

## WOULD YOU VOLUNTEER?



Since we launched our new digital RST Newsletter on the RST community website, we have been able to track the number of readers our newsletter reaches online each month.

We are delighted to see that we have been averaging 855 readers per newsletter over the last 4 months. The newsletter can be read online at any time or downloaded as a PDF to read offline. Each edition is also archived so you can read it at any time – no wondering where that RST Newsletter went to!

However, it has come to our attention that a small number of the community do not have access to the internet or a suitable electronic device. They are therefore unable to read our monthly newsletter in the new digital format, and feel they are missing out. This is where we need your help.

- Would you be willing to volunteer to do one of the following for your family member or neighbour who may struggle with digital technology?
- Print off a copy (or just the sections they are most interested in reading)
- Download the newsletter as a PDF to your device and loan it to them for half an hour so they can read the newsletter in full?



If you can help, please let us know at [TheRSTnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:TheRSTnewsletter@gmail.com)

Rathfeigh Church Choir  
presents  
**An Outdoor Candlelight  
CAROL  
SERVICE**  
At Rathfeigh Church  
**On Sunday  
19th December, 2021  
At 6.00pm**  
All welcome - Admission Free



### O'CONNELL'S PUB SKRYNE

would like to wish all their customers a very Happy  
Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

*This issue is sponsored by*

**O'CONNELL'S PUB SKRYNE**



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## Severe Weather

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of February about 30 years ago a fierce storm of wind arose. There was a large wood of trees at Gtange Dunshaughlin belonging to the late Mr Michael Murphy. They were all cut away from the roots with the wind, also a cow-house was carried away a considerable distance belonging to Patrick O'Brien of Marcellstown. There was a large hay-barn blown away at Herwit. At this particular time there was a poor man found dead on the road side between Cabin Hill and Ratoath he was known as Paddy the Fatman. There was one particular house not far from where I live, that the roof was taken off. This happened during the night. The people that lived in this house were the Brides of Ross. That night they came down to seek shelter in their neighbours house. The people of the house got up and let them in, and they stayed up the rest of the night with them. The man of the house put a ladder on top of their house, for fear the same might happen them. There was much damage caused by this severe storm.

Patrick O'Brien

This month's School's Folklore Collection article was written by Patrick O'Brien from Skryne School, about a Severe Weather event some 30 years earlier.

An article from the Meath Chronicle dated 29th Feb 1908 corroborates the story. Much damage was done to buildings but there was no loss of life in the county.

# A Christmas Revelation

Anne Frehill

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**O**n a cold, dreary night in early December, Kelforth Book Club gathered in the local library to discuss the book of the month. A work of fiction, titled: *The Distant Drums of War*, it stretched to 490 pages.

In the front row of the motley group gathered that night Justin Casey stood tall at 6`2` as he opined about the author`s lacklustre writing style.

Directly beside him, Susan sat on the edge of her seat waiting for her chance to speak.

His voice grew louder as he droned on and after what seemed like an interminable amount of time, he stopped and cleared his throat.

When she opened her mouth to speak, he frowned and raised his large hand.

“This book has a lot of verbosity and little of worth,” he concluded with a smug grin.

“Thank you, Justin for that spirited and detailed review,” Maisie, the senior librarian said as she cast her eyes around the group, searching for feedback.

Seething with rage, Susan sprung to her feet.

“I totally disagree with Justin`s harsh criticism, as far as I am concerned it is an interesting book, with some gripping anecdotes from the First World War. It must be obvious even to a blind horse that the author is passionate about his topic and did copious research.”

From the depths of his stomach words spewed forth like knives.

“Susan, just listen to yourself, a blind horse indeed! What nonsense! Surely your vocabulary can stretch to something more than images from the impoverished past.”

Raising her eyes to the ceiling, she exploded.

“It`s a figure of speech, there is no need to be so pompous.”

“Come now Susan, I am not going to stoop to your level,” he said, as he crossed his arms.

The Librarian, her face apoplectic with rage, checked her watch and then spoke in an icy tone.

“Although there is ten minutes remaining, I am bringing this meeting to a close as I will not tolerate ugly scenes of verbal jousting. Vote on the website for next month`s book, it will be the turn of the mystery genre.”

Susan, inwardly chiding herself for reacting to him, quickly gathered her belongings and hurried from the room as she received a sympathetic smile from Hanna Doyle.

Just as she was getting into her car, she realized that Hanna had followed her.

“Are you ok Susan?”

“Yes, thank you, sit in for a minute.”

Hanna opened the door and jumped in as she gave a little shiver.

“I think there is a slight frost,” she said, closing the door with a bang.

“Indeed, but my blood is still boiling! Every month we sit there tolerating Justin Casey`s arrogance and listening to him as if he were God. I am sorry that I lost my patience with that

man and brought the meeting to such a sudden end.”

Hanna threw back her head and laughed.

“Don`t apologise, he had it coming,”

For a few minutes there was silence and then Susan spoke.

“Maisie was furious, no doubt I will receive a stiff email from her about the rules of the club.”

Hanna winked.

“Probably, but no one else has had the courage to take him on. Ever since he joined our group, he has tried hard to be better than everyone else not just with his glittering intellect but in every other way too. “

Susan chewed on her lip for a few moments while condensation ran down the windows.

“You may not believe me, but I try hard to live and let live , however there is something about him that really grates.”

Hanna peered out at the rear lights of cars as they made an orderly queue before they exited the car park.

“He strikes me as a snob, all that talk about his schooldays at a private boarding school and his liquid lunches with politicians.

Susan nodded.

“Recently, I discovered that he lives in my housing estate, number 401, so not quite in keeping with that posh image that he projects.”

Then she started the engine and fiddled with the heater until the dial showed 25 degrees.

Hanna frowned. “Well, that is a surprise, did you tell him that you are his neighbour?”

“Yes, it`s a two bedroomed town house and when I divulged that I live at number 355 he went to great lengths to tell me that he downsized from a detached old house in Rathgar after his marriage broke up. “

The two women exchanged a look of cynicism.

“Do you believe him? Hanna asked.

Susan shrugged.

“Who knows! He is a dark horse, the way that he sports that Barbour jacket and his fat Mont Blanc pen, it does not add up.”

Hanna chortled. “ It seems that he took early retirement from some big job with a shipping company.”

After taking a deep breath, Susan said, “Listen to us we sound like two self-righteous people who delight in naming the faults of others.”

Her friend agreed. “You are right, anyone would think we were perfect!”

The following week Susan decided to volunteer with a centre for the homeless. Since the breakdown of her own marriage a few years earlier she had found that Christmas was a depressing time given the emphasis on homecomings and happy families. She felt sure that if she helped others less fortunate than herself that it would take her mind off her woes.

Her brother Fr Pat directed a centre on the fringes of Dublin, and he quickly taught her the ropes.

“Remember at this time of year more people than ever get into financial difficulties, we don`t pass judgement or ask any

questions. We simply offer practical support with our parcels of food that contain the staples like tea, bread, beans, butter, cereals, biscuits and some fruit and vegetables.”

On Christmas Eve, a queue for food parcels started long before dawn and snaked along three streets and up to the old door of the centre. By early afternoon over 5,000 black plastic bags of food had been given away. Susan realized that there were many races represented as well as men and women from all corners of Ireland. She even recognised a woman with a shabby animal print jacket and purple hair from earlier in the day, but she said nothing and gave her another bag.

Just before the doors closed at 6 p.m. she spotted a man in the parallel queue dressed in a raincoat and a black beanie hat which was pulled down closely around his face. For a split second their eyes met, and her heart seemed to pound in her chest as she recognised the piercing blue eyes.

She sneaked another look at him, but he had turned his head sideways. Yet there was no denying that familiar gait: the ramrod straight back, the broad shoulders and the head which was held high.

It was none other than Justin Casey.

Lowering her head, she continued to distribute the bags, going out of her way to make a big fuss over the young woman and child who happened to be next in her row.

Later that night just as she was settling down beside a roaring fire, the doorbell rang. She hurried to open it as she guessed that it was Fr Pat calling to exchange presents and share a hot whiskey or two with her.

When she saw the tall figure of Justin Casey framed in the doorway she was lost for words and just managed a weak smile.

“Susan I desperately need to speak with you and tell you the sad truth about my predicament...”

For a moment she eyed him and then replied, “Ok, come inside.”

He sat on the edge of the armchair, red -faced and with his hands clenched while she took a seat at the other side of the room.

“I have a confession to make, I am or rather was a compulsive gambler until two years ago when my wife and family disowned me. I lost everything else too, my house, my friends and my job as I was forced to retire early because I even stole from the company to pay for gambling.”

Susan felt remorse wash over her.

“I really am so sorry I had no idea that you were having problems indeed you present as someone who is ...”

He finished her sentence, “Someone who is full of himself. I know I work hard at projecting a certain image, but it is all a lie.”

“It must be very difficult trying to keep up appearances.” She spoke in a soothing voice.

He picked off imaginary bits of fluff from his jacket.

“I will be the laughing -stock of this community when the truth gets out. You know I was homeless until my brother offered me the use of his house at a low rent, he works in Dubai.

I am living on the breadline as most of my pension goes

towards paying back the crippling debts that I amassed.”

Susan smiled at him sympathetically, “Don` t worry your secrets are safe with me. Look here, I know that we got off to a bad start, but can we begin again?”

A single tear slid down his left cheek.

“You are so kind and I know that I don` t deserve it as I have acted like Lord Muck towards you and the other members of the Book Club. I find it difficult to pass the time as I have to avoid any place that might tempt me back to gambling, so I joined the Book Club.”

Suddenly, Susan stood up and removed a framed photograph from a drawer in an oak cabinet.

