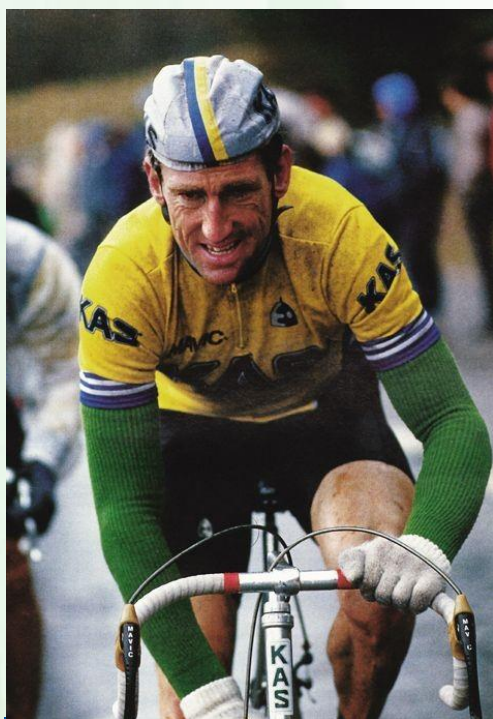
June 2026



Tom O'Brien, Playwright
Kilmacthomas / London – latest play
in The Gealach Gorm Theatre



Slabh gCua Set Dancers
All Ireland Champions 1972



Hall of Fame
Sean Kelly



Julian Walton, TwentyYears of
Dunhill History Lectures



Kieran Foley
With
Lots Of News
From The
Comeraghs

Inside this Issue

**The Mill at Furraleigh, Copper Coast Scouts,
Fenor GAA Club in Focus and much more from
the Comeragh Area**

STRONGER



TOGETHER

The Gains to be Achieved from Networking

For rural communities to do much better from their resources and for the state to get a much higher return on its investment there is an urgent need to promote the setting up of rural networks. Rural networks contribute many additional resources and opportunities by sharing experiences, solutions, best practices, replications the elimination of waste of time, materials and mistakes.

Learning with and from each other is a priceless resource and opportunity to be nurtured and celebrated. Many inefficiencies and mistakes are eliminated and the gains from collaboration are very strong. Some projects benefit and become more viable from scale involving neighbouring communities and when considered on a regional basis.

Individual rural communities have eco-systems with voluntary organisations addressing needs, gaps in services and facilities that neither the state and private sector will provide. When added to what Much of this work is added to the basic but essential work of the local and national authorities and fit into the needs bank that creates top class living conditions for residents – individuals and families, extended families across generations.

The next step to be taken is for rural communities within a district to establish a network that would encourage collaboration that would bring new resources into play and would carry more weight with local and national authorities / agencies even within the

There are 3 municipal districts in Co Waterford (1) Waterford Metropolitan Area which includes the city, Tramore and Dunmore East/Passage East area (2) Comeragh Area in centre of county and entirely rural (3) Dungarvan/West Waterford District. The overall population is 126,683 with Comeragh Area accommodating 25,000 people the most distributed and fragmented area in the county extending from the sea to the mountains.

There are 22 village communities, 36 social enterprises and 26 GAA, Camogie and Ladies Football Clubs in the Comeragh District. They are all searching for the much the same information. It only makes sense to set up an IT Shared Learning Platform and promote collaboration in addressing problems, needs, opportunities solutions, maximisation of resources and in parallel the elimination of mistakes, waste of time, materials expertise. The Comeragh Network is designed as a 2year pilot project from which so much can be learned and then shared countrywide. It is a project the department should support as the return will be much greater than the investment and the lessons learned will survive across generations.

Comhar Comaraigh Network Task Group

Senan Cooke, Eoin Morrissey, Angela Mulcahy, Deirdre Woodbyrne, Kieran Foley.

Liam Brazil Mayor of Waterford City & County



Congratulations to Cllr Liam Brazil on being elected Mayor of Waterford City & County for the first time. Liam is a native of Kilrossanty. He was first elected as a councillor for Comeragh Municipal District in 2004. He has served the District and Waterford with great dedication and distinction. He received 1982 votes the highest in Waterford in last Local Election. Liam is delighted with his promotion to this very responsible position. It is a great honour for himself, his family, community, Kilrossanty GAA and all the organisations he has served and continues to serve with great commitment.

A NESTLESS MAY by Joanna O'Sullivan

With no entries to the competition to win an owl box, the hand-crafted home, made by Dungarvan Men's Shed, has been put up locally. Hopefully, it will become occupied, but, hopefully, my owl box will become occupied first!

I'm listening out at night, and watching in hope of seeing a white flash enter or exit the entrance hole of my owl box. During daytime, I hear the common cuckoo, whether I listen or not. It's the male who makes the distinctive call, and he is incessant in his insistence on mating. I have often been convinced that he is in my garden. I walk towards where I am sure he is, only to realise he is further away, and not conveniently located so I can get a look at him. For a bird that makes so much noise he is seldom seen. For those of you who, like me, have never seen a cuckoo, here are a couple of photos of a male, ringed, in 2018, at Kilmichael Point, in Wexford.

Have you heard the cuckoo call this year? I hope so, because that bird has an endless list of connections to old wives' tales, one of which is that you must hear the cuckoo's call before the end of May...or risk certain death!

I am fascinated by the cuckoo's system. How does being a brood parasite get bred into the chicks? How does each generation, having not been trained by a parent, know to lay their eggs, cleverly finished to blend in, in other birds' nests? And, while the cuckoo secures the survival of its chicks, why don't the host birds notice what's happening?

To me, it seems like it would be easier, for the cuckoo, to just build a nest and lay eggs in it.

Having come to Ireland all the way from Africa, you'd think they'd like to settle down for a little bit. So, could it be that the cuckoo enjoys all the cloak-and-dagger activity, and gets some sort of rush from pulling off a long con?

As we move into June, I have seen neither the nocturnal barn owl nor the diurnal cuckoo, but, I know they're around, and hopefully, the barn owl will nest in my garden, and the nestless cuckoo will show himself.



Photos: Michael O' Donnell

COPPER COAST SCOUTS

BALLYSCANLON PROJECT UPDATE JUNE 2026

The Coppercoast Community Outreach CLG (CCCO) was incorporated on 10th December 2018. The aim of the CCCO is to support the promotion of outdoor activity for youth of all abilities from the Coppercoast area of Waterford and the wider Waterford community.

The Directors of the CCCO are all members of the 35th Waterford Coppercoast Scout Group Council. The Scout group has a membership of 150 youth and 50 Adult members and is the only youth group that provides a service to youth of the whole Coppercoast area.



In October 2024 the CCCO was informed that it was successful in its bid for funding from the Sports Capital programme 2023. The organisation was granted €471,000 under the regional centre grant stream.

Work began on site in June 2025 and the building is now in full use.

The following Community groups are using the site and building on a regular basis.

35th Waterford Coppercoast Scout group: Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday and Thursday evenings.

Active Connections Clg: Regular weekday and weekend use.

Metalman Paddlesports: Thursday evening and events.

Deise Medieval: Wednesday evening and events.

Collective Communications: Radio Room, Regular use.

Yoga (Eoghan Dunphy): Friday evening

Other scout groups that have used the site for weekends in the last year:

Donnybrook, Glasnevin, Polish Scout group. Dunmore

East Scout Group, Cabinteely

It is expected that many other community groups and scout groups will use the facility now that the building is open for use.

Eoin McMahon

Eoin McMahon

Director of CCCO: On behalf of the board of the CCCO



COPPER COAST GEOPARK NEWS



Copper Coast Geopark recently took part in the Waterford Rural Tourism Network Showcase Event held in Dooley's Hotel, Waterford. As part of the Copper Coast tourism cluster, the Geopark joined a diverse range of local businesses, community organisations, and experience providers in showcasing the unique heritage, landscapes, culture, and visitor experiences of the Copper Coast. The event also brought together the wider Waterford Rural Tourism Network, including the Blackwater Valley, Comeraghs,



Gaeltacht na nDéise, and Waterford Estuary clusters, highlighting the strength of collaboration across County Waterford's tourism sector.

