



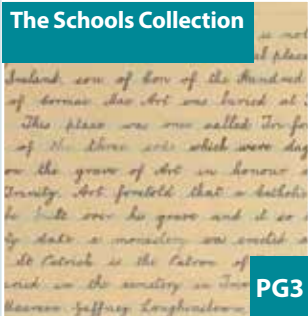
RST Community Newsletter

RATHFEIGH/SKRYNE/TARA

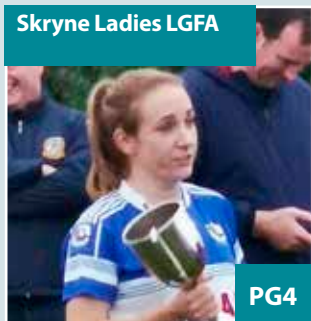
28th August 2021 • Issue No. 6



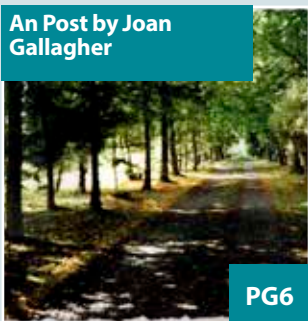
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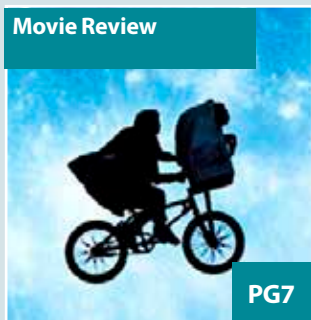
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Active First Responders – 2021 Corporate Fundraising Drive



A Chara,
23/07/2021

Active First Responders

Active First Responders are a **community based emergency response team** that are trained in dealing with and attending life threatening cardiac calls in the **Dunshaughlin, Drumree, Skryne, Rathfeigh, Tara, Culmullen, Kiltale and Moynalvey areas**. Dispatched by the National Ambulance Service when a call within the locality comes in, we **provide the essential life-saving treatment in those first few minutes of arriving on scene while waiting on the arrival of an ambulance**. We are local members of the public community, working on a rostered **voluntary basis**, who have received training in life saving interventions such as defibrillation, airway management and CPR. We can deal with these medical emergencies until the ambulance arrives.

We have **trained over 150 responders**, have 15 defibrillators with our responders and have been involved in the **training and installation of 12 public access defibrillators in the local area**. All our members are volunteers but our annual running costs of providing this vital community service ranges from €6,500 to €10,000 which is a massive challenge. So far this money has been provided through the **generosity of the public and businesses in the area**. Without these funds this amazing service would end.

2021 Fundraising Initiative

Our usual fundraising events have been significantly curtailed over the last two years due to the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic. Due to these constraints we will struggle to fund replacement batteries on a number of our public access defibrillators which are due to expire at the end of July. **I am writing to you today to ask if you are in a position to sponsor a battery with a donation of €300 as a gesture of goodwill and to ensure this vital piece of lifesaving equipment can be kept operational in our community**. If we cannot meet the costs of this equipment we will have to reduce the number of responders on call each month. Please see the attached map that shows the locations of the public A.E.D's. **Your company logo (if you wish) will be displayed on our website and Facebook page which has a sizeable local following along with a picture presenting the donation**.

This issue is sponsored by

NEWLINE MOTORS

Seeking your Support – Sponsorship and Donation Options

We understand that these are challenging times for all businesses. If your business is in a position to assist us in any way we would greatly appreciate your help.

The Active First Responders group is run by local volunteers. We continually seek funding from various sources, but **we need your help**. Every little generous donation from members of the community will help us to train, equip and continue to run the Active First Responders group.

If you are in a position to help and would like to discuss this you can contact us at **activefirstresponders@gmail.com**

We look forward to hearing from you,

Yours sincerely,
Barry O’Brien
Fundraising Officer



ACTIVE First Responders
 Irish Heart Foundation
 Heartsafe Community Award Winners




CPR AND AED'S SAVE LIVES
 Learn the Skill, Know the Location

ACTIVE First Responders have been involved in the training and installation of 12 public access AEDs in the local areas of DUNSHAUGHLIN, RATHFEIGH, SKRYNE, TARA, BATTERSTOWN, PORTERSTOWN, MOYNALVEY, CULMULLEN AND KILTALE



Your nearest public access AED is:



Public AED Locations

DUNSHAUGHLIN

- ♥ Dunshaughlin Parish Centre
- ♥ Kavanaghs Pharmacy
- ♥ The Village Grill

RST

- ♥ Tara Post Office
- ♥ Maguires Hill of Tara
- ♥ Rathfeigh National School

CULMULLEN

- ♥ St. Martins Church – Parish House

BATTERSTOWN

- ♥ Batterstown Church – Parish House

MOYNALVEY / KILTALE

- ♥ Moynalvey National School
- ♥ Kiltale Service Station
- ♥ Moynalvey Parish House

RATHBEGGAN

- ♥ Porterstown Lane – Fairyhouse Steel

www.ActiveFirstResponders.org  [activefirstresponders](https://www.facebook.com/activefirstresponders)  [ActiveFR](https://twitter.com/ActiveFR)

Serving the Areas of Dunshaughlin, Drumree, Skryne, Rathfeigh, Tara, Culmullen, Kiltale and Moynalvey

2021: Donation Payment Options

1. Payments by Cheque

All cheques should be made payable to:

‘Active First Responders Account’

And be forwarded for the attention of:
 Active First Responder’s Group Treasurer:
activefirstresponders@gmail.com

