



Keeper Hill Terrace, formerly home to the sandmen.

(LL)



## DOWN YOUR STREET

With IAIN DEMPSEY

# The keepers of Keeper View

NESTLED comfortably between Athlunkard Street and the Sandmall lies a quaint old street, Keeper View Terrace.

Over 100 years old, it was named so because it provided a perfect view of Keeper Hill in Tipperary until houses were built across the street

obscuring the view of the Slieve Feilm mountain range.

Originally an old store for grain, four houses were built by the man who owned the store, and so was born Keeper View.

More and more houses went up.

John Sheehy, a resident of 48 years, said: "All the old neighbours are gone now. The Frawley's used to live here, and there used to be houses in the square that housed what were known as the 'sandmen'—the men who worked on the Abbey River bringing the sand into Limerick.

"I'd say that half the houses in Limerick were built using the sand that came in here."

Of course, St Mary's Parish is well known for its rugby, and John said: "The O'Connor's used to live here, a famous rugby family who played for Garryowen and Ireland."

John's brother Shane,

who emigrated to New York but is back on holidays, said: "Marie Bartlett used to live here and she was the most capped player for Ireland in any sport. She was a field hockey player."

Apparently a lot of well-known sports personalities lived in Keeper View, as Shane tells me that Jack Flaherty, who played for Garryowen

and Shannon, lived here also.

John added: "Stan Quinn, who was a relation of mine, was a famous Limerick sculptor and painter who used to live in this house. He used to make religious statues back in the early 20s."

Moving down the street, Ann O'Halloran fills us in on some more sports stories from Keeper View.

"My two nephews, Brian and Frank Lohan, played for the winning Clare team in the 1995 All-Ireland hurling final."

She shows us a picture of her mother and the two boys, proudly smiling for the camera.

"There was also a stamp made featuring Irish sports stars and they are on it. The picture is known as the Lohan sandwich, because it shows an Offaly player being sandwiched by the two Lohan's. The whole family is very proud of their achievements."

Linked weakly to this sporting theme that seems to have developed, she said: "You'd want rollerblades to get across the new road in time."

"The road they built when building the Abbey Bridge is awful for traffic, with everyone coming and going from Corbally."

"The little green man stays on for about six seconds and then goes. You don't have time to cross at all."

This is an opinion echoed by a resident of Keeper View for over 60 years, who preferred not

there for 62 years.

"It's very quiet down here and we like it like that," she said.

"My father was born in 9, Keeper View, and so we only moved down the street. We love it here."

John Sheehy added to his collection of famous neighbours: "A woman living up the street is related to Richard Harris, the famous movie star. There's a lot of famous connections with this street."

Sean Halvey has been living in Keeper View for around 45 years, and said that the street and the area hadn't changed much.

"I'm originally from Bishop Street and this general area is pretty much the same as it always was."

Referring to the Corporation houses that have gone up, obscuring the view of St Mary's Cathedral, he said: "There was a lot of opposition to those houses going up."

"They're not the nicest looking houses and they've been there about 10 years. There were smaller houses there but they were demolished to make way for those four houses."

His attitude towards the Limerick Main Drainage Project is a lot more magnanimous than those who live on the Sandmall.

"At times the smell from the river is fairly bad but it will be better in the long run. We'll have a much better sewerage system and it was definitely in need of being done."

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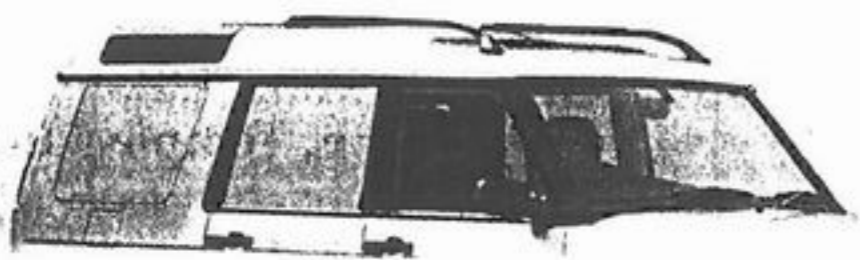


Ann O'Halloran smiles for the camera. (LL)



Mary Power strolling down the street. (LL)

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This is an opinion echoed by a resident of Keeper View for over 60 years, who preferred not have his name mentioned.

He said: "The traffic lights up above are a menace. You'd want to be Ronnie Delaney to cross in time," he laughs, though I have no idea who Ronnie Delaney is.

He said that there were too many changes to the area, and the four new corporation houses he describes as "monstrosities."

Ann O'Halloran tells us that there were about nine houses in the centre where the square is now, but that they were demolished about 10 years ago.

"People used to dump their rubbish there but that's been stopped," she said.

She was born and reared in her house on Keeper View, and her mother has been living

there for 62 years.

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"At times the smell from the river is fairly bad but it will be better in the long run. We'll have a much better sewerage system and it was definitely in need of being done."

"The smell can get to you sometimes and occasionally comes into the house, but long term it will be for the better."

He tells me the house he lives in is the oldest house on the street.

We meet Mary Power walking down the street and she tells us she's originally from the Castle Barrack.

"I was living out Kilmurry way until our houses were done away with. I got married and had a gaggle of kids, and everywhere, not just here, has changed."

"These days you get terrible trouble and it's awful to see young kids being killed by cars. People are getting lazier by driving all these cars. What's wrong with walking?" she asks.

We hop into the car and drive off.



Ann O'Halloran smiles for the camera. (LL)



Mary Power strolling down the street. (LL)

## ACE DELIVERY



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Shane and John Sheehy. (LL)