

# COUNTY CARLOW ASSOCIATION LONDON

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## NEWSLETTER

### MAY 2007

**Time once again to give you an update on events that have taken place and inform you of our upcoming events, in the hope that we may see many of you over the coming months  
Thankfully Spring is well and truly here and we have the Summer to look forward to**

#### Omission from our March Newsletter

Unfortunately, we failed to inform you that Margaret Moran one of our long standing members resigned from the committee but continues to hold her membership and recently attended our AGM. Margaret and her late husband Denis had served quite a number of years on our committee. Denis Moran (R.I.P) had first joined the association in the 1960's. Margaret still shares her fond memories of helping out at the Roundwood Park Festival. We would like to take this opportunity to wish Margaret all the best for a happy and healthy future and thank her for all the help and support she has given to the Association. She will be missed.

#### St. Patrick's Day Parade and Festival - Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March 2007

The mass at the Irish Centre was a wonderful celebration, with the traditional harpist playing and parts of the service were in Gaeilge. The Irish Ambassador, Daithi O'Cheallaigh and his wife attended also. John Connolly, Chairman of the Council of Irish County Associations took the opportunity to wish the Ambassador every good luck in his new post and thanked him for all the work he has done for all the Irish Counties during his time in London. The parade and festival were a great success with larger crowds than ever attending. The Carlow contingent was well supported and we were delighted to be joined by people who came from as far as Norfolk and members of the Dunbar family who travelled from Carlow, specially. Let's make next years Parade the biggest and best ever. You can't say we have not given you enough notice!

#### Our Annual General Meeting – Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2007

Our AGM was held on recently at The Irish Centre and was very well attended, in fact, the best for some years. It was great to see so many long standing members turn up and the event proved to be a great opportunity for some of us to catch up with old friends.

Thanks to everyone who formed the committee and a special welcome to the new committee members:- Margaret Dixon & John O'Brien. Since the AGM Cecilia Byrne has agreed to be co-opted on. We are pleased also to say that the following committee members also remain with us:- Brenda Clarke, Jenny Schwab & Peter O'Brien.

Our officers were voted in as follows:-

Margaret Doyle – President  
Claire Nolan Sturley – Chairperson  
Ned Dunbar – Treasurer  
Chrissy O'Brien – PRO

Bill Schwab – Vice President  
John Nolan – Vice Chair  
Catherina Clarke – Secretary  
Noreen Nolan – Assistant Secretary

We look forward to a busy and rewarding year ahead working together in order to carry on the great traditions of the Carlow Association with the London area.

**“Follow me up to Carlow” - An evening of Music, Dance, Song, Stories and Buffet**

**Join us for a good old `Hooley` at the Done Our Bit Club (D.O.B)  
128a Maygrove Road, London, NW6 2EP**

**this Friday 11<sup>th</sup> May from 8.30 to late.**

**You are all guaranteed a warm Carlow welcome!**

Tickets in advance are only £8 each. The club is just a few minutes walk from Kilburn Station and the club management have contact with a reliable cab firm who can take you home. Why not get some family and friends together and come along and have a great night out! We would love to see some second & third generation Carlow People. For further information and/or tickets contact:-

Margaret Doyle - 0207 978 4643

Claire Sturley - 0207 609 4650

Catherina Clarke - 07789 226734

**Southwark Irish Festival – July 2007**

As usual the County Carlow Association London (CCAL) will be running a stall on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> July at Peckham Rye Common, SE15. A great line-up of entertainment is in store including our very own, home grown, Richie Kavanagh who will be appearing on the Irish World stage. If you want to help on our stall (and we do need volunteers) please get in touch. Or if you are there just to enjoy the day out, please call to the stall and say hello, you will be most welcome.

**Crawley Irish Festival – August 2007**

Now in it's 12th year the Festival attracts some ten thousand people to the town and has built a reputation as a great family day out over the August weekend. The event showcases some of the best musical talent from Britain and Ireland on three live entertainment stages, showing modern, traditional Irish music and open dance competitions. This year features heavily on the younger element of the community with a special children's entertainment marquee involving games, song and story with particular emphasis on Irish traditions and folklore. In addition, sport and cultural identity are each featured prominently with GAA sports, a funfair, various food and craft stalls and displays with the added attraction of a licensed beer tent. The event is run by The Celtic and Irish Cultural Society, which was formed to promote a greater understanding of Celtic and Irish traditions. Further details about the society and previous events can be found online at:- <http://www.celtic-irish.co.uk>

County Carlow has always had a close association with the Irish Festival in Crawley and this year is no exception. As part of the GAA display, Erin's Own (Bagenalstown) are making their way to Crawley to play a hurling match against a London selection. Erin's Own Club were the All-Ireland Junior Club finalists in 2005, they won the Carlow Intermediate title in 2006 and are heavily focused on taking the Carlow Senior title this year. They have already been in touch with the Carlow County Board and have been exempted from any of their match commitments on that weekend. They will be using their trip to the Festival to sharpen themselves up for the campaign at home, whilst taking in Irish Culture at it's finest. The County Carlow Association London Cup Challenge Trophy together with other fantastic trophy's are up for grabs for the victors.

