

FR. JOHN SULLIVAN, S.J.



The annual anniversary Mass of Thanksgiving
For the Life and Work of the Servant of God,
The Venerable Fr. John Sullivan, S.J.

Will be celebrated in
Clongowes Wood College on
Sunday 8th May 2016

At 3.00 pm.

Principal Celebrant and Homilist
Bishop Denis Nulty

The anointing of the sick and the Blessing with
The Cross of Fr. John Sullivan
Will take place immediately after Mass.

Le Chêile

Community Magazine



May 2016 No. 345

EDITORIAL

The evening of Tuesday 19th April marked the start of Tuesday evening meetings of Clane Tidy Towns for the Summer of 2016. Everyone is cordially welcome to come along and devote an hour of their time. There will be a full size notice in the Main Street throughout the Summer to remind us all of the details. Tools, etc., are stored at the Abbey, making this the best place to make contact and learn of the projects being undertaken. Starting time is 7.30pm but the timing is a matter for the individual. You may also make contact with some of those involved in different parts of the town, who may generally be identified by their reflective jackets. Tuesday evenings may not always suit everyone but you may be assured your contribution will be welcome at any time. It is good for the area and good for the individual to be involved, -make friends and keep fit!

Saturday 2nd April was the occasion of our contribution to the National Spring Clean effort. The rubbish which accumulates along the country roads was tackled. A very large skip was filled. Thanks to all those who participated. As well as the roadsides generally a number of black spots are cleaned up annually. It is remarkable that over a twelve month period the number of coffey cartons, bottles and cans, thrown from cars, builds up on average to at least one per yard along the roadsides!

A start was made to cleaning up the old Abbeylands drive. This is an area where large numbers of our young people, boys and girls, choose to eat out with the rats in a ditch to the north of the Sewage Station while rolling up their joints. So heavy is the accumulated litter after a few weeks that it has to be raked out. In warm weather they sit out in the open space to the east of the Sewage Station, where they scatter their litter over the grass, producing up to half a sack full in any one day.

CALENDAR

Saturday May 14th

Crystal Swing the group of singers and musicians are coming to Rathcoffey GAA on Saturday May 14th. See p. 8

Monday 16th May

Clane & Rathcoffey Community Games hold their Field and Track events in the grounds of Scoil Mhuire Community School, commencing at 6 pm. See p. 9

Saturday 21st May

Clane Local History Group will host a historical walk of Clane Village May at 11am in conjunction with the Irish Open Golf Championship at the K Club. See p.8

Monday 30th May

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

[Tuesday 14th June

Abbey (Friary) Graveyard Maas 7.30 pm.]

THE IRISH OPEN [Contd. p.9]

With the Irish Open 2016 coming to the K Club, Clane is one of the localities selected by Kildare County Council to get involved in an event which will see some of the world's finest golfers play here in Kildare including Rory McIlroy and recent Masters winner Danny Willett. Clane has declared itself Open for the period of the Irish Open, May 17th to 21st, and is looking forward to welcoming visitors to this vibrant community with its fascinating history and buzzy array of shops, cafes, restaurants and bars.

EDITOR'S DEADLINE

The deadline for receipt of material for the **June** issue of Le Chéile is

Monday 23rd May

To 142 Loughbollard please.

Tel. 045-868474.

E-mail: margaretmcevoy1@eircom.net

Get Le Chéile on www.clanecommunity.ie

Barrow and Liffey.* It is semicircular and measures over 2,000 Irish acres. Its average depth in the middle of the 19th century was calculated at 30 ft. To reclaim this bog at the time was estimated at £8,867 18s 9d.

* The writer remembers a local man pointing out a well to his father over 60 years ago with 2 different outflows from it which he said ran to the Liffey, and the Boyne. The well is no longer in existence due to peat moss extraction.

Fairs at Clane. April 28th, July 25th, Oct. 15th

The area of the town of Clane was estimated at 28 acres. The population in 1831 was 216. In 1841 it was 335. There were 51 houses in the town in 1831. (The census populations in the early 20th century were + or - 350)

Schools in the parish of Clane in 1831.

There were 9 daily schools in the union, 6 of which were in Clane parish, one in Clongowes College, with a total student population of 629; 332 males and 297 females.

