

M.C

# TRÁCT



In and about Kinvara 1995/96 Price £2





**Kinvara and District**



## **Credit Union Limited**

**Kinvara, Co. Galway. Tel : 091 37525**

### **Board of Directors**

*Chairman* : Peter Greene

*Vice Chairman* : Brendan Leech

*Secretary* : Jennifer Linnane

*Assistant Secretary* :

**Ailbhe O'Rourke**

*Treasurer* : Toddie Byrne

*Assistant Treasurer* :

**Maureen Heffernan**

**Marian Connolly**

**Madeleine Mahon**

**Brendan Leech**

**Luke McCarthy**

*Training Officer* : Breda Kilkelly

*Public Relations* : Michael Organ

*Directors* : Kilian Kenny

**Helen O'Connor**

**Mona Gill**

**Gerry Naughton**

*Supervisors* : Paddy Kavanagh

**Sheila Conneely**

**Pauline Keane**

### **Opening Hours**

#### **Kinvara**

Wednesdays 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Fridays 10.00 am - 1.00 pm

Saturdays 7.30 pm - 9.00 pm

Sundays 11.30 am - 1.00 pm

---

#### **Ballyvaughan**

Thursday 10.30 am - 12.30 pm

Saturdays after evening Mass

- 
- Almost 700 members
  - Over 232,000 received in shares
  - Advanced over 355,000 in loans

**Chance to make regular savings • Loans available to members**

**Low interest on loans • No Retention Tax • Dividends on Savings**



# TRÁCHT



In and about Kinvara 1995 / '96 Price £2

## Editor

Bill Dooley

## Editorial Board

Stan MacEoin  
Marian Connolly  
Paddy Geraghty  
Jeff O'Connell  
Chris Mooney  
Toddie Byrne

## Graphic Design

Glen Mulcahy

## Lay-Out and Setting

Petra Bhreatnach

## Cover Design

Pam Fleming

## Compilation and Typing

Kathleen Kenny

## Photography

Glen Mulcahy  
Thomas Quinn

## Cartoons

Martin Clare

## Advertising and Publicity

Bill Dooley  
Paddy Geraghty  
Chris Mooney

## Published by:

Kinvara Community Council Ltd  
in co-operation with  
FAS Community Employment  
Project



## EDITORIAL

We learn from remembering. We heal through remembering. Gary White Deer, a representative of the Choctaw Indians, whose ancestors sent aid to Ireland during the famine a mere seventeen years after they themselves had been dispossessed, said in Mayo this year: "You can't heal unless you remember.....Healing is remembering." Another speaker, comparing the Irish Famine with contemporary famines, on the same occasion said: "...the truth is that the Irish Famine was a symptom of social and economic policies that continue."

This edition of Trácht continues our community's remembrance of the Famine because we believe we can continue to learn more about ourselves from it. We can grow through recognising the horrors visited by a heartless economic system on our ancestors and we can question whether a similar system may yet be at work in the world.

In this edition too, we remember our more distant heritage. We look at St. Coman's church and we recognise we are all the poorer for not having this treasure accessible to us all though we accept that it must be in a controlled manner so as not to disturb in any way the residents adjacent to the site.

Dr. Garrett Fitzgerald - on the occasion of Paddy Geraghty's bringing a unique honour to Kinvara, when he was named Irish Life Pensioner of the Year - said that vitality and service were the distinguishing marks of the winners of the award. We hope that these qualities will become values which more people in our community will adopt.

We wish to salute, not only Paddy Geraghty, but all the women and men in our community who work selflessly to make this the great community it is. They are to be found in the many sports organisations, in the Community Council, Credit Union, Women's Group, Play Group, Social Services, Tidy Towns and others.

Whether you belong to an old established family living either in Kinvara or away from home; or whether you are a new resident in our community (i.e. moved in over the last fifty years!) or whether you are simply a lover of the area who comes to visit now and then, we hope you enjoy reading Trácht. We hope it gives you a better feel of what Kinvara is. Maybe something in it will inspire you to become more involved. Or maybe something will provoke you to put pen to paper to get your point of view in print. We welcome such wider participation.

The layout, artwork, photography, typesetting, much of the editorial work and advertising management for this edition have all been done by the participants of our FAS Community Employment Project. They have carried out their task as a co-operative team in a most professional way. They deserve our thanks and congratulations. The community should be grateful to them and to other CEP/FAS participants who have been engaged by the Community Council for the fine work they have done in our schools, churches and grounds, Community Centre, and in beautifying our village and approach roads with their much acclaimed murals, well cared for flower beds and shrubberies, repaired walls and other improvements.

We have kept the price of this Trácht at the ridiculously low sum of £2. We have done this so that no-one will be able to say that they couldn't afford to buy it because it was too expensive. This would not have been possible without the generous support of our advertisers. We ask all our readers to support them, in return, whenever possible.

Tá súil againn go mbainfidh tú taitneamh as Trácht a léamh. Buiochas duit as é a cheannach; buíochas dár scríbhneoirí, dár bhfógróirí agus do chuile dhuine a chabhraigh linn é a fhoillsiú. Go gcúití Dia bhur saothar libh.

Ar aghaidh le chéile.

## Feature Articles

Feature Articles	Page
Kinvara's Hidden Church	5
All Revealed	12
The Great Educators	15
Mary Remembers	18
What do they do?	19
Reflections on Pat Keane	23
A Walk on the Child's side	25
Kinvara Through Old Photographs	29
Folklore from Kinvara *	35
The Famine Years	39
Our Trip to Local Mendon	43
What it said in the Papers	45
The Famine in Kinvara	47
Paracetamol	56

\* Our thanks to The Head of the Folklore Dept., University College Dublin for permission to publish this article

# **Joseph J. Mc Inerney & Co.**

*M.I.A.V.I.*

AUCTIONEERS, VALUERS & INSURANCE BROKERS  
COMMISSIONER FOR OATHS  
PERSONAL. LIFE & GENERAL INSURANCE BROKERS  
LOW COST VALUATION SERVICE

GORT & KINVARA TEL: 091 - 31078 FAX: 091 - 31930  
DISTRICT OFFICE : *IRISH NATIONWIDE BUILDING SOCIETY*

SUB OFFICE KINVARA, SATURDAY'S 11A.M. - 1P.M.  
(BESIDE TULLYS BAR)

## **Fahy's General Merchants**

Nogra, Kinvara,  
Co. Galway  
Tel:(091) 37116

—◆—  
*Fuel, Coal, Gas, Bar,  
Shop  
---Restaurant---*

## **John Huban BUILDING CONTRACTOR**

Knockaculleen  
Doorus, Kinvara  
Phone no.: (091) 37211

Registered for all types  
of Building work



# Kinvara's 'Hidden' Church

1.

Ruined churches are a common sight throughout Ireland. Originally Roman Catholic, after the Reformation in England, and especially after the Elizabethan Church settlement, these medieval places of worship were either taken over by the new English Church in Ireland - the fate of many of the cathedrals, such as Christ Church in Dublin, and Collegiate Churches, like St. Nicholas' in Galway - or abandoned to the elements.

Even when they had fallen into ruin and were of no use to the legally established Church, they could not be used for Roman Catholic worship because the land upon which they stood belonged to the Reformed Church. The only kind of ecumenical relations that existed concerned the dead: Roman Catholics continued the practice of burial in the old graveyards, where they rested with apparent equanimity alongside their Protestant counterparts. However, until the repeal of the Penal legislation, a Roman Catholic priest was not allowed to conduct any form of burial service within the churchyard.

Because a church was frequently one

of the earliest permanent buildings to be erected in a small settlement, as this settled population increased in the 18th and 19th centuries the expanding town often came to encompass the site of these now ruined church. Examples of this type of development include the ruined church of St. Jarleth in the town of Tuam and the ruined abbey of Cong on the edge of that village.

Kilfenora, in Co. Clare provides an interesting example of how the functions could be combined. The cathedral of St. Fachtna was the Episcopal see of the diocese of Kilfenora. After the Reformation it ceased its function as a Roman Catholic place of worship. However, a portion of the original medieval cathedral was preserved for Protestant worship, while the greater part of the site was allowed to fall into ruin. Meanwhile the graveyard entered on the common road of posthumous inter-denominational harmony.

The medieval church of Kinvara follows the pattern of Tuam and Cong, with, however, one highly unusual exception. From the late 18th to the late 20th century the church and its graveyard has been entirely enclosed behind a row of sturdy two -

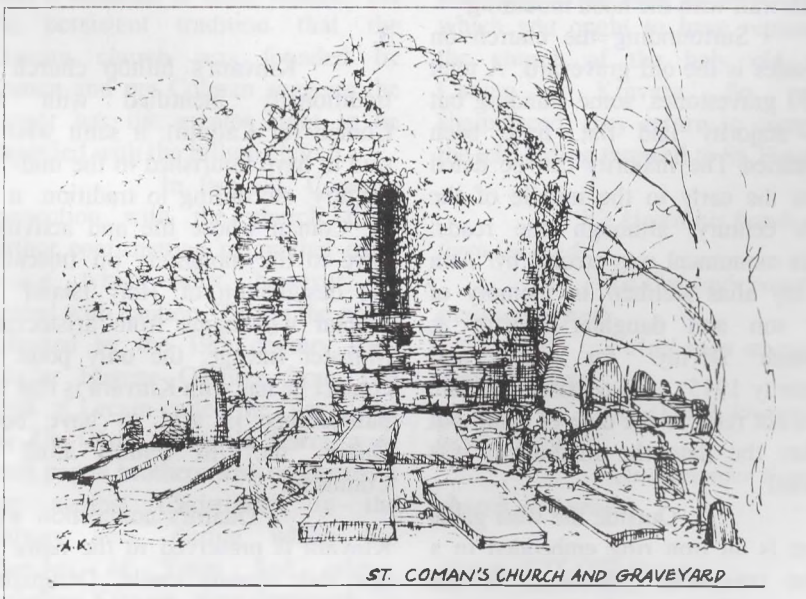
and three-storey buildings as well as several walls that prevent any public access. What is more astonishing is that certainly the south-facing line of houses has been built directly into the sloping hill of the original graveyard.

To put it bluntly, the foundations of these buildings are laid over probably a large number of early graves. There is, so far as I am aware, no precedent for such a thing happening anywhere else in Ireland. Sometimes a very ancient burial ground is discovered when building takes place, but what we are talking about in Kinvara is a graveyard that was still in use less than a century ago.

Today the only ways in which you gain access to at least a portion of the old graveyard and church lie through the yards belonging to the Old Plaid Shawl and through the back yards of Leech's Craft Shop and the adjacent houses extending up the main street to Sayre's Restaurant. The actual entrance to the church itself is directly behind the large three-story house next to the Post Office.

2.

The primary purpose of this article is to describe Kinvara's 'hidden' church; outline what little is known about its history and associations; and provide a partial list (originally published in the author's *Kinvara History: A Family Affair*; other grave stones certainly exist in the back gardens of the houses backing on to the church but they are either difficult of access or covered over with earth) of those buried in its graveyard. A secondary aim is to alert people in Kinvara, in particular those whose forebears are buried here, to the badly neglected state of both church and graveyard in the hope that steps can be taken to restore them both and allow limited access - perhaps at certain times of the year - to the site.



ST. COMAN'S CHURCH AND GRAVEYARD

drawing courtesy of Tír Eolas



The church, aligned as is traditional from east to west, stands on a hill that faces the quay on the east; the hill falls away sharply to the south (the main street of the town), and more gradually to the north; to the west the ground is fairly level and is bounded by the outbuildings of the Old Plaid Shawl and the back yard of J.J. O'Dea.

Much longer than it is wide, its dimensions are 16.90m x 7.30m. The north wall is plain and windowless, and in the western part of the wall there are traces of corbel holes which, if they were extant, would have supported the roof beams. In the eastern corner of the north wall is an alcove, above which is an inscribed slab with a date of 1678 which reads: 'This tomb was erected'. The remainder of the inscription is missing. Beneath the alcove is a broken vault tomb which is dated 1810.

The east gable contains a tall narrow window with a gently pointed head with a pointed bowtell motif on its arris moulding; unfortunately, this attractive architectural feature is now blocked up with rubble and plaster, and the thick ivy covering the wall makes it difficult to make out any other decorative features it may have. There is also another small rectangular window, positioned slightly off-centre, higher up the gable wall with a rounded arch top. The luxurious growth of ivy makes it difficult to say anything more precise about this feature.

The south wall contains several features of interest. Almost directly opposite the alcove and vault-tomb in the north wall is a twin-light (i.e. a double-window bisected by a thin stone running from top to bottom called mullion) with an attractive rectangular hood-moulding visible from outside the church. It appears that this later window replaced an earlier lancet window, the top of which still remains in place above the hood-moulding.

The other feature of the south wall is the round-headed doorway at the western end; that it is

in the south wall indicates the church does not date back earlier than the 14th century, before which time it was customary to have a flat-headed doorway in the west gable (as, for example, in Drumacoo Church near Kilcolgan, and the cathedral church at Kilmacduagh).

The west gable is very plain and shows no evidence of any features such as windows or a door.

All the walls of this quite large medieval church survive to their full height, with the exception of the west gable, a portion of which has collapsed. There is a tradition that a sheela-na-gig, those enigmatic female 'exhibitionist' figures often found on medieval churches and even castles, is on one of the walls. But as the ivy is so dense it is impossible to verify or disprove its existence. The wall themselves are built with crude limestone blocks, some quite large along the lower courses of the north wall. The interior was originally mortared and plastered, traces of which are still evident.

The interior of the church is in a very sad state. Not only is it overgrown with bushes and brambles, at some time in the recent past the southeastern portion was used as a dump for building materials and other miscellaneous rubbish, with the result that the ground level has been raised just to the base of the window in the south wall with the hood moulding.

Surrounding the church on all sides is the old graveyard. A total of 53 gravestones, some standing but the majority laid flat, have been identified. The majority can be dated from the early to the middle of the 19th century, although one reads: 'This monument was erected by/ Ann Diviny alias Keliher/ in memory of her son and daughter Martin & Hannah Diviny/ for them and posterity 1915'. It is possible the date does not refer to the date of death but rather the date the monument was erected.

Outside the west gable there is an iron ring embedded in a stone cover-slab that leads to the Staunton family vault. Unfortunately

it is not possible to identify the exact location of this iron ring and cover-slab; it may be either covered by the accumulating earth, or destroyed as the result of building work in the back garden of J.J. O'Dea's house. Out of the total of 53 headstones, eleven can be identified within the church, the earliest being the low irregular stone with the inscription '1688 pray for the soule of --- Donaugh Margaret Kelly.

Of particular interest are two long cross-inscribed stones located almost in the middle of the church that, from this particular motif, can be dated to the 13th-14th century. What Dr. J.J. Fahey, in his 'History and Antiquities of the Diocese of Kilmacduagh' says of the church is relevant here; he states that

*In the long past, none but the recognised and leading representative branches of the Hy Fiachrach tribes, such as the O'Hynes, Kilkellys, and O'Shaughnessys, were allowed the privilege of interment within the sacred precincts of the church of Cíl Ua Fiachrach at Kinvara.*

If this piece of tradition is reliable, and there is no reason to question it, then the exciting prospect exists that many more of these early grave slabs may be found under the accumulated rubble within the church.

### 3.

Kinvara's hilltop church is traditionally identified with St. Coman (or Caimin), a saint who is said to have flourished in the mid-7th century. According to tradition, it is St. Coman whose life and activities gave to the monastery on Iniscaltra the designation of 'Holy Island'. A scholar who came from aristocratic Munster lineage, the only point of contact he has with Kinvara is that his half-brother is said to have been Guaire, the 7th century king of Connacht.

Guaire's connection with Kinvara is preserved in the name of the 16th century castle, Dunguaire, but more importantly with the well-



preserved promontory fort that occupies a headland site just to the east of Dunguaire Castle. From the proximity of this fort, traditionally associated with the 'Rath Durlais' of King Guaire, and the hilltop church, it is entirely conceivable that St. Coman received from his powerful kinsman the site on which he built the first church to stand overlooking the inlet of Kinvara Bay that was later to be the town of Kinvara.

From the poem, which cannot go back in its present form much earlier than the 15th century but which is quite likely to preserve an older oral tradition, it would seem that the marauding brothers eventually repented of their wicked deeds and went to St. Finian of Clonard to ask how they could make amends. The saint tells them to restore the churches they have so wantonly demolished. After carrying

4.

Apart from the names of one or two of the priests who held the living of Kinvara in the 15th century, the history of the church as an organisation and as a particular place of worship is a complete blank until the 19th century. In his Ordnance Survey Letters dating from 1839, the Irish scholar John O'Donovan writes:

*The old church of the parish is situated in the fast improving little sea port town of Kinvara. It is in very good preservation, but certainly not more than 500 years old as anyone will see by the form of the windows.*

*It is very probable, however, that it occupies the site of a primitive Irish church as it is dedicated to St. Coman who is said to be one of the primitive Irish saints.*



Ruin of St Coman's church. Photo taken by Tomás Ó hEidhin in the 1930s

Fahey wondered whether Coman was a mistake for Colman, the early 7th century saint said to have founded the monastic settlement of Kilmacduagh near Gort, who is also said to have been a kinsman of King Guaire. Yet the persistent tradition that the Kinvara church was founded by Coman and not Colman suggests the former has the greater right to be identified with the hilltop church.

In fact, St. Coman's connection with the church finds further confirmation in another early source, which must, however, be treated with caution. This is the poem collected by the 19th century Irish scholar Eugene O'Curry from The Book of Lecain called the 'Voyage of the Ua Carra'. The Ua Carra were three pagan brothers who conducted a war against Christianity in the Galway area, during which the churches of Tuam and others, including Kinvara, were destroyed.

out this penance the brothers return to St. Finian and declare that they have repaired all the churches they had destroyed, save one, the church of Kinvara. St. Finian tells them pointedly, 'That was the first church which you ought to have repaired - the church of the holy old man Coman of Kinvara.' So, rather shamefaced, they return to complete the job; bidding farewell to St. Finian:

*We kissed his hands, and  
forth we hied,*

*To Galway's coast our  
steps we turned,*

*And soon above the  
dark blue tide*

*The church towered up  
in stately pride,*

*And grander than the  
church we burned.*

(Trans. T.D. O'Sullivan)

Evidence suggests that the houses that now surround St. Coman's Church and graveyard were built either very close to the end of the 18th century, or sometime during the early years of the 19th century. In any case, it is clear that by the time the first Ordnance Survey map of Kinvara was published in 1839 the houses were already standing.

As mentioned earlier, how these houses came to be built on a graveyard is particular mystery. It is known that Robert Gregory of Coole Park purchased the town of Kinvara from James French of Doorus sometime before the end of the 18th century. Having already started making improvements to the harbour by the construction of a small pier, Gregory would appear to have continued improvements to the quay.

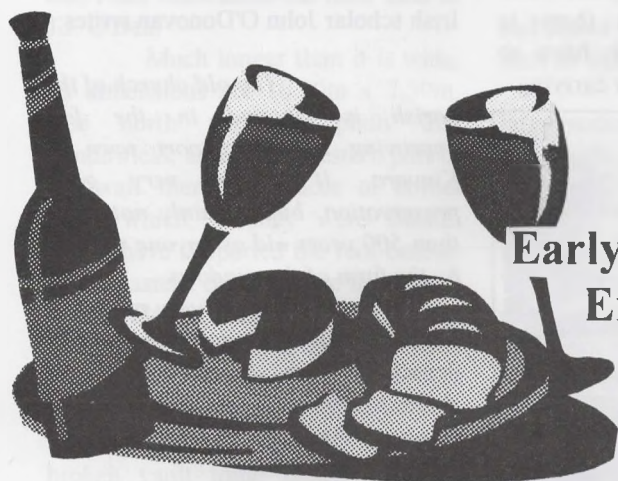
Kinvara had the distinction of being the only port serving the town of Gort and the south Galway, North Clare hinterland, and it is possible, again, that Gregory appreciated the economic possibilities of this position. It is almost certain that it was the Gregorys who built the sturdy three-storey grainstore overlooking the quay. Is it possible that he may also have been responsible for the



# *Tony Donnellan's*

## *Old World Style*

### **Bar & Restaurant**



**Early Morning Breakfast, Carvery Lunches**

**Extensive Bar Menu throughout the day**

**A La Carte 6.00 p.m. - 11.00 p.m.**

**For Reservations : 091 32127 / 32157**

**Gort, Co. Galway.**

*For That Special Eating Experience*

### **J.J. Coen, Co. Ltd & Don Coen**

**Bridge Street, Gort, Co. Galway**

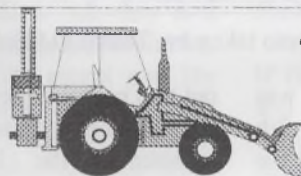
**Tel : 091 - 31038**

**Catering for all the family  
in footwear, Mens, Boys  
and Childrens Clothing.**

**Household and Sports  
Goods call to**

***Coens***

**Bridge St. Gort  
Co. Galway**



*Move with the Best*

***Mr. Lyons***

**JCB Plant Hire**

**Toureen West, Kilcolgan**

**Tel 091 : 37541**

**M. O'REGANS**

**on the Quay**

**Sweets, Confectionery,  
Ice Cream, Newsagent.**

**Now Open 7.30 am - 9.30 pm**

**7 days a week • (091) 37257**



construction of the dwellings running along the east quay frontage and up the hill westwards?

If so, had it been forgotten just how extensive the original graveyard was? Or were the original structures perhaps not dwellings at all, but stores and offices only later turned into dwellings?

However, even after these buildings were erected, the church was still not sealed off from the town. From the 1839 town map there is a distinct gap in the line of houses extending westwards along the main street. This gap corresponds with the site today occupied by Mrs. Agnes Lynch. Before the house was built, this gap would have provided easy access to the graveyard. When, precisely, the remaining house was built it is not possible to say with any precision, but it was clearly prior to Griffith's Valuation in 1848 as all subsequent town maps show no break in the solid line that still greets the eye today.

There was, even after this house was built, another access point where a wall now stands between the east front wall of J.J. O'Dea's house and corner of Sayre's Restaurant. Until finally closed some years ago, there was a gate here that led to steps into the graveyard.

In November of 1866 Kinvara's graveyard was the focus of correspondence between Fr. Francis Arthur and Lord Gough. Lord Gough, chairman of the Gort Poor Law Union, informed the authorities that, because the presence of a still functioning cemetery was a serious health hazard, it should be closed for further burials.

