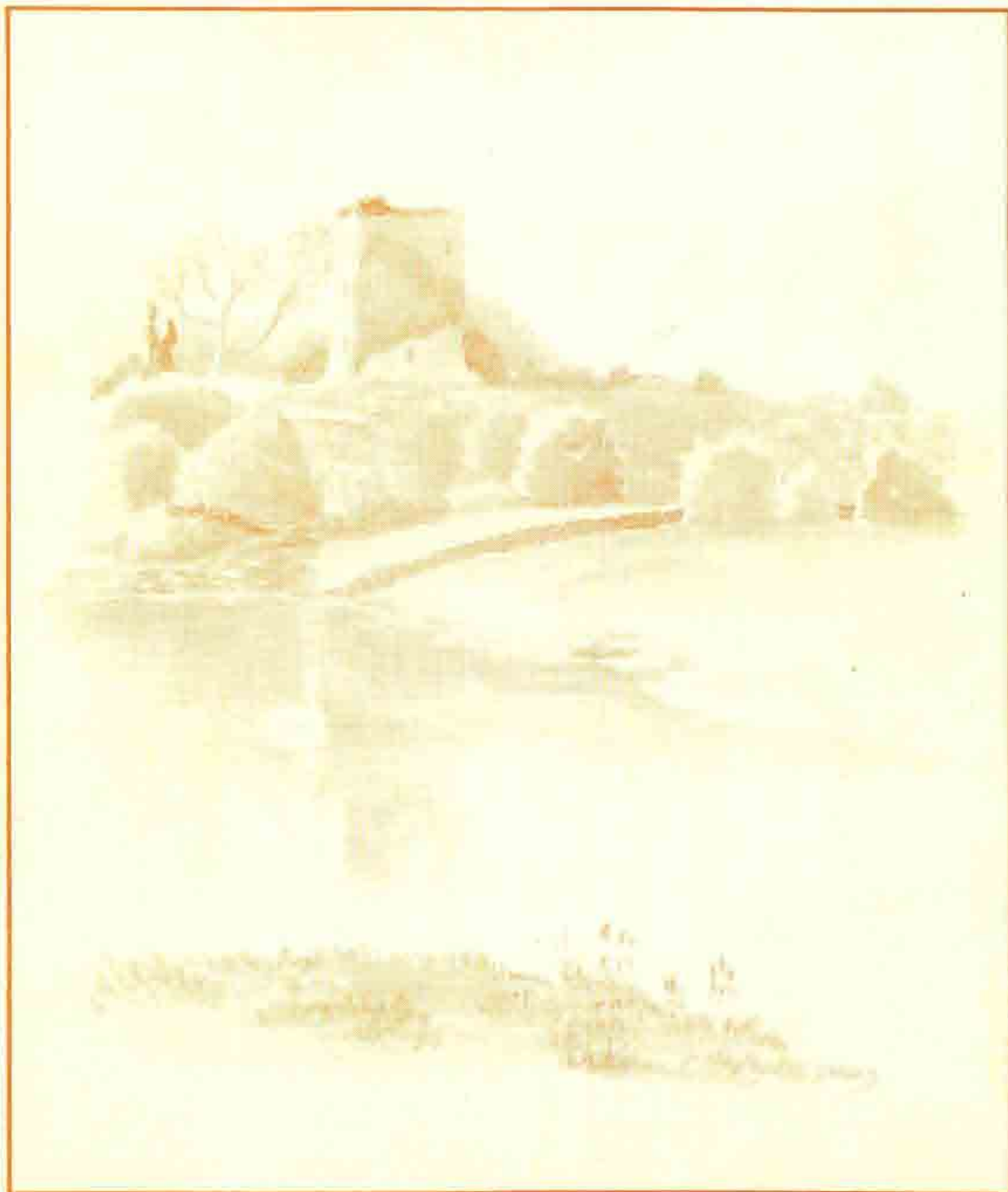


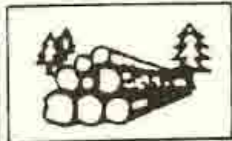
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Christmas
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Guairé

Christmas 1994



EDITORIAL

WE are glad to offer you another issue of Guairé. We are conscious of the fact that Christmas is a time for reminiscing about times gone by, so we have included in this issue a few people's treasured memories of Gort in the past. We fully realise of course that sentiment and nostalgia are not enough. So you will find articles depicting life in Gort at the present time, articles of general interest, poetry and photographs in this issue also.

My sincere thanks to a small, hardworking committee who gave so much of their time and energy in the preparation of this edition.

To our advertisers, the business community, I offer my sincerest thanks.

Finally, I hope that you, the reader, will find something of interest in this issue of our magazine.

Go mbeirimid beo ar an am seo arís.

PEADAR Ó CONAIRE

COVER PICTURE:
Caherglassaun Castle, Killomoran, Gort.
Drawing by: Josephine Ward.

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

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Two Major Restoration Projects

Kiltartan National School

On the 3rd May, 1993, work commenced on the refurbishment of Kiltartan National School. This intricate work is carried out by the Kiltartan Gregory Cultural Society in conjunction with a FAS Youth Training Scheme. The restoration of the building is done with considerable care to preserve the unique architectural integrity of the building. The exterior and interior of the school building needed extensive repair and replacement. Reconstruction got under way with vigour and enthusiasm, starting with a challenging test.

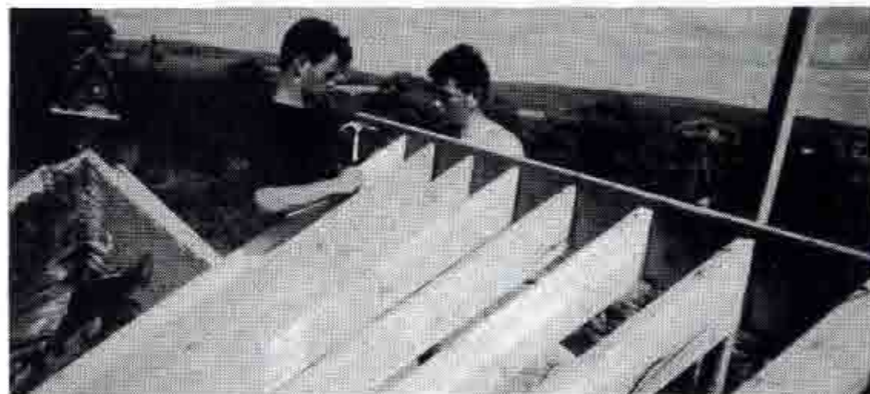
The Roof:

The roof of the building was structurally in bad and dangerous condition. Therefore it had to be stripped with caution and care to preserve as many original tiles as possible. Many of the tiles were cracked and held together with mortar. About one third of the original tiles were preserved.

These tiles were badly weathered and all of them were washed and cleaned by hand. All rafters had to be replaced, but the beam carrying the rafters was structurally sound and is left in the original position. The roof was then battened and felted. The original tiles were put back with some replacements.

The Chimney:

The chimney is built of brick. Some of the bricks were in extremely bad condition. The chimney was taken apart, brick by brick, with care. It was then discovered that there was another layer of brick on the inner side. That gave us enough bricks to complete the chimney. Then the



Eamon Sheerin and Michael Earley at work on the roof.

chimney had to be relined and the chimney stack put back in its original design.

The Pinacle

This is an attractive and an unusual roof-shaped ornamentation. This also had to be taken down and rebuilt to its original design. It is built of decorative brick to coincide with the rest of the roof.

East Gable with Verandah

The east gable is decoratively designed in brick. At one stage, these bricks were covered with mortar, possibly to stop the penetration of dampness. All of them had to be replaced and were made to appropriate size and design, on the site.

The foundation at the entrance of the verandah was in poor condition. A part of it had to be taken down. A new foundation was put down and the walls were rebuilt again.

Windows and Doors

All windows and doors are made of wood. These windows are arch-shaped. All these had to

be replaced and new ones were made on the site.

Stone and Brick Work

The joints in the stone and brick work were raked and cleaned out and they were repainted.

The Gutters

The gutters are made of cast iron. They were replaced.

The Interior

The interior walls were chipped to the stone and replastered. New floors and joists were fitted. The wainscotting is also replaced and re-fitted to its originality.

The Boundary Walls

These walls were badly in need of repair. Therefore they were rebuilt.

The Post-Box

There is an unusual post box beside the school. It was in bad condition and is now restored.

New toilets are built where the original toilets were.

by Sean Dermody

Thoor, Ballylee

by Sean Dermody

A FÁS training project commenced in Ballylee in January, '90. This project was in conjunction with Ireland West. It set about to restore the following: The Mill; The Miller's House; and The Weir Wall.

All of these buildings were in a very bad condition and were in a dilapidated state. The surrounding area was overgrown with brambles, bushes and briars. Therefore, the undertaken task of cleaning and restoring was slow and tedious.

The Mill: This building was in a dangerous condition. One of the gables was ready to collapse. It had to be taken down and rebuilt. All the walls had to be repointed. The interior was full of rubble and it had to be extensively repaired.

Originally there were three floor levels and all of these floors were reconstructed to their originality. A water wheel and an interior wheel were made on the site. The water wheel is made from oak and elm. A lot of time and skill went into the making of this wheel. The interior wheel was made for driving the works of the wheel. A tuck mill in the mill was partly restored.

The Miller's House: This building was partly in ruins. The front wall was completely demolished, and it had to be rebuilt. An unique fireplace in the building was in a bad condition. This was reinstated to its originality.

The Weir Wall: This was the biggest challenge on the job. A temporary wall had to be made with sand bags to divert water. On two occasions this temporary wall was brought, by a flood in the river after heavy rainfalls. It was decided then to try and build another temporary wall of



At Thoor, Ballylee. From left: Aidan Dooley, Stephen Hanrahan, Sean Dermody (Supervisor), Pat Diviney, Tony Dermody and Gerard Power.



The water wheel in Ballylee.

concrete. This was done under difficult circumstances mainly because of flooding. Then, the actual weir wall was finally constructed.

The landscaping around these

buildings is kept to its originality and is in keeping with this unique and quaint picturesque area.

It's a place worthy of a visit.

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How Gort Began

From very early times the O'Shaughnessys were the chieftains of Cinel Aodha, which comprised most of South Galway. They had a castle and mansion house in Gort. The town of Gort, "Gort Inse Guaire", The Field of the Island of Guaire, is named after Guaire, an ancestor of the O'Shaughnessys. In the earliest Ordnance Survey Map, that of 1839, the island in the Convent grounds is called "Gort Island", but this island would have been far too small a site for a chieftain's residence. A late mediaeval window has been recently discovered. It is set into the southern perimeter wall of the eighteenth century cavalry barracks. Archaeologists have dated the window to the sixteenth or seventeenth century. It originally belonged to the O'Shaughnessy castle.

HISTORICAL REFERENCES

On his way from Limerick to Galway, in 1559, the Lord Deputy "encamped near Gort, and dined at O'Shan-shin's (O'Shaughnessy's) house so worshipfully that divers wondered at it, for such a dinner, or the like of it, was not seen in any Irishman's house before". Such lavish hospitality was worthy of the descendants of Guaire The Hospitable.

Almost one hundred years later, Ludlow, one of Cromwell's generals, attacked the castle in 1651. The castle was



by Sr. de Lourdes Fahy

burned but the house preserved.

In 1697, King William of Orange conferred the O'Shaughnessy estates on Sir Thomas Prendergast, ancestor of Lord Gort. A troop of His Majesty's forces soon occupied the old O'Shaughnessy mansion.

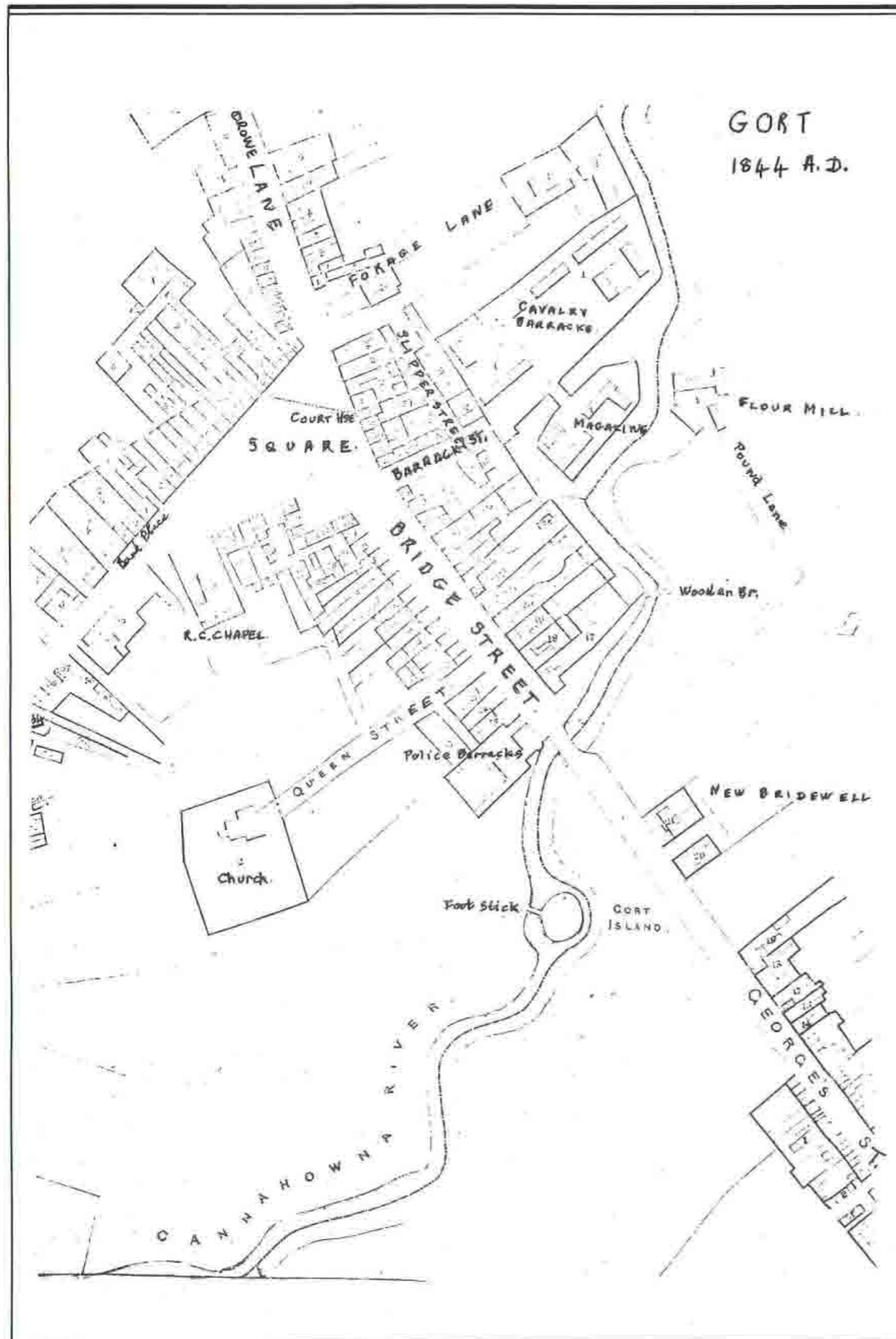
When the Church of Ireland Dean Pococke visited Gort in 1749, he said: "it was the estate of the Oshognusses and was fortified and now there is a barrack in an old mansion house of that family, built within the walls of the castle. It is a very poor market town like a village". In a Report to the Irish House of Commons, three years later, we learn that a new barrack had just been built by Chambers, a Dublin contractor, at a cost of £624-10-6.

