

Le Chêlle

COMMUNITY MAGAZINE



November 2021 No. 398

EDITORIAL

Nominations invited to C.C.C.

Clane Community Council is now 48 years in existence, having been set up in 1973. Every second year Nominations are invited to continue this voluntary community structure into the future. On page 8 you will find a brief summary of the works carried out over the past 48 years.

The concept of working together as a community to develop facilities which will improve the quality of life in one's area was developed by Canon Hayes, the founder of Muintir na Tíre, in the 1930's. Urban District Councils are a statutory equivalent which existed in towns like Naas, Newbridge and Athy. Such towns had State standing and funding but became highly politicised. Their Urban Councils were abolished during the downturn. Many of these towns are now attempting to set up structures based on the Muintir na Tíre model but are working against huge odds and are struggling in their efforts. The voluntary model is almost unique to Ireland and would not be possible in more impersonal societies or large cities and conurbations.

We in Clane should continue to value what we have and to work for its improvement. It is a case of men and women working with and for the community. The community needs your ideas, your talents and skills. There are as many ways to contribute as there are different personalities and talents. It is not just a matter of keeping what we have going -full stop. There are always new issues to be looked at and considered. Needs change with time and circumstances.

There is a saying in Irish. Níl neart gan chur le chéile (We have no strength until we combine our efforts). Working together means also working with other community groups -in the Sports area, in the culture and arts area, with the I.C.A., with Residents Associations, with the Parade group, with the Wheelchair Association, etc. It means working with the authorities, such as the County Council, the Gardaí, the Schools and the various providers of grant funding.. There is nothing achieved in isolation, so let's all row in together.

Look around you & you will become aware of people in your own area who you think could contribute. Indeed, how about nominating yourself? A meeting once a month, with a break in July & August is something most people could manage & think of the benefits to the community –and to you in terms of satisfaction as a volunteer in your own community. See p.8 for benefits and achievements.

Nomination Papers will be available at the Post Office in Londis from 4th October to 6pm on 29th November. You can also Nominate on line at the Web Site www.clanecommunity.ie

EDITOR'S DEADLINE

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

Monday 22nd November

To 142 Loughbollard please.

E-mail: mcevoyclane@gmail.com

Get Le Chéile on www.clanecommunity.ie

Republican Courts in Clane during the truce period of 1921

by Seamus Cullen

One hundred years ago, between September and December 1921 during the period of the truce when treaty negotiations were taking place in London, a confident IRA successfully asserted their influence in policing matters throughout County Kildare. A steady erosion of RIC authority that had taken place since the beginning of the War of Independence continued during the period. The IRA seemed to be winning the battle for public acceptance and this was evident due to the increasing popularity of Republican Courts which rivalled the normal Crown Courts.

Republican Courts that dealt with criminal offences were regarded by the Crown forces as illegal and therefore breaches of the truce while Republican Arbitration Courts that adjudicated on civil matters and were held in public were not regarded as unlawful.

Details of Republican Courts in Clane were investigated by the RIC, with one particular case involving a criminal offence becoming the subject of a breach of the truce. The offence occurred on 8 September in which a homeless man in Clane was robbed of a small sum of money.

The crime was initially investigated locally by the Republican Police, the policing wing of the IRA. On the following day two members of the Republican Police, Fred Archer from Clane and Pat Green from Loughbolard, armed with revolvers arrested a local man and imprisoned him in a vacant house close to the Two-Mile Bridge on the Prosperous road. This site is now in the area of Clane Hospital. The prisoner was confined in the house overnight guarded by nine additional members of the local Republican Police who were all armed. They included, Pat Dunne, from Mainham, Jim Delaney, Jack Carney, Joseph Baine [Behan], Pat McCormack, William Noble, Breen Quinn and Pat Byrne, all from Clane and James Burke from Loughanure. The following day at 10 o'clock the prisoner was escorted to the burnt-out ruins of Clane RIC Barracks, now Marron's Pharmacy, where he was tried by a Republican Court. He was charged with stealing 2s. 6d. From the homeless man two days previous and was convicted. A fine of £1 was imposed and paid, with half of it given to the homeless man and the balance to the Court and Republican Police for working expenses. The prisoner was then discharged.

