

Wexford PEOPLE

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BUMPER WEEK OF GAA ACTION



THE MAN WITH A HIGHER IQ THAN EINSTEIN

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EDUCATION AND COURSES
SIX-PAGE SPECIAL INSIDE



SUMMER FUN!

Rebecca Stavar, Jason Hore and Hannah Stavar at the family fun day in Redmond Park on Sunday, held in aid of St Anthony's Special Needs Pre-School.

Four families burgled during funeral

FOUR FAMILIES returned home from the same funeral last week to find that their houses had been burgled and ransacked.

The targeting of mourners in Rathangan and Ballymitty last Thursday is at the centre of a report by a Fianna Fáil councillor Mick Roche, who lives in Bridgetown.

'It seems the culprits knew that the houses would be unoccupied during the funeral,' he said.

'I believe there are gangs strategically robbing homes during local funerals.'

'People are living in fear. Some families won't leave home without ensuring there is someone to mind the house.'

'Ghost train' faces new closure threat

IRISH RAIL REVIEW IS ALREADY UNDER WAY

MARIA PEPPER

WEXFORD'S railway station faces the threat of closure as Iarnród Éireann reviews what have been dubbed Ireland's underused 'ghost' trains.

The days could be numbered too for the stations at both Rosslare Strand and Rosslare Harbour at the southern tip of what is one of the least used train routes in Ireland, according to

figures published at the weekend.

On a daily basis, just 20 people board the train in Rosslare Europort and 18 arrive there by rail. In Rosslare Strand, the figure is 25 passengers boarding and 30 people arriving. In Wexford town, the daily number of passengers boarding trains is 81 while the arrival figure is 64.

An Iarnród Éireann spokesman said a full review of routes and services is under way.

In the light of this, there are fears that the Wexford to Rosslare Harbour link could be targeted for closure.

'The cut-off point seems to be 100 passengers but they should be looking at the revenue, not passenger numbers,' said former Labour councillor Joe Ryan, who has highlighted the threat to Wexford's rail service over the past two years.

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THE MAN WITH A HIGHER IQ THAN EINSTEIN

He's the Wexford genius who hacked NASA and caught the Boston bombers. Now CBS is airing a TV series about...

MIAMH KEEGAN

BALLYMACKESSY near Clonroche is the unlikely starting point for a major new blockbuster TV series to be aired by leading American channel CBS.

'Scorpion', which will launch next month, is based on the true life story of computer genius Walter O'Brien, who grew up on a farm in the Co. Wexford townland and went on to become one of the world's leading experts in



artificial intelligence.

Ranked fourth most intelligent person in the world, 39-year-old Walter is now a billionaire who lives in California. He is the son of Maurice

(originally from Cushinstown) and Anne O'Brien (née Ronan), a native of New Ross. Walter is the second of a family of five.

Boro Hill House near Clonroche was Walter's childhood home until the age of 13, when they moved to Rosshaven, near Callan in Kilkenny.

The bright spark started off his schooling at St Patrick's National School in Courtnacuddy and in 1987 went on to the CBS in Enniscorthy. His love of computers began when basic computer classes called 'Turtle Logo course' were brought to his primary school.

Not surprisingly, the gifted youngster excelled when he sat his Leaving Cert at St Kierans's College in Kilkenny - yet despite his world ranking intelligence, he only scraped a pass in Irish, which seems to have had no lasting impact on his remarkable ca-

reer.

Walter, who never had a computer lesson in his life, was a selftaught child prodigy who, when not yet in his teens, sold some livestock his father had given him

Walter's IQ was measured at 197. Einstein's IQ was just 165

in payment for his farm chores, to buy his first personal computer - an Amstrad model popular at the time.

At 13 years of age, he used that computer to hack into NASA's network, which resulted in him returning home from school one day to find the family farm surrounded by black cars, his mother in tears and suited men with American accents shouting at him. In what seems like science fic-

tion, the little genius managed to strike a deal with the US officials to sign an extradition waiver so that he could show them the pitfalls in their own network.

Tested at the age of 14 years, Walter was diagnosed as a child prodigy with an IQ score of 197. To put that into context, Albert Einstein's IQ was 165.

Walter is said to be personally responsible for catching the Boston bombers by writing an algorithm that tracked motion on all the cameras within a two mile radius of the blast.

In 1988, and barely in his teens, the child prodigy set up Scorpion Computer Services, initially offering tutoring and other courses to individuals and companies but which today specialises in everything from risk management to security for clients including the US military, and currently

employs over 2,000 geniuses from all around the world with a turnover per annum of over €1bn.

While studying for his Leaving Cert, the driven student was also immersed in studies for a degree in computer science and artificial intelligence at the University of Sussex, and was awarded honours.

At 18 years of age the brilliant young man captained the Irish team in an international computer problem solving competition in Argentina, as part of the 1993 International Informatics Olympiad, when he was ranked as sixth fastest programmer in the world.

Sought after by companies and governments the all over the world, he was certified as being of national interest to the United States economy in 2001 when he was granted a special visa for extraordinary ability - the

same sort of visa awarded to Albert Einstein and Winston Churchill.

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