

*The Irish
Counties Journal*

Spring 1991



*A Happy
St. Patrick's Day*



To all our Readers

The Waterford Association, London



Patron:

The Most Rev. Dr. Michael Russell, D.D.
Bishop of Waterford and Lismore.

Life President: Rt. Rev. Charles J. Henderson,
Area Bishop of Southwark

Chairman: Mr. Billy Allen
Tel. 071 267 8100

Vice-Chairperson: Mrs. Kitty Groves
Tel. 071 359 5994

Hon. Secretary: Mrs Mary Allen; 10 Ashmore,
Agar Grove, London NW1 9SL Tel. 071 267 8100

Asst. Hon. Sec.: Mr. Bill Aulsberry,
2a Brabant Road, London N22 Tel. 081 889 6579

Hon. Treasurer: Mrs. Sharon Whitehead,
46 Stoneleigh Terrace, Raydon St.,
London N19. Tel. 071 359 5994

Membership Secretary: Kieran Kiely

The Annual Dinner dance was a resounding success on November 10th. This was attended by our President Bishop Charles J. Henderson, both Mayors and Mayoress's of Waterford and Camden. Our County and City Managers with their ladies, the Chairman of the Waterford County Council and a host of other dignitaries. Our special thanks to Jim Kirby Aer Lingus, Pat Hanratty B & I Line, John Walsh A.I.B. and many others for their generous support of our raffle.

On Sunday 11th November we hosted a West Waterford Parishes Re-Union which was attended by around 300 people. A most enjoyable evening was had by all.

Our December Bacon and Cabbage proved to be a wonderful social gathering with contingents from Islington and Elephant & Castle.

Before Christmas we saw the departure from the Centre of Fr. Tom Scully to take up the position of Parish Priest near Southend, we miss Fr. Tom but wish him well in his new ministry. Fr. Dennis Cormican is now Director of the Centre and he is assured of our help and co-operation.

The Associations A.G.M. took place on Sunday January 27th with our President, the attendance was poor and we are all back in harness again for another term. We would wish to get some young people on to the committee but despite appeals we like a lot of other county associations appear to be unlucky. However, the people we have are a loyal and committed bunch. I thank them and ask for their continued support.

1991 has already started on a busy note, we are making arrangements for the St. Patrick's Day Parade and Mass. As usual the Parade will leave Horse Guards at 11.15 for 12 o'clock Mass at Westminster Cathedral. The preacher this year will be our own Bishop Henderson.

The Festival takes place on Sunday July 7th at Roundwood Park. We pray for a fine day.

Dates for your Diary

May 18th Buffet Supper

June 22nd Princess Aoife contest

November 2nd Annual Dinner Dance

December 14th Bacon and Cabbage Supper.

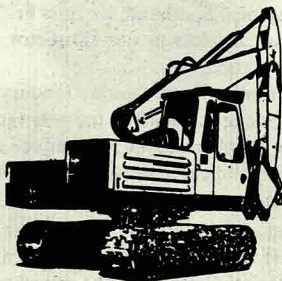
All these functions to be held at the Irish Centre. At the time of going to press Jed O'Sullivan is in the process of organising a Tramore Re-Union. Which will take place at the Rising Sun 25 Harlesden Road, Willesden NW10 on March 22nd. Music by Jim Henegan. Tickets £3.

The Council of Irish County Associations held their A.G.M. on February 3rd and the following officers were elected: President Mrs. Mary McCormack. Chairperson Mrs. Mary Allen. Vice Chairperson Mrs. Bridie Shaw. Secretary Mr. John Connolly. Treasurer Mr. T. Dack. Assistant Secretary Mrs. Maura Fitzsimons.

(continued on page 4)

J. DEVINE

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Clare Association in London

Patron: Most Rev. Dr. Michael Harty, Bishop of Killaloe.

Life President: Mr. Martin Moroney (Tel. 081 952 3186)

Chaplain: Father Noel Naughton

Chairperson:

Mrs. Bridie Shaw
351 Amhurst Road,
Stoke Newington,
London N16
Tel. 071 254 4257

Secretary:

Fergal Collins
124b Sussex Way,
Finsbury Park,
London N7 6RR
Tel. 071 281 3109

Treasurer:

Mr. Joe Collins
91 Wymering Mansions,
Wymering Road,
London W9
Tel. 071 286 1640

Assistant Secretary: Philomena Egan 071 739 3865

Vice Chairman: Tommy Egan 071 739 3865

Press Officer: Maura Davies 081 748 7910



Committee: Jim Commanc, Michael McMahon, Bill Boswell, Una Stevens,
Madeline Behan, Billy Walsh, Phyllis O'Loughlin, Tracey Brogan, Nancy Boney.

