

Swinford Croquet

Contrary to what many believe, croquet is an Irish invention which became very popular in the mid 19th century. Golf Croquet is an alternative version to the game which employs the use of the croquet lawn and equipment. In recent times it has become a worldwide competitive game, with Ireland's Mark McInerney becoming Worlds Golf Croquet Champion in 2012.

Following initial telephone conversations and a meeting with members of the *Carrickmines Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club*, The Swinford Amenity Park, kindly hosted Croquet demonstrations on Sunday 29th June 2014.

This was attended by the chairman of the Croquet Association of Ireland, *Simon Williams* and *Joe & Anne Marie McGowan* and a mixed age profile of local people. Joe and Simon also presented Swinford with two starter sets of croquet equipment, for which we are very grateful. It was a very successful morning which has evoked much interest across the community from both young and not so young.

Joe McGowan is a native of our neighbouring town, Charlestown and he, like some of the attendees at the croquet demonstrations and many others in the area, first played croquet while attending secondary school in Swinford in the 1960s-1980s. The common link between all these people is that the interest fostered in them by the priest and nuns all those years ago, has remained with them to this day. So much so, that many in our community feel that it is time to bring croquet back for all our community to avail of. To this end, the Swinford Amenity Park has provided us with our first lawn, located at the road side of their training pitch together with the use of their facility for a cup of tea and chat as required.

Following on from our initial demonstrations, several planned and impromptu games have been played over the course of the summer with players ranging in age from 7 years to retired people.

From initial discussions, it is our aspiration that clients in our local health care facility, Aras Attracta, which is located adjacent to the Amenity Park, will soon be involved in the game through the interaction of their sports and recreational manager.

We have also held initial talks with the chairman of the Swinford Active Retirement Group and are awaiting feedback on the number of their members who wish to play croquet now or when they resume their meetings in September.

Some of our Swinford secondary school 2014-2015 transition year students have suggest that they would like to set up a croquet league through their school as part of a work project and ultimately to help promote the game and to continue the legacy of croquet in Swinford.

It is *our belief* that croquet will offer our full community a choice to participate equally at a level that suits them. Some may prefer the gentler pace of Golf Croquet while others may

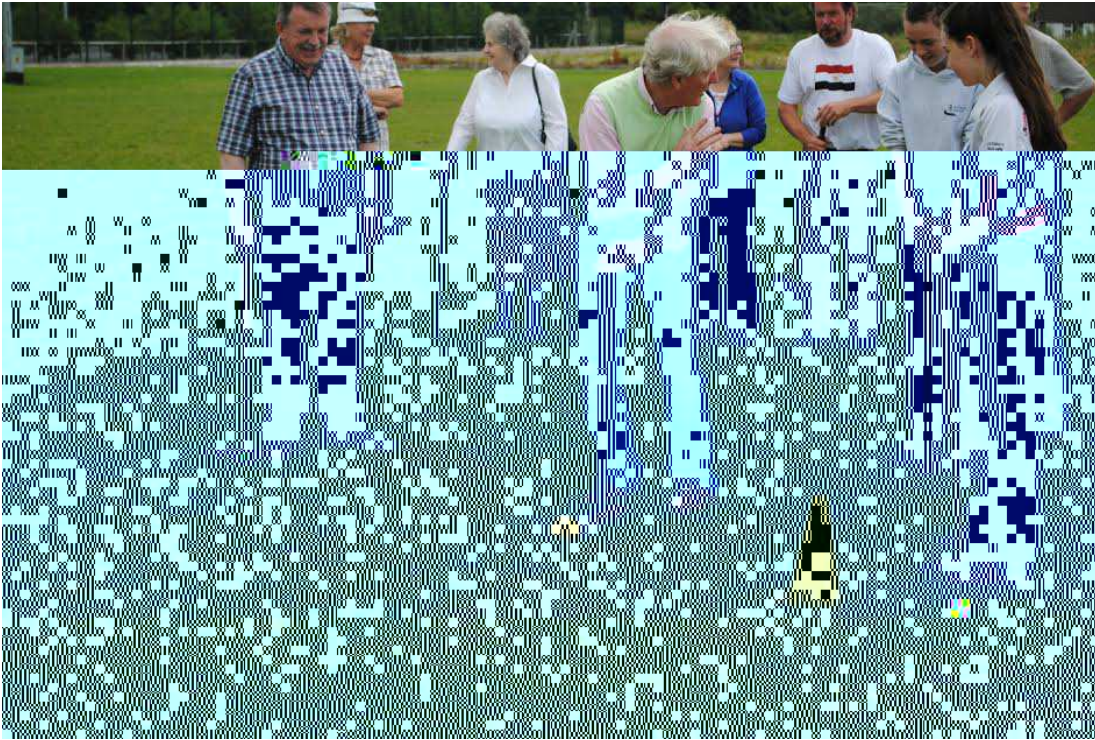
wish to play the more strategic croquet. Both can be played at local or county/club league level and ultimately at world level. Others may choose to attend as helpers for Aras Attracta clients or to attend solely for a social chat and light refreshment in the Amenity Park facility after the games. Whichever they choose they will not be disappointed.