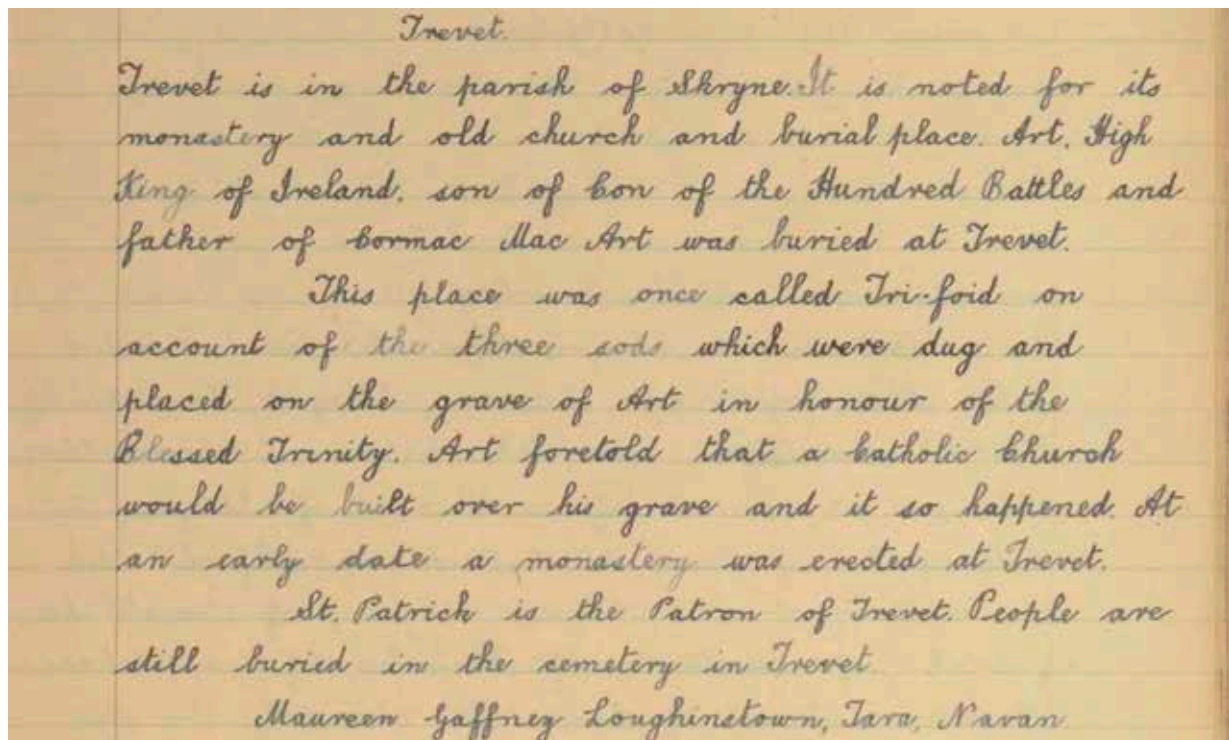
2. Electronic Money Transfer Details

Credit Union:	Credit Union Plus
Address:	Kennedy Road, Navan, Co.Meath
Account Name:	Active First Responders
Account Number:	40630909
BIC:	MNCUIE21XXX
IBAN:	IE24MNCU99103240630909

A receipt will be issued in respect of all donations received.

The Schools Collection, 1937-1939

National Folklore Collection



This month's Dúchas article, "Trevet", was written by Maureen Gaffney from Rathfeigh School.
Image and data © National Folklore Collection, UCD



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Skryne Ladies LGFA

Jenny O'Dowd



Congratulations to Skryne Ladies on winning the Division 3 League final last week. Skryne 3-17 (26) St. Ultans 1-5 (8)



Rathfeigh Entrepreneurs

Rathfeigh continues to produce budding entrepreneurs now and for the future as these two fine young men prove that with a bit of initiative and enthusiasm anything is possible.

Thank-you to everyone who stopped and purchased buns over two days - all handmade by the lads themselves.

They raised €150 euros for their chosen charity - Irish Guide Dogs for the Blind. Riley and Ellie as Ambassador dogs for the charity were there to thank the lads personally for all their hard work and generosity.

Well done lads. We are proud of you.

An Post

Joan Gallagher

In 1981 I had the good fortune to be talking to Mary at my local Post Office, and she was starting to panic about the fact that she had nobody to do the holiday duty for the local Postman, who's holidays was due to start the following Friday, so on a whim, I said I would "give it a go".

Those two weeks turned into nearly sixteen happy and rewarding years, spent with An Post. For the first time in a very long time I had a job where I got a decent salary, a good pension scheme, and holidays, with pay!!! Wow.

An Post also provide a free uniform, free Doctor and medicine scheme, a company vehicle and they even paid for our driving licence, but I think it is only fair to remember that it took a nineteen week strike by the workers about twenty six years ago, (which was before my time) to bring about the conditions that are enjoyed by the staff today.

Oh yes, we had to be up with the lark, but when you get used to it, you find it is just as easy get up at six as nine o'clock, and there is no doubt, early morning is definitely the best time of day by far. Everything seems to look and smell shiny and new, especially in spring when the Daffodils start to appear, and the trees come alive once again with their fresh green shimmering leaves.

The most memorable thing that happened during my tenure with An Post, was in November 1992, when there was a robbery at Tara Post Office and one of the robbers was shot dead.

This was very traumatic for all of us, and it took a good while to put it behind us.

My car, parked in the Post Office yard, got "caught in the crossfire" and "was shot" several times.

Another thing I clearly remember is how

difficult it was to get the Department of Justice (whose responsibility it was) to pay for the damage done to my car by the "firing squad".

It took twelve months of being pushed from Billy to Jack and about a hundred phone calls before it was settled. Lord, talk about trying to squeeze blood from a stone.

an extract from Joan Gallagher's book "Milestones along the Journey of Life"

A MEMORIAL MASS

for Joan, will take place at 6pm in Rathfeigh Church on

Saturday 25th September.

