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Plaque is unveiled to 'almost forgotten hero' of the Old IRA

CAHERCONLISH

AN almost forgotten hero of the War of Independence in the Limerick area, Richard Leonard of Shrahane near Caherconlish, a member of the Mid-Limerick Brigade of the Old IRA, was honoured on Sunday when a plaque was unveiled and blessed at Ballybrood Cross near the spot where he was shot dead by Crown Forces in 1920.

Mr Leonard, a member of the fourth battalion, was shot twice in the back as he attempted to escape from custody following a raid on Michael Hogan's pub in Ballybrood. The event took place just five weeks before the Dromkeen ambush.

The plaque was unveiled by Michael Leonard of Clashbane and blessed by Fr Liam Ryan, Cappamore, former Professor of Sociology at NUI Maynooth.

Three wreaths were laid on behalf of the family, the Mid Limerick Brigade and by the Dromkeen Ambush committee. Michael Leonard is a member of that committee.

At Sunday's ceremony, historian Tom Toomey delivered a stirring account of the events that led to Mr Leonard's death.

"Coming from strong Republican stock and being a first cousin of Dick O'Connell, the O/C of the local battalion, it was not surprising that he joined Oglaigh na hEireann.

"His work as a schools attendance officer and as an insurance agent required that he travel a lot. This made him very useful for carrying dispatches and gathering information," Mr Toomey said.

Earlier on the day of the shooting a military court had been held at Cappamore RIC barracks to investigate the accidental death of Constable Patrick McGann, who had died after a discharge of his own revolver.

Three officers from Cork involved in that inquiry had been drinking in Pallasgreen after the conclusion of the investigation, and before setting out for Bruff, they had made a detour and raided the Hogan pub after midnight. A copy of An t-Oglach was discovered in an upstairs room, and Richard Leonard, who was in the house, was arrested.

While he was being taken out to the car he made a break for freedom and as he ran, he was shot twice in the back, according to Mr Toomey.

"Dr John Corboy of Caherconlish was called, and, having examined the body, later gave evidence that the two entrance wounds were from the back," the historian said.

No report was filed by the officers on the shooting at Ballybrood, but Dr Corboy reported his findings to the military authorities. But despite statements from 19 witnesses, the officers were cleared of murder.

"The death of Richard Leonard was only one of a series of brutal killings that took place in the general Limerick area over the Christmas period of December 1920 to January 1921. Over that brief period, 11 volunteers were killed. The day of reckoning came five weeks later, when these men were fully avenged at Dromkeen," said Mr Toomey.

Over 100 people attended the ceremony, and Mr Toomey said that it was fitting that "memorials such as these be erected to remind us that we are in debt to these great men and women of the past".

Old IRA member remembered: members of war hero Richard Leonard's extended family at the plaque unveiling. Back row, from left: Joan Casey, Tom O'Donnell, Mary Cussen, Noel Leonard, John Hughes, Michael Leonard, Richard Leonard, Denis Leonard, Kevin Leonard, Bridget Fitzgeraid and Eileen Leonard. Front row from left; Michael Leonard, Patrick Benson, John Leonard, Willie Cussen, Michael Leonard, Patricia Doyle, Fiona Hayes and Myria Mannering

Michael Leonard, Pallasgreen, unveiling a plaque to the memory of his uncle Richard Leonard in Caherline

PICTURES: DAVE GAYNOR

Oola

Your local correspo

OOLA GAA NOTES
The clubs celebration of the 1 anniversary of the founding o was a very enjoyable day.
The opening ceremony was a performed by Fr. Morris.
The 125th anniversary flag wa raised by Pakie Heuston.In th nity hall was a lovely exhibiti orabilia including old photos, and some rare cine footage. T followed by a mixed football all ages and was great fun fo watching and those who too club would like to thank ever helped in any way to make th a great success.
Our junior girls were beaten Caseys 2-12 to 1-8.
U12 girls had a good win ove to 0-2.
Fixtures; U13 boys ACL, Oola on Monday, May 18 at 7.30pn girls G /Griffins v Oola on Su 17. U12 girls, Ballylanders v C Friday, May 15.
Congratulations to John Stok Block, on winning €400 in t GAA Development draw
OOLA NATIONAL SCHOOL
Congratulations to Bryan Ha 5th class pupil at Oola N.S. v won a prize in the I.N.T.O./E. Handwriting Competition. B received his prize in Limeric Easter.
Pupils in 2nd Class received Sacrament of First Penance busy preparing for First Ho Communion which will take Saturday, May 16 in the Chu Sacred Heart, Oola
IRISH DANCING
Classes with Bridget Whela in Oola Community centre e evening from 6.30pm, all a
HISTORICAL SOCIETY REQU
Presently Doon Historical s documenting the names of interred in the Old Cemeter with a view to publishing a legible inscriptions are not anyone with knowledge of atives or acquaintances wh have any inscription or leg please contact Donal Ande South, Doon or phone 061- 086-8421747 before May 1
OOLA NATIONAL SCHOOL
Enrolment Forms for pupil enrol for the new school ye September are now availa School or phone 062-479

