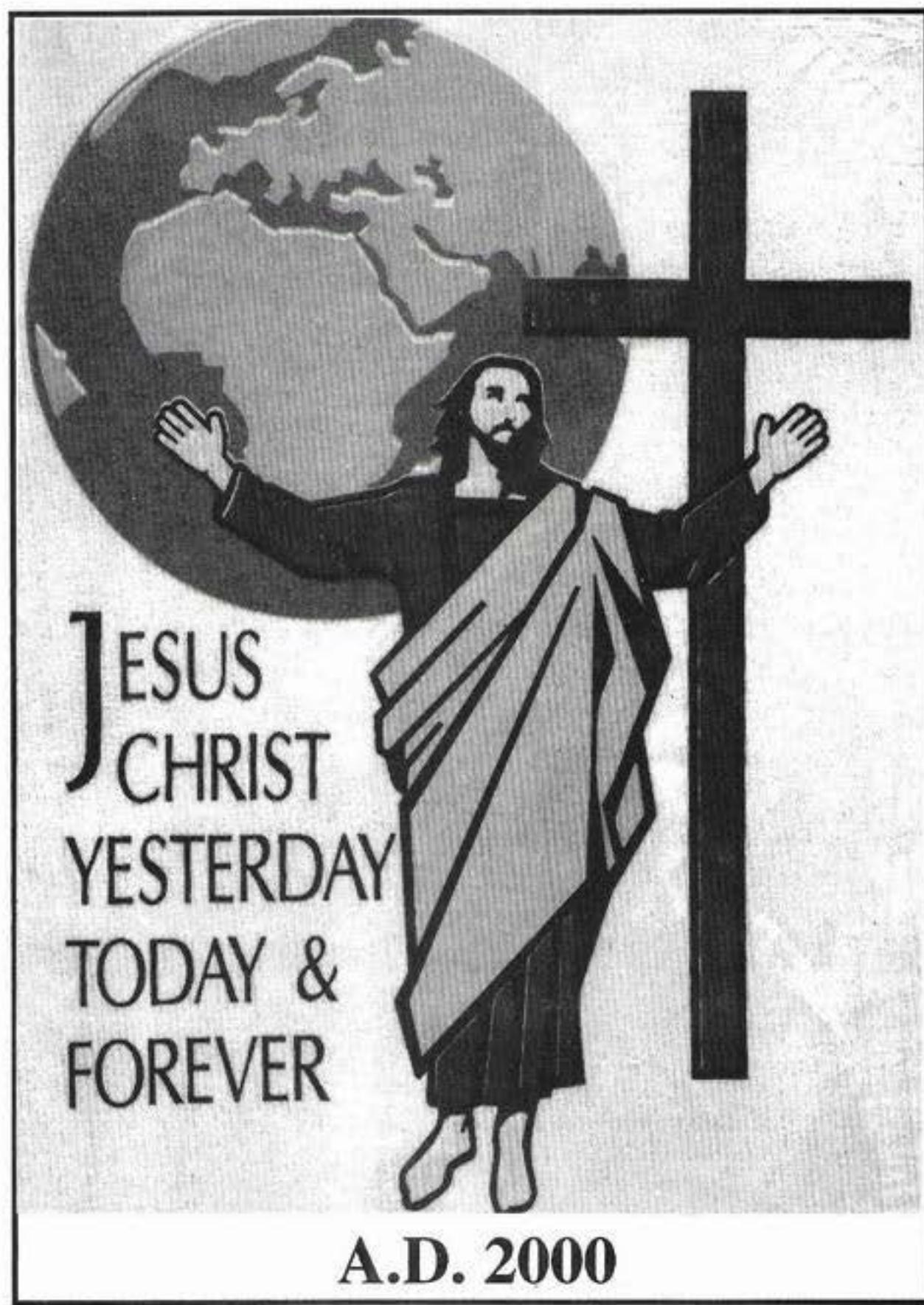


Deel Views

Christmas 1999



*RATHKEALE
COMMUNITY COUNCIL*

Price 50p



Michael Hanley



There was much sadness and extreme sense of loss when we heard of the sudden death of Michael Hanley a few short weeks ago. His native town of Rathkeale is only slowly coming to terms with the void created by his unexpected departure of this life. Mike was a founder member of Rathkeale Community Council in 1973 and we have very fond memories of his outstanding contributions to the election held at the time, when he produced a manifesto and erected posters around the town. He was involved in the running of the council for most of the time since, in one way or another, and never overlooked an opportunity of furthering its interests or those of the community. He contributed regularly to "Deel Views" and was the main source of photographs for the magazine. Many people were truly amazed at the display of his photographic portfolio recently where upwards of 8500 items were exhibited. His notebook, pen and camera were, obviously, never far from his hand.



The Community Council proposes to organise a further display of his photographs at an early date and it is hoped that some form of permanent memorial will be forthcoming later on. Mike had a deep attachment to his native town of Rathkeale and we have included, in this Christmas issue, an article he wrote for "Deel Views" in 1984 which typifies his exceptional love of and interest in local people and places.

May he rest in peace.



Limerick City Library



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Marie Griffin, Val Foley, Marie O'Sullivan, Ciara O'Sullivan and Stephanie Dalton at the "Boogie All Stars" Concert

**some 18th century advertisements and stories
relating to rathkeale from the limerick chronicle ².**

October 6th 1785

The Gentlemen of the Rathkeale Theatrical Society intend performing the Comedy of the STRATAGEM with a farce and entertainment's on Monday 10th for the benefit of Mrs. Hall whose unremitting assiduity to please, they hope will recommend her on this occasion, to the patronage of the public in general. N.B. This will be positively their last night. Tickets to be had from Mrs. Hall in the Post Office To begin at seven precisely. Rathkeale Oct. 5 1785 ³

October 27th. 1785

Last Monday one four mile heat for 100 guineas was run at the course of Rathkeale between J. M. Uniacke Esq.'s horse "Waterman" and James Creagh Esq.'s horse "Charles Fox", which was won by the former.

November 7th. 1785

Last Thursday Mr. John Downes, Revenue Officer, received information that Christopher Goff, master of a sloop, laden with brandy, wine and tobacco had run the same into the river at Askeaton in order to evade His Majesty's duties and at ten o'clock the same night he proceeded to Askeaton with Michael Slattery, a preventing officer, assisted by a detachment of fifty men of the Royal North British Fusiliers under the command of Capt. Starkie. They arrived at six o'clock on Friday morning and proceeded to search when they found a hogshead of tobacco in an out-office. While Mr. Downes was getting the tobacco fixed on a car, Slattery went with a party of twelve men and a sergeant to search other places, when a considerable number of armed men demanded of the sergeant to deliver up Slattery, which being refused the party was fired on by these desperadoes. Slattery was wounded (supposed mortal) and one of the soldiers in the guard. A general engagement then took place between the sergeants and the country people, in which eight of the soldiers were wounded, three of them dangerously, and several of the country have been killed or wounded, a particular account of which has not come to hand. The detachment, after destroying a parcel of tobacco and storing some of the wine, returned to town on Saturday. Since the above was written a letter has been received from Askeaton informing us that one of the countrymen is dead occasioned by the wound of a bayonet through the head.

July 10th 1786

Yesterday, Sunday morning, between eleven and twelve o'clock, two thousand Whiteboys, several of whom were mounted and armed, assembled near the high road leading from Rathkeale to Ardagh. Major Scanlon judging the purpose of the meeting to be illegal, was determined to disperse them and rode towards them with a party of the 8th Dragoons from Bruff, leaving a strong party of the 27th regiment in the town of Rathkeale. On approaching the Whiteboys the commanding officer of the cavalry observed the road to be covered on each side by thick hedges from which his men might be much annoyed by fire of an enemy. He accordingly wheeled them about in order to get into the fields which gave the Whiteboys occasion to exult and they fired and wounded one of the cavalry horses and shot away one of the mens helmets. A skirmish then commenced when the cavalry discharged about sixty rounds, killed five or six of the enemy with two horses and wounded about forty. The same party brought seven prisoners to town last night, six of whom were lodged in jail on a committal order from Mr. Lane Scanlon Esq. viz. William D'Alton, Hugh Lacy, Connor Conward, John Dwyer, Patrick Kennedy and Thomas O'Neill.⁴

July 17th 1786

On Saturday morning Mr. Scanlan sent from Rathkeale to the commanding officer of the garrison here a requisition for the detachment of Dragoons quartered in this town to remain at Rathkeale until Monday on account of some disturbance expected there. They marched in the afternoon as did the Grenadier and Light Infantry companies of the 27th, by order of Sir C. Knight, Mayor, who accompanied them as a magistrate. On arriving he heard that a large body of Whiteboys had assembled in Newcastle West, who were to be called on by a party from the borders of Cork for the purpose of coming to Rathkeale on Sunday. He immediately sent an express recommending to them at Newcastle West to receive some advice from him and offering to meet them any where they appointed without any military or other force. This they very wisely and cheerfully consented to and requested of the Mayor to go to them. He went immediately with another magistrate who was at Rathkeale and whose company he desired. When they got to the Inn of New-

castle the Mayor was waited upon by a gentleman of the town whom these people had prevailed upon to present the Address published in this paper (This will be included in a later edition). The Mayor was later visited by most of the other gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood who very humanely signed the Address to show their opinion of these deluded people. The Mayor then wished to return to Rathkeale, when a number of those lately unfortunate but now happy men, to show their gratitude, insisted on drawing his carriage out of town while the rest to the amount of several hundreds accompanied. They had prepared for the occasion with peals of applause and shouts of joy. The news of this was received at Rathkeale with the utmost pleasure and the Mayor returned to Limerick with all the military except the party of the 27th quartered at Rathkeale and the Dragoons who came from Bruff. It is proper to add that Lord Muskerry, on hearing of the intended meeting, exerted his influence in a most laudable manner, particularly among the County Cork men, to prevent it as did John Browne of Mountbrowne, Esq. In the County of Limerick. As every person of a proper way of thinking must devoutly wish that these unfortunate people, should at this critical time in particular, return to their industry without an effusion of blood, it is ardently hoped that gentlemen in their respective neighbourhoods throughout the province, will without delay, exercise their humanity in promoting this conversion to the law which from the conduct and disposition shown in this instance by these people there is every reason to believe would be generally if not universally adopted should proper and immediate steps be taken by gentlemen of influence.

