

THE IRISH CENTRE

DECEMBER 1968

: NEWS-LETTER :

- Sun. 1st. Sean McDermott's A.G.M.  
Mon. 2nd. Camberwell L.V.A.  
Tues. 3rd. Individual Quiz.  
Wedd. 4th. Individual Quiz.  
Thurs. 5th. Cavan Association - Dance  
Sat. 7th. Donegal Association Christmas Dinner  
Sun. 8th. A.G.Ms.- Cavan Association and Cork Association  
Tipperary Association - Children's Christmas Party.  
Mon. 9th. United Ireland Meeting  
Tues. 10th. Carlow Reunion for Priests - Lunch 1 p.m.  
Thurs 12 . Legion of Mary Bacon & Cabbage Dinner  
Sat. 14th. Sligo Association Christmas Dinner.  
Sun. 15th. Waterford Association Childrens' Christmas Party.  
Tues. 17th. Meeting of Council of Counties.  
Dance - Eccles Street Boys.  
Thurs.19th. Westmeath Association Christmas Dinner.  
Sat. 21st. Waterford Association Christmas Dinner.  
Sun. 22nd. Westmeath Association Childrens' Christmas Party.  
Wed. Christmas Day - Closed from 3.p.m.  
Sat. 28th. Kildare Association Christmas Dinner.  
Crean School of Dancing Childrens' Christmas Party.

BINGO - Sunday, Wednesday, Friday.

WEEKLY TOTE DRAW - Every Sunday

Dear Member,

In a very short time, Bishops, Priests, Statesmen, Her Majesty the Queen, will all be wishing their flocks a very happy Christmas. The young will wish the old the same and vice versa. In a way, the store-room of charity will be searched again for that wonderful virtue which is the greatest of them all.

And yet nothing new can be said about Christmas. All our wishes are but an echo of what the angels said when they sang "glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace to men of good will". Looking at the world around us it would seem there is not much peace, and if that means there are not too many men of "good will", then it is time the world examined its conscience. It may mean too that you and I and our like have not had the impact that Christ intended and wished us to have.

On the night that our Lord was born, a star appeared in the heavens and led the wise men to Peace Itself. Since that day, many "stars" have appeared - (film stars, pop stars, sports stars etc), - but we can hardly say they have led souls to peace and happiness. "Come to Me all you that labour and are burdened". The world seems to be in labour as it carries its heavy burden, but too many refuse to come and be refreshed and relieved by the only One who ever promised to effectively help, namely Christ. Our wish is that you will always go to Christ and cling to Him, and that you will taste that peace about which the angels sang on the first Christmas night; that you will experience the same happiness the wise men had when they met Christ in the stable - in a word, we wish you all a very Happy Christmas.



As promised in our last News-Letter, we now give you some more details of our welfare work. Miss Miona Hanly and Sr. Ann Marie, (Holy Family Sisters), are our two Welfare Officers. Theirs is a hidden life in many ways but their work is tremendous. For the month of November they have interviewed 151 people, 109 of which were new. Up to November of last year we had 1,511, but this year the figure has increased to 1,624. This shows you that more people are coming to The Irish Centre, but we must add that this does not necessarily mean there is more emigration from Ireland, but simply that the welfare work of the Centre is becoming better known.

On the occasion of the unveiling of the John F. Kennedy portrait at the Clare Association Dinner - about which more will be said later - it was interesting to listen to Mr. Kevin Rush of the Irish Embassy when he spoke about the young people and their idealism. You know we do shout a lot about our patriots and we are justifiably proud of them, and we have much to be proud of in the past. But surely we should also turn the other way and be equally proud of our children? When we examine the great men of the past, we will see they all had one thing in common - they knew their history. They lived in the present realistically and looked forward to the future, with hope through the idealism of the youth. Padraig Pearce is one who comes to mind. He understood the history of Ireland and tried in his time to turn into a reality what great men in the past had fought and died for and his interest in youth was unique. He had his own school where he instilled Irish culture, (language, sport and literature) into the youth under his care. He did not just brood over the past, he lived a full life to make a better future. Christ Himself took the little ones and said "of such is the Kingdom of Heaven". "Unless you become like one of these little ones you cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven".

