

# SHANNON MEAT GAZETTE



Volume 1. No. 1 December 1975.

## LOOKING FORWARD WITH CONFIDENCE

By Maurice F. Cowhey  
Managing Director.

As organisations grow larger personal communications between members becomes more and more difficult. Different interpretations of policy or directives between the various groups may cause frustration and friction. Any efforts however small which would eliminate such short comings must be commended. The hope is that this bi-monthly paper will provide for our organization a forum for information and discussion. The editorial group of Dan Neville, Christy Jones, Sean Harnett, and Sean Dowling are to be congratulated on their efforts and we must all support them to the utmost of our ability.

Recent years have seen large investment by the Company in plant and building viz. New Abattoir, Welfare Block, Extra Blast Freezers etc. etc. The development commenced in 1974 envisages the completion of the following works by August 1977.

By Products Plant and Ancillaries  
Complete Restructuring of the Refrigeration plant.  
Chillers - Cold Storage  
Complete Water Treatment Pumping and Storage.  
Complete Effluent Disposal Plant  
Extend Office Accommodation  
Extend Canned Goods Store  
Extend Dry Goods Store  
Extend Lairage  
Extend Boning Accommodation and facilities.  
Extend Laboratory and Ancillaries  
Extend Various plant and Machines  
Extend Roads, Parking etc.  
The estimated costs necessary to make the project viable are :-

Site development and building works	£562,213
New Machinery and Equipment	311,787
	£874,000
Additional Working Capital Needed	700,000
	£1,574,000

This is being financed as follows :-  
Company's Cash flow 656,000  
Industrial Development Authority Grant (Subject to Conditions) 218,000  
Balance By Bank Borrow.

### SURVIVE

An application for a F.E.O.G.A. grant of £140,000 towards the project has been made to Brussels. The response to this application will not be known until early 1976. If it is successful no payments will be made until the project is completed.

The above scheme is an investment in updating the factory plant and premises in modern processing technology and facilities. The successful completion of the project is essential for the Company to survive as a first class meat processing unit.



Maurice F. Cowhey.

I would like on behalf of the Company and myself to wish each and every Member of the Staff

A HAPPY CHRISTMAS AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.

We would like also to thank you for your co-operation through-out 1975.

P. LYNCH, General Manager.

Our industry has weathered the present world recession so far. Some rather gloomy predictions are being made for 1976/77. Undoubtedly the level of slaughtering of breeding stock gives cause for anxiety as to future livestock supplies and the export of weanlings and calves will not help. It is to be hoped that any predicted diminution in livestock supplies will have little effect on the employment content or on the general progress of our organisation.

## NEW APPOINTMENT

Michael Kelly of Rathkeale is operator of the new fat rendering plant. For Michael it all began in March of this year, when he answered and was successful for the above.

His training began shortly after his appointment. He went to England in August to see a similar plant in operation. In England, he gained a tremendous amount of knowledge first hand.

While there Michael had an opportunity to visit his sisters, Margaret and Patricia, and brother Denis who live in Burton-on-Trent.

Michael first operated the Shannon Meat fat plant for a three day trial period. This was under the supervision of two qualified men from England. After this, Michael began operating the plant on his own. His work involves the rendering of fat and extracting the cooking oil. Michael finds this job very interesting and is very happy at it.

Michael Kelly has now been employed with Shannon Meat Ltd; for 18 years. He began in Packing department in 1957 under the foremanship of Frank Barry. His wages there were £1.25 per week.

From there he was transferred to the Freezers as chargehand. He spent 4 years there stacking boxes of frozen beef. He then moved to strapping boxes in the Boning Hall under Mr. P. Cawley. In 1967 Michael joined the building maintenance and continued there until early this year

### CHANGES

Michael has seen many changes in Shannon Meat since he joined. The biggest change he can bring to mind is the introduction of organised training programmes. When he came to Shannon Meat Ltd; it took him almost one week before he saw all the factory. Now he says they have training instructors to show them everything.

Michael went to Rathkeale National School. In 1967 he married the former Eileen Balfe who was at the time working with Shannon Meat. They have three children. Denis (7), Brian (6), and Michael Jr. (4½).

Michael has been involved in the I.T.G.W.U. for 10 years. He has been Secretary for 4 of those 10 years. He found this hard work but very rewarding. He feels that it is left to the same few every year to keep things going in the Union. He feels that more people should seek election.

Michael is very interested in Sports, mainly Soccer which he played for Rathkeale for some time.

For the future, Michael would like to see possible expansion of the Company, with more employment and greater opportunity for promotion in various jobs.

To Michael we say congratulations on your success and may you enjoy many more years in your employment.



Miss Nora Dalton seen here packing one of Shannon Meat's most popular and successful products, Corned Beef.

## 1975 - A YEAR OF ACHIEVEMENT AND CHANGE

By John F. Mulcahy,  
Production Manager.

these inflationary times.

Although the year 1975 has still some eight odd weeks to come before finally passing on nevertheless it can be said that it will turn out to be a year of achievement for Shannon Meat Ltd. Assuming that the present level of killing will be maintained until the end of the year the Company will see the figure of 50,000 units processed. This will be a new record for the Company and in fact it will represent an increase of 38% over the previous recorded best at Shannon Meat. This is all the more remarkable when one considers that during the last three weeks in June only 551 cattle passed through the plant due to circumstances beyond it's control.

The record increase in killing has resulted in increased activity throughout all departments within the plant to record levels. This has been made possible by the employees entering into the spirit of the "incentive bonus scheme" which has been introduced and by increased effort on their part. It is gratifying to relate that most departments are now working above standard performance and the Management are pleased to see employees wages increased through enhanced bonus earnings. No doubt, the systematic training programme embarked by the Company has contributed very largely to this increased throughput also, particularly in the Boning-Hall where a major training programme was carried out. This has resulted in raising the number of boners and trimmers available and is now reflected in record levels through this department.

### CHANGES

The year 1975 has seen many changes within Shannon Meat, notably, (i) The introduction and preparing of the new Training Area. (ii) Installation of the Rendering Plant. (iii) Completion of new blast freezers. (iv) Palletising of Holding-Room. (v) Installation of new Refrigeration equipment. (vi) New shop chill (vii) New liquid blood installation. This has involved the various managements and Engineering Depts; in considerable planning and it is to their credit that they were ready to meet this increased throughput. Many of these installations will have the effect of account value to the product passing through the plant which is very desirable during

The Company is presently committed to a capital works expansion programme which will cost well in excess of half a million pounds. This expansion is necessary if the Company is to progress further ahead and remain competitive. This expansion will be financed from within Company reserves, Bank borrowing and Grants.

### EFFICIENCY

However, it is only fair to point out, that while this expansion and increased activity has been taking place within Shannon Meat, it's competitors have not been standing idly by. This is probably best illustrated by the fact that in former years Shannon Meats share of the national cow kill was 10% and that it presently stands at 8%. The national cow kill has of course increased to 15,000 cows per week at present. It is very important for the Company to regain this position and to increase it if at all possible. This does not mean that the Company expects it's employees to work harder still but rather that it can be achieved by (a) Greater efficiency. (b) The elimination of all lost time. (a) Hopefully could be achieved by the installation of the new Boning lines, hide puller etc. (b) Could be achieved by eliminating breakdown time to the most negligible proportions, and also the acceptance by the employees of the proposals before them concerning staggered starts and stops. I sincerely feel that the employees of Shannon Meat have enough intelligence and foresight to recognise that the latter is as much in the interest of themselves and their families, some of whom may yet come to work here, as it is in the interest of the Company. Agreement on the latter could result in increased killing to the tune of 40 to 50 cattle per day and would be reflected in increased bonus earnings for the workers involved.