The event brought together over 100 tourism businesses and organisations from across County Waterford and highlighted the importance of collaboration in promoting Waterford as a leading visitor destination within Ireland's Ancient East.

The Geopark also recently hosted a successful programme of free community events as part of Bealtaine Festival. Activities included a Garden Swap & Share event, a Community Biodiversity Action Plan open day, a mining heritage talk, guided geoheritage walks, and fossil workshops with local schools.

Thank you to everyone who attended and supported these events. Keep an eye on the Copper Coast Geopark social media pages for upcoming activities and events planned for Heritage Week this August.



THE MILL at FURRALEIGH By Sile Murphy

There has been a watermill on this site from at least 1650. It has been described in Petty's Survey: "*We find the mansion house of the said Darby O'Brien to be Kill Comeragh a considerable slate house now garrisoned with a large bawn, an outhouse with a good orchard and quicksett hedges and a Mill worth £4.*"

The part of the building adjacent to the river is the oldest part possibly dating from 1700



A deed of lease of lands from Wray Palliser of Derryluskan Co Tipperary to Thomas Hunt of Roxboro Co Waterford dated 1789 refers to a mill.

The waterwheel would seem originally to have been on the river side but in the 1840's the whole building was 'modernised' and completed in 1847.

The architect used was William Tinsley. This architect was employed extensively, by Lord Waterford, for several churches and other buildings. Tinsley designed the Mill to be powered by a large Breast Wheel, which was situated centrally in the building. The water came via a mill race diverted from the Mahon and entering the mill at the back on an aqua duct. The water then was taken back to the river via an underground tunnel still visible today and a source of wonder to children (big and small). In addition he installed a beam engine for power during the low water periods and also a brick chimney. The mill then consisted of an enclosed courtyard offices, stables and a fine three story managers house with private entry. Only the gable wall of the mill house remains today and the courtyard walls have been demolished. The stone and rubble was used to trunk roads by the Co. Council in the 1950's in the days when conservation of heritage buildings was not a priority.

Extract from "*Carrick Man's diary*". Comeragh flour Mill

Nov. 17 1854 *Pierse and Michael Walsh drove out to the Comragh Mills and bought 50 Sacks of Superfine flour at 56/6 and 10 Sacks of seconds at 51/- and 1 and a half tons of bran at £8 per ton, amounting in all to £ 178-10-0*

Nov. 19 1854 *News has arrived of the severe losses of the Allied Armies in the Crimea.*

Nov. 20 1854. *The fifty sacks of flour from the Comragh Mills were delivered at the Store today. Oven was repaired by Kennedy.*

25th July 1860 : Arrangements were made to let the Mill .

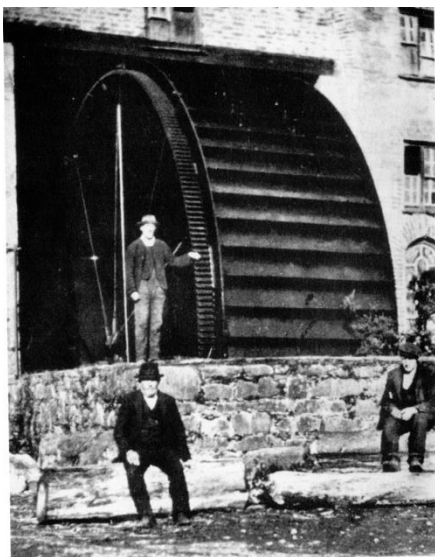
COMRAGH MILLS—CO. WATERFORD.
TO BE LET, from the 1st of SEPTEMBER next, the above extensive Concerns, hitherto in full Work. There are Nine Pairs of Stones, together with One Pair of Shelling Stones, Screens, Smut Machines, Separators, Fans, Patent Flour Dressing Machines, Elevators, &c., all combining the latest Improvements. To provide against occasional dry weather in summer, a Steam Engine has been erected, which can be worked independant or conjointly with the Water Wheel.
There is a large Corn Store attached to the Mill, Stabling for Six Horses, Out Offices, Smith's Forge, Carpenters Shop, &c., all enclosed in the Mill Yard.
An excellent Dwelling House and Seven Acres of Land will be Let with the Concerns.
Application to be made to THOMAS HUNT, Esq., Rockmount, Kilmacthomas.
July 25th, 1860.

Patrick Carmody was one of the great Irish Scholars of the Comeraghs. He was born in Co. Clare in 1833 and came to Comeragh in 1859. He was brought from Co. Clare by John Palliser, the landlord of the Comeragh estate, to teach the Irish language to his nieces the Misses Fairholmes who had lately arrived in Comeragh with their mother the former Miss Palliser. Mrs. Fairholme had always professed an interest in the Irish Language and was a member of the Irish language societies of the day. We are not sure as to where Patrick Carmody lived in those early days but soon he became a schoolmaster of the Protestant school at Mahon Bridge.

THE MILL at FURRALEIGH By Sile Murphy

He became the tenant of the Mill House at Comeragh Mills which belonged to the Palliser estate. This was a fine inspiring three storey building in front of the flour mill. Originally intended for the miller this house was only used for a short time as the mill did not function for long as a flour mill. Here Patrick Carmody reared his family and taught daily in Mahon Bridge. During his lifetime he made two hand-written copies of Foras Feasa ar Eirinn by Seattrun Ceitinn. So far we have not discovered what became of these. Living in the mill courtyard was Bob Weldon the poet of the Comeraghs. They became firm friends and Patrick encouraged Bob to keep composing his poetry. Indeed if Bob had never met Patrick Carmody it is unlikely that much of his poetry would have come down to us. With Bob's natural gift of poetry and his native Irish tongue he was of great interest to Patrick Carmody who listened avidly to every word Bob spoke. He wrote it all down and put Bob in touch with the right people to publish some of his poems. Carmody would record the Irish poetry phonetically and send his notes to the Abbot Maurice O Faolain (*Son of John Phelan, Cooper, of Briskey*) in Mount Melleray who would in turn correct the phonetic script into written Irish. Indeed it could be said that it was Patrick Carmody who made Bob Weldon famous. They became so influential in the Gaelic revival movement that they were visited by scholars and academics including Dr Douglas Hyde, AE, Eoin Mc Neill and Dr Dineen who was compiling his new dictionary of Irish.

It was usual to see Bob and Patrick every Sunday seated on the stone stile outside the mill, Bob reciting and Patrick writing. When Patrick Carmody died in 1909 Bob Weldon composed a poem in his memory. He was a great favourite with the local people and during his 50 years in this parish he collected folklore, poems and sayings from the old people. He presented a collection of these to John Fleming another Irish Scholar who taught in Rathgormac, a native of Clonea Power. Towards the end of his life Fleming went to Dublin to assist in the publication of an Irish language magazine. This collection of folklore would be most interesting for the people of this locality but unfortunately there is no trace of it now unless it lies forgotten in some attic. It is a pity that none of Patrick Carmody's manuscripts survive just 80 years after his death. Having devoted a great part of his 50 years here to writing recording local events the amount of manuscript must have been available and I cannot but believe that somewhere there must be something of this great man's work. In 1910 there was a very severe flood during which the sluice gates were open so the machinery was ruined. People heard it clattering away during the night but nothing was done. It never really worked as a successful corn mill due to the shortage of corn. It was mainly used by farmers in the locality to crush grain for feedstuff and to make oatmeal.



Riobard Bheldon ina sheasamh le hais roth an mhuilinn.