July 20th 1786

We are happy that only two men, O'Brien of Newcastle and Murphy of Dromcollogher, were killed last Sunday night near Rathkeale and that the prudent measures taken by the Mayor and Recorder of Limerick and John Browne of Mountbrowne are likely to be attended by the most salutary effects. The peasantry of Munster are determined to wait peaceably until some able Senator shall convince the Parliament that this useful body of men have been for years oppressed by heavy and unequal taxes, operating at once to the discouragement of agriculture and population which form the strength of every kingdom. No doubt the enemies of Ireland are glad of an opportunity to traduce our national character but is evident from the whole conduct of these ignorant men that they never harboured anything hos-

tile to government. Their loyalty to King George 3rd has been often proved in fighting his battles and their gratitude to government has been often expressed for giving them liberty of religious worship and to take long leases. What remains to make their lives in to some small degree comfortable, we hope will be effected by a patriotic King and a wise and good government.

January 31st. 1788

To be let from the 25th of March, for such terms as may be agreed, upon, the brick fronted house in the Market Square, Rathkeale, with convenient offices and a garden. Proposals will be received by Hayes O' Scanlan Esq of Rathkeale and Mark Lidwill Esq. of Limerick.⁵

May 25th 1789

The earliest and most valuable fruit and flowers this country ever produced has been cut this season in the hothouses of Rathkeale Lodge in this County, the seat of John Pigott Esq. in the grapery of which there is a vine of one years planting, from the cuffing that will produce this season half a hundred weight of grapes in the greatest perfection, a quantity not yet known in any other county. There is a Bananaguewa and many other eastern productions in the greatest perfection.⁶

June 25th 1789

To be sold: The house, offices and improvements of Rathkeale Lodge. The house is situated in pleasant sporting country, 13 miles from Limerick and 1 mile from Rathkeale. The demesne consists of 80 acres and to accommodate a tenant or purchaser 50 acres will be added thereto. The house is new and finished in the modern style, fit for the reception of a man of any fortune; the offices complete, extensive and compact; the gardens plentiful with the choicest fruit trees in full bearing; the hothouse, stoves, grapery and greenhouse in the highest perfection; the ponds well stocked; the shrubbery's in neat order and every desirable convenience of fire and water. The tenant or purchaser may, if he wishes, take the household furniture, which is entirely new, fashionable and well chosen, at a valuation. Proposals to be received by Sam Dickson, of Ballysimon near Limerick; the purchaser being declared (and immediate possession given) as soon as the value is offered.

Nov. 2nd 1789

We hear that Mr. Morgell has purchased the house

and beautiful appendages of Mr. Pigott, near Rathkeale. That the latter is going to reside in the Queens County is a circumstance to be greatly lamented as he is a man of most amiable private character, whose extensive benevolence is only known to those who partook of his numerous and generous bounties.

Dec. 28th 1789

Mr Power impressed, with the deepest sense of gratitude, for the repeated favours conferred on him by the numerous and respected families of the town and vicinity of Rathkeale, with profound respect acquaints them he, by particular desire, has fixed his assembly for Thursday 7th January next at the Long Room Rathkeale where the company are requested to meet early as minutes will precisely begin at eight o'clock; afterwards will be a variety of cotillions and fancy dances. Proper stewards will be appointed to regulate country dances and excellent music will attend. The room will be well illuminated and every other necessity will be in due order. Admittance for ladies and gentlemen 3s 3d each.

N.B. His school opens at the Assembly House, Limerick on Monday, 18th of January next.

May 26th 1791

Advertisement

The Honourable the House of Commons, having a few days ago ordered that the Clerk of the Crown of the different counties and cities of this Kingdom, should lay before said House, on the first day of the next sessions, returns of the names of the several persons against whom indictments have been presented by Grand Juries, who have not been same in the last ten years, with the offences with which they are charged and their respective abodes. Now I, Christopher Goff of Askeaton in the County Limerick, Gentleman, and several others do stand indicted in the Crown Office of the said county as of the Lent assizes 1786 for unlawfully assembling, assaulting and other offences, alleged to be committed by me and others against Michael Slattery, James Bryson, Malcolm Cameron, John Love, James McQuaine, James Ross, James Faulkner, William Swanson, Donald McDonald and Donald McIntosh near Askeaton and Rathkeale in said county on the 4th and 6th days of November 1785. In obedience to the said order and to prevent the Honourable the House of Commons from any trouble with respect to the return of said indictments to them. I do hereby give this public notice, that I have this day entered in recognisances, before a magistrate, with sufficient

sureties, to stand and abide any trial at the next general Assizes and general Gaol delivery to be held at St. Francis Abbey, Limerick in and for the said county, for the alleged charges and offences, to evade which I never absconded. I always since publicly appeared in this county and different of the Kingdom and would have long since surrendered myself to the laws of my county had the said prosecutors or any other person on their behalf, taken proceedings against me for that purpose. Lest this should not be deemed sufficient notice to said prosecutors and all others concerned, I am determined on a future day again to publish my intentions in this and other papers and also, should I be advised, to surrender my person to the custody of the Sheriff, one month at least previous to said trial.

Dated at Askeaton this day 17th May 1791,
Christopher Goff.

To the said Michael Slattery and the others foregoing and all others interested.

¹ Historians refer to this period in Irish History as the long 18th century. It is a period which is in contrast to the 17th century (up to 1680 approx.) the English Government administration had an active interest in Ireland primarily as a location of lands for settlers who would "civilise" the Irish. This land had to be surveyed before it could be allocated and consequently extensive records had to be built up. From the 1820's on the British Parliament began taking an interest in the administration of Ireland and a series of reports were initiated on such matters as education, acts or periods of violence or poverty and many others. In the intervening there is little in the way of official reports or indeed police/magistrates reports as matters generally tended to be dealt with locally. In any event Ireland didn't get a centralised police force until the early 1800's. Newspapers have therefore become one of the prime sources of information of the "long" 18th century.

². Though not generally recognised as one of the best papers for local news, the Chronicle, by virtue of its location contains a wealth of information about Rathkeale and its hinterland. Newspapers were of most value to literate members of society and this was obviously the market for which they were intended. They therefore reflected the standards, practices and beliefs that these people saw as important. The Limerick Chronicle, through the 18th, and 19th and early 20th centuries was a unionist paper

³ This is an intriguing stand alone piece. From my searching through other 18th. and 19th Century papers I have not come across any other reference to a locally based Theatrical Society. Such a group and indeed a post office indicates the presence of a literate population.

Rathkeale and I believe Castleconnell were the first post towns (outside Limerick City) to be established in the county. Castleconnell was a spa town popular with the gentry and Rathkeale was also at this time a town with a disproportionate gentry population. Why this was so is unclear. There were sections of the ordinary people who would have been literate but we are probably talking of little more than 20% or 30% and they being overwhelmingly male.

⁴ There are possibly links between the gathering on the "high road" between Rathkeale and Ardaghs and also the gathering in Newcastle. This view gains support from the meeting in Newcastle between the Mayor of Limerick and most of the other gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood, who made their support known by signing the petition that was organised. The reception the Mayor received in Rathkeale on his return from Newcastle is similar to that of Bishop Conway of Limerick got in Newcastle after the bishops meeting. It can probably be described as the diffusing of a tense situation. Also the taking of oaths was illegal and because large numbers of people descended on the towns and villages in which they were being administered, swearing involved a degree of intimidation. If matters later came to a head in a courtroom one might well be submitted to a particularly severe form of punishment for taking the oath.

⁵. Advertisements for the letting or sale of property in Rathkeale and other towns were reasonably common in the Chronicle. They give an indication of who lived in the town. They also provide descriptions of the houses and where they were located.

⁶ It is intriguing to think that grapes were being grown in the town in the 1780's, in Rathkeale Lodge, which I take to be Beechmount. The house is described as "new" and the house now known as Beechmount was built in 1786. The piece in the paper of November 2nd indicates that the purchaser was probably Mr. (Crosbie) Mongell as a man of that name came into possession of the house about this time and named it Mount Mongell.

From Michael Hanley's Archives



FROM "THE WEEKLY OBSERVER" OCTOBER 1915

WILL OF MR. ABRAHAM M.P.

