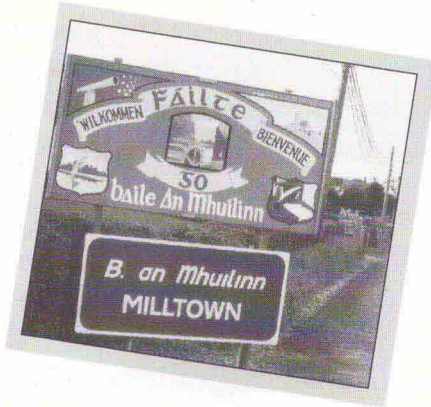


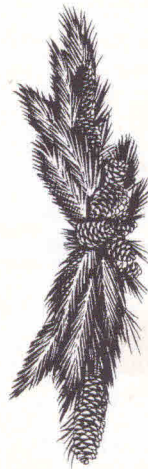
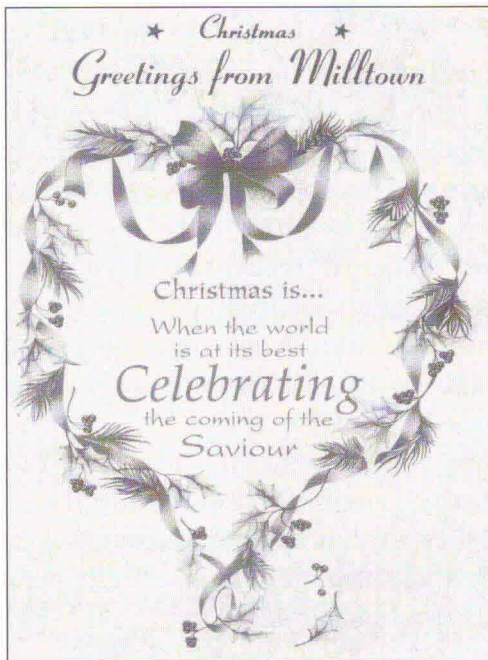
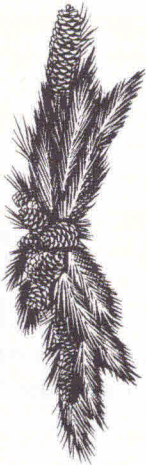
Milltown Newsletter

CHRISTMAS 1997



PRICE £1

**A Happy and Holy Christmas
to all our Readers**



Editorial

Once again we have the pleasure of welcoming you all to the Christmas issue of the Milltown Newsletter. This is our fifth time to publish an edition for the festive season even though it is hard to believe that we have been together as a team for so long.

This time last year we mentioned that our parish was "sadly devastated again by the death of one of our young men" and that "shock and disbelief once again descended on the parish at the dreadful news". The news of course was that Joe Donelon had tragically been killed in a car crash in Florida.

Sadly once again we have to mourn the loss of another young man cut down before he reached his prime. Kieran Walsh at the tender age of 18, died in a car crash in Sligo. To his heartbroken parents, grandmother, brothers and sister we extend our heartfelt sympathy. For them it will be a lonely Christmas.

On a more positive note we welcome our new curate Canon John Cullinane who has replaced Fr. Raymond Flaherty who has been transferred to Dunmore. We wish Fr. Ray well on his new appointment and we hope that Canon John will enjoy his stay in Milltown. On a brighter note also is the fact that our village has once again triumphed in the Tidy Towns competition. Congratulations to all involved.

We hope that our usual mix of articles and items will entertain you our loyal readers and that you will all enjoy a Happy and Holy Christmas and a Peaceful and Prosperous New Year. From the Newsletter team of Pauline Larney, Deirdre McGrath, Trudi Varley, Micheal Oates and Noel Carney, best wishes to you all and a special word of thanks to our contributors and shopkeepers and their staff who sold our humble offerings during the year.

The Hot Seat

Full name: Margaret McGrath

Address: Cloonagh, Milltown

Favourite food: Potatoes, Cabbage and Bacon.

Favourite drink: Port Wine

Earliest memory: Playing ball outside our house in Carraatootagh with my brother Eddie.

