

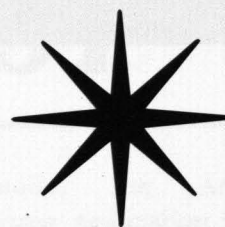
# Annagh '97



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# Christmas Greetings



**T**HE days are getting noticeably shorter and colder, the nights are getting longer, which, in itself, is an indication that Christmas is fast approaching.

Through the pages of Annagh Magazine, I am happy to have this opportunity of greeting all its readers and wishing you all, whether at home or abroad, a very happy and peaceful Christmas and every blessing in 1998.

Last year got off to a great start with a successful Parish Mission. There were wonderful attendances both morning and evening with standing room only at some of the evening sessions.

It also saw the introduction of the Parish Radio System which enables the sick and housebound to tune in to everything taking place in their parish church and thereby ensures that they are very much part of the community on a Sunday morning.

Some old friends left us during the year. Fr. Vincent McCarthy and Fr. John O'Connor departed



from the Augustinian Friary, and in their place came Fr. Michael Collender and Fr. Timothy Walsh. We wish them all every happiness in their new assignments.



*Fr. Cooney being welcomed to the Stations in Mrs Noreen Horkan's, Churchpark*

Many other friends - twenty-six in all - departed this life. We remember them with affection; they will always have a special place in our prayers. We remember especially their families who mourn them and for whom this Christmas will be a lonely one. However, we assure them that they won't be alone because Christmas is a time of remembering and supporting.

Our thoughts too are centred around those who won't be coming home for Christmas. They too are not forgotten and will be remembered in our Masses.

May the new-born Christ bless you and your families this Christmas and during the coming year.



**Fr. Joseph Cooney**  
**P.P. Ballyhaunis.**



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# Editorial - 1997

## **W**elcome to *this, the twentieth issue of the Annagh Magazine.*

Many people have been involved in its production over the past twenty years: members of the Annagh Magazine Association, and their Junior Chamber predecessors, whose names are known to all, and those who operate quietly and unobtrusively in the background. All work hard to source and gather material, and ensure it reaches the printers in time. I would like to pay tribute to the hardworking people who have ensured the survival and development of the Annagh magazine since the first issue appeared in 1978.

Putting an Annual parish magazine together is an

exacting and exhausting task and the Annagh Magazine Association is lucky to have people of the calibre of the present and past committees to do this work. However, new blood and fresh ideas are necessary to guarantee the magazine's continued appearance in the future and I appeal for anyone who feels they have a contribution to make to the future success of the Annagh to consider joining the Association.

The production of the magazine - committee or no committee - would be impossible without those who contribute articles, reports and photographs year-after-year and to whom we send our heartfelt thanks. Neither would the magazine be possible without the support of our Patrons, whom we thank sincerely for their continued generosity.

Finally, the Annagh Magazine Association would like to dedicate this issue to the memory of Noel Waldron, our long-serving treasurer who died as preparation for its publication was underway. Noel's contribution to the Annagh Magazine over the years is well known to all of us. His attendance at meetings was regular and punctual; his valued contributions to debate and discussion were always carefully thought out, balanced and considerate to all involved. He carried out his work as Treasurer in a thorough and meticulous fashion, and his diligence in this role played a large part in ensuring the continued existence and development of the Annagh magazine.

*Ar dheis Dé go raibh a  
Anam Uasal*

**Paul Waldron,  
Editor**

## **Committee Members**

**President:** Jack Halpin  
**Chairperson:** Maura Griffin  
**Editor:** Paul Waldron  
**Assistant Editor:** Jim London

**Secretary:** Agnes Heaney  
**P.R.O.:** Máisín Meath  
**Treasurer:** Noel Waldron (R.I.P.)  
**Assistant Treasurer:** Gerry Cribbin

*Committee:* Jim Cribbin, Martin Forde, Murt Hunt, Michael Godfrey, Peter McCafferty, Joe Hosty, Matt O'Dwyer, Josephine Ganley, Seamus Mulrennan.



# The White Forty-Seven

## *Tony Boyle remembers the Big Snow of 50 Years Ago.*

I well remember the big snow storm of 1947 for the simple reason that I left Ballyhaunis to take up a position in Tuam in the middle of that big snow period. The snow commenced to fall on Monday morning, February the 24th and cleared for a few hours at mid-day, but it resumed snowing very heavily later in the evening and continued all night (Monday) and well into the Tuesday afternoon. From that Tuesday, February 25th to the following Saturday morning, the whole town of Ballyhaunis was completely isolated. We had no electricity, telephone, water or newspapers for a period of over four days.

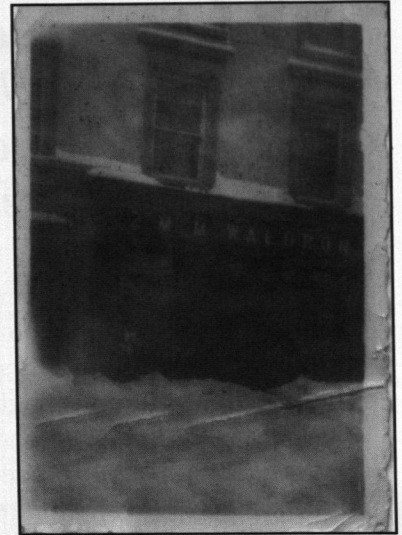
There were drifts of snow over six feet high on the roads in the town and leading to the town, and the severe frost which followed ensured that the snow remained on the ground for weeks - in some cases almost right up to May. I remember well, on the Saturday morning, getting five days newspapers plus the 'Western People' in Joe Flatley's on Saturday morning, March 1st.

Of course, traffic in and out of the town for those last few days of February was almost completely impossible and presented many problems, especially for funerals. At least

three people died in the town of Ballyhaunis that week and as far as I can recall they were Willie Lyons of Clare Street, Anne Greally of Main Street and Mrs. Hopkins of Barrack Street. The introduction of the motor hearse was virtually impossible and the coffins had to be drawn along on sheets of galvanise on the frozen snow. But the people responded to this situation admirably and the coffins were duly dispatched to the graveyard. There were also problems there as there was considerable difficulty in finding the exact family graves, but we presume that this problem was solved as well. A Mrs. Kirrane from Cloonbulban, Began also died on the Wednesday, (February 26th) and I remember her son Jack - who was not a young man - having to walk into town in the snow, to make arrangements for the funeral of his mother.

A meeting was held in the Parochial Hall with a view to alleviating the hardship on the poor of the town and it was presided over by the Parish Priest, Archdeacon Prendergast. There were also problems with supplies, particularly bread, as at that time bread came by rail to Coyne's. There were amusing stories emerging from the difficulties too, and a local character, Jimmy Noone rushed into Coyne's shop and inquired from Mrs. Coyne if the turnovers turned up yet!

It would appear that the worst hit area of the whole snowstorm was a stretch from Roscommon to Crossmolina, and conditions were particularly bad in the Loughglynn and Castlereagh areas. At least three people were lost in the blizzard in the Belmullet - Erris area and two brothers named McAndrew died in similar circumstances in the Nephin Beg region. Many buses were marooned in various areas around Ballina and Enniscrone and much shovelling of snow was done in several districts. Of course, if it happened nowadays, we believe that the problem would be solved earlier, and there would not be as much hardship or isolation.



**Snow on Main Street  
outside Gallagher's, February 1947.**

In some areas approaching Ballyhaunis, the roads were impassable for almost three weeks. When I was leaving the town for Tuam on Monday evening, March 10th, per Willie Eagney's taxi (R.I.P), we were forced to go via Claremorris, as the snow was still blocking the road in the Cloonfad - Dunmore districts.

As the year 1847 will be remembered as Black '47, the year 1947 could be called the White '47. Although, at times, there were drifts of snow over eight feet high in roads and fields around Ballyhaunis, the day came when it was all gone, though it lasted well after Easter Sunday. 1947 can also be remembered as the year after the bad harvest (1946) when people from the town went out to help the farmers, and the year before the election of the first Coalition (or Inter-Party) Government in February 1948. And, for good measure, you may like to know that 1947 was the year that Cavan beat Kerry 2-11 to 2-7 in New York on September 14th, and a horse called "Caughoo" won the Grand National. Many will be surprised to know that the price of the pint in Ballyhaunis in 1947 was one shilling (five pence in today's money) - just imagine!



**Back: Tommy Joe Forde,  
Carmel Waldron, Marie Flatley.  
Front: Paddy Forry, Aiden Waldron  
(Courtesy: Carmel Waldron).**



# MARRIAGES

*...from 1st November, '96 to 31st October 1997*



*Tony Waldron, Cave and Patricia Fadian, Achill.*

*John Ryan, Derrylahan and Mary Flanagan, Loughglyn.*

*Kieran Cunnane, Carrowkeel and Rita Flynn, Ballinlough.*

*Barbara Kenny, Skeghard & Michael Caulfield, Tooreen.*

*Fiona McNamara, Brackloon and Thomas Naughton, Ballindine.*

*Seamus Coffey, Tullaghane and Majella Waldron, Carrowkeel.*

*John Cribbin, Knockbrack and Sally White, Waterford.*

*Mary Henry, Gurteen and Aidan Matthews, Dublin.*

*Michael Heneghan, Station Rise and Anne Marie Kedian, Moneymore.*

*Gerard Doherty, Annagh and Angela Prendergast, Ballindine.*

*Sean Conway, Holywell and Claire Tighe, Kilkelly.*

*Eamonn Glynn, Upper Main Street and Anne Quinn, Aghamore.*

*Ann Maughan, Tooraree and Gerry Maughan, Castlereah.*

*Pauline Morley, Kilmannin and Gerald Walsh, Dublin.*

*Robert Herr, Knox St. and Mona Egan, Knockbrack.*

*Michelle Fitzmaurice, Forthill and Ronan Reidy, Claremorris.*

*Raymond Sloyan, Brackloon and Bernadette Burke, Ballyglunin, Co. Galway.*

*Thomas Meehan, Annagh and Anne-Marie Moran, Carrowedan.*

*Vincent McNamara, Upper Main St. and Sharon Naughton, Ballyforan, Co. Roscommon*

*James Fleming, Ballyhaunis & Catherine Tarpey, Kiltimagh.*

*Paul Donnellan, Clare St. and Paula Walsh, Castlereah, Co. Roscommon.*

*Alan Henry, Upper Main Street, and Niamh Creighton, Claremorris.*

## Deceased of the Parish

1st Nov. 1996 to 15th Nov. 1997



Sr. Paschal Newell, Convent of Mercy  
Mark Waldron, Cave  
Mrs. Margaret Neenan, Coolnafarna  
Mrs. Winifred Kilboyle, Tullaghau  
Mrs. Ellen McDonagh, Tooraree  
Mrs. Mary Carney, Island  
Declan Mulhern, Knock Road  
Mrs. Bridget Moore, Gurrane  
Martin Comer, Killinaugher  
John Smyth, Brackloon South  
Eamonn Dwane, Clare St.  
Kevin Beirne, Main St.  
Mrs. Bridget Curran, Doctors Rd.  
Mrs. Teresa Folliard, Kiltaboe  
Mrs. Kitty Trainor (née Dyer), late of Brackloon Nth.  
Mrs. Kitty Jordan, Lecarrow  
Michael Boyle (Brod), Ballinphuill  
Luke Freeley, Spaddagh, late of Scregg.  
Lawrence Lynch, Holywell  
Michael Keegan, Pattenspark  
Michael Cunnane, Scregg  
Peter McHugh, Devils  
Bernard McDonagh, Ballybofey, Co. Donegal  
Noel Waldron, Devils  
Mrs. Maureen Dyar, late of Devils  
Edward Biesty, Kilmannin  
Mrs. Rosaleen Dwane, Clare St.

### Natives of Annagh parish who died elsewhere

Mrs. Josie Murphy (née Morley), Knox St. and London; Mrs. Gemma Kelly (née Smyth), Abbey St. and Dublin; Mrs. Teresa Farrell (née Mulrennan), Gurteen and Bekan; Mrs. Agnes Gilmore (née Byrne), Knox St. and Brickens; Mrs. Nora Oates (née Kenny), Clagnagh and U.S.; Mrs. Mary Sutton (née Byrne), Johnstown and U.S.; Mrs. Julia Waldron (née Melvin), Ballindrehid and U.S.; Mrs. Bridie McGuire (née Gannon), Johnstown and U.S.; David Plunkett, Forthill and England; Mrs. Nancy Hayes (née Coyne), Ballyhaunis and Maynooth; Mrs. Bridie Parkes (née Hunt), Moneymore and Manchester; Michael Griffin, Clare St. and England; Gus Lanigan, Clare St. and Manchester; Mrs. Margaret Harte (née Phillips), Main St. and Frenchpark; Michael McGuire, Ballindrehid and London.

# Baptisms

## Parish of Annagh 1997

James Bartholomew Lyons  
Carol Freeley  
Dylan Munnich  
Shauna Margaret Costello  
Ryan Michael Kilbane  
Erika Louise Webb  
Sean Bernard Lannon  
Ailish Carmel Phillips  
Shane Terence Maughan



Aoife Kathleen Nolan  
Cormac Thomas Reidy  
Brendan Joseph Morrissey  
Jonathan Paul Ryan  
James Patrick Cribbin  
Ciara Catherine Heslin  
Martin Joseph Conlon  
Cian John Henry  
Lisa Marie McGuire  
Sorcha Teresa McNamara  
Kaitlyn Olivia Clarke



# Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce

**B**ALLYHAUNIS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, as with other Chambers throughout Ireland, is currently finding itself faced with the challenge of the accreditation process. This is designed to improve and focus Chambers and to bring them in line with their European and U.S.A. counterparts, and to cement their role as the recognised voice of Irish Business.

To achieve accreditation requires the Chamber to meet a set standard in five main areas:

1. **Local Economic Development**
2. **Representation**
3. **Information**
4. **Education and Training**
5. **Administration, Membership and Basic Development**

To this end, Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce is currently on a membership drive, as one of the requirements is a membership base big enough to represent the area and fund a Chamber Office. Much of the ground work has taken place behind the scenes and, over the past number of years, the foundation for the future of our area has been set in place.

Ballyhaunis itself is poised for change on a scale never before experienced. The town enjoys a unique position in that we have almost as many employed in our town as we have resident. The challenge is not just to hold this position, but to develop it further on an ongoing basis.

*by Mary Smyth*

The sanctioning of a twenty-two million pounds Government spend is the key to ensuring that our vital infrastructure is being put in place with the start of the Ballyhaunis Sewerage and Water Scheme. In three phases this will give us:

1. A state of the art treatment plant
2. Pumping station and pipe work going along Main Street and Clare Street
3. The extension of Lough Mask Water Scheme and all other pipe work

In April of this year exciting plans for our town were unveiled by Mayo County Council. Entitled "The Integrated Action Plan for Ballyhaunis into the 21st Century", it gave us a glimpse of the massive potential our town has.

Credit must go to the County Council and the County Architect's Office for their vision. Credit too must also go to our local people - too many to mention here - for their determination and dedication to this town over the years. Through spending their time and money here, improving and expanding their businesses, they make a statement of faith in our area. The Chamber of Commerce has played a pivotal role in this area over the years.

In conjunction with BRCIE, the developing arm of the Chamber of Commerce, a town

plan has been drawn up and will be launched in tandem with our plans for the four and a half acre site (donated by Avonmore Plc in November). One of the more exciting aspects is the Technology Centre, which we intend to develop as a lifelong learning centre of excellence with a view to not just attracting new people and business to the town, but also to assist our own many home grown entrepreneurs.

Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce is currently establishing new and exciting links with other Chambers, not just nationally but internationally. Ballyhaunis Chamber has forged links with the Japan Chamber and the town is featured on Internet and in the Japan Chamber of Commerce Magazine. We look forward to developing these links to their full potential.

If you are interested in starting a business in Ballyhaunis we would be delighted to hear from you. Please call (0907) 30311 for further details of our new Enterprise and Technology Centre. Background details on Ballyhaunis Area can be found on Internet address: <http://Ballyhaunis.mayo/ireland.ie>

Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce will host a Gala New Year's Eve Ball this year in the newly refurbished Scouts' Den. Tickets are on sale from Eddie Murphy's, The Gem, Newsround, Spar and The Wash Tub. Plans are afoot for an Easter Parade and Dance, and later on for a Trade Fair.



## FIRST WOMAN PRESIDENT

Denise Moran made history by being elected first woman President of Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce. Denise (33) is also the youngest ever President of the Chamber.

Denise, daughter of Jack (R.I.P.) and Mary Moran is a native of Lecarrow, Ballyhaunis. She has one daughter, Sinead (13). She attended St. Joseph's, Convent of Mercy, Primary School, Ballyhaunis and Presentation College, Tuam.

After leaving school she worked in Galway for a number of years. She returned to Ballyhaunis in 1988 for 'three months' and is still here! In December of 1992, along with her sister Barbara, she opened the 'Wash Tub' in Abbey Street.

As this proved to be a successful business they expanded and opened another business in Castlerea in 1994.

Shortly after opening the business in Ballyhaunis, she got involved with Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce and BRCIE (Ballyhaunis Region Community Innovation and Enterprise). At first she was reluctant to join the Chamber of Commerce but, with persuasion from her bank manager, Tim Shanley, she went along to a meeting and was impressed with what she saw. Denise now says: "It is important for everyone to be involved in their own community." She now wishes to develop Ballyhaunis Chamber along the lines of the new accreditation programme coming in for all Chambers. She



*Denise Moran, President,  
Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce.*

would like to marry the experience of the more established members with the enthusiasm and vision of the new.



*Eamon DeValera at the Ursuline Convent, Sligo. Teresa McGarry, Ballyhaunis on extreme left.*



# The Egglers

***The Egglers, or Travelling Shop as it was sometimes called, was a familiar sight travelling the roads around Ballyhaunis for decades.***

Those who operated them gave an excellent service to the farming community calling weekly to each house buying eggs and selling groceries.

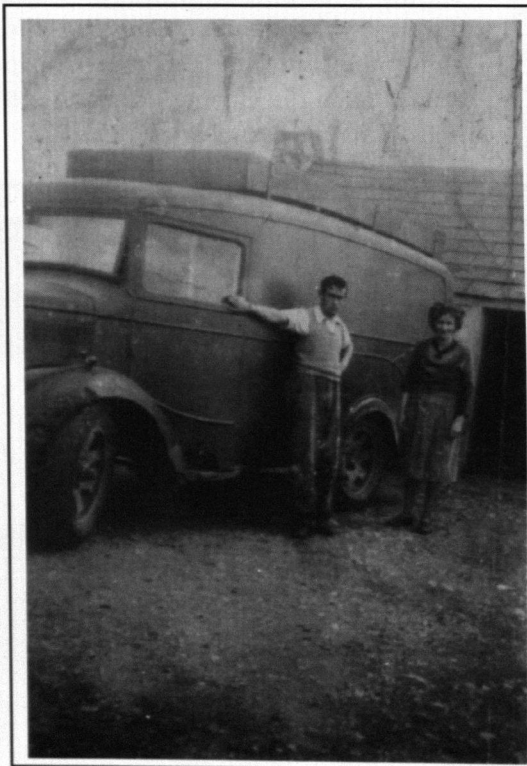
The catchment area of Ballyhaunis was one of the largest egg producing areas of the country due perhaps to the number of smallholders. For the woman of the house eggs were a cash crop that paid the household bills and, it is said, money from eggs sometimes paid a daughter's fortune. When the Egglers started bringing groceries out the country a barter system developed whereby the eggs would be exchanged for groceries.

Before the Second World War, and for some years after, radios and newspapers were very rare in the country and the Egglers was one of the ways by which news was passed along, other ways being the Postman and the Travellers. Michael Keane of Kiltabo remembers it was the Egglers (Cunningham's) who brought news of the death of Michael Collins.

The market was in England

*by Martin Forde*

and, in the sixties, England was becoming self sufficient due to the Deep Litter system (an intensive method of egg production where the hens are kept indoors at all times). As those eggs could be produced more cheaply and got a hold in the market the price for free-range eggs dropped and the decline had begun. Marks and Spencers who have stores in



*Paddy O'Brien  
& Mrs. Fitzpatrick, Brickens.*

England and Ireland have recently stated that in future they will be stocking only free-range eggs. It appears the wheel has gone full circle.

The late Eddie Biesty remembered Michael Lyons, Clare St., as being the first to go out the country buying eggs with the horse and cart about 1912. (Michael was a relative of Michael Lyons who has a bicycle shop in Bridge St.). Prior to that the people brought the eggs to town in baskets, and sold them to one of the Exporters or to shops who in turn sold them on to the Exporters. Eddie himself as a young lad started with the horse and cart buying eggs for his uncle P. J. Caulfield. He would have feed for the horse but would depend himself on a few houses for a cup of tea and a bite to eat. Sometimes he would be starved with the hunger when he got home but after a meal and a good night's sleep he would be off again in the morning as happy as Larry.

Down the years there were several Egglers in Ballyhaunis: Michael Lyons, Denis Foudy, Paddy O'Brien, Tommie Flatley and Sean Griffin in Clare St., Murray's in Devlis, Cunningham's, Durkan's and Hannon's, Abbey St., Michael Foudy, Bridge St., Byrne Bros., Fitzgerald's and P.J. Caulfield who was the first to have a lorry (He was Jack Halpin's father-in-law) in Main St. In Upper Main St. there was Ned Johnson (grandfather of Michael Murren). Vincent Caulfield's (Tommie Mick's), Micksie Caulfield, Gus Caulfield in Carrowkeel (where the Caulfields came from) and the Fitzmaurices in Lisbane.



Micksie Caulfield finished five years ago after forty years in the business. His father Michael was also forty years in the egg business.

Most of them were exporters, two of the biggest being Byrne Bros. and P. J. Caulfield. They bought eggs from other Egglers throughout the catchment area which extended from near Charlestown to Hollymount and on towards Tuam. When the exporting died out Val Byrne produced eggs by the Deep Litter system for the home market which he sold under the Hazelhill brand. In the twenties and before, some of the Exporters went to Egg Markets in

other towns. There they would buy the eggs, pack them in cases with straw which they also bought at the market and sent them off by rail. The cases were in three sizes: the 300 case held 360 eggs, the 600 case 720 and the 1200 case 1440. Towns they went to were Castlerea, Ballaghaderreen, Kiltimagh and Castlebar, and they travelled by horse and cart. Nine wagons of eggs would leave the station on a Tuesday at peak times, the egg train it was called. Occasionally some eggs would be brought by lorry to Collooney station and put on the Northern train to Belfast for markets in Scotland and, other times, lorried to

Ballina, Westport or Limerick where a boat would be docked. During the war years the Egglers had again to return to the horse and cart to do the run due to the rationing of petrol and they were all subject to frequent visits from the Department of Agriculture Egg Inspector.

John Fitzmaurice was in the business for twenty four years. His father started in the 'thirties with a horse and cart, out in good and bad weather, daylight and darkness, sometimes until after midnight. He sent the eggs by rail to Carton Bros., Dublin. On a few occasions the station was closed when he got there but the Station Master obliged him by opening up and taking in his cargo.

John remembers the 'forties and 'fifties. His mother, like women of her generation, worked hard and reared a large family (in his case eleven) without running water, electricity, or any of the mod-cons which are taken for granted today. He, as a schoolboy, went out at times with his father packing eggs and was always asleep when they got home.

In 1954 John took over the business and started with a second-hand van that cost £250. During his years on the road he bought four other new vans. Most of his goods he bought from the late Noel Waldron who was a wholesaler. Noel, he describes, as a perfect gentleman. Later on he bought direct from suppliers. Some housewives would have several hundred eggs. It was an offence to collect dirty eggs and that was a problem with a few customers. He might give them one reminder but if that did not work he packed them separately and washed them at home with breadsoda and water for, if it was mentioned again, you might lose



*Lr: Mike and Jim Caulfield, Upper Main St. Note the tea chest with tap connected to a paraffin can within.*



the customer for good. Like the other Egglers he gave a Christmas Box - usually a large fruit cake. As the "seventies" wore on business began to fall off: the car, the Co-op and the Supermarket all contributed. He gave it up in 1978 and concentrated on farming.

What started eighty five years ago as the Egglar evolved into the travelling shop, and when Oliver Ruane drove Cunningham's van back to base on 3rd December 1996 not alone was it the end of the run for the travelling shops from Ballyhaunis, it was the end of the road.

*I would like to acknowledge the help of the following in researching and writing this article: Eddie Biesty (R.I.P), Jack Halpin, John Fitzmaurice, Michael Keane, Paddo and Nora Cunningham, and Micksie Caulfield.*



**Jim and Eileen Culliney, Clossagh and Mike Cronin (RIP), Lecarrow.**  
*Photo taken in the 1950's.*



**Mrs. Bridget Higgins of Lurgan (nee Waldron, Drimbane)**  
*taken 1915/16.*



**Cunningham's Travelling Shop in the Thirties.**  
*L to R: John Connor, Kate Tully, Bernie Connor, Bridget Connor, Jimmy Connor (in van), working for Cunningham's, Tom Connor, Jack Shevlin (Driver in van), at Connor's House in Carrickacat, Logboy.*

# Jig-Saw Puzzle

*I have started "so I'll finish"*

as Magnus Magnusson often said. The question is, will I put on the rose tinted spectacles and write a glowing bit of "bull" about the good old days or, leaving the spectacles in the case, cast a naked and cold eye on the bad old days. There is also the present and, had I the gift of prophecy, I would be happy to let the Editor have an article on the future. The options do not end there. There is the choice between fact or fiction, or a cocktail of both.

Writing about the past or present is an intriguing pursuit, but like a jig-saw puzzle with unusual rules. It can be played even if some of the pieces are lost or hidden, and it is possible to cheat and leave aside some of the remainder if they do not fit into the picture you wish to build up. Come to think of it, historians and fiction writers are not the only people to play a game where the rules are elastic or it is believed that they can be made elastic.

The style of writing favoured by historians and writers of fiction is often used to great advantage by many people when filling up Income Tax returns, which reminds me I must make a call by Freephone and enquire how much DIRT I paid last year on my account in the C.I.P.O.S.B. (Cayman Islands P.O. Savings Bank), excuse me - phew - that account is something I'll have to attend to in the New Year, or else it's going to get me into bother sooner or later. Of all the options open to me I think I'll do nothing about it just now; there might be another Tax Amnesty, or the results of the forthcoming tax audit of Senior Citizens in Dublin Castle may be favourable to those who dilly-dally in making tax returns. Hopefully the Revenue Commissioners will adopt a "don't do it again" liberal agenda rather than zero tolerance to those whose job it was to represent the poor and who became rich in their spare time.

I suppose the best thing to do about my own anti-social behaviour is to journey down to Davitt House, throw this ragged Post Office book on the desk and explain that it was not quoted in my A.G.12, as I could not read it because it had become indeci-

*by James Cribbin*

pherable as a result of a cat I was trying to evict upsetting a pot of tea on top of it. While I'm there I might as well do like the man with the glasses did in the Dáil "bare my soul" and tell all including a full account of how I came into possession of laundered money. I have already rehearsed my account of this laundered money in front of a lady in the Credit Union office. I was sitting waiting my turn when a large notice caught my eye. It stated that they would not handle laundered money in the Credit Union office with the blue door. Not a good time to read a proclamation like that when all you have in your pocket is laundered money. The more I pondered the more my conscience was torn apart. Would I hand in the unwelcome currency and talk about the weather while doing so or would I walk out. With the benefit of hindsight I now know it was ould Beelzebub himself who took me on a mental walkabout to places I had been to before, like up to I.C.M. Meat plant in Clare St. where I had read a notice advising farmers to present their animals in a clean condition. "There" whispered the ould boy "they want laundered bullocks in the factory and they won't take laundered money here, and do you remember" says he with a nudge "that Sugar Factory in Newark where the notices said laundered sugar beet was more welcome than dirty beet".

Distance being no object to this fellow he soon has me back in a doss house in Canberra where the notice read "no tucker served to newcomers unless they took a shower." "Now", whispers the ould tempter, "in all your travels did you ever before see a notice which said they would not handle something for the simple reason that it was clean?" The only truthful answer I could give to the Patron Saint of Liars was "No." I always heard that he was handy with the tongue and that he could quote the "Good Book" with evil intent. I had my mind made up to talk about the weather. It's probably as hard for St. Paul to explain what happened on the

road to Damascus as for me to explain what happened as I made the short journey across the floor between the chair and the counter. There I am like the man in the Dáil "baring my soul" to the nice lady inside the counter with no control over what I was saying, like a politician protecting his bare back from the party whips. Piecing together the saga of my laundered money is in itself a bit of a jig-saw puzzle.

We all have seen the soap add on TV where Mary McEvoy promises that if you are not satisfied with your laundry "Lever Brothers will give you your money back." The only money I ever got back after a mediocre washing was the laundered money I took from the pocket of the jeans after they had been through the long cycle, three rinses and final spin.

I should have searched the pockets before I closed the door with the little round window. "O Hell" said I, "another jig-saw puzzle". I hope all the pieces are here. Handling the lump of paper like an Archaeologist handling the Dead Sea Scrolls I commenced to separate the notes with the caution of a surgeon separating siamese twins. It being bad weather for the clothesline I then plugged in the iron and, in three shakes of a lamb's tail, I had items of laundry ready for the DAZ doorstep challenge. The friendly lady inside, after listening to my tale of woe, gave me the benefit of the doubt. "But don't let it happen again." I'll have to give it to "Ould Nick" he is a battler.

As I came out the blue door he is trying a new stunt whispering quotations from books he knows I have read. Trying to make me feel foolish, he quotes a character from a play by John Millington Synge: "It's quare the likes of me do be telling the truth and the wise are lying all the times." Another good one of his, which I should mention is: "an ignorant thief will steal from a railway wagon, an educated thief will steal the railway company." He has my head nearly addled boasting about all the wise boys who took his advice and did well. But you don't have to take my word" says he, "go and have a look into their premises yourself."



In this game one piece leads to another. In order to avoid finding myself the victim of a campaign of calumny and abuse I wish to state that there was nothing illegal, unethical, or improper in me accepting an incomplete horse plough from Kevin Eagney and a rusty mouldboard for same from Pat Murray. They were unsolicited gifts accepted in good faith with no strings or bits of barbed wire attached. For the record I have never made any representation on behalf of either Mr. Eagney or Mr. Murray, nor have I been asked to do so. The matter is now closed and there is no reason why it should come within the terms of reference of any tribunal. This is the full story and when people are put in the picture they are less likely to jump to wrong conclusions. In the long term openness and transparency is the best policy even for politicians.

If people had all the pieces of knowledge about politics and politicians they would be more sympathetic and generous to them. Few people have any knowledge of how expensive politics has become and how the bills are really paid. Some people are under the misconception that politics is funded by church gate collections. The few pounds grudgingly given at the church gate once a year would not buy enough posters for the Irish Snake Restoration Party. The show is kept on the road by millions willingly and discretely given by generous benefactors who do not call at Clinics and pester T.D.s. with out of date medical cards, headage forms, and maps of roads taken by satellite with the potholes enhanced by computer imagery. No person can survive for long in politics unless he continues to get votes from the poor and envelopes from the rich. It matters little whether the fat envelope contains laundered or un laundered money. Everybody has a washing machine nowadays. Neither does it matter if the slim envelope contains an invoice for an aircraft, a conservatory, or any household necessity so long as the invoice is stamped with the insignia PAID.

This is democracy at work. Wise up man. Check the ballot papers and see who tops the poll. In this damp climate are not men placed at the top of the poll in thanksgiving for favours received entitled to a decent roof over their heads. Getting votes from the

poor qualifies them for envelopes from the rich. When those who talk a lot and live in houses of glass throw stones and then find they have rained down they don't go blaming the politicians. They go to their clinics seeking a hardship grant to repair the shattered skylight. It is over a hundred years now since farmers were granted fixity of tenure in this country. In some countries a few politicians also enjoy this privilege, not so here. Many people in "perky" permanent and pensionable jobs forget that a politician's job can be very transient. The amusing thing about all this is that it was a politician who got the job for them in the first place. Eaten bread is soon forgotten. Many politicians live like that fellow in the school book. I think he was Greek and he had a dangerous piece of cutlery suspended over his head by a string, with tensile strength well below E.U. safety limits. In those circumstances it is surprising that many politicians take the advice of the old proverb, "for age and want grab what you may, no morning sun lasts the whole day."

They can be criticised if they take this advice and will certainly be criticised if they don't.

However, they are so good at dealing with criticism that I suspect they have all done a crash course on the subject and one of the reference works used may very well be by Brendan Behan, who described critics as being like eunuchs in a harem: "They know how it's done, they've seen it done every day, but they're unable to do it themselves." The only way to avoid critics is to do nothing, say nothing, and be nothing. To follow those guidelines it would be nec-

essary to "arise and go now" to a little island. Regrettably not everybody can afford to buy a little island and retreat from the critics and the rat race. Politicians as a general rule avoid little islands, there are no votes there and the postal service is dismal. However, if you were a person well regarded by the powers that be it may be possible to have the security forces deliver mail, like the man from Derrintogher with the urgent headage application form whose name cannot be revealed for logistical reasons.

The few remaining pieces of this jig-saw puzzle have me flummoxed entirely. Worse than fitting a square peg into a round hole because there are three pieces for just one space which, as far as I can figure out, is intended to be a small Island. I have three island-men alright but none of them will fit the vacant space comfortably. Napoleon won't fit in because his passport is out of date. Of the remaining two Robinson Crusoe kept a diary while living alone on an island and John Mitchell wrote his Jail Journal while he was a guest of the Governor of the island of Van Diemen's land and both indicated in their writings that they had grown weary of island life. Both John Mitchell and Robinson went to the mainland where they both landed themselves well-paid jobs and thereafter held the view that islands were for the birds.

So if I try to fit the great leader, the shipwrecked sailor and the man who stood in the dock for playing a part in the patriot game into a small island it will be crowded as the lady once said about her marriage.

I give up. I concede.



*David Nestor with Diarmuid Byrne, Clare Street.*

# The Anvil Chorus

## 'A PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS AND GOD BLESS YOU'

(for my beloved sister Jill aged 15 – and the 40's and 50's)

spawned on sheets  
from flour bags  
black sugar bags  
the devil at dances  
jezebels  
Redemptorists  
dances on the fair green  
fair days  
market days  
cow dung  
and pigs  
pig in a poke  
Curly Wee and  
Gussie Goose  
in the 'Irish Independent'  
agus 'M'Asal Bheag Dubh'  
my First Holy Communion  
all dressed in white  
primroses  
in the ditches  
pristine and fresh  
Brilliantine for your hair  
a permanent wave  
going to mass  
matchmakers  
dowries  
tinkers  
thinkers by the score  
music scores  
Irish dancing  
jigs and reels  
Maggie dancing  
down the years  
agus 'Fiche bliain ag fás'  
angelus bell ringing  
match scores  
my father's golf cups  
filled with lemonade  
friendly matches  
dollars from America  
a penny for your thoughts  
hot whiskies in the snug  
Punch and Judy  
Judy the Irish setter  
setting pheasants in  
the misty blue  
purple heather bog  
bog trotters  
betting on horses  
still running

church dues  
pay your dues  
money in the bank  
bankers trousers  
plus fours  
down on all fours  
crawl for your masters  
Hitler and Goebbels  
Anew McMaster and  
'The Merchant of Venice'  
bluebells in the woods  
pheasants and rabbits  
hens in the garden  
angelus bells ringing  
'The Bell' magazine  
going to mass  
master craftsmen  
carpenters and tailors  
'The Tailor and Ansty'  
shirt tails for collars  
turning a collar  
collars of bacon  
greasy owl pots  
pot menders  
pots under the bed  
pots of stout  
stout country women  
selling their butter  
buttermilk cream  
and rhubarb pie  
pots of tea  
spuds in their jackets  
strait jackets  
asylums  
locked up for life  
cows and bullocks  
TB and decay  
decaying estates  
relics of owl dacency  
family rosary  
Tower of Ivory  
House of Gold  
gold ribbons for Irish  
processions through  
the streets  
cold potato salad  
jelly and custard  
confessions  
the stations  
mass in the house

pots of tea  
scapulars  
miraculous medals  
medals for Irish poetry  
primroses  
daisies and bluebells  
May altar  
the angelus bell ringing  
daisy chains  
for our hair  
fairy raths  
the wail of the banshee  
gay boys and girls  
dancing together  
'ceól gáire agus cainnt'  
holidays in Carna  
with Maggie  
never ending rainbows  
stretching across Mweenish  
céilís in the house  
American wakes  
wakeing the dead  
visits for the Holy Souls  
holy wells  
St. Brigid's Day  
first day of Spring  
benediction  
céilís and feis  
operas  
costumes from Ging's  
the Anvil Chorus  
Ill Trovatore  
'hammer and clatter'  
Shelley and Keats  
agus 'Eóinín na n-Éan'  
angelus bell ringing  
light a penny candle  
white socks and  
Sunday dresses  
frocks from the dressmaker  
cardigans from the knitters  
knitted brows  
turning a heel  
down at heel  
flag hoppers  
frogs in lily ponds  
Pond's vanishing cream  
cream on top of the milk  
milk cans  
churns



asses and carts  
 Morris Minors  
 Baby Fords  
 my mother  
 pushing me  
 in the go-car  
 on the road  
 to Knock  
 primroses in the ditches  
 daffodils  
 tea in McDonagh's  
 scent of hawthorn hedges  
 hedging a bet  
 bookies  
 pass books  
 copy books  
 comics  
 Beano and Dandy  
 six a penny Dandies  
 Cleeve's toffee  
 gumboils  
 bull's eyes  
 Girl's Crystal  
 Heathcliff and Cathy  
 fair isle jumpers  
 counter jumpers  
 patching  
 patchwork quilts  
 rag dolls  
 Peg the grey haired  
 little dog  
 hiding under  
 the bed clothes  
 Peig Sayers  
 soothsayers  
 pot menders  
 pot wallopers  
 maids  
 rain water in barrels  
 barrels of porter  
 my mother's porter cake  
 nuns in black dresses  
 wild poppies  
 in the meadows  
 buttercups and daisies  
 corncrakes in the meadows  
 pots of tea  
 making hay  
 dandelions and daisies  
 smell of fresh hay  
 the call of the curlew  
 Croagh Patrick rising  
 above the mist  
 St. Patrick driving  
 the snakes  
 out of Ireland  
 going to mass  
 learning the piano  
 'the dear little shamrock'  
 black and white keys

light a penny candle  
 a penny for your thoughts  
 Hitler  
 'Eine Kleine Nachmusik'  
 my father's golf cups  
 filled with lemonade  
 blackberry pie  
 gooseberry jam  
 tea-pots in cosies  
 little black hen  
 coming in for her tea  
 when the Angelus bell rang  
 a penny for the black babies  
 'Iosagán'  
 Roy Rogers  
 and Trigger  
 Far East  
 Pudsey Ryan  
 'East Lynne'  
 Duffy's Circus  
 in Cooney's field  
 Laurel and Hardy  
 Radio Luxembourg  
 and Perry Mason  
 'play it again Sam'  
 Hospital's Requests  
 Hopalong Cassidy  
 and Topper  
 'Gone with the Wind'  
 Jane Eyre and  
 Rochester  
 'Film Fun'  
 cowboys and indians  
 going to the pictures  
 on Saturday afternoon  
 holy pictures for Lent  
 pancakes  
 Shrove Tuesdays  
 on the black Stanley range  
 Maggie singing  
 'Anois teacht an 'Earraí'  
 dancing in the gypsy camp  
 our tambourines beating out  
 the Anvil chorus  
 'hammer and clatter'  
 ringing out around  
 the Town Hall  
 smell of turf fires  
 and blackberry pie  
 purpling our lips  
 old maid  
 patience  
 on the worn  
 card table  
 mushrooms for breakfast  
 fresh from the fields  
 brown bread  
 kneaded and floured  
 on the big wooden table  
 porridge in the morning

with an egg cup of cream  
 Oliver Twist  
 asking for more  
 'Great Expectations'  
 a fry for our breakfast  
 on Sunday morning  
 church bells ringing  
 poetry by the fire  
 ghost stories  
 at Hallow'een  
 leprechauns dancing for a  
 thimbleful of cream  
 shrouded tip of  
 Mt. Nephin  
 rising above the  
 whispering clouds  
 the crock of gold  
 at the end  
 of the rainbow  
 All Souls  
 fairy shoes  
 shoemakers  
 soled and heeled  
 wild ducks  
 ducking for apples  
 snap apple  
 eider downs  
 snipe and grouse rising  
 in the early morning dew  
 barmbrack  
 with a ring  
 pots of tea  
 reading the tea cups  
 a penny for your thoughts  
 hot mince pies  
 Christmas Eve  
 midnight mass  
 Santa Claus  
 down the chimney  
 early morning breakfast  
 with Maggie  
 a fry on the  
 card table  
 beside the range  
 the fire crackles  
 the tambourines  
 ring out the  
 Anvil chorus  
 the colours  
 of the rainbow  
 reflections  
 in a patchwork quilt  
 never ending  
 a penny for your thoughts –  
 'if you haven't a penny  
 a half-penny will do  
 if you haven't a half-penny  
 God bless you'

# Christmas in Deblis

**T**HE excitement of Christmas built up for about two weeks before the great feast.

The postman came later and later each morning, as his mail-bag became heavier and heavier. Every house would have a letter or two and these were awaited with great expectation.

The American letters usually carried welcome dollars and the dollar windfall from various American relations was considerable. The envelope would be opened early as the USA stamp indicated an enclosure. Mother opened the mail and we all awaited the announcement of the exact figure of the cheque. We were a gaggle of children around her feet and rejoiced in all the good news. Mother was happy that her purse was a little fatter for the Christmas; we were happy with her. She would pour out a string of blessings on the sender and recount all the goodness of that person towards the family over the years.

The task of decorating the kitchen in a festive manner was left to us children. We strung gaudy garlands of paper decoration across the ceiling and tucked sprays of holly on the tops of the picture frames.

The real pageant began on Christmas Eve when we would gather round the wireless listening to Radio Eireann broadcast of Santa Claus loading up his sleigh and setting off with tinkling bells on his journey across the rooftops of the world. It was all

by Declan Lyons

very real for us as Santa took trouble to mention nearly every conceivable Christian name of boys and girls he had parcels for in every county of Ireland. At the mention of a Billy, Rita, John, Declan, Michael, Josephine, Kathleen, Davy or P.J. we would all go: "OO OH" and get carried away with a spasm of excitement. Mother would announce that we were having a special Christmas Eve tea. Rich currant cake and nuts were spread on the table, a candle was lighted and placed in the window; we knew now that this was a night of nights.

After tea we all walked into the nearby town for Confessions at the Augustinian Friary. Every house along the way had a candle lighting in the window and this gave a magical feeling to the journey. The candle was meant to show the way to Mary and Joseph on their way to Bethlehem. What they were doing traipsing their way around Mayo to get there was something we never bothered to question. You just gazed in wonder at the flickering glow of light from each window. This sparkle in the winter darkness of the evening gave the countryside an air of fairyland, there was little or no street lighting. The Convent on the hill was a spectacle as the nuns had candles burning in all of their many windows.

By the time we got home it was bedtime for us children and that was the problem. How could we ever get to sleep with

the adrenaline of expectation pumping through our young veins? If only we could get asleep quickly, we mused, Santa Claus would have been when we awoke. We laughed, giggled and let loose with our imaginations on what would be ours when we got out of bed in the morning. Eventually we would fall asleep, but not for too long, some one of us would waken in the night and steal into the kitchen to see if Santa had been and on discovering the pile of parcels immediately arouse the other children. Night would suddenly turn into day as presents were torn open, you had one eye for what you got yourself and another watching what everyone else got.

The night was spent playing Snakes and Ladders or blowing balloons, all attempts at sleep were abandoned. Usually each child was satisfied with a new toothbrush and tube of Colgate toothpaste and a few simple toys and games.

It was the custom for each priest to say three Masses in succession on Christmas morning and most people stayed for such a session. My brothers John and Michael were altar servers, as was I, so we had little choice but to stay. These Masses began at 6 a.m. The long Masses took their toll and I always remember being overcome by a social embarrassment on the way home. I did it in my short pants, the watery liquid ran down my legs like molten lava on to my socks. This was brought on by all the rich food from the previous evening's feast and I found it distressing as the accident happened without my realising it. To avoid the shame of meeting the crowds making their way into town for the later batch of Masses, I took a short cut home through the fields. Presumably my mother or one of my older sisters sorted me out when I got



home so that I could be clean for the Christmas dinner which was conducted with special solemnity.

Dad would want us all around the table together. In the normal way, with a family of eleven, meals tended to be taken in sittings: the young members eating first followed by the older side of the family. However, Christmas Day was Christmas Day and Dad decreed that we all squeeze together around the table. He carved whatever fowl we were having while mother took a special pleasure in doling out her stuffing. Since we lived as a family in the kitchen, there being no separate living room, we were able to watch all the preparation of the fowl from my father cutting its neck in the back yard through to mother plucking it clean of feathers. She would make a large cut near the bird's tail and with the skill of a surgeon disembowel its innards. Various pieces of the entrails, like the liver and gizzard were used for making soup.

Into a large basin she crumbled stale bread, adding cold boiled potatoes, chopped sausage meat, shredded strips of bacon and diced onion. The whole mixture was kneaded until it formed a moist bolus which was stuffed into the belly of the fowl. Again with her surgeon's touch she stitched up the hole with a needle and thread so that all the juices from the cooking bird seeped into the stuffing.

We would also have watched her prepare the plum pudding. It took weeks in the making as she bought the ingredients for it as she could afford them. As the weeks went by the mixture grew richer and richer; currants, raisins, lemon peel and cherries were added to a seemingly limitless selection of ingredients. Finally, beaten eggs, whiskey, porter and milk bound the pud-

ding together before it was boiled for hours on end in a pudding bowl placed in a pot of boiling water. This preparation of the plum pudding came to its grand climax at the end of the Christmas dinner. It was placed at the centre of the table and we all peered at my father as he poured spirits over it before setting it alight. This was the only meal of the year that contained such drama. There was something sacred about sharing in a thick portion of this pudding.

On Christmas night neighbours came for a card session. Around seven o'clock they made their way through the darkness to receive a hearty welcome at our door. A table was placed by the open fire and a game of '25' was played, sometimes with great seriousness. The stakes were only pence but the skill of the game lay in the use of a com-

plicated set of rules, and should some player transgress these, by lack of thought or otherwise, a stern correction might come from some long experienced player. As children we did not take any part but with a respectful silence which the times demanded we followed the course of play and listened to the conversation and demeanour of our elders. Tea with Christmas cake, pudding and trifle was shared while compliments flowed on the flavour of the fare on offer. We were sent to bed before our visitors left but we could follow something of the proceedings from the open door of our bedroom.

So our Christmas Day came to an end, lulled to sleep by the murmur from the kitchen. The following day was Wren Boys' day, but that is another story.



*The late Mrs. Maria Forde, Island, at her Spinning Wheel in the 1930s.*

# Mid-West Radio enters its ninth year of broadcasting

by Sinead Freyne

ON THE 24th July last, Mid West Radio celebrated eight years "on-air." The occasion passed off relatively peacefully. However, looking back to 24th July 1989, it was an entirely different story. That date back in 1989, was the culmination of seven months of frenzied activity and preparation. The pirate Mid West Radio began life in 1984 after both Paul Claffey and Chris Carroll invested money to pay for a transmitter. They subsequently set up shop in the cloak room of Midas Nite Club. For the first few months, Chris and Paul were the only two full time presenters. And were it not for Ryan's Super Valu, that's how things might have stayed. Paddy Ryan approached Mid West to do a bit of advertising to help him move some Christmas stock. Thanks to Paddy, that first campaign generated £100 for the station and helped him sell his extra stock. Unknown to everyone concerned, that day was a turning point in the history of Mid West Radio.