Hon. Auditors: John Corry and Andy Murphy.

Dear Friends,

First I would like to thank all the people who attended our Annual Dinner Dance at The Regent Crest Hotel on 24th November 1990, it was a big success. Also again a very big Thank You to all our Sponsors, we owe its success to you and to our very hard working committee.

A.G.M.

We held our A.G.M. on 27th January 1991 at The Irish Centre Camden Town. I am pleased to report it was quite a success. It was very nice to see our Life President Martin Moroney in attendance. Also our new Chaplain Rev. Noel Naughton, we welcome you to the Clare Association. Our Committee has more or less remained the same, but we welcome one new member Billy Walsh. We have lots of new ideas and plans for the coming year. More about that in the next issue. Our first monthly meeting following our A.G.M. had to be cancelled owing to snow and frost.

Our first social event of 1991 will be a Fancy Dress Ball to be held on Saturday February 16th. Music by 'Goldmine'. It will be over by the time you read this, so a report in the next issue.

Dates for your Diary

Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade 17th March
Bacon and Cabbage Supper 23rd March
Darling Girl from Clare 6th July
Roundwood Park Festival 7th July.

(continued on page 4)

(Clare Association continued from page 3)

As the 17th March is on a Sunday we hope to have a very large turnout for the Parade. Calling all Clare people please come to Horseguards Parade at 11 a.m. and march behind the banner to Westminster Cathedral for 12 O'Clock Mass. Mass will be concelebrated by Bishop Henderson of Waterford.

We in the Clare Association congratulate Fr. Dennis Cormican on his appointment as Director of The Irish Centre Camden Town. Also we would like to thank Fr. Tom Scully the former Director of The Irish Centre Camden Town. Also we would like to thank Fr. Tom Scully the former Director of the Irish Centre for all his hard work and effort he has put into the Irish Centre in the past years. We miss you Father Tom. We wish you every success on your new appointment as Parish Priest in Leigh-On-Sea.

We in the Clare Association congratulate two great ladies. Firstly congratulations to Mary Allen on becoming Chairperson of the Council of Irish County Associations. And secondly, to our own Chairperson Bridie Shaw who has become Vice Chairperson. Well done ladies.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a very Happy St. Patrick's Day and again, please come and join the Parade, also a very Happy Easter to you all.

Take Care

God Bless

Maura Davies P.R.O.

(Waterford Association continued from page 1)

The Results of the Waterford Association Annual Raffle held on Saturday December 8th 1990 are as follows:

1st. £250 cash. 081 889 6579.

2nd. Two Aer Lingus Return Tickets. C. Johnson London South.

3rd. B & I Voucher £100. L. Angland London North.

4th. Sealink Voucher £100. Sean Power Harvey Travel Waterford.

5th. Waterford Crystal donated by A.I.B. Mr. N. Butters London South East.

6th. Gerry Feeney Travel Voucher £30. Mrs. M. Loftus London SE22.

7th. Additional prize Sherry & Port donated by P. Meskill. C. Rowley London NW10.

The Waterford Association wishes to thank all those who donated the prizes. The generous support of all who bought and sold these tickets is much appreciated.

Mary Allen - Hon. Sec.



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Life Vice-President: Mr. W. Attwell.

President: Mr. Dan Fox.

Chairman: Caryl McKervy.

Vice-Chairman: Bill Cashin.

Secretary: Mrs. Betty Gavigan-Walshe.

Assistant Secretary: Mr. W. Stenson.

Tel. 071 609 2909

Treasurer: Mrs. T. Curran.

Tel. 081 672 7809

Assistant Treasurer: Mrs. D. Kennedy.

Tel. 081 672 5263

P.R.O.: Mr. Pat Looney

Tel. 081 672 0888

Our Supper Dance on February 9th will be over by the time you read this, but I will tell you all about it in our next issue. Among the Raffle prizes received for the occasion were a B & I Travel voucher and a large hamper of Irish Goods by courtesy of Mr. Carter Manager of 'The Green Isle Irish Shop' Tooting SW17.

