

Milltown Newsletter

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April
1995
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PRICE £1

Good Friday

Was it for our sake?
The splintered foot-bone
The flesh nail-anchored,
Never again the feel of sand through sandal.

Man has walked for so long in the wrong direction.

Was it for our sake?
The hand-veins severed
The wings of arms pinioned
Never to rise again, gently, in blessing.

Man has used his arms for so long to cradle hatred.

Was it for our sake?
The lacerated brow
The eyes which mirrored a mute despair
Never again knowing joy of sun or shadow.

Man has abused his own intelligence
For madness does not remember conscience.

Is it too late to redeem
All that was given and taken on that far hill?
Is it too late to heed the footprint of example,
Extend the loving hand
and show compassion
Born of comprehension?

Can we be sure it will never be 'too late'?

Sent in by
Maureen McCormack, Kilgevrin.

Editorial

The Easter issue is as usual, the first of the year and comes after a quarter of the new year has slipped by. It also marks the beginning of better

weather after the long wet winter and, hopefully, good times for the community in general.

For Milltown people Easter represents a time of nostalgia as we reflect on days gone by when our town was a Mecca for racing and dancing enthusiasts who came in droves to our events on the race-course and marquees. Those days, alas, are now gone and are unlikely to return in the near future but our Summer Festival later in the year goes some way towards recreating that atmosphere.

In this issue of the newsletter we feature Sergeant Martin Connor in our popular Hot Seat spot while we have another interesting school photo from times past, and an interesting article written by Pádraic O'Connor, Knock on his famous ancestor Dick Dowling, Christy Molloy writes about our proposed new Heritage Centre, we have a look back in time at Milltown G.A.A. Club in the 1950s and several other interesting items — Mother and Toddler Group, Article from Korea by Michael Kenny and an interesting photo competition. Due to pressure on space the fifth and final instalment of the M.J. Molloy story has been held over and will appear in the next issue.

The Milltown newsletter is compiled by (in alphabetical order) Noel Carney, Pauline Larney, Deirdre McGrath, Michael Oates and Trudi Varley.

Happy Easter to all our readers.

The Hot Seat

This issue we feature our new local Sergeant,
Mr. Martin Connor. On behalf of the parish
we welcome him to Milltown.

We would like to thank him and all
other guests who have participated in
our 'Hot Seat'.



Full Name: Martin Connor

Occupation: Sergeant — Milltown Garda Station.

Favourites Pastimes: Golf and Football.

Brothers and Sisters: Three brothers — Michael, Noel, Gerry and one sister Doreen.

Favourite T.V. Programme: All sports programmes Match of the Day.

Favourite Actor: Danny De Vito/Clint Eastwood.

Favourite Actress: Felicity Kendal.

Earliest Memory: First day I started school in Lacken, Co. Mayo I couldn't get wait to get home.

First Job: Garda, I joined the force after finishing school. The only other job I have dabbled in is farming for a few months.

Favourite Books: I don't read a lot of books, but read all the different daily newspapers.

Favourite song: Dancing in the Dark and I'm on Fire by Bruce Springsteen. I also love listening to Phil Coulters music.

Favourite Sport: Gaelic Football.

Favourite Food: Steak and Onions.

Favourite Drink: Tea, I'm a great tea drinker!

Person you most admire: Charlie Haughey — He was a great achiever.

Most Embarrassing moment: Sitting here being interviewed by a three ladies for this 'hot seat' not knowing what's going to be asked next.

If you won a million: Well, if I won a million, I would retire and go into business.

What is Your Greatest Regret (if any): No regrets I have really enjoyed life so far.

Horoscope: Scorpio — reads but I don't believe.

Happiest moment: October 1994 — The day I got the news that i was promoted to Sergeant.

Worst incident that happened you: The day I broke my leg playing football, which I had to eventually give up.

Last post previous to Milltown: I was in Dublin for 19 years, stationed in Irishtown, in the Ringsend area.

First Impressions of Milltown: As I arrived on a very wet and cold November's day I have to say I was wondering about the place but as time went on and the weather got better, I am really getting to like the area and the people are very friendly.

Favourite car: Ford Mondeo.

Favourite colour: Green/Navy

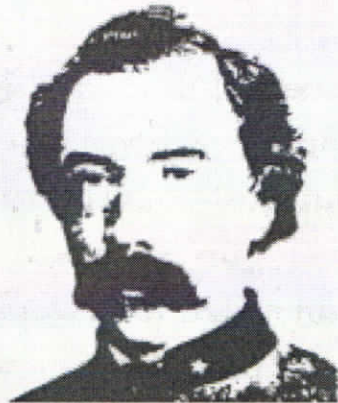
First Dance: I was seventeen years of age when I went to the Marquee in Killalla. There was a live band playing to a very large crowd. Like all marquees in those days there was plenty of pushing and shoving, but the craic was good.