Fr. Arthur, while sympathising with the opinion of the Gort Union, paid a personal call on Lord Gough at his home of Lough Cutra Castle, south of Gort, and told him that unless the order banning further burials was rescinded, he predicted there would be serious disturbances.

Lord Gough referred Fr. Arthur's attention to the report made

by the Board of Guardians of Gort Union who described how 'the ground reaches up to within six feet of the second storey of the houses on the principal street. Many had to board their windows to keep out the effluvia arising from the bodies buried there because the bones and skulls were almost falling in the windows still left open. There is not six inches of soil in any part of the graveyard available for burying coffins, there being nothing but loose stones and the remains of former graves.'

Nonetheless, Fr. Arthur knew his parishioners and urged that the order be rescinded. Eventually a compromise was worked out and the authorities did not insist the graveyard be completely closed.

From the description given by the Board of Guardians the most urgent question is, not why they objected to the cemetery being closed, but how the people in the houses overlooking it could have continued to occupy them, with scenes outside their back windows like something out of horror film.

From the early editions of the Ordnance Survey town map it is clear that it was not until later in the 19th century, and then increasingly as the 20th century proceeded, that the inhabitants of these dwellings began pushing their gardens into the graveyard. While in some cases this had no serious effect, in others, unfortunately, it did with gravestones being uprooted and made to function as paving stones, footpaths and steps. There is no way to accurately measure just how many gravestones were destroyed this way.

St. Coman's Church, Kinvara's 'hidden' church, is closely linked to the history and development of the town. Not only does it contain the graves of at least 53 Kinvara families, from the medieval cross-inscribed gravestones it would seem very probable that more evidence of the town's obscure medieval and even pre-medieval past lies beneath the rubble piled up within the church itself.

The time is long overdue for making amends to all those people of Kinvara who believed their final resting place would be both honoured and respected.

#### **Appendix: Headstone Inscriptions from the Cemetery of St. Coman's Church**

(Spellings of names are as they are found on the gravestones. Where an inscription has been difficult to read a question mark has been placed behind it. Where an inscription has been impossible to decipher, or part of the stone has broken off, a single stroke (-) has been inserted)

1. Erected by John Deely in memory of his father Edmund Deely
2. Sacred to the memory of Mary Anne Barrett died August 24th 1840 Requiescat in Pace. Amen
3. O Lord have mercy on the Soul of Patt Flinn This Monument was erected by William Flinn his son for him and Posterity c. A.D. 1840
4. Erected by Patrick Jordan 1844
5. Erected by Barth. Carrick
6. O Lord have Mercy on the Soul of Betty Feeny. This Monument was erected by her son - Feeny for him and Posterity 1836 (?)
7. Erected by Martin Kerins for him and Posterity 1842
8. Erected by Barth. Jurdan and Posterity 1842
9. Here lies the body of Mary Staunton who departed this life March 17th 1812 Aged -
10. Erected by Patt Carroll
11. O Lord Have Mercy on the Soul of John Burke who departed this life 13th December Erected by his beloved wife Mary Burke alias Byrne and sons John and Peter Burke for them and Posterity
12. Erected by Martin O'Byrne for his Brother Thomas O'Byrne for them and Posterity
13. Erected by Thomas Keady for him and Posterity 1811
14. Erected by James Corles and his son John Corles for them and Posterity 1816.



15. Erected by John Ward for him and Posterity 1818
16. Erected by Pat Ward
17. Placed by Michael Nestor for him and Posterity AD 1839
18. O Lord have Mercy on the Soul of Patt Mulvahil who departed this life April the 14th 1834 Aged 40 years

- Lord have Mercy on the soul of Thomas Hynes who dep't this life March 7th 1811 Aged 15 (?) years Erected by his Affectionate Father Terence Hynes
- 26 Terence Hynes
27. Erected in memory of Michael Cavanagh by his son John (?) Cavanagh For His Posterity AD

wife who died the 3rd of Sept. 1830 This is inscribed to their memory by John Foster of Rinroe, County Clare the son-in-law of the said John Burke. Requiescat in Pace.

36. Erected by James O'Beirne 1840

37. Erected by Thomas Hynes Esq. his wife Mary Hynes and their Posterity A.D. 1823

38. John Conlon

39. Erected by Darby Larkin for his son Bartholomew Larkin

40. O Lord have mercy on the soul of Lawrence McInerney

41. Michael Buckley died Jan. 7, 1806 aged 64 years erected by His beloved wife Catherine Buckley alias Conlon in memory of their posterity may they rest in peace

42. This monument was erected by Ann Diviny alias Keliher in memory of her son and daughter Martin & Hannah Diviny for them and posterity 1915

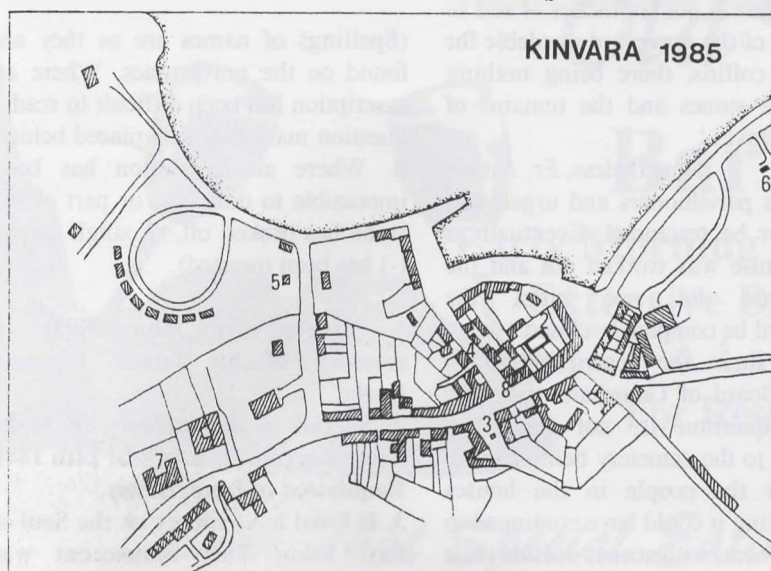
43. 1688 pray for the soule of - Donaugh (and) Margaret Kelly (Note: This is the oldest dated stone in the cemetery and it stands within the walls of the old church itself. Jerome Fahey, in History and Antiquities of the Diocese of Kilmacduagh, states that "In the long past, none but the recognised and leading representative branches of the Hy Fiachrach tribes, such as the O'Hynes, Kilkellys, and O'Shaughnessys, were allowed the privilege of interment within the sacred precincts of the church of Cil Ua Fiachrach at Kinvara". Hy Fiachrach was the name of the ancient clan or tuath that occupied South Galway in the early centuries of the Christian era. As Kelly is only a shortened form of Kilkelly, this grave may commemorate one of those ancient families.)

44. Francis Lally and his sons Patrick & Thomas Lally A.D. 1811

45. Stephen Hyens

46. Erected by M.J. Sheehan of Philadelphia in memory of his beloved father Joseph Sheehan who departed this life in 1884 aged 80 years.

47. Martin Skerrett 1819



drawing courtesy of Tír Eolas

19. O Lord have Mercy on the Soul of Malachy Mullavil who departed this life March the 10th 1809 (?) aged 60 (?) years Erected by his wife Ann Mulaville alias - for them and Posterity

20. Lord have Mercy on the Soul of Honoria Lally alias MacMahon who died - erected by her beloved husband - for their posterity

21. Erected by John Fahy and his wife Cecily Fahy in memory of their daughter Margaret who died May the 7 1819 Aged 7 years For their posterity

22. William Fallon A.D. 1819

23. This Monument was erected by Michael Melody and his wife Mary Melody for Them and Posterity A.D. 1835 Requiescat in Pace

24. Lord have Mercy on the soul of J- Corles alias Linnane who died the 10 Jan. 1820 (?) aged 52 years Erected by her Beloved Husband William Corles for her Posterity

25. In Thee O Lord Has he hop'd Let him not be con-ded for ever O

- 1810 (?) May They Rest in Peace

28. Erected by Michael Cavanagh in Memory of his Father Patt Cavanagh Erected for their Posterity 1810

29. Erected by Peter McConnel and his wife mary McConnel alias Nelly (or Kelly) For them and Posterity

30. Erected by Thomas Cavanagh for him and Posterity 1840

31. O Lord have Mercy on the souls of those interred here May They Rest In Peace Amen Placed by Francis Curley (?) for him and Posterity AD 181-

32. Erected by Michael Walsh for him and Posterity 1812

33. In Memory of his beloved wife Elenor Burke alias Walker who departed this life Jan the 3rd 1837 For him and Posterity

34. Erected by John Walsh for him and Posterity 1812

35. - Burke his daughter who died the - of July 1837 Margaret Burke who died the 28th of Dec. 1830 also Catherine Burke alias Foster his



48. Erected by James Connole of Chrishoe in memory of him and posterity

49. James O'Farrell lies under this stone pray for him christians to sin He was prone (Note: This curious inscription is cut on a much older gravestone that possibly dates to the 13th or 14th centuries. It was not uncommon for such older gravestones to be re-used at a latter date.)

50. William Howard his brother Charles A.D. 1819

51. William (?) Cullinan M. Cullinan and Margaret Cullinan and posterity A.D. 1848

52. O Lord have mercy on the soul of James Winkel who departed this life on the 11th of April 1800 aged 50 (?) years.

53. This monument was erected by Donnelan French Esq. for him and posterity Anno Dominum 1810 (Note: This inscription is on a broken vault tomb within the walls of the church in the angle of the northeast. The person named was the last male descendent of the Frenches of Duras

who first came to the area in the early 18th century. Patrick French's sister, Frances, married Bartholomew de Basterot of Bourdeaux, who inherited the French estate through his wife. The only puzzle lies in the fact that Patrick French died in 1785. It is possible the inscription was added after his death by one of his de Basterot cousins and the date refers to when the inscription was added. The names of Patrick French's father and mother, James and Annabelle French, and another son, Martin, are inscribed on (thegrandson of the de Basterot who married Frances French) and was restored by the second Bartholomew's son, Florimond, in 1886. So the vault tomb in St. Coman's Church may have been the original family tomb.)

The most exciting discovery inside the walls of the old church was made several years ago when two very old gravestones, each inscribed with a cross but no names, were found under some of the accumulated rubbish that fills the church today. Dated by

experts to the 13th or 14th century, it is very likely that more ancient gravestones lie nearby. It is also equally possible from the distribution of 19th century headstones within the church that others exist. But until the unsightly mound of rubbish is cleared away, this remains only a possible, though a strong one.

J.W. O'Connell

### John McLoughlin R.I.P.

Kinvara Community was shocked by the sudden and tragic death of John McLoughlin. John was very involved in Community Affairs both while a Garda Sergeant and in his free time. He was a member of Muintir na Tire and was very active in Community Games and Tidy Towns .



# ***Ken Carr***

## **SOUND & VISION**

Crow Street, Gort, Co. Galway. Tel : 091 - 31953  
OPEN TUESDAY - SATURDAY 9.30AM - 6.30 PM

## ***SALES RENTAL REPAIRS***

*Full Finance Terms Available and Extended Warranty*

**T.V. VIDEO Hi-Fi AERIAL SATELITE**

**BACKGROUND MUSIC SYSTEMS**

**PHONE & MICROPHONE EQUIPMENT**

**LEADING BRANDS IN STOCK**

**J.V.C. SONY PANASONIC AIWA PACE**



# ALL REVEALED !

*-What went on behind the scenes with the Arts in Kinvara?*

Kinvara Community Employment Project drew the three of us together, Pam, Petra and Marty in November '94. Our first meeting on 21st November gave us the opportunity to find out a little about each other and if we could work together. Happily, we have over the past year developed a friendship and an understanding of each others' little quirks that has made working together enjoyable.



Marty the snowman

Our first job together was to organise the **Christmas Craft Fair**. It was very short notice but we went for it anyway. The National Schools were invited to take part, as a possible fund raiser for them and St Joseph's senior class were helped make golden origami bird mobiles to sell. Northampton School had made their own store of goods over the previous months, from the puddings to the Xmas cards. Other groups/individuals also took part. The poster went up, the venue Winkles, a big banner painted and the bunting hung. The Christmas Craft Fair '94 was on! Potential customers

were enticed by Marty the Snowman, who had a soft spot for nurses! Pam, the Red-nosed Reindeer and Petra the "Angel". The fires in Winkles were blazing and the carol singers took refuge "behind the bar" in from the cold! Mary O'Sullivan added some merry tunes on the box. Sales went well, with Maria Dunne's hand-crafted Hedgehogs doing a marathon out the door thanks to Shay Davern's humour and persuasive selling. A jolly Xmas mood was well on the way!

Christmas also brought with it a few "odd" jobs. Petra was called to make Piggie and Wolf masks for Mrs Murphy's "babies" who performed a Christmas play in Johnston's Hostel. Meanwhile Marty, Pam and Cormac foraged the countryside for moss, holly, ivy and a few fir cones to put together a huge hanging "live" wreath for the church entrance. It weighed a ton!

After the festivities, it was time for us to put our heads together and lay out plans for the coming year. Three Arts workers, we better come up with something good!

Damien also an arts worker was upstairs in the newly built attic room the Centre. On a clear day he could be spotted amidst the paints, brushes and boards. Definitely something fishy going on! You only have to look at O'Grady's to find out what.

At this point we were asked to **teach art** in the national schools. For Marty, fresh from art college, this was to be a real labour of love, as he strove to help and encourage your children to discover that with a little practice and encouragement they could paint and draw and be creative. Marty enjoyed them all and the art work they did together as a team (in particular a huge mural in St Joseph's) is very inspiring and hopefully self

expression, be it through art, drama or literature is as much necessary and important to your child as the academic subjects in their development. We joined forces and the three of us took a class each week for art in Northampton. With help from each other and a bit of "book work" we had as much fun as the children.

Also the plan for skirting a **Saturday club** for teenagers (later changed to Wednesday) was taken on. More planning! ..... Budgeting - Programme - buying materials etc. We met up with the Galway Arts Officer, to see if there was any help / money available. (Not much ...!)

Then the Spring Fair came along and to keep the little ones amused we had a go at face painting. We also ran an **exhibition on Drama** over the years in the Centre, going back to the 1950's. It was called "Once upon a Time", hope you got a chance to see it. There were photos and costumes, programmes, books with old plays and paper cuttings. The costumes were going back to the days of Paul Brennan's directorship - some 6 years ago and from other theatre events e.g. Halloween's etc. All these costumes are now in the community centre and will hopefully be used for many more events. (Costume hire is being considered).

The play "**Religious Knowledge**" starring Kinvara's own Ger Connely and Philip Sweeney was brought to Kinvara and it was certainly a play that brought back many "fond" memories of school back for many. To add to the night 2 short plays were also put on at very short notice. Its amazing the energy people have for these things! There was a great crowd and its always good to see us all out laughing!





St Patrick's Day snake construction

In the meantime preparations started for commemorating the famine.

We hoped to organise several events. More about this later. Then it was almost **Paddy's Day**. Pam had great plans to create an imaginative outdoor parade with everybody involved, from the local FA to the Dream group (yes, there is such a group). But not enough groups spanned to our invitation to take part (yes we do need you to make things happen), so we opted for an indoor event. A whole nights show was put together in which many groups and individuals took part. There was also a sketch on the life of St. Patrick involving a huge snake and the loveliest piggies (playschool children) ever seen. The snake was made by the Saturday Club teenagers under guidance of Aine Philips, a professional puppetbuilder and ourselves. It was altogether a great experience and it was amusing to watch Brian Allen and Shay Davern behind the stage trying to make sense of page upon page of lighting and stage curtain instructions for the thousand and one acts! There's nothing like making something difficult work together! Events like these take a lot of preparation. We hope you enjoyed the night, we had more than a full house. Kinvara had the privilege of putting on the first event on the Famine in

the area. Prof. Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh and Jeff O'Connell spoke on the effects of the famine in Kinvara and John Flanagan sang some lovely songs that were relative to the famine. It was an interesting and enjoyable evening. It was a pleasure and an honour to have Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh there - he's such a great communicator and can really bring history to life. Jeff had put a vast amount of material together on facts about the famine in Kinvara and put it in its historical context.

In the meantime, plans were forming on other kinds of projects. For example, some "solid research" was done on old shopfronts before Petra sat down to make a design for a

mural for Kelly's old shop opposite Burke's. She even went as far as finding out what the inside of Kinvara's oldest shop (remains of it still in existence) - St George's - looked like and made sketches of very old glass sweet jars that were still there on the old shelves. Research on what sweets were called and looked like in the past, what they cost and many other items.

More sweets were added on the spot as the mural was being mounted by interested passers by who also made suggestions on how the old packets of cigarettes really looked like. Anyway the mural has become famous by now! Further up the road we can see the **street aquarium**, the fish were all made by the teenagers out of papier maché at the Wednesday Club, and the whole lot beautifully assembled into a real moving sculpture by Glen and Marty. So nobody needs to get bored anymore walking this part of town. The **murals at O'Grady's** cottages deserve close attention, as they have been painted with enormous love and care for detail by Damien. You only have to look at these to find out how busy he was. A lot of homework was done to pick out the world's oceans' most colourful and unusual inhabitants. Four coats of paint lie behind each one and three coats of varnish might ensure that a much needed splash of colour will last longer than the buildings themselves!



Playschool piggies herded by St Patrick





Maura Mongan at her retirement presentation

First, timber had to be prepared. sanded, primer applied; then the base coat followed by sketching and outlining of fish shoals painstakingly filling in and highlighting and finally the cover coats of varnish. The finished murals were then put in situ and nailed in position for all to enjoy. The mural down at the Quay was also given a face lift by Anne Korff and a few young helpers.

In the meantime, in **St Joseph's** national school, Marty was guiding along the children of all classes into making an **indoor mural**, they had chosen different themes. Not many know about or have seen this mural, but it is absolutely lovely and touching and well worth a look. All children need is opportunity and good guidance and they will come up with some real original art.

The school year was closing and **Northampton school** made a **wall hanging** (like a quilt) as a goodbye present for Maura Mongan who was retiring. A well-suited gift as Maura always supported the arts in the school. The Wednesday club had started now with the preparations for the **pirate pageant** under Trish Powell's guidance. We had planned a great outdoor spectacle for during the Cruinniú na mBád: Gráinne Wail. Marty took it upon himself to get a group of drummers together. Drums were made (old vegetable oil

containers) an old snare drum was repaired, a cowbell (musical instrument!) bought, and a drumming teacher was called for in the form of Barry Duffy, one of the Macnas drumming teachers who gave a couple of drumming workshops. Thanks to Macnas for the loan of costumes and some props! Again we should stress here how much dedication is needed to make something work. Summertime is the most difficult time to get people to commit themselves and this was definitely the case in preparing the Pirate Pageant. So it was some surprise when in the end of it all over sixty people in total took part. Admittedly some of them were very latecomers (arriving on the actual day! Even up to 5 minutes before taking off - Martina!) but that's what community theatre is made of. Pam took on the "stage" managing and the frustrating job of finding people to take on certain roles. Changes had to be made in roles by the hour nearly! Petra got dug into the costume and prop making with the help of some teenagers and adults. What a job! Trish Powell took on the job of directing, not an easy one with all those changes in roles going on all the time. We were lucky to find Ger Conneely to act the Lord Mayor and Noeleen Kavanagh as Gráinne Wail. There was no time for rehearsals for

them, and as they are great ad-libbers at the best of times, we got away with it. On the actual day we gave it our all. Sometimes the script went haywire, but at times the drumming sounded as good as any you'd get at the Galway Arts Festival. The drumming was headed by a most energetic and enthusiastic drummer - Marty. We think we can say that all of us enjoyed the day, and hopefully the audience did as well! But bloody hard work it was! Our thanks to all who gave their time and energy and stayed on board.

Other things that took place over the summer include a **wacky fun club** for 8-11 yr. olds and this ran for six weeks and a make and play morning for 4-7 yr. olds. Before the Community Employment Scheme is rounded off in November, we still hope to tie up some loose ends: the making of a **Famine Quilt** made from patches donated by Kinvara parishioners. Maybe there are **some other things** happening too, keep your eyes open! Hands up all those who knew all this was going on in Kinvara in 1995.



Snake in action at pirate pageant



# The Great Educators

**Teachers of Kinvara children are affectionately and gratefully remembered. As a body of professionals they have been singularly dedicated to the overall formation of their students, their academic success and their competence in the skills that enable them to be successful in life.**

At their very basic, these skills include reading, writing and arithmetic, but they also include such things as interest in games and other pastimes, instilling a sense of pride in community and locality and being able to communicate in a meaningful way to others, whether family, friends or strangers.

Readers of the early numbers of *Trácht* will remember the fond and lasting memories that their past-pupils had of Kieran Moylan, Joe Muldoon and Tomás Donlon. Since then a number of other principal teachers have graduated into retirement from teaching and they are no less gratefully and lovingly remembered. Because each of us has been influenced by only one or two of them, people might not be aware of how many principal teachers have taken retirement, most of them having given about forty years to the improvement and betterment of the youth of Kinvara. They include Toddie Byrne, Maura Mongan, Sr. Laurence, Shawn Mac Mahon, Micheál Breathnach, Fr. Brendan Kelly. They have been replaced by excellent successors who will uphold the values and standards which have already been firmly established.

Toddie Byrne is remembered by his past-pupils as a person who was always approachable, 'a nice person to talk to', as one pupil said. He developed not only a love of learning in his charges but a great enthusiasm for hurling and camogie. Some of the outstanding memories of students include the nature walks after lunch to the seashore and watching 'birds, rabbits and other wildlife along the way'. 'He also brought us to historic

sites around Kinvara and got us to develop an interest in our local history'.

Maura Mongan was always 'very kind'. A person of firm religious belief, 'she was a great teacher of prayers as she sent us into the Sacrament of Holy Communion with great confidence in ourselves'. She was 'a great teacher who taught us to be well-mannered, had brilliant school tours, was loving, caring, sporty and made us obedient'. Other memories include her care and concern for people experiencing sickness or other difficulties and her love of flowers and trees.

Sr. Laurence always made a point of getting to know all her pupils as well as was possible. She was deeply interested (and still is) in their welfare, development and academic success. She set high standards in her own professional life and she demanded high standards of her students, which she got to an extent that is the envy of many other second level schools. She could be strict, but if she was she is remembered as being thoroughly fair at all times.

