Over 200 honour the men who fought in 1920 Grange ambush

Donal O'Regan

OVER 200 people attended a plaque unveiling ceremony in Grange on Sunday to commemorate the ambush at Grange on November 8, 1920.

The event was organised by the Sean Wall Memorial Committee and guests included politicians and relatives of those involved in the ambush.

The oration was by author and historian Tom Toomey, who concluded his speech by saying, “today as our country faces a position of unparalleled financial danger such that our entire economic survival is threatened”.

“Let us hope that our leaders, be they political, economic, civic or clerical will show the same courage and sense of purpose as those brave young men who fought here over 91 years ago,” said Mr. Toomey.

In his book, The War of Independence, Mr. Toomey explains how the action was a joint one between the third battalion East Limerick Brigade and the fourth battalion Mid-Limerick Brigade.

They were supported by men from the local companies of Bruff, Grange and Holy Cross in the East Limerick Brigade and from the Pedamore and Ballybricken companies of the Mid Limerick Brigade.

Michael J Noonan, secretary of the Sean Wall Committee, recalled the birth of our nation at the plaque unveiling in Grange on Sunday.

There were no casualties among the volunteers but there were casualties among the Black and Tans.

On Sunday, Mr. Toomey said that one unique fact about the Grange Ambush was that the curate at Pedamore, Fr. Carroll took part in the action.

“What was unique about was that Fr. William Joseph Carroll, chaplain to the Mid Limerick Brigade, had been awarded the Military Cross for Bravery in 1918 by the British Army,” said Mr. Toomey.

Michael J Noonan, secretary of the Sean Wall Committee, who introduced the ceremony, said: “There is much talk these days about our loss of sovereignty, maybe a lot of it is just in financial terms, maybe more.”

“In those conversations rarely is the gaining of our sovereignty discussed in any great detail. A generation is passing from us that could bear witness to the pain, grief, bravery and fortitude that was required in the birth of our nation,” said Mr. Noonan.

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Have yourself a Palatine Christmas

Norma Prendiville

THE Irish Palatine Association, based in Rathkeale, is offering people a rare introduction to an old German custom when it hosts a demonstration of hand-crafted Christmas decorations next week.

The demonstration will be given by Doris Spychalski, from Assenheim, Germany who will draw on her own experience and on family tradition. Each Christmas, in her home village in the German Palatinate, she makes two of these ornaments, the tree in her church.

German Christmas decorations hand-crafted from straw to hang on the tree - and will also show people how to make special Palatine cookery and a second of Palatine recipes. Copies of the books will be on sale on the night along with some ornaments.

Doris’s family can trace their history back many hundreds of years, back to the time before the Palatine exodus to reland in 1708 when some 300 German families settled here, a big number of them in and around Rathkeale where they maintained their distinctive cultural presence over many generations.

The demonstration will take place on Monday, November 21 at 7.30pm in the White Horse Bar, Lough Derg.
Tom O'Donnell, Cllr Maurice Quinlivan, Cllr Bill O'Donnell, Cllr Mary Harty, Cathaoirleach, Patrick O'Donovan TD, Cllr Bridget Teegy and Cllr Michael Donegan at the unveiling of a plaque in memory of the Oranmore ambush.

Tony and Nicholas Tierney, Catherline.

The Guard of Honour: Denis Martin, Dennis Danaher, Eamon O'Riordan, Jerry Nolan, Frank Gammell and Christopher O'Connor.

Dennis Martin with piper Cieran O Seachnasail.

Paddy Quinlivan and Cllr Maurice Quinlivan, Thomondgate.

Relatives of those that took part in the ambush: Donal Moine, Lucy Hynes, Willie O'Brien, Lelia Heren, Doreen O'Brien, Barbara Hayes, Biddy Conway, Alice Hayes, Tom O'Donnell, Catherine Quish and Pat Murnane.

Historian Tom Toomey unveiling the plaque.