

Clogher News

Issue: December 2014

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Batman in Brackloon

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New Community 'Text Alert' soon

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Brian's tales of "Christmas Past"

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3 Day Walking Festival draws nearer

Community Scheme helps to put Clogher on the Map

The Community Employment Scheme in Clogher is sponsored by Clogher Environmental Group with the support of the Department of Social Protection.

The role of the participants is varied and interesting. The main purpose of the scheme is to enhance the locality and attract visitors to the village. During the year we participated in the Litter League and Tidy Towns competitions organised by Mayo County Council. We arranged floral displays at Clogher Community Centre and Clogher Heritage Centre. We also maintained green areas within the village. Picking

of litter throughout the year also helps to make the locality more appealing for visitors and locals alike.

A number of participants facilitate the Active Age Group, also the Parent & Toddler Group, who meet on a weekly basis in Clogher Community Centre.

Many events are organised in Clogher Heritage Centre. One of the most successful activities we organised was "A Day on the Bog" a re-enactment of the traditional means of harvesting the turf. This was organised to coincide with National Heritage Week and was partially funded by Mayo County Council.

One of main attractions in Clogher is the Clogher Bog Loop Walk- a Nationally Approved Waymarked route. During the month of June we organised a weekly walk along the Bog Loop in conjunction with Mayo in Motion Walking and Cycling Month. So successful were these family friendly walks that we decided to keep this up for the months of July and August, attracting up to 20 participants each Tuesday during June, July and August.

These walks have been such a success that everybody is looking forward to the next walk. Along with the walks being good health enhancing activities, they

are also a social occasion. Well done to our regular walkers who have come out regularly in fair weather or foul. These beautiful countryside walks are well worth the effort, if you haven't been on one yet.

Two participants on the scheme are involved in promoting the Croagh Patrick Heritage Walking Trail. A successful festival was organised in March with walkers stopping to visit Clogher Heritage Centre. The proceeds of this event went to support Croí – West of Ireland Heart Health charity. A similar event was organised in June with the proceeds going to Western Care.



CHARITY BEARD SHAVE: A Charity beard shave was organised on Saturday night, November 29, with proceeds going to Rock Rose House. The big shave was held in The Drum Inn, Clogher on Saturday night 29th November at a specially organised social night. To date more than €4,000 was raised with more money still coming in. A big thank you to all who took part, sponsored the participants or helped out in any way in this magnificent community event.

Meet the Team

Meet William Igoe

The spot where we introduce members of the Clogher Heritage, Clogher Envigroup and Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail staff, whose efforts keep the whole thing on track.



My name is William Igoe. I have always been interested in all matters to do with Heritage, especially in my own local area. I was fortunate to get a position as a development worker on the Croagh Patrick Heritage trail, in spring 2014. Graduating with a BA Honours Degree in 2006, it was great to find much needed Heritage work experience in the vicinity. The job description involves several interesting operations. It included working with a team for the development of future events along the Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail. The job also focuses on researching archaeology, heritage and folklore and the communities through which the trail runs. Handling these aspects and dealing with all the people involved means I'm always busy and the time flies.

Friends Of Drum Graveyard

from Heather Kelly, Chairperson

I WOULD like to start by thanking everyone who has contributed in anyway by either deed or donation, you are very kind. It is only with your ongoing support that we can maintain present standards.

The planned Grotto did not commence in October as promised, we are still awaiting confirmation of a start date on this project.

At present the new row of graves gets ever longer we must over the summer make provision for a further row of grave spaces.

The subject of a grave information board was brought up at our last meeting: an estimate of €2,500 was given. Many of these

boards are in graveyards in the area. Following the completion of the Grotto we hope to provide one, as funds allow.

The Annual meeting was held in "Clogher Community Hall on Thursday, May 8, at 8pm.

All donations will be wisely spent and anyone wishing to donate may sent to either: Bernie Mc Greal, Fortlawn House, Fortlawn, Clogher, Claremorris or to: Heather Kelly, Bally"K", Newtown, Clogher, Claremorris.

