

The Garvaghy Road and Ballyoran were famous for nurseries and rose growing

Four generations of Sam McGredy were involved not just in rose production but also supplying Co Armagh with its apple trees. McGredy roses became world famous and the company became McGredy's Royal Nurseries. Many local people worked in the nurseries which were major employer in the area. Unfortunately, many of the "budding" skills have now gone. We have included a short article on Dr Sam McGredy, the last of the great rose growers from the area.

Samuel McGredy IV

Samuel Darragh McGredy, born in 1932, was only 2 years old when his father McGredy III died. A board of trustees including his uncle Walter and mother Ruth took over management of the rose breeding and nursery until McGredy IV was of age. Meanwhile, as was the usual practice at the time, young McGredy IV was sent away to boarding school at the age of 7. He attended Mercersburg Academy in Pennsylvania USA in 1948, then Greenmount Agricultural College in 1949. From there he moved on to Reading University. After leaving Reading he worked at a rhododendron nursery to further expertise in hybridisation, then reported for duty at the family nursery in Portadown in 1952, at which time he was handed the keys and began the modern phase of the rose-breeding industry. McGredy IV modernized operations and transformed style. He was famously adept at dictating innovation and fashion, along with plant health and strength. He introduced his first hybrid of his own, 'Salute', a cherry-red and yellow bicolor floribunda, in 1958. His first Gold Medal winner, 'Orangeade', a floribunda, was introduced the next year, in 1959.



Sam McGredy IV married fashion model Maureen McCall in 1960. They had three daughters, Kathryn McGredy, Maria Winder and Clodagh Leigh. In 1972 McGredy IV and family emigrated to Auckland New Zealand. The move allowed him to breed roses without the need for greenhouses, and to better select roses that would do well in the USA, his major market. Sam and Maureen divorced in 1978, and Sam later married Jillian Hawcrige. Sam McGredy IV has now retired and closed the nursery.¹

Sam McGredy inspecting the new rose seedlings, Spring 1952. Garvaghy Park is now built on this site, it was known as Davison's field.

Services for our older people

As outlined on page one we provide weekly sessions for older people to come together, engage in activities and have fun.

In order to be a viable group we need more people to get involved. Every one over 55 is welcome and we would particularly like men to get involved in our club. We also need help to run our club and we would ask for volunteers to help us. We have found that since we have become involved with Richmount Rural Community Association they have been very supportive and are inviting us to join them in programmes for the benefit of both our communities. We have now been invited to become involved in their proposed community forum for older people where groups can help each other.

However, we need your help. Please come along to our Thursday sessions. We will be very pleased to see you.

In this section we want you to tell us what are the needs of the older people in our community and how we can tackle them. However, please remember we are a small voluntary group managed by older people, but with help and support we provide a quality service for our older people



Handwritten lines for providing feedback or suggestions.

Please return to Ashgrove Community Centre



Ballyoran Seniors News

Published by Ballyoran over 55s Club

Our older people together

February 2018

Welcome to the first Edition of Ballyoran Seniors News

This is the first edition of our Newsletter. We hope it will let you know more about the activities of Ballyoran Seniors and what we can offer older people in the general Garvaghy Road area and beyond.

We also want to take the opportunity to reminisce about our own area and its history. The Garvaghy Road area has had its share of conflicts and press coverage but sometimes we can forget what it was like before then and how we can now look forward to working together for the good of our community and in particular our own interest group, those aged over 55.

This Newsletter has come about through our involvement with Richmount Rural Community Association. This is our neighbouring rural community association with which we have worked over the past 2 years on two cultural diversity projects funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade, Republic of Ireland. We are also engaged in Peace IV project with the Association.

(PEACE IV is covering the cost of this publication)

What do we do ?

Ballyoran over 55s was formed many years ago but is now normally referred to as Ballyoran Seniors Club.

We normally meet on Wednesday afternoons between 2.00pm and 3.30pm at the Ashgrove Community Centre. Currently we have around 20 people who come along to meet their friends, have a cup of tea and engage in a multitude of activities. We also organise holidays, day trips and outings for our members.

It is now well established that loneliness is one of the biggest killers, and groups such as our can help alleviate the social isolation experienced by many of our older people. We are a self help group with little external funding.

At present we have only women in the group but men are very welcome. Please see page 4 for more details.

In this Issue

- What can Ballyoran over 55s do for you?
- Background to Garvaghy / Ballyoran
- Working in partnership with Richmount Rural Community Association (RRCA)
- Our "rosy" background
- The needs of older people -have your say
- PEACE IV project
- Cooperation in action



Frances Hayes, Chairperson of Ballyoran Seniors speaking at the finale of the Peace Say it with Flowers project in the Richmount Centre. Also included are Gertie Breen & Lily McNally



We will be joining with Richmount Rural Community Association's Advocacy and campaigning project on the needs of older people and joining the support forum



Project supported by the European Union's Peace IV managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB). The views and opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily reflect those of the European Commission or the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB).

Working together in Partnership



Great Value Winter break

Just before Christmas 14 of our members joined with 44 members of Richmount Rural Community Association in its trip to Donegal Town.

