

Volcanic eruptions and following The Rossies

As the news began to circulate on Thursday of the volcanic eruption up in Iceland on some unpronounceable mountain top, I started to realise that my plans to go to Stoke to see the young fellow, Mark, play for Longton Rugby Club in The Staffordshire Cup final on Saturday were looking increasingly shaky. I had managed to, courtesy of my hero, Michael O'Leary and Ryanair, get very cheap flights from Knock to Liverpool on Friday morning – back on Sunday – and had been looking forward to having a few quiet pints in The Potteries over the weekend. However, by late on the Thursday night I knew I was 'volcanoed' and, giving in to the inevitable, I mentally wrote myself out of the script and decided that, ash or no ash, Stoke was out of the question.

As we now, of course, know, it was only the start of the biggest disruption ever on European airline schedules and as I write this on Monday morning any type of resolution seems as far away as ever. They, (the I.A.A.), are now predicting that the earliest possible re-commencement of flights may be towards the end of this coming week, but it all seems to depend on whatever way the wind decides to blow. I suppose along with the floods, the earthquakes, and the tsunamis and our recent spell of unseasonable frost, it's just another way of realising that no matter what type of technological development man makes, we are still no match for Mother Nature.

Anyway, all's well that ends well and the lads from Longton won the game by 22 points to 10 and brought home the County Cup for the first time in 26 years. Mark told me yesterday that despite my sad absence they still managed to celebrate in style! I'm sure they did.

So, here am I, grounded in Creggs, but, in truth, I couldn't have picked a better weekend to be there! On Friday night, Gerry Keegan had organised a Table Quiz in Mikeen's for the GAA club and, seeing that I was still here, I got my usual job of asking the questions. There was a

tremendous turnout and despite a controversy or two, after a tie-break, during which it took three rounds of questions to separate the two remaining teams, Bobby Jennings' crew were crowned champions and were extremely popular winners. The Devaney team who had won the last two quizzes were affected by the low-flying ash and, accordingly, they were a little bit off the pace! They have, however, vowed to make a comeback, so whenever we have the next one, watch this space.

Anyway, Duff was there on the night and he told me he was hitting off to Cavan on Saturday evening to see Roscommon take on the Dubs in the U-21 All-Ireland semi-final, and he asked me if I wanted to go. Now, I'm sure Seamus Duke and Tony Mac will mention it in their sports columns this week, but the people who made the two semi-final fixtures must have been temporarily insane. It was bad enough to have a 7.30 pm throw-in in Breffni Park, but to have the same starting time in Parnell Park for supporters of Donegal and Tipperary, on a Saturday evening, was criminally insensitive. We didn't get back to Creggs until after 11 o'clock, so you can imagine what time you might have made it back to Carnadonagh or Templemore if you had gone to the Dublin venue.

In fairness, the Gardai in Cavan were well organised, and once we got through Ballinagh on the way home it was pretty much plain sailing. As for the match itself, the two early goals killed it off and even though the Roscommon lads were on top for long periods of the game, it was an uphill battle to try and make up the early deficit. They, however, put up a decent fight and with a little more composure in front of goal, they might well have made it a lot more uncomfortable for the young Dubs. Our local lads, James McKeague, Eamon Bannon and Niall Kilroy all played well, and if they had got the right ball into him, young Kilroy looked extremely sharp and

seemed capable of causing serious damage to the Leinster champions' rearguard.

Anyway, Duff and myself and a former great Creggs stalwart, Noel Hanley, enjoyed the outing and while it is well known that I would be more maroon and white than primrose and blue, I must take my hat (if I had one), off to the wonderful Roscommon supporters, who were, yet again, out in their thousands. I only saw three Dublin jerseys in the whole crowd, but maybe I just missed them.

Now that should have been enough excitement for me for the weekend, but it was no ordinary weekend, as my next-door neighbour, Joseph Morgan, was celebrating his 18th birthday with a bit of a bash up in Gannon's. So, of course, I had to make an appearance and I must say it was a wonderful night. The place was absolutely wedged with the best of food, porter and music, all combining to make it a night to remember. For a change, I left the dancing to the very many young friends of Joseph who were there, but I must compliment the DJ, (whose name I don't know), for playing very lively, popular music, but, nonetheless, keeping the sound low enough to ensure that some of us (slightly) older folk didn't wake up to thumping headaches on Sunday morning. If we did, it wasn't the music's fault!