What is more interesting is the fact that the old barracks, or former O'Shaughnessy mansion, had been repaired, at a cost of £158-13-0. The following, dated 1752, is the earliest recorded description of any Gort building: "The old barrack for two troops, having formerly been a house,

contains about sixteen rooms, besides closets; the rooms are of various sizes: those for the officers less, but those for the lodgement of men are sufficiently large and have two staircases. There are five stables which will contain sixty-two horses, besides an infirmary stable for three and a straw house. The cover of the house was repaired last summer (i.e. 1751) after the troops were in possession and some little repairs were lately made both within the house and stables. The cover of the stables is much out of repair and broken in many places. Two chimneys of the old barrack are in a ruinous condition". This was also attested to by Terence McCabe, a Gort mason: "one of the chimneys which is near the long stable is in such a tottering way that I have seen it frequently shake in times of storm and have likewise known the horses which have been in the said stable to be removed".

Sir Joseph O'Shaughnessy took forcible possession of the family mansion about four years later, but the triumph was short-lived and the castle was re-taken.

Dean Beaufort states in his *Journals* (1788): "Gort has two or three good houses and one large habitation of Mr. Prendergast Smyth". (That was Bridge House, now the Convent of Mercy). "He has let the Barracks go to Ruin. The Government used to pay Smyth £60 a year to continue it if he would lay out £500 in repairs or to pay £30 and lay



out the money themselves - both of which offers he rejected. Therefore the barracks will fall." However, Prendergast Smyth gave a lease to the Board of Ordnance on the 10th February, 1796. He removed every trace of the old castle and mansion of the O'Shaughnessys and built a new barracks. The officers' quarters on the island occupied the site of the castle while the men's quarters

occupied the site of the mansion. On the eastern side it was protected by the river. On the other sides it was surrounded by a fortification about twelve feet high, with a trench on the outside.

Towards the end of the eighteenth century, the landlord, Prendergast Smyth, began to give leases and encouraged people to build good houses in Gort. The earliest buildings seem to be those

that stretched from the present site of the Catholic Church as far as O'Grady's. It was called the "Main Street". The houses from O'Shaughnessy's corner down as far as the Post Office were built between 1814 and 1818. Further research will enable us to trace, with a considerable degree of accuracy, the growth of the remainder of the town.

HOPE OF SOLUTION TO FLOODING PROBLEM

By PADDY O'GRADY

THE South Galway Regional Executive of the Irish Farmers' Association has concentrated most of its activity this year towards seeking to have action taken which would alleviate the serious flooding which occurred last Spring in the Tarmon/Rathorpe area and to a somewhat lesser extent, in other parts of South Galway.

There has been no let up in a campaign which commenced last February and while it has not yet borne fruit, hopes are now high that at least part of the area will benefit from alleviation measures which may be announced in the near future.

The main fear that farmers in the Tarmon/Rathorpe area now have is that the flooding is set to recur again in January/February. Farmers in the other areas fear a similar situation may obtain in Peterswell, Kilmacduagh, Glenbrack and parts of Ardrahan and Ballindereen. The IFA Executive is very conscious of its obligation to try to dispel any such well-founded fears and so has conducted its most persistent campaign ever on behalf of all who have been affected by the flooding last Spring or previously.

From the time that IFA President, John Donnelly visited Tar-



mon in mid February and described it as "a disaster area", much media attention has been given to the problem. It has been featured on RTE Television (twice), 'Farmers' Journal', 'Sunday World' and repeatedly in 'The Connacht Tribune' and 'The Clare Champion'.

The South Galway Regional Executive IFA has left no stone unturned in an effort to find a solution or at least some measure of alleviation. Strong representations were made to local public representatives (Dáil and Senate), the M.E.P.s and John Donnelly (IFA President). A deputation from the Executive travelled to Dublin last April and met Liam Hyland, then Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture and officials of the Department of Finance.

A short time later, Mr. Hyland

visited the affected townlands of Tarmon and Rathorpe and stated afterwards that it was the area worst affected by flooding that he had ever seen. But there was no response from his Department and Mr. Hyland went on to be elected an M.E.P. for Leinster in June. Since then there has been much correspondence with the Office of Public Works and the Department of Agriculture and both bodies have turned down requests for alleviation in any shape or form.

However, at the time of writing, Senator Frank Fahey has arranged that a deputation from the IFA Executive would meet with Bertie Ahern, Minister for Finance and officials of the Department of Agriculture and there are some indications that there may be better news this time.

ROOTS

● SINCE the last issue of Guaire I received the following letters from people looking for information about their ancestors. If you feel you can help in any way please contact me. *The Editor.*

THOMAS J. DIVINEY
East Hill Woods, 218 Birchwood
Southbury, CT. 06488-1377

22/7/94

DEAR SIR: Information is sought about the family of Julia Fogarty, my paternal grandmother. The known facts are as follows: (1) She married my paternal grandfather, Patrick Diviney; (2) Date of marriage February 19, 1871; (3) Place Kilbeacanty Chapel, St. Columba's Church; (4) Residence then, Kilafin; (5) Age (est.) 22 years; (6) Father's name, Michael; (7) Four children—Thomas J. (same as mine), Mary, John and Patrick.

If there are other local newspapers I shall be glad to write to them if I can get name and address.

I shall be most grateful to anyone who can answer me and to you. Two other Fogartys, Mary and John, came to U.S. about the same time.

Many thanks, sincerely,

THOMAS J. DIVINEY

MISS P. COWAN
24 Ashford Road, Topsham
Exeter, EX3 0LA

29 January 1994

DEAR MR. O CONAIRE: My second cousin, Ann de Winson (Gregory) sent me a copy of Guaire to look at, as not only was there the interview with her and her sister, but also some information about the red brick schoolhouse designed by my grandfather, Francis Perse. (He was Lady Gregory's favourite brother and there are a number of references to him in her Journals).

Last Summer with a friend I visited Coole and we also, with great difficulty, managed to find Ashfield, my grandfather's house—or what remains of it (prac-



The remains of Ashfield House.

tically nothing). He was forced out by Sinn Fein in 1922 with two young grandchildren, which must have been traumatic for all of them. I have tried in vain, in order to have more information to trace the boy; the sister, I know, is dead. He must be too, so I wondered if any of your readers had any remembrances, of any kind, of Ashfield. I have only a small and very faded snapshot.

A cousin tells me that the fireplace in a local pub is made of stone from the house. I enclose a photo of some Ashfield remains—not a dovecote, I think, so what can they be?

To return to your magazine, I think it is first rate and so does Ann. I especially enjoyed the childhood memories and the beautiful poems. What gifted writers you have!

Near here at Sidworth there is an annual International Folk Festival and the Irish dancers (from the North of England) always carry off the first prize. I see you have some talent in that line in Gort, so what about some Galway dancers next year. That would be great!

Wishing Guaire continuing success.

Yours sincerely,

PATRICIA COWAN

(Proud great-niece of Lady Gregory).

1910 LETTER FROM AUSTRALIA

● MIKE WILLIAMS, a native of Gort, emigrated to South Africa towards the end of the last century. He became Light-Heavyweight boxing champion of that country around 1900. He had been trained by Pat Burke of George's Street. Mike subsequently left South Africa for Australia from where he sent the following letter to his friend and former trainer back home.

MR. M. J. WILLIAMS
Blackburn, Melbourne
Victoria, Australia

8th May 1910

FRIEND PAT: Just a few lines to let you and all the boys around know that I am still alive and going strong. I had awful bad luck when I arrived here first. The first fight I had they gave to the man I was fighting—they said I fouled him. I met him again and knocked him out in two rounds. They are the biggest lot of thieves

in the world out here, but I am holding my own with them.

I am doing all right, got married and I am settled here for some time. I fight Burns next month. He was in Dublin and beat Jim Roche there.

Well Pat, write as soon as you can and let me know all about good old Gort. I may get back next year for a trip. I am sure there is a big change in it. Is there anybody belonging to me there? If so, you might be kind enough and ask them to write to me.

Remember me to Mrs. Reynolds and family. Also Kate Shaughnessy—has she got married yet? Also J. H. Glynn, I wrote to him and he never answered my letter.

Now Pat, be sure and write and send me a Tuam News as I never hear from home.

Kindest to Mrs. Burke and yourself and family. Write soon as you can.

Kindest regards to all. Bye, bye,

MICHAEL JOHN WILLIAMS

Bakers Road, Blackburn, Melbourne.

Snail Farming in Killomoran

How would you fancy a 'little pot of local snails, wild nettles, spinach and mushrooms served with a lid of puff pastry'. You can enjoy this delicacy in the sumptuous diningroom of Ashford Castle during the Summer months. Suppliers of the snails are Martin and Mary O'Donoghue of Killomoran, Gort. The O'Donoghues have developed their snail farm to complement their main business which is market gardening. Their shop 'Burren Garden' is located in the Square, Kinvara.



Martin O'Donoghue in the snail tunnel.

Company for exportation purposes.

The Irish snail is in great demand on the European market, consistently fetching higher prices than its continental counterpart. France has an annual consumption of 16,000 - 20,000 tonnes of snails per year, of which only 400 tonnes are farmed commercially, according to Martin Hanmore of the British Snail Farmers Association. Mr. Hanmore, an expert in heliculture, addressed a large gathering of potential snail farmers, at a symposium in Sullivan's Hotel, Gort earlier this year.

Mary and Martin's fledg-

ling company got a major boost last June when Ashford Castle head chef, Denis Lenihan and his assistant, John Sheedy, were filmed by an American T.V. crew preparing and serving snails supplied by Western Snails Co. The general consensus was that they were of excellent quality and far superior to the imported product. Over 39% of guests dining in the 26 seater Connacht Room picked O'Donoghue's snails as their starter.

We wish Martin and Mary every success with their novel and interesting enterprise.

The Editor.

Some time ago the O'Donoghues decided to investigate the possibility of capitalising on the natural abundance of snails available in their locality. They carried out extensive enquiries about production and marketing and came to the conclusion that the lowly snail, regarded as a pest by most people, could become a marketable commodity. Martin and Mary formed a group which became unwieldy as it grew larger. At that point they decided to set up their own company - Western Snails Co.

They have been breeding snails for the past three years, most recently in large tunnels. They hope to develop a modern processing unit eventually and have recently secured the assistance of a Galway Seafood

T. Mullins

BAR & GROCERY



'THE BAR YOU'VE BEEN
LOOKING FOR'

From Gort to Darkest Africa

By Fr. Fintan Nelly

I am grateful for having been invited to write in your magazine. This is my fiftieth year as a priest with the S.M.A. Fathers. We were ordained on 17th December, 1944. In November we joyfully celebrated our origin and we looked back over the years with joy and with gratitude to God for his continued mercy. We also remembered those of our class who have died. For them we shed a tear of remembrance and pride.



Fintan P. Nelly in native attire.

Somehow the mind, at a time like this, seems to keep on glancing back over the years. We were ordained in December 1944. From there some of us came to Wilton, Cork for further studies. So at the end of June 1946 we were finally ready.

I remember the weeks and months waiting for a boat to West Africa. All the Elder Demster Line had been sunk in the War which had just ended. The British needed to get men out to Nigeria to replace those who badly needed a holiday. They finally decided to use a boat which had been taken from the Germans as part of the war settlement. It was called the 'Empire Deben'. One evening as I sat at home unshaven and unkept my mother walked in and looked at me. Then she laughed and said "Yerra look at the man who is about to leave for Africa". That very evening the telegram came. We were to join the Empire Deben next day in Liverpool, 19th December, 1946.

Our boat was fine and large but during the war it had been used as a troop ship and there had been no time to change it back for passenger service. So we had three tier bunks and queues for food and all the rest. But we loved it and we were young and we were tired of waiting.

It had been a rather harsh, cold winter in Ireland. So we were very interested in the continual increase in the heat of the atmosphere as we rounded ever southward off the coast of France and then Spain and then North Africa. Soon we had to put on tropical clothes. European gear seemed so heavy. We stopped at Las Palmas and many of the passengers, British, Scots and Irish, stocked up with bottles of Cognac which was dirt cheap in Las Palmas, beer and all sorts of beverages. Before you turn away in disgust remember that we were far from home and that we were just about to celebrate Christmas.

Christmas came and went and as always it was a time of great joy to all on

board. We ploughed on deeper and deeper into tropical waters. Good was it at that time to be alive, and to be young, was very "Heaven". We had always heard of the tropics but now here we were at the very threshold of that strange exotic land. Off to port side about 70 miles distant we could get occasional glimpses of distant shores, rows of magnificent palm trees with a backdrop of unending green forest. All the time the heat increased but with the lovely sea breeze things remained very pleasant. The ship's pool was now in use and many pleasant hours were spent diving and splashing and sunbathing. We arrived at Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone. We were allowed off for five or six hours. This was our chance to get a real taste of the tropics. The streets were very crowded and noisy but we were enthralled by all the new sights and sounds and smells and strange languages.

