

Order has been restored in the walled garden at Mount Trenchard, Foynes.

Pictures: Michael Cowhey

# New life for old garden at Mount Trenchard

### Historic and atmospheric garden now open for morning visits

#### Norma Prendiville

TWO years ago, it was wilderness. Briars thrived and trees grew out through long-decayed glass-houses and the order and plenty that once abounded there were just a memory.

Abandoned forgotten, the walled garden Mount Trenchard, outside Foynes was a secret garden indeed, but not one that anyone wanted to enter.

But owner Frieda Carmody had a hope for this place with its high

walls and underground stream, its heritage apple trees and overgrown paths. It was a place, in her mind, with a rich past - and she, somehow, believed in its future.

This week, that future arrived and the garden opened for its first visitors.

Looking about the ordered space that now has the pared-down look of a new garden, garden Maighread designer Hourihane recalls the chaos that first greeted her. "You could only go through it with a machete," says she wonderingly.

The garden had once provided the estate of the Spring-Rices with bounty

 but almost nothing remained of that, just a few rough outlines of beds. Even the walls had fallen in in several places.

The painstaking work of clearing the garden began about two years ago. It was slow work, repairing and rebuilding walls and uncovering the bare bones of this oncethriving garden. And though it appeared that little had survived, careful excavation threw up some real gems - the root cellar, an original furnace and piping system for the glass-houses.

Of the plants, and planting schemes, almost nothing remained. However, Maighread says with evident satisfaction, they did manage to salvage many though not all of the heritage apple trees. Sadly, no old gardening notebooks or plans were found to guide the restoration. As Maighread explains: "The house is steeped in history but there was nothing about the garden."

It was, in a very real sense, a blank canvas. But one which Frieda Carmody was determined to fill with her concept of a physic garden.

The physic garden, she explains, is one which is both beautiful and useful, one in which all the plants are associated with homeopathy, with old remedies and with healing. It was a popular idea in the distant past, she adds, but few such gardens remain now.

In the new outline at Mount Trenchard, the garden is divided into planting areas that correspond with different parts of the human body. There are plants associated with the central nervous system,

gastro-intestinal system, the cardiovascular system.

And everything, Frieda stresses, is organic. "Itisaworkinprogress,"

she makes the point again and again. There is a famous physic garden in Chelsea, she explains and her hope is that the garden in Mt Trenchard will develop and will attract herbalists as well as garden enthusiasts. But it will also be a place where even the casual visitor can learn about the health-giving and restorative powers of various plants.

And most of the plants are common ones - feverfew, marjoram, tarragon, coriander, rue, fennel. In time, Frieda explains, explanations for all of them will be given in both Irish and English.

The garden has yet to come into its own. There is a kind of rawness about it still, despite the old trees and old walls. But it has atmosphere. It is a calm and lovely space. And what is both inevitable and best of all it will grow into itself. For the next few months, you can visit there any morning from 10am to 1pm. And group tours can be organised.



Garden designer Maighread Hourihane

### newsinorie

#### Limerick aid day in Tipp

HUNDREDS of school children from Limerick will this Thursday attend aid organisation Bóthar's annual Open Day.

The event will be held at Roscrea Livestock Mart and will be attended by children drawn from schools in the locality as well as from as far afield as Limerick, Dublin and Clare. The children will get a real insight into the aid organisation's work and many of the animals it places with poverty stricken families across the world.

Among those attending will be children from Munchin's CBS, Shelbourne Road Limerick; Cloverfield NS, Dromkeen; Limerick Project School, O'Connell Avenue and Castleconnell

#### Methadone **HSE** stats

MORE people are on methadone in the Limerick area than any other region Dublin/Midoutside Leinster, new HSE figures have confirmed.

A total of 276 were prescribed the opiate substitute in 2011. The figures show that 78 were women and 43 were inmates of Limerick Prison.

Four teenagers took courses in methadone last year, the stats revealed.

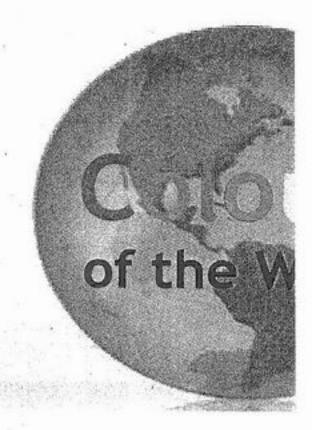
#### **Exercise** in futili

Life's too short to be spent doi press-ups or running on a treat says Patricia Feehily

SEE Leader 2



Christian Aid and Tróca



A Musical Evening with a g in support of Christian A with "Voices Together" Choir(

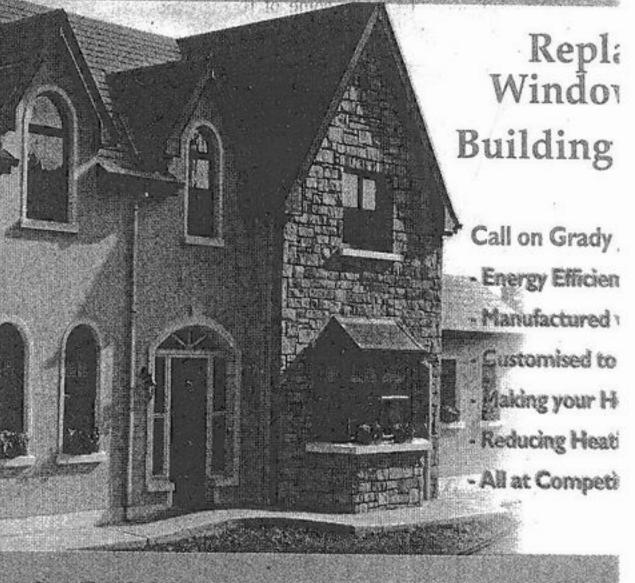
and Villiers Schoo Saturday 12th Ma

St Mary's Cat Limerick Donations for Christian Aid :

For further details: Contact 061-39

## Grady Join Windows • Doc New build & Replacem

Energy Efficiency Without Col www.gradyjoinery.com



LoCall 1890 411 411 for a FREE Surve Quote Promotion No: 264LL for Reduction Ra

Grady Joinery Manufacture Ireland's First A-Rated W

Visit our showrooms in Mallow C Maynooth Co. Kildare and Charlestow



## MEDICAL Express One Stop Mobility Shop / Independent Living Aids

4 Parnell St, Limerick

P: 061-416671 M: 086-2308788

E: medicalmobility@eircom.net

Commodes, Walking Aids, Anti **Pressure Cushion** 

Electric Rise and Recline

**POWERED MOBILITY SCOOTERS** 

Orthopaedic Pillows, Wheelchairs,



**Bellavia Bathlift** The lightest and lowest battery owered pathlift on the market. Takes the work out of getting in & out of the bath and getting up

& down in the bath. brks by remote control

Circulation Booster Improves Circulation - Reduce Swollen Ankles & Feet

· Alleviate tired, aching legs & feet · Reduce Joint Pain & Numbness Aid recovery for sports injuries The Circustion Booster works by sending thiny electrical impulses through the nene endings in the soles of the feet and to the lower leg which in turn stimulates muscle contraction and improves circulation.