*Michael Neary, MWR fm Presenter, with the Radio Patrol.*

After almost four years as "pirates", both Chris and Paul knew they were on a "very short plank", because legislation was about to come in. The government of the day wanted to clean up the cluttered air-waves, then supporting hundreds of illegal stations. So the Radio and Television Act of 1988 came into being and the Independent Radio and Television Commission was set up to decide who should get these new licences and to regulate the industry.

On New Year's Eve 1988, a big "farewell concert and bash" was organised and, according to presenter Gerry Glennon, "it was comparable to an Irish wake." The doors of Midas were left open, and people were let wander

in and out all day to express their condolences and give moral support. As Gerry remembers, it was an emotionally charged day and evening, "all of us presenters were doing our shows as normal and saying our goodbyes." He remembers a packed-to-capacity crowd turning up for the concert to wish them well. "We were losing our jobs, there was no guarantee we would be the consortium to win the new licence for Mayo; we were saying goodbye to each other because we knew some of the staff would be moving on to different things. It really was a very emotional day."

As Charles Dickens wrote, "it was the best of times, it was the worst of times." That was one way of describing the next seven months off air. A plan was put in place to win the broadcasting licence for County Mayo. A consortium of experienced business

*Left: "Around the Fire" Two of MWR's most popular Presenters, John Duggan and Seamus O Dubhthaigh.*



people and organisations was put in place to make a successful bid. They were the "Western People" and "Connaught Telegraph" newspapers, the Federation of Western Churches, Horan International Airport and North Connaught Farmers. The oral hearing was heard in Galway on the 10th March 1989. In mid April, the team was notified of its success and the mammoth three months build-up to putting MWR legally back on air began.

First on the agenda was the need to secure a premises. Two old residential houses in Abbey Street were being renovated at the time and MWR secured a rental agreement and moved in. Electricians and carpenters moved in and, for a time, were literally camped there day and night. Miles of cable and wiring were laid down within the heart of the building. Technical engineers were contracted over from England as well as the team from Joe O'Neill's, Glenamaddy, to set up and fit our two studios.

After the completion of inter-

views, "twelve apostles" were appointed. There was a tangible excitement at the studio as the 24th July drew near. On the evening before, the new studios were locked at 7 pm and nobody was let in until the following morning when the new Mid West Radio went on air at 7 am. With that MWR became the first inde-

pendent local radio station outside of Dublin to be set up in Ireland. Today, there are twenty-five people employed full-time in Mid West Radio and fifteen full-time in North West Radio. Another forty people who might work one hour a week to ten hours a week are employed on a part-time or contract basis.



*Secondary School Debating teams in Recording Studios at MWR.*

## It's a long way to Ballyhaunis...

*.....But my heart lies there.*

And somehow I think it always will! Even though I've been living and working in France for the past five years, my Irish roots are something that are very much a part of me and something I am very proud of. Being asked where I come from is somewhat of a daily routine now as I meet new people every day in my work, and I must admit that I get great pleasure in telling them I'm Irish. And the questions never stop there once they hear "Irlande"; usually they continue asking about (or remembering) the Irish pubs, the rather wet weather, the lovely countryside, but above all, the friendly people.....so, why wouldn't I be proud after that (apart from the wet weather of course!)

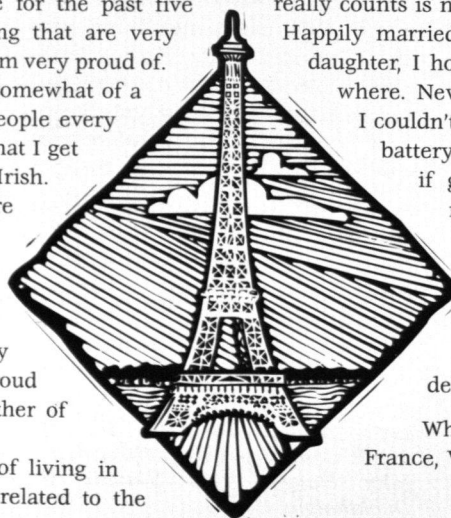
So many people tend to think of living in France as something exotic, ideas related to the

climate, the food and wine, even the lifestyle maybe. I'm not going to deny these advantages, but for me what really counts is not what you have but who you have.

Happily married, with an absolutely adorable baby daughter, I honestly believe that I could live anywhere. Nevertheless, coming home is something I couldn't do without - sometimes I feel like a battery with no more energy and it's like as if going home is what I need to be recharged! After all, there are some things that just simply can't be replaced elsewhere; first and foremost, my parents and sisters, my other family and friends, my home, my town, a good night in the pub, a delicious Irish stew....need I continue??

What more can I say apart from Vive La France, Vive L'Irlande!

**Lisanne Fitzgerald-Bruchmann**



# A Penny a Lump

## The more you eat, the more you jump

*by Jimmy Cribbin*

The literary contributors to this magazine can be classified in the same way as flowers are classified in a seed catalogue: hardy annuals, biennials and perennials.

The hardy annuals flower just once and after that its 'gang aft a-gley' as the Scottish Poet, Robert Burns once said. All this jogs my memory and reminds me of a sermon I once heard delivered in the Friary years ago in which those who went to confession just once a year between Ash Wednesday and Trinity Sunday were described as hardy annuals.

Getting away from Botany and Theology, I want to tell you that one of our perennial scribes will not be taking pen in hand this year. No serious reason for this, just a temporary interlude while Jack Halpin's arm recovers from injuries incurred in a recent accident. While Jack's arm may be in 'neutral' just now his brain is still in top gear, as we found out at a recent meeting of the Editorial Committee. His status as a perennial contributor is going to be kept intact because we intend to reap another literary crop from his fertile field of memories. As a concession he just has to relate his anecdotes and they will be jotted down by a 'Secretary' of his choice drawn from the Editorial Committee. A condition of this concession is that for the next edition he gives us an unabridged account of how he got on with the nurses in Merlin Park.

In the meantime Jack will talk to us about a less exciting subject. While this subject may be less exciting, it is nonetheless smooth and delicious and very suitable for convalescing people. We will be talking about ice cream. The process of

making ice cream is fairly straightforward and those making ice cream in town at the present time will be happy to tell the full story. As ice cream has been made now for three hundred years it is unlikely that there are any secrets about which they may not wish to talk. Just ask any of them could it be made without using electricity. The probable answer is 'can't be done.' It was done and Jack is one of the few people in the locality who can, from personal experience, tell how ice cream was made in Abbey St. nearly seventy years ago before the coming of electricity. Today electricity is essential because in making ice cream the ingredients have to be thoroughly 'whipped' and then refrigerated. When ice cream was first made in Abbey Street the mixing was done by a hand operated machine. The refrigeration was provided by ice which arrived by passenger train once a week from Dublin. Those large blocks of ice were wrapped in sacking and stored until required in the 'cold store' which was a short tunnel dug into the high ground at the back of the premises.

The equipment consisted of a circular container with a somewhat smaller container on the inside which served the purposes of mixing compartment and ice box. There was a handle or crank mounted on the outside of the container which was connected to a mixing device on the inside by means of shafts and gears. In an operation not unlike 'churning' the handle was turned by hand and the mixing paddles were set in motion. Jack recalls that the late Eddie Biesty

was a man who did many a turn at this job.

When the mixing of the ingredients was completed, a mixture of crushed ice and coarse salt was placed in the cavity between the two compartments to provide the refrigeration. Then the ice cream was ready to be scooped out and put into a little mould with a wooden spoon and between two wafers. Depending on your wealth you could have 'a penny', 'a tuppenny', 'a knickerbocker glory' or 'a banana split'.

The coming of electricity in 1932 brought more than light into town. Soon the electrical salesman arrived, the churnlike machine was left outside, the iceman got no more orders and the tunnel under the hill became vacant. The new ice cream cabinet had an electric motor to do the muscle work and a built-in refrigeration unit to replace the ice and there was even a thermostat on the side. The new equipment was more efficient, the temperature could be controlled at the turn of a switch, no backbreaking handle to turn and the daily cleaning of working parts with scalding water was at an end, as was the weekly journey up to the railway station with a cart to collect the large blocks of ice.

Those of us who were the last generation of youngsters to walk in from the country to church each Sunday also recall that it was on that trip we enjoyed the only luxury that normally came our way for the rest of the week. The salesmen are still calling with new flavours, new names, new wrappings, new shapes but, to us, no 'magnum' will for us ever taste as good as the 'tuppenny' after Mass on a Sunday in the sunny long ago.





*'Bringing home the turf in the '40's'  
Mercy Flatley, Main St.;  
Carmel Waldron, Upper Main St.;  
Nuala Caulfield, Carrowkeel.*



*Photographed with the Chief Scout, C.J. Murphy at Whit Camp,  
Lakehill 1968: Eddie Campbell, Oliver Concannon,  
Kieran Folliard and Hugh Campbell*

## Cavan - December '96

*I'll never forget how I felt  
When your eyes enveloped mine  
Across a swaying maze of glasses and  
Laughter, things  
Unknown that should have been familiar*

*And how clear the music thumped  
How every beat  
Was the tightening of our hands  
The air was drunk with voices  
Only the moon  
Carved into the blackness of calm despair  
I knew I'd never see you again  
But for one night it didn't matter  
It's as if every detail must never change  
The glass you dropped, the creased leather*

*Of our seat  
My mind is one constant replay and I see  
Your hand on my shoulder  
Maybe there'll be another night like this  
With one perfect moment  
Of two hearts finding a likeness  
An escape from themselves in the reality of  
disguise  
And two people who can take a part of  
each other  
I know I'll never see you again  
But is the pain somehow  
The cure?*

*Lucie Kavanagh*

# Crystal Night - 1939

*We still have the heirlooms  
But who shows their grandchildren  
Cracks in pavements, like old scars  
Battlewounds  
Not of a finale but where it began  
And the world ended*

*Sometimes in my sleep I hear the glass  
First a crack, a shatter and shards dribble  
Into furrows of gutters and gratings  
Like my tears  
A war, a contest, not for time, not for words  
Life, love, security-just for action  
There was never a world to kill  
Only memories; visions of people just  
Robots as they realised  
There were no more consequences*

*But how do you tell your grandchildren  
Where their computer games come from?  
How you slash someone to pieces and become  
Invincible, somehow  
They were only ever afraid of fear  
I'm sure I heard screams that night  
And drew in the blankets to the sound of my heart  
I'm sure I told my child it was just a nightmare  
Ready to kill her first-if they came  
Not a killing, but a saving of dreams*

*They give you medals for fighting  
But not surviving  
Not for the ability to go on waking*

*On another planet  
When you understand nothing and see  
No one to know you  
Or even know how they died  
Or if they still exist  
No choice but to keep on breathing  
Yes, its called survival.*

*I can find myself, even now  
In my daughter's old history book  
Summarised, registered  
Statistics  
Black and white photos so colourful  
It hurts your eyes  
And no one looks in their faces  
It's too much like a mirror  
And who wants to feel guilty?*

*They called it "the Final Solution"  
And in my grandchild's nightmares  
We pray for finality  
Not to live, not even to go  
To Heaven  
But never to see Hell again  
And never to die there again  
Or to live there again*

*(These were two of the poems with which Lucie won 2nd prize in the Hillstead Museum National Poetry Competition)*

*Lucie Kavanagh*



# Martin Andrew O'Brennan

MARTIN Andrew O'Brennan was born in 1810 in Ballyhaunis, Co. Mayo, the seventh (or eleventh, the records differ) son of Martin O'Brennan and Sara Cullen. He was educated in Roderick Judge's academy on Main St., Ballyhaunis and then, for six years, in St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, where he studied Greek, Latin, French, Logic, Metaphysics, Science, Principles of Canon Law, Rhetoric, Belles-Lettres and the Practice and Science of Elocution; he apparently gained first class honours in all subjects. He seems to have stayed for a while at St. Jarlath's where he was "Public Professor, Historiographer and Lecturer." In 1836 he went to Dublin where he began a career devoted to the propagation of the Irish language and history and an association with the changing nationalist movements of the period.

by Marie-Louise Legg

At the end of the 1840s O'Brennan appears in Thom's Directory as the Principal of a "Collegiate Seminary" in Bolton Street, Dublin, for young men studying for examinations for entrance to university and for civil and military appointments. Although it was not then necessary for entry to the professions, O'Brennan advertised that he taught the Irish language. It is probable that he was associated with Gavan Duffy's Young Ireland movement as he was later said to have vetted the juries at Duffy's trials to ensure his acquittal. He certainly joined the National Irish Speaking Society, and worked on the revival of the Irish language and Irish history. His *Ancient Ireland* was published in 1855 and, in the preface, he speaks of his dedication to the revival of the language and ancient history and called on professors of

Irish not just to read "old stories, however interesting.... They must be teachers rather than mere talkers, when a good National work is to be done, people must be in earnest.... Work is necessary to uplift a fallen nation, res non verba. "O'Brennan's *Antiquities*" was published in 1858 and went into two editions in two months. Again, in the preface O'Brennan writes of the importance of his cause: "There still exists an indestructible flame of nationality never to be wholly subdued.... everything Irish is not a failure.... the heart of Ireland is yet pure and loves liberty." He also wrote *An essay on Ireland* (1856) and *Irish made easy* (1859). In 1857 he was admitted as a student of the Honourable Society of King's Inns to study for call to the Bar, and in 1858 he was admitted to Gray's Inn, London, for the same purpose, but there is no record of his having been admitted to either the English or Irish Bars. In his application to these Inns of Court he claimed to be an LL.D from Trinity College, Dublin, but T.C.D. has no record of his ever having been their student. The reason for his failure to take up his place in either Dublin or London may be that he returned, in 1859, to Tuam.

The *Connaught Patriot* was founded on 27th August 1859 and dedicated "in the name of God, under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin and with sanction of the venerated prelate and the revered clergy of Connaught. The name of the editor is evidence that no Catholic interest will be overlooked." The "venerated prelate" was Archbishop McHale whose protection may have been of some help to O'Brennan in the difficult years ahead. The paper, from the start, took a strongly nationalist line, openly supporting the National Brotherhood of St. Patrick which was known to be a front organisation for Fenianism; O'Brennan spoke on behalf of the

National Brotherhood in Ireland and the north of England. He wrote editorials calling attention to the plight of Poland, and called Ireland "the Poland of the seas." He took up the cause of Father Lavelle of Partry, the nationalist priest whose activities in the west of Ireland were a thorn in the side of Galway landlords and who angered Cardinal Cullen in Dublin and Propaganda in Rome. Despite these causes, O'Brennan disclaimed any revolutionary ideals: "I am nothing of Mazzini. I anathematise the Carbonari, but I bless the sword and the scythe of the Pole and I long for the freedom of my country." He devoted a great deal of space to the Irish language although he did not print in Gaelic, having no Gaelic font; the lives of Irish saints and Irish heroes were the subject of many potted biographies. The *Connaught Patriot* advocated a form of patriotic protectionism in the name of Ireland: native products - peat, stone and flax should be used in preference to imported goods.

There is no doubt that O'Brennan was anathema to both the government in Dublin and London and to the Holy See. They were all driven to exasperation by his support of Father Lavelle's advocacy of a Catholic right of rebellion against the state, and by O'Brennan's abuse of Cardinal Cullen and his maddening inability or unwillingness to condemn Fenianism which he interpreted in a purely historical sense, believing that the Irish race was descended from Fenius, the chief of the Scythians. But despite this support for the National Brotherhood and his attacks on the government, these policies did him no good with the leaders of the Fenian movement in Dublin. There, the leaders, James Stephens and Thomas Clarke Luby, thought him a romantic fool.

While O'Brennan enjoyed the

support of Archbishop McHale, the Catholic Church in Dublin repudiated his actions. Cardinal Cullen, who accepted the government of Ireland by Westminster, had been horrified by the attack on the Papal States and the collapse of the temporal power of the Pope in the 1850s and 1860s which he saw as the triumph of secret societies and the enemies of religion, and he roundly denounced the Fenians. O'Brennan publicly attacked Cullen as "one of those untold calamities which at this moment afflict my country", and added sweetly, "Your Holiness may not agree with me in this." The *Connaught Patriot* was described to the head of Propaganda in Rome as "a malicious Garibaldian rag which is sometimes heretical, sometimes schismatical and at all times personally offensive to the Head of the Church." It was claimed that when the paper first appeared the Tuam clergy were expected to subscribe and when it nearly failed Archbishop McHale sent money and declared it to be the "true organ of Catholicity in this part of the country." Cardinal Cullen sent copies of the newspaper to Rome, claiming that it excited people to disobedience and weakened their faith. He believed

it to be an instrument of war between himself and MacHale and that they were infected with Mazzinianism and told Cardinal Barnabo: "The newspapers speak of him (Mazzini) as if he were some kind of divinity or another redeemer of the world.... It is not surprising that the poor Catholics begin to think that secret societies are not so bad."

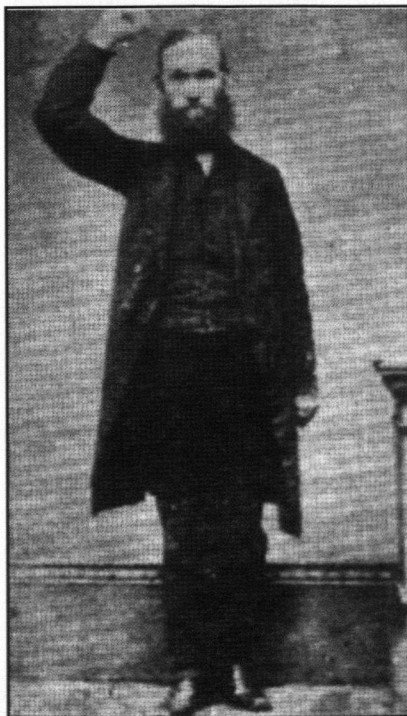
By 1865 O'Brennan had exhausted the patience of another power - Dublin Castle. In February that year he published a letter from Father Lavelle which claimed that Propaganda in Rome had advised Monsignor Wood, the Bishop of Philadelphia, that "*Feniani non sunt inquietandi*" ("The Fenians are not to be disturbed") and in the same paper an article declared that all Catholics were free to join the Fenian society. In October 1865 O'Brennan and a clerk in the newspaper's office were arrested and charged with having published an article which was calculated to stir up foreigners and strangers to invade Ireland, levy war against the Queen and separate Ireland from the United Kingdom. This article claimed that every Irishman who wishes well to Ireland was himself a Fenian, on the basis that Milesius came from a colony in Spain and that Fenius, as the ancestor of the Scythic colony settled in Spain, was therefore a remote progenitor of all genuine Irishmen and women. "Galway was hundreds of years before Christ and Galway will be standing when London will be in ashes.... It will come - and by the strong arms of the haunted exiled Irish.... shall return sword-in-hand to their Land of Promise". The *London Times* lectured the "credulous readers" of the newspaper and said that it was "consolatory to know that neither the peasantry nor the farmers nor the artisan population of the towns nor the shop-keepers are, as a body, Fenian and it is most satisfactory to find the priests ranged with the landlords on the side of order." Cardinal Cullen told his clergy that Fenianism was a compound of folly and wickedness wearing the mask of patriotism. There is some mystery about the length of

O'Brennan's sentence, but he was certainly in gaol with the other Fenians who were arrested when their paper, the *Irish People*, was suppressed.

The Fenian movement might have been expected to support O'Brennan in his plight, but instead they abandoned him. Thomas Clarke Luby had reviewed *Ancient Ireland* in the *Irish People* where he described it as a "literary Leviathan" where "the reader never knows exactly where he is or in what age of the world; so rapid and unceasing are the learned doctor's changes of place and time." O'Brennan told Luby that this attack was "the stroke of an assassin", and although Father Lavelle called at the offices of the *Irish People* to remonstrate, "the pathos of the reverend advocate was unable to soften our hard hearts." Luby last saw O'Brennan in Richmond Goal, Dublin, where he was exercising in the prison yard, reading "some book (ancient classic, no doubt) with grand theatrical emphasis and gesture..... It is now many years since he departed this topsy turvy life in Chicago."

The *Galway Vindicator* of 9th March 1878 carries a report from the *Chicago Times* on the death of Martin A. O'Brennan: "The death of Dr. O'Brennan", says the *Chicago* paper, "was the result of a fall on the sidewalk on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Van Bruen Street by which he broke one of his legs, the shock proving too much for his enfeebled constitution." The *Vindicator* goes on to say that O'Brennan had been released from gaol in Ireland on condition of his residing out of the country. He went to America and, after lecturing on Irish subjects in various cities in the United States, settled down as a lawyer in Chicago but was not over successful. "He leaves, we regret to say, his wife and a family of eight children wholly unprovided for. We are glad to add, however, that the Irishmen of Chicago have opened a subscription for the family which, we trust, will meet with a liberal response."

Published courtesy of the Author  
and the Publishers: The Old Tuam  
Society.



Martin Andrew O'Brennan (1810-1878).



# 'Our Kitchen'

by Declan Lyons

**O**ur kitchen was our cookhouse, living room, washroom, private chapel, family council chamber and the centre of all the little dramas that went into the make-up of our lives.

Its decoration and furnishings changed over the years to reflect the modest material progress we were to make as a family.

When we first moved into this small cottage it was badly run down. The paint was peeling from the walls, here and there different colours from previous coatings showed through. Dry paint flaked from the ceilings and as children we would lie in bed gazing at the images we could see in the patterns created by the missing paint..... "I can see a horse".... "I can see an elephant" .... "What can you see?"

We spent the most of our lives in the kitchen which was furnished in the basic Irish style of the day. The main item of furniture was a huge old fashioned open dresser with rows of crockery. The top shelf contained large, blue-rimmed, oval meat dishes which were used at Christmas to hold the cooked goose. The next shelf down held a row of jugs, some more ornate than others and generally of the kind that were not intended for regular use. Then there was a row of china cups and saucers decorated with a rich, gilt, blue and orange design, wedding presents of my father and mother which only saw use once in seven years, perhaps when we had the Stations. Thereafter the crockery got more work-a-day, the ordinary cups, mugs and plates we used for our meals. The bottom half of the dresser had two doors and was called 'the press.' It contained food such as butter and jam and all the ingredients needed for baking and cooking.

The fire was the second main feature of the kitchen. In our young days it was an open grate with a hob on either side. An iron crane swung over the blazing fire and from it hung the kettles and pots used for boiling water and cooking. Bread was baked on the hearth in a flat iron pot laid on a tripod. Lighted coals were removed from the fire with a tongs and placed under the pot and on the lid of the pot. In this primitive fashion our bread was made.

Someone wrote that those of us who grew up in Ireland through the 1940's and 50's experienced the change from the ancient ways of living to the new and vastly different style of the 1960s and onwards. We had no tap water or electricity. Water was carried from the well some distance away and light at night was provided by paraffin oil lamps.

Life was basic from the bare concrete floor

upwards. The uncovered concrete had deep cracks which ran like rivers when the floor was being washed. The concrete was made from rough gravel, button-sized stones shone from the traffic of hob-nailed boots. In my early teens I took a special pleasure in laying moss green tiles on this floor. It seemed to me progress of mega-proportions to have covered over the ugly concrete with smooth tiles of a gentle green broken with splodges of cream. As I laid the last few tiles leading to the front door, I felt that we had moved a million miles up-market and in all my life I can never forget that first youthful burst of achievement.

My mother was in cahoots with me over the scheme. I first had to win her over to the idea so that she could find the money for the project. Now that the job was completed she sat on the old armchair by the fire and enjoyed a cigarette, her expression betrayed her rich approval of our new floorscape. So well she might smile, the drab kitchen interior of those earlier years was taking on a cosier glow. By now the walls were covered in a cream wallpaper with a fan-shaped pattern in tan and orange shades. The lower section of the wall, separated by a paper border, was painted green. Wallpaper at ground level would never stand the wear and tear of our crowded house.

There was nothing understated or subtle about the religious presence in our kitchen. Castles might well have their private chapels, our kitchen was the family oratory. From one wall hung a large bust sized figure of the Sacred Heart, clad in a dark red garment, his benign eyes gazed at you from whatever angle you viewed him. His left hand pointed to his pierced heart from which fell a golden stream of light, while his right hand was raised in blessing. My mother would tell us that her mother used to say to her: "in time of trouble he's your best friend."

The focus of our family prayer was not directed to that picture, however, but towards a high alcove in an opposite corner where a statue of Our Lady was displayed in a blue cabinet with a glass front. This was the altar before which, however reluctantly, we knelt to say the Rosary. It took ten minutes to recite, but for us children that seemed an eternity. If we were out playing on a summer's evening and arrived back to hear the rosary in progress we would scamper off again until it was over.

The rosary brought the day in the kitchen to an end: when it was over we were sent to bed.

# The Bellman or Town Crier

Except on pig-fair mornings and on the weekly market day, there was very little noise on the streets of Ballyhaunis during the forties. Apart from the daily Westport-Longford bus which rolled through the town each morning and returned nightly, and the odd petrol tanker and haulage lorry passing through, the most common disturbances were the occasional barking of dogs and the chatter of children on their way home from school.

But one different and indeed unique sound was sometimes literally ringing in our ears. It was generated by Martin Duignan, the Bellman, doing his rounds. For a small fee he advertised everything and anything of local interest. It could be a dance in McGarry's Hall, a concert, a play or a card drive in the Parochial Hall, a sale by a local auctioneer, the coming of a circus or a meeting in the Central Hotel of a trade union branch, dramatic society or the local boxing club.

His circuit commenced at the top of Upper Main Street when six or seven loud peals of his hand-bell eclipsed all other sounds. Slowly, he walked in the centre of the streets which were invariably traffic-free in wartime Ireland and, the stronger and more rapidly he swung the bell, the louder was the

*by Willie Costello*

clang of the clapper striking the hollow metal. When he stopped ringing, the fading of the chime into the still evening air was his cue to start speaking. The first two words of every message were delivered at the top of his voice and they never varied: "Don't forget!" he bellowed, and this appeared to be a complete sentence. After a few seconds of a pause he continued with the announcement in a tone pitched much lower, but still audible at a considerable distance.

A typical bulletin would be: "Don't forget, to-morrow night in McGarry's Hall, Ballyhaunis Draughts Club hold their annual dance. Music by Stephen Garvey and admission five shillings." He believed in using only as many words as were necessary, and he repeated the procedure every fifty or sixty yards until the whole town was enlightened about the upcoming event.

If given a few shillings extra, or if he liked the organisers, the message might be delivered more often on the route and perhaps a few extra steps would be taken beyond the town perimeter. He seldom found it necessary to use notes as the announcements were generally short and he was familiar with every local organisation,

activity and venue.

All conversation in the pubs and shops ceased momentarily when the sound of the bell drew close, and people listened to see if the message held any interest for themselves. In a case of urgency the bellman gave an invaluable service and it was often supplemental to advertising in local newspapers.

Martin Duignan, who was also the local bill-poster, was well known to the publicity managers of circuses and travelling shows, all of whom availed of his services. He usually referred to himself as "the principal bill-poster in this town." Nobody could dispute his claim because he was the only one.

*Reprinted from 'A Connacht Man's Rambles', with kind permission of the Publishers Eamon de Burca and the Author.*



*Mrs. Mary Regan, Tooraree; Madeline Duignan-Hourigan, daughter of Chrissie and Paddy Duignan, Cherryfield and niece of Martin Duignan.*

## Citizens' Information Centre

**PAROCHIAL HALL, BALLYHAUNIS**

*by Mary Donnelly*

1997 was a significant and perhaps poignant year in the history of the Citizens Information Centre in Ballyhaunis. First of all, it marked twenty-one years as an information giving service to the community. Secondly, it was decided in October that the centre would close.

The Citizens Information Centre opened in May 1976 and has provided a continuous, free and confidential service to the public on a completely voluntary basis. For the past twenty-one years the volunteers in the Centre have given generously of their time and efforts and have dealt with countless queries on a wide range of entitlements and benefits. They have attended many training courses and seminars to become familiar with new schemes and services and to up-date their skills.

The Centre has survived many changes during this time, not least in the personnel who manned it. At the same time a degree of continuity has prevailed as a small number of the original volunteers have remained with the centre up to the present. Revision of Social Welfare, family and labour law has brought about huge changes in the areas of

entitlements and benefits, with new schemes coming on-stream and existing ones being revised, or sometimes abolished. The directive on equality payments, where women were enabled to claim arrears of social welfare payments going back several years, were very significant. All these changes have created a great need for information and the Citizens Information Centre sought to fill that need.

The Centre was well equipped with up-to-date information, files and booklets, and frequently relied on the assistance of local experts who were always willing to help out when needed.

In recent years the Centre experienced some difficulty in recruiting new volunteers, and, as "new blood" is the lifeline of any organisation, the Centre was unable to continue. The volunteers were presented with special certificates by the National Social Service Board to acknowledge their dedication and service. There was no "golden handshake" or pension for life, instead they have a sense of pride and satisfaction of having contributed to their community in a unique way.





L to R: Paddy Philbin, Tooraree; Mona Philbin (his wife); Joe Cunnane, Knock; Kathleen Philbin, Tooraree; Pat Cunnane, Knock - taken at a Dance in The Shamrock Hall, Leeds, May 1966.

## Parish Radio

by Seamus Mulrennan

IT was Springtime when our Parish Priest Fr. Joseph Cooney came up with the idea of Parish Radio. His thoughts were for the elderly and housebound members of our Parish, also other parishioners who are unable to attend weekly Mass and wish to join with any of the happenings in our Parish Church such as Novenas or Funeral Services. As our Parish is an area of hills and hollows, it was not an easy task to get the signal to outlying areas of the Parish, but Fr. Cooney persisted, even to the extent of having an aerial fitted on top of the Church tower. We now have a signal to at least 75% of our parishioners and we are still trying to improve on same.

We would be delighted to have more households with receivers, the cost is very modest at £35 for the year. If any household wishes to even try out the system, we will give them a receiver on a week's trial basis. We hope, by our efforts, that the senior citizens of our Parish can participate in all the happenings of our Church from the comfort of their homes.

Allied to our Parish Radio, we now have a new Chimes System installed in our Parish Church: it replaces the old Church Bell. It has various different peals and hymns for special occasions.

E OIN HARTE was in school the day he found out. His teacher had gone home for lunch and the kids in the classroom saw him run up the school's old steps. He charged into the class and through deep breaths, he told them to go home quickly because the crops failed.

As Eoin and his classmates filed out of the school, the teacher said: "God help us all." As he ran the short distance home Eoin saw women crying, men saying: "why, why, why" and older people just sitting, silent as could be.

When he got home his Father had given up all hope. He said: "Eoin, we're in big trouble." Eoin and his father had been on their own since his mother had died a few months earlier. After that the school closed and the next few weeks were a scavenger for food. His father had been talking to some of the neighbours and found out a few of them were going to England.

A few weeks later his father had made a decision. Eoin was only thirteen and didn't understand when his father told him they were going to have to go to England. He said: "But Dad, the crops will be back next year and surely we can last that long", but his father just said: "Eoin you're too young to understand now, but the

crops will be gone for a long time." The next few weeks were spent preparing for their new home which was going to be Birmingham. When the day finally came, Eoin was very sad to be leaving the house where he was born and where his mother had died. He reluctantly said goodbye to his friends and Ballyhaunis.

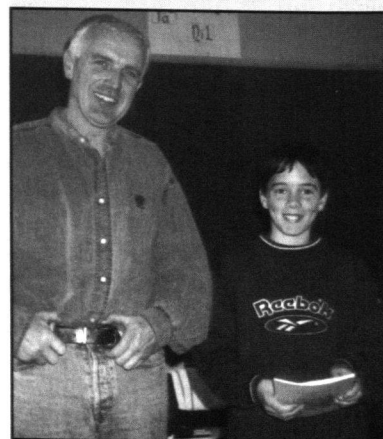
It was a long trip to Dublin and on the way Eoin saw many people who looked very thin and weak. After the long journey Eoin and his father booked into a tavern in Dublin near the port. Eoin and his father ate breakfast quickly and boarded the ship which was called "The Eagle." The journey took about a day but it seemed much longer to Eoin. They ate nothing on the ship because they wanted to save their food.

When they arrived in Holyhead a great crowd surged up to the edge of the pier to see the new arrivals. Eoin nearly lost his father a few times in the crowd but they managed to get to the back of the crowd. The next day after staying in another tavern they got a lift on a cart which was to bring them to Birmingham. After a few hours they

came over a hill and Eoin got his first glimpse of Birmingham. He could now start his new life.

Cian Higgins  
(12), Saint Mary's  
Primary School,  
Ballyhaunis. First Prize

Winner in the Kenny/Naughton Primary  
School Short Story Competition.



Cian Higgins being presented with his prize at the Kenny/Naughton Story Autumn School by Seosamb O'Broin, N.T.

## Eoin's Struggle

by Cian Higgins

# A Historical Study of Mannin Lake

In the late Summer of 1996 I visited Ballyhaunis with Dr. D. Shimwell and M. Robinson. At the time they were excavating a site to the south-east of Ballyhaunis.

Through a colleague I heard about Mannin Lake and the discovery a few years ago of a log boat, uncovered whilst local farmers were digging drainage ditches. The boat had been dated to be c.5000 years old. Associated with this boat were crannogs identified in the lake, these being old lake dwellings. My interest in these surrounded the possible human interference man may have had upon the local environment over time. To study this I was interested in the fresh-water snails identified in the lake sediments: these were collected from a site very near to where the boat was excavated.

Fossil snails can provide a good indication of the past water conditions. These creatures are very sensitive to changing environments, an example of this is seen with their use as indicators to changing water levels.

*John F. Corr*  
Dept. of Geographical and Environmental  
Sciences, The University of Huddersfield.

My study identified that there had been a few changes to Mannin Lake over time, thought to be from around 5000 years ago to the present day. These changes saw the water levels fluctuating widely at certain times of the lake's history. The fluctuations seemed to be very sharp, they must have been an indication of a major human effect. These fluctuations, however, were not as great though as the final fluctuation when the snails became extinct at the time when the lake was drained, approximately thirty years ago.

The snails provided some information on the human influences locally. In the studied sediments a lot of charcoal was identified, this indicating strongly the local influence of man. With these charcoal pieces, a piece of charred bone and charred snails were identified. The

charred snails may indicate the presence of man burning the reeds at the edge of the lake, this may have been to clear an area for colonisation. Along with these, flint artefacts were also found, again evidence of man locally.

The study was one carried out in a limited time period, thus greater, detailed information about the lake was not found. However, the information obtained through my investigation points to widespread human activity in the area. This lake may provide future important results with more investigations. There seems to be a vast amount of information about the early inhabitants of the area locked-up in the lake waiting to be discovered.

I visited the site again recently in the Autumn of 1997 to obtain more samples. I am hoping these will date back to the end of the last Ice-Age, approx. 10-13,000 years ago. Again, I will be studying the snails of the lake, this time hoping to identify something of their immigration into Ireland. To carry out this detailed

study I will be sampling a number of sites across Ireland. At the moment I am looking for former lakes or Turloughs that are dry for a time during the year. I would be interested in any local knowledge with regards to possible sites in Counties Mayo, Galway and Clare. Please contact me through Gerry Cribbin with any relevant information.



*Bed of Mannin Lake, now vegetated.*



# A Year in Germany

*by Peter McHugh*

**A**t the end of 1996 I took a sabbatical year from UCG. A chance to plan for the future, do some travel and learn new skills that would be useful in my job lecturing in engineering at U.C.G. I decided that I wanted to go to Germany, a country famous for its engineering excellence.

In early January 1997 my wife Tina and I packed up the car and headed for Germany. We had selected the city of Freiburg as our destination, which has a world-renowned engineering research institute that I intended to visit for most of 1997. After a rather bumpy ferry crossing in the winter seas and a long drive half way across the continent we arrived in Freiburg, a very old German city, with a population of about 200,000, situated at the foothills of the Black Forest mountains in the south west corner of Germany. It is very picturesque, especially in winter with snow covering the high, red tiled roofs and the tall spire of the medieval Munster (cathedral) silhouetted against the low, winter sun. That part of Germany, the province of Baden Wurtemberg, has some of the country's most charming countryside. It embraces not only the Black Forest but also Lake Constance and the green valleys of the upper Rhine and the

Danube. It took time to settle into life there.

Neither Tina nor I had good German, having only taken a crash course before we left, but we did our best. We found the society very organised. People seemed much more conscious of laws and regulations, or to be more correct, people seemed much more conscious of obeying laws and regulations than we do at home. We were amazed to find people standing at both sides of a street, empty of cars, waiting for the pedestrian light to go green before they would even think about crossing, and then shouting at the Irish pair who just casually strolled across. I have come to believe that the regulations of life in Germany leads to a good degree of intensity and seriousness in the people. Relatively speaking, life in Ireland is much more laid back. Both the standard of living and the cost of living are high in Germany. Although their average salaries would be higher than in Ireland, the high population density drives house prices out of the reach of most people. A large percentage of the population will never own their own house, having to spend their lives in rented apartments, that are usually quite small, with rents cal-

culated by the square metre of floor area! All this made us feel good about life in Ireland.

The Germans are formal, in that surnames are used most of the time, except among close friends. However we found that once you got to know them they became more jovial and casual. Most of the people I came across had a positive outlook, and efficient "can do" attitude. I gained a lot of respect for the Germans because of their patriotism. For them Germany is the best and German products are the best. This is especially true of their cars, only German ones to be seen on the roads: Mercedes, BMW, Porsche and VW. They take real pride in knowing that these brand names are the best in the world, so much so that in the Mercedes home city of Stuttgart, the local authority actually paid Mercedes to put up the Mercedes logo, the three pointed star, on top of the tower of the main railway station. Actually, with all this seriousness in their lives, the car presents the people with one way to really let off steam. Thundering along the motorways as fast as the car will go with no speed limit! There you really see what the big German cars are built for. Trying to keep up in my relatively modest 1.6 motor did very little for my self-esteem or my nerves, for that matter.

In addition to their cars, in Germany they love their sausages, all shapes, sizes and colours and, of course, their beer - each town and indeed almost every pub having its own local brew. Actually the German pubs are now under severe competition from one of the fastest growing businesses internationally, the Irish Pub. There are some quite good ones actually in Germany, especially the ones with Irish traditional musicians playing regularly, in one of which Tina and I experienced our one severe bout of homesickness.

West of Freiburg, just across the French border, is the Alsace region, which is famous for its white wines. The capital of the Alsace is Strasbourg, a city of great architectural splendour, made so by successive French and



*Tina and I on a frozen lake in the Blackforest Mountains, Germany.*

German occupation down through the centuries with each ruler trying to out-do the last in terms of grand buildings. There are many wine-making villages in that region with small wine makers trying to make a reasonable living off the land, similar to farmers in the west of Ireland. We were determined to bring home some of this Alsatian wine and we located a wine making family in one of the small villages. The family could only speak French or German and our command of both languages left something to be desired (hopefully my French teachers in the Community school aren't reading this!). Anyway, after much huffing and puffing and various forms of sign language, culminating in us producing a handful of French Francs, which of course spoke much louder than words, we were invited into the sitting room to taste the produce. The honour of pouring the wine for the guests was reserved for the aged grandmother of the household. We bought a few boxes of excellent white wine at modest cost, which we managed to get back to Ireland unbroken at the end of our stay.

Leisure time for us involved much walking in the Black Forest mountains, along the well signposted and maintained mountain trails. We found this invigorating with spectacular scenery and fresh air. In the winter months the ski slopes are full. The mountain lakes freeze over and provide huge open-air ice skating rinks. It was amazing to see crowds of people walking out on these frozen lakes. For the last month of our stay we visited the famous Aachen University of Technology in north West Germany. The city of Aachen is located at the meeting point of the three countries Germany, Belgium and The Netherlands. A stone monument marks the spot and if you stand on it you are in three countries at the same time. The Netherlands is known as one of the Low Countries and this indeed is true because right beside this monument, on the Dutch side is another stone monument with the inscription "This is the highest point in the Netherlands"! I guess it's all down hill from there.

Being based at almost the centre of Western Europe we took the opportunity to do as much travelling as possible. While on visits to other universities and research institutes we took the

time to look around. We travelled to all corners of Germany including Stuttgart, Munich, Frankfurt, Hamburg, Dresden and Berlin. Berlin I found fascinating. Side by side, separated by no-mans-land are two totally different cities. East Berlin, containing all the old grand architecture of the historical capital, run down, with the buildings pitch black, covered in 50 years of industrial pollution, and West Berlin, big brash, rich, you could be walking down Fifth Avenue. Of course the two are now being merged, the World's biggest construction site they are now calling it, famous for what it is going to look like. I made sure I got my chip off the remains of the Berlin wall before we left. Most of the Nazi buildings are now destroyed. We tried to find Hitler's last hideout, but the locals were not co-operative, understandable as I suppose, that part of German history they prefer to put behind them.

We travelled outside Germany also. In Freiburg, we were only a twenty minute drive from France and a forty minute drive from Switzerland. We travelled to Switzerland to go to the cinema, there they showed films in their original English. In Germany and France they were dubbed. We drove to Italy, partly across the Swiss Alps and partly through the many mountain tunnels (most notably the ten mile long Gotthard tunnel), and visited Milan and Venice. In Milan we stayed with my good friend James Waldron who continues to thrive in the hectic

life at the high end of the international fashion industry, working as right hand man for Giorgio Armani. We travelled into the Czech Republic and visited some of the small towns. I didn't chance bringing the car across the border as it was like crossing into the last century. The well cared for German highways deteriorated into backroads that the most remote parts of rural Ireland would be ashamed of. Food was amazingly cheap, a full meal for four of us for under £7 total. Battered Yugos and Ladas abounded. A lot of money has been poured in to modernise the capital city, Prague, in recent years, but the rest of the country has a long way to go. In Austria we joined some friends for a skiing trip in the Alps. Tina seemed to be a natural. I tried my hand but only succeeded in moving backwards, ah well, the scenery was brilliant! We visited Vienna, a spectacular city of grand buildings and Mozart music. In central Europe people cross borders like we cross county borders in Ireland. This kind of country hopping was a strange experience for islanders like us.

My overall impressions of life in central Europe were that it is rich and fulfilling but both of us knew for certain, at the end of the year, that we wanted to come home. The high population, the pace and regulated nature of things all made life too intense for me. We are indeed fortunate in Ireland, life is good here.



**Vocational School 1974 Past Pupils Reunion.**

Back Row, l to r: Sean Tighe, Paddy Kelly, Seamus Mulrennan, Eddie Thornton (School Principal), Mick O'Connell, Micky Joe Lyons, Joe Hosty.  
Front: Helen Hopkins, Peggy Curran, Mary Waldron.



# 'Family Connections In Ireland And England'

**M**y Granny's sister's name is Bridie. She originated from Coppulcurragh, Charlestown, Co. Mayo.

When she was twenty-one years of age she qualified as a nurse in this country, but when she went looking for a job in Ireland she found out that there was no work for her in Ireland. So she set off for England leaving her family and friends behind her.

She worked for a hospital in England for about five years and then she married a man called Jimmy Breeze who was born and reared in England. His parents were both Scottish and moved to England when they got married.

by Liam Lyons

When Jimmy and Bridie got married they had five children named Harry, Seamus, Carol, Sharon and Annah. During her children's childhood they came over to visit my Granny. They used to swap games with each other and go for walks in the fields and collect berries for tarts. Now they just talk to each other on the 'phone.

Now great-auntie Bridie comes over with her grandchildren who are named Tyrone and Copeland. We play games and go places with each other such as the beach in Enniscrone, the Galway Races and Castlebar. They sometimes

have toys which we have never heard of, such as Pogs (round little discs) and this year they had Tamigotchis (virtual pets) which are computerised toys for people to have instead of real pets. They came up to our house and stayed five days and four nights which I really enjoyed.

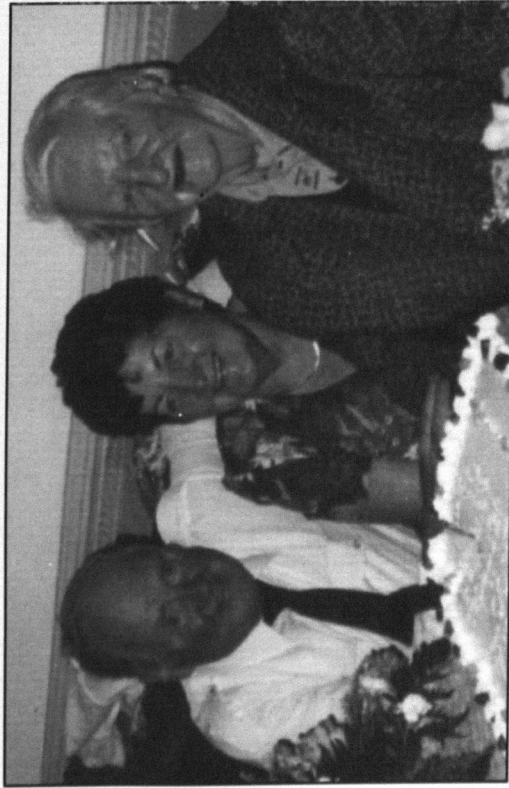
If my Auntie Bridie had never emigrated I would never have had the pleasure of having cousins come to visit us from England to Ireland.

Liam Lyons (12), St. Mary's Primary School, Ballyhaunis. Third Prize winner in the Kenry Naughton Primary School Essay competition.

## Ballyhaunis Woman Celebrates Her 100th Birthday

**A**nn Morris, who celebrated her 100th birthday on September 17th last, was born at Upper Main Street, Ballyhaunis in 1897. Her parents were P. J. Veldon and Annie Veldon (née Moran), and they ran a licensed premises and shop at that address (now

owned by Paddy Phillips). She was an only daughter and had four brothers. Two brothers died as infants and Thomas (Tommy) died at age 27 years. Patrick (Pa), her younger brother, possessed a great singing voice and often sang solo in the local church. He was a member of St. Patrick's G.A.A. Club and played in the County Championship which they won in 1925. He emigrated to Boston where he continued to sing in his local church. He married and remained there until his death in his seventies. Ann is the last living member of her family. She has a keen interest in politics, history, current affairs and remained an avid reader up to approximately three years ago. The "years of the troubles" were often recounted by her with great stories of life and times in the 'twenties and 'thirties. After emigrating to England in the 'forties she later returned to live in Dublin, where she resides to the present. She has two children, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Ballyhaunis always had a special place in her heart. From there was laid the foundation of her faith which has remained strong, and she has retained a great love of the Rosary to this day. To all old friends and anyone who may remember her she sends special greetings.



left: Mrs. Anne Morris pictured at her 100th Birthday with her son Bosco and daughter Breeda.

# Ballyhaunis And District Credit Union

by John Tuohy

**Office Administrator:**  
Kathleen Meenan;  
**Tellers:** Katherine Kilbride  
and Cynthia Fitzgerald;  
**Training and Promotion:**  
Madeleine Niland,  
Helene McCafferty, Rita Lundon;  
**Public Relations:** John Tuohy.

**Credit Control:**  
John Tuohy, Frances Mulhern  
and Eileen O'Brien;  
**Insurance Officer:** Maura Murphy;  
**Memberships Officer:** Helene McCafferty;  
**Supervisors:** Barry Butler,  
Martin Keane and Margaret Byrne;



1997 Credit Union Art Competition Winners. (front row 1 to 5): Imma Follard, Joyce Siobhán Shanaghy, Cian Higgins, Phelim Carroll. (second row 1 to 5): Helena McCafferty, Maura Murphy, Jordan, Sandra Herr, Enda Nestor. (back row 1 to 5): Fergus Coyne & Linda Hopkins. Paddy Diskin, Rita Lundon. Missing from photo: Fergus Coyne & Linda Hopkins.

