OBITUARY

Mick Crowe - a man for all seasons

John O’Shaughnessy looks back on the colourful career of the late Michael Crowe

A MAN of many parts - that was the legendary Mick Crowe, who died this week, aged in his eighties, at the Lakes Nursing Home in Killaloe.

Mick recognized the breadth and breadth of Ireland, and further afield, of a businessman and sportsman extraordinary.

The words of one acquaintance, there was has been a humorous note that he was not associated with his native town.

At various stages in his illustrious life, he was hospital, hotel owner, restaurateur, sports and white goods shop owner, international soccer player, showband manager. For varying periods of different organisations, fundraiser and soccer club manager.

In his youth, he was capped at junior international level with Ireland, and it was not surprising, I suppose, that much of his energy was devoted to the game that he loved so well.

Linked to Shelbourne and Ballybunion Rovers clubs, as well as Shannon RFC, he held a multiplicity of positions with Limerick AFC, from the Fraw Fenton era of the 1960s, through to the Pat Grace ownership in the 1990s.

When Limerick travelled to Sofia in their first ever European Cup game in the 1960s, the always jovial Mick Crowe, affectionately known as ‘The Doc’, assigned himself the role of ‘interpreter’ which he fulfilled admirably, according to the late Billy Higgins, a then director of the club.

He also lent his support to Limerick CKE when they qualified for the Colleges World Soccer Cup, held in Turkey in 1975 and where his managerial and fundraising skills were crucial to their success.

Mick was prompted to run for the Dáil after the untimely deaths of Desough O’Malley in the mid-sixties, and less than a decade later, was voted in as an Independent member of City Council, a position he later resigned.

His motto in his Dáil election campaign was “Things Go Better with Crowe”

Mick, one time owner of the former Imperial Hotel in Catherine Street, once again demonstrated his entrepreneurship when following the closure of Barrington’s Hospital, he opened Barrington’s Pub on Broad Street where a number of memorabilia he purchased from the hospital adorned the walls.

When it came to raising money for clubs and charities, he had few equals. Even the Kerry County GAA Board called upon his services to help organise an overseas trip. Mick was particularly friendly with the late Pat McInerney.

I can recall a situation where a woman was left with eight children following the sudden death of her husband. The family was in poor circumstances and Mick Crowe, without seeking assistance from any other source, privately went to a local undertaker and met the full cost of the burial.

There are countless stories surrounding Mick Crowe, who, in recent years, resisted attempts to have his life published in book form.

I will leave that to the more deserving - like my cousin, hurling legend Eamon Cregan,” he responded when I recently met him in the company of his long time friend, Joe O’Mahony.

The last word to Mick Doyle, who broke his leg when playing for Limerick AFC in their first ever FAI Cup final against Shamrock Rovers at Dalymount Park, in the mid-sixties: “Mick was something else, and I don’t believe we will ever see his likes again”.

He is survived by wife Lily, sons Michael, David, Niall, Barry, daughters Ann, Karen, Hilary, sister Betty, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, grandchildren, great grandchildren, cousins, relatives, many friends.

Burial was at Castlemungret Cemetery on Wednesday 23.

The late Mick Crowe during his playing days with Shannon and during his latter years.

CUTBACKS

‘Grey revolt’ under way despite reassurances from Taoiseach

By Andrew Carey

As thousands of pensioners protested outside Government buildings over last week’s budget cutsbacks, Taoiseach Enda Kenny travelled to Limerick to issue a warning against “scare mongering”.

Speaking at the University of Limerick, Mr Kenny said that up to 97 per cent of older people will keep their medical cards, despite claims for the opposite that the Government is targeting older people in “witch hunts” of medical card holders.

He also insisted that older people would not be left without vital home security links following the abolition of their monthly telephone allowance.

When asked about fears of a “grey revolt” in the wake of budget changes, to eligibility for medical cards for those over 70, Mr Kenny warned against any “scare mongering”.

“There isn’t any room for scare mongering to the effect that everybody is going to lose medical cards. There is a system here that is income based.

“Since this was centralised a number of years ago, the assessment process is the same for everybody so those people who are under the income guidelines for medical cards need have no worries,” he said.

“The change made in eligibility affects a small number of higher earning people over 70 and when that change is completed, the proportion of people over 70 who either have medical cards or GP cards will still be around 97 per cent,” he added.

Mr Kenny insisted he values greatly the contribution that older people continue to make to society. However he confirmed that there would be no roll back on the awing of telephone allowances for pensioners.

When asked about fears among some older people that they will lose their link to emergency services without their telephone service, Mr Kenny said he is in talks with the Ministers for the Environment and Social Protection to arrange how this can be facilitated through digital technology.

The Taoiseach also confirmed that there would be no cabinet reshuffle this year.

“I have already indicated it will be in the second half of the Government that will not happen this year. It is a matter I will reflect on,” he concluded.

Mr Kenny was in Limerick to announce details of a €52million