

SUAIRE

CHRISTMAS

1981



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GUAIRE

Xmas 1981

Guaire is a community-based magazine and depends on community support and involvement.

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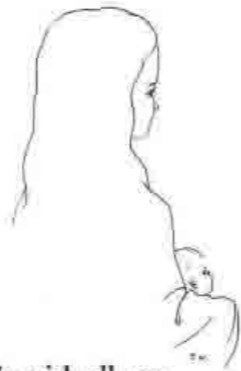
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Letters and comments to the Editorial Board will be greatly appreciated.



We wish all our
Readers a Happy
Christmas

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A Look Back

Enda Glynn

A friend from outside the Barony of Kilmacduagh once tried to phone me in Gort. He eventually got through to what he thought was the Presbytery and ventured the question: "Is Fr. Enda Glynn there?" The reply was to the point: "No, he's never here". The giver of the reply was George Quinn, the larger than life parish priest of Gort from 1971 to 1980.

I have many memories from my three years in Gort. George, as he was affectionately known to his flock, was parish priest during the first two. Curates did not figure high in George's scale of priorities, as he was at his best a solo performer. He was one of the great characters of Gort who enlivened many a gathering whether present or absent.

His vocabulary was rich, ranging from "the miasma of Coole", through "the oasis of St. Colman" to the grandeur of "Kilmacduagh", a place dear to George's heart — all of which defied scientific explanation.

The first time I saw George was as a young boy growing up in Lahinch in the 1950's — he was part of a search party for a young soldier who was drowned where the river Inagh meets the sea near the 12th fairway in Lahinch. He was a great swimmer and was one of the first to swim Liscannor Bay. This feat lost nothing in the passing years. When I came to Gort George had made it to the Cliffs of Moher.

Winnie

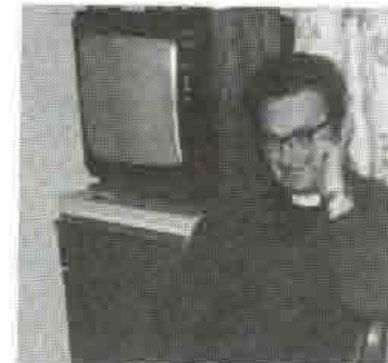
Winnie Niland looked after the curates in Gort for many years. When I came there she made me feel at home — her quiet gentle way was appreciated by all the priests. How tragic that her brother and sister's death brought to an end almost forty years service in Gort. She is now happy in the family farm in Ballindereen. I know there

are many in Gort who remember Winnie with great affection.

Working as a priest I was always conscious that I was one of the redeemed, a sinner living among sinners. The advice which an old farmer in Oughterard once offered always impressed me. "If you can't do a man a good turn, then don't do him a bad one". I was aware of the beam in my own eye.

However most Irish towns have a disturbing tendency to highlight the specks and forget the beams. I thought Brigid Noone captured this idea well when she wrote in the first issue of Guaire: "There are some things in Gort which compare painfully with Peyton Place. . . It is a typical small Irish town, everybody knowing everyone else and their business".

I am delighted that the Guaire magazine is continuing. I think magazines like Guaire enrich a community, provide a link with the past and will be greatly appreciated by later generations. Will Willie Quinn's "Star" ever die? I don't believe it will. Do you remember Willie "when he was riding high, a



Fr. Enda Glynn

semi-detached house on the Ennis Road two doors from the Classic Ballroom?" Willie's nostalgic look at the past rings a note in the ear of many a reader's yesterday.

Youth

It is the young who bring life to most communities. There is much truth in the Irish proverb "Mol an óige agus tiocfaidh sí", Gort has many fine young people and I was always impressed with the open and friendly spirit of their ways. I think Gort and Kiltartan Youth Clubs helped young people relax in a free and friendly atmosphere and in this way provided a great service to the community.

The Disco's are an important element in young people's social entertainment to-day. Gort's discos were always free of trouble. Credit for this must go to the young people themselves and to Michael McGann whose work in this sphere is legendary. I always had difficulty in keeping abreast of the fast changing lines in the youth scene and I still hear an occasional whisper while working in the Regional Tech. I believe that young

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people when given leadership, co-operation and example are capable of stirring deeds.

One of the duties I enjoyed doing most was the First Friday Communion calls. Meeting the old people in their homes gave me a link with an older generation of Gort people. I was always made welcome, the old people appreciated the call and it is one of the things I miss most in my new job. I always finished the calls with a cup of coffee from Mrs. Hill, whose brew has even improved with the passing years.

The Tech

I was three happy years in the Tech and while teaching Christian Doctrine is not everyone's cup of tea I enjoyed my contact with the school. The "Poor Tech" is an oft heard phrase but I think deep down most people appreciate its enormous contribution to educating the youth of South Galway. Its caretaker Christy was one of the characters in the school and no matter what shouts were heard from the office, Christy let them pass by.

In my last year in the Tech Tom Lally came as Career Guidance Counsellor. His great work for students is not known to the public. The Dew Drop Inn is a product of Tom's fertile mind. It is now closed. But the experiment was worthwhile as it proved that such a project was viable - financially and otherwise.

It was an attempt to provide a meeting place for young people away from the pub atmosphere. One of its strongest supporters is

Bishop Eamonn Casey who believes that the drink issue among young people must be confronted by providing alternative means of entertainment. The project can be reactivated once suitable premises are discovered. There are sufficient concerned adults in the Gort community to overcome this problem with cooperation from civil and religious interests.

There were some sad moments too in Gort. The car crash resulting in Marie Minogue being called home and my own father's death. Also Louise Nolan and John Melville,

Malachy

Brian Melville



Louise Nolan

two young people who will be missed by their families but who are now shining like bright stars in God's kingdom.

Gort is a town that most people pass on their way to Galway or Shannon. Before 1978 this was my experience of it. I now feel that Gort is part of me, though I was but part of its passing ecclesiastical furniture.

Roma '81

Paul Cafferky



For me the dream of visiting Rome became a reality on the 21st of August this year. Over 2,000 young people had been preparing for this trip for a year, but on the Monday before the departure date, I got a telephone call from Fr. Tom Tarpey who asked me if I was interested in going to Rome in four days time. Some unfortunate person got sick, and his place was left vacant, so Fr. Tom, or "Tarps" as everyone called him, called on a former Latin student of his to fill the space.

I just couldn't believe it at first, and until I got on the bus in the Square on that Friday morning I was waiting to wake up and find that it was all a dream. But this was definitely no dream! In the bus I got to know the lads, who like myself, headed straight for the back seat. I already knew Michael Earley, Greg Scully and William Clondillon from school and before long I knew I was beside Michael Kelly from Craughwell and Pat Burke from Renmore.

There was a large representation from the Gort area on the tour with

ROMA '81
the lads already mentioned representing the College, Tina Broderick and Pauline Diviney from the Convent and John Tierney and Bridget Greaney from the Vocational School. About two hours behind schedule, we arrived in Rosslare to board the St. Kilian. We headed straight for our cabins and deposited our luggage and prepared for the night ahead. Not many were in the mood for eating and drinking, while the boat was moving, so the majority of the crowd gathered around the Disco.

On the following morning we arrived in Cherbourg and immediately got on the train which we would inhabit for the next 24 hours. I'd love to tell you about some of the things that happened on the train, but I'm afraid there might be some suspicious parents reading this magazine. Anyway, we eventually arrived in Rome at Ostiense station from where we transferred to our hotel, had a meal which we were told was traditionally Italian but only that we were so hungry, I think little would have been thought of Italian traditions.

That night was free and we decided to do some exploring for ourselves. We arrived back at the hotel to find it closed at 10.00 p.m. sharp and if you come in later than that, you get to see Rome by night for free.

I won't bore you with every exact detail of what we did, but I can assure you it was far from being a boring experience for us. The week included swimming at a

beautiful beach, visits to the Colosseum, Masses at some very beautiful churches, tours to the Catacombs, Pompeii, Tivoli gardens, the Vatican and, of course, the highlight of the tour, seeing the Pope.

On the way to Rome, there was nothing certain about our seeing the Pope. The organizers were telling us not to be disappointed if we didn't see the Pope at all. Then came the great news; that on our third evening in Rome, the Pope was to spend some time with us in Castlegondolfo. The scenes there were just as exciting, if not more so, than those in Ballybrit two years ago. The Pope, who looked pale and weak, went against all his doctor's advice and spent over an hour with us. Then we would have been quite satisfied, but he wanted to meet us again. He was forbidden to say Mass for us, so he took his Secretary of State, Cardinal Caseroli away from the running of the Vatican state to say Mass in his stead.

But it all had to come to an end. On the final day, in the bar of the hotel, Fr. Tom Tarpey said Mass for us. If I forget everything else about Rome, I will never forget that Mass. Now, I'm no saint, as anyone who was in Rome will tell you, but that Mass definitely had an impression on me, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Fr. Tom for it.

Now the journey home, train to ship, to bus, all unforgettable experiences. Arrival home, giving of the presents, showing off the few words of Italian and then the

sudden realisation that it was all over.

We've had two reunions since then and we are all determined not to let the memories of Roma '81 die.

Fighting the gen. election

By Mr. Frank Fahey, M.C.C.

For anybody actively involved in politics, his ambition must be to fight and win a general election. I had hoped to get such an opportunity since I first became a member of Galway County Council, in 1971. My ambition, on becoming actively involved in politics, was to help improve living standards in this area, both on a Community and personal basis. It soon became evident that it was necessary to be a full time politician, and member of Dáil Éireann, before one could hope to achieve any significant results.