**B**allyhaunis and District Credit Union, since its foundation in 1983, continues to make remarkable progress in the common bond area of approximately ten mile radius of the town of Ballyhaunis. During the past year it has seen its membership increase by 9% to over 2,600 members and its share capital increase by 30% to almost £2,000,000. This represents the total amount of money saved by the members since the Credit Union was established in Ballyhaunis and surrounding area.

Little did the first Board of Directors ever dream that the Credit Union would be such a success and benefit to the community with 70% of its shares on loan to its members at low interest rates and free insurance cover on the loan.

Services to its members also offered by the Credit Union include Foreign Currency Drafts, Bureau de Change, Travellers' Cheques, Western Union Money Transfer, Auto Union Motor Insurance, Home insurance, Group Membership of VHI or BUPA.

All savings in the Credit Union are protected by the Irish League of Credit Unions Savings Protection Scheme and there is also free life savings and loan protection insurance on all savings and borrowings at no extra cost to the member.

The Credit Union office opening hours are: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday: 10am - 5pm; Thursday: Closed; Friday: 10am - 6pm; Saturday: 11am - 1pm & 8pm - 9pm.

The present Board of Directors are:

**President:** Paddy Brennan;  
**Chairperson:** Rita Lundon;  
**Hon. Treasurer:** Helen Lyons;  
**Asst. Treasurer:** Pat O'Connor;  
**Hon. Secretary:** Pat Fitzgerald;  
**Asst. Secretary:** Madeleine Niland;  
**Credit Committee:**  
Pat Fitzgerald, Aiden Kelly,  
Rita Lundon, Ina Freyne  
and Justina Lyons;

## Ballyhaunis Macra na Feirme

Ballyhaunis Macra na Feirme held its General Meeting on 7th October 1997.

The following officers were elected:

**President:** Ann Nolan;  
**Chairman:** Michael Dee;  
**Secretary:** Caroline Carney;  
**Vice Chairman:** John Carney;  
**Vice Chairman:** Michael Jordan;  
**Treasurer:** Michael Nolan;  
**P.R.O.** Deirdre Finn;

**Delegates to County Executive:**  
Michael Jordan, Jimmy Lyons  
and Declan Kirrane.

General Meetings are held every two weeks in the Central Hotel at 10.30pm.

Sporting activities are held every Tuesday night in the school gym at 9.30 pm.

New members always welcome.



# Ballyhaunis Golf Club 1997

by Ina Freyne, P.R.O.

**B**allyhaunis Golf Club had yet another enjoyable and busy year, thanks to Captains, the President, officers & various committees.

Golf Club Officers for 1997 are:

**President:**

Alo Reddington;

**Vice President:**

John Dillon-Leetch;

**Captain:**

John Forde;

**Vice Captain:**

Alec Eaton;

**Hon. Secretary:**

Tom McNicholas;

**Men's Secretary:**

John Cleary;

**Hon. Treasurer:**

John Collins;

**Competition Secretary:**

Ivan Freeley;

**Handicap Secretary:**

Michael Mahoney;

**Lady Captain:**

Maura Patterson;

**Vice Captain:**

Kay Buckley;

**Hon. Secretary:**

Siobhan Herr;

**Hon. Treasurer:**

Susan Laffey;

**Competition Secretary:**

Kathleen Donlon;

**Handicap Secretary:**

Mary Frances Cleary;

**Registrar:**

Susan Laffey;

**P.R.O.:**

Ina Freyne.

**Trustees:**

John Dillon,  
Tadgh Buckley,  
Alo Reddington,  
John Mooney  
and Helen Cleary.



*Brother and Sister, Tom & Barbara Dillon, Winners of the Gents & Ladies Sections of John Forde's Captains' Prize, played in August. Glynn Photography*

The ladies had a very successful year in golf. Fiona Prenty was our "Connaught Junior Champion" and was also "Lady Golfer of the Year" at the club. Runner-up was Kay Fanning. Our ladies "Intermediate Team" was also victorious in this year's "Western District" event. Ann Freeley was the winner of Maura Patterson's "Lady Captain's Prize" while Ann Curley won the "Beginners" prize for the same competition.

It was a golden season for Barbara Dillon who among other things was the winner of the Ladies section in both the President's and Captain's Prizes. Barbara also had a



*Fiona Prenty, Connacht Junior Championship Winner*

*Glynn Photography*



"Hole in one" this season while out playing in a competition with her Aunt Norrie Dillon. For her achievements, she was also the recipient of the "Irish Independent/Bulmers Golfer of the month" award for August.

During the summer, in the men's section Tom Dillon won the Men's Captain's Prize, while his cousin Michael Dillon won Alo Reddington's President's Prize. Alan Delaney and Eamonn Freyne were the winners of the "Cassidy Cup." Eamonn also had a "Hole in one" during the year. The runners-up for the Cassidy Cup competition were John Mooney and Sean Paul Tighe.

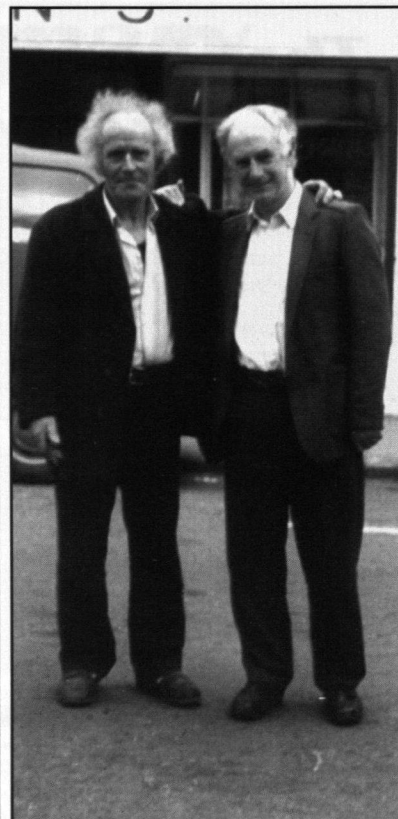
However, John had better luck in this year's Dillon Mixed Competition, which is sponsored annually by the Dillon Family, and is one of the major match-play competitions in the club's calendar. John Mooney was

joined by Maura Burke in winning this year's title. Runners-up were Fiona Prenty and Alec Eaton.

Last April, the club began evenings for men and women interested in taking up the game. These later developed into the Tuesday evening "Scramble Competitions" where "amateur" and "professional" competed side by side. We hope all the new faces will be back with us as members next season.

Fifty-three golfers had an enjoyable week overseas in Portugal at Hallowe'en. Many thanks and credit is due to Tom Prenty in organising a wonderful break.

The year is now drawing to a close and every good wish to the incoming captains, Alec Eaton and Kay Buckley, and President John Dillon-Leetch and their fellow officers.



**Kevin Eagney  
and Gerry McGarry.**



**Ballyhaunis Golf Club: Winners, Subs. and Selectors of the Intermediate Team event in the Western District.**

(Back row l to r): Selectors: Mary Lyons, Susan Laffey, Cait Dillon. Subs: Barbara Dillon, Mary F. Cleary, Helen Cleary (Executive Member), Moira Patterson (Lady Captain), Rita Hannon and Kay Buckley.

(Seated - Winning Team) Kay Fanning, Fiona Prenty, Ann Freeley, Laurena Freeley and Kay Curley. Glynn Photography

## That River That Flows By My Door

*Dear river, I love you and each wild flower above you  
I know that your day's never over  
On your banks we go strolling while you must keep rolling  
That river that flows by my door*

*As a boy I would saunter to that school house down yonder  
Where we plucked and we chained the wild flowers  
That your clear water nourished, on your green banks they flourished  
On that river that flows by my door*

*At night when I'm lonely I have but you only  
I hear every quiver and moan  
I hear the birds nestle and the curlews shrill whistle  
From that river that flows by my door*

*You go by the woodland, the moorland and meadow  
You service the mill and the forge  
You're the fisherman's glory for e'er they'll adore you  
That river that flows by my door*

©Michael Godfrey

## AN IRISH FAIR DAY

*How happy we would be on the evening before  
When our stricks we would ready and leave by the door  
Then the alarm was set for the first light of day  
When we would hurry along to an Irish fair day*

*'Tis soon we'd be there in our joy and pride  
With the slapping of hands and the way they would divide  
Then a bargain was made, to the pub we're away  
That's how it was done at an Irish fair day*

*There the traders or jack cheaps, as then were called  
Would be busy displaying the clothes on their stalls  
If you stood for to listen you might be asked to fit on  
'Tis many were dressed there in days that are gone*

*Now the street singer's voice in the distance you'll hear  
As he sang at each door 'tis soon he'd be near  
What a treasure they have left us without credit or pay  
Just a coin in their cap at some Irish fair day*

*The gypsies gay wagons I've not seen for an age  
With that beautiful piebald and gold finch in its cage  
With the greyhounds beneath that from them would stray  
That's a scene I will cherish from an Irish fair day.*

*Then the friends and relations how grand it was to see  
With the shaking of hands and the great graw o'groigh  
Then some match would be made the dowry they would pay  
That was a custom that went with an Irish fair day*

*Now the fair days are over and those customs are gone  
They say it's progress and that we must move on  
Perhaps they are right but what of the cost  
To the youth of tomorrow it's a heritage lost.*

© Michael Godfrey

## The Seasons

*When the brown leaves of Autumn  
are falling*

*And the swallows are far, far away  
With the sun in the West gently sinking  
At the close of a cool autumn day*

*Then we'll soon have short days of winter.  
When the darkness its presence will lend.  
But thank God we have something to  
cheer us.*

*For Christmas is just round the bend*

*The old year will soon be departing  
When the bells a new one will ring  
Then we'll look to the flowers and the  
green fields  
And the blessings that come with  
the Spring*

*Then each day we'll see getting longer  
With Easter now fast on its way  
When we'll renew the vows of our childhood  
When the church bells will call us to pray.*

*How pleasant the bright days of Summer  
When the birds and the bees hum and sing  
With the lark soaring high in the heavens  
And the swallows are all back again.*

*Each season has got its own beauty  
'Twas the great Lord that gave us them all  
Each one got its own brand of charm  
Be it Winter, Spring, Summer or Fall*

© Michael Godfrey

# It

*No secrets anymore  
Out with it  
Whatever it is  
Look at it  
Feel it  
Own it  
Share it  
Get on with it  
Twit.*

Micheál Smyth



# St. Joseph's Primary School

*by Marie Campbell*

**1996** was a busy year for the staff and pupils of St. Joseph's Primary School, Convent of Mercy in Ballyhaunis. The children were involved in a variety of activities including painting competitions, quizzes, games, swimming, music, speech and drama. Senior Infant pupils Maura Kelly, Gavin O'Connor and Kevin Moran were prize winners in the 'Sugradh' Colouring competition and a big congratulations to them on their success. Kevin Nestor won the Cadbury's Colouring Competition and received a lovely hamper of goodies for his prize. Congratulations, Kevin!

Sixth class students Karen Lilly, Laura Murphy and Caroline Noone qualified to compete at World Irish Dancing Championships and Caroline achieved 6th place in the world. For Speech and Drama Stephanie Cassol gained first class honours at primary level. Laura Freyne, Aisling Finan and Sarah Kelly gained first class honours at Grade 3 and Jane O'Connor gained first class honours at Grade 2. Well done, girls! Still in this area of Speech and Drama Elaine Cregg came third in the All Ireland Speech and Drama competition. A credit to you, Elaine.

On the games field the pupils did the school proud and achieved a tremendous standard in a number of events. The U-12 Soccer team went to the Community Games held in Castlebar and were only beaten in a penalty shoot-out by Bohola. The girls also reached the Mayo final in the Mini Sevens and played a fine game. Eilis Nevin came second in the 80m race at the Community Games in Mosney in September 1996 and she came third in the 100m this year when the competition was held in Claremorris.

The 4th, 5th, 6th class school choir sang in the Parish Church on the Sunday before Christmas and this was broadcast on the local radio



*Members of St. Joseph's N.S. Teaching Staff on the occasion of Mrs. Leonard's Retirement.*

*Front row L to R: Mrs. Connie Cosgrove, Sr. Teresa Fahy, (former Principal), Mrs. Teresa Leonard, Ms. Marie Campbell (Principal), Mrs. Sally Fahy (Vice-Principal). Back row L to R: Sr. Treasa, Mrs. Caitlín Jennings, Sr. Geraldine, Mrs. Ita Delaney, Mrs. Marie Byrne.*

station. It was a wonderful performance and a good time was had by all.

The Pioneer Total Abstinence Association organised a whole host of competitions and activities and the pupils of St. Joseph's took part in a large number of them. Frances Brogan won the Connaught P.T.A. colouring competition and received a lovely prize. Fifth class organised a play which they performed in Kiltimagh for the P.T.A. Drama competitions and they got through to the semi-finals. A tremendous achievement for such enthusiastic drama students. The 'Readoiri' was a big competition also hosted by the P.T.A. and Bernadette McNamara came second in this competition at regional level. Well done, Bernadette. The school's drama group made up of Catherine Nestor, Sinead Mulrennan, Sarah Buckley, Elaine Cregg, Máire O'Dwyer, Roisin Flanagan, Cindy Ward and Eilis Nevin got through to the Connaught Finals in the 'Readoiri' drama section and they gave an excellent performance on the day. Sarah Kelly, Frances Brogan, Nicola Nolan and Niall Richardson won the local P.T.A.

quiz held in the Parochial Hall.

The number of swimming awards this year was outstanding. Ruth Dillon-Leetch, Marie O'Dwyer, Aileen Burke, Sarah Kelly, Edel Kilcourse, Jane O'Connor, Aisling Finan and Nicola Nolan all achieved their Safety I award. Joanne Hoban, Venetia Powers and Karen Higgins achieved their Safety II and resuscitation awards. Swim 5 was awarded to Sarah Kelly, Edel Kilcourse, Jane O'Connor, Samantha Gildea, Nicola Nolan and Mary Freeley. Laura Freyne and Lorraine Fitzmorris were awarded with the Swim III Award so well done to all our swimmers.

The pupils of fifth and sixth class were also confirmed and our photo is evidence of the great day that was had by all. A big thank you to the teachers and parents for all their help and support which made this day the success it was. Colgate toothpaste organised a competition entitled "Design a Robot" and Catherine Nestor, Eilis Nevin, Sinead Mulrennan and Marie O'Dwyer got together and made a robot from toothpaste cartons. They received a merit in this All Ireland competition.

Two groups of pupils entered the St. Patrick's Day competition held in Kiltimagh to see which school group would be allowed to travel in the parade on a float. Group 1 included Sarah Buckley, Sinead Mulrennan, Eilis Nevin, Máire O'Dwyer, Catherine Nestor and Martina Cunnane. Group 2 made it through to the finals and was made up of Jane O'Connor, Mary Freeley, Janette Maguire, Laura Freyne, Emma Herr, Sindy Ward, Katie O'Connor, Roisin Flanagan, Ruth Dillon-Leetch and Leanne Murphy. A sincere well done to everyone who took the time and made the effort to get involved in this competition.

The school is delighted to welcome Japanese student Yuki to the school for the year and although she is finding it colder than in Japan Yuki is settling in well.

Mrs. Teresa Leonard retired from St. Joseph's Primary school and a special Mass and lunch was organised by the school to commemorate this very special occasion.

Congratulations to our Junior Infants teacher Mrs. Carol Horkan on the birth of her son Eoin and also to Mrs. Delaney the Resource Teacher who also had a baby boy. Mrs. Delaney has moved and now has a teaching post in Ballinrobe.

## Bartra

Reaching in to shore  
Broken waves leave their mark  
Snail-like on the sand  
Out again they roll  
To where they were conceived  
Recreating more  
We are born  
We live  
We die  
Our stamp  
On all  
We touch.

*Micheál Smyth*



*6th Class Confirmation 1997. Front row L to R; Mrs. Cosgrove, Karen Lilly, Claire Gallagher, Caroline Noone, Joanna Kirrane, Elizabeth Gallagher, Edel Moroney, Ms. Marie Campbell. Back row L to R: Fr. James O'Grady, CC, Lorraine Biesy, Bernadette McNamara, Frances Grogan, Anne-Marie McGowan, Archbishop Michael Neary, Cathriona Quinn, Lisa Carney, Laura Murphy, Fr. Joseph Cooney, PP.*



*5th Class Confirmation 1997. Front row L to R; Siobhan McNamara, Janette McGuire, Edel Kilcourse, Emma Herr, Mary Freeley, Sarah Kelly, Siobhan Quinn. Middle row: Fr. O'Grady, CC, Ciara McDonagh, Sarah O'Connor, Samantha Gildea, Jane O'Connor, Aisling Finan, Fr. Cooney, PP. Back row: Nicola Nolan, Laura Freyne, Carla Allen, Archbishop Michael Neary, Lorraine Fitzmaurice, Annie McDonagh.*



*Readóiri Winners: Back row L to R: Marie Campbell, Principal, Catherine Nestor, Bernadette McNamara, Roisin Flanagan and Sinead Mulrennan. Front row L to R: Elaine Cregg, Sarah Buckley, Cindy Warde, Maura O'Dwyer and Eilish Nevin.*



# Bill Mulligan - A Memory

*by Joe Kenny*

The cigarette was always there, the eternal fag, down to the last couple of inches and firmly fixed to the upper lip. And it stayed there even as he talked, firmly fixed, with his eyes narrowed, squinting against the smoke. That was just part of the trick. He held on to the cigarette with the upper lip and meanwhile he curled the lower lip and blew upwards to remove the ash which scattered in all directions, at no time having to remove the hands deep in the trousers pockets. And as he carried out this performance, he could still talk to you; tell you that he was twenty seven years teaching and never met such a crowd of dunderheads; ask you the gestation period of a cow (that shook me when I was ten years old), or explain the intricacies of the second Mary and Kate sum. Then, perhaps, having disposed of the cigarette, he would leave his place at the fire, if there was a fire, walk slowly with his erratic gait around the perimeter of the classroom, hands still deep in pockets, singing in his light tenor voice "I dream of Jeannie with the light brown hair."

This is the picture my mind conjures up when I think of Bill Mulligan who was Principal of Ballyhaunis Boys National School and taught me there from 1942 to 1945. I had encountered him earlier, however, four or five years earlier, on the occasion of a Feis or Aeríocht in the grounds of the Mercy Convent. I was wandering in the restricted area reserved for singers, performers and visiting dignitaries behind the railings and heading towards the stage when I met a grey, slightly-built man whom I had never seen before. He spoke to me, firmly turned me around and, in the nicest way possible, removed me from the reserved area. He didn't frighten me. He was very pleasant. But I knew he was a boss. Somebody who witnessed the confrontation told me the man was Bill, and that he was the Master in what we called the Master's School.

At that time boys in Ballyhaunis

up to First Communion attended the Convent. That was one reason why I had not seen Bill Mulligan before. Another was that he did not live in Ballyhaunis but in Coolnafarna where he had come to teach many years earlier before coming as Principal to the larger school in Ballyhaunis in 1932. Earlier, probably in the late 1920's, Bill had taught in Ballagh, Co. Roscommon.

William Joseph Mulligan, to give him his full name was born at Fairymount, Kilrooskey, Co. Roscommon, between Strokestown and Longford in the Slieve Bawn area. Now and again we picked up details of his background from comments he made in class. I gathered that his parents had originally been well-off, but his mother (born Ann Fahey) was widowed when Bill was young, his father being killed by a stallion he was bringing home from a fair. This changed Bill's life. It was one reason he turned to teaching, where he could qualify at an earlier age, from what he aspired to, i.e. veterinary, a long and expensive course. But no doubt his interest always lay in the world of livestock,



**Mary Norton (alias Monica Carr) RIP, well-known columnist with the *Farming Independent* and Bill Mulligan RIP, in July 1979.**

and we saw this, although it never diminished his dedication as a teacher. There was a lot about his background and history that we never knew. What happened to that leg that left it stiff? - an accident of rural life? a legacy of the War of Independence? We never knew.

We were aware, however, that he had been involved in 'The Troubles.' In fact, he had got caught up in Nationalist politics in his own locality as a young man and had a major role as Intelligence Officer with E. Company (Kilgeffin) Third Battalion South Roscommon Brigade, I.R.A. from 1919 to 1921. After the truce, he took the treaty side and joined the army of the new State. He served in Castlebar as Head Intelligence Officer of the Second Western Division under his pre-truce Roscommon comrade, Commandant General Frank Simons, reporting to David Neligan, who had been Collins' spy in Dublin Castle. He was on active service with the Forty Fourth Infantry Battalion in Westport.

His classes in school showed his nationalist leanings and, later on, he became President of Fine Gael in Ballyhaunis. But I only once heard him indicate in any way his stance on party politics. That was during the 1945 Presidential elections when General Sean MacEoin, a neighbour and comrade from 1921, was a candidate. Some nocturnal campaigners had been at work decorating the Friary wall between the main gates and where the Scout's Den is now with slogans urging people to vote for MacEoin. In no uncertain terms Bill told us in school that defacing walls in such a manner was wrong and he condemned it and the perpetrators; "But" he added "when it comes to my number one vote in the election, Seán MacEoin will get it." He avoided party politics in school, and he never spoke of his part in the 1920-22 period.

When I think back on my school-days with Bill, I have to remember the context of the times. The idea of an occasional cigarette in a class-

room today would be an enormity. At that time, when the non-smoking adult was the odd-man-out, and cigarettes were difficult to come by, to have a cigarette at all was a triumph. His innate good nature came out too in cold weather: if there was a fire he saw to it that everybody, especially poorer boys, got a share of it. Remember, boys walked to school from Bushisland, Holywell, Gurteen, Island, Annagh and Clagnagh.

His school curriculum was the norm for the time: Irish, English and Arithmetic, with a bit of Algebra in 7th class. Catechism and catechism notes featured largely especially when the periodic visits of the formidable school Manager, Chancellor Geoffrey Prendergast, were due, and then it was really Bill himself that was on trial. We did some Geography and History. The war years, when maps of the battle zones abounded, was an ideal setting for teaching and learning geography. Ironically the geography of England never featured.

History was a dry volume: "The Short Story of the Irish Race" by Seamus MacManus; part one - Brian Boru, Red Hugh's escape and the Big Battles was exciting; part two - all politics: Grattan, O'Connell and so on, although Davitt and the Land War was local and interesting. Still the history classes left little impression. Maybe Bill had a feeling that too much history could bring its own problems.

What I recall most is Bill's attention to the basics. Reading and handwriting he stressed, without great emphasis on formal grammar. We had poetry: Wordsworth's "The Reaper" - "Behold her, single in the field, yon solitary highland lass." Pearse's "The Fool", and "The Mother", "Lord, Thou art hard on Mothers." Bill laid great stress on the importance of mothers. In reading he aimed high. The senior classes read "A Tale of Two Cities" by Dickens: "It is a far, far better thing that I do now."

In arithmetic I will not try to explain the cow sums, or the Mary and Kate sums. Somebody near you should be able to do that. Suffice it to say that they were Bill's way of getting, for example, percentage profit or loss across to pupils in a way they might understand.

We had songs too: "Jimmy Mo Mhíle Stór", and "The Foggy Dew." Bill was a good singer and, when he had a boy that could sing, say Billy O'Shea, Tom Gavin or Bill Brennan, he encouraged him.

But it was outside of the formal curriculum that I learned most from Bill. He loved nature and pointed us towards trees and buds and wildlife. One of our books was "A Rural Reader for Irish Schools", - a gem of a book. If anybody has it now it could be a collector's item. Bill had travelled and read, and could talk of Rome and other places. He had seen things happen. He was in the Phoenix Park when McCormack sang at the Eucharistic Congress. But above all he delighted in recounting how his friend Major Dwyer on "Limerick Lace" ensured that Ireland won the Aga Khan Trophy for the first time. This was told round by round, fault by fault, point by point, until the climactic clear round that made history. Bill kept bees and loved explaining the craft. He was talking in the 1940s about silage and compost. He never laid much emphasis on football or showed great interest in it, but he preached physical fitness, good posture and had a great interest in athletics. He was a founder of the Boy Scouts in Ballyhaunis and was the first Scoutmaster.

Outside of school and his family, his main interest, his absorbing interest was the breeding and showing of Shorthorn cattle. To do this with success west of the Shannon at that time was an achievement. Carrick-on-Shannon Show each Spring was his big occasion and success there meant a lot to him and indeed to us. If names like "Thunderer" and "Son of Thunderer" did well, and they invariably did, life in school was very happy for a while. Bill later received recognition at national level for his contribution to the breeding of Shorthorns.

His life in school was not an easy one. It was wartime. Fuel was scarce and school heating was poor. He cycled to school, day in day out, in all kinds of weather and I do not think he missed many days. He taught for some years next door to an unsympathetic Inspector who had two sons in the school. He lost his first wife when his family was very

young. That must have been a severe blow, happily compensated for in his happy second marriage and third son.

Many of his pupils came from a deprived background and most were destined for the emigrant ship. Bill, who had taken part in the War of Independence, could not have been happy with what he saw around him - emigration, subsistence farming, lack of employment. He must have felt it deeply that the best brains in his school, and I sat with some of them, had no chance of further education or a life in Ireland. At least he did his best to give them the basics of education, to see that they could read and write and were numerate.

Bill Mulligan taught in Ballyhaunis for twenty years or so after I left the school. I still met him although, as years passed, I saw him seldom enough. Still, we never lost touch and I met him in his later years and was amazed at his sharpness. His sight was failing but he told me gleefully that very little escaped him. I didn't have to be told. When he died in September 1990 he was in his nineties.

At his funeral he was remembered by his pupils and his neighbours and his friends. He was honoured too by the sons of his former comrades from the South Roscommon Brigade. The attendance included Eamon Simons, son of Commandant General Frank Simons, and the oration was given by Eamon Duffy whose father Luke Duffy was Brigade Commandant and, at whose funeral almost twenty years earlier, Bill himself had given the oration.

I was not there and I cannot recall why. But I know I should have been. I owed him more than I could ever repay. So did a lot of people.

So for myself and for all of us, Bill, who got so much from you and gave so little back, I am now saying meekly but with respect and affection, we hope you are with Eoinín na n-Éan "Ins an Tír in a mbíonn sé in a shamhradh I gcónaí." Thanks Bill.

*(I would like to record the help I got with the above from Eamon Duffy of Ennis and my brother Ado Kenny of Strokestown. Eamon's father, Ado's father-in-law, Brigade Commandant Luke Duffy soldiered with Bill.)*



# Hopkins' Shop...

## *...The End of an Era*

**T**OM and Noreen Hopkins' was a veritable institution in the town of Ballyhaunis and, when they decided to call it a day earlier this year, few needed reminding that a part of the old town was slipping quietly into the pages of history.

Hopkins' shop was on 'our way' into town. It was home to shopper, talker, raconteur, storyteller, friends and strangers; only that no one felt much of a stranger after spending a few minutes inside the door of this shop.

Nowadays we have these big shops and corporate take-overs and all the choice in the world. And yet we are missing something that these superchains can never aspire to - that sense of community and belonging and being part of what we are.

Tom and Noreen epitomised the spirit of the family run shop. They opened their premises on the 14th October 1950. It was an exciting time and a great time to be from Mayo. The county pride was bursting at its seams as Mayo had won the All Ireland Final a few weeks earlier, a feat they were to repeat the following year.

Tom Hopkins had just married Noreen Waldron from a few doors up the street. Noreen certainly hadn't far to travel. The Hopkins name had first become associated with Ballyhaunis as far back as 1913 when Tommy's father, Daniel, came in from Langanboy to set up his own shop in Upper Main Street, and a good job he made of it too. This venture continued until the War Years when the shop

*by Michael Commins*

closed down.

From 1950 onwards, Hopkins' Shop quickly established a reputation for personal service and attention to customers. And they were always willing to try out new products. They were the first to sell briquettes in Ballyhaunis and the first to stock 'oven-ready' chickens, a big thing back in those years.

Hopkins' shop was also one of the very first in the town to sell bottled milk. At that time most people had their own milk supplies and some said there would never be a great demand for this product! Tom recalls that Dennis Mooney from up around Glenamaddy was the milk agent at the time. "There were eight or nine shops in the Upper Main Street part of the town back in those years. It was like another small town in itself. All the shops were doing nicely and we all had our own customers", recalls Tommy.

### **MORE THAN A SHOP**

But down through the years, Hopkins' shop was more than just a shop. It was a place where friends dropped by for a chat, where you got stuck in conversation with other customers, and where no one took a bit of notice of whether you wanted to buy something or not.

From early morning to late at night, Tom and Noreen heard the people of the district discuss the news of the day, the price of cattle and sheep, the triumphs and tragedies, the good news and bad news, the sporting exploits and politi-

cal upheavals, in fact the whole merry-go-round of human life.

Local man, Seamus Mulrennan, regrets the closing of this grand old shop: "We got so used to calling to Tommy and Noreen over the years that you would almost expect the car to slow down and pull in as you came down the hill. It was where we met friends and neighbours, where we chatted on the way to and from work. It was just a special place for so many people." And special it was is right. People heading on the morning train to Dublin would often take a newspaper or two from the bundle lying outside the unopened shop. No notice was taken because Noreen and Tom knew full well that their "customer" would be back in to pay for the paper that evening or sometime during the week. There was that sense of absolute trust between the lot of them.

You know it seems like a million miles removed from the crime wave of big cities and towns and perhaps it was, for here in this corner of East Mayo, Tom and Noreen cultivated and nurtured a business that was homely in the extreme. They knew their people and their people knew them.

They worked long and hard from 1950 to 1997. Forty-seven years of opening seven days a week, from 8.30 a.m. to as late as 11.30 p.m. at night on many occasions, often averaging ninety hours a week. They had a family of six daughters and they too had to bear a heavy cross when their lovely daughter Rita died at a young age.

Noreen recalls the many pupils from the school who would drop into their shop over the years: "Back in the sixties, girls from around Gorthaganny and other areas would often

arrive in Ballyhaunis soaked wet on their way to the Technical School. Many of them would leave their scarves and other clothing to dry out and we would have it ready for them in the evening. Many of them never forgot those small things."

And so it is that what appear to be 'small things' are often those that are remembered most fondly in the hearts of young people in later years. Not a Summer went by that many of those 'young' boys and girls, who left the country for lands beyond the waves, did not return and call around to say Hello to Tom and Noreen and share many happy memories of simpler times and happier times when the world was a lot more carefree and easy, when people still clung with sincerity to the firm belief in right and wrong. For them, Hopkins' shop was a link with the old town they knew, a kind of almost permanent institution binding them to their younger days and happy memories.

"There was a great decency in the people in those years", says Tom, "They lived within their means as far as possible. Sometimes they might avail of a bit of credit but they always paid it back. There was a great sense of duty and honor and trustworthiness about them. They always appreciated what one tried to do for them in times of need."

Today, Tom and Noreen can relax and look back at almost half a century of faithfully serving the people of Ballyhaunis and district and the many people who passed through the town on their way to Knock or other places. People who liked to do a bit of shopping, collect the few "messages", buy the papers and have a chat. "We always appreciated the custom of the people. The people were very good to us. It was our

pleasure to serve the public and we made many great friends during the years", say Tom and Noreen. "The business was still going well but it came to the situation that we were not able to manage it much longer. The hands of time kept moving on."

The curtains now drape the windows and there's a loneliness about the street. Tom and Noreen have called it a day. They deserve their rest too for theirs has been a huge contribution to the town of Ballyhaunis and to a way of life that had far more heart and soul than much of what passes as progress today.

Tom and Noreen, enjoy your retirement!

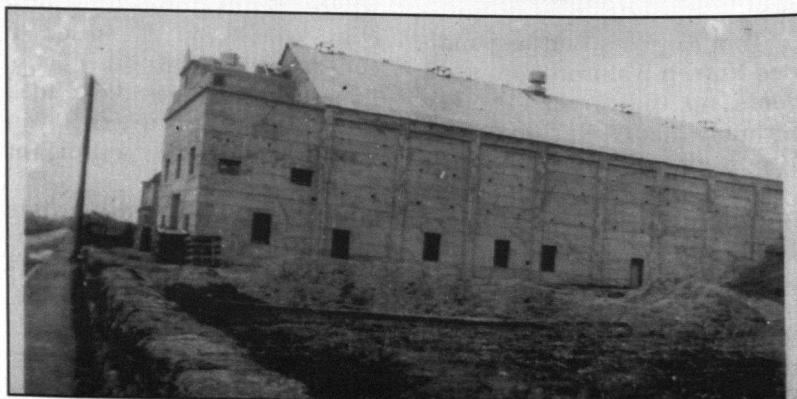


**Grand-children of Tom & Noreen Hopkins, Sinead Neilan & Ruth-Ann Cawley, busking at Ballina on Heritage Day, 1989**  
(see photograph on cover)



**Photo taken about 1944.**

L to R: Tony Boyle (Gallagher's); Maureen Carvey (Forde's); Bernie Cunnane (Tooreen); Teresa Folliard (Forde's) and Michael Feeney (Gallagher's). Bernie and Teresa subsequently married and have a family.



**The Star Cinema under construction in 1945, opened July of same year with a film entitled "Leave Her to Heaven".** Photo courtesy Tony Boyle



# Ballyhaunis Foróige Club

In the past year Ballyhaunis Foróige Club has been a hive of activity. The Club, which meets every Friday night from September to June, has had renewed interest with many new members.

Each year a new Committee is elected and members of last years particularly hard-working committee were:

**Chairperson:** Michelle Conlon;

**Secretary:** Bridann Halpin;

**Treasurers:** Lorraine Moroney,  
Stephen Carney;

**P.R.O.:** Maria Rochford.

The Club holds its weekly meetings in the Parochial Hall from 8-9p.m. each Friday. Our Club members were kept busy all year with organising or taking part in various activities such as: a cake and jumble sale, go-karting, bowling, horse-rid-

*by Aileen Gallagher PRO*

ing, swimming, talent shows and not forgetting our annual Kiddies Christmas Party which was, as always, a complete success. Our thanks again to the Credit Union for their help and support with that.

Other activities we organised were a sponsored wake-athon, a number of teenage discos, a church gate collection and a quiz for all other local Foróige Clubs to take part in. But probably the most worthwhile thing we did during the year was to sponsor a child, living in a village near 'Chernobyl', to visit Ireland for a few weeks during the summer.

To finish our Club year on a high note we all decided to go on a memorable overnight trip to an island in Clew Bay. This trip, I'm sure, shall not be forgotten by any of us for a

long time as not quite everything went according to plan (it's a long story!)

Of course we must definitely thank all our adults leaders for all the help and guidance we received from them in the past year. Because, without Fr. O'Grady, Michael Murphy and John Halpin, we would not have been able to take part in, or organise most of the things that we did. And already the Club's 1997-'98 season is underway with a newly elected committee:

**Chairperson:** Stephen Carney;

**Secretary:** Orla Mulrennan;

**Treasurers:** Shauna Walsh,  
Nathan Murphy;

**P.R.O.:** Aileen Gallagher.



*Pakastani and Syrian Children attending St. Mary's N.S. 1996 / '97*

Front row L to R: Syra Idress, Rya Charbatji. 2nd row: Tahir Idress, Farhan Afzal, Shahzad Jarid, Omar Charbatji, Aledin Charbatji, Adam Jumail, Housam Kezze. 3rd row: Nadeem Charbatji, Mohammed Charbatji, Fawaz Asilia, Rizwan Afzal, Arslan Afzal, Khaleeq Nazir, Zaheer Javid, Ammar Ahmad. Missing: Hazem Kezze.

# Bantracht Na Tuaithe - I.C.A.

by Veronica Freyne

UNDER the leadership of our President Mrs. Angela Waldron the Ballyhaunis Guild had a very successful and enjoyable year. Our Treasurer Mrs. Maura Fitzmaurice kept our finances in order with Confectionery and Craft Sales for which members worked hard to make delectable and unique items. Mrs. Ann Burke excelled with a glorious display of plants and shrubs.

During this term, members attended the Community Development Programme which



Veronica Freyne at Áras an Uachtarán with President Mary Robinson.

could be very beneficial to women and their families engaging in business ventures and requiring advice, financial backing, grants and planning. We are now very aware of the changing demographic trends in our Country and in the long term for the I.C.A.

Our Guild attended all Federation meetings in the County, winning competitions and prizes for bright ideas and craftwork. We had many pleasurable outings, our main trip being a tour of Achill Island from which we all returned refreshed and tranquil.

Our activities are indeed wide and varied. Mrs. Veronica Freyne completed the Dublin Women's Mini Marathon for a charitable cause. We also attended a Summer School in Mulranny which is truly the "Riviera of the West", outstanding with the beautiful Bay and surrounding scenery. We enjoyed fabric painting and embroidery. An enjoyable time was had at the Ballina Craft Workshop, where members were introduced to Decoupage, Celtic embroidery, Flower Arranging & Crochet.

Members attended courses in Floristry, Irish Traditional Crochet and Quilting in our wonderful Adult Education College, "An Grianan", in Co. Louth, by the sea. Having such a varied agenda we are happy to report an increase in membership. We realise that we keep on working for the benefit of our Community and our chosen charity "The Hospice Movement."

We wish to thank all our valued Friends, Supporters and Sponsors and we invite other ladies to join us at our meetings on the second Thursday of each month at 8 p.m. in the Parochial Hall. We extend good wishes for a joyful and healthy 1998 to you all with our gratitude for such support.

**President:**

Mrs. Angela Waldron;

**Vice-President:**

Mrs. Mary Donnelly;

**Hon Secretary:**

Mrs. Veronica Freyne;

**Treasurer:**

Mrs. Maura Fitzmaurice;

**P.R.O.:**

Mrs. Catherine Carney;

**Hon. Member:**

Mrs. Maria Cribbin.



by Margaret Owens,  
P.R.O.

THE Ballyhaunis Fianna Fáil Comhairle Ceantair had a very busy year. Many of our members attended the Árd Fheis in April which had special significance as it was the first Árd Fheis under our new leader Bertie Ahern T.D., now our Taoiseach. John O'Dwyer was selected as Constituency Delegate at the Árd Fheis.

Indeed John had a very busy summer as he was Director of Elections

for the General Election campaign, which was a daunting task as the New Constituency encompassed the whole county. Every member of the Comhairle Ceantair put in a big effort during the election campaign but, regrettably, our T.D. of twenty years, P.J. Morley, lost his seat. This was a big disappointment to his supporters.

In November the Minister for Environment and Local Government, Noel

Dempsey T.D. made a presentation to P.J. at a function in Knock in recognition of all he had done for the area over the years and wished him well in his retirement.

The highlight of the year was the Government candidate, Mary McAleese's visit to Ballyhaunis and Knock during the Presidential election, and that the county played a major part in electing her as the eighth President of Ireland.





*Chernobyl Children arriving at Knock International Airport.*

# **East Meets West - Russians Invade Knock**

**O**n Thursday 19th June a Russian plane carrying sixty children from Minsk landed at Knock Airport. Fifty children travelled to Donegal and ten spent the month with host families in and around the Ballyhaunis area. The children were aged between eight and thirteen years and stayed for two weeks, each with two different families.

The children were brought through Mr. Ernan Meehan, Donegal A.B.C. (Aid for Belarussian Children).

A month's holiday in a clean environment can prolong a child's life by one year. Due to the explosion of the nuclear reactor in Chernobyl, which spewed tons of radioactive uranium into

*by Kay Buckley (Secretary)*

the atmosphere, Belarusse was exposed to 70% of the fallout. Children were most vulnerable to the radiation and, by 1993, there was a 90% increase in childhood cancers and leukemia along with a frightening increase in thyroid cancer. Babies born after the disaster were retarded and deformities are very common.

This is the second year that Ballyhaunis has hosted children from Chernobyl. In 1995, ten children arrived into Shannon from Belarusse.

The people of Ballyhaunis and the surrounding areas must be congratulated for their wonderful response to the fundrais-

ing and, in particular, to the Companies and Clubs who sponsored the flights for the ten children and their interpreter, Nadia. It is through their generosity that we hope to be able to bring another ten children in 1998.

A special thanks to all the people who generously donated items for raffles, cake sales etc., and who gave their premises free of charge for any functions held on their behalf.

Before their departure, a special Folk Mass was celebrated by Fr. James O'Grady in the Parish Church for the children, their host families and everybody involved.

A Farewell Party was organised in "The Horseshoe Inn" and a very enjoyable day was had by the children, their sponsors and their host families.

Anybody interested in hosting children in 1998 or becoming involved in any way with fundraising etc., should contact any member of the Committee.

# Cantairí Béal Átha hAmhnais

The Choir continues to flourish and has welcomed several new faces to its midst over the past few months.

This year marked a new beginning within the choir as the female voice section branched out on their own. This involved the recruitment of some new female members. The first outing for the ladies was the Sligo International Choral Festival. They certainly left their mark when they took 3rd place in an International Equal Voice Competition. Well done, ladies!

One might well ask do we sing at functions other than Choral Festivals? The answer is, of course, Yes! 1996 was a very active year for the Choir on this frontier. They were the host Choir at a concert staged in "King House", Boyle, organised by the Social Services Committee, Castlerea. They also staged a concert in the Parochial Hall, Ballyhaunis in December 1996 in aid of the Cat Scan Unit Appeal. On this occasion the amount of £1,000 was raised.

Cantairí were also the recipients of a very special invitation during 1997 from the organising committee for the All Ireland Drama Finals being held in Claremorris. They drew up a very entertaining programme specially for the occasion. The Guest of Honour, Mrs. Jean Kennedy Smith, American Ambassador to Ireland, commended the Choir on their performance.

## **The Cork Choral Festival**

The Cork Choral Festival was certainly the highlight of the calendar year for 1996/97. It was our first time to commission a new piece of music. Miss Maria Judge, Coolnaha, Ballyhaunis, composed a very beautiful piece of music for the Choir titled "Faoiseamh a Gheobhadsa" based on a poem by Mairtín O'Direáin. Maria is at present studying for her Masters

*by Nuala Fitzgerald*

Qualification in U.C.C. but took time out from her studies to work with the Choir.

The O'Riada Cup was awarded to Maria for her new work and the Choir was also awarded 1st Prize for the performance. It is worth noting that this prestigious cup had not been awarded for the previous three years as the standard had not been attained.

The Choir welcomed the challenge to commission and would like to congratulate Maria on her beautiful, harmony rich composition. The O'Riada Cup was not the only accolade the Choir received during the Cork Choral Festival. On this occasion, once again, the Female Voice Section left its mark. It was awarded 2nd prize in their competition. This was particularly appropriate as it was their second competitive performance. They look forward to taking a first place on their next outing.

The performance of music to a

high standard is a very demanding objective for the Cantairí Béal Átha hAmhnais. Should you feel that you would like to be a part of this group please contact one of the following members:

## **Chairperson:**

Mr. Luke Murray, Hazelhill

## **Secretary:**

Mrs. Laura Brogan, Doctors Road

## **Treasurer:**

Nuala Fitzgerald, Bridge Street

## **Choral Director:**

Mrs. Pauline McGarry, Devlis

Any of the above members would welcome the opportunity to answer any questions that you may have concerning the group and its activities.

We would like to take this opportunity to offer our sympathy to Mrs. Mary Waldron and her family upon the death of Noel Waldron. Noel was a member of "Cantairí" since its inception and we all miss his support and kindness very much.



*Sinéad Lunden, Knock Road, Ballyhaunis, the 1997 'Roscommon Rose' in the Rose of Tralee Competition, which was held in Ballinlough, Co. Roscommon.*



## Parking Ticket

While roving reporters from the Annagh Magazine were carrying out research in Abbey Street late one evening, Paddy Delaney noticed two people acting in a most suspicious manner in the vicinity of the reporters' parked car. As it transpired, no sinister intentions were involved. The secretive pair included a man from Devlis and a person unknown. They were attaching the "parking ticket" introduced here to the vehicle.

HAVE YE  
ANY HOME  
TO GO TOO.  
SHAM ON YE.  
SU FF

We believe that this is the first time ever such a document was attached to a car parked in Abbey Street or anywhere else in the World. Paddy Delaney watched from the shadows as history was made. Despite defects in spelling, grammar and punctuation the document clearly conveys the message that the paparazzi are unwelcome in Abbey Street.

*pictured right >:*

**Legion of Mary Pilgrimage to  
Lough Derg - May 1997.**

Mary Hopkins, Agnes Heaney,  
Liz Carney, Mary McBride  
and Brigid McLoughlin.

# Legion of Mary

*by Agnes Heaney*

THE LEGION OF MARY continues to operate in the parish. We meet every Wednesday night at 8 o'clock, in the Parochial Hall. We say the Rosary, have some spiritual readings, report on our work and receive our work allocation for the following week. Our main works are visiting people in their homes especially the sick, the lonely and the bereaved. We visit nursing homes and hospitals and promote the Rosary through the Pilgrim Virgin which is taken to many homes each year. This year we organised a day pilgrimage to Lough Derg. We also had our annual outing to Sligo.

We recruit auxiliary members. The auxiliaries are the praying force behind the Legion and their prayers help legionaries all over the world. Auxiliaries say the rosary every day and the prayers on the leaflet known as the Tessera. The main prayer on the Tessera is the Catena which is our lady's prayer - the Magnificat. The Catena, meaning "chain", is a symbol of the unity that exists between all the branches throughout the world. Each branch is a link in the chain.

Few people realise that legionaries were imprisoned in China during the regime of the Communists. The Legion was introduced into China by Fr. Aidan McGrath. As the priests and nuns were expelled it was felt that the Legion of Mary would help the Catholic Church survive. But the

Communists saw the Legion of Mary as a great threat to them so they had many legionaries executed and many imprisoned - even Juniors in their early teens. It is believed that some are still in prison and we know of one lady who was released a few years ago. She made a visit to Legion headquarters in Dublin and told her story. Fr. Aidan McGrath was himself imprisoned and he believed that it was the prayers of Auxiliaries all over the world that helped him in his ordeal. He was later released and, happily, is still involved in the Legion even though he is in his nineties. I mention this story to let Auxiliaries know the importance of their prayers and the far reaching effect they have.

Here in Ballyhaunis we are only eleven members out of two million active, and several million auxiliaries, throughout the world. We would like to thank all the people who have received us into their homes and have made us welcome.

**Officers: (Senior Praesidium):** Spiritual Director: Fr. O'Grady; President: Agnes Heaney; Vice President: Freddie O'Brien; Secretary: Helen Hoban; Treasurer: Noreen Brennan.

**Officers (Junior Praesidium):** President: Helen Hoban; Vice President: Christopher O'Neill; Secretary: Tara Murphy; Treasurer: Leanne Murphy.



# 1887-1997: The Years Between

**O**n the morning I was born at our home in Upper Main Street, our good neighbour Dr. Eamon announced to my grandmother that the name over the door could remain in place for another generation, at least.

T. M. Caulfield (Tommy Mick) had bought the premises in 1896 and from there ran his egg exporting business until his death in 1927, aged 57 years. The business was carried on by his widow Ellen and family. In time, the eldest son Michael branched out on his own and ultimately my father Vincent, glad to bid farewell to St. Nathy's College, took over at the helm.

By the time I was old enough to accompany my father, the egg collecting side of the business had gone into a serious and irreversible decline. In a few short years we were actually selling eggs, milk and vegetables. In those far-off days of the 1960's the weekly visit of the eggler was eagerly anticipated. Local births, deaths, and marriages were announced and Mayo's performance of the pervious Sunday was analysed. Few people had cars and there were not many televisions or telephones. Many's the phone message I relayed to the A.I. office in Claremorris. In my childish innocence repeating exactly the farmer's observations and specifications: "noticed yesterday; first time; ....."