Ambitions: To enjoy life and make lots of money, if I can.

- Martin O'Connor.

Dick Dowling (1838-1867)

The history of America has been influenced by Irish immigrants and their descendants. The following is an account of one Irishman's contribution to the history of America in the middle of the 19th century.



Richard William Dowling was born in 1838 at Knock, Milltown where the O'Connor family now reside. He was born into an era when the Irish population was about eight million and a great famine was just around the corner. The failure of the potato crop in 1845 led to a famine which denuded the countryside of its many dwellings and more importantly of its people.

During this time thousands of Irish people took the coffin ships to America to escape hunger and death. Patrick Dowling, his wife Bridget and their six children were some of those who hoped for a better future in the "New World". They left Knock in June 1846 for America, sailing from Galway to Queenstown (Cobh), then on to New Orleans via Havana. The Dowling Family settled in Houston, Texas.

Dick Dowling, son of Patrick and Bridget was nineteen years old when he opened a saloon in Houston in 1857. The saloon was a popular hangout for other Irish immigrants. The speciality of the house was a drink called "Kiss me Quick and Go." He later sold the saloon and opened a bank.

The American Civil War started in 1861 lasting until 1865. When Dowling enlisted in the Confederate Military effort an Officer ordered him to gather his own troops. He recruited his Irish friends

mostly stevedores or "Dockwallopers" from Galveston and Houston. One writer describes them as "a brawling, claypipe smoking, Irish jigging lot." The unit was known as the Davis Guards.

General John Bankhead Magruder, who was the Confederate commander of Texas learned that a Union Armada of twenty two navel transport boats carrying a few thousand men, spearheaded by four naval gun boats was heading from New Orleans to Invade Texas. The plan called for a landing at Sabine Pass on the Texas/Louisiana border, a place where the Sabine river flows in to the Gulf.

The Davis Guards were deployed to Sabine Pass to defend it against the Union invasion. The unit consisted of forty seven men under the command of Lt. Dick Dowling, who was acting as commanding officer in the absence of his ailing father-in-law, a man by the name of Odum, a Quaker from Co. Kildare. Dowlings men waited until the union gun boats were within firing range of their six cannons. The battle lasted forty five minutes, the Davis Guards captured two gun boats, inflicted fifty six casualties, captured about 350 prisoners and put the rest of the flotilla to flight.

The Battle of Sabine Pass occurred on September 8th, 1863. Every soldier in the Davis Guard survived the battle. The people of Texas hailed the unit as heroes. The people of Houston presented Dick Dowling with a medal for his dramatic victory at Sabine Pass, the only one ever to be presented to a Confederate soldier during the war.

Of course, the battle didn't alter the Civil War's ultimate outcome, but it inspired Jefferson Davis (Confederate President) to declare it a victory "without parallel in ancient or modern war."

Dick Dowling resigned from the army with the rank of Major in 1865. In civil life he dabbled in real estate, helped to organise Houston street car company, owned half an interest in a steamboat and a bonded ware house in Galveston. He is also reputed to have set up

Texas' first oil company in partnership with two others.

In 1867 a terrible yellow fever epidemic struck this area and claimed the life of Dick Dowling on September 23 of that year. He was 29 years of age. His parents also died of yellow fever.

The people of Houston erected a granite statue of him in 1905. There are still reminders of him in the city — Dowling Street. Dowling Middle High School and also Tuam Street. J

Mrs Ann Caraway Ivans of Houston is Dowlings great-great-grand-niece, she is at present researching a book on the life of Dick Dowling, and I would like to thank her for giving me the above information. She intends to give a talk on the subject to the Old Tuam Historical Society in the near future. Dr. T. Claffey noted historian is helping her with her research.

Padraic O'Connor,
Knock, Milltown.



Belmont N.S. Christmas Concert



Congratulations to Maude Connolly, Drim, Milltown on winning an All-Ireland Medal under 12 on the violin, playing a slow air at Clonmel Feis in August 1994.



Carrownageeha N.S. Christmas concert.

Social and Personal

Births:

February 1995: Niamh Molloy, Milltown.

March 1995: Hannah Donnellan, Belmont.

Engagements:

Eleanor Fahy, Cloonagh and Mark Ryan, Dunmore.

Ursuala Grogan, Milltown and Gerry Clifford, Kerry.

Ellen Walsh, Liskeavy and Martin Bradican, Swinford.

Martina Rattigan, Bawnmore and Brian Carey, Athlone.