The Protestant (?) Parish of Clane. The benefice of Clane consisted of Clane, Clonshamboe, Mainham and Killybegs, measuring 6x4 miles. In 1831 the population was 4,450. A house in Mainham was used, in addition to the Church at Clane, as a place of worship. The Clane church consisted of a gallery, a vestry room, a school house, seating 300. (The school house was a narrow single storey structure, running parallel to the graveyard wall, behind the masters house (Cash's), with a doorway leading into the side of the tower; damaged in the recent fire)

The Catholic (?) Parish of Clane. The chapel has an attendance of 1,000 and is united to the chapels of Balrahan and Ballinafagh. Two other chapels are listed in the parish, namely that at Killybegs and at Mainham (Jesuits). Protestant population amounted to 98, Catholics 1,973.

(?) There seems to be serious mix-ups and omissions between the last two paragraphs.

The Barony of Clane. It is bounded to the west by Carbury, on the north-east by Ikeathy and Ooghterany, on the south-east by Naas and on the south-west by Connell. According to Rawson's statistical survey the barony measures 18,736 acres; 6,845 acres are bog, 11,891 are arable. Its real area according to the Ordnance Survey is 32,023 acres, 1 rood and 1 perch. Of this acreage 123 acres 2 roods are water. The Bog of Allen is described as "repulsive". Towns in the barony are listed as Clane, Prosperous; the parishes are Ballinafagh, Brideschurch, Clane, Caragh, Downings, Killybegs and Timahoe. The population in 1831 was 8,356; in 1841 was 8,534. The other statistics were: Houses 1,421; Employed in agriculture 1,143 (families); Trade and manufacture 237; other pursuits 127.



The April meeting of Clane Community Council was held in the Abbey on Mon. 25th. As well as dealing with a large number of on-going agenda items two members of the general community were invited to discuss suggestions they made in the "Ideas for Clane" initiative, which was launched prior to our AGM in January. Other submissions will be taken on board in forthcoming meetings. Fergal Lee, who was the first Chairman of C.C.C. when it was established in 1973, spoke on the advantages he would see to pedestrian crossings controlled by flashing beacons, or Pelican Crossings as they are commonly known. Neill Cullen elaborated on his suggestion that one way traffic for heavy lorries turning on to the Prosperous Road would avoid a lot of the blockages we experience in the Main Street.

Fergal spoke of the frequent instances where pedestrians press the button and then see an opportunity to cross before the light changes, the problem being that the traffic has to stop either ways when it encounters the red light. Another problem arises out of young tricksters pressing the button as they pass along the footpath, even though they have no intention of crossing. He made the point that when a pedestrian arrives at the flashing light and pauses to catch the eye of the motorist that this leads to the development of good repos between all users of the road and that the long stoppages associated

with the changing of the lights are avoided.

Neill made the point that for large articulated trucks, and even more so for some rigid trucks, that they find it impossible to swing left on to the Prosperous Road when coming from the Naas direction without moving into the lane the on-coming traffic from the Main Street. It would be better that all such trucks came around the bypass, and along with all such similar trucks coming from the Kilcock and Ballinagappa Roads, go down the Main Street past the church. Directing trucks coming from the Kilcock Road to the bypass therefore should not be an option except where they are heading for Naas. The result would be that the Main Street would be one way for trucks heading North to South and the difficulties associated with two such trucks meeting head on in the Main Street, especially at the narrow end would be avoided.

After some discussion it was agreed that a road traffic engineer would be invited out to walk the scene and consider the issues

The next monthly meeting of Clane Community Council was fixed for Monday 30th May the Abbey at 8pm.

THE IRISH GAZETTEER
First published in Le Chéile Feb. 1981.

The reference to Clane in the Irish Gazetteer (3 vols.) is as follows:

The 19th century mansions at Clane.
Blackhall--the property of P. Wolfe
Millicent--the property of B. Molloy
Sherlockstown--the property of Mr. Sherlock
Firmount--the property of R. Dease

The nearest bog to Clane. The nearest bog to Clane lies to the north-west. It occupies a valley at the chief watershed of the rivulets that run respectively towards the Boyne, the

CLANE GOLF CLUB

During April we had three major competitions:

- 1. Spring Monthly Medal which was won by Martin Meaney.
- 2. 1916-2016 Easter Centenary Competition which was won by James Coonan &
- 3. John B. McAndrew Cup which was won by our Captain, Michael Connolly.

