

# MILLTOWN

## PARISH ANNUAL

### 1998



*Price £3*



# Editorial

## Editorial

Welcome to our new Parish Annual. Since the last publication of our local newsletter a new committee has been formed. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the previous committee of Noel Carney, Deirdre McGrath, Michael Oates, Trudi Varley and Pauline Larney for the hard work and dedication they gave over the last number of years.

We have decided to make some changes to the newsletter. Apart from the obvious change of making it bigger we also decided to limit it to just one publication a year. The main reason for this being that a news-sheet will be published every weekend which will keep everybody informed of the weekly happenings in the parish.

Over the last year the parish has experienced a number of changes. Fr. Gill has left the parish after many years of devoted service and we would like to wish him a joyful and happy

Christmas in his new parish. Our new parish priest is Fr. Cribben and we warmly welcome him to Milltown and hope he enjoys his stay with us. To Canon Cullinane we also extend our welcome to Milltown. We would also like to welcome our new Garda to the parish, Garda Kevin Noone and his wife Martina.

Our u-12, u-14 and u-16 teams sparked a new lease of life into Milltown football with their brilliant campaigns over the year. The Tidy Towns Committee are to be congratulated once again for winning the overall county award and achieving great recognition for the beautiful riverwalk along the island. The Horse-show Committee also pulled out all the stops in putting on a fantastic Gymkhana during the summer.

Finally I would like to thank all the people who gave of their time to write articles for this annual and we hope you enjoy reading them. I would also like to give special mention to Ciaran and John Murphy who typed out the articles for us.

From all of us on the committee, Oliver Turner, Pdraig O'Connor, Jarlath Molloy, John Hehir and Eamon Callaghan, we wish you a Happy and joyful Christmas and a prosperous new year.



# Michael Burke

## *Electrical Contractor*

Member of Electrical Contractors Safety and Standards Association of Ireland

Milltown, Tuam, Co. Galway

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## Milltown Community Council

Milltown Community Council was set up in April 1993 because people felt that there were many issues affecting the community which weren't being addressed by any of the existing organisations. Issues such as our roads, the elderly, graveyards, and the lack of a community centre. Committees were set up to look into all these issues.

At our first meeting the Hall Committee was asked to look at the existing hall in the village to see if it could be expanded and renovated to the extent that it would facilitate all the various functions of a parish hall such as sports, drama, dance, etc. After consultation with the fire officer, engineer and architects, the committee reported back to a full community council meeting and it was agreed that on the evidence given renovating the old hall was not a viable option and a new site would have to be found. It was agreed that the existing hall would not be allowed to become a derelict building. At the moment it is serving as a valuable headquarters for the local F.A.S. workers.

The committee then set about the task of getting a suitable site. An advertisement was placed in the Tuam Herald asking for people who had land in or around the village to come forward and offer a site. Mrs. Mary Sheridan made a very generous offer of an acre of ground across from the day care centre and after consultation with the members of the community council the site was purchased subject to planning permission.

The next phase was to draw up plans for the centre. The local school children were involved in this and we would like to thank the children and their teachers for their help. It was evident from the children's

## **Community Council Update**

responses as well as from those at the community council meetings that a centre with a hall and a stage was not good enough. If it was going to be made use of, it should facilitate different kinds of sports, be able to hold dramas, school concerts and night classes. A Heritage Centre would also be important to the parish.

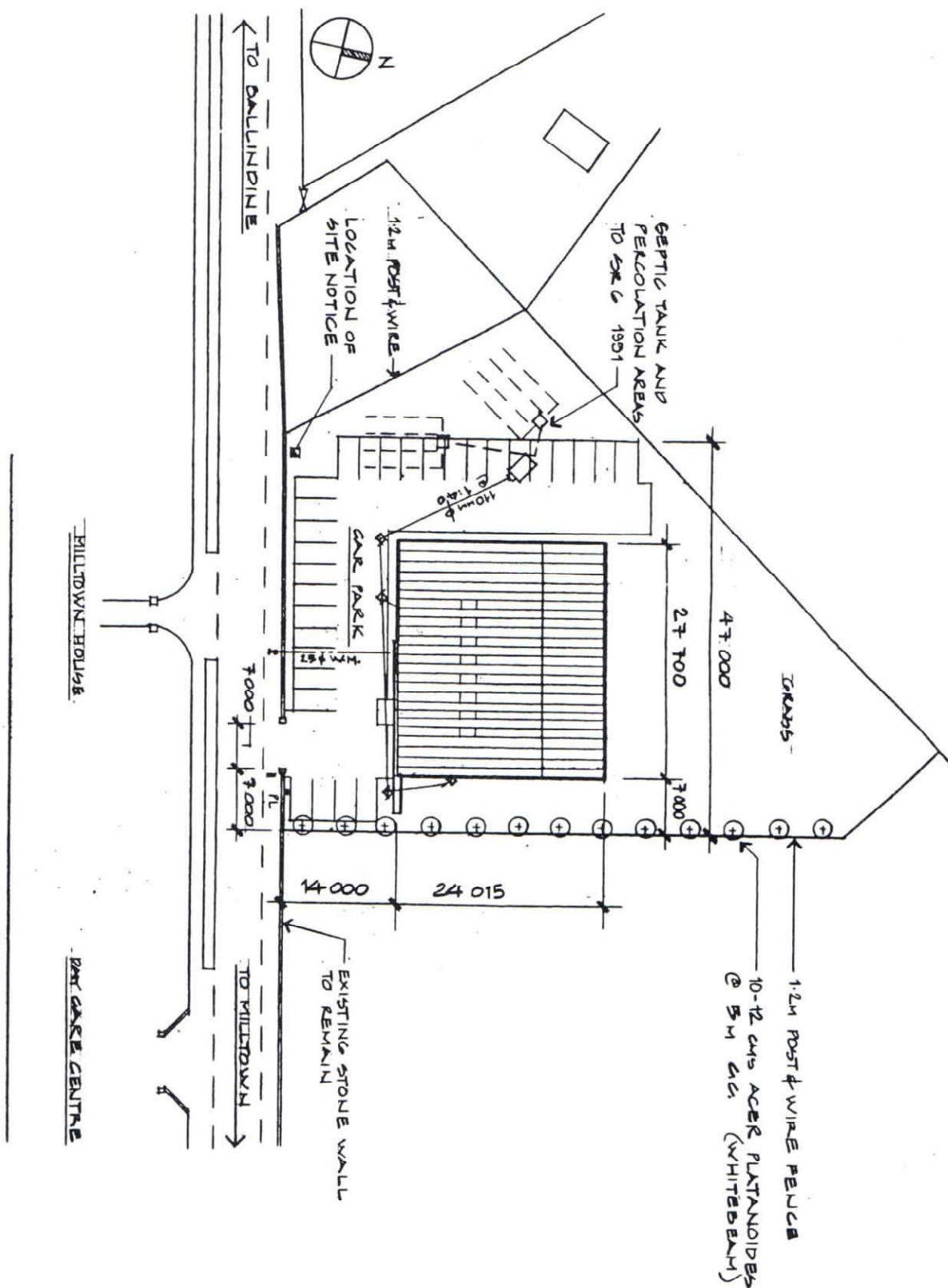
Our parish has had many famous people whose great achievements are left hidden and forgotten. John Bermingham, who died in 1884 was a famous astronomer whose observatory was at Millbrook. In May 1866 he discovered a new star which was subsequently named after him. Another famous family who lived in the area were the Conlon's. They lived in Gurane for a time. They were gifted musicians and dancers and their fame spread far and wide. One of the most famous people to come from our parish is the late M.J. Molloy whose plays and short stories bring enjoyment to so many people.

