

s depending on  
iber of questions  
d and the prize  
irect answers is  
The venue is The  
ills Hotel on  
day, February 6  
8pm sharp. Tick  
£10 and are avail-  
om committee  
s or at the door  
night. They can  
obtained by con-  
the school at 061  
A very enjoyable  
assured

**ST. PATRICK'S**

**Jack Gilligan's  
by jersey**

The piece of Lin-  
story was made  
s when a 90-year-  
national rugby  
is donated to the  
en Club by  
ner Mary Gilli-  
ayondale Ballys-  
1. The jersey had  
to her late  
e renowned Lin-  
by player Mick  
of Shannon and  
n fame winner  
Munster Senior  
als between 1900

Mick was first  
e on the Irish  
t played France  
While in the  
room he was  
is jersey and told  
Then a strange  
happened. A  
Ireland forward  
beatty, also got  
tog out and it  
who played, so  
igan had the dis-  
f being the only  
eland who had a  
ex without actu-  
ng for his coun-

historical jersey  
framed and will  
a display in the  
n club over the  
eeks

**Lotto**

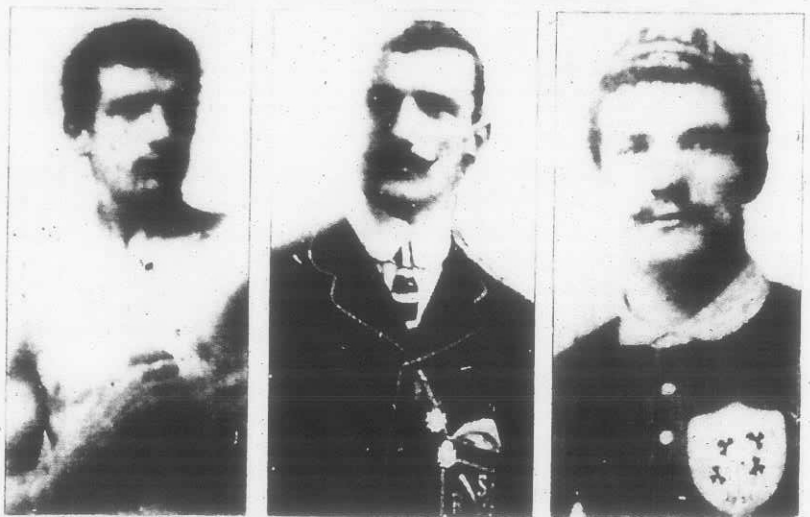
NA Pairsaugh results for  
January 14, 2002. Num-  
bers drawn were 1 to 21.  
The jackpot was not  
won. €25. Anne Leahy,  
Fred Bourke, Joe Harris,  
Bill Wallace, Mick  
Collins, Doris Keefe, Al  
O'Connor and Sean Kelly.  
Winners of €15 house  
draw: Fred Bourke, Mar-  
garet Quinn and Maureen  
McGrath. Next week's  
jackpot will be €2,000.

**Woodlawn  
Crib**

THE Woodlawn Crib is to  
be taken down this week.  
The crib was the focal  
point of Christmas celebra-  
tions in the parish.  
There was an excellent  
turnout for the unveiling  
and blessing of the crib on  
December 24. The atten-  
dance included local mag-  
nifier, Diarmuid Scully,  
and parish priest, Fr  
Irwin, who performed a  
most beautiful ceremony  
ably assisted by the choir  
singing of the residents of  
the area. The infant Jesus  
was laid in the crib by  
Amy Purcell, granddaugh-  
ter of Maureen and the late  
Gerard Hickey. Eunice  
McCarthy, granddaughter  
of Gerard and Geraldine  
Buckley, and Bernadette  
Ward's daughter of Mar-  
garet and Declan Waters.  
The infant Jesus crib  
has drawn many visitors  
from throughout the city  
over the Christmas peri-  
od. Warm congratulations  
were offered to the team  
using volunteers for their  
excellent work.

**Great St Mary's sporting hero recalled**

THE memory of the  
city's greatest sporting  
hero, the late Pa Healy,  
was recalled recently in  
a book about Pallaskenry  
entitled 'A Look  
Back'.  
A rugby international,  
all champion Irish  
heavyweight boxing  
champion and out-  
standing oarsman with  
Shannon RC, the multi-  
talented sportsman  
owned extensive lands  
he had many friends.  
An expedition by a  
group of young Parish  
boys to an orchard on  
these lands was  
recalled in the book by  
Denis O'Shaughnessy.  
One day in the late  
summer of 1950, with  
Europe still licking its  
wounds after the great-  
est conflagration the  
world had ever known,  
a group of excited  
young lads from St  
Mary's Parish in Limer-  
ick prepared to set out  
on what to them was a  
big adventure to the  
heartland of County  
Limerick.  
No worries for them  
about the numerous  
displaced persons still  
roaming Europe or  
ongoing revelations of  
the greatest holocaust  
in the history of  
mankind.  
Then only worry was  
to get the loan of a  
bicycle to take part in  
what would for them be  
the greatest incursion  
into the countryside so  
far in their young lives.  
It was unheard of  
that time for any of  
those boys to own bicy-  
cles and it was a motley  
cavalcade of moth-  
ers, high lizzies and  
fathers, ancient  
Raleighs complete with  
passengers on the  
crossbars that set off in  
a state of high antici-  
pation. Our mode of con-