We passed through a large market where all kinds of food and fruit were for sale as well as a vast variety of very colourful clothes. But here the heat was really oppressive, the sun poured down relentlessly and flies of all kinds came to examine us. Perhaps they sensed the new European flesh and could not resist examining the find. At the mission we found the Holy Ghost Fathers very welcoming and soon we had large gourds of variegated fruits set before us - oranges, paw paw, mangoes, bananas, guava, pineapple and many others. All together on this gourd they looked formidable but our thirst was so great that we made light work of demolishing them.

It was back on board then and we were so glad to get in from the great heat. The

swift tropical night was coming down as we drew away from Freetown Harbour. As we looked back we remembered that it was almost 100 years since our founder and his five companions landed here to start the work of the S.M.A. Fathers. They were all dead and buried in six weeks - Malaria was the deadly problem that is still with us to-day. Though now we have great medicines to help to fight it.

We gratefully remember the words of Jesus, "Unless a grain of seed falls into the ground and dies it remains alone. But if it falls on the ground and lives it produces much fruit". Our founder was Father Marion de Bressillac. He and his companions have produced much fruit though at the time of their deaths they thought it a disaster.

Our journey took us south eastward into the Bight of Benim. We made steady progress as the sea was very clam. At times great shoals of flying fish broke the surface at speed and then they would travel along over the water for about 100 metres and then down again. Also a great number of porpoise loved to play and surface beside the ship.

Lagos came into view on the 6th January, 1947. So this was Lagos the capital of Nigeria. Here we would make our home for the next 30 or 40 years, here we would learn to live with our black brothers and sisters until the Lord called us away.

Later that afternoon we had a really hard couple of hours getting our belongings off the ship. We found that we would spend our first night in Services Inn - used by the troops during the war when they were preparing to join the 6th Army in the desert to fight Rommel.

And then you can imagine how tired we all were when it came time for bed. We all slept in a large room and soon all was peaceful. A number of our black friends felt that these 'green' Englishmen might be worth a raid. They came and lifted all our worldly money.

That was that. Next evening we decided to stroll along the marina to see all the wonderful new sights. I remember that at some stage a group of Lagos girls approached us and told us that they could entertain us in a nearby hotel. We knew how well they meant but we had too many places to see. Lagos was full of surprises. Tomorrow we would be on our way 250 miles up country.

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MEMORIES

Good memories, like a cat on a well-known rug, curl warmly about the soul. Memories are not merely ruminations and vague images of past experiences, but also sweet remembrances of moments of insight. How often, in the midst of despair has hope illuminated our lives through recollection? The smile that adorns the broken-hearted is proof that the first love, even in its inadequacies, and often bitter ending is a discovery of an emotion that will remain an irreparable dint on regret.

To remember and to be remembered allows life to continue to cushion mankind from his bereavements, goodness standing in opposition to evil in the memory helps to halve the horror and ignite the fires of hope for the future. It is therefore with a need to be made happy, or simply to enhance an ecstatic moment, that we call on good memories and they begin to purr softly to our senses.

Memories of childhood, for most, shine brighter than others to become the jewels of remembrance. As old people grapple with a withering existence, their sprightly young days are reflected in the youth they observe, who unknowingly ignite the fires of thought in the old. The middle-aged find consolation in seeing their children mirror their memories, and often proving them obsolete. For young adults and teenagers, the knot of pain that is the uncertain anguish of development and change is eased by thoughts of the simplicity of



by Elva Conroy

a childhood yesterday.

Wonder at the littlest things and sudden awe at gaining an understanding of a new aspect of life, feature strongly in memories of childhood. Parents affectionately revive slumbering memories in the company of relations whose laughter is merely an echo of the true happiness the child enjoyed.

Not all memories are cherished; some extend their claws and scratch and tear the soul before surfacing in tears. Memories of death and the resulting sorrow erupt in emotion and the sufferer tosses and turns in dismay at the torture of thoughts. Memories of fear, a childhood accident, or the unprecedented toss into turmoil due to human nature, cause disillusionment when the memories plague the soul.

God created man as an intelligent and capable life-form, equipped with a certain degree of foresight and a great deal of memory. The abuse of the shortness of memory of some by others, whose motive is very often a personal gain, is a common occurrence in society and life. The distorting of memories is an important historical factor, as is the exaggeration of events to enrage the present generation.

Memory combined with anger are indeed deadly weapons. Many of the conflicts of the present time reflect such partnerships.

Memories are remnants of the past that teach, torture and delight. Mankind must carry the cross of memory from the moment of consciousness to the last quenching of spiritual light. Heavy is the load for those whose past is marred by unhappiness, yet time heals all wounds and the cross becomes lighter, so that the bearer can lift his head once more to feel the warmth of the sun. An unexpected re-union can cast off the shackles of bitter recollections, to evoke a long forgotten sense of contentment and an emotion, perhaps, approaching happiness. All will have a complementary store, some thoughts of the enjoyment of youth and others, of more difficult times. As the end approaches, those who have reached before you from your past into the celestial light, seem to be calling and enticing you with pleasure. As Henry Vaughan said in his poem "Friends in Paradise":

*"They are all gone into the world of light!
And I alone sit lingering here;
Their very memory is fair and bright,
And my sad thoughts doth dear;..."*

Thus those who remain shall see a knot forged between memories and infinity, as they pass before us into the afterlife. This paradox of past and future where what we once knew, again awaits us, is the fantastic example of one truth in the circle of life, that memories are eternal.

Veteran of War of Independence Dies on his 100th Birthday

ON OCTOBER 26, 1894, Tim Considine was born in Feakle, Co. Clare. On October 26, 1994, exactly 100 years later, Tim died at the residence of his son, Flan, in Wexford. One hundred years of living that saw many changes.

As a young man growing up in Feakle, Co. Clare, Tim worked with his father, Michael who was a building contractor, where he acquired a deep love of working with wood, a hobby which was to serve him well in later life.

During his young days in Feakle he served with the East Clare Brigade in the War of Independence. After a raid on the R.I.C. Barracks in Feakle he was tried for murder and possession of arms. Luckily for him the charge of murder was not proven against him as a guilty verdict would have meant an automatic death sentence. Instead he received a twenty years sentence with hard labour. During his trial he described his fears "I could feel the rope tightening round my neck". He remembers the advice given by Arthur Griffith to all prisoners "Make your prison time as easy on yourselves as you can, obey the rules and do not cause problems". He and his companions were transported to Portland prison where his biggest problems were the constant hunger and sparse rations. Later he was transferred to Dartmoor prison and remained there until the 'Truce'. After the 'Truce' the Irish prisoners of war were transported back to Ireland, While marching through Liverpool they were afforded a rousing welcome by supporters, a welcome which was not as noticeable when they reached the homeland. Tim recounts an anecdote of the march through Liverpool "Marching through Liverpool the prisoners wore prison caps, one lady dashed from the crowd and snatched Tim's cap. "Madam, you can't have that" he said. "Just for a moment" she replied, she placed the cap on her young son's head and said to him "Now son, you can say you have worn a man's cap".

Tim joined the 'Treaty side' during the civil war and remained in the Army until 1929 when he retired. He was appointed Postmaster in Gort, Co. Galway, and rejoined the army for the duration of the 'Emergency'. He was stationed as Adjutant at Costume Barracks, Athlone and promoted to Captain in 1940. 1941 saw him promoted to Commandant and appointed 'Area Officer' to East Galway area LDF where he was stationed at Lough Cutra Castle, Gort. From 1950 he acted as Local Agent for Department of Social Welfare. During his time in Gort he was involved in many local activities, he was



Minister Brendan Howlin presents the President's letter-checkue to Tim Considine on his 100th birthday. Looking on is Fr. Fegan.

a founder member of Gort Agricultural Society and Gort Marts and was actively involved with Gort Pantomime Society.

After the death of his wife Ciss, he moved to Newbridge, Co. Kildare, where he resided with his son Mick, R.I.P., and later to the home of his son, Flan in Wexford. All of Tim's children joined the army, Michael, who predeceased him in 1979 was a Commandant, Maura served as a lieutenant in the Queen Alexander Nursing Corps and Flan was a lieutenant in the FCA.

Tim was lucid and interested in all aspects of life right up to his death. He was well enough to attend and enjoy a birthday party in his honour just three days before his death and was alert enough to acknowledge President Mary Robinson's message of congratulations to him. His standards were always above reproach and eventhough he had firmly held convictions during the civil war he never spoke evil of his opponents. He could never reconcile or condone actions of the IRA in recent times and never wanted an association made between them and the Old IRA. He felt they had sullied the name of the IRA.

He was glad to have lived long enough to see the present ceasefire with its glimmer of hope for peace. For his selfless contribution to the founding of this nation he is owed our fervent thanks and for his friendship, help and sense of humour his friends will remember him.

He is survived by his son, Flan, daughter, Maura, six grandchildren and nine great grandchildren.

100 Reasons for Tim's family to celebrate



Timothy Considine celebrating his 100th birthday with family.

TIMOTHY CONSIDINE, who lived with his son, **Flan**, and daughter-in-law, **Maureen**, at **Crosstown, Wexford**, celebrated his 100th birthday in October 1994.

Timothy is seen here surrounded by family and friends at the birthday which was held at Wexford Golf Club after Mass in Ely Hospital celebrated by Fr. Jim Fegan.

Timothy was a veteran of the War of Independence and following a raid on an R.I.C. Barracks in Feakle in Co. Clare, he was sentenced to twenty years in prison. He was interned in Portland in England and

Dartmoor until the Truce. His main complaint while he was in prison was not the confinement but the constant hunger. Timothy later served in the army and retired with the rank of Commandant.

As a person who took a prominent part in the formation of the nation, he was delighted to have lived long enough to see a glimmer of hope for a lasting peace in the North of Ireland.

In the course of his birthday party, Timothy was presented with a cheque by Fr. Fegan, on behalf of the President of Ireland.

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THE EDITOR TALKS TO MATT MURPHY

Recently appointed Manager of the Galway Senior Hurling Team

First of all congratulations on your appointment as manager of the Galway senior hurling team. What was your initial reaction when the result of the vote was announced?

I suppose my first reaction was one of relief after a couple of weeks of intense speculation and doubt. My next problem was that I had to name a team to play Laois in the NHL for the following week-end. Many of the panel were still involved in the county championship and were unavailable so our first selection had a lot of untried young players.

You have been a very successful manager at minor level, winning two out of three All-Irelands. Will your success and experience with the minors be of much benefit to you at senior level?

It should count for something but the hype and build-up for the senior game is much more intense. Most of the current payers have experience of success and that will be a decided advantage also.

Sometimes players who shine at minor level fail to make it in the senior grade. Of the young players that you have come across in the past three years, could you name a few who should have a bright future at senior level.

Some have already made an impact at senior level, like Nigel Shaughnessy, Francis Forde, Michael Donoghue, Colm O'Doherty and we will be expecting players like Ollie Fahy, Ollie Canning, Kevin Broderick, Niall and Padraic Linnane to make the grade over the next few years.

Is it your intention to retain all or most of last year's panel or will you go for 'fresh blood' on a large scale.

We will have a look at all the fringe talent out there and all the talent coming through from under age during the league campaign. Many of the older players have been great servants of Galway hurling and still have a contribution to make if their mental attitude is right and they are prepared to make the necessary commitment and sacrifices.

Looking objectively at the situation how would you rate the talent available to you?

There is a fair pool of talent in the county at the moment—the trick is finding the right blend of players and playing a type of game that best suits us at this particular time.

How important are your two selectors John Connolly and Monty Kerins to your plans?

John has been through it all before as a player and can talk to the panel on that basis. Monty has been involved with under age in C/Bridge for the last seven or eight years so he knows the under age talent better than anybody. They are both pretty shrewd tacticians also.

How do you think you will cope with the media attention, which will inevitably be directed at you come championship time?

The media have their job to do and I respect that but I must temper that with the needs of the team. Too much attention is being focused on the role of the manager in the modern game and we will be striving to keep a low profile at all times.



MATT MURPHY

It is often pointed out by hurling followers that it is important for Galway to reach the final stages of the league because of the fact that there is no Connacht championship. Bearing that in mind, will it be your intention to use the best players in the league or will you try out new players, perhaps risking the team's chances of being involved right up to the end of the campaign?

A good run in the league is important but we also need to sift through as many fringe players as possible in the group games. Hopefully if we qualify for the knock-out stages it will give us a chance to find a settled combination. It is impossible to use our best players during the early games because so many clubs are involved in the knock-out stages of the county championships.

How soon will the McCarthy Cup come back to Galway?

I don't know—if we can get everything right then I have no doubt but that the talent is within the county. So it will happen soon, I hope.

Finally, do you think there is too much expected of a manager considering the fact that the position is part-time and non-salaried?

The job now lasts for eleven months of the year and can be very intensive during the months of July and August. I suppose we wouldn't let our names go forward if we didn't enjoy the challenge. Every manager feels he has something to offer.

Thank you Matt for this interview and may we wish you the best of luck in your new post.

P. C.

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CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF GORT

By MICKEY McQUAID

GORT was a lovely place to live when I was a child. It must have been nearly self-sufficient as it had many bakeries including Gillane's, O'Grady's and Fitzgerald's in the Square. Fitzgerald's was situated next to the Courthouse. Agnes O'Grady's was situated where the pub of the same name now stands. There was Moloney's in George's Street and Cahill's in our own street (Crowe Street).

There were at least three tailor shops and one of those, Hughes' in Crowe Street, was a great meeting place for us after school. Paddy Hughes and his son Tommy ran this tailor's shop and the door was always open for passers-by. They could continue with their work of cutting out suit lengths on the big bench and stitching them up on the foot machines regardless of the visitors. Tommy was a great character and whistler and you could always hear him long before you reached the shop. Both of them also enjoyed a fight and would often deliberately set one of us against the other, usually by sending a wooden spool of thread flying through the air and landing on one of our heads and then blaming our companion.

