



ashbourne
community initiative

NEWSLETTER

Saint Patrick's Day Special Edition

Happy St Patrick's day Ashbourne. It's that time of year again & it certainly feels like the big annual events like the Ashbourne parade comes around quickly each year.

That is why it is important sometimes to do things that really tickle the senses so you can live in the moment. Like climb a mountain or as Christy Moore says "jump in a lake or even go potholing". One of those memorable things to do is to come along to your local parade on our national day of celebration. There is always colour, music & fun. You get to see loads of people from the community having the craic.

We are very proud to honor John Fanning as the parade Grand Marshal. John & the Tidy Towns achieved a miracle by winning third prize in the national tidy towns contest. John has championed the work of the tidy towns for years & worked very hard on behalf of the town as a councillor for many years now. His colleagues Joe Jones, Gerry & Sean Smith & many others must be mentioned, who have worked so hard. Please give a cheer to John & the tidy towns crew when they lead up the parade.

After Patrick's day, comes the festivals of Tradash & the living history in April. When you witness these events within your community, taking in the music & the moving images of history, you can ignore the noise of daily life & be moved & stimulated as you take in what it means to be Irish. Saint Patrick's Day is a celebration of being Irish. As in life, a town is born, develops & grows, it also has a soul. Such energy is enhanced when history, culture & community come together. It lasts forever & is felt on the streets & in every nook & cranny of our town.



Keeping it Green...

Ashbourne Community Schools Keep it Green are national finalists in the Certified Irish Angus Beef Schools Competition.

The focus of the competition is to promote Certified Irish Angus Grass Fed Beef. The first stage of the competition was to create a 3 minute video. They then went to an interview in Mullingar for the second stage, they were interviewed by representatives from Certified Irish Angus beef, Kepak, ABP and an Ag Science teacher. The final stage will be held on the 15th of March 2017 in Croke Park. Check out [keepitgreen.acs](https://www.instagram.com/keepitgreen.acs) on instagram for more.

We wish them the best of luck!



Ashbourne Archery Club

Ashbourne Archers are a young archery club located in Donaghmore GAA club in Ashbourne. The club was founded in June 2014 and has offered the sport to many people since this time. The club has target archers, field archers and 3D archers as members. At this time we can only accept adults but we're currently in the process of obtaining relevant training to pass this sport onto the next generation of archers.

On the 21st of March the club will be holding a have-a-go night where people are invited to come and try out the sport. We hold introduction to archery courses through out the year and these are advertised on our social media. The next course is on the 28th of March and is filling up quickly.

So for anyone who would like to try a different sport and free their inner Robin Hood or Katniss Everdeen why not drop down to Donaghmore GAA club on the 21st of March between 8 and 10pm and give it a go. All it will cost is your time and you might enjoy it. If you're a little shy why not bring a friend, the more the merrier. Bookings will be taken on the night for introduction to archery courses. The course runs for six weeks and is held over an eight week period. The course price is €90 and all equipment you will need to complete the course is provided for the duration of the course. €20 can secure a place on the next available course. For more information please contact us by message on our facebook page, ashbourne archers boghdoiri chill dheaglain, or you can email us on pro@ashbournearchers.com or coaching@ashbournearchers.com. We look forward to seeing you.

A Patrick's Day Message from the Lions Club

The Ashbourne and District Lions Club would like to wish all Ashbourne Community Initiative Newsletter readers a very happy St Patrick's day, and to thank you for your continued support throughout the year. Every cent raised by the local Lions Club goes towards supporting many local charities and worthy causes within our community. We have many challenging events planned throughout 2017. We would like to invite you to join the Lions Club, helping us organise these events and in doing so, give something back into the community while making new friends.

The TradAsh Festival is on April 20th to 23rd in Ashbourne. Ashbourne and the surrounding area is steeped in Irish music traditions and this annual foot tapping festival hosts a series of Irish song and music sessions across a number of venues in the town. There is no cover charge for any of these sessions and all musicians will be made to feel very welcome. Further information will be posted up around the town nearer the event, and full details will also be made available by clicking on www.TradAsh.com . So get your feet tapping and we look forward to seeing you all there.

We are always welcoming new members so please contact us anytime. We meet on the first Thursday of every month between September and June @ 8pm to 9pm in the Pillo Hotel . We would also like to thank the Pillo Hotel for their continued support throughout the year. Please visit our website at www.ashbournelions.weebly.com or contact us on Email: lionsashbourne@gmail.com or simply text "Lions Club" to 087 265 4944.

Interview with Jimmy Dillon, Chair of Ashbourne Rugby Club

"Over recent years the Patrick's Day parade has become one of the local events alongside the Ward Union hunt on St Stephen's Day and pony races that all the families and businesses in the town and surrounding villages from Curraha, Cushinstown Garristown, Rolestown and Kilbride look forward to. It is great to see so many out and about the town meeting and chatting with neighbours and friends that is not always possible during hectic schedules. This was also the case for the 2016 celebration last Easter. The parade but more importantly the quality of the parade is a fantastic way of fostering a community spirit which is increasingly important as the town continues to develop."

"Ashbourne RFC is all about the local community and the club's fantastic facilities at Milltown House are enjoyed by many local Gaelic and soccer clubs for training. The mini rugby players can often be seen changing out of there rugby gear when the rugby float has passed through the town and parading again with another club. It was great to see so many local people attend the recent All Ireland Rugby final win who had got to know of the club through the parade. Rather than sitting on a couch watching sport on TV we would encourage locals come out to enjoy top quality live rugby in Milltown."



