

NEWSLETTER

Spring
2018



Est. 1949

**Laois Association
Dublin**

Cumann na Laoiseach
Baile Átha Cliath

www.laoisindublin.com

MISSION STATEMENT

'The purpose of the Laois Association is to foster the origins of Laois people of all traditions and of all ages in Dublin, through cultural, educational, sporting and social contact, developing the traditions of the past while embracing and contributing to the Ireland of the New Millennium'

WELCOME to the Spring 2018 Newsletter of the Laois Association, Dublin. We hope you enjoy the photographic memories of 2017. As always, the Chairman and the President commend to you the events planned for 2018 and ask for your continued support.

"Yes, Minister"



Only the second recipient of the Association's Lifetime Achievement Award, Charlie Flanagan, TD (then Minister for Foreign Affairs, now Minister for Justice and Equality) receives his Award from our President and Chairman on 11th April last. *More inside ...*



"Well done, good and faithful servant(s)" - Mathew 25:23



Fr. PJ Cunningham



Tony Brophy
(Former Treasurer)

Sadly missed, not forgotten.

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2018 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sunday 25th March 2018 - 12.30pm

National Gallery of Ireland

(Guided Tour)

(Followed by Pub Lunch)

May / June 2018

TRAIN TRIP (Galway City)

October 2018

AUTUMN LUNCH

Monday 19th November 2018

(Jackson Court Hotel, Harcourt Street)

ECUMENICAL SERVICE & AGM

Thursday 6th. December 2018

(Jackson Court Hotel, Harcourt Street)

CHRISTMAS PARTY

Members will be notified of final details in advance of each event

If you haven't already done so, please pay your membership NOW - by EFT, by Bank Giro or by cheque, thank you.

**- Colm Healion, Membership Officer
(t: 01-8332570)**



The Laois Association lost a great friend when the co-celebrant for many years of our annual Ecumenical Service, Fr. P.J. Cunningham died at the Carmelite Friary, Gort Mhuire on the 10th May 2017 after a short illness which he bore with patience and serenity. His interest in our Association, his warmth & gentleness and his wonderful playing of his beloved tin whistle at our services will be fondly remembered by all our members.

Patrick John Cunningham was the 3rd eldest of eight children born to Elizabeth and Patrick Cunningham at Timahoe, Co. Laois, his mother's home parish. The family later moved to Mountmellick, his father's home town. He attended primary school there and often told me I was the first person to tell him the 2nd World War had ended (May 1945). We shared the same birthday - his 28/02/1936, mine - 28/02/1938. After primary school, PJ went as a boarder to Terenure College. On passing the Leaving Cert. he joined the Carmelite Order. After his first professions, he moved to Gort Mhuire and began his studies at UCD where he graduated with a BA degree in Irish & French. Having completed a HDip, he began teaching in Terenure College in 1964, and was ordained on 12th July 1964. He taught there until 1970 when he was appointed to Knocktopher, Co. Kilkenny, also administering in nearby Ballyhale where he made lifetime friends with famous hurling families - the Fennellys, the Reids and the Sheflins. He later served in Kildare town and Moate, Co. Westmeath, returning to Gort Mhuire in 2001. P.J. was a great friend to our family over the years having first called on his bicycle to our home in Swords where he blessed us and our home on the 8th May 1967. He was a frequent visitor after that and Rosaleen would always make scones and an apple tart which he would take back to Gort Mhuire to share with the other priests. He performed the marriage ceremonies of three of our children and christened most of our nine grandchildren. P.J. loved nature - birds, flowers & shrubs and he would spend hours in the garden in deep contemplation and prayer. He loved swimming and most days - winter or summer - he would swim at the 40 Foot in Sandycove. P.J. was always very pleasant company, had knowledge of most subjects, was very obliging and even-tempered. He had a great gift for remembering folk and making connections, was never judgmental and all manner of people would be quite at home with him. Our family miss him very much but get great solace as we feel he is in heaven and will intercede for us there. He is survived by his sister Lily (Abbeyleix) and brother Larry (Youghal).

We are indebted to Rev'd Nigel Pierpoint for leading a very moving and reflective Ecumenical Service for our Association's members on 20th November last - remembering, in particular, Fr. P.J.



Tony Brophy

REFLECTIONS



The Association also lost a longstanding stalwart and former Officer with the untimely death on the 29th Dec. 2017 of friend to so many of us, Tony Brophy, after a very short illness. Tony was our Treasurer for many years, a duty he always carried out with absolute diligence, and was always a willing helper whenever called upon to help to run events - not to speak of the amount of enjoyment he gave us at so many sessions with his wonderful musicianship.

