

The BRIDGE

Maynooth Alumni
Magazine 2016

Femme Formidable!

Femme Formidable

Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason
(BA 1980, MA 1981) on diplomacy, the
value of arts degrees and more...

Campus of the Future

Unrivalled facilities for
students, alumni and staff

Creating Cities of the Future

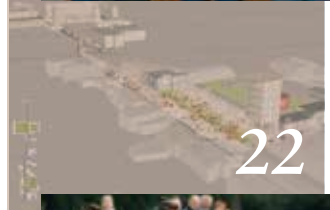
MU Researchers awarded €2.4 million
to shape the smart cities of the future

Plus

Boom, Bust & Brexit
International Appeal
Graduations 2016

CONTENTS

- 1 **President's Message**
- 2 **Graduations**
Welcome Class of 2016!
- 4 **Alumni events in 2016**
Another busy alumni events calendar including the first ever London meet-up
- 6 **Alumni Reunion**
Reconnecting with familiar faces and meeting new ones at this year's gathering
- 8 **Deireadh Ré**
An Dr Tadhg Ó Dúshláine ar scor
- 9 **Legal Eagle**
From founding the Maynooth Law Society to researching women on death row, a profile of Sharon Pia Hickey
- 10 **Creating Cities of the Future**
MU researchers awarded €2.4m to shape the smart cities of the future
- 11 **30 Years in the Saddle**
How the Galway Cycle went from humble beginnings to the premier student fundraiser
- 12 **Boom, Bust & Brexit**
Insights and analysis from new book by alumnus and former ICTU chief executive, David Begg
- 13 **Nice Day for a White Wedding?**
Danielle O'Connell explores whether Irish brides are feminists
- 14 **Femme Formidable!**
Diplomacy, the value of arts degrees and more with Irish Ambassador to France and Monaco, Geraldine Byrne Nason
- 18 **Strong demand for New Curriculum**
MU experiences highest ever growth in first preference applications
- 19 **Sigerson 40th Anniversary Reunion**
Reliving the 1976 glory days at the 40th anniversary reunion



- 20 **80 Days: An Exploration Podcast**
Meet the Maynooth alumni behind an inspiring travel podcast
- 21 **Spotlight on Science**
Teaching Heroes Recognised
Three Maynooth alumni receive awards for their excellence in teaching
- 22 **Campus of the Future**
President Philip Nolan shares his vision of the University and reveals changes underway on campus
- 23 **MaynoothWorks**
Business Incubation Hub celebrates its first birthday
- 24 **International Appeal**
MU's global appeal just keeps growing among international students
- 25 **A Helping Hand for Alumni from Alumni**
Scholarship recipients share how the award has aided their study paths
- 26 **Good Sport**
All the action from another busy year in sport
- 28 **Family Matters**
The Heifron family describe how attending Maynooth has become a family tradition
- 29 **Access for All**
Inspiring tales from Maynooth University Access Programme (MAP) trailblazers
- 30 **Maynooth Memories & Memorabilia**
- 31 **In Memoriam**
Remembering the friends we've lost
- 32 **Class Notes**
'20 Memories of being a Maynooth student in the 1990s' and more flashbacks



Greetings fellow Maynoothians,

It's been a busy year in Maynooth alumni land with plenty of events and opportunities to come back to campus, to meet friends and network (at home and abroad) or to continue with life-long education via our alumni lecture series. See the photos and read more about these on pages 4-5.

Our Alumni Lecture Series, is going from strength to strength so expect more from us on that in the months ahead. November's alumni lecture, which featured cutting-edge research on health issues concerning obesity, one of the global epidemics, from Senior Researcher and Maynooth alumnus, Dr Andy Hogan, was certainly a highlight for the alumni events calendar this year. (I believe I may revisit my relationship with chocolate!)

A stand-out event for me this year was the 'Preparing for the Workshop' afternoon for our current students which took place in April. A special 'thank you' to alumni Joanne, Niamh and Seán for putting up their hands and answering our appeal for alumni contributors.

Another special 'thank you' is due to our Maynooth Alumni Advisory Board (MAAB) who tirelessly gave their time and experience at our meetings during 2016. With Chairman, Mark Greville (BA 1996) at the helm as we head into 2017, we look forward to more insights and advice during the year ahead.

We had an addition to our Alumni Office team this year. Mary Larkin joined us in May as the Alumni Database Manager. So an official *Bridge* welcome here to Mary!

Don't forget we're on social media – so listen in and join the conversation on #MadeinMaynooth and #Maynoothalumni. Spread the word too about *The Bridge*. It's online on maynoothuniversity.ie/thebridge.

And finally... congratulations to our newest alumni, the Class of 2016. Welcome to the Maynooth Alumni Community gang.

All the best,

Karen Kelly

Karen Kelly
Alumni Officer

Editor – Karen Kelly, Alumni Officer
Words & Editing – Lisa Hughes
Print – GPS Belfast



Why not connect with us and be a part of the conversation?
www.alumni-network.maynoothuniversity.ie



President's Message

If 2016 has taught us anything, it's how rapidly the world can change, in complex and unpredictable ways.

It is a year that has emphasised how vital an educated and engaged citizenry is to prosperity and democracy. We enrolled 300 new first year undergraduate students this year, and a little over 1,000 new postgraduates, bringing our total student enrolment to 11,600. These students will graduate into that changing and unpredictable world, but we know one thing for certain, that our collective future depends on their ability to think critically and respond creatively to whatever the future has in store for them.

This places a special responsibility on educators to prepare students as critical thinkers and engaged citizens. This time last year, Maynooth University took a significant step forward with the implementation of our new undergraduate curriculum – a unique proposition in the Irish higher education sector - designed with the needs of today's students and tomorrow's employers in mind. This year we received a resounding endorsement from students for this decision with our highest ever level of first preference applications through the CAO.

These students will avail of world-class teaching that is informed and supported by outstanding research and scholarship. Our researchers never shirk the difficult questions and time and time again confront and tackle

some of the most pressing challenges we face today. This year we have seen a particularly strong array of publications including steps forward in the development of new antibiotics, counteracting climate change, and improving emergency first response times to terrorist attacks.

Our dedicated teaching and important research has seen us ranked as one of the world's top 400 universities in this year's World University Rankings, published by Times Higher Education.

We are determined not to rest on our laurels and we are accelerating our campus development plan with the opening of the new School of Education building and 300 beds being added to our student accommodation this year. The next five years promise plenty more new and exciting developments.

Our alumni are a great source of pride for the University. We are always excited to hear about how you are progressing, and I hope that you stay connected with us to engage in all of the exciting developments you'll see in the year ahead.

Le gach dea-ghuí,



Professor Philip Nolan

President, Maynooth University

Welcome Class of 2016!

Welcome newest Maynooth Alumni – see you at the Reunion in 2021!



'Maynooth, you've been great!'
Amy Clarke

Amy Clarke (BA 2016)



Aidan McGuinness (BA 2016), Dymphna Gushinan (BA 2016), Violet Foley (BA 2016)



Giulia Borello (BA 2016)



Aurora Mather (BA 2016)



Zoe Rogers (BA 2016), Emma Murphy (BA 2016), Siobhan O'Sullivan (BA 2016), Edel Eglinton (BA 2016), Eimear Lowth (BA 2016)



Kelly Monaghan (BA 2016), John Gormley (BA 2016)

'Good Luck to everyone in their future scientific endeavours'
Gerard Sheehan



Ciara Nulty (BSc 2016), Shane Giggins (BSc 2016), Cian Lemass (BSc 2016), Luke Heaphy (BSc 2016), Cathriona Quill (BSc 2016)



L to R: Caolan Harkin, Heather Gaffney, Briana Shiels, Kevin McKeon, John Brennan, Aídeán Hillery, Stephanie Rocks, Clare Fitzgerald, Greg Copley, Roisin Cameron, Jamie McGowan, Gerard Sheehan, Ann Marie Coan, Sarah McFadden, Niamh Dempsey, Emer Lafferty, Shauna Campion, Azad Mohammed



'It's my favourite photo from the day by far!'
Mary Gorman

Mary Gorman (BA 2016)



You can see more of these photos on our Facebook page
facebook.com/maynoothalumni

Olubukola Dasaolu (BSc 2016)



Billy Martin (BSc 2016)



Rajan Sambhavi Priyadarshini (BSc 2016)



Abel Hii (BSc 2016) "Put your pride aside and ask your peers for help, sometimes you can learn a lot more from them than from lecturers."

Sadhbh Moran (BSc 2016)



Keith Finnerty (PhD Engineering 2016)



Kashmira Zohoor (BSc 2016)



Conor Connelly (BA 2016)



Norah McLoughlin (BA 2016)

Alumni Events

from the past year

Save the date:
the 2017 reunion
will take place on
16 September.
Spread the word!

Alumni Carol Service Reception *December 2015*

On 14 December 2015 the Alumni Office hosted a post-Christmas Carol event in Renehan Hall, close to the beautiful Chapel where the annual Carol Services are held. After the short magical walk through the Cloisters, alumni who were lucky enough to win the hottest festive season ticket in town were treated to a selection of modern and traditional carols from the University choirs. Afterwards President Philip Nolan and members of the choirs mingled with alumni at the mulled wine and mince pie reception. Make sure your name is in the hat for next year's service by visiting maynoothuniversity.ie/alumnicommunity



Ciara Cook, Yvonne Pigott (2013) and Chloe Meehan (2013)

Alumni event in London *January 2016*

The first ever gathering of Maynooth alumni in London took place on Wednesday 13 January for a pub night hosted by a number of Irish universities in the Porterhouse near Covent Garden.

Together with Cork Institute of Technology, Dublin City University, Royal College of Surgeons, Trinity College Dublin and Queens University, Maynooth University invited alumni to this event.

Among the alumni who joined Karen Kelly, Alumni Officer for this event supported by the Alumni Office were Markis Duggan (BSc 1997), Caoimhe O'Connor (BA 2006), Harvey Duthie (BA 2002) and Barry Hetherington (BSc 1984).

Interested in connecting with
Maynooth alums in London?
Join our group on LinkedIn
Maynooth University London Chapter



Alumni Lecture puts the spotlight on the 2016 General Election *February 2016*

This year's Faculty of Social Science alumni lecture 'Ireland Votes 2016: Predictions, Predilections, and Partnerships' took place just before the General Election on Wednesday 24 February and put the spotlight on the mechanics of this election (boundary changes, political/vote trends, gender quotas). Key issues driving the debate and the electorate were explored by Maynooth University experts Professor John O'Brennan and Dr Mary Murphy from the Department of Sociology, together with Dr Adrian Kavanagh and lecturer Claire McGing from the Department of Geography. Moderator Shane Coleman from Newstalk ensured an engaging discussion.



Shane Coleman and Dr Mary Murphy

Professor Emeritus of Modern History delivers Alumni Lecture *April 2016*

Alumnus and former head of the Department of History, Professor Comerford's lecture 'Currencies, Politics and Society in Ireland since 1847' explored the Irish public's awareness of the capacity of currency to impact on our economic, social and political life. The second lecture in the 2016 Maynooth University Alumni Lecture Series took place in Renehan Hall on Wednesday 6 April in collaboration with the Faculty of Arts, Celtic Studies and Philosophy. Many of the Professor's former students and colleagues attended and all were delighted to see him back again at a Maynooth podium.



Professor Vincent Comerford with William Smyth (BA 2002, PhD 2009)

Sigerson Cup 40th Anniversary Celebration

April 2016

On Friday, 22 April a reunion of the triumphant Sigerson Cup team of 1976 took place in the University. Assisted and supported by the Alumni Office, this 40th anniversary gathering was celebrated over dinner in Pugin Hall. Read more about this reunion and Maynooth's GAA glory days on page 19.