A recording of the mass will be shared online at a later date.

Newline Motors

- **Car towing, jumpstarts, battery and wheel changes- all your breakdown needs.**
- **Mishaps with Fuel**
- **24/7 recovery & road side assistance.**
- **Tyres, service all makes and models and Carwash open 6 days a week.**

Located across from Rathfeigh school, We would just like to thank our local customers for all the support over the last few years.

**Call Kevin or Paul today on
0876 226 054 / 087 349 2363**



Skryne Community Alert

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms.

Please take the time this weekend to check all your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.



Firstly, check the expiry date on your alarm. Alarms become less effective after their expiry date and should be replaced. The installation or expiry date should be marked on a label on your alarm. Useful life is typically 5-10 years depending on the manufacturer.

Secondly, if your alarms are battery powered, test that the battery is still working. This is done via the test button on the smoke or carbon monoxide alarm. If the battery needs replacing, please do it without delay.

Remember these alarms can save lives if they are properly maintained. They are inexpensive – please consider installing a smoke alarm in each habitable room of your house, and at least one CO alarm per floor. Combined smoke/CO alarms can be a good option to consider.

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Movie Review

Darragh O'Dowd

This time we're going to look at sci-fi, a genre which has produced many great books, movies and TV shows. Since then we've had many great sci-fi classics, and here are just a few of them. Here is my top three, must-see sci-fi movies;



Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back (1980)

Even for anyone who hasn't seen the Star Wars movies (watch them right away!), they will know most of the quotes, characters and scenes from this movie. Darker than the previous fun space adventure that was Star Wars, Empire adds more depth and pathos to its central characters all the while delivering phenomenal action like the opening Hoth battle or the climatic lightsaber duel between Darth Vader and Luke Skywalker. The best film of the series and one of the greatest movies of the 80s, Empire Strikes Back is epic and action-packed filmmaking.

E.T. the Extra Terrestrial (1982)

It's crazy to think that one of the most famous sci-fi movies of all time almost didn't have an alien at all, as Steven Spielberg originally planned for this film to be called 'A Boy's Life' and be based on his own childhood. But by adding the titular Extra Terrestrial, E.T. further deepened the story of a lonely boy and also introduced one of the most iconic movie characters of all time. Full of great performances, brilliant direction, and a beautiful, sweeping score by John Williams, E.T. is a joyous and heartwarming film that is the perfect movie to watch with your family.



Jurassic Park (1993)

Jurassic Park came out in 1993 and was the first movie to use major special effects, which still hold up better than many of its imitators. His first major thriller since 1975's Jaws, Spielberg makes Michael Crichton's novel into a pulse-pounding adventure across a dino-infested island. One of my favourite childhood movies (as I had an obsession with dinosaurs), Jurassic Park's rip-roaring action, iconic characters and amazing CGI are just as breathtaking now as they were back in the 90s.

If you're looking for more sci-fi, check out Aliens, Terminator 2: Judgement Day, Back to the Future, Close Encounters of the Third Kind, The Terminator, Inception and the rest of the Star Wars series.



Rathfeigh National School

Seamus Tansley

New Beginnings

“A new school year means new beginnings, new adventures, new friendships and new challenges. The slate is clean and anything can happen”. (Denise Witmer).

Welcome back. We opened the doors for the new school year last Thursday on a beautiful morning. The nice weather reflected the positive mood as there was a buzz of excitement amongst all the children as they mingled with their friends again after the summer holidays. A special welcome to our new Junior Infants as they start a new chapter in their lives. They all settled in really well with some parents looking more nervous than their children! I know how it feels as I remember vividly being nervous when my daughter started in Junior Infants in Rathfeigh in 2012. I needn't have worried as she came home from school on her first day having made new friends and a big smile on her face. All children are different and they will settle in to their new surroundings in their own time. If you can have any concerns about your child settling in please contact the Junior Infant teacher Mrs Vaughan.

Covid-19

This time last year we were going into the unknown as we re-opened with numerous guidelines from the government regarding the safe re-opening of schools. Vaccinations weren't developed at that stage and as a result there was a lot of nervousness among teachers, parents and children in relation to the virus. With over 80% of the adult population now full vaccinated we are in a much better place. Of course the children aren't vaccinated and with the very high daily Covid-19 infections we must be more vigilant than ever. Please refer to the e-mail I sent to parents/guardians last week regarding the procedures that will be in place in our school this year. We hope this year has no school closures as a result of Covid-19 as the last two years were impacted negatively by the unprecedented closures. In the event of school closures this year due to Covid-19 or any other school closures (school closed due to snow etc) the following timetable will be in operation.

Teacher	Zoom	Edmodo	Zoom	Edmodo
Ms Reynolds	9.15-9.45	10.00	12.15-12.45	1.00
Mr Tansley	10.00-10.30	10.45	1.00-1.30	1.45
Ms O'Donoghue	10.45-11.15	11.30	1.45-2.15	2.30
Mrs Vaughan	11.30-12.00	12.15		

Sensory Room

In March of this year the idea of a sensory room in our school was in its infancy. With Mrs Vaughan and Nicola (SNA) co-ordinating the project serious momentum developed behind the project. Our Parents' Association got behind the project and their "Relay Marathon" fundraiser raised over £3000 which exceeded even the most optimistic expectations. We are delighted to announce that the Sensory Room is

now complete and we are looking forward to all our pupils benefiting from it. Pictures of the Relay Marathon can be viewed on the school website (rathfeighns.org).

A sensory room is a space designed to help an individual with sensory issues learn to regulate their brain's negative reactions to external stimuli by developing coping skills for these experiences. We hope to have an official opening of the Sensory Room in September.