On behalf of the Friends of Drum Graveyard I would like to extend thanks to everyone for their continued support and valued contributions. Wishing you a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Drum Graveyard - 440CE to present

The ancient church of Drum was the seat of the parish of Drum and of ecclesiastical importance in St.Patrick's time. It is believed that St.Patrick's built the first church here in 440CE, of timber A stone church replaced the original, but fell into disrepair in the 1800's. In 1871 local people decided to build a new church but sadly their wish was never fulfilled. All that remains of the old stone church is one wall; this is of great archaeological interest.

New Community Text Alert Service to be introduced

A NEW Community Text Alert Service is soon to be launched for the Clogher area. The Community Text Alert programme is a community based crime prevention, care and safety programme for rural communities. It's particular emphasis is on older / vulnerable people in rural communities.

The purpose of the programme is to improve the quality of life in rural communities by reducing

opportunities for crimes to occur; encouraging neighbourliness and self-reliance and promoting accident prevention and personal safety awareness.

This service is in the early stages of planning. More information regarding the operation and funding of this service will be announced shortly. (Report of meeting held November 27 appears on Page7).

Clogher News needs you!

AT CLOGHER Environmental, we want to try and issue this newsletter about four time every year. Articles are invited from everyone involved in the Clogher Community. If you have a report of a community event, an up-

coming event or pictures from an event we would like to hear from you. Especially from the group leaders in the schemes. Please contact gray@clogherheritage.com if you have anything for the news.

Knockaraha Ringfort/Hillfort

by William Igoe



Living in Knockaraha village most of my life, I have always been fascinated with Irish place names. What I discovered about village place names was that in many cases, throughout Ireland, villages are often named after an archaeological feature located in the village itself.

One such important archaeological site in my village is Knockaraha ringfort. In Irish 'Knockaraha' means hill fort, derived from 'knock' meaning hill and 'raha' meaning fort. Hill forts or ring forts are usually identified as a circular earthen bank; they are mainly Iron Age single family settlements.

Larger ring forts may have contained several family units and may have two or more banks (described as *bi-vallate* or *multi-vallate*). Ringforts with more than one bank may

have been an indicator of the inhabitants status or possibly were constructed that way because the threat of attack was greater in the area. However, the ringfort at Knockaraha has only one bank. An excavation carried out at this archaeological feature during the late 1960s / early 1970s revealed no pottery or artefacts inside. This suggests that the ringfort was used only for livestock and not for human habitation.

Knockaraha ringfort is an excellent example of a uni-vallate ringfort (single bank) in good condition. The interior is subdivided by a low wall running east to west while to the south of this there is a broad earthen bank dividing the holding in to two additional parts. The enclosure in Knockaraha has a bank that averages 0.3 metres internally and 1.4 metres high externally. Hazel trees grow on the edge and interior. One can gain access to Knockaraha ringfort along the Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail enroute to Ballintubber Abbey.



Is it there? : Looking skywards for the bats, at dusk in the Brackloon Woods.

Bat Walk shows nature watchers it's fun to be kept in the dark

by **Greg Kelly**



The Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail is of great interest in two important respective features, its archaeological and natural history assets. The latter was given attention when the Trail staff arranged a "Bat Walk" in Brackloon Woods as the summer came to an end. The Bat Walk attendance numbered about twenty people on September 25 last, with participant's ages ranging from 6-60. It was a mild evening, perfect for bats to be abroad, feeding on their nutritious diet of flies and midges.

The evening, organised by the Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail team was led by trail guides William Igoe (BA) and Greg Kelly (BA Hons) who were accompanied by ecologist Jackie Hunt, from ANIAR Ecology.

Thanks to the special equipment brought along by Jackie everyone was able to listen to the bat's echo location signals. The creatures identified mainly as pipistrelle bats. After a short presentation by William and Greg, ecologist Jackie Hunt spoke in more detail about the bats. It was perfect way to promote the trail and was a great night for the attending bat enthusiasts.

Don't miss this winter's Kildangan Solstice Walk event

by **William Igoe**

Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail has a walking event for December 21, 2014, called the 'Kildangan Solstice Walk'. Gathering at Campbell's Pub, Murrisk village, at 1.00pm, walkers will trek the 2km to Kildangan. Here, guides William Igoe and Greg Kelly will give talks on the subject of Kildangan standing stone alignment, plus the archaeology on Croagh Patrick summit and the surrounding landscape. The Kildangan standing stone alignment is a truly unique event in the calendar year. At approximately 1.50 pm on December 21 (winter solstice) the sun is observed to rest in a

niche on the eastern shoulder of Croagh Patrick, at which point it is directly in line with the stones, before disappearing the far side of the mountain. The phenomenon is visible for approximately ten minutes, weather permitting. Four standing stones aligned NNE-NNW form a stone row 5.5m long.