We stayed at the Abbey Hotel where we had 2 nights dinner bed and breakfast. We had nightly entertainment and a day trip to Sligo. The whole package including luxury coach travel to Donegal was only £99. Our members described it as a most enjoyable trip, great craic and great value.

Good Neighbours for Aging Well

By partnering with Richmount Rural Community Association we will be having a series of art & craft sessions. What is different this time is that we will have a choice of 5 different arts or crafts on any one afternoon. For those who may not want or feel able to engage in traditional arts there will be story telling and reminiscing which is always very popular. The sessions will be held on Thursday afternoons at Richmount with free travel from Ashgrove Community Centre.

Peace Say it with Flowers

This project which was completed in July 2018 and was completed by Richmount Rural Community Association and Ballyoran Seniors together with 3 Primary Schools.: Richmount Primary School, St John's Eglis, Annaghmore and Scoil Phádraig outside Carrickmacross Co Monaghan.

This was a challenging programme but very successful and has paved the way to develop greater involvement between the Community Association and Ballyoran Seniors.

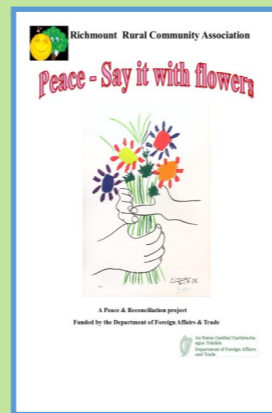
The theme of the flowers was derived from Pissarro's Bouquet of Peace



Richmount Rural Community Association has secured another round of funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and this time the project is entitled "Lasting Peace"

One of the highlights of the peace say it with Flowers was the children from the three schools. We would ask you to watch a short video on their work together. It sets an example for all of us.

<https://www.facebook.com/joe.garvey.583/videos/1273073152829614/>



Celebrating the successful peace say it with flowers celebration are some of the children from Richmount Primary School and St John's Eglis. They worked with Scoil Phádraig, Corduff, Co Monaghan to produce some beautiful wall hangings and banners depicting the theme of peace. The celebration was opened by the Lord Mayor Councillor Julie Flaherty. Also in the picture is: Joe Garvey, Chairman RRCA, Mary McKenna, (Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Dublin), funder of the project. Frances Hayes (Ballyoran Seniors), Dure Najaf and Shirin Hasonova from the Richmount & Portadown ethnic women's group

PEACE IV Project: Ballyoran Seniors and Richmount



Pictured at the start of the Peace IV project are : L-R Joe Garvey, Chairman RRCA ; Frances Williamson , Anne Connolly & Teresa Murphy , Ballyoran Seniors,; Letty Houston, RRCA ; Patricia McElduff, ABC Council; Daphne Hegarty, RRCA; Julie Milligan, Secretary, RRCA & John Carson , Tides Training

Project supported by the European Union's Peace IV managed by the Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB)

Shared Spaces and Services Re-imagining Programme

In the context of Richmount Rural Community Association and Ballyoran Seniors this programme is worth some £15,000. The lead group is Richmount Rural Community Association but it receives no direct finance for the project as all services are provided by Armagh City Banbridge & Craigavon Borough Council.

What is it about?

This programme is funded under the Shared Space and Services Theme of the EU's PEACE IV Programme and should work towards 'the creation of a more cohesive society'. The project is designed to meet a required outcome of the programme:

"Public facilities services are more inclusive and therefore lead to an increase in shared spaces"

What is involved ? The two groups will learn and develop together. There will be educational trips combining aspects of the DFA cultural diversity project. We foresee trips to Dublin, The Boyne Centre and Drogheda, Ulster Scots and the Irish Language Centre in East Belfast. We also want the exercise to be fun and we are planning multi-cultural entertainment and a session of Question Time when we will have an opportunity to put questions to the politicians who will be seeking election at the May Council elections.

Some Historical Facts about the Garvaghy Road and Ballyoran

The name Ballyoran is derived from the Irish: *Baile Uarain* meaning townland of the spring.



In terms of the history of the Garvaghy Road Ballyoran estate is one of the more landmarks of the area having been mainly built in the 1970s. But Garvaghy Road was a name rarely given to this famous thoroughfare by its inhabitants in the years before it became so well known to a vast audience. To those who lived on Garvaghy Road and the streets radiating from it, it was known as 'The Walk' - a title which baffled most outsiders, but was readily identified within Portadown.

The term 'The Walk' had nothing to do with the annual Orange walk from Drumcree Parish Church. Its origins related to the fact that two main streets leading from the town centre, Castle Street and Garvaghy Road, led to 'the castle', an

Elizabethan-type mansion which occupied a site close to where the present Woodside Green stands.

This House or castle was built around the time the first 30 or so English families settled in Portadown in the early 1600s, at the time of the Ulster Plantation. Early records show that the first owner of this land and castle was a man called William Powell who, after a short time, sold it to the Rolleston family who, in turn, sold it to the Obins family. This was the oldest part of Portadown, and the names of streets like Castle Street and Castle Avenue indicate the existence of the castle in that area. There was hunting of deer in the extensive lands of Castle Obins during the 17th century, extending to Richmount, some miles further out into the countryside.

Throughout the 19th century 'The Walk' continued to grow, and at the height of its industrial prosperity, it had two large flour mills, and later became synonymous with rose growing and the Mayfair factory.