It was felt that it would be a shame not to have a place to display the memorabilia of these and other famous people from the area. So it was decided to incorporate a Heritage Centre into the building also.

Having visited various centres around the area the committee drew up a rough plan of the centre and this was sent on to an architect to properly design. It was decided to name the centre "The M.J. Molloy Centre" in honour of this great man.

# Community Centre Plans

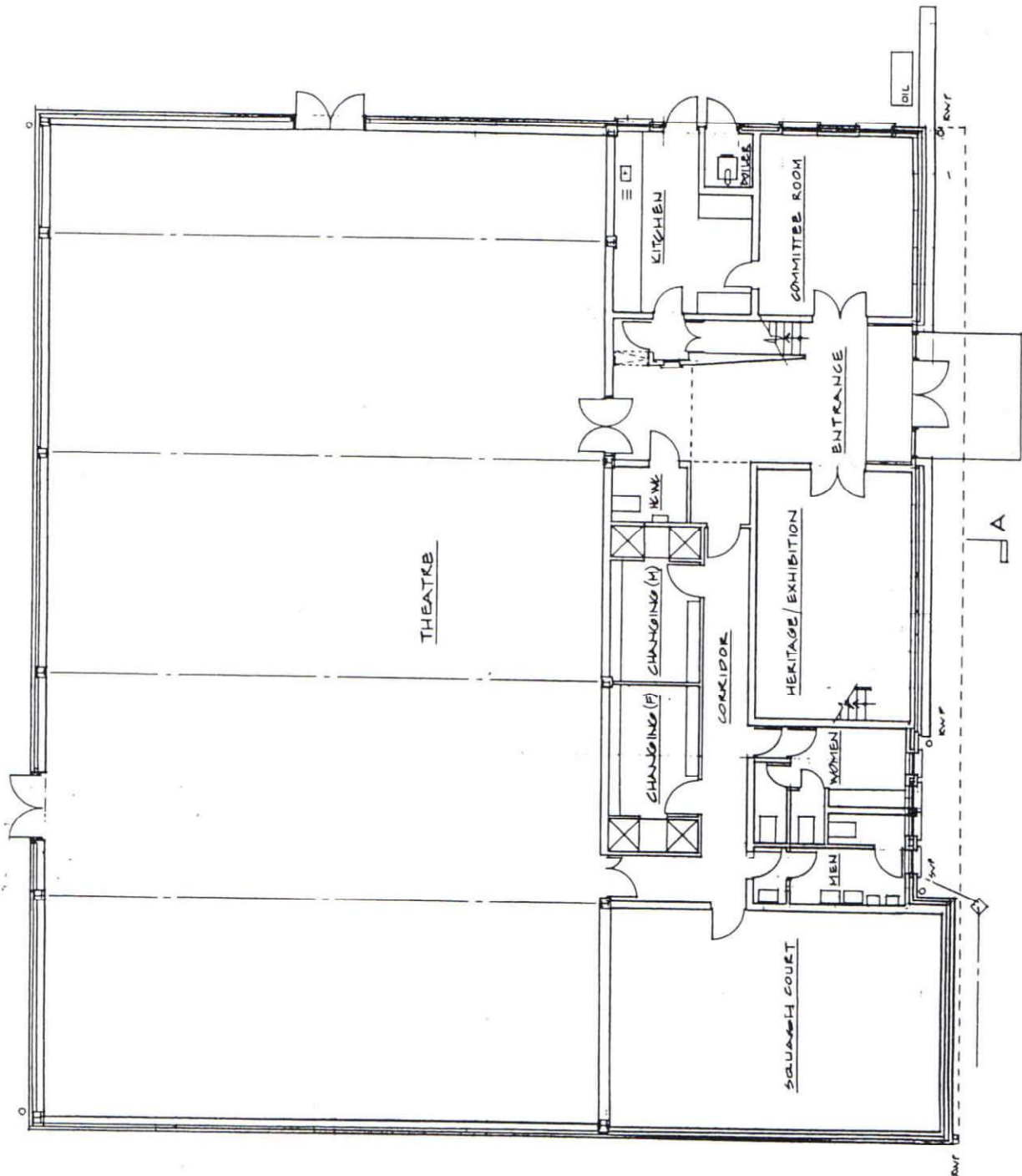
## SITE PLAN





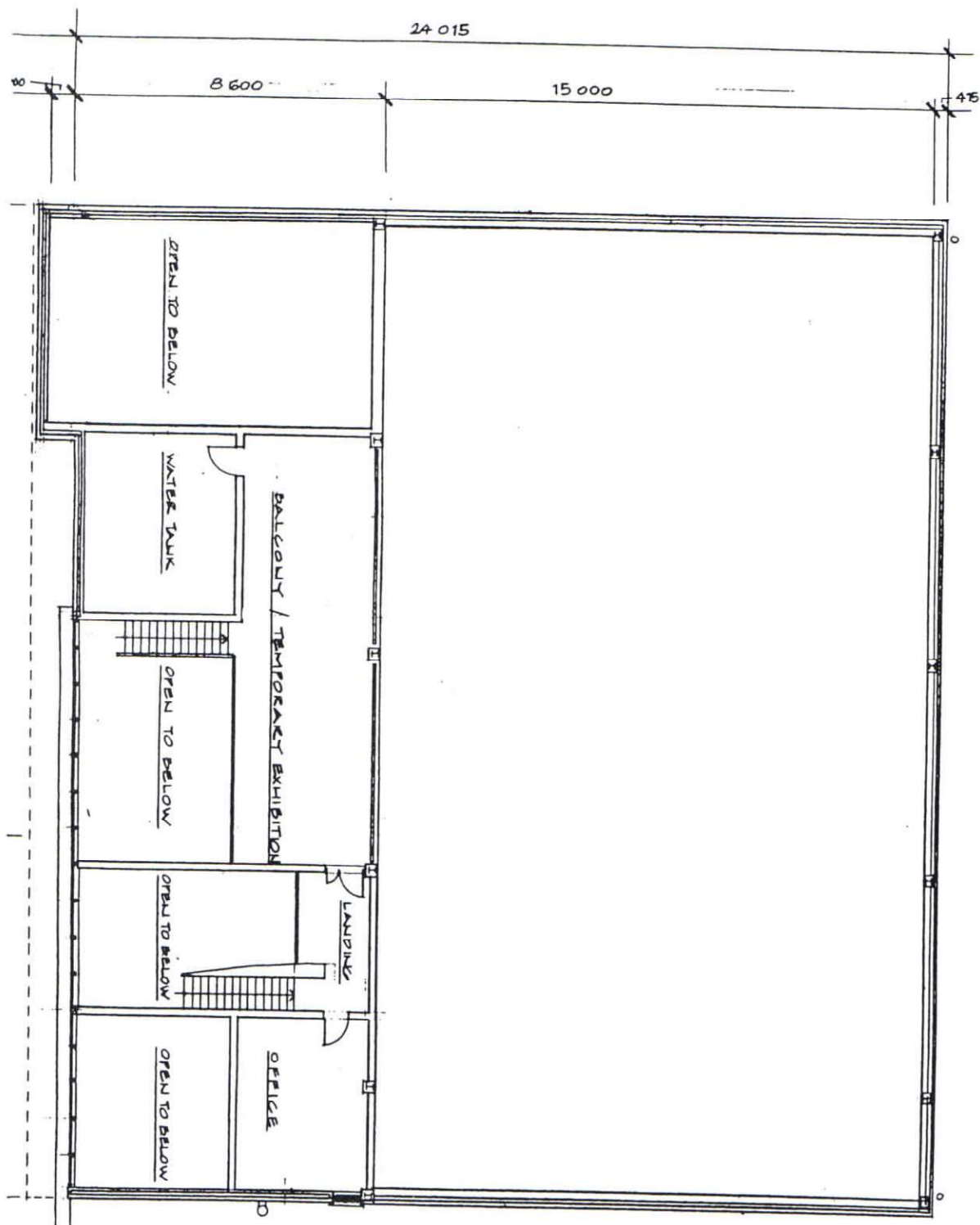
# Community Centre Plans

## Ground Floor



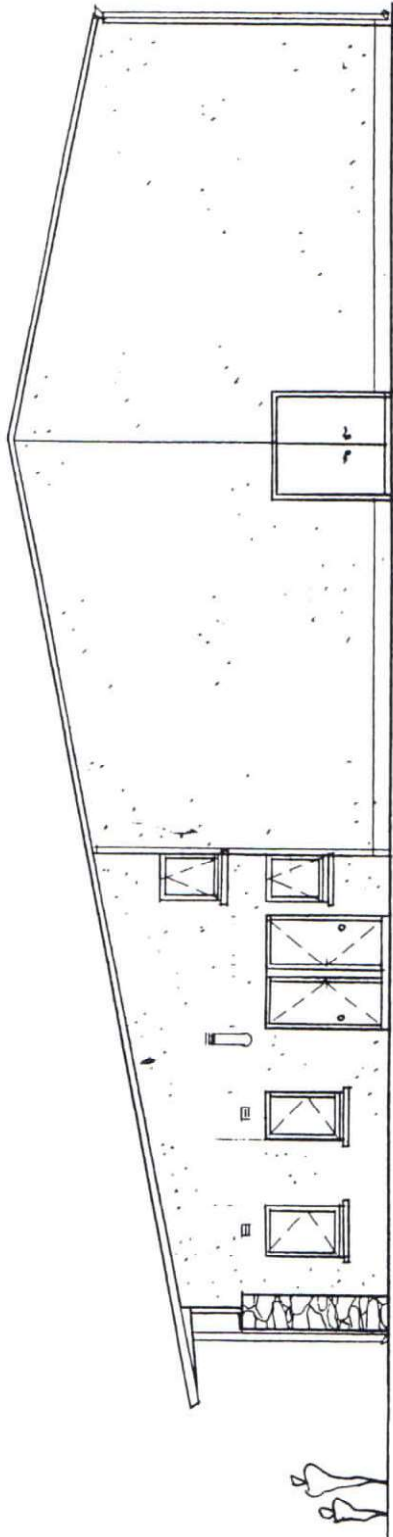
# Community Centre Plans

## *First Floor*

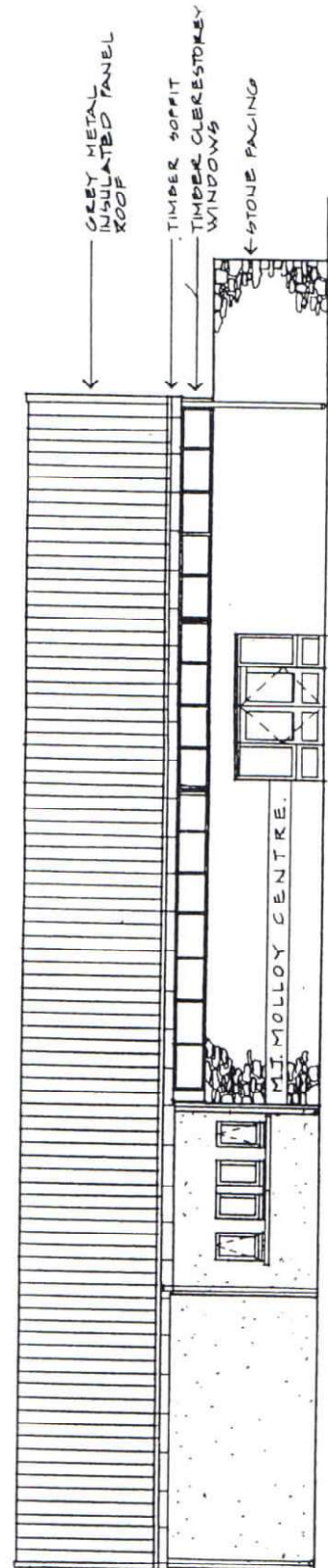




# Community Centre Plans



EAST ELEVATION



FRONT ELEVATION

## Community Council Update

Full planning permission has been got for the centre and the purchase of the site has been completed. We are now seeking funding, and have applied for government assistance. A lot of thought and effort has gone into this project and we hope that you will give it your full support.

The Community Council is also involved with many other projects within the parish. A Graveyard committee was set up to tackle the local graveyards whose walls were in need of repair and were also overgrown with weeds. The results of their efforts are very evident, and we wish to thank all those who contributed so generously to graveyard collections over the years.