Finally, on behalf of the Management and myself, I sincerely express my gratitude to all Department Heads, Supervisors, Chargehands and all the employees for the increased effort they are making this year. Let us all keep the effort up and together make this firm a better and more prosperous place to work in the future.



# I.T.G.W.U. CO-OPERATION WITH NEWS INITIATIVE MEANS PROGRESS.

G. Molyneux Secretary.

By  
P.J. Jones  
Chairman.

The Shannon Meat Ltd., branch of the I.T.G.W.U. was first established in 1952 by a group numbering about ten workers. The first officers to be elected were as follows: Chairman, Bernard Daly, Secretary - Patrick Jones, Treasurer - Martin O'Shea. It is interesting to note, that the Secretary on that occasion, Patrick Jones, was the late father of the present Chairman, P.J. Jones. The Committee elected were, Donie Lynch, Sonny Lynch and Patrick Roche.

At the time the Union was founded, the staff was much smaller in number than it is at the present time, and employment was very insecure and unstable. One who is a veteran of those years, and one who has experienced both lean and plentiful times in Shannon Meat Ltd is Bernard Daly. He, as already stated, was the first Chairman, and his reminiscence provide us with invaluable details of the early days of the Union. At that time, production was on a much smaller scale, and employment was very unpredictable. Jobs often only lasted short periods. The Management at that time consisted of Mr. Cowhey, Mr. Lynch, and Mr. Binchy. Bernard Daly speaks of his relationship with them as being very co-operative and tranquil. He wishes to convey his appreciation to Mr. Lynch for his fair and open minded attitude in their various dealings.

## FRUITFUL

As the years passed, production

and prosperity increased and the Union developed into a more active body. Its association with the Management became closer and more united. This close association proved fruitful when a joint effort by Management and Union, to have a Cannery installed in the plant was successful. The Union officials directly involved in this venture were Mr. Patrick Jones, and Mr. Ned O'Neill. They had a meeting in Dublin with the then Minister for Agriculture, Mr. Smith, and a short time later the license was granted. Many members involved in the Union during this period have passed away, namely Patrick Jones, Patrick Roche, John O'Shaughnessy and Neddy Roche. Some, however still remain and are presently employed in the plant. They are, Bernard Daly, Sean Guiry, Paddy Royce, William Meade, Paddy McNamara and Tommy Glenny.

The most notable achievements of the Union to date have been its success in getting holiday pay and sick benefits for the workers. Relations with Management have reached a very high level and this has been beneficial to everybody concerned. We firmly believe, that the principal reason for this improvement in relations, is the weekly meeting between the Union and Management representative, Mr. Dan Neville. These regular meetings have proved most effective, in discussing and dealing with problems as they occur. They have developed a great sense of involvement and responsibility, and



Mr. P.J. Jones left present chairman of the I.T.G.W.U in Shannon Meat Ltd, with Mr. B. Daly the first Chairman.

have fostered a common interest in the success of the plant. We are grateful to Mr; Neville and Management, for providing us with this opportunity of communicating regularly.

## GRATEFUL

Shannon Meat Ltd; has come a long way since Paddy Sheehan was employed with his horse and car drawing out offal. This has now been replaced by machinery. The plant has developed into a thriving and successful industry and provides employment for about 250 workers from the surrounding area. As 1975 draws to a close, we look forward to the New Year with

hope and optimism. We will strive continually to maintain our high level of involvement and co-operation with both workers and Management. We are very grateful to Management for the facilities provided by them to the Union and we hope we can continue to be of assistance to them. To conclude, we would like to encourage all Union members to give their fullest co-operation and assistance in the production of this magazine, as we believe it will further improve communications within the plant. It is important to remember that this magazine belongs to and represents every person within the factory.

## Shannon Meat chat

By the Scribe.

\* Ned and Cathleen Lawlor have a new baby girl born on 11th September. Mr. and Mrs Jim Kenrick likewise, born on 13th October.

\* Michael Barry got engaged during the summer.

\* Michael Ahern, of the boning hall, got married during the summer.

\* John Lynch, the assistant Production Manager has been chosen as a member of the panel for the Limerick County Football team.

\* We would like to wish Paddy Small, who has been ill for some time, a speedy recovery.

\* Donal Costelloe and wife had a new baby, their first, born on 30th October.

\* The following staff members were selected to play in the Rathkeale football team which beat Killeedy in the West Limerick final: Liam Woulfe, John Lynch, Patch Markham, James O'Grady, Sean Harnett, Denis Kenneally and Tom White.

\* Best wishes to Gerry Raftery on his recent engagement.

\* Welcome to David O'Connor, who has joined the Department of Agriculture staff in Shannon Meat Ltd.

## A Woman's Place

BY BRED MORRISSEY (Accounts Dept.)

This is International Women's Year. There have been many national and international conferences, lectures and sessions on the general items of the liberation of women. Many will have read about this or heard the subject debated on Radio and Television, but apart from the privileged few who are actively involved, most of us are happy to indulge our own thoughts on the matter.

Many of us are neither Women's Libbers or Women's campaigners of any sort, but we have sympathy with some of the aims of the Women's Lib Movement while disagreeing with others. Nobody will deny that women have been discriminated against in many aspects of life and that it took the Women's Lib. Movement to bring these injustices out in the open and indeed to have them rectified. Most people now accept that women should have equal rights as regards job opportunity. The legal position of women as regards ownership of property etc; was another field where women were greatly discriminated against, but this also is now under discussion.

### CHRISTIAN

Yes, the Women's Lib. Movement has done a good deal for women. Women are gradually beginning to invade what was up to recently, regarded as male preserves, Politics and even the Church. And is it not right that women should exercise some influence in public life and help to create a more human and Christian Society.

However, having said all this about Women's Lib; we feel we must take issue with at least some of the points these women campaigners try to force upon us. To listen to some of these formidable women on T.V. debates one would get the impression that the woman who stays at home and looks after her family is some kind of inferior being. She should be up and out and fighting for an equal position with men. Now, this is a total misconception of woman's primary role in life, that of homemaking. There is so much more to homemaking than just doing the cooking and washing the dishes etc;

which many women undoubtedly find boring and unfulfilling. Homemaking consists more than anything else in dedicating oneself to one's family, in having time to listen to one's children, in talking to them, in taking an interest in all they do, and it consists above all in giving them a sense of Christian values which the world so needs to-day. How can the woman who is out at work all day have time for anything but the most immediate needs of her family, that of cooking for them or perhaps doing their laundry?



Breda  
Morrissey  
Accounts Dept.

### HUMAN

True, many women must, of necessity, go out to work to supplement the family income, and it is a pity that this is so. But what of the other women who go out to work just because their husband's income is unable to provide them with the ever increasing luxuries which modern society have come to regard almost as necessities. As far as the Irish scene is concerned one could perhaps ask here, can the Ireland of to-day with its economic problems, its lengthening dole-queues and its school leavers with no job prospects, afford to give employment to such people. We are all so busy chasing after material things that we are in danger of forgetting the basic needs of ourselves and our fellow human beings. We must at all costs, keep up with the Joneses. If the neighbours get a new coloured T.V., we cannot let our side down, a new car, wall to wall carpeting nothing else will do. The result of all this is that we have little time for one another, little time to listen to each other's problems, to offer a friendly word of advice or sympathy. And so our Homes and Institutions are full of

old and lonely people, our children are neglected and our teenagers are indulging in dangerous drugs. With all the advancements, our rising standards of living, are we any happier? It does not seem so.

