

by Andrew Carey
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A LIMERICK mother has said how she is "going through hell and back" after the death of her 15-year-old daughter whose body was taken from the River Shannon six days after she went missing from home.

Speaking after the inquest into her daughter Chloe's death heard that the Junior Cert student had toxic levels of alcohol in her system, Shirley Kinsella said that teenagers were not heeding warnings about the dangers of alcohol.

The inquest at Limerick City Coroner's Court this Wednesday 26 heard that Chloe's body was recovered from the River Shannon a short distance from her home at Kenyon Avenue in Kileely on October 4 last year.

Shirley, the mother of seven, said

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her life would never be the same again and renewed her call to young people not to drink alcohol.

“I’m going through hell and back again and young people are still drinking near my house. You’re just wasting your time talking to them.

“I just hope to God for their own sakes they just look after themselves. I wouldn’t like anyone to go through it. I don’t think I will ever be right after this. I can’t believe what happened her.”

She said that her daughter would have turned 16 last week and instead of organising a party, the family met at Chloe’s graveside where they released a number of balloons in her memory.

Chloe’s uncle Matt Franklin said the recent searches for two young students who went missing earlier this month brought it all back for the Kinsella family.

“It is very hard when you hear the helicopter hovering over your house and you know there’s someone else in trouble.”

Coroner John McNamara heard evidence of how Gardaí were notified on October 4 that members of the Limerick Marine Search and Rescue had found Chloe’s body in the water near an area known as Brown’s Quay.

She was subsequently identified by her 24-year-old sister Linsey who last saw her alive at their home on September 28.

Pathologist Dr Vourneen Healy performed a postmortem examination where toxic levels of alcohol were found in the 15-year-old’s blood stream.

Returning an open verdict in accordance with the medical evidence, Mr McNamara said he was aware of the great efforts to find Chloe with more than 200 volunteers taking part in the search.

“I don’t know if she fell in accidentally or intentionally and therefore the suitable and correct outcome is an open verdict in accordance with medical evidence,” he explained.



Shirley Kinsella holds a pendant with a picture of her daughter Chloe outside Limerick City Coroner’s Court on Wednesday.

CITY COUNCIL

Bridge in troubled legal waters

by Bernie English
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THE renaming of the Shannon Bridge could land Limerick city councillors in troubled legal waters.

The monthly meeting of the local authority was delayed for half an hour while party leaders had a ‘meeting to discuss a meeting’ due to be held this Friday 28.

The purpose of the meeting is to decide whether a new name should be chosen for the bridge after a public outcry followed the council decision to rename the Shannon Bridge after President John F. Kennedy.

A furious Cllr Pat Kennedy (Ind) threatened to take legal action if the local authority decides to overturn its own vote.

“What you are doing is undemocratic and illegal. We voted for the change of name at a properly constituted meeting by a democratic vote. If you go back on that, I will be demanding a judicial review,” he said.

RECORD

St John’s high spire may be a tall tale

by Alan Jacques
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HAILED as the tallest spire in Ireland, the landmark St John’s Cathedral could be set for a mighty fall from grace with its lofty title now in dispute.

Touted as an impressive 308 feet and three inches from the base of the tower to the top of the cross, the Limerick Post has been told that the Cathedral does not deserve its elevated status. A local source claims that it is actually under 260 feet tall and does not live up to its altitudinous title of ‘Ireland’s highest spire’.

Drawings dating back to 1878 for St John’s Cathedral from M&S Hennessy Architects depict a total tower height of 258 feet. The Limerick Post source also argues that photographs taken during restoration

work in 2002 shows scaffolding with 37 rises of 7ft lifts – equaling 259 feet.

Head of History at Mary Immaculate College, Dr Liam Irwin, who recently published ‘The Diocese of Limerick, An Illustrated History’, stands over claims that St John’s has the tallest spire in Ireland.

When contacted by the Limerick Post this week, Dr Irwin commented, “I do not wish to engage any further in this debate which has already been aired. I do, of course, stand over what I wrote.”

Meanwhile, a spokesperson for Limerick Diocese revealed that an older taller spire was removed at St John’s Cathedral during renovations in 2000 and replaced with a slightly smaller spire. However, when surveyed with the new reduced spire, it was still “over 300 feet”.

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