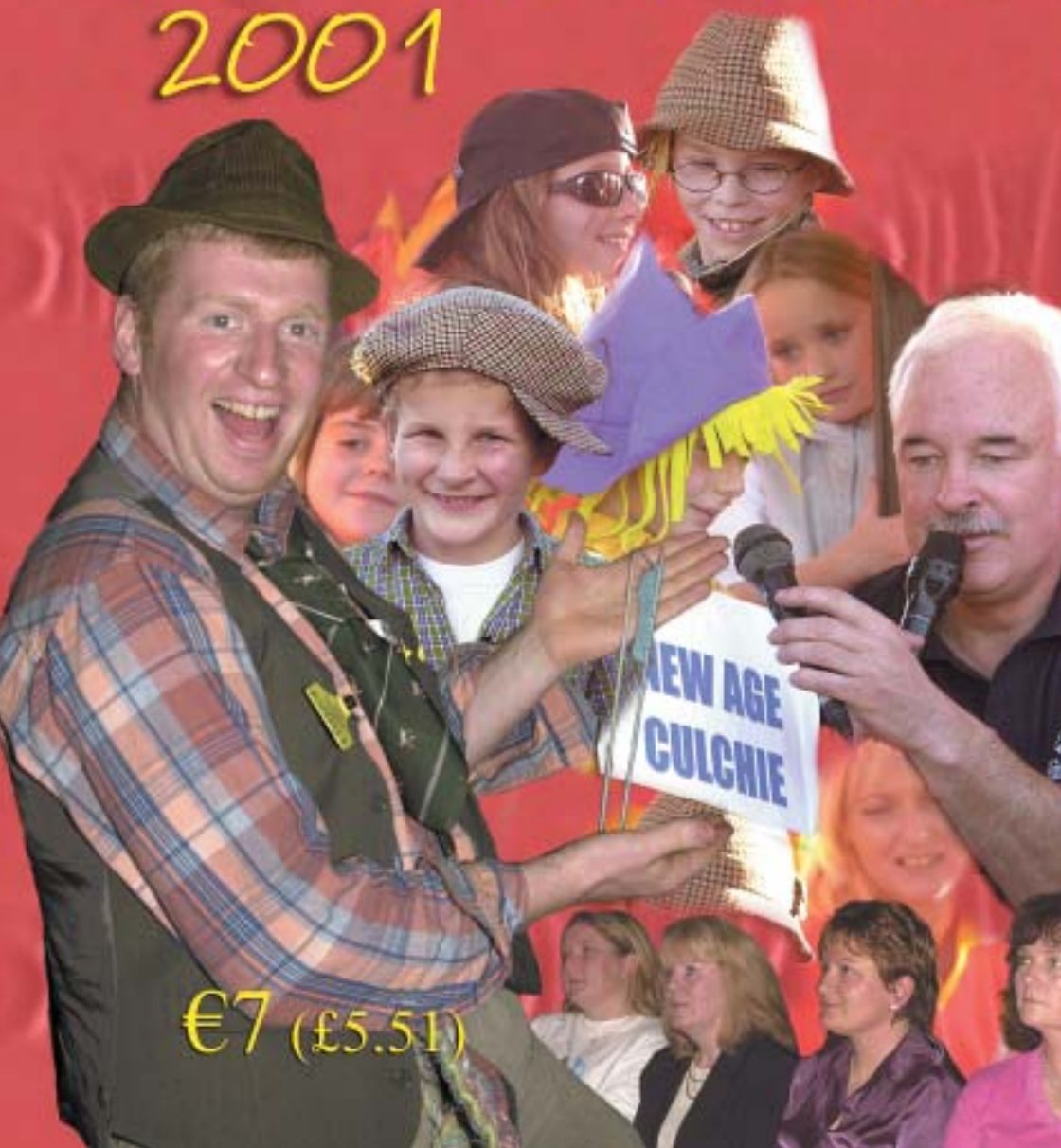


Fethard & Killusty NEWSLETTER 2001



€7 (£5.51)

South and County Under-21 Football Champions 2000



Fethard Under-21 panel of players photographed outside Lonergans Bar (sponsors) on St. Stephen's Day 2000.

Munster Club Senior Football Finalists 2001



WELL PLAYED FETHARD!

Fethard senior footballers did themselves, their town, club and county proud by their great performance, though losing against Nemo Rangers, Cork, in the Munster Club A.I.B Senior Football final at Fermoy on Sunday 25th November, 2001. The strength in depth of the Nemo team is shown by their three under-21 Cork inter-county star players, David Niblock, James Masters and William Morgan, who were on the substitute bench. Nemo, on the run of play, fully deserved their 1-11 score line. Fethard on the other hand would not be flattered by a further four points, at least, in addition to their score of 0-10 on their chances created.

FETHARD & KILLUSTY NEWSLETTER 2001

*Dedicated to our friends and relations
living away from home*

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*Published by the Fethard & Killusty Emigrants' Newsletter
ISSN 1393-2721*

WWW.FETHARD.COM

*Layout and design by Joe Kenny, Kenny Photo Graphics, Fethard
Printed by Modern Printers Kilkenny*

Cover photograph: All-Ireland Culchie Festival in Fethard October 2001 (see page 44)

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Welcome to Europe!

Joe Kenny (editor)

This year we celebrated the beginning of a new millennium and the preparation of changing our Irish currency for one more time – probably the last. With the coming of the New Year we welcome the new European currency, the Euro, into our pockets and say goodbye to pints, pennies and the memory of pounds, shillings and pence. This changeover will be very attractive for those who travel, especially in EU countries, where at last we will have some idea of what we are paying for a pint.

On the other side of the coin, I'm sure there will be a sharp increase in the cost of living in Ireland and other EU countries. Who is going to charge less when the time comes for changing our prices to Euro? Will an item that cost £1 (1.27) now be sold at €1.27 — I'm afraid not, It will more than likely be rounded off to €1.50 (£1.17) an increase of 17p. Unfortunately this brings me to my main point! Here at Fethard Emigrant Newsletter headquarters, we admit we are no different than other Europeans and are also rounding the price of our Annual Newsletter up from £5 (€6.35) to €7 (£5.51), an increase of 51p. This small increase will help us continue to publish the Newsletter and post it free-of-charge to our ever increasing mailing

list of Fethard & Killusty emigrants throughout the world. The number of Newsletters posted free of charge every year has now increased to almost 1100 copies and is still growing with many long-lost emigrants making contact through the Fethard website (www.fethard.com). For copies delivered outside Europe, the postage cost exceeds the actual cost of the Newsletter itself.

We appeal to those of you who receive the Newsletter free of charge, to increase your donation accordingly, if you can afford it. We depend on your generous donations to keep this Newsletter viable. We also acknowledge the great support we receive in Fethard by those who buy the Newsletter and those who donate and support our annual church gate collection.

We would like to express our deep sympathy to those affected by the horrific act of terrorism in New York on September 11th this year. We also pray for peace throughout the world and a solution to the struggle that causes people to act this way.

Finally, on behalf of all living in Fethard and Killusty, we wish you a very Happy Christmas and a magnificent New Year.

Welcome to Europe! ♦

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Donations, letters, etc.

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Parish Christmas greetings

To the readers of this annual newsletter - special good wishes to you all, both far and near.

There is a Yiddish proverb which says, "*The favourite place of God is in the heart of man.*"

Our wish for all of you this special time, is that God is truly in your heart and that He will bring to you that place where we all long for.

In the past year the tragedies that the world has experienced are almost

beyond belief. We must respond in the truly Christian manner by bringing 'The Christ of the Heart' out into our everyday world and in this way let us all bring the Peace of Christ into all of our lives.

We ask the Lord in His goodness to guide us in all we do and may He bless us all with health, peace and happiness at this special time. ♦

Fr. Tom Breen P.P. and Canon James Power



Photographed at the presentation of the 2001 students awards at Fethard Patrician Presentation Secondary School on 26th October are L to R: Our new Parish Priest Fr Tom Breen, Fr A. B. Kennedy (past pupil), our new Prior Fr Gerry Horan OSA and Canon James Power.

Church of Ireland

On 11th December 2000 a Service of Thanksgiving for the life of Giles Richard Blundell, 1939 – 2000, was held at Holy Trinity Church.

Our annual Carol Service was very well attended and the Church was beautifully decorated for the nine

lessons and carols.

On Saturday 15th September the Lowry singers came to Fethard. We sang Evensong. Earl Moffit was the organist. It was a beautiful evening and a lovely service.

On Friday 21st September there was

Fethard Harvest Thanksgiving Service. The church was decorated with fruit, vegetables and flowers.

On Sunday, 21st October 2001, there was a Baptismal service for Annabelle Jane Tara Ponsonby. Annabelle is the daughter of Julian and Patricia Ponsonby of Grove, Fethard. We would like to congratulate Timothy and Rosanna on the birth of their son. Rosanna is the daughter of Harry and

Rosemary Ponsonby of Grove House, Fethard.

We congratulate Jill Lalor on achieving her first class honours degree in engineering at U.C.D. Jill is the daughter of Richard and Anne Lalor, Rathkenthy.

We are very grateful to Pat Shine for the wonderful work he has done in the last three years for Holy Trinity. ♦

Abbey Christmas greetings

This annual Newsletter is our pleasant opportunity to greet the friends of Fethard and Killusty Parish and neighbourhood, at home and abroad.

Many changes, affecting Augustinian communities throughout Ireland, have taken place this year. Briefly, they are as follows: ten of the existing eighteen communities have been reduced to five, namely: (1) Fethard / Callan, (2) Dungarvan Town / Abbeyside College, (3) New Ross Town / Good Counsel College, (4) Dublin John's Lane / Meath Street Parish, (5) Galway/Ballyhaunis.

Each of these pairings now form one community, resulting in a gradual phasing out and closure of the second named. All this is happening because of our ageing and dwindling personnel. Callan / Fethard community consists of five priests, two at Callan and three at Fethard. The future of the remaining communities is also threatened for the same reason.

In Fethard, meanwhile, we will continue to serve the venerable Abbey which contains the remains of our martyred confrere, Blessed William

Tirry. His memory is very much alive in Fethard; the Fethard Community Centre and a housing estate for retired people bear his name.

We look forward to the restoration of the Abbey church. Our architect, Mrs Margaret Quinlan will soon present the final plans of the project to our Provincial and Council for their approval.

We send our sincere good wishes for Christmas and the New Year. ♦

Fr Gerry Horan, OSA, Prior;

Fr Timmy Walsh, OSA,

Fr John Meagher, OSA,

Fr Malachy Loughran, OSA, (Callan)

Fr Michael Clifford, OSA, (Callan)

FUNDING FOR TINSLEY BRIDGE

Further verification of Fethard's historical importance was announced this year with the Heritage Council of Ireland generously agreeing to give a substantial grant towards the urgent repair of 'Tinsley's Bridge' built c.1840 over the river Clashawley at Grove.

The restoration project is currently in progress. Contact: Rosemary Ponsonby.

Legion of Mary

Another year has come and is now drawing to a close. Many families in our parish have been affected by changes, some good and some not so good. All of us will have had to face life with courage and optimism. Many of our dear friends, and relatives will have been called to eternal life and now rely on us to pray for their eternal peace and rest. We should not forget them as we try to struggle with the loss of their presence among us.

This year we have been re-awakened to the presence of evil among us. Fear is never far away when we become aware of the power evil has in spreading terror and instability. This means that more and more we are called to offset these powers with the strength and the security of prayer and penance as our Blessed Mother called us to do in Fatima. This leads us to wonder how anyone can refuse to attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on Sundays and on Holy Days. In contrast we have many people attending Mass each day. There are also those who not only pray one Rosary but several Rosaries each day. Many attend The Holy Hour in The Abbey each Thursday. Others pay visits to The Blessed Sacrament, make The Stations of the Cross, recite the Chaplet of Divine Mercy. To one and all we say Thank You! You help to keep evil away from us and from our families. Let all of us, then, extend ourselves to actively support and publicly proclaim all that the Catholic Church teaches. We cannot

hide our faith. Neither can we be selective in what we choose to believe or to obey.

Agnes Allen was called to her reward in March. Although Agnes was in poor health for some time, she kept the best side out. Many did not realise how ill she was. Agnes was a member of The Legion of Mary for over twenty years and she faithfully participated in the activities of The Legion during those years. Agnes was one of the few remaining Fethard people whose roots were firmly established in the town and who could trace and associate events from years past. We miss her humour and her friendship. May she rest in peace.

This year crowds turned out for the May Procession in honour of Our Lady. Not as many walked in the Corpus Christi Procession held on the Sunday evening. The Holy Year Cross Pilgrimage was successful as was the yearly pilgrimage to Knock. Each November we visit all eleven cemeteries in the Parish to pray for the souls of all our departed relatives and friends, and for those souls who are now forgotten, or for those who have no one to come out to pray for them.

The Legion of Mary members do their best to be active, to help all of us to remember we are needed in our Parish. Membership has increased so we anticipate that more work can be accomplished. For all the incentives, the encouragement, the guidance and the perseverance we owe an untold, inexpressible debt of gratitude and respect to Father Twomey, O.S.A.

who was our Spiritual Leader for twenty years. God will be his reward. We would like him to know that his priestly, loyal dedication to the Church, to Our Holy Father the Pope, to Jesus and Mary, and to The Blessed Sacrament has been a source of encouragement to one and all. In particular we refer to the guidance he extended in the Legion of Mary, in the Cenacle of Our Lady — the laity group in The Marian Movement of priests — in the assistance he extended when work was needed to proclaim the teachings of the Church, and in the guidance he gave in the confessional. We can do our utmost to live in such a way that when God calls us we will rejoice as we stand with Father to give thanks and praise

to God for all Eternity. Thank you, Father! You will ever be held in respect and love among the people in the parishes around The Valley of Slieve na mBan.

We conclude with the following extract from the words of the Cure D'Ars referred to by Pat O'Leary in The Irish Catholic. He Wrote, *'all soldiers are good in garrison, but on the field of battle, we see the difference between the brave and the cowardly.'* And, *'If I were to ask you if you loved God, you would tell me that you did; but that is not enough. You must prove it!'*

Enjoy a peaceful New Year. Let us pray we keep Christ in Christmas this year. ♦

Goodbye to Fr. Sean

Fr. Sean Ryan C.C. bade goodbye to the parishioners of Fethard and Killusty on Thursday March 1st. At his last mass in the parish, he sincerely thanked the people of Fethard and Killusty for the privilege of having ministered to them over the past six and half years.

We would also like to thank Fr. Sean for his great work in the parish, especially amongst the youth, during that

period. Fr Ryan was chaplain to the boys' schools and an active member of the school's parents' committee. He was also actively associated with the Fethard branch of St. Vincent de Paul Society, the Fethard Dramatic Society, and will be especially remembered for his great skill in communications when presenting his weekly hour long programme each Sunday morning on Tipp FM Radio. ♦

Nursing Home Closure

Fethard town has lost a very much needed local amenity with the closure of Sacre Coeur Nursing Home on Saturday 31st March. The home provided a great service for residents and visitors which was much appreciated. The residents have been placed in nursing homes throughout South

Tipperary which will of course greatly inconvenience relatives and visitors, especially those without their own transport. The future of the Sacre Coeur Home is at present uncertain.

At time of going to print, the Nursing Home is reported to have been sold. ♦

A rural ramble (1975 with 1957 in mind)

Pat Tynan

Many years ago on a trip home from England I took it upon myself to dispense with the car and walk around the roads that I rambled so freely as a child. I planned to leave the car at my uncle's in Mobarnane and walk from there to my old school in Moyglass. Along the way I would take in the townlands of Mobarnane, Magorban, Silverfort, Arbourhill, Woodhouse (my place of birth), neighbouring Clonbrogan and then on to Moyglass.

On the way to Mobarnane travelling along the Cashel road from Fethard I was reminded of the pilgrimages we made from my cousins in Mobarnane to the crossroads at Coolmoyné to visit Nora Casey's little shop. It was here that my cousins and I with a coin or two picked our sweets, six for a penny.

Whenever I reach Knockbritt I feel I am home; Knockbritt was one of four boundaries that I roamed within, either on foot or by means of my grandmother's old Raleigh bike; Silverfort, High St and Moyglass being the other landmarks. Beyond these townlands my world ended. Townlands were special to me as a young lad growing up in the fifties. They gave me a sense of belong-

ing to the land, I was part of them and they were part of me.

The Knockbritt I knew as a child was home to the Forge and the local Post Office run by Davy and Rita O'Meara. Passing through Knockbritt I recalled Davy working away in the darkness of the forge and the sight and sound of horses outside the forge door.



Marie Crean, photographed with her aunt, the late Rita O'Meara, who ran the Post Office at Knockbritt, one of the oldest collection points for post.

The old Post Office brought back a memory I had long dispensed with, that of 'Telegram Boys', a forgotten job that struck fear or joy into the hearts of the locals in rural Ireland. The sight of a telegram boy pedalling furiously, and they always did, on a bike two sizes too big, often meant news of an exile returning home or a death in the family. It was

via Knockbritt Post Office that we made or received those very rare phone calls in the days when a phone was a rare thing.

Leaving Knockbritt I made my way up the hill past Tom O'Neill's house, resplendent at that time with a thatched roof. In days gone by I would keep an eye out for Tom's terrible terriers. In the company of children Tom would drop his cap to the ground, most youngsters would quite naturally pick it up for him, as they did Tom's terriers displayed their

disapproval. No matter how many times we tried we always fell for Tom's little tricks with his well-trained dogs that put the fear of God in you.

Turning left at O'Dea's cross along the Mobarnane Road I stopped by the Soldiers Tree where, legend has it, a young man tired of soldiering in the twenties ended his days. Passing the tree in the late evening brought fear and trepidation, and on a bicycle a lick of speed was required, never looking back until you were well past the lodge at Mobarnane House.

At this point on the road the quiet of Mobarnane is broken by the sound of crows, loads of them, whose calls can be heard right across Mobarnane, Magorban and Woodhouse, and their feathers much in evidence along the road. To this day if I hear a crow it always reminds me of childhood in Ireland.

I have never been inside Mobarnane House, but I spent many happy days in and around Mobarnane Wood. The lodge at the entrance to Mobarnane House was then the home of the O'Rourkes and the Moroney family lived in the cottage just in front of the kitchen garden. With Mobarnane Wood to my left I thought of the sea of blue-bells that always greeted you as you entered the wood. As a child I loved Mobarnane, its wood and lake, it all seemed like a magical place, always exciting, often frightening. Leaving the car at my Uncle Jimmy's I set off on foot, you miss so much of what is around you in a car.

Magorban Chapel by the little bridge was my next stop, now the resting place of my grandparents and many a good neighbour. The old boys of the day would frighten the life out of me with

tales of a ghostly coach and horses that was supposed to come through the churchyard gates in the dead of night. Many of the old folks would tell you the story, and a few claimed to have heard the sounds of galloping horses. Cycling past the gates of Magorban Chapel late at night was a frightening experience, especially when on one occasion the chain came off my bicycle as I passed the gates. The experience was made worse as I then had to pass the Quaker burial ground. I always knew the burial ground by the name of 'Gorranalie,' to this day I have never known if that was its real name or for that matter the correct spelling. Mick Prout, who lived opposite the Quaker burial ground, told me at the tender age of seven that, "*the lads buried in there were put in the ground standing up,*" I passed the little iron gate of the burial ground with a great sense of fear for ever more. Opposite Mick's I could still see the remains of a gap in the ditch, it was through here in the fifties that on Sunday afternoons we entered the fields to walk down to a make shift hurling field.

Just around the double bend from Mick's, before Silverfort Crossroads, the gypsies would set up camp. I recalled the many caravans passing our house; I was always fascinated by their beautifully painted horse drawn homes with the occupants selling their wares, usually brushes and the offer of repairing saucepans.

Approaching Silverfort Crossroads the ambience of the road would change due to the lack of light kept out by the 'great trees', as they were known locally. The crossroads were made all the more haunting by the sound of water coming from the stream that flows near-

by. It was to Silverfort that people came on a Sunday afternoon when a goodly number of the locals would be out for a stroll along the road after dinner. In the summer evenings people came for miles around to dance at the platform in Jacobs's field. I will never forget the expression on the faces of the old folks when one Sunday night a 'Teddy Boy' in full regalia came out from Cashel and jived at the platform.

A post box was set in Jacobs's wall, beneath it lay Neddie Dineen's stone, where Neddie, one of two local postmen, would take his ease on his daily round.

In 1973 a memorial was erected to commemorate the life of Seamus Hayes killed in action on Nov 20th 1922 at Silverfort. A little way beyond Silverfort crossroads on the Cashel Road sits a small well, which never ran dry no matter how warm the summer.

From Silverfort Crossroads my walk took me homewards on

the Moyglass Road known locally as 'The Lane'. It was so called because a native of Magorban, Mrs Prout, often referred to the people along that road as, *"that lot along the lane."*

The Lane was home to many old friends and good neighbours. The road in the fifties and sixties sported names like Stapleton, Healy, Kennedy, Cleary, Grey (Parson, living in the rectory later occupied by Major Kane), O'Brien and finally, just before the old family home, Neddy Hunt's. I knew Neddy's house originally, as Mary Kate Ryan's, beyond

that lay Brown's, Kennedy's, Lacey's, O'Connell's, Hannigan's, Carey's, McGuire's and Tobin's.

Our old home at Woodhouse was a typical cottage, a two bedroom dwelling that always seemed to have more people in it than it was ever built to house. A stone floored kitchen where everything happened and a highly polished parlour that remained under lock and key. The house has long since changed hands, time has seen the cottage extended and modernised and my grandparents are now at peace in Magorban graveyard.



Davy O'Meara, Knockbritt

The old hedges my grandfather trimmed and shaped, the orchard, flower and vegetable garden that helped feed our household have disappeared — victims of modernisation, the lawn mower and the fridge freezer.

From here on I would be walking the actual journey I made as a child from my home at Woodhouse through the townlands of Arbour Hill,

Clonbrogan and finally the village of Moyglass.

Walking past the old house without being able to go in was a strange experience.

I remember going back to the house after my grandfather had died. The house was empty and cold as if the life and soul had gone out of it. Disappointed that there was nothing of my grandfather's left in the shell that was once my home I turned to leave and as I did I spotted the old tongs he used to tend the fire. The tongs, blackened

and well worn from daily usage, had been concealed from all in the darkness of the fireplace. It was as if they were waiting there for me. What better memento could you have of a person's life than something they used every day when they were with us.

Starting off from Woodhouse, I was immediately reminded of Simon Thompson who was often my companion on the daily walk to Moyglass School.

The Moyglass road in the fifties was little more than a path with a grass verge running through the middle of two pot holed wheel tracks. There was no traffic to worry about, only the occasional vehicle conspicuous in summer for miles by a plume of dust and in winter by the amount of water it threw up from potholes that really were potholes.

The first landmark was the entrance to Browns and Kennedy's farms lying directly opposite each other, Browns was in Woodhouse and Kennedy's in Arbour Hill. Both farms had creamery stands for the milk churns outside their entrance gates. As a small lad creamery stands had to be climbed, kept as your territory and any intruder pushed off. Passing here reminded me of the days I went to Brown's pump for spring water, retrieved in a large white pale. I remembered that white enamel water pale — a fixture in all houses of the day and used twice daily to draw water from the well or pump.

The biggest problem was trying to make it to and from the well with some water left in the pale as it bounced off your leg and drowned your shoes and socks.

The next stop was the little bridge just before Lacey's, a small stream trickled through here, and it was an exciting

place for any child to investigate. Who hasn't thrown a leaf in the water on one side of a bridge and then rushed to the other side to see if it will make the journey under the bridge. In the harsh winters this little stream could be quiet spectacular when the water would rise from a trickle to a roar as it cut through under the little bridge, while summer would see it almost run dry. In winter when you went to get the water from Brown's pump you could hear the river gushing by in a torrent concealed by the trees and bushes.

Then it was on to Lacey's gate, and memories of 'Blind John', or to give him his name, John Meehan. John would often be out along the road for his daily walks using the grass verge as his guideline. He would walk as far as my grandfather's house and pop in for a chat. Often they were joined by Jack Brien and occasionally when funds were good I would be dispatched to Tehan's Public House in the village for the large bottles of Porter to enliven the proceedings. The sight of John Meehan making his way along the road was part of life back then, a blind man walking a country road without a care. I can see him now with his cream straw hat in the summer sunshine, making his way, tapping his stick along the grass verge. He would stop occasionally taking little breaks chatting to neighbours.

After Lacey's was Molly Connell's cottage, it was at this point that the mountain came into full view as you gazed across Clonbrogan.

Slievenamon was my constant childhood companion — a special friend. Walking to school the mountain would be in view then disappear from view and then just as quick come back into view as you travelled the road, 'rain hail or shine.'

My grandfather could tell the weather by the mountain; he would always look out to Slievenamon from Woodhouse. The ritual was always the same, leaving the house he would dip his fingers in the holy water font, next came the hat, raising it towards his head he would glance at Slievenamon and say something like, *"it'll be raining by evening."* Often in my exile I would think of the mountain especially on a long summers evening when Slievenamon was always at its best. Her colours ever changing as the sun set casting shadows on the great lady.

Rounding the bend at Mollie Connell's you came to Paddy Brown's and Hannigan's set on opposite sides of the road at the top of Cooneys Hill, the dreaded Cooneys Hill.

Now Cooneys Hill was steep to say the least, icy in winter and hard work in summer. Come to think of it, it was hard work at any time. Twisting and turning past Carey's and on by McGuire's and levelling out just before Tobin's. One consolation Cooneys Hill had a spring well just below McGuire's, this well was the watering station of many a child going to, or coming from Moyglass School.

I always found the next stretch of the road from the foot of Cooney's Hill, a little sinister and never delayed along this part of the road. The trees here formed a canopy over the road making it very cool and dark. Trees change the temperature and atmosphere of a road.

The old railway bridge at Moyglass was a stopping off point for any child travelling the road; the railway from Farnaleen was still running at that time giving you two daily time checks, quarter to one and quarter to four if my memory serves me well. In the evenings

returning from school you could wait on the bridge and become engulfed in smoke as the train made its way from Farnaleen to Thurles. I think it also meant you were late from school but I am not certain about that it could be that you were early. The fog of forty four years living in another country has clouded some of my childhood memories.

After the railway bridge it was over the stile opposite the village hall and off across the big meadow to the village of Moyglass. The training of greyhounds was much in evidence in the big meadow so on the way to and from school you could idle awhile and watch the greyhounds being put through their paces.

The village shop was run by Mr and Mrs Lyons. With little money available my visits to their establishment in the fifties and sixties were reserved for Sundays after mass.

School now grew ever closer and an immediate reminder of it was right there in the village in the shape of the small gate leading into the church. For it was by the small gate that Mr Lynch the schoolmaster would hold court every Sunday before mass. Because of this I, and many other children of the time, used the big gate to go into the church. However, on returning from England for the summer holidays I would use the small gate thinking to myself, *"you can't get me now."*

Passing the old church at Moyglass stirred memories of the times when on the way home from school we would visit the church and visit we did! Hearing each other's confessions, playing the old organ and generally wandering around the church. Sometimes the gallery would be open and it was a big



Moyglass Boxing Club. Back L to R: Jack Purtill, Jack Wall, Jack Lawlor, Johnny Hurley, Francie Hayde, Pat McGuire, Tony Thompson, Mick Prout, Eddie Tierney, Paddy Brown, Liam O'Connell, Billy Blake, Jim Costigan, Chris Purtill and Patsy Hunt. Second Row: Simon Thompson, Walter Tynan, Martin Kennedy, Michael Bergin, Jimmy Thompson, Mick Shelly and Tony Colville. Third Row: Michael Sullivan, Billy Thompson, Tom Hannon, Tommy O'Brien, Liam Quinn (trainer & Munster champ). Sean Walsh and Derry Ryan. Front: Willie Ryan, David Ryan, Thomas O'Neill (secretary) and Johnny Hurley.

adventure to go up there. Usually one of the holy ladies would arrive and give chase, exclaiming that we were, *"the boldest children she had ever known."*

The road climbs gradually out of Moyglass towards the old school, and as a child I walked a little slower over this the final part of the journey. I was not the biggest fan of school. I always enjoyed the view as I climbed out of Moyglass but it looked a lot better as you escaped from school. I made my way out of the village up the hill to the new school, a far cry from the one I attended which was a little further along the road past the priest's house.

As a youngster I would keep my head down passing the priests house, for I

was always in trouble for talking in church becoming the focus of Fr McGrath's gentle wrath. Not long before Fr McGrath died I met him in Clonmel. We stopped on the street and chatted about the old days. He reminded me of the time I was scared to come to school after one of the 'old fellows,' up to no good, told Paddy Croke and me that Fr McGrath was coming up to the school to sort us out. We had been guilty of talking and giggling in church. I distinctly thought I saw Father McGrath look in my direction during the sermon. This, added to the comments made by the 'old fellows' at the back of the church, was enough to convince Paddy and me that we were doomed.

For the remainder of that Sunday I was sick with worry; Monday morning saw me reluctant to go to school. My little legs would only carry me as far as the Railway Bridge at Moyglass. Consumed with fear I went over the ditch and hid under the bridge. I could hear the other pupils going by up above; wild horses would not have dragged me to school that day.

Once the coast was clear I made it back to the house and hid in the shed, giving myself up later in the day. My mother eventually sorted the situation out and a bemused Fr McGrath made his peace with me.

Before parting on that Clonmel street Fr McGrath said to me, *"spare a little Ave for me,"* this was his way of telling me that he was not long for this world. As we said our final goodbyes Fr walked away towards the West Gate. The priest who unknowingly frightened me as a child now seemed vulnerable and frail as he neared the end of his days.

Walking on from the priest's house my next stop was the building that was the Moyglass School of my youth. The old school consisted of an entrance doubling as a cloakroom. I don't recall any coat pegs; I always hung my coat on the floor in a heap with all the others. Beyond the entrance were two classrooms under the guidance of Mr Lynch & and in my youth a very young Ms Corcoran. The building was basic with no real facilities either academic or sanitary. It's fair to say that what it lacked in material attributes was more than made up for by its teaching staff. Our main source of play came from an old tree that had been cut down at the front of the school; its contours could be imagined into anything we could dream up. Mainly deemed to be a tractor or a lorry.

In 1955 all small boys wanted to drive a tractor.

Standing across the road from the old school house I felt I had exorcised the ghost of wanting to walk around the old roads. When first I arrived in England in 1957 I kept the memory of the road, my neighbours and the townlands alive in my mind.

I spent a lot of my early childhood exiled in London very homesick and missing Ireland terribly. To compensate for the loneliness, I would wander in my mind's eye along the roads around Moyglass, Mobarnane, Knockbritt and High Street. That way I was able to keep my memories of Ireland alive.

Every year I returned from England for the summer holidays and at first things remained pretty much the same. But as the years moved on the biggest change to come was that the people who I knew in childhood started to pass away. Eventually, like many an exile, my visits were completed by attending the churchyards of Moyglass and Magorban. ♦



Jamesy Gleeson and his sister Molly Cantwell, Knockelly, on their way to mass. 1931

Fethard Players



Fethard Players cast on stage after their performance of 'Drama at Inish' on opening night November 25th 2001. Back L to R: Eoin Whyte (William Slattery, neighbour); Joe Hanly (Peter Hurley, T.D.), Eoin Powell (Tom Mooney, civic guard), Seamus Hayes (Hector De la Mare, actor), Marian Gilpin (Constance Constantia, actress), Michael McCarthy (John Hegarty, reporter), Mia Treacy (Helena, servant). Front L to R: Vincent Murphy (Eddie Twohig, proprietor's son), Jimmy O'Sullivan (John Twohig, hotel proprietor), Mary O'Connell (Annie Twohig, his wife), Helen Carrigan (Christine Lambert, accountant), Anne Connolly (Lizzie Twohig, spinster), Gerry Fogarty (Michael, the boots).

