

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020

(SPECIAL EDITION)

70th Anniversary



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 2020 Newsletter of the Laois Association – Dublin. We hope you enjoy the photographic memories of 2018, and 2019 - our 70th Anniversary year.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION:

*If you have **not** already paid your membership, please contact our Membership Officer, Mary Doyle: (e) mary@ardahouse.com or (m) 086 8754339.*

As we begin our 71st year, the Chairman and the President ask you to reward the efforts of your committee with your continued support.

2020 Calendar of Events on Back Cover

1949-2019



The 70th Anniversary



GREAT Achievement

The highlight of our 70th Anniversary was the celebratory lunch on Sunday 7th April 2019 attended by over 80 members & guests when we returned to the Gresham Hotel where the reception for the 1949 team was held.



It all began with them ...



The 1949 Laois Senior Hurling Team

GREAT Celebrations

2019 celebrations for members included presentation of the Association's Lifetime Achievement Award to founding member Bridie & Colm Healion at the celebratory lunch in April while in January 2019, Claire King celebrated her 90th birthday (and her 91st in Jan 2020) making her our oldest active member.



GREAT Sadness

Members were deeply saddened to lose our beloved founder member, Bridie Healion in November, in a year where we lost longstanding member, Marie Dunne, and great supporter, John O'Meara.



Great Sadness

It was with shock & deep sadness that we learned of Bridie's passing on the 25th November. To say that this lady was much loved by all members - and an institution in our Association - would be a total understatement. How fitting and appropriate that we had the opportunity, in a small way, to demonstrate our appreciation and feelings for her and Colm, in presenting the Association (3rd only) Lifetime Achievement Award to them both at our celebratory 70th lunch in April. (See pages 3, 4 & 5).

Bridie Healion RIP



A native of Glosna (near Ballylinan), Bridie (Mulhall) came to Dublin as a 17 ½ year old, to join the civil service, and found herself being part of a group of Laois people who fundraised to support the Laois Hurling Team in the All Ireland Final in 1949. Thus, began the Laois Association, Dublin, and she was part of its history for the rest of her life, and throughout the entire existence of our Association to date. In the early 50^s when she met Colm, if he had any expectations about becoming her husband, then continuing membership of the Association wasn't optional! They shared a wonderful life together, a huge part of which was their teamwork in the development of the Association. Over seven decades, Bridie & Colm filled many roles, and worked tirelessly for the organisation and its members.

In her own quiet respectful way, she influenced so many aspects of the shaping (and re-shaping) of the various phases of the Association, throughout the years. To say that there would not be an Association in existence today without her dedication and contribution is not an exaggeration. And her interest and enthusiasm never waned.

Bridie passed away peacefully at Beneavin House Nursing Home in Glasnevin, where she and Colm had taken up residency in the early part of 2019. Our thoughts and deepest sympathies are extended to her Colm, and her daughters Maura, Terri, and Mel, her sons in law, her adored grandchildren, and extended family. Our thoughts are also with her sister, May Mulhall, herself a lifelong member of the Association.



From Bridie's Requiem Mass

Marie Dunne RIP



We lost our devoted member, Marie, in July 2019. Despite mobility issues in latter years, Marie was an active member up to about 2 years ago. Marie (Burrowes) was born in Boston and moved to Mountmellick at the age of seven. She began work at eighteen in a legal firm in the town, before moving to work with the Irish National Insurance company in Dawson Street. After seven years, she moved to Kilcool Shamrock Fertilisers, and shortly afterwards met her late husband Joe - former Chairman of the Association. She & Joe attended Association dances in the basement of the original home of the Association at 47, North Great Georges Street.

We are deeply indebted to Marie for her contribution to - and lifelong support for - the Association from the very early years and for most of its existence. We extend our deepest sympathy to Marie's sons, Jim & Leonard, her daughters-in-law, grandchildren, and extended family.

John O'Meara RIP



In April, our loyal supporter and friend, John O'Meara, Rathdowney, passed away. Having begun his working life in England, John spent most of his career working in the stores at the Irish rail Depot in Inchicore. He lived for some time with his brother Gerry before moving back to his native Erril on retirement. Travel was one of John's great passions which he combined with his other passion of following the Irish soccer team. One memorable trip John made was to the USA for the 1994 World Cup following Jack's Army.

In latter years, John was a regular attendee at Laois Association Dublin functions accompanying his brother Michael, and sister in law Lucy, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

It is also with deep sadness & regret that we record the loss of loved ones by several other members during 2018 & 2019, and we take this opportunity to offer our condolences to them and their extended families.