Do come along and support the lads in the “Black and White hoops” as they take on London!

**Our Annual Dinner Dance – October 2007**

It seems like no time since last year's Dinner Dance which was a great success. Thanks to everyone who joined us and helped to make the evening so enjoyable for us all. Our Dinner Dance this year (which will be our 39<sup>th</sup>) will take place on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> October, as usual, at The Irish Centre, Camden Sq, London, NW1.

Further details will be available in our Summer newsletter.

**Click me up to Carlow:** [www.carlowassociationlondon.co.uk](http://www.carlowassociationlondon.co.uk)

We're almost there and we hope to launch our website at our “Follow me up to Carlow” event on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2007. Looking forward to the new inter-action that having a web site will afford to all CCAL members, their families and friends. With more and more of us and our family going on-line, if you have access to a computer why not email

us and we can then send you our E-Newsletter. (saving us some time and money). Email the Chair, Claire Nolan-Sturley at [carlowlondon@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:carlowlondon@yahoo.co.uk)

If like so many, you don't have a clue about what you have just read, then please don't worry, we will still be using Royal Mail and will always be at the end of a telephone.

### **Dates to Remember for your Diary:**

`Follow me up to Carlow` Buffet/Dance & Music	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> May
Southwark Irish Festival	Sunday 1 <sup>st</sup> July
Carlow Floral Festival	4 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup> August
Crawley Irish Festival	Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> August
39 <sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner Dance	Saturday 13 <sup>th</sup> October

### **100+ Club**

We are still running our 100+ club. We now have 11 monthly draws for just £1 per month or £10.00 if paid in advance. 50% of takings go in prizes and 50% goes to our Welfare Fund. You can join at anytime. Just contact our Secretary, Catherina, or if you think you can get others to join, let her know and she will send you a card to complete.

### **Carlow's Floral Festival**

The festival starts off in Carlow on the 4<sup>th</sup> and continues throughout the county until the 12<sup>th</sup> August. A definite date for your diary, if you have planned to visit Ireland during the month of August. More information will be available in our next newsletter; however, some of you may wish to check out their website [www.carlowfloralfestival.com](http://www.carlowfloralfestival.com)

**Bagenalstown** will once again be celebrating in style on the 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> of August. Lots of activities will take place over the weekend, with floral fun, gardening exhibitions, craft stalls, workshops, demonstrations etc. not forgetting musical performances and superb street entertainment. I am pleased to announce that we have once again received an invite from Michael Lakes, Secretary of the Festival Committee, asking us to attend the "Emigrants Dance" at the Lord Bagenal Hotel on the night of Friday 10<sup>th</sup> August. This event has in the past been a great success and one that many committee members have attended. It would be great if some of you could join us. Watch this space for more news. However, in the meantime why not think about booking your holiday to coincide with this dance and other activities taking place in Carlow during this period. For further information on this years festival and past events, [www.bagenalstown-festival.com](http://www.bagenalstown-festival.com)

### **Walking Tour of Irish Literary Sights in London**

It has been suggested by some of you that we should organise a Walking Tour of Irish Literary Sights in London. We are in discussion with Tony McDonald of `Irish Luminaries` fame (St.Patrick`s Festival weekend). Tony is a Blue Badge Guide with a special interest and expertise in Irish London. If you think you might be interested in the above, please contact our chairperson. We will keep you posted.

### **Bringing Back Ceili Dancing To London**

Comhaltas London Office in conjunction with Anton Coyle and Gasra nGael are making a concerted effort to revive Ceili Dancing in London by holding an all day series of workshops for juniors and adults at The London Irish Centre on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May from 12pm, followed by a Ceili Mor in the evening at 8pm with the Ivy Leaf Ceili Band, with admission for the Ceili being £5. Admission to workshops is free but is only available to those who have pre-registered in advance, as it will not be possible to register on the day, unfortunately. For further details and registration forms, please email Jim Myers at [jimmyers@ic24.net](mailto:jimmyers@ic24.net), leave a message at the Comhaltas Office on 020 7916 8727 or e-mail Anton Coyle at [antoncoyle@btinternet.com](mailto:antoncoyle@btinternet.com).

It is a great way to keep fit and very enjoyable too I am sure. Some of us are going to go along; it would be great to see fellow Carlovians and their families there also. Let's help revive Ceili Dancing in London!