First day at school. I started school when I was 5 years old in the old girls school in Dalgin. Miss Coyne taught me for 3 weeks. Then the boys and girls schools amalgamated and I was taught by Mrs Ryan,

Favourite song: "One Day at a Time"

Favourite singer: Charlie Landsborough.

Biggest change over the years: The new modern houses.

Happiest moment at school: I had plenty of happy moments like when I sang for Mrs Smallwood who lived in what is now called the Bon Secours Hospital in Tuam. She had a party in the school and some of my friends and I had to sing for the guests. I also loved doing messages on the bike for Mrs. Ryan to Dunmore and Milltown during playhour.

Favourite colour: Navy blue

Favourite actress: Siobhán McKenna

How I spent Christmas: We really looked forward to Christmas then. My mother and father went to town in the horse and cart to buy the 'Christmas'. On Christmas morning we all walked to 7.30 Mass, fasting from the night before. They were poor times yet everyone was happy for Christmas.

Early interests: I joined the Red Cross when I was sixteen. I was also in the Sodality which doesn't exist anymore. We had to go to Confession and Communion once a month wearing a ribbon with a medal on it. It was two shillings a year then to join.

Recipe for happy life: Doing a bit of work and looking forward to going out.

Memory of first dance: I stole out to my first dance and went cycling to Garrafrauns. I got in but after a few dances I was spotted and sent home as I wasn't eighteen.

Pastimes: Reading and dancing

Favourite Quotation: "Well well well said the old man in the corner"

Margaret lives with her husband Raymond in Clonnagh. She has two sons Pat and Billy, six grandchildren and one great grandchild.



LESOTHO *by Pat Leonard*

I am now in Lesotho, and have spent most of that time working with Rural Water Supply as the District Engineer in Qacha's Nek, one of the more remote mountainous districts. I actually saw the job advertised in the Irish Independent, or actually the sending organisation advertised, something like over 23? With at least 2 years experience? Hoping to travel abroad? Interested in other cultures? Looking for a challenge?

I sent off my cv without having given it much thought. I reckoned that two years flies, look how fast the last two have gone and its time I saw a bit of the world. This was May '95, the start of the good Summer, I had work until the end of it in Longford. I hadn't enough experience for the job advertised, design engineer in the Gaza Strip, so APSO let me down gently and said I would be put on their books for six months. In August they phoned again asking would I be interested in a job in Lesotho as a Water Engineer, the Water engineering bit made me interested straight away as this was what I had specialised in college, as for Lesotho they told me it was somewhere in Southern Africa.

A few weeks later I was being interviewed by two guys who had worked in Lesotho with APSO, the interview went extremely well and by the end of it I was being asked when could I go. Six weeks later, after a two week intensive development and management course in Dublin, some Sesotho language lessons, my Sister's 21st and my parents 25th wedding anniversary, I was flying to Johannesburg and then another flight to Lesotho which is a Kingdom in the middle of South Africa.

In Dublin I had met the engineer who I was going to replace, but it couldn't prepare me for what I had got myself into. I was collected from Moshoeshoe International Airport, smaller than Knock, by the APSO field officer, taken into town to a flat used by APSO volunteers when they are in town for the weekend, and brought out for pizza that night. Choosing from that pizza menu was one thing I hadn't expected to be doing.

I was given a day to rest after the flight, almost 24 hours including waiting in airports, on Tuesday I was introduced to some people in the Rural Water Supply head office, and on Wednesday I was sitting into a seminar on the new accounting system which would be used in Irish funded projects, my project being one. The next two days were spent visiting 3 other districts, 10 in all, and then at the weekend a chance to meet the other APSO volunteers, and I went to one of the earliest parties I'd ever been to, but with limited bars and one all night disco there isn't much alternative than to start the party early. There was a lot more volunteers than I had imagined, teachers, engineers, agriculturalists, business advisers, journalists, and the different nationalities, Irish, British, German, Americans, Dutch, Danish, Japanese as well as other African countries.