Since then I have had the ambition, but not an obsession of becoming a T.D. A definite decision was made that I should attempt to contest the election, in January, 1981, and so eighteen months of active planning went into the campaign. The first hurdle was to convince the Fianna Fail National Executive, that South Galway should have a Candidate, on the Fianna Fail ticket. Following the intervention of the then Taoiseach,

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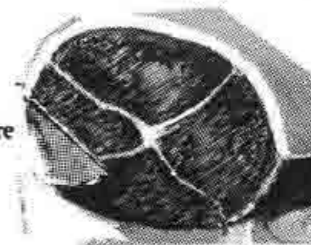
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out and about

GOOD NEWS

We congratulate local man Maxie Scully on his wonderful achievement at the recent indoor International Showjumping competitions at the R.D.S., Dublin, being one of three riders to clear the 6' 7½" wall in the world bare back high jump competition, creating a new record, which the

Australian equestrian team held for the past 42 years.

We extend our best wishes to Mr. Joe Mitchell and his staff, who are responsible for the activities of Galway County Council in the area, on their recent move to new Offices at Bridge St.

FIGHTING THE GENERAL ELECTION

this was agreed. A Fianna Fail Convention of over five hundred people, then selected five candidates, from nine contenders. I was lucky to be selected in the fifth position.

A hectic three week campaign had begun, and was made more difficult by the fact that Fine Gael had been campaigning for three weeks previously. It was planned, and controlled by a campaign committee, who met every night, at 12.00 p.m., midnight. We started each day, at 7.30 a.m. by meeting people going to work in factories, throughout Galway City. One particular morning, I had met 1,500 people, by 9.00 a.m. It was not-stop for a gruelling three weeks.

There were difficulties, but also some humorous moments. The greatest difficulty was being completely unknown, outside South Galway, and having to stay in the same ring as big-name politicians, on all sides.

There was the occasion of the Taoiseach's visit to Galway. At a public rally, in Athenry, on the first night of the campaign, our three T.D.'s, Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, Robert Molloy, and Mark Killilea, who were called first, gave three rousing speeches. I was to be called next, and literally, there was

nothing left to say. They had really got the crowd going. The atmosphere was electric, and the Taoiseach was to speak after me. I felt like running off the stage.

Approaching Election Day, there was relief that it was coming to an end, although it was only now we were making an impression in outside areas. We could have done with more time, although we knew we had come a long way in three weeks.

Our target was 5,500 votes; we felt this was enough to be elected. In the days before the Election, I felt I could be elected, although I had been, up to then, the complete outsider.

The result is now history. I was initially disappointed when I saw my first preference vote of 5,049. I knew it was going to be just short. However, on reflection, I was pleased. It was a good result for a first outing. My only disappointment was that once again, South Galway had been passed by.

It was a worthwhile experience. We had a great campaign team. Many people, with no active interest in politics, joined in, especially in the last week. It was certainly an encouragement to try again. Perhaps in the Summer of 1983!

Our best wishes go to Mr. Bill Fallon on his retirement from the Forestry Department after 30 years service at Coole Forest. We hope Bill and Maura enjoy a long and happy retirement.

Every success to Mark Scully, M.R.C.V.S., Gort on the recent opening of his Animal Clinic at George's St.

We also wish every success to Mr. Charles Foley, B.C.L., who has commenced practice as a Solicitor at George's St. His father, the late Charlie Foley, practiced as a Solicitor at Queen St. for many years.

New 7,000 Sq. Ft. Advance Building Gets The Go-Ahead

An advance factory of seven thousand square feet, sanctioned last year by Industry Minister, Mr. Dessie O'Malley, TD is about to be built in Gort. Councillor Frank Fahey, who has been informed on this matter by Mr. Tom Hyland of the IDA said yesterday that the factory is being built under the investment arrangement with private enterprise.

BOYS NEW SCHOOL, GORT

The present position of the new school is: the working drawings have been completed by the Architects and have gone to the Quantity Surveyors for their examination of costs. They hope to be ready with their estimates in another couple of weeks. The Department of Education is expected to proceed to invite tenders from Building Contractors. It is hoped the work will commence

OUT AND ABOUT

some few months after that. £13,069.00 has so far been collected from the parish. Interest on this has amounted to £2,818.77 leaving the total fund at £15,887.77.

We are delighted to see work commencing on the £150,000 extension to the former Foley residence at Queen Street, now occupied by the Brothers of Charity as a centre for mentally handicapped children. The work is being conducted by local contractors - Lally Construction Ltd.

Nearby, the former Kilduff residence, now in the ownership of the Convent of Mercy, has been demolished. On part of the site will be built the proposed new centre by Gort Social Services for the needy of the town.

Good news for all prospective house buyers. Mrs. Teresa Maloney, Secretary, Gort Chamber of Commerce, confirmed during the week that concrete progress was being made in attracting the Shannon based Rural Housing Organisation to build a scheme of houses in Gort. Fr. Harry Bohan, Chairman of the Organisation, is very keen to buy one particular site from the number of sites viewed, according to Mrs. Maloney. The proposed number of houses is not as yet decided on, but in the long term it is hoped that the Rural Housing Organisation will meet the

full demands for housing in the area. The design of houses will be similar to the scheme presently completed at Dunmore, at a cost of £18,000 for a three bedroomed semi-detached and £19,500 for a four bedroomed semi-detached. The Rural Housing Organisation have indicated to the Chamber that Gort is mapped for being a town of prime suitability for further similar development.

Our congratulations are extended to Mr. Noel Mullins, Proprietor of the Classic Ballroom, whose puppy, "Spring Wood" won the "Hurry On Bran" Munster Puppy Competition Cup 1981 at the Golden Jubilee outing at Clonmel Greyhound Track on 15th October last. "Spring Wood", a February, 1980 puppy, who opened at money on favourite, won the race in a time of 29.58. In the semi-finals, the same dog had equalled the track record in a time of 29.54. By all accounts, in excess of a gallon of champagne was consumed at Clonmel following the race, no wonder, Noel having received a beautiful Waterford Crystal Vase and Cheque for £2,000 and an offer to sell the puppy for £10,000, the latter of which incidentally he declined.



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25th ANNIVERSARY

The 25th Anniversary of Our Lady's College Gort was a very big occasion recently, a large number of past pupils returned from far away places to be present at the function.

Miss B. Keehan Lough Cutra was presented with a gold medal for English at the Conferring ceremony in Carysfort Training College. Bridget was educated at Lough Cutra National School and St. Joseph's Gort.

Mrs. Mary Donnellan was presented with a Silver Tea Service to mark the occasion of her retirement as Principal of Tiernevan School.

Congratulations to our girls who were conferred with B. Education degrees, Geraldine Nolan, Marie Long, Bernadette Halvey, and Annette Lally.

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Sweet Victory at Last

At last Gort was in a County Final. On the 24th, of October 1981 no less a team than Castlegar had been conquered. After 31 years Final Day would have a team from St. Colman's Parish, and hopefully a forty seven year gap would be bridged, the Cup coming Gort's way for the first time since 1934.

The euphoric certainty of the post Castlegar days had mellowed to a cautious optimism as car after car wound it's way through Peterswell, Castledaly and Loughrea on the road to Ballinasloe. Sunday, November 8th, could well be the day of glory. Some must have longed to celebrate a great victory without having to wait and endure, but the Final was fixed for 3.15 p.m., and the title of County Champions had to be won on the field against experienced opponents in Kiltormer. As referee Mick Quaine (what a man at 67 years!) tossed the coin, the experts in their thousands must have been wondering how the match would go; what would it's pattern be. A good start could be important to Gort. A slow start could be fatal against a team such as Kiltormer. Yes a good start was vital!

Waiting for the National Anthem one was conscious of the stillness of the day. A balmy day in November, not a whisper of wind to stir the flag. The Anthem over, the crowd expectant, a good start is half the battle.

Kevin Fahy assures Gort of that



good start by scoring two points and winning frees from which Gerry Lally scored two more points. Ten minutes gone and Gort leads by 0-4 to 0-1. Matt Murphy ends a scoreless spell to make it 0-5 to 0-1. As the second quarter wears on Kiltormer come more and more into the game, but with full-back John Nolan excelling, goal-keeper Tony Monaghan keeping his eye on the ball, and Josie Harte giving good support the Kiltormer men are still behind by one point at half-time — Gort 0-6; Kiltormer 0-5.

Centre-half back Conor Hayes and half-forwards Furey, Kelly and Staunton have caused problems. Is an early levelling point ominous! Gerry Linnane answers with a goal

when goal-keeper fails to hold a Pierce Piggott cross. Gort are a goal ahead!

Jackie Goode goals and the East County men are on terms again, but once more Gerry Linnane (a real trier in the second half) puts the ball in the net, having run a long way to be on the spot when Matt Murphy lob breaks close in.

Once again Kiltormer take the road back, coming to within one point, but Gerry Lally hits a fine free from a very narrow angle, over the bar. Less than five minutes to go and the score is Gort 2-8; Kiltormer 1-9. Can it happen! The lead is halved. A minute to go, but a free to Kiltormer. Captain Cormican is entrusted with the task of saving the day for Kiltormer. So

STREET VICTORY AT LAST

much depends on the last puck of the game. Is the Cup bound for South Galway, or will it be another day! The ball is in flight. Will it carry all the way? Yes, it's a draw!

Gort 2-8 Kiltormer 1-11

Quietly the crown leaves Duggan Park. Somehow very few had considered the possibility of a tie. Slowly, almost sedately the lines of cars make their way home. The Cup can still be won. Yes, it can!