Confirmation

Confirmation for our Graduation class of 2021 will take place this Tuesday August 31st at 5pm in St. Mary's Church in Navan. We hope the children and their families have an enjoyable and spiritual day. We also wish the children the best of luck as they start on their journey in various secondary schools.

School Grounds

The school grounds have always been commented upon positively not just by people in the Rathfeigh school community but by visitors to the school. We have always had great caretakers who always take pride in their work. In Jackie's absence Ingrid continues to do an amazing job keeping the school and school grounds to a very high standard. Thank you Ingrid. Ingrid will continue as caretaker while Jackie is absent. We wish Jackie a speedy recovery.

Gaelic Football/Rugby Training

We hope to have Damien (Gaelic Football) and Kevin (Rugby) back in the school coaching the children in the different disciplines over the coming weeks. The children always enjoy the fun approach that the coaches bring to the training sessions and we look forward to their return in September.

The Cumann na mBunscol Gaelic Football and rounders' competitions were cancelled last year due to Covid-19. The children always look forward to training for and participating in these competitions. We hope to have Gaelic Football training during and after school for boys and girls during September regardless of whether the competitions go ahead or not this year.

Book Rental

Thanks to Bridget for coordinating the Book Rental Scheme again this summer. The children were delighted to get their new books covered and labeled on Thursday. Please remind the children your son/daughter to take care of their books as some books will be used again next year. Thanks Bridget.

Teamwork and Positivity

We have a great staff in Rathfeigh. This in conjunction with the great support from the Board of Management and Parents' Association results in everyone in the school community

working towards the common goal of enabling the children to reach their full potential as unique individuals. We approach this year with optimism despite the cloud of Covid-19 never being too far away. We're looking forward to another great year in our school and a positive approach will be central to everything we do in the school.

“Yesterday is not ours to recover, but tomorrow is ours to win or lose” (Lyndon B. Johnson).

We wish everyone in the Rathfeigh school community a happy, and most importantly, a safe year.

We also wish everyone involved in the RST continued success and we thank them for their continuing support of Rathfeigh National School. Thanks.

**KEEP THE
RST AREA
TIDY**



A thing of beauty



is a joy forever.

Billy...our little ray of sunshine.



Night Sky September 2021

by Tony Canavan

Sunrise: 6:40 am

Sunset: 8:15 pm

Moon:

September 7th – New Moon (no moon visible)

September 20th – Full Moon

September 13th – First Quarter (half-moon visible)

September 29th – Last Quarter (half-moon visible)

To view the night-sky you need to be outside for at least 20 mins to allow your eyes to become accustomed to the dark, with all background lighting switched off and if possible away from towns. In my recent observations of the sky at 230 am all of the below celestial objects were visible from Skryne, with the naked eye.

During August the nights are longer and darker and astronomical viewing is improving. Planets like **Jupiter** and **Saturn** will appear at higher altitudes and in the evening sky, as the tilt of the earth changes. Jupiter is particularly bright, as it is in opposition, with its moons visible through a good pair of binoculars and small telescope.

September 2nd: 10 pm Great views of Jupiter and Saturn, remaining in the night sky until about 3 am. Above Saturn is the star **Altair**, easily recognised as it is flanked by two stars. At a higher altitude 75° and slightly more to the west is **Vega** with **Deneb** further to the East (azimuth 120° altitude 75°) together with Altair they form the summer triangle.

Throughout September **Venus** is visible in the evening sky after sunset. September 3rd – 7th 8:30 pm Venus passes close to the star Spica (need binoculars for Spica). Mercury is also setting after sunset but has a very low altitude so difficult to see. Around the 9th/10th September **Venus** will be accompanied by a small crescent moon. You will notice that each evening the Moon ‘falls back’ about 12° from day to day, rising later each night.

Throughout September **Jupiter and Saturn** are clearly visible every night in the night sky.

Throughout September you can view our nearest galaxy **Andromeda**. Best after 10 pm and even better viewing through the night as the sky gets darker. Follow the **V** shape point of Cassiopeia and you will see a bright red star call **Mirach** (it is a distinctly red/orange colour as it is a red class M giant). Follow a short line up from this star to Andromeda. Andromeda is circumpolar, it never sets, but rises and falls in the sky as it ‘orbits’ the Pole star (Polaris).

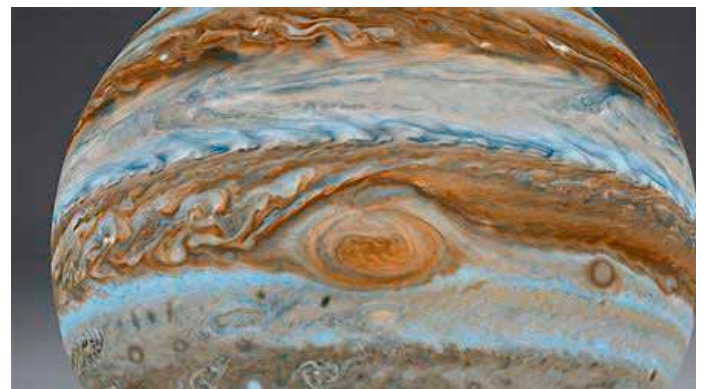
If you want to see the Milky Way then I advise about 2 am on a dark night (definitely no moon) and you will see the Milky Way overhead running from East to West through Cassiopeia and passing between the very bright stars Vega and Altair.

September 22nd: Equinox: An equinox is the point at which

the sun sits directly above the earth’s equator causing night and day to be of the same duration. It is also the halfway point between the summer solstice and the winter solstice. The northern hemisphere is tilting away from the sun as we move towards winter. During the French Revolution the French Government designed a new calendar starting at midnight on the day of the Autumnal Equinox. It was abolished by Napoleon.