Ar Dheis De go raibh a nAnam

1949 – 2019

70th Anniversary

Celebration Lunch & Achievement Award

Gresham Hotel – Sunday 7th April 2019



For our 60th and 65th anniversaries, the Association returned to Croke Park to mark those milestones, and for our 70th highlight event, the venue was the same one at which the team reception was held after the '49 final – The Gresham Hotel. MC for the day was our President Sandy Metcalfe. Attendance was in excess of 80 and included Minister Charlie Flanagan, Senator David Norris and Cathaoirleach Laois County Council John King and CEO of LCC John Mulholland.

In his address, our Chairman Gerry Thompson explained how the Association thrived throughout the fifties and sixties and at one point owned their own premises on North Great George's Street. He outlined how the Association had embraced the Millennium and helped out with the fund raising for Dunamais Theatre in Portlaoise.

A video of the 1949 game was shown and Gerry called on Association committee member, Joe Dowling to recount his memories as a seven-year old boy who went to all the matches in 1949 including the final. Gerry finished by thanking the members as it was their loyalty and support that meant the Association had reached its seventieth Anniversary.

Cathaoirleach of Laois County Council John King responded on behalf of the guests. Mr King thanked the Association for his invitation, offered his congratulations and good wishes in this special year.



We Published Our Commemorative History in 2009



It all began with them ...



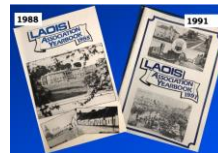
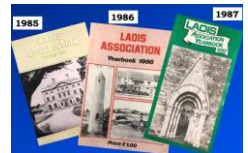
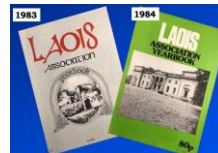
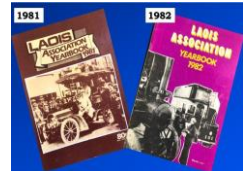
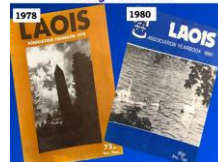
The 1949 Laois Senior Hurling Team

It all began with them ...



The 1949 Laois Senior Hurling Team

Through The Years



This Event Was Possible Thanks to Our Sponsors to Whom We Are Indebted



Congratulations are due to the organising committee of this event led by our Chairman, Gerry Thompson and our President, Sandy Metcalfe – for delivering a hugely ambitious project to celebrate our 70 years in such a professional way, and for providing such an enjoyable & memorable occasion for members and friends.

THANK YOU
Very special thanks to our Chairman for his energy and leadership in organising another hugely enjoyable calendar of events throughout 2019. Well done, Gerry.

1949 – 2014

70th Anniversary

Celebration Lunch & Achievement Award

Gresham Hotel - Sunday 7th April 2019

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD




Laois Association Dublin
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ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Award recognises the contribution of Laois persons in their field of activity to the development of people, nationally and/or internationally.

**Presented to
Bridie & Colm Healion**

7th April, 2019

The highlight of our celebration lunch day was the presentation to Bridie and Colm Healion of the Association's Lifetime Achievement Award. While they follow Liam O'Neill (former President, GAA), and Minister Charlie Flanagan in receiving this prestigious honour, it is they – in the context of the Association – who are a hard act to follow.

Our Chairman spoke of their devotion to the Association, outlined the many roles they had held, and expressed our appreciation of their continued involvement over seven decades. In making the award presentation, Minister Charlie Flanagan spoke glowingly about Bridie and Colm and their backgrounds in Laois, and their dedication to the Association. Vice President Mary Doyle presented a bouquet of flowers to Bridie.

At the time of this special occasion, little did we know the sadness that was coming for Colm, their family and for all of us in the Association with Bridie's death in November 2019. How appropriate that we got the opportunity to acknowledge in the 70th year of the Association her enthusiasm for all things Laois. It is our hope that the photographic record in this edition of our Newsletter will provide fond memories for Colm and the family of Bridie's last participation in Association activities, and an illustration of our respect and love for this wonderful lady.



Award presentation by the Minister for Justice & Equality. Charlie Flanagan, TD.



Congratulations from our Chairman; from the Minister; from our President; and from the Cathaoirleach LCC. Clr John King.