*"Ba chliste a tamh, is barra mheura,
Ag scriobhadh na ndan gan chaim NGaelhilg,
Gach a bfuair se shoilethar nios fhag ga deunamh,
Gan pateein, gan paighe, gan chain geileamh.
Biodh pean de grath na taimh go heasguidh,
Gach oiche is la, is trath da mbfheidir,
Beidh eachlai is danta is stair na hEireann,
Go foill ar faghbail de bhar a shaothair".*

*Poem composed by Bob Weldon after the death
of Patrick Carmody in 1960*

THE MILL at FURRALEIGH By Sile Murphy

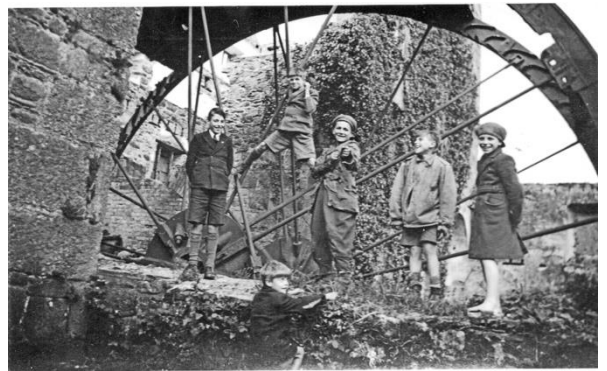
Later the power was used to run a sawmill. During the 1930's and the early WW2 years the building was used to store leather from Portlaw tannery.

In 1943 after Miss Caroline Fairholme's (niece of John Palliser) death, the mill was stripped of its slates and timber floors and all sold to Hearn's of Waterford for building purposes. Building materials were in short supply after World War II and many old buildings had their slates, cut stone, timbers etc recycled in new builds. The mahogany doors of the Mill House were used in a new house in Co. Waterford along with fireplaces and slates. Charles Langley who had been the land agent for the Fairholme estate conducted all this business.

October 1945 Letter from Patie Whelan a worker on the Fairholme estate to his friend Johnnie Higgins who had emigrated to England:

"Well John there are big changes every way around here since you left. The old Mill has been stripped of its roof and Carmody and John Power of Coumahon gone to rest and all the woods cut down, you won't know the place at all when you come home."

In 1948 the mill and surrounding land was sold to Patie Walsh. The Large wheel was still in situ (second largest diameter Mill wheel in Ireland). Patie Walsh sold the wheel for scrap iron to Haulbowline in Cork. Today the once busy mill stands as a picturesque ruin on the bank of the river Mahon and is viewed from the beautiful Crough walk



GEALACH GORM THEATRE KILL

'The Men That Sank Beneath the Sea' Written By Tom O'Brien (Kilmacthomas / London)

Fri, July 24th & Sat. July 25th at 8pm

Step back in time and discover the remarkable story of Bonmahon's copper mining heritage in *The Men That Sank Beneath the Sea*. This moving and powerful performance explores the lives of the miners who worked deep beneath the cliffs and sea, risking everything to earn a living. Through story, song, and drama, it shines a light not only on the men who laboured underground but also on the wives, families, and community who shared in their struggles, sacrifices, and resilience.

Set against the backdrop of Bonmahon's rich mining history, this production brings to life the hopes, hardships, and enduring spirit of a village shaped by the copper mining era. A tribute to the people whose lives were intertwined with the mines, *The Men That Sank Beneath the Sea* is a heartfelt celebration of local heritage and the generations who called Bonmahon home.

The play is written by Tom O'Brien, a Kilmacthomas native who has lived most of his life in London. Tom has written several books and plays many of which have been performed in various London theatres.

'The Men That Sank Beneath The Sea' is sure to be a sellout show so early booking is advisable. Booking on Powertik or Contact 086-8569358



THE MEN WHO SANK BENEATH THE SEA
Written By Tom O'Brien

The Story of the Copper Mining Era in Bonmahon
Performed By The Gealach Gorm Theatre Group

The Mines
The Village
The Story

*The sea above them
The darkness below them
The courage within them.*

The Gealach Gorm Theatre
At Kill Community Centre
Fri July 24th and Sat July 25th at 8pm

Booking on Powertik or
Contact 086-8569358



Coming Soon..... (Booking on Powertik or Contact 086-8569358)



ANNE GILDEA
Further Adventures in WOMANIZING

RETURNING BY POPULAR DEMAND

"ANNE IS A TONIC UNBELIEVABLY FUNNY, GREAT NIGHT!"

"200% RECOMMEND"

"AMAZING NIGHT, DIED LAUGHING"

"...A TONIC, UNBELIEVABLY FUNNY, GREAT NIGHT!"

"AN INCREDIBLE ENERGY AND BRILLIANT SHOW!"

Connects with her audience from the start...it is a show that lifts the spirits - No More Workhorse

A great night out with laughter, song, kinship, drinking and much, much more - The Reviews Hub

The Gealach Gorm Theatre
Friday Sept. 11th at 8pm
Booking on Powertik or Contact 086-8569358

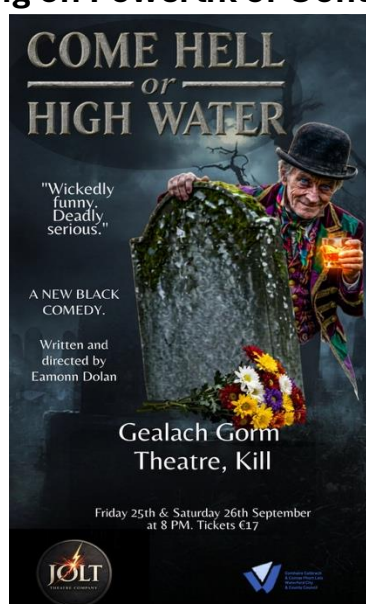
Creates a genuinely cheery and relaxed vibe...and it's very funny." - Irish Independent

Side-splittingly funny! The Reviews Hub

Utterly punk and funny with a twist! The Irish Independent



Fri. 11th Sep. at 8pm



COME HELL or HIGH WATER

"Wickedly funny, Deadly, serious."

A NEW BLACK COMEDY.

Written and directed by Eamonn Dolan

Gealach Gorm Theatre, Kill

Friday 25th & Saturday 26th September at 8 PM. Tickets €17




Fri. 25th & Sat. 26th Sep. at 8pm



Back by popular demand
Sat 17th Oct. at 8pm

HUBCAP THEATRE PRESENTS

MARY'S HOPES & DREAMS

More tales from the parish!

A delightful comedy about life in a rural community

Sat.. 17th Oct. at 8pm 9

TWENTY YEARS OF THE DUNHILL HISTORY LECTURES

By Julian Walton

In February 2006, on my sixty-fifth birthday, my employment with University College Cork came to an end, as was then the practice. On our Retirement Course, we had been told: “Don’t just retire FROM something, retire TO something. Take up golf – or ...”

I was lucky, for I did not have to take up golf – I was encouraged by Donal Lehané to join the staff of Dunhill Multi-Education Centre. I was given an office and told vaguely: “Make yourself useful.”

From these humble beginnings developed the series of Dunhill History Lectures, which ran weekly every year for ten weeks from mid-January to mid-March. I was initiated into the mysteries of PowerPoint by our then manager, Jason King, and we started on 25 January 2007

Twenty years and over two hundred lectures later, we are still going strong.

Initially, I gave all the lectures myself and the main purpose was to give a general introduction to the history of DFBA (Dunhill, Fenor, Boatstrand and Annestown), from Adam to the Atom Bomb, so to speak. In the third year we began to invite guest speakers, and this practice has developed until now I generally give only the first and last lectures. And as the internet has expanded in the last twenty years to such an extent that almost any information is available at the touch of a button, the topics have become more specialised and the final lecture is often simply entitled “A Surprise!”; surprise topics have included the life and legacy of the Emperor Hadrian, a guide to heraldry, a pilgrimage to Mount Athos in 1969, the adventures of the Bible in Ireland, and German surface raiders of World War Two.