Lesotho is one of the poorest countries in the world, it has a population of 2 million, with 63% of the people earning less than 50 maloti (7 pound) per month, which by the way is the poverty level. But, there is also a lot of rich people in Lesotho. Unemployment is huge, up to 40%, and about 40% of the male population work in the mines in South Africa, Lesotho has not got many industries and only 1/10 of the land is arable, the rest being mountain, which is why Lesotho is sometimes called the Roof of Africa, with some mountains over 3,200 metres (2 miles) high.

The job of District Engineer is much the same as what I was doing in Ireland, but with some differences. We trap mountain springs, run the water through a special tank to remove any dirt, the water is usually very clean flowing out of the rock. The water is then piped to a stone masonry storage tank in the village, and piped to taps in the village, I tap for every 80 people, this is a big improvement from sometimes having to walk 1 mile for water.

In the district we have 30 staff, a technician, draughtsman, 3 supervisors, 2 village liaison officers, mechanic, lorry driver, store/accounts person, 3 watchmen, office assistant, 15 masons with an average wage of 50 pound per week. The district is about the size of an



Houses in Lesotho Village

average Irish county, and we usually have 8 projects going at any one time, with one or two masons in each project village. The whole project is funded bilaterally by the Lesotho government and the Irish government, the Irish government funds pay for some of the salaries, all the construction materials, for tools, and part of the vehicle maintenance. The villagers have to provide the free manual labour during construction, and to collect the materials from the road to the sites, sometimes up to a 3 hour walk as villages are built in valleys near the fertile land, and there is less than a 1000 km of tarred road in the country, but thankfully there are also dirt roads.

In 1996, we completed projects which served 5,000 people, a bit above the average served per district. The whole lifestyle of Africa moves slower than Europe, so depending on free village labour has its disadvantages in terms of speed, but the villagers feel more responsible for the completed system. Other differences are the language, the weather 30 C in January and 18 inches of snow in July and a long evening meaning 7 pm, the poverty side by side with the wealth, children who have seen an aeroplane but have never seen a car because there being no roads to where they live.

And, you also have the tribal thing, its not so much a thing in Lesotho as there is only one race, the Basothos, but in South Africa they have 11 official languages. Some conflicts do occur between the Basotho and Xhosa across the border in the Eastern Cape, mainly cattle rustling with people being killed as a result. Cattle mean to Africans as much as land means to Irish, with the number of cattle a person owns being an indicator of their wealth. And cattle are involved in most ceremonies, as the fee the grooms family pays the bride's, 23 if she is a princess, a beast is slaughtered for funerals and for the ceremony after the mourning period has passed.

At the moment there are about 20 APSO volunteers in Lesotho, teachers, engineers, a business adviser and a journalist, we all meet up regularly in Maseru or in each other houses. APSO pay your air fares, insurance, a living allowance and have someone in country to help if needed and assessing new positions. The work can be frustratingly slow at times, but it can also be fabulous, and the craic is great at the weekends when we meet up, especially St. Patrick's Weekend when Connacht/Munster won the gaelic football for the third year in a row, now that was different.

Don't Blame The Youngsters

Those who bemoan the lawlessness of today's youth should take note of this salutary little poem I came across lately; We read in the papers, and hear it on air, Of mugging and stealing, and crimes everywhere, We are shocked and dismayed, as we notice the trend, We blame the young generation, saying "where will it all end"? But can we be sure, that it is their fault alone, That maybe some part of it, isn't our own, Perhaps we are more guilty, who placed in their way, Too many things, that could easily, lead them astray. Far too much money for spending, too much idle time, Too many movies showing passion and crime, So many children, are encouraged to roam, By too many parents, who won't stay at home. Kids don't make the movies, they don't write the books, That paint pictures of gangsters, hoodlums and crooks, They don't make the liquors, they don't run the bars, They don't make the laws, they don't buy the cars. We call them delinquent teenagers, just how we condemn, The sins of the nation, and blame it on them, The rule for the blameless, our Creator made known, So who is there among us, to cast the first stone. For in many cases, it's sad, but it's true, The term "delinquent teenagers" fits older people too, So if laws are kept in spirit, and to the letter, The term "delinquent" fits older people better.

Sent in by Margaret McCormack

Just
IMAGINE!

THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA CAN BE SEEN FROM SPACE!



WHEN DAIMLER BUILT THE FIRST AUTOMOBILE TO LOOK LIKE A CAR - AND NOT A HORSELESS CARRIAGE, IN 1901, HE NAMED IT AFTER HIS DAUGHTER MERCEDES!



THREE BOYS FROM BALALLY, DUBLIN, BELIEVE THEY MAY HAVE ESTABLISHED A RECORD BY WALKING BACKWARDS FROM SANDYFORD TO DUNDRUM, A DISTANCE OF MORE THAN ONE AND A HALF MILES! THE SUPERVISED WALK WHICH THEY DID FOR A BET, TOOK 38 MINUTES AND THEY GAVE HALF OF THEIR 'EARNINGS' TO TROCAIRE!

MUNNESHED FEATURES

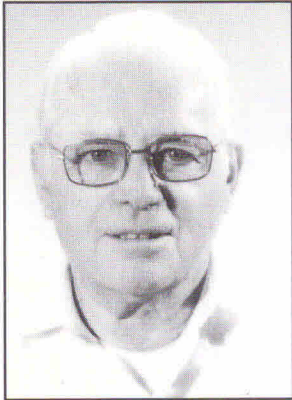


THE OLDEST NATIONAL FLAG IN THE WORLD IS THE DANISH FLAG! THEY'VE BEEN USING IT SINCE 1219.



DUBLIN'S BIRD MARKET IS THE WORLD'S SECOND OLDEST ! ! !

Fr. Francis McEnnis, 1916-1997



Fr. Frank McEnnis, formerly of Milltown, died in Manila on November 12, 1997. Present at his bedside were his brother, Fr. Tom, and sisters, Ita, Eithne and Teresa.

Born in Castlegrove, the eldest of eleven children, he studied at Kilbannon and Brooklawn National Schools, where his mother taught. In 1930, the family moved to Milltown, where his father was appointed Station Master.

After studying at St. Jarlath's College, Tuam, in 1935, he joined the Maynooth Mission to China in Shrule. In 1941, he was ordained a priest at St. Columban's College, Navan, Co. Meath.

Because travel to China was impossible, because of World War II, he bravely and generously volunteered to become a military chaplain. He was assigned to the Royal Air Force and served in England, France and Germany. As squadron leader, he took part in the D-Day invasion of Normandy in June 1944 and also was present at the Battle of the Bulge. His main work was to provide for the spiritual needs of the soldiers, the dying, and the wounded, and bury the dead. It was also his unenviable duty to inform parents and relatives of those killed and wounded.

Often hiding in trenches and foxholes, he was very lucky to escape shells and bombs which killed many of his colleagues. After the liberation of Belsen concentration camp in Germany, he was one of the first to enter. It was there that so many were starved, gassed and cremated. He also witnessed mass-burials, where some of the people were still alive.

During his term in the Air Force, he developed his life-long interest in aeroplanes and also in flying. A great story-teller and a man to make friends easily, he knew very well Lord Leonard Cheshire, who was formerly a pilot and who later established Cheshire Homes world-wide for disabled people.

When the war was over, after a short vacation at home, he set sail

for Shanghai, China. There he studied the Chinese language, but had to leave after a year or so because of the Communist revolution. He arrived in Manila in 1949, where he worked as a University Chaplain before being transferred to the island of Mindanao. This was real mission territory at the time with large mountainous parishes. He served in Oroqueta, Lopez Jaena, Aloran and Tobud, and Laguindingan. He was very compassionate and kind, and worked very hard in catechetics, family life and in building Christian communities. He built two large Churches and many smaller chapels in the barrios.

He became a licensed pilot in 1955. During his vacations in the Philippines and in Ireland, he loved to practice his skills at flying light aircraft, and at giving his friends a bird's eye view of the countryside. Very well-read and very scientific-minded, he was an excellent radio and T.V. technician, when little was known about these modern marvels. At one stage, he had become so popular at repairing them for his parishioners that he had to cry "stop", since it was not for that he came to the Philippines. He was an excellent chess player and accomplished magician. He used his craft to entertain and raise funds for worthy causes. He maintained that all tricks were based on very simple explanations.

