



## A View from the Chairman.

Dear Association Members,

A very happy New Year to you all.

The Committee has had a busy few months since our last issue of Link. Completed projects include: lobbying for the recently installed pedestrian lights on Rathgar Road, an improvement scheme for Herzog Park due to begin shortly, ongoing monitoring and lobbying of a proposed high-speed cycleway through the Dodder Park, and a proposed “Quiet Way” cycling route from Kimmage to Herbert Park which would necessitate closure of several local streets to cars. We are also working actively with local representatives to ensure that existing cross-city connectivity for urban villages not served by the LUAS is preserved.

Like any organisation, the RRA is in constant need of renewal and rejuvenation as volunteers come and go. The Committee would welcome new ideas and individuals with the time to execute them. We are seeking new committee members and/or volunteers with expertise in the following areas:

- Website/social media management
- Event planning & management
- Legal/planning knowledge
- Database/membership management

This list is not exclusive. If you have an idea or if there is an area you feel would make a positive contribution to life in Rathgar, please let us know. None of these tasks require full-time devotion, rather a few hours a month, or more likely, bursts of attention at various intervals during the year. The Committee meets formally 11 times per year (every month except August) in Christ Church, Rathgar. Much of the work emanating

from these sessions is conducted online, and on a project basis (where a sub-committee may be formed). If you have any questions or would like to learn more, please do not hesitate to contact us at: [info@rathgarresidentsassociation.ie](mailto:info@rathgarresidentsassociation.ie). Information on our projects can also be found on our website at <http://rathgarresidentsassociation.ie>. Lastly, you can now find us on Facebook (search “Rathgar Residents Association”).

The RRA is your community organisation, here for your benefit. Please consider joining with us to keep it relevant and dynamic.

Wishing you a peaceful and successful 2018.

Colman McMahon

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## Environment:

John McCarthy

I am writing this brief article with a strong feeling of frustration that despite the efforts of this Association the Dublin City Council is still not able to clear our footpaths and gullies of fallen and rotting leaves in Autumn time.

Annual events, such as New Year’s Day is marked with celebrations of fireworks and concerts. St Patrick’s day is marked with a fantastic parade. Easter is marked with various parades. Dublin City council has a large involvement in these celebrations and I’m sure every citizen appreciates their input. Why then, cannot Dublin City Council apply the same energy; have the same focus in the clean-up of Autumn’s leaf fall? After all, every Autumn is marked with a fall of leaves from the city’s trees.

To avoid personal injury from slipping and falling, these leaves need to be gathered up. Fallen leaves turn into mulch on our streets. Mulch gets washed into the gullies leading to flooding problems. When will the penny drop? For the past five years, the Association has been in contact with local councillors highlighting this problem. The response is always the same from the council ----some action but too late!

I am very glad to report that the pedestrian lights from the corner of Rathgar Ave (The 108) to the corner of Orwell Road (the Deli) are now operational. There appears to be some knock-on effect on traffic. This could be down to additional traffic at Christmas time; perhaps some tweaking is required. I feel the addition of this crossing will make the crossing of the roads in Rathgar village much safer for all its users. There are still ongoing problems with:

Graffiti,

Dog fouling

The state of roads and footpaths.

I urge you all, where you have complaints, please report the matters to the council. It can be frustrating at times but at times there can be a surprising outcome.

**The Neighbourhood Watch Scheme.** Recently the local gardai have begun to re-establish this scheme which was very successful a number of years ago..  
*See details of the scheme in the article below.*

### **Community Policing and Neighbourhood Watch**

I was recently approached by the Gardai concerning the possibility of setting up a Neighbourhood Watch Scheme on the road where I live. The two gardai involved were trying to determine whether or not there was an interest on our road to have such a scheme. I agreed to do whatever I could to find out what other road residents thought.

What exactly is Neighbourhood Watch?