During this month, we also started the 9 hole & 18 hole Club Match play Competitions, which are now in full flight. We also had our second away outing of the year at the fine course of County Meath Golf Club in Trim, which was very generously sponsored by Seamus & Kitty Manzor, who has been a major sponsor to Clane Golf Club down the years. Thank you, Seamus & Kitty. As the weather has greatly improved, the course has benefitted greatly & everything is beginning to look really well. Long may it continue.

The competition results since the April edition of Le Cheile are as follows:

23rd / 24th April - 18-hole Stableford

Winner: Eamonn Howlin (15) 39 pts
Second: Paul Morrissey (18) 36 pts
22nd April - The Friday 18 No 6
Winner: Lar Blanchfield (17) 37 pts

23rd April - Outing to Co Meath (Trim)
Sponsored by Seamus Manzor

Winner: Paul Morrissey (18) 36 pts
Second: Robbie Reilly (5) 35 pts
Third: Sean Lavin (26) 33 pts
Gross: Seamus Carew (8) 90pts Last 9

Class 1 (-17) 1st Michael Connolly (15) 30 pts Last 3 Front 9
2nd Dermot Maguire (12) 30 pts

Class 2 (18-) 1st Joe Higgins (22) 28 pts
2nd Noel Cruize (19) 26 pts

Two's Club BRIAN CONLON, MICHAEL GATELY, ROBBIE REILLY

16th / 17th April 18-hole V Par

1st Michael Cuddihy (11) 5 up
2nd Diarmuid F. Coonan 3 up
Gross Michael Cuddihy (11) 76

15th April—The Friday 18 No. 5

Winner Seamus Carew (8) 35pts

9th / 10th April—John B. McAndrew Cup

1st Michael Connolly (16) 39 pts
2nd Michael Kelleher (18) 38 pts
Gross Niall Bryan (6) 78 pts

8th April—The Friday 18 No. 4

Winner Lorcan Wyer (12) 39 pts

2nd & 3rd April—Spring Medal Sponsored by Eamonn

1st Martin Meaney (21) 65
2nd Seamus Carew (8) 68
Gross Seamus Carew (8) 76

1st April—The Friday 18 No. 3

Winner Seamus Carew (8) 30 pts L.9

27th—28th Mar. The Centenary Cup
—18 hole Stableford

1st James Coonan (10) 39 pts
2nd Pat McDonnell (11) 38 pts
Gross James Coonan (10) 75

Forthcoming events: The Pierce Purcell Interclub Competition takes place at Naas Golf Club on Saturday 14th May. The first mixed competition will take place on the evening of Tuesday 31st May.

On Sunday 22nd May the course will be closed for Union Day of Clongowes Wood College & we wish them a happy & successful day.

Eamonn Howlin 24th April 2016.

COLE PORTER'S KISS ME, KATE A SUCCESS FOR CLANE



Cole Porter's most famous and successful musical met with unanimous approval from audiences at Clane Musical & Dramatic Society's production last week. Patrons left The Abbey smiling and humming many of the popular songs from the show – and that approval was echoed in the AIMS' adjudicator's review which was recently received by the Society. Having praised the cast and production team, individually and collectively, and also the back stage crew and Front of House team, adjudicator Peter Kennedy concluded his review as follows:-

“Clane Musical & Dramatic Society seem to have gotten this business of presenting a show in a shoe-box down to a fine art with polish and efficiency. Thank you all so much for a very wonderful presentation of a popular “older” show”.

The cast thoroughly enjoyed themselves, as could be seen from their performances on stage and the thousands of Facebook postings and photographs! The Society would like to thank everyone who supported the production – patrons, retailers who sponsored raffle prizes and/or advertised in the show programme.

Sadly Kiss me, Kate, which was sold out for all but two nights, was an expensive production and the Society must once again do some fund-raising to help clear an unwelcome Bank Overdraft! Please come along to the Parish Centre on Saturday or Sunday next, the 7th or 8th May from 10.00am until 4.00pm on Saturday and until 1.30pm on Sunday.

Society members will also be bag packing in Supervalu on Friday and Saturday the 13th and 14th May – thank you to Alan Condon for his constant support of the Society.