Mr. William Abraham of 26, Ashmount Road, London N., Nationalist MP for West Limerick 1885 to 1892; North East Cork from 1893 to 1910; and for Dublin City Harbour Division from 1910, who took an active part in the land agitation of 1881 and suffered imprisonment as a political suspect and was one of the treasurers of the Irish National Party died on the 2nd. August, aged 75. He left property valued at £533-9s-3d. Probate was granted to his widow, Mrs. Ann June Abraham

rathkeale and district historical society

The next event of the winter programme of the society will take place on January 26th 2000 when it is planned to have what is referred to as "local night". This has been an occasion each year for anybody wishing to talk for about twenty minutes or so on a topic of specifically local interest. At the moment there are two speakers confirmed and we would welcome word from anyone else who would consider contributing. Following these talks, sometime in late February on a date to be confirmed, we will have Don Gallagher, formerly of Rathkeale and Shannon Meats to talk on the story of Irish Railways. Meanwhile we would remind you of the historical exhibition planned for April 2000 and ask again that you contact either Jack ODwyer or Patrick Coleman if you have items of any sort which might be of interest in an historical context. All such will be well looked after and returned.



FROM "DEEL VIEWS" 1984

THE TOWN THAT I LOVED SO WELL

by Mike Hanley

What can one say about Rathkeale. The natives love it and very few leave it. It also provides a 'Home' for strangers even though many are called 'Blow-ins', a tag which will stick for a life time. The people that leave will always come back. Rathkeale to me will always be a place to remember and never forget.

I will now try to record on paper my memories of Rathkeale and the faces and places of the last twenty five years or so.

Do you remember the schools, the Convent with the majestic trees in front of it, and Sr. Peter (RIP.) to greet the pupils at the entrance gate. The boys that I grew up with and attended school with were, Dick Lynch, Mike Guinane, Francis Wilmot, Frank Carroll, Mike Doyle, Declan Casey, Brian Casey, Tom Lynch, Tom Mullins, Mike Smith, Pat Supple, Pakie Lynch, Pat Moran, Mike Wilmot, John Fitzgerald, Patch Markham, Miko Dunne, Niall O'Shea and Vin White.

We later moved on to the boys school where we were introduced to Mrs. Hayes (RIP.) and Mrs. Mooney (RIP.). I can well remember there when we used to bring our bottle of tea, - the bottle was supplied by Nash's Mineral Waters. All the bottles were put in a can of water and heated for us at lunch time.

We graduated from that school to the 'Big-Boys' which was situated where the grave-yard is now. There, our teachers were Messers, Boyly, Conlon, Clarkson, Ford, Cahillane, Spillane, Hynes, Oh Boys! Those were the days, will I ever forget them.

What was the town like in those days? Well we had the Cinema. The Sunday Matinee, that was a great day out. All we needed for the day was one shilling (five pence). To our younger readers a shilling consisted of twelve old pence. Four pence for the pictures, four pence for a big wafer ice-cream from Kitty Reidy's and four pence for a quarter pound of Scots Clan sweets. The pictures -no Star Wars' or 'Et's' or sex or violence in those days, but we did have Roy Rodgers, the 'Cisco Kid', Shane, Audy Murphy and many more Cow-Boys and Indians.

What were the shops like in those days? The Post Office was in Thomas Street - where the McCarthys are now living. Keatings had a shop at Thomas Street Corner, part of it a sweet shop and the rest of it a chemist shop.

Frawleys had the Garage at the top of the town, and Miss Banks had a small shop in Boherbuoy (next to Morrisseys bungalow). There was Sullivans forge which has developed into one of the finest Engineering Workshops in the County. Nevilles Pub was next (now the 'First and Last'). Jackie Shiels mother opened a shop in front of the Abbey some years later. Across the road from the Abbey, we had Artie Hudsons shop (where the Kellys now live). At the corner was Danny Frawleys. I best remember Frawleys for the 'snuff'. On Saturdays I used to get the 'pinch' for my grandmother on the Bog Road. McMahons at the opposite corner, Madge and Nonnie, the place where we used to get the Sweep Tickets to send to America. Conways are still in the Abbey Bar whilst next door we had the original 'Rathkeale House', Stephen McDonnells. There was Mickeen Connors from Croagh who owned the 'Rock 'n' Roll' Bar. David Maddens was next on the list after 'The Round House'. Maddens was the first place I ever saw a television set - about 24 years ago. They had a B.B.C. aerial.

The Square has changed a lot since my boyhood days. No more pigs on a 'Fair Day', in fact no more 'Fair Days'. The Court House is now a fine Community Centre. Gone is Healy's Hotel and Bar. Also gone is Mr. Piggot and his Grapery shop. John Goodwins is now run by Patrick Giltenane and Stephen McDonnell. Healy's Garage now operated by Mickey Joe Neville in place of Paddy Geaney and Christy Moore. No more Miss Kirbys in the Cross-Lane whilst Miss Bovenizer has put up the shutters on her premises at Main Street, Michael Cahill now occupies the premises once known as McCarthy's Drapery Store. Whilst Mary Cregan is in place of Miss Shanahan. Kate Noonans is still there as is the Central Bar. Mrs. Hickeys has been converted into a dwelling house. Gone from the Square are the Wards and the Doyles who at different times occupied the premises situated between 'The Round House' and Maddens (Talty's or Dan's as it is now known). Oh Boys there have been some changes! I could go on for months, and maybe I might some time. But for now I will finish and leave a bit of space for somebody else, and as the bug would say "You never can tell about people".

Recollections

by Maurice Cowhey

The revival of the celebrations of "Slanders" and other May Eve traditions by the Rathkeale Arts Group, so much encouraged by Mike Hanley's publicity, recall some customs of the district from the 1930's to the 1950's. Catholics were forbidden meat on Fridays but Rathkeale had a top class fresh fish delivery each Friday morning. This delivery was made by Christy Nash of Askeaton with the aid of wooden fish boxes and a pony and cart. Christy and his brother, John, were fishermen who carried out their fishing on the shores of the Shannon when the tides were favourable. They used a type of drift netting and their catch was mainly plaice and fluke. One of the more usual spots fished was at the back of Odell's farm, now Kanes, not very far from Aughnish Island. During heavy river mists or in the hours of darkness they could not be seen from the island but were clearly heard while at work. They also fished the Deel where the catch was salmon. When a housewife was heard saying on one of those Friday mornings that she had got her lush one knew that some best Deel salmon was in the boxes. Whatever type of business was being transacted when attending the Winter cattle fairs in Rathkeale, some hardship had to be endured. Such might include some or all of the following: very little sleep, very long hours with business commencing at 4 am., and extremely wet or cold mornings, or both. A favourite tipple to soften the hardship was a hot whiskey(punch). Sometimes raw whiskey was poured into squelching footwear claiming it was an antidote to catching heavy colds. A choice of drink which seemed very rare was hot claret. This consisted of top class Bordeaux wine treated in the same way as the hot whiskey and appeared to be confined to those who lived in an in-depth band, adjacent to the Shannon from Askeaton to Tarbert.

In past centuries Spanish and French trading with West Cork included wine in sizeable quantities but I could not find any such trading link with the Shannon Estuary. It is possible that it may go back further as the Geraldine penetration of this district was first made in the Askeaton area. The tradition still lives on very strongly. I remember asking, before I knew anything about history, what was the meaning of the word "Desmonds" emblazoned on the jerseys of the Askeaton hurling team. It has been brought to my attention that in the past and at occasional present day outdoor sports events, what is described as warm claret, was and is a favoured drink among some British groups. This is exemplified by the saying" Claret being heated on the engine of the

Bentley", the Bentley being one of the most expensive of cars in Britain.

During the long Summer evenings a group often to fifteen older people were frequently seen lined along the outside front of Tommy Guinane's premises at Lower Main Street. They would appear to be in deep and earnest discussion and enjoying themselves immensely. This group and its location was known as "The Dail". Tommy carried on a specialised footwear business and also a small manufacturing unit. He had around six bootmakers employed and the resulting product had a buoyant market. He himself was a very intelligent man and was a mine of information on the people of the district and their activities over many generations. He was also a very political animal and reigned over the "Dail" sittings as the unanimously selected Ceann Comhairle. He had a very deep regard for tradition and a very great pride in past achievements by the community- none more so than the building of St Mary's Church- a project which was well under way twenty years after the great famine of 1847.

It was some years after Tommy had crossed the great divide that I became interested, for family reasons, in researching some information on St. Mary's. Fortunately it was made easier for me when I recalled a remark that Tommy had often quoted" McCarthy was the Architect of the church, a pupil of Pugin you know". Pugin, an Englishman, was the greatest church Architect of the nineteen century and McCarthy was known as the Irish Pugin. Several eminent Irish architects have noted and written, that apart from its wonderful siting, design and construction, the interior of St. Mary's was by far the greatest of McCarthy's interiors. Sadly this is no longer the position as a large part has been destroyed, altered, hidden or given away. There are some curious unPugin or unMcCarthy like additions.

Rathkeale cattle fairs, by any comparison, were very large and for a period some horse flesh was introduced for sale. The Casey family of Charleville, who had been in the cattle business for generations, found it difficult during the so called economic War with the U.K. in the 1930's. There was little opportunity for the export of cattle, prices were at a low ebb and almost a standstill in cattle sales generally. Caseys commenced importing hardy hill raised Welsh ponies and showing them for sale at a few cattle fairs including Rathkeale. These ponies

were the same breed which, for generations, had been used in the Welsh coalmines.

