



THE 10K TIMES

2020

www.maynooth10k.ie



What's another year?

Teresa Murray, Editor



10 years on and the Maynooth 10K is still going strong. While, like many other groups and organisations, plans and celebrations had to be cancelled and rearranged due to Covid 19 restrictions, the

Maynooth Virtual 10K/5K is happening. The concept of the Maynooth 10K was first introduced to the Parent Teacher Association of Maynooth Post Primary School by two parents, Mary Molloy and Deirdre Glynn ten years ago. After much planning and organisation the first 10K was run in May 2011. It was an immediate success and has developed into an annual event with hundreds of participants each year.

In this most unusual of years the Maynooth Education Campus's 10K Committee decided to offer a virtual option of either 5k or 10k to be run in the participants' own time before December 31st 2020. Our magnificent 10th anniversary medal sponsored by Pearls Dental and new Snood sponsored by Specsavers Maynooth are posted out on submission of evidence on the Pop-Up Races mobile app.

The monies from this fundraiser- organised by the Parent Teacher Association for Maynooth Education Campus, go towards the upkeep of the school playing fields on the Moyglare road and a new astro / MUGA (Multi-Use Games Area) at the new Campus. This year the importance of community spirit and connection has been greatly highlighted, so in light of the Covid pandemic we are very happy to support a local frontline charity "Friends of Maynooth Community Care Unit" to purchase much needed equipment.

The virtual race has proven very popular as more people are walking and running while in lockdown so we are encouraging everyone to go online and register with Pop Up Races and receive your

special medal and snood. It will be a very special memento of these times in years to come. So why not give it a go.... click on the link below to enter: <https://www.popupraces.ie/race/maynooth-5k-10k-2020>

We have much to celebrate in Maynooth. Our Tidy Towns Committee brought home another gold medal in the 2019 National Tidy Towns Competition. This dedicated group of volunteers keep our town looking splendid. It is important that we support them during these times and be careful when disposing of our masks and other sanitary items, when out and about. We should all help to keep our town up to the standard that this hard working group of people have set.

Our new Gaelscoil, Scoil Ruairí has moved up to its permanent location on the Moyglare Road, sharing the site with MEC. We wish them every success in their new and final location. Another exciting event in 2020 was the establishment of Gaelcholáiste Mhaigh Nuad. In Maynooth, we now have two of the eight Gaelscoileanna and the second Gaelcholáiste in Kildare county. Maynooth University demonstrates a dedicated commitment to the Irish language and its promotion while being home to the largest Department of Modern Irish in the country. The Irish language is well catered for in our town and will further promote and enhance our cultural environment.

We also welcome the large number of residents who have chosen Maynooth as their home. With many new residential developments being built and planned, the population of our town will greatly increase. There are many great organisations here that will welcome our new residents and help them to settle into our community.

In 1971 Tom Ashe and a group of parents successfully campaigned for and succeeded in establishing a co-educational secondary school, Maynooth Post Primary School under the

patronage of the Vocational Education Committee. All applicants were accepted without designation of creed, nationality or socio-economic status. The diversity of nationalities, creeds and abilities within the school is its strength and the strength that continues in the Maynooth Education Campus to this day. We look forward to whatever events may be organised to celebrate this very special anniversary.

The 10K/5K has been a very popular run with participants because of its scenic nature. We are thankful to St. Patrick's College and Carton House Hotel for the use of their grounds and facilities. There have been many comments down through the years in this regard. These two establishments have helped the residents of Maynooth and its environs during the Covid restrictions by staying open and allowing people to avail of their beautiful walks and scenery. We are very lucky to have two wonderful facilities at each end of our town where we can walk and enjoy nature.

On our 10th anniversary there is going to be an online version of our 10K Times newspaper. For the past ten years, the staff, parents, guardians and friends of MEC have devoted their time and energy organising the 10K/5K. The businesses and local organisations have also greatly supported

us by helping out with stewarding, catering and by taking advertisements in this paper. So this year we want to say thank you by publishing the online version of The 10K Times and promoting all of these businesses and groups for free. It is now their time to ask for our support as a community - Stay Local and Shop Local! The 10K/5K is normally run in Spring, so it is unusual to be mentioning Christmas or shopping local at this time. We are encouraging people to shop in and support all our local businesses. They have been loyal and supportive to our fundraising efforts over the years so now it is their turn to receive.

We wish you all a very happy, healthy and safe Christmas. We look forward to the much awaited move to the Education Campus and wish all of the staff and students every joy and success in their new abode.

Nollaig shona agus athbhliain faoi mhaise daoibh go léir!



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Declan Kennedy and all the Staff wish every success to the Maynooth 10k and 5k Family Run

Tel: 01 5054725

Table of Contents

Maynooth GAA	8
Mizen to Malin	10
Comhaltas Ceoltoiri	16
Maynooth University New Buildings	18
Royal Canal Greenway	22
Confessions of Runner	24
Pearls Dental Clinic	26
Probio Carbon	30
Royal Canal Parkrun	34
10 years of 10K	36
Maynooth Tidy Towns	42
Maynooth Senior Citizens Committee	47
Queen Victoria's Visit to Maynooth	48
Maynooth Castle Keep Art Group	50
Low or No Alcohol Challenge	52
Ballots and Bullets	54
Maynooth Community Council	58
Crisis Fatigue	60
Specsavers Sponsor Maynooth 10K	62
MEC New Schools Photo Gallery	64

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Wishing Maynooth 10Km every success on the 10th Anniversary
Good luck to all the virtual runners.

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GAA Report

Aidan Minnock

Best wishes to everyone involved in this year's staging of the Virtual Maynooth 10K / 5K road race. Like much of what we have done ourselves in the GAA this year, the wonderful Maynooth 10K/5K committee have had to think outside the box to ensure this much anticipated annual event goes ahead.

Maynooth GAA Club enjoys a wonderful partnership with all in the school community at Maynooth Education Campus and we look forward to growing that partnership in the years ahead. Firstly, the club and the schools have worked together over the last 10 years, to bring to fruition our playing pitches at Moyglare Hall. The 10K Road Race has contributed significantly to the development and upkeep of this wonderful facility. In addition to this, the club benefits greatly from the willing and generous efforts of so many in the schools to promote Gaelic Games, incorporating them into the school programme. Recent years have also seen staff members of both schools take on coaching responsibilities with Maynooth GAA senior and underage teams in all codes, while this year the transfer of teacher Tom Walsh to hurl with the club has been a huge boost to the hurlers and something we are extremely grateful for.

“This year our Ladies footballers won the Intermediate Championship, beating a much fancied Kilcullen in a cracking final last month.”

All great and successful Club and County teams over the years have benefitted from the strong support of their local schools. Maynooth GAA has been experiencing this for ourselves in recent years. This year our Ladies footballers won the Intermediate Championship, beating a much fancied Kilcullen in a cracking final last month. They can now look forward to playing senior football in 2021 and beyond. Our Hurlers have had a fantastic 2020, are unbeaten in League and Championship and will play the Intermediate

Final when Covid restrictions are lifted. Our Senior Footballers and Camogie teams will once again play senior championship in 2021 having put in some great performances in 2020.

Similar to all organisations, Maynooth GAA Club has had to operate in the new normal that Covid 19 has brought about. For much of the early months of 2020, the idea that no games would take place was a distinct possibility. This didn't deter the wonderful people that make up Maynooth GAA club as they rallied to provide Zoom training sessions for teams, skill challenges were posted on WhatsApp groups for players while our LGFA Chair Orlaith Kirwan led club members in a charity drive that raised over €4,000 for the Roar for Ruairi charity and the Irish Wheelchair Association. Throughout lockdown, Club Officers pushed on with plans for the development of the club and much needed work was completed on our Clubhouse Carpark. Thanks to the tremendous support of local councillor Tim Durkan we were able to complete a resurfacing of the carpark in time for the Return to Games. This has made a huge difference to all members driving into the clubhouse especially during these wet, winter evenings.

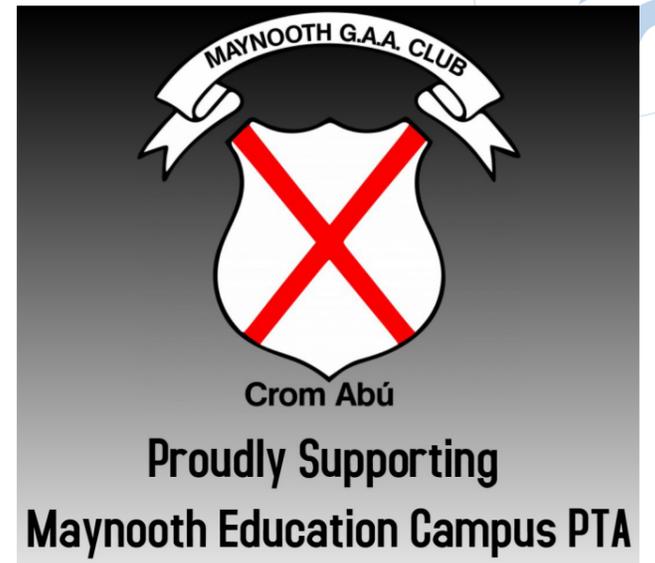
We are blessed with a wonderful grounds team in the club who, throughout lockdown have kept our pitches and clubhouse in perfect condition and ready for the return to games last July. A Return to Games Committee was set up in June in advance of restrictions being lifted. Led by Matthew Doran, this group of club members Shauna Kinsella (LGFA), John Gaule (Hurling) Martin O Sullivan (Football), Dave Schuller (Juvenile) Mickey McGuigan (Pitches Co-ordinator) and Aidan Minnock (Club Chairman) worked tirelessly to ensure the clubs compliance with the guidelines issued by Government, Croke Park and Public Health.

The games returned in July to the delight of members young and old. Socially distanced training, hand sanitising and Covid forms became the new normal for everyone involved with teams. Covid Supervisors were required for each team and true to form the support received from club members was heartwarming, with huge

numbers of volunteers taking on this role and have continued to do so since July. Their efforts have ensured that the players can train and play in as safe an environment as is possible. Everyone involved in playing and training teams in the club are extremely grateful to the Covid Supervisors for all their work.

“Socially distanced training, hand sanitising and Covid forms became the new normal for everyone involved with teams.”

Finally, we are delighted to say that plans for a new All Weather Surface at the ball wall are at an advanced stage. The project team led by Clubman John Brunnock hope to have planning permission early in 2021 and once secured will be ready to begin work immediately. Fundraising for the project is ongoing with support for our Club Draws playing a vital part along with a sponsorship package for advertising at the wall which is being very well received by businesses. Once completed the All-Weather surface will provide a safe, dry and comfortable area for our players of all codes and ages to train and prepare for their games.



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Mizen to Malin

Mark Nugent

My 2019 was full of many different highlights and the odd set back that have become part and parcel of being in a wheelchair. Kidney infections are a common occurrence as is the “I’m not feeling great” phrase that covers everything from colds and flu to just general little things like spasms in the legs. In truth 2019 overall was one of the greatest of my life so far. I achieved things I had never done on the road bike and in my personal life. It ended on an amazing high. So here is my 2019 in review and the 2019 journey really started with the Maynooth 10km a few years ago.

“In truth 2019 overall was one of the greatest of my life so far. I achieved things I had never done on the road bike and in my personal life.”