A amateur drama is alive and well in Fethard, due in no small way to the tireless efforts of Austin O'Flynn who reads numerous plays during the summer months, and then in the Autumn rounds us up, all the time looking for new members, to get the ball rolling for the current season. It's a wonderful way to pass away the dark winter evenings, for six or so weeks at any rate. The commitment is considerable. It means three or four nights, and five coming towards the end, per week of rehearsal, but it is well worth it, the comraderie and the craic are great! And of course, a production well done which gives pleasure to the audiences and the cast, is very rewarding.

Last year we put on a hilariously

American comedy called, "*You Can't Take It With You*." We had a very successful run, played to full houses and had to put on two extra shows (8 nights in all) to facilitate the crowds. It was produced by Austin (our long-suffering producer) and the cast included a mixture of old and new members — Anne Connolly, Joe Hanly, Mary O'Connell, Lisa Rice, Gerry Fogarty, Vincent Murphy, Eoin Whyte, Percy O'Flynn, Mia Treacy, Eoin Powell, Seamus Hayes, Marian Gilpin, Ann Marie O'Sullivan, Michael McCarthy, Carmel Rice, Derek Newport and Eoin Maher.

This year we staged an Irish comedy by Lennox Robinson, '*Drama at Inish*', — the third time the Players have staged it! It was first put on in

1958 produced by the late Eddie O'Neill and then again in 1974 produced by Austin O'Flynn. Each time it proved to be very popular with the audiences.

We are so lucky here to have our beautiful Aby mill Theatre in which to stage our productions, and also in

which to rehearse. We can get on the stage after the first reading or two, it's comfortable and warm and we have our very own kitchen to make 'the cuppa' to keep us going. So that's the news from us for this year! Slan agus beannacht! ♦

Fr Patrick Thomas Corcoran

Patrick Thomas Corcoran was born in Fethard on 8 September 1844, just prior to the Great Potato Famine of 1845-49.

Apparently, as the Corcoran family were wealthy, they were spared much of the misery and hardship of those years, but the famine still had an impact on the personality and character of Thomas Corcoran.

In 1870 Fr Corcoran was ordained at All Hallows College in Dublin by the Most Reverend Dr. Lanigan, Bishop of Goulburn. He had studied at both Mt Melleray Abbey and at All Hallows College before his ordination.

His first appointment was as Priest-in-Charge in East Maitland in New South Wales, Australia, where he stayed for 16 years before returning to Ireland in 1887. Fr Corcoran lived at Mt Melleray Abbey as a Cistercian Monk for the next four years until a letter from Bishop Murray arrived in 1891, offering Fr Corcoran a permanent position at his old Parish of East Maitland now Morpeth in Australia.

Upon his return, in 1898 Fr Corcoran began building the parish church St. Bede's. The name was later

changed from St Bede's to the Church of the Immaculate Conception. A stained glass window donated to the church from Fr Corcoran depicts our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. In Fr Corcoran's time as a priest at Morpeth, the presbytery, convent and church were all built.

On June 24th 1920, Fr Corcoran celebrated his golden jubilee in the priest hood. After Mass was celebrated, the Bishop of the Diocese and priests presented Fr Corcoran with a gold chalice, which is still used in the church today.

Fr Corcoran could be seen doing his rounds in Morpeth on his horse, Posinatus. Posinatus had won the

Melbourne cup in 1913, possibly making Fr Corcoran the only priest who rode a Melbourne cup winner as a hack.

Fr Corcoran cared for his flock until his death on the 21st February 1929. On his tombstone parishioners engraved "Parish Priest of Morpeth 1875 – 1929", as they considered Fr Corcoran to be their true parish priest since he arrived 54 years earlier. ♦



Fr. Corcoran

Source: 'Tomorrow belongs to you', a history of the Catholic Church in Morpeth, NSW. (Kevin Pilgrim).



Marriages



Weddings in the parish

Elizabeth Molloy, Clonmel, to Denis Hannon, Crossard (Killusty)
 Maura O'Donovan, Grove Road, Fethard to Stewart Clooney, Baptistisgrange (Killusty)
 Triona O'Sullivan, Perryville, to Mr David Madigan, Dublin (Fethard)
 Kathleen Nevin, Rocklow Road, to Adrian Gavin, Bedfordshire, England (Killusty)
 Carol Costello, Strylea, Fethard, to Declan McNamara, Mullinahone (Fethard)
 Claire Kenny, Grove, Fethard, to Donncha Doyle, Clonmel (Fethard)
 Breda Morrissey, St. Patrick's Place, to Mr Pat Loughnan, Ballymacarbry (Killusty)
 Vera Sheehan, Claremore, Killusty, to Mr Robert Dooley, Cork (Killusty)
 Jacinta Horan, Tinakelly, to Michael Kavanagh, Clonmel (Fethard)
 Jacqueline Stokes, Main Street, to Captain Thomas Freyne, Irish Defence Forces (Fethard)
 Helen McGarry, Woodvale Walk, Fethard, to Mr Francis Vaughan, Kilsheelan (Fethard)
 Jacqueline Dorney, Woodvale Walk, Fethard, to John Hally, Clerihan (Killusty)
 Elaine Walsh, Burke Street, Fethard, to Malachy Feeney, Limavaddy, Co. Derry (Fethard)
 Bronagh Nesbitt to Alan Galvin (Killusty)

Weddings outside the parish

Margaret Newport, Grove, to Mr Michael Callan, Dublin (Clonmel)
 Edmond Walsh, Coolmoynes, to Ms Julie Keogh, Model Farm Road, Cork (Cork)
 Rory O'Connor, Main Street, Fethard and Kate Richardson (New Jersey)
 Ms Laura Manahan, Tramore, to Maurice Walsh, St. Patrick's Place (Tramore)
 Sarah Grubb, Beechmount House, to Mr. Sergio Furno, Italy (Magorban)
 Seamus Hayes, Rocklow Road, to Mary Nugent, Newcastle (Newcastle.)
 Simon Probin, Tullamaine, to Ms Sili Ryan, Shannonbridge, Co. Clare.
 John Neville, Kilnockin, to Carol Casman, Beechwood House Cappoquin (Cappoquin)
 David Flanagan, Coolmoynes, to Margaret Barrett, Crohane (Ballingarry)

Engagements


























Avril Colville, Spitalfield, to Adrian Morrissey, Tullow.
 Gillian Murphy, Main Street, to Peter Collier, Meath.



Wedding of Kitty Shaw (c.1939). Kitty, who died this year, is photographed with her husband Gerry Doyle, his brother, and bridesmaid Annie Barrett. (supplied by Kathleen (Quirke) Whelan, Clonmel.

Our dear departed 2001

from available photographs

				
<i>Agnes Allen</i>	<i>Bill Holohan</i>	<i>Nellie Fitzgerald</i>	<i>Johnny Casey</i>	<i>Stella (Kennny) O'Dwyer</i>
				
<i>Sinead Healy</i>	<i>John P. O'Flynn</i>	<i>Bro John Gallagher</i>	<i>Babe Maher</i>	<i>Michael Shelly</i>
				
<i>Patrick McCarthy</i>	<i>Mary Smyth</i>	<i>John Holohan</i>	<i>Margaret Fitzgerald</i>	<i>Bill Ryan</i>
				
<i>Dick Hayes</i>	<i>Tommy Dorney</i>	<i>John Burke</i>	<i>Kathleen Walsh</i>	<i>Paul Quinn</i>
				
<i>Capt. Evan Williams</i>	<i>Tom Morrissey</i>	<i>Mick Treacy</i>	<i>Elfreda Hulsebosch</i>	<i>Mick Leahy</i>

Deaths in the parish

The following is a list of deaths that occurred in the parish during the year. We have also included many of the deaths (from information supplied) that occurred away from Fethard and in brackets, the place of funeral service if known.

Allen, Agnes, Barrack Street (Calvary)
Burke, John, Donoughmore (Lisronagh)
Carew, Robert, Derryluskin, Fethard (England.)
Casey Johnny, The Valley, Fethard (Cahir)
Clarke, Jim, Crampscastle (Calvary)
Coffey, Michael Robert, Brodeen, Fethard
Croke, Madge, Derryluskin (England)
Dorney, Tommy, Milestown (Cloneen)
Doyle (Shaw), Kitty, The Green, Fethard
Fitzgerald, Nellie, St. Patrick's Place (Calvary)
Fitzgerald, Margaret 'Peggy', Kiltinan (Calvary)
Fleming, Christy, Coolmore and Rhode, Co. Offaly,
Gallagher, Bro John, Patrician Brothers (Newbridge.)
Guildea (O'Connell), Josie, Coleman (England.)
Hanly, May, Barrettstown (Powerstown)
Hayes, Dick, Burke Street (Calvary)
Healy, Sinead, Fethard and London (Calvary)
Heard (Fogarty,) Kathleen, The Valley (Brighton)
Holohan, Bill, Boolagh, Killusty
Holohan, John, Ballinard, Fethard (Cloneen)
Hulsebosch, Elfreda, Annesgift House (St. Patrick's)
Leahy, Mick, Derryluskin, Fethard
Leonard (Croke), Madeline, Jersey and Redcity
Looby (nee O'Grady), Mary, Coleman (Rosegreen)
Mackey, Jim, Farranaleen, Fethard (Moyglass.)
Maher, Babe, The Green, Fethard (Calvary)

Maher, Noreen, Barrack Street, Fethard (Calvary)
Morrissey, Michael, Grove and Swindon (England)
Morrissey, Thomas, St. Patrick's Place (Calvary)
Mullins (Hennessy), Mary, St. Patrick's Place
Mullins, Tommy, Knockbrack, London (London)
Murphy, William 'Willie', Cashel Road (England)
McCarthy, Patrick, Kerry Street (London.)
O'Dwyer (Kenny), Stella, Crosford, (Ardmore)
O'Flynn, John P., Bradford and Killerk.
O'Meara, Mary, Ballyvaden (Rathcoole.)
O'Shea, Patrick 'Paud', St. Patrick's Place (England)
Power, (Mackey), Kitty, St. Patrick's Place and London
Quinn, Paul, Tullamaine and Lowesgreen (Calvary)
Russell, Donna Jean, Tullamaine (Moyglass)
Ryan, Bill, St. Patrick's Place (Calvary)
Sheehy, Marie Therese, Garrinch (Calvary)
Shelly, Michael. The Green (Calvary)
Slattery, Ellen. Barrettstown (Clerihan)
Smyth, (Hennessy), Mary, Coolbawn, (Moyglass.)
Smyth, Harry 'Har', Mogorban (Mogorban)
Sr. M. Celine, Roscrea and Fethard
Stapleton, Johanna. Burke Street (Calvary)
Treacy, Michael (Mick), Barrettstown Cross (Calvary)
Walsh, Kathleen, Barrack Street (Moyglass)
Williams, Captain Evan M.F.H. (Kilmallock)



Confirmation Day 29th April 1982. First cousins L to R: Darren Bradshaw, Karl Cooke, Audrey Moloney, Anna Bradshaw, Kevin Bradshaw and Rory Bradshaw.

Abymill Theatre

Once again to readers of the Newsletter we extend a thespian “Céad Míle Fáilte!”

The theatre has seen its usual high standard of shows this year. The Fethard players had a huge success in November 2000 with a fifteen star cast of the comedy, ‘You can’t take it with you’. In December the transition year students staged ‘Oliver’ and as I write many of that class are about to take to the boards with, ‘Wednesdays Child’, a play set in the troubled North of Ireland of the 70’s. This Abymill youth drama is under the direction of Seamus Hayes, and works and rehearses out of Abymill.

St Patrick’s Boys’ National School had their show this year and of course Majella Hewitt’s ‘On your Toes’ dance group entertained audiences with children of all ages on the stage.

The solo singer Joe Giltrap offered an entertaining night for singing

enthusiasts, but one of the highlights had to be the return of the Irish Chamber Orchestra in September, with a valued and beautiful night of music for all.

The popularity of Thursday night bingo is still a major factor and thanks must be extended to Gerry Fogarty and Cinta O’Flynn.

Our continued thanks also to Mary Morrissey and Christy Mullins who look after the building so well.

The Board of Directors Abymill 2001 – 2002: Chairman - Michael McCarthy; Secretary – Marian Gilpin; Treasurer – Agnes Evans; Administrator – Austin O’Flynn; Carmel Rice, Joe Kenny, Noelle O’Dwyer, Jimmy O’Shea, Bernard Walsh, Eileen Maher, and Mary Mc McCormack.

To you, wherever you are, we wish you a truly peaceful Christmas and a successful 2002. ♦



Members of the Croom Carroll family photographed in the Abymill Theatre on May 12 following a one-man, story-play called 'Robert Service, Bard of the Yukon' by actor Mike O'Mahoney. Mike went to college with local lads Michael Carroll, Joe Murphy and Aidan Maher.

Fethard Youth Club

Rita McCormack (secretary)



Club leaders photographed with guest speakers and parents at the Fethard Youth Club Drugs Seminar on May 22nd. Back L to R: Marian Gilpin, Mary Shanahan, Therese Barrett, Eileen Purcell, Ann Nevin, Paula Taylor, Mary Delahunty, Eileen Frewen, Claire Hannigan. Front L to R: Rita McCormack John, Marie Murphy, Johnny Casey, Sinead O'Mahoney, Patricia Fitzgerald and Eileen Burke.

A newspaper ball tied with string for something resourceful. Jumpers for goal posts and the game is on. Later, hungry tired and huddled together on a cold hard floor, someone began to share the remainder of sandwiches, crushed and gooey. The odd apple and biscuit was grabbed too! Cold, shattered and waiting they sat. As if this wasn't enough for the youngsters to bear, a lunatic began to sing 'Lean on Me'. A noise, a rattle, a movement behind the grill plates. A buzz of anticipation, then they began to surge forward — all too ready to be loaded. Yes it was 3am and the ferry had finally arrived. The youth club trip to Oakwood was moving slowly to a close. After a 10-hour wait in Fishguard Port, swearing we would never do it again, we were on our way home.

Arriving in Fethard on July 11, a day late, the crew disbanded to head home and sleep for what they hoped would be a warm long time.

The next day, misery forgotten,

plans were afoot for next year's trip!

Our adventure to Oakwood in Wales was the final activity of a full and packed year of events which included a variety show, a soccer tournament, an inter-club table quiz, a drama, a Christmas party and quiz, a disco, a drugs project, self defence, a euro night, a cinema trip and regular weekly activities.

This is the club's second year and we have had to put a cap on our membership due to lack of adult leaders. This year has shown 52 members on our books. We are now operating a waiting list. For the coming year our programme of events is likely to be more extensive and we once again call on over 18s or any adult with genuine interest in working with teenagers to help. Having listened to 'heavy metal' played loudly isn't a prerequisite, but it might help prepare you for the noise level. Ask Mick Ahearne who I'm sure has by now invested in earplugs.

We would like to thank each and

everyone whose support for us has been invaluable. Special thanks must go to Noreen Ahearne, Fethard Arms, who has hosted our adult events and meetings. Thanks to Jimmy O'Sullivan for the use of his shop front to display our drugs project and the Fethard Ballroom committee,

Thanks for the parents who help transport us to events when we couldn't afford a bus — Willy O'Donnell, Eileen Frewen, Valerie O'Meara, Stephen McCormack, Joan Duggan, Eileen and Denny Burke.

A huge thank you to the people of Fethard who supported our church gate collection. We are voluntary and non-funded and so are grateful for your support. I particularly wish to thank Clare, Tony, Maria, Patricia and Mary for their enthusiasm and dedication which keeps the club going.

But the club is the sum of its members whose spirit and sense of fun encourage us to turn up every week. Kids are constantly slated in the media but I want to take this opportunity to laud our kids. Their good manners and behaviour at inter-club events has gained them a reputation to be proud of within the Tipperary regional youth service. Well done lads.

Congratulations are in order also; the club's drug awareness project has won the senior clubs Community Involvement Award. Again special applause to; Tracey, Tara, Ashley, Louise, John H., Anthony, Niall, Ciarán, Brian, Adrian, Eoin D, and Kyle.

Well that's some of our news for this year so until next year, Merry Christmas and a peaceful, hopeful 2002. ♦



Fethard Youth Club members with their Drugs Awareness certificates received on Wednesday 27th June. Back L to R: John Hannigan, Charlotte Escalon, Brian Conway, Niall Maher, Ashley McCormack-John, Anthony Hanrahan, Kyle O'Donnell. Front L to R: Rita McCormack-John (leader), Adrian Allen, Sinead O'Mahony (Drug Project Worker), Tracy Coady and Claire Hannigan (leader). The following also received certificates: Tara Ryan, Louise Nagle, Ciarán Duggan, Eoin Maher and Eoin Delahunty.

A young man from Farranaleen *Mail Nodnoc*

I would love to tell you a story. A true story, actually, a heart breaking story about the life and death of a young man from Farranaleen. His name was Jimmy Condon, born in 1937, died in 1964.

There was nothing unusual about his youth except that he was a daredevil. He had to be the first to try out anything remotely dangerous, like walking across the old red bridge over to the railway station while a passenger train passed underneath. Yes young readers there was a lovely railway station at Farranaleen, only three miles from Fethard. Why a station there you ask? Well that's another story.

Jimmy Condon listened to few people, needless to say not least his parents. When he should have been working he was skulking off work (from Scully's). His popularity at home was strained due to his wild nature, and his disappearing for three days at the age of fourteen did not impress his austere father, Jack.

Maybe this was the start of the nomadic Jimmy Condon. He left to join the army in Clonmel, nothing unusual for young men at that time, except that they took your word you were 16 years or older.

An indication of this man's wildness, untamed nature or what nowadays would be classed as unsocial behaviour could be summed up when

he arrived home on one occasion from Clonmel Army Barracks in possession of a .177 calibre small firearm.

He used his neighbours as practice. Needless to say they were not pleased and did not appreciate having small slugs bounce off their rear ends.

He was no mean footballer and this writer would have no hesitation in stating he was on a par, if not better, than

his brothers Sean and Billy who went on to represent their beloved Tipperary. Jimmy Condon won a county juvenile medal at the age of 13 with Ardfinnan.

A twist of fate and life changes. Half disowned at home by a disciplinarian father, but not by his adoring heartbroken mother, and not

happy with the unexciting Irish Army he left for London. From there to Aldershot, Hereford and finally Sarawak province of North Borneo where the story ends.

Or has it?

*"We are the pilgrims, Master,
We shall go always, a little further."*

Jimmy Condon joined the Special Air Service Regiment in 1959, much to the absolute horror of his parents, and against the wishes of his younger brothers and sister Maureen.

Coming from the Condon's republican background from Ahane, Limerick, this was indeed very sur-



Jimmy Condon (right), Borneo 1963

prising and upsetting for the whole family, knowing that the S.A.S were considered a cool, calculating outfit that never did anything without a reason. Undaunted and unperturbed by local opposition he went on to become champion recruit of 'A Company' and represented the company in an air display in Canada in the early sixties followed by other parades throughout the British Empire.

From 1963 to 1966 Britain fought a war in South East Asia on the Malaysian side against the Chinese Communists and Indonesian Soekarno. The S.A.S were involved. Paratrooper

Jimmy Condon, being a member of the S.A.S, was posted to Borneo in 1963. Each unit comprised of four men who attacked supply routes and staged surprise attacks. Let me remind you that this was a huge, un-populated countryside with mountains and heavy jungle. Boundaries were drawn on maps using rivers mostly, and they navigated more by sense of direction than by the actual maps. Patrols made friends of the locals as best they could. Condon, who volunteered for a second tour, was well versed in the Malayan language, and acted as interpreter of his party.

Early in March 1964 the usual four-man patrol was sent out, including paratrooper Jimmy Condon, who was known to his comrades as 'Paddy'. These comrades did not leave a stone

unturned in their later efforts to locate 'Paddy'.

Here was the very short, slight and very quiet man from the banks of the Clashawley River at Farranaleen whose daredevil attitude to life endeared him to his comrades, in the middle of a jungle in Sarawak Province in North Borneo, carrying a heavy two-way radio (he was also the radio operator of the unit).



Jimmy Condon (right), Borneo 1963

After 10 days they came across a large enemy camp which was empty and estimated to have housed about 100 enemy. The unit decided to watch this camp and as nothing happened they

moved on the next day.

Wherever the border was, and historians disagree, one thing was sure that this camp was on Malaysian territory. Nothing else was found the next day and a decision was made to return to this camp.

On the morning of the 14th March, 1964, they encountered an enemy patrol. A large enemy force confronted them and thereafter followed a shootout. Following a well-rehearsed routine, the troop moved in different directions. Three men re-convened at a prearranged point. Jimmy 'Paddy' Condon did not make this point. They were not worried then as he was carrying a heavy radio. Shooting became rapid again and Paddy Condon did not make the second rendezvous point.

Things looked bad at that stage.

For four days, these three troopers searched every pre-arranged point, but no paratrooper Condon. They knew then that hope was negligible. Jimmy Condon was dead.

Word filtered through during the next few days of how Indonesian soldiers had boasted that they had killed a

British paratrooper. He was grievously wounded during the first encounter, having taken a bullet in the groin. He was taken captive. They tried to obtain as much information as possible from him. He pretended his knowledge of Malaysian was limited which was untrue. He succeeded in giving them the idea that the S.A.S patrol was larger than it was. They could not take any chances and

retreated on this information. His comrades to this day acknowledge that they owe their lives to the misinformation Jimmy Condon supplied on that fateful day, March 14th, 1964.

The enemy retreated and being unable to walk, the injured paratrooper was no longer of any importance to them. He was shot and finished off in the lonely jungle of North Borneo.

So he died alone, unmourned, un-

prayed for, but dearly loved — the young daredevil from Farranaleen.

He was buried in an unmarked grave in this foreign land, having done more in his short life than most.

His beloved parents left this world in 1972 and 1981 respectively, still clutching to the possibility that this young wild man from Borneo would some day

come home. But he didn't.

Today, all three are together again, at home in the lovely churchyard in Moyglass. Jimmy was brought home last April.

To the people of Fethard, Farranaleen and its surrounds, I would like to point out that the Condon family deeply appreciated their support at that time. Many tributes were paid to Jimmy and many people called to Farranaleen.

Local support, as

always in a time of tragedy, is always foremost in people's minds.

At the time, local opposition to Jimmy's vocation was cause for local speculation. I know that the Condon family bear no grievance, but genuine forgiveness, as some comments hurt an old repentant father who had just lost a son, many, many miles away.

Say a prayer for Jack, Brigid and Jimmy Condon. All three at rest. ♦



Jack and Bridget Condon, Farranaleen 1960

The Irish Red Cross



*Red Cross members making a donation of £500 to the CAT scan appeal for St. Joseph's Hospital.
L to R: Commdt. Austin Kenny, Frank Coffey (chairman), Jacqueline O'Gorman, Biddy Trehy, Mary Tierney, Maureen Guiry and Gabrielle Schofield (St. Joseph's Hospital Clonmel).*

Once again it is time to give an account of the Fethard Branch activities for the year 2001.

In January First Aid Classes were held in the Tirry Centre, conducted by Tony Lawlor and Kevin O'Donnell. When completed, an exam was held in which all were successful. Those who sat the exam were Rosemary Lalor, Katie Murphy, Marie Murphy, Helen Guiry, Rena Hannigan, Ellen Tobin and Margaret Tuohy.

A demonstration on the area of heart disease and cardiac resuscitation was held in Fethard Ballroom on Monday March 27, given by Tony Lawlor and Ellen Kearns. Great interest was shown and a large crowd attended.

A very active member of the branch, Jacqueline O'Gorman, who has been a volunteer leader on Red Cross respite holidays, for many years went to Pontin's holiday centre in Blackpool during the summer to help care for people with physical and other disabilities, and all had a lovely time. She

also drives the ambulance which is available for racing and sporting fixtures and other emergencies at all times.

In March a very interesting talk on health food was given in the Ballroom by Pamela of the health food shop in Clonmel. She had a lot of herbs and medicines, all completely natural remedies, to relieve complaints. Samples were given for all to try.

The Red Cross members also donated £500 to the CAT scan appeal for St. Joseph's Hospital in Clonmel. It will make a big difference to the people of the area not to have to travel for a scan.

We also help people in need, especially the people of Afghanistan, who are in desperate need of food and medical supplies now that winter is near and war is still raging there.

New members are cordially invited to join, especially those interested in a medical career. The experience gained in the Red Cross would be helpful in their chosen field. ♦

Fethard Macra na Feirme

Another successful year has come and gone for Fethard Macra na Feirme. Our year began with the Christmas Party, which was held in Cahir House Hotel. The South Tipperary Clubs attended to make it an enjoyable night all round.

We have had our share of success in competitions this year with our male and female Indoor Soccer teams playing in the All-Ireland finals, which were held in Gormanstown, Co. Meath. The tasks in the Creative Challenge competition were cookery, recycling, woodwork and computers. Sinead O'Brien, Jennifer Frewen, Gary Williams, Ciarán Duggan and Lynda Nevin did themselves proud by finishing third in the All-Ireland semifinals.

We took to the stage for the Dublin City talent competition. Daryn O'Meara played well in the solo instrument section. Emma Morrissey and Corina Smidt did well in the solo singing section as did Ciarán Duggan in the stand-up comedy act section. Our disco dancers were worthy winners and qualified for the All-Ireland semi-finals. Due to the Foot and Mouth crisis they did not compete in the next round. Sinead O'Brien represented us well in the county rounds of the 'Queen of the Land' and 'Miss Macra' competitions. The volleyball team of Mary Barry, Corina Cleary, Lil Grant, Sarah Whyte, Paddy Cooney, Kevin Whyte, Gary Williams and Lar Looby, put on a good show by reaching the South Tipperary quarter-finals. Well done on a great effort.

Club members Ali Holohan, Liam Hayes and John Hingston tried their luck in a 'Blind Date' competition. An

adventurous Liam also took part in an 'Ideal Bachelor' competition. Better luck next time Liam!

Brendan Morrissey, our very own 'King of the Culchies' had another busy year. This year the Culchie Festival was held in Fethard from 25 to 28 October and was won by local man Ken Lee who was representing Slievenamon. The 'Bacon & Cabbage Ball' was held in conjunction with Fethard Macra where we rolled up our sleeves and served out the food on the night. A wide range of activities took place over the weekend and it was enjoyed by competitors, escorts and spectators alike. Brendan also reached the final eight of the National Leadership Awards.

We were well-travelled during the year with Lorraine Morrissey moving to Scotland and Corina Morrissey and Robin Roe moving to Australia for a year. Lynda Nevin spent the summer working in America while Jennifer Frewen went on holidays to Canada. Sixteen members went on a day trip to a theme park in Oakwood in Wales; eight members travelled as part of a group of forty-five from South Tipperary Macra to Turkey on the 16/17 September. Our holiday included a Turkish bath, lounging by the pool, craic at the beach, barbeques, belly dancing, spoon dancing, scuba diving, plenty of shopping and great nightlife. Friends were made and no doubt one or two will make a return visit! We arrived home on the 22/23 September exhausted and happy. Plans are already being made for next year. A thoroughly enjoyable time was had by all.



Macra play cast at rehearsal with Paddy Maher in convent hall. Back L to R: Paddy Maher (producer), Liam O'Connor, Seamus Kennedy, Jackie Aylward, Anne O'Connell, Sean O'Dea, Nuala Fahy, Simon Delahunty, Paul Quinn, John Heffernan, Pat Fahy. Front L to R: Francis McGivern, Anne Harrington, Jim O'Meara, Theresa O'Connell, Catherine Harrington and Trudy Phelan.

The play was 'Many Young Men of Twenty' by John B. Keane.

Community Involvement was in the form of a table quiz, which was held in aid of the St. Vincent de Paul. It was well supported and we raised £286 for the local conference. Some things never change in Fethard Macra as again romance was in the air.

Congratulations go to Patricia Morrissey and Matt Hennessy and also to Adrian Morrissey and Avril Colville on their engagements. Best wishes to Pamela and Dermot O'Donnell on the birth of their daughter Laura. We wish all of them the very best of good fortune, health and happiness. Other activities during the year include Macra capers, debating, volleyball, basketball, race nights, discos, karting and bowling.

At our AGM on September 1st the following officers were elected: President Brendan Morrissey; Vice-

President Avril Colville; Chairperson Thomas Grant; Vice-Chairperson Kevin Whyte; Secretary Mary Barry; Asst. Secretary Avril Colville; Treasurer Adrian Morrissey; Asst. Secretary Teresa Grant; P.R.O. Emma Morrissey; Recruitment Officers Kevin Whyte and Gary Williams.

Our club meetings take place every second Friday night in Loneragans, Fethard. Members come from all walks of life so if you are interested in enjoying yourself making new friends, learning new skills, improving your social life and availing of travel opportunities Macra is the place for you. Any of the above committee members could be delighted to hear from you.

We would like to thank all those who helped to make the past year a success for the club and we are looking forward to the year ahead. ♦

Fethard in 1950

compiled by Billy McLellan

Sean T. O'Kelly was President, John A. Costello was Taoiseach, Dr. Noel Browne was Minister for Health and Pope Pius XII had declared 1950 a Holy Year. By happy coincidence, January 1st was a Sunday, and in the very first hour of the New Year Midnight Mass was celebrated both in the Parish Church and in the Abbey. Fr. White was Augustinian Prior at the time. Canon Ryan was Parish Priest and the curates were Fr. Hogan and Fr. Lambe.

And from things of God to matters of manna we are amazed to note that bread rationing was in force. It had been re-introduced the previous November. The pound in your pocket was sterling but that had been devalued three months previously from four dollars to \$2.80. We used to call the half-crown a half dollar, but now it was only worth 35 cents.

And if you did have a spare half-crown on Jan 12th and 13th, 1950, it would have purchased you a balcony seat in the Capitol Cinema where the Fethard Players were presenting their

annual pantomime. On this occasion it was Simple Simon, which, apparently, was vintage Fethard Pantomime stuff and was the subject of a detailed appraisal in the Nationalist newspaper which we re-print in full on page 48. It's a valuable record of those times and tells us "who did what and who sang which". They took this show to the Savoy Cinema in Limerick and played to a capacity audience of 1800, to a packed Regal Theatre in Clonmel in aid of the Cottage Hospital building fund and to Dungarvan in aid of the Friary building fund.

February 22nd, 1950 was Ash Wednesday, which meant the suspension of dancing for 40 days. Not surprising then that 'Fred and Ginger' fans got in a lot of dancing before Lent began. One event was billed as a 'Grand All-Night Dance' in the Town Hall on Sunday 5th February, with music by the Twilight Serenaders Dance Band. Admission was five shillings. If the weather wasn't too wet or cold, a crowd gathered on the opposite side of the street watching the cou-



Archbishop O'Donnell talking to blind musician, Joe Kelly Napier, also included is Nellie Trehay



Twilight Serenaders band featuring L to R: Paddy Grant on drums, Paud O'Shea (trumpet), Tom Sheehan (sax), Patsy Carroll (accordion), Phil Vaughan (piano) and Mick Looby (banjo).

ples gliding past the windows and listening to the band. That year one of the latest hit tunes was Tennessee Waltz - appropriately melancholic music to play in a dance hall with its haunting tones particularly suited to Tommy Sheehan's saxophone. (If you're trying to remember who made the song famous, it was Patti Page).