The Replay — 15th November 1981

Sean Cormican gave Kiltormer the lead (with a point from a "65") about one minute of playing time after he had levelled the score from a free, but, a week separated the scores.

For the only time in the two games Gort were in arrears, a fact which didn't seem to upset them as they settled down with Michael Cahill playing well at centre-field and the forwards making it difficult for the opposing backline to get good clearances. Gerry Lally a point from a free, Michael Cahill two from play and Matt Murphy a goal after good work by Pierce Piggott.

Gort 1-3 Kiltormer 0-1

Kiltormer started to come more into the game and were looking dangerous with the score at 1-4 to 0-4 when John Crehan finished off what at first had looked a harmless delivery from Matt Murphy. Score 2-4 to 0-4 and Kiltormer in trouble. At half-time the score was Gort 2-4; Kiltormer 0-6.

A Matt Murphy point soon after the break was a real boost to Gort, but as the second half wore on Kiltormer strove to save a game which was slipping away. However, the Gort half-backs (Christy Monaghan, Sylvie Linnane and Fr. Michael Brennan) were much tighter than in the drawn match and were giving good support to the



Gort's Captain, Sylvie Linnane, receiving the "Hurling Skills '81" Trophy.

revelation of the championship series — the full-back line of Josie Harte, John Nolan and Joe Regan.

In the forward line Pierce Piggott, Matt Murphy and Kevin Fahy were causing trouble to the Eastern side's backs but scores were not coming. Two pointed frees by Tony Furey left just a goal between the teams, but Matt Murphy scored a fine point from the near side-line, a vital score which must have sown desperation in the opposition ranks. Little did we realise that it was the last score of the game. Try as they might, Kiltormer could not break down the Gort resistance. THE CUP WAS GORT'S AT LAST!

Teams

Gort: Tony Monaghan, Josie Harte, John Nolan, Joe Regan, Christy Monaghan, Sylvie Linnane (Capt.), Fr. Michael Brennan, Gerry Lally, Michael Cahill, Gerry Linnane, Pierce Piggott, Patrick Neilan, Matt

Murphy, Kevin Fahy, John Crehan.

Kiltormer: Frank Larkin, Kevin Lynch, Joe Hayes, Tom Lynch, Ollie Kilkenny, Conor Hayes, Sean Cormican (Capt.), Tony Kilkenny, Andy Fenton, Tony Furey, Sean Kelly, Aidan Staunton, Donie Campbell, Peadar Ryan, John Goode. Sub.: Liam Larkin for Tom Lynch.

From the top of George's Street to Ballinger's Corner; to the far end of Church Street and back to the Square, the Cup was proudly paraded. The Club Chairman, Michael Linnane, addressed the

delighted hundreds. One suspects there were those among them, especially the veterans, who were prevented from cheering by lump-filled throats.

Cheering or not, there it was in Captain Sylvie Linnane's hands — THE CUP! !

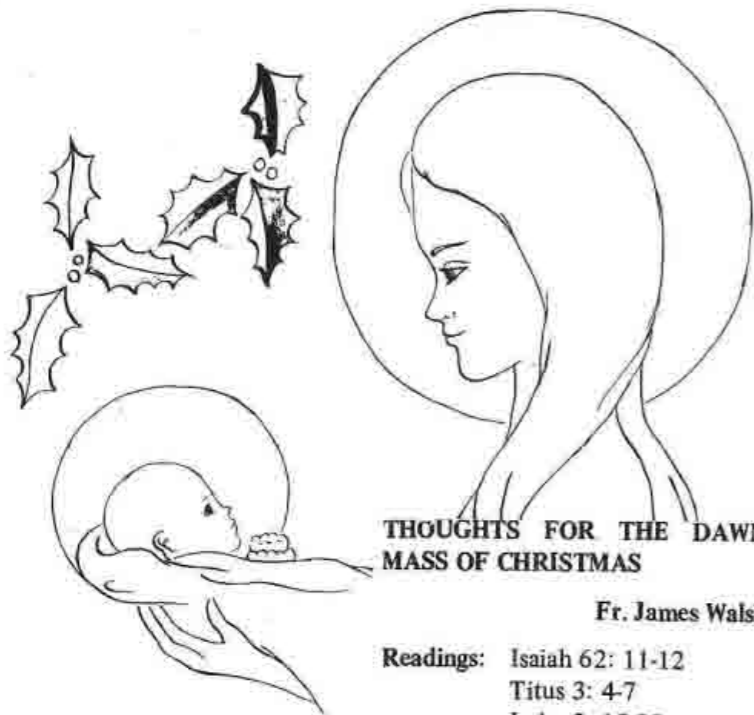


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**THOUGHTS FOR THE DAWN
MASS OF CHRISTMAS**

Fr. James Walsh

Readings: Isaiah 62: 11-12
Titus 3: 4-7
Luke 2: 15-20

A few miles outside Ballyvaughan there is a wonderful underground cavern called Ailwee Cave. It is unusual in that its rock formations make it popular with holiday-makers. Of course, it is now well lighted but on the conducted tour the lights are momentarily extinguished and for one awesome moment there is an experience of absolute darkness, before the

blackness gives way to welcoming light. We may have experienced something similar when we were passengers in an unlit railway-carriage, entering without warning a long tunnel on the line before emerging with relief into the full light of day. Most of us are a little frightened of the dark and we welcome the return of light.

Most of us too have suffered the

most harrasing and fretful experience of some night, when through sickness or worry, we were unable to reach the relaxation of comfort and sleep. We remained in a darkness, both real and mental, uncomfortably awake and alert, fearing vaguely "the terror of the night." and awaiting almost with relief the first faint glimmerings of dawn.

Today's Mass brings the light after darkness. It brings the bliss and assurance that accompanies the dawn. This is Christ's Mass. It is an occasion for uniting ourselves with the shepherds who 'glorified and praised God for all they had seen and heard'. We rejoice in the light that filled the rough cave at Bethlehem.

We can rejoice because we have all experienced the frustration and anxiety of the darkness. Like mankind before the birth of Jesus we have suffered the consequence of having turned away from God. We have longed for better things yet have been unhappily conscious of giving way to baser things. We have sought the light but have felt more secure in the dark. We have sinned.

In our sin we are reproached by our conscience. Conscience shows

us the way to the light – just as the Jews, God's chosen people, were shown the face of God in a hidden veiled way before the coming of Christ. But it is not the fullness of the light. This is why Isaiah, in the Entry Antiphon, looks forward to the day when "a light will shine" and the Psalmist rejoices in the "light which shines forth for the just". But these promises were only to give ground for hope. They were to prepare the way for the day when God would fully reveal himself – when we would see him face to face.

And now at last, the waiting is over. As Paul tells Titus in the second reading, "the kindness and love of God has been revealed". Jesus, who was later to say of himself, "I am the light of the world", has come into the lives of men to be our light and take away the darkness of past years. As St. John tells us: "All that came to be had life in him, and that life was the light of men, a light that shines in the dark, a light that darkness could not overpower".

Sometimes, the light that is Christ blinds us in its brilliance; but for most of us such moments are very rare indeed. In our everyday life we are most likely conscious of times of stress, anxiety and perplexity when we have found it hard to know God's will or, at any rate, see much goodness or love in it. And it is then that we must remember that Christmas is still only the dawn. In this morning light we can see shapes and figures clearly enough, but there is no colour; everything is still grey. A

little later, when the sun has fully risen, the colours appear and we can see things more clearly.

If Christmas seem only a brief, exciting but slightly irrelevant interlude in our lives it is because we come to Christ in the manger and fail to follow him in his life, death and resurrection. It is because our deeds prefer the dimness of the dawn to the radiance of the day. For we cannot help noticing how mankind puts on a new personality for this brief period each year. Family squabbles are postponed, T.V. shows and films are happy, industrial disputes are shelved, even

wars take a few days off. For a few days humanity is transformed into something joyful, something very good.

Our coming to the infant Christ this morning, then, must lead us to "glorify and praise God for all we have heard and seen", just as the shepherds did. But it must also lead us, as it led Mary, to "treasure these things and ponder them in our hearts". It is only in following Jesus in his life, pondering on it, treasuring it, that we can come to live in the full light of the eternal day. May our following of Jesus in the days that lie ahead complete our joy which has begun today.

ON THE HEARTH WITH

BOB NOONE

Peadar Ó Conaire



Bob Noone, though not an old man, possesses many of the gifts of the great story-tellers of the past. He has an extremely clear memory, he knows what constitutes a good story, and above all he has a way with words.

His memory is a storehouse to which the most trivial phrase is a key. Mention of 'long ago' brings an immediate response – the characters of the area, the customs, the superstitions. He is an indefatigable conversationalist. This is how the conversation went the other night as we sat in front of a big log fire in Bob's home.

P. Ó C.: I'm sure there were many fine characters around here long ago Bob.

Bob: There were, quite a few. Lady Gregory was a remarkable woman in many ways, but some of the ordinary people were fine characters too.

'The Blocker' Diviney, who was a drover for the Gregory's was an extraordinary man. He drove cattle to a fair in Athlone one time. It rained very heavily and 'The Blocker' was wet to the skin when he reached the fair. He took off all he had on, wrung them, and put them on again.

JOHN SULLIVAN & SON

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A very happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year
from

The Sullivan Family & Staff

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Sat. 26th: St. Stephen's Night of R.T.E. D.J. plus John & Silver Disco Roadshow.

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going elsewhere.
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Happy Christmas.

and spent the day at the fair.