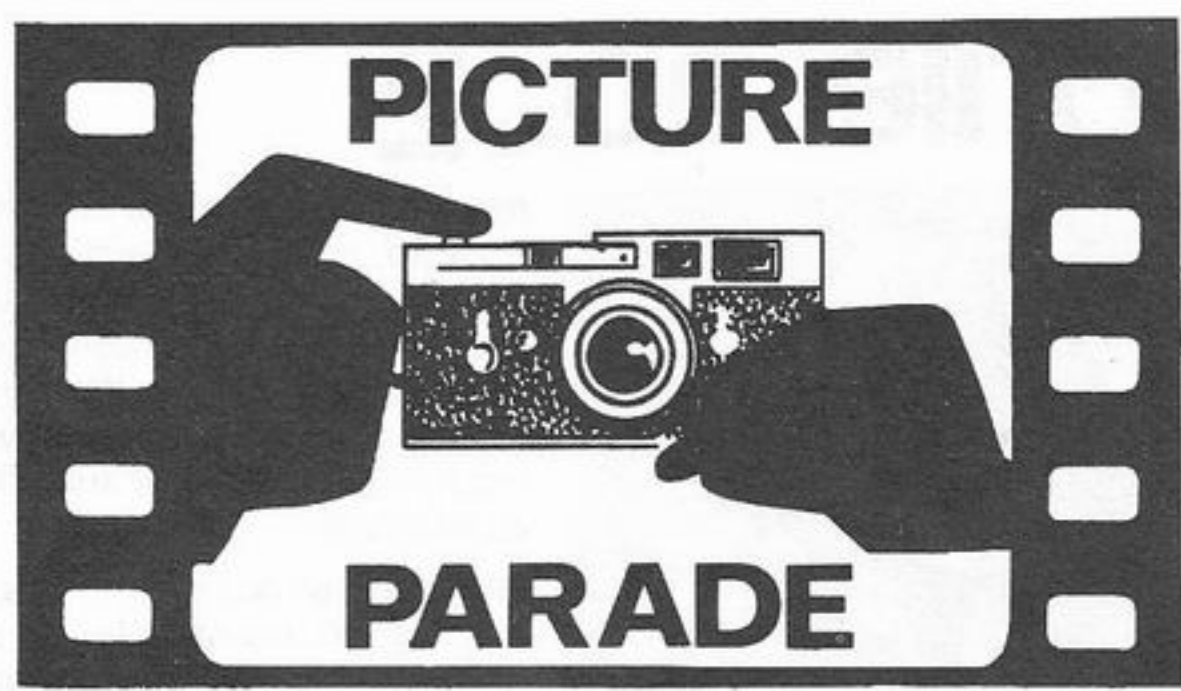
### NOSTALGIA

People speak with nostalgia sometimes about the "good old days". What we wonder, is meant by the "good old days"? They certainly were not good as regards material possessions. But the quality of life was good. People enjoyed the simple pleasures. Life was at a more leisurely pace; people had time for one another, and they gave generously to one another of their time and whatever little possessions they had to share. The workman gave a day's labour to a neighbour, and expected nor accepted any reward. The farmer or the man with a few acres of ground thought little of giving a sack of potatoes to a needy family. But where to-day, would you get the workman to do an hour's work without paying him his full rate - and time and half if it is a Saturday. And your modern day farmer is not slow to seek the latest market price for his produce. This is an example of how economic advancement has ruined our basic willingness to be kind and generous to one another.

But what, you will say, has all this to do with women in the home and going out to work? The point we are making is that there is a deterioration in the quality of life to-day. We need to stop and ponder what our priorities are; we need stability in society. And where is this stability to come from if not the home - the basic unit of society.

By all means let women have their voices heard in public life, politics etc; but every woman has it in her, to influence for good these with whom she comes in contact. She has the natural gifts of compassion, understanding and kindness. So why all the fuss about being equal to men. There are many ways in which women will never be equal to men or perhaps to put it more correctly, men will never be equal to women.





## ANNUAL DINNER DANCE

The Company's Annual Dinner Dance was once again a major success. All who attended, fully enjoyed themselves. This, it seems, has now become the highlight of social functions in and around the Rathkeale area. A large contingent of the staff were there to witness and experience for themselves a most enjoyable and memorable evening. A special word of praise must go to Mr. Gerard Raftery, who, for a number of years now, has arranged this sociable outing. One must not forget also, the Social Committee and those individuals who readily sell tickets for the occasion. So, now that it is all over for another year, everybody looks forward to next year, when we can once again, come together to enjoy each other's company away from work.



Preparation and Organisation over, Mr. Gerry Raftery relaxes with his fiancée Miss Helen Penny.



At the Shannon Meat Social were Mr. and Mrs Jimmy Lenihan.



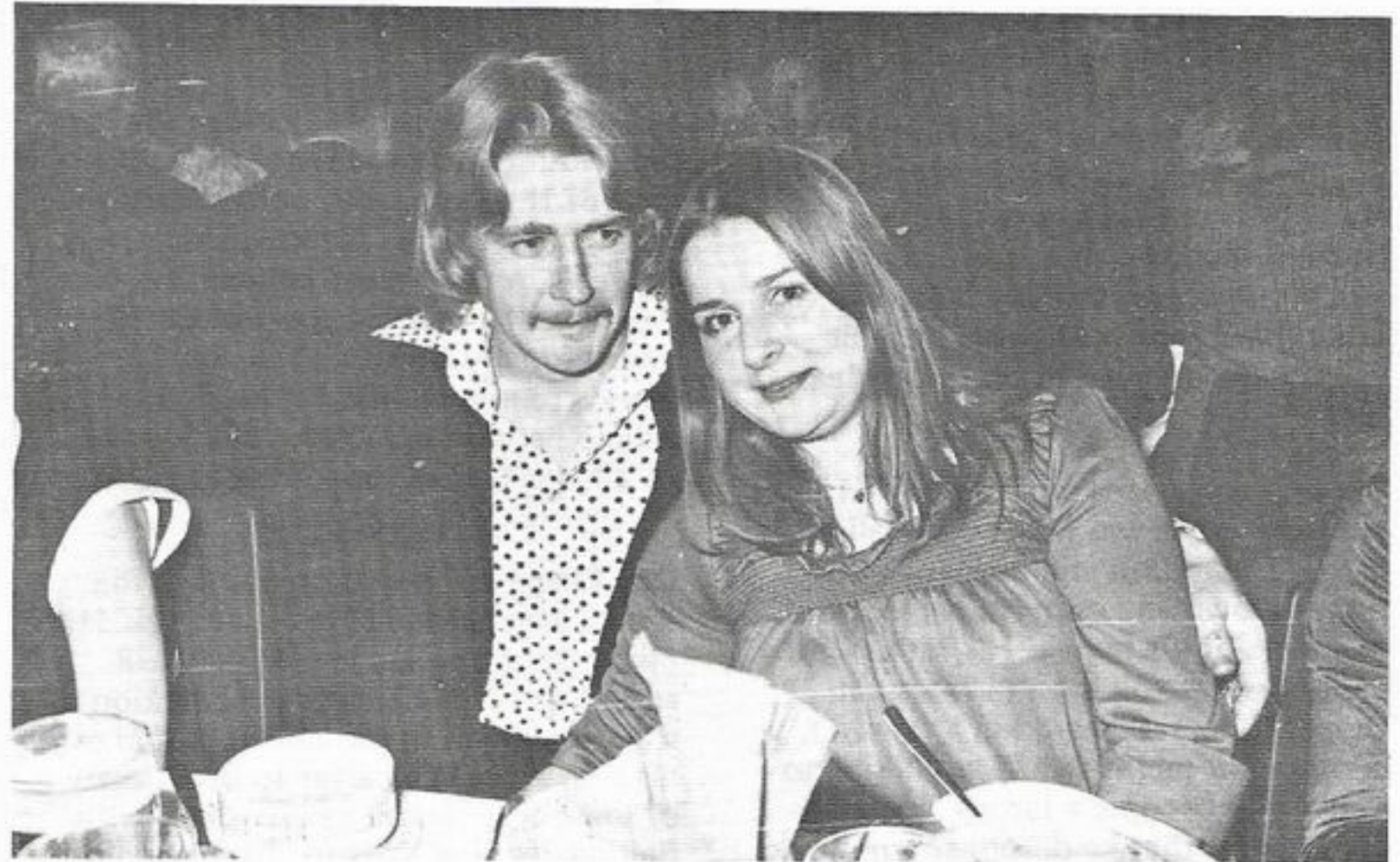
Mr. Michael Kelly who now operates the new fat plant.