Around this time a large advert appeared in the Nationalist announcing bottled milk for Fethard. The Dairy, Clonacody was introducing their agent Mr. W. O'Flynn, Burke Street. The ad went on to say, "This High Class Milk produced and cooled under Modern Hygienic Conditions, untouched by hand, will be sold only in sterilised pint bottles, and for cash, at the controlled price. Those who wish to register as customers should do so with Mr. O'Flynn immediately."

Coolmoine Hurling Club held their annual convention in the Town Hall. The president, Fr. Lambe C.C., congratulated the minors on winning the minor championship and paid a glowing tribute to the county senior and minor hurling teams on bringing the

highest honours to the county. He appealed especially for good, clean sporting displays and said the motto should be "honour before honours."

Fethard Badminton Club was doing well in 1950. The A Team, comprising Misses P. Walsh and K. McCarthy, Messrs. J. McCarthy, S. Henahan and A. Newport, were competing in the Clingan Cup Competition. They defeated Clonmel 4-3 and met Thurles in the semi-final whom they beat 5-1. They put up a spirited performance against Waterford in the final but lost to very experienced opponents. Fethard had one great victory in the men's singles when Jimmy McCarthy won 15-0, 15-1, playing an inspired game and making miraculous returns. The applause for two of his returns, made when he was on his knees, caused play to cease for some minutes.

Master craftsman in wood by day, bandmaster by night, Tom Hickey had been busy for the previous twelve months reviving the Confraternity Band. A big event was looming. The town was preparing for the arrival of an auspicious visitor and wanted Tom

not only to polish up the brass but the technique of the musicians who made those great oom-pah-pah sounds. Bunting, blather and ballyhoo would have to be augmented by Fethard's very own Brass Band in according a fitting welcome. A series of Whist Drives were held on the Sundays during Lent to raise funds for the band. A large crowd gathered outside the parish church after the men's sodality in March 1950 cheered and clapped as the band did their stuff. All agreed the revival had been a success. When the visitor came, he would be impressed.

A report from New York stated that St. Patrick's Day in 1950 was celebrated by the sons and daughters of Tipperary on a larger, more colourful and more representative scale than ever before. Some of the many

Fethard names attending were mentioned:- Mr. & Mrs. Michael Casey; Mrs. Alice Cody; Thomas & Josie Healy-Bannon; Margaret Healy O'Shea; Wilfred Lyons; Michael Gunn; George Anglim.

Patrician Brothers Superior Hilarion O'Keeffe died suddenly in the early hours of Monday 3rd April. The Brothers in Fethard attending the funeral were Bro. Damien, Bro. Fergus, Bro. Albert, Bro. Stephen and Bro. Dominic. The new Superior was Rev. Bro. Serenius Bergin who was on the teaching staff at Ballyfin and had spent 45 years in India. Bro Mark Lee also died in Fethard later in the year.

On 9th April, Easter Sunday, Fethard football team had a resounding victory over Clonmel Commercial in the Tipperarymens Cup Game at



Fethard Badminton team and committee in the 1950's. The Team, shown here with the 'Clingan Cup' (won later than 1950), were unbeaten in their time in Tipperary badminton circles, a match for any club team in Munster. A unique feature of the team is all players, except Cly Mullins, are from Main Street. Pictured with President, Fr. Lamb. Back: Tommy O'Connell, Rosie Henahan, Jimmy McCarthy, Tony Newport, Cly Mullins, Frank McCarthy, Dollie O'Connell and Fr. Lamb. Front: Mrs. Rita Schofield, Pat Walsh (McCarthy), Sean Henahan, Kitty McCarthy, Betty Holohan, Baby-Anne McLellan.

Ballypatrick. The weather was blowing such a gale that play had to be stopped entirely at one stage. Commercials elected to play against the wind in the first half and as the wind increased in strength Fethard swamped them to such an extent they couldn't recover during the second half. The final score was Fethard 3-7, Commercials 1-5. The Fethard team was: R. Meehan; P. Larkin; M. Byrne; W. Coffey; Ed. Burke; J. Roche; J. McCarthy; R. Power; T. Riordan; J. Tobin; P. Foley; P. Marron; J. Fogarty; J. Riordan; and C. Mullins.

Putting the clocks forward to Summer Time in 1950 was not a unanimous, taken-for-granted practice. Some thought it unnecessary. Many farmers didn't agree with it and others were vociferously against it. "It'll confuse the cows at milking time" was one argument. The Fethard Notes in the Nationalist said "it is to be hoped that the people of Fethard will fall into line with those in local surrounding

towns by adopting Summer Time which comes into force on 16th April." But during the year, and for a good while afterwards, some functions advertised commencement time in Old Time and others in Summer Time. and if you told someone the meeting was starting at eight o'clock, the reply would invariably be "is that old time or new time?" It was almost a contest between progressives and fundamentalists. Now that we have a vast number of gadgets in the average home, many containing timers, all of which have to be adjusted twice a year, it somehow doesn't feel like progress and gives the last laugh to the cow.

Fethard Lawn Tennis Club held its annual meeting. The secretary's report told of a very successful season and reported that the grass courts were in good condition and now open for play. New members were welcome. The courts were down the stairs and behind Joe and Pauline Coffey's house in Burke Street. The seat (or *furrem*, as



Fethard Tennis Team in the fifties: Front L to R: Pat McCarthy, Mary Goldsborough, Carmel White, Betty Holohan. Back L to R: Sean Henahan, Andy Holohan, Jimmy McCarthy, Sean Hogan.

we pronounced it) outside Billy O'Flynn's shop was a great meeting place and an opportunity to sample cones of delicious ice cream called American Whipped. There are indications that Fethard won the Gibson Cup that year, but we cannot be certain.

The arrival of Summer days meant the Fethard Carnival was n't far off. It was held on Sunday 11th

June. A special train was laid on. The return rail fare from Waterford was 5s. 9d and from Clonmel 1s 6d. Visitors from far and wide converged on the town before the Fancy Dress Parade led by the Confraternity Band and the Clonmel Boys' Club Pipers Band started from Kerry Street on its way to the Barrack Field where a wide programme of attractions was laid on. The yearly success of the fancy dress parade was brought about by dedication right across the community and a sense of fun that shone out as brightly as the sun that, even at the time, was reported to always favour the Fethard Carnival. Gymkana events were judged by the Earl of Donoughmore, Dr. P. Stokes and Mr. C. Carrigan. A hurling contest was held between county champions Borrisoleigh representing Tipperary and county finalists Clonea representing Waterford. Borrisoleigh won by a small margin. There were Irish Dancing competitions, numerous side shows, a dancing

platform and a place to have refreshments known as the "tea tent." No hawkers were allowed into the field but they were certainly evident in the approaches and did a thriving business.



Lawn Tennis Court behind Joe Coffey's, Burke Street.

The side shows included Roulette, Penny on the Jack, Money from America, and a game not unlike Bingo called Pongo, played on multi-coloured

boards where you marked off the numbers with chalk. The 960 visitors who came by train left Fethard Railway Station at 9pm with memories of a great day's entertainment. We, at home, eagerly awaited the photographs of the day's events appearing in the window of O'Sullivan's Chemist in the Main Street where groups gathered looking in at the pictures and reliving it all.

At a meeting of South Tipperary County Council, Councillor Ahessy proposed, that for the future, no tolls would be collected at Fethard Fair. The motion was carried unanimously. The Fair of Fethard was held on the third Tuesday of every month and was soon to be discontinued in favour of the Cattle Mart. At another meeting of the County Council during which housing needs in Fethard were being discussed, a report from Dr. M. Naughten, County Medical Officer included the following:- "Fethard is a town with a population of just over a

thousand (1024). There is, as a matter of interest, a preponderance of females (555 to be exact). Everything is at the agricultural wages standard. On going through the register of each family in the district, which was brought up to date a few months ago, I find that almost all adults in the town (male and female) go to England on adolescence and that in some cases full families have gone because of absence of local work. The town is static and is largely a 'dormitory or nursery' from which people depart." Although the good doctor used the word static in a statistical context, it nevertheless caused a good deal of resentment, indeed, outrage as you can imagine, in a community that was anything but static. A meeting of various organisations of the town, including the Irish Countrywomens Association, Hurling and Football Clubs, Fethard Players, Fethard Carnival Committee, Fethard Tennis and Badminton Clubs, was held and issued a statement to the Press listing the various activities and achievements of Fethard clubs and organisations - hardly the attributes of a community described as static.

We re-print part of the statement which is of particular interest:-

"The Fethard Branch of the Irish Countrywomens Association, which has a membership of 58, boasts a record of activity and achievement which any organisation and town could well be proud of. This Guild has won twice in six years the Production Cup offered for work produced in the home, as well as numerous other prizes in various competitions throughout the country. Fethard members were responsible for the starting of rush-basket making and through the

Fethard Guild this home industry spread all over the country. Fethard-taught instructresses in the making of rugs and unspun wool have recently taught this art to spinners and weavers in other parts of the country and the Guild recently won first place in all Ireland in a rug-making competition for I.C.A. members. An annual Chrysanthemum Show, the only one of its kind in the provinces is annually held under the Guild's auspices in Fethard; and during the past two years members have erected and equipped a comfortable hall for meetings that is available for all parish functions. One of the most successful and enterprising ventures by the Guild was the establishment over two and a half years ago, in Fethard, of a weekly co-operative market for produce which has since been running most successfully. Together with this, members operate a much-needed coffee stall at Fethard Fair. The programme of the Guild for the past season included a series of six lectures on a wide variety of subjects and six demonstrations on various home crafts. Two of the four permanent organisers of the organisation were chosen from Fethard and another member was selected by Mrs. McNeill, Ireland's only woman ambassador, to accompany her as secretary to The Hague."

Certainly, the people of Fethard were not standing still on the issue of housing. A deputation to the County Council led by Fr. Hogan and Fr. Lambe succeeded in securing 30 new houses for Fethard. A month or so later, the County Council heard a proposal for the purchase of houses by some tenants of Congress Terrace and The Green. It was suggested that the

purchase price would be 75 percent of the rent. The rent was quoted as 5s 0d and 2s 6d respectively.

A meeting was held in Moyglass at which it was decided to form a Camogie Club and enter a team to play against Elmville, Clonmel in the first round of the championship to be played in Fethard. It was expected to attract a large crowd because it was the first camogie match to be played in the district for a number of years. The game was held on 22nd June. At the time of going to press we were unable to find out what the result was and would like to hear an account of that match from readers.

In handball, Coolmoyn Juniors won the singles and doubles in the South Tipperary Championship beating Clonmel St. Mary's. The game was held at D'Arcy's Cross.

So far, 1950 has been an interesting

and eventful year as we move towards the month of August when a representative meeting of the parishioners of Fethard and Killusty met in the Town Hall for the purpose of forming a branch of Muintir na Tire. The meeting was addressed by the founder Fr. J.M. Hayes, P.P. Bansha. A Parish Council was formed representing, Farmers, Labour, Business, Trades, Professions and Ladies which held its first meeting a week later with a full attendance at which matters of local interest and utility were discussed and initial practical steps taken in some matters of considerable importance in the district. We feel sure that one of the items in general discussion around that time was the 100 percent increase in water rate charges from 7/6d to 15/-.

Sunday 27th August was a big day in Fethard. The headline says it all "Fethard Welcomes Illustrious Son -



Sections of large attendance taken at a testimonial luncheon to Archbishop O'Donnell tendered by the Tipperary Men's Association & his friends in New York. Feb. 18th. 1951.

Great Reception for Archbishop O'Donnell." And so it was. Papal flags and bunting decorated the houses and streets. Enthusiastic and welcoming crowds greeted the Co-adjutor Archbishop of Brisbane as the procession went through the streets led by Tom Hickey and the Fethard Confraternity Band playing O'Donnell Abú. At each side of his car marched a Guard of Honour of the Archbishop's former school companions. A rousing cheer and applause was heard as he approached the entrance to the Parish Church, where the Australian and Irish flags flew side by side, and where he was greeted by a large number of old friends and received with full military honours by a Guard of Honour of the local F.C.A. That evening he attended a Grand Reception Concert in his honour at the Capitol Cinema. (Seats were bookable at Ward's, The Valley Garage. Phone Fethard 11. No booking charge).

The Archbishop's arrival coincided with the feast of St. Augustine which meant that the special devotions in the Abbey had to be postponed for a week. They were conducted by Fr. Butler O.S.A. who enrolled a number of people in the Confraternity of the Holy Cincture. Fr. Butler announced that he was being transferred to Dungarvan which was greeted with great sadness.

Local elections were held in the Autumn. Jack Ahessy exceeded the quota. It went to the eighth count before another candidate was elected. The elected Councillors were: John Ahessy (FF); Thomas Duggan (FF); Patrick Brett (FG); Denis O'Driscoll (C.na P.); Patrick Henahan (FG) and Patrick Kenny (FF).

An October headline "Fethard are

Champions" was followed by the following report:- *"Fethard surmounted the last obstacle in the climb back to the highest peak of football prominence in South Tipperary when they defeated Old Bridge, Clonmel, in the Divisional Senior Final on Sunday. Inheritors of an inspiring tradition, the Blues have thus once again entered that place of honour where the colours of Fethard have been raised in the past by footballers whose names became household words."* Final score 1-5 to 0-2.

During 1950, Windscale (now Sellafield) atomic power station opened in Cumbria. The Chinese invaded and occupied Tibet. Senator Joseph McCarthy launched his crusade against Communism. Three planes crashed, 2 in Britain and one in the Alps, death toll 166. Soap and petrol rationing ended in Britain and the Cold War got hot when North Korea invaded South Korea.

In Ireland, the banks went on strike on the day before Christmas Eve and didn't end until the February 15th. Dr. Noel Browne's proposed Mother and Child Scheme was collapsing in the face of church opposition.

Back in Fethard the big news was the imminent arrival of the rural electrification scheme. The area had been successfully canvassed in 1948. The Farmers section of Muintir na Tire appointed a deputation to meet Mr. Enright, District Superintendent of the E.S.B. in Waterford. Wet battery wirelesses would become things of the past and the hum of milking machines could be heard in the near future. ♦

(Information taken from The Nationalist newspaper issues in 1950)

Fethard A.C. (The Running Club)



Fethard Athletic Club members photographed before setting off on their sponsored walk through Grove Wood on Thursday evening, 28th June. Over £1,100 was raised to help cover the day-to-day running expenses of club.

Officers for season 2001- 2002 are: President Dick Cummins; Chairperson Miceál McCormack; Vice Chairperson Carmel Condon, Secretary Mary Trehay; Treasurer Laura Lyons; Assistant Treasurer Peggy Sullivan; PRO Fintan Rice.

"I sometimes think that running has given me a glimpse of the greatest freedom a man can ever know, because it results in the simultaneous liberation of both body and mind."

This quote from the great Roger Bannister goes some way towards explaining why so many children from Fethard and its surrounding parishes attend our twice weekly training sessions in spite of the physically demanding nature of the sport and the sometimes challenging aspect of our winter weather.

The emphasis in these club sessions

is not merely on winning, and competitions, but on participation and enjoyment of the health fitness benefits of this ancient and most basic sporting discipline. The club coaches focus on helping our younger runners to achieve their potential whatever their natural ability.

Following on from this approach to training, the club presents an annual award called 'Sportsperson of the year'. In deciding the recipient of this prize we looked at attendance at training, discipline, work rate, commitment to racing and respect towards coaches and fellow athletes.

Our 2000 winner was Rachel Blackmore from Mortlestown who inspired her club mates with her sportsmanship and her determination. In the competitive arena, the 2000 – 2001 season was most successful,

making it impractical to list all our medal winners, the following being a profile of our top runners and their achievements:

Michelle Ryall (Buffana)

U9: County Champion 200m and 60m; Munster Bronze medal 60m; All Ireland Bronze medal 60m; Tipp county games champion 200m.

Darragh Dwyer (Ballygambon) U10:

County Champion 60m, 200m and ball throw; Munster bronze medal 60m; County Silver Cross country.

John Lalor (Rathkenty) U9: County Champion Cross country; Munster Bronze medal Cross Country; County Bronze medal 200m.

Elaine Kennedy (Mortlestown) U11: Tipp Community games Champion 800m; County Silver Medal 800m; County 'B' Cross country Champion.

Michael Costello (Woodvale walk) U10: Tipp Community games Champion 100m.

Gregory Henry (St. Johnstown) U8: Tipp Community games Champion 60m.

Conor Prendergast (Cooleagh) U10: Tipp Community Games Champion 100m hurdles.

These are the athletes who crossed the line first in championship races wearing the blue and black of Fethard, but the unsung heroes are the boys and girls who never win but compete for the sheer joy of running and the sense of achievement that is experienced when one reaches the finish line after a hard race. Without these athletes our club workouts, in the boy's school

field in summer or the G.A.A field in winter, would be far less enjoyable and productive.



Rachel Blackmore, club 'Sportsperson of the Year'

It must be mentioned at this stage the debt of gratitude that is owed both to St. Patrick's Boy's School and Fethard G.A.A club for the use of their training facilities. Other activities organised by the club during the year include our Christmas party, trips to Carrick Swimming Pool and Kilkenny track, a sponsored walk to Grove Wood and several races and juvenile sports evenings.

In this information technology era, where children are increasingly cut off from the natural world and face many restrictions, challenges and distractions, we can only hope that through running and other sports our youth can taste some of that freedom to which Roger Bannister referred.

Sportsmanship, next to the family and the church, can be the greatest teacher of morals and for this reason it is vital that we in Fethard and our surrounding community, nurture and support our sporting organisations.

To end on an amusing note, the following is a race day list found discarded on the field after the recent A.A.I. Cross Country Championships at Everardsgrange.

The author is an obviously well organised young runner with an interesting set of priorities: (a) Race: spikes, shorts and singlet; (b) Clothes: an old tracksuit because it will get mucked up. Big Time! (c) Lunch: a packed lunch. (d) Others: most important of all is money. (e) Win! ♦

Foot & Mouth Disease



This year, 2001, will be remembered by many for the outbreak of Foot & Mouth disease in our country and the restrictions caused as a result. All farms and walks were closed to visitors and the above sign at the entrance at Grove is an example of how accommodating the Ponsonby family were. It reads "Cattle at Risk, No Entry. Ring 31295 for access. Please walk dogs in woods opposite. Thank You"

Fethard was no different than the rest of Ireland when everyone was asked to make special efforts to prevent the spread of the dreaded Foot and Mouth disease earlier this year.

Local organisations cancelled meetings and functions at which members would congregate. The Hogan Musical Society put rehearsals for their production of 'Mother Goose' on hold. Fethard ICA cancelled their monthly meeting on March 13th. Ballylusky White Heather Harriers deferred their annual St. Patrick's Day draw as the sale of tickets entails the calling from door to door in rural areas. Fethard Athletic Club postponed their AGM and of course all GAA activities were brought to a halt. Disinfectant soak mats were in place

outside churches, public buildings and business premises.

The precautions taken locally may have seemed to be overreacting to the scare. However, many local people, of free travel age, will remember the 1941 outbreak when cattle were destroyed on a farm as near as Moyglass. This was in an era when the very few cattle trucks in operation were grounded as the petrol was rationed and livestock could only be moved as far as they could walk. The outbreak of sixty years ago was not, however, without its humorous episodes.

The noted practical jokers working at Coolmoyné Creamery included a 7lb weight in the back-pack of the late John Croke, whose job it was to spray

the incoming carts. John walked around for a considerable period oblivious to the fact he was carrying 7lb overweight. It was also a regular occurrence to see five or six able-bodied men pushing and pulling, trying to persuade a reluctant donkey to get its feet wet and go through the one-foot-deep pit of disinfectant.

Looking back, it now seems a different world, when horses and carts, don-

keys and carts, went to the creamery. To the younger generation it must seem like a different planet. Those were the days when farmers like Tom White of Knockelly called to houses en route inquiring if occupants needed any messages, and gladly brought them. We certainly have progressed and gained much from those days, but perhaps in hindsight, we have even lost more. ♦

Reunion - Leaving Cert 1975

Calling all Fethard past pupils from 1970 (first year) – to 1975 (Leaving Cert). We are planning a reunion for the coming year. The date set is Saturday, 4th May, 2002 (Bank Holiday weekend) and the venue is McCarthy's Hotel at 7pm (lateness will not be tolerated!). Dress: Informal but neat! Food: Some light refreshments will be served. (We hope!). No children, pets or partners unless part of the old class! Bring along any old school photos and of course any portable musical instruments. (No Francis you cannot bring the piano!) P.S. Drinking of alcohol will be allowed, in moderation, but

please no dancing on the tables!

Please make contact as soon as possible; we can't contact you, as there is no school register for our year. (Please bring to the attention of family left in the area.) Please RSVP soon as we might need to book the Ballroom! Also the committee will consider any suggestions! Looking forward to meeting you all after 27 years!

Contact: Tom Delahunty, Market Hill, Fethard; Madge (McGrath) Fogarty, Beal Inse, Upper Riverstown, Glanmire, Cork.

Email: fogartygang@eircom.com
or Majella Morrissey Smyth, 6
Strylea, Fethard. ♦

St. Vincent De Paul

The Society continued its work in the parish in the past year, greatly helped by the generosity of the people who donate funds to us.

Our annual collection again set a new record and donations outside of the collection were also high. We lost our esteemed spiritual advisor early in the year with the transfer of Fr. Sean Ryan. Fr. Sean was a most diligent worker for the society. We wish him

well in his new posting.

Our new parish priest Fr. Tom Breen has kindly agreed to become our spiritual director. Our work in the parish consists of family help, educational help, senior citizens, holiday and assistance with Christmas expenses.

Anybody needing assistance, in complete confidentiality, please contact any member of the conference. ♦

Killusty Pony Show 2001

The Foot and Mouth epidemic in England put paid to the chances of holding Killusty Pony Show in 2001. The restrictions in place in Ireland commencing with 'not on agricultural land' meant that it was impossible to comply and still hold the Show in Killusty. A social evening was held instead.

On Saturday 6th October in the Ballroom, Fethard, the Killusty Show Committee held an evening in lieu of the Show. The Ladies' Committee produced a scrumptious meal for 120. Kieran Fogarty provided suitable background music during the supper and upped the tempo for dancing when everyone had finished eating. There were some very accomplished waltzers in evidence but no prizes

were being given out. The 'Walls of Limerick' and 'Siege of Ennis' were enthusiastically re-enacted by supporters of all ages. A great night was had by all. The Ballroom Committee continue to improve the facilities and that made the Killusty Committee's job that much easier.

With the last case of Foot and Mouth in England on September 30, 2001, as I write, it looks as if it will be possible to hold the Show as usual on the first Saturday in July 2002. If some participants have their way, the social, too, will become an annual event.

Officers elected for 2001 are: Chairman, Noel Byrne, Claremore, Killusty; Secretary, Betsy O'Connor, Knockelly, Fethard. ♦

Canon James Power retires

At a most enjoyable parish function in the ballroom on Thursday 2nd August, presentations were made from the Fethard and Killusty parishes to Very Rev, Canon James Power to mark his retirement as Parish Priest of Fethard and Killusty.

Mr Jimmy Connolly, M.C. on the night, on behalf of the Fethard parishioners thanked Canon Power for his dedicated and unselfish service to the people of Fethard and Killusty. He paid a very special tribute to the Canon's devotion to the sick and incapacitated of the parish and said he never failed to visit any member of his flock who were hospitalised, whatever the distance.

Mr Mick Ahearne made the presentation and Mr Noel Byrne spoke similarly on behalf of the parishioners of

Killusty. Mr Pat Halpin made the presentation on behalf of the Killusty people. Noel stated that Pat was well worthy of the honour as he probably knew Canon Power longer than anyone else in the parish. While in the employment of Healy's of Coolcree, Pat was a teammate of the Canons on the 1945 Moycarkey junior football team.

Fethard and Killusty parish are very fortunate that Canon Power will still continue his ministry amongst us. Jimmy and Noel also welcomed our new Parish Priest, Fr. Tom Breen, to the Fethard & Killusty parish. Canon Power suitably replied and thanked all concerned with the organisation of the event. He repeated his thanks at the 11am Mass in the Parish Church on Sunday morning. ♦

Culchie Festival 2001

Paddy Rock (Festival Director)

The Culchie Festival originated in Clonbur, Co Galway, and is now in its twelfth year. 2001 was the first year that it was held outside the West of Ireland as a result of a local man, **B r e n d a n** Morrissey, winning the title in Shrule, Co. Mayo, in October 2000. Brendan insisted the festival be brought to Fethard.

The Festival is a festival of fun and its aim is to find local characters all over Ireland in towns and villages, who are natural entertainers and have the ability to entertain at will, at any time of the day or night. This year's Festival brought a huge gathering to Fethard for the four day event. The Culchies arrived in the town on Thursday night, where they were matched up with their escorts for the weekend by Biddy (a well known character herself), whose job it was to see that the Culchies/contestants were on time for all the pre-arranged challenges that lay in wait for them.

One of these events came under the guise of 'The Fionn Mac Cuhaill Challenge', Fionn challenged the Culchies to welly-throw, to knit, to wool-roll, to model in the culchie fash-

ion show, to hurl, to go back to school for an hour (in Grants Bar) and finally, to the art of 'bulling' and horse shoe throwing. This method is a tried and tested way of assessing the true quali-



Ireland's Culchie of 2001, Ken Lee, Killusty, receiving a bottle of Champagne from Minister Noel Davern TD. National winner Ken represented Slievenamon and qualified for the final from the heats held at Cloneen Hall and Sports Complex.

ties of a genuine culchie, before being interviewed on stage by the Festival c o m p e r e Margaret Niland. Margaret, who hails from Kilkelly, Co Mayo has compered the event for the three years running. In recent years other comperes for the festival have been Nicola Berisford, WLR Radio, W a t e r f o r d ; B r e n d a Donoghue (Gerry Ryan Show RTE); Linda

Martin; Maxi and Anne Doyle all of whom remain good friends of the festival and continue to mention the festival on occasions on their own radio shows when the opportunity arises.

Friday saw the Culchies head off to Clonmel where they called into Tipp FM Radio to wish them a Happy 10th Birthday.

Throughout the weekend the Culchies raised money for this year's adopted charity, the 'Top Flat Charity', Temple Street Children's Hospital, Dublin. Including the donations



Ken Lee photographed with his friends at a victory celebration held in Cloneen.

received from the Culchie 'Bed Push' in Clonmel, the total money raised came to £2,070.

Friday night saw the now famous 'Bacon and Cabbage Ball' take place in the Ballroom. On Saturday and Sunday record crowds attended the interviews, which were on stage in the Ballroom, followed each night with dancing till late. On Sunday there was a hint of past times, as the Festival Parade took place, travelling from the Ballroom to the GAA grounds. Some very interesting floats were entered, and the prize for the best float went to Burkes Bar. Many shops also entered the festival theme with some interesting window displays appearing up and down the town. The window display winner was O'Sullivan's Chemist.

The selection of the 'Junior Culchie' took place after the parade and was followed by a unique hurling match at the pitch between the 'Powley Boys' from Castlecomer and the Culchies, with the overall winners being the 'Powley Boys' (or so they say). The weekend was brought to a close with

Ireland's top comedy mime act, 'The Madcaps' who received a standing ovation from a packed ballroom. Soon after, local man Ken Lee, from Killusty, was selected as Ireland's Original Culchie for 2001.

As Festival Director I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people of Fethard and the surrounding areas for the warm welcome the Culchies and I received throughout the build up to the event and throughout the weekend itself. I would like to say a special word of thanks to Catriona Stapleton who organised accommodation for people visiting Fethard over the weekend, and also to Brendan Morrissey and the Morrissey Family who extended a warm welcome to me at all times.

I look forward to hosting the Festival next year in Fethard and if you know that local character that we search for, why not let us know about him. If you have relations living abroad why not get them to plan their holiday for the Festival next year at the October Bank Holiday weekend. ♦

Fethard Badminton Club

The club had a very successful 2000/2001 season with team and individual performances outshining previous years. We started the season with the County Shield teams. This event got the club off with matches being played on a home and away basis. Our 5th/6th division team didn't go quite as far as our 3rd/4th division team who eventually went on to win the county final.

Our next event was the county league for our 3rd division team. This competition seemed to bring the best out in our players with each match being fought down to the wire. The league is contested with the first half being played before Christmas and the second half after Christmas. The final was held at the end of April and as we were unable to field the full team, we went down to Galbally.

We had three individual players, Catherine Morrissey, Jim Connolly and Pat Ryan, taking part in the Munster junior competition in Clonmel. This event had singles, doubles and mixed competitions. Catherine Morrissey set the ball rolling when she took the Munster singles title beating a Cork lady in the final. Pat Ryan and Jim Connolly both participated in the singles event but luck was not on their side for this event. Catherine Morrissey, after her win in the singles, teamed up with Mary Wall (Hillview) in the ladies doubles and came up against two other Hillview players in the final. Following great displays from all four players, Catherine Morrissey won her second Munster title of the day. Pat Ryan and Jim Connolly played the

doubles but like the singles event luck was not on their side. Jim Connolly teamed up with Catherine Morrissey in the mixed and reached the semifinal of this event.

In the county doubles, Ger Browne and Jim Connolly put up a great performance and gave some fine displays of Badminton to take the 3rd Division title. Ger Browne teamed up with Mary Nugent in the county 4th division mixed and took that title beating Fiona Lawrence and John Fitzgerald (Hillview) in the final. Catherine Morrissey and Jim Connolly were beaten in the 2nd division mixed final.

The county cup was the final event of the season and we had the same team entered in this competition and true to form the team rallied to take this title and to add to the clubs great performances for this season.

Players were: Pat Ryan, Jim Connolly, Ger Browne, Catherine Morrissey, Fiona Lawrence and Mary Nugent. Other players who subbed for the year were Delores Costigan and Marie Neavyn. Jim Connolly represented Tipperary in class 4 and Catherine Morrissey in class 3, Butterfield Cup and Brewster Cup. ♦

NEW CAREER FOR PATSY

Mr Patsy Lawrence, a very popular and efficient barman for 20 years, left the public house trade and has set up his own hackney service. We wish him the very best of luck in his new venture. He may be contacted day or night on Telephone: 052 32250 or 086 8217472.

The Valley Witch!

Jean Collins O'Brien

It was Hallowe'en about 1960 and my late mother and grandmother (who lived with us for the last years of her life) were talking about past Hallowe'ens and dressing-up. We lived in The Valley at that time, in what is now Looby's house.

Almost before I realised what was happening I was dressed up in my grandmother's black fur coat and her new fur lined slippers (which her daughter had sent her from London a few days previously).

A mask placed on my face completed my disguise. I was now ready to go up the Valley and attempt to scare my sister Brid and her friend Catherine Molloy, who lived in what was then the Munster and Leinster Bank House, now Don O'Connell's residence. The two girls were at study and always came home via the Valley.

On my way up The Valley I met Pat Fogarty and one of his younger brothers, who when they saw me, placed their coats over their heads and raced down the street. This gave me a great feeling of elation as I walked up to my vantage point inside the wall opposite Mulligans (now Gilpin's) where I proceeded to wait for Brid and Catherine.