He had the gift of the gab too. Lady Gregory once commented on the strength of one of her servants who had lifted a heavy load. "Great men are great fools and great fools are great men", remarked "The Blocker".

Another man who was gifted with words was Frank Cafferty the plumber. He was called to Coole House to fix something. On completion of the job Lady Gregory asked him how much he would charge. "Ten bob for doing it", he said and "Ten bob for knowing how to do it".

I heard of a poacher too who gave Lady Gregory a great answer. He had just killed a rabbit in Coole when she came the way. He was trying hard to keep a good grip on the rabbit under his coat and not to let it fall as he wasn't supposed to have it. Lady Gregory asked him which of his two terriers was the better dog. "Well", he said, "Grip is a good dog but Hold Fast is better".

P. Ó C.: I suppose poor people had to poach or starve.

Bob: Yes, times were bad. A pig's head for Christmas was a great novelty! For many people there wasn't much of a Christmas if the American letter didn't arrive. Santa Clause wasn't very generous either in those days! He might bring a tin whistle, a mouth organ, or a teddy bear if you were a very good child.

Drink was cheap and used to

be fairly plentiful around Christmas time, and at wakes. I remember the 'wake - whiskey' well at sixteen shillings a gallon. I remember the clay pipes too and snuff at wakes. The box of snuff would be left on the stomach of the corpse and people would take a pinch of it as they needed it. That's how the saying "we'll be taking a pinch of his naval soon" came in (in other words he'll be dead).



P. Ó C.: There must have been a lot of ghost stories told in those days.

Bob: Yes. Most of the stories that I remember concerned Coole and most of the 'ghosts' were real people!

There was a story told about three lads who were coming home late on night through the fields in Kiltartan, when they noticed a light in Gregory's monument. They looked in and saw a man plucking a hen. He had a candle placed on a coffin beside him and he was whistling a tune. Two of the men were rooted to the ground with fear,

but the third man threw a stone at the hen plucker who ran like the wind out the door. The 'ghost' of the monument was a traveller who used to steal hens in the neighbourhood.

There was a bet put with Mickey Fahy of Raheen one time that he wouldn't walk through the nut wood in Coole after midnight. He decided to try his luck. He was halfway through the wood when he met a man who asked who he was. "I'm Mickey Fahy" he said, "who are you?" "I'm W.B. Yeats", was the answer. Mickey told him why he was in the wood. "There are no fairies here", said 'Yeats', "if there were you wouldn't find me here at this hour of the night!"

I'm sure you often heard of the 'Step on the Stairs' in Coole House. That was a rat banging its tail on the stairs as it went up and down. The 'Creaking boot' in the glasshouse garden was no more than the rubbing of branches against one another. The fear of the 'creaking boot' was great protection for the apples in the orchard of course!

There was talk too of a White Lady being seen near the lake. She seemed to be picking feathers and was seen in harvest time. Paddy Hehir saw her. People were very superstitious in the old days. You wouldn't get a bottle of milk in a house on May night. The cows were locked in, too. People were afraid of the 'evil eye'. Many people found that they couldn't make butter

out of good quality milk. The Friars were the only ones who could help such people.

When a cow calved some people used to put some of the afterbirth under a rafter. They felt that the cow's milk couldn't be interfered with if that were done. I heard of a man who bought two cows at Gort fair but wouldn't drive them home when he noticed that their tails were cut. He was afraid of buying 'bad luck'.

The strangest happening that I ever witnessed was when a potato digger dug what I thought were ordinary potatoes in one of our fields. They were tipped off a cart, raked over with a beet fork and not one of them was broken - they were eggs not potatoes!

P. Ó C.: Did people play practical jokes on others?

Bob: Regularly, especially on people whom they knew would be easily frightened. 'The Blocker' Diviney gave William Farrell such a fright in the avenue one night that he ran home and burst in his own door, taking it off its hinges and smashing it against the dresser on the other side of the kitchen!

He was the same William Farrell who put the first initials (W.F.) on the autograph tree. He gave the knife to Lawrence Dooley (the late Joe's father) to do likewise, but he refused to put his initials on the tree for fear of losing his job.



Gort featured impressively again this year in the National Tidy Towns Competition, organised by Bord Failte, judging of which took place throughout the summer months. The Judges awarded the town a total of 135 marks out of a possible 150.

In their annual report, issued to the Chamber of Commerce, who are responsible for co-ordinating the entire effort, the Judges compliment the people of Gort on the new, fine community spirit, which they state is more evident this year than in previous years, resulting in the marks being increased significantly. "Gort", they state, "is an impressive town with a fine heritage of public and domestic architecture, and is quite capable of winning a major award". We compliment and congratulate the towns people in general, with particular praise for the Chamber of Commerce, traders, schools and County Council for their combined

efforts in making Gort a tidier town to live in. To those few who didn't do their share, we simply say, there is always next year to make up for it.

Apart from the town's very high mark this year, we can be further compensated and encouraged by the fact that one major award came to the town, that for the most attractive Shop Front in Ireland. It was awarded to Brady's, Bridge St., Gort and we offer the Brady family our heartiest congratulations on their magnificent win.

Here is a brief mention of the praises and criticisms contained within the Judge's Report.

PRAISES

Litter control is quite good, except outside certain shops. Business premises were on the whole attractively presented, the town possessing many fine traditional shop fronts. Public Buildings are also well presented - Schools,

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and a good New Year
from

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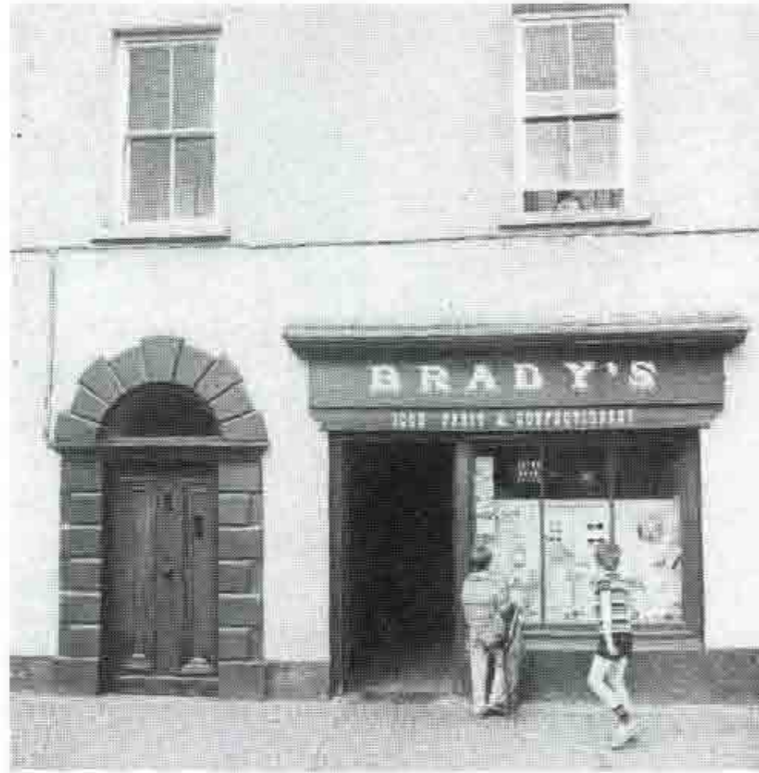
Churches etc. The cattle mart is well presented, as is the Tourist Office, appropriately located in the restored Weigh Bridge House. The Judges were impressed with the presentation of open spaces and the river banks and adjacent areas looked particularly good. The stone walls throughout Gort are impressive, as is the shrubbery on the Galway Road. The approach roads and the principal streets were presented well – road surfaces good, footpaths clean, hedges trimmed, houses and gardens along them generally well presented. The Judges feel that Gort possess many attractive stone kerbs to the footpaths. These, they feel, should be retained whenever improvements are taking place. Road signs throughout Gort were generally clear and well maintained and there was an adequate number of litter bins, well positioned. The Judges felt that many of the older houses, both in the town and along the major roads are attractively presented with the buildings tastefully maintained and painted, where appropriate, and with many fine private gardens.

CRITICISMS

As mentioned above, litter was observed outside certain shops. Gort, the Judges say, has a problem with regard to derelict and empty buildings and their report mentions some at the Galway Road, but more particularly, at Boland's Lane. It is a pity, the Judges say, that the derelict houses at Boland's Lane cannot be improved or

developed to make way for new houses. In their report, they mentioned that on their first adjudication, the school grounds needed attention, but they failed to mention which school. Their report is highly critical of the crudely designed public toilet at the Square, particularly as it stands beside the pleasantly renovated Weigh Bridge House. The Judges appreciate the fact that the field at the rear of the Catholic Church is being developed into a Park. It is important, they say, that this new development is completed in a sensitive manner and say that special advice should be sought with regard to the type and position of landscaping and the design and choice of boundary walls.

Although praising the shrubbery on the Galway Road, they suggest that the posts should all be painted in one colour. The football grounds entrance, they say, is a bit untidy and suggest that the local club make a better effort here. Although impressed with Gort's stone walls, as being one of its main features, the Judges stress the importance of repairing such stone walls in stone and that new walls match the existing, wherever possible. The railway road, Barrack St., and Kinnincha Road came in for criticism, the Judges stating that more work is needed in these areas. They accept that it is not necessary for such areas to be as crisp as the main approach roads or major



WORLD

CHAMPION IN THE MAKING

by Tim O'Driscoll

In this issue we are very proud to feature a special article on the success of Tommy Minogue Chairman of Gort/Coole and District Anglers association in qualifying recently to represent Ireland in the World Sea Shore Angling Competition to be held in Bordeaux, France in September, 1982. The popular Tommy qualified at Garryvoe, Co. Cork in the Master Anglers Competition and took 3rd place overall to represent Ireland in a five man team. In order to qualify to fish in Cork, Tommy had to compete in several competitions all over Ireland. He was successful in many of these competitions and was awarded points for the various



Tommy Minogue

types of fish he caught including Conger Eel, Dog Fish, and Skate. Only top class fishermen took part in these competitions hoping to amass enough points to eventually qualify in the Master Anglers Competition.