Pallasg

Your local corres

SYMPATHIES
There was tremendous sad shock in the community an lowing the sudden passing O'Dwyer, nee Hogan, of Dr completely and unexpecte Enda shocked and numbed ken husband Pat, family, friends and all who had co and love this gentle and k Her death has caused muc disbelief amongst her fam friends.
The deceased lady was a n well Known Hogan family who was predeceased by last year. Enda was a jovia ing individual who enjoye company of good friends. life was short she enjoyed great sense of humour an ing time with her friends, had many.
In what was described as largest funerals witnesse nity she reposed in Ryan' where it took over four h to pay their final respects home for the final time a morning her remains we John the Baptist Church mass was celebrated to a congregation by Rev Fr H by Rev Fr Byrnes, Rev Fr Fr Coffey. Following requ guard of honour was for leagues from the Mid We Board. The funeral corte short journey for the int Columba's Cemetery whe shine shone brightly on The large crowd bid far bright young lady in a s lieving silence.
The only interruption wa squawking on the trees ing on the events unfold them. Sympathies are e husband Pat, Brothers a Mother in Law Kathy O' in law, Sisters in law, re

Killaloe

Your local correspondent Sadie Scanlan **Telephone** 086 1696595

BRIAN BORÚ TRIATHLON CHARITY CHALLENGE
Athletes are invited to compete in the first Brian Ború Triathlon in Killaloe on August 8. At the official launch on Thursday last in the Kincora hall Hotel, two former Munster and Ireland rugby stars, Keith Wood and Anthony Foley pledged their support.
The triathletes will contest the title of "Árd Rí" on territory adjacent to Brian Ború's Fort. Swimmers will complete a 750m swim at the Two-Mile-Gate, which will be followed by a 22km cycle along the shores of Lough Derg and, finally, a 5km run, with the first "home" crowned 2009 Árd Rí.
2009 JSAR GAMES
Three members of Killaloe Coast Guard were on theValentia Region team that won the 2009 JSAR games, held in Ballybunion. Well done to Damian Quigley, Jason Carey, David Johnson and Gerry Wilson (Co. Cork).
SYMPATHY
Louis Bigot died recently at his home in France. We extend sincere sympathy to his son, Jean Louis, Ballygreen, Killaloe.
MINI COMPANY SUCCESS
Congratulations to transition year students at St. Anne's Community College whose for forms, returning them no later than May 23.
Boys wishing to enrol at Killaloe Boys Primary School, contact Elaine at 061-376407. An Open Night for prospective parents will be held at the school at 7pm on Wednesday, May 20.
ART TRAIL 2009
The annual "Art in Windows" multi-media exhibition will take place in Killaloe-Ballina from July 1-12. Call Rosaleen on 087-2077431 or email arttrail@iol.ie before Friday, May 22.
TRACK AND TRAIL COMPETITION
Congratulations to the Killaloe Tuesday Cubs scouts who finished second in the County Track and Trail competition held in Newmarket-on-Fergus recently. Well done to Colin Hart, Zak O 'Farrell, Maddie Baker, Sam Dalton, Katie O'Malley, Luke and Paul Fitzgerald and Shaunie Mac Gabhann.
BRIAN BORÚ SCOUT CHALLENGE
34 scouts took part in the Brian Ború Challenge weekend, organised by the National Water Activity Centre (WAC) in Killaloe. The two-day event started with scouts taking part in some water-based activities such as sailing, rowing and being
With an U9 North Tipperary Schoolboy league trophy win last October for non league competitive blitzes, four trophy wins this season for the club represents the best ever year for the club since it was founded in 2002.
AN DROICHEAD COMMUNITY GAMES
The Community Games committee members wish to thank all who supported their "Bag Packing" fundraiser at SuperValu recently.
The annual Athletics Day will take place on Monday, May 18 at 6.30pm. All who qualify will participate in the county finals, which will be held in Ennis on June 28.
BALLINA JUVENILE GAA
Last week was a very eventful championship week for the club at the end of which only the U14A footballers remain in contention for a North title. The same U14's got the week's action underway with a semi-final v Kilruane McDonagh's in Kilcolman. Our boys won the day with a 2-03 to 1-04 victory. That put the U14's through to the final v Nenagh. Come along and support the lads on Thursday, May 14 at 6.15pm in Nenagh.
The U12's were next into action onT uesday, May 5. This was a play-off against Portroe

Caherconlish

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GLORY COMES TO CAHERCONLISH
There was a tremendous explosion of joy and fulfilment on Saturday evening last at Raheen when Caherconlish AFC convincingly accounted for Regional AFC to win the LDL Division 2B League Championship, 6-0. The game was a good as over at half-time with the locals leading by 4-0. Caherconlish went off to a flying start with Mark Ryan opening their scoring early on. Brendan Hourigan got a hat trick in what was a fine personal performance. On the resumption of play Mark Ryan added his second and fifth goal in all. It wasnt that the opposition were that poorly, it was just a case of the steeplemen being faster on the ball and having the greater touch and finish. Goal number six came from the boot of the impressive Mike Nelligan and it was only then a case of giving a run to the remainder of the panel who were so loyal to the task all season through. The defence has been truly magnifent all season helping to keep down the scores against them. The wily veteran Aidan Ryan had them well
Caherconlish. He was just 26 years old when he was brutally killed by Crown Forces.
SYMPATHY
Sympathy is tendered to Denis Foley, Kathleen and family, Knockanea, Caherconlish and the extended Foley family and to Mickey O'Connor, Moira and family, Rathjordan on the passing last week of Bridget Foley (nee O'Connor).
SET DANCING QUIZ
The Ballyneety Set Dancers are to hold a Table Quiz in the Stroller Bar, Ballyneety on Thursday, May 21 at 9pm. €20 per team, there is a generous first prize. Further information, Pauline Hynan.
MOBILE PHONE APPEAL
An appeal for donation of old mobile phones has been made by both national schools at Caherconlish and Caherline. These can be dropped in at Caherline NS and at the Millennium Centre and village school at Caherconlish. Enrolments are also taking place at present.
COMMUNITY GAMES
Any child interested in participating in