

# Sixmilebridge train back on track after 34 years

New Limerick-Galway service applauded



The €106.5 million new route was officially launched by Minister for Transport Noel Dempsey TD following the completion of the renewal of the Ennis-Athenry line. Scheduled services commenced this week. Minister for Transport Noel Dempsey TD & Minister for Sustainable Transport, Horticulture and Planning, Ciarán Cuffe TD.

By Rebekah Commene, at Sixmilebridge Station

A SIZEABLE crowd turned out at Sixmilebridge this Monday, despite the downpour, to watch the first train stop in the village in nearly 34 years.

The Clere station reopened as part of the €106.5 million route from Limerick to Galway, under the government's Transport 21 strategy.

Minister for Transport Noel Dempsey was on board the launch train, along with a host of other political representatives, and CIE and Iarnród Éireann chairman Dr. John Lynch.

Sixmilebridge was the first stop on the route from Limerick, and the train also made ports of call at Ennis, Gort, Ardahan, Craughwell, Athenry, and finally Galway.

"I'm delighted to see the train back. I'm studying photography at Limerick Senior College and the bus times didn't suit my timetable there", Margaret McHugh, a Sixmilebridge resident, told the Limerick Post. "This will make life much easier for me, getting the train to Limerick."

"I have a daughter in Galway also, so have a train directly from here will be very handy for me".

Padraig Moroney from Broadford, was hopeful that the historic Station House would be refurbished, and suggested a shuttle bus from Shannon airport.

"It's great to see the train back here, but there should be funding allocated to refurbishing the station house. It's part of our heritage and it's in a terrible state of disrepair."

"I use the train from Birdhill most often, but if I'm going to Galway, I'll use the new service here."

"There should definitely be a shuttle bus from the airport to Sixmilebridge now".

Clare County Councillor Gerry Flynn, told this newspaper that

€750,000 had been spent on purchasing the land on which the carpark now lies, with 83 spaces available.

"I'd say there were a couple of thousand here to see off the train today."

"If 25% of those who turned out today use the service on a regular basis, it will be very viable."

"Anything that opens is positive, we've seen enough closing. When you see the Shannon Shamrock closing and a number of other hotels operating on a shoestring on the verge of closure, any positive developments in the region have to be welcomed."

"It's all about using the service now. If you don't use it, you lose it!" The Limerick to Galway train will operate five times a day in each direction, with four services on Sundays.

## Letter to the Editor

### Decision against wishes

Sir,  
I am writing to protest at the decision to allow the pubs to open on Good Friday.

This whole situation is down to pure greed and the Munster Rugby branch that were too cowardly to take on Leinster and Setanta Sport.

If they had courage, they would have refused to play on Friday as there was Thursday, Saturday or Sunday to play the match.

So hang your heads in shame; as for the publicans, they were on the steps of the

court with their mouthpiece, the mayor, wanting the law changed. Their eyes gleamed like cash registers.

All involved sold all the values that were handed down to us. They have betrayed our heroes who died for this Republic. I am sure their own ancestors would turn in their graves. Is there nothing sacred in this country anymore? Will they change our country's name to Greedland instead of Ireland?

Gerry O'Sullivan,  
Greenhill,  
Garryowen.

## Pubs with plenty of beer on Good Friday

By Colum Coomey

WE have all heard of The Pub With No Beer, a song made famous by Australian Slim Dusty, but the reverse will be the case in Limerick on this Good Friday when publicans will be calling 'last orders' 11.30 pm.

There has been a generally positive attitude to last week's court ruling allowing city centre pubs and those in the suburbs, to open their doors for 5 1/2 hours on Good Friday, to facilitate the thousands expected to converge on Limerick for the Magners League clash between Munster and Leinster.

Dublin-based publican Charlie Chawke, who also owns two pubs in Adare, is availing of the decision to serve refreshments and sandwiches on Good Friday in all his premises.

He argues that he will be operating within the law in opening the pubs without serving alcohol, opening from 9am to 11pm.

The Catholic Church in Limerick responded to the District Court ruling with a statement from administrator of the Diocese, Fr Tony Mullins.

He said: "I respect this decision. However, this is also an opportunity for Christians to make their own decision, in the context of civil law and society and the faith community to which they belong, in accordance with their conscience".

The cleric emphasised



Chairman of Limerick Vintners Federation and representing the publicans Jerry O'Dea pictured celebrating at the Locke Bar.

that the decision to respect the religious festivities was a personal one.

"Good Friday is a day when Christians of all denominations throughout the world take time to reflect on the passion and death of Christ. Many people in Limerick and Ireland still join in these religious practices and enter into the spirit of Good Friday".

Fr Mullins welcomed any Good Friday visitors to Limerick to join local communities for the liturgies on that day.

Limerick City chairman of the Vintners' Federation Jerry O'Dea, is delighted with the court ruling.

He said: "Our members saw this as a last resort, having previously consulted both the Magners League and the respective teams with a view to playing the game on either the Thursday or the Saturday".

He described the decision as a victory for common sense, and believes that their application had wide public support.

However, Br Shaun O'Connor of the Franciscan Friars, expressed his sadness at those who put money ahead of their faith.

It is believed that the Friars are set to hold a protest outside of Thomond Park on match day.

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