32 CO.'s REPRESENTED

Forty four clubs representing 32 counties took part and Tommy took third place overall by landing a large skate. On the same occasion he was unlucky not to have landed some other large fish. This is the first time Ireland have sent a team to compete in the World Sea Angling Championship, hence we are truly proud of our local representative. Tommy represented Connaught in the Inter Provincial Championship in 1975 and won a prize. The following year he again represented Connaught in one of the top competitions in Ireland "Royal National Lifeboat Institution" competition where once again he won another valuable prize. To date he has won over twenty major competitions and has collected some beautiful trophies for same. He is a member of Lisdoonvarna/Fanore Sea Anglers club and is also a member of the recently formed Galway Bay Sea Anglers Club. By any standards he is a master angler and highly qualified to represent his country.

HELPING OTHERS

He is noted for his patience while fishing and is also very kind to his fellow anglers, and in particular the younger members, especially when they are in trouble while landing fish. Time and again he has abandoned his own rod in competitions to help other members in repairing tackle and providing bait etc.

At a recent meeting of Gort/District and Coole Anglers Association Patsy Cusack, Secretary, on behalf of his fellow officers passed a vote of congratulations which was endorsed by Jack Williams, Cyril Piggott and Vincent Moloney. Anglers from adjoining counties who have competed with Tommy over the years are delighted that his years of angling have come to fruition. We would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Tommy and wish him well in the World Championship, as he is indeed a Master Angler.

Last year Tommy's 12 year old son, Shane, not to be outdone by his more famous father, won the Connaught Junior Sea Angling Competition in Westport. This year he completed a double when he again won the Connaught Junior Championship in Enniscrone, Co. Sligo.

TIDY TOWNS COMPETITION

streets, but, on the other hand, they should not be allowed to become like forgotten and derelict areas. Although the building of new houses brings prosperity and social development to the town, they can bring problems say the Judges, not least during the construction of the houses, but also in the first year or two after they are occupied. It is important, the Judges say, the the grounds and roads are cleared and planted as soon as possible in these situations. Some weeds were noted at the base of the Christ the King statue and Judges found it hard to understand how such an important item was overlooked. It would take a very short time to overcome this problem and they suggest careful vigilance to maintain the statue in a well presented manner.

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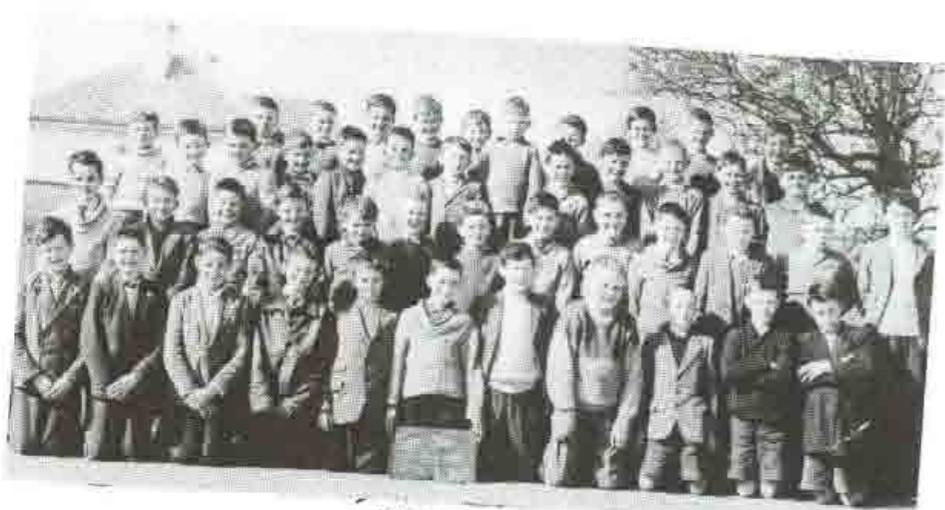
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Down Memory Lane



1961



KILTARTAN SCHOOL BAND — Feb. 1956
 Front row left to right: C. Forde, J. Kelly, B. Coen, O. Regan, A. Cunningham, N. Flanagan.
 Middle row left to right: Mr. Long, N.T., P. Baldwin, J. McLoughlin, P. Flanagan, L. Forde, J. Murphy, R. Forde, P. J. Downey, I. Quinn.
 Back row left to right: M. Quinn, T. Fahey, T. Flanagan, K. Murphy, N. Coen, M. Killilea, J. Cunningham, B. Neilan.



Corpus Christi Procession in Gort a number of years ago.



Left to right: John Counihan, R.I.P., Kieran Moylan, Martin Dolan, R.I.P.



'FÁG A' BEALACH'

Keane's of Gort, established over a century, brings memories of "far off trenches and battles long ago" to soldiers of the first world war 1914-1918, for blazoned above the Cab is the war cry of the British empires most daring and fearless

regiment — the Connaught Rangers — "Fág a' Bealach" — Leave the way " ... or else ... Founded 1793.

The Connaught Rangers were founded in 1793 by the honourable John Thomas de Burgh, 12th Earl of Clanricard. Within a year, 30,000

Irishmen eager for a warm uniform, dry boots and enough to eat, had joined the colours.

The record of the Rangers in the Somme, Flanders field or the Dardenelles was heroic and memorable, but their greatest sacrifice was in 1920, when a regiment stationed in India, mutinied in protest at Black & Tan atrocities back home in Dear Ould Ireland. The mutineers were subjected to extreme torture and imprisonment — and dismissed without pension or prerequisites and dumped back to Ireland. Only in the late 1930's did the Irish Free State Government greedily grant them an insulting Pittance Pension.

So, when next you see Keane's lorry approach, doff your cap or your hat and breathe a prayer and a tear for:

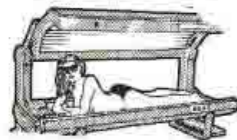
Those gallant men neath an Indian Sun

Who helped set Old Ireland free, and small was the gratitude of our new found masters —

Home based Freedom Fighters, now cushioned in Dáil Éireann.

Happily two old Rangers are still with us — Jim Minogue and John Ramplier — and long may God spare them.

W.M. Quinn



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Hours of opening Mon.: 10 — 5.30; Tues., Thurs.: 9.30 — 6.00; Wed., Fri., Sat.: 9.30 — 8.00.

Costume jewellery on sale.

Parish News

KILTARTAN NOTES

Wednesday, 24th of June 1981 was a very exciting day for us in Kiltartan school, when the President of the G.A.A. Mr. Pádraig McFlynn and Mr. Aubrey Higgins of the Galway County Board came to visit us. He gave us a lecture on the history of the G.A.A. He said the aim of the association was to cultivate Irish national pastimes. He also said hurling and training is good for us, both physically and mentally. He presented us with an autographed hurley and sliotar as a souvenir of his visit. We sang our song of the victorious 1980 All-Ireland Galway team. It was a very happy occasion for us, a day we will always remember.

St. Colman's Well

An estimated 400 people attended Benediction at the Holy Well in Corker on St. Colman's Day. Officiating was the Parish Priest, Fr. O'Halloran, assisted by Fr. Jimmy Walsh, C.C., and Fr. Liam Power, C.C. The Rosary was recited later at Kiltartan Church.

The A.G.M. of Kiltartan Youth Club was held recently.

Community Hall

The I.F.A., Youth Club, as well as the local Fianna Fáil and Fine Gael Branches, meet on a regular basis at the Community Hall.

KILBEACANTY/BALLYTURIN

Féile na nGael

Kilbeacanty/Ballyturin under 14 hurling team participated in this year's Féile na nGael competitions, hosting a hurling team from Dungiven, Co. Derry for a friendly game, which Dungiven won by 2-4 to 1-4. Some weeks ago, a return invitation was accepted when Kilbeacanty/Ballyturin sent their Senior hurling team go Dungiven, where they had a most successful outing, beating Dungiven by 15 points to 14 points and St. Paul's Belfast in the final by 3-3 to 2-3. The Club hope to repeat the same exercise when they again invite Dungiven to their parish at Easter. This Club is very active, having built new dressing rooms and constructed a new pitch over the past number of years.

TUBBER

Rural Housing

An additional six new houses have been completed by the Rural Housing Organisation at Tubber, adjacent to the existing original scheme of similiar houses, which are now occupied. It is expected to have the additional houses fully occupied within a short time.

Telephones

Tubber telephone subscribers are looking forward to being connected to the automatic dialing system early in the new year.

PETERSWELL/CASTLEDALY

Joe Cooley Memorial Hall

The building of the new Joe Cooley Memorial Hall at Peterswell is now at an advanced stage. The installation of windows, doors, toilets and a maple floor should hopefully see the official opening by next summer. The huge cost of the project is being off-set by fund raising campaigns, which have been organised within the parish for the last seven years and which are expected to continue into the coming years.

St. Thomas's Community Hall

Meanwhile, a few miles over the road at Castledaly, the recently built St. Thomas's Community Hall is reported to be doing very well, with various functions held. A regular card game is held there every Monday night.

