

A Limerickman's Diary

By OBSERVER

Half a century's search ends in Shannon Rowing Club

LAST SATURDAY morning a long search, continued for the past few years by the president of Shannon Rowing Club, Mr. Ian Comiskey; the vice-president, Mr. Joe Harold, and Mr. Felix O'Neill, ended in success. For many years the club had been trying to trace the whereabouts of the old records and minute books so that a list of presidents might be compiled and displayed in the premises. What records there were, however, covered only the period from 1921 to the present year; those dating from the foundation of the club in 1866 had been missing for over half a century.

After years and years of fruitless search by present and former members, the discovery was made simply enough. Mr. Comiskey was preparing a scheme of decoration for the upper rooms of the club, and this entailed the removal of an old desk from the committee room.

The two lower drawers of the desk had not been opened in living memory, and it was believed that they were empty. Mr. Comiskey, however, thought the desk unusually heavy, and decided to have the drawers prized open. And there, neatly stacked away, were the minute books of the club dating from 1874 to 1920, together with sheafs of accounts and many interesting documents. A half a century of search had ended.

The documents included an agreement drawn up in November 10, 1893, between the club and the Limerick Harbour Commissioners authorising the members of Shannon Rowing Club to build a premises on the Eastern end of the Wellesley Pier. At that time the old club premises were situated at the Western end of the docks.

The agreement was signed on behalf of Shannon by Edward Pigott and W. Baker, and for the Harbour Board by James Harris, secretary to the Harbour Commissioners.

The drawers too contained a set of the original plans for the present magnificent clubhouse which was built in 1906. The drawings were signed by T. Stephens and W. Clifford Smith, architects.

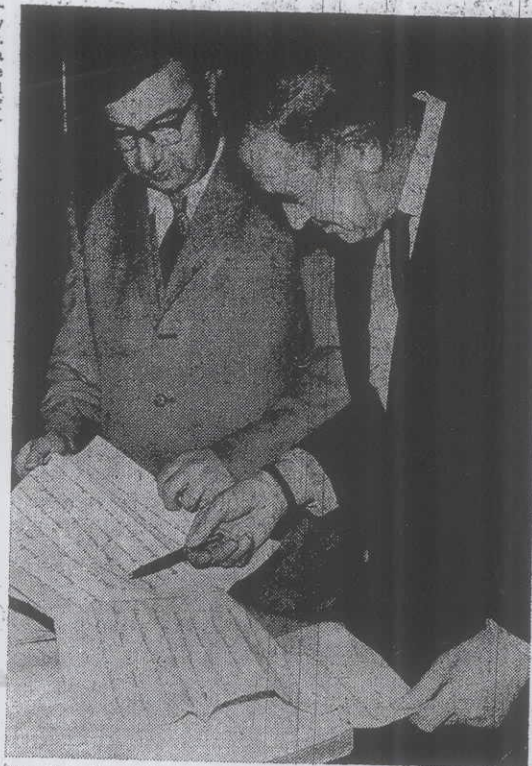
Stories

Behind these documents are two very interesting and authentic stories.

When the Limerick Boat Club received permission from the Harbour Board to build a club premises at the western end of the Wellesley Pier in 1870, Shannon Rowing Club, a few months later, approached the Board for a site on the eastern end of the pier.

The Board, however, refused permission to Shannon, on the grounds that two rowing clubs, situated in such close juxtaposition, could only come to blows with each other! And so Shannon had to wait a further 23 years before the Harbour Board could be convinced that whatever rivalries the clubs had — and they were many and intense — would only be fought out on the water through the clean and manly sport of rowing.

The other story concerns the building of the present premises. In 1905 the members decided to run a world-wide sweep to raise funds for the building of a new clubhouse. The idea was a tremendous success, and tickets were generously purchased wherever Limerick exiles were living in



Mr. Ian Comiskey, president, Shannon Rowing Club, and Mr. Joe Harold, vice-president, examining the eighty-year-old agreement between the club and the Limerick Harbour Commissioners. The deed, together with old records of the club, was lost for over half a century.

the far-flung corners of the earth.

A substantial prize was then offered to the architect who would, in the opinion of the committee, submit the most acceptable design for the proposed structure. The award went to Mr. Clifford Smith, an English architect, who came over from Britain to supervise the work. He liked Limerick so well that he made his permanent home here and opened up practice in O'Connell Street.

The present clubhouse is today recognised as the most magnificent rowing club premises in Europe.

Social

By a happy coincidence, the old documents were discovered on the morning of the club's annual buffet dance.

Speaking that night at the function, the Mayor, Councillor Paddy Kiely, said that Shannon Rowing Club down through the years had made its impact on the professional, business and sporting life of

Mayor, Mr. Des Kinnane of Shannon Diamond and Mr. Barney Canavan of Aer Lingus.