There have, of course, been hitches. On the night of the very first lecture there was a thunderstorm, a lightning strike knocked out the local transformer, the whole district was plunged into darkness, and the event had to be postponed for a week. We have had wintry nights of snow, frost, gales, floods and fog. And on 12 March 2020 the final lecture of the series had to be cancelled at a few hours’ notice as Covid 19 reared its ugly head, schools and offices closed, and people fled for their lives. The following year, a second lockdown was imposed, and the entire series had to be cancelled. We made up the loss with three daytime lectures in the autumn, and this practice (increased to five talks) was revived in 2024 and 2025.

TWENTY YEARS OF THE DUNHILL HISTORY LECTURES

There has been no shortage of speakers, and we are grateful to all of them for the time and care they have taken to prepare their lectures, travel to us, and face an audience. Special thanks are owed to those stalwarts who could always be depended on to return year after year and fill the hall: Pat McCarthy (who would drive down from Dublin, give his lecture, and then drive back again), Eugene Broderick and William Fraher, all of whom have provided us with more than a dozen stimulating evenings.

It is always a worry whether anyone will actually turn up on a winter's night to be entertained with a slab of history, but so far, we have not been disappointed. There have in fact, been several surprises. It was with some trepidation that in 2009 I invited Niall Byrne to speak about his recent book *The Irish Crusade* – would a talk on medieval crusading orders attract our very mixed local audience? – but in the event the room was filled to capacity, and an animated discussion followed his discourse, which he delivered (amazingly) while suffering from a severe bout of pleurisy.

Another surprise was Christina Knight O'Connor's 2022 lecture "Rebel women: The Cumann na mBan in Waterford City and County", which was attended by a huge audience, mainly female (this was one of two occasions on which the audience has included a babe in arms - both were well behaved throughout).

A record attendance of about ninety was achieved by Eugene Broderick's 2024 lecture on Ireland's Magdalen laundries with particular reference to Waterford.

There has been a huge diversity in our speakers, their personalities, their styles and their topics; to all of them, we express our heartfelt thanks – as, indeed, to our audience too, without whom there would have been no lectures at all. And I cannot conclude without thanking also our successive managers Marie Cox and Helen Kavanagh and their staff of backroom boys and girls who have established and run such an excellent facility – in particular, Shirley Moore, Alexandre Viegas, Stephen Rainey and their long-suffering colleagues who have come in or stayed late to ensure that all went well and/or provide the welcome refreshments which enabled us all to relax and chat after so much cerebral activity!



Knockmahon National School Closes it's Doors



Principal Bernadette Murphy turns the key in the school door for the very last time.

Knockmahon National School sadly shut its doors this month. The Diocese of Waterford and Lismore, which is Patron of the school, says enrolment has declined significantly over a sustained period, leaving the school no longer viable. It says the decision follows consultation with the Board of Management and engagement with the Department of Education. Bishop Cullinan said the decision has not been taken lightly and he acknowledged the school's long role in the local community. He thanked staff, parents and volunteers for their commitment over the years and says support will be provided to pupils and families during the transition.

The school made considerable efforts to promote enrolment in recent months, however enrolment numbers ultimately remained low in the two-teacher school.

In November 2025, a public meeting was held in Bonmahon to discuss the issue. The meeting heard about the urgent need for increased infrastructure in the Bonmahon area to facilitate the construction of new houses for families.

Bonmahon has been omitted from Uisce Eireann's capital programme, and wastewater facilities in Bonmahon will not progress until at least 2029.

The issue has been raised on numerous occasions at meetings of Waterford City and County Council, and the Bonmahon Wastewater Quality Initiative has been established to further highlight the issue.

A Special event was held on June 3rd to mark the school's closure which consisted of a prayer service, refreshments and lots of sharing of memories from down through the years.





SERI (Social Enterprise Republic of Ireland)

Group from around the country who attended the launch of its pre budget 2027 submission in Leinster House on Wednesday 17th June. The group includes representatives from social enterprises countrywide from various counties. Our Comeragh Network was represented by Senan Cooke, Dunhill, Comeragh Task Group member. Standing in front is chairman of SERI and former government minister Richard Bruton (now retired) and SERI CEO John Logue. They had presented the 2027 budget submission to an all party Oireachtas Committee in Dail Chamber. They then official launched the submission in a meeting room in Leinster House attended by group (see photo) and ten TDs from different parties countrywide.



Bioregioning in The Comeraghs

Weaving a Really Resilient Food System from the Comeraghs to the Coast

Really Resilient Food: Over the past months, Bioregioning South East Ireland has been hard at work, bringing together a growing network of farmers, growers, bakers, processors, landowners, and community groups across the South East through what we call the **Really Resilient Food** initiative. The aim is to strengthen our local food system by developing relationships between land, livelihoods and communities, from the Comeraghs to the coast.

A keystone moment in this work came earlier this year at Dromana House, where many of our local producers, retailers and food advocates gathered to plan the next steps towards really resilient local food systems. From this emerged the Dromana Declaration - a set of shared principles rooted in the values we miss in the offerings from globalised supermarkets and ultra-processed food. Things like fair value, learning and sharing, caring for nature, and celebrating our connection with our mountains, fields and coast. You can read it and sign up to it if you visit the website at

<https://bioregion.ie/project/really-resilient-food/>

Besides the declaration, the participants co-created a long list of actionable next steps, pathways to how we can collectively change our food system to one that brings health and well-being to people, farm animals and nature. Read more about the planned actions on the website and be in touch if you want to join bi-weekly discussions on how things are progressing.

Since Dromana, we are seeing the principles and actions blossom into practical cooperation.

Partnerships are being forged between local grain growers and bakers interested in shorter supply chains. Dairy and livestock farmers are exploring collaborative methods for on-farm processing and diversifying both their products and routes to market. There's a lot of ambition around keeping more value within the region through direct sales, shared infrastructure, and stronger local networks – and these are not just words: watch this space and join in our movement for tangible, concrete things happening here in the region that is your home..

Piece by piece, these collaborations are beginning to build something bigger than any one farm or business could achieve alone. In a time of growing uncertainty around food, environment, climate and rural livelihoods, this kind of cooperation has the potential to shape the region in deeply positive and lasting ways.

The Weft: BioSEI is re-launching The Weft, our weekly open-door invitation, as a space where you are always welcome to come and meet other passionate and concerned people wanting to make change in the region. Whether you're a farmer, a producer, a researcher, a food business owner, a community organiser, or simply someone who's curious about where all of this is going, The Weft is an informal drop-in where you can have a cup of tea, share an idea, raise a challenge, or explore a possible collaboration. The Weft is open on Monday afternoons 3:00-4:30pm. Dunhill EcoPark, X91FVF9.

New colleague: We're delighted to introduce Meg, who has recently joined the BioSEI team and is bringing her energy and commitment to communications and documenting change across the bioregion. Meg comes from a background in organic dairy farming, sustainable food systems and community-based research, and is currently farming on an organic dairy farm in west Waterford. When she's not to be found in a pair of muddy wellies somewhere around the yard, she's usually making cheese, wandering the hedgerows and streams of the Blackwater Valley, or chatting to anyone willing to talk about food and farming, biodiversity, barn swallows, or the small wonders hidden in a healthy landscape. Meg joins Sarah and Keeley as the BioSEI team based at the EcoPark in Dunhill.