On the first of January I went out to the shed at myself and Jacqueline’s home in Dundalk. I got on the bike that was attached to a turbo trainer and began to turn the arms around and around and around. I was training for the biggest and hardest challenge of my life so far. I, along with one of my heroes in real life Mary Fitzgerald who is recovering from breast cancer, my aunt by marriage and also Jacqueline, were going to attempt to cycle from Mizen in Cork to Malin in County Donegal in aid of two charities, Spinal injuries Ireland and Breast Cancer Ireland. The route we chose was 602km in total. It was hilly, very, very hilly. I was hoping to be the first person paralysed from the chest down to cycle it and we hoped to get it done in a week. I had come up with the plan on a night out in Cork to celebrate Jacqueline’s sister Nicola’s 30th birthday party. Before we left the pub that night, I had a few people signed up even though it was not officially happening as of yet.

The groundwork started the following day and continued on behind the scenes night after night at home on my standing frame. My goal at that time was to get as many sponsors on board as possible

so the cost of the event would be covered, and this would let the money raised and donated by people go directly to the charities. I asked some very close friends like Declan Buckley and Stephen Brennan who are both proud Maynooth men to help me and my uncle Peter Nevin to manage the accounts, so everything was above board. Myself and Declan arranged a meeting with Spinal injuries Ireland (SII) and before going in he said to me “How much do you think you might raise?”. My response was “€5,000 is the target, €2,500 euro for each charity. As we sat at the meeting with the SII team they were delighted and told me that I had 110% backing from them. We both left delighted. I remember the day Declan set up the GoFundMe page and we set a target of €3,000 as we had sent out sponsorship cards as well, so we didn’t want to be too greedy.



Anyway, training started on the 1st of January 2019 in the shed on a turbo trainer and if I’m honest I thought I was flying. Every evening, night after night I went as hard as I could for 1 hour, 2 hours and 3 hours at a time and I got off the bike saying I must have done 20km, 40km or 60km. I spoke to a good biking friend and told him what I was doing in the shed and he said “Remember it’s only a turbo trainer it’s not the real road”. On the 1st February, my first day on the road, reality hit me like a truck. I did 12km in an hour and I soon got a rude awakening as to the challenge ahead of me in less than 6 months time. My friend was right. This was going to be a real challenge. I slowly built on the distance on both the road and turbo trainer. It was night after night with gym work and bike and also working full time, so I was kept busy. All the time in the back of my mind was the charities and what it would mean to them. It was also so important to

build awareness and prove to so many people that anything is possible if you put your mind to it and have the right support. As training continued so did the work behind the scenes. I needed to pick a great support team. I know the importance of having a great team on the road behind you. It’s easy to cycle if you have a great support team. I knew I’d have no problem getting cyclists because most cyclists have Mizen to Malin on their bucket list, as it was on mine before my accident.

With this in mind and the fact we had such an epic journey ahead of us, I asked my friends Ivor McCormack and Paddy Walsh to be the bosses over the week and to keep us safe. They agreed and the plan was starting to take shape. I trained most days and linked in regularly with Mary in Cork. It’s important to mention at this point that Mary had not been on a bike in 30 years so she was starting from the start as well. The sponsors were all onboard before we opened the GoFundMe page and the money was put aside to cover the cost. The bank balance was zero and myself and Declan waited to see what was going to happen. I decided to train like I did for the Race around Ireland in 2014. I would do a training cycle and cover some of the route we would take on the week, so I’d be ready.

Before I could do this, I needed to drive the route. So, on a Friday evening after a long week of work I drove to Cork, stayed overnight with Jacqueline’s parents before leaving for Mizen with Daithí at 5am on the Saturday morning.

“...to prove to so many people that anything is possible if you put your mind to it and have the right support.”

We picked up a friend Andrew in Durrus and we drove out to Mizen. That day I drove from Mizen to Ballymahon, Co Longford noting every turn and almost every point of interest on the way. I noted that when I’d get to Ballymahon on the cycle itself I would be over halfway. We decided to have a jersey made to commemorate the journey and also to show off the sponsors to the world. I got my friend Lorraine McGill to design it. It’s the little

things that bring people together. When you stop playing team sports you miss the team spirit and I knew the importance of the team and the jersey would bond us together if things got hard on the week of the cycle.

“I was not going to quit that day.”

We were now within 8 weeks of the cycle and the 2 training runs had been decided. The first one was from Mizen to Macroom 100km and it would also be the first leg on the week of the event. The second would be from Ballymahon to Enniskillen and that would be the fourth leg of the event. I started early on a Saturday morning in Mizen and it was hard, very, very hard and I had loads of negative thoughts and feelings in my head. I stopped a number of times and I was so nearly quitting except I had Jacqueline with me and her Dad Daithí and her sister Mary driving behind us. That day Daithí saw the beauty of his daughters and Mary saw her sister’s love for me. Not alone did she encourage me, she also kicked my ass and reminded me of the charities and the people I would let down if I quit. I was not going to quit that day.

We finished and as we sat down to take stock of the day, we knew to say nothing to each other. Was it a step too far or was it the beginning of something amazing? The next training run was a little better and we were supported that day by an amazing friend and one of the bosses for the week, Paddy Walsh, in his car. We started early



and finished in Enniskillen 100km later, in good spirits having learned that this was going to take unbelievable effort.

“The craic was mighty and the challenge that was ahead of us in less than 24 hours, loomed larger than ever.”

As the event got closer, we finalised the last of the plan and got the team together to go over the last of the details. We would have 22 cyclists taking part in the event from start to finish and 12 support crew over the course of the week. We were all ready and on Saturday morning the 26th of May 2019, myself and the Mizen to Malin team left Maynooth for Bantry in Co Cork to meet the rest of the team. The craic was mighty and the challenge that was ahead of us in less than 24 hours, loomed larger than ever.



How do I describe the greatest week of my life so far in a few short words? Well I can't. It's totally impossible and for people who were not there on the journey it's impossible to understand what happened that week on the road. It's impossible for them to understand what "one notch up means" or how you talk for 602 km and not tell the same story twice. It's just you have to be there to really get a feel for it but I'm going to try. Day 1 The route was from Mizen to the outskirts of Millstreet in Co Cork. It was Mary's and

Jacqueline's homeland and the people were out in force. We had fog and rain and it was so cold on the Mizen Head. I had broken a chain and it was nearly over before we left the start line. We had 35 or more cyclists and support on the start line, and it was just wonderful. We started and the lead group of cyclists headed off to collect and cheer us on as we went. We had divided into two groups. One main group of 20 or so cyclists and one with myself and Mary in it. This was decided so we didn't hold up traffic and to keep everyone safe on the road.

Our first stop was in Durrus and the welcome was amazing. Getting a Garda escort through Macroom and having over 100 people waiting for us at the second to last stop on the day. Seeing the joy that was on everyone's faces as we arrived. Seeing Andrew Fay, a Maynooth man on the side of the road at Kilmichael Ambush cheering us on and finally getting the first leg finished at the GAA centre outside Millstreet and having so many people cheer us in. The journey had started, and we had 130km done.

“As we entered the village, we were greeted by a massive sign wishing us good luck”

Day 2 was another long day. We were heading for Nenagh Co Tipperary and the weather was wet to start. I was still in good spirits as was everyone else. We left and our first stop was great. I was joined by my good friend and former boss at Cadbury, Dave Nagle from Freemount, a small village in Cork. As we entered the village, we were greeted by a massive sign wishing us good luck and we stopped for a photo. We got a tenner from a truck driver and loads of encouraging beeps from cars. We were still in Cork and almost 170km in when we finally crossed into Limerick. My god Cork is big. Day 2 finished with another Garda escort into Nenagh and the locals gave us a great welcome. We had some cyclists leave us and some join us on the day, but the craic was just beginning and friendships were taking root among us all. We were going well.

Day 3 was short and took us from Nenagh to Glasson and day 4 was just 20km just to keep the



arms turning from Glasson to Ballymahon. We were now settling into our stride and Paddy and Ivor were managing everything. All I was doing was cycling. Myself and Mary were enjoying it. On day 3 we were again joined by cycling friends keen to enjoy and be part of our journey even for a day. The stories about towns we were going through and cows we saw in the fields kept coming and we laughed till we cried. The main group had a day off on Wednesday and on Tuesday night a few beers were drunk and songs were sung, and we were all having a ball. On Wednesday we did yoga and some of the Cork people were amazed as they had never tried it before. A few fell asleep and they will never live it down. We had a lovely lunch, a few more drinks and got some washing done. I guess we were enjoying it. We really were.



Day 5 took us to Enniskillen and the weather, and my body had taken a turn for the worse. Mary on the other hand was going from strength to strength and her encouragement was unwavering. We were into Ferbane and the school were out to welcome us into the local Spar. It was just what we all needed. The weather was bad, and the day was long. As we slowly approached Enniskillen the mind drifted to the journey we were on and the points I was trying to prove. Would it all be worth it? Would people understand how hard it was and would people accept that life is not always easy? We decided to announce a running total in Enniskillen and the hotel had kindly put on a lovely meal for us. The pints flowed and the craic was mighty. We got a song from Ciaran, one of the kids on the journey and the crowd went wild. We told the team that Friday was our Breast Cancer awareness day and they were all to wear pink. Then we told them the total raised so far. People were shocked. Remember €5000 was our target. We were a little north of that!!

“Would it all be worth it? Would people understand how hard it was and would people accept that life is not always easy?”

Day 6 began in awful weather conditions with heavy rain and wind and my body was shutting down. I was lucky to have the amazing Edel Daly, my physio and friend for years with me for the whole week. She was now sticking me together with super glue and tape and doing a great job of it. But it was my kidneys that were letting me down now and after getting a bit of sunburn on day 1, I was in a bad way. We did 44km and every bit of it felt like it was uphill. It was then it happened. I always thought the highlight of the week would come at the end and it did in a way, but the end was always going to happen. We were always going to get there. But on day 6 in a little town in Northern Ireland called Killeen on the way to Muff the surprise happened. We cycled into the schoolyard with the rain pouring down and the wind blowing hard, to a hero's welcome, from kids and teachers we had never seen before. Their day had started as normal and we were about to



put a spanner in the works. We cycled in, took the cheers and went into the school toilets to get some heat and dry clothes on. What happened next was unreal and you really had to be there to understand and feel the atmosphere. We do have some clips on the Mark Nugent Mizen to Malin Facebook page so have a look if you want, I really think you should. The kids asked questions as kids do and then they asked if they could sing a song for us. But this was to be no ordinary song. This was special, really, really special. They, along with the guidance of some teachers sang and signed a song from the movie The Greatest Showman called A Million Dreams. And that's exactly what it was for them. They had learned how to sign because of one child. A child in the school was nonverbal and all the children from Junior school to Senior school learned how to do basic sign language. It was amazing and there was not a dry eye in the place. We got a hero's welcome that day but in truth they were the real heroes. Anyway, as we left, the weather had not really improved but spirits were high, and the finish line was in sight. We were met by my mother and father in Derry city and there was a big crowd in Muff, County Donegal as we rolled into the last stop for the day.

“We got a hero's welcome that day but in truth they were the real heroes.”

The ladies and lads were having pints and food in the place we stopped and the reality of what was going to happen the next day was kicking in. We started out for the Buncrana Gateway Hotel where we would all stay for the next two nights at about



4pm. Dinner was organised for 7pm that evening and the speeches and thanks would be done. Conor Dempsey a Roscommon man who now calls Maynooth his home and is proud of it, had kindly organised along with the amazing designer and jewellery maker Ger Breslin from Maynooth, some lovely medals for each of the crew and cyclists who had completed the full journey with us. These were to be given out that night as well. When I first got a look at them, I was blown away and I knew they would be really appreciated by everyone involved. The Friday night was a great success and we all went to bed happy in the knowledge we would get to the finish on Saturday.