SHANAGLISH

Investment

There is quite evidently a great community spirit within the parish of Shanaglish. During the past year alone, the people of the parish have invested an estimated £150,000 into various parish improvements, including renovations to the local Church, the parish priest's house, and the hurling field. While renovations to the Church were in progress, they renovated the old school as a temporary Church, which has since become the parish hall. Of the total debt, £24,000 has to date been collected and understandably, fund raising

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campaigns will continue over the coming years. The parish's most recent fund raising campaign was a Christmas raffle of a Prize Bullock, kindly donated by Mr. Martin Pearl of Cregmahon, which realised an estimated £3,000. The lucky winner was Miss O'Donahue, Lakefield, Gort.

LABANE/ARDRAHAN

Badminton

This parish have a very strong and energetic Badminton Club, meeting every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday nights at Labane Hall.

Hall

The Labane Hall Improvement/Development Committee are at present discussing the possibility of making renovations and improvements to their Hall and fund raising techniques to off-set the proposed cost are also being discussed.

By-Pass

Lack of County Council funds again seems to have delayed the opening of the new Labane by-pass road, the second time in which work has been stopped since the project first got under way a couple of years ago.

GORT AND DISTRICT

Musical Society

By Eileen Brennan

George Bernard Shaw wrote, "Hell is full of musical amateurs – music is the brandy of the damned." If that be the case, Gort and District Musical Society may prove a source of tipsy demons.

However, since Mr. Shaw was noted for his caustic remarks, I hasten to assure potential members of the Society, that they will not be joining a recruiting centre for Hades, but rather a haven of lilting and dulcut tones. In any case, it will be worth the risk.

It remains to be seen, wheter Mr. Colman Sherry is the devil's emissary, or not, what is certain is, were it not for his interest and enthusiasm a musical society would not have materialised at this time.

He organised a series of meetings early in May, attended by a handful to sound out the possibilities of forming a Society and producing a musical for Christmas, there was definitely interest in the project, but whether sufficient numbers

could be got to produce a show was questionable.

Gradually, the attendance, as Pudsy Ryan would say, "grow'd and grow'd." Mr. Pat Heaney of Galway, producer of many musicals, attended a meeting and offered sound advice on musical production – emphasising that enthusiasm and perseverance were the basic ingredients for a successful show. There was no doubt that talent was in large supply, considering the tradition of musicals in the town, from the days of H.M.S. Pinafore, produced by Canon Quinn to the era of the pantomimes in late 50's, continued in the 60's by Fr. Edward Kelly, and in recent times, school productions.

The first public meeting was held on July 2nd with a view to forming a musical society and establishing whether there was sufficient interest to produce a show for Christmas. The large attendance favoured both proposals

and the Gort and District Musical Society was formed – whatever the consequences in the next world!

It was left to the Committee to select a musical and taking due note of Mr. Heaney's assertion that every production has its own set of problems and there was no point in wasting too much time in deciding what to do, the Committee set about their task . . . and proceeded to spend a very long time in making a choice. Should we select a musical, a panto or a concert? The panto was favoured finally, because since it encompassed drama, music and comedy, it would provide scope for a wide range of talents and the script could be edited to a local flavour.

"Sinbad the Sailor" was chosen for our first production and co-incidentally it forms a link with the past, since the same panto was staged in the 60's.

At the present time, I can report that rehearsals are progressing well. The stage crew are busy creating and assembling a set, which must function, not only as a royal courtyard and bazaar, but also the deck of an ocean-bound ship, and a mountainous valley floor. Sinbad travels extensively.



Scene from a Pantomime staged in the Town Hall some years ago.

Mention must be made of the Finance Committee. Without funds the show would not be a viable proposition. Great credit is due to them in their fund-raising efforts, as instanced by the successful supper-dance held in Sullivan's

Hotel recently.

I shall say no more about the panto, save that if our audience enjoy the performance half as much as we, the members enjoy producing it, they will go home satisfied.

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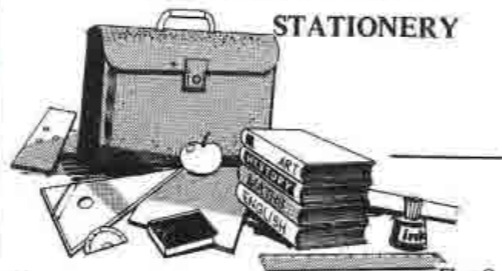
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COMMUNITY CENTRE

- A QUESTION?



Our Lady's College

On the eve of going to print, our Editorial Board were approached with a suggestion that we ask the people of Gort, through the channels of our Magazine, what is perhaps a very important question in relation to the possibility of we someday having a proper Community Centre in our town. The question which we have been asked to throw out for feelers is "could the premises at Bridge St., formerly Our Lady's Boy's College and more recently the residence of the staff of the College, be purchased with the intention of converting it into a Community Centre?" The premises is presently for sale by Private Treaty.

Survey
On hearing this proposal, our Editorial Board conducted a mini-survey of the situation, to learn that what might appear on the out-set to be a financial impossibility, could quite easily be achieved, if all the Clubs and Associations in our town made a united effort. In another part of this issue, we learn that the present St. Colman's Hall committee are negotiating with the Bishop of Galway, Most Rev. Dr. Eamon Casey, for the possible transfer of ownership, by way of re-appointment of Trustees or otherwise, to the people of Gort. Following our survey of the situation, we might suggest to the Town Hall Committee to also consider, with other clubs the possibility of purchasing this premises at Bridge St., or perhaps, for reasons which our Survey has unearthed, concentrate solely on the purchase of this premises at

Bridge St., dispensing entirely with endeavouring to obtain ownership of the Town Hall. As the photo shows, this is a large and impressive building, ideally situated in the centre of the town. Our survey indicated that the Building is structurally very sound and in a very good state of repair and if purchased, could be used immediately for holding Meetings, sporting and leisure activities. Unlike the Town Hall, it has vast space at the rear of the building for future expansion and the erection of courts for the various out-door games. In fact, one would have to knock half a street to ever again acquire such space in such a prime location. Very little internal structural alterations will be necessary to the existing building. As it was originally a boy's school, it is presently internally designed accordingly, with adequate toilet facilities for large numbers and with large and small rooms. Even if the Town Hall Committee acquire ownership of the Hall, our survey indicates that space could be a problem from the out-set, if they intend building a new Community Centre on the site of the present Town Hall.

Finance
We feel from our survey, that as this property at Bridge St. is the property of the diocese, it might be possible to persuade Dr. Casey to accept initially one third or a half of the actual purchase price spreading the remainder over a number of years, especially bearing in mind the purpose of purchasing the property. If our assumption is correct, it would require the commitment of every Club and Association in Gort to contribute generously towards obtaining this first substantial deposit. We learned that there are a number of Clubs in Town with substantial funds, which are not apparently being used for any specific purpose at present. We learned of one Club having almost £2,000 in funds and another having £8,000, and we feel sure that there are many others in this happy position. Furthermore, we learned that there might be a number of other properties, similar perhaps to the town hall, which could be disposed of to create the fund needed in getting the purchase of the old College off the ground. We also found from our Survey a number of other methods of

What is happening in Gort?

AT VARIOUS CLUBS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Gort Dramatic Society
Following the success of the South Galway Senior One Act Festival of Plays, held last month in Gort, the local Drama Group are now busy planning for a similar Festival for Junior entries, as well as planning

the production of a Three Act Play for the Festival Circuit. As is customary, the local audience will have their opportunity of seeing this production prior to going on the Festival circuit and by all accounts, the selection of play is

reckoned to be the biggest undertaking of the Society.

Gort and District Gardening Club
Making Christmas decorations from flowers - that's what the year and a half old Gort and District Gardening Club's 65 members are presently busy at, under the guidance of Mrs. Lorna McMahon, Galway Gardening Club. They meet on the first Wednesday of every month at the Vocational School.

Gort Bridge Club
This very successful Club have been busy engaged in competitions, the most recent were for the Sullivan Cup and the team of four competitions.

An Taisce
Delegates from the Gort Branch recently attended the National A.G.M. of An Taisce at Ardilaun House Hotel, Galway. On the local scene, they are busy with the creation of the Canon Quinn Park at Queen St.

COMMUNITY CENTRE
acquiring this proposed first payment. Constant fund raising would of course be required until the entire debt is cleared.

existing only on borrowed space from the Principals of the schools and the hoteliers. In fact, some Clubs, because of their activities, cannot find suitable accommodation in town. So, give this question some thought over the Christmas period and if your Club feels that this is something that should be discussed in greater details, perhaps a mass meeting, representative of all Clubs, could be held in the town, perhaps, under the umbrella of such a body as the Chamber of Commerce. A word of caution however. Our survey has indicated that there are at present two bids by private individuals, in the hands of the Auctioneer, to purchase the property therefore, the town must act quickly in the matter, if this is to be pursued further.

Finally
Please bear in mind that this refers entirely to a question which we have been asked to relate to the people of Gort through our Magazine, and our Survey was entirely as a result of we having considered the question seriously. We now ask all Clubs in the town to think over this question being asked, the purchase of this old Boy's School premises at Bridge St., as a possible alternative towards rebuilding the present Town Hall into a community centre. We point out that the majority of Clubs and Associations in the Town are

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Happy Christmas to all
our customers.

Boy Scouts

The A.G.M. of the Gort Boy Scouts took place recently.

Kiltartan Society

The Society are presently endeavouring to attract entries for the annual Kiltartan Summer School, which takes place from 4th - 14th July next.

