

Milltown Newsletter

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CHRISTMAS 1996



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



Editorial

Welcome to the Christmas issue of the Milltown Newsletter. Incredibly this is the fourth time we have produced an edition for the festive season, starting in 1993 then '94, '95 and now in 1996. How the years are passing.

As we write the community of Milltown is sadly devastated again by the death of one of our young men. Shock and disbelief once again descended on the parish at the dreadful news that Joe Donelon, a lovely lad in his twenties, was tragically killed in a car crash in Florida just a few weeks after arriving there. To his parents Margaret and Willie, brother Liam and sisters Fiona and Ann Marie we tender our heartfelt sympathy.

On a more cheerful note we welcome our new priest Fr. Raymond Flaherty who has just come to minister to our spiritual needs although of course the circumstances of his arrival are the cause of further regret as he replaces the late Fr. Mick Acton, a native of the parish who also went to his eternal reward some time ago.

Milltown has thankfully had its share of good news too in the past few months. Our lovely village finally won its first county accolade in the Tidy Towns competition. Congratulations to all those responsible for keeping it in such immaculate condition not just at judging time but also right throughout the year.

This issue of the Newsletter contains a great variety of articles and features which will we hope prove good value for you our loyal supporters, particularly those away from home who make such an effort to obtain their copies at all times.

Finally the newsletter team of Pauline Larney, Deirdre McGrath, Trudi Varley, Michael Oates and Noel Carney would like to extend their best wishes for Christmas and the New Year to you all.

SHERIDANS MILLTOWN

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The Hot Seat



Full Name: John Brogan.

Occupation: Overseer for Galway County Council.

Favourite T.V. Programme: Glenroe, Late Late Show, Kenny Live and The News.

Favourite Actor/Actress: Mike Lally, Maureen Potter.

First Day at School: I went to Dalgin N.S. I was taken there on the back of a bicycle, this was in the late thirties. It was a mixed school which had 109 pupils on the Roll Book. At first I was taught by Mrs. Tess Ryan and later by her husband Mr. Brendan Ryan.

What was your worst moment at school: I had no bad moments as I liked school and I never missed a day. In my time we had to bring a crib of turf once a year.

Favourite Colour: Blue.

Favourite Singers: Kevin Prendergast, Joe Dolan and Bridie Gallagher.

First Job: In July 1948 I started working for the council drawing water with a donkey and cart, and earned 7 shillings a day. Men that worked with a horse and cart got 12 shillings a day, a ganger earned himself 10 shillings a day. I bought my first bike from Kevin Feeney. In the fifties and sixties I cycled to work to Cortoon and Lavally – some days to Curragh West and sometimes as far as Kilconly and Cloonbar. In 1971 I bought my first car for £80, and I got 10 shillings back for luck. It was an Austin A40.

Persons you most admire: Mother Teresa and the late Monsignor Horan.

Favourite Food: Potatoes, Cabbage. I eat very little meat. My biggest downfall is sweet cake and biscuits – I have a terrible sweet tooth.

Memory of First Dance: August 1949 I went to the old hall in Ballindine. Admission then was one shilling and six pence – 1/6, and the music was by Kieran Ansbros band. I remember there were some houses in the area that held dances – three of which come to mind right now – Joseph Frawley's, Dalgin, Martin Donoghue, Cloonrairie and Patrick Sweeney, Meelick. We often danced the night through until 6 a.m.

What is your Greatest Regret: None.

Happiest Moment: Trip to England with my wife Eileen in 1990.

Favourite Saying: "I hope it will last" and "Yep".

Favourite Pastimes: Céilí dancing and working on the farm.

If you won the Lotto: I would take care of my family first, give some to the poor, retire and have a good time.

John lives in Dillonbrook, has eight in family – John, Noel, Joseph, Martin and Francis, Mary, Anne and Caroline.