Dan McCormack, Kilgevrin and Bernie Costello, Kilconly.

Marisa Heaney, Ballyglass and Shay McCarthy.

Edel Heaney, Ballyglass and Damian Gleeson.

Sandra O'Toole, Ballyglass and J.P. Hughes, Hollymount.

Marriages

Tom Connolly, Knock and Orla Cunningham, Tipperary.

Collette Walsh, Russelstown and Cormac Tuohy, Limerick.

Bina McHugh, Belmont and Padraic Jennings, Claremorris.

Oliver Walsh, Emmercly and Angela Tierney, Tuam.

Therese O'Connor Emmercly and Jerimiah Smyth, Cork.

Deaths

Mrs Mary Keane, Corohan

Mrs Mary Connolly, Cloonagh

Mrs. Celia Huvane, Cloonrairie.

Mr. Frank Cummins, Illaune.

Mr Martin Joyce, Belmont.

Mr. Johnny Cosgrove, Belmont.

Anniversaries

Congratulations!

Ruby: Paddy Joe and Bridie McHugh, Belmont.

Golden: Joe and Moggie Lavelle, Kilgevrin and Cloondaroone, Tuam.

Milltown Mother and Toddler Group

In the past few decades Irish Society has witnessed many changes — changing landscapes, changing demographic trends, changing values and ultimately changing needs. People of course have responded to change and new ideas and new organisations have emerged. Among these new ideas has been the evolution of Mother and Toddler groups.



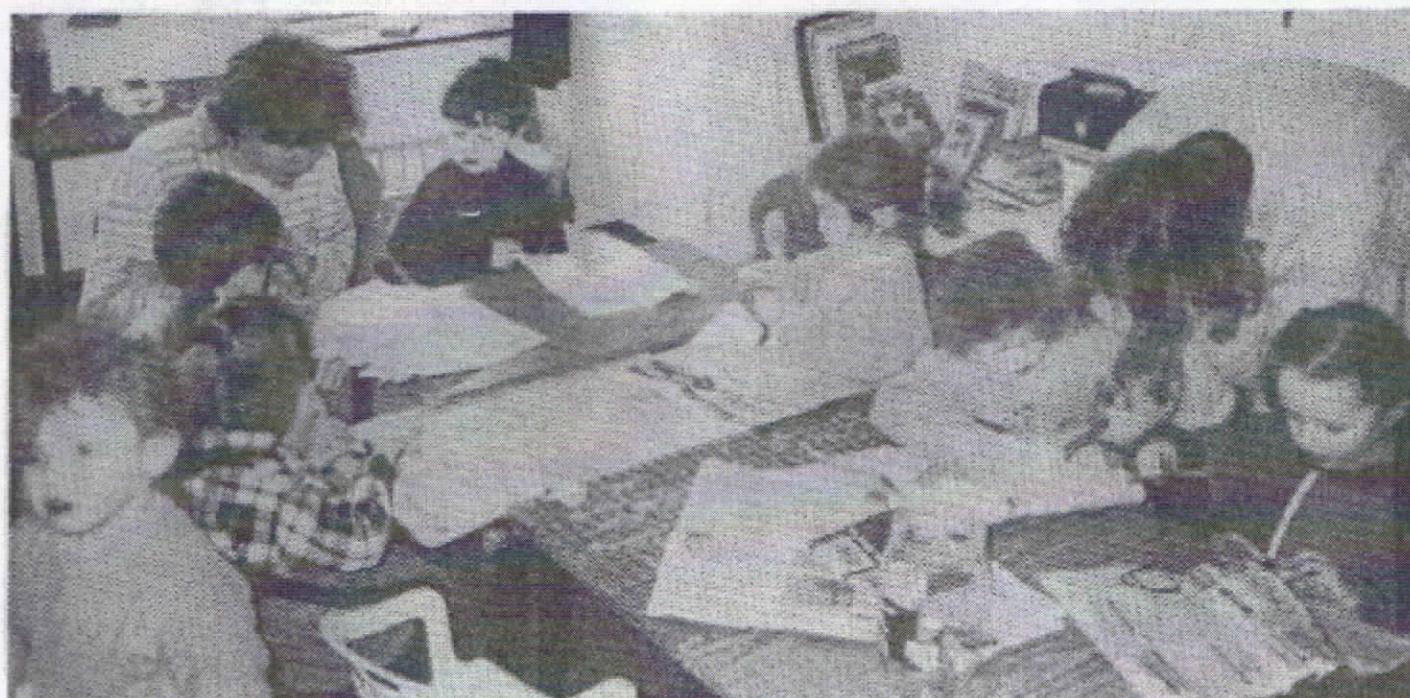
Young mothers (and fathers) often feel very lonely and isolated, especially if they live miles away from family and friends. Young parents may also find that living with a baby or toddler is different from what they expected, and they need the reassurance of meeting others in the same situation, and of finding that they are not unique in having problems. Mother and Toddler Groups provide an opportunity for these parents to meet, become involved in other activities, make acquaintances and develop friendships.