I was waiting only a short time, when I heard what I could only describe as a herd of stampeding elephants coming up the Valley and they started to pound their way in, near to where I was hiding. I found out afterwards that my pursuers were the St Patrick's Place gang. All I could hear during this time were shouts of, "Find the witch, find the Witch." The very frightened "witch" was crouched amongst the briars, brambles and

barbed wire shaking like a leaf. I knew straight away I had to move fast! I proceeded to make my way as quietly and quickly as possible, down through the overgrown area which was next to the Clashawley. The next thing I knew I was ankle-deep in the Clashawley and my Grandmother's new slippers were ruined!! By then I was opposite Landy's house now the Clashawley Cottage and I just raced across the road as fast as my (Granny's) sodden slippers and shaking legs would bring me. I was home and safe!! My mother and grandmother were delighted to see me in one piece and I never even got told off over the ruined slippers!

That night Brid and Catherine went by a different route — the Main Street and I never dressed up for Hallowe'en again! ♦



Molly Meara from Powerstown. Molly is a sister of Bill Prout from Killusty and was sacristan of Powerstown Church.

‘Simple Simon’ 1950

The Nationalist Newspaper

The following article appeared in the Nationalist in 1950 by a Special Correspondent. We contacted Brendan Long, former Editor, and asked him was it he who had written it more than half a century ago. Having heard an excerpt over the phone he felt that he could very well have been the correspondent in question. We owe him a debt of gratitude for preserving this record for posterity.

BRAVO FETHARD !

Another great success for the Fethard Players in their annual Pantomime! For three hours we all enjoyed a feast of song and dance and music, of jest and fun. The high standard of other years was maintained in “Simple Simon” and many say it was bettered. Packed houses were the order. Many patrons came from far away having discovered the mine of talent that is in Fethard.

The part of Simple Simon was a personal triumph for Paddy McLellan. He appeared very frequently on the stage and all the joys and sorrows and perplexities of youth were splendidly depicted by him. He sang very well when called on, and recited a very clever piece of his own composing.

Dame Twinkle’s part, of course, as we have come to expect, was played by

Billy O’Flynn. I think he was better than ever in this pantomime. Each time he appeared we expected life and fun, and we were never disappointed.

Louis O’Donnell played the Baron of the beetling brows and bristling moustache and florid face with great gusto. He had some riotously funny scenes with the Dame and sang ‘Paddy Reilly’ very well indeed.

Eddie O’Neill and Ned Maher were the bad bandits, Sam and Slippery. They played and sang excellently and gave us many laughs, especially in the schoolroom scene. Eddie sang the ‘Shawl of Galway Grey’ feelingly and received a deserved ovation.

Paul, the handsome hero, was played by Denis Looby. He gained confidence as the play progressed and gave a nice performance. He has a very pleasing voice and his duet with



Cast of ‘Simple Simon’ on stage in 1950

Marion and his own solo were warmly applauded.

Joan Goldsboro was a very bright and vivacious Marion, the heroine. She sang two solos, both beautifully, and we admired the poise and confidence with which she sang. Helen O'Connell's Fairy Queen gave us beautiful speaking and acting all through the play. Tom Barrett played the deep-voiced Demon King well improving with each performance.

Betty O'Donnell in her rather brief part as Anne acquitted herself very creditably. Paddy Morrissey had two roles, - the Pieman and the King of Truth. In both he was successful, speaking and acting well. John Collins as Jack, and John Littleton as the M.C. were good and clearly spoken in their brief appearances.

The characters in the cast were assisted by the villagers in the singing of the choruses. The villagers were:- Misses M. Evans, K. Fahey, M. Greene, M. Kenny, M. McCarthy, B. Malone, E. O'Shea, F. Walshe, L. Ward; Messrs. B. Kennedy, A. Kissane, W. Ryan, D. Wall, J. White.

Three of the choruses were in harmony, the others in unison. All were finely sung, the harmonised choruses being particularly good. John White sang the solo tenor part in 'Love's Old Sweet Song' very sweetly. The more lively topical songs and choruses were sung with great spirit and life.

We had some lovely dances, full of charm and beauty. The dances were devised and rehearsed by Miss Phyllis O'Connell, who deserves the greatest credit for these works of art and grace. I refer particularly to the beautiful fairy Mime when the Fairy Queen (Miss H. O'Connell) and her atten-

dants - Misses J. Brett, P. Coffey, N. Hennessy, P. O'Connell and C. White - treated us to a most graceful and captivating exhibition of dancing to the time of a beautiful waltz, well played by the orchestra, while they portrayed for us in mime and dance the story of Simple Simon. This dance was rendered more beautiful still by the very skillful lighting of Mr. H. Goldsboro, who not merely on this occasion, but throughout the pantomime used the lighting and effects, of which he was in charge, to the very best advantage.

The excellent orchestra was:- Violin, Mrs. Murphy; Trumpet, Mr. J. O'Shea; Saxophone, Mr. T. Sheehan; Drums, Mr. P. Grant; Piano, Miss E. Lonergan. Everyone was loud in their praise of its grand playing.

For this Pantomime only three costumes were hired from Dublin. All the rest - the gay frocks and dresses of the ladies, the men's colourful attire - were made at home in Fethard. A notable achievement. ♦

Graduation for mother and daughter

Congratulations to Valerie Colville, B.Sc. Spitalfield, who graduated from the University of Limerick with an Honours Degree in Sport & Exercise Science.

Congratulations also to Valerie's mother, Peggy Colville, who graduated with distinction in the field of Supervisory Management from The Irish College of Ireland, Dublin.

Woodvale Walk Residents Association

In March 2001 the residents of Woodvale walk formed a residents committee. The following elected were: Chairperson, Mary Murphy; Assistant Chairperson, Bill Pollard; Secretary, Dolores O'Donnell; Treasurer, Fiona Lawrence; P.R.O, Brud Roche.

Our aim was to upgrade our estate.

There was a grant received from the County Council which enabled us, with the help of the residents, to purchase a 'sit-on' lawnmower and flowers. With the help of the kids and committee we were able to set out the green areas. The committee and residents also do a sweep up of the estate every Wednesday night. ♦



Mr. Seamus Healy, T.D. M.C.C, met with members of the newly formed Woodvale Walk Residents Association at a meeting in the Tirry Community Centre on Thursday night 15th March. A large attendance came to voice their opinions and also hand a petition to Deputy Healy seeking support and action from the County Council to improve facilities in their housing estate. The meeting was also attended by representatives of Fethard and Killusty Community Council who arranged a follow-up meeting with the County Council's Engineer, Jonathan Cooney, and members of the Residents Association.

Country Markets

The door of the country market at the town hall is opened every Friday morning at 8am. There is always a great buzz when people come to buy our country fresh produce.

You can always find a good variety of confectionery, farm fresh eggs, veg-

etables, jam and honey, but most popular of all are the cut flowers and plants.

To our friends overseas we send our best wishes for Christmas and the New Year and look forward to their next trip to Fethard. ♦

“The great republic of the West” *Tommy Healy*

Such was the description applied to the United States by Charles Kickham in ‘Knocknagow’, a work which I read as a sixteen year old back in 1959 and one which I have reread a number of times since.

I have been to the USA, in 1981 when, as a family we took advantage of the sky-high exchange rate of sterling and booked a flight to Florida with that cut-price airline ‘Laker’, now sadly no more. We went again in 1984 when we spent almost a month in New England thanks to my wife Julie’s cousin Bea who lent us an apartment and a car and made possible an unforgettable holiday.

One of my abiding memories of the second trip was arriving in Boston Airport after the usual exhausting flight and, having managed to convince the charmless, poker-faced Immigration Officer that we were neither illegal immigrants nor undesirables with a highly questionable past, we encountered US Customs. Struggling under the weight of a large case and balancing a bag on the other arm, I was waylaid by an officer and asked for our passports. I fumbled in the bag and produced three, two UK ones and my Irish one, the distinctive green document which preceded the current EU version. The green one produced an immediate change of manner, we were asked where we were to stay and offered all sorts of information and advice to help make our holiday, sorry, our vacation, enjoyable.

Reflecting on the experience a few years later, I concluded that I must have encountered one of the descendants of Phil Leahy or one of the many

who had emigrated in the post-Famine period and whom Kickham portrayed so sympathetically in his novel. Throughout that memorable event we encountered countless Irish Americans and felt that we were part of that extended family which characterises the Irish Diaspora.

This October saw the two of us, our girls having grown up and, like birds, flown the nest, at Heathrow en route for Chicago. Our daughter Kathleen was there and we were to spend four nights on package deal break in the ‘windy city’. She had booked it for us with Virgin in August but, like everyone else, had not reckoned on September 11th. The resulting panic in the holiday trade had resulted in us being transferred to British Airways. Surviving the Draconian security at departure, we embarked on the eight hour flight to O’Hare Airport and arrived at a fine and sunny Chicago in the early afternoon. It was Sunday and the city was a little less frenetic in its pace than the rest of the week.

That Monday afternoon saw us driving up the lake coast to the state of Wisconsin, a part of America settled in the early 19th century by Germans and, as a result, the beer capital of the country. The cost of petrol amazed us, about £1 a gallon, I had filled up on the way from Plymouth to London at four times the US price and the experience illustrated how heavily taxed this particular pleasure is in Europe. Our destination in Wisconsin was the home of my second cousin Mary and her daughter Kathy and her family. She is the last surviving daughter of a grand uncle, my father’s mother’s

brother who had emigrated in the 1880s. He had settled in California and trained horses there eventually. The family made us extremely welcome, served us an excellent meal and regretted that our stay was so short. We spent a most convivial evening exploring and explaining our various family relationships and left promising to keep in touch. The trip back to Chicago was made in the heaviest rain storm we have ever encountered, far worse than the thunderstorm I remembered from the drought of 1959, when on one Sunday night in August, the heavens opened and we had a brief respite from three months of dry weather.

While the Chicago trip brought home to me the immediate and subjective reality of emigration, a visit to the museum in Cobh in August had put the issue into perspective. The museum, housed in the old railway station, commemorates the three million people who emigrated from Ireland through that port, bound mainly for North America. It does not neglect those other countries to which significant numbers of Irish people departed and there is an interesting section on Australia and New Zealand to which large numbers travelled in search of a better life or perforce by transportation. The coverage of transportation to Australia is particularly well described. This aspect of emigration started with the large numbers of United Irishmen dispatched in the aftermath of the 1798 Rebellion and their particularly brutal treatment there. The episode is very well covered by the Australian writer Robert Hughes in his highly graphic account of convict life in "The Fatal Shore".

The reality of emigration is something which has shaped the lives and attitudes of us all. It has shaped the history of modern Ireland, it has affected its economic development and fashioned our attitudes and responses whether individually or as a people. Other countries in Europe have experienced it but in no other country has it been experienced on such a scale. The population of Ireland in 1841 was 8.5 million and probably even higher if the evidence cited by Mrs Woodham-Smith in her seminal work 'The Great Hunger' is to be accepted. By 1901 that population was down to 4.5 million and the decline continued until the 1960s. Famine during 1846-48 killed over a million and dispersed another million and a half. Population haemorrhage in the following decades was severe and shocked and infuriated the Fenian Kickham. Today Ireland is the only country in Europe which has a population very much smaller than that of a century and a half ago.

However the picture is no longer bleak. In an article in the London "Times" a few weeks ago, Ireland and France are the only EU countries which, on present projections can expect to experience greater numbers of people between now and 2050. These figures are based on internal indigenous growth only. They do not allow for that phenomenon new to Ireland, net immigration. While every other EU state is and will be grappling with the manifold problems of declining population and supporting their huge numbers of retired, Ireland like Australia and New Zealand, can look forward to the unusual position of having people who are mainly young and

economically active. When I was at school the reverse was the case, the Fethard of the 1950s was a town rapidly losing its young people. I continue to be both amazed and delighted that the reverse is now the case.

In the final chapter of "Knocknagow" Billy Heffernan says . . . *"I never see a town that's gone like*

Clonmel. I remember when I could hardly get through the streets wud loads uv corn; and now there's nothin' doin' there. The mills nearly all idle an' half the shops shut up." I only wish that Billy Heffernan or his creator could come back to see present day Clonmel. Kickham must be resting well in Mullinahone Churchyard. ♦

St. Patrick's Place Residents Assoc.



The people of St. Patrick's Place held a meeting in the Tirry Community Centre on Tuesday night 26th June, to elect a residents' committee. Following some lively discussion it was decided to draw up a priority list of items needing attention and seek a meeting with County Council officials. Councillors Susan Meagher and John Fahey attended and spoke at the meeting. Both congratulated the steering committee on their initiative. The group were encouraged to work under the umbrella of the Fethard & Killusty

Community Council who were also represented at the meeting.

The officers elected at the meeting were Geraldine Looney (chairperson), Eileen O'Shea (secretary), Philomena Morrissey and Maura Ryan (joint treasurers).

Further meeting have taken place with the County Council who stated that they will be unable to offer the same support as in other County Council estates as all but four of the houses in St. Patrick's Place are now in private ownership. ♦

My good friend Joe Pilendiram

William Mullins

Genuine friendship enriches life, enhances relationships. Such a friend is Joseph Pilendiram who comes originally from Sri Lanka, formerly known as Ceylon famous for the tea that country produces. We became

friends thorough the church and a common faith. The more I came to know him, the more I learnt about his close affiliation and affection for Ireland, which for him is the land of

saints and scholars. He is only a third generation Catholic for his forefathers were Hindus. He recalls with evident relish names like Keating, Conway, Dunne, Long – a long line of Missionaries belonging to the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Inchicore, Dublin. He has chosen for special mention the family of Fr. Timothy Long O.M.I. who came from Cork. He tells me that the Long family were very blessed to give four of their children to spread the Kingdom of God. Fr Timothy Long came to Sri Lanka in 1921 and served the country till 1954. His two brothers- Fr. Fredric Long was dean in Maynooth; Fr Daniel Long was professor of Moral Theology at the Oblate Scolasticate; their only sis-

ter became a nun- Rev. Sister Mary Mechtilde and was a lecturer at the Ladies Training College at Carysfort.

Joe came to England in 1954. The Missionaries had given him not only a fine education but also a deep founda-

tion in his faith. While studying at St. Patrick's College under Fr Long, in 1939 at the commencement of World War II, he came to know the Legion of Mary,



Joseph Pilendiram photographed meeting Pope John Paul II

which was started by Frank Duff in Ireland in 1921. The Legion of Mary had spread all round the globe by the time Joe came to England. He continued his work in the Legion of Mary in London and was soon spotted by Mr Joseph Farrelly who was the treasurer of the then Senatus of England and Wales. Joe Pilendiram was elected to be Assistant Treasurer of the Senatus. It was during that period he came to know the founder of the Legion, Frank Duff, and they remained friends till the death of Frank Duff on 7th November 1980. Joe expresses the view that Frank Duff will be counted as one of the greatest in the land of 'Saints and Scholars'.

It was while he was in England

Frank Duff chose Joe Pilendiram to be the Envoy of the Legion of Mary for East Africa covering the territories of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. People in Ireland will know that Edel Quinn, whose cause is going forward for beatification, once traversed this part of Africa. She went as Envoy to Africa in 1936 and worked there for 8 years until her death in 1959. Mr Duff sent Joe Pilendiram to East Africa as the Envoy. He was in Dublin for a period before his departure to Nairobi and during his stay in Dublin he was introduced to Mr William Cosgrave the first Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland. Mr Cosgrave was a great friend of Frank Duff and helped him when help was needed in these early days in 1921. Mr Cosgrave confided to Joe all the difficulties that prevailed in 1921 when Frank Duff started the Legion and then the Prime Minister was himself able to help his friend.

In the summer of 1959, Joe left for Nairobi to commence his important mission. On his way out, he stopped in Rome and was received in audience by Pope John XXIII who had succeeded Pope Pius XII in August of the previous year. With the blessing and the approval of Pope John XXIII, Joe went to East Africa and carried out the important work of Envoyship throughout Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania with the active support of the Pope's representative- the then Apostolic Nuncio in Nairobi, His Excellency the Archbishop of Guido Del Mestri. For three years, Joe toiled hard and perseveringly to extend the legion of Mary throughout East Africa and to consolidate what was established by Edel Quinn. In June 1962, on his return to Dublin to lay down his baton of office,

he broke his journey in Rome. There in the Eternal City, he was given the great honour of being received by Pope John XXIII and to be complimented by the Supreme Pontiff.

On his return to U.K. he settled down, got married and had three children. He worked as a Probation Officer until he retired in 1989. Whether he was working or in retirement, his work for God and his Blessed Mother never faltered. He was president of the Senatus of London for 6 years and also Society of the Blessed Virgin Mary for which Cardinal Cathal Daly is one of the patrons. In 1996, there was a request for personal help in Kingston, Jamaica from the superior of the Missionaries of the Poor who were looking after nearly four hundred poor ejected men, women and children. Joe responded promptly and went to Kingston and lived with the community of the Missionaries of the Poor and rendered sterling service for a whole year seeing Jesus in every one of the poor people being looked after by the Missionaries of the Poor. As recently as last year, the bishop in Jaffna, Sri Lanka invited him back to his native country to help the people suffering in one way or another, orphans, widows, widowers and the people traumatised by 17 years of civil war. Joe went to Sri Lanka and helped the bishop and the church throughout the year 2000. That is the type of generosity and selflessness of my dearest friend Joe Pilendiram. The reigning Pontiff Pope John Paul II has received him in audience on several occasions commencing in the eighties up to the present day. In my experience, I can definitely say that there are few people who measure up to his standards. ♦

Fethard Open Coursing Club

Arthur Daly

This year, 2001 was a great year for Fethard Open Coursing Club. We had the privilege of running the Munster Open Cup, which is no easy task, as well as the J.F. O'Sullivan Cup. To say we had a good meeting would be putting it mildly as every one there agreed it was one of the best Munster Cup meetings they had seen in years. To top it all the Munster Cup was won by a member of our own club. The dog Tipperary Martin owned by Martin Ryan of Dungarvan and trained by John O'Gorman won the cup for the second time, the first dog in the cup's history to do so.

Sonny Butler from Thurles won the J.F. O'Sullivan cup. We also won some local stakes including the Dick Burke local stake for the working members,

which was won by Pat Cormack.

We also won the Cormack Cup for eight dogs and bitches, which was won by Tommy Shine.

All in all we had a great year's coursing. Thanks mainly to all our landowners and sponsors to whom we owe a vote of thanks.

Finally I would like to thank our hard working beaters. Without them we would have no coursing. Thanks also to our secretary and treasurer.

My hope for 2001 is that we can have another good year. Keep up the good work lads and may the hare run straight and true (and escape).

Officers for 2001: Presidents: J. O'Sullivan and T. O'Riordan; Secretary, Pat O'Sullivan; Chairman, Arthur Daly. ♦



FERGUS FAMILY REUNION

Saturday, 18th August, was a special day for the Fergus family in Fethard. Peter Fergus, on behalf of all Vincent's family, organised a reunion to celebrate and reflect their family's connection with Fethard. All the Fergus family, grandchildren, in-laws, outlaws, friends, neighbours, teachers, school-friends were invited to a special service in the Augustinian Abbey on Saturday afternoon, followed by the blessing of a memorial headstone at Calvary Cemetery, and later for supper and a social gathering at Loneragans Bar. The evening was truly a memorable one for all concerned and afforded all involved a time to reflect on the vibrancy, vitality, good humour and love of life the Fergus family have and still associate with their former hometown — Fethard. Members of the family are photographed above in Loneragans Bar.

The Irish Girl Guides

Judy Doyle



On the beach at Woodstown, 2001

This past year has been quieter than usual for the Fethard Girl Guides due to the restrictions placed on outdoor activities as a result of the Foot and Mouth outbreak.

The regional camp organised for Kilcooley was cancelled and also all hikes and other outdoor activities. But, we still had a very active year, the highlight being a day trip in June for all Ladybirds, Brownies and Guides to Splash World and Woodstown in Waterford. We set off bright and early from Fethard and met up with groups from Cashel and Thurles. The afternoon on the beach was absolutely wonderful. We had brilliant sunshine, treasure trails, seashell crafts and the "Burying of our Area Commissioner in the sand." Many parents and ex leaders joined us that day, and everyone had a wonderful time.

Last December we participated in a "Gang Show" in Thurles, and in February we attended Thinking Day celebrations in Cashel. Presently we are very busy with making Christmas crafts for a craft show in Thurles on the 9th December.

The guide leaders attended the official opening of the new Guide Centre and shop in Limerick in September. Fund raising for this project is on going. The weekly meetings are held in the Ballroom on Mondays from 7-8pm. Presently we have four leaders: Susan O'Meara (Ladybirds), Catherine O'Connell (Brownies), Teresa Hurley and Judy Doyle (Guides), who have put in tremendous work, but we could always use more adult leaders. If you would like to help and have some fun at the same time, Guiding has a lot to offer. ♦

Producing 'Foundations'

Rev. Michael Barry



Rev. Fr. Michael Barry, originally from Tullamaine, Fethard, and now working in Borrisoleigh, photographed at his favourite hobby, 'Quadding' in the Galtee mountains.

The editor has asked me to write a few lines regarding my new job as editor of our diocesan magazine *Foundations*. I offer the following in response to his request.

It was over a year and a half ago when I got a phone call from the Archbishop asking me to become the next editor of *Foundations*. Since then I have tried my best to familiarise myself with the entire process of producing a magazine. This has been an interesting and exciting journey.

I began by meeting with the magazine production team made up of nine young priests working in various parishes across the diocese. We decided after much discussion to change the face of the magazine and to try and make its contents as relevant and as appealing as possible. This aim was achieved by including news items and

pictures of events from the various parishes. We also invested in a new computer which allows us to produce the entire magazine ourselves.

Originally the magazine was set up to foster faith and unity within the diocese. This was to be the guiding principle of how we proceeded with our task. The future success of *Foundations* will very much depend on its content. The reader must be given a reason to open its pages if it is to achieve its purpose. We have tried to involve every parish in this initiative. During the production phase we write to every priest in every parish seeking ideas and suggestions. As a committee it is impossible for us to be in touch with every initiative and 'good news' story that is going on in every parish. This is why it is so important for us to be told of events so that we can use

Foundations to spread the word of what's going on and spread the good news that we all need to hear.

One of the new features in the 'new look' magazine is the children's section entitled 'Sparky's Space'. These four pages are for our younger readers' enjoyment. They include word puzzles, an art competition and other fun things to do. One of the pages is filled with pictures of children doing whatever it is that children do. And of course everyone from grandparents to long lost cousins across the globe eventually get to see these pictures — a little bit like the 'Fethard at home' website, but not quite as effective!

Another section entitled 'Exploring Faith Issues' attempts to foster and deepen faith. Our most recent issue, for example, asks the question 'Why does a loving God allow suffering?' There are few, if any, to which that question is not relevant.

If I have discovered anything since I got this job, it is that editors don't have an easy task. I read the following description of what it means to be an editor and I agree with every word:

*The editor has a complex and delicate task.
He must plan, prod, encourage,
turn down, turn up,
remind contributors of deadlines,
speak sternly 'with a sliver of ice in his heart'
when deadlines are unmet.*

*He must cherish his writers
but be answerable to his readers
and he'd better not be thin-skinned
when reader or writer complains.*

*This editor is grateful to everyone who has
eased his way.*

More recently in my ministry I have been assigned to St Patrick's College, Thurles as Spiritual Director to the

seminarians. This presents a daunting challenge and one I don't at all feel worthy of. But I am sure, in time, it will prove to be as interesting and exciting as my work with Foundations has been, if not more so. In an effort to better prepare myself for this onerous task I now travel to Dublin on a weekly basis to learn the art involved in Spiritual Direction.

I thank God for the good health I am currently enjoying which enables me to carry out these jobs. I pray that you too are enjoying good health and I hope you and yours have a happy Christmas and a blessed New Year. ♦

THE FETHARD CONNECTION

The author of a new book on the 'Hope Diamond' book is Mary Ryan whose grandfather was cousin of Mrs Evelyn Walsh McLean, long time owner of the 'Hope Diamond'.

Evelyn Walsh's father, Tom Walsh of Baptistgrange, emigrated to America as a 17 year-old youth having worked as an apprentice carpenter on the erection of the ornamental porch on the former curate's house at Main Street. Tom Walsh became a very successful tin and copper mine owner in America and with his other business interests was reckoned to be one of the richest men in the world of his time. The 'Hope Diamond' was the largest coloured diamond in the world and allegedly had a curse attached to it. Evelyn Walsh made light of the curse even though several tragedies befell her. She overcame a drug addiction problem, her daughter died from an overdose, her son was killed in a car crash and her husband died in a sanatorium.

After Evelyn's death, her diamonds were acquired by a millionaire jeweller, Harry Winston, whose family also suffered misfortune. Local folklorists in the Baptistgrange district, notably the late Tommy Purcell, Jossesstown, and the late Jack Smith, Donoughmore, often discussed the life and times of Tom Walsh using information they had heard from people who knew him. Part of the folklore was that, on a visit home in 1889, he made an offer to build the church wall in Lisronagh. Tom Walsh died in 1910.

Civil Defence

The early part of the year was quiet due to the curtailment of activities during the Foot and Mouth crisis. All our members were on standby but thankfully our services were not required. Having local units at a time like this is very important so we could give a prompt response if we were called upon to help.

Once training resumed our members were very active. Many of our members attended the County Social in Dundrum house in April and Annual Camp in Lahinch in June. Our Rory once again took care of the kitchen for the week with many helping hands from our members and all had a very successful weekend. Members provided assistance with First Aid and stewarding at many events during the summer including the Mitchelstown Festival and Rose of Tralee week end and of course the Culchie Festival at home.

We would like to thank the

Ponsonby family, Grove, who have always made us welcome to use their land for training exercises and to the Tirry Community Hall committee for the use of room for weekly training.

It is hoped to clean up the fire station and hopefully we might see a Fire Unit in Fethard once again in 2002. Anyone interested should contact Rory Walsh.

Christmas greetings to all those who played an active roll in our organisation down the year.

Present Members: Rory Walsh, Rhya Roberts, Tom O'Halpin, Brian Kenny, Philip Croke, Emma Morrissey, Ruth Higgins, Teresa Coffey, Jim Murphy, Pat Flynn, Lar Looby, Gavin Ahearn, Patrick O'Brien, Noel O'Donnell, Joe Cunningham, Darren O'Meara, Damien Flynn, Deirdra Flynn, Robert Lee, Emmet Burke and Tony Kennedy (Instructor). ♦



This photograph, taken c.1900, is of the Byrne family from Fethard. L to R: Robert (better known as Bob Byrne, The Green), James, Thomas, Alice (Maher) Byrne, Alice, Johanna, Margaret and Molly Byrne. Alice and Margaret left for America.

Abymill Youth Drama Group



Cast from Abymill Youth Theatre Group's production of 'Wednesday's Child' which was staged in the Abymill Theatre. The successful show, produced by Seamus Hayes, ran for three nights and gave a young person's viewpoint at the start of the troubles in Northern Ireland. "For those who live in Northern Ireland — the troubles are a fact of life. For young people living elsewhere — it seems distant and inexplicable. 'Wednesday's Child' goes back in time and considers what it must have been like for Northern Ireland teenagers, both Catholic and Protestant, as their communities exploded into open conflict"

The Abymill Youth Drama group was started here in Fethard three years ago by Seamus Hayes (B.A. Drama, P.G.C.E Drama Primary and Secondary). Since then local interest has grown, and the group now comprises a junior and a senior level (6-11 years and 12-18 years respectively). There is great credit due to the efforts of all the youth involved for their contributions to the workshops and the various productions over the past few years.

The senior group's first production in 1999 of 'Our Day Out' by Willy Russell gave them a taste for the stage and by 2000, they were ready for the challenge of 'Grease' — whose performances filled the Abymill Theatre for

four nights!

This year, the acting skills of the senior group really shone in their portrayal of 'Wednesday's Child', a powerful drama looking at the lives of teenagers living in the early 70's with in the troubled city of Belfast.

This ran for three nights and both the audience and the cast really enjoyed the whole experience. Well done to all involved and all who helped to make these productions a success.

Classes for the senior group will resume after Christmas and classes for the junior group will begin, depending on level of interest and numbers. Remember, all are welcome! Contact Seamus at (087) 9502954 ♦

Fethard Historical Society



Fethard Historical Society held a very interesting lecture on Friday 5th October at 8.30pm in the Abymill Theatre by Senator Maurice Manning on 'James Dillon, his life, times and contemporaries'. Over 50 people attended the lecture which was followed by a 'question and answer' forum. Photographed at the lecture are L to R: Joe Kenny, Mary Hanrahan, Sen. Maurice Manning, Cllr. John Fahey and John Cooney.

The 6th Annual book fair organised by the Fethard Historical Society took place on Sunday 11th February 2001 in the Fethard Ballroom. The Tipperarian Book Fair continues to be a great success with young and old enjoying books, music, and high tea. Plans are presently being made for next year's Fair on Sunday 10th February. Any donations of books would be greatly appreciated.

The annual general meeting of the society was held on 27th March 2001. Margaret Newport and Mary Hanrahan had 3 years completed as secretary and P.R.O respectively. The new committee elected were: Chris Nevin, chairperson; Mary Hanrahan, vice chairperson; Catherine O'Flynn, secretary; Margaret Newport, assistant secretary; Gemma Burke, treasurer;

Peter Delaney, planning officer; Terry Cunningham, public relations officer; Diana Stokes, Dot Gibson, Kitty Delaney, Joe Kenny, David Sceats, Marie O'Donnell. A most interesting slide show entitled 'The long and the short of it' by Liam Burke followed the meeting.

A group of ten people travelled to see 'The Treasures of Waterford' on Saturday 7th April. Highlights of the day included a trip to the museum, walkabout with Jack Burchill and a tour of Waterford Crystal.

We held a lecture on 'Old Country Houses' by architect Matthew Shinnars in April. In early May, Liam Burke spoke to the society about 'The Burren'. This was in preparation for a weekend trip to The Burren which took place on the 18th – 20th May and

turned out to be a very busy but enjoyable weekend.

A lecture on 'Fethard Town Hall' took place in June. Archaeologist, Barry O'Reilly, spoke comprehensively on its history with lots of new interesting information on the building.

The Fethard tourism brochure was reprinted this year by the historical society and is available locally and at tourism centres in the region.

A grant was received from County Tipperary (SR) Vocational Educational Committee for our lecture programme.

We hope to put it to good use this coming year.

During the year the society was delighted to sponsor a school history project in the Patrician Presentation Secondary School. We also employed 10 students under the Students Summer Scheme who continued work on cataloguing death and birth records and entering them on computer.

Our autumn programme started with

a bus trip to Wexford at the end of September. We visited the Dunbrody Famine Ship on the Quay in New

Ross. We had previously visited the ship while it was being reconstructed. Now it is a wonderful place to visit to appreciate the conditions in which those travelled to America during the famine. While we were in Wexford we also visited the John. F. Kennedy Arboretum and the Kennedy Homestead.

The first lecture held in the autumn was a talk by Senator Maurice Manning on

'James Dillon – his life, times and contemporaries'. About 50 people attended this very interesting presentation.

We will shortly be rounding off our year with our Annual Christmas Dinner at the new restaurant at Slievenamon Golf Course. We send a sincere message of peace and happiness to all our members and friends at home and abroad. ♦



Marie O'Donnell and Kitty Delany planting the Fethard Historical Society's Millennium Oak Tree by the Town Wall on the 18th December, 2000.

The late Johnny Casey



The Casey family when they lived in The Valley. Back L to R: Johnny Casey (father), Johnny Casey, Kit (Catherine) Mackey (mother) and Johnny Mackey (uncle), Mary Cassidy (sister). In front is Molly Mackey (grandmother) and the child is Eileen Cassidy (niece).