He continued to do pastoral work in Mindanao until last year when he was forced to retire for health reasons.

Growing in Milltown, he and his brother, Tom, and sisters, Ita, Eithne and Teresa, and other young people, were very involved in community affairs in the town. Inspired by Fr. Stephen Blowick, C.C., who had the CYMS Hall built, they took part in many plays and productions. Among those produced were "The Rising of the Moon", "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs", "The Workhouse Ward", "The Cobbler's Song", "Negro Minstrels", and "Il Trovatore". Some of the plays produced were especially written by the late M. J. Molloy, who along with Christy, were life-long friends of Frank.

He is sadly missed also by his other brothers, Kevin, Jarlath and Brendan. Fr. Frank was buried in Cagayan de Oro, Mindanao, among the people he loved and served for almost 50 years. Ar dheis de go raibh a anam uasal.

By: REV. JOHN A. KEENAN
November 15, 1997

Christmas Day

Advent is a time of waiting for the biggest Feast Day of the year. Waiting for the birth of a baby who will make holy the night for the world. No Crib for this baby, just a manger with straw for a bed and the breath of the animals to keep him warm. With the long loved carols and hymns and the gospel record of a star in the sky. Let us ever wonder at the coming of Christ into this world in a small town, in a small country of his choosing, to a humble couple of his choosing. Let us marvel that Angels and Shepherds gave him welcome, while the mighty in the land, and the proud in their own secret hearts passed him by, missing one of life's greatest moments. Bless the old and the young who have opened wide their hearts to give him welcome to-day. Bless all in the middle years who have paused amid this day's festivities to own him king. On this great day we beg the Infant Jesus for peace in our hearts, peace in our homes, peace in our country. We remember the old and the lonely and all the homeless everywhere. We give thanks for the happy memories of the twelve months past. There have been too, some things we would like to forget. Let none of these slip from us unforgiven. Let us step into the new year obedient and eager, humble and sincere. Let the lovely everlasting things for which Jesus Christ lived and died for, become more real in our lives this year for his sake. Amen.

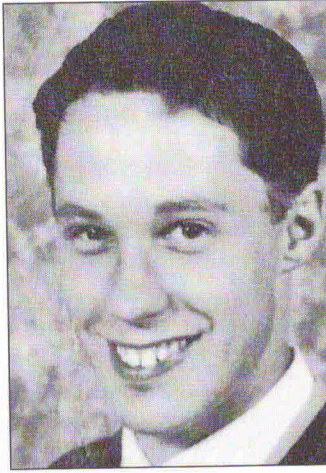
Written by Maureen Mc Cormack.

Author Unknown, verse submitted by Patrick O'Grady.
SCENE in 19th CENTURY MILLTOWN, NORTH GALWAY, TIME OF DEPARTURE OF THE EMIGRANT FOR AMERICA FROM HIS COTTAGE - SO HE COMPOSED THIS SONG. THIS IS ONE VERSE.

I am leaving my dear Father's cot, that cot beside the Mill.
It grieves my fond heart to part but I might see it still.
I am bound for America, that land of liberty.
Where freedom smiles on every child who seeks her colony.
Through Bodkins grave I'd often roam till the sun was going down
With my line and hook along the brook of my native sweet Milltown.
On a Sunday afternoon we would dance and sing our favourite tunes,
and eat our fill of meal which was ground in old Milltown.

Dr. Gary Curran

Dr. Gary Curran, Dalgin, Milltown on whom the degrees M.B., B.Chem and B.A.O. were conferred at U.C.G. last June. Gary is the son of Mary and John Curran. He was educated at Dalgin N.S., Dunmore Community School and U.C.G. We wish him well in his future career.



Milltown Housing Association

This recently formed group has a busy schedule of work set out for the coming year. The primary goal of the Association is to provide well-constructed, secure dwellings in the heart of the community where all amenities are conveniently located. It is proposed that four single bedroomed accommodation units will be constructed on a site to the rear of the Day Care Centre.