Then she handed it to him.

“I know all about addictions! Look at me ten years ago, I was morbidly obese before I accepted that my constant craving for food was an addiction.”

Shaking his head, his tone was gentle. “I would never recognise you.”

With a big smile on her face, she answered, It has been a battle but I have managed to achieve my weight loss target of 9 stone and I have learned a new healthy way of dealing with food .”

“Congratulations and well done.” He took out a tissue from his pocket and wiped his eyes.

“I feel so ashamed now when I hear your story, especially about the way I treated you at the last meeting. Please accept my apologies. “

“Apology accepted I have an idea, but you must promise to be less obnoxious to everyone at the Book Club in future. Also, you are welcome to join my Walking Club, every Saturday a group of 12 individuals go for long walks in Wicklow, Meath and Louth. We have all experienced major problems in our lives, so the only rule is that we don't ask questions or judge each other. We just enjoy the glory of nature and treat every member as equal.”

He smiled through his tears.

“Thank you for extending the hand of friendship, of course I would be honoured to join your walking group and I assure you too that in the future I will keep a low profile at the Book Club. You have shown such generosity of spirit that I feel truly humbled.”

She filled two tumblers with whiskey and gave him one.

The fire suddenly crackled and sent a display of sparks across the room.

*Laughing, they clinked glasses.*

*“Happy Christmas Susan.”*

*“Many happy returns Justin.”*

*The End*

## Skryne Community Alert

The last couple of weeks in the run up to Christmas is very popular for burglaries and for theft from cars. Please remember:

- Keep your doors and windows locked whether home or away
- If you have an alarm, use it. Again, this applies whether you are at home or away
- Keep your gate closed if possible
- Good security lighting can act as a deterrent. Check your lights are all working
- Use timers to light the inside of your home after darkness if you are out. An unoccupied house is very easy to target if you don't do this.
- When shopping, do not leave goods or valuables on



view inside car. Also avoid leaving your car multiple times having returned to put something in the boot, in case your car is being watched.

- Always double check that your car is locked using the door handles. Some thefts occur after thieves block the wireless signal from your key which should lock the car.
- Report ALL suspicious activity to Gardai on 018010600. If you get no answer, use 999

If you have any vulnerable neighbours, please take the opportunity to check in on them. It can be a lonely time of year for some. There is no need to go inside, but a chat over the phone or from a distance at the door can make a big difference.

*Wising you and your loved ones a very Happy Christmas,  
from all at Skryne Community Alert*

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# Movie Review *Christmas*

Darragh O'Dowd

It's that time of the year again; when once you're finished all the festive activities you can flop down the couch by the fire and stick on the telly for; the Christmas movie.



## It's a Wonderful Life (1946)

Often thought of as the seminal Christmas movie, *It's a Wonderful Life* retains its lovely message and holiday spirit even 75 years later. Casting the infinitely likeable James Stewart as the worn-out George Bailey is a stroke of genius, as the charismatic star carries the film's message in his interactions with the many characters. What people forget is how dark the film can get, which makes the cathartic ending all the more heartwarming. *It's a Wonderful Life* is up there with *The Shawshank Redemption* as one of the most uplifting movies ever made, and its title perfectly summarises its hopeful message. It is a wonderful life.

## Home Alone (1990)

An ultimate classic, *Home Alone* captures the Christmas spirit in a way no other film could. A completely original idea matched with charismatic charm of star Macaulay Culkin, this film illustrates the importance of family in children's lives, all the while bounding with gleeful energy at the fun the young Kevin McCallister has when his family leave for Christmas without him. Joe Pesci and Daniel Stern both give equally hilarious performances as the bumbling robbers that attempt to rob the house. Funny, edgy and heartwarming, *Home Alone* is the perfect movie to watch on a Christmas Eve.



## Elf (2003)

*Elf* was completely hanging on whether the lead actor could deliver as the titular character. Luckily, they chose Will Ferrell. Bringing a childish quality not previously seen in his movies, Ferrell epitomises Buddy's complete buffoonish-ness and naivety in a hilarious performance as he goes to find his father in New York (a wonderfully stingy James Caan). A fantastical and delightful Christmas fable that balances broad humour and heartwarming sentimentality, *Elf* is impossible not to love, for all ages.

Looking for more Christmas movies, check out *Die Hard* (controversial, I know), *Scrooged*, *The Santa Clause* and *A Miracle on 34th Street*.

## Battling Skryne bow out of U20 Championship

**Donaghmore/Ashbourne 0-13 Skryne 0-10**

**U20 Football Championship – Quarter Final.**

**Skryne travelled to Ashbourne for this U20 knockout quarter final. The conditions were cold and wet, far from ideal and yet both teams managed to put on an excellent display of football with little between the teams throughout.**

Skryne started strongest with Oisín Keogh firing over a superb opener from wide on the right hand side inside the opening minute. 2 minutes later, Niall Finnerty turned his man and unleashed a powerful effort that looked destined to hit the back of the net but for the quick hands of the Donaghmore/Ashbourne keeper who parried it away for a 45. Niall Finnerty added Skryne's second point from a free before Donaghmore/Ashbourne got back on terms with Jamie Browne grabbing a brace of points. Skryne were denied a goal scoring opportunity when Shane Smyth advanced towards the Donaghmore/Ashbourne goal, but was taken out of it by one of the Moore's defenders. The defender will count himself lucky to have received a yellow card when a black card seemed warranted. Niall Finnerty converted the free to edge Skryne ahead. Donaghmore/Ashbourne hit 3 points in a row to move into the lead. Oisín Keogh pulled one back for Skryne to reduce the deficit to a single point as the game reached the first half water break. Donaghmore/Ashbourne 0-5 Skryne 0-4.

Donaghmore/Ashbourne had the better of the second quarter. Jamie Browne pointed again from play before they added another point, this time from a free. George Fitzpatrick showed his battling qualities when he won possession for Skryne before laying off to Niall Finnerty who fired over. Donaghmore/Ashbourne added a final point to pull three clear as the half time whistle sounded. Donaghmore/Ashbourne 0-8, Skryne 0-5.

Skryne faced the breeze in the second half but started in determined mood. They were again denied a clear goal scoring opportunity when Niall Morland did a neat one-two with Niall Finnerty which released Morland into space behind the full back line. As he advanced towards goal, a Donaghmore/Ashbourne defender dragged him down just outside the penalty area. Amazingly, the defender again escaped with just a yellow card. Niall Finnerty made no mistake with the free. Donaghmore/Ashbourne replied immediately with a point from their corner forward. Niall Finnerty added two more frees for Skryne, one just before the water break where he took a snap shot at the Donaghmore/Ashbourne goal which just rose narrowly over the top of the crossbar when it looked like it might just dip into the goalmouth. Jamie Browne pointed a free for Donaghmore/Ashbourne leaving only two between the sides at the second half water break.

**Donaghmore/Ashbourne 0-10, Skryne 0-08.**

Skryne were guilty of making some bad decisions up front as they fought to reel in the Ashbourne men. There were several occasions where they hit shots from too far out when it might have been better to work the ball into a more scoreable position. For sheer effort and determination, Skryne deserved to get a result from this game, but they were to rue the missed chances and also the potential goals that had been snuffed out by the earlier cynical fouls. Donaghmore/Ashbourne increased their lead to three with a point from play after the resumption. Niall Finnerty added another free after Oisín Keogh was fouled. Jamie Browne tapped over a free to leave a goal between them. Remarkably, Skryne were denied a third goal scoring opportunity when a Donaghmore/Ashbourne defender hauled down a Skryne man who was arrowing towards the D/A goal. This time the referee produced the black card. Niall Finnerty converted the free. However, Skryne were running out of steam at this stage after throwing everything at Donaghmore/Ashbourne. George Fitzpatrick and Niall Finnerty both forced saves from the Donaghmore/Ashbourne keeper, but the Moores held firm and their top man Jamie Browne sent over his seventh point of the night (4 frees) to see them secure their place in the semi-final.

The Skryne supporters who had made their way to Ashbourne on a cold wet night, while disappointed with the result, were proud of the performance put in by the lads. Almost all of the team will be able to play in this grade next year, with many been eligible again the year after, so while they may not have made it through this time around, the future looks very bright for this group of players.

### **Skryne:**

Gary Browne; Scott Armstrong, Kristoffer Kinsella, Jack Swan; George Fitzpatrick, David Rathbourne, John Finnerty; Shane Smyth, Oisín Keogh(0-2); Cian Reddy, Niall Morland, Andrew Nolan; Mark Swan, Niall Finnerty(0-8, 7fs), Seán Keogh.

Subs used: Cillian Moss



# Presentation to Ernest Kenny

On the occasion of his visit to Skryne recently with St.Jude's LGFA, a presentation of the History of Skryne GAA, "**The Blue Kings of Tara,**" (signed by the author, David Carty) was made to **Ernest Kenny** by Mick O'Dowd. Ernest won a championship medal with Skryne in 1954. Later when he moved to Templeogue, Dublin, he was one of the founders of that illustrious GAA Club. His grand-daughter Aoife Keyes was captain of team that narrowly beat Skryne 3-07 to 1-10 in a great game of football. Since then St.Jude's have been crowned Leinster Junior Champions. We congratulate them on their success.



From left: Aoife Keyes, Captain of St.Jude's, Nicola Rogan O'Reilly, Captain of Skryne, Máire Keyes, Mick O'Dowd, Deirdre Kenny, Ernest Kenny, Dom O'Brien, Shane O'Brien, Stephen O'Brien, Aisling O'Brien and Niamh O'Brien.

## Skryne GFC held their AGM on 09 December 2021

The following officers were elected to the Executive Committee for 2022.