Mothers of course are not the only beneficiaries. Toddlers also need a chance to socialise. At the Mother and Toddler group they meet other children and other adults in a safe environment, with the reassur-

— ance that mother is close at hand. They take one tiny step towards independence, learn to mix and play with others and catch a glimpse of the wider world.

In November 1994, some mothers got together in Milltown and decided a Mother and Toddler group would be beneficial in the area. The Day Care Centre provided excellent facilities and ideally met the needs of such a group. Meetings were arranged for Wed. mornings 10.30 a.m. — 12 noon.

Since its beginning about 20 mothers and over 30 children have attended. The gatherings are informal with toddlers deviating towards the toys on one side, while the mothers can't resist the magnetic pull of the fireside. The children are provided with a drink and biscuits while mammy indulges in a cup of coffee and a chat.



The last 10 minutes are spent singing songs (the Hokey Pokey proving very popular) with the children. At this stage of the meeting it can be difficult to differentiate between the mother and the toddler, as the mothers swing their left leg in, left leg out with unrestrained enthusiasm while their child looks on admiringly!

Milltown Mother and Toddler Group wish to thank all who helped us in our endeavours. We are thankful to the Day Care Centre Committee for making centre available to us. We are grateful to the Western Health Board for providing us with an adviser, speakers and a grant which we hope will arrive very soon! We look to the future with enthusiasm and wish to remind everyone that all new members will be very welcome.

— Milltown Mother and Toddler Group.

How I came to visit Knock for the first time

By Colin Cadogan

I promised in the last Milltown Newsletter that I would with your permission tell you how and why I first visited Knock as a pilgrim. It was all made possible by Peter (Cosie) Coyne, son Joseph, my brother. We are of different parents, colour and race but from the time God brought us together we have become brothers and brothers we will remain until death and after.



My grandfather on my mothers side was from Cork. I grew up listening to my mother sing Irish songs. I could be heard across the vale when I lived in the country singing Irish songs on my way home from school some classed as rebel songs. I class them as Irish history. I was proud of my Irish roots as I am of my Trinidadian roots on my fathers side.

My mother was a very saintly woman who longed to go to Knock. Although this was her desire she always put others before herself and as the church organised pilgrimages to Lourdes on a fairly regular basis for the sick. My mother choose to save what money she could to pay her own way there and help look after the sick and wheel them around even when she was herself in poor health. My mother, May God rest her soul, died never making it to Knock. I cried no tears for mother when she died for I knew she had gone to heaven. The Priest that night said our mother had died a saint. I was happy and singing on the way home afterwards. I always wished whilst mother was alive that I could raise enough money to send her to Knock but I was struggling to bring up a young family.

In April 1991 I had a serious heart attack from which I died and came back. Doctors later told me there was twice they did not think they would get me back and I had the experience of being on the other side. It was beautiful with golden rays coming out not from west or east but all around, this was on Maundy Thursday so I consider It a special blessing.

It was shortly after coming out of hospital I met Joe in our local social club. There were several men asking Joe about making a trip to Ireland. I said to Joe I would come with him I quietly explained to him about my mother's wish and that I felt a strong urge after coming back to life that I must make a pilgrimage to Knock for my mother, it would be her pilgrimage.

Some weeks later we were in the club one Sunday evening Joe said "I am going to Ireland in two weeks time and taking my sister Mary who else wants to come?"

I at once said "Me Joe, now I can go to Knock." Joe was coming home for his sister Helens 40th Birthday party. We arrived on Friday evening, went to Knock Saturday morning. We said stations of the

cross together and went to Mass in the Church. I was able to have confession there. I went to Church in Milltown that evening with Cosies family and their Dublin relations.

Sunday morning I was back in Knock to attend Mass in the Basilica. My mothers pilgrimage to Knock had been fulfilled. Praise be to God and thanks to Joseph Coyne.

I cried my first day at Knock that I was able to do a pilgrimage there for my mother. Joe cried with me. I knew from that moment on the bond between Joe and myself would grow stronger and stronger.

Once again I must point out that what I and others travel far and wide to visit and make our pilgrimage to is another blessing bestowed on you from God, Our Holy Mother Mary and Saint Joseph. You seem to take for granted.

I would like to see as many people as possible from Milltown and surrounding villages join together say once every third month maybe starting this Easter. Show your thanks to God and Our Lady. Do a pilgrimage to Knock, say the Rosary together.