A Community Alert committee is up and running and many elderly people are feeling a lot more secure because of their work. Emergency Response Phones were given to those who needed them. Locks were fitted on doors and window and security lights were also installed. The elderly are everybody's responsibility and we should give them special care and attention over these winter months.

I'm sure many of you have enjoyed the great productions the Drama committee have staged. They are currently working on a new production which they hope to stage shortly.

Milltown has also twinned with a village from Wales called Llandarrog. We would like to thank all those involved in the twinning and especially those who

hosted the Welsh people when they came over to visit us.

The Community Council is here for you the people of the parish, and if a community is to prosper and thrive it needs everybody's involvement. Meetings are held only once a month and last for just over an hour. All it takes to get involved is to come along to the meetings. You don't have to take on any work if you don't wish to but your presence and input would make a big difference. Please don't wait to be asked. I would also appeal to any existing organisation within the parish to ensure that they have at least one member from their committee attending the meetings.

Finally I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Milltown Community Council to wish you all a very happy Christmas and a joyous new year.

Eamon Callaghan.



# JOHN HANNON

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### The Milltown Show

One of the most successful local ventures in the last decade must be the Milltown Show which has, since its inception in 1990, grown continually every year to be now regarded as one of the top Summer shows in the West of Ireland. The Show itself centres mainly around horses, and in two separate areas there are showjumping events and 'showing' classes. These events attract horses and riders from all around the country, as several events in the showjumping can qualify you to the R.D.S. and other high-profile shows.

Of course its not all horses at the Milltown Show and the ever popular dog show has carved out a reputation of its own as being one of the bigger events in the calendar. The country fair is always well supported as is the local sports which caters mainly for the kids, but with fun races for parents too. With many side shows, stalls and novelty items there is always more than enough to keep young and old occupied every year at the Milltown Show.

To organise an event like this how-

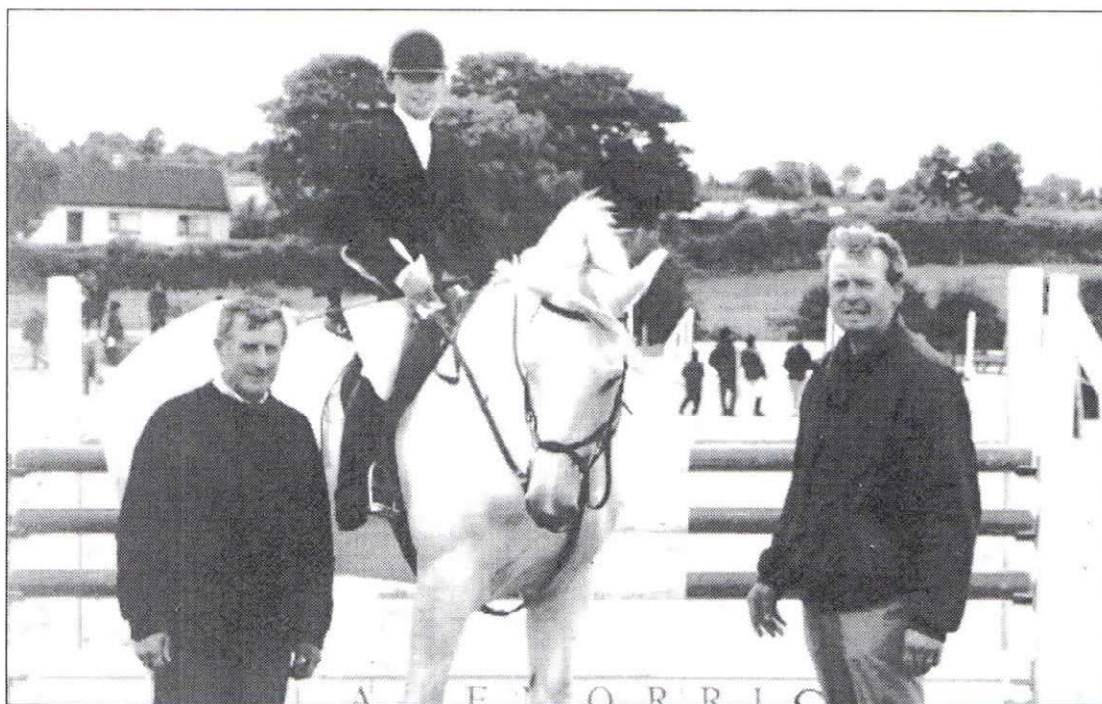
## **Milltown Horse Show Report**

ever requires months of work in the lead up to it and Milltown are lucky to have a hard-working committee, the driving force of which are Jimmy and Marie Murray.

Another group of people who deserve much credit are the multitude of local sponsors, without whom the Show would not be possible. They deserve your support for all the money they have contributed over the years and hopefully they will continue to row in behind the Milltown Show and carry it successfully into the new Millennium.