There were also a number of harnessmakers in the town—Treston's, Crowe Street and Reidy's, The Square and also Nelly's in Church Street. Gort was also well supplied with shoemakers. We had Paddy Nolan in our street. Paddy's was also a popular meeting place. We often went in there, maybe on our way from school and watched Paddy at work. Poor Paddy was often 'under the weather' and I suppose we got a bit of a kick seeing the man in this state trying to peel the excess leather from the new sole he had fitted. However, the poor man never ordered us out or seldom got nasty. Jim Hemsey and Mickey Jordon were two of Paddy's regular visitors. They both lived in the old row of houses in Crowe Street where the new houses now stand. Jim was a big simple man with very bad eyes and he wore a hard hat, and Mickey was a tiny little man who lived with his brother and sister, Peader and Lilly. They were very simple men who probably never travelled outside Gort, but we often sat listening to them conversing with great interest. God be good to them, they are all long departed this life.

There were two blacksmiths in Gort when we were young: Paddy Burke in George's Street and Paddy Glynn had a forge beside the national school. The forge next to the school was always a busy place and we frequently paid it a visit after school and looked on as Paddy fitted the red hot shoes on the horses or sometimes we would operate the big

bellows for reddening the fire. Paddy also made and fitted the steel bands on the cart wheels. For this, a big fire had to be made at the rear of the forge to heat the bands first and then fit them.

CHRISTMAS TIME

I loved Christmas time in Gort. For me the first signs would appear in Barry's shop with a few small dishes of currants and raisins in the window flanked by big red candles. Barry's shop and O'Grady's bakery were unique at the time in that they still did not have electricity. Instead, they had a number of big oil lamps hanging from the ceiling so there was a lovely old world air about them, especially at Christmas time. In Brady's, Madge Burke's and Luke Shinner's toys would appear in the windows, dolls, Christmas stockings and the like. A big Christmas stocking cost half a crown at the time (about 12.5 pence in present day money). This was way beyond us but we were fascinated just looking at them.

When we were very young, I remember a Christmas tree on the stage of the old Town Hall and presents distributed to the children of the town. I don't know who organised this but I remember that we all gathered in the hall one evening and our names were called in turn. I remember getting a small picture of the 'Little Flower' which I still have. I remember being very disappointed as the picture meant nothing to me at the time, especially when there were so many toys on the tree. The money for those presents may have come from money left by a lady of the town called Spelman and it was called Spelman money. She apparently left money to be used annually for the purchase of presents and clothing for the children of Gort. Prizes in the schools were given out each year to the best pupils, and were funded by this money also.

Christmas was also a time for turkey markets. Here the people of the town would buy their Christmas dinner which was usually a goose. A goose was the traditional dinner for most people at the time. There was great excitement at the markets with everyone trying to get a bargain. I remember my mother used to stuff the goose with mashed potatoes and chopped onions and cook it over the open fire in a big pot with hot coals on top of the lid, as well as heat underneath. She made the bread in this way also. I thought that nothing tasted so good. I often wonder how she managed to cook a dinner in this fashion as our open fireplace was very

small. They were extremely gifted people and could improvise with very little.

Then there was the turkey plucking in Piggott's. This would start 4-5 weeks before Christmas each year and it was here that we made our Christmas money. We spent every free hour here after school, when turkeys were available. Dennis Madigan and Pierce Piggott operated the business and they exported the turkeys to England for Christmas. They bought and collected the turkeys around the countryside from the farmers. They had a number of trucks and we waited each evening for those trucks to bring in their load. We always hoped for a continual supply because more turkeys meant more money. I remember in the early years (mid '40s) we got two old pennies a bird. Then it was increased to 3 old pence and later on to 4 pence. The turkeys were plucked in a big shed and supported from the rafters by a sling or double rope. The turkeys were freed from the crates on the lorries into the shed so that they were convenient for us when we were finished one to pick up another. So in the shed there were a combination of live turkeys and dead ones and ourselves, on a huge cushion of feathers and all of us trying to exterminate the remaining live birds, because every dead one increased our income and also we tried to get as many hens as possible (much easier to pluck and handle for the same money).

Most of us quickly learned to hang up and kill our own birds. They were supported from the slings by the feet and then we caught the turkey round the head and bent it almost at right angles to the neck and stretched the neck with the weight of our body till we felt the neck snapping. This was a very delicate job because if you put too much weight on the neck after it snapped you could pull the head from the neck and the turkey was destroyed. However, we became very expert at our job and this rarely happened. Occasionally, if we met a strong necked bird and if we failed to break the neck we had to call for help immediately as the turkey was

in danger of suffocating and this would also discolour the bird, as well as being cruel. It was important that the neck be broken so that the blood travelled to the head. This all seems so crude nowadays but we never gave it a second thought in those days. We became expert at assessing turkeys. We knew the birds to avoid, the ones that were losing their feathers (this meant pin-feathers and slowed us up) or small delicate birds (easier to tear when plucking). We also had to cope with turkey lice, but even though they could be numerous, they did not seem to survive that long on humans.

Our plucked turkeys were laid beside us on feathers and were checked at the end of the night by one of the lads who worked in the store. All the turkeys had to be plucked before we left and sometimes it would often be 1 a.m. or 1.30 a.m. when we finished. Towards the end of the night our hands would be sore from the wing feathers, especially those of the cock turkeys.

The lights in Gort went out at 12 midnight in those days and it would be pitch black as we made our way home. I should mention that there were geese to be plucked as well but we avoided those as they were far more difficult to pluck and the down on the geese was far more difficult to remove from our clothes in time for school the next day (seldom a change of clothes in those days). Ned McNeill plucked all the geese and the going rate was also higher than for turkeys—6 pence a goose.

On Christmas Eve everyone put a candle in the front window and on Christmas morning there was Mass at 8 p.m. in the church. Everyone spent Christmas Day at home and enjoyed the simple things they got for Christmas, maybe a game of ludo or snakes and ladders and maybe something to wear. We went out with the wren on St. Stephen's Day and that completed our earnings for that year.

● NOTE: PART III WILL APPEAR IN THE NEXT ISSUE!

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The 'Rawking' of an Orchard

By Seán Leahy

WHEN all is said and done, it is not for me to put pen to paper, and tell you how to rob an orchard, 'rawk', as we called it when we were children. The funny part about it was, if you knocked at the door of the owner, he would fill your pockets or jersey with the best of apples, but the good was gone out of it, the mystery and the adventure was gone down the drain and the apples never tasted the same, so we set about 'rawking' the orchard.

First we would circle the enclosure where the trees were, look at the height of the walls that had to be scaled, and the best way of retreat if you were caught while on the manoeuvre. The more daring did it during the daytime, while those of lesser nerve, in the darkness of night. I preferred the daytime myself, as you saw what you were doing and where you got the best apples from, they usually grew at the top of the trees and so you had to go prepared to climb which put more adventure into the 'rawking'.

We usually worked in fours, three went in while the fourth stayed outside as a lookout. Often it took half an hour to get to the top of the wall, using a rope and hook, and dropping down on the inside as quickly as possible. The deed was done, and our jerseys and pockets bulging, as we made our way up the wall again, losing some of the apples on the journey, which was a dead giveaway to the owner of the orchard.

We divided the apples evenly and we were eating to our heart's content for hours afterwards. But some raids never went as smoothly as I have described. There were times when we were caught, O God, how we suffered, I remember once being up the tree picking away to my heart's content, when looking down, I saw the face of an outraged owner, peering through the branches, with a big red rusty face, that was fit to explode. "Come down here you young robber and face your punishment or I'll send for the Guards. I know you, you young blackguard", and every now and again you got a welt of an apple from an angry owner. So eventually you made your way down to face the nightmare. He then grabbed you by the shoulders and shook you till your teeth rattled and your bones started coming apart. Then the belting started, mostly across the face, and the back of the head, With the tears streaming down your face, you were quickly ejected from the orchard with a hard kick in the pants. You sat outside for a while with your aches and pains, then cleaned yourself up a bit and hit for home hoping to God that he would not tell your parents. If he did you got a lot more of the same punishment at home.

On another occasion we were busy visiting the orchard when, to our amazement, there in our midst stood the owner. We ran to the nearest exit that happened to be a door, we opened it, ran inside and to our horror it was a henhouse. The farmer then closed and bolted the door, leaving us with the startled hens and the outraged cock for three hours till he sent for our parents, and the next time we saw daylight was to be confronted by our parents, who walloped us black and blue home before them.

Looking back, the worst time ever we were caught was when we 'rawked' our local monastery. It was the start of the Summer Holidays and most of the brothers (our teachers) were away on holidays leaving but a skeleton crew to look after the place. The orchard was surrounded by a very high wall. We scaled the wall on the outside and came down into the orchard by sliding down a statue of St. Joseph on the inside. When we got in it was easy to get out when finished as there was a door in the wall that you could pull shut after you. But we were spotted and were told by Br. Driscoll, in Irish, that he knew us.

That night at the Benediction (we were in the choir) Br. Driscoll was the choirmaster and the words he said to me on the way down from the gallery will always stick in my mind. He said "Ah, Mr. Leahy, how were the apples? Br. Garvey will see you all after the holidays. Happy holiday". I never spent such an unhappy Summer holiday in all my life and when we did face Br. Garvey when the holidays were over we got six of the best with the leather on both hands, and it was all over.

I think knocking at the door of the owner is the best in the end. Or is it?

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IRISH OAKWOODS

BY DAVNET McDONNELL

UNTIL the end of the sixteenth century Ireland was largely still a wooded country, with up to one-eighth of its area covered in forest. The dominant tree was oak. The Irish word for oak is dair, with dairbhre and doire being oakwood and oakgrove, respectively. The anglicised versions of these words such as 'der' and 'derry' are found in twenty-five per cent of townlands around Ireland, such as Derrybrien, in Co. Galway.

When Neolithic farmers arrived in Ireland about five thousand years ago, the first attack on Ireland's oakwoods began. They opened up clearings to grow cereals and grass for cattle. However, it was not until the decline of the Celtic order and the dawning of the Elizabethan era that the real exploitation of our oakwoods began.

During the sixteenth century, the first attack on Munster's oakwoods was the clearing and planting of lands by English settlers. They also felled the forests for their own security, as they aimed to destroy the hiding places of Irish armies.

Meanwhile the Slieve Aughty Mountains, which straddle the Clare - Galway border, were covered by the great forest of Suidan. It was through this forest that O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone, marched to raid Clanricarde of Thomond. One of the last remnants of this primeval woodlands is located at Raheen Oakwoods, Tuamgraney, Co. Clare. This wood contains many oaks of up to six hundred years of age, and one tree known locally as the Brian Boru Oak is reputed to be one thousand years old.

INDUSTRY

The oakwoods of Killarney, Cork and Clare, luckily for us, survived the exploitation of our natural forests. The destruction of the huge forests of these counties was brought about when iron smelting, using local oak charcoal, became a major industry. The landscape changed drastically and many animals were deprived of their natural habitat. Indeed, the last wolves in Ireland were killed near Feakle, Co. Clare in 1750. Also some woods near the sea provided timber for shipbuilding. For example, ships for the East India Company were built with timber from Kinsale. The manufacture of wooden casks was also a significant industry.

The legacy of this minor industrial revolution is one of a countryside largely devoid of our natural oakwoods, and the loss of habitat for our native animals.

The largest concentration of oak to-day is in the Killarney area, where fortunately our native red deer thrives. However, the regeneration of this woodland is threatened by the invasion of rhododendron which grows rapidly and thickly on the local acid soils, and has a destructive effect on our native plants and consequently our wildlife. There are ongoing efforts to root out this plant.

To understand the devastating effect of this plant, it is necessary to understand the delicate balance of life in the oakwood. Our ancient oakwoods can be understood in terms of a tropical rain-forest, where fuelled by the sun, plants and animals depend on each other for their very



life. The oakwood, while it is a complex three dimensional system, can be seen as having four distinct layers.

DISTINCT LAYERS

The first is the field layer, where there are simple plants such as mosses, fungi, filmy ferns and liverworts. Next comes the field layer of large ferns, woodrush and many rare woodland flowers such as golden saxifrage, woodavens, wood sorrel, figwort, sanicle and better known varieties such as meadowsweet, campion, bluebells, violets, and orchids.

About fifteen feet above the field layer is the shrub layer, which largely consists of holly and hazel, with rowan or birch on acid soil, or alder, cherry and wild apple on lime soils. This layer is topped by ash.

These layers are sheltered by a canopy of oaks, through which sunlight filters to support the rich and varied life below. Indeed the oak itself supports a myriad of ferns, mosses, and lichens as well as hundreds of insects. It is argued that the four hundred acre Raheen Oakwood is richer in plant species, acre for acre, than the more well-known Killarney Oakwoods. This Clare Wood is located on the interface of acid mountain soils in younger valley limestones and there supports a greater variety of plants.

This rich habitat also harbours a wealth of wildlife. Resident birds include jays, sparrowhawks, treecreepers and woodcocks, while blackcaps, chiff chaffs and warblers are Summer visitors. Red squirrel, badgers, pinemartens, fox, stoat and deer are plentiful while others are located by lake edges.

The survival of Irish oakwoods depend on decisions made to-day. Should we intervene and clear the woods of non-active plants, clear the woods of destructive red deer, so that over the years the woods would be actively returned to the native state? Or should the wood be left to nature, with fallen oaks fertilising the soil, as we wait and hope that the oaks will regenerate despite fierce competition from non-active sycamores, horse-chestnuts, etc.?

The future of our oakwoods, powerful link in our Celtic past, depends on decisions made to-day.

A TRIBUTE TO STEPHEN GALLAGHER

WE went for a game of golf in Lahinch, a week before he died . . . Sean and Ann Marie against Stephen and myself. The elder brother, much to the disquiet of his daughter-partner, suggested that he would give us 'a shot a hole'. The game progressed with the younger brother, as predicted, immersing himself in the wilds of Lahinch. So the game was really between the elder gentleman and the people from Co. Clare. Stephen's game was simple . . . an easy stroke with his battered driver usually sent the ball well down the fairway, then he relied on his favourite stick—the 'up and downer' to bring him to the green, to finish off with a short chip and a putt or two.

A most enjoyable outing—for some; Stephen whistling sweetly or singing, 'I'll Take You Home Again Kathleen' while Ann Marie sensing that all was not well occasionally questioned the generosity of the 'shot a hole', and then of a sudden the game was over on the 13th hole. Gort/ The Bronz 1, Ennis nil. Stephen got immense pleasure from the outing—'sure it's all in the hands, the feel', he said, with a devilish smile savouring the pleasure of what was to be his final game.