Contact details and more information: bioregion.ie



FROM COAST TO COMERAGH

WITH



Kieran Foley



Bonmahon's Blue Flag

Waterford secured 13 coastal awards for the 2026 bathing season, including three Blue Flags and 10 Green Coast Awards. Bonmahon was awarded a Blue Flag for the first time since 2012, following what An Taisce says is a significant improvement in bathing water quality between 2022 and 2025. Waterford celebrated a significant increase in Green Coast Awards, rising from six to ten award-winning beaches in 2026. The Green Coast Awards recognise beaches for their unspoilt environment, excellent water quality and natural beauty. Bonmahon was also a new addition to the list this year as well as Kilfarrasy.



Lithuanians at Woodhouse Estate

It was great to see so many Lithuanians gather once again on part of the beautiful Woodhouse Estate in Stradbally for their annual summer camp during the June Bank Holiday Weekend. This has become a hugely popular event and showcases Stradbally to a wider audience. The Lithuanians who attend each year love Stradbally and all that the area offers. You can check out a video from their visit on the WLR Facebook and Instagram pages.



Safe Routes to School launch in Kilmacthomas

Two additional County Waterford schools are celebrating the official launch of their Safe Routes to School projects.

Active travel infrastructure works prioritising access and safety at the front of Scoil Mhuire National School, Butlerstown, and Kilmacthomas Primary School were delivered by Waterford City and County

Council in partnership with An Taisce's Safe Routes to School unit, the National Transport Authority, and with support from the wider school communities. A celebratory event was held at the Rainbow Community Centre in Kilmacthomas recently. Among those in attendance at the launch of the Safe Routes to School projects were Mayor Seamus Ryan, and the Minister of State for Local Government and Planning John Cummins TD.

Minister Calleary visits Waterford

Minister for Rural and Community Development Dara Calleary visited Waterford for a number of engagements on June 8th. Included in his busy itinerary were visits to Leamybrien, Mahon Bridge and Portlaw where he opened various recreational amenities.



Further farming success

There was further success for Kilmagemogue-based couple Shane and Kate Fitzgerald who were named Tirlán Milk Suppliers of the Year at the 2026 Tirlán Dairy and Sustainability Awards.

A total of 12 family farm milk suppliers were honoured by the leading farmer-owned dairy and grain co-operative at April's event. The awards honour Tirlán's dedicated suppliers for delivering quality, sustainably-produced milk from grass-based herds across categories from exceptional milk quality and milk solids to environmental stewardship and ambassadorship. The Fitzgeralds also won the Farming Ambassador Award, recognising their leadership, innovation, and commitment to producing high quality milk sustainably while actively promoting the wider dairy sector in Ireland. The couple operate a highly efficient, grass based dairy system with approximately 200 spring calving Holstein Friesian cows. The Aherne Family from Shanawalla Farms, Stradbally, won the South Region Award.



Gold medals Tidy Towns

Comeragh communities picked up a series of awards at this year's SuperValu Tidy Towns South East regional ceremony in April. The awards recognise work in environmental improvement, biodiversity and community presentation. Ballymacarbry and Stradbally secured a Gold Medal, while Dunhill picked up the Endeavour award. Well done to all involved.

WATERFORD SUIR VALLEY RAILWAY

Waterford Suir Valley Railway (WSVR) has announced that its General Manager, Maria Kyte, will step down this April from her role after 25 years of dedicated service to the railway.

Maria has managed the development of this award-winning heritage railway since its inception through to operating a very successful social enterprise as it preserves and promotes Ireland's rich railway heritage and has become an integral part of the tourism offering in Ireland's Ancient East, contributing to the local economy.



Maria feels the time is right to move on and pass the management of operations to someone else. Maria started her railway journey 25 years ago as business development manager for the Waterford Chamber-initiated, Waterford Suir Valley Railway Project, which was established to develop and operate a narrow-gauge railway as a tourist attraction on the 10km section of the abandoned Waterford – Cork Railway, between Kilmeaden and Bilberry.

In 2000, the project was established as a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. In 2003, the railway opened to the public inviting visitors to experience a scenic journey through the magnificent Suir Valley on Ireland's longest narrow-gauge railway. Attractions along the route include the ruins of Kilmeadan Castle, the internationally renowned Mount Congreve Estate and Gardens, excellent examples of lime kilns and children's favourite, the Magic Woods.

Over the years the attraction grew as it included special events to extend the season. The Easter Bunny Express, Summer Choo Choo Fun Days with characters, Spooky Express at Halloween and the Santa Express at Christmas fast became established as firm, family favourites with visitors coming from all over Ireland to enjoy the experiences. Visitor numbers are averaging at 28,000 annually.

The opening of Waterford Greenway in 2017 was a game changer for the railway. It brought greater visibility to the project as visitors flocked to experience the award-winning Greenway in this beautiful part of Waterford, rich in history, flora and fauna. As they stopped off at Kilmeadan Station for a welcome break, the company had a new source of revenue. This made the business more sustainable and justified WSVR employing more people on a full time and seasonal basis. The Whistlestop Café was built to provide a service for railway and Waterford Greenway customers.

In 2020, Waterford Suir Valley Railway rebranded to reflect how it has developed from an idea into an anchor attraction for County Waterford and to carry it in to the future. The Story of Rail Storyboards were erected at Kilmeadan Station. These stories celebrate and commemorate Ireland's rich railway heritage, recognising how the establishment of railways contributed to the development of tourism and sport, industry, education, engineering and to our social history. Visitors can read all about it at Kilmeadan Station and on the Waterford Suir Valley Railway website.

Maria pointed out, "None of this could have been achieved without the amazing people who have volunteered at the railway over the past 25 years. Volunteerism is at the heart of Waterford Suir Valley Railway. From the board of directors to the train drivers, it has been humbling to see people give their time and expertise so willingly in order to achieve the companies mission. This is also true of the staff, most of whom joined initially on FAS, TUS, CE or RSS schemes. It has been a pleasure and privilege to work with them."

WATERFORD SUIR VALLEY RAILWAY

The success is also due to the support and encouragement received from Waterford Leader Partnership, Waterford City and County Council, Fáilte Ireland, Clann Credo, Waterford Chamber, Dungarvan Chamber, Iarnród Éireann, The Heritage Council, Pobal, Waterford Local Enterprise Board, Bord na Mona, Visit Waterford, and from the people of Waterford.

The Waterford Suir Valley Railway story is still evolving. While a lot has been achieved there are ambitious plans for the future. Sharon Murphy, has been announced as the new General Manager of this unique project. Sharon, a Waterford lady with over 30 years' experience working in tourism with Waterford Crystal is joining at a very exciting time. While the brief will be to carry on the legacy of an already successful business, she will also be involved in the future development. Waterford Suir Valley Railway has plans to return Steam to Waterford. Kettering Furnaces No. 3, a 3ft narrow gauge steam locomotive, gifted to WSVR by the National Trust, UK is currently being restored in Darlington by Northern Heritage Engineering, specialists in restoring and building railway rolling stock. The restoration project is dependent on funds raised through donations. It is hoped to have work completed by 2027.

Other projects include the building of a Preservation Facilities Building which will eventually be home to a new tourist attraction celebrating railway heritage. There is also huge potential to develop the Viking site, discovered in 2004 at Woodstown as a tourist attraction as it is just beside the railway line.

There is no doubt there are exciting times ahead for Sharon Murphy at Waterford Suir Valley Railway, as Maria assures her, "She will be assisted by a very supportive board of directors, committed staff, volunteer crew and the local community."

She continued, "I look forward to reading all about their achievements and new developments long into the future."

The WSVR Board of Directors are very grateful to Maria Kyte, wish her well in the future and hope she will always have a role to play in some form as this social enterprise continues to flourish.

