

# Meelick commemorates 1921 ambush of McCarthy and Gleeson

by Marie Hobbins

THE 90th anniversary of the Meelick Ambush will be held on Sunday, June 26, with a series of events organised.

During the War of Independence, two members of the IRA's East Clare Brigade, Christopher Mc Carthy and Michael Gleeson, were killed at Woodcock Hill.



Christopher McCarthy

Historian Pádraig óg O Ruairc, retraces events.

'On June 15, eight IRA Volunteers under the command of John McCormack went to Woodcock Hill to raid the Limerick to Ennis train. McCormack suspected that there was a British spy active and was hoping to capture the mailbags.

"He thought that if the IRA examined the letters, they might find proof which would reveal the spy's identity.

"The IRA built a low stone barricade across the railway line. They placed a red flag on top of the barricade so that the train driver would be able to see it easily and stop the train.

"Tom Bentley, an IRA Volunteer from Cratloe, had boarded the noon train so he could signal to the IRA.

"A party of about 30 British soldiers from 2nd Battalion of the Royal Scots Regiment, under the command of Lieutenant Gordan, boarded in Limerick. As it approached the barricade, Bentley frantically signalled to Mc Cormack and the volunteers awaiting the IRA, remained hidden.

"A man named Sullivan from Limerick, guessed that the IRA had planned to raid the train, knowing that there were British soldiers on board,

"A soldier put his head out of the window. Mc Cormack fired a pot shot at him. The train broke through the stone barricade without stopping and went on to Cratloe Station, but the soldiers on board now knew that there were a group of IRA at Woodcock Hill.

"Mc Cormack went to the farm of Mike Collins and returned with a hedge clippers to cut the telegraph lines.

"When the train reached



Michael Gleeson

Cratloe, the soldiers forced the civilian passengers off, and Gordan climbed aboard and ordered the engine driver, and his crew to reverse back along the track to Woodcock Hill.

"Gleeson and Mc Carthy and a group of IRA Volunteers were waiting at the top of the field. The two men walked down the field, wondering what was delaying McCormack and O'Halloran in cutting the telegraph wires.

"The British soldiers opened fire with two machine guns as soon as they caught sight of the IRA men.

"McCarthy was wounded. Gleeson had already reached a place of relative safety.

"The advancing British

soldiers surrounded Gleeson and shot him dead. Mc Carthy carried on through the fields but was soon outrun and killed. "Both were buried in the Republican plot in Meelick Churchyard, alongside Patrick White, who had been shot by a British sentry at Spike Island Prison, Cork, earlier that month.

"This event, subsequently known as The Meelick Ambush, was the only occasion in County Clare during the Irish War of Independence when two Republicans were killed in action".

On Sunday, members of the McCarthy and Gleeson families will be involved in the readings

and the carrying of gifts at the Mass in Meelick Church

Two laurel wreaths will be blessed by Fr Tom Carroll, PP, during the Mass. Cllr Cathal Crowe will invite members of the McCarthy and Gleeson families to lay wreaths at the graves. An oration will be given by Pádraig óg O Ruairc.

## UL introduces MBA in aviation

A new MBA in Aviation Management from University of Limerick has been welcomed by IBEC, who said it was a clear example of successful collaboration between industry and education.

Dennis Dempsey, IBEC regional president and vice president Analog Devices Limerick Manufacturing, said: "A new MBA in Aviation Management is a welcome development and is a clear example of successful collaboration between industry and education works for the good of the region. The airline industry is the driver of the leisure and tourism industry and this industry-tailored MBA will serve the region well".

## Moyross community coffee morning takes off

A COMMUNITY coffee morning every Tuesday at the Northside Youth Cafe, Watchhouse Cross, has become a focal point and a hive of community, according to one of the organisers.

"We have started the community coffee morning for people living and working in the Northside.

"The aim is to create a safe and casual community space for social cohesion and interaction among adult residents.

"The space also functions as an informal drop-in centre where they can enquire about services available," said Aisling O'Brien.

The coffee morning is an interagency partnership between Northside Youth Cafe, Moyross Youth

intervention project, Northstar Family Support Agency and the Moyross Community Companions

Aisling said the plan is to combat isolation, re-engage people with their own community and create an informal environment.

"The response has been amazing. We had 45 people arrive at 9.30am last Tuesday and stay until 12 noon, with very little promotion.

"It originally started as a four-week pilot programme, but due to its massive success, we have decided to continue it for the summer".

All proceeds and donations received will go towards the sustainability of the Northside youth cafe.

Essential Bathrooms