Shawn Mac Mahon is recognised by his past-pupils as a great innovator (even if they don't use the word!). 'He taught me carpentry and gardening', says one student, 'besides all the other subjects.' 'He used to bring us on great tours and excursions, including to the Outdoor Activity Centre in the Burren where I

went pot-holing and rockface climbing.' He also promoted an interest in science and happenings in the area and the world at large, but he is remembered also as a 'nice teacher who always had something funny to say.' Micheál Breathnach spent nearly all his teaching life in St. Colman's Vocational School, Gort, where he taught many pupils from Kinvara, including some of the most successful business people and tradesmen in the area today. He could be 'cross' and his voice might sometimes be heard raised in apparent anger. But he was respected and admired by his pupils for his commitment to teaching and his insistence on high standards. 'Whatever he said, it made sense', says one past-pupil. He believed passionately in the importance of the overall development of the young person which, he held, should include education in manual subjects, as well as the humanities, sciences, languages, and business.

Fr. Brendan Kelly, though he has retired from his position as principal of Our Lady's College in Gort, is the youngest of the retired principals. He was 'very fair'; 'he taught us to be good citizens and fine young men'. He encouraged his students' interest in sport and always gave the impression of 'liking very much what he was doing', and because of that the students responded well to him and got on well.



Left to right: Toddie Byrne, Maura Mongan, Shawn MacMahon



*Go n-éirí go geal le Tráct arís*

# ***Tigh Uí Chonghaile***

***Guthán : (091) 37131***

## **Kinvara V. Drug Co.**

**Main Street,  
Kinvara, Co.**

**Galway**

**Phone (091) 37293 / 37136**

## ***SEAN REGAN'S***

**Carpets, Vinyl, Paints, Furniture,  
Household Goods, Giftware, Toys,  
Footwear, Roller & Vertical  
Blinds, Clothes.**

**Gort, Co. Galway**

**Tel: (091) 31889**

## **SPIC 'N' SPAN**

**Dry Cleaners and Launderette.  
We Specialise in Quilts, Suedes  
and Leathers**

**Gort & Oranmore**

**10a.m. to 6 p.m.**

**For Your  
Drapery  
and  
Footwear  
Call to**



**Paul O' Shaughnessey**

## **TULLYS**

**Select Bar**

**Main Street, Kinvara**

**Phone (091) 37146**

*Enjoy a good pint in Comfort*

*For a pleasant drink,  
call to*

# ***DUNGUAIRE INN***

**Proprietors: John & Tina Conole**

*Thanking you for your support*

## **Michael Staunton**

### **FARM PRODUCE**

### **EVERY FRIDAY**

**The Square, Kinvara**



## More than Teachers

All of the retired principals have been deeply involved in many activities of benefit to the community and their retirement is no indication that they will be less involved than before. In fact, the signs are that they will throw themselves with renewed vigour and energy into the many community activities in which they are involved. These include the Community Council, Credit Union, Social Services, G.A.A., Golf Club, Liturgy Committee and many others.

He has also been involved in a number of community activities including Muintir na Tire, Kinvara Handcraft Co-operative Society, and the establishment of links with Locoal-Mendon. Micheál Breathnach is recognised as the main community activist in Gort and, along with a few others, he is credited with getting the fine Community Sports Hall built. He is also keenly involved in political life and in Gort Golf Club and he is still passionately interested in the development of Gort Community School. He shares the latter interest

approachable, conscious of the needs of the students and their parents, and they are determined that the children under their care will receive an education unsurpassed for excellence anywhere else. The author can write this confidently because he knows the calibre of the new principals and he also knows that the parents and pupils of the locality are privileged to have such outstanding educators taking over the direction of education in this area at this time. In a way, the team isn't changing, it is only that some members of the team are passing on the baton to the next. The race is over for some; they were in the lead and the next have a great headstart. Be assured they will stay out in front - and bring pride to us all (just like our relay team in Mosney did!).



Left to right: Fr. Brendan Kelly, Sr. Laurence, Micheál Breathnach

Kinvara has reason to be grateful to Toddie Byrne for his involvement in many community enterprises and his service as County Councillor, member of Gort Community School Board of Management and Count Galway V.E.C. Maura Mongan, in spite of having a number of personal tragic setbacks in her life has given her talents to the community in her service with the Liturgy Committee and in her help in establishing Kinvara's link with Locoal-Mendon, as well as helping other community initiatives from time to time. Sr. Laurence has also contributed handsomely to our community through her membership of the Community Council, her personal approach to families when they were in difficulties of any kind and her generosity in making Seamount's facilities available to community groups. Shawn Mac Mahon has won fame far and wide for his development of his ever expanding business which not only provides excellent diverse services but is also an important source of employment.

with Fr. Brendan Kelly who, over the last few years, also promoted the Community School project. Fr. Brendan is remembered in Kinvara as a cheerful, hardworking young curate. Like Sr. Laurence, he was conscious of the importance of making Our Lady's College available as a community resource and he enthusiastically promoted its use for plays and pantomimes

## No Going Back

Does the departure of such personnel from the education scene leave a void which will be hard to fill? Of course it does. But change can also bring progress. New talents and new ways will be brought into the educational scene by the 'new' principals. They possess youthful vigour, a proven track record, qualifications of the highest standard. Each of them is caring, conscientious and dynamic. They possess varied skills and talents which will further enhance the lives of the boys and girls under their care. They have proven leadership skills which they will use to motivate students, staff and parents. They are

Kinvara wishes every success to our new National School principals - Martina Tarpey in Doorus, Bridget Kelly in Northampton, and Finola Murphy in Kinvara, to the first lay principal of Seamount College, Eileen Mulherrins and to the first principal of Gort Community School, Denis Corry. We also send our good wishes to Sr. Maura Crowe, who was principal of Seamount for a number of years and acting principal of St. Joseph's Secondary School, Gort, for the past year. We also remember two other past-principals, Sr. De Lourdes Fahy, and Sr. Joan Ferris (Sr. Anthony) who were also in Seamount but who were also principals subsequently, Sr. De Lourdes in Lisdoonvarna and Sr. Joan in Gort. However, readers will be pleased to know that the three sisters, though they are no longer principals, are once again teaching students from Kinvara (this time, boys!) since they transferred as valued and important members of the teaching staff to Gort Community School.

Go dtuga Dia gach rath dóibhsean, agus do na príomhoidí agus na múinteoirí go léir, ina n-obair tábhachtach ar son aos óg an cheantair.

By Stan Mac Eoin



# MARY REMEMBERS

**Saint Patrick's Day in Kinvara brings back beautiful memories to me and indeed to all of my age group. As one who was born and grew up in Kinvara, there are many days I could write on having seen many changes and old customs dying out, which makes me sad.**



I am sure many of my age group will recall the Mission Days, Corpus Christi, Fair Days in Kinvara etc. Also Céadaoin Mór, the Wednesday before Christmas (a big shopping day).

At the commencement of Lent, which is approximately two weeks before St. Patrick's Day, we would make a promise not to eat sweets or biscuits and deny ourselves any treats during Lent. This fast was made for the Holy Souls in Purgatory and we would never break it. We collected and saved our pennies. At that time it was customary that children would run errands for their neighbours, especially old people and indeed mothers, who in those days did not go shopping as they do today. For instance, somebody wanted three or four lamb chops from Leech's, one of three butcher's shops in Kinvara at that time. Or sheeps' lights for the woman who kept about ten cats.

I would be asked to do a message run to the shop for meat with a note and the money in my fist and returned all agog or excited because I knew I was getting a penny or two for doing the messages. I saved those pennies in a box, together

with any other treats which I got for doing messages. My reward was always a few pennies and sometimes a Peggy's Leg, a couple of Bulls Eye sweets or a liquorice pipe which was made locally by Ellie Ryan R.I.P. all of these would be saved in my box for St. Patrick's Day. Another errand was to mail letters in the Post Office on the hill or to get stamps. People wrote a lot of letters in those days as there were no telephones.

On the eve of St. Patrick's Day, each one of us would compare our collections and spend our pennies in the shops for our Big Day!

After school, we would go to old grassy ruins of houses, or along the Quay side where we would pick beautiful clumps of shamrock with our blunt rusty knives. The turf-mould from Connemara turf piled on the quay-side from the previous summer would produce luscious shamrock.

We were happy to give some to old people who lived alone and we kept it in water until the next day when we would all wear it in honour of St. Patrick.

On the eve of St. Patrick's Day, we made plans for our picnic on St. Patrick's Mountain which is one of the Burren mountains three miles from Kinvara. It is said that St. Patrick spent three days and three nights on this mountain, fasting and praying. My mother who was born in nearby New Quay, as a young girl walked to this mountain with her seven sisters, two brothers and her parents to pray at the Blessed Well of St. Patrick. This well is still there to this day and people go there to pray and bless themselves with the holy water, every eve of St. Patrick's Day. Almost every household paid a visit to this well in years gone by.

Our picnic would consist of tea, milk, brown bread and boiled eggs which we boiled in a pot over an open fire on the mountain. We also had treats like sausages and bacon slices and lamb chops if we were lucky to have enough money to buy them. There were no Taytos, no tins of Coke and no sliced loaves.

On that morning, we were up bright and early for mass at 8 a.m., packed our bags and we were on the road to St. Patrick's

mountain by 9.30 a.m. we had our bicycles ready since the night before. On arriving at the mountain, each one of us had our own jobs to do - gather the twigs, fetch the water from the well, light the fires etc. By noon we would enjoy our picnic and one can imagine what appetites we all had! After the picnic we would climb further up the mountain and sometimes went to Slieve Carron. I would like to mention that the weather was much better in those days - St. Patrick's Day was always mild and sunny with maybe a little frost in the morning and again towards night-time. After our long, enjoyable day, we would head for home between 7 and 8 p.m., tired but full of the joys of our day's outing.

We would meet many cars coming from New Quay going to the Céili in Gort as it was a big night out on St. Patrick's night. Being Lent there were no more dances allowed until Easter Sunday night, another four weeks away. Everybody over eighteen years of age went to the Céili on St. Patrick's night. Shamrock was worn by man, woman and child. Our mothers had our green ribbons ready to wear on our hair and St. Patrick's Day badges - either harps or shamrocks - were worn on our lapels. The men wore hats or caps with sprigs of shamrock. Nowadays it is breathtaking to see what our brothers and sisters do to celebrate St. Patrick's Day in America, Australia and other countries. They make plans weeks and months in advance for this big day. I lived in the United States in the '70's and my mother always sent me shamrock for St. Patrick's Day. Today, I send it to family and friends.

No doubt it was one of the loneliest days of the year for me.

Since I have returned home, every year I go out with my blunt knife and pick shamrock which my family and I are so proud to wear on St. Patrick's Day.

It makes me happy to see the young people keeping up the tradition - after all it is our own National Holiday.

**By Mary O'Shaughnessy**



# What Do They Do?

**Who? The Community Council!**

**That shower! All they do is talk. They do nothing for Kinvara. What this place needs is a big factory to provide work for all the young people. Why don't they go out and get a big hotel for the place? A big hotel would make Kinvara. Why don't they do something to stop the traffic going through? Look at all the tourists that stop in Ballyvaughan! It's the same crowd holding on to control all the time!**

I'm sure everyone has heard such talk from time to time. Kinvara Community Council Ltd. suffers from trying to reach into nearly all areas of life in the parish and trying to improve them. The Hockey Club, the Swimming Club, the GAA, the Youth Club and other single issue clubs and groups draw support throughout the area, and they deserve it. The Community Council, on the other hand, is concerned with a wide range of things - promoting the Tidy Towns, servicing the needs of the four schools, churches and voluntary organisations in such areas as caretaking and secretarial services. It has established important organisations such as the Community Games, Social Services and the Credit Union. It facilitates numerous groups for classes and meetings in the Community Centre. It liaises with state bodies such as FÁS in order to gain the maximum benefit for the community in terms of employment opportunities and general improvements for the locality. It supports all worthwhile community initiatives in whatever way it can. It makes representations to state departments and the local authority and it enlists the help and support of public representatives for its efforts from time to time. It promotes contact

with other communities in Ireland and abroad (Locoal Mendon).

Participation in Community Council activities is expensive in terms of time. Members must be prepared to attend a monthly meeting, occasional sub-committee meetings and to be present at some activities in the Centre. Discussions may not be always as entertaining as a television programme but when decisions are made they are made with the support of the membership. Committed members ensure that they keep the night of the monthly meeting free because they know that their opinion is valued and needed.

The Community Council should be representative of every area and established voluntary group in the parish. It is only as good as the women and men who make up its membership. There are vacancies on the Board of Directors in each of the three electoral areas. We would welcome a generous response from the community to our plea for their active involvement in the Council. Your community will be the better for wider participation in its deliberations and activities. We hope you come along and offer your services - and bring someone else with you!

## KINVARA TIDY TOWNS

Once again Kinvara has moved up in the marking of the National Tidy Towns

Competition, securing five marks above the 1994 tally, Kinvara now stands at 184 marks out of 250 marks. This year the overall winner, Glenties, won the award with 210 marks. Judging from the above markings, Kinvara has a lot of hard work ahead in the next few years if it is to make a significant improvement in its aim to win the top award. We need large numbers of volunteers to concentrate on the black spots. We need organised groups working to an overall plan in order to make any significant progress. It's true we are leading in category B in County Galway but our aim should be firstly to win the county award, this means gaining 18 to 20 marks in the next few years. As for 1995, thanks to everyone who helped us gain the worthy points.



Cruinniú na mBád 1994

Jessica Leenane, Atlanta, Georgia, USA  
winner of the Bonny Baby competition



- Tidy towns :- A chance for you to push and Pull for Kinvara -



## ABILITY-DRIVE LTD.

### SHIEL DRIVING SCHOOL

Driving Lessons in Bus, Cars,  
Rigid & Artic Trucks

“Learn to Drive quickly, safely  
and confidently in the shortest  
possible time”

Prop.: J.B. Shiel, M.O.T.A.D.I.,  
M.I.A.M., R.A.C.R.I., M.S.A.I., R.O.S.P.A.

**GALWAY & LOUGHREA**

River View, Craughwell, Co.  
Galway.

Tel : (091) 846203



## CRUSHOA CONSTRUCTION COMPANY LTD.

**Crushea, Kinvara, Co. Galway**

Private Houses and General Contractor

N.H.B.G.S. MEMBER

Proprietor : MIKE BURKE

Enquiries to (091) 37126



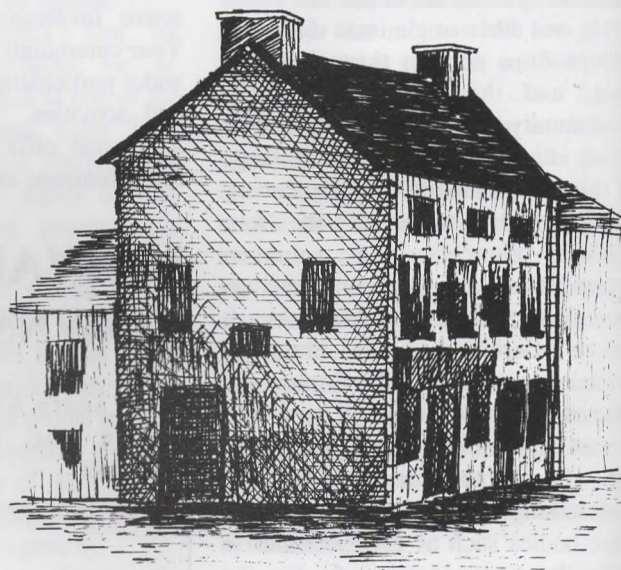
*Piggott Travel*

*Consult your Local Expert*

Galway Road, Gort, Co. Galway.

Telephone (091) 31477, 31044.

Fax. (091) 31995



*The Ould  
Plaid Shawl*

Kinvara, Co. Galway.

Tel: (091) 37400



# Poetic Compositions

## Untitled

Your Life was full of Kindly Deeds  
A Helping hand for your children's  
needs  
You looked after them with the very  
best of care  
They didn't mind when you were  
there  
You died so quick without a good bye  
That is why I'm writing this with a  
tear in my eye  
All the children are here to say  
we love you Mary Fallon  
Our love grows stronger each and  
every day.

By Catriona Kelly

## **MY FRIEND**

I'm now standing by your headstone  
A thought for you I spare  
Your smiling face, your hair of gold  
I never will forget.  
'Tis vain to grieve as time flies on  
That life we cannot save  
But I'll keep you in my memory  
and always see you there.  
For when e're I look at Michael  
your darling little heir  
May God bless and keep you always  
From the cold west wind that blows.

Now time has brought a change of  
scene  
and yet not changed the heart  
You were a kind and trusted friend  
and you were true to one and all.  
Now fate has left us far apart  
and life's bright dream is o'er ,  
new paths our lives must take  
but I'll remember to the last.  
The brightest link in friendship's  
chain  
is memory of the past.  
So alas, my friend with a tear in my  
eye  
can I ever say goodbye.  
Farewell old friend, farewell.  
In A Castle of Dreams  
I Walked on Tender Stairs

In A Castle of Beauty  
I Stroked Golden Hair  
In a Castle of Holiness  
I was Quiet and Serene  
In a Castle of Love  
I Glimpsed the Unseen.

Joe Staunton ©

## The Man with the Beard

I sat down and talked, to the man with  
the beard.  
We talked about the old days, and the  
way we were reared.  
We talked about, sheep, cattle and  
pigs.  
He told me his job now, was driving  
big rigs.  
He said, he has driven them from  
Frisco to Maine,  
Drove them all over the world,  
through France and Spain.  
We talked and talked about our  
younger days  
He laughed, a big laugh and said "I  
enjoy my days"  
I was from Galway, he was from  
Cork.  
He told me he loved a lassie, a lassie  
from York.  
We talked and talked, I can't  
remember half of what was said,  
When morning came, we were both  
half dead  
Life was homely back then, the time  
we were reared.  
So said the man, the man with the  
beard.  
We remembered the hens and  
chickens  
As they ran around the yard  
We sat on a stone wall and talked  
In this "Land of the Bard"  
The laughter was soft and mellow  
The wisdom simple and deep,  
Respect and enjoy the things of this  
world,  
There is "Nothing we can keep."

Then, the man with beard, got up to  
leave  
He really had to go

He said next time we meet, It will be a  
treat  
More memories, will glow and glow.  
Joe Staunton ©

## Nana K's Memories

A cosy glow from a winter fire,  
Shadows in the room.  
Four eager happy faces  
Sitting in the gloom.  
"Who is first for a story tonight?"  
A weary Mum might say.  
Knowing her girl with the golden  
curls  
Would climb on her lap and say:  
"Please tell me the one about the  
prince.

The way he loved the girl,  
And the 'happy ever after bit',  
When she found the magic pearl."

The three boys wanted stories  
Of kings and fiery dragons  
Tales of mystery, aye and bravery  
And cowboys, guns and wagons.

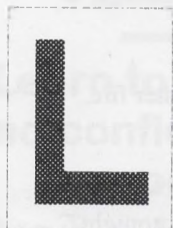
The years flew by - the changes came,  
The number grew to nine  
The stories lasted all those years,  
They travelled down the line.  
In far Australia's sunny land,  
Where five of nine abide,  
My children's children hear the tales  
Their Dads heard at my side.

A cosy glow from a Winter fire,  
Shadows in the room.  
No children's happy faces  
Sitting in the gloom.  
The memory fades a little  
As I enter life's December  
But the tales I've told  
Have turned to gold  
And I'm sure they will remember.

Submitted by K. Kenny©



# **Gerard O'Connell SCHOOL OF MOTORING Galway**



**Excellent Test Results  
All test routes covered  
Car available for test**



**Special deals for Block Bookings  
Vouchers available**

**Phone (091) 757738 Mobile (088) 536968**

## **Kinvara Pharmacy**

**Séadna Tóibín. B.S.c PHARM. M.P.S.I.  
for**

**PRESCRIPTIONS • COSMETICS • CAMERAS • FILM**



**stockists of**

**Weleda • Tisserand • Max Factor**

**Open Mon - Sat 9.30am - 6pm • We don't close for lunch**



# REFLECTIONS ON PAT KEANE

by Charlie Piggott

Pat Keane was in constant touch with the unshakeable spirit of Old Ireland. At the ripe age of ninety he still sipped the elixir of life most nights of the week, sprung to the floor when the occasion of a half-set lent itself and didn't wait to be asked a second time when invited to "spake a verse of a song".

Born in 1904 on the barren, windswept Aughinish peninsula (from the Gaelic for Horse Island) off the North Clare coast, Pat personified one of the last remaining few of a cultural group fast disappearing in Ireland, a breed of people about whom it has

been said that 'their likes will never be seen again' and who moved the poet John Betjeman to write thus:

"Stony seaboard fair and foreign  
Stony hills poured over space  
Stony outcrop of the Burren  
Stones in every fertile place  
Little fields with boulders dotted  
Grey-stone shoulders saffron spotted  
Stone-walled cabins thatched with reeds

Where a stone age people breeds  
The last of Europe's stone age race."

Pat attributed his lengthy days on earth to his passionate zest for life, plenty music and song, fresh Atlantic air, a frugal diet of oatmeal, wild garlic stewed in milk and seafood including an ample supply of dilisc, a pocket full of which he carried with him wherever he ventured and gladly shared with any willing takers. His cure-all for any ailment which would befall him was a simple shell-fish soup made from the common edible Periwinkle (*Littorina Littorea*) and prepared by closely following Pat's instructions:

"Wash them ( the periwinkles) and put them down in a saucepan of cold water, and when the boil would come up overhead in them you'd want to take them up, because when a periwinkle is boiled too much, in he's going....but when you only let the boiling water over them, take them up and you could pick a saucer of them with a pin or a needle and wash them and peel an onion and cut it up an' salt and pepper...throw it in your saucepan again and get a little grain of flour in a mug of water and not make it too thick an throw it on top of the water and the periwinkles and stir it well and you'd want to keep the lid off of it because it would come out over it, there's so much proof in the soup....it would come out over the fire!

Like many old-timers blessed with an excellent memory, Pat's copious knowledge of local history and events attracted a stream of tourists and academics alike. He is quick to point

out unusual irregularities in the landscape around his native Aughinish - like those caused by shock waves from earthquakes in Western Europe in the 16th and 17th centuries. (The Lisbon earthquake of 1755 apparently caused an O'Hyne castle to crumble and a fresh-water mill to become submerged, the remains of which can be seen today). According to Pat, the miller "was grinding with fresh water and he had so much corn in this day-it was St. Martin's Day, 11th November- he had only a little sprinkle of water...he had no right current for grinding and he said 'That God or the devil may send me water' - he was drowned within in it!...and that's the time the tide came hether."

