



At the Civil Defence dinner at the Limerick Inn: Mary Byrnes (left), P.J. and Kathleen McCormack, all from Murroe.

LIMERICK COMMUNITIES by PATRICIA FEEHILY

Sandmen memorial? Look around you

IT'S NOW OVER half-a-century since Eddie Tom Frawley, "the Bishop," rowed a sandcot laden with 14 tons of sand from the Black Bridge at Plassey to the Canal Bank.

Limerick's building industry has changed dramatically since then, but Eddie Tom and his brother Jim, the last of the sandmen, will tell you that Shannon sand proved its quality 300 years ago when the Williamites were trying to batter the walls of Limerick.

The Frawleys, with the Shanahans and the Crowses, dredged the Shannon for generations in specially made cots that could carry up to 14 tons of wet sand from Plassey and from the old weir at Corbally.

They all originated from the Abbey, and the Sandman, along the Abbey River, where they once docked, is now the only memorial to their work. The only named memorial, because Eddie Tom Frawley points out that every building in Limerick that pre-dates 1940 is a memorial to the sandmen.

There is also another memorial in the process of manufacture—a replica of a sandcot now being made for the Bunratty Folk Park.

And in Eddie's Tom's local pub, Costelloe's of Broad Street, there is a small replica of the sandcot, by Bobbie Duhig, and a photograph of the victorious Garryowen Munster Senior Cup winners of 1924, captained by Eddie Tom's uncle, John Frawley, another well-known sandman.

"It was hard work," Eddie Tom recalls, "especially in winter. You were out in all kinds of weather." He worked for his father, the late Jeremiah Frawley, at a trade that was, like many other trades, handed down from father to son in Limerick.

He recalls that the cots were made by local boat builders in the Abbey, especially the Howletts, originally from oak out of Cratloe Woods. When fully laden they were level with the surface of the water.

"It was a skill in itself to know when it was full," said Eddie Tom. He left the sand trade himself at an age when most people today would be setting out on a career, at 18.

"It was dying then anyway," he says. He went to England and after that travelling the world—even to Russia.

The Shannon Scheme, which had closed down a whole fishing community, also sounded the death knell of the Sandmen's Association.

After the damming of the Shannon, the fine sand no longer gathered at the Corbally weir and by then the contractors of Limerick had discovered that sand was available at less cost, and more readily, in new sandpits that were opening up around the country.

Jim Frawley, a veteran of the Spanish Civil War and O'Duffy's Brigade, worked as a clerk in his father's sand company.

"We had all the contracts of the Corporation for roads and houses," he recalls, and he remembers the contractors they supplied—John Kenny, Doyleys and Sullivan.

He still has in his possession a receipt dated 1640 from the Arthur family (of Arthur Quay fame) to the Limerick Sand Company for loads of sand dredged from the Shannon.

He remembers the days when his father and brothers hauled the sand from the Canal Bank in horses and carts to various building sites.

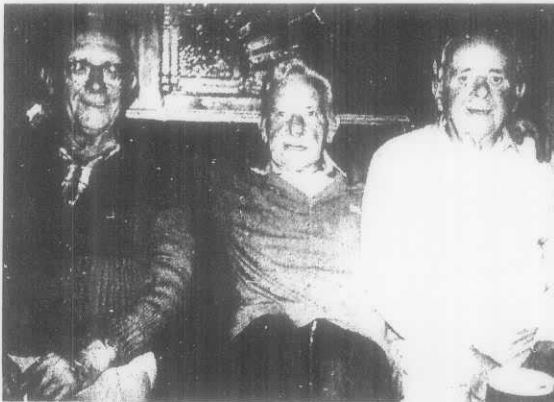
"When the Shannon Scheme came they had to transfer their operations to Plassey. They got to know the river intimately and all its changes," he says.

When the boat was anchored, he says, a large canvas bag was lowered on a 20 ft. pole and filled and pulled to the surface by means of a crane. It was a risky job and saw at least one fatality in his own day. When the boat was empty it was 3½ feet above the water. When full it was level with the water.