Frank Mullarkey is another whose contribution to the Show every year is invaluable, as it is on his lands that the entire show is held. We are all grateful for his continued support.

A lot has happened since our inaugural Milltown Show in 1990 and in the following pages you can see some of the many moments captured on film over the



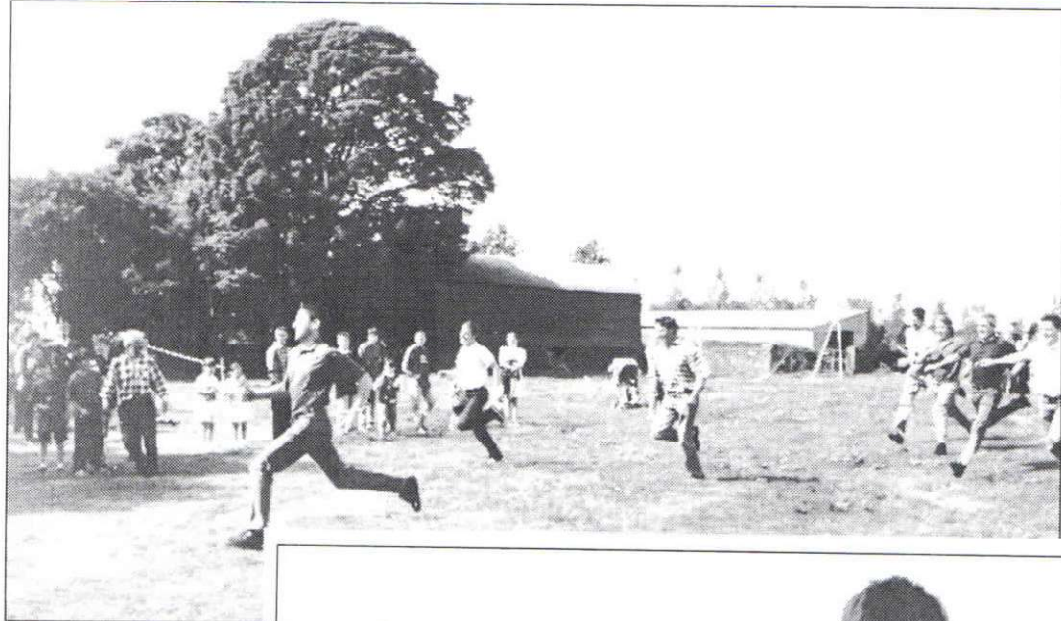


## Horse Show Photos





## Horse Show Photos



## Christmas Day 1998

### Christmas Day 1998

Today we welcome into our hearts and homes the Holy Infant Jesus. Oh Heavenly Father we thank You for the precious gift of your only Son you have given us.

We beg You oh Holy Infant Jesus by the almighty power of Your littleness to bring us a lasting peace in Ireland and in all the countries of the world.

Have pity on the poor and the homeless especially the children. Jesus bless our senior citizens, may they live in peace and security.

May Thy light and love be abroad today. In all the dark corners of the world. Wherever hopelessness deadens and dulls, wherever men and women are prisoners of shame and fear, deliver us from war and its methods deliver us from racial superiority.

Let the music and carols echo throughout all our lives. We ask the most Holy Family to watch over our home and our country.

Maureen McCormack

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**I would like to wish all my customers a very merry christmas and a peaceful new year, thanking you all for your custom throughout the year.**

*Lee Gilmore*

## PAT FEERICK

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## Tidy Towns 1998

In another ground-breaking year for the Milltown Tidy Towns Committee, the judges had this to say about our village :

“It is something of an understatement to say that Milltown is truly remarkable. The planning, the progress over a relatively short period, the fine detail of the various projects in execution, can only be matched in a few other places. One wishes one could halt the stream of traffic passing through on the N17 and divert motorists to enjoy the work of this committee and community.

“The Church is beautifully maintained inside and out. The schools within and without the village are well kept. The re-pairing of the Garda station was favourably noted. The several business premises, as usual, looked smart and inviting. The Millbrook gateway is a first-rate example of a project which could be emulated elsewhere. It is clear that the ruined Tenant’s Cottage may well develop as a worthy visitor attraction.

“Nowhere is the enormous effort and

## **Tidy Towns Article**

achievement more manifest than in the landscaping of the town. The sense of history evoked through the plaques and exhibits is quite moving - the Land League, the Famine, the Fight for Freedom all emerge through interesting artefacts judiciously placed on walks and in gardens. It is unnecessary to mention the numerous additions and improvements; but among the most notable seen were the stone seating and the millwheel on the Riverside Walk, the plaques and Pota an Ghorta in the Islands park, the new trees and shrubs. When foliage grows up - for example on the severely straight boundary beds of the road to the Rural Walk - and an overall softening of edges takes place, the currently pristine nature of some of these developments should merge with the local landscape.

“With regard to wildlife and natural amenities the river, the pastoral and the sylvan all vie for attention. What seemed

Included are the marks awarded to Ardagh, overall winners of the Tidy Towns 1998

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded 1998	Mark Awarded 1997	Ardagh Mark 1998
Overall Development Approach	50	39	37	45
The Built Environment	40	30	29	33
Landscaping	40	30	29	34
Wildlife and Natural Amenities	30	23	22	25
Litter Control	40	31	30	36
Tidiness	20	16	16	14
Residential Areas	30	22	22	24
Roads, Streets and Back Areas	40	30	29	33
General Impression	10	7	7	9
<b>Total Mark</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>253</b>



## Tidy Towns Report

like an unusual variety of birds were seen along the riverbank. It is interesting to see a deer farm in the vicinity. Your plans for schools projects, and co-operation with the Western Fisheries Board on River Clare developments, are promising.

"Very little litter was seen. Your practical and educational efforts are eminently successful. Older street houses, as well as more recent homes, are well kept. Some of the former have pleasing floral displays, and the latter have attractive gardens. What is most striking in Milltown is the sheer hard work and planning which clearly goes into this competition. It must be a very pleasant place to live in, and is surely much admired by visitors."