'Preparing for the Workplace' Workshop for Current Students

April 2016

Following an appeal to alumni for assistance with a workshop for students undertaking a Masters or PhD but not planning research careers, alumni Joanne Charles (BA 2000, HDip IT 2001) – Territory Account Manager (Sales) at Cisco, Niamh Smyth (BA 2000/HDip IT 2001) Commercial Accountant at Kerry Foods and Seán Earley (BSc 2001, PhD 2005), Senior Chemist at the Veterinary Public Health Regulatory Laboratory at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine shared their experiences about their transition into work and obstacles they had to overcome. The workshop was a collaborative effort between Graduate Studies, the Career Development Centre and the Alumni Office.

Annual Reunion

September 2016

The eve of the All-Ireland final was also the date for the 2016 Reunion. This year we celebrated reunions from Classes of 1971 right up to 2011. For more on this great evening including photos and feedback from the gang who turned up, see pages 6-7.



Share your career journey with us on maynoothuniversity.ie/graduateprofile

#MadeinMaynooth



Mary O'Rourke (HDipEd, 1967) Book Reading and Signing

October 2016

In collaboration with the University Library and held during the Kildare Readers Festival, the Alumni Office hosted a book reading by Mary O'Rourke of "Letters of My Life".

Athlone native, alumnus and former minister, Mary regaled alumni with her often humorous anecdotes from her student days to her exploits in the Irish political arena. In her book, she looked back over her life in the form of 20 letters to people who have made an impression on her. After the reading Mary signed copies of "Letters of My Life" and welcomed questions from alumni and guests.



Tina Warren (BA 2005, MA 2009) with Mary O'Rourke

Tackling the tough societal questions, alumnus returns to give Faculty of Science and Engineering Alumni Lecture

November 2016

Alumnus Dr Andy Hogan (BSc 2004, PhD 2010) returned to campus to give a rousing, informative lecture 'Obesity – Why is it so hard to lose weight?' during Science Week. Andy's journey from Maynooth to his current cutting-edge research on this global epidemic provided many insights for alumni, family, staff and members of the local community who attended. "During my time at Maynooth University, I had some exceptional teachers who encouraged me to tackle the tough questions we face as a society. This has always been a hallmark of Maynooth research and it was instilled in me throughout my studies."

Summer Soirée 2016

Alumni were treated to literary and musical delights in the University Library on 9 June for the annual Summer Soirée which saw over 100 alumni and guests, including Governing Authority and international visitors from Quinnipiac University, Connecticut, return to campus.

Harpist Alida Loftus, a second year music student, provided music for the wine reception before the main event. Alumnus, novelist and short story writer Evelyn Conlon (BA 1979, HDip Ed 1980) began by sharing humorous anecdotes of her student days at

Maynooth. Our very own "Choir of the World", the Maynooth University Chamber Choir, captivated the audience with a spell-binding rendition of Raglan Road, which showcased why they won the Pavarotti Trophy. Alumni travelled from as far afield as Luxembourg and many took the Russell Library tour prior to the Soirée and immersed themselves in the '16 Up Close' art exhibition.

In his welcoming address, University President Professor Philip Nolan highlighted the changes at Maynooth and appealed to alums to consider Maynooth as a research hub or to provide career/internship opportunities for our students.

2016 Maynooth Alumni Annual Reunion

*Gather the gang, bring a friend,
spread the word and enjoy
your reunion event this year.*

On Saturday 17 September, we celebrated reunions for the Classes of 1971, 1976, 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2011. Enjoying a trip down memory lane in the SU (together with bites and bevies!), alumni partied until the wee hours with music provided by DJ Darragh Jones, an alumnus from 2000.

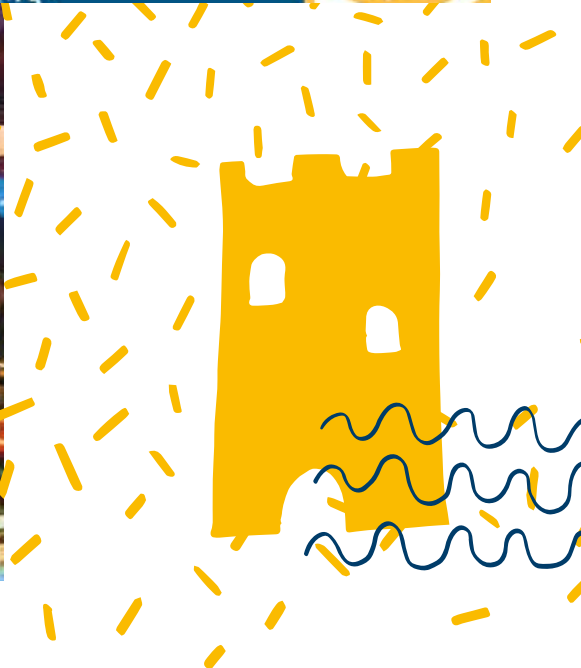
Not your year? Don't worry – all alumni are very welcome to attend.

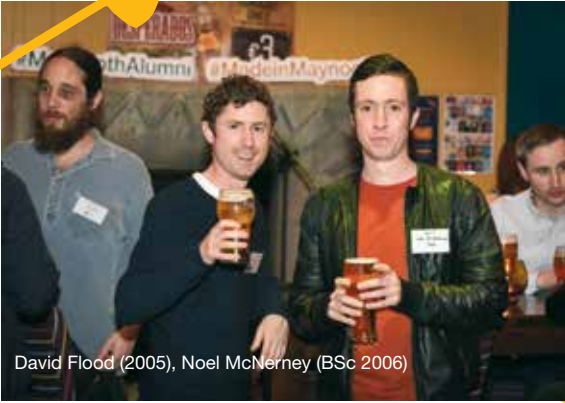
Like to come along but you've lost touch with friends? Let us know and we'll reach out for you. Email alumni@nuim.ie

*Hey Classes of
1972, 1977, 1982,
1987, 1992, 1997,
2002, 2007 & 2012 –
2017 is your reunion
year. Do join us!*



The poster features the Maynooth University logo (Ollscoil Mhá Nuad) in the top left, a graduation cap icon in the top right, and a yellow castle icon in the bottom left. The text is arranged as follows: 'Are you a Maynooth Grad?' in white, 'MAYNOOTH ALUMNI REUNION' in large yellow letters, 'JOIN US ON THE' in white, '16TH' in large white letters, 'SEPT 2017' in white letters inside a yellow box, 'STUDENTS UNION, NORTH CAMPUS' in white, 'Return to Campus & Relive the Memories!' in white, 'From 7.30pm' in white inside a yellow box, and 'SEE YOU THERE!' in white inside a yellow box. At the bottom, it says 'Find out more : maynoothuniversity.ie/alumnireunion'.





David Flood (2005), Noel McNerney (BSc 2006)



Mary Scarry Ryan (BA 1996), Margaret Trector Kane (BA 1996), Ciara Murphy (BA 1996), Emily- Anne Doyle (BA 1996), Brid Cranny (BA 1996), Ronan Barry (BA 1996), Joanne Costello (BA 1996).



Jennie McGarry (BA 2007), Edel Chadwick (BA 2007)



Martin Kelly (BSc 1987), Philip O'Rourke (BSc 1987), Brian O'Broin (BSc 1988)



Clive Jordan (BSc 1996), John McDonald (BSc 1996), Lorraine McDonald Battersby (BA 1995), Padraic Kavanagh (BSc 1996)



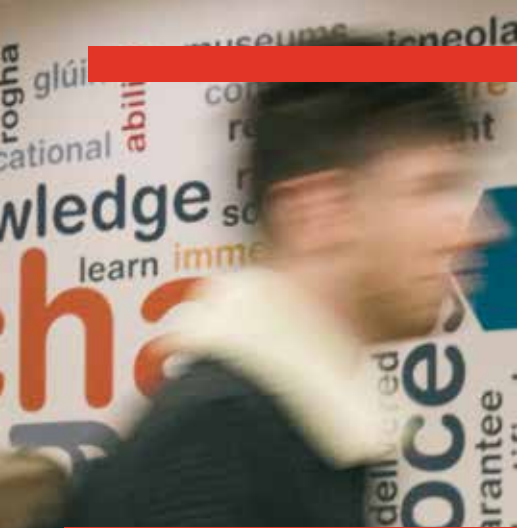
Mark Greville (BA 1996), Eamon Hayes (BSc 1997)



Daragh Jones (BA 2000)



Margaret Trector Kane, Tom Reynolds, Mark Greville, Emily- Ann Doyle, Ciara Murphy, Conor McHugh, Eamon Hayes



Sliocht as an dán ‘Ar Scor’, scríofa ag an Dr Tadhg Ó Dúshláine agus é éirithe as a ról mar Léachtóir Sinsearach i Roinn na Nua-Ghaeilge.

“Is bhaineas súp as gach litir is leabhar

Gach oscailt súl

Gach a gcuala cluas

A scaoil saor mé

A choinnigh óg mé

Fómhar i ndiaidh fómhair

Le gach glúin óg nua

A tháinig tríd an ngeata chugam isteach

Chomh gíodamach meidhreath creidmheach

Is a bhíos féin tráth na bunscoile fadó.”

An extract from the poem ‘Retirement’, penned by Dr Tadhg Ó Dúshláine after retiring from his role as Senior Lecturer in the Department of Modern Irish.

“And I treasured every letter, every book

Every insight

Every annunciation

That set me free

That kept me young

Autumn on Autumn

With every new young generation

That came through the gate to me

As excited, as delighted and as credulous

As I once was myself in primary school long ago.”



LEGAL EAGLE

*Sharon Pia Hickey (BA Civil Law 2012)
Research and Advocacy Director
of the Cornell Center on the
Death Penalty Worldwide*

You could say Sharon entered Maynooth University on a high, after being awarded an All-Ireland Scholarship just before starting her studies in 2008, and from there she continued to move upwards. Taking her place in the first class of Law and Arts in Maynooth University, Sharon chose Law, English, and Music so she could combine her interest in legislation with her love of literature. Before long, Sharon was racking up some serious credits to her CV as one of the founding members of the Law Society, as well as creating the Golden Thread and the Irish Law Journal.

After hearing about the Washington Ireland Program, a program for young leaders committed to public service, Sharon joined the 2010 class, which led to a memorable summer working in the Law Library of Congress in the political hub of Washington D.C. During that summer her interest in human rights and international law was piqued when she took part in peace and reconciliation activities.

By her third year, the USA was calling again and she began studying in Boston College, editing a gender studies journal, and interning in the Women and Public Policy Program in the Harvard Kennedy School of Government. She credits the latter with opening her eyes to the possibilities of a career in public interest. Leaving university in post-recession 2012 was a daunting prospect but, nonetheless, Sharon followed her passion and joined the team at Women for Election in Dublin. One of her favourite experiences in this position was contributing to the Constitutional Convention by recommending a provision enshrining women in public life and removing gender-specific language.

Another trip across the pond beckoned and in 2014 she added a Masters of Law from Columbia University, with a focus on human rights and gender and sexuality law, to her impressive CV. After graduating from Columbia and qualifying as a New York attorney, Sharon’s next move was to join the faculty of Cornell Law School as Clinical Teaching Fellow with the Gender Justice Clinic, where she supervised international human rights projects including a stakeholder workshop on preventing sexual violence against Kenyan schoolchildren.

When her fellowship came to an end, Sharon began a new chapter as Research and Advocacy Director of the Cornell Center on the Death Penalty Worldwide, launched in Cornell Law School in November 2016. Here, Sharon oversees research on topics such as mental health and the death penalty and women on death row.

“My advice to my fresher self would be to work hard to become an expert in things that you find fascinating and you will find a job that you care deeply about.”

