

LEITRIM ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. 5.3.78.

The Annual General Meeting of the Leitrim Association in London took place at the Irish Centre, Camden Square on Sunday 5th March 1978.

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRMAN. Frank Murphy welcomed all the members to the Annual General meeting and asked for the reading of the minutes from the last year's annual general meeting. These were read by the Secretary Mary McGreal who referred to the very successful year just ended and appealed for extra active workers for the coming year. Membership was only 40 persons but various events were well supported since there was a good method of communication between the members. Less draw was made on welfare last year though this was the main aim of the Association. The Bacon and Cabbage function at the Irish centre was a small event though thoroughly enjoyed. Ann McGovern won the Wild Rose competition in the National Ballroom in Kilburn in a very successful competition. The Leitrim Association lost in the first round of the quiz competition but were unable to field a team in the darts competition. Leitrim industrial products were on show at the Leitrim Association stall in Roundwood park in July though support was poor in general. However total profits from the festival was £17,000. The Cricklewood Hotel dance was also successful though small. The Annual Dinner Dance in Barkers was very successful. The guests were Dr Daly Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnoise, Mr R. Laird and his wife Seamus Fox, Mr and Mrs Tommy McGuire, Miss Ann McGovern, Fr Butler, Mr Hugh Smith and his wife, Mr Owne O'Neill and Mr Martin Noroney. Dr Daly praised the work of the Association in London and for its loyalty to the homeland. Mr Murphy called for continued help especially from the young and thanked his fellow officers for their help. Miss Mary McGreal proposed the toast to the guests and Mr Laird responded.

THE WHITEHART DANCE was a very popular dance and was well attended. Miss McGreal ended her report by paying tribute to all the officers and committee of the Leitrim Association, to the Irish Centre, To Allied Irish Banks, Aer Lingus, the Irish Tourist Board, B + I and all those who helped her in her year of office. Mention was made at the meeting that last year's dinner dance was the 21st Anniversary dinner dance and that 400 attended. The patrons attended and distinguished guests with Dermot Gallagher from the Embassy. A trophy was presented to the Irish Centre welfare activities. Eamonn Sheridan's comment that we all should build up the Association and work together and give new blood an opportunity to get ahead. The Secretary urged that it was most important to keep contact with members and to have concern for the less fortunate and always to be aware of these who need help.

THE TREASURER made a clear report and indicated that there was a good bank balance, which showed at £968.24.

THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - Eamonn Sheridan and Mary McGreal were appointed to stay on as representatives at the Council of Irish Counties. It was suggested that a room be dedicated to Fr Ryann in the New Irish Centre and if that is not possible at least a plaque. It was urgent that the Irish Government make funds available to help the Irish in need in England.

PRESIDENTS ADDRESS. Mr James Fox said he was attending his 23rd AGM though he was away quite a lot last year. But he had come to this meeting to urge everybody to do what they can to improve the lives of all our men and women in Britain and to try and keep contact with them at home. He praised the work of the committee especially the officers and congratulated the secretary on her report and also the Treasurer. He felt it was a sad year in many ways - the Chairman was bereaved, Peter Heaney died - he contributed a lot to the L.A., Mr Conway also was a great friend of the Leitrim People and then Paddy Ryan RIP. Seamus Fox said he now could look at the emigrant from the other end as he was now working in Ireland. Ireland now was a land

