

IN BRIEF

Mid West jobs

■ EIGHTEEN Mid West companies are involved in a drive to create 1,850 new jobs over the next three years in high potential start-up (HPSU) businesses. The companies are supported by the Department of Jobs through Enterprise Ireland. The companies are among 122 HPSU's nationwide which received support under the programme in 2013. The jobs will be created in fields ranging including software, services, food and consumer products, engineering and medical devices.

Chamber board

■ THREE new directors have been appointed to the board of Limerick Chamber. David Jeffreys, managing director of Action Point Technology Group; Colm O'Brien, managing director of Carambola Kidz and Helen O'Donnell, director of Dolmen Catering and chair of Limerick City Business Association, will take up their positions immediately. They replace outgoing directors Jim Kenny, Padraic Frawley and Karl Daly. Liam Dwan, general manager of Brown Thomas, was re-appointed as director.

School funding

■ EDUCATION Minister Ruairi Quinn has approved funding for additional accommodation and emergency works in three county Limerick schools. Barna National School, Pallasgreen has been approved for funding for a mainstream classroom and resource rooms. Approval has been given to Scoil Mhuire, Effin for a mainstream classroom and funding has also been approved for St. Patrick's National School, Bruree for two mainstream classrooms and one extra room.

Notice lifted

■ LIMERICK County Council has confirmed that its last remaining precautionary boil water notice has been lifted. The local authority, acting on the advice of the Health Service Executive, introduced a precautionary boil water notice across County Limerick on Thursday after extensive power outages caused by last week's storm affected water pumping stations and treatment plants. Since Saturday 15 however, only 475 people served by the Fedamore public water scheme have been required to boil water prior to consumption. This precautionary notice has now been lifted.

REGENERATION

UN official support for regeneration submission

by Bernie English
bernie@limerickpost.ie

TWO community groups who have drawn up a submission on how they would like to see the Limerick regeneration process proceed have earned the support of the Human Rights Council of the United Nations.

Magdalena Sepúlveda Carmona, UN special rapporteur, who was on assignment to Ireland in 2011, wrote to the groups on publication of the submission, supporting their stance and recommendations.

The submission document was drawn up jointly by the Ballinacurra Weston Residents Alliance (BWRA) and the Weston Gardens Residents' Association (WGRA).

Speaking about the concerns raised by the two groups in the submission,

the UN Rapporteur said she supports the groups' approach to community participation.

"I urge the authorities in the regeneration areas to take their recommendations, based on human rights, into account," she said.

Cathal McCarthy, chairperson of the BWRA, said the submission outlines the greatest concerns of people living in the areas.

"Community participation is the biggest issue. We would like to see the same process as the one which was successful in Fatima Mansions in Dublin. People held local community elections. They were involved and engaged," he told the Limerick Post.

Another issue is safety and security, with boarded up houses being vandalised and torched. "The cameras are there but they're not monitored," said Mr McCarthy.

STORM DAMAGE

Historic lighthouse is swept away by storm

by Alan Jacques
alan@limerickpost.ie

A LIGHTHOUSE that stood watch over the Shannon Estuary for 145 years was swept away by the destructive force of Storm Darwin last week.

The Old Horse Rock Lighthouse, situated between Ringmoyle Pier in Pallaskerry and Shannon Airport, was destroyed in the violent storms that struck the region last Wednesday 12. Having withstood a battering for almost a century and a half, Storm Darwin proved too strong for the wooden structure.