Bill and Anne Chawke at the Shannon Meat Dance.



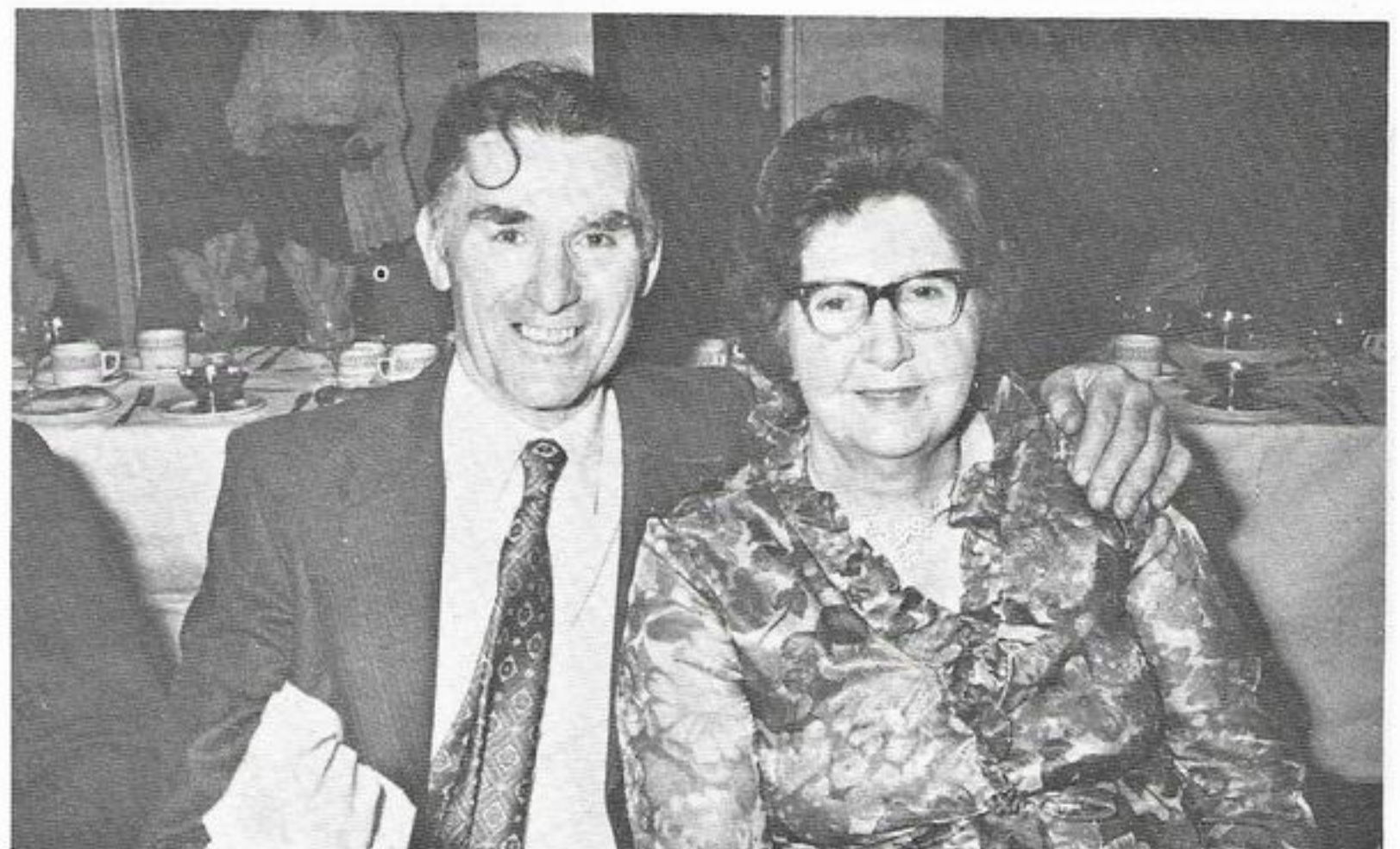
Discussing Soccer at the Devon Inn were Miko and Pa Dunne with Pa Guinane.



Mr. Kevin Neville and Miss Margaret Mulcahy enjoying the 7th Annual Social.



Tom White has his say while John Meehan Liam Woulfe and Ned Lawlor listen on.



Mr. and Mrs James Dalton at the Shannon Meat Social.



# Profile no. 1



**DAN CAGNEY**

"This is Dan Cagney, he is a new lad here" These were the words that introduced Dan to me. Although it was approximately fifteen months ago, the same reference could be applied. In comparison to many of his fellow workers Dan Cagney is still a "new lad" in Shannon Meat Ltd. In the forthcoming issues, it is our sincere desire, that the "older lads" who have given years of invalid service to the Company will relate, through this magazine of their varying experiences in Shannon Meat Ltd.

## FAMILY

Daniel Cagney was born on 15/7/1956. His birth-place was Ballinaha, Ballingarry. Today Dan still resides in this remote townland with his parents and members of his family. His father and ancestors have all been farmers. Although Dan was reared in a farming community he never had any liking to eventually become a farmer. He modestly claims that he despises farm work.

Dan, as he is amicably known to both friend and foe (if he has one) received a very thorough and standing education. He commenced school as a five year old and received all his primary education at Ballingarry National School. From there, his parents decided to send him to Copeswood College in Pallaskenry. Here he successfully passed both the Intermediate and Leaving Certificate. He has made no secret of his gratitude to those who taught him and has often expressed special words of "thank-you" to his former head-master in Pallaskenry Father Donnellan.

## TASTE

After having passed his Leaving Certificate, Dan Cagney was in a similar position to thousands of other individuals, in the fact that he was job searching. Unlike many others however he struck "gold" or maybe in this case "meat". He applied successfully for a clerical position in the firm. On 29th August 1974 Dan began his career in Shannon Meat Ltd. He was employed as a clerical officer in the Sales Department and retains this position at present.