Neighbourhood Watch is a scheme whereby neighbours watch out for each other in their local area in conjunction with the Community Garda unit. In the scheme I am involved with, the plan is to set up a group alert system, using WhatsApp-a smart phone application. Text alert can also be used or simply calling on the neighbours to let them know of suspicious happenings in the area (it is also a way of getting to know your neighbours). If you come across something unusual or suspicious that is concerning you, inform the Gardai and send a WhatsApp/text/or personal call/ message to the group regarding your suspicion.

The first step in setting up such a road group is to circulate a Garda questionnaire

- Q1 Are you in favour of establishing a Neighbour Scheme
- Q2 Would you become an active member of such a scheme
- Q3 Are you interested in organising/managing such a scheme.

Provide name/address/contact details, if desired.

On our own road, I went around, house to house with the questionnaire and after a week or so the response was so positive that the Gardai decided to go ahead with a Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

There have been a couple of meetings with the Community Garda group and the final details are being worked out.

The final meeting was held in a local hall, to put faces on names and to meet and say

hello. More may join at a later stage; some initial reluctance is understandable.  
This is not vigilantism-no patrolling up and down the street.

I recently attended a meeting in Terenure Garda station chaired by the local Garda superintendent, where all the local Neighbourhood Watch groups came together and spoke of their experience over the previous twelve months. The gardai stated that they benefit from the Neighbourhood Watch system, receiving much useful information which in turn makes neighbourhoods safer.

Why is community policing and Neighbourhood Watch Schemes coming into prominence now? Community policing is back on track after the severe budget cutbacks of recent years. I believe that this is a very good method of getting to know your local gardai and likewise your neighbours. It is an important way of improving the quality of the neighbourhood and keeping crime at bay.

If this is of interest to you contact the following gardai  
Garda Andy Dunne or Garda Martin O'Connell at (01) 6666735 Rathmines Garda station.

The organisational structure of the Garda in our area is: Terenure is the district headquarters and Rathmines is a sub district.

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**Planning Report**

**January 2018**

**Philip O Reilly**

At the year end, we saw the delayed arrival of Fallon and Byrne in in the Swan Centre. Across the road, a re-incarnated Stella returned to Rathmines after many years: complete with a new set of apparel and an entire new make up.. Miracles do happen!

Further up Rathgar Road at the rear of 173 Rathgar Road, a mews development proposal which had been withdrawn in 2016 reappeared. In July the Association came forward with support for a group of residents who were opposing an enormous modern mews in a small back lane and next door to a beautifully restored mid 19<sup>th</sup> century building. A significant number of locals from Rathgar Road and York Ave. as well as surrounding areas, voiced their opposition and were joined by some local representatives. Permission was granted on October but appeals (including the Association's) were lodged with

An Bord Pleanala and a number of long and detailed exchanges took place. The outcome is awaited.

In December additional information was requested by the planners on 10 Grosvenor Road where the house owner wants to build 3 houses in the back garden. Again, local residents are opposing this proposal. It is expected this will end up in Bord Pleanala. The decision of the Local Authority is expected any day now.

Local residents in Highfield Grove were given support in fighting a proposal for a two storey mews with basement (3 storeys) at the back of 12 Highfield Road. This went all the way to Bord Pleanala who found in favour of the development.

Alterations to No 182 Rathgar Road by way of a light well to the front and off street parking was commented on but was granted permission. (maybe fatigue is setting in!)

The Association supported Richard Good (Dodder Action Group and other fronts) in his good fight against an even more intense development (5 storey in an area predominated by two storey buildings) at the Smurfit site in Clonskeagh by Gannon Homes. This development is on the banks of the Dodder and so is of interest to us and our concerns in respect of this important public amenity.