Play readings will recommence this week – check out our Facebook page for further details or phone 087 7916989 if you would like to come along. Play readings are open to all – members and non-members. There is a nominal payment of €2.00 per night.

Following the success of our Workshops last year the Society is planning the following:-
SUMMER CAMP for 8 to 12year olds

The Summer Camp will be held in The Abbey from 11th to 15th July – 10.00 am until 2.00 pm daily - €90 for first child - €80 for second child.

For a fun week of dance, drama and music enrol your child now – places are limited. For booking form telephone Grainne at **086 0864380** or email us at clanemusicalsociety@gmail.com.

YOUTH WORKSHOP

Plans are being finalised as to the content, extent, dates and cost of the Youth Workshop which is being organised for 14 to 20 year olds.

ADULT ONE DAY WORKSHOP (OVER 18s WITH NO UPWARD LIMIT!)

Following the success of the day long workshop last year the Society was delighted when members requested that we repeat the day this year. Arthur McGauran, Michael Fay and Grainne Gorman have already agreed to come on board again and all that needs to be done is to book The Westgrove and confirm the date and cost (presently estimated at €30 per person for the day) Please email clanemusicalsociety@gmail.com for further information.

Once again – thank you for your support, which makes the hard work worthwhile.

Sadie O'Reilly PRO - CMDS

and share with Her our many worries and cares.

Congratulations to the boys and girls, all 135 of them, from Clane and Rathcoffey schools, who have celebrated their Confirmation. Hope the Holy Spirit will bless, influence and inspire them throughout their lives. The feast of the Sacred Heart is earlier this year -it being 3rd June. So therefore the Novena begins 26th May, when during those 9 days we renew our love of the Sacred Heart.

On behalf of the Evergreens I would like to thank Clane Musical and Dramatic Society for their kindness in giving us complementary tickets to their latest and most enjoyable musical production -Cole Porter's hilarious “Kiss me Kate” Both the calibre of the acting and the quality of the singing were really superb to packed audiences each night. Edel Marron starred in the leading role and my goodness is she some actress and singer. So here's to the next production! Yes, CMDS you really are going from strength and give such pleasure to many.

Anyway may each and everyone enjoy safe and happy Summer months. Slán agus beannacht dhíbh go léir ar feadh tamall beag.

Maureen Spain, P.R.O.

CLANE & RATHCOFFEY COMMUNITY GAMES

Clane & Rathcoffey Community Games will hold their Field and Track events on the grounds of Scoil Mhuire Community School on the evening of Monday 16th May, by kind permission. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the finals of all events will qualify for the County Kildare Finals to be held at **Clongowes Wood College grounds on Wednesday and Thursday 29th and 30th June, commencing at 6pm.**

In the County Quiz Final Aine Maguire, Amy O'Sullivan, Claire Lynch and Sarah Connolly came 4th! We offer both commiserations and congratulations. The County Finals of the Swimming are being held on Saturday 30th April and Sunday 1st May in Athy. On Wednesday 4th May the Boys' U/11 Hurling team play Leixlip away in Leixlip. We will have reports on the results in our next issue in June.

THE IRISH OPEN [Contd. from p.2]

The centrepiece of Clane Open is the Friday night, 20th May, which will feature a FREE concert in the Main Street, commencing with a marching band and followed with singing and dancing as well as face-painting for children. There will be music in all the pubs that night too and shops will be open late- so do come along and enjoy the hospitality.

On the Saturday there will be a history walk, also free of charge, meeting at Manzor's Village Inn car park at 11am, with four guides taking different topics such as Clane's role in 1798, the little known tale of Mathilda Tone, visiting Clane's oldest man-made object and the “Garden of the Angels” to mention just a few stories in this hour long journey into Clane's past. Craft beer is big news at the moment and our own Kelly's Mountain Brew will be open between 12 noon and 3pm in Clane Business Park if you want to drop by and learn all about brewing!

Other events to be held during the week include a shop window competition, children's involvement through a golf-themed colouring competition as well as no less than two Opens in Millicent Golf Club, one for Seniors on Tuesday 17th May and a general one on Wednesday 18th May. Make sure you join in the fun for Open week!