It has been a year of change for Dan. No longer has he to endure the prolonged tuition of a school teacher. Neither has he to endure the stigma and terror of a forthcoming examination. Now Dan, works in an environment more to his taste. In his job he is constantly meeting people. This he states "is a joy of life". With a character like Dan's jovial friendly and at all times eager to assist anybody, it is easy to see why Dan is such a success with customers and all fellow workers. Dan is very grateful to all members of Management and particularly William Nestor, the Sales Manager who have assisted him in every way possible. Dan has successfully completed Year 1 in a Marketing Course which he has undertaken to do himself at night in the School of Commerce, Limerick. He modestly admits that he had a lot to learn regarding both the job and the industry. He speaks confidently of the future. He can see and would like to witness the expansion of the Company, particularly the Sales Department. Although relatively "green" in the industrial area, he says that the attitudes of the workers is exceptionally beneficial to the Company's requirements. Through this article he wishes to say "thank-you" to all the factory operatives.

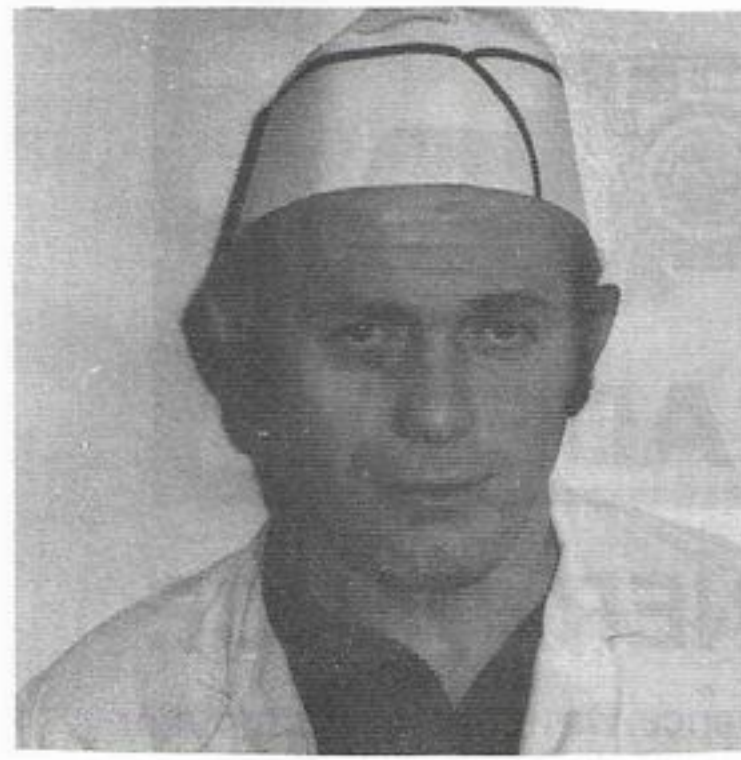
## PROMINENT

Dan Cagney is very prominent in the sports scene around West Limerick. His favourite sports are soccer, football and hurling. He has a large collection of trophies which he has amalgamated over his short sporting career to date. Many of these trophies he has acquired with Ballingarry G.A.A. club. Talking with the individual it seems obvious that he holds the Factory hurling and soccer clubs in high esteem. The unbelievable "never say die spirit" of Shannon Meat G.A.A. club shines through like the north star on a dark frosty night. His biggest disappointment to date was the failure of the Factory Club to lift the County Inter-Firm Hurling Championship this year but optimistically says "next year will be different."

Dan Cagney is presently nineteen years of age, weighs approximately fourteen stone, contains enough physical and mental attributes sufficient to furnish a legionaire of soldiers. Though his "memory lane" of Shannon Meat Ltd. is only one year old, he hopes that one day "this lane" will contain sufficient mileage to equal Ml. McNamara P. Sheahan, Wm. Kelly, D. Donovan to mention a few. He positively claims "My future lies in Shannon Meat Ltd, and from here, I do not want to move."

Dan Cagney (who is single) Ladies take note. I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of all in Shannon Meat Ltd; on wishing you a successful and illustrious career in the Company.

# Profile no. 2



**MICHAEL J. McNAMARA**

Michael J. McNamara of Reens, Ardagh, is one of the key Grade A Slaughter hall operators. He has manned the first legging station almost continuously since the introduction of the new line. He has done this job over 100,000 times and it comes quite easily to him now. This was not always so. Michael remembers the introduction of the new slaughter line too well. Several operators were selected to try out the first legging station during the trial run but on the first morning of the line running, Michael was put "first legging" and Josie Lynch was "second legging." They found it extremely difficult "Josie and I sweated our hearts out", Michael says.

Michael McNamara commenced employment with Shannon Meat Ltd; in 1958. He was then involved in the building of the Cannery and the present offices. He was then under the foremanship of Mr. Sean Guiry. Michael was among those laid off the following year but again returned in 1960 to assist in the building of the present cold store. Among those who worked with him during that period were Bill Meade, Bernard Daly, Paddy Royce, Paddy McNamara and Paddy Sheehan.

From the buildings, Michael spent a year and a half with Tommy Glenny salting hides in the hide shed before moving to the Slaughter Hall. Apart from 6 months he spent in the Cannery as Supervisor, in Donie McEnery's absence, Michael has spent most of his time in Slaughtering area. He feels he got very good experience by his involvement in Cannery Supervision. He is very versatile operator and is capable of doing any operation in the plant except boning.

Michael went to Rathkeale school and afterwards spent 12 months at the Vocational School, Newcastle West. In 1969, he married the former Josie Dillon. Josie had been at that time a member of the staff of Shannon Meat Ltd; for eight years. Josie left the Company early 1970. They have 3 children, Alison (5), Martina (2?) and Michael (Jnr). 1½.

## HURLING

Michael has won 2 West Limerick junior hurling medals with Rathkeale, in 1958 and 1963. He has won no less than 30 medals for field and track competitions. He holds an All-Ireland bronze medal in cross-country, won in Louth in 1959. Among his other achievements are, under 18 Munster Cross Country Championships in 1958 and 1959. He was unbeaten in Co. Limerick at under 16 competitions for Cross Country. He has also won county championship honours in 440 metres, half-mile and mile. Athletics was his whole life during that period.

Michael McNamara was first elected shop steward in 1972 - Frank Hayes was then Chairman.

In January, 1974, Michael himself was elected chairman of the Rathkeale branch of the Irish Transport and General Worker's Union. Michael was unable, through illness, to attend the meeting at which his election was made. He feels himself if he was present, he

may not have allowed his name to go forward. He did not realise at the time the task he was taking on. Looking at the situation with hindsight, he is glad that he himself, Liam Woulfe, Vice-Chairman, and Michael Kelly, Secretary worked so hard under such difficult circumstances.

1974, was of course, the year the job grading and incentive bonus scheme was introduced to the production area. He feels that one of his most difficult tasks was to convince his own members that the acceptance of the scheme was to their advantage. He was pleasantly surprised at the majority vote in favour of final acceptance of the scheme. One of his main functions as a Trade Union representative as he saw it, was the conveying of the workers ideas and attitudes to Management. On Communications, Michael says "There is not enough communication between Management and workers. Workers would like to know how Management feel about the way they are doing their jobs". Even though Michael would accept that "Management probably appreciate work well done, but they are afraid to show that appreciation of it" to quote himself. He feels that more showing of appreciation by Management would mean a lot to the workers. "The Company magazine would be an ideal way of doing this" he says.

Michael handed over the chair to Mr. P.J. Jones in January, 1975, after 12 months in which he impressed everybody by his fairness, his readiness to see other people's point of view and above all his dedication and hard work for the people who placed their trust in him.