We are actively working toward forming a club and registering a club with the Croquet Association of Ireland by September 2014.

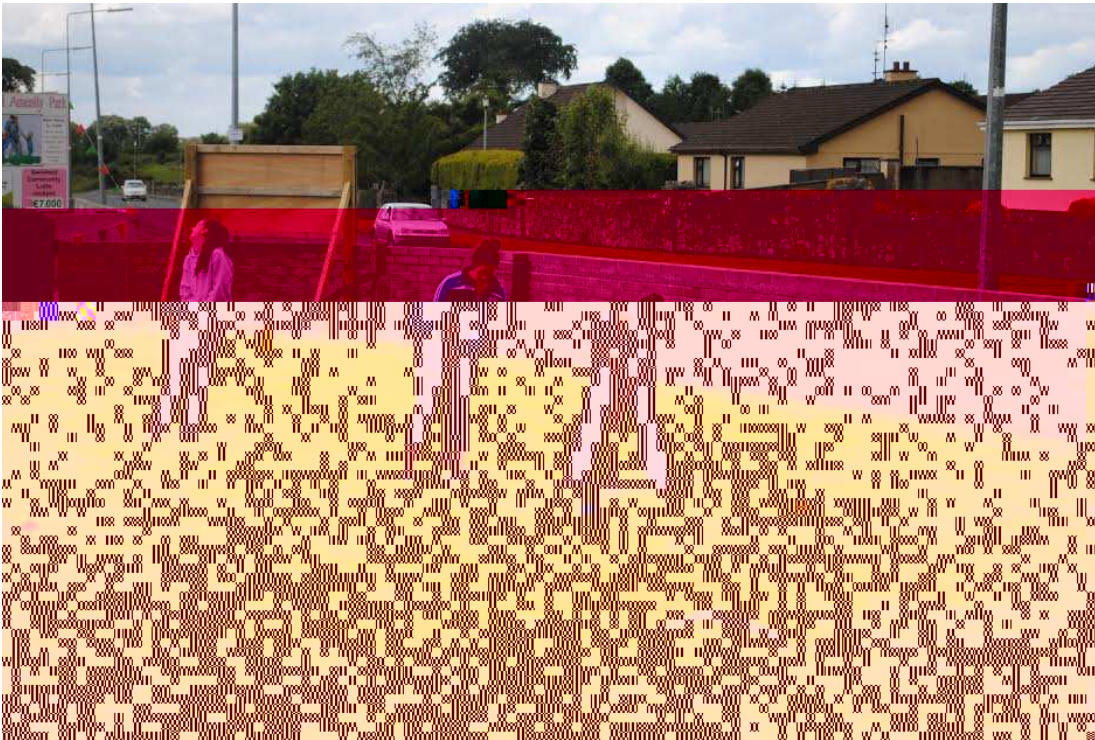
It is our commitment to **Build Bridges in our Community** by promoting Equal Inclusion for **ALL**.



Croquet Demonstration provided by members of the **Carrickmines Croquet and Lawn Tennis Club** at **Swinford Amenity Park** on 27th June 2014



Joe McGowan Instructing members of the Swinford Killassser LGFA and Swinford Athletic Club



Swinford Killassser LGFA and Swinford Athletic Club get Competitive



Simon Williams Instructing Swinford Ladies