President Mary Robinson met little Jacqui Harley, from Milltown, when she officially opened the Stepping Stone centre at Garraun Park, Dublin Road, Tuam.

Hair Care by Lee

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Fr. Ronnie Boyle

Fr. Ronnie Boyle, Lisconly who was ordained at St. Joseph's Church, Milltown on Sunday June 9th, 1996 and celebrated his first Mass of thanksgiving on the following day.

He is the latest in a long line of Milltown men who have dedicated their lives to the service of God. Fr. Ronnie is presently a Dean at St. Jarlath's College, Tuam where he got his secondary education after leaving Milltown N.S.

He is one of nine children of Jimmy and Margaret Boyle and was a popular and very talented footballer with both St. Jarlath's and with Milltown.

We congratulate Fr. Ronnie and wish him many fruitful years in the service of the Lord.



GLYNN'S

—CENTRA—

MILLTOWN

Wishing all their customers

a

Happy Christmas

and a

Prosperous New Year

Milltown G.A.A. News

For the first time in many years, Milltown had a team in Group A in u14. This bunch of lads had promised much, with many of this years team winning the schools title last year. Also, a fair number of the team had played for their colleges' first year teams: Paul Farragher, Brendan McGrath and Keith Nestor for Dummory C.S. Diarmaid Blake, Ciaran Murphy and Fergal Nicholson for St. Jarlath's, and John Feerick for St. Patricks College. As well as these players, Dermot Forde, John Devane, Michael Feerick, Brendan Molloy, Cathal Blake, Darren Mullahy and P. J Kelly were also busy playing for the Milltown N.S team, which emulated the feat of last year by winning their group, which was 13-aside. So, alot of these players were relatively 'seasoned' individuals, and knew what it takes to play in big occasions.

The Division A group, which included Corofin, Caherlistrane, Dunmore, Tuam, Ballygar, Caltra, Monivea-Abbeyknockmoy and ourselves, started off with Milltown facing Dunmore in Milltown. Captain for the league Brendan McGrath put in a very good performance at centre-back, and with Paul Farragher and John Feerick forming a fruitful partnership at midfield, we won through on the score-line of 5-5 to 2-3. Leaders of the scoring charts were Ciaran Murphy with 2-3 and Fergal Nicholson with 2 spectacular goals.

Next up, a really tough assignment; Corofin in Milltown. And it was the visiting side that were first off the blocks, blasting into a five point lead before Milltown woke up. We got back 2 points and Paul Farragher had a goal chance flash agonisingly wide of the post. But the main men up front, Diarmaid Blake at centre and Ciaran Murphy at full-forward were being well marshalled and we were trailing by 7 points until 10 minutes from the end. Then Blake made a characteristic burst through the centre, drawing the fullback. Blake looked up, spotted Murphy behind the full-back, and Ciaran made no mistake from 10 yards, that score putting us right back in it. Blake had a goal opportunity minutes later, but the Corofin goalkeeper palmed the ball away brilliantly. That was to prove our last chance. Literally seconds later, the ball was at the other end and Corofin put the ball in the back of the net for their last, decisive score. Best for Milltown were John Feerick, Paul Farragher, Darren Mullahy and Fergal Nicholson.

Next up was the Feile competition, and this was the one the one that the players were really looking forward to. In our group was Oranmore-Maree (where our group was played), Eire Og Castlegar and Oughterard.

We had our biggest test in our first game, against Oranmore-Maree. And it was the home team that triumphed in the end, on the score-line of 1-6 to 1-2. There were some very lacklustre performances from some players in vital positions, but Paul Farragher and Diarmaid Blake played brilliantly, Paul scoring an absolutely wonderful goal in the second half. Unfortunately there was no reprieve after that. Oranmore-Maree promptly won their next 2 games, as did we, and they advanced to the semi-finals, they won that and they went on to beat Caherlistrane in the final.