The reason for saying all this is because we feel that we are doing something well worth while when we are trying to help all these young Irish boys and girls that come to the Centre. Their present state is they need jobs and accommodation and we help them find both, and so we put them on the road of the future. "As long as you did it to one of these my least ones, you did it to Me". I only wish more people would see it in this light. To keep this valuable work going, we need YOUR help, and the help of your friends. Our ambition is to have a hostel which will be very much better than the one in existence, and our committee are going into this idea with careful consideration. There are prospects of getting one, but honestly the cost is almost forbidding. If only everyone would get together and bring in the L.S.D., then we could do a lot.

The Bishop of Killaloe, Dr. Harty, was over for the Clare Dinner, and then he came to the Centre to officially unveil a beautiful painting of John F. Kennedy presented to the Centre by The Clare Association. The Bishop's speech was well worth coming to hear. Two points he made I would like to quote here: "The aim and achievement of the late President Kennedy was summed up in the watchword The New Frontier, and that watchword did not promise easy solutions to all the problems, but it did call for a sensible and courageous analysis of the real ills of society." He further went on to say, "It is no accident, I think, that President Kennedy became President of the United States after Pope John was elected to the Papacy and that between them they ushered in a new era of tolerance and of maturity".

Mr. Martin Moroney gave a very fine talk on the late John Vaughan. He told us nothing new about John but he told us the down honest truth when he said "John was an upright, honest, straightforward man who applied all his virtues for the betterment of society in both the material and spiritual level. Indeed, one could say, the Clare men are concerned that John's imprint is well embedded in the men he has left behind to carry on the work he tried so very hard to do." Mrs. Vaughan, and John's two brothers were also present.

Mr. Dominic Donnelly, Chairman of the Irish Centre Club, paid tribute to John Vaughan also, and said that his memory was to be enshrined in a special silver cup, presented to the Irish Centre by the Clare Association also, which will be awarded annually to the Irish County Association doing most to help the Centre.

The whole night was a most enjoyable one, and the Clare Association must be congratulated.



On the night of the Kerry Dinner, the Irish T.V. cameras were here. They are doing a documentary on Emigration and this, as well as an interview with Fr. Hackett and many others, was all part of what should be a great programme. Speaking of T.V. The Staff of the Irish Centre were all at the Dave Allen Show and enjoyed it.

We had two Dances in aid of The Irish Centre - one run by the Staff of Aer Lingus at the Gresham, and one run by Miss Margaret Lawlor at the Regent Rooms. Both proved very successful and our thanks again to everyone.

We had many Parish Reunions in the past month, Silvermines, Rathvilly, Rockchapel and Inagh, and all were outstanding successes.

On Sunday last, the G.A.A. entertained about 200 boys to some wonderful films on Gaelic football and hurling. To those of us who lived through the excitement of some of the games we saw on film, we had a couple of hours of nostalgic memories last Sunday, for one was most impressed by the work these dedicated G.A.A. men were doing. If ever there was a case of making the past be the teacher for the future, it was last Sunday at this film show.

Both the Columban Fathers and the Wexford Association had their Concerts on the 22nd November. Each had a packed house and excellent entertainment.

As you know from our last News-Letter we have CHRISTMAS CARDS here for sale, and you may want a supply. If so, please order before our stocks are sold out.

The official opening of the new Hall will take place on Thursday, January 16th 1969. Perhaps you will have ideas of a name for the Hall, and if so we would be pleased to hear your views. We have thought of several names, but so far, have not decided what it is to be. Of course the Hall will be in operation before the opening date. The furniture and curtains are ordered but are not delivered yet, but by the 8th December, all should be going well.

We will not be having a Christmas Dinner this year. Last year was an exception on account of the foot and mouth disease, but our staff need a quiet Christmas Day themselves, and we judge that everyone else will have plenty of friends to call on.

Subscriptions for renewal of membership are due once more. Thank God we have something more to offer to members this year in that the new Hall will be reserved for members only, at week-ends.

With the wish that you will all have a Holy and Happy Christmas, and a peaceful prosperous New Year, from All at The Irish Centre, r

Beannactai na Nollag,

Rev. P. Sheridan, O.M.I.