Cities of the Future

Maynooth University awarded €2.4m research investment to build city dashboards and shape the smart cities of the future.

Smart cities are no longer just an urban development vision, they're fast becoming a reality. In fact, experts at the Smart America Challenge suggested global cities will invest around \$41 trillion in the next 20 years upgrading infrastructure and utilising the Internet of Things. But 21st century cities face unique and complex problems, ranging from different transport systems to coping with the data that smart cities generate.

Researchers at Maynooth University are helping to create smart cities from both a technological and social perspective, and are making enormous strides in areas such as wide area wireless sensor networks, traffic management, and data mining, in order to address the key challenges of the modern city.

To assist this research, Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Mary Mitchell-O'Connor TD announced a €2.4million award to a team of scientists from Maynooth University. The researchers will work closely with Cork and Dublin City councils and others to build more extensive and effective city dashboards.

Lead investigator Professor Chris Brunson outlined the importance of this work: "This project tackles three sets of fundamental problems: managing complex data; showing information in a useable way; and analysing or modelling data to support policy. These are some of the biggest problems in data science today and are areas in which Maynooth University researchers are global leaders."

The team is confident of success, with Professor Rob Kitchin pointing to their previous achievements in delivering effective city dashboards: "We have already built a Dublin Dashboard which anyone can access at www.dublindashboard.ie. Dubliners are using this to discover more about their services, while planners use it to improve delivery of the myriad of civic services. This project will allow us to solve tricky and fundamental data questions, but it will influence dashboard development globally. Cork will be the first city to see the benefit of this new work."

Martin Charlton, of Maynooth University's National Centre for Geocomputation, noted that "city dashboards are important because they enable start-ups and small companies to create innovative new products. Our research will support the creation of an open data economy in Ireland by opening up

real-time and public administration data, along with open source code and analytics necessary for Ireland's economic development."

This important award is offered through the Science Foundation Ireland Investigators Programme which supports world class

research in areas deemed to be at the pinnacle of scientific excellence. The Maynooth project will bring together expertise from computer science, spatial statistics, geocomputation, and multimedia to work alongside local authorities and other agencies. Twelve people with skills in data analytics and visualisation will be employed to work on the project.

"These are some of the biggest problems in data science today and are areas in which Maynooth University researchers are global leaders."



Galway Cycle
2017 will
take place
on 7-9 April

30 Years in the Saddle



Maynooth's premier student fundraiser, the Galway Cycle, has raised over €1million for various Irish charities over the last three decades, including over €96,000 for Down Syndrome Ireland in 2016. For the cycle's 30th birthday in 2017, the chosen charity is The National Rehabilitation Centre Paediatric Unit.

It's hard to believe that this staple of Maynooth's calendar sprang from humble beginnings but it's true. The idea for the cycle was born out of a simple wish – to make a difference. In 1987 a small group of Maynooth students decided that they wanted to do their bit for a deserving charity.

Determined to come up with a sizable challenge that would entice sponsors to donate, the group settled on an epic cycle starting from the college gates and finishing in Eyre Square, Galway. One of the founders, Flor Madden (BA 1988) remembers the debut event: "A weekend was picked, one van hired and driven by Ger Nash – the only student with a suitable licence - and a car was borrowed under false pretences from Fr Niall Ahern and the Galway Cycle was on the road."

Compared to today's convoy, the inaugural cycle was a small affair, with around eight cyclists donning their lycra and one support car in tow. Impressively, the group wheeled into Galway on time but the journey wasn't without the occasional mishap.

"In the Stone Age era of the late 1980s, pre Sat-Nav or Google Maps, not even armed with a mobile phone, the adventure began!" remembers Flor. "The 'navigator' with the AA Road Atlas led the way in the van, but not knowing the road to Galway, forgot to turn left in Kinnegad and continued to the outskirts of Mullingar! Lead cyclist Pat Fleming from Kerry politely pointed out the shortcoming. Nothing could be done but go cross-country, eventually arriving in Kilbeggan."

The arrival into Galway was equally memorable for Flor and his teammates. "The cyclists caused major traffic disruption and we were pulled over by a patrol car with two somewhat irate guards pointing out the risks to public safety. We decided

the best form of defence was to ask them to thank their superintendent for organising an escort around Eyre Square for us. To our amazement, they believed us and the escort proceeded!" The occasional missed turn, white lie to authority figures and sore limbs was worth it when the amount raised was totted up to £1,200, a major sum at the time.

2016 president of the Galway Cycle, Aaron D'Arcy, a Digital Media 2016 graduate, has been involved with the cycle from the age of 14 and is now looking forward to becoming an alumni member of the team. "It cannot be said often enough how important the alumni are to the Galway Cycle," states Aaron. "I would urge anybody thinking of joining as either a cyclist or collector to do so, especially in 2017 as we celebrate 30 years of charity. It could be a great way to meet old faces while also raising money for charity. Cycling, charity and craic – what more could you ask for?"

Check out the latest on the Galway Cycle on www.facebook.com/galwaycycle

Did You Know...



- Today 300 cyclists, 25 support vehicles and over 30 support crew take part in the cycle
- In the early years, cyclists slept overnight in sleeping bags in Salthill Parish Hall – uncomfortable but the craic was mighty!
- At any point cyclists can take a break on one of the accompanying buses
- You DO NOT need to be able to cycle the full distance to come and join in the fun!
- Training is provided on campus before the event so it's a great way to get fit and meet old friends!



Boom, Bust & Brexit

Ireland's new horizons offered in new book

Respected *Financial Times* columnist Wolfgang Munchau has argued that Brexit and the undermining of Ireland's corporate tax regime could persuade Ireland to leave the EU too. According to Munchau, this depends on whether Ireland can find an alternative model within the EU. Maynooth University alumnus David Begg's (PhD 2014) new book 'Ireland, Small Open Economies and European Integration: Lost in Transition' is about that alternative model and what it might look like.

"The impetus for the book came from the shock to Ireland of the 2008 financial crisis" explains author Begg. "Ireland had been the poster child of Europeanisation and globalisation. The rapid transformation of the Irish economy from one with high unemployment and emigration and a debt to GDP ratio of over 100 per cent in the 1980s to full employment, net emigration and sound public finances in the 2000s earned it fulsome praise. But all this evaporated almost overnight.

In 2009 David began research under the supervision of Professor Seán Ó Riain for a PhD in Maynooth University and the subsequent thesis became the basis for his new book. The book is a political economy account of how Ireland and three other small open economies – Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands – coped with European integration over the last thirty years.

Underpinning the research was a 1985 study of industrial policy in Europe by American academic Peter Katzenstein. At that time Katzenstein was writing for an American audience troubled by the competitive threat posed by Japan. He proved that the systems of what he described as 'democratic corpo-

ratism' practiced by the small open economies of Northern Europe fireproofed them against global market forces. In essence, having an open flexible economy on one hand and high quality public services and structures for social protection on the other.

Begg set out to explore whether Katzenstein's findings survived the stresses of European integration and general financialisation of the global economy, and to contrast these countries with Ireland.

In his book Begg says Finland, Denmark and the Netherlands have all made extensive reforms to their welfare state models and labour markets without compromising their societal values. By contrast, Ireland caught up with the rest of Europe in a material sense but not in the capabilities required to

carry this developmentalism forward in the new millennium. "In fact Ireland regressed during the 2000s. Serious policy errors were made due to an intellectual failure to assimilate the requirements of living in a currency union."

"Ireland is now at a critical juncture," Begg states. "Credit rating agency Moody's opined that the economy's high volatility due to

openness and large presence of multinational corporations remains a strategic vulnerability to further economic shocks by comparison with its peers. The possibility of aligning our development model with the other small open economies of Northern Europe is an option. I would like to think that the book may be of interest from that perspective."

Former General Secretary of the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), David Begg is currently Director of TASC, a prominent think tank.

"The question of why this (the financial crisis) happened resonated with a long held doubt in my mind about the sustainability of our development model."



Nice Day for a White Wedding?

Investigating modern Irish brides from a feminist perspective

Marriage is an ancient tradition and one that Irish couples show no signs of renouncing. However, the Big Day itself is not without its complications – particularly for the bride.

Inspired by her own recent experience as a bride, Danielle O’Connell (BA 2016) decided to investigate the wedding day from a feminist perspective for her final year Sociology thesis.

“Although identifying as a feminist, I was taken aback at how much I became subsumed into the gendered nature of the wedding, not at the behest of my groom or family, but of my own accord,” explains O’Connell. “I became interested in the reasons why contemporary Irish women opt for traditional, expensive weddings that involve a lot of invisible labour that largely falls on them. Through anecdotal chatter, it became evident that within my circle of friends, some contemporary Irish brides felt that getting married was hard work!”

After some preliminary reading on the topic, O’Connell decided to do a qualitative study of Irish brides. Having come to Maynooth as a mature student, O’Connell had worked in a number of jobs so she was acquainted with a range of married women, who were a mix of homemakers and women who worked outside of the home. She conducted eight in-depth interviews and her sample was a mix of civil and church weddings. Within the sample the weddings were divided into two categories. The first was the lavish wedding; a wedding that cost in excess of €25,000. The second group was the moderate wedding or any wedding that cost under €25,000.

During these interviews, O’Connell found that the most common topic was the cost of getting married. One bride was quoted saying ‘sure you don’t even talk in real money anymore, it’s all thousands, thousand for this, thousand for that...’

The women within the study also felt that the majority of wedding work was perceived as women’s work. Curiously, the majority of

the women interviewed would not have felt comfortable letting the grooms become involved in it.

The last question O’Connell asked the brides was “would you get married again?” Half of them said yes, unequivocally, while the other group - the group that fell into the lavish wedding bracket - said yes, but with provisos.

O’Connell argues that Neoliberalism, Gender Role Socialisation and Tradition are the perfect storm that makes up the modern Irish wedding. From First Holy Communions, to debutante balls, women are continually socialised into this feminised role, albeit subconsciously. Finally, she argues that the majority of brides in the study did not like to break with tradition.

So, in conclusion, are Irish brides doomed to be the poster girls of a patriarchal and overly commodified tradition?

“All of the brides, overall, looked back with fondness to their wedding day. The idea that your wedding is the happiest day of your life should be taken with a pinch of salt though!”

Not necessarily, argues O’Connell, who concludes that all of the brides in this study brought to their wedding day a certain amount of agency, an ability to create something and make their wedding their own.

Alumnus and Sociologist Dr Pauline Cullen (BA 1990, MA 1991) was the academic supervisor on Danielle’s thesis. She is a lecturer with the Department of Sociology and Maynooth University Centre for European and Eurasian Studies. Danielle was a student of Sociology and Politics at Maynooth University.



Femme Formidable

Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason

One of Maynooth's most accomplished alumni, Geraldine Byrne Nason grew up in Drogheda and graduated from Maynooth with a BA in English and Irish in 1980 and completed an MA in English in 1981. She was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from Maynooth in 2015. Currently based in Paris, Geraldine serves as Irish Ambassador to France and Monaco but her location hasn't stopped her from being an active board member of the Maynooth Alumni Advisory Board (MAAB). The Ambassador spoke to *The Bridge* about her fondest memories of Maynooth, her varied ambassadorial duties, Brexit and more.

Ambassador Byrne Nason with President of France, François Hollande

For your undergraduate degree, you studied English and Irish at Maynooth. How did you decide on this course of study?

As a Leaving Cert student in Presentation Convent Greenhills Drogheda in 1977, deciding on a college course was not as complex as it is today. Some of my teachers encouraged me to consider medicine. Looking back on it, it was a moment that I was lucky to pass on. I had no interest whatsoever in medicine or science – my first love was literature. My wonderful parents Gerry and Helen saw university not as a job application but as an opportunity for me to learn how to think. Without knowing it, they were really living out the Nussbaum idea of a broad education that cultivates humanity – even if that would have been a rather exotic thought in 1970s Drogheda! My mum and dad harboured that instinct and it was a real gift to me.