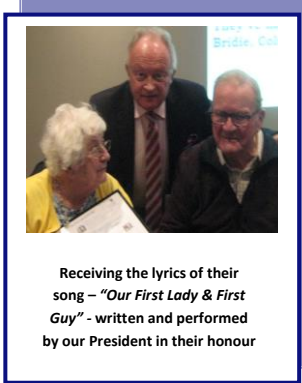
Congratulations from the family



Happy Award Recipients



Happy "Healion Daughters" - L to R: Imelda; Maura & Terri



Receiving the lyrics of their song – "Our First Lady & First Guy" - written and performed by our President in their honour



Congratulations and flowers from our Vice President, Mary



Congratulations from members
L to R (Front); Claire King (our oldest Member at 90)
L to R (Back): Dolores O'Reilly and Joe Dowling

1949 - 2019

70th Anniversary

Celebration Lunch & Achievement Award

Gresham Hotel - Sunday 7th April 2019



**Laois Association
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PHOTO GALLERY



Our Photographers:
Bill Kelly & Daphne Metcalfe

1949 – 2019

70th Anniversary

2019

Other Celebration Events



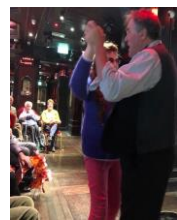
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SUMMER EVENT: Visit to Chester Beatty Library (Fri. 21st June)

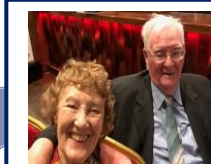
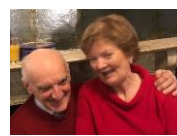


AUTUMN EVENT: Lunch Theatre (13th October – Jackson Court Hotel)

Excerpts from Michael Creagh's One Man Show.



WINTER EVENT: Xmas Party Lunch (15th Dec. – Jackson Court Hotel)





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2018

Also A Good Year!



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Visit to the National Gallery of Ireland – Hosted by Our Chairman at his place of work!



“We’re All Off to Galway”



Christmas Party Time – 2018 ... and SAM came too!



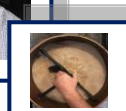
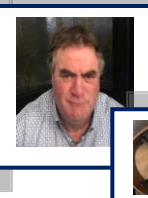
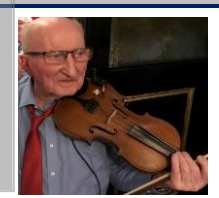
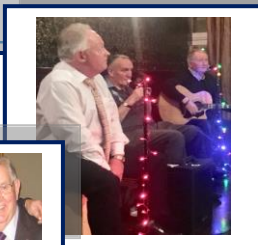
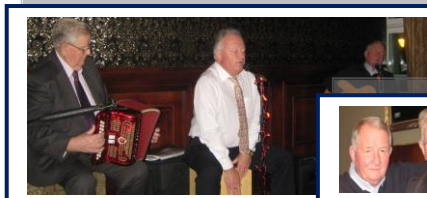
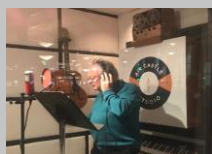
The Laois Association Dublin Showband Starred Again!

Throughout 2018 and 2019, our ever popular 'LADS' continued to lead the entertainment at our Christmas Parties and at our 70th Anniversary lunch. We are especially grateful to George Doody (Portarlinton) and Michael Creagh (Rathdowney) for travelling up for all the events. Our thanks also to our Association members who complete the line-up for the band - Mick Brophy, Mick O'Meara, Fintan Walsh - and of course, 'Bandleader', Sandy Metcalfe.

We congratulate Sandy on achieving a life-long ambition to record in Nashville which he did in November last at the recording studio in the Grand Ole Opry! He didn't sound half bad either!

Thanks again, 'LADS'... we want more!

- Gerry Thompson (Chairman)



70th Anniversary

Final News For 2018 and 2019



ECUMENICAL SERVICE

Our annual Ecumenical Service (held again prior to our Annual General Meetings in 2018 and 2019) continued to be well attended and appreciated by members as an opportunity to remember loved ones. We are extremely grateful to the Rev'd Nigel Pierpoint for his time and support in conducting the services for us.

A SPECIAL WORD OF THANKS TO....

- Cathal & Paula 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 (in particular, Laois Today.ie; the Leinster Express, the Laois Nationalist and DublinCityfm) for their interest & support.

And 2020? EVENTS CALENDAR



1. SPRING EVENT - Friday 27th March:

- Visit to Museum of Literature Ireland (MoLI)
 - Followed by lunch

2. SUMMER EVENT - Friday 5th June:

- Bus Trip - 'A Wicklow Wander'

3. AUTUMN EVENT - Sunday 11th October:

- Lunch / Entertainment

4. NOVEMBER - Monday 9th November:

- AGM / Ecumenical Service

5. DECEMBER - Sunday 13th December:

- Christmas Party Lunch / Entertainment

Full details will be issued well in advance of each event

OFFICERS 2020

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	- Mary Doyle
PRO	- Rory Campion

NEWSLETTER PRODUCTION TEAM

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

Best wishes to all our members for a happy and healthy 2020 with special thoughts to those who are ill or indisposed at this time.