Street where the Parish shop is now located and extending down the school yard to the rear. A prefab campus operated on the Prosperous Road opposite the entrance to Liffey Lawns. Despite this in 1970 it was put under notice of transfer to Prosperous. A deputation from the then "Community Council" (Clane Social Development Committee) met the Minister and obtained a stay of execution. The school continued to grow and in 1975 a Community School with provision for 650 pupils was approved. Mother Perpetua had already purchased the site on the Prosperous Road (with the help of the late Peter McCreery) for £70,000, including two 4 acre sites for the two proposed new 16-teacher Primaries.

On June 24th 1982 the girls' and boys' primary schools moved to their current premises, Scoil Bhríde and Scoil Phádraig on the Prosperous Road. In September 1983 Scoil Mhuire Community School moved to its new premises beyond Scoil Bhríde and Scoil Phádraig. In 2015 the new extension to Scoil Bhríde was opened. The re-building of the Scoil Phadraig has now been approved.

When we pass the Old Convent School in the Main Street it should be an inspiration to us of what benefits the Presentation Sisters brought with them to Clane in 1839 and how their legacy continues to enrich the area and serve our needs 177 years later. Furthermore we should be aware that in Clane we have an extraordinary building, built in 1818 and due to reach its 200th Anniversary in 2018. Originally built as an exact copy of the Kildare Place School, which in turn was an exact copy of the School Street School, it is an embodiment of the history of National Education in Ireland, both as to the nature of the facility it envisaged throughout the country and of the nature of the education, together with the training of the teachers, it aspired to provide.

CLANE LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Clane Local History Group will host a historical walk of Clane Village on Sat. 21st

May at 11am in conjunction with the Irish Open Golf Championship at the K Club. The walk will commence at the 1798 memorial on Coiseanna Hill (College Road) and will proceed along the Main St. to Alexandra Bridge. The walk will include stories of an earlier heritage which is to be found in Clane's historic surroundings and provides an ideal opportunity for residents of Clane to become acquainted with the history of the village. All are welcome.

RATHCOFFEY G.A.A.

Crystal Swing the group of singers and musicians are coming to Rathcoffey GAA on Saturday May 14th. Tickets cost €15 and are available from Clane Parish shop as well as the following numbers 087 2695829/086 6089911. This is a club fundraising so it should be a great night and we look forward to seeing all that come.

THE EVERGREENS

Welcome to the first month of Summer and may it be three months of lovely weather and sunshine which we all long for and need. This month of May is a very special one -it being Mary's month and we celebrate the feast of Pentecost. "Come Holy Spirit fill the hearts of Thy Faithful". We older ones remember when devotions in honour of our Lady were more evident. Altars, shrines and processions were more to the fore. Do you remember the most colourful ceremony of all was the procession starting from the church and then proceeding down the streets, with children in Holy Communion clothes and every house along the way decorated with flowers and flags. Yes the devotion was great to the Virgin Mary, Mother of Mercy, Star of the Sea, etc. Yet devotion to our Lady very much remains -which reminds me at an opportune time that we are once again in for a Faith Lift as Fr. Paul has arranged for a Novena to our Lady of Perpetual Succour -commencing 2nd May for four consecutive weeks, so we can entrust ourselves to Mary

I. C. A.

Guild members continue to meet at the Kare Centre on Thursday evenings. Some are multi-talented and "out-do" each other with impressive creations, but also have time and patience to kindly assist the "strugglers" in their efforts. On one evening, Yoga Teacher -Laura gave a very interesting talk on the values of yoga, plus exercises and movements that all could share in. A few members attended Art Appreciation Class, hosted by Prosperous Guild, which proved educational and enjoyable. The monthly Fitness Classes, given by Peter, are as popular as ever, so there are no creaking bones in our group. Anna Aherne was Sports Star again! A trophy must be on the cards soon?

The A.G.M. was held on April 7th. Our very efficient Hon. Sec., Yvonne Winters, is taking on the role of Assistant Secretary (due to commitments) and the very capable Eileen O'Brien is stepping into Eileen's shoes. There is no other change in the Committee -Eileen Gray continues as President and Mary Kelly, Treasurer.

Congratulations to Clane Musical Society and Prosperous Drama Group on once again producing such brilliant shows. We wish them continued success. Congratulations also to all the girls and boys who recently received the Sacrament of Confirmation. May their future be blessed with health and happiness.

For information, please contact (for the moment) Hon. Sec. Yvonne: 086 0308779.