I mention this match, because it gives a sense of the nature of the man . . . 'Enjoy the day, live life to the full, open up the club face and to hell with the begrudgers'. Coming to this wisdom perhaps took a lifetime, like everyone else there were the hard times—providing for family in the states, coming to terms with two heart bypasses over fifteen years, living in the Bronx while still longing for South Galway, but then he was blessed with a great companion—Kathleen and through her love and appreciation of Irish music and dance it

By FR. ML. BRENNAN



▲ Stephen Gallagher

was possible for Stephen to have his 'Feet on Broadway' while at the same time never far away from the 'Old Bog Road'.

There was always a sense of fun and music in Stephen's life since the time he and his pals from 'Above the Bridge' frequented the streets of Gort in an age when youngsters had to sport and play with very little resources except imagination and plenty of space.

It was another age and there were Games for all Seasons . . . The Walnut Tree at the top of the town or the lane behind Thomas Sheedy's shop was suitably sheltered for pitch and toss. O'Connor's yard was a natural arena for the game of rounders. More exotic games like throwing the hazel stick or rolling tyres down the slope are almost extinct now.

Milder winters and traffic have interrupted one of the most popular sports—sliding down the road during frosty nights. A few buckets of water and constant sliding made the road into a wonderful skating slope. A strong pair of hobnail boots brought the most delicate skaters from The Pound to the Railway Bridge, a feat equalled in later years only by Stephen's son Timmy—on roller blades.

Because money was scarce the

hurling ball often consisted of pigs bladder . . . and the road or the town park surrounded by beech trees (now St. Colman's Terrace) provided ideal training ground. In later years, the tailor Johnny Lane kept a careful eye over the lads as they took their hurling more seriously, but that same patron provided spools for the spinning top with the nails 'borrowed' from Mullins' coffin workshop.

The few bob were made from snaring rabbits with the ferret, unless you got over excited with the prospects of making a fortune and killed the ferret by mistake; the nut wood offered its annual feast if you weren't ambushed on the way home, and since the rosy apple was ever tempting no orchard wall was too high for these seasoned athletes.

As these young men grew into young adulthood, the childish games were left aside, and they dedicated themselves to more challenging matters, such as playing for the occasional pigs head in regular 'card houses' such as Moloneys, taking up hurling more competitively, and dancing to the melodious sounds of the famous Gloughamara Band. The hurling must have been of an amazing standard in Gort if four hurlers from the town were on the county panel in the '40s and it must have been a welcome boost to Galway people to win the Railway Cup in 1947.

The night before Stephen left for the States, the Gloughamara Band cut short an engagement in Johnsons, Kinvara . . . and there was music, song and dance 'till the early hours in the Workhouse Chapel over the half-barrel and renderings of 'Now is the Hour'—and the tears flowed.

And so new life in the States—

but not altogether new—Stephen brought this sense of fun with him to America; and the game of hurling, the song and dance was always part of the lifestyle. People in the States said that when Stevie Gallagher was at a function everyone relaxed. That special charm was given ultimate recognition when Stephen was guest of honour at the fundraising event in the Gaelic Park Sports Centre on the 27th September '85 for the Gort and South Galway Community Centre.

Stephen first went to Toronto, Canada in '48, where he shared an apartment with Tom Monahan from Ardrahan. While in Canada he commuted to New York on week-ends to play with the N.Y. Galway hurling team. He came to live in N.Y. in 1950 and played until he retired from hurling in 1955. From 1951-53 he was a U.S. Marine Corps Sergeant, having been drafted shortly after arriving in N.Y. during the Korean War. In '57 Stephen married Kathleen (nee Mullen) and they had six children—Michael, Maureen, Stevie, Kevin, Patsy and Timmy. Stephen worked for



Padraic Giblin presenting the Stephen Gallagher Perpetual Cup to Christy Dalton, winner in the Garden Produce category at Gort Show last August. This cup is one of several trophies given to Gort Show committee by Stephen.

I.B.M. Corp. and lived in the Bronx.

Since his retirement, Stephen and Kathleen came regularly to Gort, and using Gort as a base they travelled through Galway and Clare for the music and dance.

It is indeed strange and wonderful that he died as he lived . . . with music and dance echoing around Carron Roe. We often glimpse the gracious hand of the Master at work during times of death. It was indeed consoling to Kathleen and Stephen's sister and brother, Eileen and Josie, that there could be funeral celebrations in the two

places that were very dear to him, Gort and The Bronx.

The memory of the kindness and support from the people of Gort, Galway and Clare was a tremendous support to Kathleen as she journeyed with Stephen's remains for the burial. There is certainly a great hurling team in heaven now, and a choir to rival the choir of angels or even the Gort male choir . . . but those of us who chanced to meet Stephen on the way know that 'twas heaven here with him, or as he would sing 'Sure a little bit of heaven fell from out the sky one day . . .'



Gort 7-A-Side Final Team (1942) played in Connolly's Field, Kilbeacanty. Back Row (from left): Martin Brennan, Seán Burke, Christy Carty, Joe Mullins, Raymond Nelly, (man with cap the Lord Holland), Joey Fahy, Joe Halvey, Ned McNeill, Joe Glynn. 2nd Row: Joe Cooney, Paddy Burke, Albert Mullins, Cyril Piggott, Thomas Howard. 3rd Row: Tom Staunton, Val Martyn. Front Row: Padraic Hehir, Padraic McNeill, Joe Keane and Tom O'Grady.



Young hurlers of another era! Front: Bernie Moloney and Colman Burke (George's Street). 2nd Row: Michael Hallinan (R.I.P.), Ignatius Burke (The Square), Martin Flanagan (George's Street). On Wall: Seán Bredin, Frannie Flanagan, Bernie Burke (The Square), Gerard Cahill (Loughrea Road) and Billy Keran (George's Street).



Photographed at Moloney's, George's Street about 1945-46. Back Row (from left): Michael Hallinan (R.I.P.), Billy Kerans (R.I.P.), Gerry Cahill and Bernard Moloney. Front: Martin Flanagan.

DOWN MEMORY LANE

This group was photographed outside Fitzgerald's Shop/Bar (Tom Mullins'). From left: Joe Halvey, Tom Lambert, Josie Gallagher, Dessie Fitzgerald (R.I.P.), Michael Halvey (R.I.P.) and Fr. Jack O'Connor.



George's Street 7-a-side team photographed about 1945-46. Back Row (from left): Francis Flanagan, Bernard Moloney. 2nd Row: Martin Flanagan, Michael Hallinan, Colman Burke. Front Row: Hubert Courtney and Mossey Devlin.



Dog On Tricycle! Taken in George's Street about fifty years ago.



Inset photo shows the late Paddy Moran's house on the Galway Road, close to Kiltartan in 1980 (See 'Guaire' June 1980) and main picture captures 'Neddy' thinking things over beside what is left of it recently. Another gem lost to posterity.

The death took place recently of Frances McNally, curator of Thoor, Ballylee from 1965 to 1988. A native of Galway, she had a keen interest in and knowledge of Yeats' work. Our photo shows the late Ms. McNally with Michael Yeats at Ballylee.



Four generations of the O'Shaughnessy family of Rinrush appear in this photo. Back (from left): Colman (Senr.), Colman (Junn.) and Patrick. Front: Nora (R.I.P. 1990) holding Elizabeth, Breda holding Stephen and Bridget holding Rena Marie. (Baby Colm was born after this photo was taken).

UNIQUE ACHIEVEMENT FOR TWO GORT GOLFERS

Gerry Connolly and Bernie Larkin bring off the 'Grand Slam' in what is considered to be a 'first ever' for any golf club.



▲ Above: Mary and Vincent Monaghan, Ballyhugh, Gort, hold the Christy Monaghan Memorial Trophy. It commemorates the hurling feats of their son, Christy, who played for Gort in the early '80s and died at a very young age. The magnificent trophy was sponsored by Pearse Piggott, Johnny Kelly and Gort Credit Union.

Top left: Our photo shows Bernie Larkin receiving her second 'Major' of the year from Club President Tommy Ruane. She had already won the captain, Mary Kealy's prize. Bernie was subsequently named 'Golfer of the Year'.

◀ Left: Gerry Connolly being presented with his prize by Club President, Tommy Ruane. Earlier in the year Gerry captured the captain, Seán Mullins' prize. He is also 'Golfer of the Year' for 1994.



The new clubhouse will be erected in the excavated area overlooking the 18th green at Castlequarter.



Some of the machinery used in the construction of Gort's new 18 hole golf course.

GORT IN MY TIME

[Part 2]

Martin J. Burke, a native of George's St., Gort, interviewed by Brian Brennan.

Brian: What was Coole like that time Martin, the house itself?

Martin: The house itself was going down at the time you see because of the overheads. She wasn't able to keep them up and she wanted to get rid of it and sell it, and my opinion, for what its worth, is that it was a terrible mistake on the part of the powers that be to let that house be demolished, because it would be a goldmine now for the people of Gort as far as Tourism is concerned and the plan of it is still to be got and they're spending millions and millions of pounds on useless ventures [and the eradication of T.B.]. They should have spent about a million pounds and rebuilt and restored Lady Gregory's house, because it was a terrible mistake to demolish it.

Brian: You left National School, what did you do after that?

Martin: The first thing I did was to go in to work in the Post Office and after a while I left that when the Electricity Supply Board was formed and Richard Treston was the first lad out of the town to go to work for them, and then I went to work for them, but I went to work on the outside branch they called operations and I actually erected the first Street Lights in Gort myself, and I worked with them for about twelve months and they asked me would I go over to Loughrea to work.

The work was done here and I said I would but when I went over there I found they weren't giving me any increase in my wages and at that time Unions were taboo. If anybody mentioned the word Union or wage increase they would be fired so quick they wouldn't know what happened to them, so I was over

[Part 1 appeared in last year's issue]



Martin J. Burke

in Loughrea and when I paid for my digs I had about half a crown left, so I couldn't carry on and I had to pack it up.

Then the building boom started and de Valera decided, which was a very good thing, that he would do away with all of the slums and he really did do away with most of them so there was a huge big building boom and tradesmen were like old gold.

Brian: What year are we talking about roughly?

Martin: 1933, 1934. My father and my uncle being in the building trade, it came naturally to me and I had a brother Jack, already in it, so I took up that trade, a Plasterer, and the first place I worked was at St. Coleman's Terrace and a firm called McNally's from Galway that built the houses and I worked there and John Joe Glynn, who was my helper and he had been to Blackrock College in Dublin, but things were in such a state that he was lucky that he got a job on the buildings, but he was helping me and he encouraged me.

He used to tell me I was doing great and everything and the first

week's wages I got the full time wage that time was about £4.05, but of course it would be something in the region of £40.00 or £50.00, and the first wage I got was over £3 and I thought I was a millionaire and I said I am going to stay at this trade which I did. Then I went to Ennis and I worked on the new County Hospital and when that was finished I went on to Kilkenny and I worked on the Cinema there and then I went to Enniscorthy in the County Wexford and I worked at a new Convent and I went on from there and we had a great time, there was hardly anyone in the plastering trade that time only families, there was no one else. It was a closed shop.

There was no one else allowed into it but the demand got such that they had to open it up to everybody. It was a great trade and we had lots of money and loads of work and I really enjoyed it and then when the war came things went a bit bad but the technical school there was built in 1939 and the day the war was declared I was working down in Enniscorthy and the job was shut down and all building was shut down and I came home and I was lucky enough to get a job up in the technical school and I did a lot of the plaster work up there with a chap called Eddie Nestor whose family were also plasterers. They lived down in the Square where the Courthouse is now, their father looked after the Courthouse as well and I think after that job was finished I joined the Irish Army. That's my adventure so far.

Brian: So you joined the Irish Army. What did that entail, was it something that you wanted to do always?

Martin: It was an economical

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necessity. I hated being idle and there was no job and I wanted to do something, everybody was joining the army anyway because you were looked upon as a bit of a coward if you were medically fit and you didn't. I was based in Athlone and Mullingar and I got a very bad illness then when I was in the Army and although I wasn't declared unfit, I didn't feel good for a while after it and I got my father to apply for me to get out on compassionate grounds because I was the only son left at home to do bits of jobs around the place and milk the cows and all that kind of thing.

Brian: What year was that?

Martin: That was 1942, the end of 1942 and they had a law that time that there was nobody from the West of Ireland allowed to get a Passport to leave the country because they figured there was work here, the work was that you went out to the bog and cut turf, as you know I didn't know anything about cutting turf but I took it anyway and I went up to the bog and loaded turf into the lorries, in Loughaun and I stayed a couple of months at that and then finally I managed to get a Passport and I went to Belfast and things were very bad in Belfast at that time because prior to that the Americans were employing nearly all Southern Irish men at American wages but the British Government objected to them paying American wages.

The Department of Labour there made out that it was upsetting the economy and they couldn't get people in certain jobs, they were all looking for jobs with the Americans, so they prevented the Americans from that on from paying American wages.

Brian: The Americans were based in Belfast?

Martin: They were based all over the Six Counties.

Brian: What kind of work, was it factories?

Martin: Mostly maintenance work around the Barracks and Restaurants. I was offered a job by a Contractor in Belfast at the

building of the Air Raid Shelters, but the Belfast Union had a policy that they wouldn't employ any outsiders and although I had a Dublin City Plastering Card they said it was no good up there and they stopped me from getting a job and I had to settle for a job in a Hotel as a Barman in Lisburn and I enjoyed it very much, I liked it and the man that owned the hotel died and he had a teenage son and daughter and another daughter about 21/22 years of age and the Executors of the Will, he was a methodist, they were all Methodists and they were totally against drink and they decided that they didn't want their people to run a hotel and a pub and they would sell it and divide the money and they put us all looking for jobs but they were very nice people and they were a grand family and we got on very well altogether, at the time there was no bitterness at all and so I went to work in Scotland and I got back into the buildings again and I had a great time in Scotland but the social life was bad in it, you couldn't get a drink in Scotland on a Sunday that time.

There were no dances allowed on a Sunday, no picture houses and we all wanted to go to England. And some of the lads for a joke used to put up notices around the building site that there were a hundred men wanted to go to England on Monday and there would be about 300 down at the office looking for the job. We eventually got to England and the rest is history.