And after such a successful Tidy

Towns run, there was further good news for our Tidy Towns Committee when the judges in the Civic Trusts Ireland Environmental Awards Scheme awarded the River Walk and Amenity Area first prize in the Awards' Environmental Category. The project went on to represent the Galway region in the National Final, and came first in the highly commended section in Ireland. This award represents another high water mark in the development of the parish as one of the most beautiful villages in the country.

KEEP  
MILLTOWN  
TIDY





### Remembrance Mass

Mass was celebrated at the Liskeavy Children's Burial Ground on June 14th 1998. The Lios was blessed by Fr. Patrick Gill, and special prayers were recited for all the children who were buried there.

## Remembrance Mass



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## Golf Society



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Bord Failte Approved

### Milltown Golf Society

The inaugural Milltown Golf Society was set up in October 1997 when the following officers were elected ;

President - Joe Diskin ,  
Captain - Eamon Blake,  
Vice Captain - Joe Hynes ,  
Secretary - Judy Concannon ,  
Competition Secretary - Pete Coen ,  
Handicap Secretary - Stephen Burke ,  
P.R.O. - Ollie Turner ,  
Treasurer - Eddie Morris.

Having organised a number of scrambles over the previous twelve months, it was generally agreed that there was now sufficient interest in Milltown to form an official society for golf in the area. Eamon Blake received the



honour of being elected the first ever Milltown Golf Society Captain, and his influence, along with Eddie Morris, was the main reason why golf has grown locally to its current unprecedented level of interest.

In our first year we held five outings, all in Claremorris Golf Club and the winners of our first meeting on October 25 were Gabriel Farragher and Sybil Sheridan. 60 players took part in an event kindly sponsored by Cathal Sheridan who has been our main financial backer this year.

Our second outing on November 29th was again a two-ball scramble and the eventual winners were Tadhg Mullins and Daniel Farragher. All our competitions were played over 9 holes and this ensured we could cater for the huge numbers who wanted to participate.

The third outing was held on December 27th, and Frank Mullen and Brian Murphy were victorious, again in Claremorris, after a wonderful day's golf which included many local people home for the Christmas period.

The only two outings left were the Captain's Prize and the President's Prize, the two most prestigious prizes in any society's calendar.

On April 18th 1998 we had Eamon Blake's Captain's Prize in Claremorris. The two-ball scramble format paired a golfer with a beginner and the delighted winners of Eamon's fantastic first prize of a Royal Tara lamp were Ollie Turner and Anne Concannon. Eamon himself and Alan Coen came second, while Pat Garvey and Pat Forde came in third place.

On then to the final outing of the first ever season - Joe Diskin's President's Prize on May 23rd. Sponsored by Liam Glynn, the format was altered to that of four ball scramble and the winning quartet were Dave McCoy, Gabriel Farragher, Linda Monaghan and Brian Diskin.

All our presentations took place in Sheridan's, and as well as his kind sponsor-

## Golf Society Report

ship we owe a debt of gratitude to Cathal Sheridan for the use of his premises on each of the nights. Well done and thanks also to all the officers and committee of the society who worked so hard all year to make sure every outing was as enjoyable as possible.

We are also indebted to Claremorris Golf Club for their wonderful hospitality all year and now, with their superb 18-hole course, we look forward to a brand new challenge for all our golfers.

For the current season, however, we will be looking to visit some other courses in the locality and we will also be playing more and more individual competitions to cater for the many local golfers who are members of golf clubs and have official handicaps. Of course we will still cater for the casual golfer this season and you can be guaranteed a few 'scrambles' before the summer.

The officers elected for the current season are as follows ;  
President - Eddie Morris ,  
Captain - Joe Hynes ,  
Vice Captain - Michael Rhatigan ,  
Secretary - Judy Concannon ,  
Treasurer - John Concannon ,  
Competition Secretary - Pete Coen ,  
Handicap Secretary - Eamon Blake ,  
P.R.O. - Ollie Turner ,  
Competition Organiser - Joe Diskin.



## Milltown Gun Club

The National Association of Regional Game Councils is a national organisation representing shooters. There are fifty-four clubs in County Galway. Milltown Gun Club has a membership of 26.

At local and national level N.A.R.G.C. represents the shooters in various ways ;

1. All members of N.A.R.G.C. are covered by insurance, if a shooter has an accident on a farmers land, the farmer is protected by this insurance.
2. Safe handling of guns - this is done through Safety Meetings at county level, and publication of a Safety Booklet.
3. Conservation of wild life, e.g. pheasant, duck, partridge. Grants are available to develop habitats such as Pond Development, Game crop, Tree Planting.
4. Protecting our countryside from foreign shooters, French, Italian. e.g. High Court case last Summer taken by N.A.R.G.C. against government about issuing of Gun Licences to foreign nationals.

Members of a Gun Club activities include Game Bird Shooting, Vermin Control, Clay Shooting. Game Bird Shooting includes Pheasant, Duck. This starts on November 1st and ends on January 31st. Duck season starts on September 1st.

Vermin control includes foxes, grey crows, Magpie, Hares. Predators cause a good deal of damage to wild life, e.g. attacks on birds nests and sheep. Mink is a new predator to this country and will become a bigger problem as the years go by. Rivers

and small drains are the habitat of the mink, so needless to say, Milltown has its fair share of them.

Clay shooting is held during the summer months by various clubs throughout the county. Milltown Gun Club holds a Club Competition once a year for Club Members. Hopefully this article will throw some light on the activities of the Gun Club.

The Officers of the Club -  
Chairman : Michael Kirrane  
Secretary : Padraic O'Connor  
Treasurer : Tadhg Kennedy

Padraic O'Connor

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Wishing All Our Customers A Merry Christmas And A Happy New Year.





Slane 1998 - you weren't there? Here's what you missed:

1. Junkster : This up and coming Irish group offer soothing music with alluring vocals from front-woman Deirdre. Added to the line-up at the last minute, Slane was too big a venue but Junkster won many hearts all the same.

2. James : This group have been together a decade and are best known known for "Sit Down" used on a television advertisement. The crowd swayed and rocked to the easy-listening group who received a superb reception.

3. The Seahorses : This indie group, with genius guitarist John Squire, are derived from the mega-successful Stone Roses. They clearly adore performing and are dedicated to their art but unexpectedly failed to stimulate their audience.