Meanwhile up by the river at Dartry House, the proposer of a development who previously has sought to demolish a bin store and build a two storey house immediately adjacent to the front of Dartry House (a protected structure) in its place only to have it rejected by the Local Authority, was back again with a similar application. In its request for additional information on the latest proposal the Local Authority asked:

*“In the interests of transparency, clarity and third party interests, the applicant is requested to clarify how the current proposed development materially differs from that which was refused under Planning Register Reference 2372/17 and in so doing how the current application materially addresses the previous stated reason for refusal for a similar application in April 2017 (under the same Dublin City Development plan 2017 – 2022).”*

That bin store could yet be saved!

We supported local residents on Rathgar Ave. against a large extension proposed to be tacked on to a lovely small villa type house at no 31. There were many exchanges in this battle and after two major modifications the proposers finally won.

Richview Residents were anxious to get our support against a proposal to allow Trinity College use Trinity Hall as use for “temporary tourist accommodation” as well as for “temporary education use” outside of the academic year. This proposal is with An Bord Pleanala at present.

More recently, local residents have appealed a permission for a three storey, out of character mews development, at the back of 60 Kenilworth Sq.. We have supported their submission.

Changes and permissions continue with the Marianella development. A permission was given for a flat roofed extension for the original (and architecturally interesting) gate lodge (a protected structure).

The Orwell Nursing Home saga continues after 15 years.

Finally, with a refusal for a new high rise development at no 1 Upper Rathmines Road now on 1<sup>st</sup> party appeal, one wonders what’s coming next in early 2018?

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## Some Notes and Comments

### 2018 AGM

**The AGM of the Association is provisionally fixed for Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> March- in St Patrick’s Hall as usual. You will be notified in due course.**

### The RRA Annual Garden Competition and Dixon Cup 2017

In this year’s competition, as well as the prime category of Best Garden, there were a further nine categories.

Garden in bloom

Best flower pot/window box/container display

Low maintenance garden but aesthetically pleasing as a garden

Specimen Tree in a front Garden

Best small front garden

Best large front garden

Best kept hedge

Best accommodation for bin in garden setting

Garden with balance between hard surface and green surface

Congratulations to the Dixon Cup winner for the Best Garden, Marie McCabe in Wesley Road. Congratulations also to all the other winners.

The Association is very appreciative of local businesses who generously provided the prizes

## **Dodder Action Group**

Keep abreast of their stalwart work in maintaining this wonderful amenity in our area.  
Better still join the group and give your support  
For more information on this group go to [www.dodderaction.com](http://www.dodderaction.com)

## **Book Reviews: Some recent publications of interest**

### ***Dublin Strolls: Exploring Dublin's Architectural Treasures***

Gregory and Audrey Bracken The Collins Press €12.99

This book invites you to emulate Leopold Bloom in strolling through the city. Each walk follows on from the previous one and gives clear architectural descriptions accompanied by beautiful hand drawn illustrations.

### ***The Hidden Life of Trees***

Peter Wohlleben William Collins,€13

The Author who manages an ancient forest on behalf of the community of Hummel in the Eiffel hills in Germany, describes how trees are like human families where tree parents live together with their children, communicate with them, support them as they grow, share nutrients with those who are ailing. The author shares his deep love of woods and forests and the amazing processes of life death and regeneration of his woodlands.

## **Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Lectures, Talks and Outings** 63 Merrion Square

Lecture: 7.30pm

**25 Jan 2018 'Prince of Spies': Henri le Caron and Irish American Republicanism: Speaker:** Dr Gillian O'Brien, Liverpool John Moore University

Talks: 7.30pm

**5 Feb 2018 The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (2002-2017):**

**Results and Prospects: Speaker:** Mr Willie Cumming, Dept. of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht

## **Outings**

**Outing A** 23 Feb 2018

18 Ormond Quay Speaker: Graham Hickey, Dublin Civic Trust  
Meet at 18 Ormond Quay at 11am

**Outing B:** 12 Apr 2018 ‘

“Making Majesty”, Dublin Castle, Speaker: Dr Myles Campbell  
Meet at State Apartments at 11am