Brian: You moved to London, I suppose, then?

Martin: I secured the job in Glasgow and I went down with a Glasgow Contractor and there were ten more lads going, they were all Scots, none of them were ever in London before and Jock Whyte was the name of the man we were working for, he put me in charge of them to make sure they got billeted and got looked after, because I had an idea of London, I was there a few times before. They made me the Foreman and I had a great time

then. What we had to do that time was first aid work most of all, we went onto work in the morning and we mightn't be ten minutes there when there would be a couple of flying bombs and they would level a whole street and we would go down and do what we could for the people and would house them temporarily and it was harrowing times and at other times we enjoyed it because the people were so good humoured and the first thing they would do is try and make a cup of tea for you and I must say at this stage that the Londoners were very brave people and if anything like that happened here, I doubt if they would be able to stand up to it at all.

Brian: So how long did you stay in London?

Martin: I stayed in London until 1949 or 1950. My father died and I came home but I couldn't settle down here although there was plenty of work in the buildings here that time and I went back to London again and I stayed there until I retired.

Brian: So you are now retired, Martin, Living in Dublin.

Martin: I like living in Dublin because I like going to the Races and all the race tracks except the holiday ones are all within about a half an hour of Dublin and I like to get out.

Brian: Any other interests bar the racing?

Martin: No, I don't think so. I'm getting too old for the women now!

Brian: Looking back, Martin, on your life, is there anything that you would change?

Martin: It is a fair question. I think most people, given a chance, would change a lot. I'm sure there are things I would change but I'm a fatalist. I believe that if something is laid out for you, its hard to avoid it. Now, there might be a lot of people here would remember Josie Kelly who lived up here at the top of the Street and although he wasn't what you would call an educated man he was a great Philosopher, and I remember

him saying one time, life depends on who you meet, and I think there was a lot in it. He used to say if you came out your own door in the morning and instead of turning left you turn right, you might meet somebody that you might finish up robbing a Bank with, and if you turn the other way nothing would have happened and I believe that I got into situations that I couldn't avoid.

Brian: Coming back to Gort now after being away so long . . . ?

Martin: It's like coming to a completely strange town. I would say 90% of the people who live here now are not natives of the town at all. I'm not against that, you know, things must move on. I am only just stating a fact because I am not one of these insular types of men that want no one only themselves. I believe that freedom means freedom and at least it means freedom for people to move around in their own country, that they be no less Irish if they are in Donegal or Cork and that they are entitled to go where they like in the country, maybe its a good thing that there are a lot of strangers in the town, it didn't do it any harm anyway and nobody lives for ever.

Brian: Martin Burke, thank you very much.

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A GROUP called 'Friends of Kilmacduagh' has been formed to direct attention to the neglect of the famous monastic site associated with St. Colman and to impress on the relevant authorities the need to provide toilet facilities for the hundreds of tourists who visit the ancient ruins every year.

This group would also like to see the old headstones cleaned and restored, paths laid and a display/video room provided where the history of the monastery could be studied. The group has submitted outline plans to Galway Co. Council, FÁS and Galway Archaeological Society.

If you want to be associated with the group's work contact Dean Christopher Walsh or Mrs. Mary O'Donoghue, Killomorán.

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The Kiltartan Summer School

THE first week in July is always a busy one at Thoor Ballylee. That is the week when the Kiltartan Summer School takes place. The ground floor of the tower is thronged with National School teachers who come there each year to spend a week studying the works of Yeats, Lady Gregory and their friends in the idyllic surroundings of Thoor Ballylee.

The Kiltartan Summer School was inaugurated in the early 1960s by Louis Muinzer of Queens University, Belfast, distinguished academic and admirer of the work of W. B. Yeats.

For over twenty years, Louis travelled to Gort each summer to direct the week-long Summer School. Both local people and students from further afield joined him to examine the works of Yeats and other prominent figures of the Irish Literary Renaissance.

By 1980, it was becoming clear that Louis needed some help, as the financial and administrative burdens of running the school were growing too great for one person to manage. The Gort Arts group generously agreed to provide support

by Anne Keane

and the school took on a new lease of life, with Sr. Damien O'Sullivan of the Gort Mercy Convent as secretary, and Louis as Director.

In the years that followed, Mrs. Kitty North and others of the Gort Arts Group gave unstintingly of their time and energy to ensure the continued success of the school.

The school became a recognised summer course for National School teachers in 1986, and enrolment greatly increased. Much of the growth in popularity was due to the wonderful energy and commitment of Sr. Damien. Her death in 1989 was keenly felt by all the course participants.

To recognise Sr. Damien's outstanding personal contribution to the school, the Gort Arts Group and the Kiltartan Summer School organised a tribute to Sr. Damien in the Gort Library on July 7th, 1990. The event was directed by Louis Muinzer, and was attended by a large number of people, including members of Sr. Damien's family.

After Sr. Damien's death, the

Gort Arts Group continued to support the school as before, and local schoolteacher Bríd Burke agreed to act as secretary for the Summer School.

Bríd proved an efficient and capable secretary. The smooth running of the school each year owes much to her hard work behind the scenes.

My own association with the Summer School goes back to the late 1980s, when Sr. Damien asked me to run the Summer School during Louis' sabbatical leave. From then on, I returned to lecture on the course each year and when Louis resigned in 1991, I was pleased to be asked by the Gort Arts Group to become the new director.

Directing the Summer School has been a wonderful experience for me. Many of the participants return each year, so there is a great sense of camaraderie as we meet on the first day of the course to begin our week together.

The Summer School programme includes talks from visiting lecturers, tours to places of literary interest and artistic performances. We try to arrange an interesting and

varied programme which will be both stimulating and inspiring for the teachers who come on the course.

Each year, the Summer School focuses on a different figure from the rich panoply of personalities from the literary Renaissance connected with Thoor Ballylee, Coole Park and the Gort area. Last year, we studied Edward Martyn and (in honour of the centenary of Conradh na Gaeilge) Douglas Hyde. This year, we looked at the works of Violet Martin, whose initials are on Lady Gregory's famous signature tree at Coole. With her cousin Edith Somerville, Violet wrote The Irish R.M. stories.

Our visiting lecturers make a valued contribution to the school each year. Dónal Taheny has lectured to us on the Irish Big House. His unique slide collection made over a sixty-year period includes many great houses now destroyed. We have had professor Breandán Ó Madagáin of UCG lecturing on the Irish Song Tradition, and Rebecca Bartlett of the Galway Youth Theatre came to run a workshop on theatre in the schools.

Bus trips included a visit to

George Moore's ancestral home three years ago, with a boat trip to the island in Lough Carra where his remains were buried by Oliver St. John Gogarty.

Last year, Jack and Janet Darian very kindly hosted the Summer School to a coffee morning at Tulira Castle.

This summer, accompanied by archaeologist Paul Gosling, we visited the famine museum at Strokestown and were taken on a guided tour of Rathcroghan, sacred site of the Kings of Connaught, where the opening of Táin Bó Cuailgne is set. We saw the rath of Queen Maeve and Ailill, and the gateway to the Celtic underworld.

Each year, we try to include some of the plays written by Yeats and Lady Gregory on the Summer School programme. An Slua Sí Drama Group [Director: John O'Mahony] has entertained us with spirited performances of Lady Gregory's *The Travelling Man*, and excerpts from *The Countess Cathleen*, while the Gort Drama Group [Director: Jarlath McInerney] performed Lady Gregory's *The Gaol Gate*.

We have also been entertained by

the Danguaire Singers, and by Eamon Brophy who illustrated the playing of traditional music on the uilleann pipes and spoke about the Irish piping tradition.

Already we are busy planning our programme for next year. We are going to visit the haunts of the Clare witch Biddy Earley, who fascinated Yeats. Lady Gregory's folklore collections contain many stories about Biddy. We hope that Eddie Lenihan will visit the school to retell some of the stories about Biddy, as only he can do. It promises to be an interesting experience.

For the organisers and for the participants, the Kiltartan Summer School is an opportunity to study some of the best of our literature in that very special place where so much of it was conceived and written. The staff of Thoor Ballylee make us very welcome and the new restaurant facilities afford us every comfort. Martin and his staff provide coffee and delicious lunches and see to our every need.

It is these little touches which make this Summer School so enjoyable for all concerned.



The Danguaire Singers performing at the Kiltartan Summer School last July.

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Shop Street In July

By Pat Fitzgibbon

The German tourists caught my eye,
They weren't young, but they weren't old,
Gazing into the Butcher-shop window
He was animatedly gesticulating to her
And she was smiling and nodding in agreement
With whatever he was saying.
Not understanding their language
I wondered what it was that had captured their
attention.
Moving closer, I beheld, with some amusement
What it was, that was causing their excitement—
It was a tray of shiny Blackpuddings!
They had eyes for nothing or nobody else
But each other, and those big Blackpuddings.
To think—that Blackpuddings in a Butcher's window
In Galway, on a Summer's day
Could cause such consternation!

Starry Night

By Pat Fitzgibbon

Endless voyagers in time and space
Across the deep and fathomless sky
Sail myriads of twinkling stars,
Each one's course plotted in eternity.
The awesome immensity of that silent armada
Sweeping our human understanding.
In its vastness we dwindle into insignificance.
And yet —
The Lord who launched that fleet
Loves each one of us
More than all of them.

Salute To Yeats

By W. M. Quinn

Welcome to this Land oft graced by him
Whose noble pen lends such uplifting
And sustaining food
For mind and spirit
Without the mind what is the body
But a poor receptacle for
Earthy things like meat or bread
Or fish or passing fancies,
Transient as a fleeting cloud;
But Yeats we do salute
And granting Justice
Thank him for a wond'rous Heritage!

Time

By Fidelma Larkin

Time is precious
So very valuable.
Time spent with the ones you love
Chatting, listening, caring:
So short . . .
But time spent with oneself
Is even shorter,
Neglected,
Important
For some people,
Vital
For others . . .
Like me.
I need time to myself,
For no reason in particular:
Just to be alone
Ponder, wonder
Decide for myself
All the things in my life
That need thinking about
No matter how petty they may be.
A time where
I need to refresh myself.
Can you understand that?
You who spend most of your life
With people, enjoying people,
Content with company all the time . . .
Can you really understand?

A Landlady

By Michael O'Dwyer

Big boned, awkward, generous way,
Her one sound eye shrewd as many two
Looked you in the face, saw right through.
Delicious food, an ordered life,
A big dog, a Kerryblue with bursting hide,
Postcards from her sons, worldwide,
Mischievous, a joker when the mood was right,
Her hearty laughter rang out with her delight,
Considered odd by some, I know not why,
Honest, straight, outspoken, didn't care,
In that respect she certainly was rare.
Sometime ago, she passed away,
That she is in Heaven, I do pray.

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Some Dreams Do Come True

IT is because of our dreams we survive the ebbing and flowing of the "Tides of Life". And if we are lucky enough to fulfil some of our dreams as I was this year, then that is a bonus.

Due to the fact that I am a member of The Blazing Saddles Cycling Club, I was invited to take part in a 700 mile charity cycle during August '94 in aid of The National Council for the Blind of Ireland.

When Eamon Duffy, co-ordinator of the event, informed me that the location was Australia, I was both excited and sad. Excited because at last I was going to see a country I had dreamed about since childhood. My first recollection of hearing about Australia began while listening to my late father speak of his Uncle Patrick Kearns who emigrated there in 1856 aged 16 years. Sad, because he would not be here to hear me relate about my great trip "Down Under".

In February '93 my great helpers and I set the wheels in motion to raise the required amount of £3,500 to enable me to participate in this cycle. I got great encouragement from almost everyone I approached for a contribution, because the RTE documentary of the previous cycle highlighted the true fact that when we go on a cycle we really do cycle and do our best to complete the task. Thanks to the trojan work done by all, the co-operation of the Galway branch of the N.C.B.I. and the generosity of the sponsors I completed the fund-raising to a total of £4,600.

There was a frantic build-up to the departure on August 8th and God Bless whoever said "everyone must assemble in Dublin on the night prior to departure" or I would never be ready to board the plane on time.

At last the great day dawned and when the beautiful silver Megatop 747 Singapore Airline glinted on the horizon over Dublin Airport I finally said to Andrew "we are really going to Australia". Stéfan Grace, visually impaired person

By Mary Coen



Andrew and friends get ready to look after the needs of the leg-weary cyclists at a food stop.

[V.I.P.], was singing. Eamon Duffy yelled above the din "here she comes", and the TV cameras were whirring as this bird landed for the first time at Dublin Airport. Later Andrew and I were to feature with a lot of others on the 6 p.m. News. What a beginning to a trip of a lifetime!

The trip of twenty-six hours was very tiring and even the most seasoned traveller began to wilt in the sweltering heat of Singapore.

Singapore Airlines took us on a courtesy tour of the city to while away the hours before departure on the final leg of our journey to Sydney. I was fascinated watching the inflight chart on the screen showing the various countries and cities we travelled over that were only names in geography text books heretofore

Wednesday, August 10, 6 a.m., we arrived at Sydney Airport to a rousing welcome by the Sydney Irish Association headed by Kevin Doyle [Beagh] playing Galway Bay on his accordion. The next few days were hectic, touring the city, meeting relatives and friends, a boat trip around Sydney Harbour, seeing the Opera House, a magnificent building, assembling our bicycles and checking that everything was in order to begin our cycle on Saturday, 13th August.

Stéfan Grace, aforementioned V.I.P., was the first casualty of the group as he became seriously ill on

Friday at the dinner, hosted in our honour by the Sydney Irish Association, necessitating surgery, thus putting an end to his dream to cycle every mile of the route to Brisbane.

The cycle began on Saturday, 13th August with a short twelve mile spin and continued on Sunday at 7 a.m. out of the city. Along the route we witnessed the havoc of the bush fires earlier this year North of Sydney. Tall gum trees were blackened and the countryside was burned to the soil, hence very few animals to be seen. The temperatures were very low but warmed up to 70°F [Cool to them]. 70°F is like our warm Summers used to be. Remember this was their end of Winter and the average Summer temp. is 100°F from November to March.