September 25th: Close approach of Moon, Jupiter and Saturn.

Jupiter: The Sentinel also known as the Godfather.



Jupiter’s Great Red Spot: Measuring in at 10,159 miles (16,350 kilometers) in width (as of April 3, 2017) it is 1.3 times as wide as Earth. The storm has been monitored since 1830 and has possibly existed for more than 350 years. In modern times, the Great Red Spot has appeared to be shrinking.

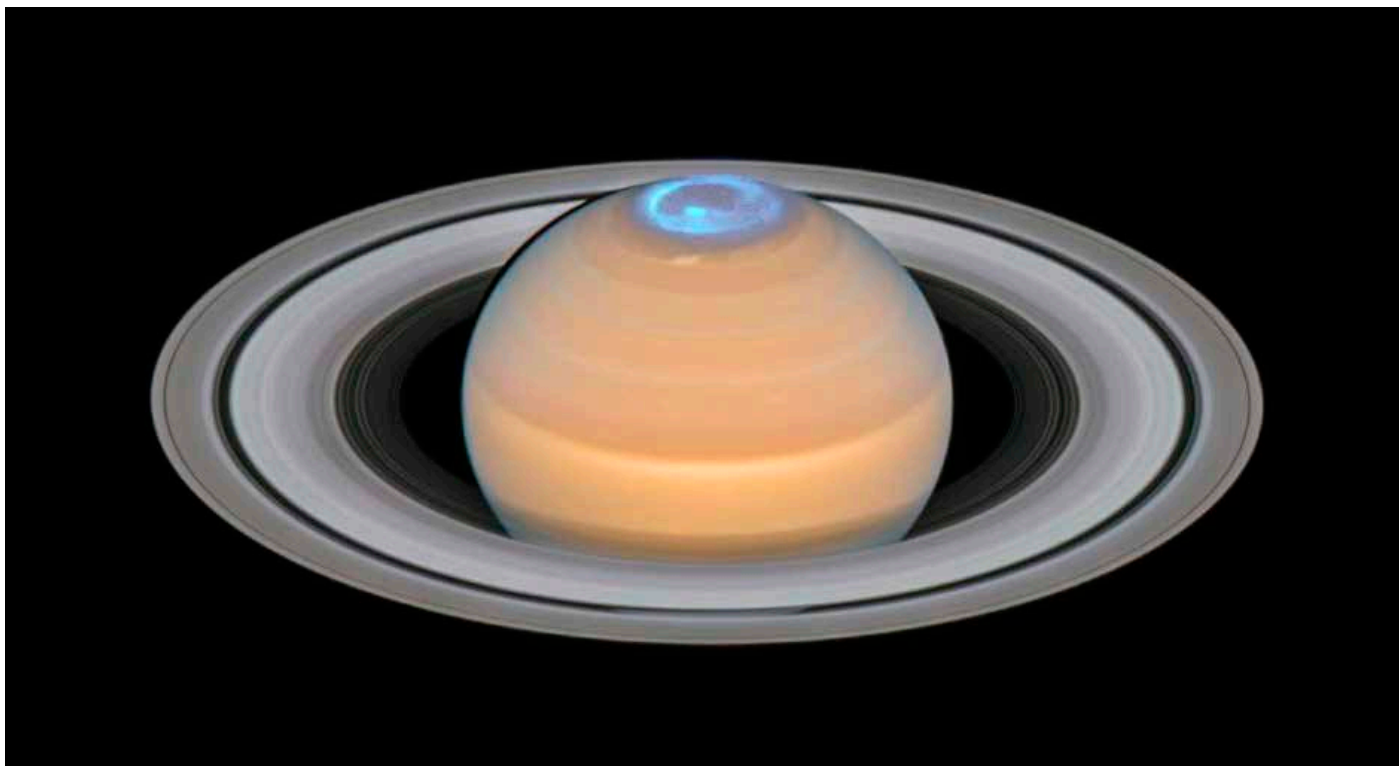
Jupiter is a gas giant, a swirling ball of hydrogen and helium and it is possible to fit 1300 earths inside it. Because of its size it has a huge gravitational pull across the Solar System. When the sun first ignited 5 billion years ago it revealed **Jupiter**, the first of the planets, as it swept up the debris left behind after the formation of the sun. There was an asteroid belt between Jupiter and the sun, a graveyard of failed planets. About 4.5 million years ago Jupiter moved towards the Sun through the asteroid belt. Jupiter cleared a path through the gas and dust scattering the debris that would have allowed the giant asteroid Ceres to grow. It’s faith was sealed and its ocean froze and was buried beneath its crust. **Jupiter** approached Mars and Earth as they were forming, scattered gas and dust in all directions which is why Mars is a very small planet. And then **Jupiter** stopped, why? Because another

gas giant was forming further out in space, **Saturn** and was exerting a new gravitational pull on **Jupiter**, causing both gas giants moving back out into space, allowing the inner rocky planets to continue their formation. **Jupiter** scattered icy water on asteroids and comets towards the earth. All this had to happen to create a planet-like earth. It is not unreasonable to assume that earth-like planets are rare. However planets have been discovered that may be even

more receptive to life than earth. We will learn much more with the unfolding and operation of the James Webb telescope next year (successor to Hubble).

Jupiter to this day controls the Asteroid belt as it dances to its tune. And it was one of these asteroids that Jupiter dislodged that wiped out the dinosaurs and 75% of all species died in one sulphur winter. So were it not for **Jupiter** dinosaurs might still be here.