Pa Healy, a man of many parts, boxer, oarsman and rugby player

veyance was a far cry  
from the 12 speed  
mountain bikes that  
youngsters now take  
for granted.  
Our destination was  
Pallaskenry, a spot far  
removed from our play-  
ground on the banks of  
Abbey and Shannon  
rivers and for most of  
the group it would easi-  
ly have been the fur-  
thest they had ever  
cycled from home.  
The purpose of the  
trip was a foray to an  
orchard on the lands of  
one Pa Healy, a living  
sporting legend in our  
parish. He lived just  
across the Abbey River  
from our house in the  
Sandmull and we used  
point him out to one  
another as he trotted  
his pony and trap on  
his way from his butch-  
er's stall in Roche's  
Street. We used listen  
in awe to stories of his  
strength such as being  
able to kill a young bul-  
lock with a blow of his  
fist to the head and  
afterwards drinking a  
point of the beast's  
blood for added  
strength.  
Pa was champion of  
every sport in which he  
participated: amateur  
and professional box-  
ing, Irish heavyweight  
boxing champion, cap-  
ped 10 times for the  
Irish rugby team, and  
Irish champion in pairs  
and fours in rowing  
with Shannon RC.  
His son Dan was one  
of our contemporaries  
and was organiser of  
the trip to Pallaskenry.  
It doesn't take much  
imagination with the  
sad state of our modes  
of conveyance, how  
long it took us to reach  
our destination.  
But reach it we did  
and tired limbs were  
soon forgotten as we  
surveyed the orchard  
with its trees laden  
with as many apples as  
we could carry. To the  
youths, whose only  
access to orchards was  
a night time foray into  
those belonging to the  
pig-buyers in Ath-  
lunkard Street or on  
the Island Road, here  
were riches indeed.  
Having taken our fill,  
we stuffed what we  
could into our pockets  
and up under our gan-  
sies.  
Someone suggested  
we go to a place called  
Ringmoylan but this  
extension to the trip  
wasn't enthusiastically  
received. Dan said he  
thought there was a  
lake nearby and we set  
off in search.  
Someone shouted:  
"There it is," and like a  
scene from a fairy tale,  
this beautiful lake and  
castle as its backdrop,  
unfolded in front of us.  
It was of course what  
we learned later to be  
Dromore Lake and we  
looked in wonderment  
at its crystal clear  
waters with the bottom  
clearly visible. "It's like  
the Pollock Holes in  
Kilkee," someone  
remarked and we could

but agree.  
Like all the summers  
of our youth, memories  
of that day were noth-  
ing but of sunshine.  
Being from an island  
parish, we were all  
good swimmers and  
soon we were disport-  
ing ourselves in the  
lake, all in the buff or  
as we used to call it, in  
the pelt. Like young  
otters we dived, com-  
peted at long ones (see-  
ing who could swim the  
furthest under water),  
splashed, shoved one  
another in and cavorted  
to our hearts' content.  
Ravenous, we tore  
into our sandwiches,  
most of them made  
from Matterson's suc-  
culent brown, but  
which, sadly in pre-  
titled and plastic days,  
used go quickly stale in  
their brown paper  
wrapping. Washed  
down with bottles of  
milk, poured into emp-  
ty lemonade bottles by  
mothers who wound  
tightly folded strips of  
paper to act as corks,  
unfortunately not  
always secure.  
Mindful of the long  
journey home, reluc-  
tantly we took our  
leave, and wended our  
way back to the city.  
The thought of having  
supplies of juicy apples  
for many a long day to  
come, helped to shorten  
the road.  
Sadly, most of that  
group of young adven-  
turers fell victim to the  
great depression that  
was the 1950s and are  
now scattered through-  
out England and Ameri-  
ca. Some have passed  
on, including Dan. One  
of the group that did  
stay at home became  
like Pa Healy, a great  
rugby international. He  
was Brian O'Brien, now  
manager of the Irish  
rugby team.

To those who knew  
and it comes as no great  
surprise that his talent  
and organisational skills  
have borne such fruits.  
As a very young  
teenager in  
Thomondgate, he formed  
a club in the basement of  
his parents home where  
youngsters, not much  
younger than himself,  
came to play games like  
table soccer etc. Out of  
this he formed Riverside  
Soccer Club, which  
became the main recre-  
ation and activity of  
many local children.  
Niall's organisational  
skills became clear as he  
trained and steered his  
Riverside team to the pin-  
nacle of their short  
career, the winning of  
the U12 schoolboy soccer  
cup.  
Part of that winning  
team was made up of Ger-  
O'Loughlin, Ray O'Hallo-  
gan, Andy Cooke, goal-  
keeper, Dermot Glynn,  
Brendan O'Reilly, Tony  
Kelly, Joe Bourke and  
Tony Meaney. It is Joe  
Bourke and Tony  
Meaney went on to  
receive League of Ireland  
honours, playing with  
Limerick Senior Soccer  
team.  
One member of Niall's  
club in those days who  
was too young to make  
the victorious team  
remembers how north-  
bours Mrs Ita O'Loughlin  
gathered all the local  
kids and man led them  
through John Street and  
Garryowen to the Mar-  
kets Field to cheer Ned  
and Riverside on to vic-  
tory.  
Who better to know the  
value of such support  
and encouragement than  
Pa, who in her younger  
days as Ita Connery, cap-  
tained Athane Camogie  
team to many victories.  
She also played camogie  
for Limerick. Though  
now deceased, it is mem-  
ory still lives on.  
Even as a young  
teenager, Niall Fitzg-  
erald was a great

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