Day 7. What a change in weather. We all drove back to Muff to begin the final push to the finish. I had done some of this leg earlier in the year with Kieran and I knew the start up over Quigley's Point was a long slow climb of 12km or so with a sharp start but the descent would be worth it. The turnout at the start line was mind blowing. We had friends like Paul from the Watch Club in Dundalk with about 8 cyclists including a few

“Along the road we were cheered on by people from all over the country... Heading up Quigley's Point a young boy walked beside me shouting encouragement.”

tandems, sponsors and friends like Norman and Anne Birchall from Maynooth all cheering us on. The atmosphere was electric and as the first group headed off, we took the final few photos and set off for the finish line in Malin.

Along the road we were cheered on by people from all over the country. Many had set off early to get to the finish line ahead of us. Heading up Quigley's Point a young boy walked beside me shouting encouragement. It was a real inspiring moment to be honest. The day was going well, the sun was out, and the sense of achievement was slowly dawning on all of us. We stopped officially only once in Garndonagh at a fire station and we headed for the finish through Malin village and to the top of Ireland. Again, if you have not seen the videos have a look at the Facebook page and Bob Miller's one is the best. He's a cool American and his voice over is very memorable. At the end it was like a relief to be honest. I cried, I had my Mam and Dad beside me, my Father in law and many, many friends. I also had my amazing wife who has never stopped encouraging me from the days after my accident until now.

“It's probably said too often but she is most definitely my rock.”

It's probably said too often but she is most definitely my rock. The pint at the end was enjoyable and I got into the car and we drove to the pub about 500 yards away. The craic was mighty and the night all too short. We were to stay another night in beautiful Donegal but as I was now very sick, we headed for home early Sunday morning and the adventure was over. We returned to a hero's welcome in Dundalk and I set about getting myself sorted. I rested for a week before getting on the bike again. We had other plans for 2019. Well that's the week that changed my life for the better. It also gave me a chance to appreciate the general kindness and generosity of the people of Maynooth, Cork, Dundalk and all of Ireland. We raised at the end €54,000 in total split equally between both charities. On an amazing night in the Glenroyal we handed over 2 cheques for €25,000 each (some money came in after the cheque presentation) and I was speechless for the first time. This was an amazing year. I hope you enjoyed my story.

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Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

Angela Tracey

Having been established in 2012, Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann Craobh Mhaigh Nuad has grown and now has a strong membership, well balanced across all age groups. We participate regularly in community events, Scór, County, Provincial and All Ireland Fleadhanna. Members and tutors take pride in and have a great love for our traditional music, song, dance and Irish language and do our best to promote these traditions at every opportunity.

Sadly, in March of this year we were faced with the enormous difficulties posed by the arrival of Covid 19 and the necessary regulations imposed upon us. It was no longer feasible for us as an organisation to provide weekly classes in Maynooth Post Primary school, to have sessions or engage in any of our normal activities.

We are all very much aware of the effect this pandemic has had across the board, and the area of arts has suffered considerably. We have all missed the excitement

“Members and tutors take pride in and have a great love for our traditional music, song, dance and Irish language...”

of participating in Fleadhanna, joining together on a weekly basis to play a few tunes, sing a few songs and have a chat.

In order to keep the connection going as best we can, we have set up online classes for members who wish to participate, which will take us to the end of this term. We will have to “play it by ear” to see how we will progress for 2021. We will keep our members informed via email and Facebook.

We would like to wish Maynooth 10K the best of luck in their online event!

“In order to keep the connection going as best we can, we have set up online classes...”



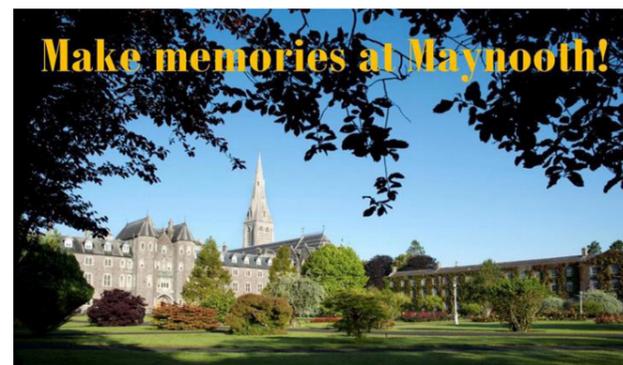
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Maynooth University New Buildings

Eliz Dunne

Construction is advancing at pace on the Maynooth University campus as the development of the new academic building establishes itself along the Kilcock Road. The new Technology Society and Innovation Building will be commissioned in 2021.

This exciting development will:

- Enable increased graduate output essential to our economy and society,
- Address regional demand for higher education,
- Support the needs of enterprise, government and community organisations for skilled graduates, expertise and innovation partnership, and
- Promote equality of opportunity by widening participation in higher education

The building will support advancements in flexible, blended and lifelong learning through a range of lecture theatres, collaborative living laboratory teaching spaces, public engagement, exhibition and café spaces.

RKD Architects have incorporated sustainable design elements to reduce energy and lifetime costs, to improve thermal performance and building efficiency, and to generally enhance the user environment. The new design considered building orientation, natural lighting and ventilation strategies, sustainable building materials, photovoltaics, low energy light fittings, ground heat pumps, rainwater harvesting, green roofs and the public realm.

The Maynooth University campus operations have been modified to reduce the spread of Covid-19 in accordance with public health measures, with all but essential operations currently moved online. During the Covid-19 restriction arrangements, Maynooth University has continued to deliver its academic programmes, examinations and student support services remotely. The University's aim is to provide the best possible experience for students this year, while taking the necessary health and safety precautions.

Over the summer, Maynooth University has done extensive work to prepare the campus for the return to teaching for staff and students. An individual risk assessment was conducted for each department. Based on these assessments and the current public health guidelines, physical work has been done throughout the campus. This includes signage, perspex barriers, sanitizing stations, floor markings as a guide on where to walk, and one-way systems.

The maximum capacity of any teaching venue has been reduced to 50 people in line with guidelines, and a reduced density of seating was established to enable separation in the Library and other areas.

Teaching and Learning

The University has installed specialist software, so that lectures can be streamed from each of the lecture theatres on campus, to allow students to view the lectures online, either live, or later. In most modules, students participated using a mix of on-campus and remote learning. Limited laboratory work, practical sessions and small group teaching continue on campus during the public restrictions.

The University wishes to provide assurance to the wider community of Maynooth that public health safety measures will remain its priority. Everyone has a personal responsibility to keep ourselves, family, friends, the campus, and the wider community as safe as possible from potential exposure to Covid-19.

In order to encourage a strong awareness of safe interactions with the wider community, the University, in conjunction with Maynooth Students' Union, are engaged in a student-focused communications campaign on how 'Playing My Part' is key to protecting the wider community. The campaign will run throughout campus and online, as well as at bus stops and the train station in Maynooth. One key message being delivered to students and staff is that they must avoid coming on campus if they have any symptoms which

could indicate COVID-19 infection. Additionally, there will be reminders throughout campus to observe the social distancing protocols, wash hands frequently, follow appropriate respiratory etiquette when coughing or sneezing, and wear face coverings whenever 2m distance cannot be maintained.

The University has reinforced the message that students should not attend house parties and should restrict all gatherings in line with the public health guidelines at the time. They should avoid shopping locally during hours designated for vulnerable people, and they should follow all guidelines related to public transportation. Most student residences take the form of 3-6-person bedroom apartments with shared kitchen and living areas. No guests are permitted to visit student accommodation this year and each apartment will act as a household. Students were required to complete a Covid-19 induction training prior to registering for courses and were shown videos on MU campus specific health and safety protocols at the beginning of the semester.

The University has put its technology expertise to the cause. It has developed the Maynooth

University Check in App in which students are asked to scan a QR code at each new location or desk they attend around campus. The technology is used to help the HSE identify close contacts in the event of a positive Covid-19 diagnosis. In addition, all students are asked to use the national Covid Tracker app.

International students arriving from countries not on the COVID-19 Green List were required to restrict their movements for the first 14 days after arrival. Some students completed this restriction period in campus residences, with appropriate arrangements for food delivery and cleaning for a 14-day period.

The University also has established a Student Help Desk to serve as a one-stop shop for student queries about any aspect of the upcoming year. The Maynooth Access Programme is another key resource for our students.

More detailed information on return to campus arrangements is available on the Maynooth University website at

www.maynoothuniversity.ie/coronavirus.



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Royal Canal Greenway

Gary O'Daly

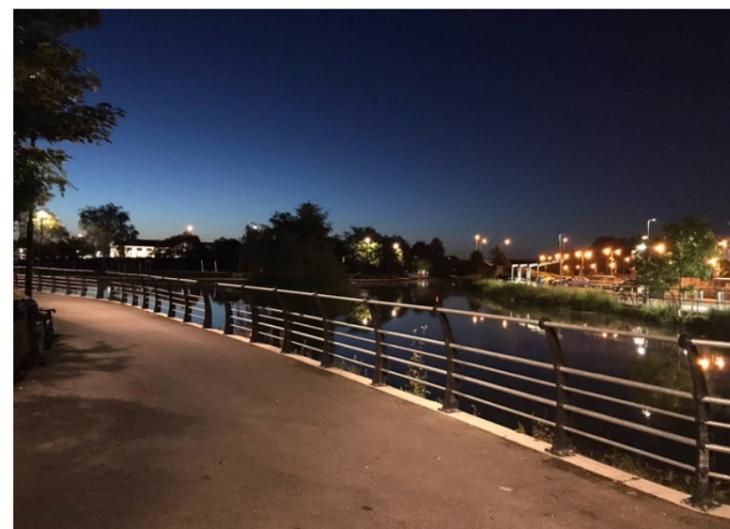


As a resident of Maynooth and a long distance runner I have come to find the Royal Canal the greatest amenity in Maynooth. While heading east towards Dublin from Maynooth is a little rougher underfoot, Waterways Ireland has been working hard in partnership with Kildare, Meath, Westmeath and Longford County Councils to bring together Ireland's longest Greenway of 120km, starting at Maynooth Harbour and going the whole way to Richmond Harbour in Cloondara, Co. Longford.

a 4.3km stretch from the Harbour out to Chambers Bridge and the 15th Lock passing by Bailey's Bridge (the Royal Canal's first accommodation bridge heading west) and North Kildare Club on the way and finally if you really want to push out the long run you can continue on to Kilcock Harbour and Shaw's Bridge at the 16th Lock which is 6km from Maynooth Harbour giving the runner a nice round trip of 12km, on safe wide traffic free paths. Of course it is important to bear in mind current restrictions and health advice.

The Royal Canal Greenway was developed from the old towpaths of the Royal Canal where unlike the more commercially successful Grand Canal, almost all the boats that operated were horse drawn which would have pulled the barges from the towpath. The construction of the Royal Canal started in 1790 and reached Maynooth around 1795, making the canal and St. Patrick's College contemporaries of each other.

It is said that Royal Canal only came to Maynooth due to the meddling of William Fitzgerald, the 2nd Duke of Leinster who wanted the Canal to pass his property at Carton House as it does now at Pike Bridge, rather than taking a route further north. This change of direction necessitated the blasting of the Deep Sinking around Clonsilla and the building of the Ryewater Aqueduct near



“The Royal Canal Greenway provides the residents of Maynooth with the perfect place to get out and go for a walk, jog, run or cycle...”