Johnny Casey's parents were emigrants to Liverpool in the early twenties. His father was an electrician, and was a native of Fethard, as was his wife Kit. They had three girls in England, and Kit was in poor health during her pregnancy, eight years after the youngest girl, and so returned to Fethard for the birth of her only son, John in April 1932.

Up to the age of six, he lived with his family in Liverpool, and then became one of the war babies evacuated out of England during the blitz. He settled into his grandmother's home in The Valley, Fethard, and did not see his family again until he was fourteen years of age, having made his First Communion and Confirmation in Fethard. He was educated by the Patrician Brothers, where the first seeds of choral singing and drama were sown. A gifted musician from his

early childhood, he studied piano in the Presentation Convent, Fethard. Mary Casey, his sister, won 'Opportunity Knocks' playing the piano accordion and she found a very willing student in her musical brother Johnny during her summer visits to Fethard, when he developed a magnificent touch on the same instrument.

At the age of seventeen, having passed the entrance exam to the post office, Johnny served his apprentice years in the G.P.O. in Galway. In 1953 he arrived in Cahir to take up his appointment as clerk in Cahir Post Office, where he worked until his retirement in 1987. He had a great affinity with the elderly and was much loved by the pensioners who have predeceased him.

During his early years in Galway he was discovered by Maxi Dooley of the Arabian Dance Orchestra, Salthill, and

afterwards enjoyed several seasons as resident pianist with that orchestra. On his return to Fethard he joined the *'Twilight Serenaders'*, and soon progressed to Mick Fogarty's famous showband, the Southern Stars, who were received to huge acclaim in Dublin. Indeed they were the main attraction,

while *'Dickey Rock and the Blackbirds'* were the support band. Johnny then joined the Kevin Flynn Band and after a few years was approached by Jimmy Wiley of Mitchelstown and soon afterwards joined the Jimmy Wiley Orchestra. He completed his dance band career with the local band the Pat Burke Seven, and

spent many happy years touring with his Cahir companions. All his adult life he suffered from asthma and finally found the travelling too difficult. He was fortunate to be a pianist when show bands were at the height of their popularity, and so thousands of young people could enjoy his talent. He could accompany anybody in any key and often did!

On the 23rd of April 1958 Johnny married the local girl Winnie Caplice,

when they were both members of the Cahir Dramatic Society. Their son John was born in 1959, soon followed by daughters Maureen and Cathy. Johnny's family was the centre of his world, perhaps especially so since the war robbed him of his early years with his own siblings. All his family are



Johnny Casey leaving his home in The Valley

musical, and have made their mark with their special talents, as indeed have his grandchildren. Soon after he had taken early retirement he joined the Cahir Choral Society and had many happy years and some wonderful trips around the world with the choir, including The Holy Land, South Africa and Rome, Italy. He will be sadly

missed in the bass line of the choral society, even though sometimes it was hard to keep order with the wise cracks at the back of the room.

In the late sixties, Johnny was coaxed to run a Subbuteo League of table soccer with the local Boy Scouts in Cahir and because of its popularity with the youngsters, was asked to get involved with the club as leader. He agreed to join, only if his wife Winnie got involved as well, and for almost

twenty years they threw their hearts into the running of the 7th Tipperary Troup, and were very involved in the fundraising and building of their new Scouts Den.

A man of many talents, Johnny was a beautiful reader in the liturgy readers group of St. Mary's Parish. He was also a volunteer with the local Meals on Wheels group for many years. Four years ago he celebrated fifty years a Pioneer, an amazing achievement, considering all his years touring with the various dance bands, where one of the perks was 'free drink for the night'. A deeply spiritual man, who truly walked with God. Since November 2000, Johnny's health was failing, and in January he got a mild stroke. His continued weight loss caused concern, and while in hospital undergoing tests, he died suddenly on

the 15th July, 2001.

The crowds who attended his wake at his home, his removal, and his



*Johnny Casey with his Granny
outside his home in The Valley*

Requiem Mass were testimony to his very full life and involvement in his community. The remains were received by Fr. Sean O'Dwyer, P.P., and the requiem mass was celebrated by Fr. Jack Meade, C.S.Sp. Cahir Choral Society Sang an inspiring solemn mass for their much loved comrades, and the hymns chosen reflected his faith and trust in God. The Offertory Interlude was played by two of his

grandsons, Stephen and Aidan Casey 1st and 2nd clarinet. The prayers of the faithful included his other three grandchildren, Fiona, Jack and Sarah Donovan.

May Johnny Casey's soul shine in everlasting life. ♦



L to R: Declan Mulligan, John Casey, Honor Mulligan and in front is Marian Mulligan.

Nano Nagle National School

Staff members at Nano Nagle National School 2001: Sr. Maureen Power, Principal (3rd/4th Classes); Mrs. Patricia Treacy, Vice-Principal (Senior Infants); Mrs. Rita Kenny (5th / 6th Classes); Mrs. Maureen Maher (1st / 2nd Classes); Mrs. Margaret Gleeson (Junior Infants); Mrs. Mary Hanrahan (Learning Support Teacher); Sr. Mary MacNamara (Resource Teacher) and Sr. Angela Ryan

The last fifteen months have seen many changes in Nano Nagle National

School. In June 2000, we said goodbye to Ms Anne Ryan who had served so competently as our Resource Teacher for the previous nineteen months. Suffice to say we miss her cool, calm presence and the efficiency with which she dispatched every task which came to hand. We wish her well in her new school. Our loss is their gain!

September 2000 also saw the arrival of Sr. Angela from Clonmel, who joined us courtesy of the Presentation Order, and who is doing sterling work in 3rd and 4th Classes.



This year's Junior Infants Class at Nano Nagle national School. Back Row L to R: Margaret Gleeson (teacher), Amy Sweeney (The Valley), Tommy Anglim (Kilnockin), Jennifer Rice (Everardsgrange), Jade Callanan (Slievenamon Close), Kate Quigley (Garrinch), Molly Proudfoot (Strylea), Eoghain Hurley (Strylea). 3rd Row L to R: Isobel De Courcy (Annesgift), Hannah Tobin (St. Patrick's Place), Gráinne Fanning (The Green), Charlie Manton (Main Street), John Bernard O'Reilly (Barrack Street), Cormac Horan (Tullamaine), Alannah Coady (Grangebarry). 2nd Row L to R: Jody Sheehan (Woodvale Walk), Niamh McCarthy (Derrylusklin), Louise Fitzgerald (Clerihan), Thomas Condon (Woodvale Walk), Kayleigh Higgins (Strylea), Adam Fitzgerald (Barrack Street), Michael Halley (Woodvale Walk). Front Row L to R: Liane Hannigan (Barrack Street), Niamh Shanahan (Friarsgrange), Katie Butler (Kilnockin), Jesse McGrath (Rathcoole), Larrisa Clancy (Barrack Street), Jane Morrissey (Roseanne, Clonee) and Aileen Butler (Saucestown). Missing from photograph are: Darragh Bradshaw (Slievenamon Close) and Clodagh Bradshaw (Patricks Place)



This year's sixth class at Nano Nagle Primary School. Back L to R: Aoife O'Meara, Lisa Ryan, Stephanie Lawrence, Danielle Ferncombe, Sinead Coffey. Front L to R: Patricia Cooney, Jenny Quigley, Sinead Delahunty, Sarah Moloney and Patricia Rochford.

In December 2000 we had the pleasure of welcoming back Sr. Mary after a short absence due to illness. We are delighted to report that she is back in action and enjoying the challenge of her new position as Resource Teacher.

September 2001 brought us Fr. Tom Breen, PP, as Chairman of our Board of Management. We are delighted to welcome Fr. Breen to our school community and we look forward to working with him and Canon Power in the coming years.

To Fr Sean Ryan, our previous chairman, we say a heartfelt thanks for his tremendous commitment to our school and for his many innovative ideas. One such project he initiated with our pupils was the Christmas Mass and collection for the homeless. We particularly appreciate his contribution to the setting up of the amalgamation of

our school with St. Patrick's Boys N.S. We wish him every blessing on his work in his new parish of Maynooth.

Invaluable additions to our staff are our two new classroom assistants Ms. Anne-Marie Harty and Ms. Eileen Kennedy while the office is now in the capable hands of Ms Anne D'Arcy. Ms Mary Sayers continues to keep the school in pristine fashion while Liam Cloonan and Dave Williams have done an excellent job keeping the school grounds in shape.

Our Parents Association has been as active as ever manning the stalls at our annual Cake Sale, helping with the Sponsored Walk and organising the ever-popular Fun Sports Day in June. The parents ongoing commitment and support is a major factor in the successful realisation of our goals for our school and we are deeply appreciative

of all their efforts on our behalf.

Our school year incorporates many activities, curricular and otherwise: artistic and literary endeavour is encouraged by participation in various competitions, local and national while participation in inter-schools athletics in Thurles has become an annual fixture. It is wonderful when individual efforts are crowned with success but we also encourage all our pupils to enjoy the very act of taking part and doing one's personal best.

Promoting environmental awareness among the children has always been high on our list of priorities and our 'Recycling Can-paign' continues apace. We would like to thank everyone for their support and to say if anyone can help please just drop your

empty cans into school. Reflecting the hi-tech age in which we live we are now also recycling inkjet cartridges. Again all donations gratefully accepted. The ongoing battle against litter continues, as does our involvement with the Tidy Schools Competition.

We look forward to a busy, happy and fruitful school year 2001/02 as we begin to implement the revised Primary School Curriculum which is being phased in over the next few years.

To all our pupils, past and present, to the parents, the Board of Management, and the wider parish community and to all those who read this newsletter we would like to say "Beannacht Dé oraibh agus Nollaig Shona Dhíbh go léir". ♦

A Visit to Clonmel Museum *by Sinead Delahunty and Jenny Quigley, 6th Class*

One day last year we went on a trip to Clonmel Museum. There was an exhibition on about the River Suir. A local artist called Des Dillon had made a huge model of the river. It started at the top corner of a very large

room and went all the way to the other end. There were lots of models of animals which have their homes on the River Suir. It was a lovely experience and we all enjoyed it. ♦

Alice Leahy and 'Trust' *by Aoife O'Meara, 6th Class*

I first heard of Alice Leahy and Trust last September. She was born and raised in Annesgift just outside our small town of Fethard. She was educated in Coolmoyné N.S. and the Presentation Secondary School, Fethard. After secondary school she studied to be a nurse in Baginbun Street, Dublin. Soon afterwards she worked for six months in St. Patrick's in Cashel. This is maybe where she got the taste for the kind of work she is doing now. Alice is co-founder of Trust which was set up in 1975. Trust

offers care and hospitality to the homeless of Dublin.

Last Christmas, Fr. Sean Ryan enlisted the help of 5th and 6th Class Nano Nagle girls to help him raise money for the homeless. Thanks to the generosity of our local community a large sum of money was collected. It was divided between Trust and the Guild of the Little Flower. Sr. Brigid, formerly a teacher in Nano Nagle N.S., was our contact in the Guild of the Little Flower, which is also based in Dublin. ♦



The entrance to the old Fethard Presentation Convent School classrooms, demolished in 1994.

Amalgamation of National Schools

During the last school year it was proposed that Nano Nagle N.S. and St. Patrick's B.N.S. amalgamate in the near future, subject to approval from the Department of Education and Science. A Steering Committee, representative of the Boards of Management of both schools, was formed to engage in the amalgamation process and to liaise with the D.E.S. This committee reports on an ongoing basis to both Boards of Management.

The Steering Committee comprised: Mr. Dermot Rice, Chairperson, Mrs. Helena Delany, Secretary, Mrs. Mary Delahunty, Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Mary Hanrahan, P.R.O., Sr. Margaret Mary, Fr. Sean Ryan, Mrs. Cathriona Morrissey and Mr. Ger Manton. Sr. Maureen Power, Principal, Nano Nagle N.S. and Mr. Eamonn Dwyer, Principal, St. Patrick's B.N.S. are auxiliary members of the committee.

Our first task was to submit a formal Letter of Proposal to the Department of Education and Science, stating our wish to amalgamate and seeking departmental approval. We had already contacted Mr. Declan Kelleher, District Representative, INTO, who had promised us the benefit of his considerable experience of school amalgamation.

On Monday, 9 April, 2001, the teachers from Nano Nagle N.S. and St. Patrick's Boys National School visited Bunscoil na Naomh, Lismore to learn more about the amalgamation process. In a situation similar to our own, the boys and girls primary schools in Lismore amalgamated three years ago, the new school being sited on the girls primary school campus. Our thanks to Sr. Aileen Fenton, Chairperson Board of Management, and Mr. David Corbett, Principal, who facilitated our

visit and shared the “ups and downs” of amalgamation with us. Given their insights we now have a much clearer understanding of the process involved. Sr. Aileen advised “patience and perseverance” in embarking upon amalgamation and stressed the importance of knowing exactly what is necessary in terms of school structures, classroom equipment, etc. etc. On a positive note she informed us that, while the preparatory work was taxing in the extreme, the amalgamation itself proved a tremendous success from the outset.

A representative of the Department of Education and Science visited the schools in September to assess our

needs in terms of classroom space etc. In the meantime, the staffs of both schools are to collaborate in drawing up a list of what we consider to be priorities for the proposed ‘new’ school. Mr. Declan Kelleher, I.N.T.O. Area Representative, is also to meet with us to discuss our reply to the Department’s original letter consenting to amalgamation.

During the coming months the Steering Committee will be involved in ascertaining the needs of our “new school”, seeking expert advice and collaborating with the D.E.S. and the Board of Works. Interesting times ahead! ♦

St. Patrick’s Boys School



This year's sixth class at St. Patrick's Boys School. Back L to R: Kevin Maher, Colin Bradshaw, Declan Doyle, Joe Fogarty, Cathal Gorey, Jason Lawrence. Front L to R: Lory Kenny, Ciarán Leahy, Alan O'Connor, Christopher Sheehan and Aaron O'Donovan. Missing from photograph is Paul McCarthy.

This has been a very eventful year for St. Patrick’s Boys School. We staged our first school show in the

Abymill theatre. Martha Sheehan directed the show, ‘The Royal Mix Up’, which proved to be a great hit.

This year's school outing in June to the University of Limerick's sports centre proved a major success with our pupils. They were able to avail of the University's excellent indoor and outdoor sports facilities.

Congratulations to Eileen Fitzgerald on her appointment as resource teacher, a new post for our school.

Catriona Morrissey takes up the post of acting principle for the current school year. We would also like to welcome two new staff members, Aisling Ryan and Emma Maher.

Fr. Tom Breen becomes the new chairman of our board of management. We wish them all well in their respective positions.

The schools cross-country event took place this autumn in Thurles. Fethard boys won the 3rd and 4th class large school competition. The team included John Lalor, Ben Walsh, Owen Healy and Damien Morrissey. Darragh Dwyer won an individual medal at this event. He has also quali-

fied for the All Ireland Cross Country Championships. This is a great achievement.

Our under-11 football team are leading in their group. They drew in an exciting match against Ardfinnan and had a strong win against Cahir in their last match. Best of luck in the next round.

We had three winners in the Clonmel Library Competition. Dylan Fitzgerald received a prize for colouring, while Kieran O'Connell and Tony Myler received prizes for painting.

Seven of our pupils represented our school in a recent swimming competition held in Clonmel. All seven proved to be excellent competitors. Aaron O'Donovan qualified to the next round. He will represent the school in Cork. We wish him the very best.

Finally we wish all our pupils and their families all the best for the coming year and would like to extend a big thank you to everyone for their continued support and co-operation. ♦



Shem Butler photographed recently with his two brothers who were home on a visit from London. L to R: Pat (Cricklewood, London), Richard (Wembley, Middlesex) and Shem Butler (Garrinch, Fethard).

Fethard Rugby Club

After a lapse of 70 years, Fethard has been reintroduced to rugby with the help of Sean Devaney. With short notice Sean formed a juvenile team to take part in the 2001 community games in May. The newly formed team came away with silver medals from their first Community games rugby competition.

Training commenced for under 12 and under 10 players on the school sports field on September 1st coached by Sean Devaney and Paul Kavanagh.

A meeting was held on September 27th 2001 to gauge the interest in forming a Rugby club in Fethard and surrounding areas, including Moyglass, Killenaule, Drangan and Mulinahone. The level of interest and support for a new rugby club was wonderful. Sean says, with the numbers turning up for practice, the enthusiasm of the players, the skill shown by the very youthful players, he intends to keep the show on the road. If he gets

the necessary co-operation and support from the community and parents Sean will be able to continue with his good work for the 2001/02 season.

John Lacey, National Development Officer, recently visited Fethard and offered his full support for this venture.

The team who played against Cashel in the Community games match were as follows: Stephen Heelan, Robert Ahearne, Jerome Ahearne, James Kelly, Mike O'Hagan, William Grassick, Johnny Grassick, Juss Halley, Seamie O'Keeffe, John Lalor, Sam Manton, Michael John Murphy and Matt O'Sullivan.

Fethard under-10 had a high scoring encounter with Carrick-on-Suir on Sunday 2nd December. Some great drives by the forwards, especially Seamie O'Keeffe, Matt O'Sullivan and Michael John Murphy, set up scores for the halfbacks Conor Kavanagh and John Lalor. Some fine running also saw tries for winger



Fethard under-10 rugby team. Back L to R: David Bergin, Johnny Grassick, Matt O'Sullivan, Sam Manton, Jack O'Connell, Andy Walsh, Jessica Kenny, Jack Devaney. Front L to R: Mark Ronan, John Lalor, Tim O'Hagan, Jerome Ahearne, Andrew Kelly, Conor Kavanagh and Keith Bergin.



Fethard under-12 rugby team. Back L to R: William Grassick, Dick Walsh, Adam Clooney, David Gorey, Chris Thompson, Stephen Healan, David Thompson. Front L to R: Shane Kavanagh, James Kelly, Mike O'Hagan, Colin Blackmore, J. P. McGrath and Joseph Kelly.

Andrew Yates and centre Jack O'Connell, indeed, the latter being brought down inches from the line for a winning try.

Fethard under-12 rugby team also travelled to Carrick for their second competitive game on December 2. The Fethard boys are improving with each outing and showed the experience gained on their first outing the previous week. Fethard were leading throughout and ran out of luck when two tries in injury time gave Carrick a very narrow six tries to five victory. Richard Lalor and Darragh Dwyer both having their first outing gave very impressive performances. Richard scored two tries and Darragh won a very deserved 'man of the match' award.

The club have some rugby jerseys in the club blue and white colours, or blue polo shirt with logo, for sale.

To show your support, these can be purchased at McCarthy's Hotel or con-

tact Sean Devaney, Grove, Fethard. Tel: 052 31095. ♦

Tipperary Star - May 9th. 1925

THURLES BEAT FETHARD IN GARRYOWEN CUP FINAL.

At the Markets Field Limerick, Thursday, Thurles defeated Fethard in the final of the Garryowen Cup Competition The Trophy has been presented by Garryowen Club to foster the game in North Munster. Fethard fielded a strong team captained by Dr. P. Stokes the well-known International. Thurles team, which has had a remarkable list of successes in its first season, however, upset all calculations and won a great game by a margin of two points. The match was very strenuously contested and resulted: Thurles one try (converted) 5 points; Fethard one try (3 Points). For this victorious team Dan O'Sullivan who played a great game scored and converted.

Thurles—George Rowe, T. McCarthy R. Murray, D. Sullivan, W. H. Ryan, J. Butler, F. Quinn, R. A. May, E. C. Walshe, W. Dwan, M. Brien, J. Grurdy, P. Tobin, P. Gleeson, J. Delaney.

Fethard - V. Vaughan R. H. Hughes, Dr. P. Stokes, J. E. O'Brien, J. Schofield, J. O'Sullivan, R. H. O'Brien, J. Scully, W. Quirke, J. Wall, J.P. Coffey, J. Hughes, D. Kelly, P. J. Delaney, C. Heffernan.

Fethard GAA Club

The club was formed in 1884 and one of our founder members was Dick Cummins who was first County Tipperary chairman (from south division) the present County chairman, Con Hogan is the second. Dick Cummins was also the first Munster council chairman (1901) and at this year's centenary celebrations, was represented by his son Dick Cummins (current life president of our club), a great honour for both Fethard club and the Cummins family. The club officers for the year are Gus Fitzgerald (chairman), Noel Byrne (secretary), and Nicholas O'Shea (treasurer).

On Sunday 11th November 2001, Fethard won their 21st county senior football title in style at a sun-drenched Semple Stadium, Thurles, on a scoreline of Fethard 1-13, Aherlow 0-8. The last county senior title at this venue was back in 1954, beating Loughmore 2-3 to 2-2 for their 13th title. The friary town who have currently a fine blend of youth coming through this success, will be a great morale booster for the future of football in Fethard (the home of gaelic football). Management and team who brought us success in senior were Tom Mansfield, (manager); selectors Jimmy O'Shea, Danny Kane and Pat Sheehan; Paul Fitzgerald (goalie, 2nd senior medal), Michael Ahearne, Cian Maher, Thomas Anglim, Willie Morrissey (5th senior medal), Michael Quinlan (Capt., 3rd senior medal), Stephen O'Donnell (2nd senior medal), Brian Burke (5th senior medal), Aidan Fitzgerald, Glen Burke, Tommy Sheehan (6th senior medal), John Paul Looby (2nd senior medal), Conor

McCarthy, Miceál Spillane (3rd senior medal), Damien Byrne (2nd senior medal), Subs on: Kenneth O'Donnell, Carl Maher, Jimmy O'Meara (3rd senior medal), Kenneth Byrne. Other panellists; Michael Carroll, Tommy Gahan, Brian Coen, Michael Dillon, Martin Ryan (4th senior medal); Willie O'Meara (5th senior medal).

Our footballers then went on to reach another Munster Club final by coming from behind to beat Drom/Broadford (Limerick) on a scoreline Fethard 1-9 (0-3), Drom/Broadford 0-9 (0-7) in the Munster semifinal played on November 17 in Drumcollogher, Co. Limerick. This experience coupled with ten of the Munster club final team defeated by Castlehaven (Cork) in 1997, on a scoreline Castlehaven 1-14 Fethard 1-8, our senior team travelled to Fermoy on Sunday 25th November seeking success in our second appearance in a Munster Club senior football final. Alas, this was not to be as we were beaten on the day by a very talented Nemo Rangers team from Cork. The Fethard team played brilliantly on the day and surprised many of the Cork fans with their determination and teamwork. The final score was Nemo Rangers 1-11, Fethard 0-10. Our captain, Michael Quinlan, age 28, captained the team for the first time having played football with the senior club at all levels since 1989. Michael is holder of three county senior football medals, one minor county medal and numerous divisional honours in both football and hurling. He has also worn the blue and gold with distinction, a wholehearted

player who has made centre back his own, in recent times. Our team for the Munster final was: Paul Fitzgerald, Kiltinan; Michael Ahearne, Prospect; Cian Maher, Dún Aoibhinn; Tom

Anglim, Kilnockin; Willie Morrissey, Tullamaine; Michael Quinlan, Tullamaine; Stephen O'Donnell, Monroe; Brian Burke, Farranshea; Aidan Fitzgerald, Kiltinan; Glen Burke, Redcity; Tommy Sheehan, St. Patricks Place; John Paul Looby, St. Patricks Place; Conor McCarthy, Kerry Street; Michael Spillane, Tullamaine; Damien Byrne, Killusty. Subs: Tommy Gahan, Strylea; Jimmy O'Meara, St. Patricks Place; Kenneth

O'Donnell, Monroe; Kenneth Byrne, Killusty; Karl Maher, Barrack Street; Michael Carroll, Coolmore; Brian Coen, Killusty; Michael Dillon, Tullamaine; Martin Ryan, Patricks Place; Willie O'Meara, St. Patricks Place. Management team: Tom Mansfield, (manager); Co-selectors, Jimmy O'Shea, Danny Kane and Pat Sheehan.

The under 21 'A' football team won their third title in a row in the south

championship and their ninth in all, beating Moyle Rovers in the semi final on a scoreline of Fethard 2-7, Moyle Rovers 0-9; and in the final on a scoreline Fethard 0-14, Ardfinnan 0-12. The



Aidan Fitzgerald with the ball in the County 'A' Football Championship Final against Galtee Rovers played on April 28 at New Inn. The game ended in a draw and the replay has not yet been played as Galtee Rovers were unable to field a team the following week.

team was: Tommy Gahan, Michael Carroll (capt), Michael Ahearne, Nicky Murphy, Alan Phelan, Cian Maher, Michael Costello, Aidan Fitzgerald, Kenneth Byrne, Glen Burke, Kevin O'Donnell, Jason Nevin, Karl Maher, Connor O'Donnell, Kenneth O'Donnell. Subs: Brian Coen, Philly Croke, Paul Hackett, Conor McCarthy, Michael Dillon, Owen Doyle and Diarmuid Burke.

Management

team: Tommy Sheehan, Tom Anglim and Pat Sheehan. This team beat Kildangan in the county semi final, Fethard 2-6, Kildangan 1-6; drew with Galtee Rovers in the county final, Fethard 2-6 Galtee Rovers 2-6. The replay is yet to be played.

On the 25th July 2001 the under 21 'B' hurling team won their fourth title, the last being in 1997. On the way we accounted for Kilsheelan on a scoreline

Fethard 1-10, Kilsheelan 0-5; in the semifinal, Fethard 5-13, Ballyneale 1-11, and the final on a scoreline Fethard 3-7 Carrick Swans 1-9. Team: Conor O'Donnell, Philly Croke, Michael

Ahearne (Capt.), Tommy Gahan, Kevin O'Donnell, Michael Carroll, Michael Costello, Cian Maher, Glen Burke, Michael Dillon, Alan Phelan, Owen Doyle, Kenneth O'Donnell, Jason Nevin, Brian Coen. Subs. Aidan Fitzgerald, Alan O'Meara, Connor



'Fethard General Burke's Senior Football Team 1913'

This photograph is thought to be the oldest photograph of a Fethard football team in existence and was received from William P.

Heffernan, New Jersey, USA. The photograph has the following names of players written underneath which is most interesting: Back Row: Tom Pollard, Christy Burke, Jack Phelan, Jack Tobin, Ned 'Sparky' Delahunty, N. Phelan, J. Gleeson, E. Coffey. Middle L to R: T. Keating, Lar Gorman, Mikie O'Meara, Bob Byrne, Percy Dahill, Paddy Daniel. Sitting: Ned O'Shea, Jack Ryan (captain) and Jimmy Heffernan. It is interesting to note that Ned 'Sparky' Delahunty also figured on the 1908 Cloneen County Senior Football Championship winning team and the captain of the team was a very well known Fethard personality of yesteryear, Jack 'Báinín' Ryan.

McCarthy, John Fitzgerald, Pat Ahearne, Diarmuid Burke, John Noonan, William Harrington, Val O'Dwyer. On September 22, we played a draw in the county semifinal, Fethard 2-9, Templederry 0-15. The replay was played in Holycross on Saturday 1st December in lovely weather with heavy underfoot conditions. We never got really going, as in the drawn game seven weeks previous, and although only two points separated the teams at the end, the game was there for the taking for Fethard. The final score was Templederry 0-8 (0-3), Fethard 0-6 (0-2). Management team: Michael Ryan, Shay Ryan and Kenneth Browne.

In intermediate hurling, under Angus Ryan (manager) and co selectors Michael Keane, Davy Morrissey and Michael McCormack, we played eleven games, losing in the south final to Ballybacon/Grange 0-

13 to Fethard's 1-2, and in the county quarter final, Kildangan 2-14 Fethard 1-7. In Junior B hurling we played seven matches losing in the south final, Ballybacon/Grange 0-13, Fethard 2-5.

We played four matches in Minor B hurling, losing the south semifinal, Newcastle 2-9, Fethard 3-5.

We lost the south semi final replay in intermediate football on November 10th to Ballyporeen 4-11 Fethard 1-7 having played eight games. In Junior 'B' football in the play-off for the semifinal stage we lost to Ballyporeen 1-12, Fethard 0-10, having played six matches.

On the 18th April our minor footballers retained the Jim Frawley cup by winning the county league on a scoreline Fethard 0-8, J. K. Brackens 0-4. Our good form then left us down, when we were beaten by Moyle Rovers in the south semifinal, Moyle Rovers 3-10, Fethard 0-3, having played 10 matches. ♦

Of Cabbages and Kings!

Tony Newport

A few short years ago there was great excitement amongst botanists and naturalists from a wide area when a plant of the very rare (in Ireland) wild Bee Orchid was discovered at the Abbey Rocks field in Spitalfield.

If my own experience is anything to go by, there should be equal, if not even more, excitement if a plant, once very, very common all over Ireland could be rediscovered anywhere in South Tipperary or adjoining counties. I refer to the plant of the brassica family, known to all and sundry as the common cabbage plant. I kid you not; the humble cabbage plant seems to have joined the *Corncrake*, *Yellowhammer* and *Skylark* as an extinct species, at least in this area.

Time was not so long ago when each weekly edition of the Nationalist, especially in spring and autumn the traditional sowing periods, carried at least half a column of '*Cabbage Plants for Sale*' advertisements. The plants were always described as strong and healthy, the same qualifications also being applied to bonhams. Half a crown per 100 was the usual price. *Greyhound*, *Elms Earls*, *Savoy* and *Flower of Spring* were the popular varieties. Now, '*Where have all the flowers gone?*' Every fair day saw two or three car trailers with cabbage plants on board, tied in bundles of 100, ready for sale. The usual method of keeping them fresh was to make a thick paste of yellow clay and water and apply liberally to the roots. Some families were also noted for the production of cabbage plants. The Cummins family of the Cashel Road

were known far and wide for the top quality plants they produced. Mr Walsh of Kilconnell was also a well-known producer of plants and also of the finished article.

The late Mrs Nora Cummins told me that shortly after she went to the Cashel Road as a young bride, a customer arrived for 1,000 cabbage plants.

"*How on earth am I going to count that many?*" she asked. Her mother-in-law quite simply replied, "Count twenty-five, four of each bundle are 100, forty bundles are 1000".

Pat Power of the Valley though he would avail of the high demand for cabbage plants. He grew the produce on The Valley, put a notice on the E.S.B pole on the bridge '*Cabbage plants for sale, 2/6 per hundred*'. Much to his surprise he had no customers. The sight was not too good with Pat, and some weeks had elapsed before he discovered that some of the 'bright boys' had put the figure one before the two making the price 12/6 per hundred. Thus increasing the price 400%.

Cabbage, however, is still easily obtained in greengrocers and shops, but it is a fair bet that the garden of production is a fair distance from the point of sale. Time was when a housewife if stuck, could send one of the children to Johnny Croke on the Rocklow Road or John O'Donnell on the Grove Road and purchase a head of cabbage for 2p or 3p (old money), that would make a family dinner no problem.

While we are on the cabbage situation, the delicacy that usually accom-

panied the head of cabbage in the pot, the gloriously delicious half head (pigs head to younger readers) has also disappeared.

You may as well ask for caviar in butchers or supermarket these days. However, who would bother with pigs head and cabbage when you can feast on goulash and Chinese takeaways; chow mein, chop suey and Szechwan. There are also a variety of Indian dishes so highly flavoured with hot spices and curries, it would take paint off a gate.

I wonder do the youth of today write in each others autograph books such versus as:

*My heart is like a cabbage
That I have broken in two
The leaves I give to others
The heart I give to you.*

Probably not! The treasured autograph book has probably disappeared, after all, it is now much easier to contact by mobile phone or leave your greeting on a message minder.

