

# ASHES of 'Cooner' scattered in river

By DENIS O'SHAUGHNESSY

THE ashes of a former Limerick rugby player have been scattered at two places he loved most—the banks of the Abbey River and George's Head, Kilkee.

A small group of relatives and friends gathered on the slipway of Athlunkard Boat Club to say farewell to Gerry "Cooner" Griffin, when his ashes were brought there by his daughter, Angela.

Angela, who is a poet and will be publishing her first novel shortly, travelled from the USA for the short but moving ceremony.

Later that morning she was driven to Kilkee by family friend and cousin, Paddy O'Farrell of Farranshane, where the other half of the ashes were committed to the Atlantic at George's Head.

The deceased was a native of Athlunkard Street. "He had an abiding love of his native home and though domiciled in America for the great part of his life, he was a regular visitor to St. Mary's and Kilkee," said Paddy, who organised the ceremony.

Cooner, a member of a well-known and very sport-



Watery grave: the submerged slipway

ing family, was reckoned to be the youngest ever player to have competed in local junior rugby.

He was a mere 15 back in the late twenties when he first lined out with Shannon, and then graduated senior to Garryowen where he proved a first class and elusive out-half.

With his brothers John and Tom he was on the Garryowen team of 1934 but lost out on a Munster Senior Cup medal when all three withdrew from the team due to a dispute with

the club.

Tom was picked for a Final Irish Trial and according to his contemporaries looked certain to be capped.

Unfortunately it was an era when it was reckoned that players from the provinces had to twice as good as those from within the "Pale", and he was not selected internationally.

He later turned professional and played rugby league in England.

The deceased served his time as a carpenter and then joined the international mill

builders, the English based Simon Company. He rose to the rank of head erector and eventually consultant, a position in which he traveled the world for his company.

All five Griffin brothers played rugby with either Shannon or Garryowen. His father was the late "Curry" Griffin, a great character in St. Mary's, and of that Griffin family Angela, Breeda, John and Turlough, a former soccer player with Star Rovers and one time table tennis champion of Limerick, survive. the commercial rate in the city has been very high in recent years.

In 1992, the rate increased by 12 per cent.

There is a thought in some areas that if charges are not levied, the Department could reduce their rate support grant to the city.

A copy of the book of estimates will be available to everybody making application to City Hall, at the price of five pence.

The cost of the book which includes five or six pages of figures is according to a regulation in the Public Bodies Order and is not determined by City Hall.

It is understood that few few people apply for a copy of the estimates.

A complete copy of the book of estimate, including a report by city manager, Jack Higgins, is supplied to each member of the City Council and the press.