Another of Pat's connections with the past was his ability to tell the weather which passed on to him from the older folks in his youth. His predictions were so successfully accurate that the local padre would often announce details from the pulpit to weather-fearing farmers anxious to save their hay. "A lot can be learned by observing the phases of the moon," he said, explaining that the full moon can fall on any date in a particular month. "If it happens to occur at the beginning of the month, (and it will be the same for all twelve months of the year since the lunar phase is 29½ days) then a good year can be expected, as the full moon coincides with and introduces each season." His use of the study of wind-direction, however, is less easily understood. "Look to where the wind comes from on the last Thursday of a November moon," was his advice for predicting the general weather pattern for the following year! - "a west of south-west wind (the prevailing wind direction in the West of Ireland) on that particular day promises a good year; if the wind blows from the east or north, then beware" (whether or not this applies only in the West of Ireland, I have no idea).



Pat Keane. Photo courtesy of Nutan



Early days for the Keane family in North Clare were much preoccupied with a constant struggle to procure enough rent, or grain for rent as

people then lived under the old landlord-tenant system. This battle for survival often demanded that every trick in the book was used to retain enough grain for the following years crop. Pat heartily recalled that "at the time it was all tillage...there was no stock...they'd have only one cow. But I used to hear me father saying that they weren't able to pay the rent...and they used to have to cut the corn with hooks, there wasn't any machines then...but they'd cut the corn, and the landlord's agents would come and collect it and bring it out to the big house and my father would have to travel from Aughinish to the big house and scutch it (flail it). Well, they had no trousers that time only banins and flannel drawers, and in the evening when they'd be coming home...they'd have cords in the legs of their drawers...they'd bring the seed home in their drawers!"

For God knows how long, mankind appears to have been plagued with problems of the marital variety and, being a philosopher, Pat was quick to offer advice (or advice as he calls it) to the man who was slow to appreciate his situation:

"So let us sit down and be merry

It is but one night of our life

For a man should feel proud and feel happy

For knowing he has a good wife"

Listening to him, one was also constantly reminded of his passionate love of the native tongue and an exclamation in Irish was likely to erupt from his lips at any given opportunity - "Cad tá tú a' rá?" (What are you saying?) is one he used frequently as a come-uppance when detecting any trace of a mocking attitude to the culture and traditions he so cherished. He was saddened by the fact that he has witnessed the virtual disappearance in a few generations of a language spoken throughout his homeland for the best part of two millennia, while many of the national languages of Modern

Europe are flourishing despite the fact that their written records barely exist as far back as the 17th century.

"I wasn't born on a calm night" Pat

would tell you, an expression he used to demonstrate his wild rebel spirit, and he reckoned that anyone who could not sing, dance or play an instrument must have been born on a calm night. Though he knocked a tune out of an old melodian, he was better known for his singing and his earthy voice and unique collection of old airs (unknown by many) provided him with a perpetual horde of admirers. His handling of the traditional songs was in the old style or sean-nós, and favourites from his repertoire included The Jacket of Blue; The Kerryman's Rambles to Tipperary; The Six Girls and The Glen of Aherloe. "What do they know about it?" he says of those who fail to appreciate his vocal utterances. I often asked him to sing a verse in a crowded bar, to hear him exclaim that he would "want the jaws of a jack-ass" to rise above the noise!

Sadly Pat passed away on 27th October 1995 and many will miss his larger-than-life presence around North Clare and Galway. However, his spirit still lives in the songs he has passed on and in the memories of great times we have all spent together. "Ar dheis Dé a raib a ainm"

### Bernadette Forde

Kinvara Community will always remember with love and affection Bernadette Forde who died on July 9th 1995, aged 18 years.



Her love of life, sense of fun and caring nature made her a loving daughter and sister and an endearing friend. She will remain forever young in our hearts. In the words of one of her favourite poets, Patrick Kavanagh, "she smiles at us, eternally".

# KINVARA UNITED SOCCER CLUB

C. Sweeney, Secretary

Soccer has returned to Kinvara with the forming in 1994 of Kinvara United. Since the foundation of the club, we have joined the Galway Youth and Schoolboys League at both Under 12 and Under 17.

The season has started with our Under 17 side showing great promise and talent against some of Galway's best. At time of writing, we are looking forward to the start of the Under 12 League and, having watched our team in the friendly games they have played to date, it promises to be a very entertaining time.

Of course the Club could not exist without the support of its sponsors to whom we are very grateful. We must also thank our trainers and managers who have worked with both teams in preparing them for their competitions. We have, not, as yet, obtained a regulation size pitch on which to play and train locally, but with kind permission of Fr. Mahon in Gort, we have been granted the use of Our Lady's College pitch at least for the short term for our home games. The obtaining of a home pitch of regulation size in our own area still remains a priority.

As with any club, the participation of its lady members is important and we have, therefore, laid the groundwork for the formation of a girls soccer panel which we hope will also participate in the Girls' League next season.

All in all it has been a busy time for Kinvara United over the past 18 months, but we expect the hard work to pay off. Perhaps even with the winning of a trophy by one of our teams in the not too distant future.



# A Walk on the Child's Side

by Chris Mooney, Dooras.

From looking at any newspaper, or listening to the radio over the past year, you would be aware that children with problems and child abuse were often featured. After hearing many of the Childline / ISPCC ads for help, I went along to an information evening in Galway.

It was a very informative meeting and many questions were answered. As a follow on from that evening I felt that I could really help by fund-raising on their behalf. I was put in touch with other people who also felt the same. One of the coming events was a sponsored walk in the Yorkshire Dales but each participant had first to raise £1200.00p and I felt that I could reach that target. This I achieved by donations from family and friends, a dance in McCarthys, a Table Quiz in Hollands Briar and begging letters to various companies and celebrities!

People were very generous with their time and money. Many offered to help with events locally and I received many letters of support and some with cheques. Connolly Sports donated a special track suit.

From the time we started raising money for ISPCC/CHILDLINE to the time we left Galway in the middle of June, we were promised an adventure of a lifetime in the beautiful Yorkshire Dales. This we got, and if we ordered the weather we couldn't have got anything better. We were also told to prepare and to train for the sometimes difficult walks we were going to encounter. In the very warm weather, up to thirteen miles a time, can be difficult enough for amateurs.

The main point I want to stress is that walks like this one are not a case of people raising money to go on their holidays, yes - the organisers go out of their way to make the trip as enjoyable as possible for the participants, but they never lose sight of the fact that it is first and foremost a fund-raising event, and this particular event raised almost £40,000 for the work of CHILDLINE

and the ISPCC. Apart from this the organisers like to make sure that the people having raised the necessary money go home with a real sense of achievement, and we have all seen the blisters and shin splints it has taken to achieve this.

The walks themselves were organised with almost military precision, early morning calls, sharp getaways on the coach and specific time allowed to complete each stage of the walk.

When the walk for the day was done, everything relaxed, we rested and prepared again for the next days walk, and so on until we had achieved our aim which was a 50 mile Sponsored Walk.

Day One consisted of a 12 mile walk in Swaledale. We started out on Redmore Moor and continued west along the river Swale, passing through Grinton, Reeth, Crackpot, Gunnerside and finishing up in Muker. The terrain was easy with no long or steep hills to negotiate.

Day Two started in Wensleydale at the Aysgarth Waterfalls on the river Ure. We passed through Aysgarth Village, Thornton Rust, Worton, Askrigg, along the Yorkshire Dales Cycle Way and ended in Hawes. The walk was quite difficult as it crossed country and covered 12.5 miles.

Day Three brought us through Arndcliffe, Hawkswick, Kettlewell, Conistone and finished in Grassington. The section from Kettlewell to Grassington is part of the National Trail. Terrain was also quite difficult and the distance was 12.5 miles.

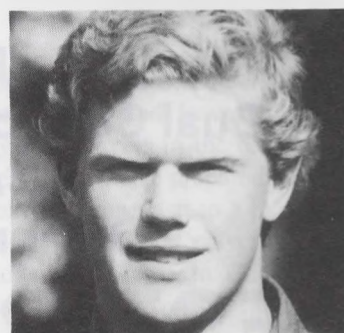
Day Four (the final day) was by far the most difficult and challenging. It covered 13 miles of mountainous terrain but we were compensated by the breath taking scenery. On the journey we passed through Masham, Loffhouse, Nidderdale Way, Ramsgill, Gouthwaite and we completed the walk in Patchy Bridge on the river Nidd.

Accommodation and food was provided everyday, and out on the road this consisted of tea/coffee from a flask and a sandwich. Water was provided by Ballygowan, C & C, Clada and Dawn Dairies, and Mars Bars and Taytos were also sponsored.

Of all the places we visited I particularly enjoyed an evening meeting at Rippon Race Track and our visit to the city of York. The people and hospitality we encountered was an immense help in forgetting our fatigue and sore feet. Overall an extremely rewarding achievement.

## My European Experience

In the Summer of 1994 I travelled around the main E.U. countries as a result of winning the Michael Sweetman Educational Trust.



John is the eldest son of Sean and Bernadette McInerney, Kinvara West, and was educated at St. Coleman's, Secondary School, Gort.

I won this award by firstly writing an essay on the title The European Parliament - It's powers and it's deficit and secondly attending an interview to answer questions on my essay and other relevant topics. Therefore in the middle of July 1994, three other winners, a guide and myself flew over to Paris to do some sight-seeing. After two days we took the train to Brussels, where we visited the Commission Buildings and met with Pdraig Flynn, an Irish member of the Commission. After another two day stay in Brussels we made the short journey to Luxembourg where we visited the European Court of Auditors and met with Barry Desmond. Finally we made our way to Strasbourg where we visited the European Parliament and saw the parliament in session. But all good things must come to an end and after ten sun-filled days of touring we returned to rain-drenched Ireland. But the memory lives on and I am sure that it is an experience that will live with me for the rest of my Life.

By John McInerney



**L****MUNNELLYS****L**

**School of Motoring Ltd.**

**Creglucas, Ballinderreen.**

**Phone Kevin or Susan**

**091 - 796539**

**Fully Qualified Instructor.**

**Dual Control Car or your own car. Door to Door.**

**CAR AVAILABLE FOR TEST**

**Beginners - pre-test. Six days a week**

**TEST ROUTES COVERED.**

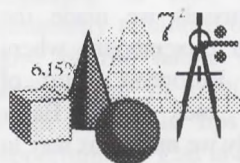
**Notes & "Rules of the Road"**

**studied and explained systematically.**

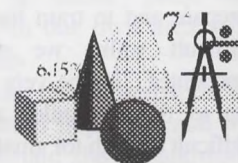
**Lift to and from Galway (test centre), for city driving, test preparation and test.**

**Gift vouchers and reduction for Block bookings**

**PRIVATE TUITION**  
**(Grinds)**



**Mathematics**



**ALL LEVELS: primary, junior/leaving certificate.**

**Call out service available (as an option)**

**Kevin T. Munnelly BSc. N.U.I**

**091 - 796539**



# Kinvara Community Playgroup

**K**invara Community Playgroup has been flourishing since 1979. An indication of its success and popularity is the fact that there are already 14 children on its rolls for September 1996! Two sessions are run daily in the Courthouse - 10.30-12.30 & 1-3pm.

The playgroup leaders are Ann Vesey and Jean Greene. Very few community playgroups have been in continuous existence for such a long time. Visitors express surprise that a community of Kinvara's size can

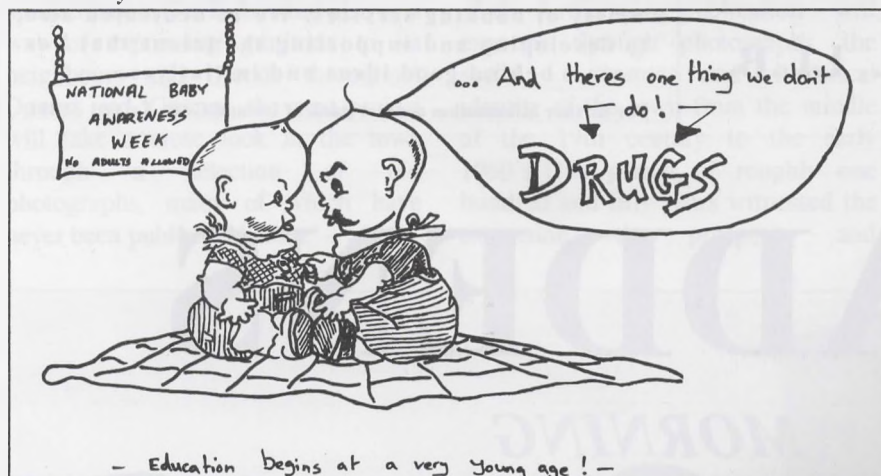
committee.

There is a rhythm to the playgroup session and to the playgroup year. This mirrors the strong sense of rhythm within the growing child. Each session begins with free play. Children may be found playing house, dressing up, doing jigsaws, building with bricks and constructing with straws. Then snack-time is enjoyed by all the group together. Afterwards there is time for painting and playdough. Ring games and nursery rhymes bring the group together again and the playgroup session ends with

and this need is recognised in the celebrations of the festivals. At Halloween the Courthouse is alive with Witches. On the first Sunday in Advent it is a haven of candles and carols. Christmas is also the season for the playgroup's hosting of Santa's annual visit to Kinvara.

Over 150 children go to visit Santa in the Community Centre each year. It is always a great Community afternoon.

At Easter, the Easter Bunny visits the Courthouse - though he has never yet been seen - and leaves little Easter eggs and sweets in the baskets which the children have prepared. They also make a Spring visit to a local farm to see the lambs and calves. The year ends with a visit to Coole Park in summer.



We take this opportunity through Trácht to thank the Kinvara Community for supporting our two annual fund-raiser - the Christmas draw and the Mother's Day cake sale. Further information on the Playgroup can be obtained from the Courthouse during the playgroup sessions or any of the committee. Aine O' Connell, Phil Nolan, Mary Roche, Finola Murphy, Rose Beatty, Jane Joyce, Rosemary McNamara, Valerie Forkan. The playgroup is a registered member of the I.P.P.A. and is partly grant-aided by the Western Health Board.

manage to run two sessions of a playgroup. It is indeed a tribute to the dedication of its leaders and the strong back-up of their organising

storytime.

All the important festivals are celebrated in the course of the playgroup year. Children love ritual

## Burren Garden

Kinvara (091) 38114

Home grown Vegetables, large selection of Fruit, a wide variety of Wholefoods, Cow, Goat & Sheep Cheese off the Block. Glenisk Yogurt Also agents for O'Connors quality confectionery and Dawn Herbal Teas

## Chartered Physiotherapist

Cliona Keaveney M.I.S.C.P.

Newly opened practice at :  
Teach Learpholl, Doorus,  
Kinvara, Co. Galway. 091 - 37421  
Specialising in :  
Sports injuries & minor traumas,  
Neck and back pain  
Neurological Conditions and Paediatrics



**JOHN C. MURPHY  
& CO.  
SOLICITORS**

**The Square, Gort, Co. Galway.  
Telephone : (091) 31022, 31586**

**Fax : (091) 31586**

**Mary E. Larkin B.A.**

**Commissioner for Oaths**

**Deirdre Larkin, B.A., LL.B.**

**Dedication**



**Bank of Ireland** 

Dedication is the back bone of creative development. At Bank of Ireland, we're dedicated to providing the most imaginative and useful variety of banking services. We're dedicated also to developing and supporting the talent that lie behind good ideas and initiatives.

For further information contact Bank of Ireland Gort. Tel 091 3181

**MADDENS**

**MORNING**



**FRESH MILK**

**Compliments of Joe Regan**

**Tel : 091 - 35216**

**WITH MADDENS.... YOU'RE ALWAYS A WINNER**



# KINVARA THROUGH OLD PHOTOGRAPHS

## Portrait of a Seaport Town in the West of Ireland

This year is the 10th anniversary of Kinvara: A Ramblers Guide & Map, the first publication by Tir Eolas- located at Newtownlynch in the Doorus peninsula. Since 1985, Tir Eolas has published five additional Ramblers Guides & Maps; A Quiet Pint in Kinvara by Richard Tillinghast (in association with Salmon Publishing); The Shannon Floodlands by Stephen Heery; Not a Word of a Lie by Bridie Quinn-Conroy; and the two major publications - The Book of the Burren and The Book of Aran.

To commemorate the 10th anniversary of Tir Eolas, and also as a way of expressing gratitude to its neighbours and friends throughout Doorus and Kinvara, the next project will take a close look at the town through a selection of old photographs, many of which have never been published before.

That Kinvara has such a superb range of photographs is due very much to the pioneering research of Dr. Patrick Greene, which has been continued right up to the present by Thomas Quinn of Crushoa. Everyone knows how easily photographs may be mislaid or lost, and sometimes we are not even aware of how valuable an old photograph can be in the eyes of someone else. Dr. Greene and Thomas Quinn have both permanently enriched the heritage of our parish through their dedicated work of rescue and preservation.

'Kinvara Through Old Photographs: Portrait of a Seaport Town in the West of Ireland' - the provisional title of the forthcoming publication - will examine through photographs, the social, economic and historical identity of the town from the middle of the 19th century to the early 1960's. This period of roughly one hundred and fifty years witnessed the expansion, the prosperity and

apparently terminal decline of a once flourishing seaport and market town. We have deliberately drawn a line at the 1960's, a decade that saw emigration to the United States and Britain turn into a mass exodus, producing the 'Irish Diaspora'. President Robinson has made us all familiar with.

In an important sense, the identity that Kinvara had forged for itself over this century and a half came to an end in the 1960's. That identity has to do with the position of the town as the only seaport serving South County Galway. Until the decline set in during the 30's and 40's of this century, Kinvara was a focal point for regular sheep and cattle markets; from its hinterland came produce of all kinds, from potatoes and turnips, to the barley that was used in Persse's Distillery at Nuns Island in the processing of quality whiskey.

Timber from the woodlands in South Galway was transported to Kinvara.

contd. on p. 32



A copy of Tir Eolas's forthcoming book will be presented to the first person giving the most comprehensive account of what this photograph is about !





Brendan Forde.  
Teagasc student of the year 1995



Cormac Quinn and Oliver Connolly,  
Connaught Colleges,  
handball champions



Antoinette Fallon - All Ireland  
Finalist, in the BIM Schools  
Seafood Cookery Completion  
1994



Community Games All-Ireland gold medal  
winners. Boys relays under 12.

Left to right:  
R. Kilroy, capt., N. Curtin, P. Mahon, C.  
Curtin, C. Connolly.



World Dancing Championships 1995. Left to right:  
C. O Connor, A. O Connor, S. Moylan, M. Maloney, S. Huban



Veronica Curtin, nominated by the  
Connacht Tribune as Camogie  
All-Star 1994



Paddy Geraghty, Irish Life Pensioner  
of the Year, 1994, also Pioneer of the  
award



# INNERS

1995



right: Yvonne Curtin, Huban and Paula Huban part in the All Scotland Championships



Photo above: St Joseph's national school camogie team. Front row: A. O' Connor, S. Canny, A.M. Connolly, R. O' Connor, C. O' Connor. Back row: S. Moylan, S. Kavanagh, J. O' Shaughnessy, R. Glynn, R. Burke (capt.)



Kinvara community games hockey team, gold medal winners at Mosney.

Back row: E. Mahon, trainer, M. Martin, Y. Keane, H. Huban, N. Murphy, M. Glynn, M. Maloney, M. Corless, A. Walsh, manager  
Front row: A. Forde, A. Tanion, T. Kelly, V. Curtin, A. Tannion, L. Smith, N. McCormack, A. Tanion



Emma Kilkelly - Best Female Athlete - Community Games '95



Gerry Martin. Feis Ceoil winner



contd. from p. 29

Loaded on big boats and transported to Galway; from there the hardy wood from Coole or Derrybrien might be used in shipbuilding or perhaps to prop up the coal mines in South Wales.

During that century and a half, the town and people of Kinvara had at least as much to do with the coastline of Connemara as with the city of Galway. From the inlets and the islands of the rugged coastline came that graceful but hardy sailing craft the Galway Hooker, bringing turf from the bogs to the people of South Galway and North Clare. In return, the boatmen and their sons would head for one of the shops to buy everything from sailcloth and needles for stitching, to bolts of material for clothesmaking, as well as tools and equipment, medicines and paraffin oil. Marriages were made between families on either side of the broad bay; families were reared; farms worked; markets held. Births, marriages and deaths: the pattern of every day living in this seaport town of the West of Ireland.

Today as we rush towards the Third Millennium, all or what made up most of Kinvara's identity over one hundred and fifty years and more has disappeared or been transformed out of all recognition. If there are boats now at the quay, they are not those of men from Ballyconneely or Struthan, awaiting the turn of the tide to bring them home again; they belong instead to those for whom the boat is no longer a livelihood but a source of

pleasure and relaxation, as well as all those drawn to Kinvara by the annual festival of Cruinniu na mBad.

The publication of 'Tir Eolas' forthcoming book has been inspired primarily by the desire to assist, in some small way, in the admittedly difficult project of forging a new identity for Kinvara as it moves into the next century. By taking a look at the origins, growth, expansion and decline of the town of Kinvara, and the problems and challenges met and overcome by successive generations in the past, we may be better placed to consider how we, while maintaining faith with the past, can tackle the very different problems and challenges that confront us today.

Researching a book like this depends very much on the goodwill and co-operation of the people of Kinvara. There is only so much that you can discover from the pages of books. Understanding the day to day, month to month, year to year way thing used (and in some cases continue) to be done in Kinvara, whether in the town or on the eland, is something that has to be learned from those who, if they no longer live that way of life, at least can recall their fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers telling them about it.

As we hope to complete the research and identification of all photographs before Christmas, don't be surprised if one of us should turn up at your door some time in the next two months, clutching a folder of old photographs, and full of questions. We very much

hope that you will share with us what you know about Kinvara's past, for whatever help you may be able to provide, in however small a way, shall be deeply grateful.

Now, turn your attention to the photograph on this page. As you notice, it shows a group of people of different ages, from the woman whose shoulders are covered in the traditional shawl to the young girl wearing a polka-dot dress, standing rather uncertainly at the camera. What we would like you to do is to help put the photograph's story together, and to set you off, we suggest some of the questions that need to be answered if this story is to become clear.