4. Finlay Quaye: This reggae male solo artist failed to live up to the hype and anticipation surrounding his appearance but proved Lord Henry Mountcharles can cater for all tastes.

5. Robbie Williams: Enthusiastic, energetic and entertaining, he stole the show from the main acts. The crowd were enthralled by his particular mixture of music and de-

## Day At Slane

manded more from the flawless idol. Unfortunately, he left to perform with the BeeGees, who were also performing in Ireland that night.

6. Manic Street Preachers: This Welsh trio consistently deliver intelligent, mature, meaningful music. The established loyal fan base were ecstatic but a minority were disappointed. Williams was a hard act to follow but it is evident the Manics are engrossed in their music.

7. The Verve: The headliners of the day did not disappoint and delivered a diligent, dignified and majestic set. The crowd knew all the songs old and new thoroughly and were addicted to the performance.

The spectacular fireworks display at the end added an extra spark to that heavenly day. Slane is the most breathtaking outdoor venue in Europe and is constantly guaranteed to draw people the world over. See you there next year!

Sharon Feerick



## Ryan's, Milltown

*Merry Christmas  
and  
A Happy New Year  
to all our customers*

phone: 093- 51311



# PJ CONLON

## P.J. Conlon Accordionist Supreme

Those of this generation may very well ask who is P.J. Conlon and for very good reason as when all the older generation passed away nobody looked for or got information. There may have been a number of reasons for this - the upsurge of pop music and possibly the way Conlon disappeared into oblivion.

Well my curiosity about P.J. Conlon began at an early age. At home we had a wind-up gramophone that is what it is called then, now it is called a record player or a stereo unit and it played seventy-eights records. The reason they were called that was they revolved on the turntable at 78 rpm - after those came LPs at 33.3 rpm.

On wet days and some Sundays my father (R.I.P.) took it out and his collection of records, mostly Irish songs and music mostly recorded in America and among them were a few recorded by P.J. Conlon. First of all the music was enchanting and the fact that my father actually grew up with and knew somebody who as we then thought in the gramophone fascinated me and on growing up I tried to find out more about him but in the meantime other things intervened and whatever I got was minimum. There it remained until the eighties when I did more thorough research which took some time and expense and resulted in an upsurge of information brought out when an R.T.E. programme called the "Irish Phonograph" came on the air in 1984. P.J. Conlon was featured with a limited knowledge on his life so I contacted R.T.E. and the producer of the

programme Harry Bradshaw came to Milltown to try and get further local information on Conlon and this was acquired and in the course of doing this I succeeded in getting in touch with three men now all gone to their reward namely Thomas Kirrane Ballymara, Johnny Hovane Pollaturick and Pete Ryan Gurrane. In the course of this information gathering I had the benefit of many hours of conversation with each of them as they knew and worked with Conlon before he left for the States.

Pete Ryan told me a true story about Mrs Conlon and the schoolmaster in Belmont James O'Kane. She knew that P.J. or Peteen as she called him was going to be a talented accordion player and she always minded him. He was a pupil of O'Kane and one day young P.J. came home from school and his fingers and knuckles were blue and blistered from O'Kane's stick.

James O'Kane cycled to school on a lovely new high Nelly bike so Mrs Conlon hid in the bushes near Godwins and when he came along she rushed out and jammed a big ashplant in the spokes, knocked him down and then beat him black and blue with the ashplant and to add insult to injury chased him up the road and into the school - he never touched him again.

Peter J. Conlon was born in the parish of Milltown in Gurrane in 1890. There is a little road opposite Burrish road leading into the late Johnny O'Neill's house and Conlon's home was just at the rear, there is no trace of it now.

His father was John Conlon who came from Killavill, Co. Sligo, the native place of Michael Coleman, fiddler. Mrs Conlon came from Glenamoy Co. Mayo and was a midwife. The family, who were highly talented musicians and singers made their living teaching music and dancing as the father John was a dancing teacher. There were four boys and four girls.

The result of this was that both music and dancing was taught in the whole area all



the barn dances and step dancing and sets as well as fiddle and accordion. This went on until John Conlon died suddenly in Sligo and is buried there. Mrs Conlon died about 1910 and the family then moved to Milltown and lived beside Flannery's - this was done about 1920.

Pete or P.J. as he was known went to the States in 1910 the year his mother died never to return. Shortly after that, the rest of the family left Milltown for ever, one brother age 17, having died of the big flu. The most notable thing is that Mrs Conlon and her son are buried in the children's burial ground at the rear of the now G.A.A. pitch in Milltown.

In America P.J. Conlon became one of the greatest accordion players of all time. He began making records in 1917 and was one of the first to begin making Irish records in America as this was when the new electric recordings began as up until then they were all acoustic recordings and the improvement in quality was high.

Some of the tunes Conlon recorded first the only one R.T.E. had was 'Happy to meet, Sorry to part', recorded in 1921. Other notable tunes were 'The Caledonian Reel', 'Galway Bay Hornpipe' and the lonely little tune 'The Scholar', 'Born Dancer', 'The Stack of Barley', 'The Irish Washerwoman' to name but a few of his outstanding recordings. A few of those are still around and I have a few of the 78s, one given to me by Tom Concannon Cararea. They are now collectors items and priceless.

During his recording career Conlon made records from 1917 up until the late 1920s when he recorded for Parlaphone, Regal, Columbia and Ginette companies in the course of which he made over fifty records. Sadly most of them can not be located. It is a pity those recordings would be lost forever. The ones in my possession were taken to R.T.E. and recorded there and copies are now in the Library there and they furnished me with copies of the tapes.

## PJ CONLON

Conlon also had an accordion named after him. The Baldoni Bartoni company in 1925 were marketing an instrument called the "Pete Conlon Special" six reeds to each key. At that time he was at the pinnacle of his career and married and later he and his son played together when New York was teeming with Irish who yearned for the music of their native land.

However in the late twenties one of the reasons he faded away was the demon drink. His wife left him and he died destitute. The life he led playing music contributed as this happens to this day to those playing in the music scene with drugs added.