The Royal Canal Greenway provides the residents of Maynooth with the perfect place to get out and go for a walk, jog, run or cycle and its wide path has proven to be the perfect escape in these challenging times of Covid restrictions. With the adult fitness equipment in the Harbour Field, those training for the 10k/5k can warm up using the machines on the field before taking to do 500m sprint repeats on the smooth tarmac between the Harbour and Bond Bridge. Those looking to do interval training can go a little further, passing under Bond Bridge and continuing on out to Jackson Bridge and the 14th Lock which is a lovely flat wide stretch of 2.2km from the harbour. Then for those looking to stretch out their runs it is

Louisa Bridge in Leixlip, at great expense which near crippled the finances of the original Royal Canal Company. 220 years on however we reap the benefit of this having the Canal pass right through our town. The Royal Canal reached Kilcock in 1796 and opened to commercial traffic from its original terminus at Broadstone in Glasnevin to Kilcock in December of that year. It took a further 10 years for the Canal to reach Piper's Boreen in Mullingar in 1806. After some very slow progress from there to Coolnahay just west of Mullingar the Royal Canal Company was dissolved and the completion

“Some records of early travellers along the Canal include priests taking barges to and from Maynooth to Dublin.”

of the Canal from Coolnahay to the Shannon was overseen by Directors-General of Inland Navigation between 1814 and 1817. Some records of early travellers along the Canal include priests taking barges to and from Maynooth to Dublin. Last year The National Famine Museum in Strokestown House in Roscommon erected a pair of bronze shoes in the Harbour along with many other locations along the Canal to commemorate the 1490 tenants from Strokestown who walked along the Canal to Dublin before taking coffin ships to Canada. In 1845 the Royal Canal was purchased by the Midlands Great Western Railway Company who proceeded to build a railway along the banks of the Canal from Broadstone to Mullingar becoming what we know today as the main Dublin to Sligo Railway Line. While the Canal saw some commercial success between 1817 and 1845, the coming of the railways led to the decline of the Royal Canal which really only had a brief resurgence during the Emergency years of 1939-1945 as peat was brought up to Dublin from the west because oil and coal were in short supply. Finally C.I.É. who took over control of the Canal in 1945 closed the Royal Canal around 1960. Supplying the Royal Canal with sufficient water to be navigable was always an issue and as a result the canal was dammed and went dry west of Mullingar and many breaches east of Mullingar made navigation impossible.

Thankfully in 1974 The Royal Canal Amenity Group was formed with the aim of protecting and restoring the Royal Canal. As momentum built for this project branches sprung up all along the length of the canal and while it took longer than the original construction, in 2010 the Royal Canal became fully navigable again from Spencer Dock to



Cloondara. Since then considerable work has been done to create the Greenway for cyclists, runners and walkers to enjoy as well as boaters. So while you are training for the Maynooth 10k/5k or just looking to get out for some fresh air why not head down onto the Greenway for a few miles and appreciate this amazing historic amenity that runs not only through the heart of our town but onwards west passing through, Kildare, Meath, Westmeath and Longford. When the Covid restrictions finally pass and we can extend our journeys out beyond our immediate surroundings why not consider taking a long trip along the canal. I have recently created a website www.royalcanalrunner.com which breaks down the entire distance of the canal into easy sections from the Liffey to the Shannon for walkers, runners and cyclists including historical information, places to stop and plenty of photos to guide you on your way.

Confessions of a Runner

Martina Reilly

Bless me father, this is my confession.

I did not take up running to be healthy. I did not take it up for the good of my heart or to lower my blood pressure or stave off cholesterol. I did not do it to make friends or win races. I did not do it to get head space.

I took up running for a far less noble reason.

My thighs wobbled.

Yes, the initial spur to don a pair of tattered runners and a mis-matched tracksuit was because my eight-year-old daughter had caused a cataclysmic crash in my confidence when she remarked delightedly that my thighs reminded her of jelly whenever I wore a pair of shorts.

“That’s just the way the shorts are,” I told her.

“No,” she said. “That’s just the way your legs are.”

Out of the mouth of babes....

And so, one dark September night, over ten years ago, I ventured down to the Le Cheile Athletic club in Leixlip. I had high hopes for myself. I had always been a sporty child, I had even run in the schools’ competitions when I was in my teens. And so what if my legs hadn’t seen action in three decades, they’d soon be fit and trim. Wasn’t it all muscle memory?

Plus, I knew all about nutrition and had eaten a grand dinner of Spaghetti Bolognaise a couple of hours beforehand, for the energy. I was wearing my well used, broken in runners to guard against blisters.

My first inkling that maybe all might not go to plan was when I saw all the other runners in their jazzy apparel - cool tracksuits, skintight strides, headbands, colourful sweatshirts. They were the business. I, on the other hand had gone for

the ‘mis-matched, baggy stuff in the back of the wardrobe’ look.

Still, it was all about the runner, not the clothes.

Bring it on, I thought.

The session that night started with a bit of hopping and jumping and I hopped and jumped with abandon. I hadn’t done that since I was about four. It was tremendous fun. After that, we were instructed to run around the four-hundred meter field. Twice.

As I came in, breathless and feeling a bit sick, I thought to myself, ‘Martina, you still have it!’ Images of the glory days of my youth, belting up a hundred-meter track, strutted in front of me.

If I kept this up, my thighs would be toned up in no time!

The whole night had been a huge success. I was pulling on my jacket when I heard: “And now that we’ve finished the warm up we’ll go out onto the road and do a loop.”

What?

There was more?

And what *exactly* was a loop?

I watched with unease as everyone began jogging towards the entrance of the track.

With my confidence sinking quicker than Fine Gaels vote, I discarded my jacket and my sweatshirt, exposing my tattered tee-shirt, which announced that I was an ‘eight-legged groove machine’.

I could have done with eight legs because the two I had were now in shock. The ‘loop’ took on the nightmarish quality of a Forest Gump run, on

and on and on with no end in sight. My spaghetti bolognaise dinner was not aiding my physical exertion in the slightest and worst of all, turns out five-year old runners with no cushioning or grip, are crap.

But I pounded on, praying for deliverance. And then, finally, like being elected on the last count, the end of the interminable run came into sight. Thank you, God, I said. But alas, it wasn’t just my thighs that were wobbly anymore - my legs got in on the act, gave way and I hit the ground, face first, my tooth cutting through my lip and chipping.

Blood spurted all over my tee-shirt.

I was mortified. I had hoped to make an impact but not like this.

Ice was procured. A chair was found. Blood continued to pour. People offered me drinks, food, a blanket. Arnica.

And then, I kid you not, a dentist and a nurse, also members of the club, appeared. The nurse patched me up, the dentist fixed my tooth the following day.

Everyone was lovely. They told me not to let it put me off. To keep going.

And I did.

Ten years later, I’m still at it. I’ve run the Maynooth 10k, I’ve done many 5k’s but, after a few years at these distances, I found my groove.

The new tartan track at Le Cheile allowed me to try out sprinting, which I adore. I run master’s track and while not always successful, I have had my moments. In 2014, my golden year - boasting to follow - I set a 60m Irish record in my age-group and also won the 200m indoor All-Ireland.

I took a break from running in 2016 when I was diagnosed with Breast Cancer but am now making my comeback - watch out world.

So, while I did not take up running to be healthy or for the good of my heart or to lower my blood pressure or stave off cholesterol or to make friends

or win races or to get head space, running has helped me achieve all these things too.

And my thighs don’t wobble too much anymore! So, to all you starting your running journey, to you doing the Maynooth 10k for the first time, to anyone thinking of taking up running, my advice, like Nike says is to, Just Do It. But do it in the good runners and the right clothes and not on a full stomach.

Martina Reilly is an author living in Maynooth, who has written over twenty novels. Her next one, The Night Caller is to be published August 2021 (little brown)

At present, she is working on a podcast with Down at Heel Productions. FRACTURED - a family, a nation, a dream is a War of Independence soap opera set in Kildare, written by Kildare writers and starring the acting cream of the county. Sponsored by Kildare County Council Arts, through a Creative Ireland bursary, the soap opera podcast covering the years 2020-2021 will go live next February and will be free to download..



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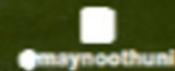


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Preventing Climate Change? Soil Is the Key

Dr. Karen O'Hanlon

Urban gardeners, as well as farmers, have a vital role to play

The widespread collapse of biodiversity is now making headlines. There has been a catastrophic effect on some species due to the loss of Ireland's farmland birds, like the curlew and corncrake. We hear more and more about the threat to our food security posed by a dramatic drop in numbers of vital pollinators. Occasionally the decline of earthworms gets a mention. Rarely, however do we see biodiversity loss written about in the context of the billions of creatures that live within our soils.

It is important to understand that it is the soil life that feeds plants. Regenerative Farming Ireland's 2030 vision for Irish farming states that there must be a paradigm shift in agriculture by the mid-21st century. Central to this change will be recognising that we have to feed the plants that feed humans. And it has to be done without the aid of the fossil-fuel-based or mined artificial fertilisers that have become the mainstay of farmers and gardeners alike in recent years. We must understand the symbiotic relationship between plants and animal life.

“We are told that our arable soils have sixty to a hundred years' harvests left in them.”

We are told that our arable soils have sixty to a hundred years' harvests left in them. For a rising global population this is critical. It is, however, the loss of soil organic matter that is of real concern because along with it goes both the microbial life that creates a healthy plant-growing environment forms and the very bottom of the food chains for so much of our farmland fauna.

The soils of most of the world's broad-scale arable regions were formed under ancient forests

or grasslands. The drainage of marsh and river flood plains created some others. In Ireland the peat within our bogs has long been disappearing. As a human society, we are still unsustainably consuming soil fertility by ploughing out ancient soils; not to mention releasing more previously stable soil-carbon.

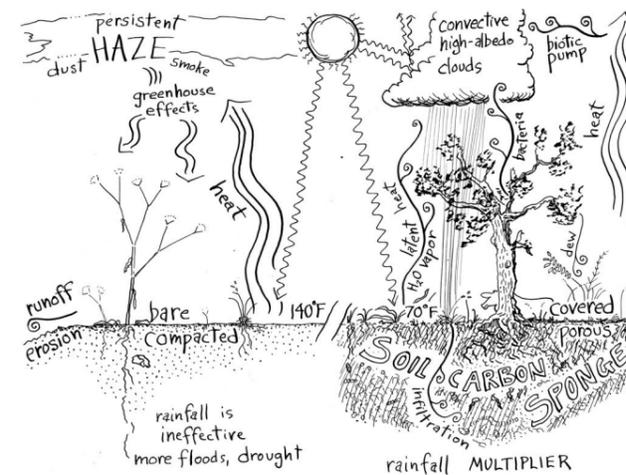
“As a human society, we are still unsustainably consuming soil fertility by ploughing out ancient soils”

We could and should be looking to recreate new, 'ancient' forests, to sequester and store carbon, to create forest-grown timber but also allows the possibility for plants and animals to thrive side by side in the mutually beneficially practice of agroforestry.

Artificial nitrogen, albeit with vast and polluting seepage and fossil fuel costs, has allowed crop production without the cycling of organic matter into plant growing soils, but it is a time-limited practice. Associated with it is a loss of soil organic matter that is destructive to soil fertility and health and, crucially, the soil's ability to hold and store moisture for both crop growing and broader water resource management.

“Rebuilding soil organic matter may mean vast composting operations recycle organic materials...”