All are welcome to attend this event, to experience the natural wonder of county Mayo and Irish heritage right on our doorstep. If attending the event, it is advisable to ensure to wear appropriate warm winter clothing.

For further details, contact William Igoe or Greg Kelly at Clogher Heritage Centre – 094 90 30687

Sunday , December 21st

Kildangan

2014 Solstice Walk

This is a heritage walk to Kildangan site to witness the Winter Solstice.

Greg/William will give a talk on the history of this site.

Location: Westport Road out of Murrisk Village
Meeting Point: Campbells Pub, Murrisk
Time 1.00pm
Trail Length 2km
Grade Easy

For further details contact Greg or William at Clogher Heritage Centre - 094 9030687
 eml: info@croaghpatrickheritagetrail.com

www.croaghpatrickheritagetrail.com

Christmas Tradition In Rural Ireland

by Brian Hoban



Looking back over the years, Brian Hoban describes some of the ways we prepared for the Christmas festivities in bygone times.

Whitewashing your home

CLEANING YOUR home in the winter and particularly the Solstice is an ancient Celtic tradition in rural Ireland. With the emergence of stone and plaster walls, the whitewash at Christmas emerged as a new variation on the original practice. It was supplemented by a thorough clean of the house to welcome the baby Jesus, a tradition still carried out today and even covers a Christmas car wash.

Holly

THERE IS no proof that the Irish invented the use of holly as a Christmas decoration, but the Irish have used it for generations and carried the tradition to the USA as emigrants, introducing the traditional wreath of holly to those shores.

Like other trees, holly was ubiquitous in druidic customs. Particularly because it was so vividly green and red during winter, it was believed to have magical qualities. Be warned, though, if you are bringing it into your homes- it is said that you have to bring branches from *both* male and female trees. Failing to observe this, whichever gender is left out will be dominated by the other in that household throughout the coming year - be warned!

Not so long ago, Irish Christmas decorations were much simpler than they are now. The children gathered holly and ivy for adorning, windows, doorways, mantles and pictures, and the father would carve out a turnip in which would be placed a large red candle. This would go in the window to light the way for the Holy Family on Christmas Eve. Only in relatively recent times did an Irish family have a nativity scene and a decorated tree in the

house. As for Mistletoe, it's quite rare in Ireland and is generally associated with ancient Celtic and Druidic fertility celebrations; this is most likely where the custom of kissing under the mistletoe originated.

Irish Christmas Greeting Cards

SENDING AND receiving Christmas cards, along with a lengthy hand-written letter and recent photos, is immensely popular in Ireland. This tradition dates to the days of mass-emigration from Ireland, when a letter from a long-departed family member would have been the best Christmas gift of all. A festive greeting card, perhaps embodying the foreign land from which it was sent, would have added an exotic touch. The card(s) would be prominently displayed while the letter would be safely tucked away but readily available for regular re-readings. Christmas cards and letters are still anticipated in Ireland today.

The Crib

ON THE tradition of the Crib, Brian Hoban recalls, "I have never known my mother fail to create a Christmas crib. As a child, it was a treat to help her set it up and to choose where to place the shepherds, the sheep and the donkey.

The placing of Mary, Joseph and the baby, Jesus was fairly straightforward. They got centre-stage on the straw-strewn miniature stable. This is an Irish Christmas traditions that may be on the wane. Not because the religious element of the festivities has been lost; Christmas remains essentially a religious holiday in Ireland. Perhaps the little crib is considered clutter in homes that are often chock-a-block with people, presents, decorations and food at this time of the year.

Whether or not the crib-at-home is losing favour, there are often larger-scale cribs atmospherically lit up in town centres and there is certainly always one

in every Catholic Church.

The Candle in the Window

IT IS customary in Irish homes to set a candle in the front window on Christmas Eve. The candle is an eminent sign of welcome for weary travellers in search of a resting place, much as were Mary and Joseph seeking shelter in Bethlehem.