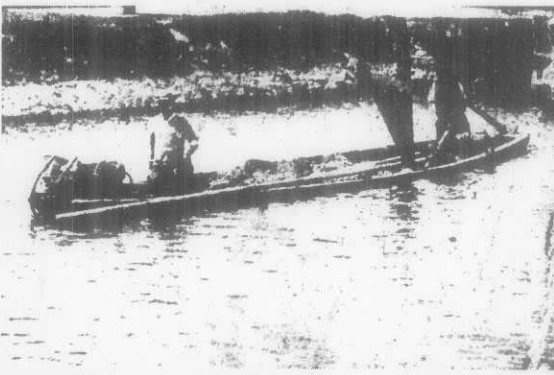
"Some of them did sink," he admitted. "It was always dangerous when a sudden swell came on the water."

The sandmen were a proud fraternity. They had their own guild and after being known for centuries as the Limerick Sand Company they adopted "The Sandmen's Association" as their title.

The gaps in the wall at the Sandman where they once unloaded their cargo are gone. The remains of an old sandcot were raised recently from the bottom of the Abbey River and it is being used as a guide for the replica being built for Bunratty Folk Park. The Frawley brothers still live in the old part of Limerick, where trades such as theirs once flourished.



The last of the Limerick Sandmen, the Frawley brothers, Eddie Tom, Jim and Sam (now in the U.S.A.)



Bringing in the sand... the late Jeremiah Frawley and his son in a sandcot.

The late Patsy Browne

'AN APPRECIATION'

THE LITTLE parish church in Athea on the border of counties Kerry and Limerick was thronged to its doors while hundreds waited outside on the village streets on the occasion of the funeral Mass of the late Patsy Browne on Sunday, May 4th last. There was an air of sadness to the occasion but in some respects it was a smiling and beloved sadness for the ceremony marked the return home from Kells, Co. Kilkenny, of the remains of a man who was an outstanding personality in all sporting events not merely in Munster but indeed throughout Ireland as a whole.

The celebrant priest struck a truly apposite note in his valedictory address at the Concelebrated Mass and the overflow congregation appreciated every word of what he said. The great personalities of the sporting world found mention in what the priest said: there would be memorable reunions on the lawns of heaven when Patsy joined the legendary heroes who had gone before.

Childhood

As one who knew him since his childhood, let me say at once that the man we mourned was a great human being. Not a plaster saint by any means, yet by the many memorable facets of his character his highly individual as it were laser-sharp wit, his astounding memory relying on a card-index brain, his almost computerised attitude to complex sets of figures, his uncanny judgement of the merits of a horse, hound or man, his unbounded generosity, his intuitive erudition, his loyal friendship he transcended all strata of society. He was not a lover of conventions: he simply made his

field, by his every word and deed, ignored all three insecurities. He did not know of their existence. His gentility was his own individual conception. There was nothing counterfeit about it. It was what he had inherited from his people before him and which he held to the very last. He imitated no more. He was unique.

Himself

Those who scorn the superficial and who delve deeper into the nature of man are comforted by the profound sense of loss and uniqueness. For as each human being leaves the hand of the creator from a mould never before utilised and afterwards broken, it is a source of solace that on the rarest of occasions, perhaps once or twice in a generation one or two men or women stand erect to scorn fashion and pretence and by so doing prove that they are not subordinate to the flickering image on a screen which postulates that men and women are henceforth to be punched out mechanically, one after the other, like so many black buttons. In short, Patsy Browne was a man who dared to be himself. And as such there was a great measure of sanctity to his existence.

And furthermore, if a civilization is upon us that cannot appreciate what this connotes, then as a people we are poverty-stricken indeed. But not a plaster saint! He waged hard. He'd wager the shirt off your back and if he won he'd demand that it be given to him. But if you appeared downcast as you walked away he'd maybe call you back and deck you out in a new suit of clothes, a new pair of shoes, socks and tie. But he'd keep the shirt to show that his judgement and his wits were sharper than yours.

These were the qualities that the sportsmen of Kerry and Limerick came by their presence to respect, even to celebrate. They shouldered him the long haul to the

sleeps. And after the rubrics were observed the mourners filled the village pubs and told tales of the man who had passed into legend and folklore.