Rebuilding soil organic matter may mean vast composting operations to recycle organic materials and nutrients from the point of food consumption [urbanisations] to rural, maybe remote, food production zones, but it is something policy-makers and farmers need to address now before it's too late.



Building Carbon into our Soils

How can we as urban gardeners help with biodiversity loss in soils?

Our gardens are a wonderful biodiversity resource and many small gardens have more biodiversity than some very large farms monocropping in the country.

The following actions could help to combat biodiversity loss:

- The most important point to remember is that the lazier you become as regards garden grooming, the greater the biodiversity in your garden. Tidiness is the enemy of biodiversity. Learn to enjoy a slightly wilder, natural garden and leave seed heads on flowers over the winter to feed birds and shelter insects.
- Plant native or old-fashioned traditional plants, shrubs and trees to provide nectar and food for birds, butterflies and other wildlife.
- Eliminate chemicals, a predator balance will return if you are patient. Natural beneficial bacteria and fungi will return and control aphids, red spiders, downy, powdery mildews and black spot. Frogs will take care of the slugs and snails. Predators such as parasitic wasps and birds will kill the insects, both good and bad insects will be consumed, you cannot win them all!
- Use organic plant food and compost, such as plant growth-promoting bacteria and carbon feed.

- Grow some organic fruit and vegetables.
- Grow your own organic leaves and herbs in pots or a special patch.
- Plant a wildflower bed.
- Put up a raised nest box for birds.
- From a practical perspective, restore soil organic matter health and fertility naturally using farmed animals in proximity to the land that provides their feed and fodder - so keep some chickens!

All this is nothing new, it is to return to the farming husbandry that we understood for centuries and only recently forgot.

Dr. Karen O'Hanlon is the founder of probio carbon Ltd, long-term and sustainable climate change mitigation feed: **probio carbon Enriched Carbon Feed** (enriched biochar) and **Plant and Soil Health** (natural soil organisms) for gardeners and landscapers.



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Royal Canal Parkrun

John Ryan



Royal Canal parkrun started on 13th April 2019. Over 1700 different people have run, jogged, or walked the 2.5km out and back course on the recently refurbished towpath. The event has attracted parkrunners from as far away as New Zealand and Australia. Not only do parkrunners like to visit other events while on holiday, a regular feature of parkrun every Saturday is the number of people who travel to take part in different parkruns around the country. This is known as parkrun tourism.

It is just over 15 years since the first ever parkrun took place in Bushy Park London. It has now spread to over 2400 locations in 23 countries. On the island of Ireland there are 123 5km parkruns plus 29 junior 2km parkruns. There are a wide variety of locations from urban parks to forest tracks to Atlantic beaches. You can even apply to run in Mountjoy Prison, and you do not have to commit a crime!

Once you register online, which is free, and print off your barcode you can take part in any parkrun anywhere in the world. The mantra-like phrase to describe parkrun is: it is free, it is timed, it is 5km, every Saturday morning! While the title parkrun includes the word run it is not about running per se. Everyone of all ages and abilities are welcome. There is no time limit. People are free to run as fast as they wish, or they can push the kids in a buggy or walk the dog. Wheelchairs are permitted including racing wheelchairs but not hand powered cycles.

“Volunteers are an essential part of parkrun as it is very much a community-based organisation and there is no hierarchy.”

Every time that you complete a parkrun course your barcode and finishing position are recorded. After the event you will be sent an email with your time. When someone completes 50 parkruns they qualify for a free red t-shirt, after 100 a free black t-shirt and after 250 a free green t-shirt. Post and packaging extra.



“The mantra-like phrase to describe parkrun is: it is free, it is timed, it is 5km, every Saturday morning!”

There are no winners in parkrun, there are first finishers. It is a great way for club athletes or anyone with a competitive streak to push themselves a little bit harder in a very supportive environment.

Volunteers are an essential part of parkrun as it is very much a community-based organisation and there is no hierarchy. To date 170 individuals have volunteered at Royal Canal parkrun. Each time that you volunteer you get a volunteer credit. When you volunteer 25 times you qualify for a purple t-shirt. In the ideal parkrun world, a parkrunner will volunteer once every 8 to 10 runs. One of our volunteers, Dermot Kelly, won the VHI hero award for January 2020. He has photographed almost all our parkruns and captures the essence of parkrun. All the photos can be found at www.facebook.com/royalcanalparkrunkilcock

Another integral part of a parkrun are the coffee gatherings afterwards. Parkruns are a great way to meet new people, get to know the neighbours and catch up with old friends.

“Parkruns are a great way to meet new people, get to know the neighbours and catch up with old friends.”

Details of how to register are here www.parkrun.ie/register

There is no rivalry between parkruns. Further details on Royal Canal parkrun can be found at www.parkrun.ie/royalcanalkilcock and our North Kildare neighbours Castletown Celbridge can be found at www.parkrun.ie/castletown



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Celebrating 10 years of Maynooth 10K

Photographs by Mark Colfer, James Shelley, John Boyd and Anne Marie Coyle







Maynooth Tidy Towns

Mary Jennings

Maynooth 10K celebrates its 10th Anniversary and we congratulate the organising committee on reaching this milestone and wish them every success in the future. The 10K is as popular today as it was when it started out in 2011. The race was the brainchild of our own Tidy Towns Volunteer Mary Molloy. She put the idea to the PTA in Maynooth Post Primary at the time and the rest, as they say, is history.

Maynooth Tidy Towns (MTT) has also gone from strength to strength in those 10 years. We have a great bunch of volunteers, many of whom are over 30 years volunteering with the group. We have undertaken and completed a variety of projects and improvement works around the town over the years.

“We have also received the Kildare County Award in 2018 and 2019 having attained the highest mark of all Tidy Towns Groups in the County.”

Our efforts for the many years of dedicated work were finally rewarded with our first ever medal win (the Bronze) in 2013. We got to Silver in 2014 and again in 2015. We swiftly progressed to Gold in 2016 and have retained our Gold medal status to date. We have also received the Kildare County Award in 2018 and 2019 having attained the highest mark of all Tidy Towns Groups in the County.



Maynooth Tidy Towns Volunteers emerged from hibernation on Saturday 3rd March. Following a well earned rest we are back in action and by the time of going to print (and COVID-19 permitting) our thrice weekly litter picks and other works will be well underway. Teams of Hi-Vized volunteers are out and about on Saturday and Sunday mornings and on Wednesday evenings helping to keep our town clean and tidy for all.

But we are not just about litter picking. In more recent years our focus has been on the protection and enhancement of our natural environment. We have fully embraced the objectives of the All Ireland Pollinator Plan which urges us to undertake actions that make our communities more pollinator friendly.

MTT -Projects for Pollinators and Biodiversity:

- Willow plantation at Meadowbrook/Old Greenfield. Willow is a vital source of food for queen bee bumble bees as they emerge from hibernation. Over 25,000 pollinator friendly bulbs such as Allium, Muscari, Crocus, Native Bluebells planted in various locations around Maynooth.
- Pollinator friendly perennials planted in our landscaped beds at O'Neill Park, on Straffan Road and in the Pound. Selection includes plants that provide year round food for pollinators and other beneficial insects.
- Wildflower meadow on Carton Avenue by reduced mowing regime on a 3m wide strip running end to end on both sides of the Avenue. The area is mowed once in April, and again in late September. Grass is removed to reduce fertility levels which encourages wildflower growth. Over 40 species of wildflowers identified including 2 varieties of orchid. The area of natural vegetation between the lime trees is of immense importance in the conservation of habitats for all manner of wildlife.
- Sensory Garden on Moyglare Road. Pollinator



friendly plants, including lavender lined path and native Irish fruit trees.

- Native hedgerow and tree planting on Dublin Road, Dunboyne Road and in The Green,
- Collaborated with Kildare Bat Group and Wild Kildare to have Bat, Bird and Swift, boxes installed at various locations around Maynooth.

What are Pollinators?

In Europe, bees are the main pollinators. Pollination is important in the production of a range of crops that we have become accustomed to having in our daily diets e.g. apples, strawberries, raspberries, currants, tomatoes, peas and oil seed rape (rapeseed oil used in cooking). These crops would be much harder to produce and much more expensive if it wasn't for the vitally important 'free-bee' pollination service provided by our bumblebees.

In addition without their services many of the colourful wildflowers in our landscape and the animals and ecosystems which depend on them could decline dramatically or even disappear altogether.



Ireland's Bees:

In Ireland there are 98 different species of bees. The familiar Honeybee (1species only) is a managed pollinator. The honeybee lives in a hive and is the only bee to produce commercially extractable honey. Honeybee hives contain up to 50,000 bees and can remain active for several years.

20 Bumblebee species live in nests on the ground hidden in long grass or at the base of a hedgerow. Each nest is ruled by a queen and has between 50-200 workers. Bumblebees have a short lifecycle and at the end of summer the nest dies. Only the mated new queen survives by hibernating to emerge in spring to start a new nest. 77 Solitary bee species nest in burrows that they make in bare soil or in cavities, like holes in wood or hollow stems. Solitary bees take one whole year to pass through a complete life cycle and may only survive as adults for a few weeks. Some are very efficient pollinators. All our bees are helped by other insects like hoverflies, butterflies and moths.

“Most annual bedding plants e.g. Geraniums, Begonias, Petunias have virtually no pollen and nectar and are of little value to pollinators and other insects.”

Why are bees in trouble?

Our wild bees are struggling to survive, one third of our wild bee species are known to be threatened with extinction in Ireland. The reason for this is simple and clearly visible. There are fewer wildflowers in the countryside to provide bees with the pollen and nectar that they need to survive. And we've drastically reduced areas where they can nest. In our modern world of paved gardens, intensive agriculture and a changing climate our bumblebees find themselves hungry and homeless. But it's not only our bees that are struggling. So too are many other species. We have chopped down, pulled out and sprayed nature to death in our quest for perfect and pristine gardens, greens, parks and living areas. And all our actions have created a biodiversity crisis.

We have to take action now to protect our environment. Nature is not clean lines and weed free. It is messy, quite orderly and very beautiful.



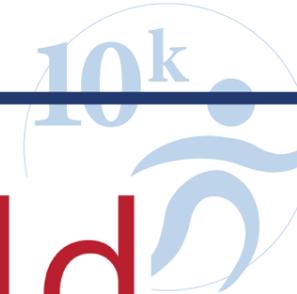
- Choose pollinator friendly perennials and annuals. Make sure to have one flowering food source from spring through to winter.
- Don't be too quick to tidy up the garden. Leave perennials intact through winter to provide nesting sites for wild pollinators and seeds for birds.
- Plant native trees and shrubs to support our native wildlife.
- Plant a selection of herbs in a pot. Chives, Rosemary, Thyme etc.
- Eliminate or reduce the use of pesticides.

Learn to embrace the messy and untidy garden and roadside verges given to dandelions. You will be rewarded with the result. Then sit back and enjoy your garden and “the murmuring of innumerable bees” and birdsong and delight in the knowledge that you are helping to give back to nature and our natural environment.

“For a strawberry flower to turn into a strawberry it needs to be visited 5 times by a bumblebee or 15 times by a honeybee. That’s just for ONE strawberry!”