of hope and it had improved out all recognition. It was making progress and this was being misrepresented by the media especially by our own. Not only has the country changed but the people have changed and the children are doing metres instead of yards and they are EEC minded. There is now a greater freedom and there is a liberation of mind and thought. The Youth are dominating the political life (1/3 of the population is under 15 years of age and another 1/3 is under 35.) and they no longer follow their parents in the political field. It will now be difficult for anyone contemplating going back to Ireland to fit into the scene there - it will be as difficult to fit in as it was incoming to Britain in the first place. They will find it hard to accept the other side of the coin. It is still a land of contrasts. For instance in the Ferenka dispute the row arose out of who should clean a toilet. Two unions made this a basis for a major conflict among themselves and Ferenka had to close due to losses elsewhere. Dr Newman acted too late when he did act and all the jobs were lost. Another example was of a judge who claimed that a defendant was given a command by the minister which could not fulfil and here the judge found him guilty. Another judge on enquiring about a person liquor licence found that the proprietor had no licence at all instead of allowed patrons to remain on in a part of the premises which were not licensed and his fine of £1 was changed to a charge for having no licence. BORD FAILTE have a great set up but they have only been able to get one bottle of duty free spirits and now the hotels have gone up 18%. Yet there was a place in Ireland for every returned emigrant though he would find that RTE had anglicised the place more than all the armies of occupation of the past. But the returned immigrant could still make his contribution. Alas there was a widening gulf between the Irish at home and the Irish in Britain. We are looked upon as British tourists. Unfortunately the Government has no responsibility for the people here and this was evident in the speech of Mr C J Haughey at the laying of the foundation stone at the Irish centre. The Germans or the Dutch or the French would get preference to the Irish business man returning home. They seem to say 'You'll be alright if you leave the country. "The Irish in Britain" programme showed that many of the problems are those thrown on to us by the Irish Government. But the country is doing well now but we want to be in contact with the people at home. There is now no TD in Leitrim - was a agreed policy of the political parties but there are three senators and now there are three on the executive committee. The Leitrim Association there must communicate with the members and should have a magazine or bulletin to keep the people together, to maintain contact and to keep hope in the future.

STANDING ORDERS WERE to be as usual and no time to be spent on them. THE TELLERS would be called in from outside the Leitrim members. THE CHAIRMAN then extended his welcome to all present though there were not all that many there.. An AGM is to examine the past year critically and to laud what was good and to dump what was of no use. But it also must look to the future. The demands on the committee members last year were getting worse. The Festival particularly was demanding especially on those who had an industrial display.. More people should be involved for such occasion. AIMS OF THE LA. There was no great demand this year on the welfare facilities of the Association. This was a good thing as it indicated that Leitrim people were doing well. Or is it a fact that we are not knowing about the needs of some of our county people. Some people obviously do not know about the Leitrim Association and its emphasis on welfare. A lot more knowledge could be got at small functions like dances and get together. ON THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL side it was agreed that that looks after itself but we should not underestimate ourselves and we could be of benefit to a lot of young people and there is a need for them to have a continuity - something like they had at home. They should be able to walk into a dance in Britain just like the once could walk into at home. The young Irish have a duty to the country's laws

while being loyal to their own country. We should try and involve these young people. We can gain from their new blood. We should make a great effort to increase the numbers in the Association. There fore an effort should be made to increase the publicity. Use the press to keep the name of the Leitrim Association on people's lips. The Observer is very helpful and has been down the years. Reports like to have something to report for value or criticism. The Irish Post has been helpful - bills are big but we owe it to our people. The Peter Kennedy column is most likely to catch the eye and it is free. The Counties Journal is also very useful. IN THE MATTER OF COMMITTEE WORK participation has been less than what was hoped for. Meetings are important for business. Fifteen went on the committee last year but $\frac{1}{3}$ of them vanished within a few months. Vital meetings had not a quorum which made the meetings embarrassing. Books need not be consulted/ - so members should be sure that they are ready to associate in the functions and try hard to support the leaders that you will elect today. This will be my last meeting as I am going back to Ireland. I have enjoyed my work with the LA over the years and I hope I have made a worthwhile contribution to the LA. I thank the present secretary, treasurer and all former officers. I would ask you to work harder to build up the aims of the founders of the Leitrim Association.

MR JOHN MCGARRY THE TREASURER said it was a pleasure and honour for him to present the report (financial) The cash came from the functions and all the expenditure went towards the functions. I am stepping down because the two years have elapsed. I would like to thank the committee and the helpers and supporters at the functions during the year.

THE ELECTIONS THEN TOOK PLACE. The patrons were Dr McKeernan, Dr Daly, Greg Dunne, Lord Kilbracken, CS Laird. It was proposed to have Senator McCarton on the list instead of Lord Kilbracken. This was unanimously agreed. LIFE PRESIDENT

Mr Jim Fox - all agreed. Vice PRESIDENT Mr Jim Murphy - all agreed. It was pointed out there that there had been no President of vice president resident in Leitrim. HONORARY PRESIDENT Capt Seamus Fox. HONORARY VICE PRESIDENT - Josie Martin.

CHAIRMAN Adrian Fleming - all agreed.

SECRETARY Mary McGreal - all agreed.

Instead of Assistant secretary it was suggested that Fr Butler should take on the office of PRO. This Fr Butler agree to do. It was pointed out that this was an officership. A newsletter should be circulated giving a list of the functions and all the aims of the Association. This should be sent to members and also sent to the papers.

