

Le Chêile

Community Magazine



November 2018

No. 369

EDITORIAL

It is encouraging to see community groups like the Clane Athletic Club striving to develop new facilities in the area. We congratulate them on the recent launch of an all weather running track project; they deserve all our support. This would have been Clane & Rathcoffey's 45th year to have gone through the very demanding task of marking out a track for the purpose of running our Community Games field and track events. We put in a letter of support when Clane Athletic Club were applying for the Track and we are delighted to learn that this great new facility will be in place in 2019.

This is Le Chéile's 44th year. The community magazine was already 40 years in print when it went on line four years ago in 2014. This was our only option as it was proving increasingly more difficult during the recession years to get payment on the ads which were essential to meeting the printing costs. Since going on line we have been getting a very encouraging number of hits, both locally and internationally and from the far side of the world, New Zealand for example! It would be nice to keep this up and even build on it.

Unfortunately it is becoming more and more difficult to rely on regular contributions from key groups within the community, That having been said there are a number of very dependable groups and individuals and it is a pleasure to work with them.

CALENDAR

Sunday 4th November : Cemetery Sunday
Prayers in the Abbey Cemetery at 12.30pm.
- The 39th Annual Mass will be celebrated in Mainham Cemetery at 3pm. **See p.5**

Monday 5th November

Monthly meeting of Clane Community Council in the Abbey Community Centre at 8pm.

Wednesday 14th November

Clane Local History Group will present a talk entitled "The Sinking of the RMS Leinster" by Author and Historian Philip Lecane of Foxrock History Club. The talk takes place The talk takes place in Clane GAA Club at 8pm. Admission is free and all are welcome. **See p. 5**

Monday 3rd December

The AGM of Clane Golf Club will be held in the Village Inn at 8.00 p.m.

EDITOR'S DEADLINE

The deadline for receipt of material for the December issue of Le Chéile is

Monday 27th November

To 142 Loughbollard please.

Tel. 045-868474.

E-mail: mcevoyclane@gmail.com

Get Le Chéile on www.clanecommunity.ie

KNOW YOUR CLANE

Bessie Nolan, a native of Clane, who became a film star aged 103 and who died on 28th February this year aged 106!

Seamus Cullen

We are grateful to Seamus Cullen for his research leading to the following article.

Bessie Nolan became a celebrity at the age of 103 when she starred in the documentary film “Older than Ireland”. She was born in Longtown near Clane on 5th November 1911, the daughter of William and Sarah Broe. Detail from the 1911 census, which was recorded seven months before Bessie’s birth, indicate that William and Sarah lived in Longtown Demesne and had a three year old son named Peter. It is likely that William, who was a native of Lackan in County Wicklow, was an employee of the Sweetman family, the owners of Longtown Estate at the time. Neither William nor Sarah, who was also a native of County Wicklow, had relatives in the Clane area.

With better employment prospects in Dublin, the family left Clane and moved to The Ranch in Inchicore, where Bessie grew up. The Ranch is a small enclave of terraced red-brick houses close to Sarsfield Road. At the age of 21, Bessie Broe married John Nolan and the couple had seven children.

In 2015 a documentary film was produced entitled “Older Than Ireland”, which told the story of a hundred years of a life as seen through the eyes of thirty Irish centenarians. It explored each centenarian’s journey from 1916 to their life as a centenarian in modern day Ireland. During that time the country experienced immense social, political and technological change and each centenarian

gave a unique perspective on life and its meaning.

Clane born Bessie, then aged 103, was one of the contributors and became the star of the documentary, showing the composure of a veteran experienced TV star. Despite her advanced age she was still active, lived alone in her home in Drimnagh and walked to the shops every day. Her wit and humour contributed to the success of the documentary, first shown in Irish cinemas in September 2015. Interviews on the Late Late Show and Ireland AM followed. The documentary, which was broadcast on RTE beginning on 31st August 2016, became an award-winning film. It has since been shown in cinemas in Britain, America and Canada. Next month it will be shown in cinemas in Australia and New Zealand.

Bessie died earlier this year, on 28th February aged 106. Despite her fame and longevity her connection with Clane, the town of her birth, was virtually unknown. Paying tribute, Minister for Health Simon Harris described Bessie as an ‘amazing person’, which sums up a centenarian who made such an impact in the last three years of her life.