Where was the photograph taken and what year? Who owned the automobile on the left? What was it used for? Can you identify any of the people in the group? Why were everyone dressed up in their clothes? What sort of occasion was this? Some of the people are obviously dressed for a journey - where were they travelling?

Other questions might begin to suggest themselves as you start to unravel the mystery, but to spur you on, Tir Eolas is offering a signed and hard-bound copy of its forthcoming book to the person who is able to provide the most comprehensive account of what this photograph is about.

Anne Korff can be reached at:  
(091) 37452

Jeff O'Connell can be reached at: (091) 37454

## *A Touch of Class*

Unisex Hairsalon

Phone : Work 37371 Home 37566

Monday - closed

Tuesday - 10 - 5 (Breda)

Wednesday - closed

Thursday - 10 - 5 (Thursday)

Friday - 10 - 5 (Mary)

Saturday - 10 - 8 (Mary & Breda)

Breda Fawl has now joined me and she is qualified in all aspects of Hairdressing.



## **BLOSSOMS**

*Flower Shop*

*Crowe St. Gort.*

*Tel : 091 31318*

*Flowers for All Occasions*

**INTERFLORA**



# Kinvara Youth Club

Down through the years there have been many youth clubs formed in Kinvara. Paddy Geraghty presented the present club with the guidelines laid down by a club formed in 1966. Kinvara Youth Club, in its present incarnation, began in the autumn of 1991 when 12 people gathered in 'Winkles' for an introductory talk by Martin Fitzgerald, regional organiser for the Galway Youth Federation. Several weeks of training followed for those people present. In November 1991 'Kinvara Youth Club' opened its doors again to the lively youth of the area.

There was some apprehension. With all the attractions of computer games and videos would a youth club be an attractive option for the youth of the 90's? Someone said we would be lucky to get 20 members. An optimist among us predicted 40. At the end of the 94/95 session Kinvara Youth Club had 95 paid-up members on its roll-book.

The club meets every Saturday night during term time in the Community Centre from 8 - 10 pm. One of the factors in the success of the Youth Club is the great facilities that are available for us in the Community Centre. As a nation, we seem to have a depressing habit of constantly knocking what is available in our own communities. Our own young people have commented on how lucky we are to have the Community Centre when they have visited other clubs trying to manage in very cramped conditions. The meeting room is buzzing every Saturday night with people playing pool, table-tennis, cards, draughts, Connect-4 and other games.

The radio or tapes are blaring, others

are just having a chat or buying something from the shop. In the main hall, a game of soccer, uni-hoc, basketball or volleyball may be going on.

From time to time, we have a table - quiz or a Disco. We also go on outings to the cinema, bowling and Quasar. Thanks to the support we receive from Pat Nolan & Tom McCormack - FAS / Kinvara Community Employment Project and to a hardworking and committed group of adult leaders, there are 4 adults present each session. The presence of someone in the shop brings this up to 5. Here we must record our thanks to Paddy Geraghty who has looked after the shop for us for many years.

Is there anyone out there among the 'Tracht' readers who would be prepared to help out on one Saturday per month or on an occasional basis? If so please contact any of the regular leaders: Pat Collins, Marion Coady, Aine O'Connell, Kevin Kinnane, Killian Kenny, Pam Fleming, Petra Breathnach, Helen McGinley. We have a great club going in Kinvara. Outsiders are amazed at our high numbers. Recently 40 students spent the weekend at Doonus Hostel under the auspices of the Co-operation North movement. These were invited to a disco organised by the club in the Community Centre. The visitors were greatly impressed by the music, the crowd and the hospitality. One of the Belfast teachers in charge sent a letter to the local paper, in which he thanked the Youth Club, with the words: "Who ever said that life in the rural west is dull?"

Kinvara Youth Club is certainly alive and vibrant. Please help to keep it that way by encouraging your teenagers to join and to support our local discos and perhaps by seeing if you could contribute in any way to the running of the club.

## CHILDREN SHORT STORY COMPETITION RESULTS

There were a good number of entries for the competition and the quality of the entries was excellent. It is unfortunate that there can be only one winner. The judges had a difficult choice in picking a winner. We would like to thank all the children who submitted a story and wish them every success in their future writing. Keep up the good work.

The winner, to go into this year's Tracht magazine is **Cathal Connolly** (aged 11 at the time of writing). Congratulations, Cathal on a very good story about a nightmare.

Here is Cathal's short story:

### A NIGHTMARE ON MY STREET

One day as I walked down a path, I heard a squeak come from the trees. It looked like a crow but as I drew closer it seemed to change. As I looked I saw a castle. It seemed to look like an upside down castle. Out came lots of white horses. Down came a drawbridge. I entered it. There were stalls to be seen everywhere. Smoke came from an oak door. It opened, I looked in cautiously. A man with his face turned inside out came out. Horror entered my bones. As I was entering in I felt like I was walking in space 'floating around'. Then I just fell to the ground. I asked where I was. No-one seemed to talk to me. My mind was being shattered. Then I saw this gloomy room in sight. Sweat was on the verge of breaking out. There was a banquet being held. I heard a voice saying "Come here, boy". I came in, there was pig (roasted) and all kinds of fruits to be eaten. It was like being in a Roman villa. I was then asked to play the flute. I tried but they only laughed at me. I threw it down and walked out. Their soldiers arrested me, I was thrown into the prison. I was going to be sentenced to death at noon. I was lined up against a wall with two more people who had done barely anything. "Lie down", we were told as horses trampled on us.

I woke up, my bed was flooded with sweat - what a nightmare!





# MacMAHON OIL



*For Express Delivery of :*

***HEATING OIL***

***AGRI DIESEL***

***COMMERCIAL DIESEL***

***091 37317 / 38126 / 088 582408***

## **O'GRADY'S BAR & RESTAURANT**

**THE SQUARE, GORT, CO. GALWAY Phone (091) 31096**

**The Entertainment Centre of South Galway**

**GOOD FOOD, GOOD VALUE, GOOD SERVICE**

## **SPRINGS NITE CLUB**

**Every Weekend**

**Great Music in the Bar every Saturday and Sunday Nights**

**NOW BOOKING FOR WEDDINGS, PARTIES ETC.**



# FOLKLORE FROM KINVARA

The following extracts of folklore concerning Kinvara which we came across recently were collected by Seán O Flannagáin in the parish of Beagh and elsewhere in the Slieve Aughty mountains, on behalf of the Irish Folklore Commission in the 1930s. We are grateful to the Head of the Dept. of Irish Folklore, UCD for permission to include the archive material below.

Last year, the Beagh Rural Development committee were completing a local history project which culminated last May in the publication of their fine book: *Beagh. A History and Heritage*. The book contains an interesting chapter on folklore, among other things. A more representative account, comprising past and present folklore is currently in preparation and is due for publication next year. The specific references to Kinvara reproduced below - sections of which are translations from Irish - are contained in the folklore of the general Gort area, collected in the thirties. The italicised comments and footnotes are our own.

*In Irish folklore, priests are often reputed to be able to cure ailments and those who can are said to be unhappy with their gift because it apparently brings bad luck to themselves in the end. "They have penance to pay," someone told us recently.*

*The priest with supernatural powers is also a recurring theme. Often we hear of the priest threatening to put a donkey's head on someone who crosses his path, or curse someone...*

## THE MAN THAT WAS CURSED

This man back in Kinvara had a row with the priest of Kinvara and did not the priest curse him. There was not a week that used pass after that, that he used get some of his stock dead on the land. Every animal he had on the land, both horses and cows, and cattle

and sheep, all died on him and the devil a bit he had left. The neighbours used be trying to advise him, and they were telling him to go and beg the priest's pardon. The devil a one of him would stir a foot. He was just as stuacach (stubborn) as the priest you know. Anyways in the long run he went to the priest, and he begged his pardon.

"Tháinig tú a Thaidhgín", says the priest, "ach níor tháinig tú in am.

"Gabh abhaile anois agus ceannaigh asal" (So, you've come Taidhgín, but you left it too late. Go home now and buy an ass).

He went home and bought the ass, and the devil a one but he got to be as good as ever again. The luck came back to him.

*I.F.C.354, p. 322: Collected in 1937 from Peaidí Mac Giolla*

Phádraig (88) Scairbh (Scarraf)

*Transportation to the penal colony of Van Diemen's Land (Tasmania) was the sentence handed down for larceny and petty crime during the eighteenth century. In this extract, we are told (also by Jamesy Regan from Townranny) how the local magistrates disagreed on such harsh a sentence as this ...*

## THE POOR MAN WHO WAS SELLING WHISKEY POTEEN

I was over in Gort one day and I heard it going round that there was this man from Kinvara on trial in the courthouse for making whiskey poteen and selling it. One of the peelers caught him at it and he was a protestant himself. The stipendiary in Gort that time was one of the Ffrenchs, and he was a Catholic. Another stipendiary was coming to Gort that time too, and he was Burke from Inagh, and he was a Protestant. Both of them were sitting this day, Ffrench and Burke.

Ffrench was on the bench that particular day and when the peeler had finished giving his evidence, Ffrench said he couldn't be too severe

on the poor man because he had never been caught before making poteen, and in his opinion he shouldn't be transported, but be given a prison sentence instead.

Burke from Inagh got up then and spoke against it. "You're saying that now," he said, "because the one that caught him in the act is a Protestant, and you're a Catholic. I'm telling you now, that this man should be transported whatever about his circumstances," said Burke. "I beg you pardon," said Ffrench, "but it wouldn't be right, fair or just to be doing that as this is his first offence."

The two of them started disputing then and could not reach agreement.

Begor, there was another stipendiary in Gort the same day called O Hara. Well this O Hara was living on the shores of Lough Graney in a place they call Cathair. The big house is there all the time. When Ffrench heard that O Hara was in Gort he sent for him, and when he came into court he was told the whole story from beginning to end. Mr O Hara said he agreed with Ffrench and that he shouldn't be transported at all. His word was accepted and Burke didn't get his way. Burke was finished after that. *I.F.C.404, p. 103-105.*

(Seamus Ó Riagáin)

## LACK OF TURF IN KINVARA

The farmers living in the Kinvara area have all their land under tillage, and it would be mostly tillage and pigs that keeps them going, I'd say. There would be one scarcity there around Ardrahan and Kinvara and that would be the lack of turf or any class of fuel.

As long as the boats are coming in there they are okay, but often they don't come and then they'd have to go over to the Aughty mountains and I'm telling you it's hard on them when they have to take that road.

## THE BEST CORN

The corn most commonly sown between here and Kinvara is the corn known as "The Common Red" or



"The Old Red". It's also known as the Old Irish Corn (an tSean Chruithneacht Gaelach). That corn is being sown here for as long as people remember, and it's the same corn that was sown in Ireland ever. The grains are very hard and they make the best of flour. The miller in Gort - Hynes - says it's the best corn there is.

When we'd be making cakes we'd put in a handful of corn - a handful of ground corn mixed with two of the white flour and we would mix it up like that.

#### THE PEOPLE OF ARDRAHAN AND KINVARA

They wouldn't have much of the white flour, or the shop flour as we call it. It's all ground corn up that side, and you never ate a cake so sweet and tasty as that cake and not a grain of white flour through it. I was over visiting some relatives there and the woman of the house asked me what was the price of shop flour. "Do you not buy it at all?" I asked her. "I do not, a mhaicin," she said. "it's a long time since I bought a bit of it," she said.

The people in Kinvara call everyone a mhaicin. It's always on the tip of their tongue: a mhaicin.

I.F.C.433, p.s 215, 226-227. (Seamus O Riagain)

*The blacksmith was a man to be respected in the past. He had all the elements at his command - earth, fire and water. Often he acted as local arbiter in settling local disputes and*

*the forge water itself was said to have a cure. In this case the water was believed to provide proof that a person was taken by the fairies, whose custom it was to leave a changeling in his place...*

#### FORGE WATER CURE

In case of lingering illness people make out that the sick person is "not right" and that the sheogues (fairies) have a hand in him. In that case they usually wish for an early death and yet they do not wish to do away with the person deliberately.

In a case like that they steal forge water and give it to the sick person to drink. If he is not right he will quickly die.

(...) was a neighbour of ours that lived at Cill Eithne (Killina). He had a longing illness and his mother was tired looking after him. There was a forge in the village and she stole some o' the forge water and gave it to him to drink. He only lived one week after it.

I had a little sister named Nora, and she was about nine years of age at the time. (...) was very fond of her and he used have sweets for her. She went in to see him when he was laid out and she got a terrible fright and ran away. His eyes could not be closed.

I.F.C.627,p. 17-18: Collected in 1938 from a woman who was born and raised in Killina, Kinvara.

The "caipin sonais" otherwise known as luck cap, or caul is, according to the dictionary, "the

portion of an amniotic sac which sometimes covers a child's head at birth." It was considered to bring good luck. Marian Connolly remembered when training to be a nurse in Galway that some midwives at the hospital were sometimes presented with the caul from women following childbirth. Some nurses would often be asked by sailors to keep a caul for them as it was generally believed that seaman would not drown if they had it.

*(Often we hear of the luck cap, or caul, being stolen at the child's (home)birth, as this woman explained forty years earlier...*

#### THE CAIPIN SONAIS

The third child I had was a son, and he had the caipin sonais on the crown of his head. An old woman and a young girl were attending me. The old woman knew that the caipin sonais should be there and she missed it gone. She searched for it and could not get it. The young girl had disappeared, and had brought the caipin sonais with her. We knew well that she had. She got married, but if she did in self she never had a birth. She had no right to steal the caipin sonais.

I.F.C.627,p. 19: In the above this woman's manner of speaking is a good example of how the Irish phraseology of her youth-(1850s) has blended with her habitual use of English.

## KINVARA FREE RANGE EGGS



**091 37269**

PRODUCER  
KATHLEEN KEANE CURTIN  
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE REG.

## Corless and Son

### UNDERTAKERS

#### KINVARA, CO. GALWAY

Complete Funerals arranged  
Funeral Parlour Facilities  
Embalming, Cremation  
**Telephone 091-37145 Day or Night**  
*Established 1863*



# Transitions

## BIRTHS NAMED

Michael Joseph  
Ashling Geraldine  
Martin Anthony  
Nicola Louise  
Sarah Marie  
Joseph Patrick Gerard  
Kevin Martin  
Darragh Martin  
Eanna Thomas & Roisin Mairéad  
Ellen Nora  
Shane Laurence  
Philip Thomas  
Sharon Theresa  
Lauren Marie  
Rachel Anne  
Niamh Marianne  
Michael Thomas  
Caolan Michael  
Kayleigh Marie  
Jenny Mary  
Meaghan Louise  
Emma Mary & Darragh Joseph  
Paddy  
Robert Henry  
Felicity  
Feilim  
Fiach

## MARRIAGES

Jerry Carr & Bernadette Naughton  
Hope Ellerson & Caroline McLoughlin  
John Duffy & Teresa Cooley  
Eoin MacMahon & Sandra Fahy  
Patrick Gerard Ruane & Mary Teresa O'Loughlin  
Padraic Molloy & Mary McLoughlin  
Brendan Corless & Angela Naughton  
Patrick McNulty & Mary Quinn

## DEATHS

Margaret Curtin, Roo  
Peter Waters, Ballybuck  
Joseph Muldoon, Curranroo.  
Dan Sugrue, Kinvara  
Thomas Moran, Kinvara  
Michael Linnane, Parkmore.  
Anne Huban, Dooras.  
Bridge Connolly, Cartron.  
Peg Fahy, Cahermore.  
Mary Kate Shaughnessy, Killina.  
Joseph Quilty, Geeha, Dooras.  
Maisie McCormack, Cartron  
Patrick Fahy, Dooras.

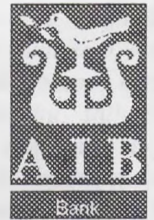
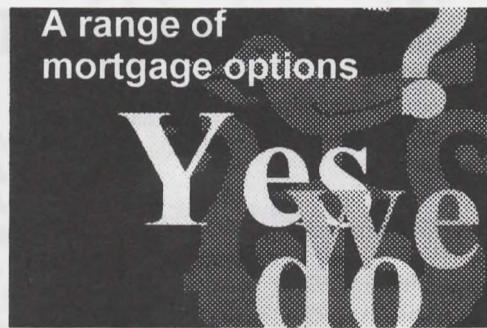
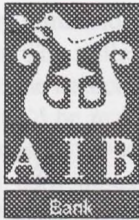
## TO

Patrick & Noreen O'Loughlin  
Patrick & Mary Warde  
Patrick & Margaret Linnane  
Joseph & Una Mahon  
John & Ann Marie Flaherty  
Michael & Carmel O'Connor  
Joseph & Geraldine O'Dea  
Martin & Patricia Kilkelly  
Enda & Fiona Linnane  
John & Margaret Burns  
Michael & Mary Linnane  
Patrick & Rosemary McNamara  
Michael & Anne O'Hara  
Donald & Mary Maloney  
Ray & Rose Beatty  
Liam & Ann Connolly  
Gabriel & Julie Bermingham  
Eoin & Sandra MacMahon  
Michael & Caroline Mahon  
Kevin & Ann Kinane  
Declan & Aoife Droney  
Martin & Bernadette Flaherty  
Jane & Peter Smith  
Susan & Pat Burke  
Bernie & John Leech  
Ailbhe & Eoin Brown  
Antoinette & Séadna Tobin

Adrian Mallon & Brigid Linnane  
Patrick Diviney & Carol O'Hanlon  
Patrick Holland & Catherine Keane  
Martin Glynn & Phylis Kelly  
Alan Moran & Melinda Hughes  
Declan Kilkelly & Geraldine Forde  
Patrick O'Loughlin & Eileen Hotchkiss

John McLaughlin, Kinvara.  
James Nolan, Curranroo.  
Kathleen Keane, Cahernamadra.  
Mrs Margaret Burke, Cahermore.  
Bernadette Forde, Cartron.  
James Curtin, Geeha, Dooras.  
Thomas Hynes, Funchin.  
Delia Leech, Kinvara.  
Patrick O'Loughlin, Poulmagan.  
John (Jack) Linnane, Ballyclera.  
Miko Connolly Oughtmama.  
Pat Keane, Aughnish  
Theresa Kavanagh, Trellick.





**Special variable rate for first time buyers\***

**6.2 % (7.8% APR)**

**Fixed repayment option for up to two years to help you plan your finances.**

**For details call into AIB Bank Gort Tel : 31051**

**Manager : Mona O'Donnell**

## **John Sullivan & Sons**

**Insurance Brokers & Auctioneers**

**General Insurance \* Motor \* House \* Shops \* Pensions \* Life  
Endowments \* Mortgage Protection  
For Personal & Confidential Service**

**Bonded Brokers  
Members of IBA**

**M.I.P.A.V.  
Building Society Agents**

**CROWE ST. GORT - Tel: (091) 31140 / 31257 / 31401 - Fax : 31916**

## **Sullivans Royal Hotel GORT**

**\*Fully Licensed \* Open All Year\***

**\*Weddings \* Functions \* Conferences \* Meetings \***

**Coach\* Parties\***

**PROP: J. & A. SULLIVAN**

**TELEPHONE (091) 31257 & 31401. FAX : 31916**



# The Famine Years

The famine of 1845-49 had a very severe effect on the Kinvara area. Even before the famine there was much poverty there. On Thursday, November 21, 1844 a meeting was held in the town "on the subject of Establishing a Dispensary therein, and electing a Medical Officer to Superintend it". As regards dispensary relief, one of the resolutions passed referred to "the great want of such relief in this poor district". The potato blight was first detected in Ireland in September of 1845. A report by a Gort correspondent of the Galway Mercury and Connaught Weekly Advertiser that appeared November 8, 1845 shows the effect it had on the potato crop in the South Galway area by then.

"From a Gort correspondent. I regret to state that the alarm in this locality, concerning the cholera amongst the potatoes is very great, not so much on account of the rot amongst them while in the ground, as that which occurred when covered in the holes. I have known many for the last three weeks to have dug and pitted them perfectly safe and free of spots, who have tried them for the last week, and found them spoiled and totally useless."

The destitution in Kinvara was evident by May 1846. A report in the Galway Mercury May 9th 1846 shows the effects of the failure of the potato crop on the vicinity.

"A meeting of the inhabitants of this town and vicinity took place in the Court-house on Wednesday last. It was attended by a large portion of the most respectable, and a great number of the humbler classes who appeared very grateful to the former for the anxiety they evinced to relieve the present distress, and avert the awful consequences of the approaching destitution." The Rev. P. Ford, P.P., was called to the Chair on the motion of Captain Kilkelly, seconded by Arthur

Alexander Esquire. Dr Hynes was requested to act as Secretary. The Rev. Chairman said it very seldom fell to his lot to preside at, or take part in, any meeting of greater importance than the present. They had assembled there today to see what means could be devised to alleviate the prevailing distress and destitution of the hundreds of their fellow beings in that locality who had not a single day's support for themselves or their families, and unless something was done to assist them, it was awful to contemplate the consequences likely to follow...

The Rev. Mr Arthur said that while we would be waiting for relief from the Government (who appeared very tardy in affording relief to any district) the people would starve for want of the common necessities of life. The every day he attended a family in fever who had no better drink than water, but who was reduced to that pitch of poverty, from being in very comfortable circumstances, in consequence of having lost all their potatoes by the rot. He would, therefore, say that subscriptions should be immediately entered into by the inhabitants of the parish, and that application be made to the different landlords having property in the district, calling on them for their support, and that when a sufficient sum were collected, meal should be purchased and sold out at reduced prices, which, in itself, would be a great source of relief, as it would be likely to put a stop to that disreputable system of forestalling so generally adopted in this town."

At a meeting of the Kinvara Relief Committee held in the Court House, Kinvara on Thursday June 4th, 1846, it was reported "The Committee having already issued over 400 meal tickets by which that number of families at least will be saved from the horrors of starvation this season and they confidently trust they will be enabled to afford at all events partial

relief to every person in distress in the district for the next two months."