I myself thank God and our Lady for giving me the chance to meet Joseph Coyne, his dad and family, all my friends from Milltown and most of all for allowing me to do my mothers pilgrimage to Knock and the one I have since done for myself and my family. I pray I will get the chance to do a pilgrimage to Knock along with many of my friends from Milltown and surrounding Districts.

May God Bless the folk of Milltown and all Ireland. Please grant me the chance to return.

Colin (Danny Boy) Cadogan

Win! Win! Win!



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.



10.

Name the above ten well known Milltown people and win a cash prize.

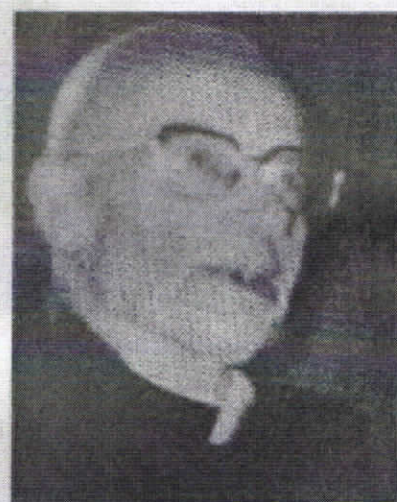
Please hand in your answers to Milltown Post Office before

Friday, April 28th.

Fr. John Lowry R.I.P.

The loss of a dearly loved parish priest is akin to losing a family member as the people of Milltown discovered last Christmas with the death of retired P.P. Fr. John Lowry at the age of 85. He had been in declining health for some time and was nursed with great care and patience by his loyal housekeeper Margaret Collins until his death on December 20th.

Born in Kilbannon in 1910 he was educated at the local National School, St. Jarlath's College, Tuam and the Irish College in Rome. After his ordination in Rome on May 26th, 1934 he served as a curate in Glasgow, Mountbellew, Letterfrack, Mayo Abbey, Roundfort and Headford. In 1970 he was appointed P.P. of Milltown in succession of ~~Fr. Louis Berry~~. *FR. MALACHY CONNOR.*



In Milltown he soon proved himself an able administrator and popular priest. Behind his stern features lay a jovial personality and pleasant sense of humour that crossed all age boundaries. He was also a witty speaker who would be in his element at informal functions such as weddings and even though he was never enthusiastic for such occasions he would always prove an entertaining guest.

As a young man he was a brilliant student of the classics and although his Greek waned somewhat through lack of use he remained adept at Latin right through his life. He was also well read in English Literature and had a particular liking for the famous Lake District poet Williams Wordsworth.

After sixteen years of devoted service to his parish and community he retired in 1986. Since his retirement his health had gradually failed but through excellent care and nursing he lived a quite active life until shortly before the end. His devoted housekeeper Margaret was a tower of strength at all times and he also got staunch support from friends, relations and neighbours.

Ar Dheis De go raibh a anam.

Heritage Centre

Turloughmore has a well established heritage centre and heritage centres are in the process of completion in Dunmore and Athenry. It is now proposed that our parish of Milltown should also boast of a heritage centre.

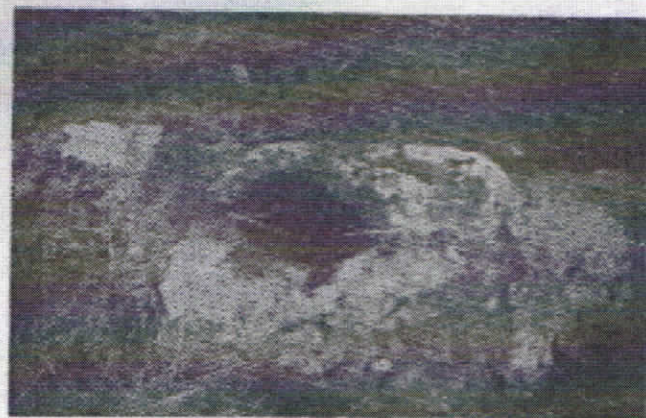
The location of such a centre is under discussion but in the meantime, Francie Mullarkey has kindly agreed to make a portion of his premises available on a temporary basis.

A heritage centre is akin to a local museum where various artifacts from our past are exhibited and may be viewed by one and all. For older people a visit here would be an exercise in recall and for younger people it would be a place of enlightenment and instruction.

The success of the venture will depend largely on local co-operation and good-will. It will be a success if people are prepared to donate or lend artifacts such as pots and pot-hooks, skillets, milk crocks, churns, rush light holders, box-irons, oil lamps, carbide lamps, lanterns, spinning wheels, reaping hooks, flails, feac spades, steeveens, skibs and baskets. Such items will be gratefully received by Trudi Varley, Frank Glynn, Joe Ryan and Francie Mullarkey. All items loaned or donated will be carefully treasured. When put on display the name and address of the donor or lender will be printed underneath each item.