**Outing C** 20 Oct 2018

UCD School of Archaeology, Speaker: Prof. Aidan O'Sullivan  
Meet: UCD School of Archaeology 11am

**Outing D:** 15 Nov 2018

The Little Museum of Dublin  
Meet 15 St Stephens Green 11am

## **Excursions**

Spring Excursion to Moyglare House and Larchill Arcadian Garden, Co. Kildare  
Meet 7 Apr 2018 | 9.30 am | 63 Merrion Square, Dublin 2

Autumn Excursion – Jerpoint Newtown and Jerpoint Abbey, Co. Kilkenny  
Speaker: The excursion will be led by Mr Con Manning

Meet 29 Sep 2018 | 9 am 63 Merrion Square, Dublin 2

**Explorers Excursion** with Tracy Collins and Frank Coyne of Aegis Archaeology  
29 June 2018 Further details from RSAI

## **The Rathmines, Ranelagh and Rathgar Historical Society Lecture Series**

Rathmines, Ranelagh and Rathgar Historical Society was founded in 1996 and incorporates Harold's Cross, Leeson Street and Milltown. Talks and other events are regularly held in Rathmines Town Hall (Rathmines College)

Series of monthly meetings resumes in Autumn and Spring

Information: [Rathmineshistoricalsociety.com](http://Rathmineshistoricalsociety.com) or  
[rathmineshistoricalsociety.ie](http://rathmineshistoricalsociety.ie)

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## Local wildlife on the Dodder Dartry Dye Works to Rathfarnham Bridge

### The Decline of Wildlife on the Dodder

I have been observing on a regular basis, the major changes in wildlife which have taken place along this stretch of river over the last 15 to 20 years. The most dramatic changes have been in the numbers and varieties of birdlife.

- The average daily number of the most common duck, the Mallard, seen in the first few years of the century was about 50. Apart from Spring when ducklings are about, you are lucky to see 10, with males outnumbering females.
- Moorhens which numbered about 5 to 8, have now reduced to a pair.
- The stretch of river downstream from Rathfarnham bridge was a haven for more unusual varieties of duck. These included the beautiful Mandarin and Tufted ducks, along with the little Grebe/Dabchick. Over the last couple of years, I rarely see any of these species.
- Wild animals include the otter, the grey squirrel and the fox with cubs.
- The Dippers who nest at the Rathfarnham weir, the beautiful Kingfishers and the active Grey Wagtail are regular residents. The Cormorants appear from time to time on fishing excursions, along with the more frequent Heron. The former can be seen drying their wings on the weirs, the latter perched on a branch or standing motionless in the river.
- I haven't observed the Tree Creeper for some time, but a new visitor is the Little Egret, feeding along the bank.
- Other birds seen are Goldcrests, Collared Doves, Long Tailed Tits and large flocks of Blackheaded Gulls in Dartry Park.

The reduction in birdlife numbers is sad. I am not a scientist or ecologist, but I put it down to climate change and habitat change along with people and to an extent, the increase in the numbers of the urban fox.

**Malcolm Taylor**

## A Charm of Goldfinches

I was delighted to learn recently that the collective noun for a flock of goldfinches is 'a charm'. The 'charm' does not, surprisingly, have anything to do with their alluring plumage – the mesmerising red, black and white heads or fascinating tail marks or even the entrancing flash of gold which is glimpsed when they spread their wings. No, the enchantment, it seems, is all down to their song – the quiet string of liquid-sounding notes and twitters that they make when they flock together.

For years, birds have been visiting the feeders in my garden. All the usual garden birds would come, except, to my dismay, the goldfinch. Until last summer, that is. That was when I found out that the magic trick to entice these enchanting creatures into the garden was to provide nyger seeds and heart of sunflower seeds. Very soon a pair of goldfinches arrived. Word went out and the numbers grew and these days I'm very often enchanted by the sight of fifteen to eighteen goldfinches feeding in the garden. Definitely, it's a charm of goldfinches.

