

BALLINTOTIS COMMUNITY COUNCIL - NEWSLETTER

NO 2

DECEMBER 2003

Dear Neighbour,

Six months on from our inaugural newsletter, summer has turned to winter and year's end is very much on the horizon. Ballintotis Community Council has continued to develop and glad to report that considerable progress has been made in the interim. In this seasonal despatch from the Communications Committee, we aim to give a brief summary of events thus far in the life of the Council, cast an eye forward to next year and also extend the net outside the Council, to bring into focus some other happenings within Ballintotis.

Fundraiser

In common with practically all organisations aiming to get off the ground, fundraising became a key issue in the early life of Ballintotis Community Council. Considerable work had to be done behind the scenes to structure the Council along recommended lines and, in order to advance any proposed projects, some form of a financial base is necessary. Ultimately, our fundraising dance was seen as vital to the early development of the Council and thankfully a marvellous response was received on our door-to-door ticket trail back in October. A sincere thanks to one and all and to everybody who supported the event on the night.

Projects

Of course, the question people are now asking is for what does the Council intend to use the proceeds of this event? Already, certain administrative costs have taken their toll, principally insurance, but at recent meetings time has been set aside to discuss the many ideas/suggestions that the people of Ballintotis have come up with over the past few months. These have varied dramatically in size, ambition and in relation to the likely time scale involved. No doubt, the provision of a Community Hall has been the most common requirement from the majority of you. Generally people acknowledge the need for a recognised base within our locality to call our own. Such a venture demands massive thought, time, and expertise and of course is a major financial undertaking. But, nothing is impossible and this suggestion is certainly worthy of major debate. Many other ideas have been forthcoming. The provision of public lighting in some areas, the introduction of speed limits, the current state of the railing at Loughaderra Lake, concerns about ongoing dumping around the lake area and the possibility of additional signage in many areas are amongst the subjects that have been aired in recent times. There is a multitude of options in terms of immediate priority and we can assure you that serious concern is being given to all of your ideas, suggestions and comments. A decision will be taken in the very near future as to the initial projects that will be undertaken. In the meantime, we can confirm details of a seasonal get together 'A Lap of the Lake' over the forthcoming Christmas holiday period, the prospect of a special Children's Mass taking place in the very near future is soon to be discussed, with Sunday December 28th (the Feast of the Holy Family) as a possible date.

Lap of the Lake

In keeping with the spirit of the Christmas season, the council is hoping to make **Saturday December 27th** a Community Family Day for the people of Ballintotis. With the pace of the Christmas countdown seemingly accelerating each year, we are hoping everybody will relax with our seasonal get-together, which is aimed at all the family and at the enlarged Ballintotis family in general. This Lap Of the Lake, which begins at the Church Car Park, is being billed as a festive stroll with friends and neighbours. A very special welcome is extended to the many new residents of the Ballintotis area, some of you who may be spending your first Christmas in our area. For the younger generation, we hope to organise a mini treasure hunt en route, whilst afterwards light refreshments will be served for all - and what would Christmas be in Ballintotis without some magical musical melodies – a brief Carol Concert will round off what will hopefully be a successful day. So do please join us whether you wish to walk or just meet neighbours and friends and lets all share the spirit of Christmas together.

Meetings

Community Council meetings take place on a regular basis throughout the year and at this stage it is appropriate that we say a sincere word of thanks to Tony and staff at the Two Mile Inn, who have generously hosted our meetings in recent months. Since our last newsletter, we are glad to welcome on board the following co-opted members of the Ballintotis Community Council: Brid Cooney, Paul Kelly, Paula McAuliffe and Fr. Billy O'Donovan. This quartet join the following original fourteen members from the respective station areas-

Roxboro, Milltown, Clashduff – Brian O'Driscoll & David O'Driscoll.

Ballintotis, Ballybutler, Ballyedkin, Farrantrenchard – Gerard Cott & Josie Knowles.

Kilmountain, Ballinascartha – Norma Ferriter & Liam Ryan.

Caherultan, Curragrine, Loughaderra, Ballyoughtera – John Cashman & Frank Hayes.

Dromada, Glenagare, Gurtstoke, Dromsarane, Meelshane - Anne Motherway & Jean O'Gorman.

Kilbree, Killurriga, Gurteenina, Attyquin – Scott Daly & John McCarthy.

Stumphill, Castleview, Churchtown, Whiterock, Dunsfort – Jerry Smith & Dick Smithwick.