Was there a particular reason why you chose Maynooth?

In Greenhills I was guided by two brilliant English teachers – Sr Magdalene Lyons and Seamus Hosey, who subsequently became producer of RTE's *The Arts Show*. A

Maynooth graduate himself, Seamus encouraged me to study English under Professor Peter Connolly. That was one of the best pieces of advice I've ever been given. It opened up my world. Professor Connolly became my mentor throughout my Maynooth years and a most valued friend afterwards. In the Irish Department Tadhg O'Dushláine and Pádraic Ó Ciardha were great advocates of looking at literature written in Irish with a modern critical eye, something I later pursued in my postgraduate work.

Did any class mates make an impression on you?

Three fellow students stand out for me. Kathleen O'Leary from Cork, and two others, Mary Hanafin (former Minister) and John O'Donohue (Anam Cara). They all became firm life-long friends. Kathleen, who was older and a wheelchair user, was an inspiration to me. When I met her, I was 17. She understood the world and drank a glass of whiskey while we were sipping Britvic orange. She was exotic, wise and a real hoot. I hold happy memories of wheeling Kathleen to lectures from our home in Auxilia. Mary was one year ahead of me and a fellow Auxilia resident. From the first time we met, we bonded over our shared love of Irish and we forged a real companionship in Maynooth that endures to this day. John was my minder, the one who waited outside exam halls and convinced me I had done better than I believed I had, the one who walked the Graph with me when I knew my dad was dying. He celebrated my marriage in San Francisco and came on the honeymoon with us (as did fifteen wedding guests – it's a long story!) John left us in 2008. I miss him every day.

What's your fondest memory of your time at Maynooth?

My fondest memories are of living on campus. I considered myself privileged to live in Auxilia, a hall of residence for girls, a stone's throw from the then new Arts building. Staying on campus allowed me not just to study but to fully immerse myself in the fabric of campus life. We really were one big community back then. I was often first in the library and last to leave, but I also had a whale of a time. Being on campus night and day meant a quick hop from the Students' Union in time for Auxilia "curfew", Sigerson celebrations that are still etched on my mind and the Maynooth song contest – our very own XFactor. I will admit to at least once climbing over the gate on the flyover bridge after curfew... but that's a story for another day!

Did you receive any special words of wisdom at Maynooth that have stayed with you to this day?

When I was hugely stressed out after my First Year exams, Professor Peter Connolly took me aside in St Joseph's Square and said "don't forget why you came here". These simple words were a wakeup call, a perspective adjuster. We talked of how little a First Year exam outcome would mean in the context of the wider wonderful education and new life I was enjoying. He didn't tell me then that he had just submitted my English exam papers to the Senate for the Henry Hutchinson Stewart award which I was lucky enough to win that year. Instead, he was more interested in telling me that the stress wasn't worth it. Thank you Pete!

What one piece of advice would you give to current Maynooth students?

My advice is the same as I give to women expecting their first baby – don't miss a single second. Nothing can match the wonder of a university education lived to its fullest. Don't sleepwalk through it. I still relive my Maynooth days 40 years later. I carry my Alma Mater with me wherever I go. I firmly believe that I was "Made in Maynooth" and am so grateful for that.

There is a lot of debate around arts degrees and how relevant they are in 2016. As someone who studied arts, how do you feel your chosen study aided you in your career?

From where I sit today, some of our greatest challenges are social ones that require a

humanitarian response. What is critical now is the capacity to read across cultures, political systems and mind sets. The ability to bring critical thinking to unforeseen circumstance and to think around corners. There are no scientific formulae that can solve the Syrian crisis or no mathematical base for sorting out the refugee problem. Life is more nuanced than that. These challenges need agile, culturally aware graduates who can look at problems from different angles, communicate clearly with people who don't share a worldview and still forge solutions. To my mind a good liberal arts education translates into that capacity. The skills I learned in my Arts degree – turning a problem on its head, being an advocate for other views, communicating clearly, marshalling the best arguments in the worst possible circumstances, networking, resilience – these have all been critical to my success as a diplomat.



"I still relive my Maynooth days 40 years later. I carry my Alma Mater with me wherever I go. I firmly believe that I was "Made in Maynooth" and am so grateful for that."

“Networking and building contacts is at the heart of what I do, in order to be well positioned to influence in Ireland’s favour. It’s all in a day’s work!”

Mary Robinson, Iar-Uachtarán na hÉireann, with Ambassador Byrne Nason

What motivated you to join the Maynooth Alumni Advisory Board (MAAB) and what would you say to other Maynooth alumni who would like to support their alma mater?

My advice to other alumni would be to get involved. At one level, there is a gratifying sense of still being in contact with the alma mater – maybe even recovering a sense of romantic youth! On another level, it fulfils a deep seated desire to give back in some small way to the institution and community that played such a key role in my life choices. Under Philip Nolan’s direction Maynooth University has wonderful prospects ahead. It is a vibrant 21st century hive of innovation and learning that inspires me every time I cross the threshold. Being part of the alumni effort will be both inspirational and satisfying to anyone who makes the effort. If I can manage by remote access to be a board member from Paris, you can do so too, from wherever you are. Don’t miss out!

You have served for over 30 years in the civil and diplomatic service. Is this what you always wanted to do or how did you become a career diplomat?

I sometimes think of myself as the “Accidental Diplomat”. When I started my MA, my focus was on moving from being a tutor to becoming a lecturer but life intervened. As a condition of a postgrad bursary, I was asked to look at public service exams – that horrified me! ‘Diplomat’ sounded more glamorous than ‘civil servant’ and the more I understood of the role, the more interested I became. I took the exams and was lucky enough to be recruited on my first try. I almost turned it down, but my Dad died at the age of 51 in the interim, and so, as the eldest of three, I assumed responsibility, surrendered my MA in 6 months and the rest is history. It has been an exciting, if at times exhausting, career living and working in New York, Vienna, Brussels, Geneva, Helsinki and Paris but I have never regretted it for a moment.

What has been a career highlight for you?

The three years I spent as a Secretary General for Europe, working with Taoiseach Enda Kenny and Tánaiste Eamon Gilmore

during Ireland’s economic crisis, would have to be the time I believe I best served the State. As Secretary General to the Economic Management Council, I was intimately involved in deliberations on regaining Ireland’s economic sovereignty and rebuilding our international reputation. It was a very tough time but I am proud of the work over those years.

What does an average day look like for you as an Ambassador?

On a daily basis, I am working on foreign policy such as Syria or Brexit, but am also tirelessly promoting Ireland’s economic interests in the hugely important French market, advocating for Irish business opportunities here in France. I also travel to other regions in France, mainly on trade missions. I am very engaged in the cultural agenda; last month alone I unveiled a plaque at the home of designer Eileen Gray, hosted a Beckett evening and launched a major Oscar Wilde exhibition. Frequently in the evening, we host receptions targeted at the business, media or cultural sectors. Last St Patrick’s Day we broke all records with 700 guests! Networking and building contacts is at the heart of what I do, in order to be well positioned to influence in Ireland’s favour. It’s all in a day’s work!

At the embassy we are also a highly responsive 24 hour service to Irish citizens in distress and we were also called on to assist in the recent tragic death in Paris of Munster coach Anthony Foley. As Ambassador I was glad that the embassy team could support the family at a time of need. That is what we are here for.

The area you work in has traditionally been male-dominated. Do you identify as a feminist?

Yes, I like to think of myself as a feminist but I believe the heavy lifting has been done by the generation before mine. I am extremely grateful to those women who in the 1970s in Ireland battled against the marriage ban and fought for equal pay. But we have more to do! My profession is still very much male dominated; only 16% of senior Ambassadorial positions are occupied by women in the Irish diplomatic service. It is gradually improving but too slowly.

What do you think women bring to the diplomatic table?

For centuries, diplomacy has been associated with characteristics that value ‘manliness’ – war, weaponry, military hardware and conflict. Back as far as Machiavelli, we have been intertwining power with masculinity. Female diplomats have some natural tendencies which reinforce their skill set as diplomats. We tend to be well-informed and well prepared. We don’t like to fly by the seat of our pants. I am convinced that the 21st century will offer a new agenda for diplomacy and we can bring something new to that agenda. The 21st century wars will be fought around disease, water, human trafficking and will be fought with a skill set and capacity considered more ‘feminine’. The role of human rights, poverty, family and health situations are now emerging as the underlying reasons for bigger regional and conflict situations and diplomats such as Mary Robinson and Hilary Clinton have successfully moved these issues to the heart of the international agenda. And frankly, I believe that because women have historically been disempowered, we may be particularly well placed to bring insights into unequal power relationships.

Given the vagaries of the ambassadorial role, how do you go from something like Euro 2016 to the sorrows of Bastille Day in Nice?

The Euros campaign was a rollercoaster of excitement, thrills, spills and a lot of hard work here at the embassy. We worked closely with John Delaney, the FAI, and IFA colleagues to support the almost 100,000 fans from Ireland. Their behaviour was exemplary but in order to ensure that we were on hand to assist with mishaps (and there were many!), we also had a number of pop-up consulates in Lille, Lyon, and Bordeaux. The atmosphere at the matches and was electric. With their

good humour, wit and music, the Irish fans charmed everyone so I was the most envied ambassador in France.

Obviously the lows of 2016 included the horrific attack in Nice on Bastille Day. The barbaric way in which innocent people lost their lives that night is seared into our memory. Nice is such a popular holiday spot for so many Irish families that we had many concerns. I travelled to Nice within the first 24 hours and assisted Irish citizens who were in the area, but luckily none were injured.

As someone who has worked in the EU and Europe for a long time, how do you feel about Brexit and its potential impact on Ireland?

I was deeply saddened by the outcome on Brexit. I have spent almost half of my career working on EU policy and I am unashamedly passionate about the EU. It remains for me the most successful political and economic construct of the 20th century. Ireland has been a major beneficiary of that success since we first sat at the table in 1973. We came of age there. I am fundamentally optimistic but we have difficult waters ahead to navigate. We will be operating for some time in an unpredictable environment, with a fragile Eurozone, signs of increasingly xenophobic tendencies and then we have the known concrete impacts we face in relation to our citizens, the Common Travel Area, our economy and the future of the Union itself. But Europe has been a harbour for us in good times and bad. There will be compromises needed, which may be hard for some to see at this stage. But it is the only realistic way forward.



1. Ambassador Byrne Nason with Euro 2016 ROI Captain, Robbie Keane (centre) and Alex Nason

2. With fellow student, Kathleen O’Leary

3. Princess Zahra Aga Khan, His Highness The Aga Khan (also an honorary Maynooth alumnus), the Ambassador and Brian Nason

“Being part of the alumni effort will be both inspirational and satisfying to anyone who makes the effort.”



Strong demand for new curriculum sees Maynooth remain Ireland's fastest growing University

Strong demand for the new undergraduate curriculum resulted in the largest ever intake at Maynooth University this year, with more than 2,960 students starting in September. Maynooth received its highest ever level of first preference applications, and as a result, this year also saw the largest intake of high achieving students (obtaining 450+ points in their Leaving Certificate) with 16% year on year growth recorded.

The undergraduate curriculum has been designed in response to the needs of today's students and provides greater choice and flexibility within its degrees. Undergraduate students have the option of specialising immediately or exploring a range of disciplines in first year and specialising later. The curriculum emphasises the fundamental skills of critical thinking and clear communication, which are addressed from the outset, and included in special small group courses in first year. Students also have the opportunity to take additional elective courses outside of their core studies, including modern language courses, alongside any degree.