You can discover more on their website www.wsvrailway.ie and can donate to the fundraiser for the restoration of the steam locomotive [Waterford & Suir Valley Railway Company CLG | Online Fundraising](#)



SLIABH gCUA SET DANCERS

A Highlight from the Sliabh gCua Set Dancers File of Outstanding Achievements Down the Decades. *Waterford News and Star, March 24th 1972.*



Back row, Monnie Hallahan, John Kearns, Maurice Dalton (RIP), Tommy Hickey, Ned Burke, Tom O'Donoghue with accordion (RIP) from Melleray.

Front Row, Biddy Nugent, Winnie O'Keeffe (nee Hallinan), Peg Dalton RIP (nee Coffey), Breda Hallinan, Alice Burke (RIP), James Cliffe.

It was Sliabh gCua's night at the R.D.S. in Dublin

SCOR '72 will be recalled and remembered for the glory of Sliabh gCua's triumph in the All-Ireland Set Dancing competition on 16th March 1972 by the huge crowd who thronged the R.D.S for the finals. The enthusiasm that greeted the Waterford team's appearance on-stage was very special. The near chaos that descended on the vast hall when the dancers from Tooraneena in County Waterford were announced as All-Ireland champions had to be seen to be believed.

The Scor All-Ireland finals had been entertaining, interesting, informative - all the "nice" words apply - but there had been lacking that sense of urgency, that touch of drama, without real competitive "bite" involved. Suddenly, it was all transformed through the set dancing finals came to life in 1972. It happened thus:

The first two of the four finalists were excellent and rightfully applauded. They were well received by the vast attendance. The third and fourth teams who were joint favourites were from Wexford and Waterford in the south-east. Master of ceremonies, Dan McAreavey from Armagh announced number 3, the team from Sliabh gCua representing Waterford. Immediately there was a change in the atmosphere and all hell broke loose - in a nice way of course. A continuous roar came from the right rear end of the vast hall which echoed throughout and filled the arena with frightening noise. All heads turned sharply to see from whence it all came.

You had perhaps 200 people jumping to their feet cheering on Sliabh gCua with county flags in their hands. Suddenly a giant banner, six feet wide, was raised aloft by two men emblazoned with the name Sliabh gCua. It immediately became the centre of a demonstration of support for the team that truly beggars description. It recalled film scenes from an American Convention when the candidature of a "favourite son" was announced. It gives some idea of the "eruption" in the R.D.S. when the flag was raised. It went on for minutes and subsided only when the music started and the Sliabh gCua group went into action. And they were superb, and made the job of the adjudicators a mere formality.

SLIABH gCUA SET DANCERS

At the end of the final team performance the announcement of the result saw the Sliabh gCua followers go wild with delight and resume their demonstration. At this time the rest of the audience joined in to acclaim the new champions. The enthusiasm was infectious and Sliabh gCua won over the entire hall with few neutrals remaining.

Even when the crowd had departed the hall when finals were over, Sliabh gCua and their followers remained and in possession of the stage. It was a remarkable night, and belonged to the Decies. Sliabh Geal gCua were champion set dancers of All-Ireland for Scor '72. It will never be forgotten by those who were there.

Once again I congratulate the dancers on their superlative display. They would wish a special word for their musicians, who were such an important part of the team effort. But, above all, let tribute be paid to Monnie Hallahan. The man who at considerable sacrifice to himself, moulded this group and made them All-Ireland champions.



PICTURED AT THEIR celebration night on Friday last were the Sliabh gCua Juvenile Set, All-Ireland winners of Scor na nOg recently. Back row (l. to r.): James Greenslade, Kieran Hallahan, Eamon Loneran, Raymond Ryan. Front row (l. to r.): Sinead McGrath, Siephany. Ailish Mcruith Merrisson and Siobhan Dunne. (Photo by John Skehan)



**Sliabh gCua
Set Dancers
1980s, in
Limerick, being
filmed for an RTE
programme**



WATERFORD MIGRANTS IN THE COMERAGHS

Waterford Migration: Strengthening Rural Life in the Comeraghs

By Csilla Czelvikker, Founder & Chairperson, Waterford New Communities Network

Migration is one of County Waterford's quiet success stories. About one in nine residents is a non-Irish national, and many have since taken Irish citizenship—clear signs of people putting down roots. While most newcomers choose the city and larger towns, a significant share live and work across our villages—from farms and food facilities to building sites, cafés, shops and care settings—keeping streets lively and services open.

Work & Enterprise

Across the Comeraghs, newcomers both plug skills gaps and start enterprises that sustain rural life. Major employers such as Dawn Meats at Carroll's Cross anchor jobs along the N25, while the Waterford Greenway brings steady footfall to Kilmacthomas—the celebrated halfway stop—supporting local hospitality and retail.

Snapshots of success

Skills in demand: construction crews across the Comeraghs include many migrant tradespeople—plasterers, carpenters, painters and electricians—keeping builds and retrofits moving through the seasons.

Training the next generation: many migrant tradespeople have grown from sole operators into small firms, taking on local apprentices and passing on skills.

Adding choice: families in the region contribute through market stalls and speciality shops; nearby Stradbally Community Market, Janosiki Polish Grocery (Dungarvan) and SAN Polish Shop (Waterford City) help supply rural households.

Community impact

New neighbours bring more than jobs: sports clubs find extra coaches and players, schools and libraries gain volunteers, and festivals enjoy a wider mix of foods, music and stories. In short—more hands, more ideas, stronger villages.

Working together

Waterford New Communities Network (WNCN) fully supports the Comhar Comaraigh initiative and stands ready to partner across the region—co-hosting outreach clinics, signposting services, and linking newcomers with local clubs, training and employers. In parallel, we're building a county-wide New Communities Business Network & Entrepreneurs Group with Empreendedores Waterford to connect rural start-ups with mentors, finance and markets—so talent in the Comeraghs translates into thriving main streets.



Dawn Meats, Carroll's Cross — an international team powering rural jobs (with many Brazilian and Ukrainian workers)



Stradbally on a Saturday—market and shopfronts alive with colour, often have products created by members of migrant background.

The fortitude of Fenor GAA

Looking back at club's proud journey from 1885 to today

(By Jamie O'Keeffe)

Playing its first match under GAA Rules at Ballinacloy in 1885, but existing in other incarnations before that, Fenor Club was exclusively a Gaelic football unit for nigh on nine decades.

Having won the junior grade in 1928, An Fionnúir claimed its one and only county senior championship in 1932 with a famous win over Brickey Rangers in The Sportsfield.

Notable players before and after WWII included the four Paddies: '32 captain Burns, Cowman, Gough, and Hayes. The latter, aka "Snowball", captained the Waterford football team that won the 1948 Munster junior championship – a side featuring three other Fenor men. Kevin Burns snr played senior for Waterford.

Reaching the County Primary (Junior) decider in 1963, four years later Fenor established itself as a dual club and won an Eastern hurling title within a couple of seasons.

Ray Cullinane, who played senior championship hurling and football for Waterford that season, was the captain. He was the last Fenor player to be selected for the county senior hurlers until Seán Mackey in 2026.

Almost a double

However, Fenor followers had to wait until the 1979 campaign before they annexed another county championship – a season when they nearly pulled off a double.

Having lost out in the hurling decider to Ardmore in Walsh Park, on a bleak December day in Fraher Field, the Fenor footballers did the seemingly impossible – overturning a 1-4 to no score deficit to beat a fancied Sliabh gCua side.

That Paddy Whittle-trained panel included no fewer than four Burns brothers: Justin, Peter (captain), Kevin, and Gene. It also numbered Donal Hunt, John O'Neill, Johnny O'Sullivan, Johnny Power, Phil Tyrrell, David Power, John Murray, Derek Chestnutt, Edmund Phelan, Monie Behan, John Cheasty, Stan Flynn, Tom Flavin, Paddy Sullivan, Jimmy Halley and an 18-year-old Sean O'Mahony.

Despite his junior status, former Déise dual player Greg O'Neill was awarded Waterford Footballer of the Year on the strength of his displays – a remarkable accolade.