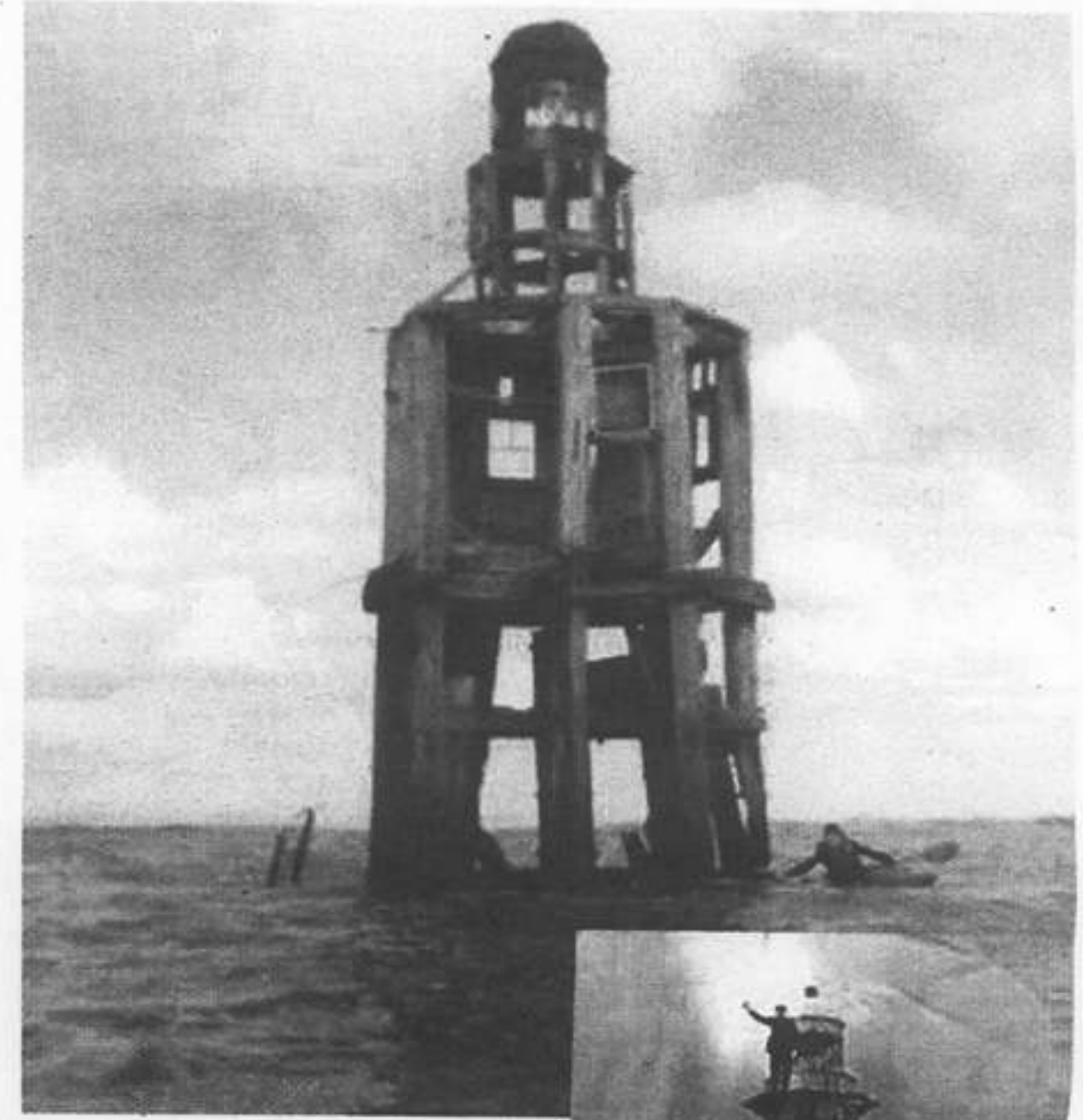
Built around 1869, the Horse Rock was later abandoned as a navigation aid in the 1950s when shipping was switched from the south channel of the Shannon to the north channel. But for the first half century, lighthouse-keeping duties were shared by the Fitzgerald brothers, Bill and Patrick, natives of Pallaskerry. The two men rowed a gandalow out to the lighthouse every day in all weather conditions between their work as fishermen on the Shannon. Bill's grandson Paul Fitzgerald told the Limerick Post that he was saddened to discover the lighthouse had been swept away when he visited Ringmoyle Pier at the weekend. "The lighthouse was in bad repair for many years but looked like it would last a long time yet until Darwin arrived last Wednesday and finished it off. It was a big shock," said Paul. "There's lots of sad reflections from our family and the family of Bill's brother Patrick for the passing of a bit of history for our family and an

important bit of maritime history for the Shannon estuary," he added. Bestselling author Darren Shan, a great grandson of lighthouse keeper Bill Fitzgerald, posted on his facebook page: "I just learnt about the most personally significant devastation of the storm - a lighthouse which members of my family used to maintain in the past was swept away and destroyed this week.

"A little bit of history passing, never to return. Of course that's the case every day that we live - every minute that passes sees the loss of something in our life that we can never regain - but some days it's driven home more forcefully than on others.

"We're only passing through this world, folks. We'll be all be swept away by the tides of time in the end. So enjoy it while you can. Be a lighthouse that shines in the dark, even if only for an impossibly brief moment in the long, long lifespan of the universe," Mr Shan concluded.

Rock of ages, The Old Horse Rock Lighthouse blown by the wind



SOCIETY

Backing for referendum

by Bernie English
bernie@limerickpost.ie

CONFIRMATION that Limerick City Council is about to give its formal approval for a referendum on same sex marriage has been welcomed by Labour Party MEP Phil Prendergast.

"This is a positive step for the LGBT community and I commend the Limerick City councillors who will support the motion at next Monday's full council meeting. Similar motions of this kind have also been passed in Cork City and Dublin City councils and I hope local authorities across the country will also support sex unions", she said.

"Equality has to be a cornerstone of Irish society and the Labour Party will do its utmost to ensure that next year's same sex marriage referendum is passed. As Deputy John Lyons highlighted in his powerful Dáil speech, gay people in all walks of life are still bullied and discriminated against.

"This move from Limerick City Council is a helpful endorsement of equality and continues the discourse on LGBT rights", she concluded

COURT REPORT

Dundon fails in attempt to delay murder trial

by Andrew Carey
andrew@limerickpost.ie

LIMERICK crime gang boss Wayne Dundon has failed to secure an adjournment of his trial for the murder of Roy Collins five years ago.

The 35 year-old from Lenihan Avenue, who is still in custody on a charge of murdering the Limerick businessman, is due to face trial along with Nathan Killeen (23) of Hyde Road on April 29 next.

On April 9, 2009, a gunman entered the Coin Castle Amusement arcade at the Roxboro Road Shopping centre and shot Mr Collins.

Last week, Mr Justice Paul Butler ruled that the possibility that the trial could go beyond the scheduled timeframe was not reason enough to adjourn it. The court was told that the State was anxious to get on with

the trial after hearing from Garda Chief Superintendent David Sheehan of the possibility of threats to prosecution witnesses. He said that the protection of those witnesses was made more difficult as time went by.

Gardaí were aware of threats that had been made against prosecution witnesses and "attacks on witness families were very likely" and any delays in progressing with the trial would cause a significant strain on resources.

Mr Justice Butler said that the court had to balance the potential danger to life and the absolute duty of the trial court to ensure a fair trial.

Dismissing the application for an adjournment, he said that any disclosure issues could be dealt with in advance of the scheduled date for trial.