As part of the new curriculum, Maynooth University has reduced its number of entry routes – from more than 50 to approximately 35. These broader entry routes give students more time to make the best decisions for their future, while also addressing the pressure students feel from the points race, rote learning and 'studying to the exam'.

Maynooth University President, Professor Philip Nolan, observed: "We're very pleased with students' response to our exciting new curriculum and our decision to broaden entry routes. We have even more high ability students attending this year, attracted by our challenging teaching, our emphasis on critical skills, and the flexibility and choice within our degrees. We have radically reduced the number of separate CAO entry routes, reducing the pressure felt by students as they prepare for the Leaving Certificate and the transition to higher education."

Discussing students' response to the new curriculum, Professor Nolan said: "This represents a significant milestone for Maynooth University. The high level of demand we have seen for our undergraduate courses is a great endorsement of our decision to present a unique proposition to students."

"This year Maynooth University saw its highest ever intake of students. Each and every student who begins their undergraduate studies here will have the benefit of a broad education that has been designed with their future needs firmly in mind," Professor Nolan concluded.



Key Components

- Increased flexibility and choice

The flexible degree structure allows students more choice in subject combinations and when to specialise. For those students who know what subject(s) they want to study, they can specialise immediately. For those who want to try a range of subjects, they can specialise in second year and decide on the amount of a subject they wish to study; whether to take a Double Major, a Major with Minor or a Single Major.

- Developing critical skills

The introduction of a new Critical Skills module in first year is designed to give students the critical thinking skills that employers value; the ability to understand and deliver complex arguments, evaluate evidence, make balanced judgements and communicate ideas clearly. Students will do more oral and written presentations, and spend more time working in teams and independently.

- Exposure to areas outside their core discipline

Students have opportunities to explore the different perspectives, different ideas and different ways of thinking, by taking an elective study in a subject outside of their main area after first year. Options available include: modern languages; global environmental change; and entrepreneurship, creativity & problem solving;

- Co-curricular activity

Students are encouraged to engage more in sports, societies, voluntary work, work placement, or study abroad, to build their experience, capability and confidence, and ensure they graduate with a CV that shows what they can achieve. Co-curricular activity is recorded on their transcripts.

- Simplified entry routes

While there is a wide range of degrees in Maynooth, the University has simplified the entry routes into those degrees. By 2017 the number of entry routes to undergraduate courses in Maynooth University will be reduced to around 35 from 50. After first year many pathways are available and students will be able to graduate from as many as over eighty degrees.

Maynooth's GAA Glory Remembered

Team captain Dan O'Mahony tells The Bridge about the 40th Reunion of the 1976 Sigerson Cup winning team

For the players on Maynooth's 1976 Sigerson Cup winning team, it's hard to believe it's been 40 years since their momentous win. On Friday 22 April this year, a reunion of the triumphant team of 1976 took place on campus to mark the 40th anniversary.

Winning team member Paddy McGovern (BA 1978, HDip 1979) was one of the main organisers who together with the panel of players and spouses were joined by the 1976 team club chairman, Pat McHugh. Also present on the night were guests of honour including Fr Enda McDonagh, Dónal McAnallen, author of 'The Cups That Cheered: A History of the Sigerson, Fitzgibbon and Higher Education Gaelic Games' (2012), John Divilly, manager of the current Sigerson champions UCD and Senator John O' Mahony.

More than 40 guests joined the festivities and spent the evening reminiscing on old times over dinner in Pugin Hall. Mementos of the anniversary were sponsored by the Alumni and Maynooth University GAA Development Offices and the Alumni Office was presented with a copy of 'The Cups That Cheered' signed by the players.

Although team manager Malachy O'Rourke was unable to travel from Brussels due to illness, he did the next best thing and sent a message to all present. "It is good to know he has overcome his illness and hopefully he will be fit and well to attend future gatherings to reminisce about the achievements of the 1976 team," says Dan O'Mahony, captain of the 1976 team. "His role was key to the success of the team. He was a manager ahead of his time."

To date, the 1976 triumph has been Maynooth's only time scooping the Sigerson Cup title. With more teams competing, the chances of winning the Cup has become

more difficult but Dan has high hopes that Maynooth will relive its glory days: "Forty years is too long without another victory."

While Maynooth had many famous footballers over the years, they were not actually permitted to participate in external competition until 1968 but Maynooth finally hosted the Sigerson competition for the first time in 1974. "A very interesting football seminar was held over a weekend a short time before the actual competition and it was attended by some of the top county players of that era, like Mick O'Connell, Brian McEniff and Billy Morgan. As you would expect this was the brainchild of Malachy O'Rourke," remembers Dan.

"Forty years is too long without another victory."

In 1974 and 1975 Maynooth lost each year to the eventual winners UCD. "You can imagine then how special it was to defeat UCD in the 1976 final because they were so successful," Dan explains.

"In 1976 the team played three days in a row, defeating UCG on Friday, Trinity on Saturday and UCD on Sunday. Only four of the first team played all three matches. Many of the players were rested on Saturday which was a calculated risk that paid off. The semi-final and final were both played in Croke Park which made victory extra special."

"After the victory celebration function in Dublin attended by all the teams, the Maynooth team returned to the college late that night to celebrate further in Liam Ryan's room. It must have been a bit noisy as there were some complaints from some other staff members who were woken up during the night!"

For Dan O'Mahony and his fellow teammates, the 1976 success is much more important than a title. "Winning a competition and achieving success creates a close bond between everyone involved, which has continued over the years." In fact, they're already looking forward to celebrating the Golden Jubilee together in 2026.

80 Days: An Exploration Podcast

*Intrepid Maynooth Alumni
Launch Travel Podcast*



Listen up...

'80 Days: an exploration podcast' can be found on any podcast app, including iTunes, by searching for its name or listen directly at 80dayspodcast.com

Once a week three Irish men take their places in front of three microphones in three different countries across the world. After hitting 'record' the trio strike up a lively chat about the history, geography and quirks of a lesser-known country. The end result is the light-hearted but always informative '80 Days: An Exploration Podcast'.

Not only do the podcast's three hosts have a shared love of travel and history but they're all also alumni of Maynooth University. [Joe Byrne](#) (BSc Chemistry 2006), [Luke Kelly](#) (BA Media Studies 2006) and [Mark Boyle](#) (BSc Psychology 2005) are all living overseas but the three self-professed "history and geography nerds" have found a unique way of exploring the world together, from different corners of the globe.

"We launched the podcast this summer and we explore a new country each week," says Joe. "We research its history, geography, culture and language and produce



"Our connection to Maynooth is strong; we wouldn't be doing this podcast without the training and connections we made during our time in Maynooth."

an episode of approximately 1 hour of engaging discussion about these lesser-known places."

"We all met through our membership of NUIM Drama Soc (as it was called). I kept in touch with the college a bit longer through my Ghost Tours of the campus every Hallowe'en since I graduated. Our connection to Maynooth is strong; we wouldn't be doing this podcast without the training and connections we made during our time in Maynooth."

In fact, Wexford native Luke puts his Media degree to good use producing the podcast from his current home in Hong Kong. As well as the technical skills of sound editing, the podcast requires in-depth research - a skill all three learned in their academic lives - and as a result listeners are treated to a wealth of travel tips and history facts.

One of the most culturally isolated places the trio looked at was Bhutan. Did you know that the "Land of the Thunder Dragon", Bhutan, is so similar in climate and appearance to Switzerland, that Fritz Maurer was inspired in the 1980s to stay there and make the Himalayan answer to Emmental cheese? This is the kind of fact you'll learn from an episode of the podcast.

As literature buffs may have already guessed, the name of the podcast is inspired by Jules Verne's 'Around the World in Eighty Days' and between them, the three friends have covered about half of the planet and love to share anecdotes about lesser-known people and places they come across.

Despite having just finished their first season of 10 episodes touching on places as diverse as Namibia, Alaska and Panama, the three friends still consider themselves "curious amateurs" but they hope the podcast will inspire a bit of wanderlust in listeners.

"The feedback we have gotten so far has been really positive and we have enjoyed hearing from listeners in countries we have researched" Joe says. "Usually people are very complimentary about our story-telling... but occasionally the pronunciation of names has raised a few eyebrows!"

Spotlight on Science

From using drones to solve agriculture problems to designing more effective medicines, scientific research at Maynooth is at the coalface of cutting edge breakthroughs. A strategic goal of the University is to be recognised by 2017 as the clear national leader of thematic areas of research that address the major societal challenges of the 21st century.



Anti-diabetic effects of recently discovered series of new compounds mimic those of exercise

Diabetes is reaching epidemic levels, with an estimated 200,000 people in Ireland suffering from it and more than 370 million people with Type 2 diabetes worldwide. Researchers at Maynooth University have discovered a series of new compounds whose anti-diabetic effects mimic those of exercise. The findings mark the culmination of five years of work by a team led by Dr John Stephens from the Department of Chemistry and were published in the internationally respected Journal of Molecular Endocrinology. During exercise, cells must convert more glucose into usable energy (adenosine triphosphate or “ATP”) than they do while resting. The compound makes it harder for cells to convert glucose into ATP, so the cells take up more glucose, thereby minimising the elevated levels of glucose associated with Type 2 diabetes. The series of compounds discovered at Maynooth University have shown the ability to improve glucose handling and also showed a positive effect on weight, which in itself may help with the interlinked problems of weight gain and type 2 diabetes.

New Research regarding Climate Change

A decrease in global Diurnal Temperature Range (DTR) - the difference between the daily maximum and daily minimum temperature – poses a potential threat to human health, agriculture and the natural environment. New research led by Professor Peter Thorne of the Department of Geography and published in the Journal of Geophysical Research confirms that a significant decrease has occurred in the DTR recorded globally since the mid-20th Century. The reduction in global DTR, resulting from daily minimum temperatures warming faster than daily maximum temperatures, is an indicator of shifts caused by climate change. Despite Ireland’s temperate climate, our mortality rates are affected by temperature. Crops and livestock require low minimum temperatures in order to recover from excessive daytime temperatures. With the agri-food sector worth an estimated €24 billion, changes in thermal climate could have extremely significant consequences for Ireland’s economy.

Teaching Heroes Recognised

Maynooth alumni honoured at Ireland’s national ‘Teaching Hero’ awards

Three Maynooth alumni were honoured with prestigious gongs at this year’s Teaching Hero awards on Thursday 27 October, which saw over 800 higher education teachers nominated by their students for their classroom skills.

The winning teachers were Ciarán Mac an Bhaird (BA 1998, MSc 2001, MLitt 2004, PhD 2007) and James O’Malley (BA 2012, MA 2013) who now both work in the Department of Mathematics & Statistics in Maynooth University, and Denise Behan (BSc 1998, MSc 2001, PGDHE 2008) who now works in IT Tallaght.

With a focus on innovative, creative and inspiring teaching and its impact on student learning, the Teaching Hero awards honour the best of Ireland’s higher education teachers for the influence they have on the development of their students. The Teaching Hero awards are the only student-led awards in Irish higher education.

Minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton TD said “This year’s awards honour outstanding teachers who bring about exceptional learning for students, who thrive in an environment of innovation, creativity and inspiration. Teaching excellence brings out the best in both teacher and student.”



Denise Behan, IT Tallaght with Kevin Reid USI & Shane Murphy USI



Ciarán Mac An Bhaird and James O'Malley

The awards were organised by The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in partnership with the Union of Students in Ireland (USI).

Campus of the Future

A vision and plan for the future – Maynooth University leads the way with a Campus Masterplan that will deliver a 21st century university with unrivalled facilities for students, staff and alumni

As the fastest growing university in Ireland, designing and building a campus that meets the academic, research and broader social needs of Maynooth University's students and staff is paramount. As a result, Maynooth University has developed a progressive Campus Master Plan that envisions how the campus will grow and change over the coming two decades.