12th Century Cross from
Addergoole Abbey



Picture of Holy Water Font from the
Abbey in Addergoole. It now can be
seen in the wall near Dalgin Bridge



Congratulations to Nicola Doyle, Maud Connolly, Ciaran Murphy, Olivia Keane and Annette Connolly on winning the Pioneer Quiz



My Experiences in Korea

By Michael Kenny

Michael hails from Russelstown, Milltown and intends to spend the next three years in Korea as a Lay Missionary. We wish him all the best.

As I have experienced it is a land of mountains, lots of rice fields and intense urbanisation. The contrasts with Ireland are almost polar except for Chejudo, an island off the south coast that has great beaches, great weather and strong woman, but more of that later.

Since, 1948 the peninsula has been divided into two parts the Republic of Korea in the south and and Democratic People's Republic of Korea in the North. On our arrival here on 2/6/1994 there was a huge hype about the military presence, but as experienced Columban's would say 'Nobody really knew the real truth' As it turned out there was nothing to worry about and actually there was going to be a top level summit between both governments until Kim Sung II died and Jimmy Carter pulled the cat out of the bag and struck a peace deal with the north. The government has postal services between the two countries and a huge number of families in the south have had no contact with their relatives in the north since the war.



A Korean Boys Concert

On our way from Ireland we had an night over night stop in Paris that broke the journey. We then flew to Seoul where we arrived about 9 o'clock in the morning. The heat hit us instantaneously, we began to feel the weight of our coats, jackets and all the luggage we brought with us. We were introduced to the lay mission house where we would be based for the next ten months. As this house is on a two year lease it has become the may mission central house. The summer had just began to show its teeth and soon we were to experience sleepless nights and constant humidity with temperatures averaging 30 to 40 degrees centigrade. This has been the warmest year on record, even the tigers stayed in the water bathing away from the heat.

The beauty of the country was only revealed to me during the autumn, as temperatures become more normal. As, the colour changes in the mountains and hills around Seoul we decided to be like the natives and "head to the hills" usually in groups of three or upwards as Korean's do everything in groups.

By now we were living a community life with 9 of us in the same house (4 Koreans in training to go to the Philippines and the 5 Irish). Claire from Dublin, Padraic from Ballinasloe, Helen from Newbridge, Chrissie from Cahir and myself. Although from time to time I had lived with up to nine people in a flat in Dublin it was no preparation for multicultural living and with language difficulties It wasn't easy to communicate various problems that came up. The house has again reverted back to the Irish team but we too are temporary / fulltime occupants, as from March-April onwards the most of us will be engaging in some form of practical missionary work. As it is, there are two who have already chosen that path and the rest of us are attending language school. All five of us have been in contact with or have actively been involved in such things here as — 1. Foreign Worker Exploitation 3. Homeless 2. Handicapped 4. AIDS 5. Poor 6 Restablishing Rural Life. This is the area I hope to get involved in from April. It has many possibilities including some of those above and hopefully some areas for me to use my trades.

Korea has a similar problem that Ireland has experienced in recent times with massive rural depopulation and lack of young adults. All the youth flood to the cities to college, universities, or to find jobs in many parts of the country. As a result, woman or (halmonie's) grandmothers do all the sowing and harvesting of crops. They work from dawn till dusk in the harvest season. This I know from a personal experience and a very sore back — I picked up during the autumn, picking everything from peanuts to pears and getting to know the locals the same time.

Korean food is very spicy. Rice is the main food in their diet. It is been used in everything from alcohol to rice cakes as in this picture.



At this stage all of us have gone through most of the various stages of culture shock, from the famous 'Honeymoon Period' to 'Withdrawal' and finally 'Identification' with the language, food and the people. Chejedo, described by one writer as 'The Irish Island' with its barren landscape and stone walls. the people here could be described as having many attributes of the Irish good and bad. With that in mind I'm happy enough to face in to another New Year (on the lunar calendar) and hopefully some new challenges as well.

Milltown's G.A.A. Winners

by O. Turner

Part I — North Board Junior Champions 1953

Welcome to a new series in the Newsletter which will take a detailed look at each of the Milltown teams over the past 40 years which brought honour and glory to the parish in the shape of titles and silverware. Since its foundation in 1953, Milltown G.A.A. Club has a fairly extensive Roll of Honour for such a small rural club. Such famous victories as those in the Senior County Finals of 1971 and '81 will be detailed in future issues, but we start by taking a look at the first Milltown team to take the field back in those famous days of '53 — the Juniors.