Most of the kids I grew up went out of the country, but Micheál and Eamon Murren were among the more regular and reliable; our cousin, Tom Moran was a frequent helper also. But his interest, then and now, was chiefly in driving.

I remember a time when items like tea and sugar had to be weighed up and the biggest selling cigarettes were Woodbines and Sweet Aftons. Rites of passage

*by Tommy Caulfield*

were there to be observed too: aged about ten, I struggled up Mrs. "Yank" Lyons' (Ballinacostello) pathway carrying my first half cwt. of clarendo. Carrying a full cwt. was another story and I could only look on in admiration as men and women made light of my impossible target.

Many things have changed since my childhood. Nowadays there's at least one car outside most doors, prompt delivery of groceries is just a phone call away, and MWR keeps all informed of local goings-on. The eggler belongs to the past, his usefulness

outrun, his role obsolete, his contribution to life in the Ballyhaunis area a faint and distant memory.

On Friday, October 30th, 1981, my father accompanied by my mother Kathleen, went "out the country" for the last time. The following day he died in hospital in Galway, aged just 63 years.

The family business is now in the safe hands of my youngest brother Séamus, himself a marketing graduate who served his time with Sainsbury's in London. But I'll bet his best-learned skills in serving the public were received from his Dad while meandering round the roads of Knock, Began and Aughamore.

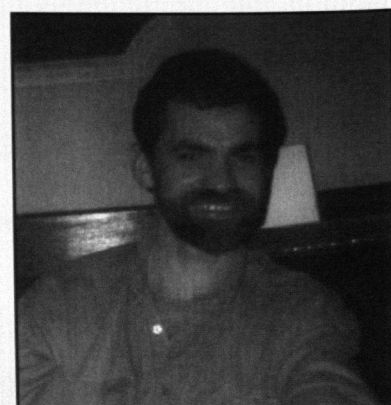
## Ballyhaunis Bridge Club

Ballyhaunis Bridge Club continues each Tuesday night in Alberto's Night Club at 8 p.m. and each Thursday night in the Central Hotel at 8 p.m. The A.G.M. was held in May. The following officers were elected: President: Mr. Donal Geraghty; Vice-President: Mrs. Kay Higgins; Secretary: Mrs. Jean Gallagher; Treasurer: Mrs. Leona Connery; Public Relations Officer: Mrs. Justina Lyons. The incoming committee was elected as follows: Mrs. Angela Joyce, Mrs. Kathleen Cribbin, Mrs. Peggy Henry and Mr. Martin Winston.

*by Jean Gallagher*

Tournament Directors are: Mr. Donal Geraghty, Mrs. Marina Coyne and Mrs. Mary Walshe. The handicap committee are: Mrs. Angela Joyce, Mrs. Corine Flatley, Mrs. Jane Gallagher and Mr. Donal Geraghty. A number of competitions were held during the past year including Simultaneous Pairs, the Murphy Cup,

Newsround Prize, The Bankers' Prize, Christmas and Easter prizes, and monthly prizes. The President's Prize was held in April and the winners of this competition were Mrs. Mary Morley and Mrs. Nuala Denny. A charity Bridge Drive was held for St. Patrick's Church window restoration fund. This was a great success. The Bridge Club takes this opportunity to thank all the sponsors in the past year and look forward to their continued sponsorship for the future. The Bridge Club ended the season in May with dinner and prizes for all.



**Donal Geraghty, Ballindine  
- President Ballyhaunis Bridge Club**



## Ballyhaunis Parish Choir

*by Nuala Fitzgerald*

THE PARISH CHOIR is in existence in Ballyhaunis for many decades, having come down through the hands of Mrs. Dill Hughes, Rev. Fr. Francis McMyler, Mr. Noel Henry and currently rests in the very capable hands of Mrs. Anna Butler.

Mrs. Butler devotes a great amount of time and dedication to the development of the Choir and the sound it produces. She conducts a practice once weekly on Monday nights in the Parochial Hall at 8 p.m. All are welcome. It is at these practices that the great camaraderie and teamwork comes to the fore. The practices are conducted in a work oriented fashion. However, they certainly have lots of lighter moments.

New members are in constant demand, in order that new music can be experimented with. 1997 was a very rewarding year for the Choir. A New Mass, Celtic in style, rich in harmony was learned and proudly performed at Sunday Mass.

1997 was however also marked forever in all our minds as the year in which we lost our second "full back", as our back row of men in the Choir are fondly known. Noel Waldron was taken suddenly from our midst and a great void has been left behind. Noel had always been there for us all with his kind, supporting ways and we miss him so. We express our deepest sympathies to his wife Mary and his sons, James, Paul and Martin.

## A Memory of Father

*by Bill Naughton*

A fairly strong memory I have of my father is of him washing his face under the kitchen tap. This was not when he had his "pit dust" on, as he and my mother called it, but of a Saturday evening or some such special moment, after his sleep, when he would have had two or three pints of beer at lunch hour. His wet unsoaped hands would rub his face noisily for quite a time, but in between he would blow through them and through the water. It was a rather unusual performance for him, for he was a dainty man, instantly upset by noises or smells, although I suppose the sound of his hard hands on his face wasn't as objectionable as I then felt it to be. Oddly enough, he didn't have large hands, they were rather small compared with other men's but they were miner's hands, the sort of hands I saw a great number of when I was a boy, but which seem somewhat rare in these days. Then he would come into the front room, the front kitchen that is, wiping his face with a towel, and he would say in his loud voice, always seeming to stare hard at me as he did so: "That bloody English soap would skin the hide of a flamin' horse. Your Uncle William told me that and God knows it was true for him."

It is strange to think that all through my boyhood years and on until youth, when I escaped into marriage at nineteen, he always appeared to bring up in me - except for the many though brief-lived occasions when he was drunk - a feeling of fear, distaste and dislike. I realise now that it was only his nervous state from the hard, exhausting work in the mine, and from the family always living at such close quarters. And yet it is odd to think that never a night passed up to the age of fifteen, but I wouldn't kiss his lips and feel his stubbly chin when he was going off to the pit at night. And so it was, I imagine, that though we disliked each other, we each obeyed the tradition of a father loving his son and a son his father, and perhaps by trying we kept something alive, for when he was an old man in his seventies, and I in my late thirties and early forties, I grew very fond of him, and he of me - so it seemed.

I have never seen any other man wash like that since, but I find on certain afternoons, if I have had a drink at lunch-hour, and a sleep after, I will rise and go to the tap, and rub my face with my hands, and as I do it, avoiding the use of soap, I get the memory of my father's words come back:

*"That bloody English soap would skin the hide from a flamin' horse....."*



*Paddy Mulligan, Barrack St. R.I.P. at Urlaur Abbey 1968*

# THE BALL IN BOLLURE

*Martin Eagney*

There is a dear little village that we all call Bollure  
Where dances and raffles were many I'm sure  
But not one spree ever could yet come in sight  
To the Ball that was held there on last Wednesday night

About half past seven we set out for the spree  
Myself and John Finn we sang on cheerfully  
When we went to the Ball we took seats round about  
Waiting for the arrival of Murphy's strong stout

We were not long seated when verse came in smart  
And nigh came the noise of Sam Lyons' ass cart  
Three barrels of porter was quickly rolled in  
And a tap stuck in one by that brave Peter Finn

The company was silent for a short little while  
But soon Peter Finn made them all wear a smile  
With the tap in his hand boys he made no delay  
And soon Murphy's Porter come round in a tray

The ladies marched in and no doubt they were toffed  
They all took their seats right under the loft  
The time that Bid Grealy was shouting for tea  
"There's no cook in the loft" Bea Kenny did say

The butlers were round till their feet got right sore  
But still the young fellows were shouting for more  
Some with their collars hung down by their sides  
And more fell asleep in the arms of their brides

In the mist of my thoughts I espied a sweet face  
With cheeks like the roses and pure golden hair  
With my hand round her neck I was courting so fine  
When attached by Jim Cruise like a tiger or lion

He said "let her go I will not see her bound  
Or when you are going home you will fall to the ground"  
But Margaret spoke up and this was her reply  
"Myself and my punch will be married by and by"

Jim then calmed down and he said "court away  
But remember when you see the first sight of day  
Give me up that woman in the very best or cheer  
And don't dare leave your foot over in Bolleshire"

Between dancing and courting I lost all my power  
And fell off to sleep for over an hour  
While I was sleeping I dreamt I saw Cruise  
Hunting all the dogs away from Muldoon's goose

When I woke from my slumber I could hear no talk  
All was gone home that was able to walk  
I asked for a drink for I felt very dry  
But the taps were pulled out and the barrels ran dry

Good luck to Mrs. Dillon, Bridget Grogan and Kate  
They could stop at home for it was not so late  
For on poor Onnie Greally the hair it did stand  
When she saw Bridget coming with the flail in her hand

Tom Eagney was singing without cap or hat  
With his sight almost scattered and his talk gone right flat  
Whatever revenge he had in for his head  
He used it like a hammer on Michael Rourke's bed

Myself and my comrades came safe from Bollure  
We were not long landed when we sent for a cure  
We needed no Doctor for McHugh he knows all  
And the Physic to give the boys after the Ball

Our fine pot of turnips was consumed that same day  
Potatoes went down sweet besides eggs and tea  
Not to mention Beef or otherwise Pork  
Or the two caps of Porter we gave Maria O'Rourke

Note: Bollure, or Baile Úr, is one of the villages in the townland of Annagh. The "Ball" took place around 100 years ago.

*The words of this song were sent to the Committee by Tom Geraghty of Manchester, who found them amongst the effects of his uncle, the late Johnny Walsh, Annagh.*



# The Great Famine

## Introduction

The 150th Anniversary of the Great Famine has initiated much study of those terrible years of hunger, disease, death and emigration. A lot has been written and said in recent years about the Great Famine in Ireland which lasted, give-or-take, from 1845 to 1850. Famines, of different degrees of severity and affecting different localities, were not uncommon in Ireland at any time; however, the scale of the devastation wrought during the period 1845-50 was such that it soon came to be called the "Great Famine." This year marks the 150th anniversary of the worst year of the Famine - 'Black '47, as it came to be known.

The memory of "Black '47", and the Great Famine, had been successfully repressed for many years and, only in school history courses, or on rare occasions in conversation, was it discussed, and then usually just as a reference point in time. Many of those who survived through those years wanted to put its painful memories behind them and to get on with rebuilding their lives as best they could. It is almost as if there was a conspiracy to forget the Great Famine once the country started to recover in the 1850s. In this way, relatively little information about the Famine years was passed on to the next generation and, in our own time, only a few stories relating to this period survive. To get an insight into the hardship of those times, one has to depend largely on written sources

Since this recent, renewed interest in the history of the Great Famine, old historical works have been re-appraised, new evidence has been uncovered and new ways have been used to interpret the available source material. All of this has led to a heightened awareness of those terrible times amongst all of us.

*by Paul Waldron*

## The Causes

The cause of the Great Famine can be boiled down to three related factors: over-population, a dependence on the potato as the staple food item and, the Blight.

Most of Ireland had a teeming population in the 1830s and early 1840s, and the Ballyhaunis area was no exception. While the population of the town was quite small, the number of people living in the surrounding country was at its greatest ever. There were houses all over the place: little cabins by the roadside and in corners where there was never a house to be seen within current living memory; groups of houses huddled together where today only one or two houses or ruins stand. There were some fairly well-to-do farmers, but the bulk of the population comprised smallholders, labourers and cottiers.

The potato took-over from oatmeal as the staple article of diet of the peasant Irish in the early to mid seventeenth century. Its high nutritional value meant that people could subsist on it alone, with very little else to supplement their diet. The amount of ground needed to grow enough potatoes for a family for a year was very small, compared with other food crops, and people were happy enough

growing just enough to feed them for the year. There was not much point having twenty or thirty acres when you could grow all your food (potatoes) and a rent crop (grain) for a year on five acres. As families grew to maturity, parents divided their holdings with their children, thus allowing them to be independent, get married, rear families etc. In turn these children would cater for their families as best they could in the same way, and as far as the acreage of their land would allow. Over a number of generations some fair-sized holdings and farms were reduced to complicated patchworks of small, scattered holdings.

The nutritional goodness of the potato made people healthier and lowered the infant mortality rate; there were thus more people living long enough to marry and have families of their own; the land-holding situation allowed for places to be divided easily, emigration was only beginning to become widespread, people were content with enough



*A sad reminder of Black '47. The stone marking the grave of a woman who died in Cave during the Famine.*

land and so holdings got smaller and smaller.

The Great Famine, therefore was a disaster waiting to happen - A growing population putting pressure on a limited amount of available land; virtual dependency on a single food-crop; no properly developed structures to deal with a large-scale food-shortage or health crisis. As one eminent historian put it: "The situation in Ireland in the 1840s was one of a teeming population of over 8 million living on the brink of disaster."

That disaster came in the mild, moist Autumn of 1845 when a new fungus disease -Blight - blew over from the Continent and England and hit the Irish potato crop, spreading with a fearful rapidity from South to North and West. Potato stalks crumpled and withered, while the crop beneath the ground rotted and was rendered unpalatable. The blight appeared again in 1846, and again in 1847, but not as severely. It returned in a big way again in 1848 and 1849.

The Poor Law system, and other schemes operated by Government or private groups could not cope with the devastation wrought as the single-crop dependent Irish population was left without its staple food item, for five years in a row. Starvation and disease spread throughout the country leaving devastation and sorrow in their wake.

### Fr. Coyne's Letters

In 1848, three years after the Blight first appeared, Fr. Eugene Coyne, Parish Priest of Annagh received £15 to alleviate distress in this parish from the Relief Committee set up by Dr. Murray, then Archbishop of Dublin. On the 17th of April 1848 he wrote to Fr. Synnott, one of this committee to thank him for their contribution. Fr. Coyne stated:

*"My parishioners get neither indoor nor outdoor relief as Castlereagh workhouse was filled with people adjoining that town. The outdoor relief is irregular; if the central committee could be got to believe that hundreds*

*will die of starvation unless quickly relieved, I am sure they would send funds, if any remain. I think this parish is the worst off of any; my people have no landlords nor anyone to do anything for them except myself. The lands are in chancery and the landlords in some safe hiding place. On my visits I find the people lying on their beds with hunger, fever and dysentery - the result of unwholesome food. If you were to see my house surrounded every day with starving countenances you would pity me and them."*

Early in 1849 Fr. Coyne received a further £10 from this Relief Committee to help his starving and diseased parishioners. On the 9th of March 1849 Fr. Coyne wrote to Dr. Murray thanking him and added:

*"I can assure you that at no period of the distress was it required more than at the present time, when the poor landholders, who struggled this time back, are now in a most wretched state without food or seed and still they are not giving up their land lest (as they say) they would never have their own fireside again: I am certain that more in my parish will die of starvation from this time to the next harvest than died in the last three years. A poor woman was found dead the other day by the ditch at Culnacleda in my parish, of starvation. If outdoor relief is not immediately given to the landholders and able bodied, the consequences, I fear, will be awful." 9th Mar. 1849*

(A sad postscript to these efforts by our then Parish Priest is that, fifteen years later, 1866, while Parish Priest in Aghamore, he died of a famine disease - Cholera.)

### Effect on Local Population

The population of Ireland in 1846 was probably around 8.2 million. While the numbers of those who died or emigrated during the Great Famine has been the subject of much study, the traditional figures of 2 million deaths and 2 million who emigrated are probably not far from the mark.

The population of the old parish of Annagh (including the Logboy, Tulrahan area) fell from 7904 to 6105, a loss of 1799 people, or a drop

in the pre-famine population of 23%, almost a quarter. This is in keeping with the generally accepted notion the population of Mayo decreased by about a quarter during the Great Famine. It is impossible to say how many died, and how many emigrated, but it is safe to say that the division was near enough half-and-half (as it was with the population of the country as a whole), leaving a death toll of approximately 900, possibly as much as 1000, for the parish of Annagh.

The townland of Tooraree was then a wholly rural locality, where subsistence agriculture and labouring were the dominant means of livelihood. In 1841 there were 69 occupied houses here, with a total population of 343 people. By 1851, the number of houses had fallen by 33 to 36, and the population had fallen to 168 people. In other words, 175 people died in, or emigrated from Tooraree in the ten year period in which the Great Famine occurred. Other badly affected townlands in the parish included Grallagh where 22 houses were emptied and the population fell from 466 to 326; Largan (near Tulrahan) where the number of houses fell from 24 to six; Hazelhill where 16 houses were emptied and the population fell from 263 to 165. Cloontumper, which saw 12 emptied; Killunagher, Leo and Levallyroe who lost 11 households each. Nearly every other townland had at least one house less in 1851 than in 1841.

### A Tragic Tale

About a mile from Ballyhaunis, on the Tooreen road, a large flat stone can be seen on the hillside. In the 1920s a local historian recounted the story behind this stone in the "Connaught Telegraph":

*"This marks the grave of a woman who died from cholera, when that terrible epidemic followed as a sequel to the devastating famine. The name of the woman whose remains lie on the lonely hill-side, has not been ascertained. Probably she was travelling from one part of the country to another. In an outhouse she fell ill and was attended by her son. When she died he con-*



structed for her a rough coffin, and strapping it to his back and shoulders with straw ropes, managed to carry his terrible burden alone to a sand-pit on the hill-side. Covering up the coffin as best he could, he placed this large stone on the spot, and went his way. It was beneath the thorn tree, at the gable of a nearby house, the melancholy task of coffining the mother was carried out by the devoted son. It was there he strapped the coffin to his back; after a struggle he succeeded in getting it onto the hill-side where it faces the rising sun, an unknown grave of an unknown and forgotten woman."

"Now lest there may be any suspicion of heartlessness on the part of the locality, we must remember that cholera was a terrible scourge at the time, and people fled from infection for their lives. When a person died from the disease, the victim was buried as quickly and quietly as possible in the most convenient spot. And so it happened that many at that time were interred in open fields and hill-sides. Funerals were out of the question."

"About this time a man from the same village where this woman died went to Dublin in connection with a lawsuit, and on his way home was struck down by the dreaded disease. He died and was buried in some unknown spot near Kinnegad. None of his friends had ever the sad consolation of being able to pray over his grave. This flagstone on the hillside, is a melancholy reminder of the terrible conditions that existed in our country, in the days following the Famine"

## Conclusion

It is thought-provoking to consider the following: at the time of the Great Famine, there were just two consecrated burial grounds in the old parish of Annagh - The Augustinian Abbey and Tulrahan. Between these two, there are only eleven inscribed gravestones commemorating people who died between 1845 and 1850, and in all these cases, it can be proven that these people came from comfortable, strong farming backgrounds, and may not have all died as a result of starvation or disease.

Who is to say how many hundred, if not thousands of famine victims

from this parish lie in unmarked graves in and around these burial grounds, in Lisheens or ancient burial grounds, in the corners of fields or in old sandpits, like the woman mentioned above?

Many hundreds had to walk, or be carried, from this parish the twelve miles to the Work House in Castlereagh, many probably died on the way and were buried near where they fell, or, if they gained admittance to the Work house, they died there and were buried in unmarked graves in the grounds.

During the Great Famine, between the years 1845 and 1850, as many as 1000 people, and probably many more, died in the parish of Annagh. Over 1000 people whose names have been almost totally forgotten. Most of us cannot even name someone who died during the Great Famine, yet it is true that most of us lost family members to starvation and disease at that time.

It is fitting that we remember them. We remember their terrible suffering, the agonising pain of seeing one family member after another slowly dying of starvation; the awful pain of knowing that the same fate awaited them because there was no food nor proper medical care.

We remember them and we pray that they now enjoy in Heaven the happiness denied to them on Earth.  
*May They Rest in Peace.*

## Townlands of Annagh and Began parishes

### Number of houses emptied between 1841 and 1851

Tooraree 33; Grallagh 22; Largan (Tulrahan) 18; Hazelhill 16; Cloontumper 12; Killunagher, Leo and Levallyroe 11 each; Culnacledha, Lurgan (Brickens), Island and Lisduff 9 each; Carrowmore West, Brickeens, Brackloon East, Kiltybo, Knockaunacat, Farnaun and Larganboy West 8 each; Aderg, Forthill, Corraun, Bargariff, Coolnafarna, Lissaniska, Kildarra and Ballykilleen 7 each; Carrowkeel East, Woodpark, Tulrohaun, Carrickacat, Feamore and Larganboy East 6 each; Began, Bellaveel, Cloonbullig, Gorteenmore, Tonreege, Liscluman and Lecarrow 5 each; Knockanarra, Kilknock,

Tawnagh, Lassanny, Cloonbulban, Bunnadober, Ballyglass Lower, Gortnageeragh, Reask and Cossallagh 4 each; Holywell Lower, Drum (Brickeens), Ballybeg, Skeaghard, Loughanboy, Derrynacon, Derrylea, Mountain, Cloonbookeighter, Garraun (Tullaghaun), Abbeyquarter, Togher, Drumaderry, Belesker, Cuilbeg, Brackloon West (Bekan) and Keebagh 3 each; Holywell Upper, Ballinphuill, Cherryfield, Drumbaun, Cloonacurry, Tullaghaun, Gorteenbeg, Derrintogher, Carrowreagh, Colloughra, Cave, Cullentrath, Carrowbeg, Moneymore, Cloonlara, Curries, Turlough, Cartron (Tulrahan), Knockroe and Gorteen, 2; Ballynastockagh, Moat, Ballybaun, Treanrevagh (Brickeens), Ballinvilla Demesne, Pattenspark, Churchpark, Lisbaun West, Classaghroe, Brackloon North, Knockbrack, Ballyglass Middle, Bracklagh, Lugboy Demesne, Cottage, Bohograwer and Cuiltycreaghan 1 each

### Townlands where there was change in number of houses:

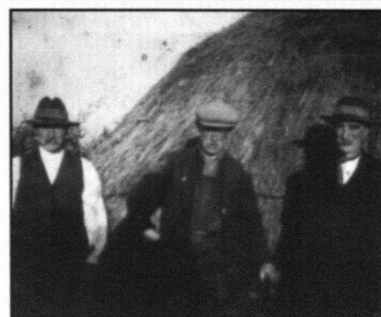
Derrynamuck, Carrowkeel West, Derreens, Clagnagh, Spaddagh, Friarsground, Carrowmore, Tawnaghmore, Kilmannin, Arderry, Erriff, Pollacappul, Cornacarta and Carrowhawny.

### Townlands where there was an increase in number of houses:

Lenamore, Derrymore, Barheen, Cloonbookoughter, Grallaghgarden, Killylea, Devlis, Redhill and Bunduff - 1 each; Carrickmacantire, Lisbaun East and Scregg - 2 each; Agloragh - 4; Brackloon South - 6; Lurgan and Carrownedan (Tulrahan) - 8 each; Greenwood - 11.

The townland of Annagh, which was transferred from Aghamore to Annagh parish in the 1890s lost 8 houses during 1841-51.

Figures for Pollnacraoghy and Carrownluggaun are unclear since they were enumerated on their own in 1841, but were included in the returns for Ballyhaunis town in 1851.



Left to right: Brothers-in-law, James O'Donnell, Sr., Cooloughra; Michael Higgins, Lisbane East and Patrick Higgins, Lurgan. Taken in the 1940's.

# GERRY CARNEY

## Singer/Songwriter

In 1987 Gerry Carney's love of music stopped being a hobby. Armed with a basic P.A. and an empty diary, he canvassed the pubs of Mayo for weekend bookings. As a solo performer, doing mainly middle of the road covers, and some original songs that he had written himself, he soon filled his diary and became known all over Connaught. His aim, at the time, was to make enough money from the pubs, to launch himself as a singer songwriter. His belief that this would happen kept him going through difficult times in the live music scene. When night clubs became popular, people started coming out later and publicans started to drop their live entertainment.

In 1995 Gerry approached Liam Bradley and asked him to produce an album of original songs. This proved to be a long and fruitful relationship. Liam was a session drummer from Derry. Gerry saw him playing with Frances Black and immediately recognised his talent, not just as a drummer, but as a singer with great creative ability. Liam, who now plays with Van Morrison and Brian Kennedy, took up the offer and within a year the project had arrived at the recording studio stage. Ten original songs were recorded and, with A.C.D. in hand, Gerry's first record company call landed him a record deal. The first single "The Flame" was one of the most requested songs on radio and stayed for months in the local Radio Charts. With the release of the second single "Missing Me" Gerry Carney had finally arrived. The single picked up major

national and regional airplay in Ireland and England, and it introduced Gerry to his now manager Joe McMurray from Belfast. Joe, who had worked with Van Morrison and managed Brian Kennedy for nine years, was the final piece in the jigsaw of Gerry's road to success and, within three months, Gerry had played support to The Corrs, Alison Krauss, and Van Morrison. At one of the Van concerts Brian Kennedy stood at the side of the stage and was so impressed that he invited Gerry as his special guest on his Irish Tour. The single "Addicted" was released in conjunction with this tour and went straight to the top of the Northern Ireland Charts where it remained for two weeks in the much coveted "Sunday Life" local product Charts. It was, and remains to be one of the most requested songs in Northern Ireland and sold in excess of two thousand copies within two days of its release. Public demand saw the announcement of a sell out tour commencing in the empire Stadium Belfast on the 9th of December 1997.

Gerry, who now describes himself as being half way up the ladder of success, has been described as one of the most important finds in current times, with words and melodies that touch everybody's life. He has been publicly acclaimed by such

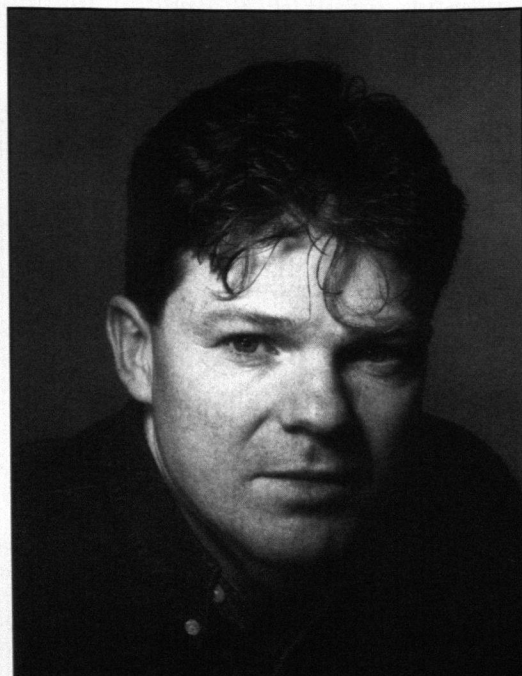
Greats as Charlie Landsborough, Brendan Graham, Charlie McGettigan and Brian Kennedy, to name just a few. He has appeared on numerous television programmes such as "The Kelly Show" and "Kenny Live", and has been described in "The Belfast Telegraph" showbiz section as "The New Brian Kennedy." Gerry's new album is due out in January/February 1998 and should see him well on his way to the top of that ladder.

Gerry thanks everybody for their support and kindness in his career to date and looks forward to playing his songs for you all for a long time to come.

Mojoe Management

*Gerry is son of Tony and Mrs. Carney, Began Post Office.*

*He is married to Loretto, daughter of the late Sergeant William and Mrs. Bridget Curran, Main Street.*





# *"Hullo listeners and welcome once again to McHale Park Castlebar..."*

## **WILLIE RYAN**

### **Gaelic Games Commentator at MWR & NWR fm**

**I** was always interested in Commentary as a youngster, but I knew there was no hope of developing it because it was an area in which there were no openings. Thankfully, the advent of local radio changed all that. On the 15th of November 1989, I was asked by Paul Claffey if I would like to do the following Sunday's N.F.L. game between Mayo and Roscommon at Ballina. He assured me that he had every confidence in my ability. It went off all right and even better for the next game versus Louth. Thankfully, I haven't looked back since. I also do commentary for NWR FM, particularly when Leitrim is involved, whilst in its early years, I covered some of Donegal's games in the League and Ulster Championship.

### **Good Commentators**

On radio, a good commentator of Gaelic Games is the eyes and ears of the many people listening in. Unlike television, which is largely self-explanatory, a radio commentator must keep talking. A few seconds silence and listeners think you are off the air. The more fluent the communication, the better the commentary. Nowadays, stoppages in play are so frequent during the course of a game that a good commentator must be armed with plenty of information on players and teams while remaining totally objective. People love information, as evidenced by the reaction I get from them. This just doesn't happen, however, on the spur of the moment: I have to research it and, hopefully, recall as much as I can at appropriate times during a game.

### **Facilities**

Facilities for commentators have improved markedly since I started, when on one occasion, I had to do a N.F.L. game standing on a stone, while on another, I broadcast an All Ireland Under 21 F.C. semi-final from a wall at some distance from the play. Mayo can boast of fine facilities in Ballina, Castlebar, Charlestown and Crossmolina as befits county grounds. Carrick-On-Shannon has a cubicle for each commentator which is excellent, while Hyde Park has a superb view in a very spacious broadcasting area. In addition, Cusack Park, Mullingar provided me with ultra modern facilities for the recent All Ireland Club Football semi-final. I am, however, disappointed at the facilities offered to local radio at Croke Park, the finest pitch in the country. Here, one has to commentate amongst the crowd, which one can appreciate, is never easy. The national station, on the other hand, has a separate broadcasting box beside the national radio facility. Why two? Well, you can have only two commentators, from the competing counties covering the particular game. Moreover, it would provide a far superior view. I exhort Headquarters management to do this at the earliest opportunity and, in the process, make life easier for everyone. I should also point out that it is mandatory for me, like everyone else, to produce an All Ireland Ticket to gain admission to the ground on final day even though I am doing the commentary. Why isn't a Pass sufficient?



*Willie Ryan (left) with Stephen O'Grady of the Sports Department, MWRfm*

## Local Radio Commentators

A local radio commentator has, in many ways, to be more adaptable than its national counterpart. The latter only covers division one games in the National League and will frequently only attend games involving the All Ireland champions. Moreover, the opposition will usually be quite well known. The local radio commentator, on the other hand, may have to cover a lower division game involving unfashionable teams whose players would not be known outside of their own counties as they are invariably eliminated in the early stages of their provincial championship. Consequently, it is imperative that a county, like Mayo for example, does not drop below division two status and, if possible, can attain division one status and remain there. This is because they will play among quality teams and I, as a commentator, would be more familiar with many players. In addition, top class competition creates far greater interest among followers, unlike the lower divisions where there is no atmosphere and the games within it warrant very little, if any, coverage in the national newspapers. Live coverage of a County Final in addition to the Club Championship provide further evidence of a local radio commentator's versatility.

On a personal level, I prefer match commentary in Summer because there is something "special" about the Inter-County Senior Championships from May until September. There is a greater enthusiasm among players. This, allied to faster grounds, rubs off on a commentator to some extent. While senior grade is, not surprisingly, my favourite, I also like the Under 21 grade and have done commentary on some great

games at this level over the years. Minor, I would consider more difficult. Why? I would get no opportunity to see these players as they first surface at Colleges level and many of these games, particularly in the early rounds, are played in midweek and I believe such game are the best way to become familiar with prospective county minors.

## My Love of Hurling

While I have had great pleasure in covering every Connacht final since 1990, in addition to the last two All Ireland Senior Football Finals, I bemoan the fact that Mayo is not a "Dual" county in the same way as Cork, Galway, Clare, Offaly, Laois and Dublin as I would dearly love to do more Hurling Commentary. Hurling is so skilful and fast and I like to commentate at the same speed. I was, however, delighted in March last to do the commentary on the Athenry (Galway) and Wolfe Tones (Clare) All Ireland Club Hurling Final as part of the double decker programme with the All Ireland Football Final between Knockmore and Crossmaglen Rangers. I also covered the 1995 Connacht Club Final between

Tbooreen and Sarsfields (Galway). I express the wish that, should Galway reach next year's All Ireland Hurling Final, I will be asked to do the commentary for MWR FM. After all, the station has a considerable number of Galway listeners.

I see a good commentator as a specialist. I thank God for the gift he has given me and the power to exercise it through the medium of radio. Commentary just doesn't happen: one has to work at it. It is more difficult in terms of time constraints in that I only do it on a part-time basis as I work in the Business area during the week.

In conclusion, I must say that, in view of the many skills which good commentators possess, I am surprised they are not sought after as part-time advisors to State Agencies such as the I.D.A and the Trade Board, for example. After all, they are endowed with good communications skills and are diligent researchers. Come to think of it, they would also make good Lecturers at Third Level Colleges because of their ability to communicate with people and to research their area of specialisation. It is worth thinking about.



*Brendan Rudden with officers of the Materials Technology and Graphics Teachers' Association at the M.T.&G. Teachers' Conference in 1996 in the Limerick Inn, where Brendan won an award for his Junior Certificate project: A Wall-Mounted Telephone Support made in cherry-wood, seen in picture above.*



# Ballyhaunis Apostolic Work 1997

**T**he objectives of the apostolic work are: (1). To share in the Missionary work of the church by prayer; (2). To supply material and financial aid to Missionaries.

Ballyhaunis Branch of Apostolic Workers has been involved in this work for the past thirty-five years. We are happy to report another successful year in 1996; this has been made

## *Bridie Brennan, Secretary*

possible by a small number of devoted ladies who meet each week and also through the generosity and assistance of many people from the locality who support us financially.

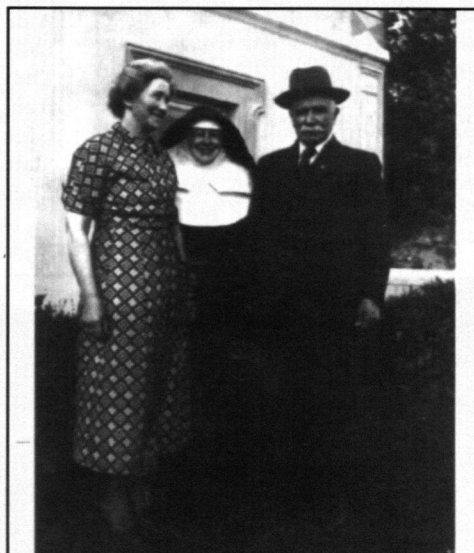
We held our annual exhibition in June and are very grateful to all those who visited same. Some of our members attended

the Diocesan Display in Castlebar in September and were pleased with the goods on show.

Our branch is very grateful to the Priests of the parish, the Augustinian Fathers, and Sisters of Mercy who have always been so supportive of our work. A special thanks to the Golf and Bridge clubs for their generosity to us and to those who donated gifts for the Raffle.



(Left to right) Martin Reilly, Granlahan; Michael Daly, Ballinlough; Paddy Cassidy, Upper Main St.; Jimmy Nally, Knock; Noel Mullarkey, Bohogue. (Courtesy Seamus Mulrennan)



Kathleen & Philip Waldron and daughter Sr. Nuala, taken at the family home in Drimbane, 1949 - '50.



(Left to right) Ann Swift, Mary Kenny, Helen Culkeen, Concepta Murphy, Lilly Lyons, Eileen Rattigan, Pauline Boyle, Mary Roche, Mary D. McGuire, taken at Old Head in 1966. (Courtesy Seamus Mulrennan)



Men from Killinaugher. L - R: Michael Connolly, Tom Regan, Martin Comer & Bill Browne (all deceased, RIP). Taken 1982.

# The Waldron Clan Gathering

After several months of many meetings and much careful, detailed planning and preparation by a hard-working, dedicated group of people, the first ever Waldron Clan Gathering took place in Ballyhaunis over the last weekend in August this year (1997).

The weekend started on Friday the 30th of August at four o'clock in the afternoon when registration commenced in the Central Hotel. Each person attending the gathering was invited to sign their name in the Clan Register and, if they wished, to write a few words about their Waldron connection. Everyone received a specially prepared folder containing a timetable of the weekend's events, a directory of members of the Clan Association, a guide to the tour of "Waldron Country", literature pro-

*by Paul Waldron*

moting local facilities and services, a name badge and an agenda for General Meeting. Registration was supervised by a number of Clan Association members in a rota system.

There was a steady stream of people to the Central Hotel all afternoon. At times, though, there was a considerable queue of people waiting to be registered. A perusal of this register shows that almost two-hundred Waldrons, and those with Waldron connections, came to Ballyhaunis over that weekend. They came from all over: many from throughout Ireland and a large contingent from the United States, as well as some from England.

Shortly after eight o'clock on Friday evening, in the function

room of the Central Hotel, the gathering was formally opened by Tom Waldron, Chairman. A Cheese and Wine reception, sponsored by Irish Country Meats, and beautifully prepared by the management and staff of the Central Hotel, got under way; there was plenty of cheese and wine to go around. A blessing was read by Very Rev. Fr. William Waldron, Phoenix, Arizona, U.S.A. (a native of Cartownacross, Claremorris) and, at around quarter past nine, Dr. Nollaig Ó Muraile of the Department of Celtic Studies, Queen's University, Belfast, delivered a lecture entitled "Clann Bhaidrín no Bhaldraithe" in which he outlined the early history of the Connacht Waldrons, up to the end of the sixteenth century. One hundred and twenty people attended this lecture and were most



**Waldron Clan Gathering Organising Committee.**

*Back row, L to R: Tom Waldron, Crossard; Michael Waldron, Aghamore; Seamus O'Boyle, Carrowreagh; Brendan Waldron, Johnstown; Michael Waldron, Cave; Paul Waldron, Cave; Jim Waldron, Culnacledha; Tom Waldron, Claremorris. Front row L to R: Mary Mulrennan, Gurteen; Mary Walsh, Tooreen; Helen Waldron, Johnstown; Vona Moran, Ballindrehid; Ann Plunkett, Scrigg.*



impressed by Dr. Ó Muraíle's scholarly research and interesting delivery, especially since he was just recovering from a serious illness.

On Saturday morning, and up to two o'clock in the afternoon, registration continued in the Central Hotel. The weather was excellent - sunny, dry and warm. At half-two, or a few minutes after, two fifty-three seat coaches, one filled, the other three-quarters full, left Main Street on the tour of Waldron County. The route was planned to take in as much as possible of the area in which the surname Waldron has always been numerous, as well as taking in as many sites of archaeological and historical interest as possible, from all periods in local and national history and pre-history. The tour travelled down Main St. and Knox St., went north as far as Crossard cross-roads, where it turned left, through the five cross-roads and Carnmore, as far as the graveyard and ancient monastic remains at Aghamore. Here, Seosaimh Ó Broin gave an eloquent and animated commentary on the panoramic view in all directions, giving a valuable insight into all periods of history from early geological time to the present: all in about fifteen minutes! From Aghamore, the tour went through Raith, onto the N17 near Kilkelly, and into Knock where there was a short break. Leaving Knock, the headed back towards Ballyhaunis on the low road and turned right at Cloonacurry into Began, and as far as the graveyard there, where the oldest Waldron gravestone is to be seen. The cavalcade left Began and travelled through Redpark onto the Ballyhaunis-Claremorris Road where it turned right, down through Cloontumper, and left through Cloonbooke to Tulrahan Graveyard, or, more correctly, Kildarra. Tom Waldron and Michael Kelly gave a few words on the history of the place, and its significant connections with the Waldron name. From here, the tour entered its final leg and proceeded through Culnacaleha, Logboy, Cottage, Lisduff, Agloragh,

Drimbane, Abbeyquarter, into Ballyhaunis town. It finished, fittingly, in the Augustinian Friary where the group were met by the new Prior Fr. Michael Collender O.S.A. The tour guides were Tom Waldron (Claremorris), Tom Waldron (Crossard), Gerry Cribbin, Paul Waldron and Michael Kelly (Lissaniska and Dublin).

On Saturday night the Social Function was held. Almost two hundred people were excellently catered for by the management and staff of the Hazel. Dancing was in the Parochial Hall, to the sounds of the popular John McGarry and the Rhythm Blues. Both venues were packed to capacity and many old friendships were renewed, and as many new ones made. Photographs were shown and exchanged, resemblances noticed and family details compared.

Unfortunately, the weather on Sunday was miserably wet and dreary. A special Mass was celebrated at two o'clock in St. Mary's Abbey by Very Rev. Keiran Waldron, P.P. Killererin. Sr. Rosario organised the offertory and readings; music and singing was provided by Niamh Waldron of Limerick and Orla Waldron of Claremorris. The afternoon was left free, and many of our visitors availed of the opportunity to take in the atmosphere of big match day as they watched the Mayo-Offaly clash on television.

On Sunday night, at eight o'clock, a General Meeting was held in the upper room of The Hazel at which the present Committee of the Waldron Clan Association was ratified and approved by those in attendance. Many interesting proposals were discussed and passed, including the setting up of a branch, or a number of branches, in the U.S. and England. Afterwards, an Irish night was held downstairs at which we were treated to traditional music and song, with a recitation or two thrown in for good measure.

When it was decided, at the General Meeting, that another Gathering would take place in

Ballyhaunis in 2000 or 2001, probably around Easter time, most of those present vowed not only to return themselves, but to bring more family members with them, and spread the "good news" about their time in Ballyhaunis amongst their relatives and friends.

Overall, the Gathering was deemed to be an outstanding success, enjoyed by all who attended it. Almost two-hundred people registered in all, but there were many others who attended one or more of the events over the weekend. Slightly less than half of these were from the U.S. or England, the rest were living around Ireland. There were Waldrons with roots in the general Ballyhaunis area: Aghamore, Cloonfad, Knock, Ballindine, Kilmovee, Ballinlough, Loughglynn and Claremorris; as well as some from Athleague, Knockvicar and Strokestown, Co. Roscommon and Headford, Co. Galway. Ron and Bente Waldron were amongst those who travelled from the U.S. Ron has no Irish connections: his Waldrons came from Holland in the early 1700's, yet they really enjoyed his time in Ballyhaunis and the West of Ireland and have vowed to return in the future.

The officers of the Waldron Clan Association are: Chairman: Tom Waldron, Ballinastanford, Claremorris; Treasurer: Tom Waldron, Crossard; P.R.O. Michael Waldron, Cave; Secretary: Paul Waldron; Dublin Delegate (Clans of Ireland): Liam Waldron, Castlebar and Dublin.

In addition to the above, a number of others were members of the sub-committee who worked very hard in preparing for the Gathering: Anne Plunkett, Scrigg; Vona Moran, Ballindrehid; Mary Mulrennan, Gurteen; Mary Walsh, Tooreen; Seamus O'Boyle, Carrowreagh; Michael Waldron, Aghamore. Over the weekend of the gathering, invaluable help was received from others, too many to name here; suffice it to say that without them the weekend would not have been the success it was.

# RENEW

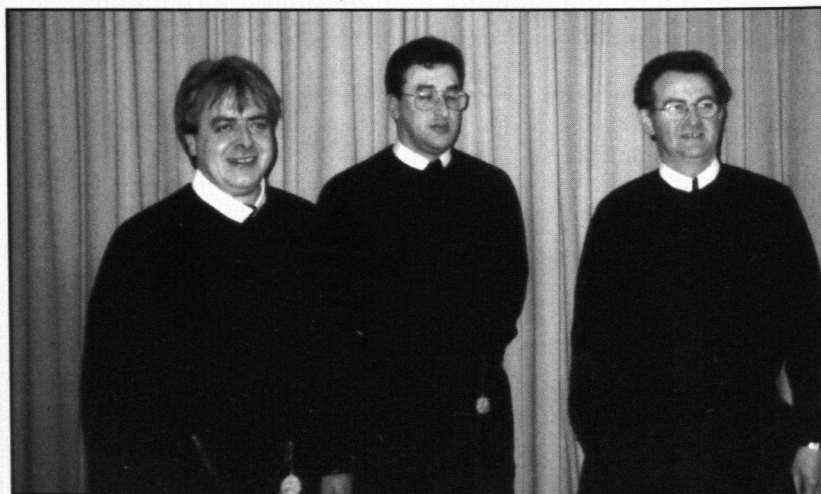
by Maura Griffin

Since the beginning of October this year the Renew programme is being followed in the parish for the third time. The first session was in October-November last year and the second during Lent earlier this year. The aim is always to stimulate spiritual growth in the parish. Most of the people who participated in the earlier courses were delighted when Renew was resumed and hastened to rejoin. This surely shows that it has relevance and provides inspiration in their lives.

The format of Renew is that small groups of ten to fifteen people meet once a week for an hour. A leader guides each group in reading a passage from Scripture. Discussion of the reading follows and, as it strikes



**Cribbin, O'Boyle & Waldron cousins at the Waldron Clan Gathering.**  
Front row: Margaret Cribbin, Noreen Dowd, Ann Burke, Mary Walsh.  
Back row: Tony Cribbin, Seamus O'Boyle, Austin Cribbin and Jack Cribbin.



**Parish Mission, February 1997. L to R: Fr. Michael Forde, CSSR; Fr. Michael Cusack, CSSR; Fr. Tommy McKeen, CSSR.**

different people in different ways, many interpretations are proposed. Things get lively then and we get many an eye-opener on different facets of a parable and on the variety of meanings it has for each one. There is no pressure on anyone to express an opinion, many prefer just to listen. After that comes the serious business of reflecting on how the Good News applies to our lives and how we may use its message in our immediate surroundings. Most of us will not travel the

world, so in order to Renew the face of the earth we must start at home.

The most exciting aspect of Renew is that more than fifty young people in the parish are taking part in the movement. Our teenagers are sometimes given a lot of negative publicity, but the other side of the coin is that there are many serious and thoughtful young girls and boys around. We trust that the Renew programme will be a valuable experience in their lives.



# New Faces in the Friary

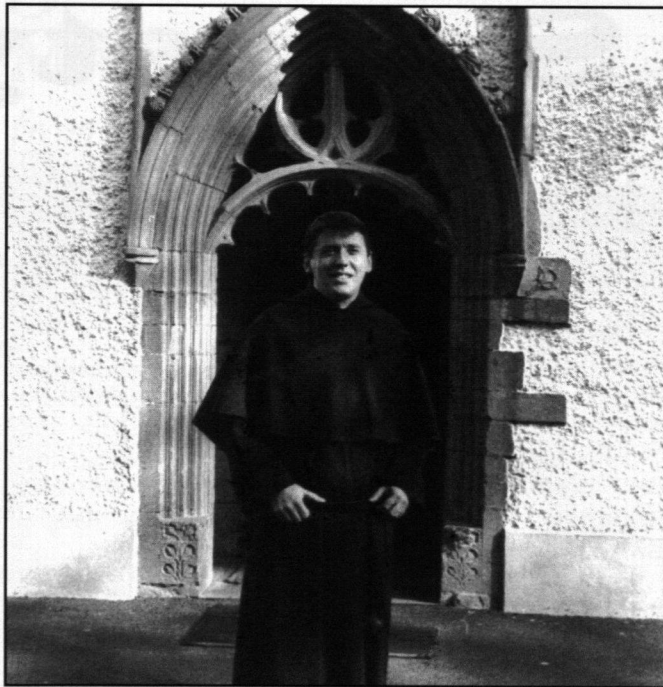
*by Sr. Assumpta*

**E**arly in Spring, word was spreading that Fr. McCarthy's term as Prior in Sr. Mary's Augustinian Abbey here in Ballyhaunis was coming to an end. Naturally the question arose who would replace him? The provincial after consultation with his team made the following appointments: Fr. McCarthy and Fr. John O'Connor were leaving while Fr. Michael Collender and Fr. Tim B. Walsh were coming to St. Mary's Abbey.

**Fr. Collender** has been appointed as Prior. He is probably the youngest Prior in Ireland. He is a native of Dungarvan, County Waterford. After ordination he was appointed to the Augustinian house in Galway and, after two years, was transferred to New Ross. Now he is settled here in Ballyhaunis. He is very interested in the History of the Abbey. His main hope is to follow the Augustinian tradition here in Ballyhaunis, to get to know the people, give time to them and listen to them.