## SOCIAL

At the first General Meeting of the G.A.A. Club in October, 1974 Michael McNamara was elected secretary of the Club. The idea of a Shannon Meat hurling team was born in 1973, when Seamus Tierney organised a team to play some tournaments. The outstanding event for him during his period as Secretary was to see the team lining out and playing in the County Final if the Inter Firm competition. "This in their first year entering organised competitions was a fantastic success eventhough they went down fighting in that final to Finn's says Michael. Michael told me that the running of the Club for the 12 months cost £400.00. He would like to take this opportunity to thank the Management and the Social Club for their assistance, "without their help, we could not keep going." Management donated plaques for the Tournament and the Social Committee a set of jerseys. Of the hurling team, Michael says, "Their spirit is outstanding, one could not possibly get the same spirit in any Club throughout the county." He feels that the Club has done much also for the image of the Company and for the Company itself.

Michael has seen many changes in Shannon Meat Ltd; since he joined. The greatest changes in his mind are the introduction of the new slaughter line, the building of the amenity block, the stabilization and increase of the work force. For the future, he hopes to see the Company continuing to expand. He would like to see the introduction of a meat and bone meal plant. This, he feels, would create further employment. He would also like to see a modern boning system in the Boning Hall. The latter, we are glad to inform you Michael, is not too far off.

In conclusion, we would like to wish Michael many more years of success as an employee of Shannon Meat Ltd. We would also like to wish his wife, Josie, and children, Alison, Martina and Michael Jnr; many years of health and happiness.

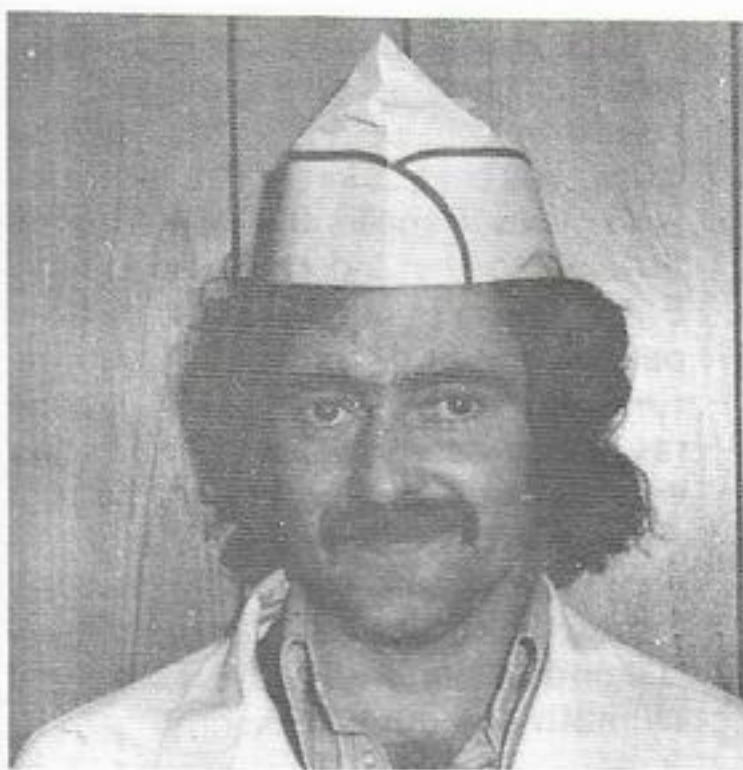


**Mr. Michael Liston and Miss Helen Ward at the Shannon Meat Social.**



# LIFE BY A CHANCE

By Tadgh Whyte (Canning Dept.)



Tadgh Whyte

Henry Ford used to say that a car could be painted any colour so long as it was black. And my grandfather believed that we could discuss anything except death, birth, sex, politics or religion. You must agree, then, that my choice is limited to making a feast from the proverbial crumbs on the floor. But, of course neither Henry Ford nor my old grandfather had ever worked with dead meat and could not have predicted the inspiration to be gained from such an honourable profession.

Poets throughout the ages have written songs to it, writers have created clever stories around it, dreamers have fashioned from it their crazy hopes, and now, psychologists have put a name on it - I speak of the Odysseus Factor. This is what has finally put Man on the Moon, what called the sailors of old beyond the grey seas, what drew the first caveman outside the confines of his lonely valley. Finally, it is what you and I feel at odd moments of confusion when the world is crumbling about our frightened ears - it is a need of adventure, and is in no way

related to dead meat.

One sweet morning I set out from the hilltop village of La Turbie with my pack on my back and a little peace in my soul. Below me to the right, lay the principality of Monaco and the overcrowded beaches of the French Riviera. To my left hung the mysterious slopes of the Alps, and ahead of me waited the magical Italian frontier. I had set my sights on Rome and could not imagine that any inducement would slow me down on my trek to the great city. Rome had attracted me ever since I was three years old and the ghosts of its glorious past had peopled all my youthful dreams. Rome, for me, was like strawberries and cream on a desert island. It was like central heating on a bad day in the Antarctic. In short, it was the ultimate. But then it happened! Before my astonished eyes, and deep within the recesses of my tiny brain grew the flower of all imagination :- The Odysseus Factor. I could not wait to get to Rome for my adventure. That would take too many precious days, and I had to act on the impulse. I drew a temporary blind on the Italian frontier, and altered my course for the heights of Roquebrune.

## NO LIFE

Roquebrune is a delightful little village, dangling high in the French Alps, and halfway between the sea and the sky. It has played host to many famous people such as Caesar Augustus, John of Gaunt, Napoleon Bonaparte and W.B. Yeats. The lunatic poet died there, and when his bones were sufficiently bleached they were brought back to Ireland and haven't moved to this very day. There's no getting away from it what's dead has no life at all.

At about midday I reached the chalet renoir on the outskirts of the village. I was feeling exhausted from the difficult climb, and besides, I was worried as to what my impending adventure would be. I ordered a beer from the vat, but jolly innkeeper, and as I sipped it timidly (being Irish, I do not like booze) I could see all about me the wild mountain slopes. In the

wintertime, these mountains are covered in snow and are famous for their skiing. But in summertime I could not see what use they might have for anybody, unless he were a sheep-farmer with a head for heights "Blessed be the man who takes the path of the eagle. His shall be the feathery grave."

Anyway, after another twenty one beers or so my head began to clear and I saw an amazing sight. All about me, from every nook and cranny, came what seemed to be dozens of madmen, rushing and tumbling down the mountainside on wooden sleds. The mountains which had seemed so useless without snow began to take on a new life of their own. No need now for crash helmets and goggles. No need for expensive snow-shoes and awkward skis. All I needed was a wooden go-cart and a bit of courage. Having handed my rucksack to the friendly innkeeper as a kind of insurance, I borrowed his quaint toboggan and set out for the steepest slope. This was either the beginning or the end of me.

## DESCENT

As I positioned my toboggan for the mad descent, I heard a whisper in my ear. Turning about, I saw a young African princess (or so she seemed to me), who told me that the mountain I was about to tackle was called The Hill of the Dead. This was because so many people had been injured on its slopes. But I decided that it is only those who are not afraid of death have a right to live, and off I went.