The following reflections are taken from the homily by Fr. Martin Delaney at Tony's funeral Mass
*"I want to begin this homily today by sharing with you a thought I have had over the last few days. I was thinking that when Tony goes to heaven in these days and he meets St. Peter, Tony will have a distinct advantage over so many of us. That is the fact that St. Peter and Tony will have something unique in common, they have both been gatekeepers at very important places. For those of you who may not know, the last ten years of Tony's career in An Garda Sióchána were spent on duty at the gates of Leinster House.
 "Tony was born on the 7th of September 1954 to Edward and Margaret Brophy of Bealady. Five days later he was baptized Anthony Pius Mary Brophy. I think it may have been that Pope Pius XII was thought to be dying in those months. I think it is fair to say that even though Tony's work with An Garda Sióchána brought him to live in Louth, Dublin, Waterford and Kilkenny he remained a loyal son of Laois and Rathdowney all his life. While in Dublin he became an active member of the Laois Association and of course in recent years, he and Catherine built a beautiful home back in his native Bealady. As Tony now crosses the threshold into eternal life surely one of the things he must be most looking forward to is being reunited with his beloved Catherine"*

On behalf of the President, Chairman, Officers and Members of the Association, we extend our deepest sympathies to Tony's children, Michelle & Colm, grandchild Jamie, his brothers and sisters - Phyllis (Sr. Dolores), Elsie, Ted, Declan and Gay, and the extended Brophy family.

It is also with deep sadness & regret that we record the loss of loved ones by several members during 2017 remembering, in particular: *Former member, Brendan Hogan; Mary Butler (sister of our Secretary, Michael Butler); Donal Flanagan (brother of our Vice President, Mary Doyle) and Pauline Carroll (sister of Rosaleen Masterson).* We extend our heartfelt thoughts and sympathies to them all.

Ar Dheis De go raibh a nAnam

ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

- Tuesday 11th April 2017 (Jackson Court Hotel)



The Association was pleased to host Charlie Flanagan, TD (then Minister for Foreign Affairs, now Minister for Justice and Equality) in April, and to present him with the Association's Lifetime Achievement Award. (This was only the 2nd Achievement Award presented by the Association – the inaugural one in 2014 to Liam O'Neill, President of the GAA). The presentation was made by our President (and fellow Mountmellick man) Sandy Metcalfe, and Chairman, Gerry Thompson. The Minister was clearly delighted to receive the Award and expressed his appreciation in an informal and most enjoyable address recalling his childhood in Mountmellick, growing up in a household as son of Oliver J. Flanagan, TD and his own life experiences as a TD and Minister.



TRIP TO LAOIS

- Friday 23rd June 2017 (Portlaoise)

On behalf of Laois County Council, Association Members were welcomed by Cathaoirleach, Cllr. Tom Mulhall, and the Tourism Officer, Mr. Dom Reddan in the Council Chamber at County Hall in Portlaoise. Our Chairman, Gerry Thompson responded on behalf of the Association and extended our appreciation for the continued support by Laois Co. Co. After morning coffee hosted by the Council, the Tourism Officer led the visiting party on a tour of the People's Park in Portlaoise. Members had lunch in the Midlands Park Hotel which was followed by a sing-song thanks to Seamus O'Brien's band, Tandem, in Peig's Bar in the Square, before 'training' back to Dublin. *A most enjoyable outing for all!*

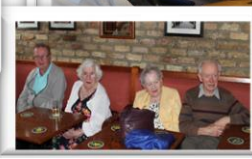


TABLE QUIZ TIME

- Sunday, 5th October 2017 (Jackson Court Hotel)



CHRISTMAS PARTY TIME

- Wednesday 6th December 2017 (Jackson Court Hotel)



Our thanks for a great night as always to the
'The L.A.D.S'
'The Laois Association Dublin Showband'
*'There's No Show like a **LADS** Show!'*



THANK YOU ...

As always, we are deeply indebted to our Chairman Gerry Thompson for his leadership in organising yet another hugely enjoyable calendar of events throughout 2017. Gerry (& Toni!) ... THANK YOU.

A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS TO....

- Cathal Jackson, Jackson Court Hotel, Harcourt St. who generously provides a 'home from home' for the Laois Association in Dublin.
- Laois County Council for their continuing support
- The media for their interest in the activities of the Association

OFFICERS 2018

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| President | - Sandy Metcalfe |
| Vice-President | - Mary Doyle |
| Chairman | - Gerry Thompson |
| Vice Chairman | - Vincent Rafter |
| Secretary | - Michael Butler |
| Asst. Sec. | - Daphne Metcalfe |
| Treasurer | - Margaret Kennedy |
| Asst. Treas. | - Carmel Campion |
| Membership Officer | - Colm Healion |
| PRO | - Rory Campion |

Very best wishes to all our members for a happy and healthy 2018 with special thoughts as always to those who are ill or indisposed, at this time.

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION TEAM

- | | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| - Editor | Sandy Metcalfe |
| - Photography | Daphne Metcalfe |
| | Toni Thompson |
| | Bill Kelly |
| | Gerry Thompson |
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