Jupiter acts as a sentinel protecting the earth from incoming asteroids and comets. In 1989 the **Galileo Orbiter** was launched and three years later the large comet **Shoemaker-Levy 9** approached our solar system. Jupiter caught it in its gravitational field, broke it apart and pulled the pieces in. This was the first comet strike ever witnessed. It is a debt that could be recalled at any time.



Cassini: A joint endeavour of NASA, ESA, and the Italian Space Agency, Cassini was launched in 1997 with the ESA Huygen's probe. It arrived at Saturn in 2004 and started a string of flybys of Saturn's moons. It launched the probe Huygen's onto the surface of Titan (Saturn's largest moon) before making repeated dives through Saturn's rings and eventually entered Saturn's atmosphere.

To the visible eye the north pole of **Saturn** is not quite as blue as this. It is actually a storm system with the centre at the pole. The blue area is actually hexagonal in shape. Scientists think it is a wandering jet stream with a velocity of 220 mph. It folds into a six-sided shape because the hexagon is a stationary wave that guides the path of the gas in the jet.

Best known for its fabulous ring system, **Saturn** is the sixth planet from the sun

and the second largest in the solar system. Like Jupiter it is a gas giant and is composed of similar gases including hydrogen, helium and methane. The layers of gas get denser farther into the planet. Deep into the planet the hydrogen becomes metallic.

Saturn's rings are made mostly of chunks of frozen ice with some rocks and dust, left over from the early formation of the planet. Saturn with its powerful gravitational force broke up a nearby moon. The rings are amazingly thin at about 10 meters but stretch out for more than 120,700 kms.

Saturn has 82 moons of all sizes and shapes. Largest is **Titan** where there are lakes of methane gas. On Aug 31st, September 15th and October 1st you can view Titan in a small telescope to the West of Saturn and to the East on 7th /23rd Sept. **Enceladus** (Saturn Moon) appears to have an ocean below

its frozen surface. **Enceladus** may be the most likely candidate in our solar system to harbour microbial life forms. It has a salt-water ocean and thermal vents on its ocean floor similar to the earth. This was confirmed by the Cassini probe recently.

Saraswati supercluster is one of the largest known structures in the nearby universe. It is 4 billion light years away from Earth and may contain the mass equivalent of over 20 million billion suns. It is 650 million light years across, (so light will take 650 million years to traverse its diameter.) Light from our sun takes 8 minutes to reach us. It has a mass of 2×10^{16} solar masses. It has 43 galaxy superclusters having billions of stars, planets and other bodies and gases and dark matter. It was only discovered in 2017.

Reflection

Matthew Byrne

It was the ninth of July and I had just arrived back home from the 'accident'. As the freshly painted oak door closed behind me, I could distinctly hear the chiming of the town hall clock signal three. My family barely wanted anything to do with me, my swollen leg in a powder-white cast and my body cocooned in a wheelchair. Bye, bye promotion to head librarian! On top of all of that, they were convinced that I was crazy. I still had the blurry, out of focus, printed picture of Bert (the other librarian) showing him stealing from the rare books room. The library CCTV camera was as ancient as the building and too out of focus to present as evidence. It was now positioned on my desk to a backdrop of the busy afternoon square seen through the matching oak, wooden-framed window.

My third-floor apartment, 22B, was situated at the opposite end of the town square from the library. Of its three rooms, kitchen, bedroom and sitting room, it was the latter in which I spent the most time. Its wall length window had a perfect view of the daily lives of my fellow citizens. As my leg was to remain incarcerated in its jail-like cast for the next three weeks, I positioned my James Bond calendar on the opposite wall so the ritual of crossing off the days could begin.

Later that sunny memorable Monday, I heard the tell-tale thump of the postman's boots along the dark oak floors of the corridor. My parcel had finally arrived! The long-awaited Sony x 1,000 zoom camera together with the prized original cut of *Rear Window*. To my surprise, on top of the parcel lay a windowless brown envelope addressed to me. There was no return address. After carefully opening it, the contents read as follows:

Mr. Hercule Holmes,

I believe you. If you ever need anything, text the number below.

.....

Your contact at the library.

To heighten the mystery, all the words had all been clipped from the previous day's *Times* and *Independent*. I sat dumbfounded in my wheelchair staring intermittently between the wall and the letter. The old, bucket-of-bolts microwave went off signalling that the first of many microwave dinners was ready. I set the letter down gently beside the ever-present photo and pondered the hopeful connections they had to each other.

It was squid-ink black outside by the time the credits rolled on *Rear Window*. The idea had not just been planted but had steadily grown over the hours spent googling at the box. I now knew how to prove that I wasn't crazy and to catch a thief.

As the dawn chorus started its first movement the next morning, I was ready to start my hunt. Positioning myself in the dead centre of the window, I had my camera lens poking secretly above its ledge and the omnipresent picture to my right. Bert was a man of routine and kept precisely to his meticulously laid out daily schedule. My perfect sightline only revealed the inner working of the library's lobby and staff room, not the rare books room. This was a windowless, dark and airless room, to the left of the lobby, used to preserve the books as best as possible. To overcome this kink in my plans, I had the perfect solution: mirror, mirror on the wall.

I mused over the letter for a while before eventually succumbing to my curiosity. With trembling hands, I typed the following to my 'inside man':

Mirror. Fourth window from right. Ground floor. On wall.

After reviewing it a multitude of times, my shaking thumb pressed send. "Let's see what tomorrow brings." I muttered to myself. My dreams that night were a kaleidoscope of *Snow White*, talking books and suitcases.

The following morning, my early bird routine was more revealing than I had hoped. The mirror shined back its greetings through my camera lens. I shouted my thanks and frightened the crows perching on the ledge above me. As the queue of booklovers had not yet formed outside the library, only one person could have planted the mirror on the wall. My inside man was revealed: Joe, the security guard.