At first the sled moved very slowly and I began to wonder if it would ever gain momentum. Ten thousand feet below I could see the tiny specks of people who had descended the other paths. The clear and dulcet tones of a shepherd's bell rang beautifully in the clear air. An Alpine hawk circled ominously about the strange valley, and I was reminded of the vultures of Morocco, with their fiery talons and devilish eyes. Then the wind began to roar about my head and the grey slopes began to fade to a fantastic blur. I clung to the rail of my go-cart and my fingers grew grey with the cold. I was sliding down the mountain at

thirty, forty, fifty miles an hour. Heaven and Hell were fighting for possession of my soul, and still my speed increased. The people in the valley below seemed to be rushing towards me like ever-expanding monsters, and for the very first time I felt fear. But it was too late now. I had taken a gamble and my fate was out of my hands.

I have often heard the old people say in their great wisdom that "Life and death are as close as tuppence." and I never had any reason to doubt them till I came to a slippery halt on the floor of the valley. At seventy six miles an hour on the back of a piece of fragile cedarwood, I learned the falseness of this wisdom. The safety in my survival and the danger of that mad descent were a thousand years apart; let me say the difference between a living vital being, and a crawling earthbound insect. Walter Peter maintained that life should be lived as a hard gem like flame, full of passion and desire and also a gentle madness. That awful wisdom of the old people, and indeed of most of the world even now, is a negation of all genuine life. Maintain your sanity and your security and you may die as you have lived without joy.

Anyway, as I picked myself from the ground and wiped the delicate Alpine gentians from my jeans I felt a delightful happiness fill my soul. I felt the relief of death and the wonder of life tumbling and tossing inside my tiny brain, each wanting desperately to make me its own. I had won my gamble with adventure and I found that neither life nor death meant a great deal after all. What was important was the risk involved, the splash of colour which I had thrown across the grey face of my condition. Like Nietzsche, I had grown to detest those half and half ones who can neither bless nor curse from the heart. Then too, I was reminded of Paddy Kavanagh's typical man who spends his time - "sitting on a ditch with two stones in his fist, and a welcome worn on his thigh.

## NEW APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

A new apprenticeship system will be introduced by the Council of AnCO. It will start on 1st September, 1976, and is expected to be fully implemented by 1981.

The new system is outlined in a report, "The New Apprenticeship, which has been published by AnCO. The forward to the report states: "The Council, in arriving at its decision, has taken account of conflicting views and has sought in every case to achieve the best possible balance between them."

The Council was satisfied that the new system "would be generally accepted and would ensure that every apprentice would get a good training and education. It would also ensure that the skilled manpower needs for the further development of our industrial economy would be catered for"

The main provisions of the system include the following:

- 1 All first-year apprentices will be trained off-the-job at approved centres either within industry, in AnCO Training Centres or within the educational system, where an industrial environment will be simulated. Where possible an apprentice will undergo an induction period in industry before beginning off-the-job training.
2. A 4 year period of apprenticeship, instead of the present 5 year period. For anyone holding a Leaving Certificate or an equivalent qualification, the apprenticeship period will be reduced to three years. In 1981 the duration of apprenticeship will be reviewed again.
- 3 All apprentices, during the first three years of training, must attend vocational schools or technical colleges for the equivalent of at least one day a week for practical training and theoretical, related and general education.
4. AnCO Advisory Staff will monitor

close the training of apprentices at their places of work and apprentices will be encouraged to seek the services of such staff by the use of pre-paid postcards. Short courses in apprentice supervision will be arranged for craftsmen and supervisors.

5 An outline syllabus of training and education for each craft will be drawn up by a representative Advisory Curriculum Committee to be set up under the joint auspices of AnCO and the Department of Education. In accordance with the outline syllabi, national standard curricula for apprentice training and education will be designed and up-dated.

6 Compulsory testing and certification to national standards, AnCO, in co-operation with the Department of Education, will design a National Craft Certificate.

7 A "ladder" to higher levels. AnCO, in consultation with the Department of Education and the National Council of Educational Awards, will develop a detailed scheme to achieve this aim.

8 Normally Grade D in any three subjects in the Group or Intermediate Certificate examination or its equivalent will be the minimum educational requirement for apprenticeship. The use of school assessments and aptitude testing as aids to selection will be encouraged.

9 AnCO will set up a Unit to provide and interpret information on manpower training needs to aid the statutory Industrial Training Committees in advising AnCO on the annual intake of apprentices.

10. Employers or groups of employers who set up their own in-company training centres for apprentices will be given financial assistance towards the equipment costs if these centres meet AnCO's requirements.

11 In areas where there is rapid industrial growth and a shortage of craftsmen AnCO in co-operation with the National Manpower Service, will discuss with trade unions and employers the establishment of craft courses for adults.

12 Further training for skilled persons, AnCO will bear the training costs of craftsmen released by their employers for suit-

able courses in approved centres. In addition, it will pay the wages of any craftsman who has to leave his employment to undergo training in approved centres to improve his skills. AnCO will also pay the appropriate wage rate to craftsmen and apprentices who are temporarily unemployed and who undergo suitable training courses in approved centres.

13 Training for women. A number of places will be available in AnCO Centres in 1975/76 for qualified girls who wish to become apprentices. Already some girl apprentices have been recruited and are now undergoing off-the-job training in some trades in AnCO Centres. "The Council's view", the report states, "is that, although there was general agreement in principle that females should not be discriminated against in apprenticeships, there was no great commitment to the concept and that unless positive action is taken it will remain a pious aspiration."

The wages of apprentices will normally be paid by their employers. When an apprentice is being trained to meet the demands of new industries, AnCO will pay the wages during the off-the-job training in the first year and will seek to recoup portion of that cost from the European Social Fund. All other capital and operating costs will be borne by the State with the assistance from the E.S.F. where this can be availed of.

## NEW SYSTEM

- 1 All apprentices to do off the job training in the first year.
- 2 (a) a-Year apprenticeship for normal intake (Group or Inter Cert. level). (b) 3-Year apprenticeship for holders of Leaving Certificate qualifications.
- 3 Compulsory test and certification for all apprentices.
- 4 Comprehensive training and educational curricula with built-in testing procedures under control of representative Curriculum Advisory Committee.
- 5 Minimum educational entry qualifications: Any three subjects at Group or Inter Cert. Aptitude tests and school assessments as additional aids to selection.

- 6 Formalised ladder to higher level.
- 7 Apprentice training for girls.
- 8 Craft training for adults in certain cases by agreement between employers and trade unions.
- 9 Incentives for existing craftsmen, both employed and unemployed, to improve their skills.
- 10 Specific provision for apprentice training for new industries.
- 11 State financial assistance to employers towards the equipment of in-company apprentice training centres in approved cases.
- 12 Improved on-the-job supervision.
- 13 Provision for training for non-designated trades.
- 14 Annual apprentice intake to be related to projected skilled manpower requirements.

## PRESENT SYSTEM

- 1 Excluding apprentices of off-the-job training in AnCO Centres (approx. 800) only 10% of first year apprentices receive off-the-job training mainly in State and semi-state bodies.
- 2 5-Year apprenticeship for all apprentices.
- 3 No compulsory testing or certification. Trade examinations voluntary.
- 4 Examination syllabi for Department of Education examinations.
- 5 Specific subjects at Group or Inter Cert required for entry.
- 6 No recognised ladder at present.
- 7 No specific provision at present.
- 8 Very limited provision at present
- 9 No special provision
- 10 No special provision
- 11 No provision at present except through levy/grant schemes
- 12 Present system in need of improvement.
- 13 No specific provision at present.
- 14 At present, intake unrelated to overall national needs.



# G. A. A. CLUB NEWS

By Seamus O Luineachan.



The Shannon Meat Hurling Team 1975 who played in the Rathkeale Festival Tournament.