Chairperson:	John Burke
Assistant Chairperson:	David Keogh
Secretary:	Gina Doherty
Treasurer:	Ross Phillips
Assistant Treasurer:	Patrick Battersby
PRO/IT Registrar:	Rowan Dardis
Insurance Officer:	Dan O'Leary
Irish Language Officer:	Joe O'Brien
County Board Delegate:	Oliver Harrington
Safety Officer:	Kevin O'Rourke
Health & Wellbeing Officer:	Norbert Coyle
Additional Committee Members:	Dermot Carty, Nicola O'Reilly, Ruth Moore, Nicholas Hamill

**Skryne GFC Club Lotto**

[clubforce.com/clubs/gaa-skryne-gfc-meath/](http://clubforce.com/clubs/gaa-skryne-gfc-meath/)

## Blotto Results

### 05th December 2021

Numbers drawn: 09, 11, 14, 23

**Jackpot €7,100**

No winner of this week's jackpot.  
Quick pick winners were

Sheila O'Grady • Ashley Gaynor  
John Quinn • Tom Mulvany

### 28th November 2021

Numbers drawn: 04, 06, 20, 27

**Jackpot €7,000**

No winner of this week's jackpot.  
Quick pick winners were

Olive Carty • Philip Kinsella  
Riona & Laura Toomey • Rowan Dardis

### 21st November 2021

Numbers drawn: 10, 23, 24, 28,

**Jackpot €6,900**

No winner of this week's jackpot.  
Quick pick winners were

Niamh Finnerty • Fred Gilsenan  
Riona & Laura Toomey • Nuala Phillips

### 14th November 2021

Numbers drawn: 06, 11, 17, 22,

**Jackpot €6,800**

No winner of this week's jackpot.  
Quick pick winners were

Fiona O'Connor • Mary O'Regan  
Tom Mulvany • Michael & Regina  
O'Sullivan

### 07th November 2021

Numbers drawn: 15, 16, 19, 24,

**Jackpot €6,700**

No winner of this week's jackpot.  
Quick pick winners were

Kevin McManus • Paula Swan  
Susan Murphy • Johnny Burke

**This week's Blotto Jackpot is  
€7,200**

# Rathfeigh National School

Seamus Tansley

**“Every Christmas is a miracle that brings us light and love on the darkest days of the year. All we have to do is open our eyes to it”.**

We've all had some dark days over the last twenty months due to the pandemic and it can sometimes be difficult to remain positive. It's been difficult for all age groups in our society and particularly for our children. Since the onset of Covid the children have had to adapt to new procedures in school and remote learning and since the start of December the children in 3rd-6th class have had to wear face masks in school. As teachers we know how it feels wearing face masks and the difficulties that come with it. The children in Rathfeigh have been brilliant in this regard. They haven't complained about the mask wearing and have got on with school life in a positive manner for which I sincerely thank them. Their resilience over the last twenty months has been exemplary and their positive attitude has always shone through. Children always look forward to Christmas and they all thoroughly deserve a great Christmas this year as they've been through a lot due to Covid. I wish them all a safe and great Christmas hopefully free from the worries of Covid.

## The Hideaway

Nobody really knows what impact Covid will have on the short-term or long-term mental well-being of our younger children. Schools, now more than ever, have an important role in promoting the mental health of the children in their care. Our Sensory Room “The Hideaway” is up and running since September and the children seem to be reaping the benefits already. We had our official opening of The Hideaway on November 24th. We were delighted to have the following people in attendance – Suzanne Jamal (Councillor), Una Curran (Mindfulness/Well-being Teacher), Jacinta Walsh (Louth/Meath Autism) and Seamus Farrelly (photographer from the Meath Chronicle). We thank Mrs Vaughan for organising the Official Opening and Nicola (SNA) for her beautiful video of the Sensory Room. **Nicola's video can be viewed on the school website [www.rathfeighns.org](http://www.rathfeighns.org).** All the invitees were very impressed with the Sensory Room and believe, like we do, that it will benefit the children in Rathfeigh school for many, many years to come. The Hideaway is a safe place to help our children with sensory, social, emotional concerns and overall well-being. As a result children are better prepared for learning and interacting with others.

There are numerous people to thank for the Sensory Room idea coming to fruition – Mrs Vaughan and Nicola for driving the project forward, Joe Vaughan and Paul O'Boyle for the building and electrical work, Bryan from Total Sensory Solutions for equipping the Sensory Room, Ms Reynolds for the Underwater Sea Theme artwork, the Parents' Association for organising the “Marathon Relay” fundraiser which paid for the Sensory Room and the Board of Management for their great support of the project.

Jacinta Walsh (Louth/Meath Autism) will be visiting Rathfeigh NS in the New Year to talk to the children about autism and we look forward to her visit. Over the last six weeks Una Curran has visited the school to give mindfulness/well-being lessons to the pupils in all classes and we hope to have another six week session with Una in the New Year. Una is an experienced teacher in mindfulness/well-being and her classes have really benefited the children. Below is a letter from Una explaining the benefits of the mindfulness/well-being classes.

## Dear Parents,

I am delighted to be asked by your school to teach Mindfulness and Well-being to your children. I am a parent to three children who are fifteen, thirteen and eleven years old. My background is in Primary schools as a classroom teacher in London, Support teacher with children with social, emotional and behaviour needs in Dublin 8, supporting children on a 1:1 in pre-schools and in my own therapy room.

The programme that I have put together and teach in Pre-schools, Primary schools and family sessions is based on my teaching experience in a variety of educational settings, being a parent and my professional training over many years.

Within each lesson your child will experience

- Mindful breathing techniques
- Brain Gym & energy movements
- Simple yoga
- Listening to a story book or poem based on Emotional literacy or Well-being.
- Story massage
- Meditation/Relaxation

I have found that within a class some children need movement and some need stillness as our sensory bodies are all unique. By teaching different techniques each child should learn a technique that helps calm their own body and mind. An example of the benefits for children is a ten-year-old girl who has many health issues with frequent hospital visits. She told her Mum that during her last CAT scan and operation she used her breathing techniques that I had taught her and visualised she was in her favourite place to stay relaxed and calm. My aim is to plant the seeds of well-being and that children will use the techniques independently when they need it in school and out of school.

For more information for yourself or your child please look at my Facebook page Finding your Wings – Well-being with Una Curran or my Instagram page is @findingyourwings\_unacurran

If you have any queries or questions about any of the activities the children will be learning please contact me on wingswellbeing@gmail.com

Many Thanks for your support.

**Una Curran**



Pictured at the opening of the sensory room in Rathfeigh NS were Jacinta Walsh (Louth Meath Autism Group), Seamus Tansley (Principal), Cllr Suzanne Jamal.

## Enrolments for September 2022

We are currently taking enrolments for children starting school in September 2022. If you would like to enrol your child please log onto the school website [rathfeighns.org](http://rathfeighns.org) to download an enrolment form. Please email the school [rathfeighns@outlook.com](mailto:rathfeighns@outlook.com) if you would like to make an appointment to view the school and talk to the Principal. The closing date for the receipt of applications is March 1st 2022. We look forward to hearing from you.

## Credit Union Art Competition

The children in 1st-6th class took part in the Credit Union Art Competition titled "Imagine" in October. Congratulations to everyone who took part. The following pupils were informed in November that they won prizes – Niall and Patrick (1st class), Eoin (5th class) and Chloe and Grace (6th class). Eoin also got the great news that his entry has made it through to the Chapter Final. Well done Eoin.

## Book Fair

Our annual Book Fair co-ordinated by Mrs Campbell was a great success. The children were delighted to immerse themselves in new books and forget about Covid. Having no written homework for Book Fair Week went down very well with the children as it gave them loads of time to read at home. We had numerous competitions during the week (acrostic poems, story writing, art etc) and the following pupils won free books - Seán, Eilín, Ada and Flora (Juniors), Camron, Kai, Tomás and Mya (Seniors), Tiernan, Lucia, Noah and Nevaeh (First), Rosie, Sophie, Ella and Donacha (Second), Mia, Hayley, Kiera and Nicola (Third), Eve, Stevie, Lucy and Freya (Fourth), Holly, Katelyn, Fionn and Thomas (Fifth), Timmy, Isobel, Chloe and Katelin (Sixth). The school received 60% commission from the books sold which will be spent on class novels or on books for the library.

## Computer Classes

During October and November we had the return of computer classes in our computer room after a year's absence due to Covid. We thank Colm for the great variety of lessons he had in his classes and the children's literacy skills have improved greatly even after a few short weeks. We are hoping that Colm will be back with more sessions in the spring.

## Science-in-a-Box

The introduction of the Science-in-a-Box programme for 5th/6th class pupils a few years ago has really benefited the

children and given them a heightened interest in science. The focus in the last two years has been on physics and chemistry so this year the focus is on biology. The ten week programme conducted via Zoom weekly will finish in late January. We thank Eimear Mofatt for sponsoring the programme again this year.

## Student Council

Our student council members – Cian, Katie, Eoin and Saoirse – are doing a great job. They have come up with great ideas that we will be implementing before Christmas ie "Kris Kindle" for pupils in 3rd-6th class, "Run a kilometre" challenge and the organising of a children's Christmas Raffle. These great ideas have made the month of December very exciting for the pupils in the school. We thank the Student Council members for their dedication to the role and it's always a pleasure having weekly insightful meetings with them.