Our next game was against Caherlistrane, again in Milltown, and this fixture produced one of the very best games seen in Milltown since the new pitch was opened. It was a tough, but scrupulously fair tussle which had it all, including a nail-biting finish that had the large watching crowd enthralled until the last kick of the game. And it was Milltown who triumphed by just one point, on the scoreline of 3-6 to 1-11. It was well nigh impossible to select the best for Milltown from this game, but John Devane in goals, Darren Mullahy and Paul Farragher were giants amongst other very tall Milltown men. Diarmaid Blake fought through the pain barrier, after having injured himself in the first half; and Ciaran Murphy chalked up an impressive score of 1-5, 0-4 of that coming from frees.

But we landed with a resounding thud just three days afterwards, when, playing Ballygar, we were heavily defeated. But we were minus the huge influence of Diarmaid Blake, who was unable to play because of the injury sustained in the previous match. It was a serious dent to our confidence, but luckily not to our chances of qualifying.

The next game was against Caltra, an absolutely vital game for us to win because Caltra also had a chance of qualifying and sneaking ahead of us. It was another cracking game, with Milltown

emerging victorious in the end. Our performance may have been indifferent on this day compared to the game against Caherlistrane, in that in the first game we had to play with all the style and panache within us to get the victory, but against Caltra we had to really grind out a result, despite the fact we were more skilful than our opponents. But nonetheless there were some really classy individual performances, most notably amongst them Ross McEvoy, Paul Farragher (0-2), and Ciaran Murphy (2-5). This almost certainly booked our place in the semi-finals, but we needed another victory to cement our place. And those 2 precious points we got against Tuam, although rather by default it must be said. Tuam didn't have the full complement of players, so we played them in 12-aside and despite the fact that Ross McEvoy, John Feerick, Paul Farragher and Ciaran Mulphy only played a half apiece, and Diarmaid Blake didn't tog out at all to protect his injury, we still won handsomely. And so our last game against Monivea-Abbeyknockmoy was a formality. For the record we won 5-13 to 1-1. Scorers for Milltown were Fergal Nicholson, Brendall McGrath, Ciaran Mulphy, Paul Farragher, John Feerick and Diarmaid Blake.

So, we had qualified for the semi-finals, and we were drawn to play Caherlistrane in Tuam Stadium. It proved to be a fitting venue for another fantastic match. It had everything the first match had and more, and the excitement at the end of this game was even greater, because this was a knock-out. A quite brilliant first-half showing by us, aided by a breeze it must be said, left us 1-6 to 0-2 in front at half-time. Ciaran Murphy was having one of his better days, scoring 0-4, including 2 long-range frees. Diarmaid Blake got the vital goal, a great punched effort after a Paul Farragher free was batted out by the Caherlistrane goal-keeper. Fergal Nicholson also chipped in with a point, when he could also have gone for a goal. To finish the scoring, John Feerick landed a great point from almost 40 yards out.

So, it was looking good at half-time. But we all realised that Caherlistrane would come back at us with all guns blazing, and that they did. We thought that if we didn't give any goals away we would be in with a great chance. But unfortunately we gave away a penalty, and even John Devane couldn't get a hand to it. After that we were fighting an uphill battle. But we gave it our very best shot. Murphy replied with 2 more points and Darren Mullahy also got in on the scoring act with a great point and at that stage we were 2 points up and looking good. But then disaster struck. The Caherlistrane full-forward got away from Ross McEvoy for the first and last time in the match and planted a great goal past John Devane. 1 point behind. And so Paul Farragher stepped up to a tree that would level it. His nerve held and it looked as if we were headed for a draw. But then it looked as if lady luck had shone down on us. Diarmaid Blake was fouled 30 yards out, on the edge of the exclusion zone just to the right of the goal. Against the wind it was a hard kick, but you would still have put money on Ciaran Murphy putting it over the bar. But his kick wasn't strong enough and the ball dropped agonisingly short and into the hands of the Caherlistrane full-back. And then to rub salt into the wounds, Caherlistrane promptly brought the ball up and from a free in a similar situation, the ball was put over the bar with the last kick of the game. It was a heart-breaking end for the Milltown team, who had given so much for the cause. But they can hold their heads high, because they exited the league in the most glorious of manners. And to leave you in no doubt that Milltown are up with the best of them, Caherlistrane faced Corofin in the final, and were very unlucky to lose that match having already beaten the same opposition in the Feile competition. So, all the players can do is look forward to u-16 in two years time, and hope they get the rub of the green next time around.