Breaking the Bog

The end of the seventies also saw a groundbreaking undertaking begin – the purchase and reclamation of an area of bogland behind the old creamery into the club's first playing field, having led a somewhat nomadic existence up to that point, thanks to the goodwill of local landowners. It was a daunting process riven with complications but overcome by fortitude and ingenuity by the likes of Sean O'Mahony and John Connolly whose knowledge of drainage was key.

Facing thick rush, and frequently that sinking feeling, through perseverance, resourcefulness, and personal sacrifice, a tireless team effort overcame all obstacles and finally, in the centenary summer of 1984, the pitch was opened. And in 2003 it was officially named William Flynn Park in memory of a man who was the driving force behind the project.

Emerging Talent

The nineties, mainly thanks to the underage coaching efforts of Gregg and others, saw the emergence of an exciting crop of Clan na Gael talent. Having built a new clubhouse in the mid-nineties, with Stan Flynn among others getting that and other field improvements over the line, on the pitch Fenor largely concentrated on hurling and reached successive Eastern finals at the end of that decade.

With players of inter-county calibre such as Stevie and David Burns to the fore, Fenor duly spent the early part of the new millennium collecting and competing for silverware. Contesting nine consecutive Eastern finals, they won three in a row from 2000-02.



Pitch pioneers: William Flynn, John Connolly, Maurice Beresford, Phil Tyrrell, John Harney and John Beresford – the first volunteers to tackle the bog in the late seventies.

FENOR GAA

However, despite annexing three more divisional titles in 2005, '06 and '08, the ultimate prize continued to elude the green & white. A fallow period followed, but the likes of current chair Wally O'Neill – whose family are perennial club stalwarts at juvenile and adult levels – kept the ship afloat as the recession and emigration hit hard.

Stalwarts still

Evergreen Jim Halley, whose grandfather and namesake won two football county medals with the club in 1909 and 1911, has been a lynchpin of Fenor teams since making his debut in 1999. His first-team career has spanned four decades and the teak-tough Islandtarsney man has made no fewer than 21 final appearances in both codes during that time.

Indeed, many of the current panel are sons of men who have sported the Fenor colours, including John Flynn, whose dad Joe played with distinction with Fenor and Dunhill, as well as Gaultier.

Having joined forces with the Kill club in 2014, winning county junior football and hurling championships in the first two years of that successful alliance, including a dramatic last-gasp victory over St Mary's of Touraneena at Walsh Park to win a first-ever hurling crown, Fenor restored its standalone status in 2022.

More green shoots

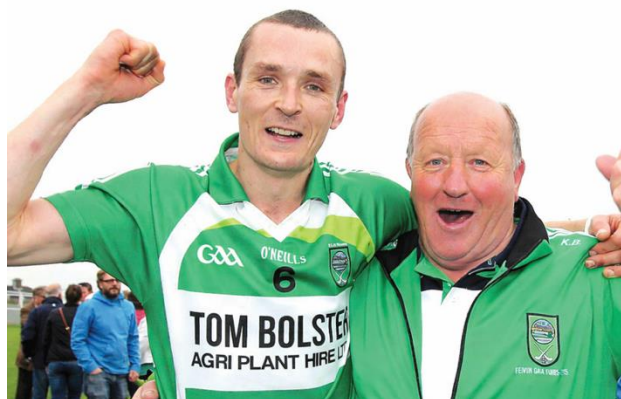
Able to call on an infusion of youth – thanks to the superb development work within Na Gaeil and Clan na Gael – these include players who have won multiple county underage honours, not least Seán Mackey.

The club reeled off four successive football league titles after going it alone and won the County Junior 'A' Championship at the second attempt in 2024, bridging a 45-year gap by beating Ballyduff Upper in typically dramatic fashion in the dying moments of the final on Keanes Road.

Looking ahead

Fenor are nothing if not resilient. And thanks to great community support, and unsung heroes like Ann O'Neill, the tiny club with the big heart is determined to ensure the trojan work of those who have gone before will live on.

We think of people like Kevin Burns whose passing at the end of last year was a huge loss to club and parish. Just elected President and long-time chairman, player and more, his singular contribution and personality is hard to quantify. As the legendary Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh said when launching the then 130-year history of Fenor (at Stunner's invitation, meeting fifties chairman and chronicler Bob Rockett), Kevin was a very persuasive man.



Icons: Jim Halley (captain) and Kevin Burns (selector & chairman) celebrate Fenor's dramatic 2015 county junior hurling triumph.



Early 1930s team, era of Fenor's only county senior title: (back) Richard Mulcahy, Paddy Gough, Ned Moore, Phil Gaffney, Eddie Casey, club chairman Fr. Denis McGrath, Jim Hunt, Paddy Cowman, Denis Hynes, Batt Casey; (front) John Connolly, Johnny Flynn, Frank O'Meara, Tommy Lyons, Paddy Burns – captain, Paddy 'Buck' Power, Johnny O'Shea.

Today, those legacies in mind, exciting plans are in the pipeline to further develop the club's facilities for the future. Having played its first official match at Hannigan's Field over 140 years ago, Fenor has persevered through wartime, depression and recession, and come out the other side stronger and prouder than ever. As has often been said, it's a great little village. [JOK]

HALL OF FAME – SEAN KELLY



Sean' Kelly (born 21 May 1956) is one of the most successful road cyclists of all time ranked number 2 only to the great Eddy Merckx. . From becoming a professional in 1977 until his retirement in 1994, he won 193 professional races, including nine [Monument Classics](#), [Paris–Nice](#) a record seven years consecutively and the first [UCI Road World Cup](#) in 1989. Kelly won one [Grand Tour](#), the 1988 [Vuelta a España](#), and four [green jerseys](#) in the [Tour de France](#). He achieved multiple victories in the [Giro di Lombardia](#), [Milan–San Remo](#), [Paris–Roubaix](#) and [Liège–Bastogne–Liège](#), as well as three runners-up placings in the only Monument he failed to win, the [Tour of Flanders](#). Other victories include the [Grand Prix des Nations](#) and stage races, the [Critérium International](#), [Tour de Suisse](#), [Tour of the Basque Country](#) and [Volta a Catalunya](#).

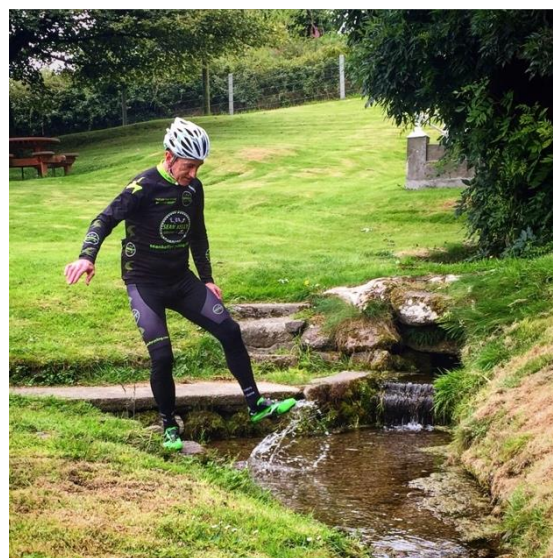
Kelly twice won bronze medals (1982, 1989) in the [Road World Championships Elite Men's Road Race](#) and finished fifth in 1987, the year compatriot [Stephen Roche](#) won gold. When the [FICP rankings](#) became established in March 1984, Kelly was the first cyclist to be ranked World No.1, a position he held for a record five consecutive years. In the 1984 season, Kelly achieved 33 victories.