Arts Group

The Group continue to organise various cultural events. They recently subscribed £50.00 to the newly formed Gort and District Musical Society.

Charismatic Prayer Group

The Charismatic Prayer Group continue to meet every Monday night at the Convent of Mercy, commencing at 8 p.m.

Gort Gun Club

With the present day membership of 350, this Club have recently purchased an automatic trap for use at Clay pigeon shoots. They now seek the permission of some generous farmer to allow them erect the machine on his land, as a permanent fixture.

I.C.A.

Preparations for the annual general meeting and fund raising for An Grianán, the I.C.A. Head Office, are the main priorities for the Association at present.

Country Markets

Now that the local Branch of Country Markets have eventually obtained a permanent premises, at the Court House, business is reported to be booming. The market takes place every Friday from 10.00 a.m. to 11.30 a.m. The Associations main concern is in obtaining additional produce for sale, especially brown bread. Approaching Christmas, the Association will also be selling hand made Christmas decorations.

G.A.A.

Following the County Senior and under 21 Hurling Finals, the Association is now busy preparing for it's annual general meeting and dinner dance.

Athletic Club

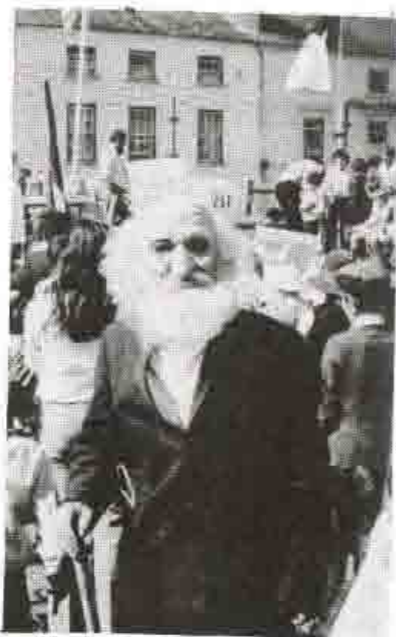
The annual general meeting has recently taken place. The Club was successful in the recently held Connaught Championships, the members now busy organising functions for fund raising.

Anti-Nuclear Power Association

Fund raising will be the top priority of the Association, as the new year commences.

Gort Youth Club

The Club are presently planning their annual Christmas Concert. Later, the classes and courses on cookery, soccer, Drama, badminton, etc. take place. The club recently presented a very substantial cheque to Fr. Liam Power C.C. towards the Mentally



What 15 years in England can do to a man was demonstrated at Gort Festival.

Handicapped Association. The money was collected from a local marathon.

Camogie Club

This newly formed club are having a slight lull at the moment, following the transfer from town of it's founder, Fr. Enda Glynn.

Gort Golf Club

The competitions for Turkeys and Hampers continue to take place every Sunday at Gort Golf Club.

Town Hall

The Committees of Gort Town Hall, both the day-to-day working Committee and the structural Committee, are very confident of getting the green light from the parish priest, Fr. Halloran, to enable them proceed with their plans to re-construct the entire Hall, presently in poor state of repair. The final go-ahead must come from the Bishop of Galway, Dr. Eamon Casey, and the Hall's trustees, the town hall presently being in the portfolio of Church properties and Fr. O'Halloran is having constant consultations with Dr. Casey on the matter. What has been a dream for a long number of years with past Committees, to renovate the town hall, might hopefully become a reality in this coming year.

Social Services

Christmas time is understandably the busiest time of the year for the Social Services Organisation in town and a time when the biggest pull is made on their resources. Their job over the Christmas period is to ensure that nobody in the town is in need of essential items, like food, clothing, toys, fuel, etc.

Angling Club

Very few coarse fishing competitions were held in recent months due to the high water level,

but is expected that a number of competitions will be held for turkeys prior to Christmas.

Many club members had large catches of mackerel in late September and early October but, in particular, Patsy and John Cusack, who bagged almost 400 in one evening's fishing much to the delight of the neighbours who shared the catch.

Vincent Moloney and Jack Williams have made numerous enquiries in the past few months in how best to obtain fingerling trout so as to restock the Gort river. The club are indebted to these officers and many others over the years for their efforts in cleaning the river and keeping it free from pollution.

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new anglers who have joined the club in the past year.

Rugby

The Gort R.F.C. have had their most successful year since formed in the League, remaining unbeaten up to the time of this magazine going to print. On St. Stephen's Day, as is customary, the Captain's selection (Dr. Brian Jennings) takes on the president's selection (Mr. Frank Shaw) for the Sullivan Cup.

Recently, the Club acquired a complete new set of jerseys, half the cost of which was kindly sponsored by the Bank of Ireland. Within the Club, preparations have just commenced for the 1982 Gort Mayoral Election.

Gort and District Musical Society

Formed last July, the Society have decided to present the pantomime, "Sinbad the Sailor" as their inaugural production, due for the boards in January at Our Lady's College, with a cast of 46. An article on the revived Society appears elsewhere in this magazine.

Gort Chamber of Commerce

As ever, the Chamber of Commerce are busy making constant improvements to our town. Christmas lighting has again been erected, which makes the town very decorative. Bridge St. has it's usual strands of lights, spanning the width of the street, while other areas have beautiful lighted Christmas trees erected on the walls of houses. Some six thirty foot lighted Christmas Trees are also positioned at strategic points throughout the town. The Chamber are also busy arranging the annual visit of Santa Claus and are

preparing the usual New Year's Eve Celebrations.

Gort Branch Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

The Gort Branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí have had a most successful and enjoyable year. They are presently subsidising Irish Music classes in the Credit Union Hall, which are held every Saturday at 3 p.m. under the guidance of Mr. Vincent Griffin, the well known musician from Feakle. The now popular Irish nights will continue fortnightly throughout the coming year and a special Mummer's night has been arranged for the Christmas period.

NOTE: Due to pressure of space, we regret that the notes from certain clubs are omitted from this issue.



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WILLIE MOLONEY, GORT'S MOST FAMOUS ATHLETE

By Peadar Ó Conaire



Willie with some of his relatives.

I met Willie Moloney (W.J. Moloney in athletic circles) last Summer when he paid a short visit to his first cousin Cyril Piggott in Crowe Street. Resident in London for many years, he does not come to Gort as often as he would like, he told me. A most unassuming man, he was most reluctant to talk about his progress as an athlete. He admitted he was 'fairly useful' but his achievements indicate that he was an athlete far above the ordinary.

He represented Ireland in no

fewer than seventeen international events. Between 1926 and 1933, Willie competed against the world's best athletes, including Lord Burghley, R.M.S. Tisdall, W. Winters (Australia), Harold Osborne of U.S.A., Viljohn of South Africa and many others.

He is All-Ireland champion for hop step and jump for two years in succession (1926-27). His best performance for this event 47' 11". He was runner-up to W. Winters in the Tailtean Games in 1928. In the All-Ireland 120 yards hurdles in

1930 he was runner-up to R.M.S. Tisdall who a few years later broke the world record for the hurdles at the Olympic Games.

Willie won the 120 yards hurdles for Ireland against the Achilles team in 1930; this famous English team toured the world that year and had many victories to their credit. In the Triangular International in Glasgow in 1930, Lord Burghley and Willie crossed the ten flights of hurdles side by side. Burghley admitted afterwards that Willie had been the only man, throughout his whole career to lead him over the first hurdle.

Here are some of Willie's best performances (fifty years ago when coaching was anything but a fine art!)

100 yards	10 seconds
220 yards	22 seconds
120 yards hurdles	15 seconds
Long Jump	23' 7½"
Hop, Step and Jump	47' 11"
Standing Long Jump	10' 1½"
Three Standing Jumps	30' 7½"

Willie didn't stop at Athletics. He is a pretty useful golfer, who has won many competitions in Ireland and in England. Not bad for an American born lad whom his pals christened 'Spider' (because of his wiry features) when he was growing up in Gort.

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We cater for wedding functions, private parties, etc.

Entertainment as follows:

Friday, 18th December: BALLINDEREEN GAA – VIRGINIANS.

Saturday, 19th December: TOP FORM DINNER DANCE.

Sunday, 20th December: KINVARA SOCCER CLUB – COUNTRY SUNSHINE.

26th December: BRIDGET DONOGHUE AND THE DOMINOES – WALTZ COMPETITION.

27th December: LEITRIM RAMBLERS BEOGHA FIELD COMMITTEE.

28th December: GORT CEOLTA – MUMMERS DANCE.

29th December: FLYNN'S HOTEL STAFF DANCE – THE VIRGINIANS

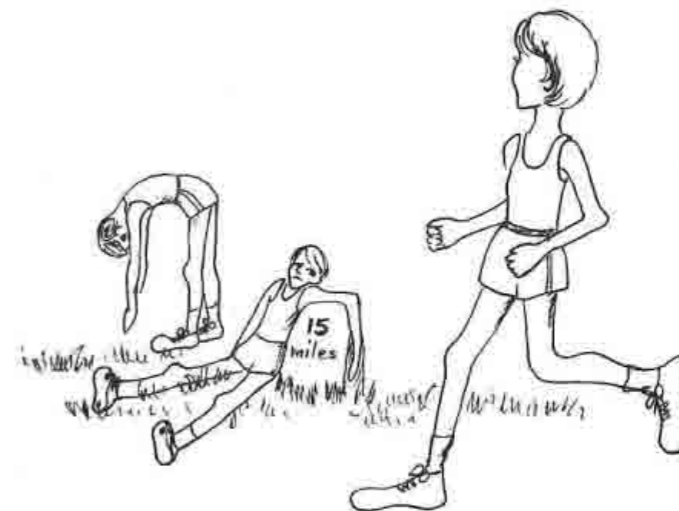
New Year's Eve: GORT RUGBY DINNER DANCE.

