

LEITRIM OBSERVER

Snippets predicted by our Roving Reporter Tommy Óg Moran 2069

PAPAL VISIT

Pope Rosemary made her first official visit to her native Ireland in October, accompanied by the Papal Nuncio, Cardinal Gregory Paulotini. Her Holiness celebrated the Papal Mass in Forest Park, Boyle and was then brought to Knock Shrine in a driverless Skoda Superb. Later that evening, she insisted on being returned to Pairc Sean Mac Diarmada for the Leitrim County Final, between her home club, Funchinagh and near neighbours, Kilnagross. Prior to entering the priesthood, Pope Rosemary had been a regular on the Funchinagh and Leitrim Ladies' teams.

SAM MAGUIRE COMES BACK HOME

There were jubilant scenes when the Leitrim GAA fifty seater helicopter, "Liatroim Abu", touched down on the tarmac at Dromod Aerodrome, with the three-in-a-row All Ireland Champions on board. After their defeat of the Dubs, All Ireland Champions from 2015 to 2067, when Leitrim put them to the sword, the county went on to retain their title in 2068 and again this year. A new page of GAA History has been written..

STAG AND HEN RE-UNION

A 50th Anniversary Re-union of the Carrick on Shannon Stag and Hen Parties of 2019 really caught the imagination on the social scene early in the year. Almost five thousand turned up in Carrick for the event and were accommodated in the twelve local 5 star hotels and in the exquisite holiday home complex just off the Kiltoghert/Gowel motorway.

ONE IN A MILLION!

Reported to be Leitrim's most expensive house, Slievenakilla View, situated along the Aughacashel to Ballinaglera N509 Highway, went under the hammer for 1,750,000 Euro at a Conference Call Auction held in Drumshanbo. The house boasts 15 bedrooms, all en-suite, 5 reception rooms, three kitchens, 4 guest bathrooms, a 12 seater cinema and a 50 metre indoor swimming pool. An added bonus is the nearby artificial ski slope with its luxurious ski chalets and cable car system. A millionaire's paradise!

VINTAGE DISPLAY

Vintage car clubs from throughout the county assembled at the Drumkeerin Bowling Arena car park on the February Bank Holiday Weekend and the thousands who attended enjoyed viewing the relics from the earlier part of the century. There was particular interest in the diesel powered cars that have long been outlawed to the public, but for which Vintage Clubs have a special once a year licence.

ALL STAR CONCERTS

Both Shannonside and Ocean TV Stations will feature the All Star Concerts, Nights with the Stars, every Monday at 8.30pm. Tune in to watch and enjoy Jimmy Óg Buckley, Robert Óg Mizzell, Patrick Óg Feeney, Philomena Óg Begley, Mick Óg Flavin, Nathan Óg Carter, Declan Óg Nerney and comedian Frank Óg Ford. The shows will be compered by Joe Óg Finnegan and Francis Óg Boylan. For payment details contact 1-80000-870-870. And remember, you must have a current television licence.

LOVELY LEITRIM FROM THE AIR

It was a busy season for Leitrim Sky Tours, with three times a week helicopter flights to the county's best known beauty spots, from the company's base at Leitrim Town. Glen-car Waterfall, Benbo Mountain, Parke's Castle, Glenade Lake, Sliabh an Iarainn, Carrick on Shannon, Lough Rynn and Garadice Lake all proved extremely popular. An added bonus has been the top quality coffee shops, bars, restaurants and shopping centres that have been developed at these tourist hotspots over the recent boom years.

BULLET TRAIN

The north-west's first bullet train has been an eagerly awaited boost for those commuting for work in the capital. Luas Lasrach departs Sligo at 7am, with one minute stops in Longford and Mullingar, arriving in Dublin at 8.10am. However, there have been a number of protest marches in Leitrim that the county has again been overlooked by not having stops in Carrick on Shannon and Dromod. Leitrim's five member County Council will consider a motion to "stop the bullet" at its next meeting.

RURAL TRANSPORT

The Rural Lift scheme of fifty years ago has morphed into the super Rural Transport system that the people of Leitrim enjoy today. 100-seater double decker eco-powered buses link the country areas with neighbouring towns a number of times daily. Timetables can be downloaded to your pocket computer.

INFLUX OF CLERGY

Leitrim has led the way for the Irish Church this year, by the ordination of 75 priests to serve in the parishes of the Dioceses of Kilmore and Ardagh/Clonmacnoise. 71 of those ordained are women, who have a total of 641 children between them; the four men are late vocations. Parishes throughout the county are engaged in major fund-raising campaigns to provide suitable accommodation for the married priests, their husbands and families.

LAST CHANCE

Hard copies of The Leitrim Observer have become collectors' items since the paper went digital only, back in 2050. A very limited number of paper copies, from 1940 to 1949, are available, at a cost of 250 Euro each, plus courier charges, by contacting the office at Leitrim Plaza on 08666-95643298.

HOLIDAY BARGAINS

The boom is definitely back, judging by the numbers travelling overseas on holiday. Some of the bargains on offer include two weeks in Spain for €2,2100 pps; one week in Las Vegas for €4,199 pps; four nights in The Big Apple for €3200 pps; ten days in Cancun, Mexico for €4,500 pps. Prices quoted are for flights and accommodation on a bed and breakfast basis, but do not include tax or airport transfers. Travel insurance available.

CRISIS – WHAT CRISIS?

Local historians throughout the country have been speaking of an apparent Trolley Crisis in Irish Hospitals back fifty years ago. For the younger generation, this is difficult to comprehend. These people ask: *What is a trolley crisis? What is a waiting list? How could an ambulance be delayed? What? Why? Where? Who? When?* For them, it is as if the historians were describing The Stone Age.

RESTRUCTURED GAA COMPETITIONS

The Uachtarán of Cumann Luthchleas Gael, Caitríona Ní Ghiolla Phádraig, has chaired a meeting of the GAA's CCCCCC Committee, which has completely restructured the All Ireland Football Championship for 2070. The top eight counties, Dublin, Longford, Leitrim, Fermanagh, Carlow, London, Sligo and Waterford will be eligible to play for the Sam Maguire; the next eight, Wicklow, Antrim, Limerick, New York, Laois, Mayo, Galway and Roscommon will contest the Intermediate Championship, while the remaining counties will play in the Junior Championship.

A NEW VITALITY

Thanks to the focus on healthy food choices, a proper lifestyle and the concentration on personal fitness, there is now a complete lack of obesity in Ireland and the population is living much longer. This has led the Government to raise the retiring age to 72; the qualifying age for free travel to 74 and the old age pensions to begin at 79. Nursing homes have been asked to impose an age barrier of 82 on those seeking admission, except in cases of illness. A recent survey has shown that there are almost a thousand people in Leitrim over the age of 110..

TUNNEL THE ANSWER?

After years of debate, it has finally been decided that the answer to the traffic backlog on the N4 in the Carrick on Shannon area, lies in the building of a tunnel from the flyover at the Mohill junction to the Ardcarne Roudabout. Tenders are already being accepted for the multi billion Euro project.