Day Three stands out for two reasons; firstly it was over a distance of 125 miles of hilly country that went on for ever, sapping away our energy. Secondly, it was a sad day because at the first food stop Eamon Duffy told Andrew and I that he had received a telephone message for us to say that a good friend, Steve Gallagher, had died since our departure. We were both deeply saddened by this news as we had spoken with him on the final night of our fundraising and arranged to meet Kathleen and himself on our return, before their return to New York in September.

I cycled 70 miles that day alone

through the vast brown, sometimes barren land, untouched nature at it's best and tried to come to terms with God's pattern in life for us. *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a Anam.*

Life goes on and the cycle progressed through seven more stages, eventually arriving in Brisbane, August 23rd, escorted by the police and all the support teams to a grand finale into the capital city of Queensland. As we cycled up the ever-changing landscapes, the temperatures increased, the beaches of glorious white sand went on forever, one continuously for 25 miles. The litter-free environment, creeks, rivers and seascape were all pollution-free. Every place was so clean. We could learn a lot from the "Aussies".

Along the roads and in the cities and towns people were very friendly, waving banners, encouraging us along, as the whole entourage had acquired "Prime-Time" coverage on TV, radio and the newspapers.

The cycle party of 180 cyclists included seventeen male and female V.I.P.s who were accompanied by sighted cyclists, these people were an inspiration to all with their laughter, songs, music and jokes both on the road and in our hotels at night.

The whole trip would be impossible without the help of Bicycle New South Wales, the Voluntary Rescue Assoc. [V.R.A.] the police and our own support team, transporting the luggage and Andrew in charge of the food truck, providing all the services necessary for the smooth running of an event of this scale. Kevin Doyle stands out, sitting on a chair under a tree at the food stops entertaining the weary cyclists on his accordion as they stopped for refreshments. He looked like a leprechaun. In all we cycled 710 miles, it was a very short distance on the map of Australia, but just think in our terms, it is more than twice the length of Ireland.

And now to the dream come true bit, but first to explain, due to a series of enquiries made through Church and Co. Council offices both in Galway, Peterswell, Melbourne, Geelong and Hamilton, my grand-uncle Patrick Kearns' descendants and I eventually made



Andrew and Mary Coen pose with the Flight Captain at Dublin Airport.

contact with each other and arranged that we must meet regardless of however short the time might be, after the completion of the cycle.

At 6 a.m. Thursday, 25th August, Andrew and I, courtesy of my cousin "by choice" Barbara Kearns, flew to Melbourne and were met by her son Norman who drove us to Barbara's home in Geelong, 50 miles south of Melbourne. It was a heady experience meeting all my cousins over the next three hectic days. I got to ride a horse out on a farm. Andrew was amazed by the large herds of kangaroos everywhere to be seen. He loved the large open spreads of land but quantity out there far outweighs quality, there is a lot to be said for our rain here in Ireland, resulting in green pasture.

We were treated like royalty by our hosts and if we were to visit the sixty or so people individually, as

we were invited to do, we would not be home in Ireland yet. Everyone was so friendly and anxious to talk to us about their Irish connection. In the midst of all this fuss over me, one could assume that Andrew would feel a bit left out; but not so, even out there, 14,000 miles away, there are Kilbeacanty people. He was delighted to meet Mrs. Mary Kennedy of Gortacornaun, Kilbeacanty, a hail and hearty 92-year-old, and her daughter Mary and son Paddy who travelled over 80 miles from Ballarat to greet us and talk of relatives and friends back home.

Now we are back home again trying to comprehend all that took place in our lives during August '94. Sometimes I stop and ask myself "was I really in Australia?". Yes, I was, the reality surpassed the dream, and please God, one day Andrew and I will return to Australia — the land of my forty-plus years dream.



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THE GORT SHOW

The District's Major Summer Event

ON a sunny Saturday—the last in August—crowds gather at the Community Centre in Gort for the District's Annual Show.

Trestle tables are laden with an abundance of cakes, biscuits and jams of all flavours. Garden fresh vegetables of every imaginary variety line the stage. Beautiful embroidery and knitwear and a gorgeous display of colourful flowers all combine to transform the centre into an 'Aladdin's Cave' of local produce.

Entries in the children's classes include decorated eggs, colourful wildlife posters, and the ever popular 'variety of wild flowers in a jam jar', all adding to the festive appearance of the hall.

And a display of nearly 60 photographs proves the success of the new category added to this year's show.

Outside the hall a menagerie of dogs, cats, sheep, ducks and hens arrive and take their places for the judges. And above in an adjacent field off of Circular Road, horses and ponies of all sizes parade in the ring.

The Gort and District Show, now in its 14th year, was first held in 1981 at the Vocational School, and moved to its present venue in 1985

BY ALAN SHOOSMITH



Laura Honan, Crowe Street, holding her prizewinning cat, Bianca at Gort Show.

when it was the first event to be held at the Community Centre.

From those early days of just 30 classes, the show has gone from strength to strength and now boasts over 150 varied classes offering something for everyone.

There was a record 1,150 entries for this year's show—perhaps the introduction of cash prizes to some of the categories brought a new incentive . . . or maybe it was that more and more new exhibitors are taking part. Whatever the reason,

the show committee were delighted to see such an increase in the number of entries.

Another big attraction for exhibitors is the chance to qualify in one of the Irish Shows Association's All-Ireland Championships and this year's Show featured five qualifying events:

- ★ The £3,000 Odlams home baking championship.
- ★ The quality onion growing championship.
- ★ The £4,000 Premier Dairies handknitting championship.
- ★ The £2,000 Fily Foal championship; and
- ★ The Spillers prime dog championship.

But it's not just the major sponsorship through the Irish Shows Association that helps make a Show like this a success. In the weeks prior to the Show, volunteer committee members call on local traders and businesses seeking their support through subscriptions or for advertising in the catalogue. Others sell raffle tickets in their local neighbourhood to help with Show fundraising. As Chairman, Padraic Giblin observed:

"Without the help of these dedicated members and the generous contributions from local sponsors, advertisers and subscribers the Gort and District Show simply could not go ahead. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of them for their continuing support."

There's more to the Show than the entries themselves—some other Show attractions this year included a Tug o' War competition, 56lb weight throwing and sheaf tossing and children's entertainment was provided in the form of model train rides and a "bouncy castle".

A demonstration by Francis Linnane from Crossford, Gort of his old threshing machine was a popular attraction too, reviving for some, memories of the old farming ways.

And, of course, a wide variety of Trade and Craft Stands and side stalls all added to the atmosphere of the Show—now a well established event in the Gort and District calendar.



Stanley Cahill presenting his Perpetual Cup to Geraldine Hynes, Kilkeedy, Tubber, the most successful exhibitor in the Flowers Section of this year's Show.



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The Gort No Name Club

By MARY WALL

WHO remembers the first No Name Disco in Gort? It was the 13th of February 1992. Well, it really started on Sunday, 9th February when interviews were held in the Community Centre when eight hosts and fourteen hostesses were selected. They were the original pioneers of the Gort No Name Club. They did great work to promote the club by being interviewed on Galway Bay Radio and through different articles in the local newspapers. Maedbh Cannon and Adrian Quinn were selected at local level and Adrian went on to the finals of the National Youth Awards which were held in Letterkenny.

Year two started with the usual interviews and 18 hosts and hostesses were selected. We travelled to Portumna for their Christmas party. We had the training programme with Peggy

Carthy-O'Brien from Yourman Promotions in Galway. We went Bowling in Galway and our usual visit to Supermacs after. At local level Angela Roche and Colm Diviney went forward to meet Portumna where Colm Diviney got through to the Regional.

Year three was bumper year with 27 hosts and hostesses. Our discos grew and grew in numbers with Seamount in Kinvara giving us great support. Our hosts and hostesses enjoyed a trip to the Druid Theatre in November, Christmas Party in Portumna and bowling in February followed by Supermacs. Peggy Carthy-O'Brien again gave a course in Leadership and Self Development during which Thelma Hannigan and Charles O'Connor emerged as our host and hostess of the year. Both went on to win Club level of Youth Awards and went forward

to Regional level. To our joy Thelma went to the finals in Waterford. This was the highlight for our hosts and hostesses. We travelled by coach to New Ross and we were all so proud of Thelma. All of our hosts and hostesses looked lovely in their evening dresses and a lovely night was enjoyed by all.

Our year ended with concelebrated Mass. Bishop James McLoughlin, Dean Christy Walsh, Fr. Brendan Kelly, Fr. John Mahon and Fr. Keane all took a part in the Mass. Each host and hostess had a special part to play in the Mass, bringing up the gifts, singing, and readings.

In his homily the Bishop praised the No Name Club and urged the hosts and hostesses to continue to show by their example that enjoyment can be had without alcohol. He told them to

stand up and be counted and not to be afraid to be different. A lovely meal followed, after which the Bishop presented each host and hostess with their Certificate. Young and old enjoyed the night.

Year four has now started, with 30 hosts and hostesses, the biggest number ever. Interviews have taken place and the course with Peggy Carthy-O'Brien is continuing. A talk on Drug Awareness is in the pipeline and we hope an exciting year lies ahead for the Gort No Name Club.

HOW IT OPERATES

□ Hosts and hostesses are chosen from the leaving Cert. class.

□ Interviews are held to select hosts and hostesses.

□ Hosts and hostesses are given a training programme on Deportment and Self Deveopment, also on Interview Techniques, and drug awareness.

□ One host and one hostess is chosen from the club to represent the club at Regional level of the National Youth Awards, if successful they go on to National level.

□ Discos are the main form of entertainment provided for the members.

□ Members are the 3rd, 4th and 5th year students.

□ Members are issued with membership cards. Membership costs £1.00 and is valid for the duration of the school year.

□ Club nights are once a month

and the venue is Spring's Night Club.

□ Outings are planned through the year, e.g. Bowling, trip to the Theatre, visit to other Clubs. The National Youth Awards is a very big occasion, everyone dresses up in evening wear, dinner is served and disco follows. All clubs from around the country gather.

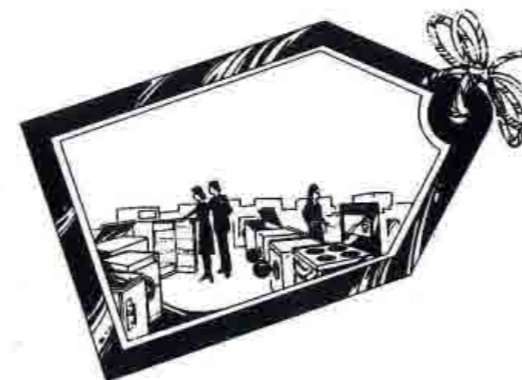
Parents Night: Usually the Bishop attends and special Mass is concelebrated. Parents of Hosts and Hostesses are invited and special guests who help the club through the year. Each Host and Hostess has a special part to play: reading, singing, prayers of the faithful, or bringing up the gifts. Each Host and Hostess is presented with a Certificate for their contribution to the No Name Club. This is the final event of the year.



Gort No Name Club Hosts and Hostesses 1994-95. Back Row (from left): John Melvin, Trevor Ryan, Peadar Grealish, Patrick Burke, Shane Linnane, James Curley, Brian Coppinger, Cathal Moran, Richard Molloy. 2nd Row: Sharon Diviney, Siobhan Fahy, Lisa Burke, Lorraine Mahoney, Sharon Ryder, Barbara Browne, Lorraine Linnane, Julianne Walsh, Demelza Burke. Front Row: Mary Hawkins, Sharon McGann, Rynagh McGrath, Deirdre Collins, Maura Mahon, Aine Daly, Deirdre Rock, Tara Quinn, Sophie Harrington and Linda Comyn.

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LIONS CLUB NEWS

By PADDY O'GRADY

HAVING been greatly encouraged by the success of its major fundraising project for the Galway Hospice, the Gort and District Lions Club has now embarked on fundraising for the recently launched Gort Heritage Town Plan. A 'Night at the Races' was held in Glynn's Hotel on Friday, 2nd December and the Club put a big effort into ensuring that the event was a success.

The Club is delighted to be first into the fray (after the Sharon Shannon Concert in Sullivan's) in support of the Heritage Town Project, as the members believe that this will be of major benefit to Gort and the surrounding area when it is up and running.

The Club has been very active since a chronology of its first year appeared in the last issue of Guaire. Almost £10,000 was raised for the Galway Hospice Fund in the biggest and most successful fundraising project to date. A series of organised events, including participation in the draw run by the hospice, all contributed to the total.

Gort and District Lions Club recently contributed £500 to Sight First, the most ambitious programme ever adopted by Lions Clubs International, with the purpose of fighting preventable and reversible blindness. The programme was adopted in response to the call, once made by Helen Keller, to be "knights of the blind".

But it's not all work and no play in the Lions Club which has as its motto, "We Serve"



Sister John, Secretary Gort Social Services, receiving a cake from Valerie Houston, Coleraine Lions Club, at a reception in Glynn's Hotel in October. Also in the photo are Seanator Frank Fahey, Seán Kavanagh, Martin Aherne and Ian Houston, President Coleraine Lions Club.

and has endeavoured to live up to it.

The Kinvara members of the Club, Gerry and Mary O'Shaughnessy, Jim Barr and Tom Ryan, have spearheaded the organising of a Mediaeval Banquet at Dunguaire Castle and two of these events have been held which have had a combined social and fundraising value. More recently, a 'social night out' was held in McCarthys, Kilbeacanty and funds to the tune of £1,350 were raised for the benefit of local charities. Julia Qualter and Nancy Stanford played a leading role in the organisation of the function.

One of the highlights of the current year was the visit of the Coleraine Lions Club from Derry for a weekend in October. Thirty-two members came to Gort on Friday, 21st October and were delighted with the programme laid on for them by their hosts. This included the music and dance function in McCarthys, entertainment in Glynn's Hotel, a golf outing and a trip to

Galway City. This was the first "Hands Across the Border" venture undertaken by the club, on the initiative of Joe McInerney. The visit was organised and coordinated by Martin Aherne.

In a tribute to their hosts, Coleraine Lions Club President, Ian Houston, said it was a weekend in which people from "both parts of our country were able to join together in friendship and fellowship, moved by the common bond of Lionism".

Brendan Quinn has been playing an active role as Drug Awareness Officer and has given talks in Gort, Kinvara and Ardahan. A Diabetes Awareness campaign commenced in December and also planned is a Christmas Party and the sponsorship of a trip to Mosney for a number of senior citizens.