On April 12, 1953 Milltown Juniors played Kilconly, in Kilconly, in the North Board League, in what was the newly formed Club's first competitive game. The Tuam Herald Report on the game was as follows.:

KILCONLY'S EASY WIN OVER MILLTOWN IN JUNIOR LEAGUE

The recently formed Milltown Junior football team were well beaten by Kilconly, on home ground, on Sunday last on the scores 2-6 to 0-3, in the North Board League.

Milltown put up a good show in the first half when they led by 0-3 to nil, but on the turnover Kilconly took complete control of the game and ran out easy winners.

Mick Heneghan has most of the winners scores and the Fallons, Gannon, Fitzpatrick, McGrath and Costello were best of Kilconly.

Kelly, as full-back for Milltown put in a great second half, and D. Acton held the Kilconly attack. Grogan, O'Connor, Blake and McCormack were the best of the others.

Milltown later claimed the game was ruined somewhat by the over emphasis of the winners on physical football, but a month later, on May 17, Milltown overcame their first loss when registering their first win,

over Cortoon in the North Board League. Again, the match report is below:

MILLTOWN'S FIRST SUCCESS

Milltown 2-7 Cortoon 0-3

Milltown had their first success since returning to Junior football when they had a facile win over Cortoon on the scores 2-7 to 0-3.

Cortoon had the advantage of the breeze in the first half but on the turn over Milltown took control and it was one-way traffic to the end.

Play was scrappy in the opening stages but improved as the game progressed, and the big number of young footballers on both sides showed improvement on previous outings in this competition. Milltown were the more experienced side and combined well.

Cortoon opened the scoring with a point from Kelly and L. Hehir and Kelly has two Milltown points in reply. O'Neill and Concannon gave Cortoon the lead with a point each. Devane added a Milltown point to leave the sides level at 0-3 at the interval.

Luke Hehir gave Milltown a good lead on resuming when he had a goal and a point. A number of efforts by Joe Clarke (Cortoon) to bring the ball into the Milltown lines were badly finished and Kelly at full back cleared other attempts to break through. Feerick and Kelly increased the Milltown lead with points. Christy Grogan had a goal and Tony O'Connor rounded off the game with a good point to leave the final scores Milltown 2-7, Cortoon 0-3.

Milltown were best served by Fitzpatrick and Connolly at midfield, and others to catch the eye were McCormack, Heaney, Grogan and O'Connor.

Concannon, Flaherty and Clarke were prominent for Cortoon and O'Neill, Heaney and McGagh also did well.

Milltown: J. Blake, J. Connolly, J. McCormack, J. Connolly, J. Heaney, T. Fitzpatrick, J. Connolly, T. Donnellan, J. Kelly, P. Connolly, F. Heaney, M. Fitzpatrick, C. Grogan, T. O'Connor, J. Feerick.

Milltown's opponents in the Junior Championship first round were Headford and after close-fought contest, Milltown emerged victorious on a scoreline of 2-4 to 1-4. Headford, playing with the aid of a strong breeze, led by 1-4 to 0-1 at half time, but: "On the change over, Milltown quickly went into the attack and had a number of wides before Tony O'Connor raised the white flag from a difficult angle. Turner followed up with a point off a free. Milltown added a further two goals and a point. In this half the Headford defence stood up well to a terrific onslaught by the Milltown forwards, and the winning goal was a hard-luck story. One of the defenders jumped high to gave a ball dropping under the crossbar, only to see the ball glance off his hands into the net."

Final score: Milltown 2-4, Headford 1-4. Best for the winners were Garvey, Blake, Turner and O'Connor, and the losers were best served by O'Dea, Walsh and O'Toole.



Pictured above are a happy group of Junior players and supporters taken in 1954, with the Junior Championship trophy on the left and the Minor Championship Cup on the right. Back row: Kevin Brennan, Jarlath O'Connor, Padraic McCormack, Padraic Godwin, Paddy O'Grady, Paddy Coen, Willie Forde, Jarlath Connolly, Eamon Blake, John Blake.

Front row: Brendan Flattery, Luke Hehir, Mick Donnellan, Franny Mallon, Billy Kelly, Pd. Connolly, Paddy Forde, John McCormack.

After the Championship win over Headford, Milltown then defeated Caherlistrane by one point in the next round. The final score was Milltown 2-7, Caherlistrane 4-0. Scorer in chief for the winners was 16 year old Michael Donnellan, who bagged a goal and six points. Others who did well were the Flannery brothers, P. Henry, J. Blake, Connolly, Ferrick and O'Connor.