Ah well. Times change and men must change with them. ♦



Starting school at Killusty National School this year were L to R: Kate O'Donnell, Grangebeg, Fethard; David Morgan, Grangebeg, Fethard; Niamh Crotty, Killusty; and Derek O'Brien, Main Street, Fethard. Missing from photograph is James Harrington, Tinakelly, Fethard.

Sponsored Cycle for Sr. Betty

On Saturday, 24th March 2002, Sr. Betty Cagney, St. Bernard's Group Homes, Fethard, along with 80 other cyclists will partake in a 600 mile sponsored cycle in France, from Dinard to Lourdes, to raise funds for the Irish Handicapped Children's Pilgrimage Trust (IHCPT).

Since the early 1980s many children have benefited from this Trust, with approximately five to ten local children travelling to Lourdes each year

for a week's pilgrimage. The cyclists will cycle six hundred miles over a period of seven days. Each cyclist has to raise a minimum of £2,000. Cyclists pay their own fare and expenses so all monies raised goes directly to IHCPT.

Sr. Betty is actively training and fundraising at present. The IHCPT is a registered charity and therefore any company making a donation is entitled to tax relief. Sr. Betty would be grateful for any financial support small or large. ♦

The Well Golf Society

The society held its A.G.M. in the Fr. Tirry Centre in January this year. Officials elected at the A.G.M were: Captain, Pat Woodlock; Secretary, Michael Leahy; Treasurer, David Lawton.

Once again we had our annual Easter draw in the Well bar on Easter Sunday night with great prizes and music from Seamus and Mary. The prizes on the night were very good and great credit to our draw committee, Shay Ryan, M.J. Croke, Kevin Ryan, and Sean Aylward. The Society also donated a cheque to the Day Care

Centre from our draw proceeds. We had a very enjoyable year on the golfing front, with six outings in the year and a great turn out at them all, showing how popular golf is in Fethard. We entered a team in the Daily Star Competition with teams from all over Ireland. We went out in the second round and it was a great experience for everyone involved. The society would like to thank all our sponsors over the year especially for the Easter draw.

Let's hope 2002 will be as enjoyable on the golfing front as was 2001. ♦



SHARE A DREAM FOUNDATION

Children from Woodvale Walk housing estate in Fethard performed their own dance show in the Abymill Theatre to raise funds for the 'Share a Dream' foundation. The group are photographed above with 'Share a Dream' representative Shane Kinsella who presented the group with a framed certificate in acknowledgement of their contribution to the foundation. Back L to R: Treacy Needham, Debbie Lawrence, Patricia Rochford, Gerard Lawless, Shane Kinsella (Share a Dream Foundation), Melissa Rochford, Sarah Lawless. Front L to R: Michael Halley, Kelly Fogarty, Katie O'Shea, Claire O'Brien and Sarah McManus. Missing from photograph is Lynn Flynn and Martina Ryan.

Community Games



Fethard and Killusty Community Games organisers photographed in Fethard on Sunday 27th May at the local heats. L to R: Helena O'Shea, Bernard Feery, Caroline Hall, Denny Burke, Joe Keane, Michael Fitzgerald, Carmel Condon, Fintan Rice, Mary Trehy, Declan Morrissey and Peggy Colville.

Fethard & Killusty area had a very successful year in the Community Games. They took part in the following events: art, model making, athletics, judo, under-10 GAA, under-12 girls GAA, under-12 boys soccer, boys and girls volleyball & rugby under-12 which was revived by Sean Devaney in Fethard after a lapse of 70 years. The following qualified for the county finals of the art and model making: Under-8 (girls & boys) — Ciarán O'Meara, Emma Morrissey, Rachel O'Meara, Ted Barrett; Under-10 — Jake Maher, Lorraine Feery, Pdraig O'Shea, Sinead Lee; Under-12 — Kevin Browne, Aisling Breen, Aoife O'Meara & J.P. McGrath; Under-14 — Cathal Maher, Katie Murphy, Eoin Condon & Denise McGrath. Model Making — Nicola Gleeson (girls under-10), Sinead Coffey and Sinead Delahunty (girls under-14). At the County Finals in Clerihan both Cathal Maher, Dun Aoibhinn, and Nicola Gleeson, Coolmore, won gold medals and qualified for Mosney.

Cathal Maher won a fourth place 'Certificate of Merit' and was competing for his fifth successive year.

Sinead Delahunty won a silver medal and Sinead Coffey won a bronze medal in model making at the County Final. The under-10 GAA had a great year winning six matches including the county final. They beat Waterford in the preliminary round of the Munster Finals but were beaten by Cork in the Munster semifinal. The team consisted of Ciarán Ryan (captain), Tommy Sheehan, Ben Walsh, Frankie O'Donovan, Kieran O'Connell, Jerome Ahearne, David Walsh, Daniel Hickey, Matthew Fitzgerald, Matt O'Sullivan, Darren Connolly, Aaron Conran, Adam Lyons, Damien Morrissey, Philip Doyle, Glen Maher, Alan Lawrence, Owen Healy, Kevin Hayes and Pdraig O'Shea. The under-12 GAA girls beat Moycarkey in the first round but were beaten by St. Flannans in the second round. The girls volleyball were beaten by Lismore in the Munster final, and the boys volley-

ball travelled to Mosney where they won a fourth place 'Certificate of Merit'. The under-12 rugby team reached the county final but were beaten by Cashel. The under-12 boys soccer team were also beaten by Cashel. At the county finals of the athletics Michael Costello won gold in the 100m, and David Sullivan won a bronze in the 1500m.

Fethard hosted the county finals of the Judo in the Town Hall on May 11th. Gold medals were won by the following from the Fethard & Killusty area; Pádraig O'Shea, Michael Costello, Matthew Fitzgerald, Cathal Gorey, Richard Gorey, D. J. Gorey, Michelle Bradshaw, Bernadette Costello and Stephanie

Lawrence. The following qualified for Mosney from the Munster Finals: - Pádraig O'Shea, D. J. Gorey, Roy Gorey, Cathal Gorey, Stephanie Lawrence, Niall & Martin O'Donnell. At last the elusive gold medals came to Fethard and Clonmel with Stephanie Lawrence and Martin O'Donnell giving outstanding performances and both winning gold. Silver medals were won by: D. J. Gorey and Cathal Gorey, and a bronze medal was won by Niall O'Donnell.

Certificates of Merit went to Pádraig O'Shea and Richard Gorey. Richard was a former gold medallist and was most

unfortunate to fall and break his arm.

A very successful open sports took place in August. The feature event was the Coolmore 4x1 mixed relay, which was won by: Willie Morrissey, Tullamaine; Michael Dillon, Tullamaine; Tommy Sheehan, Fethard; and Linda Quigley, Killenaule.

Beautiful trophies were presented to the winning team by Agnes Evans, representing Coolmore Stud Farm.

The Pat Ryan Memorial Cup attracted a huge entry in the Penalty Kick event and was won by Eoin Healy, The Green; runner up was Colm Shanahan, a



Fethard boys volleyball team who represented Tipperary in the Community Games finals at Mosney. Back L to R: Paul Kenrick, William O'Brien, Darren Sharpe and Keith Lawrence. Front L to R: Chris Taylor, Brian Conway, John Leahy and Adrian Allen. Also on the team were Connie O'Flynn, James Smyth, David Prout and Peter Gough.

grandson of the late Pat Ryan. Trophies were presented by Mrs Nellie Ryan.

The committee received tremendous help from several people too numerous to mention in organising the games during the year. They would like to say a special 'thank you' to all concerned, to their sponsors and to all those who supported their sponsored walk and church gate collection. Last but not least to Joe Kenny who was always on hand with the camera.

Current officers are: Canon James Power (president), Joe Keane (chairman), Bernard Feery (vice chairman);



Some of the Fethard boys and girls who represented their county at the Community Games Finals in Mosney this year: L to R: Cathal Maher (art), Padraig O'Shea (judo), Stephanie Lawrence (judo), Nicola Gleeson (model making), Richard Gorey (judo) and Cathal Gorey (judo).

Caroline Hall (secretary), Peggy Colville and Joe Keane (treasurers); M.C. Maher (development officer); and Peggy Colville (public relations officer). Committee members: Helena

O'Shea, Michael Fitzgerald, Denis Burke, Michael McCormack, Josephine O'Hagan, Sean Devaney, Patricia and Tony Fitzgerald. ♦



Fethard under-10 footballers who won the Community Games County Final on Friday, 22nd June. They are photographed above on a victory tour through the streets of Fethard with their coaches and trophy.

A pilgrimage to Knock!

Jimmy Ryan



Jimmy Ryan, Watergate, photographed in 1991 with Nellie Kelly and Mrs Paddy McCarthy at the Fethard Jamboree held in aid of the Town Wall restoration project

It all started in Walls Bar, Main Street, Fethard. There were three of us there at 10am, Andy, Phil and myself and as there was nothing happening, we decided to do the Stations of the Cross. The 'stations of the cross' we were doing had nothing to do with the chapels between Fethard, Drangan, Mullinahone and the cross of Lismolin, but there are thirteen pubs, so we went through them all.

At 2am in Lismolin we came in contact with a Fianna Fail County Councillor who was just coming from a meeting. He asked us where we were going so we told him we were going to Monsignor Horan's funeral in Knock.

We all took off in the pick up truck, which had a scrap cooker up on the back. At Portlaoise we were stopped by the Gardai, who asked us if we knew of anyone from Fethard. I said,

"That's where we come from". The Gardai said, "Who do you know well?" I replied, "Most people in the town!" The Gardai insisted on a name. 'O Jesus' I said, 'Sean Hanrahan'. So the guard told us to go on.

We were well stocked up with Clonmel Champagne (cider) and motoring on to Athlone we took a wrong turning. On the Customs Bridge the two lads wanted to relieve themselves so we went around the back of the shopping complex, not knowing the way through.

A beam and a squad car arrived again, but this time was a Ban Garda. We explained that we were kind of lost, so she said, "Follow me and I will put you on the right road for Knock" which she did. Now everything was going O.K. but no 'pigeon post' to give us directions.

It was just breaking dawn and we saw a fella on a bike coming on the road, so we stopped to ask the way. Well, he dropped the bike, jumped the gate, ran across the field and that was the last we saw of him.

Eventually we arrived at Kelly's Hotel in Knock not knowing it was full of retired priests and nuns. The waitress asked us what we wanted for breakfast. I had scrambled eggs on toast and the two lads had full Irish breakfasts. I asked where the best pub in town was for the craic. Andy said 'shut up' we came here for a funeral and not for fun.

So I took up the town on my own, bought a pack of Bic razors and shaving foam, went to a pub and asked the landlady if I could have a shave. She told me to go to the ladies, as there was hot water and a towel there. So job done, I came out and the two boys found me. Andy asked me where I

shaved. I told him where and gave him the equipment and he did the same. On returning he said to Phil, go in and shave yourself. After waiting a while there was no sign of Phil coming out, so I went in to see what was happening. I found Phil with a full face of foam, looking like Father Christmas, throwing away the razors, giving out that the razors were useless. The problem was that he never took the yellow cover off the blade. I went out to Andy and I could not speak. Andy asked me what was wrong, so I told him to go in and look for himself. Andy told Phil to try the other side of his face.

We eventually got to the funeral, and we were the men who represented South Tipp. We got home safely two days later. More to be told of this story next year. Best of luck and Happy Christmas to all of you overseas, not forgetting the good people here at home. ♦



WHYTES GROCERY SHOP CLOSES

The Whytes retired from their family business on Main Street, on Sunday 3rd June. The shop reopened on Tuesday under new management, that of Veronica Barry and John Morrissey from Cashel. We wish the best of luck to John and Maureen in their retirement and thank them for their years of service to the Fethard community. Photographed minutes before closing are L to R: Eoin Whyte, Pat Whyte holding his daughter Katie, Joanne Kearney, Maureen and John Whyte.

Fethard & Killusty Community Council

The Fethard & Killusty Community Council held their AGM on Tuesday 13th November, 2001, after which the following committee was elected: Joe Kenny (chairman), Brian Sheehy (vice-chairperson), Jimmy Connolly (treasurer), Edwina Newport (secretary), Marie Murphy (p.r.o.), Peter Grant (scheme participant development officer), Fr Tom Breen, Diana Stokes, Thelma Griffith, Jimmy Lawrence and Helen Carrigan. Joan O'Donohoe is our FÁS Scheme supervisor and Sr. Christine is supervisor of the Fethard and District Day Care Centre.

The Community Council is celebrating its 25th anniversary this year as the first committee was elected on the

13th January 1976 when the following officers were elected: Chairman - Rev. J. Stapleton; Vice-Chairman - Jerry Skehan; Secretary - Mrs. Mary Healy; Treasurers - Paddy Broderick and Paddy Heffernan; and P.R.O. - Austin O'Flynn. Before the formation of the Community Council the people were represented by the Fethard Development Association formed in 1967 following observations made by Mr. E. McLoughlin, B.E., Acting Chief Assistant County Engineer (Planning), on the Draft Development Plan for Fethard. In 1974, a re-organising meeting of Fethard Muintir na Tire was held on July 26th. The meeting was addressed by Mr. Patrick Costello of Templemore Branch who gave a



FETHARD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION 1967

The first committee of Fethard Development Association formed in 1967. Back row: Austin Slattery, Paddy Lonergan, Tom Barrett, Gene Walsh, Tommy O'Connell, Timmy O'Connor and ? Middle row: Paddy Broderick, Percy O'Flynn, Ray O'Sullivan (Bank), Helen O'Connell, Maura Healy, Marie 'Ma' O'Brien, Austin O'Flynn, Phil Kearney and Dick Gorey. Front row L to R: Bro. Stephen, Eileen Maher (treasurer), Paddy Maher (chairman), Eddie O'Neill (secretary), Moira Cotter and Fr. Tom Kennedy.



Proposed extension to Tirry Community Centre at Barrack Street (on right)

instructive talk on the functions of Muintir na Tire. A new council was elected. At the AGM in 1975 the following officers and committee were elected: President - Rev. Fr. Noonan; Chairman - Austin O'Flynn; Vice Chairman - Brendan Kenny; Secretary - Mrs. Mary Healy; Treasurer - Sean Henahan; Assistant Sec. & P.R.O. - Catherine Allen. Committee: Jim Ryan, Tom Barrett, Jack O'Shea, Frank Coffey, Paddy Lonergan, Mrs. O'Brien, Tom McCormack, Austin Slattery, Tim O'Riordan, Mrs Coffey, Paddy Broderick, Tommy Carey, Carol Kenny and Larry Dargan. A public meeting was organised and held under the auspices of Fethard Development Association to ascertain the views of the people of Fethard and Killusty Parish, on the advisability of forming a Community Council. There was a unanimous vote in favour of forming a Council, and a temporary steering committee was elected. This temporary committee distributed nomination papers to each household in the Parish. Each person over eighteen years of age voted for the candidate of their choice. The vote was by ballot.

On the 13th January 1976 the first meeting of the Fethard & Killusty

Community Council was held and the following officers were elected: Chairman - Rev. J. Stapleton; Vice-Chairman - Jerry Skehan; Secretary - Mrs. Mary Healy; Treasurers - Paddy Broderick and Paddy Heffernan; P.R.O. Austin O'Flynn. The guiding principles of the council at that meeting were: "The Community Council is a representative body, whose aim is to involve all the members of the community in identifying local needs and problems, and taking the initiative to solve them. A community council ensures that the identification of local problems and their solution, is an ongoing concern, and that concern is integrated into the everyday life of the community. We have at the moment, projects in operation, which we are confident will benefit the whole community." Those principals still remain today, twenty-five years later.

In the past 12 months, the Fethard & Killusty Community Council has had plans drawn up for an extension to the very popular Day Care Centre. These plans have been granted planning permission and work is expected to commence in the New Year. The extension will also facilitate a new Community Information Office on the ground



*Photographed at the Open Day at the Tirry Community Centre on 29th May are
L to R: Kay McGrath, Kathy Aylward and Joan O'Connor.*

floor, which will make it a lot more accessible for all community members. This project is being supported by the South Eastern Health Board to whom we are most grateful for their support. The Fethard Day Care centre continues to grow in popularity and their report can be read on page 91.

The second project accomplished this year was the purchase of the Convent Hall from the Presentation Sisters. The committee completed the purchase for further development as a Fethard & District Family Resource Centre — a community need identified by the committee after undertaking a FÁS facilitated Community Enterprise Programme. The hall and grounds were purchased for £50,000 and are now in community ownership.

The community council have also initiated the formation of a residents association in Woodvale Walk and St. Patrick's Place during the year. Both were successfully formed with the help and support of Cllrs. John Fahey, Susan Meagher and Seamus Healy.

The Tidy Towns committee have

also achieved great success during the year with the setting up of by-monthly meetings on the ground with County Council engineers, officials and community representatives to deal with problems on a priority and realistic basis. We thank the Council engineer, Mr Jonathon Cooney, for his support in this area.

The Community Lotto is now our main source of income and generates an average of £600 sales per week. We thank all the sellers who work tirelessly every week to promote the lotto and we thank the people who buy the tickets and assure them that their money is being put to great use in our community, for our community. As our motto states *'Helping Ourselves — Supporting Each Other'*.

An open day was held at the Tirry Community Centre on the 29th May 2001. Visitors were invited for a cup of tea and an opportunity to see the facilities available at the centre. The Tirry Centre is a hive of activity every day and caters for all members of our community, from the very young to the very old.

Great credit is due to the many volunteers who carry out their wonderful work every day in a quiet and unassuming manner. Some of the facilities available at the centre are: Fethard & Killusty Community Office and Information Centre which has free literature available on tourism and family support; FÁS Community Employment Scheme providing eleven employees working for the Day Care Centre, Tidy Towns, GAA and Community Office; Day Care Centre open five days per week and providing transport, entertainment, meals and services to the elderly in our area; Meals on Wheels providing a home delivery service of hot meals to those not always in a position to cook for themselves; 'First Steps' a privately run playschool which caters for our very young and prepares them for National School.

During the year we said goodbye to Mairead Croke, supervisor of the Fethard & Killusty FÁS Community Employment Scheme who left her posi-

tion on Friday, 5th January, to take up a new supervisor's position in Clonmel. The newly appointed supervisor of the Fethard & Killusty Community Scheme is Joan O'Donohoe who was previously in charge of community office administration and information at the Fr. Tirry Centre. The community scheme currently employs Monica Aherne, Martin Bolger, Janet Butler, Michael Keane, Patsy Lawrence, John Neagle, Thomas Purcell, James Roche, Melanie Ryan, David Standbridge and Maura Tynan.

During the year we also said goodbye to our treasurer, Fr. Ben O'Brien OSA, who was transferred to Galway. Fr. Ben was instrumental in setting up the Community Lotto and was also a great support to the committee in our projects over the past few years.

There was very positive response by Tipperary S.R. County Council to our submission on 'Community Speed Watch' and the dangers of speeding traffic on our roads. The Council have agreed to fund and erect the appropri-



Staff and helpers at the Fethard Day Care Centre. L to R: Esther (Cuddihy) Breen, Megan Sceats, John Neagle, Maura (Carey) Tynan and Marie (O'Donovan) Murphy.

ate signage to put the scheme into operation. The Community Council were also requested to submit suggestions as to what locally can be done to make motorists fully aware of the pedestrian crossing on Main Street. Flashing amber pedestrian lights were installed earlier in the year to make the crossing more visible to motorists.

In June this year, the Community Information Office promoted and made available, the interactive CD, *'Helping Hand' — a guide to education, training and employment opportunities*, which was supplied by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs, in collaboration with FÁS, VTOS, NALA and CERT. The CD is a virtual tour of the second chance education, training and employment opportunities that are currently available to people who want to return to work. It includes internet links to various websites, and was produced as part of "Welfare Awareness week".

The Community Council are currently negotiating with the County

Council to get the lights by the Town Wall replaced and turned on again. We have been promised that the supply of electricity from the ESB is now ordered officially and will be installed with the erection of two new lights by the footbridge over the Clashawley in February, 2002.

The ESB have also agreed to allow us erect our Christmas Lights from the new street light poles on The Square. This is now underway as the newsletter goes to print.

The annual dinner outing for members of the Community Council, sub-committees, helpers at the Day Care Centre, Community Lotto and Meals on Wheels will take place in J's Restaurant on Friday night 25th January, 2002.

The Fethard & Killusty Community Council would like to thank sincerely all our voluntary workers on the various sub-committees and wish all our emigrants and community at home, a very Happy Christmas and peaceful New Year. ♦



Members of the Fethard and Killusty Community Council, Community Lotto, Day Care Centre, Community Office, Tidy Towns, and Cllr John Fahy photographed at farewell social on July 2nd for our treasurer Fr. Ben O'Brien OSA who was transferred to Galway.

Day Care Centre / Meals on Wheels



Fethard 'wrenboys' photographed on St. Stephen's Day in the Fethard Arms. The group raised £445 for the Fethard and District Day Care Centre. L to R: Marie (O'Donovan) Murphy, Kitty O'Donnell, John Pollard, Sr. Christine, Thelma Griffith, Pauline Morrissey and Sr. Clement.

The first observation one makes visiting the Day Care Centre is that it is a happy place to be, and that is what it is all about! The faces are smiling, the music is rousing, and, if you visit at the right time there is a mouth-watering smell of dinner wafting from the kitchen.

The Centre is now in its sixth year and runs five days a week. Clients are served breakfast on arrival, lunch at midday and a light afternoon tea before leaving around 4pm. They have their own bus, driven by Liam Connolly (he of All-Ireland Hurling medal fame for Tipp!) which collects people who are unable to walk and from the outlying areas of the town. The meals are beautifully prepared in the kitchen by a staff of men and women and served up with the help of volunteers. Three days a week the main meal is also prepared for the Meals on Wheels and delivered out by

volunteer drivers, with the invaluable help of the transition year pupils from the local Presentation / Patrician School. These young boys and girls come to the Centre three days a week, for the first half-hour they join in whatever fun is going on, and sometimes even render a few bars of a song from the current musical they are rehearsing in school! At 12 noon they accompany the drivers to deliver the meals, and have a great rapport with the recipients, who love to meet them.

Entertainment consists of bingo, music, singing and craft making. The beautiful crafts are to be seen in the dayroom — patchwork, knitting and crochet. The throws which are on the easy-chairs are made by the clients themselves. They are also made for sale at the annual Bazaar. The much-appreciated music is provided by Pauline Morrissey (daughter of the late Tom Sheehan of the Twilight

Serenaders) on accordion, John Pollard also on accordion and Jimmy Lawrence on the keyboards. They also have their own percussion band, consisting of triangles and the spoons. They also have been known to dance!

A Bazaar is held at Christmas in conjunction with a monster raffle to raise funds. Local businesses very generously contribute towards same, and, as previously mentioned, some really beautiful crafts are for sale.

Two very enjoyable outings were held during the year which were thoroughly enjoyed by all, one to Horse and Jockey for afternoon tea and the other to Lismore and Mount Melleray

with a meal in Dungarvan before returning home.

A big 'thank you' to Sr. Christine for the caring and kind manner in which she carries out her role as Day Care Centre Supervisor, to Joan O'Donohoe, FÁS Scheme Supervisor, and her obliging staff in the Community Office, and to Thelma Griffith, chairperson of the Day Care Centre committee, for the endless hours she puts in voluntarily into the Centre, and to all the FÁS participants, who all together help to make this Day Care Centre in Fethard such a wonderful facility for our senior citizens and make it the happy place it is. ♦

Fond memories of Fethard

John Joe Keane

Through the fair to the convent school, and afterwards to the Monastery on the Rocklow Road. The cobblers cutting, shaping and sewing leather and Scully's black car. Mass and devotions in the Parish or Abbey, processions, carnivals with fancy dress parade and style.

The buzz of the hunt's opening meet, the cinema for pictures, matches in the Barrack Field. The circus in all its might, a swim in Newbridge or an orchard of ripe apples. Walking around the ring of Ballybough or up to the dispensary for a cure.

Picking blackberries on the Abbey Rocks, on Market Hill blackcurrants or down to Grove Wood where Tarzan Coroimo, the 'Tommies' and 'Jerries' and the musketeers reigned.

A game of soccer in St. Patrick's Place, 'pitch and toss' on the Cashel Road. The fights after closing time outside the pubs. Fishing in the river and Mrs O'Brien's chip shop.

Handball against the Town Wall, a snog down the pound, a few bob for hunting or thinning turnips or beet.

Jack Gunne's forge in the Green, basket making in Cummins's near the station. Will O'Donnell winning handball All Irelands. Richie Fallon breaking the high jump record. Selling Mission News and Good Counsels, playing in Delmege's field.

Just some of the growing up experiences in the town I love so well.

P.S. I Would do it all again! ♦

NEW BANK MANAGER

Welcome to Fethard to the town's first lady bank manager, Mrs Mary Birmingham, who took up her new position officially on Monday 14th May.

CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Nurse Mary Prendergast, St. Johnstown, Fethard, on her appointment as Acting Assistant Manager of St. Patrick's Hospital, Cashel.

Patrician Presentation School



Fethard Patrician Presentation Secondary School Awards 2001. Back L to R: Fr. A.B. Kennedy, Jennifer Frewen, Mary Gorey, Sinead O'Brien, Gerard Walsh, Ross Maher, Eoin Doyle, Glen Burke, Julieanne Smith, Mark Sullivan, Susanne Gorey, Mr Ernan Britton (school principal). Front L to R: Miriam Carroll, Derek Shine, Mary Griffin, Claire Ryan, Sarah Kennedy, Linda Kenny, Sarah Mai Ahearn, Jack Kenny and Evelyn O'Connor.

The new school year is underway and the euphoria of exam results fades into the not so distant past. Both our Leaving Certs and Junior Certs did very well in the Certificate exams. The ever elusive 'A' was achieved in many subjects with one student achieving nine A's at Junior Cert level. On October 26, the principal, Mr Ernan Britton, staff members and students assembled in the school hall to celebrate a mass of thanksgiving which preceded this year's awards ceremony. The celebrant of the mass was Fr. Tom Breen, and co-celebrating Fr. Gerry Horan OSA, our new prior, and Fr. A.B. Kennedy, a past pupil. Canon James Power also took part in the celebration. A number of parents were among the congregation which included Rita Kenny, chairperson of the Parents Association; Larry Kenny, board of management, and Sisters Annunciata and Christine from the

Presentation Convent.

The altar reflected the soft glow of autumn flowers and sunshine as the senior choir of the school, assisted by a third-year group, followed through the theme of thanksgiving with appropriate numbers. A moving solo of 'The Clouds Veil' was sung by Jodie Gilpin (5th year) and Peter Kenny (6th year) brought a tear to the eye as he sang and accompanied himself on piano to the John Lennon 'Imagine'.

At the conclusion of the mass, principal Mr Ernan Britton thanked all concerned in the preparation and running of this lovely occasion. He then invited Mrs Rita Kenny to open the awards ceremony. Rita presented the following awards: Progress in Learning Award to Derek Shine; Student of the Year Awards to Mary Griffin and Sarah Mai Ahearn (1st Year), Sarah Kennedy and Linda Kenny (2nd Year), Miriam Carroll (3rd

Year), Jennifer Frewen (5th Year).

Mr Britton then presented the Pdraig Pearse Trophy to Claire Ryan for achieving a Grade 'A' in History and Irish at Junior Cert level. The best achievement at Leaving Cert went to Eoin Doyle and a special achievement award for Junior Cert results was presented to Jack Kenny. Father A.B. Kennedy was then called upon. He addressed all assembled with nostalgia tinged with humour as he remembered his school days in Fethard, particularly when the schools amalgamated and the occasional 'hop' took place in either the Brothers' school or the Nuns. He encouraged the students to enjoy their young lives and their school days. Being a late vocation himself, he spoke of biding one's time and there will be an answer. He is now teaching himself in Portumna, Galway. He presented the best attender awards

to: Susanne Gorey (1st Year), Mary Gorey (2nd Year), Mark Sullivan (3rd Year), Evelyn O'Connor and Emmet Burke (4th Year), Paul Walshe and Adrian Morrissey (5th Year). Denis Burke then presented the special sports award to Julianne Smith, and Paddy Broderick presented a special sports award to Glen Burke. Marian Gilpin, chairperson of Fethard and District Credit Union, presented the business and enterprise award, sponsored by the Credit Union, to Gerard Walsh. A replica was presented to Mary Gorey – last year's winner. Justin McGree then introduced the Gaisce Awards – the President's prize for personal and social development. The recipients were Ross Maher who received a silver award; Jennifer Frewen and Sinead O'Brien who received bronze awards.

Finally Mr Britton presented pine to



All-Ireland Schools Volleyball Champions 2001. Back L to R: Michelle Coffey, Vanessa O'Donnell (Monroe), Kersty McCarthy (Kerry Street), Helena McCormack (Kerry Street), Evelyn O'Connor (St. Patrick's Place), Ailish O'Connell (Coolmoyne), Zoë Cooney (Main Street). Front L to R: Mr Ernan Britton (school principal), Lynda Nevin (Ballintemple), Jennifer Frewen (Tullamaine), captain Caroline Croke (St. Patrick's Place), Lily Maher (Kilnockin) and Ms Jill Cunningham (coach).



Mr Britton presenting the Padraig Pearse Trophy to Claire Ryan, Killusty, for achieving a Grade 'A' in History and Irish at Junior Cert level.

the prefects 2001-2002: Michael Walsh (1st Year), Paul Walsh (3rd Year), Rhya Roberts (4th Year), Jennifer Frewen (5th Year), Rebecca Carroll (Head Girl) and Paul Cleary (Head Boy).

The ceremony concluded at 1pm and all departed to commence the beginning of the October mid-term break. Congratulations to all.

Sport is very much on the agenda for the coming year with football, hurling, volleyball, and basketball, and we wish our teams every success.

A special congratulations to our eleven girls on their achievement in winning the All-Ireland Schools Volleyball title in Carlow on Thursday 6th December. The victory over old rivals Loughrea was particularly sweet as Fethard have suffered many losses to Loughrea over the years. In the last five years, two Community Games

finals in Mosney were lost to the same opposition — the 1999 final actually lost to the very same girls who played in Carlow. In addition, the final was an absolute thriller, the best of the five finals played in Carlow. The Fethard girls lost the first set but got to grips with their game in the second and won 25-18. The third set was heart-stopping and the final score of 15-13 is as close as a game can be.

The eleven girls who brought home the coveted trophy were: captain Caroline Croke (St. Patrick's Place), Jennifer Frewen (Tullamaine), Lynda Nevin (Ballintemple), Vanessa O'Donnell (Monroe), Ailish O'Connell (Coolmoyn), Lily Maher (Kilnockin), Zoë Cooney (Main Street), Kersty McCarthy (Kerry Street), Helena McCormack (Kerry Street), Michelle Coffey (Grove Road), and Evelyn O'Connor (St.

Patrick's Place). Their coach was Jill Cunningham (Kilkenny) who departs for a position in the United States next month. Along with fellow Kilkenny native, Bernie O'Connor, both have done Trojan work in Fethard for which everyone is grateful and without which this victory would not have been possible.

The Concern debates will also find the 5th years participating under the direction of Mr McGree. The team is Jodie Gilpin, Ciarán Duggan, Barry Shee, Kersty McCarthy and Rosaleen Fanning.

Transition Year have commenced their very valuable and worthwhile year, and spent long weeks rehearsing for this year's musical 'Oklahoma' which was staged in the Abymill Theatre in December and produced by Ms Marian Gilpin.