Goldfinch fare is usually the seeds of the teasel and the thistle – lovely sculptural plants that I hope will soon feature on the garden menu.

Birdwatch Ireland recommends that feeders and water containers be washed regularly to prevent the spread of disease.

## Mary McCarrick

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### Living in Rathgar: Some Childhood Memories

I was one of four children and my memories of childhood are very happy ones. The four of us were all born in 155 Rathmines Road now 31 Lower Rathmines Road. We left Rathmines in 1901 /1902 and moved to 28 Rathgar Road. 28 was a large, double-fronted three storey house; four large bedrooms and dressing room top storey, very large drawing room, large dining room and "parlour" middle floor and on the ground floor a kitchen, maid's bedroom, breakfast room and the workshop where Dad spent so many happy evenings at his carpentry. Dad got electric light installed before we

moved in. 28 Rathgar Road had a very big garden as it took in about two thirds of the gardens of our next door neighbours. There were a great many apple trees and some pear trees too and we had so many apples we simply didn't know what to do with them all.

During the Winter we had breakfast and early dinner in the breakfast room on the ground floor, but from Easter till October we had breakfast and tea in the summerhouse. Sometimes the maids didn't like having to serve meals out in the garden, especially on cold spring mornings. We were very outdoor sort of people and we loved it. The summerhouse was built at the end of the return building and faced due west so it was just lovely on summer evenings, too hot sometimes in the summer. Then we would have our tea on a trestle table underneath the shade of the apple trees. If not in the garden, we had tea in the dining room and, on Saturday and Sunday, lunch there too when Dad was home mid-day. Actually, we rarely had Sunday lunch at home for every Sunday we went off by tram and train, Winter and Summer, to the seaside, bringing with us a packed lunch of just plain meat sandwiches, a bar of chocolate and a bottle of milk. There was no "lie-in" on Sunday morning for us, for Mother had to prepare sandwiches and we left the house by about 10 a.m. We would be home from our outings about 5 p.m. for tea, then every second Sunday we went to evening service in Holy Trinity Church, Rathmines.

We all went to school at Norfolk College on Rathgar Road and so did our cousins the Allens, who lived in Highfield Road. My two sisters and I stayed on in Norfolk College for all our school life. In our early years the school was run by Miss Spears who had no educational qualifications whatever but she had qualified staff, several graduates of Trinity and a good science laboratory which was quite an innovation for schools at that time. When I was eleven years old, Miss Spears left and sold her interest in the school to Miss Jane Garrett, a graduate of Queen's University, Belfast. She was a wonderful teacher and modernised the whole running of the school.

When we were young children, the poor were very poor and the poor children used to be very badly dressed. In the Summer they were always in bare feet (perhaps not only in the Summer). We used to rather envy them in nice hot weather, especially when the water carts were out watering the roads to keep the dust down. These horse-drawn carts were tanks of water with, across the back, a pipe with holes in it from which the water would spray out. The carts moved along at a walking pace and children walked, or ran, behind them with their bare feet in the spray. It must have been great fun.

Of course, in those days nearly all traffic was horse-drawn. The general public had horse-drawn cabs to hire in place of present day motor taxis. Well-off people and

### Roger White

doctors had their private broughams or an open carriage. The shops had horse-drawn vans, the driver seated on a wooden shelf half way up the front of the van and fully exposed to all weathers. Often, they sat on top of the van with their feet on the shelf, especially the bread men in their bread vans. The milk was delivered in a special sort of cart with two big milk containers at the back. These containers had taps and the milkman filled his big milk-can from these and brought it to the house to fill our milk jugs from his can (it was like a watering-can).