If you want your say in how County Meath and your area is managed and run by the County Council or if you have any issues you want to discuss, there will be a townhall style meeting run by PPN Representative for Ashbourne electoral area William Brennan in **The Pillo Hotel on the 5th of April at 7:00pm.**

Visit our website at:
ashbournechamber.ie/our-groups/
ashbourne-community-initiative

Where you can Download the ACI Newsletter for your mobile device.

TradAsh Festival 2017 News

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O'Briens Sandwich Bar Interview

The ACI Newsletter recently caught up with Owner of O'Briens Sandwich Bar and Cafe in Ashbourne, Margaret Flanagan to ask her thoughts on the festivities in Ashbourne on Saint Patrick's Day.

I love St Patrick's day In Ashbourne, it is a major fun event on my family's calendar. We used to go to the City centre but now there is no need !

As I have run my Business for the last 13 years in Ashbourne; O'Briens Cafe, I bring my children to the Cafe on the day. They help clear tables make some hot chocolate... OK drink plenty too! They meet all our regular customers, many of whom are now firm friends. The event is hugely important to all the community as a fun get together and a celebration. It is also more importantly a free event which is well received by all families.

Everybody clubs together and volunteers and takes part in the Parade with the local clubs, creches and sporting organisations. It is a great event that the Chamber has built up each year and this year proves to be even better again. It takes a lot of time, patience, money and manpower to prepare and execute. I am very grateful to the Chamber and my co business owners whom make it happen every year by sponsorship volunteering and cleaning up afterwards.

It brings a lot of new people to Ashbourne from the surrounding Counties also and increases trade for the restaurants, bars, hotels and cafes. It is a very busy day for us in O'briens Cafe serving fresh food and coffees with long queues but we love it and the customers are in great form .

We wave from the counter to all the floats passing by and have all our children there to watch from the pavement. We hand out complimentary sweets inside and outside the store and balloons and enjoy the Craic as a holiday Day with friends and colleagues and our loyal customers. I myself have fond memories of being tossed sweets from the Floats in the 1980's as a child in the City of Dublin. I believe many other Stores if opened could benefit from the extra exposure it brings and trade well from all the new visitors entering our great Town.

Saint Patrick's Day in Ashbourne, Over the Years!



Living History in Ashbourne

The BOACC Living History festival will take place on Saturday & Sunday 22nd & 23rd of April in the Ashbourne GAA Club. Following from the enormous success of the 2016 Battle of Ashbourne Centenary Commemoration, BOACC will again mark Ashbourne's historical link to Thomas Ashe, with a festival that commemorates his contribution to the cause of Irish freedom & the role of the battle of the Battle of Ashbourne in bringing him to prominence in 1916-1917.

Thomas Ashe was born in Lispole; County Kerry in 1885 he became Principle of Corduff National School in Lusk North County Dublin in 1906. He helped establish the Lusk Pipe Band & was a founder of the Roundtowers GAA Club. Politically Thomas Ashe was a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood & dedicated himself to gaining Irish freedom from British rule. He also supported the establishment of trade unions & often quoted James Connolly's dictum that "the cause of labour is the cause of Ireland, the cause of Ireland is the cause of labour". He was an early member of the Irish Volunteers & commanded the 5th Battalion of the Dublin Brigade which, on Friday the 28 of April 1916, won the only unequivocal victory of the 1916 rebellion at the battle of Ashbourne in county Meath. After the Rising he was court-martialled & was sentenced to death but that was commuted to penal servitude for life.

He was imprisoned in England & was released in the 1917 general amnesty. Ashe returned to Ireland where he re-organised the IRB & inciting civil opposition to British rule. He was rearrested & sentenced to a year's hard labour in Mountjoy, where demanded prisoner-of-war status. He went on hunger strike on 20th September but 5 days later died of force-feeding in 1917. His funeral became a focal point for opposition to British rule & was the largest in Ireland since the burial of Parnell. Ashe's body lay in Dublin City Hall before being escorted by armed Volunteers & thousands of mourners to Glasnevin Cemetery. 30,000 people attended the burial where Michael Collins in Volunteer uniform delivered the graveside oration; "Nothing more remains to be said, that volley that we have just heard is the only speech which is proper to make over the grave of a dead Fenian".



The BOACC History Festival will feature key events from Irish history which shaped the life & death of Thomas Ashe including: The Battle of the Boyne, the 1798 Rebellion & the Irish war of Independence. Living history brings the past to life as no other form can, enabling the whole family to experience the sights & sounds of times past. Historians & re-enactors move history from the written page into the real world through re-enactments of military & civilian life covering 800 years. This year's festival will also include a Viking village & medieval knights. In addition to displays of weapons together with vintage civilian & military vehicles from the past hundred years.

In addition to these re-enactments, the festival will include the screening of Fingal's Finest, Tile Medias latest film which tells the story of Thomas Ashe & the 5th Battalion in 1916. The film features the BOACC Re-enactment group & Historian Tóla Collier. Short films by directors Marcus Howard and Elaine Gallagher will also be shown including Reel: Women of 1916. Also on Saturday afternoon historians Gabriel Doherty, Noel French & Tóla Collier will give a series of talks on topics which will place Thomas Ashe within the broader context of the political, military & social history of the 20th Century. The Living History continues on the 23rd with a large battle re-enactment of the Irish war of Independence, concluding on Sunday with a parade to commemorate Thomas Ashe & those who witnessed the



struggle for Irish independence. The ceremony on the main pitch at Ashbourne GAA Club will include a full flag party by the Organisation of National Ex Service men & Women, Irish Volunteer & Citizen Army contingents from the festival with representatives of Ashbourne's sporting & cultural institutions. The Parade will conclude with a wreath laying & reading of the 1916 Proclamation followed by the ceremonial firing of three volleys of shots in memory of Thomas Ashe. **Article by Tóla Collier.**



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