Maureen O'Connor, P.R.O.

SCHOOLS OF CLANE IN 1824

Brennan's "Schools of Kildare and Leighlin, 1775-1835" is a report of a survey conducted in 1823 (published in 1826) by the Royal Commission to all Parish Priests and Ministers in Ireland. The Parish of Clane, Rathcoffey and Staplestown had no less than 13 schools, including 2 Protestant schools at

Clane and Donadea. The citations are returns given by Malachy McMahon, P.P. on August 28th 1824. In those days the Parish of Clane included Staplestown and Timahoe along with Rathcoffey. The schools and teachers were as follows:

Clane (Stephen Hickey) - now the KARE Centre-, Firmount (Elizabeth Robinson), Firmount (Richard Colgan), Clane (James Byrne) - originally the Patrician Orphan School, later to become the Girls School in front of the old Convent-, Clane (Winifred Byrne), Betaghstown (Margaret Moran), Rathcoffey (Edward Coonan), Donadea (James Mooney), Blackwood (Richard Murphy), Timahoe (John McGarry), Clongoweswood (Rev. Peter Kenny), Clane (Robert and Margaret Clayton) - later moved from beside the Abbey tower, along with the Hewetson School at Betaghstown, to Millicent, Donadea (Patrick and Mary Legatt). The 3 underlined above were covered in a Heritage Week project which was organized by the Lyreen Research Forum and displayed in the Old Convent School in the Main Street in August 2015.



THE GIRLS' OLD SCHOOL IN CLANE

This school, which opened as a National School under the Presentation Sisters in 1839, had been built as an Orphanage School in 1818. It is now 198 years old. "Tógadh 1839" in this case does not mean "was built" but refers to the fact that it "was established" as a National School in 1839 with the arrival of the Presentation Sisters. It had been built by the Patrician Orphan Society in 1818. The Report of 1826 lists it under:

"Clane Free School (James Byrne):

Opened 1818 and held throughout the year, Saturdays and Holydays excepted. Roman Catholic, appointed by the Patrician Society 1823. 35 years; teaches Reading, Writing, Arithmetic and Surveying; educated at Carlow; taught the Lancastrian system at Clane. Income £30 per annum, paid by the Patrician Orphan Society and aided by subscription. School a good building (of one large room) with eight large windows and two fire places, interior on the plan of the Kildare Street School: built with lime and stone, slated; would cost at present about £400, 50 feet by 22; built by subscription from the members of the Patrician Society and about £130 from a charity play in the Theatre Royal, Dublin; the residue from charity sermons at the Roman Catholic Chapel, Clane. In connection with the Orphan Society founded about the year 1750 in Dublin some Roman Catholics subscribe the annual sum of six pence for protecting orphans and foundlings to the extent of the funds they might raise. The numbers, I am informed amount to 100, many of whom were from infancy nursed, clothed and educated until apprenticed. Not in connection with any religious order. Visited by the Parish Priest and Curate, occasionally by Patrick Beahan, merchant of the city of Dublin, President of the Patrician Orphan Society. Superintended by the Parish Priest and Curate and by the governors of the Patrician Orphan Society since its commencement at Clane. Average attendance: a. summer 1824: males 40, Roman Catholics 40, b. last winter 40, c. summer 1823 45. Eight in 20 read, 8 months to read. Books: History of Old and New Testament, Manning's Moral Entertainment, Murray's English Reader, General Catechism, Primers, Spelling Books, Gough's, Voster's, Jackson's Book Keeping, Hawney's Mensuration, with Spelling and Reading Tables."

The Kildare Street School was the model designed by the Kildare Place Society, a Protestant educational society, which pioneered National Education in Ireland. It was located at the back of the Shelbourne Hotel and was demolished around 1961. It, in turn, had been a copy of the School Street

School, which was located at the back of Guinness' but which was also demolished and is now the site of a block of apartments. Their teacher training course was a six week course and the trained teacher was expected to teach 100 pupils, of all ages, in one large room, with the assistance of a monitor (a competent senior pupil aspiring to do the formal training course) There was seating for 50 in one large room while 50 stood around by the wall. Those standing swapped places with the seated every hour.