There were ghosts in the village as dusk gathered. Not all ghosts of the sporting world either. For this is the village of Con Colbert hero of the Easter Rising, and whose family too loved horses. Nor was it forgotten that Patsy, a first cousin of Willie Shortis of Ballybunion, gave his life in the G.P.O. in the same Rising. Nor does history stop there. For there was laughing, mention too of that superb character Paddy Browne, father of Patsy and Berke and Al, his lovely brothers who sleep in Kilsryan graveyard where also lie buried Thomas McKenna the Westford insurgent of the '98 Rebellion with his wife Jenny Foulkes — "the captain's daughter" — both mentioned in the first verse of the well-known ballad of freedom, "The Boys of Wexford." And we rejoice that Patsy's sister Nancy is still hale and hearty in the United States.

Expressed

The rubrics were observed. Honour was paid where honour was due. There is no need to stress the profound sense of loss and sympathy to family or friend. It was amply expressed in the rightness of deed and attitude.

Let me end on a personal note by quoting a verse or two which Patsy and I learned together as we sat side by side on a bench in St. Michael's College, Listowel, in the long long ago. Memory is fallible but give or take a word or two here they are, dredged up after all the passing years.

They told me Heracles, they told me you were dead,
They brought me bitter news to hear and bitter tears I shed.
I wept as I remembered how often I had tried the sun with talking and seen him down the sky.

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APPLICATION TO PLANNING AUTHORITY

Shannon Free Airport Development Company Ltd. intend to apply to Limerick Corporation for change of entrance and facade at Work-space, Michael Street, Limerick. (117c)

APPLICATION TO PLANNING AUTHORITY

Permission sought from L.C.C. for extension to side of house at No. 3 Mulcair Drive, Annacotty, Limerick, including livingroom and 1 bedroom. (117-806)

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(LIMERICK)

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C.I.E. CITY BUS SERVICE ALTERATIONS

On and from Sunday, May 18th, 1986, the following alterations to City Bus Services will be effective:

1. **Shannon Banks to Greenfields:**
On weekdays, from 08.30 onwards the services which presently operate from Shannon Banks and from Greenfields at 15 minutes past the hour and at 45 minutes past the hour, will now leave at 10 minutes past the hour and at 40 minutes past the hour. No changes in Sunday timetable.

2. **Castletroy to Clareview:**
Services to and from Castletroy will operate via Milford Cross and through the N.I.H.E. Campus. Services to Clareview will operate via Rosas Avenue and return via Shelbourne Road. New timetable in operation. Copies available from C.I.E.

3. **Rathbane to Craval Park:**
On weekdays from 08.30 onwards, the services which presently operate from Rathbane, and from Craval Park at 15 minutes past the hour and at 45 minutes past the hour, will now leave at 10 minutes past the hour and at 40 minutes past the hour.

From Mondays to Fridays the 08.00 service from Boyds to Rathbane will leave at 07.55. The only changes in the Sunday timetable are:

(a) the 21.00 service from Boyds to Rathbane will be replaced by a 21.30 service, and
(b) the 21.30 service from Penneys to Craval Park will be replaced by a 21.00 service.

4. **St. Mary's Park to Raheen:**
New timetable in operation. Copies available from C.I.E.

5. **Cliona Park to Lynwood Park on Weekdays and to Castletroy on Sundays:**

On weekdays from 08.30 onwards the services which presently operate from Cliona Park and from Lynwood Park at 15 minutes past the hour and at 45 minutes past the hour, will now leave at 10 minutes past the hour and at 40 minutes past the hour.

On Sundays the only alteration in timetable will be the introduction of an additional service from Boyds to Castletroy at 22.30.

6. **Regional Hospital to Clareview:**
Raheen will become the terminus instead of Regional Hospital. From 10.00 instead of operating to Clareview the service will operate to Castletroy via William Street, Pennywell and new road through N.I.H.E. Campus, returning via Milford Cross, Clare Street and Patrick Street. New timetable available. Note in particular that 08.15 from Raheen will now depart at 08.10.

7. **Cliona Park to Greenfields:**
On weekdays, from 08.30 onwards, the services which presently depart from Cliona Park and from Greenfields at 15 minutes past the hour and at 45 minutes past the hour, will now depart at 10 minutes past the hour and at 40 minutes past the hour.

8. **Pineview Estate to Castletroy:**
The service will be altered to operate from Pineview Estate to Raheen. New timetable in operation. Service will operate 8 days per week, Monday to Saturday. (117c)

CITY & GUILDS COMPUTER LITERACY COURSE