By far the largest portion of all livestock movement was done by walking the roads. Only where rail transport was available or some movement by boat on the Shannon, was there any alternative. This old type movement of animals was carried out professionally by individuals called drovers, or firms of drovers. Some years further back there were families which formed clans of drovers. This is a big story in itself. To serve Rathkeale fair the Caseys would bring 30 or 40 ponies from Charleville and rest them overnight on the farm of their cousins, the Collins of Ballyallinan. On the next day the ponies were driven to the town, arriving about 11a.m. ,when the hustle and bustle of the fair had subsided, and placed right in the centre of the fair in the open space between Al B. and Superbites. As the reputation of the ponies, for hardiness and work rate grew, there was little difficulty in selling them. This was mainly to farmers, where their primary task was to carry milk to the creamery. The selling price varied from £4 to £6, a respectable amount at the time.

During the second world war petrol was strictly rationed with a small allowance being made to emergency service and health workers e.g. doctors. For the rest of us we were left with a limited public transport service, the horse and trap or the sturdy bike. Parts and fitments for the latter were like gold but luckily Casey Bros. had a large quota of tyres and Walter Doherty of Adare had laid up a large supply of ball bearings. To cycle long distances was quite common, such as attending various events and sports in Limerick, travel to hurling games in Thurles, or to Listowel races. This event usually saw a number of horse and traps used.

To anybody interested in greyhounds reliable weekly entertainment was available, particularly during the Summer months. When we had dogs racing we normally travelled by pony and trap, courtesy of Willie "Count" Fitzgerald of Ardgoul or Con Magner of Reens. If going on ones own the bike was the means. This could be a wonderful experience of camaraderie and friendship as along the route we were joined by other devotees and when we arrived at the Markets Field there might be thirty or forty in the group. When the racing was over we headed for Edward Street and deposited ourselves and the bikes on one of the parked turf lorries owned by Dan Cronin. A favoured few had got to know Dan through Christy Fitzgerald who trained his greyhounds. Being a turf merchant, which meant dealing in one of the most important commodities of the day, he ran four or five lorries which was a very respectable fleet at the times. His deliveries were to hospitals and state institutions and he conveniently arranged to have a delivery for the Mental Hospital or Sarsfield barracks on racing nights. On the way home we would stop at David Hogans of Adare

where some refreshments were partaken of. The Hogans were very interested in greyhounds as was the Rathkeale branch of the family and Dicko, the principal of this branch, had a legendary reputation in the sport. With such a homely atmosphere and an expatriate Rathkeale man, Bendy Supple, firing the balls, greyhound lore and simple amusement got a great boost. This was sometimes interrupted when David would come in and announce "He is coming". There would be a quick exodus of the locals while we, being outside the statutory limit, could remain." He" being Sergeant Reidy would come in, look everywhere around and then, as he was a greyhound man himself, would set up a chat with us about the nights racing. We held him in great regard. He was, of course, the father of the late Sean O'Riada and a loyal and enthusiastic Corkman. Shortly afterwards when Con Magner had collected his leg of mutton from David Hogan's other establishment we resumed our journey homewards. An interesting set up at the town fairs was known as the "Standings".

They were located at the street edge of the Square and were a smaller but more concentrated version of the present day street markets held in many towns throughout the country. One or two large stands contained second hand clothes-mostly male They usually did a brisk business with the demand indicating the level of money available. When one thinks of the old saying "dressed in his Sunday best "one sees a reason for purchasing weekday working clothes. The stall I remember best contained small hardware goods and tools where the build up and high standard of salesmanship left an unforgettable impression. The proprietor and salesman was none other than the incomparable Hector Grey who when he left this type of circuit built a huge and most successful business in Mary Street in Dublin. Another small stall which educated a young boy in slickness and salesmanship was the three-card trick. The missing queen held one spell-bound as did the operators who found it easy to entice further participants into the net and moved ever so quickly when Garda surveillance threatened.

Rathkeale had twenty fairs in the year-sixteen cattle and four horse-with sheep and pigs forming large additions. The story of these fairs deserves a bigger and wider recounting. The importance of the fairs to country towns was considerable. All transactions were on a cash only basis, except for some very local or neighbourly sales.

Remembering Past Events

1975

by P.J. Madigan

The following are some of the results of the events being held in conjunction with Rathkeale Community Festival between August 1st and August 10th.

Barrel race. 1 David Hogan 2. Kevin Hayden 3. John Feane

Cycle Races.

Adult:	Michael Keating
Ladies:	Joan O'Sullivan
Boys u. 14	Pat McCarthy
Girls u. 14	Helen Mulcaire

Terrier Race. 'Dingo" owned by Billy O'Sullivan

Tractor Reversing. Pat Magner

GARDEN AND HOUSE COMPETITION.

Gardens:

1 . M.Enright, Holy Cross	2. Jane Lynch, St.Mary's Terrace
3. Tom McNamara, Kyletaun	4. Mrs. Madden,
Five Cross-roads	5. Michael Moroney, Castlematrix.

Business Premises Bar.

1 Peoples Bakery Highly Commended. D.Madden and Foley's

Private Houses.

1 .Frank Geary, Ballywilliam.
2. Maurice Cowhey,Castlematrix.

Council or Cottage.

1 . M.Kennedy, Abbeylands. 2. Mrs. Hanley, Castlematrix

Festival Feis.

Reel u.5.	1. Martina Fitzgerald	2.Susan Supple
Reel u.6	1. Maeve Donovan.	2.Martina Fitzgerald.
Reel u.8	1. Siobhan Donovan	2.Margaret Lynch.
Reel u. 10.	1. Anne Hogan	2.C.Fitzgerald and N.Mooney
Reel 0.12.	1. Richared Mooney	2.Brian Mooney
Non prizewinners u.6.	1 .Linda Woulfe	2.Linda Hogan.

Championship,6 years and under.- 2.John O'Sullivan

"do" 8 years and under - 1. Teresa Morrissey

2. Siobhan Donovan

"do" 10 years and under 2. Catherine Fitzgerald

"do" 12 years and under 1. Brian Mooney 2. C.Fitzgerald

"do" over 12 1. Richard Mooney

Three-Hand Reel u. 8

1 .L. Muckell, G. Woulfe, T. Morrissey

"do" u.12 1 . C.Fitzgerald, E.Hogan, B.Mooney

Four-Hand Reel

1 E. Hogan, A.Hogan, N. Mooney, G. Barr

Adult Fancy Dress Parade:

1. Rathkeale Fleadh Ceoil 1875 - Patricia Kennedy, Mary Hughes, Moss and Mollie Duggan, John Madigan, Bernie Sullivan, John Hughes, Marie Madigan, Patsy McCann, Pat Madigan, PJ.Madigan.

Baby Show:

u.6 months 1 Marie White, Roches Road
6 to 12 months 1 Helen O'Donnell, Reens Pike.

Walking Race:

Gents.	1 .C.Fisher, Enfield Harriers.
	2. D.Riordan, Granagh.
Ladies.	1. Breda Larkin, Reens
	2. Margaret Larkin, Reens
Youths.	1 Pat Jones, Abbeylands.
	2. Michael Coleman, Castlematrix

The wedding took place at St. Marys Church Rathkeale on August 22nd . Between Catherine Lynch of Abbeylands and Thomas Govan of Scotland

The following were successful at the life saving course which was held at Rathkeale Swimming Pool during August:
Junior. Robert Zoncada, Brian O'Dwyer, Aine O'Dwyer
Elementary. Brid Meehan, Catriona Nestor, Michael Neville,
Carmel O'Dwyer
Intermediate. Pat Neville
Senior. Elva McCarthy, Mary Magner, William Madden.

The wedding took place in Rathkeale between Mary Moody of Huddersfield and William Doody of Killeedy. The bridesmaid was Mary Roche, Rathkeale and the best man was Denis Doody The celebrant was Canon T. Costelloe

On Wednesday Sept.24th some members of Rathkeale Comhaltas Ceoltóiri visited the Teach Siamsa,Finuge where they took part in the evenings entertainment of traditional music, singing and dancing. Present were Moss Duggan, Maureen O'Shea, Jack McCann, Bernie Sullivan, Mary Hughes, Patrick Kennedy, John Hughes, Marie Madigan, Gerard Barr, Fiona Madigan, Jim Barr and PJ.Madigan.
The A.G.M.of the branch was held in Geary's Hotel on Oct. 13th and the officers elected were: Chairman, P.J.Madigan V.Ch. Moss Duggan Sec. Nora Flynn Asst.Sec. Breda Morrissey. Treasurer. Tom McNamara
Delegates to Co. Board. W. Fitzgerald and G. O'Shea. Auditor. P. Kennedy

Boards of Management for the two National Schools were elected as follows;

Boys:

V. Rev. Canon Costello, Rev. J. Irwin, Mrs. M. Doherty, Mr. M. Brosnan, Mr. J. Kennedy, Mr. S. M. Johnson and P. Ambrose N.T.