The current officers are: President, Sean Kavanagh; Vice-President, Tom Naughton; Secretary, Tony Hannon; Treasurer, Joseph McInerney; Public Relations Officer, Paddy O'Grady.

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[Commissioner for Oaths]

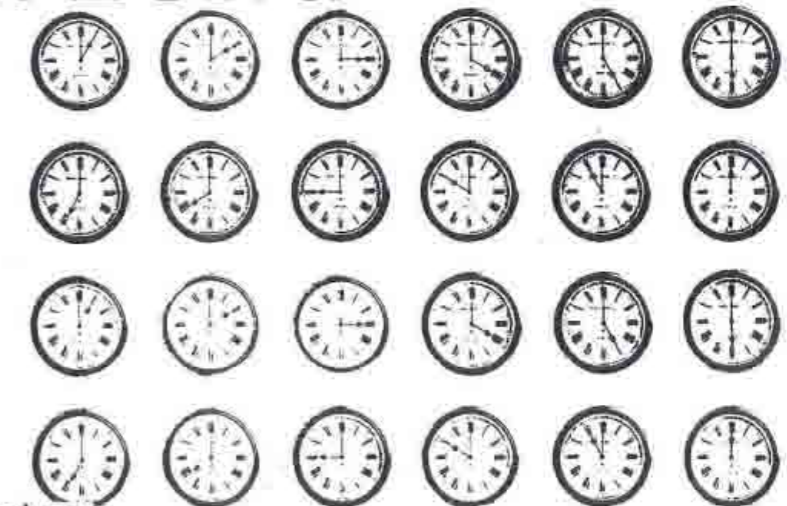
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CLOON WEIR By PAUL DUFFY

By
PAUL DUFFY

MOST people living in the Gort area will be familiar with Cloon Weir—commonly known as 'The Waterfall'; few, however, seem to be aware of its history or indeed that of nearby Cloon Mills. The Mills have, unfortunately, been demolished for many years but thankfully the Weir still stands. It was constructed in 1849 as part of drainage works on the Annagh River, and was the second Weir to be built here, the first having been destroyed by floods in August 1849.

The Annagh Drainage Works consisted of making a new channel through the esker and diverting most of the flow of the Annagh River to the East of Cloon Mills. To ensure supply of water to the Mills and the farmland on the old river course, a Weir had to be built. When the excavation from the foundations for this Weir had reached a depth of thirty three feet, the gravel bed was probed with a four foot crowbar. When this failed to reach solid bed rock, it was decided to construct the

foundations at this level.

The first Weir was built straight across the river. It was sixty feet long, sixteen feet six inches high above the downstream bed level of the river and was built in three steps so as to break the fall of the water. The downstream river bed was paved with large flat stones to prevent the gravel being washed away and the foundations damaged.

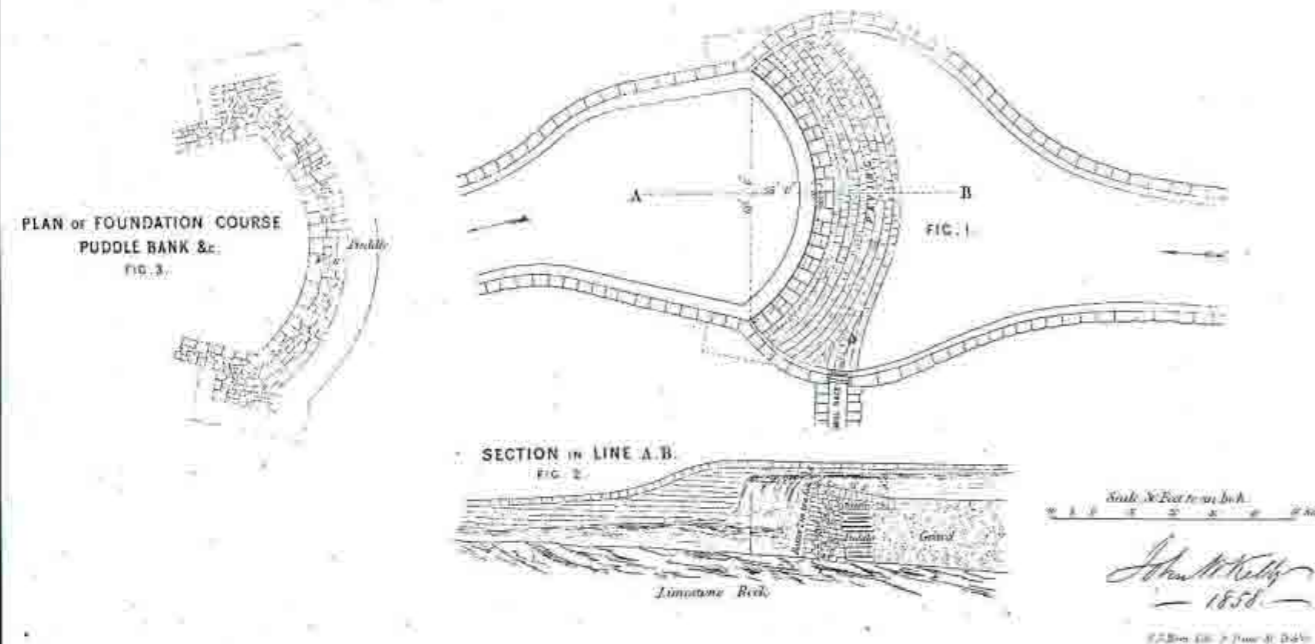
The Winter floods behaved as expected until the Spring of 1848 when extraordinary floods occurred. The water overshot the Weir completely and landing on the pavement, tore up a ten foot wide section of it all along the base of the bottom step. The sand and gravel was also washed away clear down to bed rock which as it happened was only five or six feet below the foundation level. The Weir itself was undamaged. The paved area was repaired and the Weir worked satisfactorily until August 1849, when major floods re-occurred.

This time, several large boulders, some weighing over a half a

ton each, were washed down the river and damaged the top of the Weir and the steps. The force of the floodwaters cut a hole twenty-five feet wide by fifteen feet deep through the damaged area. Because it was now known that the bed rock was relatively close to the required foundation level, it was decided to build the new Weir on the line of a circular curve. The stability of such a structure could not have been guaranteed on a gravel foundation.

This second Weir (the one now in existence) has a length of seventy-nine feet along the curve—nineteen feet longer than the original. This allows for a much greater discharge of floodwaters in a shorter period and lessens the chances of damage to the Weir. Moreover, the Weir is built exactly like an arch except that it is laid on its side. This is a far stronger method of construction than the first method used. The Weir is nineteen feet eight inches high, ten feet six inches

CLOON WEIR
IN THE
ANNAGH DRAINAGE DISTRICT
CO. GALWAY.



Drawing of the present Cloon Weir as built.



The Weir in September 1989.

wide at the base and five feet wide at the top.

The bed of the river leading up to the Weir was paved to give a better discharge flow and protect the top surface. It has had to endure much more severe floods than those that destroyed the first Weir.

Little remains now of the Mills that the Weir was built to serve, and less seems to be known of their history. What is known is that they were extensively reconstructed in 1795 when a letting notice in The Connaught Journal for September 17th of that year described them as containing two flour mills and a tuck or woollen mill. There were ten acres of land going with the mills. The lease of the property was held by the Rev. James Burke, Gort and a Dr. Martyn of Galway.

In April 1813 Martin took out a lease for four hundred years of the mills and lands of Cloon alias Cloonehungan. By 1834, both Martyn and Edward Burke Eyre the leasor were in some financial difficulties as a James Ferguson succeeded in an action against them in the Court of Chancery. A letting notice in The Tuam Herald of 23rd September, 1837 gives the

details of the Cloon property and also of lands at Capanagh, Dunmore which formed a further portion of the Burke Eyre estate. This notice mentions that the land of Cloon had been disposed of but no buyers name is given.

Griffiths Valuation (1835) gives Henry Lahiff as leasor and Patrick Hynes as occupier of a house, corn and tuck mill, office and land at Cloon. At this stage, production of flour at the mills had obviously ceased. The rateable valuation books for County Galway for the period 1896-1935 chart the end of the mills working life. These books were found by this author some nine years ago moulding away in a basement in the county buildings. They were transferred to the County Library where they are now preserved. In 1896, Honoria Hynes was the occupier. In 1897, the corn mill was derated as it had ceased production.

In 1901, Michael Hynes is listed as the occupier and a 1905 revision shows the tuck mill as being de-rated. Obviously it too had ceased to be worked. In 1906, John Hynes was the tenant and in 1912 he had succeeded in buying

out the property. The mills do not appear to have been reused. The Hynes family have a long association with milling in the area. Hynes' occupied the nearby Ballylee mill in the late eighteenth century, Raftery the Poet wrote about Mary Hynes of Ballylee. Another branch of this family were involved with the Mill in Gort until about 1906.

The first edition of the Ordnance Survey map for the area published in 1840 shows Cloon Mills with a long head race running away to the South East to the Slieve Aughty Mountains. When the Weir was built, this head race was abandoned, but still exists as a field drain in the area. A new head race was constructed when the weir was built, leading from just upstream of the Weir to the Mills. This is shown on the 1896 edition of the Ordnance Survey map. It is ironic that the Weir which took so much trouble to build has long outlived the Mills it was constructed to serve.

Readers may be interested in knowing that Cloon Weir is now considered an Engineering Heritage Site of major national importance.

Gort Neighbourhood Watch

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH was set up in Gort over twelve months ago and since then it has been a great success.

At that time surveys were carried out in the town and the results indicated overwhelming support for the scheme. Neighbourhood Watch was then set up through a series of meetings which were held over the previous twelve months. Street Co-Ordinators with responsibility for each street were elected at these meetings. An Area and Deputy Area Co-Ordinator were also elected who would have responsibility for the whole scheme. Neighbourhood Watch signs were erected by Galway County Council on all approach roads to the town.

Neighbourhood Watch was set up in Gort as part of a National Crime Prevention Programme operated by the community in conjunction with the Garda Síochána, to encourage individuals to be good and caring neighbours and to work together in order to reduce crime and vandalism. It also helps to increase the community's awareness of measures which can be taken locally to reduce the opportunity for crime.

The following is a list of the Co-Ordinators who were elected at the meetings:

- Area Co-Ordinator** Damien McGrath
Deputy Area Co-Ordinator Helen Fennessy
Street Co-Ordinators:
 Georges St./Loughrea Rd. Patrick Moloney and Michael Roughan
 Bridge Street/Queen Street/Church Walk Christopher Fennessy
 The Square/Barrack St. Patrick Piggott
 Church Street Damien McGrath
 Ballyhugh Tom McNevin
 Garrabeg Helen Fennessy
 Tubber Road Frank McDermott
 Crowe Street Pearse Piggott
 Glenbrack/Ballylennon Paraic Giblin and John Spelman
 Ennis Road/Cannahowna Ml. Breathnach and Stephen Killeen
 Circular Road Joe Halvey, John Lawlor
 Liaison Garda Garda Dan Casey

SUCCESSFUL SONG

'The Passing of Clouds' is a song written by Sean Leahy of Gort for the M/M group and sung by Marion Ball of Ennis. It's a song of peace, and has been on the local stations since it was launched at the West County last year. It was No. 1 in the Clare F/M charts for three weeks and is now played nationwide daily. You can buy it in any good music shop and locally is carried by Jordans Supermarket, Gort.

Sean has another song on the same tape called 'My Home in Co. Clare' which also got in the charts. Sean is currently writing for other popular groups around Ireland. Good on you Seán!

TRIP TO AFRICA

A competition on Clare F/M for a limerick gained Sean Leahy and his wife Jean a Two Week Trip to North Africa (Tunisia). A line was given over the air which started like this:

'I went out from Shannon this year'

You had to put four more lines and make it rhyme. This is the limerick that earned Sean and Jean their trip:

*I flew out from Shannon this year,
 As the wife threw me out on my ear,
 All the stones in the Burren
 Won't make me return,
 As I'm shaking all over with fear.*

Sean and Jean will take the holiday next year. Congrats to both of them!

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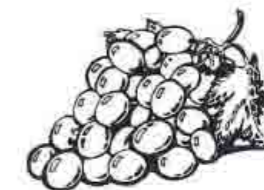
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SOUTH GALWAY A.C.

THE past year was a very successful one for South Galway Athletic Club with many honours coming to the club at County, Connacht and All-Ireland level.

Earlier in the year the club held the South Galway Athletic Championships which were very well attended. Tierneevin N.S. won the Buck Rodgers Cup for the best overall National School. The prize for the best athlete in the u-11 to u-13 age group went to Stephen Carey (Ballyturn) and in the age group u-14 to u-17 the prize went to Dermot O'Donoghue (Gort).

At the County Track and Field Championships which were held in the new Sports Centre Track, Dangan the club won 25 gold, 24 silver and 17 bronze medals. At the Connacht Championships held in the same venue the club took 9 gold, 12 silver and 6 bronze. The Boys u-11 team won the team event at both County and Connacht and then went on to make it a clean sweep by taking gold at the All-Irelands which were held in Tullamore.

The members of the successful team were: Robert Kilroy (Northampton), Karl Casey (Gort), Darren Fahy (Kilbeacanty), Brian Mullins (Labane) and Keith Glynn (Gort). Colin Casey (Gort) also took gold in the Triple Jump event at the All-Ireland u-23 Championships held in Tullamore.

Arrangements are being made to hold a function in the near future to celebrate the club's twentieth anniversary and it is hoped that all past and present members will attend to make it a night to remember.

The club held their A.G.M. recently in Glynn's Hotel and



The South Galway Athletic Club Boys U-11 team who won gold at the All-Ireland held in Tullamore. From left: Robert Kilroy, Keith Glynn, Karl Casey, Brian Mullins and Darren Fahy.

the following officers were elected: Chairperson, Nora Fahy; Vice-Chair, Mary Murphy; Hon. secretary, Dan Casey; Assistant Secretaries, Esther Glynn and Nora Mullins; Treasurer, Evelyn Roche; Committee: John O'Rourke, Rose Brennan, Greg Lundon, Bertie Keeley, Michael Monahan, James Hickey, Jim O'Donoghue and Danny McConnell.



Gort Community Games athletics team who competed at the County Finals which were held this year at The Sportsground, Galway.

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