**Fr. Tim Walsh** has come from the Dungarvan Augustinian House. He is a native of Ballylanders in County Limerick. He is a very keen Limerick man and will love to meet you if you hail from there. Father has spent many years on the missions: twenty-four years in Nigeria and four in the U.S.A. On his return home he was transferred to Dungarvan. He is a very keen G.A.A. fan and loves to watch all games on T.V. when he is free. Coming from Dungarvan where the house is on the street, Father found St. Mary's Abbey a quiet place: he missed the noise of trucks and cars he was accustomed to in Dungarvan. He loves to walk down town and learn the different streets, shops and outlying regions. Fr. Collender and Fr. Walsh are wished every happiness and blessing in Sr. Mary's Abbey.

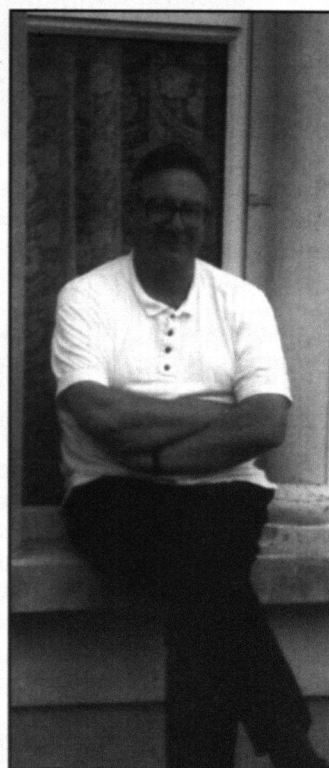
Fr. Vincent McCarthy is taking a Sabbatical and Fr. John O'Connor was appointed to Galway. You may have read in past issues of Annagh of their work here in Ballyhaunis. We wish them health and happiness in the years to come.



*Fr. Michael Collender, O.S.A.*



*Fr. John O'Connor, O.S.A.*



*Fr. Vincent McCarthy, O.S.A.*

# BALLYHAUNIS Musical Society

**T**his fun loving Society sprang from the idealistic minds of a small number of people in Ballyhaunis some five years ago.

The Society, we are delighted to see, is going from strength to strength each year. 1997 is no exception to this trend. A wealth of talent has sprung forth from the Community over the recent months and the Society is very excited about the interest that has been expressed in their forthcoming production "Fiddler on the Roof." The competition for the parts in the show could only be described as phenomenal and now rehearsals are in full swing.

March 1998 is the date for the show and we welcome any suggestions that people feel they would like to make. Please contact the undermentioned Committee Members should you wish to offer any advice or assistance concerning the forthcoming production.

Chairperson: Miss Nuala Fitzgerald, Bridge St.; Secretary: Miss Deirdre Moran, Galway Rd.; PRO: Miss Paula Moran, Main St.

The Society has just completed its major fundraising functions for the season. The 2nd Annual fashion show was a great success and the Society would like to thank all their models and their sponsors for their support. We would also like to thank all of the people who attended the event and we look forward to

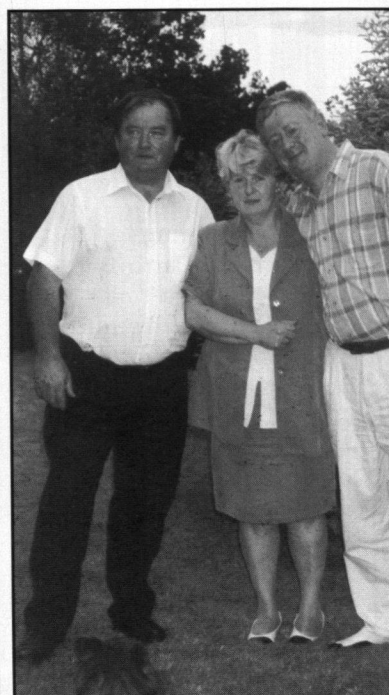
*by Nuala Fitzgerald*  
Chairperson

seeing you all again at the show "Fiddler on the Roof" in March 1998.

The programme for the show is being prepared at present by the Committee and, should you wish to have an input, please talk to our P.R.O. Miss Paula Moran, who will be delighted to answer your questions.

Meanwhile, the fashion ramp has been tucked away and the members of the Musical Society now turn to the production in hand. "Fiddler on the Roof" rehearsals take place in "The Hazel" on Thursday nights and places in the chorus can still be obtained. Mr. Ray Leonard is producing and works with the Principals while Mr. John Aldridge returns as Musical Director.

This year rehearsals are different for the members that have been with the show since the beginning. This is the first year we will be without that great "Wild Bill Hickock" and "Professor Higgins" namely Micheál Horan. Micheál and Marie Horan have moved back to the East Coast to manage a business there and the Society wishes them the best of luck in their new life. We hope to have them back as guests for the coming production in March.



**Bernard Freyne,  
Mary Grogan-Mullen, Brian Byrne.**  
*Born in Clare St. in 1947, Celebrated  
their 50th birthday in July '97*



**Noreen Horkan's Stations, Churchpark**  
*Back row: Geraldine Rowlings;  
Brendan, Marie & John McNicholas.  
Front: Noreen Horkan,  
Fr. Austin Cribbin.*

## **Alcoholics Anonymous**

Meetings held in the  
**Old Convent School:**  
*Sunday nights*

8.30pm (winter);  
9.00pm (summer).



# By Jove He Did It!!

## A FAREWELL TO MICHEÁL AND MARIE HORAN

by Anna & Kevin Henry

*from Ballyhaunis Musical Society*

The Ballyhaunis musical society was founded five years ago. Micheál Horan was one of the founder members. Little did we know at the time what a talent would emerge in the following years.

One of the issues which faced the newly founded society was to find an appropriate venue for rehearsals. Micheál and Marie kindly volunteered to allow us use the function room above their premises, "The Tudor Inn." The pub quickly became synonymous with the Musical Society.

We kicked off in 1993 with our first production "Calamity Jane." Michael landed the leading role as Wild Bill Hickock (we wondered had he used his premises, as bribrey but we were late proved wrong!). The following year he landed to plum role of Professor Higgins in "My Fair lady" and he delivered the kind of professional performance that even Rex Harrison would have been proud of. Audiences were stunned by his acting and singing prowess. He next played Judd Fry in "Oklahoma!" A much darker and different character whom he again portrayed flawlessly. His rendition of "lonely room" proved a real showstopper. Perhaps his next role presented him with his greatest challenge, as he had to act the part of a 'dirty old man' in "The Boyfriend"! This was something of a cameo role but



Micheál, being the actor he is, made the performance memorable as usual.

As well as being a leading man on the stage he was also actively involved in all of the society's social and fund-raising activities which included carol singing, tea-parties straw boys and a sixties night where himself and Marie cut a great dash on the dance floor. Micheál and Marie were great ambassadors for the Society and they made their presence felt wherever they went, whether it was to the Galway races (!), or to see productions performed by other musical societies.

**Ray Leonard,  
Michael Horan (on right)**  
*Courtesy of Phillip Stratford, Photographer.*

We in the Society were very sad and sorry to say farewell to Micheál and Marie when they moved back to the East coast earlier this year. On a personal note Micheál was the best leading man I ever had the pleasure of playing opposite and future productions will not be the same without him. We hope that Micheál and Marie will return in March to see our latest show "Fiddler on the Roof." We certainly look forward to seeing them both and hearing Micheál sing "Hey it's good to be back home again!"

# My Life in Africa

I was born on the 21st of October 1932, the eldest of nine children, to Bridget and Roger Healy of Ballindrehid. I was educated at the Convent in Ballyhaunis and then at St. Louis Convent in Balla. After school, I did my nursing training at St. Steven's Hospital and worked at the Rotunda Hospital in Dublin. There I met my husband, John Hyslop, a South African studying medicine at Trinity College.

We were married on the 30th of November 1957 at Our Lady of Victories church in Kensington and afterwards, much to my mother's distress, set sail for Africa. We first travelled across Europe and caught our ship "The Africa" at Brundisi in Italy, sailing though the Suez Canal to Durban, Natal. On board, we met some Italians who were en route to Rhodesia (now called Zimbabwe) to build the Kariba dam on its border. Among them were several nuns and priests, and one of the highlights of my voyage was the "midnight mass" that was held on the upper deck under the stars.

We arrived in Durban on the 28th of December to a tremendous welcome by my new Hyslop family and were immediately taken to their home-town, Howick, fifty miles inland in the Natal midlands. My mother-in-law, Tuli, always held a splendid New Year's Eve party in true Scottish tradition and this was where memories of Ireland were brought and I retired to my bedroom a very lonely, homesick colleen.

However, I was young and in love and so put my mind to building my new home. With the help of Tuli, I shopped for furniture, curtains and all the essentials. She was fantastic, despite having to spend much of her time caring for her husband who was confined to a wheelchair. In those days, people "called officially" to welcome you, and we had many visitors, particularly around afternoon tea. This was all a new experience for me. I acquired a maid and a gardener and learned to cope with running a home and raising children. My first son, Roderick, was born in 1959, followed by David a year later and then a daughter, Jane in 1963. Rod and David are married and I have two grandchildren (with a third on the way).

When I arrived in Howick, I joined

*by Noreen Hyslop*

the congregation at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Then, there were only six whites in the parish; the rest blacks. I loved their melodious singing, but was horrified when the ladies proceeded to breast feed their babies during mass. I still attend the same church and now take everything in my stride.

In 1957, Howick was a small town with only a few shops, one garage, two hotels and a rubber factory. The Howick Falls is a favourite site for tourists: they are 321 feet high and known to the Africans as kwaNogqaza (place of the tall one). The first inhabitant of the town of Howick - named after the Northumberland home of Earl Grey, the British Colonial Secretary - was a hotel keeper who provided a ferry service across the Falls. Unfortunately, his young son was swept over the falls during a flood. A pile of stones marks his grave at the foot of the waterfall. Now, a modern bridge has replaced the ford. Midmar Dam, three miles outside the town, is also a scenic holiday resort.

Today, Howick is very much larger (although still considered a small town) and its character has also changed, due partly to the increase of commerce and industry in the area. Howick is 365 feet above sea level and has a temperate climate. We get a warm, wet summer and a dry, cold winter, with frost and snow on the surrounding hills. I

have only once seen snow in Howick proper.

Southern Africa is very beautiful country indeed. First time visitors are often struck by vast distances between the major cities: six hours between Durban and Johannesburg; sixteen hours between Cape Town and Johannesburg. Cape Town has become the new playground for the world's rich and famous and is spread around the base of the famous Table Mountain. The Cape is also well known for its excellent wines and Cape Dutch tradition.

The Natal province (now known as KwaZulu Natal) has a distinct British heritage and beautiful stretches of long sandy beaches. The Midlands - where Howick is situated - produces nearly 50% of the farming income for the province, and boasts abundant grazing and water to support dairy farms, beef studs and a stable of top race horse breeding and training establishments. It is a mountainous region, containing the majestic Drakensberg range. Johannesburg (now known as Gauteng) is made up of high society and big business. The city works at a fever pitch - something that it has done since it was founded in 1886, when prospectors first realised there was gold in the area. Today, about half of the new gold found in the world each year comes from South Africa. The eastern Transvaal is also a major tourist area and is home to quaint mining towns like Pilgrim's Rest, the opulent Sun City, and a prolific range of Wildlife in the Kruger National Park.

A trip to southern Africa is a memorable one indeed, as has been my life in Howick for the last forty years.



*The Healy Family, Ballindrehid. Back row L to R: Frank Healy, Mary Healy, Ciara Healy, Irene Healy, Vincent Healy, Betty Coen, Peter Healy. Front row: Ron Noone, Noreen Hyslop, Vincent Healy, Nellie Noone, Tony Healy, Lillie Healy, Clare & Ronan Healy.*





# Ballyhaunis Fine Gael Celebrates

by Eugene Morley PRO



*The Higgins Family and Supporters celebrate Jim's election to the Dáil, June 1997. Jim, with his wife Marian (centre) and their family (L to R): Lorna, Tara, Olivia and Maria.*

**1997** was a year of much celebration for the Ballyhaunis Fine Gael camp. Local T.D. and outgoing Government Chief Whip Minister Jim Higgins swept back to the Dáil with a final tally of 11,163 votes and played a major part in wresting a historic three seats for the party in the new Mayo five seat Constituency.

In his victory speech in the Travellers' Friend Hotel, Castlebar, Jim was loud in his praise of the great support he got from the Ballyhaunis election machine which helped to deliver 60% of the vote to him in the area's four polling stations. His victory, however, was tinged with sadness at the loss of the Dáil seat of his friend, the long serving Fianna Fail Deputy, P.J. Morley.

The party celebrated further when John Bruton announced

his party's new front bench in September and Jim was elevated to the prestigious position of shadow Minister for Justice, Equality and Law Reform.

#### Officers:

President:

Michael Webb;

Vice President:

Mary Buckley;

Chairperson:

Tony Cribbin;

Secretary:

Helen Lyons;

Recording Secretary:

Denise Moran;

Treasurers:

Michael John Walsh

and Seamus Walsh;

PRO:

Eugene Morley.



*Mrs. Frances Maye, Aisling Drive, being presented with the Golden Drop Award by President Mary Robinson.*

# The Morley Medal

**E**nnis, Saturday, September 6th 1997; time 5.02 p.m. The ball is in the hands of Mayo forward Tony Morley; he races past the Kerry full-back and, from twelve yards, puts a powerful shot into the net for a Mayo goal. Approximately seventy minutes later, Mayo has beaten Kerry in the 1997 All Ireland Junior Football Final and an All Ireland medal is on its way to one of the most famous football houses in Ballyhaunis: The Morley Household.

Tony has joined the late Charlie Philips (1957), the late "Doc" Healy (1957), John Biesty (1957) and David Nestor (1995) as Ballyhaunis men who have won All Ireland Junior football medals.

The Morley name has a long and distinguished association with the G.A.A in Ballyhaunis. Tony's great-granduncles David

*by Eamon Murren*

and Martin Morley were founder members of St. Patrick's G.A.A. Club in Ballyhaunis in 1886. Tony's grandfather Philip was a great servant of Ballyhaunis football: he was a member of the great Erin's Hope team, a picture of which can be seen in Rattigan's Bar, Knox St. and Curley's Bar, Clare St. Philip was a life-long supporter of the Ballyhaunis G.A.A club until his death. Tony's father, Tony Morley senior, also served the Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club with distinction. Indeed, were it not for emigration, many football supporters felt that Tony would have made the Mayo team in the late sixties and early seventies. When Tony did return to Ireland in the mid-seventies he resumed his career with Ballyhaunis. Today, Tony Senior is the

Manager of the Ballyhaunis team.

Tony Junior, apart from his All Ireland Junior, also has Connacht Senior medals to his credit. His brothers David and Jason are also talented footballers. David recently returned after a number of years in the U.S. He played for Mayo at minor and under-21 level. The baby of the family - Jason - was a member of the Mayo Junior panel this year but, due to pressure of work, had to drop out of the panel. Mother Josie - a proud Clare woman - is a regular at all Ballyhaunis matches. She shows the same love and passion for the game as her husband and sons. With grandson Robert already kicking a ball at the age of eighteen months, it looks like the Morley connection with the Ballyhaunis G.A.A. club is safe for another generation at least.



**Ballyhaunis Team 1977. Back row L to R: Tommy Egan, Des Lyons, Tony Cribbin, Tony Morley, Luke Murray, Padraic Prendergast RIP, Eamonn Glynn, Padraic Cuniffe. Front: Tom McGuire, John Prenty, Eamonn Murren, Tommy Moran RIP, Billy Lyons, Mike Murphy, Pat Freeley.**



# Changing Times

Isn't it amazing how times change the demand for certain goods and services? It was only last week, when I was in a shop in Ballyhaunis, and I witnessed a lady trying to buy an enamel bucket, that this concept really hit me. Enamel buckets, I discovered, are as scarce as hens' teeth.

I then pondered on the many household items that don't seem to be around anymore. Things such as Carbolic Soap, Cardinal Red Polish, Liquid Paraffin, Mild-Cured Bacon, Epsom Salts, Mrs. Cullen's Powder: all seem to be thing of the past. Granted, some of them are still in existence but they don't seem to be advertised much.

When was the last time you tasted a Scribona cake, a Chester cake, Bull's Eyes, Peggy's Leg or got a present of Rock from Dublin? All of the above seem to have been replaced by things such as Panacur, Yoghurts, 2-in-1 Conditioners, Gammon steaks and Microwaves.

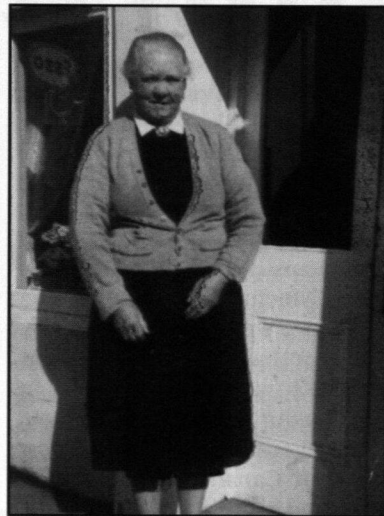
Even the games we played as kids have changed: Hop-Scotch, 3-tips, Red Rover, Draughts, Snakes and Ladders, have all been replaced by video games. Watching the film *The Fugitive* on T.V recently brought back memories of the old T.V. programmes. How we longed for Thursday nights to see if Dr. Richard Kimble would catch the one-armed man before Lt. Gerrand captured Kimble. Other favourites of the time were *The Virginian*, *Quicksilver* - "stop the lights!" - and, of course, *The Riordans* - "Get up the yard, Benjy!"

A lot of other things have changed down the years, for example: how many people salute a priest when they meet him? How many women now cover their heads in church?

*by Eamon Murren*

How many blacksmiths live in your area? How many men chew plug tobacco? How many women drink Babycham? How many farmers now keep Flexys, Charolais, Limousins instead of the good old Shorthorn? Even the publican who once only sold drink and tobacco is now selling everything from cups to condoms. The list goes on and on. Have times changed for the better? I wonder!

Incidentally, the lady did not get her enamel bucket. She had to settle for a galvanised one. But, then again there are not many people churning now either.



*(above) Mrs. Kate Flatley, Main St. outside her Café in 1960.*

*(below) Paddy O'Brien outside his shop and Martina Lyons, Bekan, related to Michael Lyons, who had an egg business in Clare St. (early 60s)*



# *Spirit of the West*

When it comes to good organisation and advance planning it is hard to beat the Americans. The people who organise the American Championships of Irish Dancing are no exception and so we were aware since early last year that the Championships of 1997 were to be held in Vancouver, Canada. As Vancouver is located on the West Coast of Canada, and about six thousand miles from Ireland, my parents felt it was rather a long distance to travel and they wondered if I couldn't find a competition nearer home. It was a time for quick thinking so I reminded them that I had an aunt living in Vancouver who had never had a visit from her family in Ireland and wasn't it about time she had a visit and wouldn't she be thrilled etc. And so it was decided. We would travel to Canada at the end of June 1997. My Dad could visit his long lost sister and I could concentrate on the serious business of Dancing.... something to look forward to.

*by Heather Noone*

*(see photograph on cover)*

We flew from Dublin to London on Sunday morning June 29th. As well as my Mum and Dad, there was my sister Caroline and my friend Aoifa from Sligo and my Dancing Teacher from Donegal. From London we caught a flight to Toronto, and from there, a final connection to Vancouver. We had some minor drama in Toronto when our luggage went missing, a state of affairs which appeared to upset my parents. As I had taken the precaution of keeping my Dancing Costume

and shoes with me, I was less concerned! By a remarkable coincidence we met a female security officer in Toronto Airport who was born in Ballyhaunis, a one-in-a-million chance. I'm not sure if she told us her name; if she did we have forgotten it, but she took control of the situation and got us to our final flight to Vancouver. It was dark by then and we slept most of the way.

My aunt and her husband met us at Vancouver Airport and drove us to their home in White Rock, a lovely quiet suburb, about one hour's drive from downtown Vancouver. In the morning we caught our first glimpse of the Pacific Ocean from our bedroom window. My aunt had prepared well for our visit and the local Community Hall was made available to us for dancing practice. The downside of this arrangement was that all the neighbours dropped in to watch the budding "Riverdancers" in action. My aunt had arranged that we would put on a full performance for them one evening. In the middle of this my sister Caroline fell and damaged her ankle. She spent the next week hobbling around on crutches borrowed from the local hospital, her Dancing Championship over before it began.

Two days before my competition we left my aunt and moved to a hotel in the centre of Vancouver, about ten minutes walk from the Hyatt Hotel where the Dancing Championships were being held. We had some spare time to explore Vancouver - said to be one of the most beautiful cities in the world. We visit-

ed Chinatown, which has a population of about one hundred thousand, and Gastown which is the oldest part of the city and we hired bicycles and explored Stanley Park, an area of several hundred acres with lakes and woodland right in the centre of the city.

On the eve of my competition I visited the Hyatt Hotel. I needed a final practice on the stage and I needed to check out the dancers in my age group. There were one hundred and fifty listed to dance including the holder of the Championship, a local Canadian girl. Tomorrow would be a long day! As I was leaving, I caught sight of a dancer I recognised - the All Ireland Champion and World Champion from 1996 had made the trip from England to be here. Tomorrow would be a long and difficult day!

When the alarm clock in our bedroom went off at 6.30 a.m. I was already awake. I did not feel like eating but my mum insisted. A final check to make certain that I had forgotten nothing and we were off. The Competition commenced at 8.30 a.m. as scheduled. All the competitors would dance two rounds in the morning with the top thirty percent being recalled in the afternoon for a third round. I came through my first dance with no major problems and felt fairly pleased. However, the local Canadian girl danced brilliantly and won the first round. Round two went very well for me, but also for the English dancer. We were all recalled for the decisive afternoon round and I knew it was very close. My third round was a set called "The Lodge Road" which is long and difficult



and very tiring. I had it well prepared and, as I danced, I felt it was going well. As I finished the applause from the audience was loud and reassuring. Dancing over.... now the long wait.

The results were due to be announced about 7 p.m.; the ballroom was packed, all chairs taken, standing room only at the back. All the dancers who had danced the three rounds were called on stage for the presentation: about fifty in all. The result was then given in reverse order, from fifty down to the top twenty, then the top ten, top five, top three until the winner is eventually announced. It was fine standing there at the start seeing the higher placed dancers being called but soon we were down to the top twenty and then the top ten. The audience was very quiet now, all focused on stage. I could see the small blue screens of camcorders and cameras being prepared. "Let's hear it for the top five dancers", the announcers called. Then there were three of us and I didn't need to check on the other two. I thought to myself... third place is good. A number is called, not mine, and Canadian moves away to take up third place on the rostrum. Only two of us left and the tension is unbearable. I turn to the English dancer and say: "You're sure to win". "No, you are", she replies. Another number is called, again not mine, and my dream has come true. The dancers are ranged around the stage in a semi-circle and I move to the only vacant spot on the rostrum, there is a large number 1 on the front. I receive my winner's crown and sash and a large plate with a central inscription: "Vancouver 1997...The Spirit of the West.

The rest is a blur.... hugs and handshakes from friends, photographs, beaming dancing teacher, proud parents, cynical younger sister, more photos.

Downstairs to the bar for drinks, more drinks. It's going to be a long night!

Early next morning, while adults were nursing hangovers, I returned to the hotel and made my way to the third floor to revisit the scene of my triumph. All had changed, all traces of Irish Dancing gone. Instead, the corridors were full of business men in dark suits and white name badges attending some obscure Scientific Conference. They knew nothing of what had passed yesterday! I turned and left quietly, feeling a little sad. The Spirit of the West was gone and could not be rekindled.

We left Vancouver the following day. We had rented a car and the plan was to drive east as far as the Rocky Mountains. In the end we never reached that far due to the sheer size of the country. We drove through wonderful scenery on highways that were almost deserted. The mountain tops were covered in snow, even in Summer, and waterfalls crashed

down the sides, the force of the water often uprooting trees. We were lucky enough to see a large bear one day and even luckier that we were in the car at the time. All too soon time caught up with us and we made our way back to Vancouver for the journey home.

I have just discovered that the American Dancing Championships are being held in Florida next year. The venue is a new hotel which hasn't even been built yet. But the Americans are good at organisation and planning. I'm sure it will be completed on time. Florida is a big state..I must have some relatives there! Must go check it out straight away!



**Four generations, Greally/Clarke Family.** Mrs. Catherine Greally, 84 yrs. (Great-Grandmother), Drimbane; Mrs. Dymphna Greally, (Grandmother), Drimbane; Mrs. Olive Clarke (Mother), Abbeyquarter; Kaitlyn Clarke, (Baby), Abbeyquarter.



**Biesty Family, Carrowkeel.** Left to right: Pat Biesty, Ned and Nan Pallett (Birmingham), Rita O'Flaherty (Galway), Mrs. Anne Biesty, Paddy & Vera Connell (Drimbane).

# Ballyhaunis and District Gun Club

**B**allyhaunis and District Gun Club was reformed in 1969 after a lapse of a few years. Soon after its reformation it registered with Mayo Regional Game Council which, in turn, is affiliated to the National Association of Regional Game Councils, which has membership of about 20,000. Ballyhaunis and District Gun Club has forty-five members who are fully insured by the N.A.R.G.C. Game Hunting Compensation Fund thus covering themselves and, more importantly, covering the farmers (and their livestock) whose land they shoot over, should an accident happen.

Soon after its reformation the officers and members saw the need to move forward and to implement a number of things to help the wildlife of the area. The first major task that was undertaken at Cave was the purchase and development of a Clay Target Shooting Ground. There, we erected a four trap (100 bird) layout to international standard, purchased four Winchester White Flyer Automatic Traps, built an office, toilets and store: all of this cost £10,000 plus. This, being a heavy strain on our financial budget left us in dire straits, but, with donations, draws, raffles and a number of successful shoots as well as a friendly bank manager, we overcame the problem of money. Indeed, there were shoots when we had competitors from all the provinces and all agreed it is one of the best layouts in the

*by Eamon Burke*

Country. We had a dream then, and it still remains, to make it the very best. We had a problem though, and it still remains a problem, that is the lack of electricity. But some day it may happen that we may get the power, and then we would be able to open on a weekly, or maybe a daily basis and incorporate clay shooting in a tourist package with fishing, golf etc.

While work on the clay target ground was on-going we did not forget about other things and that was the need for a firm vermin control policy, and we set about the task of bringing this to an acceptable level. This we achieved, but the problem is ongoing, especially with the spread of mink; the greatest problem we have at the moment. That, together with the utterly disgraceful pollution of one of our rivers, where no self respecting Mallard would dare to go. As for Trout, they are completely gone from what was, in the not too distant past, an excellent angling river. Let us not forget that the Dalgan is a major spawning bed for the world famous Salmon Weir in Galway.

On the wildlife scene we dabbled with Pheasant release for a number of years, but, three years ago, we got very serious about the whole wildlife scene as wild birds were getting very few on the ground due, we think, to very wet and cold breeding seasons.

So, with a lot of coverage and a limited amount of money, we embarked on an ambitious programme to increase the numbers of Pheasant, Mallard and Partridge (Grouse will follow shortly).

We rented some ground, which we ploughed and sowed with crops suited for game feeding. We erected some pens assisted by a county FÁS Scheme. The first year we purchased three-hundred Pheasant poults, six weeks old which proved very successful. In subsequent years we continued to sow the crops and now produce our own poults through incubators and brooding hens which proves quite successful. The sowing of those crops has been a great help to the songbirds of the area: Thrushes, Black-Birds, Robins, Wrens, Finches, Linnets, Wagtails etc. The only bird we are missing is the Corncrake. Anybody wishing to visit there is welcome and can do so by contacting any of the Club members.

Apart from the aforementioned, the Club also gets involved in the Town Parade which it has won on a few occasions. For a number of years we held a very successful Dog Show. In the past we have organised very successful shoots in aid of worthy organisations, namely: Mayo-Roscommon Hospice, People-in-Need and, this year, a hugely successful clay shoot and raffle for Ballyhaunis and District Friends of Croí.

Indeed the year 1997 has been a very successful year in the history of the Club. In a table quiz organised by the County Body we won 1st and 2nd places. The teams were: Bernard Waldron, J. J. Kelly, Flan Moroney, John Greally, Gerry O'Connell and Eamon Burke. In the County Mayo Vermin Control Competition, we again won the major award. Last, and by no



means least, we won the Mayo Clay Target Competition, the members of this team being John Joe Kelly, Martin Cunnane, John Grealley, Tommy Concannon and Eamon Burke. It is indeed no mean achievement to win all three major competitions in the one year.

The year 1997 was also one in which we suffered a great loss in the tragic, untimely death of one of our sparkling young members: Declan Mulhern. To his father Eddie, mother Frances, sister Patricia, granny Mrs. Hoban, uncles, aunts and cousins, we tend our heart-felt sympathy; May He Rest in Peace.

Finally, let me take this opportunity to say a special "Thank you" to all the farmers who allow us to shoot over their lands and assure them of our full co-operation now and in the future.

### **Club Motto:**

*The wildlife of our countryside is not ours to dispose of as we wish.*

*We are but guardians for generations to come.*

## *Friend*

*Once in a while we meet someone  
Who makes us feel so good  
Who seems to understand us  
In a way few people could  
Someone who's truly glad for us  
When things are going well  
Who's always there to listen  
When we've something new to tell.  
Once in a while we find someone  
On whom we can depend  
That's why we're really lucky  
For we've found ourselves a friend!*

*Muri Hunt*



Mr. Eamonn Burke, Chairperson of Ballyhaunis & District Gun Club, presenting a cheque to the 'Friends of Croí'. Front L to R: John Grealley, Noel Sloyan, Donal Shanaghy (Treasurer Croí), Rita Lundon (Chairperson Croí), Eamon Burke (Gun Club); Helen Meehan (Secretary, PRO Croí), Martina Nolan, Catherine Sloyan, Peggy Henry. Back L to R: Stephen Nolan (Gun Club), Joe Fitzharris (Gun Club), Brendan Hoban (Croí), Yvonne Loughran (Croí), Liam Lyons (Gun Club), Photograph: Philip Stratford



**"An Enjoyable Pilgrimage"**  
*Mrs. Phil Fox, Carrowrea; Mrs. Delia Regan, Abbey St; Mrs. Mary Finn, Holywell at Knocknarea, Sligo.*

L ocated on Lough Derg, Co. Donegal, about four miles from the village of Pettigo, lies Station Island, known to most people as St. Patrick's Purgatory, first sanctified by the visit of St. Patrick in the year 445 A.D. as a place for prayer and penance. Through the centuries, this hallowed spot has continued to be a pilgrim retreat, right down to present time. Today, Lough Derg is world famous and attracts more people than ever before. They come in thousands to make the traditional, three day pilgrimage, which commences annually on the 1st of June and lasts till the Feast of the Assumption on August 15th.

Now, and for the first time in its history, Lough Derg is open for one-day retreats. During the months of May and September, these retreats are conducted on specified days and are especially for adults who are unable to make the penitential pilgrimage.

This year, Ballyhaunis Legion of Mary organised a one-day pilgrimage to Lough Derg. A large group left Ballyhaunis by coach at seven o'clock a.m. It was a beautiful, sunny morning in May and it felt good to be alive for that journey; going on any pilgrimage is, of course, a special grace and blessing. After we picked up our last passengers at Knock, it was time for prayer, and on this journey of faith, the rosary was offered for all our intentions and protection.

*"Mother of the morning*

# The Pilgrim Way

*by Agnes Heaney*

*Lady of the day  
Be with us as we journey  
Along life's pilgrim way."*

Our route northwards brought us through the scenic grandeur of Mayo and Sligo. The countryside was bright with the radiance of early Summer, the fields were carpeted with flowers, the moorlands a rich golden brown, and the brilliant green of the trees all spoke of the wonder and beauty of God's creation. As we sped onwards in our comfortable coach, I thought about the early pilgrims and the awful hardship that they had to endure. In ancient times travelling in Ireland was not such an easy matter as it is today. The journeys that used to take weary months can now be done in days or even hours. In far off days, these early pilgrims had to walk or travel in wagons drawn by oxen; they made long, dangerous journeys through forests, often risking their lives from bandits and prowling wolves.

Nearing Sligo, we caught sight of Knocknarea, on the summit of which Queen Maeve is supposed to be buried. In the distance we could see the mountains overlooking beautiful Lough Gill and the famous Lake Isle of Inishfree. A few miles north of Sligo town stands the curiously shaped mountain of Benbulbin, with its legendary associations with Diarmuid and Grainne, those classic lovers of Gaelic antiquity; it's not far from Drumcliffe churchyard where lies the mortal remains of W. B. Yeats, "casting a cold eye on life on death." At a sudden bend in the road, we got our first view of the blue Atlantic, the waves crashing in white rollers on the rocks below.

After a short break in Bundoran, we set off again in the direction of Ballyshannon, the ancient seat of the O'Donnell clan. Our scenic route brought us to the border town of Bealeek, well known for its beautiful pottery.

Our road wound through the Erne valley, through pretty villages, snug farms and woods where the Rhododendrons were in full bloom.

The village of Pettigo is hidden until you turn a corner and there it is, beside the lake and its islands. There are many more lovely islets in Lough Derg; most of them are fringed by shrubs and bushes, except the Saints' Island which is almost entirely covered with buildings. At first sight it's like a miniature town in the centre of a blue lake with brown moors around it, set in the shadow of the Donegal Mountains.

On retreat days, the boats start leaving the mainland at ten o'clock a.m. There was a buzz of excitement as our ferry approached the pier of Station Island. Many of our fellow pilgrims had not been to Lough Derg for years and were delighted to be back again for the one day of prayer and peace. After we had a cup of tea, it was time to go to the Basilica where the retreat began with the "way of the cross", conducted by Fr. Mohan, Prior at Lough Derg. After he welcomed us, he said that he was very happy that so many people, unable to make the traditional pilgrimage, could come now. Later, we prayed the fifteen decades of the Rosary and then we went to the new dining room for lunch. As we sat down to a substantial meal, I thought about the last time I was here and our slender fare of dry toast, course oaten bread, milkless tea, not to mention the soup. After lunch, people had time for themselves, reflection, praying or going to confessions; others sat on benches, enjoying the sunshine, and having a quite chat. Throughout the day there was a great atmosphere of joy, happiness and peace; it was beautiful and stimulating to be actively present in praising God in a place where St. Patrick spirituality lives on. The ground that we stood on was sacred consecrated by the footprints of our patron saint, and by the feet of many generations of Patrick's spiritual pilgrims. After other devotions, the highlight of our day was the mass, as we thanked God and St. Patrick for the great gift of faith. As we left this oasis of prayer, the evening sun was casting a golden glow over the island. We all sang "Faith Of Our Fathers" as our boat left for the mainland and home.



# Ballyhaunis Swimming Pool

**A**nother year over, it was time to get ready to open the pool. The Committee went about compiling rules for the pool area, and parents' rotas for supervision. The big clean-up had to commence again, so, all hands on deck. With the help of FÁS and the Committee, the place was ready for opening.

The official opening took place on Saturday June 7th, kindly blessed by Fr. Cooney, P.P. The doors were open and the children ready to swim the Summer days away. The numbers of children using the pool this year were very high. Two very well attended swimming and water safety courses were run over the summer months and a very high standard was achieved. Thanks to Siobhán Byrne and the Water Safety Committee for being Examiners for the courses; also to Marie Jordan who organised Certificates, times and children for the courses.

*by Agatha Higgins*

To finish off another successful year, we had a Gala and Barbecue, which proved to be a great success. Thanks to Kay Buckley for providing us with medals for the Gala.

We would like to thank all the parents who gave their time to

help out in the supervising of the children; and to Mary McHugh, our Student Employee, for working in the office. The pool would not be able to open without our Lifeguards: Deirdre O'Connor and Patricia Mulhern who did a great job, and made sure that all children attending the pool had a good and safe swim. We wish to congratulate Rachel Cleary and Damien Byrne who passed their senior exams and are now qualified Lifeguards.

We look forward to more success and enjoyment next year.



*Joanna Kirrane receiving her Trophy for good attendance from our two Lifeguards, Deirdre O'Connor and Patricia Mulhern.*



*A group of Children receiving their Water Safety Certificates.*

# Annagh Wheelers C.C.

**O**ur first event this year was the Mayo 200K. and 100K. which took place on the 25th of May 1997. This proved a very successful event, with up to forty cyclists taking part. A large number of Northern cyclists spent the week-end in town. A great time was had by all.

On Friday and Sunday the 27th and 28th of June, we made an attempt to cycle 500K. (310 miles) within twenty-four hours. After preparing ourselves over the previous months with long cycles once or twice a week, we felt ready for the challenge. On Friday the 27th at 2 p.m. four of us, three cyclists and one to drive the back-up car, headed for Malin Head: this would be our starting point. The plan was to cycle through the night and into the next day and to head south in the direction of Cork. The evening itself was dry with a northerly breeze blowing, which suited us. We reached Malin Head shortly after 7 p.m. We assembled our bicycles, sat in the shade of the old light house to eat our fill of sandwiches, which would be our staple diet for the next twenty hours.

We left the most northerly part of our country and headed through the towns of Malin, Quigley's point, Bridge End, Ballybofey, through Barnesmore Gap, into Donegal and Ballyshannon. On our way to Sligo, night had descended and we had our lights turned on. When we came on a Garda check point, one of the Gardaí asked where we had come from and where we were going to. We told him our plan whereupon he asked what county we were from; when we answered "Mayo", the comment came: "That explains it!" They wished us luck with a curious smile and we headed on our way.

We reached Ballyhaunis some time around 5 a.m. and had breakfast. John Cleary had driven from

*by Martin Connery*

Malin to Ballyhaunis, where Brid Cleary took over for the remainder of the journey through Tuam, Claregalway, Oranmore, Limerick. At this stage we had covered over 270 miles and were feeling the strain. We sat down by the side of the road outside the Limerick Inn and had a can of rice. We looked back on what we had covered and decided this was not the time to give up, so we headed for Mallow. We were about five miles from Mallow, travelling in convoy; Mike had taken over the lead when a crow flew from the fence into his front wheel. This caused him to swerve but, luckily enough, he managed to stay on the bicycle. We stopped and checked for damage; luckily he had just one broken spoke, so into Mallow we went. We stopped at a garage. Our clocks on the bicycles read 500K. 310mls. The time was 3.50 p.m. We had covered the journey in 19 hours 50 minutes.

The bikes were then loaded onto the car and we headed for Limerick

where we showered and had a meal. We were home around 10 p.m. Our thanks to John and Brid for doing back up.

The Annagh Grand Prix took place on Saturday 27th of July. There were four races in all which started within thirty minutes of each other: 1st Senior Race, Under-16s, Under-14s, Under-12s. The overall winner was Mark Scanlon of Sligo Wheelers; 1st junior D. O'Neill, D. H. Burke's, Tuam; 1st Vet. J. Sullivan, Amev, Dublin; 1st Under-16s M. McDonagh, Thermo King, Galway; 1st Under-14s D. O'Connor, D. H. Burke's. Tuam; 1st Under-12s D. Keating T.K. Galway.

Our thanks to all who helped with these races: the Gardaí, Stewards, Knights of Malta, and our Sponsors without whose generous help the event could not have taken place.

We organised a walk, cycle, run event on Sunday the 7th of September. This was a fun event and eleven teams took part. Each team consisted of a cyclist, a walker and a runner. The idea was that you could not enter a team but you could enter yourself: the names were then put together and the teams were picked. The event was sponsored by Mike Byrne and the proceeds went to the new organ in the Friary.

Our thanks to all who took part in those events. Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



*L to R: Martin Connery, Bernard Jennings and Michael Cleary.*



# HISTORIC BANNER DISCOVERED AT THE ABBEY

Back in 1938 the Connaught Telegraph published a series of articles entitled "Father Anderson's Scrapbooks - Famous Augustinian Patriot." Each week in the Telegraph, writing under the pen-name of "Antiquarian", the writer gave a full and detailed account of the scrapbooks and diaries kept by the Augustinian Priest who was appointed to the Ballyhaunis Abbey in 1874 as Prior-Vicar.

Fr. James A. Anderson, who spent five years as Prior at Ballyhaunis, was born at Howth, outside Drogheda, and throughout his life was a leading and outspoken supporter of Irish nationalism and was also a fervent supporter of the Republican struggle in Ireland at the

*by Mike Byrne*

end of the last century.

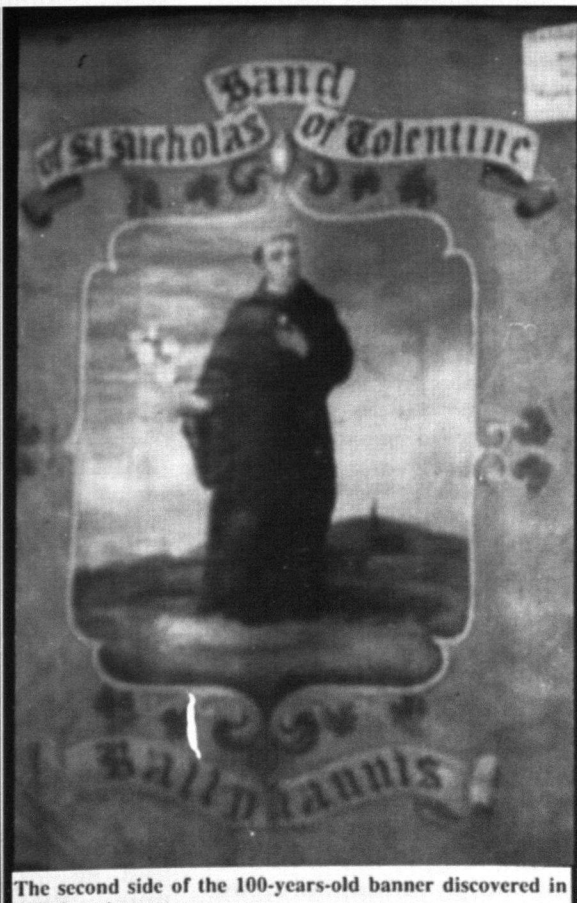
In July of last year a banner, in perfect condition and in splendid colour, was discovered in an upper room of the Friars' private dwelling by the Prior, Fr. Vincent McCarthy, O.S.A. The banner, measuring over seven feet in length with a painting on either side, carries the inscription on one side, "Band of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, Ballyhaunis", with a depiction of the saint in the centre. On the reverse side is a hand-painted depiction of the Irish wolfhound, a tower, and the Irish harp, superimposed over each other with the inscription "Let Erin remember the days of old."

Earlier this year the precious discovery was put on public display inside of the church. The historic banner was the one used by the Band of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, Ballyhaunis, for all public engagements undertaken by them. This band was set up by Fr. James Anderson as part of the St. Nicholas of Tolentine Temperance Society (also established by Fr. Anderson) and was present at all parades, regattas and picnics in the late 1800s and well into the 20th century.

On the right hand corner of the flag, written in pencil, are the words: "This banner was used by the band for their march from Ballyhaunis to Irishtown for Parnell's last public address in Ireland." >



One side of the 100-year-old banner discovered in Ballyhaunis.



The second side of the 100-year-old banner discovered in Ballyhaunis.

## Brighter Outlook

Returning to Fr. Anderson, who was the author of the recently discovered banner, according to "The Fr. Anderson Scrapbooks" published in the Connaught Telegraph in 1938, on Fr. Anderson's arrival at the Ballyhaunis Friary in 1874, "the church presented a most lamentable appearance, having been denuded of almost everything." On his arrival there wasn't as much as one penny left in the Corbona. No horse, no cow, no pig, not even a chicken: "A neglected, empty, dirty church, and still more empty, filthy, woebegone house was my only inheritance." Prior to his appointment to the Ballyhaunis Friary, the Sunday collections had dwindled almost to vanishing point. The average collections at the Sunday Mass amounted to three pence.

With the advent of Fr. Anderson, affairs at the ancient Ballyhaunis Friary took on a brighter and more hopeful outlook. Shortly after his arrival the weekly collections reached eight or nine shillings, and sometimes more.

Setting about the task of re-roofing the church, repairing the ceiling, installing new floors and furnishing the old priory, Fr. Anderson applied to Archbishop John McHale for financial assistance. The application was, "without question or hesitation", granted. During his five-year tenure at the Abbey, Fr. Anderson transformed the entire Augustinian church and residence. The patriot priest received funds from far and near, apart from the large sum he received from the Archbishop.

Financial assistance also came from the priests of the diocese, from his Augustinian brethren and, of course, from the local people with whom he steadily built up a strong relationship. The splendid stained glass window, still to be seen today, situated behind the main altar, was erected by Fr. Anderson shortly before his departure from Ballyhaunis in 1879.

## Church Choir

During his time in Ballyhaunis, Fr. Anderson set out reorganising the church choir. He increased the number of concertinas and added a few fiddles, and, as the choir numbers began to swell, he purchased a harmonium. Strange to imagine that, over one hundred years ago, the Friary had its own traditional music and folk choir: surely

a man before his time.

In July 1879, one month before the apparition in Knock, Fr. James Anderson was transferred to Drogheda. According to the "Father Anderson's Scrapbooks" articles (published in the Connaught Telegraph in 1938) the Augustinian patriot was very much at odds with the local newspaper, the Drogheda Conservative, during his period as Prior there: "Himself and 'The Conservative' went at it hammer and tongs", said one report. Although he spent a very short time in Drogheda (for obvious reasons), he was later to return there where he founded the Drogheda Independent, which continues in circulation today.

Fr. Anderson, while stationed in Fethard in Co. Tipperary, was present in Hayes' Hotel, Thurles, in 1884 for a very important meeting which saw the establishment of the Gaelic Athletic Association.

## Staunchest Friends

According to the Augustinian historian and journalist, Fr. Redmond, writing about Fr. James Anderson in his book from 1948, "throughout his life his staunchest friends were 'the Bold Fenian Men'."

In 1902, when Fr. Anderson was manager of St. Augustine's National School in John's Lane, Dublin, Maire Ní Chillín and Padraic Pearse were appointed by the 'Coisde Gnotha' of the Gaelic League to examine the pupils in Irish. There, more than five-hundred students were the first in Ireland to learn through the then despised language of their forefathers.

Thirteen years after his departure from Ballyhaunis, Fr. Anderson returned for a short visit while leading

a pilgrimage to the apparition site in Knock. On his arrival in Ballyhaunis, he was greeted by a tumultuous welcome. Fr. Anderson, taken completely by surprise by the welcome afforded by the cheering crowds, was led through the town by the Brass Band

(which he himself had formed) as they sounded "God save Ireland" and "Auld Lang Syne" in tribute to their returning hero.

On July 19th, 1903, Fr. Anderson, at the age of 64, died from blood poisoning and gangrene. Over one hundred priests attended his funeral in Dublin, as did all the Nationalist figures from the city. Miss Maud Gonne wept bitterly as she walked at the head of the funeral cortege. The Ballyhaunis Patriot Prior (1874-1879), was laid to rest in the Augustinian plot in Glasnevin Cemetery.

## Public Display

One of his hobbies was the making of scrapbooks out of press cuttings, pictures, cartoons and other material, as well as a daily diary. Some of these old scrapbooks and pieces of information were not discovered until 1938 - some thirty-five years after his death - and are of great historical and literary interest. Later that year they were published in the Connaught Telegraph.

The historic banner of the Band of St. Nicholas of Tolentine, Ballyhaunis discovered last year and unveiled to the public this year in the Friary, is of major historical significance to Ballyhaunis.

Fr. Anderson was without doubt a 'Man of the People', totally dedicated to all things Irish, the needs of the Church and the welfare of his flock. It is right and fitting that this great man should be remembered with pride, gratitude and admiration, ninety-four years after his death, particularly in Ballyhaunis where he helped to restore the Augustinian Abbey to its former glory.