Girls:

V.Rev. CanonCostelloe, Mrs .M. Nestor, Mrs. M. Geary, Mr. T. Donovan, Sr.M. Patricia, Sr. M. Jerome, Mrs. M. Kenneally,

Mr.P.Naughton, Mrs. M.Crowley and Ms.N.Dwane NT.
The sixteenth A.G.M. of Cappagh Guild of Muintir na Tire was held in Cappagh National School. During the course of his address the outgoing chairman, Denis Hawkes, said he was happy that the guild had remained loyal to the ideals of the late Canon Hayes since its formation in 1959. The outgoing secretary, Mr. Eugene O'Sullivan, gave a very comprehensive account of the years activities and also contributing to the proceedings were Sean Hegarty, National Council member, Tim Tynan, Community Development Officer and Frank Liddy, County Secretary. The following officers were elected:

President, V .Rev. Dr.Fitzgerald.

Vice Presidents, Rev. Mr.Storey and Rev. Mr. Snow.

Chairman; T.Hogan.

V. Chairmen: D.Culhane and W. Ruttle.

Sec. T. Lane.

Asst. Sec. M. O'Donnell.

Treas. E. Ruttle.

PRO. P.J. Madigan.

Federation Delegates: Rev Storey, E.O'Sullivan,
Rev. Snow, D.Culhane, M.Hennessey and T.Barry.

Scor na n-Og finals in the Central Cinema

produced the following winners:

4.hand Reel;

Fiona Madigan, Noreen Fitzgerald, Brid Meehan,
Mary Meehan.

Solo Singing; Mary Hogan

Novelty Act;

Eileen O'Shea, Rosemary Hughes, Michael Barr,
Brendan O'Shea.

Recitation; Seamus Doherty

Set Dancing; Joe Morrissey, Fiona Madigan, Ml.Neville,
Noreen Fitzgerald, Tom Meehan, Brid Meehan, P. Morrissey,
Jo.Fitzgerald.

Ballad Group; Fitzgerald family.

At the A.G.M. of Rathkeale ICA, held in Geary's Hotel on the
7th January the following officers were elected for 1976;

Pres. Mrs.Helen Roche.

V.Pres. Mrs.Mai Geary.

Sec. Ms.Helen Madigan.

Treas. Mrs. Doris O'Connor.

Press Officer. Mrs. Maura Mooney.

Teachta. Mrs.Irene Donovan.

Compt.Sec. Mrs.Mary Geary.

International Officer. Mrs.Monnie Wilmott.

Hostesses. Peg Roche and Alice Vereker.

Committee. K.O'Dwyer, B.Daly, J.O'Brien, D.Donovan,
A.Breunan

Swimmers from Rathkeale were presented with Swimming
and Life Saving certificates at a function in Foynes Yacht Club.
The presentation was performed by Mr.Dick Haslam, County
Manager and those receiving recognition were;

William Madden, Mary Magner, Brendan Kennedy, Marie
Madden, Margaret Williams , Treasa Dunworth, Patricia Kett,
Aine O'Dwyer, Robert Zoncada, Brian O'Dwyer, David
O'Brien, Brid Meehan, Carmel O'Dwyer, Mary Meehan,
Catriona Nestor, Fiona Madigan, Pat Neville, Breda Power,
Patricia Talty, Diane Talty, Elva McCarthy, Michael Neville
and Brigid-Ann Duggan.

The A.G.M. of Cappagh Handball Club took place at Peter O' Grady's residence. The outgoing Chairman, Michael Quinn, spoke of the achievements of the past year particularly the All Ireland honours which had been brought to Cappagh for the first time. The secretary,Moss Hennessey, presented a plaque to the Chairman in recognition of his long association with the club, including his five years as Chairman,during which he had contributed so much to its success. The following officers were elected;

Life Pres. Alf Kennedy.

V. Pres. V. Rev. Dr. Fitzgerald and Jimmy Culloty.

Chairman. Michael Burke. Asst. Sec. Tony Hayes.

V.Ch. Pat Stokes. Sec. Mossie Hennessey.

Treasurer(joint). Sean O' Grady and Liam Doab.

Results of the Adult Scor Competition which was held at the
Central Cinema.

Solo Singing: Pa Wilmott. Instrumental: P.J. Madigan.

Recitation: Mrs W Fitzgerald.

Question Time: J.O'Dwyer, M. Hanley, P. Wilmot.

Figure Dancing: P. Kennedy, M. Hughes, M. Madigan,
B. Sullivan, R.Mooney, M. O'Shea.

Ballad Group: W.Fitzgerald, J.O'Dwyer, P.Wilmott.

Set Dancing: J.Hughes, M.Madigan, M.Duggan, M.Hughes,
M.O'Shea, R.Mooney, B. Sullivan, P.Kennedy.

The AGM. of Cappagh I.C.A.guild was presided over by Mrs.
Danaher of the Ballyagran Guild and the officers elected were:
Pres. Mrs. P. Lowes.

VPres. Mrs.J. Murphy.

Sec. Ms.P. Donovan

Treas. Mrs.W. Ruttle.

Teachta. Mrs.W. Shanahan.

Compt. Sec. Mrs.E. Baker.

International Off Ms.K. Duggan.

Production Off. Mrs.T. Hogan.

Hostesses. Ms.P. Kennedy and Ms.B. Stokes.

Press Off Mrs.J. Ruttle.

Comm. Mrs T. Casey, Mrs.M. Bourke, Mrs.J. Donovan.

The group representing Limerick and Rathkeale G.A.A. club
were successful in the figure dancing section at the Munster
Semi Finals of Adult Scor in the Savoy Cinema. They now go
forward to the Final in Thurles in March.

At the AGM. of Shannon Meats G.A.A. club the following
were elected for 1976:

Ch.: Martin Williams.

V.Ch.: P.O'Shaughnessy.

Sec.: D.Kennealy.

Treasurers. J.Lenihan and T.Hannafin.

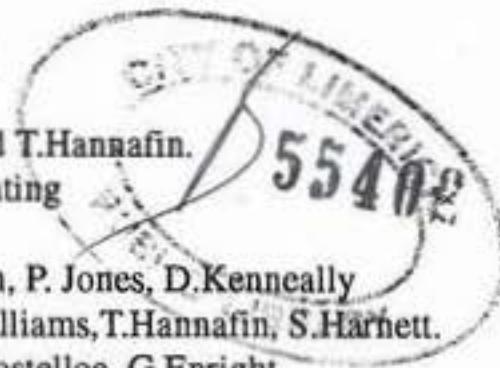
Hurling Manager: M.Keating

Hurling Selector

M. McNamara, J.Lenihan, P. Jones, D.Kenneally

Football Selectors: M.Williams, T.Hannafin, S.Harnett.

Comm. P. Markham, P.Costelloe, G.Enright.



COMHAIRLE CHONTAE LUIMNIGH

Bosca Poist 53,
Áras an Chontae,
79/84 Sráid Úi Chonaill,
Luimneach.

Seoltar freagraí go dtí an Rúnai Chontae.

PLANNING SECTION.

UD/PC/CW.

**LIMERICK COUNTY COUNCIL**

P.O. Box 53,
County Buildings,
79/84 O'Connell Street,
Limerick.

Tel.: 061-318477.
Fax: 061-318478.

All replies should be addressed to the County Secretary.

1st November, 1999.

Mr. Dan Neville, T.D., M.C.C.,
Kiltannan,
Croagh,
Co. Limerick.

Re: Caravans at Ballywilliam, Rathkeale.

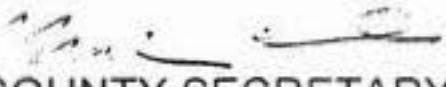
Dear Deputy Neville,

I refer to your letters of 1st April, 1999, and 24th April, 1999, 22nd May, 1999, and subsequent letters in July and September regarding the above issue.

The position regarding the keeping or storing of a caravan within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse from a planning point of view, is that permission is not required for same, provided that (i) not more than one caravan is so kept or stored, (ii) the caravan shall not be used for the purposes of a business, and (iii) it shall not be kept or stored for more than nine months in any year or occupied as a dwelling while so kept or stored. I understand that a number of meetings were held between the residents of Ballywilliam, Council Management and yourself, and the Council's position regarding these and related issues was discussed and explained. I would refer you to this.

I have referred your letters to Mr. John Flynn, Chief Fire Officer, for his attention (regarding issues such as gas fires and electric cables running onto footpaths).

Yours faithfully,


For COUNTY SECRETARY.

**The following is from a series of
articles published in the
"Weekly Observer" in the years
1915 and 1916 and titled;**

"A short history of the old borough town of Rathkeale and the nationalists of the towns of Askeaton, Newcastle West and Abbeyfeale, by Mr. William Hayes, founder and organiser of the Memorial Celtic Cross and organiser of Blessed Wells in West Limerick".

Through the kindness of Mr. Christopher O'Sullivan, "Weekly Echo" 13, Sarsfield St. Limerick, who some years ago published a short history in the Echo, of Rathkeale and West Limerick, I know I voice the feelings of my national friends when we hail with joy the nationalist paper "The Weekly Observer", published in Newcastle West and containing all the local news from Limerick, Cork and the rest of Munster in addition to the latest war news.

The proprietor of the journal, like Mr. O'Sullivan, has kindly given me space in the paper.