Midnight Mass

THERE IS no Irish Christmas tradition that compares to attending midnight mass. Every church in Ireland is sure to be packed to the rafters for midnight mass on Christmas Eve. This is a huge social gathering where family, friends, and neighbours who may not have been seen all year come together and celebrate Christmas. With Christmas carols being sung and live music being played, midnight mass in Ireland is a splendid way to connect with the local community at Christmas.

The Laden Table

IN MY own childhood this was the most important of Christmas traditions. It is a simple one where, after dinner on Christmas Eve, the table is reset usually with milk and a Christmas Barm-brack laid out. The house doors are unlocked in a symbolic gesture to a wandering Mary and Joseph that there's room and shelter for them in your home.

Visiting the Graves

THIS HAS become an ever-increasingly secular Christmas tradition. It is an enduring and growing tradition. The visit usually involves tidying the grave and laying fresh flowers although practice can vary. It has become customary in recent years to lay a Holly Wreath on the grave of a loved one in remembrance.

St Stephen's Day

DECEMBER 26 is known as St Stephen's Day in Ireland. In most homes it is a sociable day, when visitors may call in to share some seasonal foods or liquid (often alcoholic) refreshments.

St Stephens is also the day when a purely Irish phenomenon can be witnessed: the tradition of Hunting the Wren. This is when the Wren Boys take to the streets in colourful costumes and masks, and noisily parade a dead wren on a decorated pole. It's a strange tradition and its origins are often debated. Some say it originated in Pagan times. Others from the Viking invasion. Most opt for a simplified religious reference: the betrayal by a wren of St Stephen who was hiding from the Romans who subsequently killed him for his Christian beliefs.

This, then, gave the reason for hunting down the wren, and in olden days a bird was, indeed, captured and killed. The Wren Boys would then carry the dead bird on a pole from house to house and beg for money to bury the 'evil bird'.

Hunting the Wren on St Stephen's is a popularly practised Irish custom. At each house the Wren Boys would sing their song: "*The Wren. The Wren. The king of birds; on St Stephen's Day it was caught in the furze; Although he is tiny, his family is great; Put your hand in your pocket and give us a treat; On Christmas Day I turned the spit; I burned my finger; I feel it yet; so up with the kettle and down with the pan; oh, give me a penny to bury the Wren.*"

Hunting the Wren used to be a widespread celebration of Christmas in Ireland, but it is now observed in only a few locations (mostly in the southwest and Dublin), and is a much more organised affair than it used to be. Instead of running amok, the Wren Boys parade through the streets with music and collect money for charity from spectators and from the many pubs and bars they visit on their way.

'Little Christmas'

JANUARY 6, or the feast of the Epiphany, commemorates the day when the three Kings or Wise Men arrived bearing gifts for the infant Jesus at the crib



in Bethlehem. It is the final day of Christmas in Ireland and is the time when all seasonal decorations have to be taken down. Failure to do so brings bad luck, so the superstition goes, unless you leave them up for a full twelve months!

This particular day is also known as 'Little Christmas' in Ireland, in Irish *Nollaig na mBan* - Women's Christmas. Traditionally, the woman of the house was given a day off after the twelve days of cooking and acting the hostess. Instead, the men would take over family responsibilities while the women went out with their friends. It was probably the only day of the year when the local bar would be full of women rather than men. So, some things change. All the same, it can be seen that, in spite of 'progress' and 'modernisation', many elements of the past endure.



The Wren, The Wren: An old engraving of some Wren Boys celebrating Stephen's Day

An Irish Christmas Blessing:

The light of the Christmas star to you,

The warmth of home and hearth to you,

The cheer and good will of friends to you,

The hope of a childlike heart to you,

The joy of a thousand angels to you,

The love of the Son and God's peace to you.

Shopping For Christmas In Days Of Old



by **Brian Hoban**

In rural Ireland the Christmas shopping started on December 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. On that date shops would adorn their windows with Christmas decorations and fare. I remember when I was young Cadbury's merchandiser would organise our Christmas Display window. There was such a sense of wonder for us youngsters to view the chocolate boxes with their Alpine scenes or other landscapes adorning the larger chocolate boxes. People would come from near and far to view the extensive display of Christmas goodies.