Planning permission for the development has already been granted and an application for funding from the Department of the Environment is currently being prepared. If this application is successful it is hoped to commence construction in the spring of 1998. The Association meets regularly and all are invited to attend these open meetings.

Tony Sheridan

Belmont Past Pupils Reunion

By Eleanor Sheridan

The beautiful weather we enjoyed over the Bank Holiday weekend in June was just the added ingredient which helped make the Past Pupils Reunion in Belmont N.S. such an outstanding success.

The school, celebrating its twenty fifth year of its existence, was in superb condition bedecked with bunting and surrounded by well-maintained grounds. A link with the past (preserved by Fr. Michael Acton) was an inscribed stone commemorating the establishment of the old school in Belmont in 1881 which was on view in its new mounting.

The programme for the reunion began with Mass celebrated by Fr. Paddy Gill P.P. The theme of the Mass was one of thanksgiving. All pupils and teachers both past and present, deceased and living were remembered in special prayers.

After Mass the present pupils gave an exhibition of Irish dancing followed by a rousing session of set dancing from former pupil Martin Donnelly and his group "The Strawboys". Refreshments were provided and afterwards all were free to browse through the roll books and photographs that were on display. Many memories were rekindled and friendships renewed during the course of the day.

Past pupils from near and far were present as were former Principals Mr. Sean O'Ceallacháin, Mrs Kathleen O'Connor and former teacher at the school Mrs Nancy Garvey.

Tribute must be paid to the organising committee for undertaking such an event and thanks also to Padraic Coyne and the FÁS workers for their assistance. Thanks to Tom Waters, "The Strawboys", the excellent musicians Shane Green, Nicola Doyle, Maude Connolly and Sharon McHugh, The Belmont Hotel, the hard working group of parents who gave the school a "spring clean", those who served refreshments, those who loaned old photographs and finally to Gerry Greene who captured the event on video for posterity. Well done all.

Milltown Golf Society

Compiled By Eamon Blake and Stephen Burke

One of the most recent developments in Milltown, has been the number of people who have taken an interest in the game of golf. In 1990 there would have been no more than five people playing the game regularly. This has changed dramatically over the past few years and in 1996, due to popular demand, a number of outings were organised and Milltown Golf Society was formed. All outings have been very successful and a particular emphasis was placed on attracting beginners both young and old for the enjoyment of the game and the occasion rather than playing par golf.

Another development was the formation of Milltown Goal Fund which held an Am-Am Classic at Claremorris Golf Club over Easter weekend, 1997. The idea of the Fund was to support Anne Costello of Belmont who is a Goal volunteer. The members of the committee are Billy Costello, Joe Diskin, Eddie Morris, Cathal Sheridan and Eamon Blake. The outing was very successful and £3200 was sent to Goal. It is hoped that this will become an annual event.



Pictured(L. to R.) at the Goal presentation at Claremorris Golf Club are: Joe Diskin, Maura Lennon(Goal), Eddie Morris and Eamon Blake.

A number of outings during the year 1996 were sponsored by Cathal Sheridan. The following are the results.

Outing 1:(77 competitors)

1st: Gabriel Farragher, Liam Glynn and Proinnsias Glynn.

2nd: Mary Hardiman, Anne Burke, Eddie Forde and Padraic Coyne.

3rd: Joe Walsh, Stephen Gibbons, Gabriel Walsh and Stephen Burke.

Outing 2: (81 competitors)

1st: Stephen Burke, Andrew Fleming, Pat Gleeson and Bernie Egan.

2nd: Mark Varley, Jimmy Walsh and Anne Concannon.

3rd: Eamon Blake, Nora Walsh, Kieran Healy and Garret Collins.

Outing 3: (98 competitors)

1st: Tom Boyle, Catriona Varley, Gabriel and Graham Farragher.

2nd: Joe Diskin, Pete Coen, Ann Coyne and Trudi Varley.

3rd: Peter Hynes, Sean Healy, Kieran Healy and Shane Molloy

Cathal Sheridan also sponsored the 1997 outings which were won by the following:

Outing 1 at Claremorris Golf Club on October 25th.