Sustaining the distinct identity of the University and its 200 years of history, while also providing a modern vision to 2025 and beyond is crucial to the plan. This seamless fusion of past and present is a particular point of pride for Maynooth University President Professor Philip Nolan who spoke to *The Bridge* about the development plan: "The Campus Masterplan has a very strong vision for one integrated campus stretching across the old north and south campus. It brings the two together, blending that strong sense of history with modern university buildings, some of which – the Library, the Eolas building and the new Education building – are now the best university buildings in Ireland. I am very proud of how that integrated vision sits in a really beautiful natural environment. There is great inspiration and stimulus in having state of the art facilities in a truly gorgeous setting."

The Campus Masterplan is not a faraway dream for Maynooth; many changes have already taken place to date and more changes are expected in 2017. Professor Nolan describes some of the changes we can expect: "The space created in front of the Library is really a

magnificent public space and what we are doing there is pushing that sense of community and civic space across the Kilcock Road and into the North Campus. We have to pay as much attention to the public spaces that we walk through and learn in as much as the buildings. So the first priority project is to create a wonderful plaza on the North Campus to match the campus on the south and to reduce the sense of the Kilcock Road being a barrier in the middle of the campus."

"I am most excited by what the walk from St Joseph's Square through where the Arts building is, out to new accommodation and new sports facilities to the west and what that will look like in five and ten years' time. As an alumnus walks through these once familiar environments, they will be really extraordinarily proud of the developments." Wheels are also in motion for an extension to the Science Building and a new academic building is also a priority for 2017.

Alumni play a key role in the future of the campus and President Nolan is keen for alumni to get involved. "The campus is here for alumni and the facilities are getting better and better. We really like to see alumni back with us, using these new facilities and then spreading the word that the education, research and infrastructure of Maynooth are world class. To be proud of it is the first thing I would ask alumni and after that, don't be shy about spreading the word about what is going on here."

"There is great inspiration and stimulus in having state of the art facilities in a truly gorgeous setting."



MaynoothWorks

Business incubator goes from strength to strength

Maynooth University's Business Incubator, MaynoothWorks, celebrated its first birthday in October and the state-of-the-art facility is going from strength to strength in its efforts to foster a culture of enterprise creation on campus.

Originally in the pipeline since 2007, MaynoothWorks represents the missing piece in the University's strong commercialisation efforts to date. From the outset, MaynoothWorks has been more than bricks and mortar; instead it is a place where start-up companies can be guided to become more efficient and effective.

Critical to this success has been the practice of mentoring, executive coaching and providing access to a network of companies, experts and funders. The model in MaynoothWorks is very target-driven and start-up expert Owen Lavery works closely with the early stage companies to support them in making the right early stage decisions which can be critical for a young company.

At present MaynoothWorks has an occupancy rate of 90% in its offices, 95% on its hot desks and has created 79 jobs. Client companies are also doing their bit to help the undergraduate population by employing 6 interns and providing them with invaluable work experience as well as potentially planting a seed for their own start-up dreams.

With the New Frontiers programme, MaynoothWorks has been able to support both Maynooth University graduates and external entrepreneurs, including www.moodleymanor.com, www.raiseyouriq.com and previous winner of the Maynooth University Student Entrepreneur competition, www.cognikids.com.

Two spinouts Avectas and IGeotech are great examples of how combining the research excellence of Maynooth University with the right supports can lead to companies with significant commercial potential.

MaynoothWorks is always looking to expand its network of mentors, funders and sponsors. Visit maynoothuniversity.ie/maynoothworks to find out more.

MaynoothWorks Spinouts

AVECTAS

Avectas (www.avectas.com) develops leading edge science to deliver therapeutics for their global clients and the company resulted from the research of Dr Shirley O'Dea and Dr Michael Maguire from the Department of Biology. Currently employing over 20 PhDs, Avectas has offices in MaynoothWorks, Dublin and Boston and collaborates with Maynooth University and MIT. Being close to Maynooth University and the availability of lab space in MaynoothWorks was a key factor in their decision to locate their research efforts here.

IGEOTECH

A spinout from the research efforts of Dr Tim McCarthy of the National Centre of Geocomputation in Maynooth, IGeotech's flagship product is www.ubipix.com. Led by Maynooth University graduate Dr Stephanie Keogh (BA 2009, MSc 2010, PhD 2015), Ubipix allows users to make geo-referenced tags of hazards, defects and assets from video surveys. The platform and app simultaneously capture video and GPS data that can be viewed, analysed and stored. Ubipix work with global clients in a number of sectors. IGeotech is also a graduate company from the New Frontiers program in MaynoothWorks.

NEXT BIG THING

A graduate company to watch is www.accessearth.com which is led by Maynooth University graduate Matt McCann (HDip IT 2013, MSc 2015). The company is aiming to become the Trip Advisor for people with accessibility needs and is aiming to create a global company to make travel accessible to everyone.

Find out more about Studying Abroad at Maynooth University at maynoothuniversity.ie/international



Studying Economics and Finance at the University, Nihon students also live with host families in/around Maynooth

International Appeal

Maynooth University's innovative programmes continue to attract international students

Over the last number of years Maynooth University's international student population has been increasing rapidly. With over 200 university partners globally, Maynooth University now attracts students from all over Europe, North America, China, India, Japan, Brazil and many other countries to sample 'the Maynooth experience'.

In line with global trends which see students preferring innovative and shorter programmes, the university's Study Abroad programme (which allow students to study at MU for one semester or one year as part of their home degree), one year taught masters' degrees and short term programmes, in particular, are drawing more international students to Maynooth.

"Choosing Maynooth for my Erasmus Programme was one of the best decisions I have made in my life. After two years I returned to work as an intern at the International Office and I really enjoy it." Sami from Finland.

International Officer for Short Term Programmes Kathryn Segesser describes why Maynooth is such a hit with students from overseas: "We have a reputation for having a friendly faculty that's willing to work with and get to know students. Maynooth University offers an affordable education and has a small-campus feel

where students do not feel like they're just a number. They matter on our campus."

In response to the study interests of international students, Maynooth has developed a range of innovative short term programmes, such as the two week Field Anthropology

School, in which students excavate the medieval enclosure of Trim. There's also the 4-8 week Law Summer School, where students can gain a certificate entitled 'The Common Law in Europe: Public and Private Perspectives' after completing the full programme. Other innovative options available include: the International Summer School, with offerings from over 10 academic disciplines; the Chinese Computer Science Summer School; and the Israel-Ireland Summer School, a unique 6 week dual-centre programme with Bar Ilan University, focusing on Peace and Conflict Resolution.

"I studied Irish history, famine, and language. I think of Maynooth as my second home and I miss it every day. I can't wait to come back for a visit!" Katlyn is from the USA and she studied History at Maynooth in 2014.

A number of additional student programmes have been developed which are tailored for specific universities such as the Nihon University Economics Programme, a number of University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW) Programmes and the Nagoya Japanese Summer School. Bespoke Certificate Programmes for visiting Study Abroad students are available across a range of topics as diverse as Conflict Resolution, Health Cultures and Irish Cultural Heritage.

A Helping Hand for Alumni by Alumni

This year's Alumni Scholarship recipients tell us about their course of study and what a difference the scholarship has made to their education

Now in its fourth year, the Maynooth Alumni Taught Masters Scholarship programme continues to be an invaluable helping hand for alumni to continue with their studies. Funded by revenue garnered from the Maynooth Affinity Card, the scholarships assist alumni so they can come back to Maynooth and pursue their studies, all thanks to the goodwill of fellow alumni. Launched in 2013, this scholarship scheme is just one of the ways alumni are supporting the next generation of Maynooth students.

The Bridge spoke to this year's three recipients about the difference this scholarship has made to their education so far:



Christopher Phillips
MSc Climate Change

Wexford native Christopher is currently studying the MSc Climate Change at Maynooth University after becoming aware of the Alumni Scholarship in the final year of his undergraduate degree. "Receiving the scholarship has benefitted me greatly, and has provided the funding necessary to continue researching, something which I am very passionate about." With the MSc Climate Change, Christopher hopes to pursue a career in research or a PhD. "Maynooth University has always felt like a second home to me and I am delighted



Gerry O'Keeffe
MA Military History

to be given the opportunity to continue my studies here."

"Having worked for thirty years in technology, the untimely death of a family member was the catalyst that led to my pursuing a life-long passion for history," says Gerry, who is currently studying the MA in Military History. After completing the BA with First Class Honours, Gerry taught history to the long-term unemployed and conducted archaeological field trips for an American university. He is also publishing his third historical paper. "Working summers in heritage, the Alumni Scholarship allows me to undertake an MA in Military



Liam Jordan
MSc Mathematics

History. At 57 years of age I can testify that it's never too late to change!"

Kildare-born Liam was thrilled when he found out he had been awarded the scholarship, saying "After four years of hard work, I felt like the University itself was congratulating me in a way that friends and family can't." Aside from being with friends again, Liam is most excited about working in the university tutoring maths classes and helping out in the Maths Support Centre. "I feel like it's my way to give back to Maynooth after what it's done for me. Of course it's been a big help financially too. My mam said she's putting the money we've saved towards doing up the kitchen!"



Maynooth Affinity Credit Card - Get Involved

As a Maynooth graduate you are eligible to apply for a Maynooth Affinity Credit Card. Every time you use your card, a percentage of every transaction will be used to:

- Provide scholarships for our alumni
- Add to the development of the University Library
- Contribute to construction projects

Find out more at
[maynoothuniversity.ie/
maynooth-affinity-card](http://maynoothuniversity.ie/maynooth-affinity-card)



Fuad Sule (MU Business & Accounting Student)

Good Sport

Soccer

Men's Soccer had four squads competing in the Colleges & Universities Football League. Senior /A Squad defeated UCD, DIT, Trinity, Athlone IT and DCU to finish top of the group with a record five wins. Next up was UCC in the CUFL quarter final, with Maynooth defeating them 3-1. The team progressed to the semi-final which ended in a crushing defeat by eventual winners Carlow IT in a penalty shoot-out after extra time. The Senior/A Squad defeated University of Ulster 4-1 in the first round of the Collingwood Cup. Meanwhile, Senior/B Squad defeated ITB, ITT, Mary I, IT Sligo to top the Northern Division 1 group. On the Ladies Soccer front, two squads competed in the Women's Soccer Colleges Association of Ireland. The Senior Squad were unbeaten in their Northern Premier Division, defeating UU, AIT, UCD & Sligo IT. After a great win in the quarter-final of the Intervarsity finals against DCU in April, the ladies took on Sligo IT but lost 3-2 after a late goal. The Freshers/D Squad also had a great season topping their CUFL Division 3 group undefeated.

Sport at Maynooth is about much more than winning; it's about the lifelong friends you make, the infectious team spirit and the camaraderie you remember for many years after graduation. Of course, winning is the icing on the cake and this year, Maynooth had its fair share of enthralling triumphs and nail-biting finals. Maynooth University is committed to the development of sporting excellence and as a result, awards a number of sport scholarships annually to promote and foster sporting talent in the University. Here we look back on the soaring highs and crushing lows that marked another dramatic sports year at Maynooth.