On that day also people would visit Dublin, Galway or other larger population centres for their annual Christmas shopping outing. Back in the 1960's following the emigration of the 50's there was a large trade in tins of Kimberley, Mikado and Coconut Creams, which were posted to relatives in the UK or America. These varieties of biscuits were

not then available in Britain and had a nostalgic value for relatives abroad. A special parcel office was opened in towns like Castlebar by An Post for the posting of parcels. In Castlebar this office was situated on The Mall in the premises now occupied by Castlebar Boxing Club. All parcels had to have a customs declaration form and had to be sealed with red sealing wax. Free range turkeys and home cooked hams were also popular with our emigrants.

Our cities, large towns and villages would have street lights put up for the Festive Season and a special ceremony would be held to turn on the lights on December 8, often accompanied by carol singers.

Christmas Cards

THE SENDING of Christmas "cards" in paper format is hugely popular in Ireland, often with the inclusion of a long newsy letter, and some recent photos. Most likely an echo of the days of mass-emigration from the island. Back then, a letter from a long-

separated family member would have been the season's best present. A card, possibly bearing some essence of the foreign land from which it was sent, would be placed on public display while the letter would be stored safely, but readily available, for regular re-readings.

Today, Irish Christmas cards are big business with cards exchanged between work colleagues, neighbours and friends, as well as family members near and far. And, in my experience at least, the Christmas letter is still well-practised in Ireland. This practice is being replaced nowadays by more modern means of communication such as Internet, email and Skype.

Margadh Mór

THE LAST Saturday prior to Christmas was known as Margadh Mór. This was the day the rural folk would come to town to buy their turkeys, hams, brussel sprouts and other perishable goods to get them over the Christmas Festivities. All the shops would give a present

(Christmas Box) or calendar to their customers in appreciation for their custom all year.

Changes In Recent Times

IN MORE recent times Christmas is getting more and more commercialised and seems to get underway in mid-October (or even earlier) when decorations, cards, food fancies and festive gifts begin to appear in shops and on TV. While many complain about this long build-up and the over-commercialisation of what used to be purely a religious festival, the holiday season doesn't really begin in earnest until Christmas Eve: December 24.

When W.B Yeats once wrote, "All is changed, changed utterly . . ." his words could easily have been intended for the present-day Christmas holiday. Maybe it is time to return to the more traditional Irish Christmas with a caring and sharing mentality amongst our peoples rather than the greed and commercialisation experiences in recent times.



On top of their work: Michael McLoughlin and Alan Larkin operate a vintage threshing machine to show how the harvest was handled in the early days of mechanisation on the farm. *Pic: graymac*



Do it like this: Michael McLoughlin demonstrates how to cut turf by hand, using a sléan. *Pic: graymac*



To see a pictorial record of the 2014 Funday, visit the 'News' page of our website at <http://clogherheritage.com/news.html> and you can download a four page illustrated PDF, free.

'Fun Day On The Bog' is a hit second year in a row

by our Staff Reporter

A family fun day was held at Clogher Bog on Saturday 23th August. This event was organised by Clogher Environmental Group as part of National Heritage week.

The group assembled at Clogher Heritage Cottage and Forge, Newtown, Clogher at 11am. Following a visit to view the old thatched cottage the group set out to walk to Clogher Bog led by Martin Larkin and Brian Hoban. On arrival at the chosen bank of turf Michael McLoughlin gave a brief demonstration on cutting the turf using the traditional locally made "sléan".

The turf-cutting is a tradition that has been handed down from generation to generation for hundreds of years. Many of the funday participants tried their hand at using the "Sléan". Following the cutting of the turf it was then spread and piled into small heaps. This process is called "footing" the turf. A donkey and creels were at hand to bring the saved turf from the bog to the awaiting pony and cart for the journey home.

On arrival back to the cottage tea, sandwiches and a variety of snacks were provided at the

Heritage buildings by the hard working local volunteers. A local blacksmith gave a display of the work carried in the local forge.

Included in the activities at Clogher Heritage Centre was a display of traditional farm machinery and a threshing machine. Michael McLoughlin, from the North Mayo Old Engine and Tractor Club provided a practical demonstration of the threshing of the oats, using an authentically restored machine.