Here is best wishes to the heroes of 1821, Going is gone and Yellow George Lake is the next to come on, and may their sons live long. During those tyrannical times the people of West Limerick rose in rebellion over the "Tithe taxes". The farmers had to give so many stooks of wheat and the wheat crop failed in 1819, 20 and 21. The people of Rathkeale, Cappa and surrounding areas took a prominent part in the rebellion and made a raid on Mitchelstown House, Askeaton in 1821. The old people referred to this as the "Battle of Incharourke". At the time Rathkeale was headquarters for two regiments of foot and several companies of horse soldiers. The Palatine Yoemen and police were from the north of Ireland, orangemen and followers of Willie who crossed the Boyne and who it will be remembered broke the Treaty of Limerick. All the towns were provided with soldiers for scouting West Limerick, day and night. All the cross roads and historical places are remarked and described by the relatives of those heroes who were hanged and transported in dozens. In the raid on Incharourke the pass was sold and Mr. Hunt was treasurer of the "Tithe taxes". The 42nd Black Watch with the Rathkeale Yoemen and police waited in ambush. The office was lighted and the insurgents made a dash for same. The night was very dark and raining and the soldiers and supporters shot and wounded, in the stomach, Mr. Moran of Aghalacka. He placed his hand on the wound, swam across the Deel and died on the other side. Mr. Hayes of Askeaton was mortally wounded, Mr. O'Callaghan of Cappa was shot

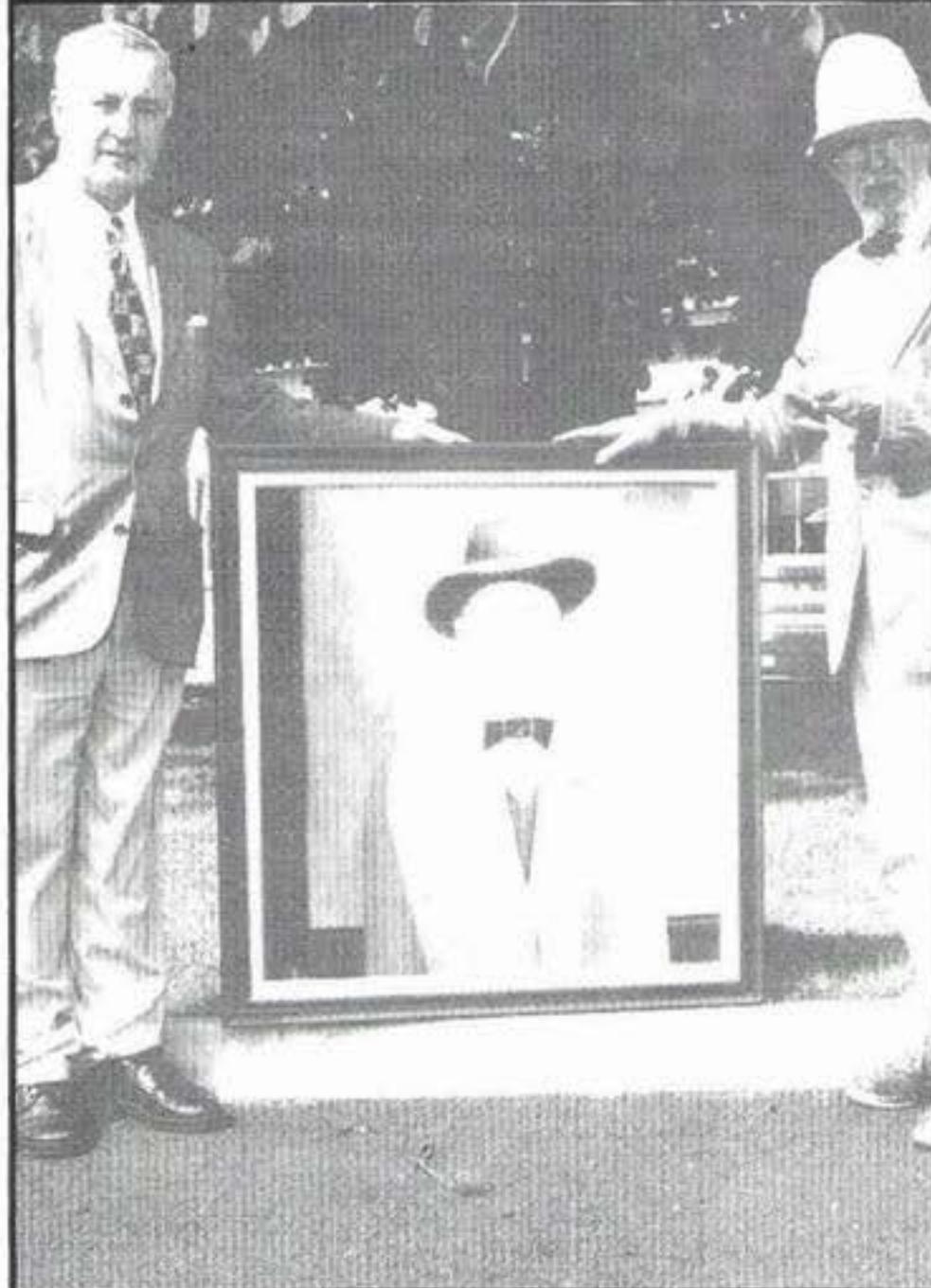
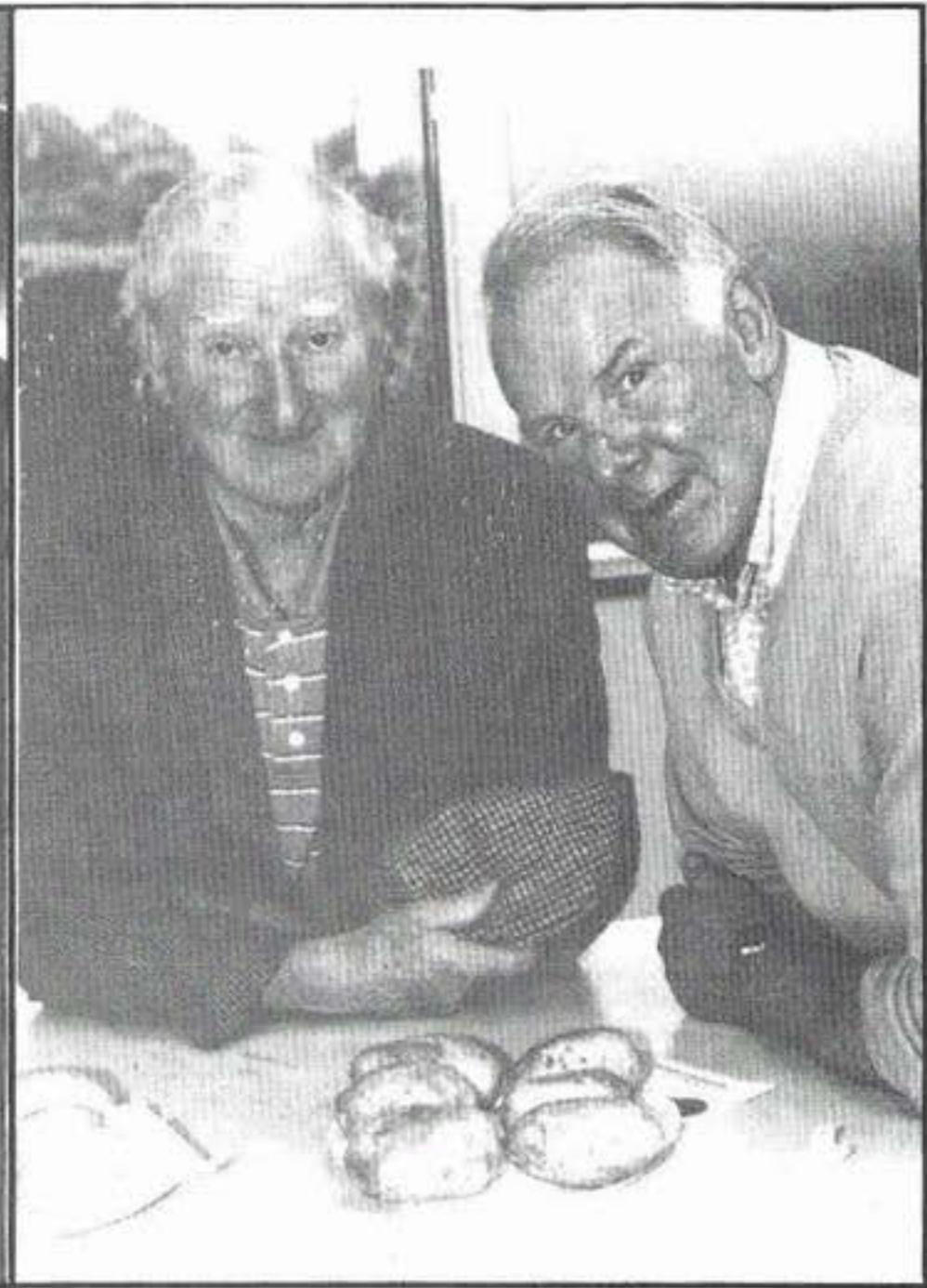
dead as was Mr. Fitzgerald from the New Road, Rathkeale. Those last mentioned were thrown into the Croppy hole at the bridge of Rathkeale. Hayes had life in him and was buried alive with his two dead comrades and burned with lime and salt. Yellow George Lake of Abbey House, Rathkeale gave orders to salt them well.