## Gaelic Football

When the Meath Gaelic footballers won All-Irelands in 1996 and 1999 many people thought that another few titles were around the corner. The years have passed by very quickly and there's been a lot of doom and gloom amongst Meath supporters about the state of football in the Royal County over the last two decades. So when the Meath Ladies Football team and the Minor Men's team won their respective All-Ireland's this summer it has given renewed optimism again to Meath supporters. It was a great thrill for the pupils in Rathfeigh to have members of the Minor team visit the school with the All-Ireland trophy and it was great seeing Eddie McCormack being a central part of the management team. Eddie spent many years in Rathfeigh training the children in all classes and his enthusiasm and optimism was infectious. When Eddie visits he always has a smile on his face and he knows all the children by name as a result of the children playing with Skryne. Eddie's optimistic nature hasn't waned over the years and with a glint in his eye he told me, when visiting with the Minor team, that Meath will be winning a Senior All-Ireland in the next five years. You heard it here first!!!

Having our Gaelic Football coach Damien Sheridan visiting the school weekly over the last few months has really given the children a pep in their step. They eagerly await his weekly visits and it's a welcome distraction from Covid! We thank Damien for his great enthusiasm in training the children and hopefully Damien will be back in 2022! Thanks Damien.

## Parents' Association

We are very fortunate in Rathfeigh to have a vibrant, dedicated and forward-thinking Parents' Association. Their fundraising work over the last six months has been exceptional – Relay Marathon, Cash for Clobber and Cake Sale. A huge amount of work goes on behind the scenes and the children are the ultimate beneficiaries of this trojan work. We wish everyone on the Parents' Association a relaxing and enjoyable Christmas.

## Christmas Tree

We got a nice surprise on arriving to school on December 1st. Our caretaker, Ingrid, had sourced a beautiful Christmas tree which adorned our reception area. It couldn't have come at a better time as the news of the previous days was dominated by the Omicron variant! It certainly lifted everybody's moods particularly the children. They spent the next few days making decorations etc for the tree. Below are a few pictures of the children at the Christmas tree.

## Christmas Jumper Day

On Friday we had our Christmas Jumper Day. The children's jumpers were ablaze with vibrant and iridescent colours. We also had our class performances of Christmas songs which were recorded and will be uploaded to Edmodo or the school website before Christmas. Well done everyone!!

The staff in Rathfeigh have been exceptional during the Covid pandemic. Their commitment and dedication while working under difficult circumstances has been second to none. They all deserve a well-earned rest this Christmas. So thanks to

Mrs Vaughan, Mrs Campbell, Ms O'Donoghue, Ms Reynolds, Nicola, Mrs Healy, Mrs Cooke, Helen and Ingrid a Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year. A special thanks, also, to our Board of Management members – Máire, Connor, Brigid, Bernard, Claire, Jackie and Mary - who have worked tirelessly for the benefit of the school over the last two years. Thanks, also, to all the substitute teachers who taught in Rathfeigh since September and to all the people who had after-school activities for the children in the school hall. Thanks, also, to our Parents' Association and to Kieran Hennessy for regularly updating our school website throughout the year.

The RST newsletter has been invaluable to the people in the parish throughout Covid. The variety of articles every month is phenomenal. I would like to thank everyone on the RST Team for their great work and for publishing the monthly articles from Rathfeigh NS. It is really appreciated. Wishing everyone associated with the RST a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

As we approach Christmas with the cloud of Covid still hanging around the quote below may help us to consider the true meaning of Christmas.

***"Spending money on someone is nice, but spending time with them is nicer. The Christmas gifts will one day lose their luster – the memories of loved ones never will".***

Happy Christmas.



## Skryne Cycle Club Hill Challenge 2021

Another great race up the hill this year (13th November) with new boy Gavin Lynch taking the honours in an impressive 2:08 mins. Mark Hughes finished a memorable second again this year!

Eddie Dunne made the transfer from the running track to get third place. It's going to be a long hard year listening to Eddie waxing lyrical about his achievement on the bike!!

Jarlath Morley got the 'comeback kid' award with an impressive finish on the day. You're a legend Jarlath!

Celebrations ran late into the evening with a lot of bikes parked on the Hill overnight.

A great finish to a good year's cycling despite the pandemic and apologies to all our neighbours inflicted by an often peloton of cyclists restricted to the parish circuit for a good chunk of the last 2 years.

Enjoy a well-earned Christmas break lads and roll on 2022. I don't believe we're going to lose anyone thru the official cycling transfer window so we can look forward to more of the same bravado and bragging over the Sunday morning coffees next year.

**Signed: The Committee!**



L to r: Jarlath Morley, Eddie Dunne, Gavin Lynch and Mark Hughes.

## Local Weddings



Ciara Murphy and David White (Greenpark) who were married in St. Martin's Church, Culmullen.



Rachel Tobin and Ray Cremin who were married in Rathfeigh Church recently



Shane Gore and Róisín Anglim who were married in Rathfeigh Church recently

# Night Sky Christmas 2021

by Tony Canavan

**Christmas day: Sunrise: 08:07 am**

**Sunset: 4:15 pm**

**Moon:** December 21st – Full Moon, 2nd January – New Moon (no moon visible), 9th January – First Quarter (half-moon visible), 17th January – Full Moon, 25th January – Last Quarter (half-moon visible)

**Venus** has the same phases as the Moon, and December is a good month to study Venus especially with a telescope or binoculars. It will be visible in the evening sky after the sun sets. Because it is one of the inner rock planets it is always close to the sun. At the end of the month, it is at its highest, shining with a magnitude of -4.4.

**December 21st:** Besides being the date of the full moon it is also the winter solstice. It is the longest night of the year once celebrated as 'Yule' by the pagan people of Northern Europe before it became Christmas. The amount of sunlight had a profound impact on humans e.g. Neolithic Era (Newgrange, 5200 years old) and Stonehenge (circa 2500 BC). The Romans celebrated Saturnalia during the winter solstice until the fourth century A.D. It was a week-long celebration of games and merriment and on the last day gifts were exchanged around December 25th.

**December 21st:** Although there is a full moon in the East you should still get a view of Venus, Saturn and Jupiter setting in the west from 5 pm. Great time to view the moon from about 9 pm onwards.

**Comet Leonard** is in the sky during the latter part of December. It has taken it 40,000 years to reach us and will make it's closest point of approach to the sun on January 3rd before heading back out into the cosmos for another 80,000 years. It's position in the sky is close to the star Arcturus.

**January 2022:** Throughout January the sky is dominated by Orion. It is highly distinctive with three stars making the 'Belt'. Also the reddish star of Betelgeuse, brilliant blue of Rigel (indicating temperature), a vertical line of three stars hanging from the 'Belt' marking the sword. The central star on the sword is the Orion Nebula and binoculars can illuminate the four stars of the Trapezium in this nebula. It is a very active star nursery. The 'Belt' points towards Taurus (the Bull).

The **Quadrantid** meteor shower begins in late December and continues until

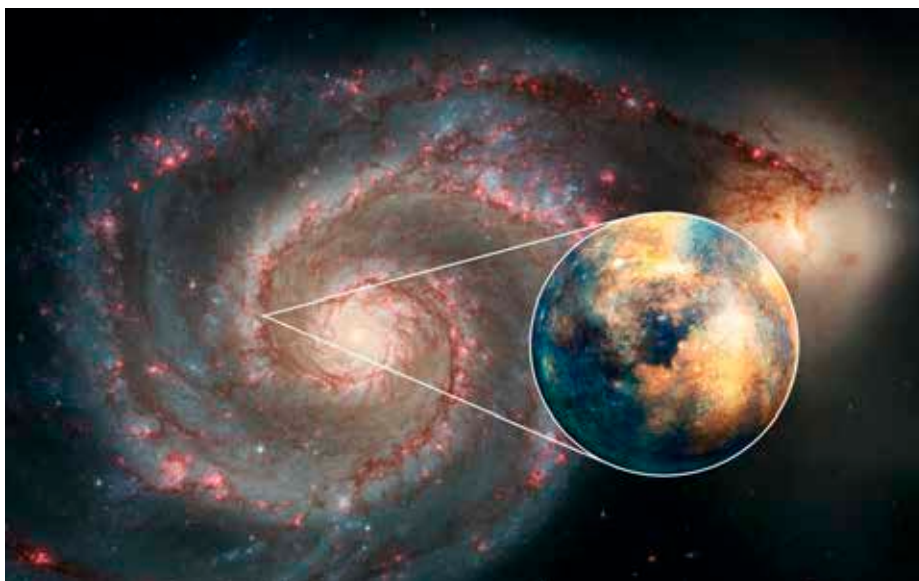
12th January. The meteors are bluish or yellowish white and may reach a maximum of 120 per hour. Altitude 22° and azimuth 326° in the evening but with an altitude of 41° and bearing 60° at 2 am.

**January 4- 6th:** Shortly after sunset, the waxing crescent moon passes Mercury, Saturn and Jupiter.

**January 17th:** The full moon lines up with Castor and Pollux.

**January 19th:** at 9 pm the waning gibbous moon passes between Regulus and Algieba in the constellation Leo.

If you want to see the **Milky Way** then a clear night mid- January, about 2 am when there is least light pollution. The **Milky Way** goes from east to west through Sirius, under Pollux and Castor, over to Capella, through Perseus and Cassiopeia back to the horizon. With a star chart you can find most objects of significance in the night sky. It makes a great camera shot with a wide angled lens and long exposure.



First Exoplanet discovered outside of our own galaxy in the M51 galaxy (Whirlpool Galaxy). Credit Nasa

## Asteroid Deflection:

**November 24th 2021 a Falcon 9 rocket** took off from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California. Known as the DART mission (Double Asteroid Redirection Test) its task is to see how difficult it would be to stop a sizeable space rock from hitting the earth.