Here’s what You can do:

- Give the ‘weeds’ their proper name and they become much more interesting and particularly when you look at the name as Gaelge
- e.g. lady’s smock (biolar gréagáin)
- meadowsweet (airgead luachra)
- valerian (slán iomaire) yarrow (athair thalún), betony (lus beatha)
- kidney vetch (méara muire). And there’s lots more!
- Create a wildflower meadow by reducing the frequency of mowing, and allowing common wildflowers such as clovers (seamain dhearg), knapweed (mínscóth) and birds foot trefoil (craobh éin) to grow.
- Try to avoid disturbing nesting or hibernating bees in areas like long grass, dead wood or walls.
- Create nesting habitats: hedgerows, earth banks, drystone walls, holes in wood and bee hotels.
- Let dandelions bloom. They are a vital food source in early spring.



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- Trip Advisor

“The food was very well presented, so tasty and was served on nice hot plates. We absolutely had a great time and would highly recommend. We definitely will be back as the atmosphere here is truly amazing.”
- Trip Advisor

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Maynooth Senior Citizens Committee

Josephine Moore

Congratulations to all involved in the MEC Virtual 10K/5K Run as you celebrate your 10th anniversary. This event has been a wonderful success story so well done to all. How quickly time passes.

Our organisation is celebrating 55 years this year and although there is a huge gap between the two groups in terms of membership and duration, Maynooth Post Primary and Our Senior Citizens have been interlinked for almost all of that time. We have a great working relationship with our young people and through the years this has served to bridge the gap which is so important in order to understand and embrace age and diversity in all its forms.

Maynooth Education Campus continues to support our organisation and provide a forum for our activities when needed. Without the use of their hall, support of teachers, caretakers and students, running our sale of work, which is our main fundraiser, would present a huge problem indeed. Our committee and older people in turn support their activities such as their annual Musical and of course the 10K/5K Run. As Christy Moore would say "It's a two-way situation". While I'm on the subject of quotes, Tom Ashe, on his retirement said, "If you don't respect your past you don't deserve a future". If this is so, then the young people in Maynooth have a very bright future indeed. So once again thank you all for your continued support and I wish you every success in all you do.

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Queen Victoria's visit to Maynooth, 10 August 1849

Prof. Terence Dooley

In 1848, the year of European revolution on the continent, and the Young Ireland rebellion at home, Augustus Frederick FitzGerald, 3rd Duke of Leinster, dismantled the home of his grand uncle, Lord Edward FitzGerald, in Kildare town. Lord Edward had, of course, been one of the more prominent leaders of the 1798 rebellion in Ireland. He died from wounds received during his capture. His role in the rebellion became a source of some embarrassment to his aristocratic family. Thus, on the 50th anniversary of the rebellion, Augustus tried to eradicate the physical memory of his existence from his estate landscape.

It was inevitable that Victoria would visit Carton, after all, the Duke of Leinster was Ireland's pre-eminent aristocrat. He corresponded regularly with the queen who had great personal regard for him. After her visit to Carton, she recorded in her diary: 'The duke is one of the kindest and best of men'. Coming to Carton was hugely important to Leinster. As Dr Tom Nelson concluded, the royal visit 'was public proof that the quiet and diligent loyalty' of Augustus and his father 'had dissipated any lingering doubts about the allegiance of the Fitzgeralds in the wake of the very public rebellion of the 1st duke's son, Lord Edward, in 1798.'

When Victoria and her entourage arrived at Carton around noon on 10 August 1849, no expense was spared in entertaining them. 200 or so socially elite guests gathered on the demesne, all eager to see the young queen and to be seen. They were all treated to a 'Magnificent Dejeuner' of sumptuous delicacies and luxuries, and entertained by Sheridan the Kilcock piper, and a well-choreographed dance by some of Leinster's tenant families on the front lawn. Contrary to reports, there were no peasants at Carton; they were too busy trying to survive and certainly would not have been entertained. Amongst the thousands more who flooded into the village by train and lined the roads were around 100 seminarian students from St Patrick's College Maynooth. Later that evening, Victoria recorded in her diary that the students 'did not make a very attractive impression.'

Contrary to Carton House lore, Victoria did not stay there overnight. Her visit to Maynooth lasted only about four hours in total. Nor did she visit St Patrick's College. This is merely another local myth. However, one of the elite guests at Carton was Monsignor Laurence Renehan (1798-1857), president of the college, which, of course, had been established on lands provided by Leinster's

“When Victoria and her entourage arrived at Carton around noon on 10 August 1849, no expense was spared in entertaining them.”

Around the same time, Leinster also tidied up the ruins of Maynooth Castle and railed it off. In contrast to Lord Edward's house, he wanted the castle to stand as a monument to the golden era of the Kildare Ascendancy when his ancestor, Garrett More FitzGerald, 8th Earl of Kildare, was the most powerful man in all of Ireland.

Leinster's plans coincided with the proposed first visit of Queen Victoria to Ireland. Nationalist Ireland would later castigate her as 'The Famine Queen' and deride her for contributing a mere £5 to the suffering Irish. In fact, she donated £2,000 in 1847, the largest individual donation made at the time. Moreover, in August 1849, there was no doubting the very warm reception she received wherever she went in Ireland, including Maynooth. She wrote to her uncle, King Leopold of Belgium: 'Everything here has gone beautifully since we arrived in Ireland.'

father, William, in 1795. Renehan composed an 'Address from the College of Maynooth' which he signed on behalf of the 'President, Masters, Professors and Students' Written in the most deferential tone, the address offered the 'most loyal, dutiful, and affectionate welcome', and paid 'homage of devoted loyalty' to Victoria. The essence of the address was to express gratitude '...that our college is indebted for an endowment suited to the importance of ecclesiastical education, the wants of a numerous people, and the dignity of a great empire.' Four years before, under the Maynooth Grant, the college was guaranteed around £26,000 per annum, and a once off payment of £30,000 towards the buildings. At the time of Victoria's arrival in Kildare, the building of A.W.N. Pugin's Gothic quadrangle was 'far advanced' at a cost in excess of the £30,000 provided under the Grant. Renehan's address had an obvious political agenda.

“Victoria's visit to Carton illustrates how socially divided Ireland was during the Famine. For those unaffected by starvation and disease, life went on as usual.”

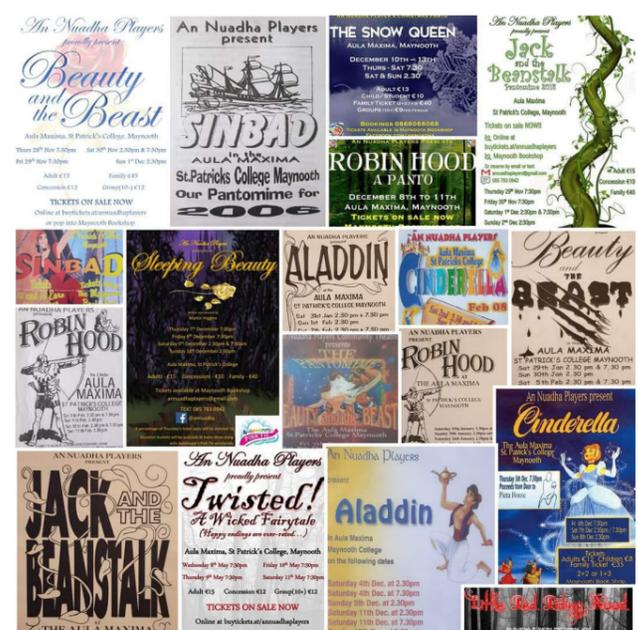
In 1849, the Great Famine was abating but far from over. While the guests feasted at the 'Magnificent Dejeuner' at Carton, an estimated 141 people in Maynooth were suffering from cholera and typhus of whom at least 47 subsequently died. That same week, the Leinster Express advertised the New East India Tea Company's prices for a range of luxuries, including teas, coffee, claret, champagne, wines, and spirits; and local markets were reportedly busy with 'fat cattle' and 'fat sheep ... all sold ... at remunerating prices to graziers.' Victoria's visit to Carton illustrates how socially divided Ireland was during the Famine. For those unaffected by starvation and disease, life went on as usual. The whole paraphernalia around the visit raises many questions as to whether those gathered at Carton, who included the Maynooth middle classes and representatives of the Catholic Church in Ireland, could have been much more sensitive to the needs of the impoverished.



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Maynooth Castle Keep Art Group

Susan Durack

The Maynooth Castle Keep Art Group was hoping to have an outdoor exhibition (pre-level 5) sometime towards the end of September or beginning of October. Because of Covid and social distancing limits it was not feasible. We have kept going during the pandemic and if anything, have had a longer year and more productive year that we would have had ordinarily. We have been working away in the background up to August with our weekly Zoom Art Sessions. Members of the Group volunteered to host an hour (or so) of instruction to other members of the Group. We also introduced YouTube instructional videos to the Group during that time which proved to be very popular. This replaced our regular meet and paint sessions in the Post Primary School.

“The zoom sessions took us out of our comfort zones in exploring new mediums and subject matter.”

The zoom sessions turned out to be a wonderful, enjoyable, and fun alternative. Our members really looked forward to the Tuesday night as it was a break from the Covid reality. It gave us a dedicated time to sit down to paint together. The zoom sessions took us out of our comfort zones in exploring new mediums and subject matter. It gave the members a chance to lead a class if they wished and there was no pressure. We each shared our strengths with others. Those who mainly used acrylic were introduced to watercolour, pastels, oils, and pen or learned new techniques within their own medium. We each took on different subject matter—landscapes, seascapes, floral studies and still life. We specifically looked at how to paint a sea and waves and clouds and how to deal with perspective, light and shade and reflections. We then expanded our zoom meeting to include free instructional videos from YouTube. These were carefully picked to suit our time and to suit the subject matter. We soon discovered that some presentations were excellent and some less so.

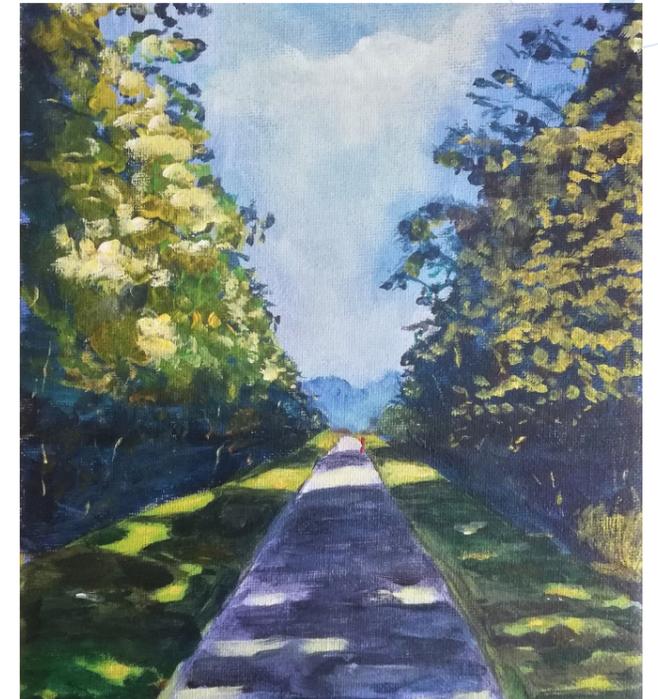
We had great fun showing each other our artworks at the end of the night and with permissions they were posted on our FB page. These sessions served to keep the Group together and to continue. Now that we have entered another Covid level 5, we resumed our zoom sessions in October and we have introduced our own free painting nights, where we meet on zoom and paint our own subjects, very like our “real” meet and paint sessions. There is some relaxing music in the background and we chat from time to time, showing work in progress, or sharing information in relation to art in general such as the Portrait Artist of the Year (including the one featuring Maynooth’s Paul Mescal), historic buildings or places we are painting or drawing, and information on art resources, as well as the usual funny or interesting story.

