Weight thrower gave it his best shot...

By PATRICIA FEENEY

THE PARISH of Ballybricken last Saturday celebrated the centenary of the birth of its most famous son, world champion weight thrower, John O'Grady.

For the community, the centenary of the birth of a local man, Tom O'Grady, the weight thrower of Ballybricken, who recently gave the world championship a facelift.

John O'Grady, who died in 1970, was a three times world champion. His weight-throwing feats are still remembered in Ballybricken and Cahirboy.

He still has the old weights used by his uncle and says: "I grew up listening to stories of my uncle's feats."

According to Tom, his uncle was "a fine cut of a man," who stood 6'4" and who took 22 in a single throw.

His prowess is still recalled in Cahirboy, where Pat Houlihan organized a small commemorative ceremony at the weekend.

According to Pat, the champion returned from the world stage to live in Limerick, where he worked as a traffic inspector with the County Council.

He died suddenly in 1970, and his wife and family are buried at Kilrush Cemetery, Cahirboy.

The celebration of the centenary of the birth of Tom O'Grady was a fitting tribute to a man who is still remembered in his home town with much pride.

The O'Grady monument at Mulgrave Street.

The Hession session

By NORMA PRENDIVILLE

EAD HESSON is causing quite a stir in Newcastle West these days. And there's a reason for that. She's now a火灾, and she's now in demand from all over the west country.

People who don't normally go out on a Tuesday night — indeed, some of those who don't normally go out at all — are coming to the weekly drag show.

It's hard to explain exactly how and why the Eda phenomenon has taken off to the extent it has. There are those who claim she can't sing a note, but who wouldn't miss her for the world. There are others who clearly enjoy her versions of old songs and new and who seem to love her zany brand of comedy.

Certainly, one can say without fear of contradiction that her rise to prominence is meteoric and that her gits are likely to be her downfall. However, the audience is packed with people who come to see her and enjoy her zany style.

Eda herself is a sanguine about the whole thing. "I left my job at the fish market and became a singer. I've been doing this for a few years now and I'm getting a lot of requests to come and sing."

"I'm a bit of a mess, but I enjoy the audience and they enjoy me. I'm not a professional singer, but I like to sing and I enjoy making people laugh."

Eda launched herself on the music scene shortly before Christmas with her own record, "Teeny Weeny", a compilation of mainly old songs, some of which she learned from her mother, and some of which she has learned by herself.

Eda has always liked to sing and says she's always done it for her own enjoyment. She doesn't know if her present success is simply a flash in the pan, but for the moment she is determined to enjoy every minute of it.

Salmon watch... Christy Kelleher patrolling the Abbeagheen River.