From Mothel Well to Paris Roubaix

By Barry (The Cycling Blog)

On a cold and damp January morning, in a windswept farmyard in the shadow of the Comeragh Mountains a wooden door opened just as the first brightness of dawn arrived. Looking across the yard at a blue Ford 5000 tractor with its white cab, and a perspex rear window slightly ajar, the young man now walking through the door is thinking of the year ahead. For many, New Years resolutions are made on January first only to be discarded and forgotten within days or weeks. This man is not one for resolutions but understands the importance of having something to aim for. A direction to achievement that would lead to success far removed from the hardened life that the farmyard will have in store if another route to making a living and a life is not found.



HALL OF FAME - SEAN KELLY

Since he was a boy there was a festival which took place each year a few fields away from the rear wall of the farm house. A Holy Well attracted up to 1000 people each July to hear a mass said and to be entertained. There was also a purgatorial challenge that was undertaken by the brave and strong. Nine times a route from the rising waters of The Mothel well along the rocky stream bed to the furthest point of the field and back was traversed by bare footed pilgrims. It was said that a favour asked for would be attained if this task was completed. Many tried and many failed, but for those who managed to complete the test of endurance there was a regular pattern of success and healing which enticed more to take on the challenge each year.

Whilst many who attempted the challenge in the heat of July failed, few if any took to the icy waters at other times of year. That was until this January morning.

The desire for success within the young man was so strong that he was willing to take up the challenge of the Holy Well on a cold and wet winters morning.

By nine am a pair of black wellington boots with socks rolled up inside were discarded beside the Holy well and a man named Sean Kelly entered the water. Immediately two feet froze and became blocks of ice. Sharp rocks and stones dug painfully into the soles of his feet, but he continued on. Reaching the end point for the first time offered relief and the contemplation that the easy thing to do would be to go home and forget all about this challenge. But that would be giving up, that would be quitting. Two scenarios alien to the nature of the man who would become King Kelly.

Kelly walked the well nine times that January morning. The year was 1984. Within weeks he won Paris Nice, then Liege Bastogne Liege, Paris Roubaix, The Tour of Switzerland, The Tour of Catalunya, finish 5th in The Tour de France whilst winning the Green Points jersey along with many more victories on his way to finishing the season as the Worlds number 1 cyclist. A wish had been fulfilled.

Did the walk at the Holy Well play a part ? Who knows, but if he went back in time to the January morning once more, he would do the very same thing again.

Kelly is not the only cyclist to have walked the walk. Kurt Bogaerts, Directeur Sportive of the An Post Chainreaction cycling team has also completed the challenge. A local lotto winner had also walked the well prior to his good fortune.

Perhaps it's time to add a few more cyclists names to the list. Soon, there will be another trip to the well and it will be interesting to see how many of those who regularly pass nearby on the Ballymac loop will be there. What will be even more interesting will be their results afterwards !



GAA PRESIDENT IN DUNHILL

GAA President Jarlath Burns visited Dunhill recently and officially opened the new ball court and other facilities.



Uachtaran Jarlath Burns cutting the ribbon



From left Niall Dunphy, Club treasurer, Jarlath Burns Uachtaran CLG, Tom White Club chairman and John Raher Club secretary



Uachtaran Jarlath Burns with Raher Family Fiona, John, Thomas , Emmett. in front TJ and Jack.



Uachtaran enjoys the music and crack!

COMMUNITY NEWS

DAWN WALK AT DUNHILL

The Dawn Walk raised approximately €820 for **Re-a-Suir**, which is a fantastic effort given that there were also other walks on in other parts of the local community this morning, and a major fundraiser only a week ago in the parish as well.

We are blessed to live in such an abundant & caring community

Sent on behalf of the **Dunhill GAA Club** and its **Healthy Club Sub-Committee**.



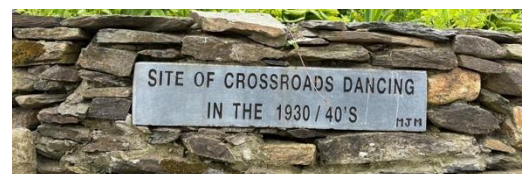
Comeragh Roses



Portlaw and Dunhill's Roses

The Comeragh area will have two representatives in this year's Rose of Tralee Festival. Portlaw's Cara Comerford has been selected to represent Waterford, while Dunhill's Rachel Keane will be flying the flag for New Zealand. Both are past pupils of St. Declan's Community College, Kilmacthomas. The very best of luck to both in August.

Blacknock Wildflower Garden



Photos Mick (MJ) Morrissey

ACHIEVEMENTS

Hugh Og Mulhearn from the Kilmacthomas/Fews area starting cycling at the age of 10 with Carrick Wheelers. He quickly got to grips with the sport and throughout the youth years from u12 to u16 he won 30 Munster titles in different cycling disciplines and over 25 national Medals

In 2024 he was invited to Holland as an u16 to guest with a team for 8 races and he finished Top 6 in all races held between Belgium and Holland over a 2 week period.

This earned him a place on the French u18 team of AS Villemur based just north of Toulouse. He raced with the Team for 2025 across Europe gaining experience as a first year Jnr. He was also selected to represent Ireland at last years Junior Tour of Ireland which is an international Stage race that attracts all the best u18 teams from across Europe. He finished 3rd on the last Stage.

He was also selected for Ireland at the 2025 European Road Race Championships.

In 2026 he was taken under the wing of Cycling Ireland High Performance Path way program.

This gave him access to world class Coaching and back up in all aspects of his cycling.

He competed in the spring Stage Race Ras Mumhan which is an International stage Race for elite teams but Juniors may race in. He finished 5th overall and for second year running won the u18 Red Jersey as best u18 in the race.

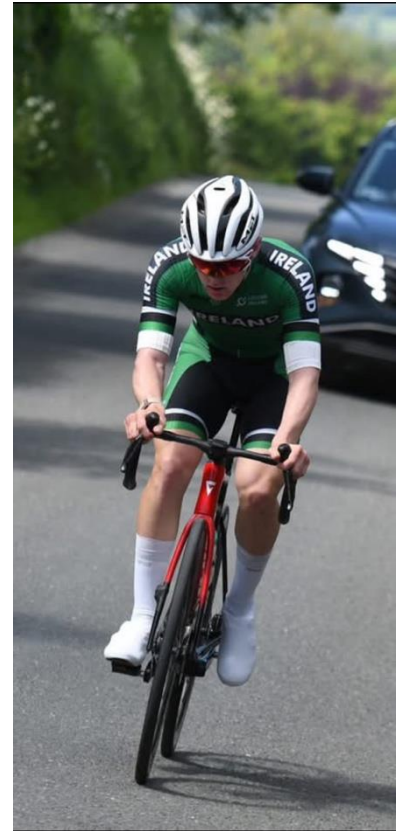
He spent a Month in France early in season with his results earning him the Top ranked Junior cyclist in France for a few weeks before he returned home.

Cycling Ireland then asked him to wear the Green Jersey as part of the national team for Ras Tailtean in May. In doing so he became the youngest rider to ever complete the Ras at 17yrs old.

His season continues with the upcoming Irish Championships and then the Junior Tour before he will return to Europe for 6 weeks and hope to gain some solid results and a place on the Irish Team for the world championships being held in Canada this September.

Part of living in France means Hugh Og has had to master the language and is now fluent in spoken French.

His long term goals are to secure a u23 place on a professional team for 2027 and beyond and sit his Leaving cert in 2027.





This 8 session programme will involve training and mentoring in the key fundamentals of developing a profit for purpose business.



The Social Foundry

8 Week Blended Learning Course on Building a Resilient Social Enterprise



September 14th to
October 7th



Buíon Phort Láirge
64 O'Connell Street
[X91 K757](#)



9.30am
to 12.30pm



Sincere thanks to all those who contributed articles for this newsletter.

Please watch our video which highlights some of the many assets and amenities in the 23 villages that are part of the Comhar Comeragh Network in Co. Waterford.