The rest of the morning and afternoon was unexceptional and monotonous. The clock had just struck six and I could see from my window that Bert still hadn't left for home. This tingled both my curiosity and suspicion as he would normally have left the building by five in all the time I had known him. The library lobby and staff room were eerily quiet, could Bert be in the rare books room? To indulge my curiosity, I trained my camera on the mirror. After what seemed like an eon, and with my hand stiff with numbness, he did indeed exit the room, but in my state of turmoil and excitement, I only took a photo at x50 zoom. The resulting photo was no clearer than its cousin on the desk. A giant, brown, muddled and (very) blurry blob was the centrepiece of the crowning achievement of my day's stakeout.

Now in my bottomless pit of shame, I retreated to the kitchen to retrieve another ready-made meal and returned for another whodunit: *North by Northwest*.

The next day, my sleuthing was interrupted as *the family* appeared at my door. I considered not letting them in. If it had not been for Miss. Marple, my neighbour, next door over with her perpetually long nose, they would have stayed in the dark and narrow corridor. For the next ten excruciating hours – even through microwave concocted ready-made pasta – I was interrogated. After they finally decided I was most certainly, undoubtedly, crazy, they left. Their malodour would linger for days to come.

Only at that late hour did I get an opportunity to resume my stakeout through the window. What I caught sight of sent me into a spiral: Joe in deep conversation with Bert! Maybe I was actually crazy after all. I rubbed my eyes frantically but still the image remained. Do they know? How much? For how long? Am I in danger? Will they come here? All the damning photos were quickly thrown into my top desk drawer, the curtains pulled across forcefully and my trembling body flopped onto the bed. Sleep did not visit me that night. I was haunted by that image throughout the night.

The following morning the inevitable itch under the cast had started so armed with an old palette knife from the ever-kind Mrs. Hudson across the hall, I positioned the chair with the cumbersome passenger of my body in front of the window. I was like a tiger ready to pounce. The camera was tightly duct-taped to a makeshift tripod of three well-worn wooden spoons, set to burst mode and aimed head on at the mirror. I waited. Waited. Waited. Waited.

The red evening sun had just starting to disappear below the buildings to my right when Bert finally emerged from the rare books room. With the shutter button held down, I took photos to my heart's content. When the adrenalin rush was over, I wheeled myself away from the window and painstakingly sifted through each and every photo for my prize. I had him! Twenty long range – in focus unlike

its predecessors – pictures of Bert hurriedly stuffing a first edition of *It Had to Be Murder* by Cornell Woolrich into his big brown trench coat. In one foul swoop, after days and nights of torment, I caught him.

A phone call to my friend in the police department and the full story was revealed. Within two months, Bert Norman Bates was living behind bars cleaning showers and I had finally taken up my position behind the new desk in the library. Hello, head librarian! Joe Jefferies turned out to be an undercover agent and unfortunately is no longer an employee of the library. Most of the books were recovered in the end, but a few remain missing to this day. One question still lingers: for whom was Bert working?

The Power of Words

Anne Frehill

On a glorious summer's morning in July we packed our cases, which had lain idle since the start of COVID 19 and headed south for a holiday. In a small town, not quite in the centre of Ireland we stopped at a quaint but busy hotel. There we enjoyed delicious lattes with sticky pastries under a pretty parasol which protected us from the blazing sun.

For a few minutes I closed my eyes, as I took in the sounds all around me. The wonderful laughter of children playing in a nearby park, the toll of the church bells further up the street, earlier we had passed by as a group of mourners lined up outside the church in keeping with restrictions. And chatter from nearby tables as a group of cyclists from Tipperary tucked into "their full Irish breakfasts." Smiling to myself, it struck me that it was like a scene from some Italian town or village that I had visited over the years while on holiday until I heard the unmistakable lilt of a Cork accent. So, I opened my eyes to see two senior citizens, both females, sitting just a few tables away. They were gossiping about some acquaintance called Bridie and it was clear that there was no love lost between them and the unfortunate Bridie. The older of the pair, a bespectacled lady, was ranting about some perceived slight she had received earlier that morning from the woman in question.

Raising her voice, she said. "I watched her as she strode down the street with her head in the air..."

Her friend interrupted her and uttered an ejaculation with a menacing laugh.

"God speed her!"

The remark resonated with me and brought me back to my days at university, when I had studied folklore with Dr Kevin Danaher.

In earlier centuries on entering a house one said, "God save all here;" and when the visitor was leaving he would be wished, "God be with you". However, if he had not been welcome or if there was some animosity between them he might be wished "God speed you" when he was out of hearing!

The first time that I heard this used was around the day of my 6th birthday when Maudie, a friend of the family, long deceased, decided to treat me to a day in Dublin. After we had spent time in Hector Grey's famous shop in Upper Liffey Street we strolled to Henry Street and enjoyed the wonderful counter displays at Woolworth's. Then Maudie took me to Moore Street where she pointed at 6 of the reddest apples on display in a stall that I had ever seen. A middle aged woman with a cigarette dangling from the corner of her mouth nodded and handed Maudie a white paper bag already filled with apples. They talked about the weather while money exchanged hands.

The apples looked delicious as Maudie put the little bag into the large shopping basket that she carried everywhere. I begged her to give me an

apple at the corner of Moore Street and with a smile she dug deep into the bag. However, I shall never forget the look of horror which distorted her features when she extracted not one but three rotten apples from that bag of six. Grabbing me firmly by the hand she did a u turn and marched me back up the length of Moore Street until we reached the same stall with the array of tempting apples.

Then aiming for the stall holder's suede bootees with tufts of fur peeping over the edges, Maudie flung the rotten apples in her direction as she demanded the return of her schilling.

The Dubliner refused to return the money and instead replaced the offending apples with fresh ones albeit a dull green in colour.