A number of our students were also involved in Abymill Youth Drama Group and the curtain went up in September for 'Wednesday's Child', a play set in Northern Ireland.

A highlight for the year for transition year students was their expedition in May. It all began with a visit to Patricia Looby's exhibition 'Harvester' in Temple Bar, Dublin - Transition Year were 'on tour' again, and less than a week later we started out on the long road to Delphi - not Greece, simply Mayo - on a bright May morning filled with promises of an Irish 'heat wave'. Twenty-five boys and girls from T.Y. 2000/2001 bid farewell to Fethard with enough luggage to survive for at least a year! The journey to Galway was predictable - Atlantic 252 . . . coke cans . . . text messages — the all too familiar sounds of an thousand and one ringing tones.

It was when we reached Maam Cross an almost reluctant wave of silence engulfed the bus. Yes! These young souls were actually touched by the strange beauty of Connemara. Was it Cromwell said "to hell or to Connaught?" - He was wrong on that May day - it was Heaven. By the time



Fethard Patrician Presentation transition year students photographed on stage after their opening night production of 'Oklahoma' on Wednesday 12th December.

we reached Delphi the awesome beauty, the silence of the mountains, the gentle ripple of the lakes had seeped into their souls. Their silence gave way to uncertainty, even a touch of xenophobia. Who were these strange people, with strange accents? English in the main, as it appeared the entire surfing generation of England had been transported to Delphi. Gradually the uncertainty gave way to a newborn confidence - the joy of achievement at things never thought possible — surfing, kayaking, abseiling, archery. Layer by layer the skin of the fast food consumer society began to peel away - burgers and mobiles faded into the distant past in these idyllic surroundings.

Cheeks rosy and sun-kissed; appetites sharpened by mountain and sea, new friends; happy laughter and the cuckoo sang her song of summer from daybreak to dusk, elusive yet ever present, the fairy godmother of the majestic Mayo mountains, accompanied by Vincent — a Mayo man at heart. Justin, with his youthful enthusiasm, enjoying to the full all the outdoor activities; Deirdre, a mother of four daughters who looked upon each one of them with a maternal eye; and

myself - defying definition - I had come home to the lost secrets of my soul - the land of Yeats, of Synge, of Joyce, of pure living.

Maam Cross, Friday May 11th. Reality struck - the myriad of mobile tones the cries of McDonalds! showers, coke cans, the odyssey was over! And now I hear her again as I write - not as clear yet somehow reassuring me perhaps she has followed us down from Mayo, perhaps she too seeks a new home - our cuckoo!

A new feature of this year is the 'new look' uniform, with the girls wearing grey skirts and blue shirts, alternating with grey trousers and blue shirts.

We welcome this year, Ms Stapleton to the staff. She will join the resource team. Congratulations to Gerald Walsh on his entrepreneurial skills.

As the dark days of Christmas set in especially this year in light of events in the U.S. we extend a hand of friendship to all our emigrants who are now living in so many area of the world.

The Principal, Mr Britton, staff, and office and ancillary staff wishes you peace, health and happiness this season. ♦



*Holy Year Cross on Slievenamon in the 1950's
L to R: Maureen O'Donnell, Jude Donovan and Kathleen Donovan*

Killusty Soccer Club



Killusty F.C. winners of the Paddy Purtill Cup final played against St. Olivers Boys 'B' at Cahir Park on Sunday 17th June. Final score 1-0. Back L to R: Cian Maher, Nicky Murphy, Brendan Brett, Paul Fitzgerald, Kenneth O'Donnell, Brian Coen, Martin Coen, Michael Quinlan, Shay Coen.

Front L to R: Willie O'Meara, Martin Ryan, Eddie Holohan, Jimmy O'Meara, Colm Coen, Karl Maher, Eugene Walshe and Chris Coen

Last season was a successful one for Killusty soccer club. We won the First Division shield, finished runner up in First Division League and were the first winners of the Paddy Purtill Cup.

The youth team performed well in the top division and played Cork City in the Munster Youth Cup. The top scorer in the junior team was Shay Coen. The player of the year award went to Paul Fitzgerald. The youth player of the year was Brian Coen and top scorer was Pa Looby. The clubman of the year was Chris Coen. These presentations were made at our Annual

Dinner Dance held in mid November.

Officers for the year 2001/2002 are: Bob Maher (president); Sean Aylward (chairman); Louis Coen (treasurer); Shay Coen (junior team manager); Jimmy O'Meara and Colm Coen (youth team managers); and Bernard Feery (trainer).

We would like to thank everyone who supports our weekly lotto. The club wishes to extend our deepest sympathy to Bob and family in the unexpected death of Noreen.

Wishing all our friends home and abroad a very peaceful Christmas and New Year. ♦

St. Rita's Camogie Club

Last April, we were fortunate enough to have Declan Browne take over as trainer for the Intermediate team - his commitment was evident from the first intense

training session. However, due to the unavailability of some of our players, we began the league campaign with a depleted side and found it difficult to field a team on many occasions. In

addition to this we played all of our Championship and League matches without a regular goalkeeper.

Fortunately, we got a few new players prior to the championship and we had a successful campaign beating Clonoulty, St. Cronin's, Roscrea, and Moycarkey-Borris. We were defeated in our first game against Kilruane McDonaghs — having led 2-8 to 0-2 at half-time — by just one point, after a controversial 7 minutes extra time. This was a game which we literally threw away and it ultimately cost us a place in the county final. We had one other defeat at the hands of Templemore who are now County Champions and so will be promoted to senior status next year. As the championship was run on a league basis we

were unfortunate not to reach the county final as we finished third in the table — just one point behind Clonoulty who qualified for the final.

We hope to have all of our players back next year to strengthen our effort to win the Intermediate County Final. The panel for 2001 was: Sharon O'Meara, Fiona Conway, Vanessa O'Donnell, Imelda Spillane, Sandra Maher, Norah O'Meara, Kay Spillane, Jennifer Keane, Niamh Sheehan, Marie Holohan, Caroline Quinlan, Mia Treacy, Audrey Conway, Edel Fitzgerald, Laoise O'Connell, Lisa McCormack, Ailish Sheehan, Joan O'Donnell, Marie Mulcahy, Louise Wade, Jennifer Frewen, Teresa Burke and Elaine Williams. ♦

The Third Cavalry Squadron

The 3 Cavalry Squadron (Reserve Defence Forces) formerly known as 3 Motor Squadron FCA has had a presence in Fethard and surrounding area for many years and recently that area was extended as far as Killenaule. The unit HQ is located in Kickham Barracks, Clonmel.

Training is carried out in Kickham Barracks, Clonmel every Tuesday night, transport is provided to and from the Fethard area. To date there are approximately 16 new applicants from the Fethard Centre. This followed a visit to schools in the area. The personnel, when enlisted, will begin Basic Training in the near future.

This will consist of: drill, weapons handling and firing, navigation, first aid, communications and sports.

After basic training is completed, personnel will undergo advanced training

and this can include any of the following: military exercises, advanced weapons handling and firing, shooting competitions, main armament live firing, career courses, orienteering, driver training on the following — jeep 4 x 4, motorcycle, truck, armoured vehicles.

The primary task of a Cavalry Squadron in performing its role within the brigade involves route reconnaissance, flank protection, seize and hold and various other independent operations. The Squadron is a mechanised unit whose main characteristic is its high mobility and use of armoured fighting vehicles. The unit also uses light three-quarter ton 4 x 4 vehicles and cross-country motorcycles such as the Kawasaki 250cc and Suzuki 350cc.

The Reserve Defence Forces is currently going through a re-organisation in line with the Defence Forces Review car-



FCA 3rd Motor Squadron group photographed outside Health Centre Fethard, 1960's.

Front: Michael O'Meara, Billy Fitzgerald, Tom O'Connell, Eddie Fogarty, Pierce Ryan (Station Master's House), Tommy Healy. Back: Jimmy Fitzgerald, Sonny Leahy, Jim Sayers, Sean Quirke and Jimmy O'Neill. Top: Dimmy Burke, Ray Molloy (Bank employee) and Morgan Fergus.

ried out over the last few years. The force is being issued with the same equipment as the permanent force. Voluntary overseas service may be an aspect of this reorganisation. The organisation is also changing its name from FCA to Cultacha Arim (Army Reserve). There are big changes expected over the coming years as personnel of the RDF become more involved with all aspects of the work done by the Defence Forces both at home and abroad.

The benefits of becoming a member of the Reserve: learn and master new skills; make new friends; experience *Espirit de Corps*; earn pay for full time attendance at regular army rates; gain qualifications that apply in civilian life; enhance your CV with the inclusion of military service as a job description; enable members to fully participate and contribute meaningful service to the state and at the same time benefit the individual in the areas of: self reliance, communication skills,

character building, sense of duty, loyalty and civic pride.

Being in the 3 Cavalry Squadron gives you a wide range of opportunities for challenge, excitement, self-improvement and comradeship within a military environment. It does, however, require time commitment from members.

While attendance at training is voluntary, members are asked to make a commitment to attend at least one full day per month (usually a Sunday) and weekly night training parades (two hours) throughout the year. However, most members do much more than this.

Enlistment is open to both male and female applicants over 17 years of age and not more than 35 years of age and be more than 5'5" in height (males) and 5'4" (females), be of good health and possess the characteristics to satisfy the medical entrance examination. Contact HQ 3 Cavalry Squadron (052) 21222 or call in to Kicksam Barracks any Tues night. ♦

A visitor in Flanders

Canon Matthew Hayes, (Bath, Avon)



Canon Matthew Hayes photographed above with his niece Maeve. Canon Hayes has just published a delightful book which records some cherished memories of childhood at his home at Rathcoole, Fethard.

The book entitled 'I Slept with Dan', covers Matthew's childhood days up to 1937 when he set off to Rockwell for the commencement of his secondary schooling. The book contains lots of photographs and is a great record of his family life at Rathcoole at that time. The book, at £5, is available for sale in local bookshops or from Lisheen Publications, Carrig Hill, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary. Tel: +353 (0)505 21050.

In mid-November last year a colleague, Fr Tadhg Barry, and I availed of the chance to visit Flanders, and Bruges in particular. We were offered seats on a coach from Weston-super-Mare in Somerset. The rest of the company were ostensibly on a pre-Christmas shopping spree to one of those vast supermarkets so convenient to the Channel ports. It was a long drive to Dover and thence the car ferry to Calais.

We reached our accommodation in Ypres late that Friday night. It was a very comfortable, modern hotel on the outskirts of the town. Ypres, ('Wipers' as the British Tommies called it), Passchendaele Neuve Chapelle, Mons, Artois, the Somme, names of places that conjure up the battles and terrible massacre of the Western Front 1916–17.

Most of the battles here ended in dead-

lock or in a few miles of territory gained by one side or the other.

Passchendaele, then a village 8 kilometres east of Ypres, is synonymous with slaughter, mud, trenches, and utter military incompetence. As an objective it had little military significance, but came to symbolise the appalling character of war on the Western Front. Here in Ypres mustard gas was used for the first time in the spring of 1915. Half a million men, in their teens many of them, died here.

Little Belgium had the misfortune to lie between France and Germany and took the brunt of the fighting, especially Flanders, where poppies grow in profusion. This is the north-western province of Belgium and borders the Channel. Calais is within 80 kilometres of the Belgian border.

I well remember as a lad, in the late

twenties, Lizzie Mulcahy, who was helping my mother in Rathcoole, having time off to see her father on parade in the Square in Fethard on 11th November. He was one of the many ex- soldiers to honour Armistice Day in this way. Poppies were worn, the Last Post was sounded and a poppy wreath was laid against the Barrack's wall. Similar parades took place in other towns. Thousands of our young men enlisted in the many famous Irish Regiments that fought in the Great War.

In the past couple of decades 2,100 sets of bones have been recovered of 370,000 Commonwealth soldiers who have lain under the black rich soil of the Western Front. Only 65 have so far been identified. More and more remains are being recovered, as the land is being ploughed, developed or dug by archaeologists. It is a testimony to the horror and camaraderie of that war that 20 skeletons have been found recently in a common grave, arranged in a neat row, arms linked and feet facing enemy lines. These were lads from the same town maybe, who enlisted, fought and died together.

All remains, when discovered, are given a christian burial with full military honours in one of the many war cemeteries that are a familiar sight in northern France and Belgium. These cemeteries are very well kept and are visited as places of pilgrimage. We visited one near Passchendaele on the Sunday morning, which I believe, is the largest in Europe. The sign posts directed us to Tyne Cot; so named because the men from Northumbria who captured that particular piece of ground, a strategic advance, nicknamed the German command post 'Tyne Cot', because it reminded them of their cottages at home on Tyneside.

'Tyne Cot' is now a worthy monument

standing in the centre of this cemetery. The headstones, row upon row of them, stand in long symmetrical lines, like soldiers on parade. There is a simple inscription on each: the regimental badge, name, rank, age and date of death. Many are just inscribed 'An Unknown Soldier.' Some poor mother's son. I found a headstone to a Private Richard Hayes from Liverpool. I don't imagine there is any connection.

That Sunday there was a cold, biting wind and heavy rain lashing down. The terrain as far as we could see was flat, open country, with no walls, trees or ditches. It was easy to imagine the trenches, barbed wire, mud and awful loss of young lives. Parties of school children on mid-term holiday trips from U.K were doing drawings and noting down names from the headstones. I hope they learnt something of the futility of war.

On the Saturday evening we went the short distance from the hotel to the Menin Gate just outside Ypres. Menin is a small town about 15kms east of Ypres. On the Menin road in September 1917 there was bitter fighting and awful loss of life. After the war a noble cut-stone monument was put up, the Menin Gate, to commemorate the half a million who lost their lives in these battles. These are soldiers who are unburied; whose bodies have not been found. Their names are now inscribed in granite according to their regiments alphabetically. Irish regiments, such as Royal Irish Rifles, Dublin Fusiliers, the Munsters, The Irish Guards and many others, are proudly featured.

The Menin Gate is really a high, open tunnel through which the main road runs; a noble granite construction indeed. The roll of honour goes on and on into the Gardens of Remembrance on either side. Every evening at 8 o'clock buglers from the local fire brigade sound the Last Post.



Military Cemetery, 'Tyne Cot' in Passchendaele (November 2000)

This unique ceremony has taken place without fail since the end of the Great War. A large crowd had gathered that particular evening; perhaps more than usual as it was soon after Remembrance Sunday. Traffic was stopped, the crowd was still and quiet; two trumpeters stood in the middle of the road, their Last Post was a shattering, plaintive, thoughtful event. I am more anti-war from now onwards.

We had spent most of that Saturday in Bruges, or Brugge colloquially, which is a lovely, cobble-stoned city that goes back to the 9th century. It started as a defence fort against Norse marauders from the North Sea. In the 13th century it had grown to a sizeable port and had become one of the most populated and prosperous cities in Europe. Commerce, industry and in particular the cloth trade flourished. Merchants, bankers and traders enjoyed magnificent festivals, tournaments, jousting, pomp and splendour. It vied with Antwerp as a port.

In the 14th century Bruges reached its golden age as one of the chief cities in the Hanseatic League. This was a confederation of cities in Northern Europe which had the monopoly of trade and shipping in the Baltic. Bruges was the centre of the wool trade. Our Modern E.U is after all

nothing new.

Even in mid-November Bruges has its appeal for tourists. The boats still plied the many canals; the horse drawn carriages still took sightseers along the cobbled streets, their boater-hatted drivers pointed out the outstanding and historical sights and buildings. Cyclists were everywhere. You can hire a bicycle from the largest cycle depot I have ever seen.

The Provincial Court is a noble building in the Market Square, as is the famous Belfry, uniquely Flemish. Bruges is noteworthy above all for its shrine of the Holy Blood. The Basilica was closed for repairs, so we were unable to visit the shrine. According to tradition this relic of Our Lord's Blood was brought to the city at the time of the Second Crusade 1147 from Constantinople. Every year on Ascension Day the procession of the Holy Blood flies through decorated streets accompanied by, clergy, people and the various Guilds in medieval costumes.

The city is under the protection of our Blessed Lady, with her 12th century church (Notre Dame). This has a famous sculpture of the Madonna and Child in white marble, the only piece Michelangelo did outside of Italy. It is a real gem. We went to evening mass in the

Cathedral of St Saviour, which is the oldest brick building in Belgium. It stands on the site of a much older church going back to the 7th century. It has magnificent stained glass and a unique collection of paintings by Flemish oldmasters.

Lace making is a delicate art much practiced in the city. The lace makers wear their quaint bonnets and shawls as they deftly ply their bobbins. The Beguinage, the most peaceful spot in Bruges, is special to the place: it was a 14th century sisterhood, but is now a convent of Benedictine nuns who still dress in the habit of their predecessors. Bruges is a mecca for artists with its architectural wealth and natural beauty. It is noted too for swans, which are quite unconcerned

about the hundreds of sightseers that daily trespass on their green banks and canals. On a short day trip it is not possible to see and take in all that Bruges has to offer. I would like to return and next time to see more of Flanders: pay a visit to Douai and its college which goes back to the Penal Times when it trained young men for the priesthood on the English Mission, many of who died for the Faith. It was from that college that our first vernacular Bible came, the Bible we grew up with.

The wheel of fortune has at last turned in Belgium's favour. Brussels is now the E.U. capital and the seat of its parliament. We often resent and criticise 'Brussels' decisions and laws. But then there's none so queer as folk. ♦

Sliabh na mBan Holy Year Cross *Kevin Ryan*

Our Lady truly looked down on us on August 15th 2001, as we were blessed with a beautiful sunny day and once again a great number of patrons turned out, from the very young to the ever-young Mrs Monica Healy from the Green. It was also a special day as it was the first time out on the course for our new parish priest, Fr. Tom Breen. Many of us thought the soft going and stiff uphill climb might be his undoing, considering he was more used to the top of the ground level conditions around Clerihan. How wrong we were.

Sporting a stylish pair of golf shoes he was more than able for the testing going uphill and his stamina was never in doubt as he led the group from the front in what many believe was a course record. Even at that, some men in the know suggested he took a 'pull' to preserve his energy for the holiday he embarked upon later that day.

What we didn't know was that Fr. Tom was an old hand at these pilgrimages, having started one similar on the Devil's Bit many years ago.

Next year he carries the weight of the heavy loudspeaker!

On returning to O'Donnell's, the field was in readiness for mass and the canopy-covered altar was enhanced with the sun-drenched valley of Sliabh na mBan as a backdrop. What more idyllic setting could you ever find?

Canon James Power and Fr. John Meagher OSA, who had earlier led the rosary for those who were unable to make the climb, celebrated the mass.

After mass, in what has now become tradition, the locals provided a much-appreciated cup of tea and refreshments. Take a bow all concerned.

So if you haven't been on our pilgrimage, or you've missed a few years, pencil in August 15th for 2002. You'll be glad you did. ♦

A visit from Ernie O'Malley

Tom McCormack

"A sloe skin dusk came slowly down on the steep western slopes of Slievenamon and across the woods there. It blurred the valley of the Suir below the Comeraghs. Hedges of tangled hawthorn with fresh leaves in amongst the neat stems of spruce, stood out against the rise of hills. There was a strong spicy smell carried across from the bright pink blossoms of a corner hedge of wild crab."

This is how Republican Ernie O'Malley described the surrounding area shortly after his arrival in this part of South Tipperary in June 1921. He had been sent to North Munster to cover a Thirty Two Battalion, which contained 7,000 men, his brief, to check armament and to acquaint himself with the officers attached to the battalions mentioned.

Earlier that June evening, three republican volunteers had come upon three British officers and had called out to them to surrender. The officers ran, but one fell, after being wounded by a rifle shot by one of the volunteers. At that point all three surrendered. Each had fully loaded Webley revolvers and an identification card in his pocket. Two were gunner officers from the Artillery Barracks here in Fethard, the third was attached to the Lincolnshire Regiment in Tipperary Town. When first captured, the officers were brought to a dugout under the command of Adj. Sean Fitzpatrick. Later on that evening they were transferred from the latter's custody to where O'Malley was stationed. Fitzpatrick questions this, or so

it seems, in his book *"Recollections of 3rd Tipperary Brigade (IRA)"*

They were brought before O'Malley one by one, all three gave their name, rank and Commanding Officer. All said they had been out for a walk. Unfortunately for them, one of the volunteers had said that they were calling to houses asking about 'dug-outs' in



British soldier stationed at Fethard Barracks

the area. They were then informed that they would be shot at dawn. One of the officers protested seeking permission to appeal to a higher authority, but O'Malley informed him that *he* held that authority. It was expected that officers and foot soldiers would by now have started a search of the surrounding area for their missing officers.

The three prisoners were moved to higher ground, as this would provide the Republicans with a clear view of the approaching enemy. The wounded officer was carried by pony and trap while the other two walked behind. All officers were blindfolded, but their hands were left untied, as it wasn't a policy to tie prisoners, men held them by the sleeves.

O'Malley liked the younger of the officers as he was quiet and seemed

refined and fearing an all out attack by the arriving British he told the officer he would release them and not shoot them like dogs. One of the officers who had first aid experience volunteered to help republican casualties if there was an all out battle. As the party of men headed for higher ground they passed a house where two women were leaning on the wall. The younger of the two inquired as to the identity of the prisoners, and when told she suggested that shooting was far too good for them. The older woman uttered loudly "*God help them*" and then asked the prisoners if they would like a drink, all nodded. Returning from the house the woman brought a large jug of milk from which all three drank gratefully.

The group moved on until they reached a farmhouse in the fields some way from the Clonmel / Cahir road. Darkness was now closing in and as British soldiers were earlier seen in the area with machine guns, two sentries were posted outside to keep watch.

The woman of the house made supper and lit a fire in the room where the prisoners were seated. The room was large and the curtains were drawn when O'Malley entered. The officers were seated around a table, one with his head in his hands. O'Malley inquired if they would like the presence of a clergyman or a fellow countryman to sit through the night with them. All three refused the offer, O'Malley then gave them paper and pencils to write to anyone they wished.

He returned and sat at the fire with a few other members of the brigade. The woman of the house had gone quietly to bed. None of the men spoke for a long time. O'Malley was putting himself in the same position as the men in the other room; he felt his own turn might be coming soon. The Q.M. entered the room, O'Malley judged him to be the eldest of the group there. He had a wind-red face coupled with a long skillet jaw. His step was steady. He was used to having his way and would over-rule most objections as



IRA Firing Squad at practice near Rathkenny

this was his job. He was about 35 years of age while everybody else in the house including the prisoners were at the most 24 years old. O'Malley mentioned to the Q.M. his desire to have it over; his reply was that *"It'll be over soon enough"*.

The night was misty, the moon shone softly through the clouded sky. From the lower field came the lonely bray of a donkey. Closer to the house sheep coughed dryly in the shelter of a hedge and milking cows chewed loudly. Dawn was breaking when O'Malley entered the prisoners' room. They had not slept, but had written their letters. The younger officer requested that all their personal items would be sent to their C.O. Major King in Fethard. Their watches, rings and money were placed and sealed in a Fry's chocolate box and addressed to their Commanding Officer. As dawn broke they were offered tea but refused.

The sky was cold and grey as they walked down the sloping hill towards the roadway. The light was dim in the shivering dawn wind that blew through the hawthorn hedges ruffling the grass laden with dewdrops. Men with rifles

walked ahead. Two of the prisoners walked with the Q.M., while the third walked with O'Malley. *"It's all a mistake"*, he said, *"We could be good pris-*

oners". The sky lit to a silvery grey and the wind dropped.

"Stiff banks for hunting", said one of the officers. *"There is no hunting in this county since the introduction of Martial Law"*, replied O'Malley. They reached the road and the prisoners shook hands with the Q.M., O'Malley and each other. The prisoners then joined hands, their faces covered with silk hand-

kerchiefs. Asked by the Q.M. were they ready, they said goodbye, inclined their heads, and fell to the volley of the six-man firing squad, who then stood to attention.

No one spoke as they walked slowly up the hill through the wind-snaked rye grass and back to the centre. Soon afterwards Ernie O'Malley moved on to South Kilkenny where he was arrested under an assumed name.

The body of Lt. Toogood, one of the executed officers, was brought to the Tipperary Barracks on the 20th June (1921) and escorted to Camberly,



Soldiers at Fethard Barracks c.1922. L to R: Lt. Kennedy, Lt. Michael Farrell, Killenaule; Lt. Jimmy Comerford, Kilkenny, who later became District Attorney in New York.



Fethard Barrack's after being burnt down in 1923

Surrey, on 25th June for interment.

It is surprising that while a number of books have been published in relation to the War of Independence in the Co. Tipperary area, very few have mentioned this episode. I suppose it would be fair to say, here in Fethard, little was spoken of this incident, possibly by some sitting at an open fire on a winter's night in the 1940's. It was in this context that I heard about the execution of the three soldiers.

On 23rd May, 1990, The Irish Times in an article *"An Irishman's Diary"*, Kevin Myers states that Dan Breen presided over the execution but failed to mention this in his book, *"My Fight for Irish Freedom"*. He also stated that two of the officers were aged 20 years, while the third was a 21 year-old R.A.F. officer. Myers calls the shooting *"a particularly atrocious affair"*. In his article he states the *"firing squad did a poor job"*. He then goes on to say that Breen went around to finish the men off like a vet did.

On another point, Myers maintained that due to the pending truce meetings set for the following month of July, the

executions were unnecessary.

Myers was correct regarding the mess made by the firing squad, even O'Malley admitted that. I doubt very much if Dan Breen was present. Neither Fitzpatrick nor O'Malley mentioned in their books that Breen was in the area at the time; also the description of the Quarter Master did not fit that of Breen. The article may have been correct about the ages of the officers. Whether the officers were going for a stroll on that June evening as reported in the Irish Times or looking for the I.R.A. dug-outs as suggested by the volunteers is no longer an issue. I also think Kevin Myers erred when he suggested one of the officers was a member of the R.A.F., perhaps he meant the R.F.A. (Royal Field Artillery) based in Fethard.

He could have a point, however, regarding the necessity of the executions. In his book *'Black and Tans'* Richard Bennett quotes the then IRA's director of publicity, Piaras Beaslai, as saying the belated exhibitions of prowess with no military objectives, when the danger seemed past, reflect-

ed no credit on Irishmen but they were only the beginning of a period which patriotic Irishmen feel little pride in recording.

One thing however is certain, the executed officers fell foul of a policy introduced by their own government when British Auxiliaries shot republican prisoners on capture.

Of Ernie O'Malley, the "Irish Press" sums him up in the following way, writer, poet, realist. A man who noted the quiet charm and rich culture of the Irish countryside with the same observant eye as he noted the mechanism of a Thompson gun. ♦

*"Stands the church clock for ten to three
and is there honey still for tea."*

— Rupert Brooke

Sources

- 1/ "On Another Man's Wound" Ernie O'Malley
- 2/ "Recollections of the Third Tipperary Brig" (IRA) Sean Fitzpatrick
- 3/ "History Tipperary Military Barracks" Walter O'Shea.
- 4/ "An Irishman's diary" (Irish Times) Kevin Myers.
- 5/ "Irish Times"
- 6/ "Black and Tans" Richard Bennett

Fethard Juvenile GAA Club

The A.G.M of the Fethard juveniles took place in February. Officers for the year were: Michael O'Dwyer, (Chairman); Caroline Sheehan, (Secretary); Anne Darcy, (Treasurer); Committee: Susan O'Meara, Marie Ryan, Patricia Fitzgerald, Laura Lyons, Mary Godfrey, Austin Godfrey, Martin O'Connor, Tina Conran, Frank O'Donovan, Michael Walsh, M.C. Maher, Stephen McCormack.

The most successful of our underage teams were the under-10, winning the Community Games County Final in style. Great celebrations were had by all, especially the children who were paraded around the town on a truck. They won the Cloneen tournament beating Ballingarry in the final. These young boys also proved their skill on the hurling field winning the (B) hurling championship in impressive style. They are currently in the under-10 football and are hoping for more success.

The team is as follows: Eoin

O'Connell, Kieran Ryan, Gavin Fitzgerald, Aidan Lyons, Ben Walsh, Kevin Hayes, Philip Doyle, Jerome Ahearne, Glen Maher, Daniel Hickey, Matthew Fitzgerald, Matt Sullivan, Kieran O'Connell, Tommy Sheehan, Aaron Conran, Frankie O'Donovan, Damien Morrissey, Alan Lawrence, Owen Fitzgerald, Owen Healy, Owen Dillon, Davy Walsh, Jonathon Fleming, Owen Prout, Colin Shanahan and Darren Connolly.

The under-12's also did well getting to the semi final in the championship, but were beaten by Moyle Rovers.

The under-14's and under-16's were unfortunate with both hurling and football opposition proving too strong.

Our under-18's trained all summer and played a competition in Moyle Park. All boys played extremely well and after a hard day were beaten by the hosts (Moyle Rovers) in the final

The summer camp proved a great success yet again with 150 children



Fethard started their Feile Peil Na nOg campaign on Friday, July 6, with their opening game against St. Josephs (Baltinglass, Wicklow) and on Saturday they played Carrickmacross (Monaghan). The Fethard team are photographed above in their new jerseys sponsored by Slievenamon Golf Club.

between the ages of 6-14 in attendance. Brendan Cummins gave of his time to visit the camp during the week. John Leahy was also there to meet the children and participate in medal presentation. Thanks to everyone who gave their time and helped during the week.

The highlight of the year was the *Feile na Peil* held this year in Tipperary. Selectors in charge of our under-14 team were: Michael O'Riordan, Pat Sheehan and Penny Burke. All the team were kindly sponsored by Slievenamon Golf Club. Fethard hosted a team from Baltinglass in Wicklow. A disco was held in the ballroom for the teams, friends and families. Baltinglass reached the All Ireland Final and Fethard travelled to Thurles to cheer on the good friends they had made over the weekend. Unfortunately they were beaten. On the Saturday the President of the G.A.A., Sean McCague, paid Fethard a visit. A tremendous amount of work, time and effort went in to making the weekend a successful one. We extend our thanks to everyone who helped to make it run so smoothly. A special thanks to all the parents who looked after the under-14 boys

from Wicklow, also Michael O'Dwyer and Mary Godfrey whose hard work did not go unnoticed.

On a final note, the officers and committee would like to thank Tommy Sheehan, Michael Sheehan, Danny Burke, Michael Walsh, Tony Fitzgerald, Mickey Ahearne, Philly Croke, Michael O'Riordan, Pat Sheehan and Brendan Brett for training the footballers. Liam Hayes, Martin O'Connor, Stephen McCormack, Miceál McCormack, Ian O'Connor and Liam Treacy for training the hurlers. ♦

CYCLING NEWS

Congratulations to Raymond Clark, the young Clonmel Cyclist whose father is Sean Clarke formerly from Fethard, on his excellent performance in this year's 'FBD Milk Rás'. Riding for the Derry Classic Wall NL Team, Tuesday and Thursday's stages were the days on which he excelled.

Wednesday's stage included three leg-breaking first category climbs in which Raymond's powerful solo effort to keep the 'King of the Hills' jersey was just not strong enough to hold Nicholas White of the powerful South African team.

Raymond finished 2nd in his category.

Fethard and District Credit Union

The euro conversion is just around the corner and our system has been up-graded to suit these needs. We are now also offering the new government savings plan. The local round of the schools quiz was a huge success in January, unfortunately 'Foot and Mouth' took its toll on further rounds.

The A.G.M was held in Cork last April and was attended by our delegates. A Credit Union Perpetual Trophy for business and enterprise was initiated and first awarded to Mary Gorey, Main Street, a pupil of Patrician Presentation Secondary School.