The team for the game against Caherlistrane was as follows:

	John Devane	
Dermot Forde	Ross McEvoy	David Hernon
Cathal Blake	Brendan McGrath	Barry Brennan
	Paul Farragher	John Feerick
Fergal Nicholson	Diarmaid Blake	Darren Mullahy
Daniel Farragher	Ciaran Murphy	Michael Feerick

Other players who started a game in the league were: Keith Nestor, Joseph Lavelle, Brendan Molloy, P.J. Kelly and Trevor Kirrane.

Why I Would Like a Community Centre

WINNERS OF COMPETITION

CATEGORY 1

1st	153	Michael Brogan	Carrownageeha N.S.
2nd	37	Jason Devane	Milltown N.S.
3rd	154	Caitriona Varley	Carrownageeha N.S.

Second Class (153)

A Community Centre for Milltown? I think it would be a good idea if there was a community centre in Milltown. There could be a youth club for teenagers. There could be soccer and football for teenagers. They could have Scór na nÓg competitions. There could be table quizzes. There could be bingo for old people. There could be indoor games for the children. There could be cookery classes for women. There could be a party for old people at Christmas. There could be a concert at Christmas for children.

CATEGORY 2

1st	156	Sarah McWalter	Carrownageeha N.S.
2nd	111	Elaine Connolly (4th class)	Bellmont N.S.
3rd	159	Kieran Cunningham	Carrownageeha N.S.

Third Class (156)

In Milltown there is no indoor sports centre. There is a rest and care centre which is used for meetings and the elderly use this centre. There is a playschool for the younger children. I think that there should be a community centre because I could play basketball there every week. If I practised with a team we would all get better and could play other teams in a competition. I would like to learn how to play volleyball and badminton and I would like to have good fun practising with my friends. I am taking part in the Scór na nÓg in Garrymore. If there was a community centre in Milltown I would like to take part in dancing or music competitions. I would also like to learn how to play musical instruments, so I would go to music classes at the centre. Some people like to stay healthy so going to keep-fit classes would be a good idea. A community centre would give work to a lot of people because you would need builders and painters. You would also need people to do cleaning and cooking. People would get part-time jobs teaching classes or looking after the centre. A lot of people enjoy going to card games and bingo. The community centre could have discos for teenagers and dinner parties or celebrations for special occasions.

The Parish Outing

By Chrissie McGagh

It was a day like a lot of others when one is never sure what way the weather might turn for or against our planned outing to Clifden, Connemara. It was late July that we set out at 9 a.m. and our first adventure from the Parish of a Day out in Summer. Anne had seen to most details beforehand that would ensure as far as possible a good day for everybody. There was full capacity of seats filled in the bus with three unavoidably dropping out.

It was calm and peaceful going through the lovely countryside of narrow winding roads on our way to Cong which is an interesting little town. It is where Ashford Castle proudly stands once the home of the Guinness family. The castellated mansion, now a hotel, holds many attractions for the rich and famous particularly for fishing and shooting.

Our first stop was Leenane for tea/coffee and refreshments. We were not disappointed with the fare on the menu. Walking round we visited the pub where some of the sets were used in filming "The Field" by John B. Keane, later receiving world wide acclaim and packing Irish cinemas. The Leenane area was a natural choice of setting with its small fields, windswept trees, and the Assleagh waterfall not far away either. It is so attractive there too with colourful wild flowers and undisturbed silences save for the cascading waterfall and the echo of our voices.