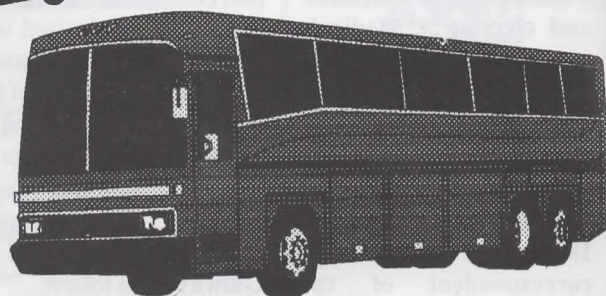
The people also had to suffer from the caprices of officialdom. A letter dated July 30, 1846 from Kinvara refers to "the doings of a Mr. Wright, who is the engineer appointed by Government for some of the baronies of this neighbourhood." He did little to co-operate with the Kinvara Relief Committee. After seventy extra men were employed working on a line of road Mr Wright "wrote to the secretary of the Committee saying he would not allow these men to be paid and, finally, he stops the work altogether, sending two hundred and forty men home to tell their families that they must starve."

At a meeting of the Kinvara Relief Committee held in the Court House on Wednesday September 2nd, 1846 it was resolved "That our Treasurer be empowered to advance the sum of Eleven Pounds Ten Shillings and Three Half Pence towards the payment of the poor men that were refused payment for their labour on the new line of road into the town by Mr Wright the Officer of Public Works for this District, and that our Secretary be directed to call to the attention of the Board of Works to the flagrant injustice done these poor creatures by that gentleman, as well as to his general conduct towards the committee."

From the general accounts of the Kinvara Relief Committee it appears that a total of £387.17s.8d was raised from private and public donations. £7.18s was spent on "Gratuitous Relief to a certain number of families, wholly destitute since May 24." Most of the money was spent on the purchase of food such as oatmeal, wheat meal and Indian meal. In the second annual report of the Kinvara Dispensary which appeared in the Galway Mercury November 21, 1847, a list was given of all the diseases treated in the last year and the number of applicants relieved.



# Michael Donoghue & Sons Ltd.



---

**Luxury Travel  
Coaches & Minibuses**

**Taramuid, Clarinbridge, Co. Galway**  
**Telephone (091) 796132**

---

## ***LINNANE'S BAR***

***New Quay, Co. Clare***  
***Tel. (065) 78120***

### ***MENU***

Mussels	Lobsters
Smoked Salmon	Crab Claws
Seafood Platter	Smoked Mackerel
Clams	Oysters

***All Served with salad and  
Homemade Brown Bread***



---

***Clare's Tradition - The Finest in Music***

---



1847, a list was given of all the diseases treated in the last year and the number of applicants relieved. Those suffering from "diseases of the Respiratory Organs" were the most numerous with 473 patients, the next most numerous was "diseases peculiar to women and Infantile Diseases" of which there were 417. The "Total Number of Prescriptions made up" was 4,657.

The author of the report, Dr. Dennis J. Hynes noted "I am glad to be able to remark that though a great number of cases have been treated at the dispensary for the year, we have not been visited by any serious epidemic. I regret, however, that Disease is on the increase in the District for the last few months, attributable, in great measure I fear, to the destitution, so general all over it." The winter of 1846/47 was exceptionally severe and contributed to the great suffering of the poor people who had been unable to get fuel to heat up their cabins. On Tuesday, February 9th 1847, the Gort Presentment Sessions met. Its intention was to make proposals "for further sums of money for the present system of road works for the barony of Kiltartan. The attendance of gentlemen was very numerous, although the day was a most inclement one, being one continued shower of snow."

One of the Catholic clergymen who spoke was Rev. Arthur, parish priest of Kinvara. "In Kinvara district, Rev. Mr Arthur said they were burying them without coffins; there were two last week buried by day and two by night and the amount of mortality was frightful. He was so weakened by the incessant calls for the dying, and the constant agitation of his mind that he could now hardly address the gentlemen present. I will here mention to you that a clergyman died in his parish last Christmas from an over-anxiety for the welfare of his flock when he saw he could not be the means of alleviating their suffering condition, or attend half the calls that were hourly made upon him. This over

anxiety of his, acting on a too sensitive mind, and a delicate constitution, was the cause of his untimely death."

The clergyman who died was the Rev. Patrick Ford. His death was reported in the Galway Mercury, January 2, 1847. "Mr Ford, though young in years was of a delicate constitution, and he was for some time subject to the complaint - inflammation of the stomach - to which at length, he has fallen a victim. Kind and gentle in his manner towards all, generous and charitable towards the poor, it is no wonder that his death is universally regretted by the inhabitants of his parish, and his exertions for some time past as secretary of the relief committee, as well as his anxiety of mind, arising from the difficulty of procuring employment for the labouring population, contributed to render him less able to bear up against the last attack of his disease. Just as he was going out to celebrate first mass on Christmas morning he became alarmingly ill, and notwithstanding every effort made by his medical attendant to prolong his valued life he died at an early hour on the following morning. Deceased was Catholic Administrator of the parish of Kinvarra, in this county."

On Thursday, September 16th, 1847, the Kinvara relief Committee had its last meeting. It was stated by Arthur Alexander, Esq., that "we have issued altogether 786,838 rations and on an average we have issued 5,120 rations to 5,570 individuals daily at a cost of something less than one and three quarters d. per ration. This includes the expense of the staff, rent of stores, soup kitchen, &c., as well as that of the meal issued." The Government inspector, Major Burnes was especially commended for his help in the relief efforts. Mr Alexander said "In conclusion, gentlemen, When I look back to that crisis and when I contemplate the frightful destitution of our district and the many difficulties we have to contend with, the mind naturally recurs to the

Government Inspector Major Burnes of the 19th Regiment. For it is to his great exertions in behalf of the poor of this electoral division, to his good advice and to his kind and conciliatory conduct at all times, we must in a great measure, attribute any success with which our efforts have been attended."

However the idea that the crisis was over in the Kinvara district by the autumn of 1847 would seem to be disproved by accounts from the Gort Poor Law Union Minutes. At a meeting of the Board of Guardians held on Friday, December 3rd, 1847 it was resolved "that in consequence of the multitude of miserable applicants from Kinvara and the total impossibility of ever finding accommodation for them in the workhouse, it is the opinion of this board that we forthwith agree for a house or houses at Kinvara, to receive the claimants from that District". At a further meeting of the Board of Guardians held on Friday, December 31, 1847 it was resolved "that in consequence of the crowded state of the house (the Gort workhouse) and nearly 400 paupers being from the Electoral division of Kinvara and an accession of 100 a week expected from the same division, the (Poor Law) Commissioners be requested to sanction outdoor relief, with as division to the able bodied."

It is a fact that most people who died during the famine, died not of hunger but of diseases associated with overcrowded conditions, poor hygiene and diet. Such diseases included relapsing fever, typhus, bacillic dysentery earlier known as "the bloody flux" and smallpox. There was a fever hospital in Kinvara during the famine years, up to 1849. It was situated in a house in the town owned by Mr. St. George. At an extraordinary meeting of the vice Guardians of the Gort Union held on March 2nd, 1848 a report was made of a recent visit to the fever hospital. "The Vice Guardians having visited Kinvarra Fever House, with a view of making arrangements for increased accommodation in accordance with



the Poor Law Commissioners Instructions conveyed in their letter to Capt. Hanley, and having on inspecting the premises found the arrangements for the relief of the sick very unsatisfactory, without proper superintendence or control, and with no ready means of extending the accommodation.

Resolved that before any money shall be advanced on account of Kinvarra Hospital, Capt. Hanley do report on the subject to the Poor Law Commissioners."

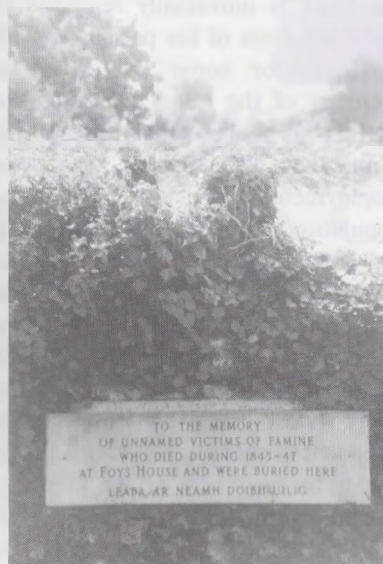
The Galway Vindicator of April 5, 1848 carried a notice inviting "tenders from persons willing to contract ...for the Erection of Sheds for 50 or 100 Patients, as may be determined on, near Kinvarra."

It is to be noted that in June 1848 the parish priests of Kinvara, Rev. Arthur and Rev. Kelly wrote to the vice guardians of the Gort Union, stating that they required salaries "for attending at the Temporary Hospital at Kinvara." When they were not paid the priests "expressed their determination not to attend the patients in the Temporary Hospital in future". It is to be presumed that some suitable arrangement was arrived at between Rev. Arthur and Rev. Kelly and the vice guardians on the matter. The Kinvara Temporary Fever Hospital remained open until the end of December 1849.

Some people took advantage of their positions of responsibility in feeding the poor to profit themselves. At a meeting of the vice guardians of the Gort Union on Friday, May 26th, 1848 it was reported that "In the course of the Inspection of the Several meal Depots in the Union by Mr. Gillons Inspector and the Vice Guardians during the week, it having been necessary to dismiss the Storekeeper at Shanaglish, John Geraghty, and the Store Keeper at Kinvarra James Curtin, for using fraudulent scales in weighing out the foods it was ordered that notice be given to persons willing to fill those situations to be considered on Friday the 3rd instant. And that in the mean

time the R/O (Relieving Officer) have a strict control over the distribution of the food at the stores". John Butler, overseer of works was appointed store keeper at Kinvara in James Curtin's stead at a salary of 10 d per week.

In 1847 the British government decided to transfer the responsibility for famine relief in Ireland from central to local resources. This meant the collecting of a poor rate on Irish property. When an attempt was made to levy a five shilling rate in the Gort Union in October, 1848 there was widespread



Famine memorial at Foy's cemetery.  
Foy's House in background

resistance. A meeting was held at Gort Courthouse Thursday, October 19 by local landowners and farmers. One of those who spoke was Mr. Burke of Kinvara, he "addressed the meeting in very forcible language, declaring the determination of the tenant farmers not to submit to the levy of so high a rate. He said it would be far better for the paupers to be at once sent off to New South Wales, economical to the Union, but the notion of paying a five shilling rate was quite preposterous." Not surprisingly what was called the poor rate campaign in Kinvara met with fierce resistance. On Monday 24th October, 1848, 40 soldiers and 50 policemen went from Gort to collect poor rates in the parish of Kinvara.

They met opposition in the village and barricades were erected to prevent them from reaching the place where they were to distraint on, one and a half miles from Kinvara. The riot act was read three times at the second barricade and when the crowd of 300 men and women would not give way the police and army were ordered to charge with fixed bayonets. "Stones were then thrown by the people, many of whom received severe wounds in the charges of the police. They then commenced a guerilla warfare from behind the walls and severely injured some of the police and military." Eventually, as it was getting late, Mr. Davis, the stipendary magistrate, ordered the police and military "to turn around and proceed home."

On Thursday, November 9th, 1848, the collection of poor rate took place for the fifth time in the Kinvara area. "On Thursday last, we are informed, a formidable force of military and police, with artillery, were under orders for the fifth time to enforce the collection of poor rate in the neighbourhood of Kinvarra. Five hundred men, headed by Sir Michael Creagh, with 60 of the constabulary, proceeded to New Quay and Duras; at the latter place they seized a horse, but the demand was immediately paid by the owner and the animal liberated. They thence proceeded to the villages where resistance was chiefly anticipated, but nothing of the sort appeared - not a man left his employment even to gaze upon them. A few paid the rates, but no property was carried away."

There was an outbreak of cholera in Kinvara in April, 1849. Doctor Hynes was made cholera medical officer at a salary of one guinea per dien and the shop of Fergus Kilkelly at Kinvara was hired for a cholera dispensary for ten shillings per week. Mr. Kilkelly "to give his own services as Porter of the Dispensary." A report in the Galway Vindicator, April 28, 1849, gives evidence of the outbreak.

"The brother of the king or Admiral of the Claddagh 'Bartly Hynes' who died from cholera, was



also seized by cholera at Kinvara and died about the same time. The messenger who came across the bay to inform him of his brother's death found the admiral dead also." By June 1, 1849 cholera had abated in Kinvara and the cholera dispensary

was closed down soon afterward.

The famine had certainly cast its dark shadow over the district of Kinvara. Between 1847 and 1867 there was a decrease of 1100 families in the parish. Kinvara like Ireland, was never to be the same again.

I would like to thank the staff of Galway County Library, Island House, for providing me with the facilities and materials to research for this article.

Oliver Martyn, October 1995.

## Our trip to Locoal Mendon

**We assembled in Gort for the bus to Cork on a blazing June afternoon. Eight second level students from Kinvara, Ballindereen, Gort and Belharbour - and one was actually bringing his mother and his kid sister along! - for the coming eighteen days in Locoal-Mendon. Kinvara's twin town in Brittany.**

It had been some eight years before when the officials of the two towns - Canon Michael O'Connor and Mayor Serge Le Gouguec - signed the official twinning agreement. At that time there were already some firm friendships established through the new accord and for a few years visits took place between the two communities and were fondly remembered by many in Kinvara. However, as often happens, in recent times only a few reciprocal visits had been made and they tended to be on a personal basis rather than representing the 'twinning'. Moya and Stan Mac Eoin kept communications open and as a family have remained regularly in touch with the Le Buhé family in Locoal-Mendon. The two families have much in common, not least the fact that they were instrumental in forging the links originally and it was Moya who together with Genevieve Le Buhé made this years arrangements in the hope that the students would generate a new level of interest in the 'relationship'. At the same time, of course, they would become fluent French speakers!!

Just before midnight, we boarded the Ferry in Cork for the 17 hour journey to St. Malo. And it was

7.p.m. the next day before we saw this beautiful port in the evening sun.

Alan Le Buhé was waiting to welcome us and once the baggage was loaded we settled down for the final two hours of our marathon journey. Alan briefed us on places of interest as we made our way through the beautiful Brittany countryside on the fast and efficient roads system there, but soon almost everyone was nodding as fatigue finally won the day. By the end of the two hour journey, however, we were all restless to meet our hosts for the first time and as we drove into the car park of the 'Mairic', there they all were waiting, just as curious about us - I'm sure - as we were about them. The baggage was unloaded and every family was assigned their 'guest' before we all dispersed to our new temporary homes. The families who were our hosts were: Le Floch (x2); Le Buhé; Guillot; Audic; Vautrin; Hervé; Rosnahro; Pensac and I stayed first with Annie Huchet, her daughter Christelle and son Yan- who know and are known by many friends in Kinvara after having been here before on twinning visits and independently.

It was the day after our arrival, before we could see what a beautiful place our twin town is - it is probably smaller than Kinvara in its central area with only a couple of shops and a post office, but there are many amenities on the outer edges of Locoal-Mendon like tennis courts, soccer pitch and a very impressive Suite Emeraud which is the local concert hall/function rooms with its own extensive car park.

There are many things which impressed us all a great deal. The

hospitality of the families was overwhelming. Everyone was treated individually as a family member and all went out of their way to provide extra outings for sight-seeing, meeting relatives, beach trips, shopping etc., but the novelty of being in another country and seeing life as its lived every day was an adventure in itself and we were all intrigued by the different food and drinks we were introduced to. Everyone knows that the French commonly drink wine at their main meal and as this meal is often in the middle of the day, this is unusual for us to say the least; then there was the locally brewed cider - proudly offered to each one of us by our individual hosts - and we all quickly learned that it would be wise to leave the French to their own customs rather than join them in this one. In fact the extremely hot weather made it essential to drink plenty of water ( usually bottled) which was also readily available. Mint tea is quite popular as an after dinner beverage but tea as we know and love it is not taken much. The speciality of the area are the Crêpes and they can be either served as a main course with a filling of anything from ham and eggs to ratatouille. You might follow this with a dessert type Crêpe which could hold strawberries and cream or bananas and chocolate flamed with Grand Marnier. We all attended what was probably the most spectacular event of the visit on our second Sunday there, the Nos Paysanne, which was a 're-construction' of a Breton wedding. The ceremonies began with the Breton mass in Mendon's lovely church with many of the congregation dressed in local





Kathleen Kenny, pictured with students prior to departure to Brittany

costume - traditional at all weddings until the mid nineteen sixties - and looking extremely elegant in black velvet and white accessories with the most perfect detailed hand embroidery on the ladies dresses. There was an excellent choir and a magnificent musical section mainly of the traditional instruments of the bombard and the bagade. The 'bride and groom' were represented by three couples who were already married and celebrating special wedding anniversaries this year e.g. 25th, 30th etc., these were the central figures for the ceremonies and after the mass were surrounded by singing and dancing 'guests' for at least half an hour before the party moved (either on foot or by horse drawn carriage) on towards Lapaul- about 4 kilometres out of town - for the wedding feast. There were about two stops on the way for more singing and dancing around the couples and this is how a typical country wedding would have progressed there many years ago with stops at homesteads en route to include the entire community in the celebrations. Finally on arriving at the site of the feast we found tables laid for hundreds of diners and everyone enjoyed an afternoon of good food, music and dancing in the open air.

Some of the places we were delighted to visit were: Auray, St.

Anne d'Auray, St. Goustin, Lorient, Vannes, Concarneau, Quimper, Carnac Quiberon, and others, all of which came alive in all their finery from being only names on a map before.

At a reception at the 'Mairie' given by the Twinning Committee, the Mayor, M. Serge Le Gouguec, re-iterated the sentiments held here in Kinvara that those who have been involved with the alliance between the two towns have many fond memories and that it would be hoped that the visits would continue and the friendships flourish in the years to come.

Finally we had to make our way home and said good-bye to our 'families' at the station in Auray, with many promises to keep in touch. We were laden with souvenirs and gifts from our new friends. We were optimistic that our aims had been achieved in that the ties were now strengthened and more visits will surely come about as a result.

Brittany is a beautiful place and there is a great affinity among the Breton and the Irish - both have their own Celtic language and culture which resemble each other in many ways. It is easy to recognise this affinity on meeting the people there and seeing the similarities in the lifestyles of Locoal-Mendon and Kinvara, both small farming

communities and largely dependent on themselves for their own entertainment and social gatherings. Both communities have the same open hospitality and interest in all visitors, there are indeed many friends between the two towns and many more to be made.

FOOTNOTE: Since our visit, there have been guests in Kinvara from Locoal-Mendon. Three students and many people will recall seeing Alan Le Buhé when he made a flying visit here at the end of August. He was pleased to meet old acquaintances as were Annie Huchet and Christelle who also caught up with a few old friends around the same time.

It is hoped that the year 1997 will see reciprocal visits between the two communities as that will be the tenth anniversary of the signing of the twinning document. Some residents in the Brittany town are already keen on generating plans for that time and we would urge anyone here who would be willing to partake in any way, to come forward so that a committee can be formed. EU funding is available to towns who wish to pursue their twinning activities, provided that a suitable plan/application is submitted which must include a 'European dimension'. Your input, however small will be most appreciated. Please contact the Community Centre if you wish to be involved.

## Kinvara Pioneers

The 2nd of February 1995 was the 60th anniversary of the foundation of the female branch of the P T A A in Kinvara. Sr M. Bernadette was the first spiritual Directress, based in the Convent of Mercy. This group were amalgamated with the male centre in 1975, with Sr M Joseph as it first secretary attached to St Joseph's Church. The present secretary is Paddy Geraghty In 1998 the Pioneers will be celebrating its centenary.



# The Battle of Kinvara

## WHAT IT SAID IN THE PAPERS

### THE POOR LAW RATES

Elsewhere in this issue of *Trácht* Jeff O' Connell's well researched article describes the effects of the famine on Kinvara. Oliver Martyn, who did fine work too in sifting through old copies of the *Galway Vindicator*, came across the following stories relating to the collection of the poor rates and the opposition thereto from hard-pressed landlords and others.

At a meeting of the Gort Union on 21 October 1846, Lord Gort and Mr St George M.P. were asked to "wait on His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant to present the resolutions agreed to and to assure his excellency of the impossibility of such a rate being collected, and that if he persevered it would be collected at the point of a bayonet and thus jeopardise the tranquility of a district hitherto most peaceable."

Now a week previous to this, October 14th, the *Galway Vindicator* carried a report stating that "protected by the dragoons stationed in that town and a large party of the police, the rate collector and his assistants proceeded into the neighbouring districts, having with them a number of cars for the purpose of bringing away various descriptions of property which they intended to distrain."

It goes on to report how a crowd of country people gathered and refused to disperse in spite of the riot act being read out three times. Indeed they commandeered the horses and carts:

"The horses were made to 'stand aside' with a despatch that would have done credit to the Attorney General disposing of a Catholic juror; and the next moment the cars were descending a hill with accelerating motion, whose momentum had a very striking appearance to the irresistible."

### THE BATTLE OF KINVARA

The next issue of the *Galway Vindicator*, dated Oct. 28, 1846, publishes a letter referring to its reports on 'extempore barricades'. The writer tells us that on the 26th a 'gallant band' of police and infantry proceeded from Gort to Kinvara to "seize and to possess, to have and to hold, all the come-atable property of a refractory set of rate non-payers. The author then describes their retreat, informing us that they left empty handed.

However the *Freeman* carried a somewhat different report from its correspondent, who recounts a bloody battle in Kinvara. A large force, comprising the 4th Light Dragoons, the 89th Regiment of foot soldiers, some 40 men commanded by a Capt. Browne and Lieut. Skinner respectively, as well as 50 of the police force, commanded by Thomas Mahon S.I., and J. Davis, stipendiary magistrate were on a rate collecting expedition. As this impressive force of 90 men passed through the village, he writes, the carts that were to convey away the corn (in lieu of payment), being at the rear of the military, were set upon by people but restrained by the force on hand. A mile and a half further on they were met by a barricade obstructing their passage:

"They then got on another road leading to the same district when a barricade, partly formed, met their view, protected by about 300 men and women. They refused to let the armed forces pass and said they would rather sacrifice their lives than permit it. They were told resistance would be useless, but they persisted to maintain their ground. The riot act was read three times but still they would not give way, when the police were ordered to charge with fixed bayonets, and also the 89th. Stones were thrown by the people, many of whom received severe wounds in the charges of the

police. They then commanded a guerrilla warfare from behind the walls and severely injured some of the police and military. One of the police got a severe cut in the face, and Mr Davis and his horse were struck two or three times. The police drove the people for a quarter of a mile into the fields, but they were as certain to be back again to the scene of action. Mr Davis did not wish to shed blood, by ordering the military or police to fire, and it being late in the day, he ordered them to turn round and proceed home. Much praise is due to the forbearance of the authorities, as among such a determined people there is not the least doubt but much blood would have been shed."