In very sunny weather the horses wore straw hats on their heads. Sometimes the hats had ears, sometimes just holes for the horse's ears to come through. There were horse troughs, iron or stone, along the roads, kept full of water for the horses to drink. Often, I saw the horses drinking from the trough in Rathmines. When the horses were standing idly by, their drivers often gave them grain to eat. The grain was in a canvas bag (nose-bag) which was put over the horse's Paddys nose and held in place by a rope behind its ears.

Coal was delivered in big drays drawn by a horse. We used to get two tons at a time (i.e. 32 bags). Our coal cellar was under the steps leading to the hall door and the coal was dropped through a hole in the steps into the cellar below. The process created an awful lot of very black dust, especially if the coalman didn't give us due warning to shut our coal-house door in good time.

*(extract from a longer article by the author)*

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## Murder at the Ely Gate

The portion of the river Dodder between Orwell Bridge and Rathfarnham Bridge is extremely picturesque; a high wooded bank rises above the northern side crowned by modern residences, while adjoining the road is the densely wooded demesne of Rathfarnham Castle. The entrance gate, in the form of a Roman triumphal arch, was erected in the early part of last century by Charles, Lord Ely, who for his vote and influence in connection with the Act of Union, received a step up in the peerage and £45,000 in cash.

This quiet spot was, in 1841, the scene of a crime which excited an extraordinary degree of interest in Dublin. On the night of the 27<sup>th</sup> February, an Italian named Domenica Garlibardo, an organ-grinder, was murdered and his body thrown on the waste ground

in front of Lord Ely's gate, where it was found next morning by a policeman. The inquest was of a protracted character, lasting no less than eight days, and resulted in a verdict of wilful murder, accompanied by a rider attaching strong suspicion to a tinker and his wife from Rathfarnham.

The two were in due course placed on trial, but during the proceedings the evidence of the principal witness (Patrick Bryan) broke down on cross examination, and he contradicted himself to such an extent that he was arrested in court for perjury, and the prisoners were consequently acquitted. It was understood, however, that police had another informant named Delahunt, who, for reasons unexplained, was not produced at either the inquest or trial: but no further developments took place, and the mystery seemed as far from solution as ever, although public opinion strongly inclined to the suspicion that Delahunt was the guilty party.

A few days before Christmas of the same year, the Dublin folk were horrified to hear of another murder, that of a boy named Maguire, whose body, still warm, was found in Pembroke Lane, at the rear of Pembroke Road. About an hour later after the body was discovered, Delahunt turned up at the police headquarters with the story that he had seen a murder committed at the spot, adding incriminating details as to the conduct of the victims's mother, but his strange demeanour and shifty answers excited the suspicions of the police, and he was detained. Inquiries being set on foot, a mass of damning evidence was soon obtained against him, principally from his own immediate relatives, and after a brief trial he was found guilty and executed on the 5<sup>th</sup> February following. Before his execution he acknowledged having murdered the boy, Maguire, but denied the murder of Garlibardo. Many of the public, however, continued to believe that he was guilty of both murders, and that the motive was the hope of getting a reward from the authorities for evidence leading to a conviction.

*The Neighbourhood of Dublin. It's Topography, Antiquities and Historical Associations. Weston St John Joyce, M.H.Gill & Son. First Published 1912*

### Support your local shops

**Shop locally whenever you can. This will keep our local shops in business and retain the character of Rathgar as a living community**

**Think about the environment each day**

Living more simply will help our precious environment  
-if we lose it, it won't return

Use Freecycle, Free Trade.

Stop Junk mail.

Make your own gifts.

Grow your own fruit.

Stop using disposable plastic water bottles.

Use a slow cooker: more energy efficient than an oven.

Avoid take out cups.

Use an electric razor rather than disposable blades.

Use the stairs rather than the lift.

Enjoy more time in nature.

Wash laundry at 30° when possible.

Campaign with Third World charities for climate justice.

Buy Ethical clothing.

Check on your own carbon footprint

And see how you can make changes.

Dry your washing outside when weather permits.

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