The friends of the heroes visited Lake's house later that night and dug a grave opposite the hall door. They had a supply of salt and lime and searched the house but could not find Lake.

Several other insurgents were wounded at Incharourke. A first cousin of Mr. Michael Cummins, who was my grandfather, whose name was Thomas Bridgeman from Askeaton was wounded and Dr. O'Hanlon attended him at Mr. Cummin's house for six weeks until he was sent away disguised, dressed in a woman's suit of clothes. These were terrible times and any person found sheltering one of the rebels was likely to be hanged. Householders were forced to post a list of names on their doors including all males down to children of seven years of age. When an officer and soldiers visited the house the names were called out and anybody found wandering was liable to be transported. A grand uncle of mine was sentenced to be hanged for being at Incharourke but he escaped from six policemen at the Meads Rathkeale. This man was from the New Road. A man named Purtill from the same road went to the funeral of a first cousin in Cappawhite and on his return home an officer and soldiers were waiting for him. He was taken prisoner and lodged in the jail in Rathkeale and a few days later transported for life. Three noble Irishmen, Lewis, Lynch and Madigan were brought from Limerick County Jail by the Stonehall route, chained to a cart and escorted by foot and horse soldiers to the Hill of Cappa. The Rev. Fr. Foley P.P. attended and protested against the presence of one of his enemies, that he could not die in peace if he were present. Fr. Foley called on the tyrant to withdraw and he had to do so. They were executed close to the houses at Lisnamuck. Lewis was from near Adare. Close to Cappa near Clogh is Going's Cross where Major Going was shot dead by the Cappa heroes. This officer commanded the troops in Rathkeale and a Major Hare was killed in the same way at Mountherry, Coolcappa on January 22nd 1822. Several men were wounded at Incharourke and they escaped through working with a shoemaker who was also suffering from wounds.

To be continued.

From Michael Hanley's Archives



Births, Marriages and Deaths.

BAPTISMS.

Brian Thomas Keating; Margaret Jessica O' Brien;
Patrice Michelle Hennessy Enright;
Jack Patrick Shiels; Francis Anthony O'Reilly;
Padraig Liam Power; Bridget Naomi Kealy; Kelly
Margaret Naughton; Simon Anthony Culligan;
Johanna Sheridan; Mark Brian Wilmott; Margaret
Francesco Culligan; Orla Michelle Lamont;
James Edward Storm; Simon Christopher Quilligan;
Amanda Elizabeth Dunne Margaret Jessica Gammell;
Ellen Savanna Culligan; Daniel Culligan;
Rachel Mary Lynch; Nora Abbey O'Brien;
Jade Marie Mulcaire.

MARRIAGES.

Liam Mulcaire and Aileen McNamara;
John Joseph Quilligan and Jean Sheridan.

DEATHS.

Jane O'Brien; Mai Ahem; Pat Roche; Jack Hourigan;
Rebecca Daly; Pa Ross Quilligan;
Marguerite O'Sullivan; Margaret McCarthy;
John Joseph Deans; Tom Frawley; Bill Clifford;
Mike Hanley; Patrick O'Shaughnessy; Tom Chawke;
Agnes McMahon; Bridget Costello; William Chawke;
Kathleen Flahavan; Michael O'Grady;
Christina Sheridan.

ABRAHAMS GOLFING SOCIETY

Recent results;

The President's (Laura Keating) Prize. At Beaufort,
Killarney in August.

Overall winner: Noel Hamett.

Gents: 1. John O'Connor,
2. Michael Cregan, 3. Patsy O'Sullivan.
Best Gross. Maurice Noonan.

Ladies:

1. Eithne Neville, 2. Eileen Noonan,
3. Mary O'Sullivan(Ballingarrane),
Best Gross.Mary OSullivan (Ballywilliam).

Captain's (Donagh Horgan) Prize.

At Adare Manor in October

Overall winner: Brian Dillon

Gents;
1 Declan Mooney, 2. Andy O'Dea,
3. Michael Cregan.

Best Gross Vincent OKelly.

Past Captain. John O'Connor.

Ladies; 1 Mary O'Sullivan(Ballingarrane),
2. Eileen Noonan, 3 Breda Keating,
Best Gross Eitline Neville.

Christmas Outing at Charleville in December 3-ball scramble.

1 Una Finn, Neally Duggan, Michael Cregan.
2. Denis O'Dea, Patsy O'Sullivan, Mary O'Sullivan.
3. David Malone, Declan Mooney, Phil O'Connor.
4. Jerry O'Connell, Phil Ruttle, Mary Nash.

*The season has now ended and the next event will
be the AGM sometime in February*



Noel White, Chairman Community Council presenting the cup for the best residential area in the Rathkeale Tidy Town Competition, to Donie Hourigan, Tidy Town Committee Chairman



Catherine Guinane presented the Rathkeale & District Credit Union Shield to Eoghan O'Connor, Captain of the victorious Rathkeale Under 8 Hurling team. Also in picture is Darren Griffin, Captain of Adare, runners up in the tournament and Shane Hourigan, Rathkeale Bord na nÓg.

Tidy Towns 1999

"Caring for our environment"

Centre :
County :
Category :

RATHKEALE
LIMERICK
C

Results

Date of Adjudication : 24-06-1999

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1999	Mark Awarded 1998
Overall Developmental Approach	50	33	33
The Built Environment	40	28	28
Landscaping	40	34	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	18	18
Litter Control	40	23	21
Tidiness	20	12	12
Residential Areas	30	21	21
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	30
General Impression	10	7	7
TOTAL MARK	300	206	204

Rathkeale. County Limerick

OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH

Thank you for returning completed entry form. You do not say if you are working to a phased development plan. Your town has undergone significant change since the development of the by-pass. This has resulted in a major reduction of traffic, which has freed up the town and offers a greater degree of discipline in parking etc. The absence of traffic has also left heretofore busy areas redundant and there are implications for the local community. Much of the old Rathkeale is in need of refurbishment and many old houses have been developed with materials not suitable for the character and traditions of Rathkeale.

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Many of the public buildings are presented to a high standard - especially the newer ones i.e. Carnegie Free Library, Mercy Community College, Heritage Centre and the Hotel in particular. Both banks are well presented and shopfronts of interest include Kathleen's Bar, Sean Ó Braonáin and Oifig and Phoist. No progress yet on the Old Cinema. The work at the Augustinian Abbey seems to have ceased and there is no information plaque to give a brief history - could you tackle this locally?

LANDSCAPING

The landscaping associated with the by-pass is excellent, in particular from the roundabout near the Catholic Church. The park at the Abbey is well presented but the tennis court now seem obsolete - also the nearby building with no identity. You have great potential for improvement at the river, but this area has deteriorated in recent years. The cattle mart is a let down and not acceptable so near a residential area. Could you contact Golden Vale and seek their help. The amenity area on the Ballingarry approach is a gem - well done to those responsible for maintenance.

WILDLIFE AND NATURAL AMENITIES

Perhaps one of the schools might undertake a wildlife project and carry out a survey of the animal and birdlife in the area.

LITTER CONTROL

You have scored well in this area and the main streets were almost litter free - indeed excellent. Litter collection was also observed during adjudication day. Litter bins seem adequate in number and well positioned.

TIDINESS

You have a problem with tidiness resulting from so many derelict and unattended open spaces. Their are numer-

ous small open spaces that have potential for attractive landscaping - could you tackle some of these for next year?

RESIDENTIAL AREAS

The town is unique in that it has an inordinate number of transient families using the town. The new houses - many unoccupied and heavily fortified are now deteriorating at a fast rate. There seems to be no discipline in the planning enforcement here and the different scale of houses and allied buildings has little consistency - in short there seems to be two communities in Rathkeale, which is unique to a town of its size. Within the town centre many individuals have gone to great efforts to present their premises to a high standard and this is acknowledged.

ROADS, STREETS AND BACK AREAS

Some of the signage has gone shabby and now needs repainting. Even the attractive small black signs are now fading and should be freshened up. Side and rear entrances are now a core part of Tidy Towns and need extra attention. The approach roads are all important to Rathkeale as they present first impressions. You have plenty of scope for further planting and improved approaches. You should consider an illustrated Fáilte sign at the principal approaches.

GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

The many attractive buildings with great character in Rathkeale deserve to be highlighted. With the reduction in traffic you now have an opportunity to further enhance the town - this can only be done if you get the backing from the community. Good luck in your efforts.

The Tidy Towns Committee comprises.

Chairman	Donie Hourigan
Vice Chairman	John Dinnage
Secretary:	Stephanie D'Alton
Treasurer:	Con Horgan.

*Rathkeale Community
Council
takes this opportunity
to wish all our readers
a Happy Christmas,
and a Prosperous
New Millennium*

TOWN DEVELOPMENT PLAN

We mentioned in our last issue how Rathkeale had failed in its efforts to receive designation under the Government's Urban Renewal Scheme. There are renewed attempts in the pipeline at present to obtain recognition under a new scheme for smaller towns.