Details of the court were leaked to the RIC in Naas the following week who treated the case as an illegal arrest and compiled a report to be investigated as a breach of the truce. Additional details were included in the re-

port by Head Constable Matthew Donaghy which alleged that the Republican Police in Clane belonged to what the RIC regarded as 'the Red Flag element of the local IRA'. RIC reports at the time highlighted a socialist element in the Republican Police who opposed the main body in enforcing the new liquor regulations and emphasised this in an attempt to discredit republican law enforcement.

The RIC did not obtain the names of the judges at this court. But a number of judges that operated in the area during the War of Independence are well-known such as Joseph Cusack a county councillor for the Clane electoral area who lived in Cooleragh. The previous November he was arrested by the RIC for being in possession of documents that linked him to Republican Courts. At his trial, by court-martial, Cusack, admitted that he settled small differences in the absence of any other authority and suggested that 'If they did not keep the blackguards down they would be overrun by them'. Cusack who had refused to plead was surprisingly found not guilty and discharged.

While the authority and acceptance of the IRA throughout the county at this time was far greater than the RIC this was not the case in Naas, where Crown Courts continued to be held although without general public support. On 17 October the Naas local Petty Sessions was held before Lord Mayo, Colonel St. Ledger Moore and Dr Smyth. However, there were no cases to

come before the court, the only business was an application for the renewal of a certificate for a canteen in Naas Military Barracks.

Meanwhile, Republican Courts flourished throughout North Kildare in areas such as Carbury, Kilcock, Celbridge, Sallins and Prosperous. On Monday the 5 December 1921, a sitting the North Kildare Republican District Court was held in the courthouse in Clane with Donal Buckley TD serving as the presiding judge. This building was adjacent to the old RIC barracks and is on the site of the Parish Office. In addition to Donal Buckley, there were also three other justices present.

A short time after the court commenced a force of RIC from Naas under District Inspector Frank Williams and Head Constable Donaghy entered the building. Inspector Williams inquired the nature of the assembly and was informed by the presiding Judge that it was an arbitration court. Williams then demanded to see the cases to be dealt with, but the registrar Liam Murray, who was resident in Timahoe, refused to give up his book. Inspector Williams then informed the gathering that if the court was an arbitration court, he would not interfere but if cases other than arbitration cases were dealt with, he would disperse the court. The response of the presiding judge was 'they had no objection to the District Inspector being present if his men

were ordered to leave, as they were evidently there as an attempt to overawe the court'. Inspector Williams then ordered his men to leave but he remained standing close to the bench during the hearing of the cases.

Land disputes were dealt with initially. A farmer from the Carbury area sued another farmer from the same locality for £21 damages for over-holding of land since 1914 and sought an order to restrain the defendant from interfering with the land.

Mr Moore the solicitor representing the plaintiff was unable to be present, but the defendant was represented by his solicitor Mr White. After hearing the evidence the Chairman said the agreement in place would be allowed to stand, with the plaintiff to get £9 10s., the amount of the valuation put on the holding by Patrick Phelan, a county councillor from Timahoe. The plaintiff was to be left in undisputed possession of the house and the right of way to it during her lifetime. Mr White solicitor for the defendant successfully obtained a judgement that the plaintiff was not to interfere with his client's proper use of the land.

The next case dealt with another land dispute, but an application was forwarded by Mr Moore representing the defendant seeking an adjournment. Mr O'Toole solicitor for the plaintiff pointed out that the dispute was in respect of a holding in which his client

claimed that she was the tenant. He had his client and six witnesses present and if there was an adjournment he would be entitled to his costs. The case was adjourned with £1 10s. Costs being allowed to the plaintiff.

The third case adjudicated on a claim for money due. Mr O H-Uadhaigh solicitor from Dublin representing the plaintiff opened the case in Irish and explained the facts. The defendant then came forward and disputed the amount claimed, stating that he 'might owe the plaintiff £1 or so, but not all that was claimed'. Mr O H-Uadhaigh asked for an adjournment as he had a letter promising to pay the amount and his client was not present. The bench adjourned the case.