Further down the coast we read accounts of similar defences, so opposition to the rates must have been a highly charged issue. On Nov. 8th the *Limerick Chronicle* reports that the government is determined to enforce payment of the poor rate and refers to the organised hostility to the law being manifested in the "lawless district of Kinvara, where the peasantry have cut deep trenches, now filled with water, upon all the cross roads, and erected cheveaux de frises in the fields, to prevent the approach of the military and police authorities. These difficulties must however give way before the constituted authority, for the law must be asserted, despite of all consequences, or universal anarchy will be the result. The Poor Law system is obnoxious, and even oppressive in its operations, but armed resistance is not the legitimate road to amend this or any other statute."

On Nov. 11th, the *Vindicator* reports that no less than 500 men, headed by Sir Michael Creagh, with 60 of the constabulary, headed to New Quay and Duras, anticipating trouble, but none was forthcoming: "not a man left his employment to gaze upon them. A few paid the rates, but no property was carried away."

The proverb tells us: an té nach bhfuil láidir, ní foláir dó a bheith glic (if you lack strength you'd better be clever).

*Maybe they saw them coming and the stock had been hidden from view.*

By Caoilte Breathnach

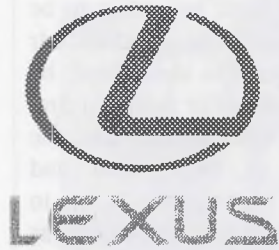


---

*Best Wishes to Tráct Magazine*

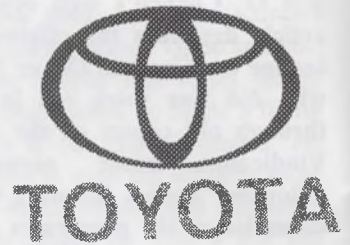
from

**TOM HOGAN**



**MOTORS**

**(GALWAY) LTD.**



**Main Toyota Dealers**

**Fr. Griffin Road, Galway**

**Tel : (091) 582522 Fax (091) 582528**

**1st for Sales - Leasing - Service - Parts**

**We don't keep good cars - we sell them**

---

**BURKE BROS**

*Kinvara, Co. Galway*

**LONDIS FOODSTORE &  
GENERAL MERCHANTS**

**TELEPHONE : 37250**

---

**For Better Value Shopping &  
Personal Service**

---



# The Famine in Kinvara

*J.W. O'Connell & Paschal Quinn*

The Irish Famine was such a colossal disaster in itself, and it has had such an enormous impact on the subsequent history of this country - economically, sociologically, politically, culturally - that it is, as historian Kevin Whelan has written, difficult for us to really grasp.

Whelan, in his contribution to 'The Great Irish Famine', the 1995 Thomas Davis Lecture series, explains this point well:

On the other hand, perhaps it is no longer so very difficult to imagine, standing, as we all do, in this mass graveyard of the 20th century: a century that has witnessed the millions of deaths at the Battle of the Somme; the six million and more deaths over a similar time-span - between 1935 and 1945 - we today call the Holocaust; the continuing slaughter in Rwanda, Bosnia, Serbia, Croatia.

Maybe the most telling of all comparisons for Irish people are the

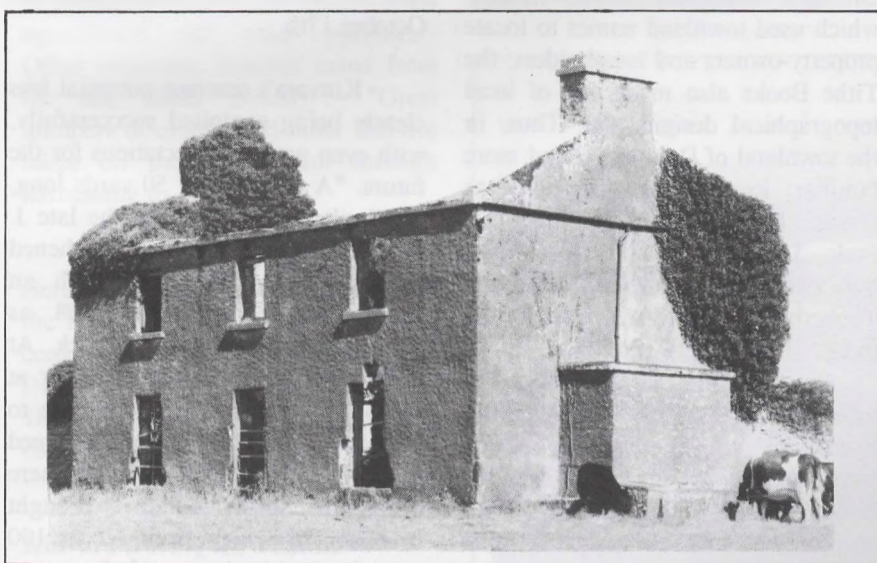
of 'phytophthora infestans', a nasty fungus with a dignified-sounding Latin name, that rotted potatoes in the ground. The reason this was such a disaster is quite simple. Over the previous two centuries, the newly-introduced potato - so easy to grow and so very nutritious - began to replace other food crops that required more attention for a successful harvest, as well as, in the case of cereal crops, recourse to a third party - the miller - for processing.

We Irish have always made up songs and poems about everything that strikes us, good or bad. And this humble plant, that could be grown virtually anywhere and produced an abundant yield, naturally attracted its praise-singers. One such song, in Irish, translates as

"The potatoes are the love of my life  
They don't require a kiln or mill  
Only to be dug in the field  
And left on the fire."

In the West of Ireland, other factors combined crucially with the treacherous ease with which potatoes could be grown: the gradual but accelerating shift to a one-crop small-farmer economy that was of little more than a subsistence nature, but, if you lucky enough to live where easy access to hills for rough grazing was available, where there were bogs for turf, and lived in close proximity to the seashore where you could get seaweed, sand and seafood, you would have had a simple but good life.

Where nobody expected very much in the way of social advancement, but in the rural West of Ireland where virtually all your neighbours were about as well off - which often meant 'as badly off' - as you were, there were not the serious



Foy's House, fever hospital during Famine

"It is difficult to grasp at an individual level the implications of a tragedy which wiped out one million people in half a decade, as if the modern population of Dublin was to be obliterated before the end of the 1990s. It is also difficult", the author continues, "to empathise with the scale of the poverty. In seemingly prosperous Kilkenny in 1835, a German visitor noted with fascinated disgust how a local mother had picked up gooseberry skins which a fellow traveller had spat out of the stagecoach, carefully placing them in the mouth of her child."

terrible famines that have claimed the attention of the world in recent decades, the famines in Biafra, Ethiopia, Somalia. Those Irish aid workers and mission priests and nuns, who have made such an outstanding contribution, may be the least liable to a failure of imagination when it comes to envisaging the actuality of the Irish Famine.

## Background

This year marks the 150th anniversary of the great Irish Famine, that nationwide disaster that began with the sinister and stealthy invasion



economic barriers to early marriage or starting a family that were to arise later in the century, after the Famine.

Consequently, the population began to expand in the Western regions, along the Atlantic. And as population expanded, so did the ubiquitous potato take over virtually every available small field or patch of mountainside soil. The age-old balance of tillage - and of more than one crop - and livestock grazing dangerously tilted in favour of tillage.

And then came the economic depression that followed the end of *England's long wars with France*. Agriculture prices dropped overnight by half; mysteriously, the herring - the 'potato of the sea' - disappeared off the West coast. The weather, hitherto friendly to the tillage farmer, turned nasty, with a succession of dismal, wet Summers that yielded poor harvests, particularly in 1817 and 1822.

One-crop small farmers, with a number of sons and daughters, also, eventually, with big families, began to be pressed to the wall. Bigger farmers couldn't take on agricultural labourers anymore; small farmer's security of land tenure began to disappear as the slightly bigger farmer - not, by any means, necessarily, the 'landlord in his Big House' - refused to renew agreements for conacre - the most basic type of land-leasing; increasing numbers of indigent poor began crowding towns, squatting in make-shift shanties, existing on charity and locally-organised relief.

### **Kinvara Before the Famine**

What we have been describing in general can be illustrated in particular if we turn to the united parish of Kinvara and Doorus. The figures for Kinvara and Doorus in the first official census in 1821 show a total of 1,279 persons living in Doorus, and 2,065 in Kinvara, taking Kinvara as including not only the town - which contained 64 houses and 385 inhabitants - but also the townlands of the parish, from Leagh South along the Western boundary with Clare;

Cahercarney on the Eastern border of the parish; and Capacasheen and Killina at the Southernmost extreme. Thus, there was a total of 3,344 persons in the combined parish in 1821.

This figure is supplemented by the list of people who paid tithes for the support of the Established Church of Ireland for 1826. Although recording only heads of households, it is possible to bring the totals of 1821 and 1826 into rough harmony by adding wives and children, based on what we know of existing marriage and family patterns in pre-Famine times.

Of particular interest so far as the Tithe Applotment figures are concerned is the fact that, unlike Griffith's Valuation (1848 - 1864), which used townland names to locate property-owners and leaseholders, the Tithe Books also made use of local topographical designations. Thus, in the townland of Doorus we find more familiar, local designations such as Duras Point, Tubberbracken, Tir Park, Tubbermore, and Ughtamore; only two of these - Duras Point and Tubberbracken - are still used locally today.

Similarly, we find names of villages, where clearly many families lived, mentioned, nearly all of which have disappeared today. The Tithe Books, thus, are valuable sources for painting a picture of pre-Famine Kinvara and Doorus, and the much greater population inhabiting this parish.

The first accurate depiction of Kinvara and Doorus we have comes from Samuel Lewis's Topographical Dictionary, which was published in 1837, less than ten years before the Famine. Here we learn that Kinvara is "a market, post, and sea-port town...containing 4610 inhabitants, of which number, 824 are in the town."

If we recall that sixteen years earlier Kinvara town and surrounding townlands contained 2,065 persons, this is an increase of more than double the earlier population; the actual town figures

are even more dramatic: from 385 people to 824. Even Lewis is moved to comment on the increase in the town's population: "In 1831", he notes, it 'contained 140 houses, but has greatly increased since that time.' In 1821, as I've already noted, the town contained only 64 houses.

Lewis also gives us a valuable insight into the economy of the parish which, he says, "is moderately well-cultivated, produced excellent wheat" (potatoes, curiously, are not mentioned) "seaweed in used as a manure, and limestone is abundant." Kinvara, we also learn, had markets on Wednesdays and Fridays, at which "great quantities of corn are sold"; and there were fairs, mainly for the sale of sheep, on May 18th and October 17th.

Kinvara's seacoast potential was clearly being exploited successfully, with even greater expectations for the future. "A quay, about 50 yards long, was built here in 1773 by the late J. Ffrench, Esq., which was lengthened and raised in 1807, and such an addition made to it in 1808 as converted it into a kind of dock. At high tide there is 12 feet of water at the pier, which is then accessible to vessels of 150 tons burden. Seaweed to the value of £20,000 is landed here during the Spring, which is brought in boats, of which from 60 to 100 sometimes arrive in one tide."

Finally, Lewis informs his readers, that "it is intended to establish a steam vessel to ply regularly between this place and Galway", and there was an even more ambitious plan - never realised - to build a canal to link Kinvara with the River Fergus, which would greatly improve "the importation of sea-weed, sea-sand, and turf, and the exportation of corn."

Kinvara was the seat of the Catholic Bishop of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora; a new church, capable of seating up to 600 persons at one time, had recently been completed. There were six 'private schools', which



probably refers to the descendants of the Hedge Schools of pre-Emancipation times, but a large public school, established under the auspices of the new National School systems, was about to be built. Everything Lewis tells us chimes nicely with the passing observation of John O'Donovan, who visited Kinvara in 1838 as part of his duties with the Ordnance Survey Department, that he found it to be a "fast improving little sea port town".

Doorus, Lewis also informs us, shared the prosperity of the inland half of the parish: "A great portion is rocky and incapable of cultivation; but some of the land is very rich and produces excellent wheat. Limestone is abundant, and much quarried for agricultural and other purposes". Other economic benefits came from the sea, either directly - "Great numbers of oysters and other fish are taken off the coast" - or through harnessing its energies -

Here is a large flour mill, worked by the tide". This unique tidal-mill was constructed by one of the landlords of Doorus, Bartolomy de Basterot in 1810 and was in operation up until comparatively recent times.

### Kinvara During the Famine

The last census before the Famine was conducted in 1841 and the population figures indicate the steady growth that had taken place over the previous decades: the combined inhabitants of Kinvara and Doorus amounted to 6,586. So, on the very eve of the Famine, it would have seemed to any disinterested observer that the 'fast improving little sea-side port', along with its agricultural hinterlands, was set for gradually increasing prosperity in the coming years.

Instead, the Famine hit Ireland, and it hit the West of Ireland with particular viciousness. The first year,

however, it must have seemed little more than a repetition of earlier bad harvests, such as those of 1817 and 1822 which caused wide-spread distress.

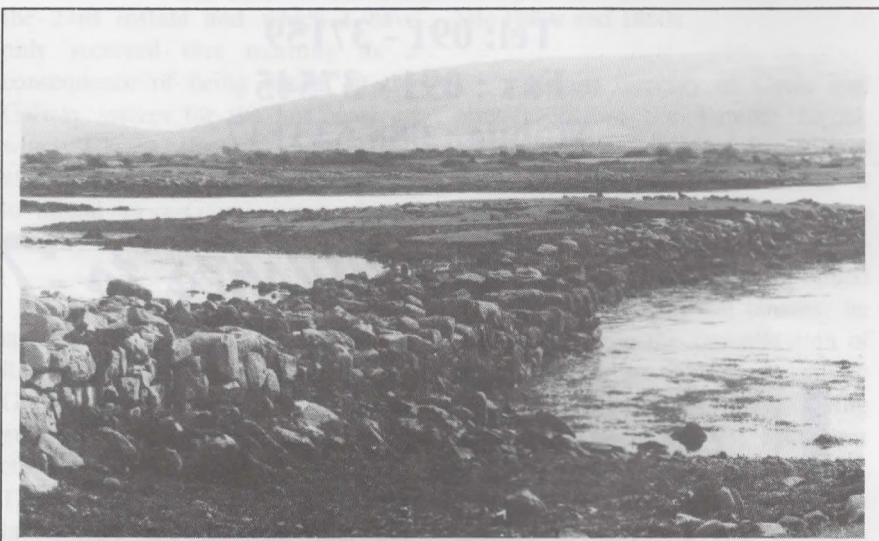
Although the blight destroyed much of the potato crop in 1845, it was confined initially to the lowlands, with hilly and mountainous areas virtually unaffected. For the moment, the Galway area and Connemara were spared. However the Spring and Summer of 1846 were unnaturally moist and warm and by mid-Summer it was clear that the failure of the crop was nationwide.

For the first time the spectre of wide-spread starvation raised its head, and despite Sir Robert Peel's humane

along the Western seaboard, circumventing the still mostly wretched roads in rural areas.

Peel's defeat in the middle of 1846 and his replacement by Lord John Russell, who believed in the principles of a free-wheeling, aggressive economic policy of laissez-faire, was an additional, political disaster, compounding the already devastating natural disaster of the blight.

Because the potato crop had failed also in England and Scotland and on the continent, demand for other types of foodstuff - wheat, flour and meat - was high. It arouses both anguish and anger to learn that even while



Tidal barrier at Ffrench's mill, one of the outdoor relief projects

efforts to keep the price of foodstuffs low by importing maize from America, it was increasingly obvious that unless something drastic was done by the Government a human tragedy on an enormous scale was inevitable.

Initially, and to the credit of those officials in charge, Government instructions that imported and stocked maize and meal should only be sold to stabilise prices were ignored on a wide scale, with food depots issuing food free, and coastguard cutters transported food supplies to areas

thousands were starving in the black year of 1847, ships continued to leave Galway, laden with the produce of Ireland, for English ports.

The earlier experiences of crop failure and famine, mostly on a limited scale, had led to the passage of the Irish Poor Law Relief Act in 1838. This led to the division of the country into 130 Unions, to be administered by Board of Guardians, who, in most cases, were the local gentry.



# SEAN MURPHY

## Heating Ltd.

-----Kinvara-----

Invite you to see their range of solid  
fuel & oil appliances

Stockists Of Solid Fuel & Oil Cookers, Stoves &  
Oil Boilers Including:

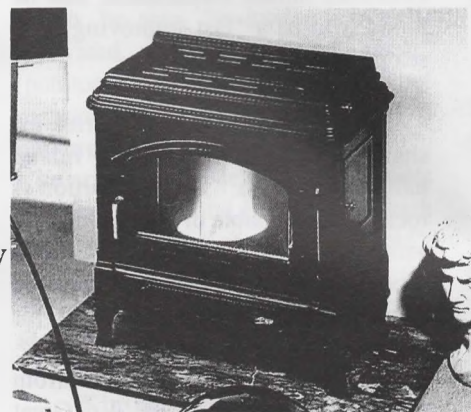
Godin, Saey, Deville, Tirolia, Wamsler, Rayburn, Somy  
Efel Myson & Stanley.

Contact Shane or Noel at

Tel: 091 - 37159

Fax : 091 - 37545

Mobile : 088 533137



EFEL OIL STOVE HEATS  
UP TO 10 RADIATORS

*Best Wishes to Tráct*

# FALLON'S SPAR

## S U P E R M A R K E T



Tel : 091 - 37483

Opening hours

9.00a.m. - 9.30p.m.

7 Days



*All you need - All year round*



Each Union was to be build workhouses, which would be situated on the outskirts of towns. In County Galway workhouses were initially built at Tuam, Ballinasloe, Clifden and Gort.

The workhouse in Gort, the remains of which can still be seen today, was the one that was to loom large in the lives of Kinvara people during the Great Famine. A large, well-built structure, it could accomodate 500 persons.

In 1846, when the second crop failure extended to those areas that had been, comparatively speaking, not badly affected by the 1845 failure, legislation was enacted in the British Parliament to establish public works all over the country, such as repairing existing roads and constructing others. However, payment was very poor, and it became clear that more needed to be done.

The main flaw in the Poor Law Act of 1838 was that it only made provision for relief within the walls of the workhouse. In practice this meant that, in order not to be overwhelmed by large numbers of people seeking relief, it was made very difficult to actually qualify for admission; in addition, the regime within the walls of the workhouse was deliberately made harsh and unattractive, thus discouraging those seeking admission.

This flaw was rectified in 1847 when outdoor relief was introduced in order to relieve the growing pressure on workhouses, by that year starting to expand in numbers far exceeding what the original building could reasonably handle.

The actual costs of looking after the distressed and homeless were expected to be handled by those subject to the collection of the Poor Law Rates. The problem with this, however, was that as the dimensions of those affected by the Famine grew, it was necessary to increase the amount of the Rate. As those capable

of paying the Rate were property-holders who were also increasingly unable to collect rents from their tenants, the collection of the Rates became a serious point of contention.

It is in 1847 that we first get an indication of what has been happening in Kinvara. Our evidence is in the form of a letter written by Dr. Denis J. Hynes, the resident doctor, who lived in Seamount House and served Kinvara, Doorus and Ballindereen, to Mr. William Stanley, Secretary of the Gort Poor Law Union. Dated March 28th, 1847, it reads:

"I have the honour to forward to you the subscription list of the Kinvara Relief Committee agreeably to the instructions in your circular of the 23rd instant and which I have only received this morning as a consequence of being absent at the Galway assizes for the last week to which I was summoned and which assizes the Chairman was also obliged to attend as a Grand Juror of this Country."

There follows a list of the subscribers, at the head of which is Robert Gregory of Coole Park; the Gregory's at this time owned the ground rents of Kinvara town and a considerable portion of the hinterland. The names of the other major landowners are also on this list, including Bartholomew de Basterot, who owned about half of Doorus and most of the village of Croshua; Mark Lynch of Renmore, who owned the other half of Doorus; and Mr. James Mahon, owner of the Northampton estate, which included the village of Loughcurra.

While it is certainly true, as Dr. James Murray points out in his excellent study of Galway's Medico-Social History, that "the poor bore the full brunt of the Famine" and that "the middle classes and gentry were affected...only in so far as incomes from rents and trade were reduced", it is also worth remembering that many

landlords decided not to even attempt to add to the appalling burdens already crushing their tenants by collecting rent, with the result that many of them found themselves bankrupt when the Famine finally ended.

This was the case with the de Basterot landlords, who are recalled with affection to this day because they would not collect rent, nor evict tenants who could not pay. Unfortunately, as an unintended consequence of this humane attitude, much of the de Basterot estate had to be sold to pay off creditors, and the purchaser was Isaac Comerford, a Galway merchant who had no paternal ties to the locality nor its inhabitants, who found themselves facing vastly increased rents in the late 1850s and 1860s.

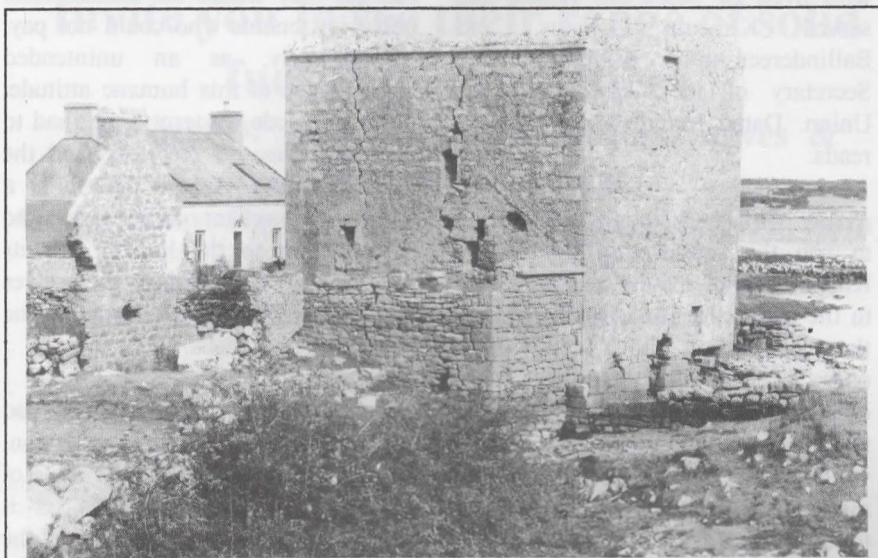
Robert Gregory of Coole had already, before the Famine began, acted to correct many of the evils of the Irish agricultural system as it existed in the first four decades of the 19th century. As large farms held by middlemen fell in, he had them rented directly to his occupying tenants; he tried to promote the consolidation of scattered holdings, taking care only to dispossess non-residents and giving the land to occupiers. He also gave greater security to leaseholders; instead of the normal and precarious practice of renewing year by year, Gregory was willing to convert such tenancies at will to two and three year leaseholds. He also encouraged tenants to improve their dwellings by providing them with wood and slates.

