

# Joyce school's record turnout

DESPITE rather unpleasant weather, the Joyce Brothers School — Scoil na Seoigheach — held in Kilfinane Education Centre last weekend, was an outstanding success, with record attendances for all the events.

Professor Breandán O Madagáin, UCG, who formally opened the School, and who was introduced by Councillor Michael Barry, chairman of the Organising Committee of the School, stated that of the many éigsí which he was in the habit of attending, none gave him greater pleasure than Scoil na Seoigheach. Referring to the Joyce brothers, Patrick W. Joyce and Robert Dwyer Joyce, to commemorate whom the the School is held, Professor O Madagáin said that Patrick Joyce had always been a hero of his, and he went on to describe him as a man specially relevant at the present time in Irish history, a man that in many ways could be described as a fitting symbol for the cultivated Irishman at a time when the Irish people had voted decisively for closer links with Europe.

We are all anxious, said Professor O Madagáin, about what this vote will mean for Ireland long-term, and we are living in hope that it will turn out to be for our good, and the good of



Christopher Dunne takes it easy along with his mother Christina, in Kilfinane. (LL)

our fellow-Europeans. But there are those who are so carried away by their economic vision of a United Europe, and its material benefits for us, that they would have us immediately turn into Europeans, whatever that means, and would have us turn our back on our own identity and our native culture.

The speaker then recalled the words of one of the great intellectuals of this century, the poet, T. S. Eliot, who, after the Second World War, addressed the Germans and said that: "For the health of the Culture of Europe two conditions were required: (i) that the culture of each country should be unique;

(ii) that the different cultures should recognise their relationship to each other, so that each should be susceptible of influence from the others."

Eliot, said Professor O Madagáin, went on to say that he had already affirmed that there can be no European culture if the several countries are isolated from each other, but Eliot added to that there can be no European culture if these countries are reduced to identity, and that we need variety in unity. Patrick Joyce — both in himself and his numerous publications — declared Professor O Madagáin, embodied and personified a great deal of that unique culture and identity. The boy who grew up on the hillside at Glensheen knew exactly who he was and what he stood for.

Continuing, Professor O Madagáin said that of great significance, especially for the troubled Ireland of today, was Joyce's basic approach to the history of our country, and to illustrate this point he quoted from Joyce's Preface to his *A Child's History of Ireland*, published in 1898, in which the Joyce stated:

"Above all I have tried to write soberly and moderately, avoiding exaggeration and bitterness, pointing out extenuating circumstances where it was

giving credit where credit is due and showing fair play all round. A writer may accomplish all this while sympathising heartily, as I do, with Ireland and her people. Perhaps this book, written as it is in such a broad and just spirit, may help to foster national feelings of respect and toleration among Irish people of different parties and may teach them to love and admire what is great and noble in their history."

Concluding his address, Professor O Madagáin said that the Joyce Brothers School was no mere museum activity but was very much alive and full of the joy of life.

Councillor Jim MacCarthy, chairman of the Limerick County Vocational Education Committee, also spoke at the opening, which was followed by the first lecture of the School, given by Dr. Seán O Riain, First Secretary in the Department of Foreign Affairs, Dublin, whose theme was "Irish Language and Culture in a European Context." Dr. O Riain said that the texts of the Treaties establishing the European Economic Community and the European Atomic Energy



Patricia, Mairead, Christina and Kathleen Wright, Dromcollogher, who entertained the crowds at the Joyce Brothers School in Kilfinane. (LL)

Community, and the Treaties amending or supplementing them in the Danish, English and Irish languages, are authentic under the same conditions as the original texts of the Treaties, which were in French only.

He further stated that there is an official Irish-language version of the Rules of Procedure of the European Court of Justice, and that Irish was one of the official languages of the Court. As well, Irish may be used as a working language in the sessions of the European Parliament and at hearings of the Court. Another interesting point mentioned by Dr. O Riain was that because Irish is one of the languages recognised in the LINGUA programme, children from the Six Counties of North-Eastern Ireland and from England or, indeed, any Irish living in Brussels, can have special funding from the EC to go to the Gaeltacht to study Irish.

After the lecture, there was a recital by pupils of the Newcastlewest School of Music.

Dr. Breandán O Cíobháin, lecturing on "Irish Placenames in a European Context," on

Saturday morning, emphasised the importance of the study of our placenames, including the names of units smaller than townlands, as providing a key to very much of our past — archaeology, natural history, social history, etc. He said it was the Irish missionaries who went to Europe in the sixth and succeeding centuries who first popularised the term Europe to describe a distinct territorial area.

Dr. O Cíobháin also spoke of Orbanet, in which he is involved, this being an on-line heritage database created on a matrix of the placenames of Ireland, incorporating features such as a text base, bulletin service and electronic mail service.

On Saturday afternoon there was a very interesting bus tour, conducted by Mainchín O Seoighe, with visits to Ardpark, Glensheen (native place of the Joyce brothers), Kildorrery, Clonworth (where the spectacularly-situated Roche Castle and old Dominican priory were viewed), Labbacalle (Leaba Caillí), the largest and finest wedge-shaped

megalithic tomb in Ireland, and, finally, the ancient church site at Lubbamlogga (Leaba Molaige).

Peadar O Riada, who delivered the final lecture of the School, said that now that there was a complete listing of Irish dance music by Professor Fleischmann, who died recently, it was time that we ask ourselves what really is Irish music. Referring to the sean nós, he said we had imitators of this traditional style, but this was not the genuine thing; sean nós had to come straight from the heart. The trappings were not the most important thing in the case of our traditional music, it was the person and the soul inside them. Irish music was not a culture of the masses, but a creative culture of the individual person. It was noteworthy that a genuine sean nós singer never sang the same song in exactly the same way in any of his renditions. The lecturer saw a close affinity between traditional Irish music and classical Indian music, which he described as the most sophisticated in the world.

Informal sessions of

music and song at the day's end, after the formal events have taken place, constitute one of the delights of the Joyce Brothers School. On Saturday evening a Cúirt Eigse (a reading of poetry in Irish and English) formed part of that evening's session. It was conducted by Fr. Micheál Liston, PP, Cratloe. And it was Father Liston who said the Mass in Irish in Kilfinane parish church on Sunday morning. The choir, which sang so beautifully at the Mass, was in the capable hands of Charles Reynolds and Sister Máirín.

Because of the bad weather, the aeraíocht, or open-air concert, which was to have been held in Glensheen, was held indoors instead in the Kilfinane Education Centre. The MC was Ciarán Mac Mathúna, an old and very valued friend of the School, and the contributors were: Dónall O Conchúir, Christy Dunne and Jackie Daly; Rónán O Súilleabháin, Effin; the Ryan sisters, Dromcollogher; Colette Moloney, An Ráth; Emer Ní Uaithnín and Colm hUaithnín, Cahir; the Moloney family, Cappamore. Songs: Tomás O Séaghdha, Cork; Dónall O Ceogháin, Cork; the Ryan sisters, Dromcollogher; Yvonne Ní Mhaoldomhnaigh, Cappamore. Dances: Chris Gleeson Set Dancers, Kilfinane; The aeraíocht was organised by Dónall O Conchúir, Cappamore.

After the aeraíocht the Joyce Brothers School 1992 was formally closed by Mainchín Seoighe, organising secretary of the School. The visitors to the School had very high words of praise for the Kilfinane Education Centre, where the School was held, and for the beautifully laid out grounds surrounding it.

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