If anyone has any extra information on Bessie Nolan, for example, if she had started going to school while she was still living in the Clane area, we would be delighted to hear from them. We have the disc “ Older than Ireland”, which has a lot of interesting information, including photographs, and we would be glad to make it available.

Clane Award-Winning Estates Competition

Report 2018

A sincere thank you to those estates that entered the 2018 Award Winning Estates Competition, again generously supported by Clane Project Centre. This year the judges were asked to select a number of award-winning estates based on the judging guidelines overleaf.

All entry forms were reviewed and entrants visited during the Summer. The standard throughout was again very high, but the judges felt that some areas and initiatives deserved to be called out:

- **Liffey Lawns** – kept well throughout, with nice beds each side of the main road through the estate.
- **Loughbollard** – congratulations on working through the significant clean-up of the boundary area. The open areas were all well maintained, with nice flowers noticed at the entrances.
- **Meadow Court and The Meadows** – The new footpath between the entrances will be a useful amenity for residents. A well-maintained estate with some impressive gardens within.
- **Hillview Heights + Hillview Green** – thank you for leaving some of the hedges on the boundaries to flower for the bees. Some gardens boasted stunning hanging baskets.

After careful consideration of all the judging guidelines, the judges selected

the following estates as **Clane Tidy Towns Award Winning Estates** for 2018:

- **Capdoo Park** – the entire estate was looking very well with the redeveloped entrance and new planting particularly admired. Nice to see the Ivy – a great choice for pollinators too.
- **Brooklands** – another impressive display with flowers all along the main road of the estate and in some stunning gardens. Very well maintained.
- **Park View** – a beautifully presented estate, lovingly maintained as always. Congratulations too on your pursuit of improved lighting, and the community compost area.
- **College Grove** – a lovely entrance again this year. The mulching of hedge cuttings was a great idea, and well-kept kerbing noticed throughout.
- **Abbey Park** – congratulations on the renewed entrance and planting in the various beds – all looking very well. Very thoughtful too to leave the dandelions in flower – very helpful to bees emerging after the winter.
- **Mainham Wood** – immaculately maintained – both inside and out – with very impressive floral displays in several gardens.

This year the judges wished to highlight two Outstanding Estates. The estates they deemed to be **Outstanding** in 2018 are:

- **Ottomy** – not just a stunning display at the entrance. Beautifully maintained beds, planters, corners were on

show throughout the estate. Congratulations!

- **Central Park and Churchfield** – Very tastefully planted bed admired at the entrance. Many enhancements throughout the estate building on the progress of previous years. Fantastic!

ST. PATRICK'S DAY FESTIVAL

Plans are now well underway for our 2019 St. Patrick's Day Festival.
THEME: BRINGING COMMUNITY TOGETHER.

Our Clane Christmas Cards are in the shops now. Thanks to The Westgrove Hotel and Conference Centre for sponsoring the cards again this year.

Our artists and photographers for this year are: Stephanie Dunne, Rachel Fountain, Maeve Harkin, Brian Cribbin, Paul Whelan and John Egan.

Some great images of Clane which we hope you will share around the world this Festive Season. Cards are 4 euro for a packet of 6 or 1 euro each.

Mary Dunne,
Chairperson,
Clane Festival

CLANE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Clane Local History Group will present a talk entitled "The Sinking of the RMS Leinster" by Author and Historian Philip Lecane of Foxrock History Club. The talk takes place on Wednesday 14th November in Clane GAA Club at 8pm. Philip is the author of a recent book on this tragedy which resulted in the greatest ever loss of life in the Irish Sea. Admission is free and all are welcome.

The 39th Annual Mass will be celebrated in Mainham Cemetery on Sunday, 4 November at 3pm.

MAINHAM CEMETERY COMMITTEE

The following will give an outline of the work of the volunteer Cemetery Committee over the past twelve months. The five acres of the cemetery have been mowed twenty times over the growing season. Six lorry loads of surplus clay have been removed from the cemetery lands. Some ten full bins were brought to the road and returned to their positions on 26 collection days.