So Covid has presented us with an opportunity to explore different avenues, introduce new technologies, discover new talents within the Group and to broaden our information on all things arty. We would like to congratulate Emma Boyce (one of our own) who was chosen as one of 10 Kildare artists commissioned to take part in the Covid 19 Portrait Project organised by Kildare County Council.

“We would like to congratulate Emma Boyce, who was chosen as one of 10 Kildare artists commissioned to take part in the Covid 19 Portrait Project.”

We hope to have an online exhibition in 2021 if we cannot have our annual exhibition at Easter. In the meantime, all good wishes to our artists, supporters, our patron Mr. Tom Ashe, the principals of the Maynooth Education Campus and everyone in the community who has contributed to the continued success of the Group. Look out for us in 2021. Congratulation to all involved in the virtual Maynooth 10k.

A selection of Art Works from Maynooth Castle Keep Art Group



Low or No Alcohol Challenge

Steven Joyce

The aim of SAFER Maynooth is to create awareness of and where possible reductions in rates of problem drinking, underage drinking and alcohol-related harm.

To date plans have focused on several strategies including raising awareness in schools, policing safety measures at underage events, providing alternate alcohol-free activities, as well as actions aimed at reducing consumption in public areas and, promoting alcohol reduction measures and safer socializing.

“The alcohol will be replaced with a mixture of challenges and activities supported by motivating leaders... with plenty of Dry Humour as we go along.”

The alcohol will be replaced with a mixture of challenges and activities supported by motivating leaders who will introduce you to tips and techniques to support your challenge, with plenty of Dry Humour as we go along.

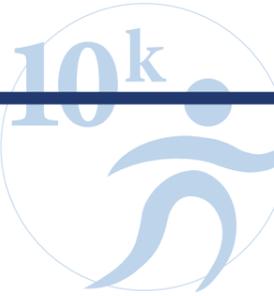
Anyone with an interest in getting involved or finding out more can do so in confidence by contacting devworker@swrdatf.ie put Low or No Alcohol Free Challenge in the Subject line.

The SAFER Maynooth name is taken from the World Health Organisation acronym for five high impact strategic actions on reducing alcohol harm

- Strengthen restrictions on alcohol availability.
- Advance and enforce drink driving countermeasures.
- Facilitate access to screening, brief interventions, and treatment.
- Enforce bans or comprehensive restrictions on alcohol advertising, sponsorship, and promotion.
- Raise prices on alcohol through excise taxes and pricing policies.

“The Covid pandemic has resulted in plenty of changes creating a new normal for many...”

The Covid pandemic has resulted in plenty of changes creating a new normal for many, for some this normal has meant a reduction in alcohol use and for others it has led to an increase in use, as we prepare to move out of the crisis, and with 2021 on the horizon SAFER Maynooth are seeking volunteers for our **Low or No Alcohol Challenge**, whether it's a Dry January or a Fewer February, if you have a couple of glasses of vino in the evening, or a couple of G&Ts, or even a few to a few too many beers, we would like to hear from you, especially if you are up for taking part in a Low or No Alcohol free challenge.



Maynooth 10k would like to thank our public representatives for all their support over the years!



Ballots and bullets

Liam Kenny

Liam Kenny looks back a century as the County Council became embroiled in the struggle for Irish independence...

The coming months will mark the mid-point in the centenary reflections of the War of Independence which raged in Ireland from 1919 to 1921. Already there is a full pipeline of publications, seminars and television documentaries looking back on the fraught years of the independence war. Much of the commentary highlights the military conflict between the Irish Republican Army on one hand and, on the other, the various armed manifestations of the British state on the other—the controversial Royal Irish Constabulary, the notorious Black and Tans and the infamous Auxiliaries. However less well known than the shooting war was the manner in which Irish nationalists worked to undermine the British government in Ireland by setting up a parallel Irish government and administration under the auspices of the new Dáil Éireann elected in 1919.

In the forefront of this effort was the struggle in the Council chambers of the land. The arm-wrestle between, on the one hand, the civil servants of the British-established Local Government Board as they attempted to hold on to their controlling function over local authorities from their Customs House offices, and on the other, the revolutionaries turned administrators of the emerging and subversive Dáil Éireann Government departments is echoed in the records of the local councils.

“In the forefront of this effort was the struggle in the Council chambers of the land.”

The surviving material shows that the battle to determine the future administration of the country went on in the dusty corridors of county halls as well as on the hillsides where the flying columns marched. To the public in general the Customs House on Dublin's north quays was one

of the main manifestations of British control in Ireland, responsible for directing a wide range of local services, and an important element in the machinery of public taxation.

For a time, there was something of a political mismatch between the Sinn Féin Dáil and the Home Rule County Council. The previous elections had been in 1914 when the Councillors elected were largely Home Rule in their political ambitions. This meant that they aspired to independence for Ireland but saw the country remaining within a context of the British Empire.

“the 1916 rebellion injected a militancy in the nationalist campaign which was to reverberate in the following years.”

However, the 1916 rebellion injected a militancy in the nationalist campaign which was to reverberate in the following years. The 1918 parliamentary elections saw Sinn Féin sweep the boards in the southern three-quarters of the country. Two years later the local government elections of 1920 took place against the febrile background of the War of Independence and were certain to bring in a council with a much sharper nationalist thrust. The elections to the city and town local authorities in January 1920 had set the scene on a national basis with Sinn Féin gaining control of seventy-two out of 127 corporations and town councils on the island of Ireland. This trend was maintained in the county council elections of June of that year with Sinn Féin winning the majority on 28 of the 33 county authorities. The newly constituted councils considered themselves an integral part of the nationalist struggle. According to the First Report of the Sinn Féin Department of Local Government the post-election councils “challenged the authority of the Imperial Parliament by refusing to recognise the control of the Local Government Board and by making declarations of allegiance to Dáil Éireann.”

The situation in Kildare County Council reflected the national transformation in the balance of power on local government councils outside of Ulster. Out went names associated with the establishment—no matter how benevolently disposed towards Home Rule—such as of Lt. Col. Frederick Fitzgerald of Maynooth, George Wolfe of Furness, and Matthew Minch of Athy. In came activists under the Sinn Féin banner such as Eamonn O'Modhráin of Suncroft and Domhnall Ua Buachalla of Maynooth whose use of the Irish forms of their names signalled the intensity of their political convictions.

“The newly constituted councils considered themselves an integral part of the nationalist struggle”

The new council lost no time in laying down the markers of its political sympathies and of its attitude to the British administration structure. The first business of the first meeting after the local government election was to elect Domhnall Ua Buachalla as the council's chairman - a figure with strong nationalist connections in North Kildare who was later to be appointed by Mr. de Valera as Ireland's last Governor General. The second item of business was to admit a deputation from the Gaelic League consisting of Arthur O'Connor, TD; a Dr Grogan, and a Fr O'Brien. Not alone did the councillors receive the deputation with alacrity but they took on board with enthusiasm its advocacy of the Irish language as a central part of the building of a new and independent Ireland.

The pre-eminence given—at least symbolically—to the Irish language was backed up by an explicitly political motion which fired the opening shot in the struggle of transferring the Council's loyalties from the British-established Local Government Board to the Department of Local Government set up under Dáil Éireann. This motion marked the entry of the Council as a full participant in the administrative battle running concurrently with the military conflict then at its most intense. The Council's motion read: “That this council . . . hereby acknowledges the authority of Dáil Éireann as the duly elected Government of the Irish people and undertakes to give effect to all decrees duly

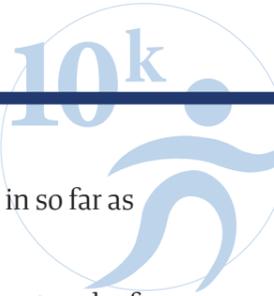
promulgated by the said Dáil Éireann in so far as same affect this Council.”

It is an illustration of the far-reaching network of influence being created by the members of the fledgling Dáil Éireann government that the KCC members felt it possible to give their motion an international airing, resolving that it should be forwarded to “the Republican Minister for Foreign Affairs for transmission to the Governments of Europe and to the President and Chairman of the Senate and the House of Representatives of the USA.”

The Council's determination to wield the tools of administration as part of the armoury of the nationalist struggle was emphasised by another motion passed at that same meeting which ordered “that every possible obstacle be placed in the way of the British Government in collecting taxes and otherwise” . . . and specifically instructing the council's officials not to let the lists of ratepayers or the Council's staff records fall into British hands. The Council's determination that urgent steps be taken to transfer the power of even the most routine aspects of local authority functions is illustrated by a resolution of August 1920 specifying that the operation of the weights & measures inspectorate be taken out of the hands of the RIC.

A secondary theme to the nationalist re-orientation of the council's political sympathies and official functions was the increased status given to organised labour. A motion was passed in August 1920 directing that ‘only trade union labour be employed’ on the Council's direct labour schemes. This preference towards the Trade Union movement was motivated, in the first instance, by a desire to reward the unions for their support of the nationalist struggle as another motion passed by the Council makes clear, “That we the members of the Kildare County Council in recognition of the good services rendered by Trade Union Labour hereby call on all Republican Employers in Co. Kildare to employ none other than Trade Union Labour”.

Returning to the central issue of the Council's transfer of loyalty to Dáil Éireann the fight back



from the Local Government Board was rapid and predictable. In August 1920 a letter was read to a KCC Finance Committee meeting from the Local Government Board backed by a similar communication from the Under Secretary in Dublin Castle threatening to withhold grants from local authorities who refused to conform with its instructions. The KCC members were defiant, the minute recording 'it was decided to take no action in the matter'.

However, more than rhetoric was needed if the Council was to make effective its attempts to cut off links with the Customs House. The people who controlled the income and bank holdings of the Council were in a position to control all its activities. It was vital that the Council's resources were not left vulnerable to being seized by the Local Government Board.

“It was vital that the Council’s resources were not left vulnerable to being seized by the Local Government Board.”

On 1 September 1920 the Council held a special meeting in which it was resolved to make 'such arrangements as are necessary in connection with the Treasurer-ship for protecting the finances of the Council.' This was backed by another motion depriving the Hibernian Bank (Naas) of the Treasurer role for the Council.

A special committee of the Council set to work immediately on emergency plans for keeping the Council's assets out of British hands, making arrangements so secret that they could not be detailed in the official minutes, a timely precaution as will be shown later. The committee ordered that all further payments to the council be directed to Mr. Patrick Field, the Council's Accountant, 'to whom the committee gave private and confidential instructions as to the disposal of the money.'

The contest for control of local administration took other direct forms. The first entry in KCC's ninth Minute book dated 22 November 1920 records the Secretary reporting that "a raid had

been carried out by the RIC this morning on the Courthouse and the Council's current minute book and letter book, also the abstracts of Collector's lodgement's and correspondence received from Dáil Éireann, had been taken possession of by the raiding party."

“As 1920 drew to a close, Kildare County Council found itself drawn deeper into the independence struggle.”

Raiding the offices of a body regarded as subversive is a common feature of the reaction by government authorities in order to glean information and frustrate the activities of the organisations which threatens their position. It is significant that among the documents seized were the rate collectors' lodgements which showed the source and destination of the council's main source of income. As 1920 drew to a close, Kildare County Council found itself drawn deeper into the independence struggle. Its head office at Naas courthouse had been raided by the RIC and its records confiscated. And some of its elected members were 'on the run' swopping their council seats for firearms in those turbulent months.