Apoplectic with rage, Maudie grabbed the paper bag from her and shouted.

"God speed you. And may the devil sweep your husband."

Then to peals of laughter from the onlookers Maudie winked at me as we took off at a brisk pace for Henry Street.

On reaching Busaras we discovered that there was almost one hour to wait for the next bus that would pass through Dunshaughlin. So, we sat on a seat and waited while I watched from underneath my eyelashes as my minder muttered to herself about the audacity of Moore Street traders.

Other greetings from my childhood holidays in Galway that I can recall relate to work. Work often began, "In the name of God and often continued or ended with thanks to Him.

While a passerby always said, "God bless the work," and the people labouring in the fields or in the bog answered, "You, Too."

Finally, at the end of the day in times past people said, "lord between us and darkness," while on lighting a candle they said, "The light of heaven to our souls."

They were I suppose a strange mixture of superstition and religiosity which has no place in our 21st century but still even today there are people who will not sit thirteen at a table or stay in a room at a hotel numbered 13! There are even people who still believe that a black cat is lucky or indeed unlucky. And in the 1970's I can recall some people who believed that lighting three cigarettes from one match was guaranteed to bring the worst possible luck.

That's all folks but be sure that you don't walk under a ladder anytime soon!

A Garden Story

By

Frank, You know all about gardens and nature. What in the world is going on down there on the planet? What happened to the dandelions, violets, milkweeds and stuff I started eons ago? I had a perfect no maintenance garden plan. Those plants grow in any type of soil, withstand drought and multiply with abandon. The nectar from the long lasting blossoms attracts butterflies, honey bees and flocks of songbirds. I expected to see a vast garden of colours by now. But, all I see are these green rectangles.

St. FRANCIS:

It's the tribes that settled there, Lord. The Suburbanites. They started calling your flowers 'weeds' and went to great lengths to kill them and replace them with grass.

GOD:

Grass? But, it's so boring. It's not colourful. It doesn't attract butterflies, birds and bees, only grubs and sod worms. It's sensitive to temperatures. Do these Suburbanites really want all that grass growing there?

ST. FRANCIS:

Apparently so, Lord. They go to great pains to grow it and keep it green. They begin each spring by fertilizing grass and poisoning any other plant that crops up in the lawn.

GOD:

The spring rains and warm weather probably make grass grow really fast. That must make the Suburbanites happy.

ST. FRANCIS:

Apparently not, Lord. As soon as it grows a little, they cut it, sometimes twice a week.

GOD:

They cut it? Do they then bale it like hay?

ST. FRANCIS:

Not exactly, Lord. Most of them rake it up and put it in bags.

GOD:

They bag it? Why? Is it a cash crop? Do they sell it?

ST. FRANCIS:

No, Sir, just the opposite. They pay to throw it away.

GOD:

Now, let me get this straight. They fertilize grass so it will grow. And, when it does grow, they cut it off and pay to throw it away?

ST. FRANCIS:

Yes, Sir.

GOD:

These Suburbanites must be relieved in the summer when we cut back on the rain and turn up the heat. That surely slows the growth and saves them a lot of work.

ST. FRANCIS:

You aren't going to believe this, Lord. When the grass stops growing so fast, they drag out hoses and pay more money to water it, so they can continue to mow it and pay to get rid of it!



Congratulations to Sarah & Sean Russell who celebrated the Diamond Jubilee of their wedding recently. They were married in Newbridge on 7th August 1961.



**KEEP THE
RST AREA TIDY**





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

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09	10	11	12

1 Odds And Ends, 2 Wise Guys, 3 Long Overdue, 4 Take From The Rich And Give To The Poor, 5 Barber, 6 Whos In Charge, 7 Getting Away From It All, 8 Putting The Past Behind You, 9 The Aftermath, 10 Searching High And Low, 11 Count On Us, 12 Foreign Language

Answers to Dingbats challenge



Some Awful Jokes

A man was sitting on the edge of the bed, watching his wife, who was looking at herself in the mirror. Since her birthday was not far off, he asked what she'd like to have for her birthday.

'I'd like to be eight again,' she replied, still looking in the mirror.

On the morning of her birthday, he arose early, made her a nice big bowl of Coco Pops, and then took her to Adventure World theme park. What a day! He put her on every ride in the park; the Death Slide, the Wall of Fear, the Screaming Roller Coaster, everything there was.

Five hours later they staggered out of the theme park. Her head was reeling and her stomach felt upside down. He then took her to a McDonald's where he ordered her a Happy Meal with extra fries and a chocolate shake.

Then it was off to a movie, popcorn, a soda pop, and her favourite candy, M&M's. What a fabulous adventure! Finally she wobbled home with her husband and collapsed into bed exhausted.

He leaned over his wife with a big smile and lovingly asked, 'Well Dear, what was it like being eight again?'

Her eyes slowly opened and her expression suddenly changed. 'I meant my dress size, you STUPID fool!!!!'

The moral of the story: Even when a man is listening, he is going to get it wrong.

This morning I saw a neighbour talking to her cat and you could tell she thought the cat understood every word. I came back home and told my dog. We got a big laugh out of that.

A woman went into the kitchen to find her husband swatting flies. "I killed three female and two male ones," he said triumphantly. She asked him how on earth he knew that. "Easy. Two were on my beer can, and three were on the phone."*

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We extend our sympathy to the

- O'Boyle family, Skryne on the death of Kevin
- Alma Murphy, Skryne on the death of her father John Keogan
- Finola and the Cahill family, Oberstown on the death of John
- Peggy and the Farnan Family, Oberstown on the death of Jimmy

KEEP THE RST AREA TIDY



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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 25th September

Submissions on or before
Sunday 19th September

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