In the past year we carried out a major project on the historic section of the cemetery by boughing and trimming 18 lime trees. We also clipped the many metres of hedging in the car park and removed some shrubs which had become overgrown near the steps. Ongoing maintenance included control of weeds and general tidying of green and of surfaced areas. A task which we take seriously each year is to maintain the graves of those interred in Mainham who have no one belonging to them in the area.

Since last November, and to date, 26 people have been laid to rest in the cemetery. We remember them all.

As space for car-parking is so limited in the cemetery we request that only cars carrying invalids, the elderly or small children drive into the cemetery. All other cars coming from the Clane direction are asked to turn right at the former Royal Oak premises and into McCreery's field. Cars coming from the Rathcoffey direction are asked to turn into the field opposite Cribbin's. Please follow the directions of the stewards. We thank all drivers in anticipation of their co-operation.

When parked ensure that you lock your car and do not leave valuables exposed.

We hope our prayers for a fine day will be answered.

Mainham Cemetery Committee.

CLANE GOLF CLUB

Results:

W/E 30th September- (Home Outing)

First: Maurice Byrne, Vice -Captain- h/c 16 - 43 pts.

Second: Joe Higgins- h/c 21 41 pts.

Third: Jim Craughwell-h/c 18 40 pts.

Fourth: Ger Nevin – h/c 10 40 pts

Fifth : Sean Connolly- h/c 15 39 pts.

Sixth: James Coonan- h/c 6 38 pts.

W/E 7th October

First: John Carew- h/c 11 39 pts.

Second: Tom Bryan- h/c 22 38 pts.

W/E 14th October

First: Fintan Connolly- h/c 12 39 pts.

Second: Brendan Bean- h/c 22 35 pts.

W/E 21st October

First: John McAndrew- h/c 13 40 pts.

Second: Tom Bryan- h/c 22 37 pts.

Turkey Competition – Leading teams after 3 weeks :

First: Sean Byrne, Michael Kelleher & Joe Higgins- 119 pts.

Second: Eamonn Howlin, Chris Brogan & Tom Bryan 118 pts.

Third: Maurice Byrne, Lar Blanchfield & James Brady 115 pts.

NEWS:

Congratulations to **Fintan Connolly, winner of the Summer League with 75 pts.**

Second: Jim Craughwell 70 pts.

Third: Seamus Carew 65 pts.

Also, Congratulations to D.F. Coonan who had a hole in one on the 16th Hole (137 metres) on 16th October. It is Diarmuid's second hole in one & 'caps' a great year for him as he also won the Captain's (Mr. William Lacey) Competition in August.

Forthcoming events:

AGM will be held in the Village Inn on Monday 3rd December at 8.00 p.m.

There are a few places available for new members & we particularly encourage younger members to join & annual subscription is very attractively low.

Eamonn Howlin
Club Secretary
Phone: 087 1215 396.

THE EVERGREENS

As we're into the first month of Winter, well its goodbye to awesome Autumn with its "mists and mellow fruitfulness" and rustic shades and hues. Ah well "if Winter comes can Spring be far behind"!

November, as everyone knows, is set aside solely to the Holy Souls. Each year maybe a new name is added to our list, perhaps a relative or dear friend. So we remember all the souls who have gone before us -they are always in our hearts and memories and we feel a special connection to them. It is within our power to alleviate the suffering souls with our prayers and other meritorious works. Of course Mass, as we know, is the greatest form of prayer to help them. St. Padre Pio interceded greatly for them, especially by his bearing of the stigmata and his life of suffering offered up in union with the sufferings of Jesus.

All activities, arts and projects are doing well in the Club and also plans are being made for future outings and of course our big Christmas Party which will be held in the Westgrove Hotel -this is open to non-members as well if you'd like to come. On October 1st we had a visit from our local Fianna Fáil T.D. Frank O'Rourke informing us with some good news. It was in regard to a new roof on the Evergreens' room in the Abbey Community Centre, the total cost being €16,000. So Deputy O'Rourke has been successful in securing €12,000 towards this, which has been approved of. So we are so grateful to him for his excellent deed. Céad míle buíochas Frank.