Gort features in Dublin City Marathon

by John Finnegan

In just two years, the Dublin City Marathon, organised by R.T.E. Radio 2, has become an international event. Some 8,000 participants took part in this year's gruelling 26.2 miles run through the streets of Dublin on 29th October last. Among the participants were three local men, Liam Fahy, a farmer from Fiddane, Gort, Donal Connolly, M.R.C.V.S., a veterinary surgeon, practising in Gort and another Liam Fahy, no relation to the first, a farmer from Cloonmolly, Gort. All three finished the marathon in excellent times, showing the amount of dedication and hard work which went into the preparation, Liam Fahy, Fiddane, finishing in 2 hours 59 minutes; Donal Connolly in 4 hours 30 minutes and Liam Fahy, Cloonmolly in 3 hours 50 minutes. All three received beautiful plaques, a complimentary programme of the event and indeed the honour of achievement in participating.

Anxious to learn of the experiences on encounters in preparing for and participating in marathon racing, I approach Donal Connolly for an interview. "Yes," he said, "I can tell you all about the Dublin City Marathon, but sick animals aren't going to hang around all day waiting for me to cure them, while I tell you about my running experiences." Like any reporter, my determination to get a story found me in borrowed wellingtons



Liam Fahy, Fiddane, Gort.

and roughing it through the countryside, getting snippets of the interview while driving from farm-yard to another. I must say, for one born and reared on concrete, as I was, my experiences that day of watching a calving case, dogs being vaccinated against yellow jaundice and a bullock being treated for a sore mouth, were as exciting as learning about the Dublin City Marathon.

How it started

Donal told me it all started for him

while attending a meeting of Gort Rugby Club, of which he is a very prominent member. The Club were discussing fund raising techniques and the suggestion was made that certain members should participate in the Dublin City Marathon, obtaining local sponsorship for the club beforehand. Donal volunteered and commenced immediate training. As it transpired, the Rugby Club did not follow up on their plan, resulting in sponsorship not being obtained – the Rugby Club's loss. This did not dissuade Donal in any



Liam Fahy, Cloonmolly, Gort.

way and at 14 stone weight, the 30 year old veterinary surgeon began his jogging at Coole Park on 13th June, feeling indeed very superstitious of that particular starting date and indeed over the coming four months, he was to experience several opportunities of blaming that starting date, or indeed anything else, as thoughts of throwing in the towel flashed through his mind. Always at hand, however, was local solicitor, Justin Sadleir, who, as his trainer, jogged alongside Donal every morning for two hours at Coole Park, spurring him on, when encouragement was needed. The nearest he went to packing up the training was when he put his knee-cap out and had to rest for three weeks. Again, only for his trainer, he would not have resumed training. From one mile in 18 minutes at the start, Donal had reached 10 to 12 miles per day by mid July, reaching what he calls his peak of 21 miles by the end of September, which he was able to cover in 3 hours 15 minutes. "Let nobody fool themselves," Donal declared, "training is very difficult, and this thing known as dedication is, perhaps, even more needed during training than while actually participating in the Marathon."



Donal Connolly, M.R.C.V.S. holding his daughter Louise.

"As so many participants finished in this year's Marathon, I feel that there will be twice the entry next year, people thinking that it can't be so strenuous, if so many participants could reach the final line." "Let nobody be fooled," he said, "it's hard, tough slog and everybody participating this year had trained hard and sacrificed a lot to make the grade."

To those contemplating entering next year's Marathon, Donal suggests that training should commence well in advance of the

event, long indeed before the four months he gave to training. Following a routine pattern of training is essential, according to Donal. He trained every morning from 6 a.m. to 8 a.m., knowing well that if he left his training to various times each day, it would be much more difficult, domestic and commercial commitments would take preference. "You cannot settle for a five day week either when you are training," Donal says. "And running to Corofin on Sunday evenings knowing that everybody else was out enjoying themselves, wasn't easy."

The Marathon

On the morning of the Marathon, October 29th, 2 stone in weight less than when training had commenced, Donal's day started at 7 a.m. with breakfast in bed, consisting of two boiled eggs, cornflakes and toast. At 11 a.m. he was at the starting line with the many thousands of other competitors with a 26.2 miles tour of the streets of Dublin ahead of him, a tour, which a year ago, he would never in his wildest dreams have envisaged participating in. The butterflies within his tummy began working overtime and he began

thinking of his previous personal best of 21 miles, more than five miles less than the scheduled Marathon. He began thinking again of his knee-cap and the possibility of it becoming dislocated yet again. While he was standing there at the standing line thinking all the wrong things, he vaguely remembers a word of good luck coming from the Mayor of Dublin and the Director General of R.T.E. over the public-address system and then hearing in a loud voice, "You'r off. GO, GO, GO." The 1981 Dublin City Marathon was on its way and thousands of people running with the same determination as Donal, to finish the 26.2 miles. He remembered a tip he got to view the buildings and streets around him, in order to keep his mind of the long route ahead.

Stone Wall

I asked Donal if he had met the "Stone Wall" at any stage during the Marathon, the stone wall being the term now used by athletes, when they push themselves too hard, resulting in their legs feeling like concrete stakes and finding themselves unable to go on. Jokingly, Donal replied: "I met that stone wall several times while training in Coole Park, but never in Dublin." "You see," he said, "I tucked myself in at the end of the group and this 'stone wall' was well knocked before I got to it." Donal's determination had him intending to finish the Marathon at all costs, even if he had to walk the last stages. "In any event," jokingly he said, "at Dublin prices I was quite happy to spend an extra hour or two out there."

Humour

My next question was a question which Donal has continually been asked since he returned to 'normal life', as he calls it, that is, the humorous side to participating in

such a Marathon — the funny things that can happen to a runner, or the smart remarks thrown from the spectators. Nothing unusually funny happened to Donal himself and he said, although the funny remarks are constantly flying from the spectators they do not as such register with the competitors, as the jokes are too numerous to retain and as the competitors have most of their concentration on the job to hand. He does, however, remember one guy shouting in his best Dublin accent: "I have never lost a drop of sweat in my life and look at me," and the group of lads outside a public house with pints in their hands shouting: "Don't rush yourselves, lads, we didn't pay in." What really knocked a giggle out of Donal was a huge advertisement display erected on the gable end of

a house. The very appropriate wording read: "Don't drive yourself too hard — erected by C.I.E."

Homeward Bound

At the 21 mile mark in the Marathon, Donal knew that he could finish the remaining 5 miles, as he had achieved 21 miles before the Marathon and he knew he had a lot more steam left in him. That sense of achievement, he said when crossing the finishing line compensates in no uncertain terms for the hard work. Over 300,000 people, the largest attendance since the visit of Pope John Paul II, lined the 26 mile route for over six hours and were a great encouragement to the competitors, cheering everyone on and at certain points, offering the competitors water to drink, oranges to eat and wet sponges to cool them down.



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LARRY ROCHE

Popular singer Larry Roche, well known in England and Ireland, already has two Recordings to his credit—his last one "A Tribute to Bing Crosby" received lavish praise.

Larry, a native of Ardahan and now resident in Gort is working on a Third Recording "Brave Pateen Donoghue" A Tribute to the late Gort Connaught Ranger mutineer—and we all wish him well.

W. M. Quinn.

POETRY

A BACHELOR I WILL BE?

I'm a he-man of independent means,
And I'm sometimes on the jigs,
As I drink my jar, in the Tavern Bar
And stagger home to my digs.
I can "swing the lead" and go in off
the red
And work is not for me,
And with due respect to the female
sex

My motto is "let them be."
Each sunny day in Pullover gay
I stand by The Landmark wall,
As the girls go by I wink the eye
But for them no fear I'll fall"
With a creamy pint in some pally
joint,
You'll find me at my ease,
And am sad at heart when we have to
part
As the Guv' says Time Up — please.
In the ill lit gloom of a small back
room
With Woodbines laid close by,
I'm pretty hot in a tough "Ace Pot"
When the stakes are mounting high
With my face so bland and a sworn
hand
I peer through a bloodshot eye —
I'll name no names, but I'll tell the
Dames
I'll be single 'till I die!
W. M. Quinn.

★★★★★

Editor's Note

A cluster of diamonds to any girl under seventy six who can win the hand of our Church Street Bard.
(Good men are scarce you know — so hurry!)



DESTINY

Two Summers ago in Greenwich
Village
Walking hand in hand.
Laughing — envious of freaks and
artists.
The drug pushers, the music lovers.
Strange, new, exciting.
But you knew it so well,
Escaping harsh reality in its midst
Away from confines of religion —
And that terrible middle class?
You entrallled me with music, poetry,
plants,
But I saw it all — your confusion, and
despair.
In the bench in Washington Square
We talked of suicide — painless.
A shared experience — a brother, a
friend.
An understanding silence
Now you too are dead.
No tears — a lump in my throat.
Will we meet again?

Aine Fahy.



THE LATE JOE GLYNN

Joe Glynn of Crowe Street, one of Gort's best known and most popular Senior Citizen died recently.

For many years, he was Porter at the Munster & Leinster (now Allied Irish) Bank at the Square and was succeeded by his son Cyril.

Joe was one of the outstanding players on the Gort team that won the County Senior Hurling Championship in 1934, and he is shown holding one of the Honorary Plaques presented to him and other members of that team at a Function five years ago.