Anyway, it was great craic and fair play, Joseph. It was nice to meet all the neighbours and friends. Among the many I met were Joe and Jayne, who as I told you a while back, opened 'Our Plaiice' in Creggs some time ago. I am delighted to tell you that they are flying and now have extended their business to include pizzas and snack boxes and the most delicious cod you could ever eat, along with loads of other lovely stuff. I'm not going to go on any further as I'm getting hungry just thinking about them, but it's great in these tough economic times to hear about a local success story. Well done to both.

Finally for this week, another example of the total lunacy that is gripping our nation is the jailing for two months of a mother-of-seven in Cork, for selling roses without a Trader's Licence. I wonder what Sean Fitzpatrick or Michael Fingleton might think of that as they continue to live the high life, despite almost bankrupting the country? It seems a high price to pay for selling a few roses!

*'Til next week,
bye for now.*



Frankly
Speaking ...
with Frank Brandon

Happy '71 Bridge Club

Results of Margaret Hession Memorial Trophy: 1st – A. Egan and M. Sheeran; 2nd – P. O'Shaughnessy and M. Dowling; Gross – T. Murphy and J. Halliday; 3rd – C. Ansboro and E. Kelly; 1st Session- K. Dowd and C. McGrath; 2nd Session – M. Coyle and M. Dermody.

Race night in aid of autism unit

A race night will take place in the Widow Pat's, Knockcroghery, on Friday 23rd April, first race at 9.30 pm. The event is in aid of autism unit, Sunflower Rooms, St. Mary's NS, Knockcroghery. Please support.

Speak to Garda Sinead

Garda Sinead Higgins is holding a weekly office in Roscommon Women's Network, The Old Mill, Castlereagh. Next office is Tuesday, 27th April from 1 to 3 pm. Any person who would like assistance filling out forms, passport, gun license, motor tax, etc. or who may have concerns and wishes to speak to a Garda for advice, is welcome. Private and confidential. Contact: (094) 96 21690.



Jade McDermott, Steve McDermott and Maggie Finnegan from Ballyhaunis in arrivals at Ireland West Airport Knock on Wednesday as flights began to move again. Pic: Mick McCormack.

Feighan in tribute to Dermot Earley

Frank Feighan TD has paid tribute to Lieutenant General, Dermot Earley, after it was announced that the Defence Forces Chief of Staff is to retire.

"It is with great regret that it has been announced that the Defence Forces Chief of Staff, Dermot Earley, is to retire for medical reasons. He has given tremendous service to the Defence Forces with whom the Lieutenant General served for his entire adult life. In particular, he presided over the implementation of the White Paper on the Defence Forces,

which resulted in a more efficient and better equipped modern army.

"Dermot Earley is one of our county's greatest ambassadors and his legendary status as a player for our county has been recognised worldwide. His work with UN in mid seventies and his subsequent achievements in his military career alongside his sporting prowess endears him to us all. We share the pain of his suffering and health problems and our thoughts and prayers are with Dermot and his family at this time," concluded Deputy Feighan.

Roscommon Mini Marathon 2010

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Crawl Jog
Run Toddle
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Amble

The Carers Association provides practical and emotional support to caring families who identify a problem. You can involve an older person in your family as well as other interested members of their families. We can help you set up a care plan and assist in facing the challenges of caring for someone with a chronic illness.

The Roscommon Mini Marathon takes place over a 10km route and will be a fun family-friendly day out. Registration Fee €12
Bank Holiday Monday 3rd May 2010 at 3pm from Hannon's Hotel, Roscommon

Show your Support for Ireland's 161,000 Carers - people who give their lives to caring for others.

Roscommon People Roscommon Champions
Roscommon Health

Affording Local Charities, Clubs/Organisations an opportunity to raise much needed funds for their individual needs