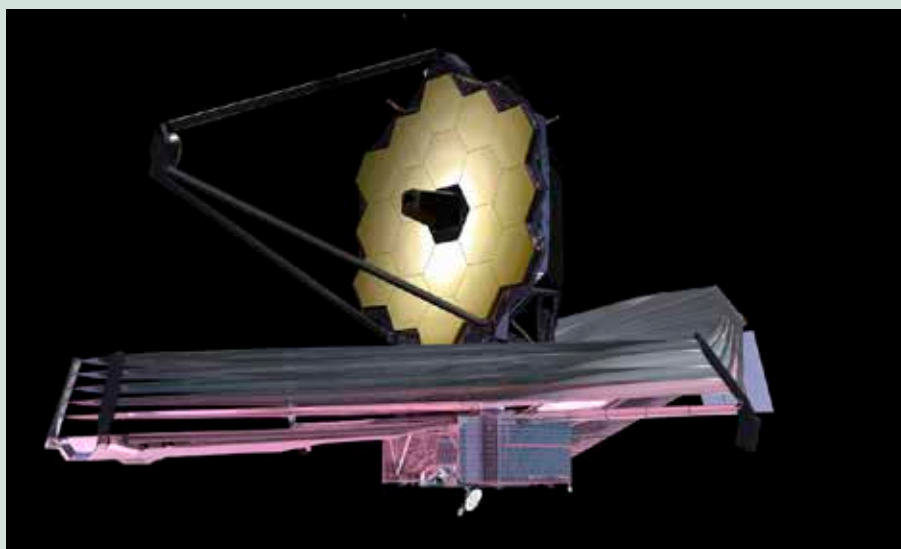
Sixty-six million years ago the dinosaurs *had a bad day* and a reign of 180 million years came to an end. The asteroid **Chicxulub** hit the earth at the Yucatan Peninsula in Mexico. It was 10-15 kms wide but due to its velocity the impact crater was 150 kilometres across. The ecosystem virtually collapsed.

**Dimophos** is a small asteroid orbiting a bigger asteroid **Didymos**. The spacecraft will crash into the small asteroid and for this mission to be successful it is only necessary to deflect the asteroid's orbit by a tiny amount. Asteroids with a diameter of 300 metres or greater can pose a serious risk to the earth. NASA tracks any asteroid greater than 140 metres. There is no risk from any celestial object at this time.

Researchers using the NASA Chandra X-Ray Observatory believe that they have discovered the first exoplanet outside of our own galaxy the Milky Way. The distance to the exoplanet is 28 million light years. All existing exoplanets have been discovered in our own galaxy. The search was carried out using X-ray wavelengths. In this case it is a binary system i.e. two celestial bodies orbiting each other. Matter falls from the donor, usually a normal star but at least 20 times the mass of our sun. This matter is accreted onto the 'accretor' usually a very dense body like a neutron star or a black hole. The exoplanet in turn orbits the binary system. As the planet transits in front of the star there is a dip in the brightness of the X-rays. Because this planet has a large orbit this will not happen again for 70 years.

## Launch of James Webb Telescope:

It will take twelve days after launch for the telescope to be fully deployed as it heads on its way to **Lagrange Point 2**. Lagrange points are locations in space where gravitational forces and the orbital motion of a body balance each other. At a Lagrange Point the gravitational pull of the two masses (Sun and Earth) equals the centripetal force. Therefore, they can be used by spacecraft to 'hover'. L2 is located **1.5 million kilometres** directly behind the Earth as viewed from the Sun.



Credit NASA: Launch date December 22nd 2021 (Hopefully!).

It will take approximately 30 days for the telescope to travel 1.5 million kilometres. It will stay in that position and orbit the sun in line with the earth and the moon. It will be pointed out to space and shielded from any heat/light from the earth, moon and sun. The temperature difference on each side of the telescope is massive. You could almost boil water on the hot side and freeze nitrogen on the cold side! The first pictures will be available in summer of 2022.

The instrument panel under the heat shield must be cooled to cryogenic temperature (very very low temperature) for the instruments to work properly. They are cooled to absolute zero ( $-273^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). The instruments need to be cooled to suppress infrared background 'noise'. Also instruments that convert infrared light to images need to be cooled to work properly.

Webb will not just search in the visible spectrum (i.e. the light we see with our eyes), but mainly in the infrared spectrum, the light which we cannot see with our eyes. This is necessary to view the earliest galaxies and stars created after the Big Bang (about 300 million years after BB), and to see through dust and gas into the stellar nurseries. It has all the equipment to search for habitable planets. It is a huge step forward from the Hubble Telescope.

**On the 31st of December we will have travelled another 940 million kilometres around the sun.**

**Hope your Christmas is out of this world!**

# Scoil Cholmcille, Skryne

Tom Brennan

And so we come to the end of our first term. It's hard to believe that Christmas is upon us already. We started back in September amidst the hope of dwindling cases of Covid-19 and the potential for a return to normal school activities. In recent weeks this hope has faded slightly but never extinguished thanks to the cooperation, resilience and spirited attitude displayed by the entire school community but especially our children.

## Christmas

Here at Scoil Cholmcille, we are all looking forward to Christmas and a new year full of possibilities. Although our regular nativity plays and carol services in the church cannot go ahead this year, we have adapted. Instead of Christmas songs, we will have Christmas dances, plays, poems and stories. These will be recorded and available on the school YouTube channel for all the parents to enjoy. Although we can't make any trips to the theatre, we have organized for a 'panto' to come to us. The Helix's production of Little Red Riding Hood will be beamed into all classrooms via video link. Add to this Christmas jumper days and Christmas parties and we are in for a festive, fun-filled few weeks.

## Sport

Our Cumann na mBunscol Gaelic football teams will not see any competitive action before Christmas. However, both boys and girls teams have been training hard. We will be ready for action come the new year. Fifth and Sixth classes took part in a recent Leinster Schools Orienteering event in Santry Demesne on November 24th. This was the first school trip our boys and girls enjoyed in almost two years so the excitement was palpable. We had fantastic performances all round with Scoil Cholmcille winning three out of the four sections. The next event will be taking place in Cabinteely at the end of January. Two teams from Scoil Cholmcille competed in the Interschools Showjumping Competition in Killossery Lodge on December 5th. Both teams performed admirably while we also claimed first prize in the individual competition.





## Anti-bullying Week

November 15th – 19th was Anti-Bullying Week in Scoil Cholmcille. All classes reviewed and discussed the school code of behaviour, and the theme of friendship was widely explored. The children examined the importance of how being kind and treating others with respect was central to what makes our school such a happy place to be. See below for just some examples of what we got up to during the week:



## Book Fair

Christmas shopping began early in Scoil Cholmcille with the arrival of the Celtic Travelling Book Fair on November 29th. Business was brisk right throughout the week with children buying books for themselves and as presents for others. Our own resident author Mr Fanning also had a book in the fair. His latest work, *Irish Fairy Tales, Myths and Legends*, was a huge hit amongst our pupils. The school was granted a percentage of all sales which will be used to purchase books for our Accelerated Reader Programme. This programme is used to assess and motivate independent reading in our school. It was heartening to see how, in a world full of digital and technological alternatives, the simple joy of a book still endures. As Dr Seuss said: "You can find magic wherever you look. Sit back and relax, all you need is a book!"

## Colmcille 1500

On the December 7th we celebrate the 1500th birthday of Colmcille. I'm sure all readers are aware of the significance of Colmcille in our community and in our school. Scoil Cholmcille was selected to participate in the Colmcille Digital Schools' Folklore Animation Project with other schools from around the country who are also associated with our saint. This project was funded and organized by Meath County Council and the Nerve Creative Learning Centre in Derry. Mr Fanning's 4th class took on the task of creating a short, animated film on some aspect of the life of Colmcille. They received training in storyboarding, script writing and animation techniques. After several weeks of hard work, Mr Fanning's young cinematographers produced a masterpiece that wouldn't look out of place in a Hollywood studio. Their creation entitled 'Colmcille and the Loch Ness Monster' can be viewed at this link: <https://youtu.be/xyQiqzKHvWM> or by visiting our blogsite <http://skryneschool.blogspot.com/>

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the Skryne community for all their support to our school during 2021. We hope that all readers have a peaceful and happy Christmas with best wishes for a prosperous 2022.

# Pride in the Parish

## Trevor Giles

This is from 'Our Field of Dreams' compiled by Tom Curley. Reproduced with permission of the author.



I got involved helping out at under-6 level with my local club, Skryne GFC, in 2013, when my eldest son, Conor, began to show an interest in Gaelic football. As with most clubs, the kids in Skryne start off in the nursery at the age of five or six, learning the basic skills and movements of the game. There could be

anything from twenty to forty-five kids at the pitch on a Saturday morning from March right through to October. As they progress on to under-8 level they practice once a week and play their Go Games every second Saturday from mid-February to mid-October. In 2017, including tournaments and friendly matches, our under-8s played twenty games, which is loads of football for a seven or eight-year old. They are all very enthusiastic and progress well.

Thinking back, it was a different environment to the one I experienced growing up in Skryne in the 1980's. My first match for Skryne was over in Curraghera, a neighbouring club. I have only the slightest recollection of the game. It was possibly an under-10 match. My mother remembers it well, and tells me that the grass was almost up to my knees - which means that the grass was a bit long and I was a bit short. Allegedly, whatever end of the pitch I ran to, the ball found its way to the opposite end. She always has a great laugh when describing my efforts that evening. I have clearer memories of an under-10 encounter around the same time for Skryne school against Rathfeigh School, which were the two primary schools in the parish. My recollection would be of a narrow defeat in a tight game on a tight pitch at the back of Rathfeigh School and a disputed point for us that was waved wide. We emerged victorious in the return fixture on the wider expanses of the club pitch, Fr. McManus Park.