Local authorities such as Kildare County Council may not have been in the frontline of the independence struggle but from the local elections of 1920 their political aspect was an extension of the endeavour of the fighting forces of republicanism. The local authorities as organisations in their own right were important actors in the drama of undermining the institutions of one regime and replacing them with those of a new independent government.

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Maynooth Community Council

Caitriona Fitzpatrick

Earlier this year Maynooth Community Council (MCC) decided that upgrading our website would be a priority for 2020. Little did we know at the start of the year how much we would all turn to online for so many things in our lives that we previously took for granted.

We had a vision of having all aspects of life in Maynooth located in one online facility and as an easily accessible resource for the whole community. Because of the pandemic, we have accelerated our desire to make this a reality and just over a month ago www.maynoothtown.ie went live. While there is still much work to be done and more information to be included, we are delighted that we have already pulled together a vast amount of information about our town, our community, our schools, our university, our businesses, our sports clubs and our history.

“We had a vision of having all aspects of life in Maynooth located in one online facility and as an easily accessible resource for the whole community.”

We have observed the number of international visitors to the website over the past few weeks and our intention is to grow the website into a significant and ever expanding facility that opens up our town not only to our community but to the world at large.

2020 has been a year like no other, and one that won't be forgotten for a long time. We want our town and our community to come through this pandemic as unscathed as possible and to ensure that all the necessary resources to aid the recovery are made available to our community. We intend to use our new website to promote and help our community in every way possible to do that. The website also features details of the Kildare County Council Covid Heroes portrait competition which an MCC member proudly features in.

We would also urge all our community to use and add to this new resource which has the potential to make so much available to us and showcase our town at the click of a mouse!

“We want our our community to come through this pandemic as unscathed as possible and ensure that all necessary resources to aid recovery are made available...”

So if you want to:

- Showcase and advertise your business
- Promote an event or activity
- Connect with the Community,
- Write an article on the history of Maynooth or other issues that might be of interest to the community

Then what are you waiting for? Check out the new website for your town now www.maynoothtown.ie and get in contact with us to be part of it!
maynoothcommunityexec@gmail.com



Crisis Fatigue, a global Pandemic and running.

Eleanor Finn, Finesse Movement Maynooth

I would normally express my shock at how quickly this time of year has rolled around again and I'm writing my annual piece for the Maynooth 10k times newspaper. Finesse Movement has supported this event every year since we opened in 2012 by doing the pre & post event massage at the finish line. It is hard to believe that its now November, 6 months after the event is normally held, I'm still a little surprised at how quickly it seems to have rolled around. 2020 has been an extraordinary year, an unprecedented year. There is some part of me still waiting to wake up from this crazy, insane situation that the world finds itself in. When I walk around the town of Maynooth, I see people wearing masks, bumping elbows to greet each other, whilst using that same elbow to activate the lights at the pedestrian crossing. People actively swerving around one another for fear of getting too close, wiping down trolley handles, eating outside in Autumn wrapped up in heavy winter coats, drinking pints in plastic cups on the Square. I see lots of local business' pulling out all the stops in order to help their small business survive and their staff stay on payroll. I see a community pull together in an extraordinary effort to keep our town alive and thriving.

"I see a town that is doing well and a community supporting each in other in whatever way they can"

I see people doing what they can to survive this pandemic or pox as I refer to it. I see a town that is doing well and a community supporting each in other in whatever way they can, and an annual fundraising event pivoting to become a virtual event to get people out and active to maintain a sense of togetherness, community and that amazing feeling that you're doing something bigger than yourself for the great good of the community. It truly is heart-warming and is great

to see. However, we need to remember that not everyone is doing ok. Some people will be feeling bad for a long time and others may only now be feeling the affects more recently. I can sense a lot of my clients starting to suffer and I can see it taking hold in my own family too. I didn't have the right word for it until I heard being described on Newstalk one day, when Dr. Philip Kieran spoke to Clare McKenna about the signs and symptoms of 'crisis fatigue'.

Of course, there are people who have experienced this from personal tragedy, but with a global pandemic there are more and more of us feeling these emotions and feelings and may not know why or what to do about it. Crisis Fatigue is what it sounds like, we are in essence tired of the crisis. However, the symptoms can be more serious than just being a bit fed up with the whole situation. I've bumped into so many people out on my daily route and they have asked and I have asked, "how are you doing" and I've always said, "just putting one foot in front of the other right now, that's all we can do right?", to which they agree and we march on and never have the conversation. How are you actually doing? Even if we don't want to stop and talk to the random neighbour we might meet outside and pour our hearts out to them, we must ask ourselves that question, how am I really doing? If the answer is not good then we need to do something about it. So, what is crisis fatigue? The general symptoms would include:

- Feeling exhausted all the time
- A feeling of being overwhelmed and not able to cope
- Feeling anxious

Is it any wonder we feel like this? The pandemic has been relentless for nearly 8 months now. We are under constant attack and have feelings of uncertainty about work, can I travel here or there, can I visit a relative, what if I'm infected and

infect someone else, what's going to happen with Brexit, what's happening in America, will there be a vaccine, will it be safe, when will we get back to normal, what will the new normal look like? All of this and more constantly swirling around in our minds, with no control over the end game and little reassurance from global leaders. When its laid out like that its not hard to see why we are feeling, exhausted, overwhelmed and anxious. But what's really going on in our bodies, why do we feel like this now? Ever heard of the fight, flight freeze response? Well, in a nutshell that response got switched on in March and its been on ever since for a lot of people. Our bodies have had elevated cortisol and adrenaline. With these two little bad boys at work over an extended period of time our bodies just can't deal with it and we feel, tired, overwhelmed and anxious. Other symptoms can include, insomnia, depression, weight gain and high blood pressure. The extension of all these symptoms is called 'allostatic overload', which means that demand exceeds our capacity to deal with things. This can lead to poor decision making, burnout and in extreme cases mental breakdown!

Harvard Medical School have identified 4 stages of crisis fatigue

1. Heroic Stage: Individuals band together at the onset of a crisis to determine how to survive.
2. Honeymoon Stage: The reaction to initial success that occurs when individuals feel that they are "in the same boat" as others who are also taking the same steps necessary for survival
3. Disillusionment Stage: Individuals begin to feel physically and emotionally exhausted. Cue the onset of the allostatic overload. Hypervigilance now turns into irritation, rage, or despair.
4. Fatigue Stage: By design, the human body cannot sustain high levels of cortisol and adrenal for long periods. This results in burnout, which can cause a person to be easily triggered or completely withdrawn, start to depend on substance such as alcohol or drugs to cope.

All very cheery stuff, I know. I have always believed though that if you know what it is, you can do something about it. Queue the running!

Running as you all know is one of the best exercises to help reduce stress. It actively reduces the levels of cortisol and adrenaline, the aforementioned 'bad boys'. Endorphins, the feel good hormones or the good guys are released, giving you what you runners call, 'runners high' these endorphins bring on the feelings of relaxation and optimism after your workout. And it is not just running that has these mood boosting affects. All forms of physical activity can have these benefits. And we all need all the help we can get. If you are regularly exercising and gaining all these amazing benefits than keep it up, no matter what you do! It will always make you feel better, no matter what. If your struggling to get out of the bed because of how your feeling Dr Kieran gave what I call "your granny's" advice. That means, it is all kind of common sense he suggested. Take one thing at a time, baby steps.

"Running as you all know is one of the best exercises to help reduce stress."

- Talk to someone, friends, family, let someone know how your feeling
- Start to go for some gentle exercise. If you are feeling overwhelmed and exhausted a walk around your block may be all you're able for.
- Feed your body well, try to make the healthier choice were possible and reduce the levels of alcohol, coffee, tea etc, all those things that can over stimulate your nervous system
- Make sure you're getting good sleep, so get rid of screens at night and have a little wind down routine to help you drift off to sleep.
- Go see your doctor as soon as you realise you need to. They see this type of presentation more than you realise. They can help.

Finally, best of Luck to all the amazing people who have signed up for the Maynooth 10k. Our Physical Therapy Clinic in Finesse Movement is open at all levels of C19 restrictions and our therapies are covered by all major health insurance.

Specsavers Sponsor Maynooth 10K

Specsavers Maynooth, experts in eye and hearing care, has been offering unparalleled service throughout the pandemic and are proud to be a reliable and constant service to the people in their community.

This year, the store was delighted to sponsor Maynooth's Virtual 10K/5K 10th Year Anniversary Race and provide complimentary snoods to all the participants in the activity. This is a great community driven event that is organised by MEC PTA, with funds being raised to support the upkeep of two school playing fields in the local community.

Speaking about the store's involvement, Specsavers Maynooth store director, Patrick Dennehy, says: 'We were delighted to support the Maynooth 10K/5K run and to be backing such a great event that is such an integral part of our community. Specsavers Maynooth is a local community opticians and hearing centre where supporting local sporting events, charities and organisations is a key part of our culture, so we were thrilled to see the event proudly representing our store.'

Customers who are unable to attend a store can still access care and support through Specsavers new RemoteCare video and telephone consultation service, while glasses and contact lenses can be bought online with a current prescription at Specsavers.ie.

Specsavers Maynooth customers can also avail of PRSI medical benefits meaning anyone who has been employed or self-employed in Ireland for two years is entitled to a free eye test as well as a free pair of glasses, or at least contribution towards new frames. Customers can also avail of PRSI medical benefits meaning a claim of half of the cost of a hearing aid, up to a maximum of €500 for a single aid, or up to €1,000 for a pair with options including state-of-the-art hearing aids from the Specsavers Advance range and the top-of-the-range Styletto Signia range.

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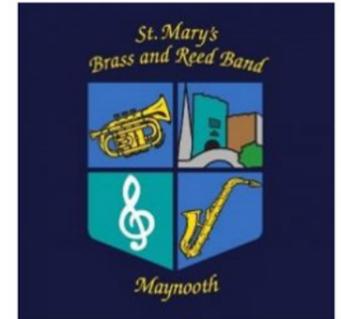
“We were delighted to support the Maynooth 10K/5K run and to be backing such a great event that is such an integral part of our community.”

Open with the health and safety of customers in mind, Specsavers Maynooth has a series of hygiene and personal protection measures in place to create a safe and comfortable experience in store for customers and staff.

Offering a full breadth of optical and audiology services, including eye and hearing tests, contact lens consultations, frame repairs and the sale of glasses, contact lenses, hearing aids, and other products, all customers can shop safely in store.



Thank you to the groups who volunteer to help at the event: 8th Kildare Maynooth Scouts, St Mary's Brass and Reed band and the Maynooth ICA Guild



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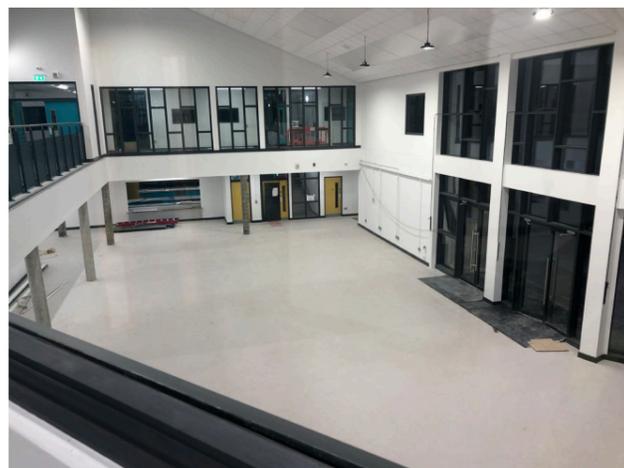
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