It was only to be expected then that when Famine hit his lands and his tenants he would do his best to alleviate its disastrous effects as much as he could. The destruction of the potato crop came as a great shock to him; it was, he wrote, "so sudden and universal that the fields flourishing today with all the appearance of a healthy and luxurious crop, were, before tomorrow's sun, reduced to a heap of weeds."



Having an idea of what was wrong, he tried to persuade his tenants to take precautions, as he tried to do, by putting drains beneath his pits, making holes to ensure proper ventilation and then covering them with turf, mould and lime.

As the crisis worsened, Robert Gregory did what he saw was his duty by assuming the chairmanship of the Kinvara Relief Committee, and



Ffrench's tidal mill, Dooras

headed the list of donors with a contribution of £25. In addition, he sat on the committee of the Gort Relief Fund, declaring at a County meeting held in October 1846 that "the time is come when every man must put his hand to the work, for the people must be fed."

Gregory also urged the Administration of Lord John Russell to take greater action. He told this same County meeting that the ordinary people would starve unless the Government "instantaneously established depots for the sale of provisions", and that these provisions must be simple to prepare, suggesting rice, a "wholesome food" that could be prepared for consumption "with little trouble". He also urged constructive work projects, not roads that he argued would rarely, if ever, be used. The existence of Famine roads in the Burren that are now little more than

overgrown tracks is confirmation of this prediction. Of more benefit would be projects to drain land or clear it of rocks so that it could be of productive use once the crisis was passed.

Robert Gregory made one crucial miscalculation, however, and one which was to lead to his own death, was his opposition to the construction of a fever hospital in Gort. He argued that it was far too

expensive and that there was no evidence so far to suggest that fever was a serious problem. Indeed, only a few cases of fever had been reported in 1845 and only one death attributed to it had taken place. Even in 1846 the number of fever cases increased only slightly, to fourteen, and no one had died of it. But soon his miscalculation and its horrifying consequences became all too terribly evident. Throughout 1847 the weekly mortality rate in the Galway workhouses, including Gort, reached the colossal figure of 25,000 persons.

Sir William Gregory, Robert's son and heir, describes his father's activities once fever began spreading. "From the moment that my father saw the extent of the catastrophe, he and the priest of Kinvara, Fr. Forde, whose name should be recorded, worked together incessantly to meet the emergency. At

last, my father was stricken down, and Father Forde shortly afterwards was added to the roll of victims." Robert Gregory died in January 1846 and Fr. Forde died in December 1846 and his memory is recalled in a memorial plaque that is now in St. Coleman's parish church in Kinvara.

Sir William Gregory, although he did not raise the rents of tenants on the estate he inherited from his father, as a Member of Parliament was responsible for an amendment to the Poor Law Extension Act that was to be used by less scrupulous landlords, as well as many who simply could not afford to pay the increasing Poor Law Rate, to evict tenants on a large scale, thus adding to the distress and poverty.

Gregory's amendment stipulated that any person who occupied more than a quarter of an acre could not receive relief either inside or outside the workhouse. The intention of the notorious 'Gregory Clause' was not, however, designed to increase distress, but rather to curb the substantial numbers of ineligible people who had found their way on to the lists of those employed on public relief projects.

That this was recognised as a problem can be seen from a report in the Galway Vindicator for February 17th, 1847, that described a meeting of the Gort magistrates and cess-payers. Lord Gort, who was the Chairman, drew the meetings attention to "one grievance that required to be remedied, that of having snug farmers on the works." He acknowledged that the chief difficulty lay in the fact that those who know of such ineligible persons "will not inform on their neighbours for fear of being called informers." Yet, Lord Gort continued, "every snug man on the works puts off a poor man that requires it", and stated that a committee had been set up to investigate the abuse.



This was the background to the 'Gregory Clause', but, as Dr. Murray points out in his book 'Galway: A Medico-Social History', "it was more effective than all the evictions combined in clearing the smallholders and labourers from the land." Since 1843 landlords had been paying all rates on property valued below £4.00, with the tenant himself being exempt. The 'Gregory Clause' encouraged landlords to evict tenants who had been paying little or no rent, thus reducing the amount of Poor Law Rate they were obliged to pay.

Barely a year after its introduction the 'Quarter Acre' clause was relaxed, but not before it had added considerably to the terrible distress repeated failure of the potato

three miles south of Kinvara, sold her estate to James Murray, who also increased rents at a time when no one could pay them. Fr. Arthur, a strong, heavily-built man with more than a touch of the old chieftain about him, stoutly defended the rights of his people against these local landlords, even publishing a pamphlet graphically describing the wretched plight of the people of Kinvara and Doorus.

At a meeting in Gort on 17th February, 1847, he bluntly told the assembled members of the Gort Presentment Sessions they were now burying people without coffins and that in the week preceding there were two buried by day and two by night, declaring that the amount of mortality

were hourly made upon him. This over-anxiety of his, acting on a too sensitive mind, and a delicate constitution, was the cause of his untimely death."

His impatience with the slowness of the Gort Poor Law Union boiled over in a letter he wrote the Under-Secretary of State at Dublin Castle bluntly stating that the people would starve while awaiting help from that body.

The other person in Kinvara who played an heroic role during the Famine was Dr. Denis J. Hynes. There are many stories told of his tireless work on behalf of the people of Kinvara, Doorus and Ballindereen. Seapark House, now a ruin overlooking Dun Guaire Castle, was donated by Mr. Hyacinth Donnellan of Hillswood for use as a temporary fever hospital. In March of 1848 this commenced operations. At this same date we have a letter written by the Vice-Guardians of the Gort Union to the Poor Law Commissioners describing the existing conditions around Kinvara:

"Along the shores of the bay of Kinvara and the bay of Galway, which form a portion of the boundary of the electoral divisions of Kinvara and Killeenavarra, reside a considerable number of persons, some with and some without land, who have heretofore supported themselves by fishing, and by the sale of sea-weed for the purposes of manure. The failure of the potato crop in 1845 and 1846, by its discouragement of the planting of potatoes, completely paralysed the operations of the latter, who are now in a most abject state."

Many of those who died in Kinvara were buried in a common grave now marked out in Foy's cemetery, to the East of Seapark House, the fever hospital in which a large number of them probably met their end.



Hollow in foreground marks Famine mass grave at Foy's cemetery

had already brought to the country.

Fr. Forde's successor as parish priest of Kinvara was Fr. Francis Arthur, a native of Ennistymon. Fr. Arthur was to remain as parish priest of Kinvara from 1846 until 1867 and he was to see the population of this once thriving parish dwindle during those two decades from 1800 families to 700 families. Famine deaths, emigration and evictions were to account for this drastic fall in population.

In 1847 the widow of James Mahon of Northampton, about

was frightful. Fr. Arthur said he was so exhausted by his attendance on the dying at all times of the day and night, that he found it difficult to speak.

Describing the recent death of Fr. Forde, he painted a vivid picture of the strain under which the clergy were working: "I will here mention to you that a clergyman died in his parish last Christmas from an over-anxiety for the welfare of his flock when he saw he could not be the means of alleviating their suffering condition, or attend half the calls that



# MAC MAHONS

**FOODMARKET • PETROL  
HARDWARE  
NEWSAGENTS • ANIMAL FEEDS  
GRASS SEEDS**

*Lowest Prices - Highest Quality*

**Personal Service - ALWAYS**


**(091) 37107 - (091) 37169**

**THE  
CAFE**

**BREAKFAST  
LUNCH  
EVENING  
MEALS  
SNACKS  
WINE**

**ON THE QUAY  
KINVARA**

065 -  
78134



## **Michael Cunningham**

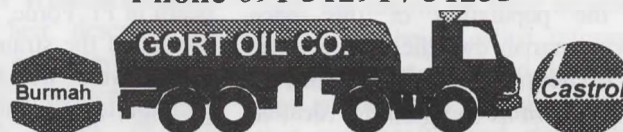
**M.I.P.A.V.**

Auctioneer

Area Manager - Irish Permanent plc  
Savings & Investments • Personal Finance  
Mortgages • Life & Pensions • Insurance  
**Bridge Street, Gort, Co. Galway**  
Tel : 091 31291 / 31233 Fax 31895

---

Heating Oils, Tractor Oils, Commercial  
Diesel, Complete range of Tanks  
**Gort Oil Company Ltd.**  
Gort, County Galway  
Phone 091 31291 / 31233



**AUTHORISED DISTRIBUTORS FOR BURMAH  
CASTROL LTD.**



## Aftermath

The Famine did not simply end, even in 1849, the year generally taken to be the end. There was, in fact, a partial failure of the potato crop, but relief measures, which had taken so long to work properly and with any efficiency, now operated to avert the kind of disasters of previous years.

The figures for Kinvara and Doorus tell their own story: in 1851, the first census after the Famine, the total population was 4,268, compared to 6,586 in 1841; after the passage of another decade, the population had dropped still further, to 3,769; in 1871, after another ten years, the total figure was 2,875.

Figures for Kinvara town are equally revealing and show a significant curve over the passage of 70 years: in 1821: 385; in 1841: 959; in 1851: 1,102 (this figure reflects the numbers of people coming into town from the rural areas, largely because they had been evicted or unable to pay their rents); in 1861: 980; in 1871: 614; and, finally, in 1891: 384. The town of Kinvara, in 1891, found itself one inhabitant less than had been the case seventy years earlier, in 1821. By 1911, the population of the town was 347.

Sir William Gregory, as we have noted, did not raise rents during the Famine, and his own contributions to relief on his properties, along with the inability of very many tenants to pay rent, meant that by the mid-1850s he was in considerable financial difficulties.

The rent role of his Kinvara properties of £7,800 had been whiped out by his payment of the Poor Rate along with other charges. By the early 1850s, Kinvara, described not so long before by John O'Donovan as "a fast improving little sea port town", now struck a correspondent for the Dublin Evening post as being on the verge of complete decay.

Reluctantly Gregory decided to put his Kinvara estate up for sale in 1857. The buyer was Henry Comerford, originally a carpenter who

had acquired money and established himself as a Galway City merchant. Comerford also, as we have already noted, purchased part of the de Basterot properties in Doorus.

According to Gregory, "Kinvara was all but ruined and the best tenants ran away." Interestingly, Gregory's experience of the rack-renting he observed taking place on his family's former estate turned him into a vigorous supporter of tenant rights. Perhaps the final word should go to Fr. Anhur, the tenacious fighter for the rights of his Kinvara parishoners for over twenty years. In 1862 he wrote, "The change of landlords for the greatest portion of this place has rendered this one of the most wretched and deplorable parishes in Ireland."

The Irish Famine of 1845 - 1849 was a watershed in our national history. It finished off the old Gaelic culture that had carried on a sort of ghostly existence right into the early 19th century. It swept away virtually an entire generation, and, if the unrecorded deaths of children are reckoned in to the accounting, even more than a single generation.

This year we remember the Famine. And to remember the Famine is to remember our ancestors: the small farmers and their wives; the children who were orphaned and who, if they survived, did so after a baptism of pain we can hardly imagine; the sons and daughters who fearfully boarded an overcrowded ship for a nightmare crossing to a new and terrifying world; and the decent people, who exist in every generation and often, paradoxically, to even greater extent during dark times, who tried to maintain their own humanity, as well as respecting the humanity of others through helping them in small, seemingly insignificant ways.

*Ar dheis lamh De go raibh a n-ainmneacha uaisle*

*J.W. O'Connell & Paschal Quinn*

# KINVARA COMMUNITY ALERT SCHEME

by Sergeant Pat Collins

To all participants of Kinvara Community Alert Scheme and its Organisers

At the initiative of Kinvara Community Council Ltd., a Community Alert scheme was organised and set up in the Kinvara area.

Community Alert is a response by Muintir na Tire to counteract the growing incidence in recent years of rural crime especially against the elderly and others who are living alone or are otherwise at risk. The aim of the movement is to harness the best of the spirit of neighbourliness in order to keep a watchful eye on any suspicious persons, vehicles or activity in the locality and to report details to the Gardai. It may not always be possible to make an immediate report of such events, but if the numbers of suspicious cars, etc. Are written down they can be passed on to the Gardai even after a crime has been committed.

People are advised not to keep much cash in their homes. Money should be lodged in the various institutions and we are fortunate in Kinvara that we now have our own Credit Union with its office beside the Community Centre.

Anyone who wishes to discuss any matter on security of their homes can contact the Garda Station at Kinvara (091 37102), Gort Station (091 31514) or Sergeant Hugh McGrath of Mill St. Station, Galway (091 63161)

continued on page 56



# PARACETAMOL

By Séadna Tóbin  
of Kinvara Pharmacy

**PARACETAMOL** is the most widely purchased pain relieving substance in Ireland. It can be given to all ages from infants upwards. It is effective, safe at the recommended dose, and cheap. It comes in a variety of shapes, sizes and dosage forms, and it comes alone or in combination with other drugs.

It comes in syrup for the relief of pain and temperature in infants and young children, and in tablet and capsule form for use in older children and adults. It also comes in suppository form for children and adults where vomiting makes oral dosing ineffective.

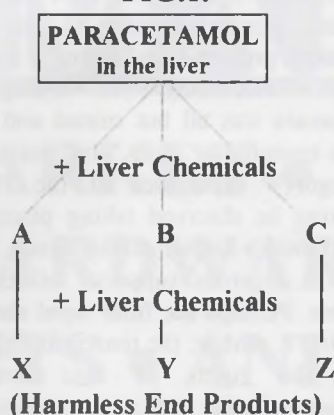
Paracetamol, very simply, is indicated for the relief of pain or temperature, or a combination of both, but because of the ease of availability, and the cheapness of Paracetamol, and perhaps because of excessive advertising we have come to treat Paracetamol as a cure all, a treatment for all ills, a harmless panacea. This of course is a fatal misconception. Although not totally clean, Paracetamol seems to act by inhibiting the production in the body, of pain-producing substances known as prostaglandins. These substances are normally produced in the body in response to infection or mechanical injury.

When produced, they cause pain and high temperature in the body. This is the body's way of alerting us to the fact that something is wrong. Paracetamol, when administered in the correct dose, blocks the production of prostaglandins and this eases pain and temperature in the body. So, where's the problem?

The problem with Paracetamol lies in the metabolism in the body. It is absorbed from the intestine into the bloodstream, where it is transported to the liver. In the liver it is broken down via a number of steps into

harmless sub-units and disposed of by the body.

FIG.1.



The breakdown steps are facilitated by specific body chemicals which are present in the liver cells for that purpose.

This all works very well when Paracetamol is taken in the correct dose. However, if taken in excessive doses, the waste disposal system in the liver becomes overburdened.

In the diagram above, the breakdown product A, is highly toxic. Under normal conditions, A is broken down and rendered harmless by the body chemical 'GLUTATHIONE'.

The substance Glutathione is present in small quantities in the body but is easily capable of breaking down normal doses of toxic biproduct 'A'. If Paracetamol is taken in large doses, however, biproduct 'A' is produced in large quantities, and the stores of glutathione become quickly depleted. 'A' quickly accommodates in the liver and begins to react with other chemicals within the liver cells, and this results in the disruption and death of those cells.

If a case of Paracetamol overdose is not promptly treated, it will result in irreversible liver failure and the death of the unfortunate person.

So, how can one avoid Paracetamol overdose? There are a few pointers:

1. When taking Paracetamol oneself, or when administering it to others, always read the dosage instructions on the label and follow them carefully.
2. If taking more than one medicine, either prescription or over the counter, make sure that two or more

of the medicines do not contain Paracetamol.

3. Keep your medicines in a locked cupboard away from children and keep the key to the cupboard in a separate location.

4. Do not keep large stock of Paracetamol (or any drug) in the house. This reduces the risk of accidental overdose.

The majority of drug-related suicide attempts involve the victim consuming whatever drugs are immediately to hand. Only in a minority of cases does the victim go out and procure the required drugs.

This is why reducing the amount of drugs stored in the house could reduce the level of fatalities among attempted suicides.

5. No drug or medicine is harmless. Treat all medicines with care, and if unsure about your medicine ask your doctor or pharmacist.

## Continued from page 55 Community Alert

The organisers of the Kinvara Scheme are: Pat Collins (Chairman), Stan MacEoin (Secretary), Paddy Geraghty (PRO) and the committee members are: Michael Marty, Mary O'Shaughnessy, Kilian Kenny, Eoin Browne, John Leech, John Griffin, Paddy Kilkelly and Gerry Sweeney.

The success of the scheme depends largely on, not only the work which the above people are doing, but, more importantly, the vigilance and co-operation of everyone in the community. With the aim of improving the quality of life for each of us, you are all urged to take an interest and to lend your support to this very worthwhile endeavour.

## KINVARA BRIDGE CLUB COMES OF AGE

Founded in January 1975, in Winkle's Hotel, Kinvara, when 16 people came together, the club now has a membership of close on 40. An account of its history will be included in the next edition of Trácht.



## A GREAT NIGHT AT AN T-AMHRÁN BEO

This year's bi-lingual traditional singing competition held during Cruinniú na mBád turned out to be a great success. Now running for seven years, the competition has gone from strength to strength and is

served in the Day Room adjoining the hall. This, together with our own emphasis on celebrating our singing heritage rather than on strict competitiveness, makes for a very enjoyable evening. To hear the



Moltóir Pauline Collins and husband, with Josie Sheáin Jeaic and Peatsai O Ceannabháin

undoubtedly an established event in the country's traditional calendar. We believe that Kinvara has the distinction of being the only venue in the country promoting both traditions concurrently on the one night. Songs are sung alternately in Irish and English and contestants may enter for one or both sections as they wish. Local contestants too are entered automatically for the Local prize sponsored by Kinvara Credit Union and Fleming Crafts, won this year by the indefatigable Pat Keane, who unfortunately departed this world while this article was being written. May he rest in peace.

It's a good night out for anyone interested in hearing a sample of the finest of traditional singing in both languages. The debate continues as to whether competitions are the best way to promote traditional singing, some of the best singers in the country being loath to take part in staged events themselves. There is much to be said for encouraging singers, a point we reiterate ourselves on the night, hence the relaxed atmosphere. Listeners too are free to come and go as they please, refreshments being

emerging young talent in evidence on the night was encouraging to all of us as is the fact that more and more people are getting to hear of

An t-Amhrán Beo ( the living song), judging from the entries this year. Old songs, new faces.

We are of course grateful to our sponsors which include Bord na Gaeilge, Údarás na Gaeilge, AIB and BOI in Gort. And Peter Greene of Murphy's. We had a great sing song in the day room at the end of the night, with *fear an ti* Máirtín Jaimsie pulling pints and all present had the opportunity of hearing the fine voices of the adjudicators, Josie Sheáin Jeaic and Pauline Hanley, among others. Josie, the well known *sean nós* singer and *bádóir* from Carna, remarked that the standard of singing on the night was as good as any he'd witnessed at the Oireachtas, ( Corn Uí Riada ) the national *sean nós* competition held annually.

Winners 1995: **Gaeilge:** Róisín Elsafty; (2) Bríd Ní Mhaolchiaráin; (3) Máire Bhrid Uí Niadh and Colm Ó Méalóid. **Béarla:** (1) Bríd Ní Mhaolchiaráin; (2) Tess Bn Uí Chonghaile; (3) Gerry Shannon. **LOCAL:** Pat Keane Caoilte Breatnach



# LENAGHAN'S

## SHELL SERVICE STATION

### Kinvara West (091) 38151

Petrol•Diesel•Tractor Diesel

Tyres & Puncture repairs

Antifreeze•Oils•Coal•Gas •Videos

Briquettes•Newspapers •Groceries

Open 8am - 9.30 pm Mon-Thur

8am - 10 pm Fri/Sat

9am - 7pm Sun

Free Delivery of all Home Fuels

Give us a call we'll deliver to your door



# MUINTIR NA TIRE CONFERENCE MARCH 1995 by Paddy Geraghty

was "a regrettable tendency, when approaching urban improvement, to aim for a standard treatment for each town."

Jim Quigley, National President said: Muintir na Tire is now 58 years working in the field of Community Development in Ireland. I am delighted to report that there is an

rural / community development and has a track record of achievements nation-wide.

We would very much like to share our experience with community groups, new or old, in your area who might be interested in the Community Development process and in the philosophy of Muintir na Tire.



Community Council members Stan Mac Eoin, Eoin Brown, Jim Quigley, Nat. President of Muintir na Tire and Paddy Geraghty

Four members of Kinvara Community Council Ltd. attended the Annual Conference in Roscrea, Co. Tipperary. Maureen Heffernan, Paddy Geraghty and Gerry & Mary O'Shaughnessy met and exchanged views on Community Development with delegates from other Muintir Councils. The conference was well attended and included two newly formed councils from Co. Galway. The principal speakers were Mr. Jim Quigley, President, Muintir na Tire and guest speaker Ms Liz McManus, Minister for Housing and Urban Renewal.

Ms McManus said trends in agriculture will see a further decline in farm-based activity and "we must therefore seek to develop the capacity of our towns and villages to act as engines of growth for their rural hinterlands".

Referring to the new improvement scheme for villages, she said there

was an upsurge of interest in the objectives of Muintir naTíre in recent times.

Over the years, Muintir has been involved in many facets of

Since 1937, Muintir has been using the "bottoms-up" philosophy for local development long before the EU discovered the concept and incorporated it into the LEADER programme and other European initiatives.

We believe that Community Groups around Ireland need a strong unified voice and Muintir, being a non-sectional organisation can be the vehicle for attaining this objective.

Any interested person or voluntary community body can contact Muintir na Tíre by ringing 01 8900377 or by writing to Muintir na Tíre, 27 North Street, Swords, Co. Dublin.



Sr Kilcoyne, Paediatric sister, U.C.H.G. holding a gift voucher for £450, the proceeds of the Old Cures Project undertaken by the children of Scoil Bhríghid Naofa Northampton



# MURPHY'S IRISH STOUT



Sin scéal eile ...



