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## Swinford bids Farewell to Robert

(Continued from Front Page)

Garda McCallion was pinned against a wall and sustained serious head and arm injuries.

He was immediately rushed to Letterkenny General Hospital, and later transferred to Beaumont Hospital in Dublin. His family maintained a bedside vigil over the past weeks, but sadly he was pronounced dead on Tuesday last.

The driver, a 17-year-old, was arrested at the scene. A blood sample was taken and sent for examination on suspicion of drink-driving. A passenger in the car who allegedly fled the scene is also facing charges relating to the event, following his arrest at a hotel a number of miles away. It later emerged that the passenger had been free on temporary release from prison. The man had been allowed out on compassionate leave from Roscommon's Castlerea Prison. He was serving a nine-month sentence for a number of petty crimes, and was due back in the prison less than 12 hours after the incident in which Garda Robbie McCallion was injured.

The state funeral was attended by many hundreds of Garda, and many players and supporters of GAA, representatives of the government, and the President. The attendants also included Garda Commissioner Fachtina Murphy and Deputy Commissioners Martin Callanan and Naoise Rice. The PSNI was represented by Chief Supt Gerry O' Callaghan.

Bishop Brendan Kelly of Achonry and Bishop Philip Boyce of Raphoe are among those who celebrated the Requiem Mass.

However, it was the incredible turnout of thousands of members of the public, many of whom tearfully said goodbye to this brave public servant, that made the occasion one of utter poignancy.

A guard of honour, dressed in the red and black of the Swinford colours, respectfully carried the coffin, and along the way there was an incredible outpouring of grief. The cortege was lead by many of young Roberts

family, including his grief stricken parents Bob and Nancy, his girlfriend Maria O'Donnell, his sisters Noreen and Deirdre, and his brother John, who is also a Garda, stationed in Ballina. Robert's father is a retired Garda himself, and Garda McCallion has been serving in Letterkenny since he graduated from Templemore Garda College in 2006.

Justice Minister Dermot Ahern said he was outraged and has spoken personally with Garda Commissioner Fachtina Murphy about the incident. "What occurred near Letterkenny that morning was the actions of a mindless individual who appeared intent on inflicting serious injury if not death".

Following mass, Garda McCallion was laid to rest in Kilconduff. Book of condolence was opened in Letterkenny and Ballina, and an online condolence page has been set-up on [www.inlovingmemory.ie](http://www.inlovingmemory.ie)



Photo: Garda Robert McCallion

## Fishing Club Appeal for new Members

The Belcarra Fishing Club is appealing for new members to join the club as it steps into a changing Ireland. As is the case with other clubs in the country, membership has been dwindling.

However, while the outlook for fishing clubs in general may not be very good, the Belcarra Fishing Club is delighted to note that due to an initiative by the Belcarra Community

Council, the prospects for the Club are looking exciting. The Community Council's aim is that the Meander/Manulla river and associated lakes in the vicinity will be developed in an environmentally friendly way as a fishing and leisure resource for the wider community.

This is welcome news for the club, as it not only hosts regular fishing competitions in these

areas, but its members are environmentalists at heart and are keen to see any improvements made to the quality of our lakes and rivers.

New members to the Belcarra Fishing Club, young or old, will have access to expert fishing knowledge and will be able to join in some serious fun while being fully covered by insurance. Fishing is a great way of enjoying the environment and we look

forward to welcoming many new members to the club. Our viability depends on good membership numbers!

A meeting of the club will be held on Thursday 16 April in the Belcarra Community Centre at 9:00pm. and the first of the years competitions will follow on Sunday 26 April. Further information may be obtained from Robin Jay, Tel. 0876814311.