There is beautiful scenery around the area including some of the Twelve Bens mountain range, the National Park covering a wide area and home to the Connemara Ponies. It borders Letterfrack once a detention centre for young offenders and a sad time for their young hearts being so far removed from family and friends. There is now a modern tourist hostel reconstructed from the old monastery which accommodates many hill climbers and walkers of the area.

It was getting time for lunch so we proceeded to the Alcock and Brown hotel in Clifden previously booked for the occasion. We had a very nice meal served with all the trimmings and drink and a rest for an hour or so, and soon everybody felt fortified to start back on the homeward journey.

We were invited however, to visit Kylemore Abbey for afternoon tea by Sr. Clare, mother Abbess of the Benedictan community of nuns, and sure enough we were regally treated and given a free tour of the Abbey including the Gothic Church which is now fully restored. I think that is where the Manchester business man Mitchel Henry is buried with his wife. He it was who built the mansion for his wife into a dream home with warm and modern influences throughout its whole interior. It has two of the most ornate and unique mantlepieces to be found anywhere, one in white marble with large nymph like figures extending outwards on each side, the other one is in black marble, both superb specimens of craftsmanship.

It was a lovely stop over for the group where there was a choice of shopping for everybody with a big variety of gifts on offer.

It was time to get on the bus and start the return journey only at this time the mist began to grow thicker but we were lucky until now. Our last stop in the itinerary was Galway City in which direction the driver was now pointing. This road included much unspoiled landscape dominated by the Twelve Bens mountain range and here and there a lake dotted across the moorland. There were some Connemara Ponies placidly grazing as we sped along the road to Oughterard. We did not feel the journey getting into Galway and the Shopping Centre, our last port of call on the Headford Road. We were free for an hour to browse a bit and spend some money here as we wished.

We arrived back in Milltown at 9 p.m. just twelve hours later after spending an enjoyable day and all praise to our genial young driver who was both careful and indulgent of his passengers, a mixed variety in kind, with all having a sense of enjoyment on the day. Some can't wait till next year when there will be another route and another venue.

**THE FOLLOWING LETTER WAS SENT TO THE MILLTOWN
NEWSLETTER BY DELLA FAHY AND MARY E. McALEER,
SISTERS OF MATIE MULLINS, BURRISH, MILLTOWN.**

Dear Editor,

We find great pleasure in telling you and your readers about a seven day pilgrimage for the beatification of Blessed Edmund Rice which was organised in Callan, Co. Kilkenny, by the Mercy Nuns.

Mary Evelyn McAleer and Della Fahy who are sisters of Martin Mullins of Burrish, Milltown were very fortunate to be included in this pilgrimage, Peddie who lives in Coventry, England was also given the opportunity but due to unforeseen circumstances was unable to make it.

It proved to be a most memorable occasion in that the ceremony was performed by the Holy Father who incidentally had surgery that same night and who is now on the way to a full recovery. At the end of the ceremony he expressed his great love for Ireland and asked for their prayers.

Callan is the birthplace of Blessed Edmund therefore our group were given special treatment with front row seats in St. Peter's Square. Our link with Callan is through our sister Kathleen who married a Callan man, the late Thomas Connors and who has been living there for many years. All our relatives and friends were remembered in our prayers at the Mass on this great occasion.

Thank You,
Della Fahy and Mary E. McAleer.



Front row, left to right: Peg, Della, Martin, Kathleen and Mary Evelyn Mullins, all originally from Burrish, Milltown on their annual pilgrimage to Knock Shrine.



Emer Feerick (9), Emeracly, Milltown, was the Co. Galway winner in a national Neighbourhood Watch slogan and colouring competition which attracted 10,000 entries. She is pictured here being presented with her prizes at Belmont N.S. by Supt. Bill Fennell and Garda Kieran McNicholas. Also in picture are her father P.J. Feerick and school principal Eleanor Sheridan.