Clonberne were next on line, and they too were defeated, to set up an intriguing clash in the North Board semi-final with Carrantryla. Again, The Tuam Herald report on the game makes interesting reading:

MILLTOWN BEAT CARRANTRYLA — ENTER JUNIOR FINAL

Milltown 1-2 Carrantryla 1-1

Five years ago, Milltown had a young junior football team, but adverses on the field, emigration and transfers killed the revival in the parish. Now they are back with a bang — into the North Board Junior final with a one point victory over Carrantryla at Browns Grove on Sunday last.

This year, the nippy Milltown team proved the surprise packet of this division of the Board area, and with good wins over Cortoon, Headford and Clonberne qualified to meet Carrantryla, rated the strongest junior side in the division.

At Browns Grove on Sunday, the hard hitting "slashers" found themselves up against a fast young fifteen who never let up for a minute. It was a hectic game, with plenty of hard knocks, and a thrilling finish.

Playing against the breeze in the first half, Milltown goaled in the first few minutes but the score was disallowed. Shocked into life by this effort, the "slashers" pressed hard and when the Milltown defence gave ground, Kennedy scored a goal. In a quick return, Milltown had a point from J.D. Flannery, but Egan replied with a similar score for Carrantryla. Just before the whistle, M. Flannery sent over the bar for Milltown to leave the interval scores:

Milltown 0-2 Carrantryla 1-1

Exchanges were very close in the second half, with the lighter and faster

Milltown lads up against steady pressure.

Carrantryla failed to beat the opposing defence, and in a Milltown raid Luke Hehir sent a neat pass to Coen, who shot a grand goal — the only score in this half. Carrantryla went all out to recover their lead, but poor shooting and a stubborn Milltown defence cost them the game. Final scores were : Milltown 1-2 Carrantryla 1-1.

Garvey, the Kelly brothers and J. Blake starred in the Milltown defence, and Donnellan and Connolly gave them good service at the centre. L. Hehir, the Flannerys, Coen and Gannon all did well in a lively attack.

Carrantryla were best served by Martin Ryder, the Reddington brothers, Jordan, Gleeson, Kennedy, Egan and the Mannions.

Milltown: E. Blake, G. Garvey, G. Heeny, P. Heeney, B. Kelly, J. Blake, J. Kelly, M. Connolly, M. Donnellan, F. Heeney, L. Hehir, P. Coen, C. Grogan, J.D. Flannery, M. Flannery.

Carrantryla: P. Mannion, M. Burke, M. Ryder, P. Kilgarriff, T. Mannion, J. Reddington, J. Burke, P. Mannion, T. Reddington, B. Egan, J. Jordan, P. Donnellan, J. Kennedy, J. Reilly, M. Gleeson.

This great win however was subsequently overshadowed by an objection as to the referees timekeeping. Thus a replay was ordered, but Milltown again beat Carrantryla by one point 1-2 to 0-4. Luke Hehir proved the hero on the day as he kicked the winning point, but the Milltown defence also took the honours of the day. Heaney, Garvey, Kelly and Blake were particularly excellent, as were T. Connolly (who scored the other 1-1) Donnellan, Heaney, Hehir and the Flannerys.

So, Milltown had qualified, in their very first year, for the North Board Junior Championship final. They would take on, and eventually beat, a strong Ahascragh side after a replay, but few would argue with this young teams deserving of the title. The drawn final finished at 0-7 each , with Milltown having had a 0-5 to 0-1 half-time lead. Goalie Eamon Blake was Milltown's saviour on several

occasions, and earned his side a replay which they won by 1-7 to 2-1. No less than eight of the side were under 20 years of age, and one man who didn't fall into that category was veteran Captain Luke Hehir. Luke scored two valuable points in that famous win, but free taker Tom Connolly was the undoubted Man of the Match with four points. Sixteen year old Paddy Coen scored the final point of the game and the first half goal of J. Connolly also proved invaluable.



Pictured on the site of the Milltown Football pitch with the old school in the background, are Paddy Coen (captain of the minors in 1954) and Luke Hehir (captain of the Juniors in 1953). Luke is holding the famous trophy Milltown refused to hand back after being stripped of their title.

Thus, Milltown won their first ever title. They were even in line for a famous county title win when they were controversially suspended for 12 months for fielding on illegal player, after Ahascraghs objection was upheld. Milltown, though stripped of their title, steadfastly refused to give back the cup and their first ever success was rightly celebrated in splendid style!

Next issue: North Board Minor Champions 1954



MILLTOWN CARNIVAL EASTER 1980

Fancy Dress Winners: Tim, Mary and Mike Ryan.

Conserve Energy/Pedal Power (due to petrol strike)