HOW AND WHEN THE PRESENTATION SISTERS CAME TO CLANE

Around 1828 there was deep concern among at least two wealthy Catholic families of Clane for the wretched state of the poor in the village area. The Sweetman Family of Longtown and Miss Judith Browne of Castlebrowne Estate were fully aware of this and they set about to relieve the chronic situation.

Mrs Sweetman herself went out amongst the people, instructed, clothed and employed the women in spinning for their livelihood. She was still helpless about the education of the poor children. Miss Browne wrote a letter to Dr. Peter Kenny, S.J. (Provincial of the Jesuits) requesting him to assist them, with the Bishop's permission, to get a religious order of women to come to Clane to instruct the poor female children.

Mr. Sweetman contributed £700 and Miss Browne £350 towards the building of a Convent on the grounds of the Patrician Society School House, which was in rapid decline by this time. This building was started in 1836. The O.S. Map of 1838, which was surveyed for in 1837, refers to the building behind the School as a "Nunnery". It was obviously a modified version of the living quarters for the orphans. Later maps show the subsequent Convent as a building altered to double its original depth. This is also seen in its present "V" roof. The Sisters of Charity were the first selected to start this foundation, but Mother Mary Aikenhead, after a

few visits to Clane, declined and refused to send her Sisters there.

The Bishop, Dr. Nolan, died in 1837 and this suspended the foundation for longer. His successor, Dr. Francis Haly, was appointed in 1838 and immediately asked the Presentation Sisters (Nano Nagle), whose main work was to instruct the poor, to come to Clane. On 25th April 1839 (the Feast of St. Mark), the Presentation Convent was founded by Rev. Mother Teresa Brennan from Portlaoise. She brought two Sisters from Carlow, two from Portlaoise (Maryboro) and one from Drogheda.

The orphan school had been in decline and was in poor repair. The Sisters obtained support from the Parish and from Clongowes in carrying out repairs. The school had gone under the Department of Education in 1834/35, when the Department paid two-thirds of the £200 which the Patrician Orphan Society requested on their departure from Clane. The Sisters were appointed to the school, under the Department in May 1839. There were no school fees to be paid by the pupils. The school was a great success and by 1850 eight postulants had joined the Order in Clane. In 1975 there were 11 Sisters in the Community

.Alterations To The Original School

The school was extended in 1906 when the "Infants Room" was added at the Southern end. This is accessed by what was the original external access door to the school when it had only one large room. It is still recessed like an external door! A previous addition had been made at the rear in 1860, which connected the School to the Convent. There were now 3 rooms. The original single room school was divided by a folding partition in 1929 and a porch was added, extending to the front boundary wall. Railings replaced this high wall in 1950 and the building was re-roofed.

Of the eight original windows, 4 were to the front and 4 to the rear. Of the 4 in front, one was reconstructed as a door

connecting to the porch when it was constructed in 1929 and a replacement window was constructed immediately beside the porch (N. side). The 4 windows at the rear were at corresponding positions to those at the front. The one opposite what was reconstructed as the entrance door from the porch in 1929 had likewise been reconstructed as a door back in 1860 when the addition was made to the rear, connecting it to the Convent. The rear window nearest the Church is now a door. The two fireplaces are still there but the chimneys have been removed.

The Convent Gate was designed by Mother Brigid about 1932, taking inspiration from the gates separating the Nuns' Choir (to the right of the Main Altar) in the Church. The granite arch was built at the same time. They are now re-located to the side entrance where the car park is accessed from the Street.

CONVENT POST PRIMARY SCHOOL

The Convent Post Primary School in Clane was founded in 1963 as a "Secondary Top" attached to the Girls' Primary School. In its first year it had 7 pupils who stayed on after 6th Class. It became co-educational in 1967 and received full recognition as a Secondary School in 1968. The same year the first batch of students did their Leaving, two receiving University Scholarships. The instigator of the school and its Principal from the start had been Mother Perpetua. The school, which was non selective, co-operated closely with Prosperous Vocational, where Woodwork and Mechanical Drawing facilities were made available to the boys. Clane and Prosperous have between them a joint catchment area of 84 square miles. Growth in this area had been phenomenal from about 1968 on. There were 19 permanent teachers on the staff and 6 part-time specialist teachers. The curriculum in Clane included 32 subjects. The school was obviously fulfilling a need in the locality and has always received enthusiastic local support. Permanent class rooms were built in the