Fr. Anderson OSA & Prefects of the Confraternity in the 1870s  
Front: M.A. Waldron, Fr. Anderson, Maurice Fitzgerald, M.M. Waldron. Back: Dr. Crean, Andrew Forde, J. Healy, M. Lavan.



# Portrait of the Artist as a Young Maneen

BROADCAST ON RTE RADIO IN JANUARY 1996

by *Adrian Kenny*

I was sitting in Abbeyquarter with my grandmother when it began to snow. She was failing. "I think I'll lie down for an hour", my aunt said. She had sat up all night. "Did you let out the hens?"

"I did", I said.

"There's some potatoes in the back kitchen you can give them."

"OK."

"She's all right. Aren't you all right?" She straightened the pillow, looked out the window. "Will you look at Kathleen out in the snow. What's she doing at all?"

If I answered, she'd never go.

"Oh, she was down at the well."

"You must be tired", I said.

"I'll lie down now for an hour...", she looked out the window again.

At last she was gone. Alone with my grandmother, I took the envelope from my pocket, took out the Christmas card and studied again for hidden meaning its one word - Mary - in her clear, blue, fountain pen ink. Looking out at the snow, I pictured her stepping out of the big house in Herbert Park, walking - where? - up to Morehampton road probably, and buying this card, writing her name, my address, licking this stamp, posting it - all for me.

My grandmother muttered something, turned her head and looked at me.

"I'm here, grandma."

She shut her eyes. I touched back the white hair from her forehead, studied her face: the skin drawn tight making her nose like a hook, the creases like fine lines.

The snow was drifting down through the bare black sycamores, into the potato garden. Soot fell down the chimney, smoke puffed out into the parlour. I looked

about at the ugly little armchair, the cheap ornaments, the dark print of the Sacred Heart; and I took my book, *Enemies of promise*, to distance myself from it all. But that one word, Mary, kept appearing, overlaying Cyril Connolly's words, like the snow covering the fields outside.

A stamp of shoes at the back door, a "God Bless!" and footsteps through the kitchen: a neighbour looking in to see how my grandmother was today; a pretext for gossip, too. I was from the city, but coming down here on holidays I had grown to fear this drifting in and out of the house, that ravenous hunger for News, those X-Ray glances which pierced my tweed sportscoat to the naked peasant's son underneath. A glance at my grandmother - dozing again - and the neighbour turned to me. Coldly I nodded, said Yes and No until chat died and the neighbour left, defeated. She would have her revenge, I knew, at her next port of call. I could imagine it all, for I heard it all before, for my aunt was part of it too; she had to be, everyone had to be; it was - I had noted in my little highbrow diary - the price you paid for living in close communion with your neighbours. First there would be the hint of dislike -

"What do you make of that young Kenny?"

"The maneen?" The masonic sign would be answered. "Arra, he's harmless."

Then they would move into the open - "he's not as clever as he thinks...." And then when the neighbour left she in turn would be pulverised. That's what it was

like, I thought: a machine reducing everything that stood out to powder.

I looked out the parlour window at the snow still falling. And yet - there was always 'and yet' here - there was something beautiful in it too; in that communion. All together, at station masses, wakes, fairs; there was something I couldn't explain, that kept me coming back here, though I was no longer a child to be sent here on school holidays. I was eighteen now; January 1964.

My grandmother's fingers moved slowly to another bead of her rosary; her nails were yellow against the white. I drew the sheet up about her throat. The snow was falling more heavily now; more smoke puffed down the chimney, mixing with the smell of medicine... and all at once, I wanted to be out of here, to be out there in that white fairyland. A pack of wild geese passed overhead and their yelping cries down the chimney sent a tingle down my back. That was what did it. My gun was standing in the corner. The dog began to whimper with excitement as I put cartridges in my pocket. Gently I stepped outside, drew the door shut.

Not a soul, not a shoemark on the straight, white-carpeted road until I reached the graveyard hill, where a tinker boy appeared; the cold or a stammer shivering his voice:

"You didn't see a p-p-pie bald mare!"

"I didn't."

"Thanks, s-s-sir."

Gooseberries of green snot clotting his nostrils; one of his wellingtons was cut open showing a blue,

naked toe. But all I cared for was that "s-s-sir." It set me above, apart from winks and watching neighbours, from that pulverising world; it warmed my heart like that Christmas card in my inside pocket, that had sent me running down here. That was really why I was here, wasn't it? Because after the months of chasing she had finally stopped and turned to me; and I had run, back to this childhood cocoon. That was why I was so touchy suddenly about winks and watching neighbours, wasn't it? I began to walk more quickly - ooh it was cold. Because that cocoon was breaking up, falling to pieces.

Beautiful snowflakes falling still, filling in my footprints down the empty streets of Ballyhaunis, filling the fields beyond with ghostly whiteness. From childhood years I knew them like the back of my hand. I found the gap, slipped in. My grandmother would be dozing still; I would be back before my aunt was awake.

The dog raced ahead, down to Island Lake, where he put up a snipe - a screeching zig-zag of brown and silver. I squeezed the trigger, heard the gun's report, felt the barrel heat in my frozen hand, saw the flash against the stone grey sky, smelled the powder, and saw the bird drop between snowy scraws - all in the one thrilling instant. The dog ran to retrieve, looked at me sideways, then

sloped off with the snipe in his jaws; snarling as I ran to snatch it before he could devour it. Once, when he had done that and I had beaten him, he had sunk his jaws into my leg. "He's mad" my father said "like all the Kennys."

A working dog, bred for the showbench, as confused, eager, timid-vicious as myself, he ran ahead again, slinking past a bullock, yelping at a blackbird, snapping at snowflakes. I thought of my father again, imagined his look - that look inherited from my grandmother, the cool glance reserved for fools - and was glad he wasn't with me. I licked the blood from my second finger, cut as always by the trigger guard's recoil; another reason I didn't like shooting, not really, and loaded the gun again, springing from scraw to scraw again.

Far ahead the dog raced along the next lake's limestoney shore, putting up a flock of golden plover. A hundred birds, flying as one, they skimmed across the water, turned as one, gold turning to silver as they swung back above me. A good shot made me better. I fired again and brought one down, gold and silver feathers reddening with blood that stained the snow. I put it in my other pocket.

But there was her face again, Mary's face again: serious, shining as it had been when I met her before Christmas, when she had

turned, drawing a strand of her hair back from her eyes - a clear straight look into my eyes, a fleck of colour appearing in her cheek; a look that frightened and delighted me. I rammed another cartridge into the breech.

Halfway down Mannin lake now. On my left, out on the water, a raft of wild duck whistled and mewed and quacked and splashed, out of range. On my right - the holy well, water bubbling up all the time, tumbling the gold sand at the bottom. My mind still tumbling, I plunged my hand into the beautiful numbing clear water. Why did I fear that pulverising world? Why did I want to be part of it too? Why did I jump up then, my face reddening, pretending I had just been washing my bloody finger as I saw someone approach down the white slope? Because they were always watching one another, flying as one, like those golden plover. The boys in my class at school, they had been like that too, laughing as one when I slipped into Mayo English, said "I do be..."

But this stranger wasn't watching me, was ignoring me, and I saw it was the tinker boy who had asked me about a piebald mare. But now he had a brindled greyhound at his heel, a dead hare in his hand, a smile on his face as he cut ahead of me, down the shore to the end of the lake where they were camped. Another flock I did not belong to: the woman building up a fire of beech branches under a pot of water already boiling white for that hare; a Yorkshire terrier asleep on a heap of stolen hay; a small ginger-haired man holding a bicycle; the children clustered in the steam and smoke that blew with the snow out across the lake. Oh lovely life!

I tried to picture her, picture Mary by my side here, to imagine her hand in mine as it had been that evening we walked around Stephen's Green together - all four sides - but couldn't. I turned cold.... God, it was getting cold. I brushed snow off my tweed hat.



**Taken at Dispensary Ballyhaunis 1966.** L to R: Brendan Carney, John Lyons, Seamus Mulrennan, Willie Winston, Michael Plunkett, Martin Gallagher, Seamus Staunton.



"You didn't see a piebald mare?" The children called, laughing, and I began to walk quickly again.

Walking where? The road back home ran along the other shore, where I could see the wind crushed hawthorn marking the old children's burial ground, where an infant uncle lay, among the anonymous snowy scraws. No, not that way. Up the stiff white hill ran the road to Kilgarriff, where another uncle would be sitting alone looking into his fire. But what would I say when I got there? That his mother was holding her own? And he would try to hold back tears, but they would slip out, down a face that looked hard as split flint. No, No.

Barr! Barr! - I threw the gun to my shoulder, firing right and left as a woodcock rose like a shadow, winging between trees; my number six shot hammering a dark pattern on the snow plastered bark. A miss. I licked more blood from my second finger. I was in Mannin wood now, wandering though the old demesne, a sparkling, whitepowdered wilderness. So cold now, so cold. Two ravens drifted from a treetop and, grunting like pigs, tumbled away in the wind that was rising. I returned to my white world: lovely silence falling still, covering everything, covering me as I made my way, walking more quickly now, feet sinking in the drifts already forming, up the old avenue to the ruined big house; the driven snow piercing my clothes as I stepped out of the sheltering trees; past the broken down Morris Minor - a white Sussex hen sheltering in the driver's seat; fallen trees, brambles - everything clear cut beautiful in the falling whiteness. There it was, Mannin House, its façade brushed white, dazzling as that Christmas card scene in my inside pocket. This was where my legs had carried me. I stood, shivering now. Set up on a sill, blocking an old window, was a stone carved with a coat of arms: a lion prancing between three crescent moons; the

snow driven into the lines, throwing the carving out into high relief. It looked beautiful like that, I thought, as I stood picturing the man who had made it, driving a chisel the size of a pencil, puffing the stone dust before him as he raised the lips of the fierce mouth, the claws of those flexed toes, the tail curled like a whip... And standing there, as slowly, suddenly as my coldness turned to numbness, I realised, admitted, saw clearly - as if some other stone carving had finally taken shape - that I wouldn't meet Mary, couldn't go through with it, that something in me shrank from it....

"Hi!"

I turned. The snowed up door had opened; a pepper and salt head of hair appeared.

"Stand in out of that!" It was the old postman who lived here now. I knew him to see from drifting along this shore. He made room for me in the doorway. A statuette of St. Philomena in the fanlight looked out over our heads serenely at the blizzard.

"The same bloody old stuff. Nine months of winter - and what's the other three only hit and miss, hah?"

I licked snowflakes from my lips, stamped my feet in manly fashion. The snow carried over the long, low house, itself snug under the chin of the hill, and across the lake and up the white road, whipping the tail of the tinkers' honey mare between her haunches. Looking at the encampment he said: "That's all that's in it now. And they'll be going soon, I'll go bail. Sure any man that'd live in Ireland now, he'd a right to have his head examined by one of them Harley Street specialists, hah?"

"The tay's wet." A woman's voice from inside.

He laid a huge warm hand to my cheek. "Urta, you're starved with the cold. Come into the fire." He led the way in broken backed slippers down to the old kitchen: big, whitewashed, black-raftered, floored in bare flags; smelling of turfs smoke and potatoes. The old

woman, wife or sister, with garters, without stockings, bent over the fire, swung the kettle back onto the chimney hook, straightened slowly, smiling -

"And who's this ladeen at all?"

I told her. She knew my grandmother. "And is she alive yet?" They were related somehow; she told me how as she poured the tea, dancing over the generations, as quick with ancestry as she was slow in walk. "Well isn't she the mighty woman." She hobbled over to the dresser, pressed a hand to her back, gave a small gasp of pain.

I laid down my gun, the dog lay down on the hearthstone. I sat on the hard deal chair and stretched my frozen feet to the fire, my hands tingling with pain as they came alive again. I looked about. A smokey Sacred Heart picture on the chimneybreast, and underneath, rearing from either end of the mantel, two bronze horses with bronze boys standing tiptoe to catch the bridles - ribbons of bronze gone green, remains of the big house days.

"They were there ever", she followed my glance. "I don't know why we have them. Only collecting dust."

"Well", the old postman said "No horses in Ireland have as fine a time as they have. They have the finest time in all Ireland."

Oh no - I thought, as I sipped the sweet scalding tea, and felt the wall of heat move out from the fire. As the journey back through the snow, and the journey then to Dublin, and that inevitable failure, funk, resolution or whatever it was ahead, faded for the moment like the cold, and for half an hour, as if it was forever, I enjoyed this haven - oh no, I have! I looked out the window at the whirling snow, and as if stroked by a ghost, the back of my hair stiffened in delight. I thought of it again next week when, when I could not cry, I touched my grandmother's cold face framed in her coffin's white lining. She had fallen asleep while I was out, she never woke again.

# Maria McGarry

***"I accept this bursary so that I can learn from musical experts in other countries and bring this experience back to Ireland, and to the West."***

So said Maria McGarry from Ballyhaunis when she addressed a celebrity audience at the Berkley Court Hotel in Dublin after she had been presented with a £5,000 bursary by An Taoiseach, Bertie Ahern T.D.

Maria won the award for the "Bursary for Young Artists" on the inaugural "Ka Spirit of Life Arts" Awards provided by Ford Ireland in association with the Sunday Independent. Maria featured on a live piano performance on RTE. The "Ka Spirit of Life" Arts Bursary is a further All Ireland achievement for the nineteen year old pianist from Ballyhaunis who has achieved a number of national distinctions during 1997; for example, Maria was selected to represent Ireland in the Guardian International Piano Competition at the

National Concert Hall last May and went on to win the "John Field" category. Earlier, she was a winner in the Fitzwilton "Search for Exceptional Talent" Trust and also received an award in the Lesney Bursary.

The highlight for Maria was the night she won the "Ulster Bank Foundation" Bursary for £15,000, plus a specially commissioned Waterford Glass Trophy, an exciting event which took place on the Late Late Show. Maria was selected as the 'unanimous winner' by an International Jury. The excitement for Mayo and Ballyhaunis was further highlighted when Rosaleen Kelly, of Kiltybo, won the Bonanza Holiday Award on the same programme. In between these competitions, Maria travelled throughout Ireland to concert performances, in An Grianán, Clifden, Goethe Institute, Royal Concert Hall and the R.D.S. She also performed at arts festivals in Kilkenny, Boyle and Clifden. However, for Maria, the concert highlight was the night she played in her Alma Mater: to a full house in the Community School, Ballyhaunis.

Throughout this hectic schedule of concerts and performances, studies had to continue. Maria is a third year student of Music (affiliated to Dublin City University) under the world famous Dr. John O'Connor. Exams, studies and all the other distractions of student life have to fit in. It is a busy time for Maria but she does it because of the enjoyment that music bring to herself and to others; and that's what Music is all about.





# Travels in the Southern Hemisphere

After three years at college, I was not quite in the mood to settle down and work hard, so I decided I should go see a few places before I got bogged down with work. I left for New Zealand in September 1995 and my stopovers on the way included Frankfurt, Singapore and Bali.

On the way to Frankfurt I was accompanied by my old boss, who trained a runner that was competing in one of Germany's biggest races on that day, so we had lots to discuss. We exchanged good luck wishes at the airport as I joined up with seven other Irish people. We had an interesting time trying to find our connecting flight as we sifted through the guards and their rather large machine guns. It was quite a few hours before we reached Singapore where we only stayed long enough to have a quick view of the airport. After another few hours we reached Bali where we had a stopover for about twenty-four hours. We received our temporary visas and had a quick look at the world outside the airport. It was very dirty and

warm outside and it struck me as a place I would not wish to return to again. We ate and slept and then got up in the middle of the night for the remaining leg of our journey to New Zealand. When we arrived in Auckland it was early morning, but we were very tired. My new employer had come to collect me, but, before I reached my new residence, we had to take in a race meeting on the way. Unlike Ireland, they have ten races on a card in New Zealand, so even I was quite bored as the day went on. The first thing that caught my eye about New Zealand were the timber houses to which I was not accustomed, but I soon had to make myself familiar with them when I saw my new residence.

I had only arrived when Mount Rapheau started to erupt. This volcano had been dormant for the previous forty-five years. On only my second day there I had a day off, so I travelled 250 miles down through New Zealand to see this volcano with some new workmates. Between the volcano and

*by Joseph Burke*

the French nuclear tests off the coast, there was quite a lot of noise and smoke during the first few days of my stay.

Time passed quite quickly and soon it was Christmas. By then, I had become accustomed to rising at 4.15 a.m. and being under the full gaze of the racetrack floodlights for 4.45 a.m. Then there were twelve to sixteen horses to be ridden before breakfast at 9.30 a.m. It was starting to get really hot and if we could have worn shorts whilst riding the horses we probably would have, but there were racetrack rules about dress. On St. Stephen's Day it was Derby Day and Christmas was soon forgotten about, as the Derby favourite had to be attended to. Unfortunately, he stumbled on the corner while channelling for the lead and, down with him went all our preparation - gone in a second. That's racing. Imagine how the trainer felt, or even the jockey, when he came to!

By April, I had seen all I wanted to see and learnt all I was going to learn about the industry in New Zealand, so I decided it was time to move on. By June I had finally secured a job for three friends and I, through an Australian jockey whom I had previously worked with in Ireland. We all left for Sydney from Cambridge Airport, which was nothing more than a large shed and, as you can imagine, customs were quite slack! One of the most amazing memories I have was of flying in over Sydney Harbour and Opera House. I knew straight away that I was really going to enjoy Australia.

However, my enjoyment was short-lived when I discovered that I had to be at work at 4.00 a.m.



*Joseph Burke and 'friend' in Melbourne.*

here! But I was working for the greatest Australian racehorse trainer ever, and one of the best in the World - Bart Cummings. I got to ride some of the best horses in Australia too, including "Saintly", Australian Horse of the Year for 1996-97. Also, we finished work at 8.00 a.m. and that was our day's work done - so it was great, a great job really. However, it was not to last for long as I was thrown from a horse one morning and I fractured my wrist in four places: this put an end to my riding.

By this time it was September, and the Melbourne Cup Carnival was starting soon, so I decided to make my way down to Melbourne in case I'd miss anything. On the way I stopped at Canberra: this is more an administrative city than anything else. It was built when Melbourne (the former capital of

Australia) and Sydney could not agree on which city should be capital, so they created a new metropolis which was almost equidistant from each city.

I stayed in a Youth Hostel in Melbourne for the weeks coming up to the cup. There I met quite a variation of people and we had a great laugh. On Derby Day I went to the track in shorts and tee-shirt, quite unlike the attire required in order to gain admission to a racecourse on Derby Day on this side of the world. But when Cup Day itself arrived, a shirt and tie was on the agenda. The favourite was the Irish invader "Oscar Schindler." But the Ozzies had one up their sleeve in a horse named "Saintly", trained by Bart Cummings, who won as he liked. There was a major party that night in the 'Saintly camp' which was

quite a night.

When the cup was over, Melbourne seemed quite deserted and I decided it was now time to head for home and to put what I had learnt, both at college and on my travels, to work. It had been a good fifteen months and, on the way back, I stopped off in Austria for the day. It was very dark, cold and gloomy in Vienna - quite a contrast to what I had left behind - but a foretaste of what was to come when I reached London. Here, I recovered for a few days before coming back to Ireland. I now work for a Bloodstock Agent who buys racehorses for foreign clients, so the contacts I made abroad have proved very useful and I have been able to keep in touch with most of them through my job. It was a very worthwhile experience all round.

## FRIENDS OF Croí BALLYHAUNIS & DISTRICT

*by Helen Meehan*

**F**riends of Croí Ballyhaunis and District was set up by Milo Henry two years ago. It is a fund raising organisation to help the fight against heart disease in the West of Ireland. 1996/1997 was a very successful year for Croí. As membership grew, events became easier to organise and invitations to outside venues flowed in. Successful fund raising has taken place in Ballyhaunis, Tooreen, Ballinlough and Ballyvary.

To date, Friends of Croí Ballyhaunis and District has been associated with installing a stress machine in Castlebar General Hospital and has secured a defibrillator for the local area. The offi-



*A presentation to Helen Meehan (Secretary/PRO), on behalf of the people from Ballyhaunis & District who contributed voluntarily over the past 12 months. L to R: Marion Fitzpatrick, Martina Nolan, Brendan Hoban, Catherine Sloyan, Rita Lundon, Noel Sloyan, Peggy Henry, Helen Meehan, Donal Shanaghy, Yvonne Loughran. Missing from Photograph: Eddie Mulhern (Vice-Chairperson, Rosaleen & Hugh Curley, Michael Curley, Mary Hannah O'Connor, Martin Gavin.*

cers are Rita Lundon, Chairperson; Helen Meehan, Secretary/ P.R.O.; Donal Shanaghy, Treasurer and Eddie Mulhern, Vice-Chairperson.

The committee and members wish to thank Midwest Radio, the Western People, the Connaught

Telegraph and the Parish Newsletter for all the favourable publicity given to the organisation throughout the year.

Thanks also to the proprietors of the various venues where functions were held.



# BALLYHAUNIS G.A.A. CLUB

**T**he past year has been another busy year for Ballyhaunis G.A.A. club. We have fielded seventeen teams and this year entered a Junior and Senior team in the Mayo Hurling Championship.

## UNDER-10 FOOTBALL

Every Sunday morning during the months from March to November, you will find some fifty to sixty boys and girls at the G.A.A. grounds, learning and enjoying their national game of football. Their ages range from seven to ten and the main aim of these training sessions is to get young boys and girls interested in Gaelic games, learn the basic skills and, more importantly, to enjoy themselves.

During the 1996/97 season the Ballyhaunis Under-8 and Under-10 teams played games against Michael Glaveys, Castlerea, Claremorris, Eire Óg, Tourmakeady, Moy Davitts,

*by James Reidy, Secretary*

Castlebar, Ballina, Louisburgh and Charlestown. They participated in four Blitzes the main one being the County Blitz. This was held in Castlebar and they reached the final, being beaten by Ballina.

Also, during the year the team was brought to Louisburgh where they not only enjoyed a good game of football but also went to the seaside. The Under-10 season finished with the Mick O'Connell Trophy.

The Under-10 panel: Mark Kelly, Conor Mulrennan, Lorcan Finan, John Mongan, Joseph Neenan, Clayton Coffey, John Jordan, Neil Jordan, John C. Halpin, Michael Waldron, Ciarán Waldron, Jarlath Mellett, Kevin Gallagher, Ross Carney, David Healy, Kimberly Moran, Liza Webb, Claire Prenty, Joanna Hoban, Brian Gallagher, John

Gallagher, Seamus O'Dwyer, Michael Cunningham, Fergal Lyons, Austin Lyons, Padraig Cribbin, John Lyons and Sean O'Kane.

Trainers: Under-10: Michael Gallagher, Barry Butler, Martin Finan and John Halpin. Under-8: Billy Phillips and Sean McNamara.

## UNDER-10 HURLING

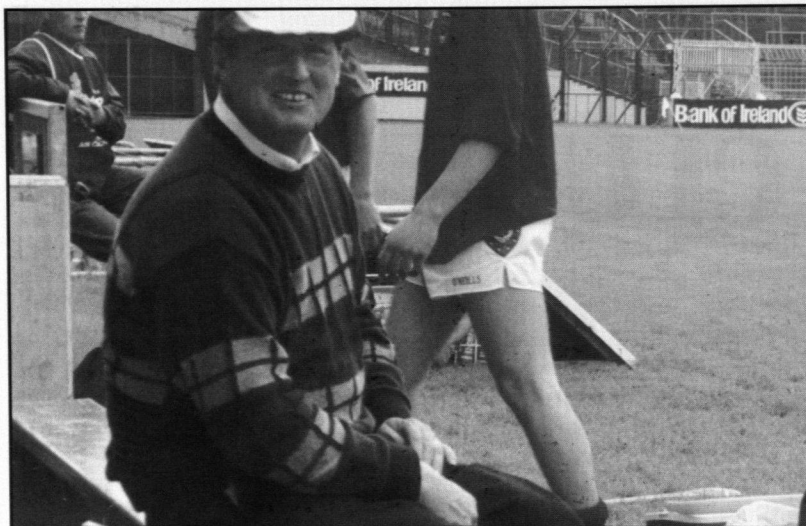
This commenced with an indoor Hurling League in the Scouts' Den. Over fifty boys and girls had an outstanding series of games in the Spring of 1997. Even though there is no formal competition at Under-10 or Under-11 levels a number of challenge games were played against Sligo and Castlebar teams.

## UNDER-12 FOOTBALL

The Under-12 team commenced training on Sunday mornings from early March, and many of the players continued training at Under-12, Under -13 and Under -14 level right up to the beginning of November. In the Under-12 League there were eight games with the team winning four and losing four to finish in mid-table. The highlight of this campaign was the defeat of table toppers, Burrishoole, in a very exciting home game.



Coventry '97 Under-14 Football. Back row L to R: Martin Finan (Mentor); Tommy Moran (Mentor); Andrew Shanaghy, Jason Powers, Hughie Carney, Christopher Morley, Alan Lucey, Tommy O'Dowd, Padraic Carney, Christy Burke, Paul Jordan, John Prenty (Mentor); Tommy Waldron (Mentor). Front row: Stephen Shanaghy, Fergal Walsh, Noel McGuire, Gareth Morrissey, Brian Mulrennan, Ian Prenty, Patrick Waldron, John Prenty, Karen Lilly, Keith Higgins, Barry Collum, Alan Lyons.



**Corkman Ray Lucey, on the 'green bench' in the dugout in Croke Park while attending the All-Ireland U-16 and Minor All-Ireland 'C' Hurling Finals.**

In the East Mayo Blitz a very enjoyable day's football was witnessed at the local G.A.A. pitch with the level of skills displayed being of a very high standard. We defeated Kiltimagh and Kilmovee to finish up in a play-off for the final but unfortunately a very strong Aughamore team proved too good on the day. Following this defeat the players remained in training in preparation for the trip to Coventry.

The Under-12 panel: Ian Prenty, Keith Higgins, Cian Higgins, Fergal Walshe, Ciaran Griffin, Karen Lilly, Patrick Heaney, Liam Lyons, Colm Gallagher, William Nestor, David Connolly, David Hannan, Michael Jordan, Phelim Carroll, Danny Carroll, Damien Waldron, Declan Ward, Anthony Murphy, Aidan Healy and Shazad Javid.

Selectors: J. Prenty, T. Waldron, J. Griffin and J. Halpin.

### UNDER-13

The Under-13 team had a very successful year qualifying for the County Semi-Final after winning a Division which consisted of all A teams. In the first round we defeated Ballaghaderreen by 2-13 to 2-10 after a thrilling game. Next on the list were Swinford and, after a very tough game, we emerged victorious on a 2-10 to 1-8 scoreline. Our next game was away to Charlestown and we were very

lucky to win by 1-8 to 2-4. This set up a final game with Aughamore and, as Ballaghaderreen was still involved in the competition, this game was, in effect, a final of the Division and, after a very exciting game, we won the Divisional title on a 1-13 to 2-8 scoreline. In the County Semi-Final we were comprehensively defeated by a much stronger Castlebar team. The team fully deserved their success following the huge effort they put in during the year training twice a week since March.

The Under-13 panel: Shane Buckley, Padraic Carney, Christopher Burke, Karen Lilly, Cian Higgins, Alan Lyons, Brian Mulrennan, Keith Higgins, Stephen Shanaghy, Patrick Waldron, John Prenty, Paul Jordan, Fergal Walshe, Liam Lyons, Ian Prenty, William Nestor, Ciaran Griffin, Colm Gallagher, Patrick Heaney, David Hannan, Michael Jordan, Phelim Carroll, Danny Carroll, Martin Mongan, Christy Morley, Declan Warde and Anthony Murphy.

Selectors: John Prenty, Tommy Waldron and Anna Shanaghy.

### UNDER-14

The Under-14 team reached the East Mayo Final before being comprehensively defeated by Kiltimagh, having defeated Charlestown in the Semi-Final

after a replay. In the County Leagues they finished in mid-table with victories over Ardnaree, Lahardane, Charlestown and Tourmakeady.

The Under-14 panel: Shane Buckley, Padraic Carney, Andrew Shanaghy, Karen Lilly, Brian Mulrennan, Jason Powers, Keith Higgins, Derek McConn, Hugh Carney, Patrick Waldron, John Prenty, Stephen Shanaghy, Fergal Walshe, Alan Healy, Ian Prenty, Alan Lucey, Alan Lyons, Christopher Burke, Paul Jordan, Cian Higgins, Ciaran Griffin, Liam Lyons, Colm Gallagher, William Nestor, Noel Maguire and Barry Collum.

Selectors: John Prenty, Anna Shanaghy and Tommy Waldron.

### BALLYHAUNIS G.A.A. BORD NA N-ÓG TRIP TO COVENTRY

On Friday 3rd of October Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club Bord Na n-Óg travelled to Coventry with the Under-12 and Under Under-14 teams at the invitation of Roger Casements G.A.A. Club. The party consisted of thirty-eight players; Bord na n-Óg Officers: Tommy Moran (Chairman) and Mary Prenty (Secretary), Club Chairman Gerry Lyons, Under-12 and U-14 Selectors Tommy Waldron, John Prenty, Anna Shanaghy, John Griffin, Martin Finan and John Halpin; parents: Maureen Lilly, Breda Waldron, Cathal Carroll, Eileen Jordan, Mary Maguire, Martha Gallagher, Mary Waldron, Statia Warde and Pamela Heaney. The party travelled by Moran's Coach from Ballyhaunis, travelling to Holyhead by fast ferry. The party was met in Coventry by Martin Grogan, Vice Chairman of Roger Casements Club, and formerly of Clare Street, Ballyhaunis, and Bernard Keane of Annagh. Following a meal the players were allocated to the host houses by trip co-ordinator Pat Hoey. Bord na n-Óg wish to acknowledge the hospitality of the following towards the children: Phil Webb, Margaret



Keane, Gerry Purfield, Brian Galvin, Bridget Dooley, John Gallagher, Mary Grogan, Liz Quirke, Carmel Hegarty, Paddy Browne and Pat Hoey.

On Saturday morning the party was taken on a sightseeing tour of Coventry before travelling to Páirc na hÉireann Birmingham to play Warwickshire at Under-12 and Under-14. Following a very exciting Under-14 game, Ballyhaunis was defeated by four points by the Warwickshire team who had won the National Feile title in Donegal in June. A very exciting Under-12 game had to go to extra time before a battling Ballyhaunis team emerged victorious by one point. Following the game, a presentation function was held where all teams were made a special presentation to commemorate the Trip. At this function, Club Chairman Gerry Lyons issued an invitation to Roger Casements Club to visit Ballyhaunis in the near future. Following the presentation the teams were taken to Games World where a most enjoyable evening was had by the children.

The following players made the journey to Coventry: Shane Buckley, Padraic Carney, Andrew Shanaghy, Karen Lilly, Brian Mulrennan, Jason Powers, Keith Higgins, Derek McConn, Hugh Carney, Patrick Waldron, John Prenty, Stephen Shanaghy, Fergal Walshe, Alan Healy, Ian Prenty, Alan Lucey, Alan Lyons, Christopher Burke, Paul Jordan, Cian Higgins, Ciaran Griffin, Liam Lyons, Colm Gallagher, William Nestor, Noel Maguire, Barry Collum, Patrick Heaney, David Hannan, Phelim Carroll, Danny Carroll, Damien Waldron, Declan Warde, Anthony Murphy, Aidan Healy, Christopher Morley, Gareth Morrissey, Ciarán Waldron, Kimberley Moran, Niall Prenty and Brian Waldron.

On Sunday morning, following mass with the host families, the party departed for home and arrived back in Ballyhaunis at 11.30 p.m. The trip was very enjoyable for all concerned and Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Bord Na n-Óg



**Ballyhaunis Hurlers on the panel of the County Minor Hurling team which reached the All-Ireland Final 21/4/96. L to R: Michael Regan, Kenneth Kirrane, Don Regan, Paul McConn, John Gallagher.**



**Keith Higgins with Joe McDonagh, President C.L.C.G. at Mini-Sevens in Croke Park, All-Ireland Final 1997 (Hurling).**

wish to compliment the children on their behaviour during the weekend and to thank Roger Casements Club for their hospitality. They also want to thank the many people who supported the Fund Raising events, such as the Sponsored Walk and the Golf Classic held earlier in the year, which made the trip worthwhile.

### **UNDER-12/NATIONAL SCHOOL HURLING**

At Mini Sevens level Ballyhaunis had a successful year. Ballyhaunis beat Glencastle 3-6 to 0-2 to qualify for the County Final. In the County Final St. Mary's National School beat Knock National School by 2-2 to 1-0; top

scorers: Fergal Walsh, Keith Higgins, Liam Lyons and Brian Mulrennan. St. Mary's then went on to represent Mayo in the Connacht Mini Sevens Finals in Athleague at the end of May. They beat the Roscommon Champions, Clooncolgan, by 3-4 to 1-1; the Leitrim Champions Carrick-on-Shannon 1-3 to 0-2; and the Sligo champions St. Brendan's N.S. by 4-2 to 0-1. They unfortunately lost to a great Galway team, Ballymanaghto, by a score of 3-3 to 3-8. As a result of these great performances Fergal Walsh was selected to play in Croke Park at the interval of the All-Ireland Semi-Final between Wexford and Tipperary. Keith Higgins was also selected to play during the interval

of the Clare vs Tipperary Semi-Final.

In the National School competition St. Mary's Ballyhaunis N.S. won the County Final beating Knock N.S. to win the Cumann na mBunscoil, Conradh na Gaeilge sponsored cup for the fourth time. St. Mary's completely dominated the first half to lead 3-6 to 0-0 at the break. In the second half Knock N.S. responded with 2-1 before Ballyhaunis scored a number of points and a final goal by Ciaran Griffin.

Scorers: Fergal Walsh, Keith Higgins, Christopher Morley, Liam Lyons, Brian Mulrennan and Colm Gallagher. Congrats to Jim Lundon on this success.

### UNDER-14 HURLING

Ballyhaunis hurlers competed at this level in Championship and Feile. At the 1997 Feile competition Tooreen beat Ballyhaunis in the first round. In the Under-14 championship proper Ballyhaunis won their first game against Belmullet in Belmullet. In the second round Castlebar were the victims of a runaway score. Next, Westport came and went with another victory for Ballyhaunis. Ballina also fell on the way. Next was Tooreen who were defeated in a spirited game of hurling. This success qualified Ballyhaunis for their second Under-14 County Final in two years. In that final the opponents were Westport. The game was played in Ballina, and with ten minutes left, Westport caught Ballyhaunis with a goal followed by another within two minutes. Westport won but there was no disgrace in the manner of the defeat.

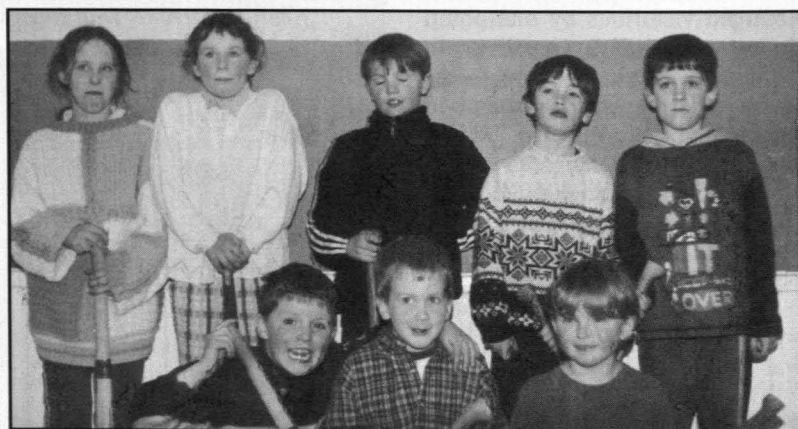
Finally, congratulations to Jason Powers who won the County Under-14 Puc Fada Competition in Balla last May. This win afforded Jason the opportunity to represent Mayo at Tuam during the interval of the Connacht Championship between Mayo and Galway.

### UNDER-16 HURLING

At Under-16 level Ballyhaunis won a number of their games, but, having been beaten by Westport



*Indoor Hurling, Spring '97. Back Row: Joseph Kelly, John Lyons, Vanetta Powers, Paul Ward. Front: Patrick Kelly, Kevin Gallagher, Robert Cregg, David McNamara*



*Indoor Hurling, Spring '97. Back Row: Lisa Carney, Elaine Carney, John Jordan, Brian Gallagher, Seamus O'Dwyer. Front: John Lyons (Knockbrack), Sean Ronayne, Shane Nolan.*



*Indoor Hurling, Spring '97. Back Row: James Ronayne, Conor Mulrennan (Capt), David Healy, Joanne Hoban. Front: Daniel Ward, Paul Higgins, Thomas Brady, Kevin Moran.*

and Belmullet, were out of contention for a final spot. All due credit to the panel of players whose dedication and skill cannot be denied.

### UNDER-16 FOOTBALL

Training started in early April on Sunday mornings in preparation for an eight match League campaign and the Championship



during the summer. On paper, the panel showed great potential. The season was divided into two: games were held up to mid-May with a break up until late June to allow for the Junior Cert exams. Performances were average in early season but showed potential. The most notable victory in the league was the defeat of the eventual winners, Balla, in a very exciting game held in Balla. Ballyhaunis eventually finished third in the League having won five games, drawn one, and lost two. The Championship was the next main focus and the highlight of the year was winning the East Mayo title defeating Kilmovee Shamrocks in Aughamore. The County Semi-Final against Shrule/Glencorrib was played in Hollymount. In an excellent game of football Ballyhaunis were defeated by the narrowest of margins. Shrule/Glencorrib went on to win the County Final by defeating Breaffy. This fact should make this panel of players realise that with the ability they have and dedicated training, a county title is not too far away. Manager: Tom Prenty and Hugh Rudden.

### **UNDER-17 FOOTBALL**

The Under-17 football team played against Ballaghaderreen, Charlestown, Swinford and Aughamore. The team performed with great commitment in all games.

### **UNDER-18 FOOTBALL**

The Minor football team under the guidance of T. Moran, J. Fahey and P. Meenan had a very busy year. First on the agenda was the Minor League in which the team played eight games, winning four, drawing two and losing two. Next came the Championship. In the East Mayo Semi-Final, Ballyhaunis accounted for Aughamore. In the East Mayo Final the team had a comprehensive win over Eastern Gaels by 0-14 to 0-3 to win the cup for the second year in succession. The County Semi-Final was the next game in which Ballyhaunis came through with flying colours

defeating Shrule/Glencorrib in a score of 2-11 to 0-8. In the County Final, Ballyhaunis were drawn against Westport. On Sunday 12th of October in Hollymount, Ballyhaunis showing great determination and skill, earned a well deserved draw in the County Final and the replay against Westport was on Sunday 9th of November.

The match was played on a wet pitch, which suited the physically stronger Westport team. The half time score of 0-7 to 0-2 showed the run of play. In the second half Westport continued where they left off. A goal for Westport in the final quarter looked like the death knell for Ballyhaunis but, with a never say die attitude, Ballyhaunis replied with a goal to give a nail-biting finish. Westport eventually ran out winners with a four-point margin and a score of 1-9 to 1-4.

Over the course of the East Mayo Championship Joe Freeley was voted Best Player and, in the Mayo Semi-Final and Final, Vinnie Healy was awarded Best Player.

Over the year, the team has played numerous challenge matches and has trained on no less than forty occasions, on top of all the competitive matches they have played. The campaign started in March and finished in November. That in itself shows the measure of dedication and respect the minor panel has for the Club.

Minor panel: Vincent Healy, Brendan Rudden, Brian Kilcourse, Alan Egan, Karl McManus, James McGarry, Sean Hunt, Simon McCafferty (Capt.), Peter Meenan, Joe Freeley, Alan Regan, Karl Lyons, Paul Prenty, Niall Tighe, Paul Finn, M. J. Nolan, Micheal Walsh, Thomas Murphy, Shay Walsh, Michael Shanaghy, Don Regan, Frank Fahy and Brendan Moran.

### **UNDER-18 HURLING**

We were defeated in the County Final by Belmullet in this competition.

### **SENIOR FOOTBALL**

At the start of the year Ballyhaunis Senior Football team

got off to a good start by beating Kiltimagh in the Final of the Goodfellowship Tournament. In the Centenary Cup, they were beaten by Swinford in the Semi-Final. In the Canon Henry Cup they narrowly missed qualification for the play-offs. The senior team played in Division 2 of the Mayo Welcome Inn League and will remain there for the 1998 season. In the Intermediate Championship they played Ballinrobe in the first round. Ballinrobe were top of the division at the time, and also had home venue. Against all the odds, Ballyhaunis were victorious and progressed to the next round against Bonniconlon. On the 10th of August this game took place in Bonniconlon. After trailing at half time, playing against the wind, all the advantages were with Ballyhaunis in the second half. But a determined Bonniconlon team would not give way and come out eventual winners. Afterwards, Ballyhaunis regarded this as a game they should have won. Bonniconlon went on to win the Intermediate Championship.

Senior panel: Fergal Kelly, Jimmy O'Boyle, Brian Phillips, Declan Doyle, Pierce Higgins, David Fitzgerald, Patrick McGarry, Kevin Waldron, Jason Morley, Derek Walsh, David Morley, John Burke, Brian Murray, Tony Morley, Johnny Cribbin, Seamus Caulfield, Michael Freeley, Billy Lyons, Mike Phillips, Noel Phillips, Richard Phillips, Hugh McKermitt, Paul Nolan, David Nestor, Donal Moran and James McGarry.

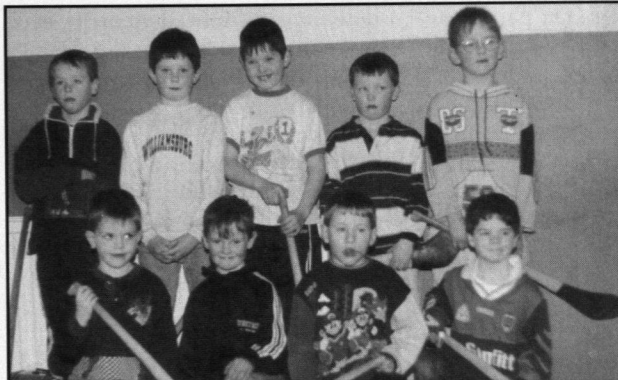
### **SENIOR AND JUNIOR HURLING**

Who would have thought at the beginning of 1997 that Ballyhaunis G.A.A. club would contest both the County Senior and Junior Hurling Finals? While victory eluded them on both occasions it was no disgrace in succumbing to Tooreen - the Kingpins of Mayo Hurling. After reaching the County Junior Final, it was decided to enter a team in the Senior Championship.

The East Mayo side marked their participation at Junior level

with Tooreen as opposition. A difficult start, but while Ballyhaunis went under, they did so in a manner which suggested they could have a future at this grade. This was borne out convincingly, when they scored an impressive 2-11 to 1-6 victory over Castlebar Mitchells. Hughie McKermitt accounted for 2-2 of his side's total. They followed this with a 1-12 to 0-8 success over Ballina Stephanites. On this team was Dave McConn and his son Paul. Their final group saw them accounting for Belmullet on a 1-2 to 1-4 scoreline. Frank Browne scored 0-8 of his side's total with Michael Freeley scoring the goal. This result ensured their place in the Final and a rematch with their great rivals Tooreen. Tooreen, however, ran out easy winners on that Saturday evening in May, amassing an impressive 4-13 total. Ballyhaunis tried hard throughout, and were far from despondent. They were prepared to learn from defeat and prepared assiduously for the forthcoming Senior Senior Championship. McHale Park was the venue for their opening game against Castlebar Mitchells. In a closely contested game it took a final goal from Michael Regan to secure victory for the East Mayo side. In addition, Gerry Kilbride brought off a couple of excellent saves and John Joe Hoban gave a commanding performance at the heart of the defence. Then it was into James Stephens Park, Ballina to take on the County Champions.

Ballyhaunis acquitted themselves superbly to triumph 2-8 to 1-2. Hughie McKermitt, Don Regan,



**Indoor Hurling, Spring '97.**  
**Back, L to R:**  
Paul Walsh,  
Noel Byrne,  
Kieran Lucey,  
Enda Griffin,  
Rodie Kilbride.  
**Front row:** Liam  
McDermott,  
Patrick  
Mulrennan,  
Niall Prenty,  
Brian Hunt.

Michael Regan, Frank Kelly, Michael Curley, Pierce Higgins and John Gallagher got on the scoreboard. Victory over Westport was to follow and their place in the County Senior Final was secured.

Charlestown was the venue on Sunday 24th August and once again Tooreen were the opposition. While the latter were again to prevail, the margin was not as great. The issue was in doubt until Gerard Glavey goaled for Tooreen in the last fifteen minutes. Ballyhaunis actually led for the first eighteen minutes and only trailed by three points at the interval. Tooreen's greater experience at this level, allied to a marvellous performance from Dom Greally was significant. Ballyhaunis had reason to be upbeat about their performance and know that if they redouble their effort a County Senior Hurling title is attainable sooner rather than later.

Junior Hurling; Manager: John Joe Kelly; Selectors: Dave McConn, Pete Higgins.

Senior Hurling; Manager: Pete Higgins, Selectors: David McConn, Jim McKermitt & John Joe Kelly.



**Indoor Hurling, Spring '97.**  
**Back, L to R:**  
William Lyons,  
Jarlath Mellett,  
Stephen Hoban,  
Matthew Cregg,  
Robert Lilly.  
**Front row:**  
Tadhg Morley,  
Kevin  
McNamara,  
Paul Carney,  
Ruari Finan.

## SCHOOLS OF EXCELLENCE

During the Summer holidays schools of excellence were held in Castlebar for Under-15 footballers, and in Galway for Under-15 Hurlers. Paul Prenty attended Castlebar for the week and Tadhg Buckley, Anthony Lyons, Anthony Curley, Jason Powers, Derek McConn and Yvonne Byrne were at the Joe Cooney School of Excellence.

## COUNTY REPRESENTATIVES

This year Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club had the following County representation:

Under-16 Hurling: Michael Walsh, Anthony Curley, Derek McConn and Christopher McCrudden.

Under-18 Football: Alan Regan.

Under-18 Hurling: Don Regan, Michael Regan, Paul McConn, Michael Lyons, Seamus London and John Gallagher.

Junior Football: Tony Morley.

Junior Hurling: Peter Healy, Hugh McKermitt, Michael Curley, Pierce Higgins, Frank Browne and Tom Phillips.

Senior Football: David Nestor and Tony Morley.

Minor Football Selector: Pdraic Regan.

Under-21 Football Selector: Bernie Waldron.

Junior Hurling Manager: Dave McConn.

County Hurling Secretary: Frank Browne.

Finally Ballyhaunis G.A.A. would like to thank its many sponsors and helpers over the past year.



# St. Mary's Primary School

**T**his year has been a busy and exciting one again for pupils, teachers and parents.

The pupils in Fifth and Sixth Classes were confirmed by the Archbishop of Tuam, Dr. Michael Neary, in St. Patrick's Parish Church on the 13th of April, 1997. The pupils in Second Class made their First Confession and First Communion in May in St. Patrick's Parish Church. Pupils from the School are Altar Servers in St. Patrick's Parish Church and The Augustinian Abbey.

Music, Irish Dancing and supervised Swimming Lessons continued in the school this year. The pupils of Sixth Class visit the Town Library weekly. Ballyhaunis and District Credit Union attend the School each week to encourage savings. In the Credit Union Art Competition for Primary Schools our winners were: 7 and Under: Joyce Jordan - 1st Prize; Kevin Nestor - 2nd Prize; Louise

*by Jim Landon*

Kelleher - 3rd Prize; 11 - 13: Phelim Carroll - 2nd Prize; Cian Higgins - 3rd Prize.