As members of the Ballintotis community, we would be delighted if you could funnel any of your ideas or suggestions through any of the aforementioned. Alternatively you may avail of the option to attend any of our Community Council meetings as an observer. (Notice of meetings is regularly printed both in the parish newsletter and the Imokilly People)

Heritage Trail

Many of you will no doubt remember with great fondness that magnificent heritage walk in connection with the School's centenary celebrations back in 1998. Many of us learned en route some very interesting snippets of local history. Presently Ballintotis Community Council is doing its best to complete the entire picture in our locality, with Paul Kelly and Josie Knowles, heading up this venture. . A project has recently been initiated by a voluntary organisation, Cork and Kerry Place Names Survey, aimed at collecting and mapping the place name heritage of both counties. Concentration is particularly on the Imokilly barony over the next six months. Thus, we seek your help. People are required to collect names of all manmade and natural

features in our area. Names of fields, play areas, wells, streams, pathways, old ruins, archaeological features, crossroads, roads, hills and slopes are all very important. The description, folklore and other information regarding such named features and places are all included in the survey. Names in Irish and English and names now obsolete along with literary references to names featured in the landscape are all being collected. The object of the entire survey is to get as many local names as used by us recorded on survey and record sheets.

If you think you can be assistance, Paul or Josie would be delighted to hear from you. Remember every snippet of information is vital in completing the picture. – Plenty of help needed!

Many Happenings

Away from Community Council business, there is as always plenty happening in the Ballintotis area.

School

It has been a significant year for Ballintotis National School. The very positive recent news is that the school has been granted approval for a permanent fourth teacher by the Department of Education. Sixteen new Junior Infants began their school lives back in September and the same day saw the introduction of a second school bus within the locality. On the field of play, nobody will ever forget the magnificent deeds of the Sciath na Scoil team that brought honour and glory to the school by virtue of their thrilling success at Pairc Ui Chaoimh in early summer. Well done also to the school's quiz teams who have been high up in the placings at various events in recent weeks. Right now, all pupils are busy preparing for the annual Christmas Pageant, which will be held in the Church on Wednesday December 17th. The occasion is always a joy to behold.

The school's Board Of Management Elections for parent's representatives are also presently in progress, with ballot papers having been distributed to all parents in recent weeks. Earlier on in the school term, the A.G.M. of the Parents Association took place and here the election of officers resulted as follows: Chairperson – Margaret McEvoy; Secretary – Audrey McCarthy, Treasurer – Valerie Motherway.

Ballintotis Group Water Scheme

Contract negotiations are still in progress regarding the upgrading of this scheme. It is hoped to make an official announcement before the end of the year.

Soccer Club

The local soccer club were very pleased with the large turnout at their table quiz held recently at the Two Mile Inn. Chairman of the organising committee Dominic Knowles wishes to thank all those who ensured this year's fundraiser was again an outstanding success. On the field, despite a couple of long serving players opting to hang up their boots at the start of the season, the team have enjoyed a solid start to the campaign and are presently positioned in the top half of A.U.L. 2B.

Choir

It's one of the busiest few weeks of the year for our local Church Choir, with practice taking place regularly in the lead up to the Christmas ceremonies. New members are particularly welcome to come along. Margaret Daly or Mary Barry has all the details.

Community Alert

Ballintotis Community Alert recently held their A.G.M. The committee applied for grant aid to facilitate the installation of a number of new social alarms within the community. It is expected that a decision on whether or not this application has been successful will be forthcoming from the Dept. of Community, Rural and Gaelteacht Affairs in the very near future.

On the social scene, over fifty local residents travelled on this year's summer tour to Kilkenny. Now attention is very much on next Thursday's Dinner Dance at Garryvoe Hotel. This event is open to everybody in our community, with tickets very reasonably priced at only 20 euro. The function, which includes a four-course meal begins at 7.45pm and will feature music by Sean Ahern until just after midnight. Ticket enquiries to Secretary – Marie McCarthy, Treasurer – Paul Kelly or any committee member. Meantime, the Tuesday Club, formed under the umbrella of Community Alert, continues to thrive and the group have regular guests throughout the course of the year.

Summary Of Upcoming Events In Ballintotis

Thursday Dec 11 th	Community Alert Dinner Dance at Garryvoe Hotel – 7.45pm
Tuesday Dec 16 th	Tuesday Club Christmas Dinner – Two Mile Inn – 1.30pm
Wednesday Dec 17 th	Ballintotis School – Pageant at Ballintotis Church – 7.30pm
Wednesday Dec 24 th	Christmas Eve Vigil Mass – 8.00pm
Thursday Dec 25 th	Christmas Day Mass – 9.15am
Saturday Dec 27 th	Ballintotis Community Council – Lap Of The Lake – 2pm

(Check details in parish newsletter/Imokilly People re Children's Mass.)

Final Thought

So another year is rapidly becoming consigned to history. 2003 was the year which saw the formation of a Community Council in Ballintotis. It's an idea, which had been aired so often in the past, but never quite materialised. Here's hoping that in the years ahead, we will, please God, look back at this year as the successful starting block for the construction of something much bigger. The success of the Council depends on all of us working together for the welfare of our local area – Ballintotis. Let's nurture what we have together!

Finally, on behalf of all involved in Ballintotis Community Council, may we take this opportunity to extend every good wish for a joyous yuletide season and may 2004 bring you peace and prosperity.

John Cashman
P.R.O. Ballintotis Community Council