I started turning up for under-12 matches as an eight-year-old. First port of call was a quick scan to see if anyone was missing. If we had a full complement of players it meant an evening on the bench. This was always disappointing for me, but in hindsight, was the correct course of action by the mentors, usually Micky Lynch, who was a brilliant man with juveniles, as the dugout was the safest place for an eight-year old to be. I do recall one evening getting a run late on in a match over in Donore and scoring my first goal after the ball bounced over my opponent's head leaving me clean through on goal. The following year as a nine-year-old I established a regular place on the team and the year culminated with us winning the under-12 Division 2 championship in Paire Tailteann. We beat a Seneschalstown team who had in their ranks, Graham Geraghty, at that stage, a stand out player, who could solo the length of the pitch and score. We won by 0-6 to 0-5, and I remember the referee, Francis Flynn, having a word with me, early doors, after some over-aggressive play.

The next season, 1985, we reached the quarter final. My first cousin,

Denise, was getting married in London so our whole family travelled over for a two week holiday to include the wedding. It was a scorching summer in London and Wimbledon was on. I remember being captivated by a seventeen year-old Boris Becker coming from nowhere to win the men's singles playing with great energy and charisma. After much pestering, mam and dad bought me a tennis racket. I automatically assumed that dad and I would return home early for our quarter-final but this wasn't in the plans at all and I was devastated to miss the match. We were subsequently beaten and that ended my football for that summer.

Despite the lack of competitive games for my age group, we organised plenty of games for ourselves locally, playing soccer more often than Gaelic. I was lucky to have plenty of similarly aged neighbours. Within a stone's throw were Christy O'Connor, Aidan O'Connor, James Murphy, Andrew Murphy, Hugh Sharkey, Eoin Sharkey, Darren Tobin, Robert Alexander and Gerry Clarke who was known as 'Big G', because he was the smallest and youngest, of course. There was a five to six year age gap from the oldest to the youngest. These matches took place at a central venue, Dolores Tobin's field, which was at the bottom of my lane and could go on for a couple of hours. We picked the teams ourselves,

they weren't always fair but you had to get on with it. Jumpers were used as goalposts and goals were hotly disputed when the ball went over the jumper. Another cause of dispute was the ditch behind the far goals and who was to retrieve the ball when it went into the bottom of the ditch - the team who conceded the goal or the player who struck the rocket of a shot. Tackles went in and frees were claimed or denied, and often the injured party threw the head, and went home promising never to return. Looking back, I am sure these informal matches developed a natural stamina in those participating and the games invariably ended when darkness fell or hunger set in. That type of gathering only happens nowadays if a gang of friends are over for a birthday party or cousins are up for a First Holy Communion. Nowadays the kids' activities are formally organised into separate days and venues, turning the parents into the proverbial taxi driver.

After my nana died in 1979, we moved in with my papa. This was not a move that caused any stress, as he lived only two miles up the road and I was still in Skryne parish, still able to go to Skryne school. Also, Papa had a few different lawns that could be used as pitches, thirty acres of farmland to run around and explore, and sheds out the back and a loft and a hay barn that doubled as great hiding places and places to build a den. He had won a National league medal in 1933 with Meath, their first title, overcoming the then All-Ireland champions, Cavan. He won five senior championships and eight Feis Cup medals with Skryne. These achievements didn't really resonate with me at the time. As far as I was concerned, papa was a great man for bringing me down to the football field where I could kick imaginary winning points in the All-Ireland final whilst himself and Jack Johnson swept out the dressing-rooms or marked the pitch. When he himself finished playing he became a juvenile mentor, often bringing the team to away matches in the back of his lorry,

then an adult mentor, club administrator and eventual unofficial groundsman. Back then there seemed to be a match every evening which we could travel to once the homework was done - under-12, 14, 16, minor, adult - all staggered to different nights

In 1981, Skryne reached the county final. It was a bit of a family occasion. My uncle Ken was in goals for Skryne and papa got the ceremonial honour of throwing in the ball at the start of the match. I was the team mascot. Dad and I went into Navan on the Saturday and got an O'Neill's navy tracksuit in Jacksie Kiernan's sports shop. There was no such thing as a Skryne tracksuit with club crest for a six year-old back then. You just got a tracksuit as close in colour to your team. I recall walking round in the pre-match parade, holding hands with the team captain, Calm O'Rourke. The match finished level but, unfortunately, Skryne were well beaten in the replay. Indeed the 1980s was a frustrating decade for the club with five county final appearances and five defeats. Skryne were able to knock out a big gun in a quarter or semi-final but just couldn't do it in a final.

1985 was probably the hardest defeat to take in that Skryne played brilliant football, comfortably beating Summerhill, and three-in-a-row champions Watterstown, in the knockout stages before losing to O'Mahony's in the final. Dad was a senior selector in 1984, and was team coach in 1985. I remember mam and dad hardly being able to speak for a few days after that defeat, such was their disappointment. and Mam was a staunch supporter and dad had put in huge work for the two years. I can remember papa giving out about his nephew, Tom Mooney, in the build-up to the match. Tom was the chief Gaelic games writer for the *Meath Chronicle* and had predicted a Skryne victory. Papa felt this would give O'Mahonys extra motivation.

Happier memories of those county final days would be of my friends, having our Skryne flags, jerseys, headbands and a few air horns congregating up the back of the stand in Paire Tailteann. The back of the stand was all wooden planks and made a right good sound if you struck it well with the back of your heel or elbow. Keith Fox, Brian Smyth, Mick O'Dowd, Ciaran Murphy, Niall Smyth and more were the main ringleaders of those Skryne Ultras.

With dad as senior selector and coach, it afforded me the chance to attend training sessions. There were no nets behind the goals to catch the balls so the man who retrieved the balls for the players was an important man. I covered a lot of ground in those sessions and it was all made worthwhile if the likes of Pauric Finnerty, "The Player" Whyte, Liam Hayes

or indeed, any of the other players said "Thanks Trevor." Those were the first team meetings that I sat in on, squeezing in between two players, listening to what everyone was going to do on Sunday, how much it meant to them and hearing the team selection and the tactics. During those years mam would have washed the jerseys. There was a bit of work to it back then unlike now, where you just have to press a button and underfloor heating dries them overnight. Dad would have kept the footballs, water bottles, a diary of attendance at training and the team line-ups during the year. I see myself doing the same now for our under-8s.

I have no doubt that those experiences and seeing at close hand the

disappointment of those county final defeats in the parish and in my own family drove me on in my career. I played in seven county finals winning five of them. Playing a part in the 1992 victory over Seneschalstown was one of my career highlights. It was our first success since 1965. My part was mainly providing energy around the middle of the field doing a lot of work, but also kicking scorable frees. Along with my close friend, Mick O'Dowd, we shared six points from frees.

The win restored pride in the club but most importantly, a number of players who had played through the 1980s now had a county medal - players that I had fetched balls for behind the goals and listened in on their team talks, and been mascot for.

The 1993 victory was almost better again. In seven previous county finals, Skryne had lost seven times to Navan O'Mahonys. They were and are, the most decorated club in the county. It remains the only time Skryne have beaten O'Mahony's in a county final. Again the placed ball was a factor and a bit of luck. I scored two pointed frees, converted a first-half penalty. A forty-five metre free, that I was attempting to score a point from, dipped suddenly at the last minute and ended in the back of the net. The great servants from the 1980s now had two county medals including that rare final victory over O'Mahony's.

Other early memories would be of birthday parties and making a wish before blowing out your candles. I always wished that I would become captain of Skryne and Meath when I grew up. I don't think I actually wanted the task of captain, my personality is not really suited to the off-field captaincy duties of motivating other players but I suppose, I wanted to be good enough to be on those teams and be one of the best players.

Looking back I feel my upbringing fostered in me a love for my club and a hunger for success. I think pride is a huge thing to have in Gaelic games. I think it is passed on to you by your parents, grandparents and people you look up to when you are growing up. It cannot be coached; you either have it or you don't. I hope to pass on to my kids, and the underage players in Skryne a similar love for their club and parish.

**"As a six year old.../ recall walking round in the pre-match parade, holding hands with the team captain, Colm O'Rourke"**





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let Santa be the only one  
**in the Red!**



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# Halloween Bingo at Hillview Nursing Home

Name Surname



Some pictures from our recent Halloween Bingo here in Hillview Nursing Home. Great fun had by all.



**NOLLAIG  
SHONA  
DUIT**

## **A PART TIME ASSISTANT COOK is required for Hillview Nursing Home**

Qualification not necessary,  
but must be able to cook  
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and some weekends.

**Please contact Rebecca  
on 041 9825698  
or email [info@hillviewcare.ie](mailto:info@hillviewcare.ie)**



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FROSTY  
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No Prior Knowledge or experience  
is required.

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[rachaelwall@fit.ie](mailto:rachaelwall@fit.ie)**

in association with FITLtd /LMETB



**I love Christmas**

# Local Business & Professional Directory

Thanks to those who have already submitted their contact details for our business & professional directory. We know there are many more & hopefully you will submit your contact details for ease of access to your service. We will include the directory occasionally. There is no charge involved and the idea is to encourage our readers to support local.