Following a break for lunch the next case was one in which a Naas motor car owner sued a prominent resident from the Clane district for money due. However, Mr D. O'Conner, solicitor who appeared for the plaintiff informed the court that the case had been settled.

The next case was a claim by a Naas butcher against a customer for £14 for meat supplied. The defendant did not appear in court. Mr D. O'Connor representing the plaintiff indicated that he had been speaking to the defendant that morning who admitted the claim and asked for time to pay. The case was settled with a decree for the full amount with £1 1s. costs.

The final case was one in which a

resident of Dublin sought to recover possession of a small farm at Broadleas, Ballymore Eustace. Mr D. O'Connor appeared for the plaintiff and Mr W.A. Lanphier, solicitor appeared for the defendant. After hearing some legal arguments, the bench adjourned the case.

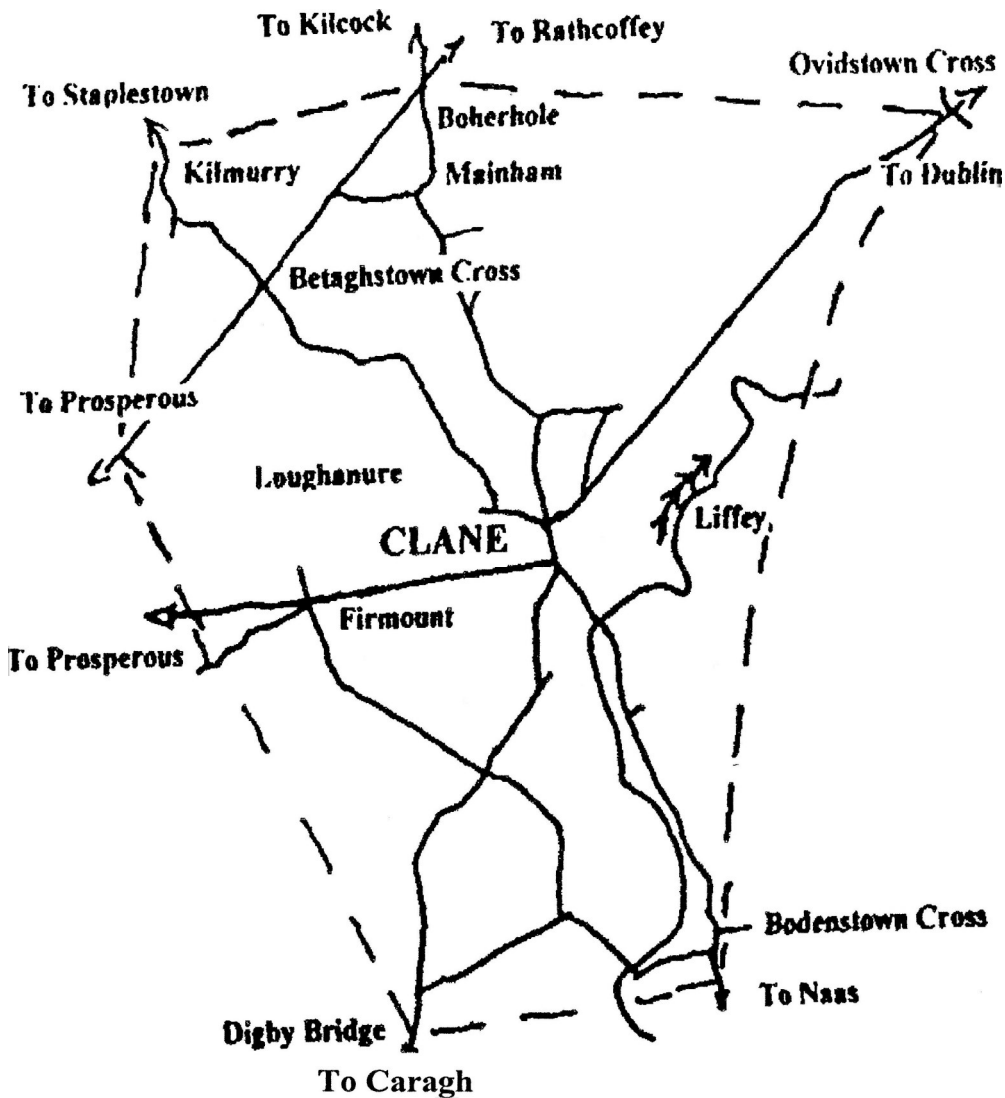
At one stage during the proceedings an impatient Inspector Williams who had remained standing close to the bench gave an ultimatum, insisting that as the court had gone beyond the time limits of an arbitration court he threatened to disperse the court, if business had not concluded within half an hour.