The first general meeting of Shannon Meat Ltd; G.A.A. Club was held in February, 1975. The following officers were elected :- Chairman - M. Williams, Vice-Chairman - P. O'Shaughnessy, Secretary - M. McNamara, Assistant Secretary - G. Molyneaux, Treasurer - Jas. Lenihan, Assistant Treasurer - T. Hannafin, Selectors :- P.J. Jones, M. Keating, S. Tierney, Captain of the junior hurling team, Bill Lynch.

The first tournament match was played in Ballyagran. Shannon Meat Ltd; defeated Western Meats Ltd, 3.7 to 2.6 They were, however, beaten by Castlemahon in the Final by the narrowest of margins 3.6 to 3.5. The team that took part in this tournament were T. Hannafin, G. Enright, M. Williams, Pat Sheehan, J. Cavanagh, Bill Lynch, L. Woulfe, W. Chawke, D. Cagney, J. Molyneaux, D. Noonan, D. Kenneally, P. Costelloe, W. Sheehy, N. Hogan, Subs. J. Lenihan, D. Costelloe and Peter Mullins.

On the 16th April, the team took part in the Newcastle West tournament but were beaten by Deel Vale 2.5 to 1.4

On April 22nd, a challenge match took place against Croagh. Shannon Meat beat Croagh on that occasion by 3.9 to 2.10.

## COUNTY CHAMPIONSHIP

On May 5th the Club commenced their campaign for supreme honours of County Championship and entry to the All-Ireland Inter-Firm hurling championship. On that 5th May, Shannon Meat Ltd. beat Scanglo. The score line 3.0 to 3.4

On June 4th, they took care of Castlemahon beating them 3.6 to 1.4.

The members that contributed to those two successes were :- T. Hannafin, P. Sheehan, M. Williams, D. Cagney, L. Woulfe, P. Markham, F. Dalton, D. Noonan, S. Dowling, M. McNamara, P. Mullins, W. Sheehy, G. Enright, J. Cavanagh, S. Harnett, B. Chawke, J. Lenihan, P. Costelloe.

On 26th June, the team made their entrance to the Castlemahon tournament. They played Deel Vale on that occasion. The result was a draw 3 points each. The replay took place on 3rd July. On that occasion Shannon Meat emerged victorious. The score line was 1.12 to 0.3 Shannon Meat went on to win the Castlemahon tournament by beating Castlemahon on their own ground by 1.10 to 0.06

The team continued its road in the county championships, when they drew

with Kantoher 3.9 each on July, 10th.

Then came the county semi-final in Adare on August, 27th. Shannon Meat Ltd; versus Cement Ltd. Cement Ltd; were firm favourites boasting two county players. It was at this match that the supporters began to turn out in numbers. The team did not let them down either. They thrashed Cement Ltd; with a score of 4.8 to 7 points. The team on that occasion was : T. Hannigan, W. Sheehy, M. Williams, P. Sheehan, L. Woulfe, D. Cagney, J. Cavanagh, F. Dalton, D. Noonan, S. Harnett, B. Lynch, N. Hogan, P. Mullins, G. Enright, B. Chawke, Subs :- P. Markham for G. Enright, J. Lenihan, P. Marron, M. Keating.

On Sept 5th the Final was played in Askeaton. The opponents were Finns. The score line at the final whistle was Finns 6.7 - Shannon Meat Ltd; 1.4. The team that took part in the County Final was : T. Hannafin, W. Sheehy, M. Williams, P. Sheehan, L. Woulfe, D. Cagney, J. Cavanagh, F. Dalton, S. Dowling, S. Harnett, D. Noonan, N. Hogan, W. Chawke, P. Markham, B. Lynch, Subs : P. Mullins for N. Hogan, P. Marron for B. Lynch, N. Hogan for T. Hannafin.

On Sept. 27th Shannon Meat Ltd; beat Silenco, Kilmallock 1.5 to 1.4 The last match of the year was played against St. Joseph's on October, 18th. St. Joseph's won on that occasion 2.2 to 2.0

## A.G.M.

On Friday, October 24th a general meeting of the Club was held in the Canteen. The following officers were elected for 1976. Chairman - M. Williams, Vice-Chairman - P. O'Shaughnessy, Secretary - Denis Noonan, Treasurer - J. Lenihan, Selectors : J. Lenihan, P.J. Jones, M. McNamara, Denis Kenneally. Committee - P. Costelloe, P. Markham, P. Mullins, G. Enright.

There was also a football team in action during the year. The Captain of this was Stephen Murphy. The selectors were - M. Williams, T. Hannafin, S. Harnett and S. Murphy.

## THANKS

The G.A.A. Club would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who supported our collections. A special word of thanks to the Management of Shannon Meat Ltd; the Social Club and the Veterinary without whose assistance the Club could not have carried on. We would reserve a special thank you to Seamus Tierney and Dick Woodroffe who formed the G.A.A. Club.

# SOCCER SCENE

Shannon Meat Ltd; now in its sixth season, have as yet to win one of the major competitions, but we have had some minor successes. In 1973 we had two tournament wins, one in Ballinagarry, and another in Cappagh. This year we won our own tournament during the festival here in August.

## OFFICERS

We had our A.G.M. at the C.Y.M.S. hall in July and the following officers were elected :- Pat Sheehan, Chairman, John Lyons, Vice-Chairman, Thomas Steele, Secretary, Sean Hennessy, Assistant Secretary, Noel Harnett, Treasurer, Declan Brennan and Liam Woulfe were elected to the Committee. I agreed to take full charge of team affairs and picked Sean Harnett as Captain.

## SUCCESS

We started training straight away, to get in shape for our first competition which was to be the Soccer Tournament run during the festival. Kildimo were our opponents in the opening round, but they failed to turn up for the game and we found ourselves in the final against Adare. We drew the first game 1-1. The replay was again a close affair with the score again 1-1 after extra time and so on to penalties. We scored our first four while Adare only scored two and we were victors.

Our team that night was Dinnage, Harnett (N), Woulfe, Cagney, Lyons, Lynch, Brennan, O'Shea (D), O'Grady, Zoncada and Harnett (S), Res. Dalton, Glenny (T)

Our league performances to date aren't as good as we had hoped. Askeaton beat us 4-2 in the opening game. We beat Adare 7-1 and drew with Ferry Rangers 0-0. We are also through to the 2nd Round of the F.A.I. However, we have got to be patient and hope, with a little more time and experience, we will get the results we deserve. Our team is still very young and can only get better. As well as the above mentioned players, our squad also includes Sean O'Shea, Seamus Cawley, Pat O'Donnell, Jimmy Reidy, Tom Wilmoth and Jimmy Glenny.

## THANKS

We have a young and eager committee who are determined to make every effort to make a big success of the Club and with the support of all the players, I think they will do just that. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Management for the use of the playing field and also for all the help they have given us during the last five years.

Michael Dunne.



Mr. and Mrs Paddy Cawley looking relaxed at the Staff Dance.



Enjoying themselves at the Devon Inn were Mr. and Mrs Denis Noonan who were married during the year.

## STOLEN

Farmer to cousin from Limerick City. "My cow has been stolen. What will I do ?

Cousin : "Don't worry Jack, They won't get far with it. Didn't you empty it's fuel tank last night.

## WANTED.

A cartoonist for the Shannon Meat Gazette. Qualifications : Must be a member of the Company. Salary : A Thank-You Card specially signed by the Editorial Committee.

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