Swanning Around

By Chrissie McGagh

There hasn't been much written about swans in general save for the odd picture portraying a brace of them sailing on some river sometimes, accompanied by a few cygnets in tow. They can also be seen merrily catching scraps of titbits thrown to them from the waters edge of nearby lakes or wherever there is a surplus of water.

Yeats immortalised them in his Ode to the Wild Swans of Coole, from the beautiful theme park in south Co. Galway, where one can mingle the past with the present. It is regrettable that the house is now gone, with only the remnants of the foundation remaining. It holds so many evocative memories of the time, but the large yew tree stands magestically apart on the grounds of Coole Park, where many literary historical figures carved their names for posterity on its trunk. The swans still cruise around the lake safely cloistered from adverse predators, reminding us of the Children of Lir whose tragic fate we all remember from schooldays, myth or fable it is our story handed down to us.

I have another reason to recall an Allegory in Swan Life that prompted me to write this in the first place. It was a bright fresh morning in March '95 while, going to Tuam on the Milltown Road, that I beheld a spectacular sight of swans in a field once owned by the Flattery family of Ardacong and now owned by the Tighe family of Tuam. There, they were on the Gardenfield side of the road in serried ranks and all facing southwards. The field was totally full of white swans having seemingly one thing in common, that of cramming their craws with breakfast fare of luxuriant grass that was so abundant all around them.

I have wondered many times since then how so many of the same species got together or how the message was imported to so many at the same time and if there is a decoded message in Swan Language manifesting itself somehow in that scene.

It can be said also, that the good grass husbandry of the Tighe family was the top table of an otherwise spartan menu on that morning.

I looked again in the springtime of this year, but, numbers were greatly reduced and the same dedicated interest seemed lacking in approaching their quarry. The goalposts were gone and the field was open to the mercurial swan.



They often met in football, then it was tidy towns; Sept. 14, 1996, Milltown has toppled Mountbellew from the County top spot. But it's to the benefit of all communities who took part, say Frank Glynn, Padraic Flannery, Padraic Coyne and Billy Burke, pictured above.

Musicfield

A little village nestles at the foot of Illaune Hills
Where sheep and cattle graze and drink along it's slopes and rills
The land is rich and fertile, so good crops each field can yield
And this little village goes by the name of Musicfield.

It's thinly populated and not many left today
As some folks emigrated and others passed away
It was packed with pleasant people about fifty years ago
Who played the flute and accordian the vioiin and banjo.

The piper used to come at times and added to the fun
So they sang and played and danced around 'till the rising of the sun
At all those country dances it was packed up to the door
While the old folks took the corner the young ones took the floor.

Michael Turner and John Flannery who were pals and cousins too
So they danced and sang at parties and attended every do
So this village by the road-way at the foot of Illaune slope
Owes it's name to those fine people who are all in Heaven we hope.

They were happy and industrious and laboured with a will
As they sowed with spade and shovel the land they used to till
They depended for a living on the crops their fields could yield
So they had to toil and labour where it's now called Musicfield.

A tribute to the memory of those folks so nice and kind
They have shown the good example to those they left behind
They have descendants on the missions who left their native sod
To work for Christ in foreign lands and teach the word of God.

Mary Connolly, Creevaugh

CATEGORY 3

1st	161	Eimear Heaney	Belmont N.S.
2nd	163	Lisa Hyland	Carrownageeha N.S.
3rd	67	Sean Hehir	Milltown N.S.

Fifth Class (161)

I think that Milltown should have a community centre for the following reasons: Most towns and rural communities nowadays have a hall or centre where people meet for various reasons. These halls are modern, well heated, well lighted and comfortable. They cater for young and old, men and women. Usually they are used for functions, meetings, talks, games and club activities. People in an area like Milltown need to get together, to cooperate and to work with one another for the good of the community.

