



VOL, 4, ISSUE 1



Welcome to Killawalla Newsletter

A sad ending,,,

A pall of sadness enveloped the Killawalla community, as Michael and Maureen Walsh closed the doors of the Killawalla Post Office on December 30th 2016, for the last time.

The Walsh family assumed responsibility for the post office in 1934 when Edward and Ellie Walsh got married and began to serve the local community through their rural shop and post office from their thatched cottage in Killawalla.

Their daughter, Bridie, assumed responsibility for the shop and post office until she married local man, Matt O'Malley, of Ballyburke.

Her brother, Michael, assumed responsibility for shop and Post Office. He was appointed Postmaster in 1965 and now holds the distinction of being the longest serving Postmaster in Ireland. Due to the decline in rural population and the easy access to transportation, the Walsh family closed their rural shop six years ago, in 2010.



Margaret McGing married Alex Axinte in Killawalla Church on December 27, 2016
John Duffy married Triona McGuinness on December 29, 2016 in Ballintubber Abbey.



Bridie O'Malley (nee Walsh) talked about the changes she noticed in rural life. "It was a time of extreme poverty when I was here. People were very poor. There were no medical cards. Thank God, it's a prosperous country now with a good welfare system. it is unbelievable that it could have changed so much in my lifetime."



Sarah Morahan, Derreendafderg
died on December 21, 2016



Local man, Mike Burke began as Postman in 1920 and continued until his retirement in 1974, covering over a half-million miles. usually cycling, during those years.

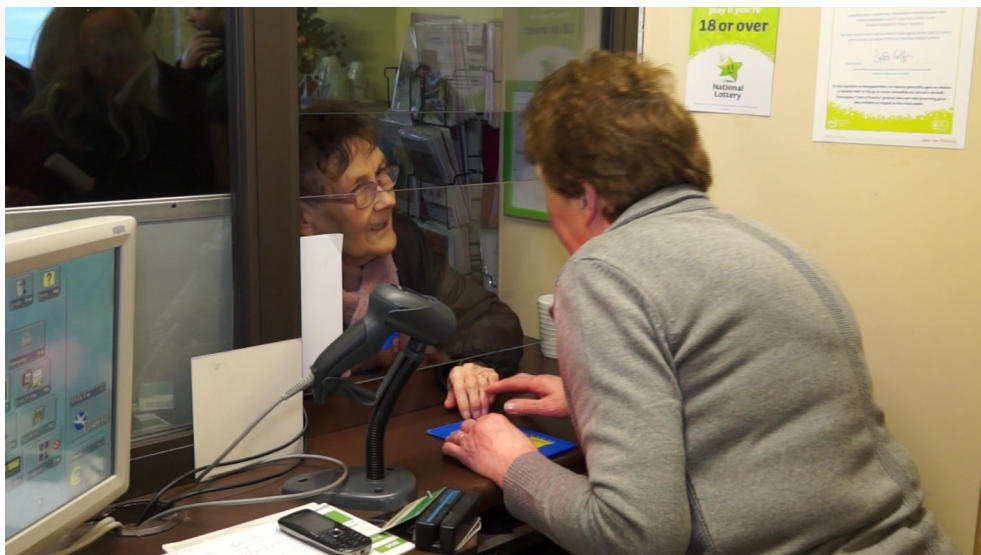




Pictured are Michael and Maureen Walsh and their two sons, Micheal and Padraig at the closing of the Post Office



Pictured are some who attended the closing of Killawalla Post Office



Last customer: Eileen Duffy, Derreendafderg



Sean Hyland served as Postman from 1989 to April 2016. He shared his memories of Killawalla: "It is a sad day for a community when the local Post Office closes. It is a sad reflection of the dying of rural Ireland. I have so many good memories of serving the area as its postman. I met some wonderful people along the way. I made lifelong friends here. These people are my second family. I will always treasure the memories I have had here."



Michael Walsh and Sean Carter share some memories of the Post Office. Sean spoke of how, as a young boy, he often traveled to the Post Office with a donkey for a ten stone bag of flour. He looked forward to a treat from Mrs. Walsh - Michael's mother. She would always give him a "bulls eye" sweet or two from a can that was on the counter.

Now, locals who collect their pensions have to travel to Partry to collect them. In recent years, Post Office in Ballyheane and Ballintubber closed their doors. Now, Killawalla joins them.



Closing out the books for the final time



Edward Walsh said, "It's a very sad day in Killawalla to see the Post Office going. It has been in the Walsh family for generations. It's bad to see all these services leaving our community. But technology changes things and I suppose we have to change with it. We wish to thank the loyalty and dedication of the local community to the Walsh family over the years."



Michael and Maureen Walsh share some final thoughts with those assembled at the closing of the Post Office



It has been a pleasure to serve the community for all those years. It has been a community of friendship much more than a community of customers and I want to thank them for their loyalty, friendships, laughs and chats. We have been here in their happy times and sad times and I hope we've been of help to them. I wish everyone good health and happiness for 2017 and would also like to remember the senior folks who have gone to their Maker - some of them before their time."



Michael and Maureen Walsh close the door of the Post Office for the last time.



Walsh old house and shop where they began the P.O.



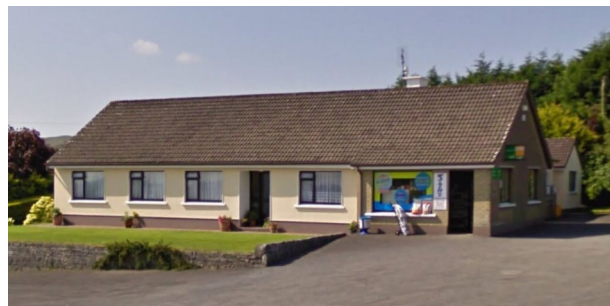
R. Michael Walsh, Postmaster, Killawalla; John Gibbons, Killawalla Community Council, Mrs. Mary Burke and her retiring husband, Mr. Michael Burke



An Post sign marks the last day of business at Killawalla Post Office.

We wish Michael and Maureen much happiness in their retirement and thank them most sincerely for their decades of service to the Killawalla community.

At the Post Office



The line is long, processional, glacial,
and the attendant a giant stone, cobalt blue
with flecks of white, I'm not so much
looking at a rock but a slab of night.
The stone asks if anything inside the package
is perishable. When I say no the stone
laughs, muted thunderclap, meaning
everything decays, not just fruit
or cut flowers, but paper, ink, the CD
I burned with music, and my friend
waiting to hear the songs, some little joy
after chemo eroded the tumor. I know flesh
is temporary, and memory a tilting barn
the elements dismantle nail by nail.
I know the stone knows a millennia of rain
and wind will even grind away
his ragged face, and all of this slow erasing
is just a prelude to when the swelling
universe burns out, goes dark, holds
nothing but black holes, the bones of stars
and planets, a vast silence. The stone
is stone-faced. The stone asks how soon
I want the package delivered. As fast
as possible, I say, then start counting the days

By David Hernandez

Keep all special thoughts and memories for
lifetimes to come. Share these keepsakes with
others to inspire hope and build from the past,
which can bridge to the future."

Mattie Stepanek