In the Kenny/Naughton Primary Schools Short Story Competition Cian Higgins was the winner, while Liam Lyons was third in the Essay Section. Our Quiz Teams entered the Credit Union, N.P.C. and Gael Linn Quizzes.

In June, St. Mary's won its Fourth Mayo County Hurling Title and the Seven a Side Hurlers also won the Mayo County Title. Two pupils, Keith Higgins and Fergal Walsh, played in Croke Park before the All-Ireland Semi-Finals and Final this year.

In Gaelic Football, the Under-8 and Under-10 teams are trained by Michael Gallagher, Barry Butler, Martin Finan, Sean McNamara and John Halpin every Sunday. The

Under-12 and Under-13 teams are trained by John Prenty and Tommy Waldron. The National School teams by John Prenty, Tommy Waldron and Jim Landon.

In Hurling, the trainers each Saturday are Pete Higgins, Gerry Kilbride and Ray Lucey. In Soccer the trainer for Under-10, Under-12 and Under-13 is Pat O'Connor.

In Under-12 and Under-14 Rugby the trainers are Kevin Henry and Aiden Gillespie.

Great credit is due to them all.

During the Summer months many pupils took part in the G.A.A. Summer Course and played Junior Golf.

Our outgoing Board of Management ended its term of office this year. They are thanked for their dedicated work for the school for the last four years.

The outgoing Board comprises: Chairperson: Rev. Fr. J. Cooney, P.P.; Secretary: Eileen Nestor; Treasurer: Tony Nestor; Parents' Representatives: Kay Curley and Seamus Mulrennan; Bishop's Nominee: Alacoque McManus; Principal: Jim Landon

At the time of writing the incoming Board of Management has not been completed.



*1st Communion Class 1997., St Patrick's Parish Church.*

Front, L to R: Luke Cribbin, Jeremy Freeley, Conor Mulrennan, Ian Mooney, Declan Murphy, Kevin Higgins, Kevin Gallagher. 2nd row: Brian Gallagher, William Lyons, Siobhan Lyons, Janice Folliard, Natalie Fitzmaurice, Lisa Freyne, Seamus O'Dwyer, Clare Byrne, Maria Connolly, Niamh Waldron, John Lyons, David Maughan. 3rd row: James Ronayne, Lisa Fitzmaurice, Maria Hunt, Matthew Cregg, Kathleen Conroy, Rody Kilbride, Kimberley Dowdall, John Jordan, Elaine Carney, Michael Waldron, Clayton Coffey. 4th row: Patrick Kelly, Louise Cleary, Martina Maughan, Samantha Maughan, Lisa Carney, John Mongan, Michael Conroy. Priests: Fr. O'Grady C.C., Fr. J. Cooney P.P. Teacher, J. Duggan.

Photo: Courtesy Glynn Photography

In October, the Parent's Association was elected: Chairperson: John Griffin; Secretary: Maria Silke; Treasurer: Anne Nestor; P.R.O. John Halpin; Committee: Kay Buckley, Michael Gallagher, John Halpin, Kay Curley, Breege Halpin, Brigid Lynskey, Seamus Mulrennan and Robert Potter-Cogan.

### STAFF

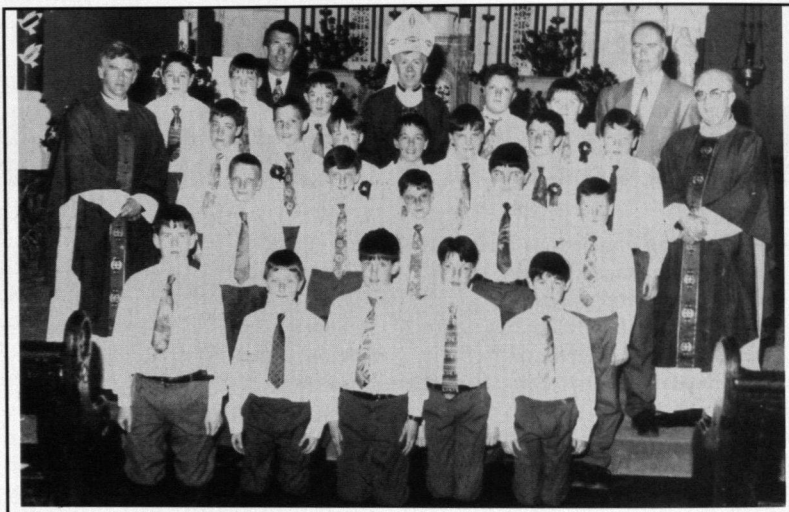
The Teaching Staff in the School is: Jim Landon, Principal; Augustine Kearns, Vice Principal; Betty Regan, Kathleen Lyons, Jimmy Duggan, Aisling Toal and Margaret O'Flaherty. Joint Support Teacher with St. Joseph's Primary School is Maureen Reddington. During the year Ita Delaney, our joint support teacher, was appointed to a new job in Ballinrobe where she is wished well.

Our pupils went on tour to Sligo and Lough Key Forest Park. Individual Parent-Teacher Meetings were held as usual. Sixth Class have access to computers. This will be developed in the future as funds allow. Thanks to FÁS, we had the services of Breege Keane as School Secretary and Noel Kavanagh as School Caretaker.

In conclusion, we wish all our past pupils at home and abroad every success. Season's Greetings to all our pupils and parents.

### (below) National School County Champions 1997, St. Mary's N.S. Ballyhaunis - Hurling.

Back: Liam Lyons, Stephen Shanaghy, Adriano Lieglio, Patrick Waldron, Shane Buckley, Christopher Morley, Ciaran Griffin, Paul Lynch. Front: Colm Gallagher, William Nestor, Fergal Walsh, Keith Higgins (Capt.), Padraic Carney, Brian Mulrennan, David Lynch.



### St. Mary's Primary School 5th Class Confirmation Day, April 13th, 1997

Back row: Peter Maughan, Liam Lyons, Shane Buckley, David Coffey, Michael Jordan. 3rd row Patrick Heaney, Martin Mongan, Phelim Carroll, Cian Higgins, Darren Doyle, Anthony Doherty, Ciaran Griffin. 2nd row: Shane O'Reilly, Michael Mullarkey, David Lynch, David Hannan, Colm Gallagher. Front row: Christopher Morley, William Nestor, Albert Madden, Declan Ward, David Connolly, with Fr. J. O'Grady, C.C.; Jim Landon (Principal); Archbishop Michael Neary; Augustine Kearns, N.T. and Fr. J. Cooney, P.P.



(above)

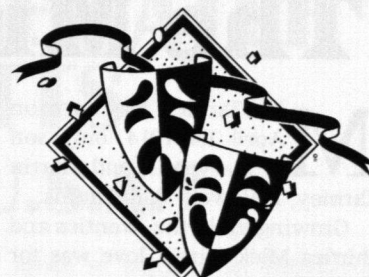
### St. Mary's Primary School 6th Class Confirmation Day, April 13th, 1997

Front row: Alan Lyons, Paul Lynch, Fergal Walsh, Keith Higgins, Henry Forde, Niall Richardson. 2nd row: Michael Kilcourse, Patrick Waldron, Eddie Kilcourse, Michael Moran, Brian Mulrennan, Noel McGuire, Keith Egan, Jason Coffey, Martin Coffey. 3rd row: Christopher Kilcourse, Rory Coyne, Padraic Carney, Daniel McLoughlin, Stephen Shanaghy. 4th row: Paul Jordan, Christopher Burke, Adriano Lieglio, Padraic Kirrane, Tommy O'Dowd, Gareth Morrissey. Back row: Simon McDonagh, Archbishop Michael Neary, Augustine Kearns, with Fr. J. O'Grady, C.C.; Jim Landon (Principal); Archbishop Michael Neary; Augustine Kearns, N.T. and Fr. J. Cooney, P.P.



# St. Patrick's Drama Society

## *'A Review of 1997'*



*by Aisling Toal*

Radio plays were very much to the fore this year: two were produced. Martin Forde directed "Dearly Departed." The cast included Anna Henry, Ann Hosty, Tom Colleran, Jack Greene and Aoife Potter-Cogan. The second radio play was produced by 'Twilight Players', Ballyhaunis. It was called "Last Tango in Ballyhaunis", a light-hearted farce, and the cast went 'on tour' with the play to Knock, Tooreen, Gortaganny and Delaney's Pub in Ballyhaunis. It was received very successfully everywhere. The cast included Anne Grealley, Martina Freyne, Noel Lyons and Leo Forkan.

In October, a new Committee was formed. Aisling Toal was elected Chairperson with Stella O'Neill was elected Treasurer; Catriona Sweeney became Secretary and Patricia Hunt P.R.O. The outgoing Committee under the Chairmanship of Martin Forde was thanked for their work and enthusiasm. It was resolved at the meeting to start the season with a one-act play and to enter Festivals. The group chose "Stardust" by Joe Burke. This play won the first ever Kenny/Naughton Drama Award. It is about the lives of ordinary Dublin people leading up to the terrible tragedy. The cast includes Stella O'Neill, Leo Forkan, Paul Rogers, Catriona Sweeney and Aisling Toal. The group travelled to two one-act

festivals, one in Kiltimagh and the other in Tuam. Two members of the cast, Stella O'Neill and Leo Forkan, were nominated for Best Actor and Actress awards in Kiltimagh. This play will be staged in Ballyhaunis before Christmas as part of a festival of one-act plays. A good night's entertainment is promised. It will be produced as a radio play in November and early in the New Year. "The Proposal", by Chekov, the eminent Russian

playwright, will be produced for radio. This is directed by Martin Forde and the cast includes Anna Henry, Tom Colleran and Jack Greene. These two radio plays are entered into the North-West/Mid-West Drama Award Competition.

A three-act play is proposed for the New Year. So, all in all, drama in Ballyhaunis is alive and well. The radio dramas are flourishing and plays are having a revival with young talent emerging. 1998 promises to be a very successful year in the annals of St. Patrick's Dramatic Society.



*Flying High in the 40's. Carmel Waldron, Mercy Flatley.*

# The Mick Tarmey Cup

**M**ick Tarmey was born on April 1st 1914, only son of Mary Ann and Martin Tarmey, Holywell, Ballyhaunis.

Growing up in the twenties and thirties Mick's great love was for football. He could recount in great detail travelling in the late twenties and thirties by rail to Broadstone Station in Dublin to see Mayo play in Croke Park. In the 1930s he was one of the Ballyhaunis Club's staunchest members and could recall the many games Ballyhaunis played

*by Seamus Mulrennan*

in Malachy Forde's field and other venues in South Mayo, to which division Ballyhaunis was attached at that period. Mick Tarmey was one of the members in the late forties responsible for having the Ballyhaunis Club transferred from South to East Mayo.

When Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club was reformed in 1948 Mick was appointed Chairman, a position he held until 1956. Mick was the

first Ballyhaunis man to be Chairman of the East Mayo Board, a position he held for a number of years in the 1950s. He was also a member of the Mayo selection committee and helped select the Mayo All-Ireland winning teams of 1950 and 1951. Mick was also the first Ballyhaunis man to be given the Honorary position of President of the East Mayo G.A.A. Board in 1968. Over the years Mick was an able administrator at County Board, East Mayo Board and Club level. He made a massive contribution to the G.A.A. now recognised as the world's greatest amateur organisation. In later years Mick's interest was just as keen as ever. On a Sunday afternoon, wet or fine, he could be seen heading for the local pitch to be part of the action; that was his life.

Throughout his life Mick always took a keen interest in current affairs, both the political and social affairs of the nation. A life long member and staunch supporter of Fianna Fail, Mick was prominently associated and was actively involved with the party for the greater part of his long and fruitful life. Many a good conversation and discussion he had in earlier years with Paddy Kilroy (R.I.P.) and Pat Keane (R.I.P.) in 'Pat's Shoemaker Shop', and in later years in 'Curley's Bar' with Mick O'Connell and Michael Waldron.

Mick passed to his eternal rest in September 1995. The name Mick Tarmey will forever be synonymous with the G.A.A. and the history of football in Ballyhaunis. The nieces and nephews of Mick are presenting a Cup in his memory for Gaelic Football to the secondary Schools in East Mayo. The competition will take place in early Spring. We hope the teams playing for this cup will get as much enjoyment from the game of Gaelic Football as Mick did.



*Annual GAA Dinner Central Hotel 1960. Front row, L to R: Pat Keane, RIP; Mick O'Connell, Paddy Waldron, RIP; Johnny Lyons, RIP. Back row: Mike Lyons, John Healy, RIP; Tony Mulloy, Dan Moran, RIP; Noel Waldron, RIP; Bertie Curley, RIP; Paddy O'Connell; Mick Tarmey, RIP.*



*L to R: Ann Curley, Gerry Lyons, Jimmy Walsh, Martin Brennan, Hugh Rudden, Austin Egan, Mick O'Connell, Pauline Curley and John Prenty at the Presentation of the 'Mick Tarmey Cup'.*



# **BROCKTON/BRIDGEWATER MASSACHUSETTS- “Ballyhaunis, MA, U.S.A.”**

## ***Ever heard of Brockton MA, U.S.A.?***

Of course you have: it's where so many of our Irish International boxers train.

When the early colonists of what is now the United States of America settled in a district of their adopted homeland, they invariably dropped the native American name for the district and renamed it after their home-town in Europe.

## **TAUNTON CONNECTION**

Such is the number of Ballyhaunis “colonists” in the Brockton-Bridgewater area, south of Boston, that one would be tempted to suggest the same could have happened. The reality of this phenomenon grew on me after a series of accidental happenings. My family and I exchanged our home and car with Rosemarie Briand and Joan Ross of Taunton one Summer a few years ago and close friendships have ensued. They have become true-blue “Ballyhaunisians,” and supply us with any mention of Ballyhaunis in their locality or local papers. One such occasion was when Joan visited us a few years ago. After she returned to her home in Taunton she was watering the flowers outside her home one very hot evening. A lady, whom she didn't know, walking her dog, stopped to talk with her. Joan explained that her kids had sown the flowers while she was in Ireland. The lady asked where in Ireland had she been. Joan said something to the effect: “You wouldn't know it..... a small town in the West, called Ballyhaunis.” To Joan's surprise the reply was, “my name was Fitzmaurice, I was born just outside Ballyhaunis, in a place called Cherryfield.” Another result

*by Councillor Pat Higgins*



***Monica, Eileen & Jean Herbert,  
Sea Mist, Mashpee, MA.***

of such information was an article by me in Annagh 1990 entitled “Jenny Herbert celebrates her 100th birthday.” Jenny, who was born in Lecarrow, has since, sadly, passed away. However, last summer I had a call from Galway from Paul O'Connor - Jenny's nephew - which resulted in a very enjoyable visit by him. He was accompanied by his wife Theresa, their friend Jake Sheehan (cousin of Sean O'Siocháin), his wife Jean and Jake's sister, Sr. Mary Kathleen Sheehan, who regaled us with stories of her life in the slums of Louisville, Kentucky.

## **TRANSATLANTIC TWINNING!**

Paul is so enthusiastic about his Ballyhaunis connections, and he

spoke so much about Ballyhaunis people living in Brockton-Bridgewater, that I asked him to supply me with information on same for Annagh. He has been the organiser for many years of the St. Patrick's Day Mass and Celebrations in Brockton, to which Irish come from all over southern Massachusetts. He was also most anxious to see the place where his mother, Bridget Herbert, had been born. We decided to meet with Denise Moran, both as the current occupant of the former Herbert farm in Lecarrow and as the current President of Chamber of Commerce, Ballyhaunis. An enjoyable evening followed and Denise and Paul are to follow up the possibilities of closer and maybe more formal links between Ballyhaunis and Brockton. Why not a Trans-Atlantic twinning?

## **FR. HAMROCK, O.S.A.**

Paul's visit led to another welcome and interesting visit from John P. Sullivan and his wife Lorraine, also of Brockton, who brought with him from Paul much of the details included in this article. John himself is an annual visitor to his mother's native Ballyhaunis. His mother was Mary Hamrock of Leow. Interestingly, John was able to tell me that a Fr. Hamrock is buried in the family's ancestral grave in the Friary graveyard and that this was inscribed on the gravestone. He has in his possession a “rubbing” of this inscription. This may solve a mystery of the whereabouts of the grave of Fr. Hamrock, credited with restoring the Abbey. I had pleasure in referring John to our much-loved historian Fr. John O'Connor in Galway, whose absence is so much regretted. I look forward to a scholarly research on this.

## HERBERT MEMORIAL PLAQUE

On Mother's day, May the 11th, this year, at St. Basil Chapel, Bridgewater State College, Paul and Theresa had a special Thanksgiving Mass celebrated for the successful recovery of their grandson, Patrick O'Connor, from two serious heart operations. After the Mass, an oil painting of the Apparition at Knock, by Andrew Digiammo, son of Julia Herbert of Lecarrow, was placed over the interior entrance to the Chapel. The painting is unusual in that the feet of Our Lady are encircled by the hands of a Claddagh ring symbolising the marriage of Bridget Herbert O'Connor's parents William Herbert and Celia Kain which took place in Knock chapel in 1898. This feature is also influenced by the fact that the O'Connor family's father Andrew, came from Galway City.

### **Paul O'Connor's research to date shows the following Brockton-Bridgewater Ballyhaunisians:**

Walter Herbert (R.I.P.) married Monica McLoughlin of Aughamore; they had two daughters: Eileen and Jean.

Julia Herbert married John Digiammo of Naples, Italy; they had six children: John, Andrew, Claire, Paul, Laura and Herbert, a retired Brockton fireman.

Celia Herbert married Thomas Fogarty of Mitchelstown, Co Cork; they had four children: Thomas, Mary, Alfred and Kevin.

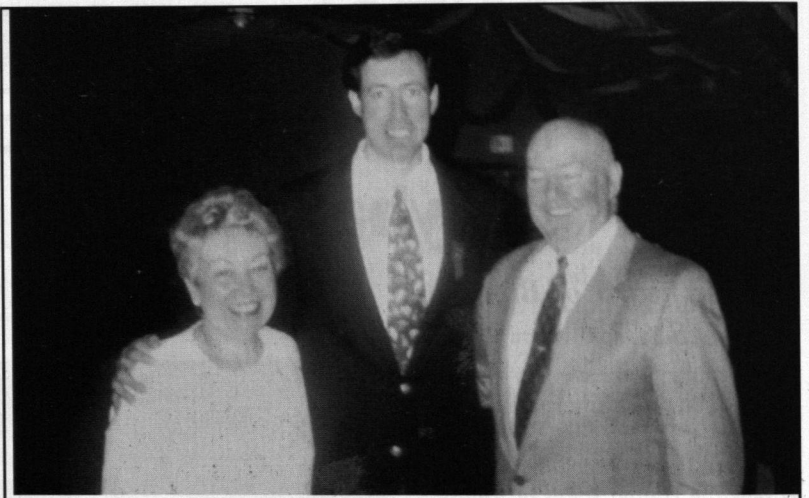
Bridget Herbert married Andrew O'Connor of Galway; they had five children: William, Herbert, Mary (Waldron) and twins - Paul and Patricia.

### **The following also settled in Brockton between 1912-1920:**

The Lyons Family: Austin, Delia Mary and Margaret.

Austin and Mary Lyons; they had four children, Austin Jr., Shawn, Robert and Kathleen (Sirois).

Mary and Margaret Lyons never married.



**Paul O'Connor and his wife Theresa, with Fr. John Kearns of Bridgewater College, where many Ballyhaunis diaspora have been educated.**

Margaret Lyons Kelleher; she had four children, John, James, Nancy and Richard.

Michael Cribbin, son of James Cribbin and Ellen Plunkett of Lecarrow, married Julia Hunt; they had ten children: James, John, Ralph, Gerald, Laurence, Harold, Bill, Richard, Mildred and Ellen.

Austin Cribbin married Kate Lynch of Kerry; they had five children: Austin Jr., Jack, Marie, Helen and Leo.

Jim Cribbin married Alice Johnston and, after her death, married Mary Fenton of Kerry: They had six children: Tom, Frances, Rita, Virginia, Fred and James.

Tom Cribbin, Bachelor.

Michael Cunnane married Margaret Sheehan; they had three

children: Patricia, Margaret and William.

Nora Hamrock married Joseph Crowley; they had seven children: Christine, Margaret, Noreen, Bernadette, Thomas, Edward and Donny.

Mary Hamrock married Daniel O'Sullivan; they had nine children: Eddie, John, Steve, Danny, Kevin, Mary, Patricia and Theresa.

Ann Hunt married Nicholas O'Sullivan of Cork; they had one son Robert.

Mary Hunt married Michael Melia; they had two sons; Murtagh and John.

Josephine Hunt married Jeremiah Burke; they had five children: Francis, Gerald, Ann, Margaret and Mary.



**Skiing in Blue Mountain New Hampshire, '97.  
Mike Casey, Pat Higgins, Ivan Biesty with Instructor Mary.**



James Mannion married Mary McGoldrick of Cavan; they had three children: James, Richard and June (Snow).

Mark Fitzmaurice married Mary Tarpey, also of Ballyhaunis; they had three children: Richard, Mary, (King), and Nora (Lonagan). Mark married secondly Mary Doherty.

Jim Cruise married Delia Cruise; they had six children: James, William, Thomas, John, Sr. James (Ann) and Sr. Thomas (Miriam).

Peter Cruise married Margaret Hopkins of Roscommon; they had nine children: Peter, James, Joseph, William, Mary (Kennedy), Ann (Connolly), Margaret (McMenamy), Eileen (McVarish) and Br. Thomas (Oblates).

Celia Cruise married Dan Deady and raised Anna Hernan Buckley, former State Senator.

Many of these Ballyhaunis immigrants served in the U.S. armed forces during World War I. Their sons and daughter also served during World War II and in Korea, and their grandchildren served in Vietnam.

**There is an honourable record of service to the City of Brockton and to the State.**

**Teachers:** Patricia (O'Connor) McGillis, Eileen Herbert, Kathleen (Lyons) Sirois, Robert (Joyce) Nerbonne and Robert Sullivan.

**Firemen:** Herbert Digiammo, Harold Cribbin, Bill Cribbin, Bill Cruise, John Sheehan (all retired) and Richard Cribbin.

**Custodians:** Andrew O'Connor, Joe Cruise, Tom Fogarty, William O'Connor

**Former State Senator:**

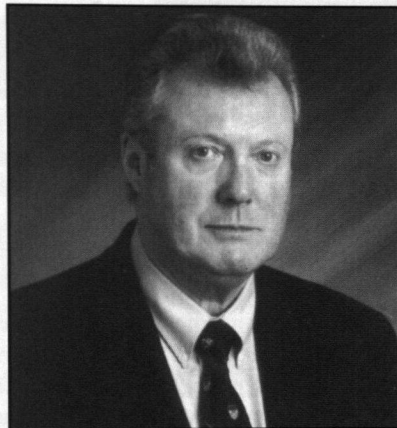
Anna Buckleyle;

**State Representative:**

Tom Kennedy;

**City Councillor:** John McGarry

This article does not claim to be exhaustive; in fact it is merely scraping the surface of the story of a proud Ballyhaunis Diaspora; proud of its roots, proud of its culture, proud of its history; and proud of its service to City, State and Country.



Francis M. Glynn, native of Clare Street, with his recently acquired Coat of Arms.



## TO ALL TO WHOM

these Presents shall come or whom the same may in any way concern, GREETING:

BY Robert Douglas Watt, Chief Herald of Canada:

WHEREAS FRANCIS MICHAEL GLYNN of the City of Calgary, Province of Alberta, upon whom has been conferred the Canadian Forces Decoration, Master of Business Administration of the University of Western Ontario, who has served as a non-commissioned officer with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, former member of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario, former Director of the Foundation, Olds College, Olds, Alberta, has represented to the Chief Herald of Canada his desire to be granted armorial bearings by lawful authority;

AND WHEREAS a warrant issued the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of November 1993 has been issued by Lieutenant-General James Cyril Gervais, Commander of the Order of Military Merit, Deputy Herald Chancellor of the Canadian Heraldic Authority, authorizing the Chief Herald of Canada to grant to FRANCIS MICHAEL GLYNN such armorial bearings as --- deemed fitting and appropriate;

NOW KNOW YOU that pursuant to the authority vested in His Excellency the Right Honourable Roméo LeBlanc, a Member of the Queen's Privy Council for Canada, Chancellor and Principal Companion of the Order of Canada, Chancellor and Commander of the Order of Military Merit, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada, to exercise the armorial prerogative of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II as Queen of Canada, by Letters Patent dated the 4<sup>th</sup> day of June 1988, and the terms of my Commission of Office, I, the Chief Herald of Canada do by these Presents grant and assign to FRANCIS MICHAEL GLYNN the following Arms: Argent a fess Or finimbrated on the top Azure and on the bottom Gules all surmounted by a double headed eagle wings displayed per pale Sable and Gules beaked and membered Azure charged on each wing with a maple leaf Or; And for a Crest: Upon a helmet mantled Sable and Gules doubled Argent within a wreath of these colours issuing from a coronet double Gules the rim bearing a fringe of bezants on a single's head Or beaked Azure holding a rapier staff per pale Sable and Gules; And for a Motto: ASSUMUNT PENNAS SICUT AGILLAE;

AS the same are more fully more especially and entered in Volume III, page 173 of the Public Register of Arms, Flags and Badges of Canada to be borne and used for ever hereafter on shields, robes, banners or otherwise by FRANCIS MICHAEL GLYNN and his descendants with such due and proper differences as may be provided all according to the Law of Arms of Canada;

WITNESS under my hand and the seal of the Canadian Heraldic Authority at Rideau Hall in the City of Ottawa this seventeenth day of April in the year of Our Lord One thousand nine hundred and ninety-seven, in the third year of His Excellency's service in office and in the forty-sixth year of Her Majesty's reign.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF JUDITH ANNE LAROCQUE, Deputy Herald Chancellor, and Lieutenant-General James Cyril Gervais, Deputy Herald Chancellor, have witnessed this action with their signatures.

## A TOUS CEUX QUI

verront les présentes ou que les présentes concernent, SALUT:

DE la part de Robert Douglas Watt, Héraut d'armes du Canada:

CONSIDÉRANT que FRANCIS MICHAEL GLYNN de la ville de Calgary, province d'Alberta, à qui a été décernée la Décoration des Forces canadiennes, maître, administrateur de la University of Western Ontario, ancien sous-officier de la Gendarmerie royale du Canada, ancien membre du sénat de la University of Western Ontario, ancien directeur de la Fondation de l'Olds College, Olds, Alberta, a avoué le Héraut d'armes du Canada qu'il souhaitait se faire concéder officiellement des armoiries;

ET CONSIDÉRANT que le Lieutenant-général James Cyril Gervais, Commandeur de l'Ordre du mérite militaire, Vice-chancelier d'armes de l'Autorité héraldique du Canada, a émis un mandat daté du 23<sup>e</sup> jour de novembre 1993 autorisant le Héraut d'armes du Canada à concéder à FRANCIS MICHAEL GLYNN des armoiries jugées convenables et appropriées;

SACHÉZ QU'EN CONFORMITÉ à l'autorité dont est investi Son Excellence le très honorable Roméo LeBlanc, membre du Conseil privé de la Reine pour le Canada, Chancelier et Compagnon principal de l'Ordre du Canada, Chancelier et Commandeur de l'Ordre du mérite militaire, Gouverneur général et Commandant en chef du Canada, d'exercer la prérogative en matière d'armoiries que Sa Majesté la Reine Elizabeth II, à titre de Reine du Canada, lui a concédée par lettres patentes datées du 4<sup>e</sup> jour de juin 1988, et conformément aux dispositions de notre commission d'office, Nous, le Héraut d'armes du Canada, par les présentes, concédons et assignons à FRANCIS MICHAEL GLYNN les armoiries suivantes: D'argent à une fesse finimbrée, parties de sable et de gueules, besquée et membrée d'or; surmontée d'un double aigle de lambrequins parties de sable et de gueules double d'argent et d'une torse des couleurs; Et pour cimier: Une tête d'aigle d'or besquée d'azur tenant un bâton acrot parties de sable et de gueules, issante d'une couronne double de gueules au cercle orlé de bezants d'or; Et pour devise: ASSUMUNT PENNAS SICUT AGILLAE;

LESQUESTES armoiries sont ici figurées et enregistrées dans le volume III, page 173 du Registre public des armoiries, des drapeaux et des insignes du Canada pour être portées et utilisées à perpétuité sur des robes, des escus, des bannières et autrement par FRANCIS MICHAEL GLYNN et ses descendants avec les brèves convenables et appropriées qui peuvent leur être assignées conformément au droit héraldique du Canada;

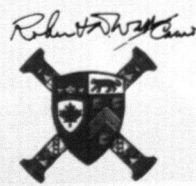
DONNÉ sous notre sceau et le sceau de l'Autorité héraldique au Canada à Ottawa, ce dix-septième jour d'avril en l'an de grâce mil neuf cent quatre-vingt-dix-sept, la troisième année du mandat de Son Excellence et la quarante-sixième du règne de Sa Majesté.

EN PLUS LESQUELS JUDITH ANNE LAROCQUE, Chancelier d'armes, et le Lieutenant-général James Cyril Gervais, Vice-chancelier d'armes, se portent témoins en apposant leur signature.

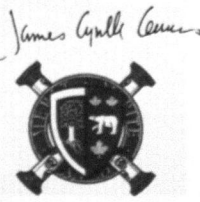
Judith Larocque



Robert Douglas Watt



James Cyril Gervais



## **Brackloon / Spaddagh, Group Water Scheme - Our 21st Anniversary**

In 1975/76 a group of people met for the first time. A committee was elected and our Water Scheme was formed, to cover an area from Togher to Killinaugher, and from Carrowrea to Brackloon.

It was a daunting task for a group with no experience in this field. Money in those days was scarce so costs had to be levied at the lowest possible level. Over the next one to

*by Joe Fitzmaurice*

two years all the surveying, drawings, tenders and works were finished and water flowed to approximately seventy houses. Over the years the scheme has grown to 133 houses. We are now in the process of installing infrared water treatment facilities.

Over the past twenty-one to

twenty-two years, we have lost two very esteemed committee members: Patrick Regan R.I.P. Gurteenbeg and Michael Flanagan R.I.P. Gurteenmore; both played very important parts in the success of the Scheme. As Honourary Secretary since our formation, and on behalf of the Committee, I wish to express my deep appreciation to all our members, past and present, for their co-operation and understanding, without which we could not have such a successful scheme.

Committee: Chairman: Ray Sloyan; Honourary Secretary: Joe Fitzmaurice; Trustees Kevin Devaney, Seamus O'Boyle and Michael Nolan.



*Above: Noreen Ruane, Johnstown, was conferred with a B.Sc. Degree in Management Law at Trinity College. She is daughter of Mrs. Bridie Ruane & the late Seamus Ruane, Johnstown.*

*Left: Michael McNamara of Upper Main St., formerly of Tullaghane, celebrating his 87th Birthday, with his wife Kathleen.*



**FAS Scheme -  
Ballyhaunis 1997.**

Back row L to R:  
Martina McGoldrick,  
Jimmy Burke, Michael  
Kearns, Ray Prendergast,  
Patsy McCormack,  
Seamus Brennan, Joe  
Cornwall, Michael  
Flanagan, Tom Lenihan.  
Front row: Jarlath Kelly,  
Roger Folliard, Tom  
Commings, Des Folan,  
Liam Lyons, Kieran  
Ruane.



# The Abbey Pattern 1997

Fr. Michael Collender OSA

On Sunday, the 24th of August 1997 we had our annual Pattern Day. It was my first time witnessing such an event; I hope it will not be my last. For me it was an experience that really brought home what it means to be part of a community effort in supporting the Augustinian Abbey. The Friars have always appreciated such efforts on behalf of the community, as it brings home how much the place means to the people of the locality.

Of course, the event would never have been such a success were it not for the efforts of the Pattern Committee. Since June, they were meeting to discuss how to best plan the event. I, in my innocence, thought the pattern was a new event in the life of the town. However, I soon found out that it was a very old tradition long associated with the place. It did fade out for a few years but was revived again. The organising committee did all the groundwork, from organising the field to helping locate funding for the event. The support from businesses and banks really meant a lot. The fine weather on the day encour-



Friary Servers 1997/98. Back row: David Hannan, Ciaran Griffin, Darren Doyle, Michael Jordan, Christopher Morley. Front row: Paul Kelly, Michael Cunningham, David Connolly, Michael Mullarkey, Colm Gallagher.

aged people to stir out for the occasion. I think it brought home all the more what local support can do, not only for the Abbey, but also providing entertainment for families on the day with something for everyone to part take in. I know there are so many people I need to say thanks to, but it would be impossible for me to mention every one by name. Furthermore, I think those who did help in any way would not like any publicity. So, to each and every one, I say "Thanks a million", your contribution means everything to us. The help and the hard work that went into the day, along with the welcome that Fr. Tim and myself have received assures us that we are with the Salt of the Earth.

## Ballyhaunis Library

Ballyhaunis Library is situated in Clare Street. (Telephone: 0907-30161).

Joining the library is a simple procedure of signing a form. A year's membership costs just One Pound! On every visit to the Library, a person is entitled to borrow two books. Books are issued for a period of two weeks and can be renewed, either by phone or by taking the books to the Library for re-stamping (unless the books are requested by another person).

Members are asked to return books promptly. Fines are charged on overdue books. Please do not loan any library books in your possession. Books loaned from the library must be returned in the condition in which they

were lent. Anyone who loses or damages a book must pay the replacement cost of the book.

A request service is provided whereby books which are not in stock can be requested by completing a request form.

Ballyhaunis Library has a wide selection of books which includes:

**NON-FICTION:** crafts, sport, farming, cookery, gardening, D.I.Y., history, biographies, etc.

**FICTION:** modern fiction, novels, classics, romance, westerns, large print, etc.

### REFERENCE AND

**INFORMATION:** This section contains dictionaries, atlases, year-books, etc. The Local Studies section contains information on local people, places and buildings,

which is backed up by very comprehensive resources at the Central Library in Castlebar.

**CHILDREN'S BOOKS:** From simple books, ABC, fairy stories etc. for the very young, to fiction and knowledge books for older children. We also stock a teenage fiction section.

The Non-Fiction books are arranged by subject according to the Dewey Decimal Classification System: 100 philosophy, 200 religion, 300 social sciences, 400 linguistics, 500 pure sciences, 600 applied sciences, 700 arts and recreations, 800 literature, 900 history and geography.

### Opening Hours

Monday: Closed; Tuesday: 12 - 5 p.m., Wednesday: 3 - 8 p.m., Thursday: Closed; Friday: 3 - 8 p.m., Saturday 12 - 5 p.m.

The Library is closed on the Saturdays preceding Bank Holidays. If you require any information, Eleanor, the Librarian, is only too willing to help.

# Polly's Near Shave!

*by Murt Hunt*

**O**n the 3rd of January 1997, I got up for work as usual. The kids had no school so I just left them in bed and had my usual look at the cows in the slatted house before departing for work. They would not be calving for some time yet so there was no need really to be that careful about checking them. There was enough silage in the passage-way to do them for another day or so and I thought to myself, what a great change from years ago, when one had to carry hay and water to the cow-house. Then there was also the mucking out to be done each day, and, I thought, all the modern farming is geared towards less and less work.

I noticed nothing unusual as the cows were chewing their cud contentedly; I made for the car and headed off for work as usual. On coming home for a cup of tea on my lunch hour, I was met by my oldest son Sean, who informed me that there was a cow missing from the shed. On investigating, we found out that a black cow, which was christened "Polly" by my young daughter Áine, was missing; not a trace was to be found anywhere, and there were no traces of a cow to be seen anywhere in the area. Yes, the two bolts in one of the barriers had been opened, but the barrier was still in its right place. Evidently, the cow had been scratching on the barrier and worked the bolts open, now she was gone, but where to?

Just on a half chance we checked the man-hole type slat outside the slatted house. This is used for agitating and pumping out the slurry whenever the tank is full. The slurry had been put out in early November and the cows had been put into the slat-

ted house a few days later. Unfortunately, we had done a temporary job of covering the man-hole and, instead of putting back the concrete slat, we used a wooden pallet to cover the hole for the time being; with no cattle outside there was no need for panic, or so we thought. It was indeed one of the greatest mistakes we had ever made in our lives.

The pallet was still in position but there was a piece of the corner missing and then the penny dropped! Polly the cow was in the tank of slurry. On lifting the pallet we found that the scum on top of the slurry was indeed broken but there was not a trace of the unfortunate cow.

We used a torch and searched all along the three bays of the slats but nothing was to be heard of the black cow. In sheer frustration we gave up, having decided that Polly would be buried at sea, no burial or cremation for her. The concrete slat was replaced and we wished all our bad luck to have departed with the loss of another animal. I went back to work (rather late) after the lunch break and told some of the lads at work about my misfortune. Some had sympathy for me, but a few looked at me as much as to say "what else do you expect" and "you might be more careful in the future."

On coming home from work that evening I don't know what possessed me but I decided to have another look. Up came the concrete slat again and I got a high powered spot lamp and looked down the length of the slatted house. It being an eight-foot tank, the slurry was up

about three feet from the top. There was five feet of slurry in the tank, so how could anything survive in there?

I heard my neighbour J. P. Murphy shout "the cow is alive!" and, surely, on closer inspection, we found that a cow's head could be seen over the top of the slurry, at the far end. She was completely submerged but was holding her head up over the top and breathing. Then one of the most hectic and frenzied events of my life started to unfold and an emergency plan was put into operation to match anything ever seen in this part to the country.

I might add, it was one of the most horrible of evenings, with thunder and lightning, and a constant downpour of rain. The first thing I did was to contact my agricultural contractors: the Waldrons of Cottage to get some of the slurry pumped out. Unfortunately, they were not at home, but their mother promised to tell them about my predicament the minute they got home. J. P. and I decided to check-out a few more contractors who had slurry tanks to try and get them to help. Eugene Judge sent us to Boland Bros. But, they were out calving a cow and, indeed, would have been delighted to help but unfortunately their tanker was punctured out in the field. They told us to go to Rory Delaney. I felt like a beggar going to Rory's door and surely thought he would refuse me, but no, he said he would be up in fifteen minutes, which he was. I realised then that all people are not bad human beings and that there are a lot of good people out there and, after all, Rory would not be anything to his dad George and brothers if he was



not kind and helpful.

The cows had to be all put out in the yard in the pouring rain and, would you believe, Rory landed with his slurry tanker the very same time as Waldrons arrived with theirs. The job of pumping out some of the slurry started, but the problem was the tank could not be agitated as the gas fumes would probably smother the cow. All that was going out in the tankers was water and the slurry round the cow was getting thicker and stickier.

The word about the drama at Hunt's had spread like wildfire and help of every description was arriving bit by bit. Tractors and cars were everywhere; Dominick Murphy arrived with his garage equipment of a block chain and pulley and also a winch which operates from the back of his breakdown wagon.

It dawned on us that we could not get the cow to move down towards the manhole so the only thing we could do was to lift the section of slats directly over the cow (this section weighed a couple of tons). This was eventually done by much pulling with crow bars and the careful use of the pulley from the roof beams (which gave a few frightening creaks, by the way). At last, we got the section of slats lifted and we were looking down directly on "Polly" the cow. At this stage we did not hold much hope of saving her, especially as she was very heavily in calf.

Then, J. P. Warde came to the rescue (he was working for Waldron contractors at the time). He grabbed a ladder and scurried down into the tank as fast as one could say "Jack Robinson." He secured some ropes round the cow's legs and head, and under her belly. The massive job of winching began and both the pulley and pick up winch were used. J. P. Warde was the hero

and despite great danger to himself, he never hesitated.

Gradually the cow was gently lifted out of her resting place in the slurry. She struggled quite a bit on coming out of her watery grave, but had been so long in the tank that a lot of her energy had been expended. We slowly but surely got her level with the top of the tank and then, with a mighty heave, slung her free from the opening. We uncoupled her harness of ropes and chains and got her to stand up, which was very essential.

Would you believe, the first thing she did on standing up was to stagger over to the silage in the passage-way and start eating to her heart's content. This was after standing nearly twenty-four hours submerged in a slurry tank with only the tip of her nose over the top. The job of pulling back the slats, putting in the cows again etc. was only child's play compared to what we had undergone earlier.

On the first week of March 1997 "Polly" gave birth to a

smashing Charolais bull calf and it never knocked a stir out of her. Many suggestions have been made since why she survived, but I suppose the best one would be that the heat of the slurry had kept her warm. Maybe she was just a survivor and wanted to live, we will never know.

All I do know is that from now on security and safety around the Hunt farm will be much tighter. It may be a lesson to us all that safety and security are very essential whether it be in the workplace or wherever.

I would like to finish by thanking all concerned for their help and their time in this massive operation which was mounted on the Hunt farm on the 3rd of January 1997. God Bless you all and I know I will never forget the event until the day that I die. I know that a cat is supposed to have nine lives, how many a cow is supposed to have, I don't know. One thing, however, I am sure of is that "Polly" has definitely used one of hers.



*Michael Murphy, Logboy; Eddie Fitzgerald, Clare St. RIP; Mick Forde, Reisk, RIP; Val Lyons, Spaddagh; Mike Mulrennan, Brackloughboy, RIP. Enjoying a quiet drink in Joe Regan's Corner Bar in the 1970s.*

*(Courtesy Seamus Mulrennan)*

# That Was Then

by Tom Keane

*(In the 1990 issue of Annagh, two extracts from a poem written by Tom Keane were published, on page 47. Here we present another extract from this epic work.)*

We used to cut turf in Killinaugher Bog  
And hear the wild curlew calling  
Then make our way home contented but tired  
As the evening shadows were falling

Then the long lazy days bringing home the turf  
Up that well known dusty old road  
With our well loved horse ambling quietly along  
We sat quietly on top of each load

In the Spring leading home one's tired ploughing team  
As night's shadows began to fall  
A drink and a feed and a quick rub down  
Then a good night's rest for all

The work-horse has gone from our fields and our roads  
To me that's a thousand pities  
Thank God they aren't fully lost to us yet  
There's quite a few left in our cities

How peaceful to stand on the little stone bridge  
And watch the clear waters run free  
Rippling gaily along over pebble and sand  
On its long winding route to the sea

That bright little stream flowing merrily along  
Made music all of its own  
A sound that when part of your formative years  
Stays with you wherever you roam

In the late twenties they steam-rolled the road  
A job that was very well done  
Small stones for soling nine-pence a load  
Stones for crushing two shillings a ton

Work and money were pretty scarce at the time  
And for those who did get the start  
A man with a shovel four and tuppence a day  
Eight bob for a man, horse and cart

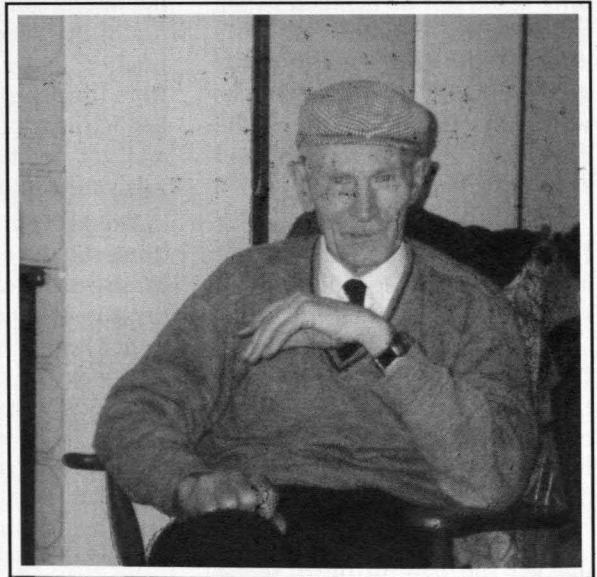
Candles and lamps were the lights that we had  
Which didn't make it easy to see  
In the late twenties that began to improve  
With the forming of the good E.S.B.

The economic war in the thirties  
Brought lots of hardship all round  
I saw a man driving from Ballinlough fair  
Ten cows that were bought for a pound

The pint it cost nine pence and money was scarce  
And the glass was a little too small  
So the medium at sixpence came nicely between  
So it was the favourite of all

The closing time law was mostly ignored  
And was never enforced to the letter  
So a drink in the kitchen when the pub doors were shut  
Seemed to taste that little bit better

A drink on a Sunday in Frank Costelloe's kitchen  
Sometimes the sow rambled in  
A sniff and a grunt and a swish of her tail  
Then out she'd ramble again



**Tom Keane, formerly of Kitaboe, now living in Dublin.**

In the war years lots of things were very scarce  
Petrol and tea were like gold  
For heating and cooking just timber and turf  
Yet none died from hunger or cold

The crossroads dance is a thing of the past  
They were dying out even then  
Indeed some goodie goodies were heard to say  
They were just an occasion of sin

Some zealous priests with their walking sticks  
Drove courting couples apart with a shock  
Now they're trying to drive them together  
Through the famed Marriage Bureau at Knock

Then there was a great caper they called it a Ball  
The enjoyment would beggar description  
The old kitchen door was wide open to all  
So long as they'd paid their subscription

The musicians got a collection  
The flag floor swept clean with a broom  
Lashings of Guinness and bottles of wine  
And currant cake and tea in the room

The jig and the reel and the old half set  
Were the favourite dances then  
But the hobnailers timing it out on the flags  
Will never be heard again

A bashful lad made bold by the booze  
Might suddenly start to sing  
With his cap pulled well down over his eyes  
He'd make the old rafters ring



Depending a lot on what drink he had  
The song could go on and on  
Spurred on all the time by the happy throng  
With shouts of "Good on you, John"

The flag floor gave way to concrete  
The concrete's much safer today  
Twas danced on for years with hobnail and clog  
But the trowel marks would not go away

Set dancing I hear is on its way back  
To let it die would be a shame  
But without the sound of the hobnail and clog  
To us it won't sound the same

We loved walking up the Friary Hill  
As the bell rang a muted warning  
What peace and tranquility we found there  
At six on a Christmas morning

Two or three masses then out again  
With heartfelt greetings spoken  
Then ramble quietly back home once more  
Before the clear daylight had broken

At the silent pictures in Conway's hall  
We spent many a wonderful hour  
Before the E.S.B. was hooked up to the town  
Johnnie Conway supplied the power

The missions were held in the Summertime  
The preachers did their job very well  
They didn't give us much hope of Heaven  
But sure gave us a fear of Hell

Before the piped water if your bucket ran dry  
As the best buckets would now and then  
If you didn't feel up to going to the well  
The town had its own Gunga Din

What a joy to walk up the town's Main Street  
And see all the smiling faces  
As we wended our way to the green fields beyond  
To the grand old Tooraree Races

The trick-of-the-loops would be there in force  
Each one with his voice at full throttle  
With a ball on a rope at a penny a kick  
And three shillings for knocking the bottle

The bookies taking two bobs and half crowns  
From punters with hearts full of hope  
And to keep a way clear for the horses to run  
John Prenty and his son with a rope

Those slim legged horses how lovely they looked  
Some names I recall even now  
Shannon Breeze, Limerick Lace, Flighty Miss & Black Eagle  
And of course local hero, Bow Wow

Bow Wow was a cert. for the Farmers' Race  
A big grey that nothing could stop  
But the nearest Bow Wow ever got to a plough  
Was outside Tommie Johnston's shop

If I got the chance of my life to live over  
There's no place on earth that I'd rather be  
Just a lad with his Dad on that dusty old by-road  
That led to the Racecourse at old Tooraree

That evening in town we roamed up and down  
With plenty of laughter and chaff  
Our darlin' Pat Killeen was sure to be there  
With music and his famed Yankee Laugh

The Yankee Laugh seemed a bit overdone  
To us in our far off youth

When you listen to some of the soaps today  
You'll know he was close to the truth

The Race Dance that night was a great turn out  
An affair that shouldn't be missed  
With one-steps and two-steps and old fashioned waltzes  
There was no word then of the Twist

The rhythm and grace as they swept round the floor  
Gave even the wallflowers a treat  
Today they dance with their heads and their hands  
Back in those days they danced with their feet

An all-night dance meant exactly that  
No one left Coogue Hall in a hurry  
We went in daylight and came home in daylight  
Loss of sleep was never a worry

What energy those young dancers had  
Anything like them we won't see again  
Couples dancing away as the morning sun  
Shone bright through the window pane

And if in the course of the dancing  
A lad clicked with a girl that he'd like  
He left her home safe past the gander  
Sitting snug on the bar of the bike

The old hall is still standing the dances long gone  
Along with the music and lights  
But what memories flood back of those wonderful times  
Especially on bright moonlit nights

The day of the threshing there was plenty of help  
They came from every direction  
The paraffin engine kept humming away  
Doing its job to perfection

With the noise, the dust and excitement  
It wasn't a good place for cats  
But that was never a worry for us  
Old Nip took care of the rats

The women cooked bacon, cabbage and spuds  
With never a hard word or frown  
And you couldn't see who sat the other side of the table  
Til the big pile of spuds had gone down

On the night of the fourteenth of August  
With never a thought for the clock  
We watched the barefoot pilgrims  
Walking the road to Knock

The crack was always mighty  
Their voices rose and fell  
Until they walked into a patch of chippings  
Which didn't seem to go down so well

I'm afraid that we spread those chippings then  
Which I suppose was a sin  
We hope the good Lord will forgive us  
But it seemed mighty funny then

On the fifteenth the road was a busy place  
Cars passing from far and near  
Some stopping with squealing brakes to pick up  
A pump that would disappear

Looking back now with hindsight  
It wasn't a nice thing to do  
But some people are old enough to have sense  
Got a great kick out of it too

We always had fish on one day a week  
And never a Friday would pass  
But the fish was delivered right to our door  
By John Martin King and his Ass

The Egger on Wednesday was part of our lives  
In the days we were born and bred  
They don't sell eggs to him any more  
They buy them off him instead

An enjoyable experience we had in those days  
That few young folk experience today  
Was the rain belting down on a galvanised roof  
As we courted there snug in the hay

The time seemed to fly on nights such as these  
And could lead to some sharp little rows  
If the young pair forgot and were still there at ten  
When Pop came out to fodder the cows

As the courting progressed the lad called to her house  
But no matter how wicked the weather  
At twelve with one hand Pop would throw out the cat  
And the daughter's boyfriend with the other

Coming quietly in, in the early hours  
Making no more noise than a mouse  
I'd be sure to hear Robin's neigh from his stable  
And Nip's tail thump the floor of his house

The back door could be always left open  
So long as old Nip was about  
If he knew you well he might let you in  
But no way were you going to get out

In the wee small hours dead silence  
Reigned supreme over green field and bog  
In the distance one might hear that most lonely of sounds  
The long drawn out wailing cry of a dog

When God created those animals  
It was his best job of all  
The comfort they've brought to the lonely  
Those creatures so great and so small

If I ever get to the Pearly Gates  
I'll think it a wasted trip  
If I don't find waiting to welcome me there  
Bunty and Robin and Nip

I know they are floating somewhere up there  
Such beautiful creatures don't die  
And someday God willing we'll ramble together  
Through those big green fields in the sky.