Milltown takes in a big area stretching from the Mayo border as far as Tuam. It has a growing population with many new houses and a lot of young people. It would be an alternative to going to the pub or sitting idly at home watching television. A centre like this could provide for games like snooker, indoor football, basketball and badminton. There could also be educational classes especially during the winter. Health and keep fit classes are very important especially for the people in the parish who are overweight.

It would be ideal for lectures and talks on topics such as drugs, drink, farming matters and community welfare. A community centre would be a great addition to a village like Milltown which already has many other facilities. Milltown has achieved fame in the tidy towns competition, a new community centre would be a great boost for the area.

Fr. Michael Acton, S.Sc. C.C. *An Appreciation*

By Fr. John A. Keenan – St. Columban Missionary, The Philippines

News of the sudden death of Fr. Michael Acton at his home in Belmont on September 27, 1996 was received with great dismay by his many friends. He is especially missed by the parishioners in the Ballyglass area where he served faithfully for many years.

Born on November 24, 1921 he was educated in Belmont national school where his father was principal. Later he studied at St. Jarlath's College, Tuam. He was a fine athlete and played on the college team and full forward in the Connacht Colleges team in 1940. He also played with Milltown.

Later that year he volunteered for the foreign missions and joined the Maynooth Mission to China's seminary at Dalgan Park, Shrute. This was during the dark and violent days of World War II. It was indeed a courageous undertaking for the 18 year old youth from Belmont to commit himself to a dangerous and uncertain future in the strange and remote land of China.

He was ordained priest at St. Columban's College, Navan, Co. Meath on December 21, 1946. So he just missed celebrating his golden jubilee by three months. In the fall of 1947 he went by boat to China and lived in Beijing. Here he studied Chinese and did pastoral work. Life in China was in turmoil because of the communist revolution under Chairman Mao Tse-Tung. Many priests were imprisoned since they were regarded as counter-revolutionaries and enemies of the people. Since missionary work became impossible and since their lives were in danger Fr. Mick had to leave China along with many other Columbans in 1949.

He was assigned to the Philippines and sent to the southern island of Mindanao. The people were just recovering from the widespread death and destruction of World War II. Seven Columban priests had been killed in Manila in February 1945, among them Fr. John Heneghan from Louisburg and Peter Fallon, Dunmore.

Mindanao at that time was real mission territory with many large mountainous parishes mostly unstaffed. In many areas roads were non-existent. Outlying villages could only be reached on horseback through brittle pathways in the dense mountain jungle. Mick learned the local language – Sebuano and became an adept horseman travelling long distances in ministering to the people. He worked in Oganian and Balingao areas. In 1958 he founded a new parish at Bacolod, Lanao del Norte. The people there were mainly fishermen and small farmers. He built a beautiful Church and Secondary school. The parish is now staffed by Filipinos, so his work continues.

Returning home in the seventies, he helped out in Milltown parish and became full-time curate in 1982. He was very popular with old and young alike, and kept the schools in Milltown and Carrownageeha in excellent condition.

His quiet disposition and presence among the people endeared him especially to the sick, the old and lonely whom he visited regularly.

He lived very simply and showed little interest in money or personal possessions. He liked to contemplate the beauty of God's creation as shown in the flowers and trees. He mourned the disappearance of Belmont lake along with all the wild-life connected with it. His personal decoration of Ballyglass Church is a lasting memorial to his faith and spirit. We extend our sympathies to his brothers Msg. Sean, Los Angeles, Canon Colum, London, his sisters and brothers, his sister-in-law, Bridie and many nieces and nephews.

Ad deis De go raibh a anam. S. Ó C.