In recent years I have from time to time heard some of his recordings played and the same remark by those playing the records namely the high quality of the playing from so long ago and the only thing known about him was that he was born in Milltown Co. Galway. He also made several duets with James Morrison, Michael Coleman and fireman John McKenna, one of which I have at home with Morrison. R.T.E. did research in New York and Chicago when Nicholas Caralon did research there and came up against a blank wall. He was very helpful to me in that respect and when I made the same inquiries in both New York and Chicago with the same negative results.

All his sisters featured highly at music as well. One sister now Rose Murphy lived in England and in her later years made the first LP of Irish music in Sheffield in 1951. It was then after a cool reception when first invented LPs came into popularity as the new record re-



## PJ CONLON

volved at 33.5 rpm making it possible to get more on slightly bigger discs.

She made the first record with twenty one tracks. Every second track, fiddle and accordion and she called the album 'The Milltown Lassies'. The only one of the family to remain in Ireland was Delia, Mrs Flanagan who lived in Ballindine and was a music teacher and died not many years ago. There is one of her daughters living in Ballinasloe I believe.

I have tried in this short extract to project as much as possible about P.J. Conlon. In this age it is notable that somebody as notable as a musician of the calibre of P.J. Conlon was born in Milltown, could flourish and make such an impact in America. I do think the time has come for the locality to pay some tribute to him and a plaque must be erected in his memory in Milltown Town Centre as he lived there for some time before going to America as times in Ire-

land were extremely hard at that time of landlordism and many young Irish lads joined the ranks of the English Army to fight in the great war as they had no alternative. The majority never came back, among them a brother of P.J. Conlon who was killed at Gallipoli.

His being a native of Milltown has a significant heritage connection with many other notable sons and daughters of the parish namely Astronomer John Bermingham, Texas soldier Dick Dowling, who has a plaque in Tuam. Another notable connection although born in Co. Mayo Jack Feeney, a wonderful tenor. Our great republicans who fought the black and tans and fenian leader Joe Dalton, father of Cardinal Dalton.

Our great sportsmen Noel Tierney with three All-Irelands, Fr. Peter Tierney, Fred Culkin, Gerald Feeney, Steve Casey handballer.

However I and many others rate P.J. Conlon as probably the most talented musician to make so many records of Irish music where he was very highly rated in those both early and late recordings.

-John Joe Brennan

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# GAA REPORT

## The Year that Was in GAA

As we look back on the GAA year in Milltown there is little doubt that it proved an incredibly successful one on the playing fields, especially for several of our brilliant under-age teams. True, our senior team again made a disappointing first round championship exit to Salthill, after a replay, and both our junior sides fared little better in their competitions, but the sheer joy at claiming both the u-14 and u-16 County championships warmed the hearts of every man, woman and child in the parish for two glorious weeks in the summer.

The glory trail began on Tuesday, August 25th in Kilconly when Killrerin provided the opposition in the B County Championship Final. It was clear from early on that Milltown were in another class and it transpired to be a rather one-sided match, ending on a score-line of 5-9 to 0-2. The champion's scorer in chief was again, as it had been all year, the unbelievable Darren Mullaghy. Darren clocked up 1-5 in the final, including a sensational second half '45 which had the entire crowd shaking their heads in disbelief. It is difficult to comprehend that he is only 14 years of age and his future in the game looks limitless.

But this classy young team was not all about Darren Mullaghy. Goalkeeper Paul Varley produced a Man of the Match display in the opening round tussle with Mountbellew-Moylough and his consistent brilliance all season was a major factor in this team's success. The full-back line were also heroic all year long and P.J. Kelly, Cathal Blake and Graeme

McEvoy look like the kind of footballers who will form a senior back-line in the not too distant future.

Without wishing to get too carried away, this writer has seldom seen a more exciting trio of footballers than Sean Hehir, Paul Costello and Matthew Flannery, who together formed a truly incredible half-back line. Each is blessed with blistering pace and the wonderful gift of anticipation, and don't be surprised to see any of these guys wearing the maroon and white in the coming years.

Brian Diskin had a wonderful year also at midfield alongside the prodigious Mullaghy, and his untiring energy won him many admirers.

The forward line too featured more than just a sprinkling of class with live-wires Colin Nicholson and Damien Brennan forming an impressive half-forward line alongside the powerful Daniel Farragher. Kevin Varley, Paul Walsh and Shane Greene were unstoppable as a full-forward unit in the county final, both Varley and Greene grabbing two goals apiece, and all three can be proud of their contributions this year.

Of course it wasn't just the fifteen who started the final who won Milltown this title and the large panel of substitutes can take as much satisfaction as anyone at their fantastic achievements this year.

Team manager John Blake must take great praise for his work all year and he had great assistance from all the parents of the team, while Tony Murphy's influence on these young players since they began kicking a football will always be acknowledged in Milltown.

Milltown captain Darren Mullaghy received the B Championship Shield from Coiste Peil na nOg secretary Niall McGinn, who described this Milltown u-14 team as the finest he has seen for thirty years - who are we to argue?

There was incredible joy and emotion that night in Milltown as the cavalcade of cars toured the parish with the county





MILLTOWN V12 TEAM

**BACK:**

Adrian Molloy, Colm Ruane, Colin Varley, Damian Brennan, Stephen Varley, David Lavelle, Keith Healy, Aidan Kelly, Shane Rhatigan, Sean Blake, Stephen Costello, Ronan Greene, Michael Ruane.

**FRONT:**

Conor Diskin, Jonathan Hynes, Jonathan Higgins, Michael Gormally, Cormac Concannon (Capt.), Colin Molloy, Derek Diskin, Eamon Blake, William Costello, Kieran Blake, Padraic Harley. Missing: Sean Nicholson, Declan Flattery.

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Milltown u-14 team, Championship and Feile Shield winners 1998

Back row (left to right) : Matthew Flannery, Stephen Varley, Sean Hehir, Stephen Hernon, Jonathan Higgins, Stephen Costello, Colm Ruane, Shane Greene.  
 Middle row : Tony Murphy, Paul Costello, Mark Whelan, David Joyce, Paul Varley, Paul Walsh, Padraig Walsh, Graeme McEvoy, David Kelly, Jarlath Farragher.  
 Front row : Damian Brennan, Daniel Farragher, Brian Diskin, Darren Mullahy (captain), John Blake (manager), Cathal Blake, Colin Nicholson, P.J. Kelly.