TREASURER After some proposals it was suggested that the rule of two years be waived and that John McGarry be invited to retain Treasurership for another year. This was unanimously adopted and John agreed. VICE CHAIRMAN Mr John Barry - all agreed.

Under Any Other Business it was proposed that Tommy Maguire be elected Honorary Life President of the Leitrim Association. This was in recognition for 25 years devotion to the culture and tradition of Ireland. This was unanimously agreed.

THE MEETING came to a close and all agreed it was a very successful meeting. Voted on the committee were Eamonn Sheridan, Tom McCarton, Tom Maguire, Mr Mulvanerty, Phil McGowan, Catheline McGovern, Pat McGloin and Frank Murphy would help when called upon. There were some Leitrim Guardians still available. Motion: Officers to hold office (same office) for more than 3 years. All agreed. It was agreed to have a mass at the Irish Centre for Peter Heaney of Carrick-on-Shannon and his wife should be invited along.

At a meeting of the Leitrim Association in London held at the Irish Centre Camden Square on 23rd October 1978, present were Adrian Fleming, Chairman, Michael Mulvannerty, acting secretary, John McGarry, Treasurer, Tommy Maguire, Jim Murphy and John Bishop.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read approved and adopted. Proposed : Jim Murphy, and Seconded John McGarry.

Arising from the minutes it was stated that the Manorhamilton Wild Rose committee had 'disqualified' the Wild Rose competitor from London because the London Association were not willing to send £50 towards the expenses. This notification had not been received.

There was a credit balance of £89.02 at the bank. The boat dance made a loss of £100.00 but that was acceptable in view of the good function and the enjoyment but means of making a profit would have to be envisaged at the next function. Dinner Dance : Matters for discussion were the guest list, the menu, tickets, advertising and the £90 grant for a child to go to Lourdes.

It was proposed to make a grant towards the burial of the Wexford youth found drowned in London which was costing £600.00. The Wexford Association were unable to handle all the costs themselves. It was thought that the Council of Irish counties should help out as well.

It would cost £300 to send a child of the Conboy family to Lourdes. This child has been in a coma for 18 months. It was agreed to make a grant of £50.00 towards this cost which has already been paid by the local priest. The child's father was from Aughavas.

A contribution of £12.00 should be made to Fr Butler, Fr Mee and the two altar servers who celebrated at the Sean Leyden funeral. RIP.

CORRESPONDENCE. Guests accepting invitations were Frank Keegan, Bank of Ireland, The AIB in Hammersmith was doing the programme. Tommy Maguire was accepting the invitation so also Raymond Laird,

B + I were giving a £60.00 donation by way of voucher. Josie Martin would come but suggested that the County Manager, Patrick Doyle should be invited....Seamus Fox accepting, (John McGarry invited him to stay with him...Hugh Smith (AIB) could not come but suggested that Jim Burke (AIB Cricklewood) and Greg Gallivan be contacted for help....North West tourist board were giving a £25.00 towards a holiday in the North West. ...Martin Moroney sent his apologies...Tommy Dunne would be absent but was sending a bottle of whiskey and an Aer Lingus bag...Pat Dodson had accepted.

THE MENU. A costing project was done on the menu and it thought that the margin of profit was small and that the wine particularly at £2.95 per bottle was excessive. Adrian Fleming would meet with Mr Lumsden and try and get the price reduced. Including for band wine meal advertising, VAT, per centage etc the meal would cost £6.40. giving a projected £1.60 profit on each cover including the raffle. Minestrone soup, roast beef, brussels, sprouts, carrots, roast potatoes and trifle would be chosen.

THE SPEAKERS. Grace and main speaker : Dr McKiernan, Ireland : Mr Fox. Leitrim Association in London : Dr McKiernan, Reply : Chairman. the Guests : Patrick Doyle. Response Mary McGreal. Senator Mc Cartan.

TREASURER REPORT There was a credit balance of £250.00 plus £500 at AIB.

It was proposed to have a list of the prizes at each table. Fr Butler would contact Patrick Doyle to organise a two day Industrial Development Project at the Irish Club with Patrick Doyle and Mr Laird and Mr Noel McPartlan and have this advertised on 3rd November in the Leitrim Observer.

The next meeting would be on the 6th November.