Type of Business	Business Name	Contact Name	Phone	Email
Accountancy, Tax Advisory, Bookkeeping, Payroll	<b>Greally Accountants &amp; Tax Advisors Limited</b>	Richard Greally	<b>0872717282</b>	<a href="mailto:info@greallyaccountants.ie">info@greallyaccountants.ie</a>
Boarding kennels	<b>Happyhounds Boarding kennels Skryne, C15 XE02.</b>	Kay Palmer	<b>0872384496</b>	<a href="mailto:Kay@Happyhounds.ie">Kay@Happyhounds.ie</a>
Building	<b>Building Energy Ratings</b>	Noel Gallagher	<b>087 2405528</b>	<a href="mailto:absber@gmail.com">absber@gmail.com</a>
Cakes and cupcakes	<b>Aisling Bakes</b>	Aisling O' Connor		<a href="mailto:aislingoconnorskryne@gmail.com">aislingoconnorskryne@gmail.com</a>
Carpet & Wood Flooring	<b>The Flooring Mill</b>	Stephen	<b>086 2351954</b>	<a href="mailto:info@flooringmill.ie">info@flooringmill.ie</a>
Community Centre with 3 Rooms to rent for classes etc. Fibre Broadband	<b>RST Community Centre</b>	Susan McAuley	<b>087 3613388</b>	<a href="mailto:rstskeyne@gmail.com">rstskeyne@gmail.com</a>
Counselling/Psychotherapy	<b>Dowdstown Counselling Services Ltd</b>		<b>046 9031196</b>	<a href="mailto:dowdstowncounsellingservices1@gmail.com">dowdstowncounsellingservices1@gmail.com</a>
Credit Union	<b>Tara &amp; District Credit Union</b>	Cliona Martin	<b>046-9025871</b>	<a href="mailto:info@taracreditunion.ie">info@taracreditunion.ie</a>
Funeral Director	<b>Michael Ryan Funeral Directors.</b>	Michael Ryan	<b>086 2722870</b>	<a href="mailto:m.mjryan@gmail.com">m.mjryan@gmail.com</a>
Handyman Services	<b>HandyFix</b>	Pauric McCaughey	<b>085 1597105</b>	
Horticulture	<b>Sedum and Sage perennial plant nursery</b>	Kirsten Walker	<b>086 3699509</b>	<a href="mailto:kirstenwalk@gmail.com">kirstenwalk@gmail.com</a>
Horticulture	<b>Blooming Blossoms</b>	John O Regan	<b>0866822454</b>	<a href="mailto:johnmoregan@icloud.com">johnmoregan@icloud.com</a>
Intruder Alarms/ CCTV	<b>Orbit Alarms</b>	John O Rourke	<b>087 2642981</b>	<a href="mailto:Info@orbitalarms.ie">Info@orbitalarms.ie</a>
Leadership Coaching and development	<b>Stephen Naughton Coaching Ltd</b>	Stephen Naughton	<b>087 2225572</b>	<a href="mailto:stephen@stephennaughton.com">stephen@stephennaughton.com</a>
Picture Framing	<b>Phractured Ink</b>	Susan Caffrey	<b>086 3711844</b>	<a href="mailto:info@phracturedink.com">info@phracturedink.com</a>
Preschool	<b>Skryne Hill Preschool</b>	Alison King	<b>0868427682</b>	<a href="mailto:skrynehillpreschool@gmail.com">skrynehillpreschool@gmail.com</a> .
For All Your Printing Needs	<b>A &amp; J Print Dunshaughlin Ltd.</b>	Anne or Hazel	<b>(01)8256402</b>	<a href="mailto:info@ajprint.ie">info@ajprint.ie</a> Web: <a href="http://ajprint.ie">ajprint.ie</a>
Suppliers Of New And Quality Vehicles	<b>Ron Chawke Motors</b>	Ron Chawke	<b>086 1717159</b>	<a href="mailto:ronchawkemotors@gmail.com">ronchawkemotors@gmail.com</a>
Violin & Piano Lessons	<b>Slide into Music</b>	Laura O'Keane	<b>087 9331000</b>	<a href="mailto:lauraokane@eircom.net">lauraokane@eircom.net</a>
Water Treatment	<b>Leo Forde Water Services</b>	Fionnuala, Leo and Kate Forde	<b>01 8011360</b>	<a href="mailto:finforde@waterstore.ie">finforde@waterstore.ie</a> <a href="mailto:Kateforde@waterstore.ie">Kateforde@waterstore.ie</a>
Taxi	<b>Nicky's Taxi</b>		<b>083-0848190</b>	
Hairdresser	<b>The Salon, Oberstown</b>		<b>046-9026282</b>	
Car Service, Sare Sales, Car Finance	<b>RMC Motors. Ratoath</b>		<b>01-8256184</b>	<a href="http://www.ratoathmotorcentre.ie">www.ratoathmotorcentre.ie</a>
Bedding Plants, Brackets & Containers	<b>Candlehill Growers</b>		<b>087 130 9060</b>	
Community Services	<b>Seniors Alert Alarms</b>	Patricia	<b>086 838 8017</b>	

# Skryne Ladies Junior A Champions

OUR YEAR 2021



**Team:** Rachel Whelan, Ciara Cowley, Eimear O'Neill, Steffi Finnegan, Samantha Clarke, Lisa Browne, Nicola O'Reilly, Aisling Bownes, Caragh Conway, Catriona Keoghan, Amy O'Dowd, Ciara Smith 1-2, Niamh O'Brien, Bronagh Sheridan 2-7, Sophie Finnegan 0-1

**Subs used:** Róisín McManus, Ellie Murphy, Megan O'Brien and Eimear O'Brien, Mary Bennett, Ruth Moore, Colleen Jordan & Miriam Hayden

Well done to all the panel and management of Mick O'Dowd, Declan Smith, Gordon Geraghty and Katie White.

## SKRYNE 3-10 ST. PATS 2-9





# The League Campaign

The year got off to a great start with two teams entered in the league and championship. Both teams had a great run in the League campaign with both making it to the Finals. Unfortunately, the second team lost out to a strong Oldcastle Team. The first team met St. Ultans in their final. A cracking game of football lead to victory for the Tara ladies with a score line of 3-18 to 1-8.



Skryne Ladies B Team  
League Final

## CHAMPIONSHIP

Skryne Ladies took on rivals St. Pats in a thrilling Junior A final on the 6th of November in Trim GFC. This final promised to be a fierce battle and it did not disappoint. Conditions on the day were poor but even faced with strong wind and rain the Skryne team could not be deterred. Skryne faced the wind in the first half but dug deep and when a big first half performance was asked of them- they delivered.

The Tara side started impressively and were first to get on the score board with a point from Sophie Finnegan. After a brilliant block from full back Eimear O'Neill the ball was quickly worked up the field and when presented with an opportunity in front of the goals- Ciara Smith rattled the back of the net.

The Skryne defence were faced with a tough challenge in the first half playing against the wind but all were outstanding. They worked as a unit, stuck to their game plan, and never lost focus. Steffi Finnegan, Sam Clarke and Ciara Cowley never gave their players an inch in defence and made it impossible for St. Pats to capitalise on their significant wind advantage.

Goalkeeper Rachel Whelan was tested immediately at the start of the second quarter when St. Pats had an attack on goal. She thwarted this attack with a fantastic save. This was followed with two brilliant catches in front of goals from high ball specialist Lisa Browne- who was outstanding for Skryne.

## Championship Pathway to the Final!

Our Junior A campaign:

Round 1- Skryne 2-13 St. Ultans 1-8

Round 2- Skryne 6-15 Walterstown 0-10

Round 3- Skryne 3-10 St. Pats 2-11

Semi-Final Skryne 7-20 Moynalvey 1-15



Skryne added to their scoring tally with a fantastic goal that started with an intercept from Captain and Player of the Match - Nicola O'Reilly. She then moved the ball to Catriona Keoghan who powered through the St. Pats defence - her shot on goal was blocked by the St. Pats goalkeeper but rebounded to Bronagh Sheridan who volleyed it into the back of the net. Midfield pairing of Caragh Conway and Aisling Bownes showed huge work rate up and down the field in attack and defence.

After a fantastic first half performance Skryne led 3-4 to 1-6.

Despite playing with the wind against them St. Pats started the second half well and got two quick points. Skryne needed to strike their note and regain control of the game. The Skryne girls responded quickly and showed great determination and hard work. A super block and dispossession by Amy O'Dowd, who then moved the ball to Ciara Smyth resulted in a point from Smyth. Skryne attacked at pace and some fantastic movement and passing of the ball from Catriona Keoghan and Niamh O'Brien found gaps in the St. Pats defence leading to a brace of points from Bronagh Sheridan.

The Skryne management introduced some fresh legs at this stage- Róisín Mc Manus, Megan O'Brien, Ellie Murphy and Eimear O'Brien coming on for Skryne. These were key changes for Skryne with both O'Briens playing a vital role in defence with Eimear saving a ball off the line in the dying minutes of the game. Róisín McManus and Ellie Murphy made some brilliant runs forward controlling and retaining possession for Skryne.

With minutes to go and Skryne leading by 4 points St. Pats piled the pressure on the Skryne defence- who once again rose to the occasion. The full back line held strong, and Samantha Clarke and Nicola O'Reilly made some crucial interceptions. Lisa Browne made two amazing blocks- putting her head where some people wouldn't put a crowbar!

The teams hard work and determination paid off and when the final whistle sounded it was to be Skryne's day. All the Skryne players involved in this entertaining encounter played their part in ensuring they ended up with a victory!



## LEINSTER

On Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> of November Skryne faced a strong St. Judes team in the Leinster Quarter final. Despite the girls putting in a massive effort, it was the Dublin champions who prevailed by 3 points and subsequently went on to win Leinster. While a tough defeat to take, their only one in 2021, it will stand to the girls as they look forward to Intermediate football in 2022. Despite the loss, 2021 will live long in the memory of all those involved in the Club.

# Underage 2021



U-10 Girls 2021. 35 girls were involved in this team!