## **Trip Down Memory Lane**

Having recently visited Bagenalstown, I took a trip one day to the “Carlow Tourism” office. It’s quite ironic really but we have such a beautiful county back home which we are very proud of and yet I guess many of us who have lived here in London for so many years forget sometimes how wonderful it is, having the time only to visit our birthplace when we return. The character and heritage of the county’s rural towns and villages reflect one of its most charming aspects. Nestled in sleeping nooks along the River Barrow and Slaney as they meander through undulating valleys are some of the most beautiful country towns and villages in Ireland. Over the coming months I will walk you through our beautiful county.

### **Ardattin**

A picturesque country village, 6 km south of Tullow near the River Slaney. Located closeby is Ballintemple House, birthplace of Pierce Butler, soldier, statesman and signatory of the American Constitution. Although the house was sadly destroyed by fire in 1913, an extensive tree nursery tended by the State forestry service, Coillte, now occupies the Ballintemple Estate which is also the base of the National Tree, Shrub and Seed Centre in Ireland. The beauty of this village is strengthened by the pride of its people, which is reflected in its overall character. The Cottage Collection boasts a unique display of domestic appliances, gramophones and radios, many dating back to the early 1900s. Aghade is a beautiful viewing spot over the River Slaney, close to the village of Ardattin and an ideal location for sightseeing and swimming. Worth a visit.

### **Bagenalstown**

Otherwise known as its Gaelic version as Muine Bheag is sited on a pleasant reach of the River Barrow and derives its name from Walter Bagenal, who in founding the town, had visions of mirroring the city of Versailles, in northern France. Shortly after he had a magnificent square courthouse, his efforts became frustrated due to the re-routing of the main road away from the town. He left more than enough however, for visitors to enjoy with handsome stone public buildings, riverside walks, picnic tables and a picturesque lock. The arrival of the railway in 1846 rejuvenated the town and its fine neo classical railway station and impressive Courthouse continue to delight the visitor. Dunleckney Manor – Home to the Bagenal family from 1585 onwards. Parts of the original house are incorporated in the present Tudor-Gothic structure, which was designed by the renowned architect Daniel Robertson and built in 1820. The ruins of the early 14<sup>th</sup> century Ballymoon Castle and 13<sup>th</sup> century Ballyloughan Castle are located near the town, with Wells Church, situated closeby, and is a preserved ruin of a church dating back to 1262. The area is also renowned for coarse and game fishing.

### **Ballymurphy**

A gentle hillside village captured in a glen on mountain slopes which derives its name from Matthew Murphy of Clonroche, Co. Wexford a powerful landowner and builder of a castle in the area in the mid 17<sup>th</sup> century. This is the first village encountered on the Co. Carlow side by the traveller passing through the picturesque Sculloge Gap of the Blackstairs Mountains. Quad biking and clay pigeon shooting are a must if visiting Ballymurphy.

### **Ballinkillen**

8 km south of Bagenalstown is the beautiful picturesque village of Ballinkillen, nestling under the shadow of Mount Leinster. In the village churchyard are the gravestones of the parents of the late Cardinal Moran & Theresa Malone, the 1798 heroine of the “Battle of Kilcumney”. Ballinkillen has an excellent range of outdoor pursuits including hill walking, pony trekking and fishing on the River Barrow.

### **Ballon/Rathoe**

The Blackstairs and Wicklow mountains provide a dramatic backdrop to the pastures and cornfields, the winding country roads and traditional stone cut cottages and farmsteads around this charming rural village. There is a strong archaeological presence in the area which includes a motte and bailey at Castlemore and Castlegrace, ringforts, cashels, standing stones and holy wells. Ballon is also the home to the magnificent Ballykealey Manor Hotel, built in the 1830’s. Ballon Hill, 450 feet above sea level is a beautiful place for a walk providing magnificent views of the surrounding countryside. Rathoe is the northern part of the parish, is situated between Tullow & Ballon, a small friendly village made famous by Bard Val Vousden, actor and entertainer who wrote the song “The Roads around Rathoe”. St. Patrick’s Church is an excellent example of 19<sup>th</sup> century craftsmanship and worth a visit.

### **Borris**

A beautiful Georgian town, full of charm and heritage nestling in the fertile valley of the river Barrow, below the curve of the Blackstairs Mountains. Borris house built in Tudor style is the home of the Kavanagh family, descendants of the MacMurrough Kavanagh dynasty, former Celtic Kings of Leinster. Borris lace gained a reputation for excellence both in Ireland and Britain and samples can be viewed at the Lace Gallery in Kilbride, near Ballon. A pleasing feature of the town also is the beautiful granite Church on the main street. Activities to take part in can include; hang-gliding on Mount Leinster, coarse and game angling, not to mention golfing at Borris Golf Club.

More towns & villages to follow in our next edition.... Hope you enjoyed the tour !