John O'Brien was on hand to give a demonstration of how ferrets are used in the hunting of rabbits. This method was common practice in most rural villages at the time of the "emergency", a time when food was scarce during WW II. John's pair of ferrets proved to be most popular especially among the younger persons in attendance.

For many of the younger generation it was their first time to experience what a "day in the bog" would have been like in olden times, while for many others it was an opportunity to reminisce and share experiences of happy days spent on the bog. Everybody was thoroughly satisfied with their experience at Clogher Bog and at Clogher Heritage Centre.

We are gathered together . . . : A group of participants in the Family Fun Day On The Bog get plenty of fresh air as they wait to watch the turf cutting demonstration. *Pic: graymac*

Active Age group still 'going strong'

Clogher Active Age Group meet each Wednesday in Clogher Community Centre for their weekly get together.

They participate in a number of activities including bingo, bocce, exercises, dancing, and music and are provided with a lunch.

In addition to these activities a number of outings and events take place during the year. On one previous occasion a bus trip was arranged to Hennigan's Heritage Centre in Killasser followed by lunch in the Gateway Hotel, Swinford. This was a very interesting and informative outing and was enjoyed by all.

Another visit saw the group enjoying the facilities and exhibits at the Heritage Cottage in Newtown, Clogher, where music was provided on the day by celebrated Castlebar singer/songwriter, John Hoban, and was much enjoyed by all. That morning ended up with lunch at the cottage.

One very memorable and interesting occasion was the trip to Cong including a boat trip around Lough Corrib with a visit to Inchagoill Island, the boat is operated by local ferry operator, Patrick Diskin. As there was brilliant sunshine there were many opportunities for photos. This trip



Taking a cruise on Lough Mask: Enjoying one of the Clogher Active Age group outings, seen pictured on the boat are (from left) Nellie Egan, Mary Sheridan and May Staunton.

was followed by lunch in Ryan's Hotel, Cong.

Other visits have taken in Horkan's Garden Centre, Turlough and Jack's Traditional Cottage in Islandeady and there has also been an outing to Mayo Roller Bowl, in Castlebar.

Another venue which proved most popular was a visit to the Coleman Centre in Gurteen, Sligo. Gurteen is a well-noted place in the annals of traditional music in Ireland, with many fine players coming from the area some, alas, no longer with us. There was plenty of music and dancing on the day, which was enjoyed by everyone.

There were also a number of other activities organised during the year, on the "home turf" in

Clogher Community Centre, which included a table quiz, and a visit by a magician from Westport.

Always among the highlights for the year is the annual mass, which is celebrated by Fr. Dennis Carney, P.P.

The annual Christmas dinner is held in Corley's Pub in Ballintubber, where an excellent meal is provided along with lots of raffle prizes too!!

There is a great bond between the members and they enjoy their weekly get-together. There is a Community Bus available for all members which collects and returns them to their front door.

New member are always welcome, if you want details or enquiries call Nora on 094 9360891.

A 'Hello' from the Clogher Parent and Toddler Group

CLOGHER PARENT and Toddler group has been running now for few years.

It's on every Monday morning in the Centre from 10.30 - 12.30. Kids of all ages enjoy the couple of hours play, we have babies as young as 4 months right up to 3 year old. There's a wide range of toys, games, art and craft and dance along for them to take part in. It's a great way for this age group to make friends and get to know each other before school. The parents can enjoy a cuppa and a chat while the kids are having fun. We go on group outings every few months to treat the kids to something different. We love to see new faces pop in and out so if you're free on a Monday morning call in for a cuppa. We are back in the New Year on Monday, January 5. We wish the communities young and old a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy 2015.

**Keep in touch -
online 24/7
clogherheritage.com**

Action taken to introduce new 'Text Alert' Scheme

THE FOLLOWING report is a summary of the second meeting to inaugurate a Text Alert Scheme in the district.

On Thursday night, November 27, Ballintubber GAA Club held a second meeting of representatives of Community Organisations, with a view to advancing a Community Alert Text Scheme across the Parish. Those present were, Sean Hallinan, Tony O'Connor and Jimmy Lally (Ballintubber G.A.A.); Hugh Corley (Ballintubber) and Tom Hayes (Ballintubber + IFA); Paddy McGing (I.F.A, Clogher); Martin Larkin, M J Ruddy and Leanne

Reilly (Carnacon); Tony Roper and Martin Kerrigan (Ballyglass); Fergal Byrne and Sean Gilligan; Bernard Kearney (Muintir na Tire).