Emma Byrne (MU soccer scholar)



GAA

It was yet another busy year for Maynooth University GAA Club. Twelve teams competed in 21 different competitions throughout the year, including inter-county competitions. In senior football and hurling, Maynooth University GAA teams competed with some of the top inter-county teams in Ireland. This year's highlights saw the Fresher 2 footballers claim the All Ireland 'C' Championship title, the camogie team reached the final of the Purcell Cup and the hurlers made the Kehoe Cup final. This year also marked a first ever O'Connor Cup win for the ladies football team. This was Kildare GAA legend Johnny Doyle's first season at the helm of the Senior Men's team. He got off to a winning start with comprehensive victories over GMIT, Athlone IT and IT Sligo in the league. The ladies got off the mark with a win against IT Carlow in the Division 1 league. Big performances from NUIG and UL left the ladies short however. It was a historic year for Maynooth University LGFA with a first ever win in the O'Connor Cup. The Fresher ladies played in the All Ireland 7's competition in November hosted by NUIG and the team made it to the semi-finals. The Sigerson Cup draw set up a tough home game against Queens University but ended with just a two point loss on the night. This was the second year in a row Maynooth missed out on a second game in the Sigerson. Overall, the Fresher footballers had a very good season under the guidance of Luke Barrett. Camogie players Kelly Dobson, Kate Nolan and captain Sarah Ann Quinlan have been nominated for CCAO All-Star awards following their performances this year. Last but not least, the Intermediate camogie team won the Leinster final against DCU in late February.

Golf

2016 was another great year for Maynooth's golfers, with a number of scholars winning individual championships during the summer months and representing Ireland at international events. Third Year Entrepreneurship student Stuart Grehan become the second MU player to represent Team Europe and won 2.5 / 4pts to help Europe win the Arnold Palmer Cup at Formby Golf Club in June. Stuart then won 3/4 pts to help Great Britain and Ireland retain the St. Andrews Trophy in Kent in July. For the World University Golf Championship in France, Maynooth had four of the six Irish representatives and Robin Dawson (3rd Year, Equine) became the first male MU player to win individual gold, making him the reigning World and European University Gold medallist. Danielle McVeigh previously won individual gold in golf at the World University Games in Thailand in 2007. In the Leinster Women's Amateur Open Championship, Meadhbh Doyle (1st Year Business & Accounting) captured her first major senior title at Correstown in July. Ronan Mullarney (2nd Year Business & Management) shot a magnificent 10 under par to win the prestigious Mullingar Scratch Trophy, which has been won in previous years by Rory McIlroy and Padraig Harrington.



Robin Dawson (MU – 3rd year Equine Business) flag bearer for the Irish University Golf Team at the opening ceremony of the 2016 World University Golf Championship in Brive, France. Also, in photo from (L-R): Rachel Taylor (TCD), Shannon Burke (MU - 3rd year Arts), Peter English (Irish Team Manager), Eugene Smith (MU – 2nd year Arts), Cathal Butler (MU – 2nd year Business & Law) & Sinead Sexton (BBS Business & Management 2014)

Rugby

Maynooth University Rugby Club continues to attract more students, whether they're seeking to play high level, social or just TAG. The Rugby Club now have teams at O'Boyle Cup level (U21), Men's Division 3 (social) and Women's Division 2. All of the teams compete in the Student Sports Ireland (SSI) competitions. The Club is approaching 10 years of partnership with local All Ireland League club MU Barnhall RFC, offering a rugby scholarship programme in the University. The aim is to offer school leavers the chance to continue their love of rugby and marry it to their studies at Maynooth. This year, former Leinster and Bristol player Darren Hudson was welcomed to the scholarship programme as well as some of the best talent from the MU Barnhall youths system. Up to 80 men and women are now playing TAG on a Monday evening, as well as huge squads out to play on competitive fixtures. To date this year, Maynooth has participated in a third level TAG rugby blitz in Donnybrook Stadium, fielded teams at O'Boyle Cup against Carlow IT, while the women played twice against IT Sligo and UL and the men's side faced off in Division 3 against GMIT.



Current scholarship players, Luke Mellett (left) and ex-Leinster player, Darren Hudson (right) in winning form against Skerries RFC in All-Ireland League match which MU won 27-24.



Treasa Uí hÉimhrín, Dearbhla Ní hÉimhrín and Catherine Heffron on Dearbhla's conferring day in September 2016

If you or a family member attended Maynooth, we'd love to hear from you. Email alumni@nuim.ie

Family Matters

For some families, attending Maynooth is as much of a tradition as Christmas dinner and the passage of study is passed on from parent to child or sibling to sibling. The Heffrons are one such family who have had four family members pass through the campus on their studies. *The Bridge* spoke to Treasa and her two daughters, Catherine and Dearbhla, about their time at Maynooth.

Catherine (BMus 2003, MA 2007)

I remember when I received my Leaving Cert results in 2003, the realisation that I was going to Maynooth in September to study for a Bachelor of Music degree was both daunting and exciting!

From the beginning I fell in love with the campus, both North and South. I've met some of my dearest friends through my years in Maynooth and I remember the first carol service I performed in was just magical.

After my undergraduate degree, I went on to complete my Masters in Musicology in 2007 and had the opportunity to work as part of the registration staff during the busy registration period. My first day to work in Records and Registration was the 5th of September 2007 and 9 years and many registrations later, I'm still here!

Working in Maynooth has allowed me to follow my passion of teaching music. It's a beautiful campus to work on and it's an honour to be part of the ever-changing and growing landscape of Maynooth University.

Dearbhla (BSc 2016)

My Maynooth journey began in September 2012 when I was lucky enough to get my first CAO choice of Pharmaceutical & Biomedical Chemistry. However, I was no stranger to Maynooth as I had first encountered the campus for my mother's graduation. Not only that but my sister and brother both graduated from Maynooth and then it was my turn.

Studying science in Maynooth has provided me with invaluable experience as well as great memories. I met some of my closest friends at Maynooth and will always cherish the time I spent there.

Before I graduated in September, I got a job working in a lab so my degree has been put to good use straight away!

Treasa (*Ard-Diop. i mBainistíocht san Oideachas 1994, Máistreacht san Oideachas 2002*)

Cáilíodh mé mar bhunmhúinteoir agus tar éis roinnt blianta ag múineadh, rinne mé an cúrsa, Ard Dioplóma i mBainistíocht san Oideachas in Ollscoil na hÉireann, Má Nuad. Bhí mé in ann an cúrsa a dhéanamh um thráthnóna le linn dom a bheith ag obair. Bhain mé an-taitneamh as an gcúrsa sin agus bhuail mé le grúpa iontach múinteoirí.

Roinnt blianta ina dhiaidh sin agus le héagsúlacht taithí scoile, bhain mé amach céim mháistreachta san oideachas i gceannasaíocht scoile in Ollscoil na hÉireann, Má Nuad. Bhain mé an-taitneamh as an gcúrsa sin agus rinne mé cairde buana san ollscoil.

D'fhreastail m'iníon is óige ar bhronnadh na gcéimeanna sa mháistreacht liom agus i mbliana, i mí Mheán Fómhair, d'fhreastail mise ar bhronnadh na gcéimeanna léise mar gur bhain sí amach céim san eolaíocht.

Bhain mé an-taitneamh agus tairbhe as an timpeallacht teagaisc agus foghlama atá san ollscoil.

"I met some of my closest friends at Maynooth and will always cherish the time I spent there."

“I am living proof that when you come to Maynooth via MAP, anything is possible.”

Access for All

Meet Maynooth University Access Programme (MAP) Trailblazers



Keith Murphy with Director of Access, Rose Ryan

Last year the Maynooth University Access Programme (MAP) reached out to trailblazing alumni to find out how they're getting on in 'the real world' and to appoint some MAP Alumni Ambassadors who can inspire the next generation.

The hugely successful Maynooth University Access Programme provides vital academic, personal and financial support to students who are the first in their family to progress to third level, mature students and students with disabilities.

After putting the word out among alumni, the Access Office has been overwhelmed by the response from graduates of the programme in Ireland and abroad who are now achieving great things in their chosen careers. These MAP Alumni Ambassadors have a key role to play in encouraging and supporting new generations of students.

Among the alumni who got in touch was 2015 graduate, James Cawley as he finished his Professional Master of Education this year. A Longford native, James was born with arthrogyriposis (AMC) and, despite doctors telling his family that he may never write, James won a 2002 Into/EBS handwriting competition. Today, James teaches second level students in Maynooth Post Primary School, and is busy campaigning for AMC awareness and is a real champion for young people with disabilities in Ireland.

Another inspiring MAP Alumni Ambassador is Dr Melissa Conroy (BSc 2004, PhD 2011) who is now a Senior Research Fellow within the Department of Surgery at Trinity College Dublin. Melissa's current research focusses on the global health burden of obesity, with investigations into the immunological mechanisms underlying obesity-associated morbidities such as non-alcoholic fatty liver disease (NAFLD) and cancer. With this research, Melissa is making a difference to public health.

The previous year's inaugural MAP Alumni Achievement Award recipient Dr Andrew Hogan (BSc 2004, PhD 2010) is a Senior Scientist at the Obesity Immunology Research Group in St Vincent's University Hospital and the National Children's Research Centre. Andy delivered the Maynooth Alumni Lecture in collaboration with the Faculty of Science and Engineering on 16 November 2016.

These are just three examples of MAP Alumni trailblazers but there are many more out there. If you would like to get involved as a role model or mentor for current Maynooth University students or if you know someone who should receive the next MAP Alumni Achievement award, check out the Maynooth University alumni page.

Keith Murphy

2016 MAP Alumni Achievement Award Recipient

“I left school at 15 to become a painter and I never dreamed I would attend university. One day in September 2007 I went to work, climbed 30ft up my ladder and fell, fracturing some vertebrae in my back and ending up with a physical disability. While in rehabilitation it was suggested to me to do a computer course and that's how I restarted my educational journey. With the economic crash and my disability, I soon realised I needed to make myself more employable. After engaging with the frightening CAO application experience, I was honoured to be accepted to Maynooth. Even though it was daunting, returning to education transformed my life for the better. After completing my degree, and then my HDip in Adult, Community and Further Education, I was granted a John and Pat Hume scholarship to complete a PhD. I am now tutoring in Maynooth and lecturing in IT Tallaght on the Social Care Practice degree. Little did I believe the day I fell from my ladder that two years later I would be starting to climb a different ladder. I am living proof that when you come to Maynooth via MAP, anything is possible.”

Don't forget to express your interest or nominate an award winner before the closing date of February 2017.

Maynooth Memories & Memorabilia

Ah... the memories – friends, events, and heady student days at Maynooth. Alumni share their memorabilia with *The Bridge*.



Mícheál Ó Fiannachta
(BA 1971)

I attach a scanned photo from Conferring Day (10 November) 1971. I thought it might be timely given that a) it is now 45 years since the class of 1971 graduated and b) from a historical perspective 1971 was significant for Maynooth; whereas St Patrick's College included both seminary and NUI components at that stage, 1971 saw the graduation of the first intake of lay students from 1968."

Front (L-R): Sr Bonaventure Costello, Margaret Walsh, An tOllamh Pádraig Ó Fiannachta (RIP- Paddy Fenton as he was best known to many students died 15 July 2016), Caitlin Nic Mhathúna, Patsy Lynch

Back (L-R): Gearóid Durack, Harry Goff, Dónal Ó Maoldomhnaigh, Mícheál Ó Fiannachta, Proinsias Mac Giolla Uain



"I enclose some programmes from my years with the Music Society, Aula Max Soc, and a literary production. More than a few names in each of these have become well known in various fields all these years later".



"A Man for All Seasons" – performed in the Aula with Christopher Kenneally as Sir Thomas More and Michael Harding as His Attendant.

If you have any memorabilia you'd like to share, email alumni@nuim.ie

Ann Weafer
(BA 1974, HDip Ed 1975)



Keith Cooke
(BA 1993, MA 1999)

"I can't tell you what the team name means... we would all give a different answer if asked! Most answers started with "Flippant". We beat the Clerics 2-1. The players are:

Back row...Rossa Ward, Paul Maguire, Richard Kiely, Martin Troy, Brendan Lardner, John Halligan, Noel. Front row...Seamus Martin, Brian Galligan, Keith Cooke, Barry Murphy, Gavin McArthur.