The following is an introduction and extract from a report prepared for Limerick County Council in connection with the original scheme and it makes interesting reading.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Summary

The designation of sites and areas for tax incentives has been an important measure in securing the redevelopment and renewal of many towns and cities. To secure greater integration of designation with other plans, programmes and measures, the Government has decided that future designations should be placed in the context of Integrated Area Plans.

In November 1997 Brady Shipman Martin were commissioned by Limerick County Council to prepare an integrated Area Plan under the 1998 Urban Renewal Scheme for the town of Rathkeale. The objective of this IAP is to provide a planned, integrated and focused approach to urban renewal. When implemented, the IAP will aid in the physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration of the town.

Why designate Rathkeale?

- A high percentage of the town's population are travellers.
- Extremely high levels of dereliction and vacancy detectable throughout the town.
- High levels of unemployment and social deprivation.
- Proximity to Limerick increases competition for investment and service functions.
- The retail/commercial base of the town is in decline.
- Lack of private sector investment within the town.
- Private sector housing supply almost non-existent.

2. RATHKEALE

Rathkeale is the second largest town in County Limerick with a resident population of 1,546 in 1996. Located 18 miles southwest of Limerick city and 8 miles northeast of Newcastle West the town is situated on both sides of the river Deel on the N.21 Limerick to Tralee road. A rural market town, it provides an important employment and service function for a large rural hinterland.

The history of Rathkeale as an urban settlement dates back to at least the 13th century with the town taking its name from the Irish Rath Caola or Caola's fort. Rathkeale has been developing towards its present form since around the end of the 18th century as a result of the sub division and letting of major estates within the town. Following what is mainly a linear settlement pattern, the commercial centre of the town has developed from the infilling of backlands off the Main street. This has created a street pattern which has interest and character to anyone who visits or uses the town. Important characteristics of Rathkeale include the narrow curved Main Street, The Square, The Deel and the traditional shop frontages. Focal points include the Abbey and the Catholic and Protestant churches, while other buildings of interest include the two banks and the courthouse.

Rathkeale is unique in Ireland in that it has become the home town to a significant number of travellers. Of the towns in Ireland with a population of 1,500 or more in 1996, Rathkeale had the highest proportion of Travellers (Source CSO). Up to 40% of the population within the town is estimated as being from the travelling community, with the number of travellers in the town significantly increasing at Christmas and for other special events. Over the years the wealthier members of the travelling community have purchased or built their own homes in the town. A sizeable number of these houses remain unoccupied, as some of the families pursue their trading activities abroad, or choose to live in a caravan adjacent to the house. Often houses are used as stores and the doors and windows of many are fitted with unsightly iron grills. Within the town the Roches Road and Fair Hill areas are almost entirely occupied by travellers.

2.1 Extent of urban decay and obsolescence

A significant number of the properties within Rathkeale are in need of refurbishment. Sporadic dereliction can be detected throughout the town although it is particularly noticeable along the Main Street and the area around the Square. Dereliction and unoccupied/underused premises along the Main Street have been quoted at 40% by the local Enterprise Group. A decline in the physical fabric of the Fair Hill and Roches Road area also corresponds with extremely high vacancy rates. The extent of urban decay and obsolescence can be seen in the Building Condition survey in Appendix II.

2.2 Extent of socio-economic disadvantage

An examination of the socio economic indicators within Table 1 clearly indicates the weak socio economic structure which exists within Rathkeale. Many of these socio economic problems can be attributed to the very high unemployment rates experienced within the town.

Table 1. Extent of Soda-Economic Disadvantage (Source CSO)

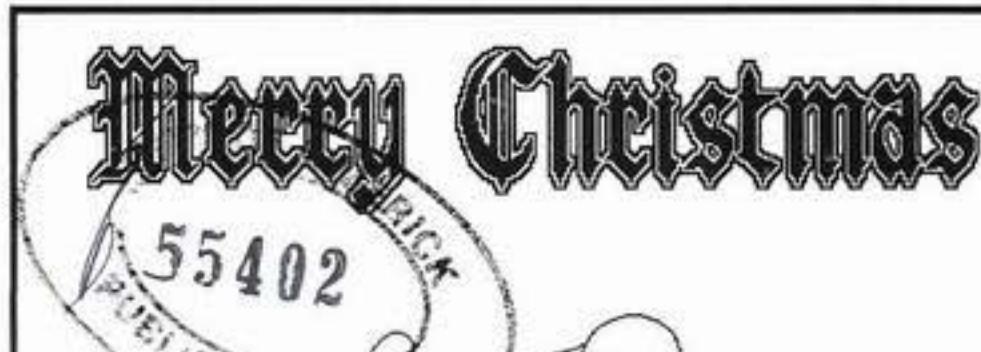
1991	Rathkeale	Co. Limerick	State
Local Authority Rented	10%	5%	10%
Owner Occupied	60%	78%	79%
Unemployed Rate Persons aged 15+ Years	33%	14%	17%
Unemployed Rate Persons aged 15-24 Years	58%	23%	26%
Hi/Lo Professional	24%	27%	25%
Semi Skilled and Unskilled	36%	24%	25%
Third Level Education (%)	11%	18%	18%
Economic Dependency Ratio	2.8	2.0	2.1
Age Dependency Rate (1996)	38%	35%	35%

3. NEED FOR INCENTIVES

Little new investment into Rathkeale has seen a slump in the town's economy over the last two decades. Emigration from the town has continually been on the increase as has the towns unemployment rates. Population decline between 1991 and 1996 was the greatest of any town in the County at 14.25%. Additionally, Rathkeale suffers from extremely high levels of long term unemployment and youth unemployment amongst a workforce predominantly made up of semi skilled and unskilled workers. The economic hardship experienced within the town is evident in not only the deterioration of the town's physical fabric but also in the retail base which has been in decline. A decline which is all the more evident since the retail base is almost exclusive to one street, Main Street. The unique Traveller situation within the town is a further requirement for incentives. Insufficient resources and a fragmented approach to meeting the needs of this group has in the past isolated and reduced the opportunities and services available to this group.

3.1 Capacity to benefit from incentives

Rathkeale has enormous potential to benefit from IAP designation. The recent completion of the town Bypass and improvements to the sewerage and water supply networks ensures infrastructure facilities have the capacity to accommodate further development. Designation will bring investment into the town, creating jobs, encouraging enterprise and ensuring adequate levels of housing provision. Improvements will also occur in the social fabric of Rathkeale with greater social integration promoted. Associated with this will be an expanded range of facilities and services available to the local community.



USEFUL INFORMATION

Deel Views: Jack O'Dwyer Tel: (069) 64210

Banks: Late opening Tuesday

Credit Union:

Monday 2.00-4.00pm.

Tuesday & Wednesday 10.00am to 4.00pm

Thursday: 10.00am to 6.00pm

Friday: 10.00am to 4.00pm and 6.00pm-8.30p.m.

Saturday: 11.00am to 4.00p.m.

Library Opening Hours:

Monday & Wednesday: 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Tuesday: 10.00am to 1.30pm, 6.00pm to 8.00pm

Thursday: 10.00am to 1.30pm and 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Friday: 2.00pm to 5.00pm and 6.30pm to 8.30pm

Mart: Tuesday - Cattle, Wednesday - Calf & Pig

Post Office:

Monday to Saturday 9.30am to 5.30pm

Thursday: 9.30am to 1.30pm

Dentist: MI. Brosnan, Thomas Street

Doctors:

Dr. Lynch Half Day Thursday

Dr. Curtin Half Day Wednesday

Dr. Teehan: Half Day Thursday

Church/ Mass Times

St. Mary's Catholic Church

Sunday 9.30am and 11.30am

Monday to Saturday 9.30am

Saturday: 7.30pm

Holy Trinity Church of Ireland

1st, 2nd, 3rd & 5th Sundays 10.30am

4th Sunday 11.00am alternating with

Askeaton & Castletown

Embry Heck Memorial Methodist Church

Sundays May & July 11.30am

Sundays June & August 10.00am

Sundays January, March, Sept, Nov 12noon

Sundays: February, April, Oct, Dec. 10.30am

Festival Show: Mrs. Ann O'Connell

Community Council: Monthly Meeting

First Monday 8.30pm Secretary: Lorraine White

Social Services: Secretary: Breda Morrissey

Red Cross: Secretary: Tim Shiels

St. Vincent de Paul: J. Dunleavy

Meeting alternate Mondays

I.C.A. Secretary: Mrs. Alice Vereker, 2nd Thursday

G.A.A. Hon Secretary: Jack Daly

Soccer: Juvenile: Séan Hartnett

Abrahams Golf Society: J. O'Connor, Secretary

Scout Cubs: Thursdays, Youth Centre

Community Hall: Tel: 64908

St. Joseph's Young Priests Society

Monthly Meeting 2nd Thursday

Secretary: Brid Hough

THINGS TO DO AND SEE

Tourist Information Centre - Irish Palatine Centre
Open June - September 7 days 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Irish Palatine Heritage Centre
Open June - September 7 days 2.00pm to 5.00pm

Dohyle Lough: John Griffin

Sports Complex
Squash, Racketball, Handball, Snooker, Pool
Tel: (069) 64622

Kyletaun Tennis Club. Contact:
Pat O'Doherty (069) 64086
Affiliated to Tennis Ireland. Floodlit international size.
Open 7 days.

Bridge Club every Tuesday night September-June
Contact: Mary Kennedy (069) 68330