*Declan Warde & Cindy Warde with the Supreme Champion; Emma Brogan with the Reserve Champion, at the Annual Dog Show held in the Friary Grounds. Also included are: Janice Brogan, Darragh Brogan, The Judge Eamon Burke, Margaret Byrne, Aileen Nestor, and John Robinson.*

# Ballyhaunis RUGBY CLUB

*by Eamon Healy*

Over the past twelve months the Club has consolidated its position further. In addition to us putting the finishing touches to the playing pitches, we have also made significant progress with our dressing rooms adjacent to the playing pitches. All this was achieved courtesy of a FÁS scheme under the supervision of Peter Gallagher. It is expected that the final phase of the project will be completed in 1998. This will then offer aspiring rugby players first class facilities to enjoy the game at all levels.

The Club attracts players for both Junior and underage from Kiltimagh, Swinford and Knock and would welcome any new additions interested in playing. Our Junior team competed in both the Junior Cup and League. While there is no silverware to display for their endeavours the signs are, nevertheless, encouraging. The Club also participated in Connaught Under-20 and Under-18 competitions and continues to put a big effort into looking after Under-16s, Under-14s and Under-12s. The responsibility for coaching these underage teams has, up to now, been in the hands of Kevin Henry. Since the start of the current season a very welcome addition as both a player and coach has been Martin Byrne, a Kiltimagh native who has played senior rugby with both Ballina and Mullingar. Both he and Peter Gallagher, who has most experience as a player and as a first class referee, are undertaking coaching sessions on Friday nights on the new pitch.

The Junior team trains on Wednesday and Friday nights and has already put a string of victories together including regaining the Dr. Declan Shields Memorial Trophy with a big win over Sligo. Brendan Morrissey was appointed coach to the Junior team and has proved a great motivating force for the team as a unit.

## FUNDRAISING

The Club's best source of fundraising is the highly successful Bingo sessions held in Julian's, Midfield, every Thursday night. In addition, the Club runs a Lotto each week. Envelopes for this draw are available in many of the bars in the town. Thanks to the dedication of the Bingo Committee, the Club has managed to keep finances in reasonably good shape at a time when lots of Sports Clubs are struggling to stay afloat.

Membership for this season is a modest £15, which can be paid to Bernie Jennings, Club Treasurer.

## OFFICERS

President: David Walsh; Treasurer: Bernie Jennings; Secretary: Eamonn Healy; P.R.O.: Ruadhri Caulfield; Club Captain: Pat Gallagher; Junior Team Coach: Brendan Morrissey; Underage Coaches: Peter Gallagher, Martin Byrne and Kevin Henry; Branch Delegates: Hugh Curley and Kevin Henry.



# St. Vincent De Paul Society

*by Matt O'Dwyer*

Friday 22nd August 1997 was a very special day for the Society of St. Vincent De Paul. On that day our founder, Frederick Ozanam, was beatified in Paris by Pope John Paul II. Frederick Ozanam was a twenty year old University student in Paris in 1833 when he founded our Society to prove that Christianity was not "all talk." From small beginnings the Society has now spread to over 130 countries.

However, 1997 was also a sad year for our local conference.

Noel Waldron, a member for fifty years, died in September. Noel, a man of deep compassion and understanding will be greatly missed by all of us. We extend our sincere sympathy to Noel's wife Mary and to his family.

Meanwhile our normal work goes on, in particular, helping people who, for one reason or another, have fallen on hard times. We have now placed a request box in the Parish Church: on the wall at the top left near

Our Lady's Shrine. If you, or anybody you know, has a financial problem, please drop a name or contact number in the box and you will be contacted in strict confidence.

We meet at 9 p.m. on Wednesday nights in the Sacristy of the Parish Church. We welcome new members. We thank all who support us in our work, especially the members of the Junior Conference.



*January 1968. Knock road with St. Patrick's College on the right and Prenty's old house on the left in the distance.*

*Courtesy Tom Butler, U.S.A.*

# Ballyhaunis Soccer Club

**T**he Ballyhaunis Soccer Club Under-10 team won the Mayo League Blitz last July at Mile Bush Park, Castlebar. They gave a great display of football drawing their first game against Castlebar Celtic and winning all their other matches on the score lines of: 3-2 against Ballyglass, 5-0 against Bowyer Hibs, 1-0 against Erris, 1-0 against Killala and 2-0 against Manulla. Eilish Nevin was awarded the best defender of the tournament.

*by Pat O'Connor*

The Under-14 Girls team won the Blackfort Machinery League for 1997 drawing their first match against Straide and Foxford and winning all their other matches throughout the summer. They have also won their way through to the Mayo Cup Final. This was an excellent panel of players as follows: Edel Kilcourse, Maria Coyne, Tara and Eilish Nevin, Lisa O'Dowd, Avril Robinson, Karen Lilly, Orla Casby, Selina Travers, Louise Byrne, Sarah O'Connor, Claire Swords, Jennifer Egan, Jeanine and Claire Gallagher, Ciara Buckley, Sarah Prenty, Caroline Regan and Laura Murphy.

Paul Finn and Adrian Cregg played on the Connacht Schools Under-18 Team that won the Inter Provincials for only the second time. Paul Finn captained the team. Paul Finn is also currently captaining the Mayo Under-18 League Team.



**Soccer Club U-10 Team:** Back, L - R: Nathan Murphy (Manager), Killian McDonagh, Thomas Finnegan, Eilish Nevin, Barry Nolan, Brendan Gallagher, Micheal Murphy. Front: Noel Hannon, David Healy, Jarlath Mellett, Vincent Walsh, John C. Halpin.



**The St. Joseph's N.S. 6-a-side team, who were beaten on penalties in the Mayo Snickers 6-a-side final.** L to R: Mrs. Cosgrove (teacher), Sarah O'Connor, Ciara McDonagh, Samantha Gildea, Eilish Nevin, Karen Lilly, Claire Gallagher, Edel Kilcourse, Edel Moroney.



**Community Games U-12 Soccer team who were beaten on penalties in the Mayo final last summer.** Back L to R: Deirdre O'Connor (coach); Máire O'Dwyer, Aileen Burke, Bernadette McGowan, Sinead Mulrennan, Edel Kilcourse, Eilish Nevin, Maeve Lynskey, Sarah O'Connor, Leanne Murphy, Cindy Ward. Front: Karen Higgins, Catherine Nestor, Venetta Powers, Joanne Hoban, Lisa Webb, Claire Prenty, Brenda Kilcourse, Myra Kilbane.



# Contributors

*Some of our readers may not be familiar with all of our contributors, so the following brief biographical notes may be of interest.*

**Sr. Assumpta (Flannery)** is a native of Kilkelly and is a long established member of the Sisters of Mercy community in Ballyhaunis.

**Tony Boyle** lives at present in Riverside, Galway. A former member of the bar staff in Gallagher's, Main St., he has been a regular contributor to Annagh Magazine for many years.

**Bridie Brennan.** A native of Claremorris, Bridie is married to Paddy Brennan, ex-postmaster.

**Kay Buckley** lives in Knock Road with her husband Tadhg (a native of Co. Cork) and family. She is daughter of Michael and Mrs. McNamara of Tullaghaun and Upper Main St.

**Eamon Burke** is a native of County Roscommon. He lives in Devlis with his wife Breda (né Toolan) and family.

**Joseph Burke** comes from Tullaghaun and is son of Joe and Mary Burke. He currently works with a Bloodstock Agency in Cork.

**Mike Byrne** lives in Clare St. with his wife Helena (né Biesty) and family. They run a highly acclaimed public house. Mike is the local correspondent for the Connaught Telegraph.

**Marie Campbell** is Principal of St. Joseph's Primary School. She is daughter of Bill and the late Mrs. Campbell of Devlis.

**Tommy Caulfield** is a Secondary Teacher in Hospital, Co. Limerick. He is son of Kathleen and the late Vincent Caulfield, Upper Main St.

**Fr. Michael Collender O.S.A.** is current Prior of St. Mary's Augustinian Friary, Ballyhaunis. He is a native of Dungarvan, Co. Waterford.

**Michael Commins** from Barnacarroll, Claremorris is a journalist and broadcaster of note. He currently works with the Western People and Midwest Radio.

**Martin Connery** is a native of Limerick. He lives in Bohogue with his wife Leonie (né Finnegan).

**Fr. Joseph Cooney, P.P.** A native of Crossboyne, Fr. Cooney was previously Administrator of Tuam and he came to Ballyhaunis in 1993 when he succeeded Canon Costello as Parsh Priest.

**John F. Corr** is a student in the Department of Geographical and Environmental Science, University of Huddersfield.

**Willie Costello** is a native of Garryedmond, Claremorris and now lives in Salthill, Galway. He has recently published his memoirs entitled "A Connaught Man's Ramble."

**Jim Cribbin** resides in Johnstown. He has been a regular contributor to Annagh since its inception in 1978, and to its predecessor the Parish Newsletter in the early seventies.

**Mary Donnelly** is daughter of the late Brod and Peg (né Lyons) Boyle of Ballinphuill. She lives in Ballinphuill with her husband Jim and family.

**Martin Eagney** came from Coolnaha where his nephew Tommy lives at present. A talented poet, his works presented here refer to events which occurred in his home locality of Annagh, about 100 years ago.

**Nuala Fitzgerald** is a Bank Official. She is daughter of Mary (né Greene) and the late Desmond Fitzgerald, Bridge St.

**Lisanne Fitzgerald-Bruchmann** is daughter of Eddie and Marie Fitzgerald of Upper Main St. She lives in France with her husband and family.

**Joe Fitzmaurice** lives in Spaddagh. He worked for many years in Ballyhaunis Telephone exchange.

**Martin Forde** is a native of Island and is a farmer. As well as being a talented actor, he has produced a number of plays, some of which have been broadcast on MWR fm.

**Ina Freyne** is married to Sean Freyne and they live in Clare St. She is P.R.O. for Ballyhaunis Golf Club.

**Sinead Freyne** is daughter of Sean and Ina Freyne. She works with MWR fm and also contributes a weekly column to the Western People.

**Veronica Freyne** lives in Clare St. She is closely involved with the I.C.A. at National level.

**Aileen Gallagher** is daughter of Bernard and Jean Gallagher, Knock road.

**Jean Gallagher.** Formerly Finn, Jean is a native of Cloontumper. She is married to Bernard Gallagher.

**Michael Godfrey.** A native of Tullaghaun, Michael now resides in Ballinlough, Co. Roscommon. He is a gifted poet and song-writer.

**Maura Griffin** taught for many years in the Convent of Mercy and in the Community School. She is a native of County Longford.

**Eamon Healy** lives in Doctors Road with his wife Helen and family. He is a native of Holywell.

**Agnes Heaney** (née Mullarkey) is a native of Bargariff where she lives at present. Her husband Padraic is a native of Garrymore.

**Anna and Kevin Henry.** Kevin is son of Milo and Peggy Henry, Upper Main St. His wife Anna (née Gillespie) is a native of Killala. Both are involved in Dramatic and Musical Societies in Ballyhaunis.

**Agatha Higgins.** Daughter of Seamus and Mrs. Clarke of Devlis, Agatha is married to Vincent Higgins, a native of Irishtown. They live in Knockbrack.

**Cian Higgins,** aged twelve, is a student in St. Mary's Primary School. He is son of Pat and Sally Higgins, Devlis.

**Pat Higgins.** A County Councillor and Secondary Teacher, Pat lives in Devlis with his wife Sally and family. He is son of Mary (née Jordan) and the late Johnny Higgins.

**Murt Hunt** is a regular and popular contributor to Annagh Magazine. He, and his late wife Anne, organised several parish pilgrimages to Lourdes.

**Noreen Hyslop** is daughter of the late Roger and Bridget (née Melvin) Healy of Ballindrehid. She lives in Africa.

**Lucie Kavanagh** lives in Station Rise and is daughter of Noel and Mrs. Kavanagh. She has won several prestigious awards for her writings.

**Tom Keane** was born and reared in Kiltaboe where his brother Mick still lives. Another brother, Pat, was a shoemaker in Lower Main St. Tom lives in Dublin.

**Adrian Kenny** comes from Dublin. His father was a native of Kilgarraff in the parish of Knock. His aunt Sally Kenny lived in Abbeyquarter. Author of several books he has also translated the songs and adventures of Tomás Ó Caiside (An Caisideach Bán).

**Joe Kenny** is a native of Knox St. A teacher in Tullamore, Co. Offaly, he has written several plays, some of which have been broadcast by RTÉ.

**Marie Louise Legg** is Honorary Teaching Fellow, Department of History, Birkbeck College, London University.

**Jim Landon** is a native of Dingle, Co. Kerry. He is Principal of St. Mary's Primary School, Ballyhaunis.

**Declan Lyons** is a native of Devlis and currently resides in Manchester. He is brother of Billy Lyons who lives in Carrownedan, Aghamore.

**Liam Lyons,** aged 12 is a student in St. Mary's Primary School. He is son of Billy and Justina Lyons, Upper Main Street.

**Helen Meehan** from Curries is a member of the secretarial staff of Dillon-Leetch Solicitors.

**Dr. Peter McHugh,** Department of Mechanical Engineering, University College, Galway. He is son of Mrs. Tess and the late Eddie McHugh, Main St.

**Eugene Morley.** A native of Carrowkeel, he is a local postman.

**Seamus Mulrennan** lives in Gurteen with his wife Mary (née Waldron) and family. He is Director of James Mulrennan and Sons Ltd.

**Eamon Murren** is a Secondary Teacher in St. Gerald's College, Castlebar. He has been a regular contributor to Annagh for many years now.

**Bill Naughton (R.I.P.).** Born in Ballyhaunis, Bill and his family moved to Bolton, England, in his childhood. He has become recognised as one of the most important figures in English literature.

**Heather Noone** is daughter of Dr. Patrick and Moira Noone, Ardpatrick, Hazelhill and is an internationally renowned Dancer.

**Pat O'Connor** lives in Hazelhill with his wife Patricia and family. He is a native of County Meath

**Matt O'Dwyer.** A teacher in Ballyhaunis Community School, Matt lives in Ballindrehid with his wife Geraldine and family.

**Margaret Owens** lives in Cloonbooke. She works in the secretarial department of Western Chickens.

**James Reidy** comes from Island. He lives in Doctors Road with his wife and family and is Secretary of Ballyhaunis G.A.A. Club.

**Anna Roche-Quinn.** Formerly of Upper Main St., her father, John Roche, was a Teller in the National Bank, Ballyhaunis.

**Willie Ryan.** A director of the Ryan's Supermarket group, Willie is son of Paddy and Josie (née Carroll) Ryan. He is also Gaelic Games Commentator at MWR and NWR fm.

**Mary Smyth.** A native of Claremorris, Mary is a talented and well known fashion designer. She is Secretary of the Ballyhaunis Chamber of Commerce.

**Micheál Smyth.** A member of an old Ballyhaunis family, Micheál taught in the Vocational School and the Community School until his retirement some years ago.

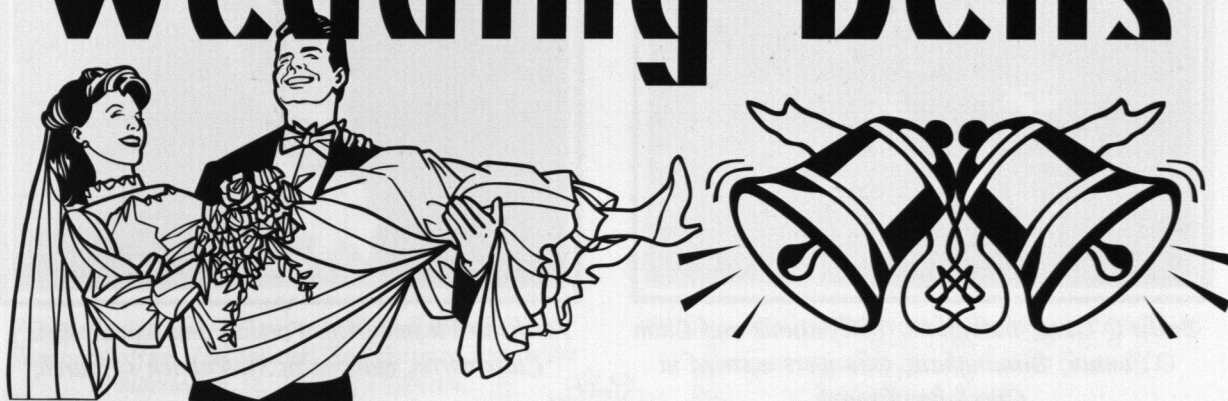
**Aisling Toal** is a native of Sligo. She teaches in St. Mary's Primary School.

**John Tuohy** lives in Crossbeg, Tooreen. He has been closely involved with Ballyhaunis and District Credit Union since its inception.

**Paul Waldron,** a native of Cave, is son of Valentine and Olive Waldron. He has been editor of the Annagh Magazine for the past three years.



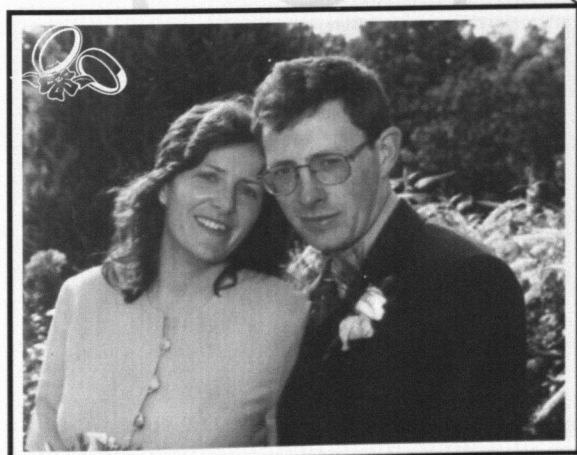
# Wedding Bells



*Katherine Tarpey, Kiltimagh and Jimmy Fleming, Knox St., married in Louisville, Kiltimagh.*



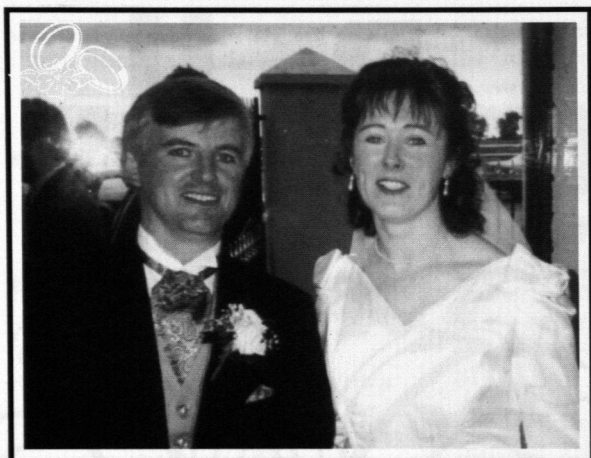
*Mary Flanagan, Loughglynn and John Ryan, Brackloon, married in Loughglynn Parish Church.*



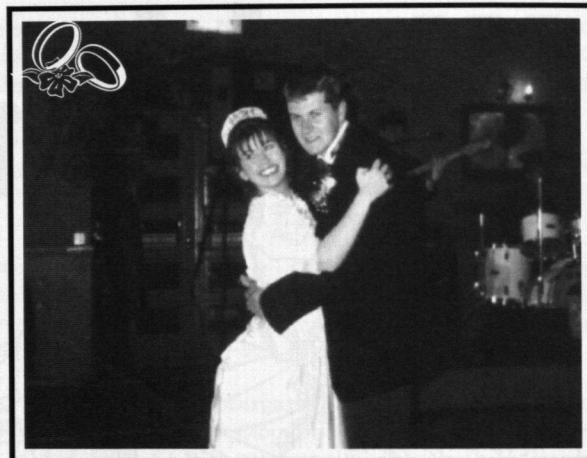
*Pauline Morley, Kilmannin, Ballyhaunis and Ger Walsh, Sandymount, Dublin, married in St. Mary's Abbey, Ballyhaunis.*



*Ger Doherty, Annagh and Angela Prendergast, Ballindine, married in Ballindine Church.*



*Bridie O'Gara, Ballyglass, Ballyhaunis and Liam O'Connor, Birmingham, who were married in Granlahan Church.*



*Michelle Fitzmaurice, Forthill and Ronan Reidy, Claremorris, married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.*



*Robbie Herr, Knox St. and Mona Egan, Knockbrack, married in the Augustinian Abbey, Ballyhaunis.*



*Ray Sloyan, Brackloon and Bernie Burke, Ballyglunin, married in St. Colman's Church, Corofin, Co. Galway.*



*Bernadette Hunt, Lecarrow, Ballyhaunis and Barry Dempsey, Turks Island, Caicos Islands, married at the Church of St. John, Knocknacarra, Galway.*



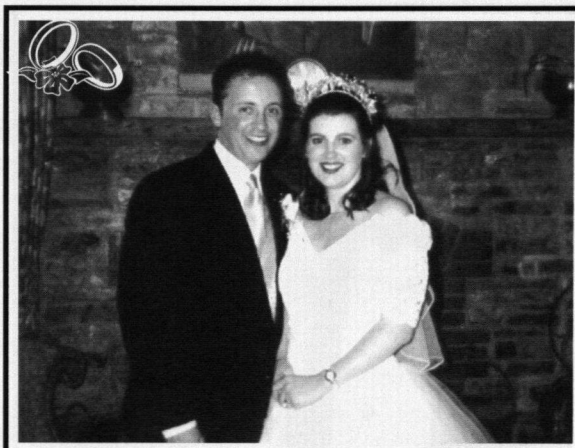
*Aidan Matthews, Dublin and Mary Henry, Gurteen, Ballyhaunis, married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.*



*Annagh Magazine '97*



*Majella Waldron, Carrowkeel, Ballyhaunis and Seamus Coffey, Tullaghane, Ballyhaunis, who were married in St. Patrick's Church, Ballyhaunis.*



*Padraic Walsh, Johnstown and Regina Spillane, Cork, married at St. Michael's Church, Blackrock, Cork.*



*Teresa Coggins, Altore, Ballinlough and Fergus Boyle, Crossmolina, married in St. John the Baptist Church, Knock.*



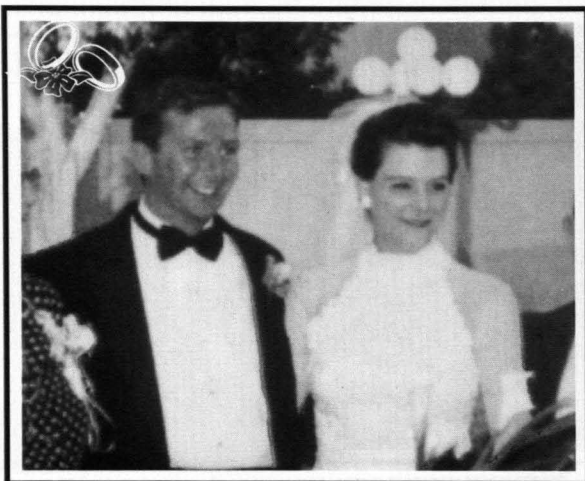
*Sean Cribbin, Knockbrack and Sally-Ann White, Waterford in St. Joseph & St Benildus Church, Waterford.*



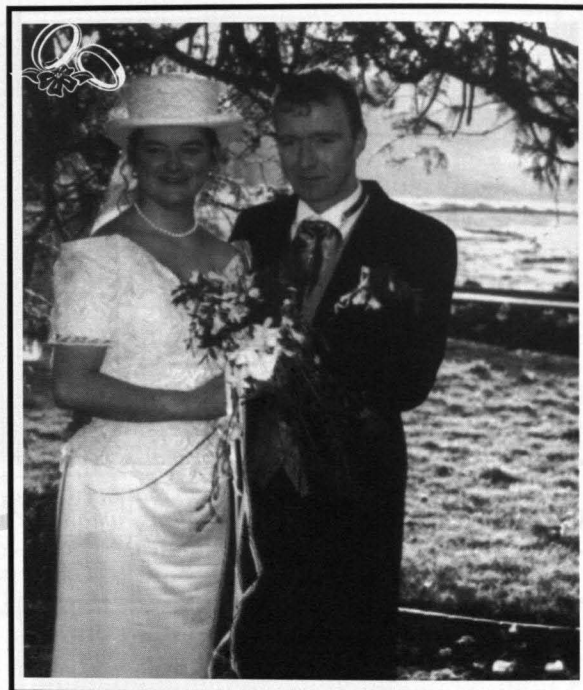
*Patricia Waldron, Island and John Moran, Belcarra, married in Belcarra Church.*



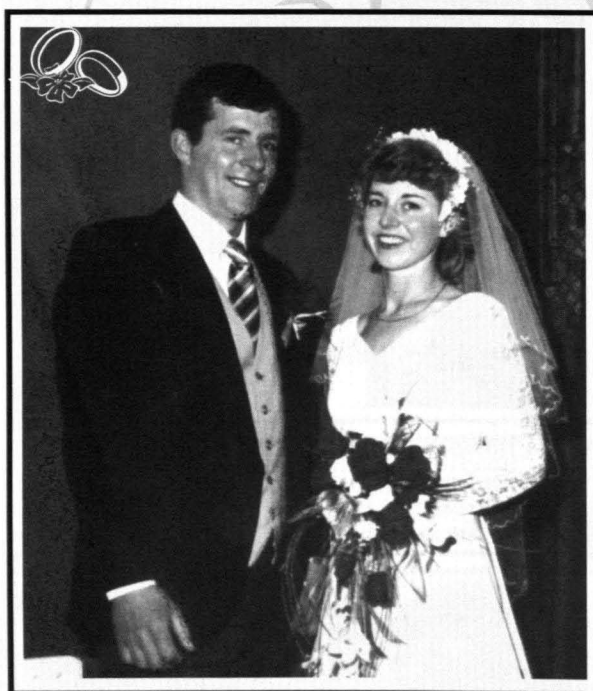
*Vincent McNamara, Upper Main St. and Sharon Naughton, Roscommon, married in Ballyforan Parish Church.*



*Val Byrne, Jr., formerly of Main Street, Ballyhaunis and Samantha Moore, Las Vegas, married in St. Thomas More Church, Henderson, Nevada.*



*Kieran Cunnane, Carrowkeel and Rita Flynn, Ballinlough, married in Ballinlough Church.*



*Tony Waldron, Cave and Patricia Fadian, Achill, married in St. Joseph's Church, Bunnacurry, Achill.*



*Tom Meehan, Annagh and Anne-Marie Moran, Carrownedeen, who were married in St. Joseph's Church, Aghamore.*





# Patrons

**Annagh would like to thank all its patrons, past and present.**

*(Prefix for all phone numbers 0907, unless otherwise stated)*

Abbey Electrical, Abbey Street	31092
A.I.B. Bank, Bridge Street	30464/30726
Alberto's Bar, Restaurant, Carvery, Lunch Daily	Fax. (091) 756678; Ph. 30443
Alma's Ladies' and Gent's Hairdressing Salon, Clare Street	30354
Annagh View Guesthouse (prop. Dolores Halpin Murphy), Rooms en-suite	31000
Auto Care, Specialists in Car Valeting, B'derreen Road, Ballyhaunis	31055; mobile (087) 658037
Augustinian Fathers (Hon.), The Abbey	30031
Avondale B & B, B & B and Holiday Homes, Clare St. (Prop. Bridie Levins)	30345
Ballyhaunis Auto Centre, Quality Cars & Tyres	30573, 30677
Ballyhaunis Transport Service; to/from Dublin, Mon./Wed./Fri.	(088) 549077, 30477
Bank of Ireland, The Square	30073
B.P.H., Ballyhaunis Plant & Tool Hire, Knox St., for all your tool hire requirements	fax.(093) 38559; Tel. 30979
Brennan, Michael, Household Furniture Manufacturers, Gurteen	30797
Bridge Club, Ballyhaunis	
Burke, D.H., Supermarket, Upr. Main Street	30482
Burke, Tom, M.R.C.V.S., Abbey Street	30225
Byrne, Patrick, Victualler & Grocer, Knox Street	30283
Byrne's Bar, Clare Street	30039
Campbell's, Auctioneers & Insurance Brokers, Knox Street	30082
Carewell Registered Private Nursing Home, Knox St., Ballyhaunis	30833
Carney, Eugene, The Gem, Newsagency, Toys, Jewellery, Grocery	30840
Caulfield's, Grocery and Newsagents, Upper Main St.	30637
Central Hotel (Props: John and Carmel Vahey)	30030
Chamber of Commerce (Mary Smyth, Secretary)	
Christina's Curtain Centre, Barrack St.,	30441
Churchfield House Hotel, Knock	(094) 88281 / 88556
Clock Tavern, Knox Street	30344
Colleran's Pharmacy, Bridge Street	30028
Community School (Ballyhaunis), Knock Road	30238
Connacht Scaffolding Ltd.	Fax: 30336; Tel. 30198
Connaught Arms, Knox St.	
Connolly's Kitchens, Galway Rd., Ballyhaunis	0907 30327
Cooney, Rev. Joseph, P.P. (Hon), Parochial House	30006
Credit Union, Ballyhaunis & District, Main Street	30998
Crehan's, Martin, Supply and Fix all Concrete Products	30328
Cunniffe Construction Company Ltd., Tooreen	Mobile (088) 612838; Tel. 49035
Cunningham, Paddo, Londis Foodmarket, Abbey Street	30730/30162
Curley's Bar, Clare Street	30077
Curley's Chemists, Main Street	30110
Curley's Jewellery & Cosmetics, Bridge Street	30110
Curran's Pub, Bridge Street	30357
Daly's Electrical, Domestic Appliances, Bridge Street	30987
Delaney, Paddy, Select Bar & Lounge, Abbey Street	30024
Delaney's Ltd., Hardware, Paint, Household, Gifts, Bridge Street	30296
De-Luxe Cleaning (Vincent Higgins), Carpets, Upholstery, etc. Ballyhaunis	30284
Dillon's Travel Agency, Fancy Goods, The Square	30021
Doherty's Betting Office, Main Street	30628/30738
Dolan, Eugene, Long Island, New York, U.S.A.	
Donnellan's Joinery, Undertakers, Funeral Home	30045
Donnellan's Service Station, Devlis, Heating Oil and Motor Deisel	31151
Durkan's, Drinks Distributors, Devlis	Fax. 30615; Tel. 30034
Eagney Insurance Services Ltd. Bridge Street	Fax. 30795; Tel. 30793/30794
Electrical & Pump Services Ltd., Ballyhaunis	Fax. 30761; Tel. 30226

# Annagh Magazine '97

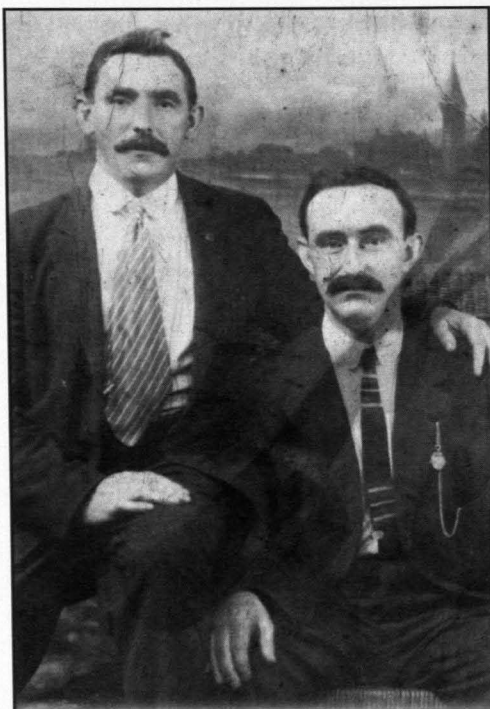
Finn, Tom, Footwear Specialists, Ballyhaunis & Kiltimagh	30141
Fitzgerald's Grocery & Confectionery, Bridge Street.	
Fitzpack Cartons Ltd., Folding Cartons, Laminated Cartons, Tooraree	30808/30309/30811/31120
Flanagan Motors, New & Used Cars; Tooreen, Ballyhaunis	49433
Flogas (Ireland) Ltd., Ballyhaunis	Fax. 30040; Tel. 30883
Forde Bros. (Alum., PVC Windows & Doors), Station Rd., Ballinlough.	40524
Forde's Ltd., The House For All The Family, The Square	30013
Forkan's B & B, (en-suite rooms - private parking), Knox Street	30888
Freeley, David: Cab & Mini Bus Hire	Mobile (087) 510908; Ph. 31164
Freeley, David: Black Mercedes for Weddings, V.I.P. etc.	Mobile (087) 510908; Ph. 31164
Freyne, Bernard, Freyne Gas Service, Hazelhill	Fax. 30040; Tel. 30152
Freyne's Garage & Filling Station, Clare Street	30043
G.A.A. Club (Chairman: Gerry Lyons, Knockbrack)	30737
Gallagher's Builders' Providers, Furniture, Main Street and Clare Road	30314/30020
Garvey-Moran, C., School Supplies, Knox Street	30079
Gerry's Barber Shop, Barrack Street	31014
Glynn (Pat), Photographer, Doctor's Road	Tel: 30026 / Castlereagh 20094
Godfrey, Michael, Ballinlough, Co. Roscommon	
Golf Club, Ballyhaunis, Coolnaha	30014
Grab-A-Bite, Main St., For all your tasty snacks	31373
Griffin (John), Orthodontist, Knock Road	30534
Griffin (Mike), Taxi Service, Clare Road, Devlis	30213
Grogan (Austin) & Sons, Concrete Products, Cave	30072
Guinness Ireland Group, Abbeyquarter,	Fax. (0907) 30158; Tel. 30130/30158
Gun Club, Ballyhaunis & District (Chairman: Eamon Burke)	30151
Halpin's, Breege and John, Floral Occasions and Coffee Dock, Main St.	30012
Harvest Fresh, Fruit, Veg., Main Street	30736
Hazel, The; Bar/Restaurant; Main St., contact Margaret/Michael	30885
Hazelhill Bed & Breakfast (Prop.: Martina & Michael Gallagher)	30605
Hazelhill Timber Products Ltd. (Milo Henry), Europallets	Fax. 30825; Tel. 30094
Healy (Joe), Registered Building Contractor, Annagh	30481
Helen's Launderette, Barrack Street	30841
Herr (Fred), Grocer, Knox Street.	
Higgins (Jim), T.D., Devlis	30052
Higgins (Pat), Mayo Co. Council, Devlis	30052
Higgins O'Brien, Auctioneer, E.B.S. Agent, Main Street	30088
Home Furnishings (Noel Culkeen), Complete Home Furnishers, Abbey St.	30607
Horse Shoe Inn, Abbey Street	30178
Irises Florists - Interflora, Main St.	30015
Irish Country Meats (Ballyhaunis), Clare Road	Fax. 30561; Tel. 30555
Irish Runner, 165 Sperrin Road, Dublin 12	(01) 4550880
Ironing Parlour, Barrack St., Washing, Drying and Ironing.	31220
Jacki's Hair Salon, Bridge Street	30807
Jennings (Bernard), Knox Street.	30315
Johnston's Machinery, Farming Community Specialist, Knox St.	30019
Jordan Windows, Clare Street	30641
Joyce (Martin): Walking World Ireland/Sports Travel International, 228 Harold's Cross Rd., Dublin 6	(01) 4922718
Joyce (Michael), 9 Washington Street West, Cork	(021) 270391
Kay's Salon, Knox Street	30065
Keane's Kitchens Ltd., Kitchen, Bedroom, Furniture, Clare Road	30038
Keane (Joe), Merchant Tailor, Knox Street	30751
Kelleher's, Spar Foodmarket and Video Shop, Main Street	30023
Kelly (Padraic), Furniture Manufacturer, Drimbane	30089
Kelly (Rosaleen), R.P.N., M.S.R.I., Kinesiology, Learning Difficulties	30022
Kenny, Joe, Tullamore, Co. Offaly	
Lilly (John J.), Plant Hire, Johnstown	30352
Little Brook House, Bed & Breakfast (Prop.: Breda Burke)	30151
Loughran (F.J.), M.V.B., M.R.C.V.S., Upper Main Street	30017
Lyons (James), Publican, Main Street.	
Lyons (Michael), Coach & Minibus Hire, Lecarrow	30347



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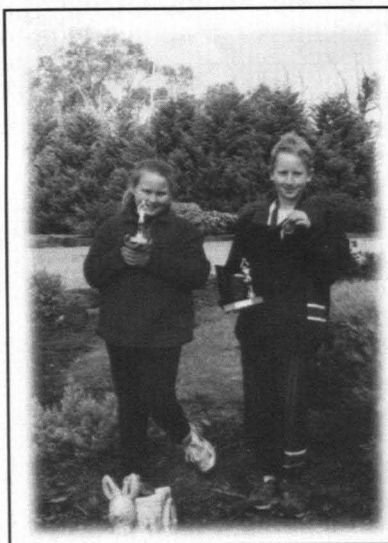
McGarry (Gerard & Associates), Development Consultants, Architects, Engineers	30170
McGarry's, Ladieswear	30084
McHugh (Terence), High Class Victualler, Abbey Street	30061
McNamara Car Dismantlers, Dublin Road	30439
MacSiurtáin, Publican, Main Street	30854
Madden (Gerald), Snooker Tables, Gurteen	30228
Meehan Memorials, Annagh	30203
Mercy Sisters (Hon.), Upr. Main Street	30108
Mobile Tractor Repairs - on call Day and Night, Ring: Eamonn	30386
Moran Bros. Ltd., Building/Publ. Wks. Contrs., Tooraree. (Members 6-year Structural Guarantee Sch.)	30146/30725
Moran (Donal), Television Systems Ltd., Knox St.	30569
Moran (Donal K. & Sons), Building Contractor	30079
Moran's Coaches & Minibus Hire, Knock Road	Fax./Tel. 30346
Moran (Tommie), Sweets, Ices, Fancy Goods, Fuel Merchants, Main St.	30493
Morley (P.J.), M.C.C. Bekan	(094) 80217
Morley (Tony) & Sons, Exterior & Interior Decorators, Knox St.	30944
Mulhern (Edward), Bar & Taxi Service, Clare St.	30249
Mulrennan (Jas.) & Sons Ltd., Fitted Kitchens & Bedrooms Specialists (Keane's Kitchen Centre)	30038
Munro (Brian) & Sons, Insurance Broker	30343
Murphy's Auto Sales, Service Station and Shop, Dublin Road	30307
Murphy (Eddie) & Sons, Menswear Specialists, Main Street	30651
M.W.R. F.M. 96.1, Abbey Street.	Ads: 30553 / Requests: 30169
Naughton, Erna, Kempis, Orrisdale Rd., Ballasalla, Isle of Man	
N.C.F. Ltd, Mart and Stores	30166
Nestor & Co., Accountants, Upper Main Street	Fax. 30294; Tel. 30005
Nestor's Corner Bar	31011
Newsround (Pat Freeley), Newsagency, Toys, Giftware, Cards, Main Street	30897
Nolan's Engineering and Mobile Welding, Togher	30205
Nolan's Pub, Knox St.	301174
O'Connor, John, Ronoco Ltd., Doctor's Road	30037
O'Grady, Rev. James, C.C. (Hon), Upper Main Street	30095
Oak Bar (Niall Delaney)	30099
Parochial Hall, Bingo	30212
Patterson (Noel), Main Street	Fax. 30865; Tel. 30113
Phillips (Charlie) & Sons, Shoes and Drapers, Main Street	30368
Phillips (Eamon), High Class Victualler, Main Street	30381
Phillips (Paddy), Publican	30118
Rattigan's Bar, Knox Street	30157
Royal Breffni Pub, Knox St.	31078
Rochford Motors, Main Mitsubishi Dealers, Knock Road	Fax 30570; Tel. 30163/30350
Romplas Bathrooms, Tooraree	Fax. 30733; Ph. 30850/30860
Ruane (P.), Radio and T.V. Dealer / Repairs, Knox St.	30129
Ryan's Super-Valu, Main St., Free parking at rear of store for all our customers	30359
Scott's Hot Bread Shop, Main St.	
Shop 'n News, Foodstore & Newsagents, Abbey Street	30950
St. Mary's Primary School, Abbeyquarter	30310
St. Joseph's Convent of Mercy Primary School, Abbey Street	30505
St. Patrick's Dramatic Society	
Stratford's Photography, Ballyhaunis	Mobile (087) 49355; Ph. 30293
Tynan Dillon & Co., Chartered Accountants, Clare Street	30261
Ulster Bank Ltd., Abbey Street	30049
Val's: Michael & Bernie Quinn, for Food and Accommodation, Main Street	30068
Valerie's - Ladies' & Gents' Hair Salon, Barrack Street	30681
Wash Tub, Launderette & Dry Cleaners, Same Day Service, Ironing Service	30449
Webb (M.J.), Master Butcher, Main Street	30003
Webb, T.J., Catering and Retail Butcher, Bridge St.	30041; (088) 679190
Western Brand Chickens Ltd., Fresh and Frozen Daily	Fax. 30834; Tel. 30069
Winston (Gerard), Family Grocer, Devlis	30395

*The Annagh Magazine Society wishes all the compliments of the season.*



Patrick Mullarkey, Bargariff and his cousin, Patrick Freeley, Leow - taken in New Haven, Connecticut, U.S.A. c.1916

(below) Emma & Andrew O'Brien, Australia. (Presentation Day, Sept. '97) - grandchildren of Jack Halpin



(above) Altar Servers - Parish Church 1997/'98. Front row L to R: Kevin Curley, Padraic Cribbin, Joseph Neenan, Neil Jordan, Robert Potter-Cogan, John C. Halpin. 2nd row: David Lynch Ian Byrne, Colin Egan, Aodan Healy, Alan Fitzpatrick, Anthony Murphy. 3rd row: Lorcan Finan, Austin Lyons, Mark Kelly, Fergal Lyons, Cian Higgins, Daniel Carroll. Back row: Liam Lyons, Declan Ward, Ciaran Waldron, Jarlath Mellett, Phelim Carroll, Paul Ward. Missing: Patrick Heaney.

(below) At a Presentation Dinner in the Springhill Hotel, Kilkenny, celebrating 25 years employment at Guinness (Ireland) Group Depot, Ballyhaunis. Back (left to right): Sean Grogan, Frank McTigue, Michael O'Loughlin (Manager), Murt Hunt (Supervisor). Front: Tommy Grogan, Mick Finnegan, Pat Byrne.

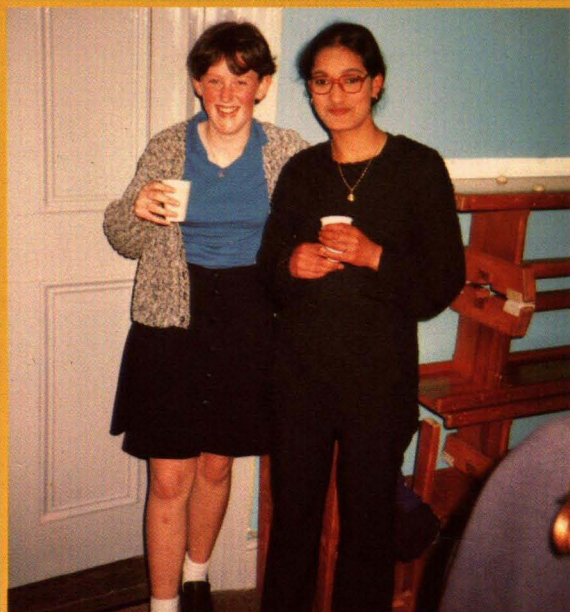


### *Cover Photographs:*

Front, clockwise from top left:- Marian Moloney, President Mary McAleese and Margaret Owens; Heather Noone; John Higgins; Seamus London; Gerry and John Paul Coen; Jim Kilboyle, Patrick Doherty and Patrick Finnegan; Noreen and Tom Hopkins; Declan Murphy, Adrian Brennan, Sinéad Mulrennan, Máire O'Dwyer, Sarah Buckley; Anne-Marie Madden.

Back, clockwise from top left:- David and Marie Connolly, Lecarrow with a Moroccan Chief; Fr. James O'Grady C.C., Fr Joseph Cooney, P.P., Fr. Michael Collender, O.S.A.; Patsy and Bernie Keane with Sean Waldron; Patrick Murray; Waldron Clan Tour 1997; Imelda Flynn, David Fitzgerald, Valerie Murray, John Fitzgerald, Brian Murray, Seamus Caulfield, Paddy Phillips, Mick Murray; Anne-Marie McGowen, Tahira Idress.





# Annagh '97