1st. Gabriel Farragher and Sybil Sheridan. 2nd. Oliver Turner and Judy

Concannon 3rd. Eddie Morris Snr. and Kathleen Morris 4th. Liam

Glynn and Oliver Turner. 5th. Eamon Blake and Fiona Donelon. 6th.

John Walsh and Micheál Turner 7th. Martin and Margaret Mullins.

Visitors Prize: Frank and Leo Byrne.

Outing 2 on 29th, November (58 played)

1st. Tadhg Mullins and Daniel Farragher. 2nd. Eamon Blake and Eamon

Blake Jnr. 3rd. Stephen Burke and Eleanor Sheridan. 4th. Peter Gannon

and Declan Ryan. 5th. Pete Coen and Ann Coyne. 6th. Pat Garvey and

Imelda Garvey.

The Inaugural Milltown Golf Society.

The following officers were elected for the 1997 - 98 season.

President: Joe Diskin.

Captain: Eamon Blake

Vice-Captain: Joe Hynes.

Secretary: Judy Concannon

Treasurer: Eddie Morris

Competition Secretary: Pete Coen

Handicap Secretary: Stephen Burke P.R.O.: Oliver Turner.

Committee: Cathal Sheridan, Liam Glynn, Michael Rhatigan, Martin Mullins, John Concannon and Ann Concannon.

There was no official committee in 1996. The outings were organised by Cathal Sheridan, Eddie Morris, Joe Diskin and Eamon Blake.

An Exiles Lament

The days work is over. The villagers assemble at the crossroads under the bushes - old men, young men, boys, teenagers. The happenings of the days were discussed - turf cutting, hay making, a veterinary surgeon on the farm, the bog heathers ablaze and some grief, some joy. This is a nightly meeting from year to year. Down the years, some have departed, gone their way, but this continues. On a winters night they will play cards at a visiting house, now the scene is somewhat changed - No more visiting at night. The Ireland of today is different. A neighbour is ill at night, unless he or she has close friends, no one visits.

In the past, neighbours visited, played cards, helped each other at work, often a man was unable to work and the neighbours gathered to do work together. This is no longer done.

Many years ago the exile emigrated, left the crossroads, turf cutting, saving the hay, mowing the grass with a scythe, sharpening the scythe with a sharpening stone. This was the method in rural Ireland long ago.

The exile never returned, wings, boat, plane, he did not have. He sat on his chair alone in his flat, life declining, lamenting, thinking of the countryside, the white thorn on moon light nights, listening to the cuckoo in April. At night, these were just memories, now old age, alone in a city suburb, no friends. Sea, water, waves he thought were his enemy. On this night he would walk with his walking stick to the sea, then swim if possible. It was impossible middle age was over, old age in a foreign country.

He was reared a Catholic in the village and he often heard the men discuss that everyone has a mind, body and soul. He also remembered them talking about the haunted house in the village, footsteps heard at night, the lights flashing on and off.... He continued lamenting saying wings, boat, also plane I do not have. It was all to no avail as he sat on his chair rocking backwards and forwards, life declining away. There must be a way he said to himself to go down the lane, see the white thorn trees, listen to the cuckoo at night, stand at the crossroads listening to the men of the village his friends of long ago. Again and again he lamented to himself. What was he going to do getting weaker and weaker rocking backwards and forward on the chair. The chair was creaking and creaking. It reminded him of the haunted house and the steps of the ghostly spirit. A strange peace descended on him, serenity at last. Peace on his death chair. He no longer needed wings, boat or plane. My spirit will visit the country lane on a winters night were his last words on the chair.



We have freedom to
do good or evil;
yet to make choice of evil,
is not to use,
but to abuse freedom.

St. Francis de Sales



Reputation is what
men and women
think of us.
Character is what
God and the angels
know of us.

Thomas Paine

Milltown's Tidy Towns Award Day



Milltown, Galway's Tidiest Village 1997

Pictured at the presentation of Milltown's award: John O'Callaghan, Director, Super Valu; Michael Forde, MD Irish Shell; Frank Glynn, and Noel Dempsey T.D., Minister for the Environment and Local Government.