## Under 8 Girls

A super year focusing on; learning new skills, going training, playing matches, and mostly importantly....making new friends and having fun!!

Coaches: Stephen Naughton, Barry Chapman, Laura Campion, Conor Corry, Paula Fitzsimons, Doreen Looby, Cathy Lavery, Liam Hanley and David Rogan

## Under 10 Girls

2021 saw a big panel of 35 girls. They had 28 training sessions and played five matches.

Many thanks to all the coaches involved in what was a very large group. There was also a great continuity of coaches between ages as some children moved up to U10.

Coaches: Liam Hanly, Laura Campion, Vinnie Naughton, Seamus Toomey



U8 Girls 2021



# Underage 2021



U-11 Girls 2021..

## Under 11 Girls

Some girls moved up from U10 to this group with one third coming from U12 so a total of 26 girls involved in this team. We entered a two-tier league with two coaches per team. Continuing to focus on skills development but increased focus on fitness and mobility to prepare them for U12 next year. The girls were super and made huge progress during the months at U11.

Coaches: Liam Hanly, Lisa Gibbons, Michelle Nolan, Maria Hanly, Vinnie Naughton, Seamus Toomey, Emily Armstrong

## Under 12 Girls

After some lockdown challenges! Under 12 girls commenced training on the pitch in April and ran until September. With enough for two teams - Blue's and Whites. The White's got to the semi-final and after a gutsy performance were beaten by a strong Na Fianna team. The Blues were unbeaten throughout the summer in the league but narrowly lost their final to Ratoath after a great performance.

Coaches: Mick O'Dowd, Aileen O'Connor, Kenny Pentony, Ross Philips, Jenny O'Dowd, Emily Armstrong.



U12 Girls 2021



# Underage 2021



U13 Girls Winners of the Autumn League!! Skryne 1-6 Oldcastle 0-7

## Under 13 Girls

The U13 autumn league commenced in September and the squad are still training! Two teams participated in the league. The Whites put in some hard-working displays against very strong opposition. The Blues were again unbeaten in their league games and reached the final in Dunganny where they played Oldcastle. On a memorable day for this young group of players they were cheered to victory by a large Skryne support. Coming out victorious after a great battle on a scoreline of 1-6 to 7 points.

Coaches: Mick O'Dowd, Aileen O'Connor, Kenny Pentony, Ross Philips, Jenny O'Dowd, Fergus Meharg.

## Under 14 Girls:

The under 14 girls had a great season this year. A super bunch of girls who improved week on week on their technical skills. They had some very competitive matches along the way. They are all looking forward to the 2022 season.



U13 girls after their win against Oldcastle!



U13 White Team



U14 Girls 2021

# Underage 2021



U16 Division 2 Champions!! Skryne 5-10 Simonstown 1-4

## Under 16 Girls

Our U16 Championship Campaign started off with a draw against Trim. All the girls showed great determination to weather two losses and come back to secure a semi-final spot. The girls showed great skill and fight in this thrilling match. Which we won and we now faced Simonstown in the final. On Sat 4<sup>th</sup> September in Dunganny, finally, we had a full fit team for the first time in the campaign. We were the underdogs heading into the final. Captain Samantha Clarke lifted the Cup for her club. As managers we are so proud of the girls and the great resilience they showed.

## Under 15 Feile

The highlight of the year for this group was playing in Feile in Grangegodden on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> August. Each game was 24 minutes and after a marathon of games, it was back to where they started, a final against Round 1 opponents Blackhall Gaels.

Despite losing the final, our girls have done us so proud, showing so much grit, determination, and commitment in all their games. There was lots of chatting and giggles among the players throughout the day and fun memories made.



U16 Girls



U15 Girls

# Underage 2021



## Minor Girls:

The minor girls are still mid-season but so far are having a fantastic run at it. The first round saw them take on neighbours Walterstown claiming a convincing win. The team followed this up with a victory over Senechalstown and looking forward to the continued campaign.

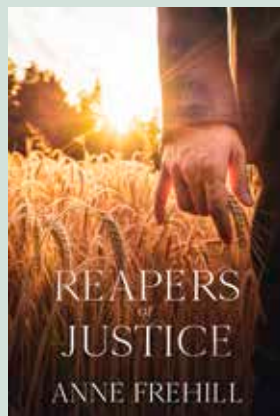
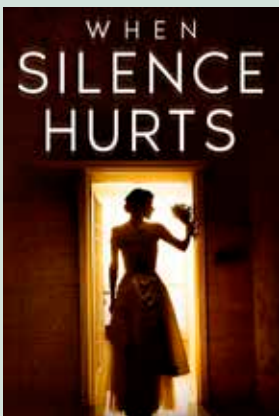
## Looking for last minute presents?

Two books of historical fiction set in County Meath with scenes featuring the former thriving Railway Station at Kilmessan, The Hill of Tara, Trim Castle, Ashbourne and more!

### My books are titled:

Reapers of Justice – set during the War of Independence.

When Silence Hurts – set in 1950's Ireland.



## Special Christmas bundle of both books for €21.99

if you phone the author Anne Frehill at (086) 770 7381.

They are also available at 20 bookshops around the country or online, where you can see their 5 ★★★★★ star reviews on Goodreads and Amazon.



**Who'd be a landlord?**

Excerpts from real life requests sent by tenants

1. The toilet is blocked, and we cannot bathe the children until it is cleared.
2. This is to let you know that there is a smell coming from the man next door.
3. The toilet seat is cracked: where do I stand?
4. I am writing on behalf of my sink, which is running away from the wall.
5. I request your permission to remove my drawers in the kitchen.

Drive carefully this Christmas. It's not only cars that can be recalled by their maker.

Be kind to your mother-in-law, and if necessary, pay for her board at some good hotel.

Did you know? By replacing potato chips with grapefruit as a snack, you can lose up to 90% of what little joy you still have left in your life.



Find the 8 differences hidden in these two seemingly identical pictures



Can you solve this Dingbats challenge? Answers to the wingdings are directly below the quiz

01 CAN CAN	02 DANC TSET NO	03 S R V E R S	04 N G O I
05 DAY DAY	06 1 D 2 R 3 A 4 C 5 U 6 L 7 A	07 GEREN NEEGR NGREE	08 NO LEFT
09 2 2	10 E L U L I C	11 HELP	12 ANIMATION

1 Tucan, 2 Square Dance, 3 Leftovers, 4 Going Round In Circles, 5 Day In, Day Out, 6 Count Dracula, 7 Mixed Greens, 8 No Left Turn, 9 Turn, 10 Lucille Ball, 11 Helpline, 12 Suspended Animation

**Answers to Dingbats challenge**

**KEEP  
THE  
RST  
AREA  
TIDY**





# Candlehill Growers



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AND A HAPPY  
*New Year*

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# Condolences

We extend our sympathy to the

- Kathleen Carty, Collierstown on the death of her brother Christy, Ardcloagh Co Kildare
- Margaret and the Shanahan family on the passing of Liam, Oberstown
- Des Manning, Greenpark on the death of his brother Terry



## Our local Business & Service Directory

Earlier in the year we asked our local businesses & service providers to submit their contact details to be added to our directory which we will include twice yearly and can be printed for easy access.

If we already have your details no need to resubmit but we invite more people to send us theirs. There is no charge for inclusion. Email your details to [Therstnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:Therstnewsletter@gmail.com). Our next directory will be in last RST of 2021 which is fast approaching

### Local Handy Man Available

#### SERVICES PROVIDED:

- Carpentry / Wooden Floors / Cabinet Making
- Radiator covers made to measure
- Shelving for Hot Presses
- Side Gates made to measure
- Under Stairs storage units
- Garden Maintenance including Hedge Cutting
- Power-washing Paths & Patios
- PVC Window & Door Maintenance
- repair of Hinges & Locks
- Supply and Fitting of Fireplaces & Stoves

#### NO JOB TOO SMALL!

**Contact: Pauric**  
**T: 046 9034846**  
**M: 085 1597105**

## SPONSORSHIP OF THE RST NEWSLETTER



**BECOME A SPONSOR**

### We require sponsors for future editions of RST Newsletter.

The cost of sponsorship is €100 which will include a half page advertisement. Interested sponsors please contact [Therstnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:Therstnewsletter@gmail.com) or telephone Patricia 086 838 8017.

Same contact details apply for advertisements and cost

**€25 per half page or €20 for regular repeated half page advertisement.**

**Smaller advertisements cost €10.**

All money raised from this source will be spent to the benefit of the community. Our initial project is to help the RST Community Centre update and further develop their website.

We take this opportunity to thank those who continue to support us through their sponsorship and advertising.

## Editorial Notice

**The Rathfeigh, Skryne and Tara newsletter ( RST ) is published by the RST committee supported by submissions from the local community.**

It provides a community news and information service to the people and organisations in the area as well as people from further afield.

The RST is provided digitally, free of charge, to anyone who provides their e-mail to the RST committee. E-mails are not shared with anyone outside the committee. Anyone or any company who would like to sponsor the RST are welcome to make a request to the committee.

Anyone who wishes to advertise anything in the RST are asked to make a small contribution to have their advert published.

The RST committee reserves the right to alter, abridge, or omit material, including advertisements submitted, if in its opinion such submissions are seen to affect the Newsletter's function to the community as a whole.

The RST is open to all Articles, letters or other submissions from contributors and are always welcome. However, such published contributions do not necessarily reflect the views of the RST committee. The RST committee are committed to trying to ensure only accurate and legal articles are published.



## Next Issue Saturday 29th January

Submissions on or before  
**Sunday 23rd January**

Contact:

Jim: (086) 383 7436

Patricia: (086) 838 8017

Email: [therstnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:therstnewsletter@gmail.com)