

Sean Nestor, Milltown – An Appreciation

THE recent death of Sean Nestor caused much sadness in Milltown and surrounding areas. Sean was born in Russelstown, Milltown and from an early age, apart from a short flirtation with football, his main interest was fishing and matters pertaining thereto. Having worked for many years with Roadstone Galway, Sean retired in 2009.

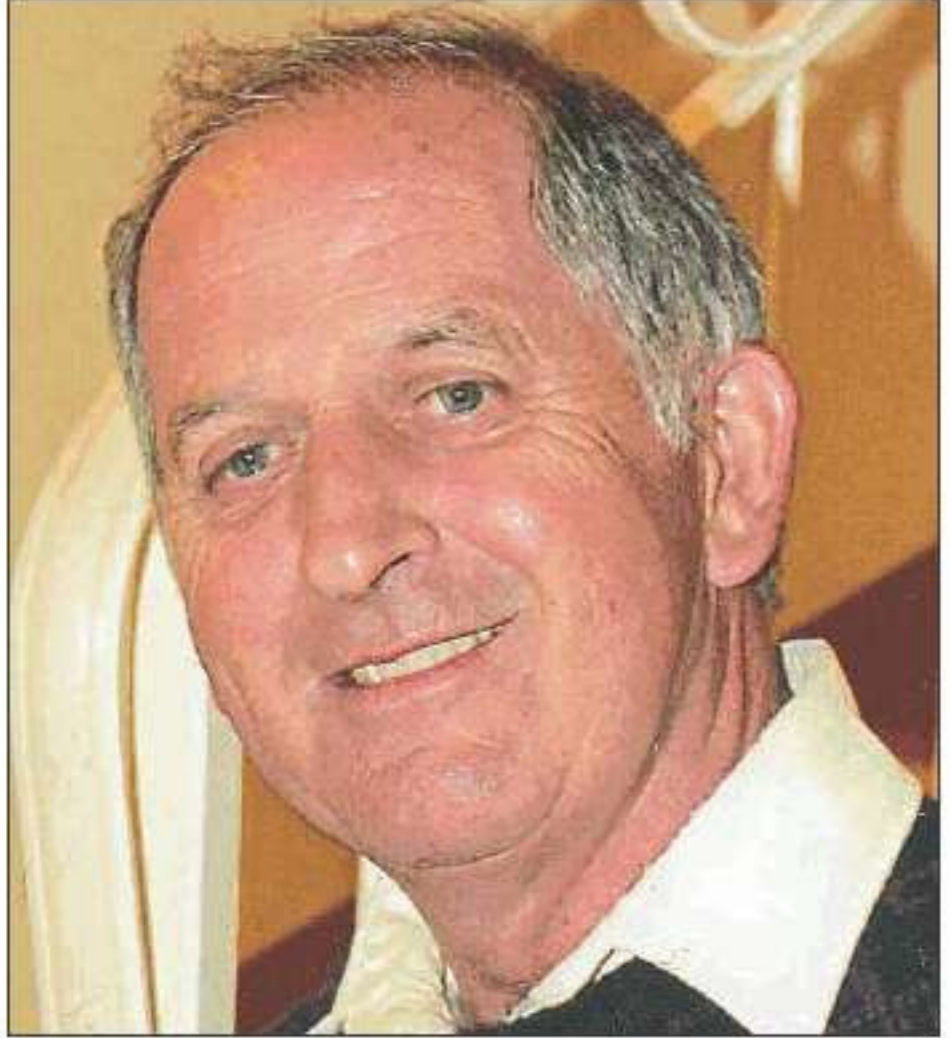
As a fishing enthusiast, he was aware that as a result of the Corrib-Clare Drainage Scheme, the River Clare was an eyesore with a mountain of rubble on each side of the river. His first step in the rehabilitation of the river was the re-establishment of the Milltown Angling Club in 2009.

In 2010 Milltown, Tuam and St Colman's Corofin Angling Clubs had a number of meetings with Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) and Office of Public Works (OPW) and it was agreed that the Dawros River in Milltown would be suitable for stream enhancement on a pilot basis.

The project was completed in 2012 and was a huge success, providing a much-improved spawning stream for salmon and trout. Consequently, the Illaun and Tonemoyle rivers in Milltown and along the main channels of the River Clare in Milltown were listed for upgrading. All three schemes have now been successfully completed.

Sean oversaw the design of these projects, made application for funding and ensured the successful completion of each project. Following the success of these projects there are now six Angling Clubs known as Cáirde an Chláir on the River Clare between Milltown and Galway city, all working together as a group thanks to the leadership of Sean Nestor.

In December 2014, Cáirde an Chláir and 13 angling clubs from Lough Corrib with representatives from IFI, OPW and a generous sponsor, identified 31 projects for stream enhancement along the Clare and they are now proceeding on a priority basis. In the roll out of the various River enhancement projects that he was involved in with IFI,



his relationship with landowners and riparian owners was instrumental in bringing the projects to fruition. The ambitious project for the Abbert River continues to be processed by Cáirde an Chláir and IFI. It is the wish of all concerned that the proposed development project will be carried out in honour of Sean.

He was chairman of Milltown Angling Club and secretary of Cáirde an Chláir and his leadership qualities were further recognised when in Feb 2014 he was elected President of the National Anglers Representatives Association (NARA) which represents over 10,000 anglers all over Ireland.

Other projects that Sean gave a lead in developing include the upgrading of Cloondroon Lake as an important course fishing lake and the planting of 45 trees there.

He got funding for and arranged for the erection of dozens of stiles, making fishing access along the river easier for anglers. He took part in a Bat Count Survey along a one-mile stretch of the River Clare.

He also took Fifth and Sixth Class pupils from Milltown NS on a half day outing to Cloondroon Lake to see at first hand the importance of this Wildlife Flora and Fauna Habitat. He brought 27 pupils

from Belmont NS on a visit to the Salmon Hatchery in Cong where they learned about the lifecycle of salmon and the value of clean water to fish life.

Sean was a valued member of Milltown Tidy Towns committee and his input into each year's application will be sadly missed. With a view to honouring the achievements of community leaders, each year the National Tidy Towns Sponsors, SuperValu, invite nominees from Tidy Towns committees. Sean was nominated in 2017 and he was one of the 12 Community Heroes honoured on the day of the National Tidy Towns Awards function. His calm and modest demeanour belied the efficiency with which he achieved results on the many projects he was engaged in. He was a devout Catholic and a member of the Church Finance Committee and he and his wife Margaret were always available to assist in Church activities.

We will miss his positive attitude and great sense of humour which endeared him to everybody.

His untimely death after a short illness is a huge loss to the community but particularly to his beloved wife Margaret, his son Keith, daughter Sharon and the extended family.