During the proceedings an amusing incident occurred. One of the solicitors present Mr O H-Uadhaigh having returned to the court after a short absence produced a broken chain that had been used to lock his bicycle. It had been cut with a wire cutter and he expressed astonishment that an attempted robbery of his bicycle could occur with so many guardians of the peace outside the court. The comment was obviously directed as a slur to Inspector Williams and particularly his constables outside the building. The bench passed no comment on the matter.

RIC interference in a Republican Court in Clane in early December, when it was rumoured that the on-going treaty negotiations were in difficulties, represented a last attempt by a discredited police force to enforce British rule in the locality. However, the old system of semi-colonial policing, their connection

to the Unionist elite, linked to Whitehall in London and estrangement from the general population was coming to an end. On 6 December 1921, just twenty-four years after the arbitration court in Clane the RIC received a final fatal blow when the Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed in London. One of the principal articles of the treaty was the disbandment of the RIC.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL AREA



Anyone 18 years or over who is resident in the above area is eligible to nominate or be nominated as a member of Clane Community Council for the two year term 2022-2023. This includes nominating oneself. Nomination papers will be available at Clane P.O. in Londis until November 29th.

CLANE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Established 1973

INVITATION TO NOMINATE MEMBERS FOR 2022-2023

Nomination Papers are available at Clane P.O. in until **November 26th**. Please nominate someone. How about yourself? It is important to keep up the voluntary community input of the past 48 yrs.

Some of our achievements:-

- **Community Games** commenced in 1974.
- **Clane's first Public Library** in 1974.
- **Church ruin (roofless since 1883) acquired in 1974 and demolition of Tower averted.**
- **Le Chéile community magazine** started in January 1974. Now on clanecomunty.ie.
- **Village Green walled & Triangle built 1975.**
- **Tidy Towns** commenced in 1975.
- **Piped TV first organized in 1975.**
- **Stream Park (Playground) purchased 1975.**
- **Abbey Community Centre built 1983-85.**
- **The 2 year Funding Scheme was extended a further 2 years to build the Evergreen Centre, to stone wall the banks of the Stream and to pave and wall the Park.**
- **Purchase of old stables, which had been on the near side of the Stream, brought the total purchase price for the Stream Park (now the Playground) to €10,000.**
- **In 1992 the old Sewage Plant at the Liffey Bridge was acquired. (It was blasted and cleared to create the Riverside Park & Walk in 1996.)**



- **In 1992 Clane Local Development was set up after a successful application for funds. Now re-named to Clane Project Centre.**
- **The Green by the footpath up the B'nagappa Road was developed in the 90s removing old hedges and fallen walls.**
- **Extensive trees were planted in 80s/90s.**
- **In 1995 CCC, on subscribing £18,000, received €96,000 to develop footpaths and parking in the Main Street.**
- **In 1999 the Fr. John Sullivan Monument (designed by Anthony Linden) was built.**
- **In 2006 the Garden of Remembrance was developed in the Abbey Grounds.**
- **In 2013 the Abbey Tower was flood lit and a plaque was unveiled on the Green to mark the 40th Anniversary of CCC.**
- **In 2008 the Abbey Cemetery Committee erected signage to mark the Friary's 750 years. Other works include new gates, a canopy to protect the altar, repairs to the boundary walls, which had been built in 1915, ruins conservation with barrier removal.**
- **Tidy Towns won Bronze Medals in '14/'15 /'16 /'17/'18 and '19.**
- **Heritage Signs were erected in 2015.**
- **In 2016 the old Fair Green outside the Abbey was restored.**
- **In '16 /'17: works to stage & Abbey interior.**

KEEP THE GOOD WORK GOING & REMEMBER THE 50th ANNIVERSARY COMES UP IN 2 YEARS TIME.