Fr. Michael Acton, S.Sc. C.C. *An Appreciation*

By Fr. Oliver Whyte

Just before Christmas, 1947, Mick Acton with 8 other Columbans arrived in China. They went to the newly opened Language School in Beijing where they worked hard at the Chinese language till the school was closed down nine months later. The Red Army was almost in Beijing when they were evacuated to Shanghai and a little later, Fr. Mick was assigned to work in the Philippines. He went to the Island of Mindanao where he studied the Philippines Language, called Cebuano - he was then appointed Parish Priest of a newly developing parish of Baliangao where he worked for over five years. He enlarged the High School and rebuilt the Church.

After a vacation in Ireland, he returned to Mindanao and was assigned to open the new parish of Bacalod in Lanao province. There he built from scratch a new parish plant - a Rectory, large High School and a beautiful new Church. He endeared himself to the people and is well remembered in Bacalod.

It is interesting to note that the son of a faithful worker of Fr. Mick in Bacalod will be ordained a priest of the diocese this Christmas. Fr. Mick baptized this boy and recently supported him in his seminary studies.

The parish of Bacalod had a Requiem Mass for Fr. Mick when they learned of his death. Over 500 people signed a message of condolence which was sent to the family of the late Fr. Michael. They plan to erect in Bacalod a memorial to the founder of their now flourishing parish.

May he rest in peace.

Fr Michael Acton was found dead in a chair at his residence in Belmont, Milltown, Co. Galway, Ireland, on 27th September, 1996, when his brother Dr Gerry came to visit him. The post mortem finding was that he had died of a heart attack.

Mick was born on 24th November 1921 in the parish of Milltown, Co. Galway, in Tuam archdiocese. He was educated in Belmont N.S. (1926-34); St Jarlath's College, Tuam (1934-40); St Columban's, Dalgan Park, Galway (1940-41); and St Columban's, Dalgan, Navan (1941-47), being ordained priest on 21st December 1946.

Appointed to China, he went to the language school in Peking 1948-49, but after the communist take-over in 1949 he was among a dozen Columbans sent from China to the Philippines. By 1951 he was stationed in Baliangao Misamis Occidental. In May 1956 he was appointed first pastor of Bacolod (cut off from Kolambugan) and remained there till 1971. He founded the Santo Nino High School.

In 1972 he was appointed to the Irish Region, where he did pastoral work in the his home archdiocese. For the last 14 years he was stationed as an assistant in his home parish of Milltown, taking care of the Ballyglass area.

At the Mass for him in Milltown parish church on 1st October the church was again packed as it had been the previous night for the removal. Archbishop Michael Neary presided and preached the homily. Mick's brother, Mgr Sean Acton from Los Angeles was the main celebrant, assisted at the altar by another brother, Canon Colm Acton from London, and Columban classmate Oliver Whyte, with Milltown P.P. Paddy Gill as M.C., accompanied by some 60 other concelebrants, including Nicholas Murray and Neil Magill. In the congregation were several more of Mick's brothers and sisters. The final commendation was given by the Archbishop.

Burial followed in the church grounds, where Archbishop Neary also led the prayers at the graveside. Afterwards all the priests were invited to a meal in a local hotel.

**The Following Tribute was written by
Fr. Micks niece Martina Acton, Belmont.**



As a final farewell, my mother Bridie and we her children, would like to share with you, what Fr. Michael was and meant to us. He was a happy character with a simple approach to life. He loved listening to birds singing, a walk early in the morning, the changes of nature as each season moved on, a day at the races, a good football match, a Sunday dinner spent with his family, and especially the company of children. He often delighted us with stories of his youth. He was a generous man who was always ready to listen and advise. He praised and guided us. He never turned away from us but instinctively protected us, like a father, a role he had taken on in our minds as well as his. He enjoyed our company, and we his. He had no favourites, we were all equally important. And now we have lost him. We find some comfort in knowing he is in a better place. All his worries and fears are gone. We are left with a lonely emptiness that time may ease. We will never forget you Mick. We miss and love you dear friend. Goodbye.