Our business is keen and the Friday

morning opening has proved a huge success. Hopefully the recessionary impact of the downturn in the United States economy will not be of too long a duration, and will not have adverse affects on the Credit Union system, both in Ireland and elsewhere.

Board of Directors: Marian Gilpin (chairperson); Edward O'Brien (secretary); Kate Healy (treasurer). Credit Committee: Sean O'Callaghan, Angela Dillon-White, Mary Morrissey, Kay Spillane and Jonathan Gilpin. Supervisory Committee: John Barrett.

The staff and directors wish all of you a very peaceful Christmas and a Euro New Year! ♦

Fethard Bridge Club

Fethard Bridge Club celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary at the end of the last bridge season in May 2001. Our outgoing president, Anna Cooke, arranged for a special pen to be produced to commemorate the event and these pens were presented to the members at the beginning of the new bridge season in September. Our president's prize dinner was held in J's Restaurant, Fethard, on 18th May 2001 and the President's Prize winners were Rita Kane and Kay St. John. The Committee Prize was won by Brendan Kenny and Buddy Roche. Player of the Year, for which the O'Flynn trophy is presented, was Berney Myles, and the Club Championship, for which the Hayes trophy is awarded, went to Moira McInerney and Nell Broderick.

We played for the free sub for the coming year on 26th September and 3rd October and the winners of the gross free sub were Margaret Hackett and Berney

Myles. Tony Hanrahan and David O'Meara won the nett free sub. Our Christmas party was held on 12th December at which our Christmas prizes were presented.

A course of bridge lessons for beginners was run over eight weeks during October and November and was well-attended.

At our AGM on 23rd May 2001 the following officers and committee were elected: President: Nora Lawrence, Vice President: Margaret Hackett, Secretary/PRO: Gemma Burke, Treasurer: Bernie O'Meara; Anna Cooke, Breda Walsh, Berney Myles, Kay St. John, Teresa Cummins, Frances Burke, Alice Quinn and Betty Walsh.

May we take this opportunity to wish all bridge players (and non-bridge players!) at home and abroad a very happy and holy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. ♦

Fethard Ballroom

We glance back on the last twelve months with a sense of pride, as it was a hugely successful year for the Ballroom Company.

Our main events were: Dancing on Sunday nights, which is proving very popular and our single biggest turnover of revenue with attendance's averaging 200 per night; indoor soccer; volleyball; dancing classes; cards; Girl Guides; Boy Scouts; Macra; keep fit classes; parties; 'On Your Toes'; Youth Club; funeral catering; Senior Citizens parties and meetings.

The Ballroom is proving to be an excellent community facility which we are continually improving, most recently, fitting new doors and windows, new carpeting, and non-slip floor covering in the kitchen. These eliminate draughts and reduce heat loss and add to the comfort of patrons.

All of these improvements do not come cheap and, added to our operational costs and repayments to our shareholders on an ongoing basis, add

up to a tidy sum. However, we are happy to say that we are in a very strong financial position, due to a small but hard working Board of Directors.

It would be an injustice to fail to recognise our Ladies Committee who do so much so quietly; Margaret Phelan; Monica Ahearn; Breda Spillane; Sheila O'Donnell; Pat Horan and Catherine O'Connell.

To our dancers, clubs and individuals who use the Ballroom, many thanks for your support, we hope we provide a good facility and service. We look forward to your continued support. To all who helped in any way, many thanks. We would like to wish everyone a happy and holy Christmas and a peaceful New Year.

Board of Directors: - Mick Ahearn (chairman), Seamus Barry, Gay Horan, Paddy Hickey, Sean Spillane and Robert Phelan (secretary). Resigned during year: David O'Donnell. ♦



David O'Donnell is photographed in his new plant tunnel at his home in Coleman, Fethard, where he can supply a large variety of healthy plants for bedding or for hanging baskets.

Mush, Musha, Musheen, Musharoon Mushroom . . .

Tony Synnott.

I think these words need some explanation!

Mush: — As a young teenager I worked in the pram factory in Clonmel, for the princely sum of seventeen shillings and sixpence (87.5p) a week. One of the adult workers was known as ‘Mate’, because he had worked in England for some time. He addressed all his adult colleagues as ‘Mate’. However, the younger workers like myself were referred to as ‘Mush’: “Hey Mush, hand me those panel pins.” A fellow young teenager was being corrected at home for his mispronunciation of certain words. When he asked his family what sort of mate they were having for dinner, he was promptly told, “It’s not mate, it’s meat” As a result he one day said to mate “Would you like sugar in your tea, Mr Meat?”. Enough said!

Musha: — This word was often Mused by my mother instead of “indeed”. “Did you see poor Mrs. So and So?”, my mother would reply, “Musha, I did, she doesn’t look well at all.” As my mother hailed from Tallow in West Waterford, I could never understand why she said “Musha” as folk in Tallow would have said “Yarra, she doesn’t look well at all.” When I recently read Christopher Nolan’s “The Banyan Tree”, I was amazed at the constant use of the word “Musha” by the main character in the book, Minnie O’Brien. As it happens my mother’s maiden name was O’Brien, a coincidence or what?

Musheen: - A friend of my mother lived in Hopkin’s Lane in Clonmel, the entrance to which was

between Duggan’s the Druggists and Waldron’s Grocery and Bar, off O’Connell Street. I often visited this woman’s house with my mother. On more than one occasions the house was full of smoke from the fire. My mother would remark, “It’s very smoky today Mam.” To which the reply was always the same, “It’s the wet musheen Missus.” That was her description of wet turf, which it often seemed to be during those winter days in the early forties.

Musharoon - Like my young friend at the pram factory (fifteen shillings and one penny a week after stoppages -75.5p), I too had my moments of mispronunciation. “Where did you get the musharoons Mammy?” My sister Phyllis would correct me “They are mushrooms not musheroons,” she would say. I suppose that’s when I discovered my love of mushrooms, which happily continues to the present and will I trust, continue into the future.

Mushrooms: - As soup, boiled, on toast, fried with a few rashers, cooked with a pinch of salt and a knob of butter on an open fire or nowadays even microwaved, they are the food of the gods anyway up. I’ve eaten mushrooms in England, Scotland, France, Spain, Italy, America, and Poland but at the end of the day there is no mushroom to beat a Fethard mushroom. Ask any expert. The first mushroom I picked was not in Fethard, no, it was in Clonmel. I will remember it for the rest of my life; it was in O’Donnell’s field up the Cashel Road. I was just over six

years old, it was before 7 o'clock on a dewy morning and someone had been before us. Their tracks in the dewy grass were clearly visible. My mother and my eleven-year-old sister Phyllis told me to walk between the tracks, which were three or four yards apart. Of course they were both right, the previous picker has missed a lot. I can still taste the breakfast of that morning, mushrooms boiled in half milk, and half water, lots of white pepper and a good shake of salt, lashings of home-made brown bread and butter and hot tea. Egon Ronay eat your heart out.

Since my sister Phyllis and her husband Michael (God be good to him) moved back to Fethard over 40 years ago, it has been my habit to phone Fethard at least once a week, regardless of my own address. Always after the initial greeting and when the season was right, the first question from me would be, "Any mushrooms yet?" I always asked that question too soon. Then perhaps after two or three weeks of, "None yet", the magic words would come down the line, "Tom Barrett got a few during the week." A week later perhaps the answer would be, "Mrs Gleeson brought me in a nice few this morning and Tommy Bulfin came with more." That was good enough for me, that was the signal to arrange a trip to Fethard. I honestly believe that all Tom (God be good to him) had to do, was to stand outside his front door on Main Street, sniff the air and he immediately knew which direction to take to get the first of the season. I well remember a Saturday night whilst enjoying a leisurely pint in Lonergan's talking to Tom and his friend Gus about mushroom picking days around Fethard. Two of nature's gentlemen talking to me about nature.

Gold medals are not awarded for mushroom picking, but if they were I would surely have got one on a Saturday evening in 1984. Together with my wife Phyllis and our then teenage daughter Kim, we had gone down from Clane to Fethard for the weekend, as the signals were good. When we had eaten and exchanged news, my sister Phyllis told us that Marie Crean had told her that there was an abundance of nice mushrooms ready for picking on her farm. Within minutes of hearing the good news, my sister, daughter and our dog were on our way to Crean's farm. A sight for sore eyes appeared when Marie and the late Jimmy pointed us to the right field. It looked more white than green, covered with the most beautiful mushrooms anyone ever laid eyes on. Fortunately we had brought ample baskets with us. We returned to Main Street with well over 20 pounds. A big mushroom supper and an even bigger mushroom breakfast saw us leaving Fethard, still with 21 pounds.

Returning to Clane on Sunday, we weighed them into one pound lots and bagged them ready for Dublin on Monday morning. I told the Limerick man who was in charge of one of the offices, that there were Fethard mushrooms in the boot of my car, and it was open, but only one bag per person. Five minutes later I locked the empty boot. Most of the families who enjoyed the Crean farm mushrooms that Monday evening in various parts of Dublin, had only ever eaten forced mushrooms from their local supermarket, now they were introduced to the true taste of Fethard.

God willing, I will tell you another time about how I sold leprechauns in Fethard! ♦

Still Life

"Ploughman Rest"

*Remembering the great Ploughmen around Fethard —
coming to mind are the Nagle Brothers —
Pad and Martin who ploughed the Rocks of Carrigbawn.*

*A green breasted haw-finch grosbeaks his fill
From a red berried tree of haws
Which beamed across a sunlit field
Of bobbing turnips an Infantry drilled
I regiments plodded in ups and downs
And plumed like circus horses
In swede attire.*

*A smoked out pipe, the broken stem chalked
The headland where he the breadwinner
Would rest for a bite and sup
On his throne of sop and fern
To the munching sound of oats and hay
By his seisreach
A white starred chestnut
And a red maned bay.
Secretly in purple robes*

*Lies Queenly Slievenamon, passionately alone,
Baring all,
A shapely thigh and crested breast
Nakedly caressing the ploughman's unquiet cry
As they stretch together side by side
Crouched in a sensual dream
Humming like a lullaby
Cradling to sleep*

*The ploughman's unquiet cry
On a feathered bed
Of deep red fern
"Ploughman's Rest"
Until shadows pass a hushed
"Still Life"*

Into the kingdom of The Morning Star.

— by Jimmy O'Donnell



*Jimmy O'Donnell, overall winner in
the Best Drama category at the Ballina
Arts Week Literary awards, July 2001.*

The Old Priest

by A.J. Philips

*Monica Lonergan Wade found the following amongst books belonging to the late Archdeacon Cotter.
Thought provoking in appreciation of all the priests who have passed through the parish of Fethard and Killusty.*

*Dear Lord, he stands there all alone
So helpless old and grey,
He is too old to guide his sheep
Or seek the lambs that stray*

*Those eyes that turn to Thee in prayer
Are dim with aged tears,
Those snow-white hand that touch their God
Have withered with the years
That Pallid face that once shone bright
The lips that kissed Thy cheek
Are blanched because he knelt beside
The fallen and the weak*

*No one is there to take his hand
Or guide his stumbling feet,
And silently he stands and waits
Where earth and Heaven meet.
Beyond the hill the children lie
Who once stood at his knee,
Beyond the stars the Angels wait
To lead him unto thee.*

*Dear Lord, have pity on him now
He stands there all alone,
Not yet of Heaven and not of earth
Take him, he is your own.*

A Raid on McCarthy's Orchard

John Fogarty

We were crouched in the bushes on the bank of the river, elbowing one another, pushing, voices lowered, waiting our turn to slide down onto the fat sewerage pipe that made a hump on the rippling surface of the Clashawley; mouths drooling in anticipation as we eyed the ripe red apples that gleamed tantalisingly on the trees in McCarthy's orchard at the far side of the river. And the clusters of pears on the towering pear tree. Soon we'd be wiring into those, stuffing them inside our jumpers.

One by one we hopped along the chunky squares of concrete that held the sewerage pipe in place and provided us with ready-made stepping-stones to the far bank. The orchard ditch was close to the river and there was a hole in it close to the spot where the pipe disappeared into the riverbank. We squatted there in a rough circle, thinking we were commandos about to venture behind enemy lines. We used to be the Valley Gang, now we called ourselves 'The Valley Slashers.' We even had a slogan, made up by Eddie Coffey and Pat Fogarty: *'Eggs and rashers/ For the Valley Slashers'*

We'd chant this as we dogtrotted our

way to the wood to cut hazel saplings for the makings of bows and arrows. (Like the Fianna of old we – well, some of us – had a great disdain for walking and ran everywhere). Of course when we were Apaches we'd ride our pinto war ponies everywhere, and when we were deep in Sherwood Forest — as we

often were — we'd break into, *'Robin Hood, Robin Hood, ridin' through the glen ...'* Sometimes we'd be out there ranging over the mountain-tops of Tennessee in our coonskin caps singing, *'Daveee, Daveee Crocket, king of the wild frontier.'*

The gang was about a dozen in number, mostly Coffeys, Littletons, Sayers and Fogartys. Our mission now was to

feck and gorge ourselves on as many apples and pears as we could carry in our jumpers from McCarthy's orchard.

Tommy Sayers was eyeing us seriously now and telling us that we'd better stuff our jumpers inside our britches and tighten our elasticated 'snake' belts to make pouches so's we could feck loads of apples and if we were caught 'twas every man for himself and no bawling if you were caught and above all, no telling.



McCarthy's Hotel

Tommy then scuttled off through the hole with Pat Fogarty — they were our leaders — to scout ahead for signs of danger. They ran in a half crouch half monkey scamper, trying to imitate Audie Murphy's low, zig-zagging run in a film we'd seen at The Capitol Cinema about a week before. We watched as they threw themselves, like good commandos, at the foot of the low stone wall that divided the orchard into two unequal parts, and slowly raised their heads to scan what we called the 'big orchard', at the far side of the wall. The best and sweetest apples were at the furthest end of the 'big orchard', close to a building where coffins were made and stored, and the stable-yards at the back of McCarthy's Hotel on the other side of the crumbling remnants of the town wall. The very spot where the risk of

being caught was greatest.

Time and again dire warnings about fecking apples had been thrown at us: *'the guards will put ye in jail; keep out o' that feckin' orchard, or ye'll draw the parish priest and the monks down on top of us!'*

But the most fearful threat of all was: *'if aul' Jack 'Carthy catches ye feckin' his apples he'll put ye into a coffin, or lock ye into a stable with a mad horse!'*

That put us thinking all right. But it didn't stop us. The lure of those juicy apples and pears was irresistible. As soon as they were ripe enough our sweet-starved taste buds took over and all fear of coffins and mad horses suddenly vanished. We were like prospectors in those old Westerns, possessed by gold-fever.

So when Tommy and Pat beckoned



Robin Hood 1956 - 57. Boys from Fethard Patrician National School in Town Hall. Front L to R: Michael Maher & Stewart McLellan. 2nd Row: Billy Power; Lory Dineen, Jimmy O'Neill, Damien McLellan, Billy Fitzgerald, Noel White, Ian McLellan, Jim Sayers, Ray McSweeney, Davy Woodlock. 3rd Row: Paddy Mahoney, Eamon Maher, Eddie Fogarty, Tommy Whyte, Waltie Moloney, Willie Harrington, Jim Fitzgerald, Davy Lawless, Paddy Lonergan. Back Row: Jim Shine, Tom Mackey, Tommy Healy, Richard O'Brien, Sean Evans, Michael O'Meara, Cyril Sweeney.

us on we almost trampled one another in our eagerness to get into the orchard. We charged through the 'small orchard', which had mostly cooking apples and swarmed over the wall into the 'big orchard'. In minutes, leaves rustled and trees shook, as we wriggled through the branches, working our way to the top to reach the juiciest apples. Our legs and clothes were smeared a scummy green from the damp moss on the branches. We'd pay for that later on. Now we didn't care.

In the small orchard John Coffey had clampered almost to the top of the pear tree, as nimble as a pirate in the rigging of a ship. The thinner branches at the top curved ominously under his weight as he tried to reach the ripest pears on the outer edge of the tree. All sense of danger and fear of

being caught were gone now as we bit into juicy apples and packed them inside our makeshift pouches. This was too easy. We began to shout and laugh carelessly. Soon we were screeching and cursing and wantonly bombarding one another with half-eaten apples.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, we heard an angry shout, and froze.

'Hey, hey,' we heard.

We looked towards the sound. Somebody was shouting and waving and striding angrily down the yard from

the back of the hotel, a big dog bounding on ahead. A strange looking dog. White, with black spots. We didn't stop to admire him, though. There was an immediate, panic-stricken evacuation of the trees. We sprang from the branches, fear driving us like drug-fuelled, Olympic sprinters towards the wall and the hole in the ditch beyond



Kitty and Nell McCarthy

that led to safety. We were pregnant with jumpers-full of apples and reluctant to leave them after us; we ran in terror imagining the dog closing in like a ravening beast anxious to devour one of us, expecting to be hit between the shoulders at any minute, praying, oh please let it be anybody else but me.

'Jaysus, we're all et,' Billy Sayers wailed and then there were apples hopping off our shins and ankles as we began to empty

our makeshift pouches, trying to gain that vital, extra bit of thrust that would carry us clear of the dog's jaws.

High overhead in the pear tree John Coffey began a slow crazy tumble, falling from branch to branch like a rag doll. Amazingly he hit the ground running and was out the hole ahead of everyone. Some cleared the wall almost without breaking stride; others scrambled up and slipped back, heedless of skinned knees and shins, and were heaved and pushed unceremoni-

ously over by those behind. There was congestion at the hole in the ditch as we all tried to squeeze out together. 'C'mon, c'mon,' the ones at the back screamed.

I risked a fearful look over my shoulder. Poised on the crown of the wall was the bold Judo, leaning forward, his flight arrested by the dog whose jaws were firmly clamped to the arse of his britches. For a millisecond they hung there in a weird freeze frame, Judo straining forward, the dog pulling him back. Suddenly the shorts gave away, Judo tumbled forward, and the dog fell backwards, looking slightly surprised to find only a khaki coloured patch between his teeth. Judo picked himself up and streaked away with one hand clamped to his backside, wailing like the fire siren on the Town Hall.

And then we were all jumping wildly into the river, splashing and falling and floundering through water and rushes, slipping on mossy stones in a frantic effort to get to the other side and safety. No queuing for the sewerage pipe this time. Oh no. Fortunately the dog stayed on the far bank and only his barks followed us as we scrambled through the bushes to the Valley field then over the wall and onto The Valley. Of the man there was no sign.

We milled around on the road panting, laughing, everyone shouting his own version of what had happened, the water squelching in our shoes and dripping from our wet clothes. Then we became aware of Judo, wailing and dancing and clutching his left buttock: *'Oh, me arse, me arse, I'll be kilt, I'll be kilt when I go home!'*

'Give us a look, give us a look, ah come on give us a look!'

We gathered round Judo, bursting

with curiosity, showing not a shred of sympathy as we jostled one another out of the way to get a good look at what the dog had done. Just at the spot where thigh and buttock meet the dog had nipped away a tiny piece of flesh. So intent were we on getting a good look at it that we didn't notice the arrival of a fawn coloured VW Beetle, or the trousered, cigarette-smoking figure of a woman struggling out of it. Only when she twisted someone's ear did we realise what was happening and then we were off again in a mad scatter. This time we cleared the wall into Henehan's field and tore away intending to take refuge in The Furry Hill. But we stopped, groaning and cursing, when we reached Jesuit's Walk because there was Nell chugging along past the dump in her Beetle, blocking our way. We swung away right-handed through Dick Cummins's field, intending to cut through Nick Harrington's sandpit and onto the Clonmel road at Congress Tce. And blast it, we swore, when we got to the sandpit and saw the roof of the Beetle above the top of the wall moving slowly along the road. We gave up running and sat among heaps of pebbles and concrete pipes and scattered blocks cursing her and wishing she'd go away. Finally she went and we dispersed for home.

Later that evening, at about five thirty, which was the time 'Rin Tin Tin' and 'Rusty' would be showing on the telly, a group of us stood gazing uncertainly at the brass-handled door of the Hotel. We desperately wanted to see 'Rin Tin Tin'. And the pubs were the only places that had tellies. We could have watched it on a telly in Jack O' Shea's window, without sound, but that was no use.

Would Nell be inside waiting to

pounce if we went in? Once again the lure of something we really wanted outweighed the fear of what might befall us in trying to get it. A half dozen of us crowded nervously inside the door, and, Mother of God, there she was half-sitting on a stool, two legs, in an immaculately creased trousers, stretched out before her, one ankle crossed over the other, a cigarette in her hand. We backed towards the door, ready for flight once more. In desperation someone blurted out, in a pitiful voice: *'Any chance of watching Rin Tin Tin and*

Rusty missus?'

She took a slow drag on her cigarette and looked at us for a long minute and we feared the worst; then she suddenly winked and jerked her head towards the telly. *'Thanks missus,'* we said, delighted, and ran past her to the far end of the bar, jostling and elbowing for the best places as we settled ourselves in front of the telly, Nell and the afternoon's adventure forgotten as we sat glued to the snowy, black and white pictures waiting eagerly to be transported into another make believe world. ♦

Alan Cantrill remembers

*The following is an excerpt from a letter from Alan Cantrill, Burton on Trent. (January 2001)
(Son of Molly Mackey, Cloneen and 3 Congress Terrace)*

It is a peculiar feeling to think that I knew my grandparents for only 12-14 weeks, spread between 1947 and 1959, and that along with very vivid memories (of these weeks), only the names of friends made then still exist; sadly Gran died in 1962.

Lory Dineen along with Guard Evans' son played a good game of football along the edge of Congress Terrace. Sheehans (from the farm on Red City Road?) turned out to be cousins I later found out.

Breda Hurley and a certain Carmel Brett plus a number of their friends took me mushrooming up the railway bank and out onto a field somewhere above the station. The same Carmel — who saved stamps — wrote to me in England and made the postman think it was a birthday with red envelopes!

Philip Ward took me with Dad, on garage business to Thurles and Kilkenny. The scent of a new Volkswagen I can conjure up even now. He was a very kind and generous

friend.

Mick O'Riordan allowed me to help at the smithy — he let me write to Ferguson Tractors in Coventry for details of all the accessories then available in 1954. Perhaps he was intending to sell them?

I helped put iron tyres on wooden wheels outside on the front. I even went to a large castle covered with ivy or similar, to shoe up some horse. I was only 12 or so. I wonder if it was the same place that Mr Lloyd Webber has taken over.

I remember someone connected with McCarthy's pub — he was a little older, had a strong interest in photography. We could buy contact print packs and these could be exposed somehow. (They were a toy and not a proper camera film.) They were then developed at his house. The amazement at seeing an image come out of an otherwise plain paper was something!

Who was he? I haven't a clue now but I wonder if he remembers.

Gran gave me 6d each morning so that I could go down to Jimmy Hanrahan's shop. A bottle of pop 3d (a firm from Clonmel produced it and it was better than anything else apart from Guinness) and a 3d Cadbury milk bar — not your Birmingham Cadbury but a much better Dublin variety. Jimmy's shop had wonderful posters of yacht racing, courtesy of Players tobacco. He was also very kind to an English school kid, in fact I probably came to know

Mick O'Riordan and Philip Ward through him. I should add that travel, even at the age of 9 or 10, was safe enough for me to be put on a train alone at Derby Friday evening and then journey via Holyhead — Dun Laoghaire-Dublin — Thurles- Fethard to be met by Gran and Grandad on Saturday evenings. All Alone. I doubt if you let 10 year olds cross the road alone today.

Very Best wishes to everyone for 2001. ♦

Nature Diary 1943-1944

Extracts from a nature diary kept in 1943-44 by Liz Brett, Main Street, Fethard.



Liz (O'Keeffe) Brett

September 9th 1943.

While cutting barley on the farm we were very surprised to find a wood pigeon's nest. When the tractor passed along the side of the hedge, two pigeons flew out in a very excited fashion. We went to the spot and it was quite easy to find the nest, which was very low on the branch of a crab tree. I realised what a sanctuary Grove wood is for all the different birds and animals, weasels, rabbits, hares, pheasants, par-

tridges, rats and mice. But I did not find what I was looking for, the nest of a harvest mouse. I was told that he builds with the skill of a bird, fastening his nest like a cradle, to the stem of the corn.

September 10th 1943.

Trees are holding green with a very odd scrap of gold and red shining in some places. Blackberries are ripe everywhere. Mushrooms are also plentiful.

September 28th 1943.

I noticed an Elm tree in Grove, flaming in red, gold and yellow. The other trees near it are a very dark green, so it stands out like an Indian Prince. Nuts, hip, haws and sloes are to be seen on hedgerows everywhere. A lovely day of warm sunshine. Robins and wrens singing cheeky duets to each other. Honeysuckles in bloom.

September 30th 1943.

On my way from Kiltinan this evening, I heard a lot of chitter-chatter in the trees near Grove gate. I could not see them, but I am sure they were starlings. I noticed the crows flying around apparently very busy at something or

other. They were making lots of noise in the trees and it struck me that they were having manoeuvres or exercises of some sort, or meetings perhaps.

October 1st 1943.

The Ivy is in blossom and the daisies still in bloom. I saw five hen pheasants feeding very peacefully near the bracken in grove. I wonder how many will survive the shooting days of October? I saw three squirrels sitting on the road-side eating beechnuts.

When they saw me they hurriedly crossed the road and jumped over a high wall into the wood.

October 8th 1943.

I saw five young swans in flight over the river Anner with Slievenamon quite close for a background. They looked lovely, but a fisherman remarked that something would have to be done about them, as they were getting too numerous and so destroying the fish in the Anner.

October 14th 1943.

We went for a nature walk with Mrs Hughes at Annesgift and spent an interesting and lovely evening. From her I learnt a lot about fungi. I even had the courage to taste the peppery milk of the Lactarius, which burnt my tongue. I also saw a fern leaved beech tree, which grows at the entrance gate. I never knew of this tree before. The woods around Annesgift were a lovely sight; Laburnum was in bloom on the avenue, together with seedpods and withered leaves. I also saw dozens of snails asleep in the hollows of an old sycamore near the house.

October 18th 1943.

I saw several wagtails at the bridge at Rocklow. The hedges are full of wild fruits and berries. The old folk say it is the sign of a hard winter; all the berries and fruits are Gods gift to the birds.

October 21st 1943.

I have tried in vain to get any visual feathers in Grove wood, also in Rocklow. The trees are a wonderful sight in Grove wood presently. I could hear the call of the pheasant everywhere. I saw lots of spider's webs on the furze, but no sign of a spider.

October 21st 1943.

We ploughed out our potatoes today, and half of them are both green and bad. The housewife will have to be more careful than ever.

October 25th 1943.

We sent our beef to the factory today. It suffered from crownrot and was cured by spraying with borax.

I saw several lots of small birds flitting in and out of the hedge near Ardsallagh. I think they were sparrows and sitting as if they were having a conference. I saw three blackbirds and four thrushes. I got off my bicycle and had a good look at them. When I made a sound, they slipped off quietly from branch to branch and disappeared.

October 28th 1943.

I searched the whole countryside today for elderberries, but not one could I find. I wanted to preserve them and use as currants for cake and pudding at Christmas.

At our last I.C.A meeting, Mrs Byrne gave us a demonstration how to do this. She gave us some to taste, which she had in a jam jar, they were good.

March 3rd 1944.

Went to Rocklow to look at the crows. They seem more numerous than ever. They were not working on the nests, but flying around going from one tree to another apparently settling on sites. I noticed a wren singing the loudest song I ever heard a small bird sing.

March 10th 1944.

Dandelion is blossoming everywhere

on the Rocklow road. In an old pond there is a large amount of frogspawn. One field is almost covered in with daisies in bloom. I gathered lichen to do some home dyeing, also some furze in blossom.

March 16th 1944.

The wild roses are covered with new leaves. The thorn hedge is broken everywhere by the green of the woodbine and the white of blackthorn. I saw some crows flying towards Rocklow carrying some sticks in their beaks.

March 20th 1944.

I found a waterhen's nest on the river bank near Rocklow with two eggs in it. The elms are lovely in the distance just breaking into bloom, and look purplish and dark red. There is a tremendous amount of extra tillage work being done. I noticed it on the road to Clonmel

One would think the tilled fields would all look alike, but they were a

succession of different shades, one grey, one light brown, then chocolate and many other shades of pale green where the new corn was springing up.

March 26th 1944.

I noticed a new moon and the sky was all shades of rose, mauve and purple. Slievenamon was lit up with fires. I found a chaffinch's nest with one egg in it at Kiltinan today and watched a tree climber go up and down a lime tree, but what it was after I could not find out. One would think it was following some insect.

The Grove at Kiltinan was filled with the joyous sounds of many wild birds; I especially like the sound of the wood pigeons. Violets and Celandines were everywhere. Ground ivy is also in bloom here. I gathered some primroses for our I.C.A meeting. On my way home I watched eight pheasants, male and female, near Grove wood. ♦

*Archbishop O'Donnell
congratulating Mary
Barnable from Walshbog,
Killusty, on the occasion
of her 100th Birthday.*

*In the background is Bill
Prout, Slievenamon, a
friend of the Bishop
and an outstanding
cross-country runner
who competed in his
sport all over
Ireland.*

*Mary died on the
19th November, 1954,
aged 100 and 3 months.*



Donations Received

Acknowledged below are donations (£5 and over) received from readers and organisations up to 30th Nov. 2001. We would also like to thank all those who wished to remain anonymous.

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 Moloney, Patrick F., Bucks. UK
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 Moore, Mary (Gorey), Drogheda
 Moran, Bro. James, Abbeyleix
 Morrissey, Maurice, Fethard
 Morrissey, Billy, Herts. UK
 Morrissey, Colm, Delgany, Co. Wicklow
 Morrissey, J. J., Tralee, Co. Kerry
 Morrissey, Mamie, Fethard
 Morrissey, Patsy, Swords, Co. Dublin
 Morrissey Owen, Brigid, Warwickshire, UK
 Mullins, Billy, Marlow, Bucks UK
 Mullins, Denis, New Jersey
 Mullins, John, Wexford
 Mullins, Paul, London
 Mullins, Vincent, North Yorks UK
 Murphy, Muriel, (Mullins) New Ross
 Murray, Pat, Watford, Herts. UK
 Murray, Tom, Fethard
 Nagle, Anastasia (Kelly), Bansha
 Napier, Eileen, Herts. UK
 Napier, Nora (Hickey), St. Albans
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 Neville, Roger, Tullamore
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 O'Brien, Mary (Kenrick), Limerick
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 O'Neill, Hal, Cork
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 Wynne, Monica (Dwyer), Clonmel

If, for any reason, we have omitted your name, please let us know and we will acknowledge your donation next year.

Acknowledgments

Joe Kenny (editor)

I would like to thank Sarah Crookes for typing, Carmel Rice for looking after I correspondence and donations, Brendan Kenny for distribution and Gemma Burke for proof-reading. I would also like to thank all who subscribed to our Church Gate Collection in Fethard and a special thanks to all those who make annual donations which help make the whole publishing of this newsletter possible. ♦

All-Ireland Culchie Festival — Fethard 2001



The Bridge Bar Still House - Best Float Award at Culchie Festival



Kieran O'Connell, Coolmoynes, Fethard, winner of the Junior Culchie section.
L to R: Brendan Morrissey (National Champion 2000), Paddy Rock (Festival organiser), Kieran O'Connell and Catriona Stapleton (Festival committee).