Tony Cosgrave, Crime Prevention Officer made presentations. Garda Tom Fleming was also in attendance. Martin Kelly, Killawalla, was contacted by phone and indicated Killawalla would be involved and supportive of decisions made.

At the meeting, Tony Roper was appointed Chairperson and is to convene a meeting to fill the post of Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and PRO. Annual Officer Rotation will be imple-

mented. The mobile numbers of all were logged.

Signs will be erected at locations to be determined by village representatives - specifications to be decided.

A Newsletter is to be compiled and put into every house in the region involved. Representatives are to log mobile phone numbers of the residents of villages within their various Communities and may decide a standard €5 or €10 charge on households across the region. Other means of fundraising to be considered.

S. Hallinan said he had spoken

to Cllr Al McDonnell about signage. Cllr to liaise with Engineer Ann Sweeney. S. Hallinan agreed to facilitate the Group by making the Resource Centre available for meetings as required and he pledged Ballintubber Club would help every way possible. He indicated he would now step back to allow the new Group to function as an entity in its own right. On Wednesday night, December 3rd at 8.30, a meeting was scheduled to take place at the Ballintubber Resource Centre for all community representatives to attend and take matters forward.

Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail Walking Festival 2015
 March 20, 21, 22
 in conjunction with Mayo Roscommon Hospice Foundation

A three day guided walking event from Balla to Murrisk on the Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail

more info:
www.croaghpatrickheritagetrail.com

For further details contact Greg or William at Clogher Heritage Centre - 094 9030687 or email: info@croaghpatrickheritagetrail.com
 register online at <http://www.iregister.ie/Croaghpatricktrail/>



Campaigning for the 2015 Walking Festival: Lorraine Toner (Mayo-Roscommon Hospice), William Igoe and Greg Kelly (Croagh Patrick Heritage Trail) visit Brackloon Woods, on the CPH Trail, to mark the promotion of the 2015 CPH Trail three-day Walking Festival which takes place on March 20-21-22. *Pic: graymac*

Seventh Green Flag for Holy Angels NS

Holy Angels N.S., Clogher was awarded its 7th Green Flag by An Taisce for their work on the theme, 'Global Citizenship, Litter and Waste'. The Flag Raising Ceremony took place at the school on the 19th of September. The flag was raised by Mr Al McDonnell, chairman of Castlebar Municipal District and the ceremony was attended by councillors, representatives of Mayo County Council, parents, members of Board of Management, pupils and staff.

It was a proud day for all concerned and a chance to celebrate the work and the commitment of the whole school community to the Green Schools Programme.

Ms O Hora, the school's Green Schools Co-ordinator, along with the Green Schools Committee, organised many activities over the last two years.



Pupils and staff visited the recycling banks and recycled lots of glass.

The senior classes investigated air miles and the junior classes investigated where, of all the places in the world, our fruit and

vegetables come from.

They also, along with parents and members of Clogher Environmental Group, took part in the National Spring Clean campaigns to help keep Clogher tidy.

The Senior Classes investigat-

ed fair trade products, and took part in lots of competitions.

Finally, the children from 5th and 6th classes organised and held a Jumble and Cake Sale for Trócaire, to help the poorer people all over the world.

"Operation Get Active Mayo 2015."

'OPERATION TRANSFORMATION' is coming in the New Year. Primarily a health improvement and awareness initiative, Operation Transformation 2015 will commence on January 12 and continue until February 21.

In tandem with Operation Transformation 2015, a six-week walking programme will be organised at Clogher Heritage Centre. This fitness walking programme is supported by Mayo Sports Partnership.

Acknowledgements

CLOGHER ENVIRONMENTAL Group wishes to extend thanks to the following: Mayo County Council, DSP, SouthWest Mayo Development Company and Failte Ireland, for all their support throughout the year.

Also we want to thank, for their help, support, time and generous contributions throughout 2014, all the members of the Clogher CE Scheme and the Clogher Community. Wishing you all a very happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.