On Tuesday December 4th we hope to do Christmas shopping in Blanchardstown. So hope we don't come home too loaded with too much spent. Happy shopping everyone anyway.

Beir bua agus beannacht igcónaí agus go neirí go geal libh.

Maureen Spain, (P.R.O.)

THE PRINCIPAL ACHIEVEMENTS OF TOMMY CONNEFF

American and World Records: 3/4 mile: 3 min. 2 4/5 sec., Travers Island, New York, 21st Aug., 1895. One mile, 4 min. 15 3/5 sec., same venue, 28th Aug., 1895. One and a quarter miles, 5 min. 38 4/5 sec., Bergen Point, New York, 2nd Sept., 1895. One and a half miles, 6 min. 46 2/5 sec., same venue and date. Three and a half miles, 17 min. 42 sec., same venue, 4th Sept., 1893.

Irish Records: One mile, 4 min. 26 1/5 sec., Ballsbridge, July 1885. Four miles, 19 min. 44 2/5 sec., Ballsbridge, Aug., 1887.

Irish Championships 1886: Half mile, 2 min. 0 2/5 sec. One mile, 4 min. 32 3/5 sec.

English Championships 1888: One mile, 4 min. 31 3/5 sec.

Canadian Championships 1889: Mile and two miles; **1890,** Five miles, 29 min. 34 3/5 sec.

American Championships 1888: One mile, 4 min. 32 3/5 sec.; **1891,** 4 min. 30 3/5 sec.

1888, Five miles, 26 min. 46 2/5 sec.; **1889,** 26 min. 42 sec.; **1890,** 25 min. 37 4/5 sec.;

1891, 27 min. 38 2/5 sec.; **1890,** Ten miles, 55 min. 32 3/5 sec.

IN OTHER WORDS

1886 Half Mile and Mile Championships of Ireland.

1887 Four Mile Championship of Ireland. A new record.

1888 Irish Mile Championship, with the Irish record, British A.A. Assn. Mile Champion, American Five Mile Champion.

1889 American Five Mile Champion.

1890 American Five Mile Champion.

American Ten Mile Champion.

Canadian Two Mile Champion.

1891 American Mile Championship with American record.

American Five Mile Champion.

Canadian Two Mile Champion with a new record.

1893 American Mile Championship, with World Record. American 3 1/2 Mile

Championship.

1895 World Records: 3/4 Mile, Mile, 1 1/4 Mile, and 1 1/2 Mile

Tommy Conneff was born at the forge in Kilmurry in 1866. The original house no longer stands but on older maps it is shown between the present Conneff residence and the road. Little is known of him as a boy except that he was small in stature. When fully grown he only reached five feet five inches. He had short cropped sleek black hair and was by reputation quiet, hardworking and diligent. As a lad of 18 he watched his first sports meeting in Clane in June 1884. Tradition has it that this was in the ten acre field opposite the Doctor's House on the Ballinagappa Road, now the John Sullivan Centre, which houses the Wheelchair Association. The ten acre field is now the site of Oat-field Estate. Up until the fifties, at least, it was known to some as the "sports field". This indeed must have been a great occasion if we can compare it to the sports meeting of July 17th, 1887, the published list of winners of which takes up half a page in the Leinster Leader. The organizers were Dr. John O'Connor, M.D., Clane and James Kelly, who worked as a baker in Celbridge and lived on the side avenue into Clongowes. The last surviving contestant that the writer can account for was a very old man, Billy Reddy, who died about fifty years ago and who, along with his sister Agnes, owned the two storey thatched house and shop which stood on the site in the Main Street where Londis is now. A single event can have a significance that defies imagination!

sent by transport ship to San Francisco for burial in the national cemetery in the Presidio. The remains, which appear to have been in the water for some 24 hours, bore no marks of violence; in the pockets were the deceased's watch, some money and a new pair of glasses". "The Sergeant", the Journal stated "was a peaceful and sober man and his death was believed to have been a tragic accident". **(From Le Chéile of February 1975)**

The "Manila Daily Bulletin" (Philippines) of Oct. 11th, 1910 in its obituary following the mysterious and tragic death of Conneff stated "Sergeant Conneff's dead body was found floating in the Pasig river. The body was to be