

# Abbeyfeale to remember hero Richard J Hayes

■ A plaque will be erected in the Square to honour breaker of Nazi codes

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ABBEYFEALE will remember Ireland's foremost Nazi codebreaker this weekend when it will unveil a plaque in the Square to native son Richard J Hayes, who was also Director of the National Library.

And a large contingent of Richard Hayes' relatives, including his sister, his grandchildren, great-grandchildren and other relatives are travelling to Abbeyfeale for the event.

Marc McMenamin, the documentary maker and author who brought Richard Hayes' achievements during World War 2 to a wider audience, will also attend.

The event is being organised by Abbeyfeale Community Council, and council chairman, Maurice O'Connell said they were very pleased and honoured by the response to their initiative. "The fact that so many of Richard Hayes' relatives are travelling is very significant," he said.

The plaque is located on the Bank of Ireland building in The Square, where Richard Hayes was born in 1902, son of the then bank manager Richard Snr.

The young Richard was clever, excelling at Clongowes and later pursuing three degree courses at the same time and becoming fluent in several languages including German as well as being a brilliant mathematician. He got a post in the National Library and was later to become its na-



Richard Hayes is to be commemorated in his home town of Abbeyfeale for achievements including breaking Nazi codes during World War II. A plaque is to be unveiled this weekend

tional director.

How he first became connected with Military Intelligence remains a mystery but with the outbreak WW11 began he was headhunted for G2, the Irish Mil-

itary Intelligence section. Ireland, although neutral, was of interest to the German High Command and Richard Hayes' job, because of his mathematical prowess, was to break the codes

of messages coming from and to Germany into Ireland could be understood.

He was, by any measure, successful at it and made a number of significant breakthroughs,

one of which was the discovery of microdot coding. Another concerned German spy Herman Gortz who was dispatched to Ireland with one of the most sophisticated ciphers or codes in use by the Germans. At the time, there were 16 people working in Bletchley Park in England trying to break this code but it was Richard Hayes who did so, using measures that today read like an old-fashioned spy thriller. Gathering up burnt pieces of paper and applying chemicals to them is as James Bond as you can get.

A third significant breakthrough involved the spy from Kilkee, John Francis O'Reilly who was trained as a spy in Germany and was parachuted into West Clare. He brought with him a code-cipher wheel or device which Richard Hayes set about analysing and discovered that Germany had developed an entirely new system of carrying out substitution and transposition ciphers, the keys to any code. This information was shared with British intelligence and was the breakthrough in decoding German messages in the build-up to the Battle of the Bulge.

"At the end of the war, Hayes was described as a colossus whose gifts amount to genius," Marc McMenamin told the Limerick Leader when his book was published last autumn. But he added: "He has almost written himself out of history." Richard Hayes rarely if ever spoke about his work, he pointed out.

"It was the ethos of the time. you just didn't talk about it."

## DEATHS IN THE PAST WEEK

**BARRY**, Patrick (Paddy) of Feohanagh. Devoted husband of Eileen (née O'Sullivan), loving father of Richard, Pádraig and the late Eamonn, brother of the late Margaret, Edward, Mary and Richard. Sadly missed by his wife, sons, daughters-in-law Sinéad and Deirdre, grandchildren Aileen, Muireann and Eamon, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces, relatives, neighbours and many friends. Reposing at Sextons' Funeral Home, Broadford on Thursday 16th May from 6pm with Removal at 8pm to St. Mary's Church, Feohanagh. Requiem Mass on Friday 17th May at 12 noon with Funeral afterwards to Aglish Cemetery.

**CORLESS** (née McGrath / Turner), Margaret (Magz) of Monaleen. Beloved wife of James, dearly loved mother of Leah. Sadly missed by her loving brothers Marcus, Keith, Jonathan, Patrick, sisters Monica, Melissa and Sersha, parents Lily and Paddy, mother-in-law Geraldine, sisters-in-law, the extended Mc Grath family and her many friends. Reposing at Thompsons Funeral Home, Thomas Street, this Thursday evening from 5.00pm to 7.00pm with removal afterwards to Monaleen Church, Monaleen, Limerick. Requiem Mass on Friday at 11.00am followed by cremation service at 1.00pm in Shannon Crematorium.

**O'DONNELL**, Christopher of Bruff. Predeceased by his son Patrick. Survived by his wife Gillian, sons and daughter, grandchildren, brother, nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

**O'MALLEY** (née Merrick), Kathleen of Cappamore. Predeceased by her husband Joe and grandson Cathal; sadly missed by her loving daughter Bridie (Murphy), sons Larry, Michael and Brian, sister Breda, son-in-law John, daughters-in-law Margaret, Denise and Margaret, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives, neighbours and friends.

**O'RIORDAN** (née Winters), Margaret (Peg) of Granagh. Beloved wife of the late Denis and dearest sister to the late Monsignor Samuel, Jeremiah and

by her son Eugene, daughters Anne and Marie, grandchildren, son-in-law Gary, sisters Kitty and Judy, nephews, nieces, the extended Mooney and Lynch families.

**O'NEILL**, Tony of Askeaton. Deeply regretted by loving sister Mary, brother Pat, sisters-in-law, brother-in-law, nephews, nieces, cousins, relatives, friends and the staff of Abbot Close Nursing Home.

**WALSH** (née Doyle), Ann of Limerick. Loving wife of the late Matt and sister of the late Sr. Imelda. Sadly missed by her loving sons Declan, Kevin and Brendan, daughter Fionnuala, sister Margaret, son-in-law Cieran, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends.

**CURTIN**, Paddy (Patie) of Mountcollins. Patie is very sadly missed by his wife Margaret (nee Sheehan), sons Laurence, Eddie and Patrick, daughters-in-law Tanya and Ann-Marie, grandchildren Shauna, Jamie and Chloe, brother, sisters, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, nephews, nieces, relatives and friends.

**LONG**, Micheál of Glin. Sadly missed by his parents Seamus and Maureen (nee Reidy), brothers Liam and John, Sisters-in-law Angela and Noreen, nephews and nieces Shauna, Jamie, Brian, Michael, Seán and Mark, aunts, uncles, cousins, other relatives, kind neighbours and a large circle of friends.

**LYNCH**, Willie of Cappamore. Predeceased by his brothers Tom and John. Sadly missed by his loving wife Kathleen, son Liam, niece Kathleen, nephew Thomas, sister in law Nora May, neighbours, relatives and friends.

**MOTHERWAY**, Ted of Limerick. Dearly missed by his beloved wife Betsy. Much loved father to David, Ailish and Dermot and beloved grandfather of David, Luna, Johnny and Jessica. Deeply regretted by his brother Sean, sister May and his daughter-in-law Susie, sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews, extended family and close friends.