They had sat together at the same desk in 1947/48, and were now meeting for the first time in some years. They exchanged memories of old schooldays and old schoolmates, including Don Kelly, Sean O'Donovan, Gerry Crowe, Richard Murnane, Donald Brock and Roy McCormack.

Music for the very pleasant social which concluded the evening, was supplied by the Gerry Foley Trio.

Macaoimh Prize Winners

Declan Deegan and Peter Hickey were among the prize-winners in the diocesan arts and crafts competition held in St. John's Pavilion.

Declan, who was awarded second prize in the under nine section, is showing great potential in the competitive field, and was a member of the Dun Dealgan (St. Joseph's) section that won the Dom Dowdall drama competition and all-round sports trophy this year. He became a member of the Macaoimh eleven months ago and is showing great loyalty to the group.

His hobbies are soccer, swimming and reading adventure stories.

Declan is a son of the newly-appointed Diocesan Commissioner, Thomas Deegan, 25 Bowman Street, and is studying at Sexton Street CBS. His brother, Feargal, is also a member of St. Joseph's Macaoimh section.

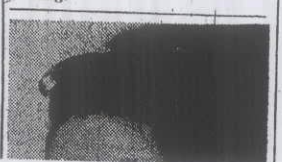
Peter

Peter Hickey, who won second prize in the under-eleven years section, has been a member of Dun Dealgan (St. Joseph's) for the past ten years.

He was a member of the winning Cath in the Dom Dowdall competition, and of the all-round sports trophy and tug-of-war teams. He is known as "The Hercules of the Cath".

At this year's sports he won three medals. He is a promising footballer and plays soccer with Dom Bosco and Gaelic with the CBS.

Peter, who resides with his parents in St. Joseph Street, is a pupil of Sexton Street CBS. He likes reading and swimming.



Mr. Stephen Bergen, manager of Woodford Bourne & Co. Bridget Magner of Cornet Mike O'Grady, Mungret. A presentation given by Woodford Bourne & Co. in celebration of the first anniversary of the first anniversary operation in Limerick.

WOODFORD ANNIV CELEB

"Cash and Carry is relative new in Ireland, but it is here to stay and is undoubtedly the modern way to do business. It cuts out many unnecessary costs and makes it possible for the retail trade to obtain substantial savings".

This was stated by Mr. Dav Nicholson of Messrs. Woodford Bourne & Co., Cork, on the occasion of a "first anniversary" celebration and reception for their customers at the Gwentworth Hotel last Tuesday night.

"This is the first anniversary of our cash and carry operation in Limerick, and I am delighted that so many of our customers have been able to join in our celebrations", said Mr. Nicholson. He welcomed them on behalf of the company and Messrs. Ken Daunt, Jerry Cashman and Stephen Bergin. Mr. Nicholson paid a special tribute to Mr. Bergin, who was held in high regard by the company and the customers for his excellent service and unfailing courtesy.

He went on to say that Woodford Bourne opened their first Cash and Carry in Cork about 3 years ago and within 18 months had opened a business in Waterford. This was followed some 11 months later by the expansion in Limerick, and only one month ago they opened yet another, this time in Dublin at Harold's Cross.

Aim

Their aim was to sell cheaply as possible, and that was why there were so many more people now dealing with Woodford's.

Explaining how effected savings that could be passed on to the trade, he went on.

"Firstly, we import all goods now in bulk containers; this involves buying in huge quantities, and this effects savings. Secondly, we have our own bonded warehouse, where goods are broken down into loads, which can then be delivered to our cash and carry depots by our own transport. On top of this, we have

Peter Hickey, who won 2nd prize in the diocesan Arts and Crafts Competition.

Boys' Club

work for youth. He continued, "The meeting of all those in participation in the Unity Games for the Thomondgate and Thomondgate New Year Club, Limerick, C.C. (club) thanked particularly the Club of Ireagh their representative, Sean Hayes, for his hospitality to the club. There are 25 clubs affiliated to the Limerick Youth Council, and for many 18-20 year olds we are concerned. The meeting would turn out in December 7 and say a vote for over 18s." Christmas cards, by St. Munchin's, were now on sale.

Club

Canon Breen of the club on their movements and made reference to the ladies' club. He wished all connected with the club a happy Christmas. Name thanked St. Boys' Club for their efforts and wished them a happy future. The club thanked the staff of the club for a splendid meal. The evening followed, and was provided by Mr. Halloran and his

SELS IS ON

sponsorship of the... Mr. Michael... He complimented... on their fine... throughout the... one player had... to the line"; Bro... the time he has... his sport; Sean Mur... coverage of the... through the