In Memoriam

We remember alumni, lecturers and friends

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a n-anamacha dílse. Ní bheidh a leithéid ann arís.



An Moinsíneoir Pádraig Ó Fiannachta
(Scoil an Léinn Cheiltigh)

Ar an 15 Iúil 2016, d'imigh an Msgr Pádraig Ó Fiannachta ar shlí na fírinne. Thug sé aghaidh ar Choláiste Phádraig, Má Nuad, den chéad uair agus é ina dhéagóir, chun tabhairt faoin tsagartóireacht. I ndiaidh dó roinnt blianta a chaitheamh ina shagart sa Bhreatain Bheag, d'fhill sé ar a alma mater in 1958 mar léachtóir. Rinneadh Ollamh le Sean- agus Nua-Ghaeilge de, ansin, sa bhliain 1962 agus chaith sé tríocha bliain slán sa ról sin gur bhain sé aois 65 amach. Ní hé gur tháinig deireadh lena bhaint le Má Nuad ar imeacht dó ach bhí sé ina chara dílis gur cailleadh é. An Msgr Ó Fiannachta a choinnigh Irisleabhar Mhá Nuad, an tréimhseachán Gaeilge is sine in Éirinn, beo agus a chinntigh, bliain i ndiaidh bliana, gur cuireadh Léachtaí Cholm Cille amach agus é ina stiúrthóir ar an gcomhlacht foilsitheoireachta An Sagart.

Go raibh leaba i measc na naomh agus na n-aingeal aige.



Pauline Carbery (BA 1991)

*"Death ends a life, not a relationship."
Mitch Albom, Tuesdays with Morrie*

The Maynooth campus and community were deeply saddened by the news that our friend and colleague, Pauline Carbery, passed away on the 5th October.

Pauline was very much part of the "fabric" of the campus community from an early age as she was often spotted around the campus as her father, David, worked for many years in Catering on the South Campus. Pauline went on to train as a nurse and subsequently returned to the University to study, and to help establish and head up the Student Health Centre which has looked after our students (and staff) over the years. A Sociology and Geography graduate, Pauline was a student of Dr Proinnsias Breathnach, Senior Lecturer Emeritus.

From establishing the Student Health Centre, to being head of that service, to treating and nursing countless students and colleagues, to contributing to the development of student services on campus, to quite simply being a most wonderful and supportive friend and colleague, Pauline most definitely made her mark on this world – and that was just here on campus.

We also remember Pauline's family at this sad time: her husband and fellow Maynooth graduate, Paddy McGovern, sons Evin and Alex, sister Orlagh, brother Bill and father David.

Pauline will be deeply missed by her university colleagues and friends in the Student Health Centre (Helen, Rose, and Kathleen) as well as the wider Student Services team.



Dr Caroline Gallagher
(BA 2003, PhD 2010)

Maynooth alumni who knew Dr Caroline Gallagher will be shocked and saddened to hear of her unexpected death earlier this year in March. Caroline is a graduate of both the Department of Adult and Community Education and the Department of History, and has contributed in many ways to the University, most recently as occasional lecturer on the BA in Local Studies. May she rest in peace.

Patrick Brendan Leahy (BA 1971)

Dear Ms Kelly,
Your Maynooth reunion card arrived here today. Thank you. My son was known as Brendan and he had great memories of Maynooth – the great sense of all that was good was instilled in him there.

Brendan was teaching in Belvedere College when he passed away from a brain tumour in 2002, R.I.P. He is sorely missed – I'm sure some of your older staff and clerics remember him.

Please remember him in your prayers on Sept 17th, also his wife and four children. Maynooth holds special memories for me.

God bless the good work.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Leahy

Class Notes

Maynooth alumni recall their fondest memories and reveal what they've been up to since leaving the University



Tim Fanning (MA in Spanish and Latin American Studies, 2015)

Tim's second book 'Paisanos: The Forgotten Irish who Changed the Face of Latin America' (Gill, 2016) was launched by the Secretary General of the Department of Foreign Affairs, Niall Burgess, in Iveagh House on 31 August. Since graduating with First Class Honours in 2015, Tim has undertaken research in Bogotá, Santiago and Buenos Aires and is currently carrying out research for his next book, a biography of Wicklow man John Thomond O'Brien, who fought in the wars of independence in South America in the early 19th century.

Amy Clarke (BA 2016)

Amy writes that her time in Maynooth University has "taught me to throw yourself in at the deep end to any opportunity that arises." Amy graduated with a Second Class Honours B.A. International in Anthropology and Sociology and now interns with the Organisational Development team in Oracle. She credits the skills and competencies learned at Maynooth with settling in and excelling at her new role, which encompasses many of the ideas she was exposed to in her degree, as well as opening her up to "a new and interesting world of global business." Looking back at her time at Maynooth, Amy's highlight was studying abroad in the University of Southampton. "The social scientist inside me loved being placed into an environment that was completely new, says Amy. "I have made lifelong friends in both universities and cherish all of my memories fondly. Maynooth, you've been great!"

Angela Feeney (BA 1982, MA 1992) is Head of Humanities at ITT Dublin. She was awarded a Chevalier des Palmes Academiques this year by the French Ambassador to Ireland, Monsieur Jean-Pierre Thebault. Angela met her husband, Dr Brian Feeney, a Science graduate, while studying in Maynooth.



Dr James O'Higgins Norman (M.Ed 1999)

James received a Lifetime Achievement award from President Obama for voluntary services to education. James is now Senior Lecturer (Sociology and Equality Studies) in the School of Human Development, Institute of Education, DCU.

Kathryn Hall (née Howard-Williams) (BA 1994)

The world is a small place, as Kathryn recently discovered after a funny conversation with her 14 year old son. "We live in Jersey, Channel Islands and apparently his maths teacher went to Maynooth as well. When he told her that his mum went there too, she said 'Ah that's really good...eh....what age is your mum'? He replied '42' to which she smiled and said 'uh oh, I am too!' Still have yet to meet her but wonder what she has to hide, ha ha...."

Patrick O'Meara (BA 1980, HDip Ed 1981)

Earlier this year Patrick returned to campus and his impromptu walkabout brought back a flood of memories, particularly when he saw one of the original desks in Classhall B in the Arts Block! But it was the 'iconic' footbridge that really stirred a memory Patrick will never forget. "We hung a bike from it once and, in revenge for a practical joke, we parked a VW Beetle right in the middle of it. A long-planned act of revenge, it caused uproar and much merriment." The prank was an act of revenge after the owner signed Patrick up to history tutorials at 4pm on a Friday with Christopher Hill, which Patrick assures us he never missed – even though it stopped him many a time from making a weekend trip home to Tipp. "It was a conspiracy," claims Patrick. "I even remember the reg number! All the perpetrators have gone on to have wonderful careers in teaching and academia. The owner is thriving as a teacher of history somewhere in Roscommon; the car thief is a wonderful teacher in Cloverhill Prison; his accomplice is a lecturer in DIT Thurles; and I, m'lud, am not guilty."

Eamonn Hayes (BSc 1997)

Eamon has vivid memories of a particularly raucous Rag Week in 1996 – Bar-Ex's, Rag TV and... The Daily Sport Roadshow! He also recalls pints in the Roost amidst the marble, semi-naked female statues!



Tell us your stories!

If you'd like to share a class note – it could be where your career has taken you, if you got married or found a significant other, all about your travels or just have a fun student memory to share – we'd love to hear from you. Email alumni@nuim.ie or tweet us using #MadeinMaynooth or #MaynoothAlumni.

Conor McHugh (BSc 1996)

“The other night I was at a 20 year Maynooth reunion. God, I'm getting old! Inevitably, we got chatting about the old days, when the 1996 version of Maynooth was a kind of Disneyland for young adults.”

Here are Conor's 20 memories of being a Maynooth student in the 1990s:

1. Hitching was a perfectly reliable way of getting to college.
2. Long Tray from the Chinese — these days called a Three-in-One.
3. Rag Week. A week long orgy of creative and drunken madness.
4. The slight feeling of panic when the grass was mowed for the first time.
5. Actual opening of books when it is mowed for the second time. It's all done away with all that now that they've introduced semesterisation.
6. Maynooth was particularly good at the non-academic university experience - Student Union meetings, political gatherings and debates were always full to the rafters.
7. Socialising was, quite frankly, epic. I recall a gang of us falling out of The Roost early on a Wednesday morning after a celebration many hours earlier “on account of it being Tuesday”.
8. Bar-ex's. To say they were big nights in the on-campus student bar doesn't do it justice. They were Greek tragedies of drunken and (usually unrequited) lust.
9. Donatellos — then the only ‘posh’ restaurant in Maynooth.
10. The Roost, including the ‘Greek and Roman’ section, the cocktail bar and the oul lads’ part. It was where you were likely to meet anyone from anywhere at any time.
11. The LA — if you just wanted to get hammered (but also a grand carvery).
12. The cattle mart (where ‘old’ Tesco is now).
13. Caulfields - for sneaky quiet pints.
14. Brady's - ‘oul fellas’ only. Things have certainly changed since.
15. The never-ending road works on the railway bridge.
16. ‘Science heads’ who had twice as many lectures as ‘Arts heads’ and were therefore half the craic, except for Eamon Hayes, who was always twice the craic.
17. ‘Arts Heads’ who had 12 hours of lectures a week - and still begrudged the extra two hours of tutorials.
18. The college newspaper, The Source, was read from cover to cover by everyone.
19. Only seven students had cars, all ‘matures’.
20. Joe Donnelly (from Newbridge) as SU president. Now doing well at Today FM.

(20 Memories first appeared in the Leinster Leader.)

MaynoothAlumni Officer

September 7 · Maynooth

Welcoming 2016 Maynooth Alumni, any advice to share? Follow #MadeinMaynooth

Today we welcomed new smiley 2016 graduates to the Maynooth Alumni world, remember your grad day? Any advice to for our new Alumni friends, share via comment below or #MadeinMaynooth on Twitter



Like Comment Share

Ambo Brennan and 10 others

1 share

3 Comments



Bernadette Smyth Lovely

Like · Reply · September 7 at 9:56pm



John Collins Advice?...No matter what manner of unmitigated disaster ye are, there's nothing like a walk round the back-end of the seminary to cure ye (not a euphemism...) Followed by a pint in the SU... Unless of course yer an alcoholic...in which case, have a coffee. I mean, use the good sense Maynooth gave yel Humble regards to the Physics Department circa 2001...

Like · Reply · 2 · September 8 at 12:32am



Enda McLoughlin When I did my walk through the south campus to the Aula there was a blizzard going on...it felt like Hogwarts

Pádraig Barry (BA 1996)

When Pádraig found his Student ID card recently he was shocked to realise it's been 20 years since he left Maynooth but his memories are still as strong. “In some ways, everything has changed: I moved to the United States, became a citizen, bought a house. In other ways, everything has remained eerily similar. I went back to university over here and got – wait for it – another history degree.” During his time at Maynooth, Pádraig worked for Barretstown in Co. Kildare, Paul Newman's camp for kids with life-threatening illnesses and rare diseases. Flash forward 20 years and Pádraig now works at Paul Newman's Camp in Connecticut as the Chief Program Officer. In the in-between years, he travelled the world to help establish these camps in Asia, Africa and other far-flung spots, but his connection to his alma mater remains with him. Two years ago, he attended the wedding of one of his closest Maynooth friends, Vanessa, in Bali. “I remain profoundly grateful for the time spent in Maynooth. It was an environment which protected and nurtured us, while allowing us to grow up, get our lumps and move on. I visited about four years ago and was stunned by the level of development. Several things are the same but much has changed and rightly so – it should be a progressive spot! Continued success to all there.”

www.maynoothuniversity.ie/alumni-office