The Annual General Meeting on March 3rd (Sunday) is not alone the most important one of the year, but could be the making or breaking of the Westmeath Association in London. Twenty six years ago, when the association was founded the people of Westmeath were dedicated to their county, but in recent years we have suffered tragic losses in both officers and committee. The trouble being that we have failed to attract the younger generation, or even the middle aged, to our association. Our losses are great, so great, that if we don't get people to join us on Sunday March 3rd 1991, then I regret to say that the Westmeath Association will have to be wound up, after twenty six years. On the other hand if the people of our county answer our call in London I will be glad to say in our next issue that we have survived.

I hope that the people of Westmeath won't let their County down. If we do survive then our Annual Dinner Dance will be held as usual on Saturday 18th May in the Grosvenor Rooms London. We can also take part in the Annual St. Patrick's Day Parade on Sunday March 17th. St. Patrick's Day being on Sunday this year we would hope to have a larger crowd than in previous years. There is also the possibility of us taking part in the Annual Roundwood Park Festival in July. With your help we could have many more events throughout the year.

Other counties too can help keep their associations alive by sending their annual activities to The Irish Counties Journal at quarterly intervals. Not alone will it help keep your association alive, but also your free Journal.

The Westmeath Association in London extends its deepest sympathy to the Whelan, Ennis and Atwell families on their recent sad bereavements. The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is being offered for the repose of the souls of the deceased.

Mota Ghrainne Oige (Moate)

Moate is an important market town on the main Dublin/Athlone/Galway road and situated in the Centre of a rich cattle-raising area. The Gairbh-Eiscir (rough esker) running almost parallel with the Moate/Mount Temple Road is a noteworthy feature of the District. The town takes its name from the remarkable mound of Mota Ghrainne Oige which rises behind it. Ghrainne Og was the wife of O'Melaghlin, Chief of the District, who resided here. The ruins of the sixteenth-century castle of the family can be seen two miles from Moate where many interesting archaeological finds were made in 1932 when 'Crannog' site (Lake Dwellings) were excavated near the town. Moate is one of the homes of Irish music, the local branch of 'Comhaltas

(continued on page 16)

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Annual Report 1989

"You see things as they are; and you ask Why?". But I dream things that never were: and I ask 'Why not?'. George Bernard Shaw - Irish Emigre.

The prophetic is a necessary component of any balanced, mature organisation. It always seeks to explore beyond the formal limits, to push new frontiers of understanding, to raise new questions, and to challenge the formal structures to be ever on the alert to respond to new needs. Without the prophetic, the institutional would become rigid and stale, expanding a maximum of energy on its own self-perpetuation. The task of the prophetic is to challenge the institutional into new ways of being, of acting, of relating and communicating with humanity. Its task is to criticise any form of systematic domination and to energise people into creative co-responsibility.

The fundamental cause of homelessness is the huge gap between low incomes and the cost of housing. The problem is most acute in urban centres, in particular London, but is also being felt in rural areas as daily commuters and people buying holiday or retirement homes push prices well above the means of most locals.

Homelessness is growing most rapidly among young people, especially 16 and 17 year olds who are largely in-eligible for income support since the government tends to assume that they will either be in employment or on YTS placements. For many young people unable to find a footing in society by way of a job and a place to live, homelessness is virtual inevitability. There is also an increase in mentally-ill people on the streets, undoubtedly attributable to a great extent to the move away from long-term institutional care for the mentally-ill towards community care. According to one survey, around 25% of those discharged from psychiatric hospitals had no accommodation to go to.

Although rising mortgage interest rates over the past few years have generated an increasing degree of homelessness among house buyers — already 10% of homeless households cite inability to keep up with mortgage repayments as the reason for losing their home — homelessness is a feature mainly of the rented sector. This, in effect, means local authority and housing trust schemes, as private rented accommodation now accounts for only 10% of total housing supply versus more than 90% in 1918. Among the single homeless is a high proportion of members of ethnic minorities, especially black, Asian and Irish.

While homelessness has been on the increase for some 30 years, the rise has been particularly sharp since 1982, fuelled mainly by the combination of the systematic selling off of council housing stock to local authority tenants and sharp cutbacks in new building. In the mid-1970's, local authorities built well over 100,000 houses a year. Current output is around 15,000 and is set to be cut to 6,000 a year by 1991-92. It seems highly unlikely that any increase in output later in the decade will be enough to close the gap. (Housing Association dwellings are projected to rise from 15,000 a year in 88-89 to 40,000 by the mid-90's)

A comparison between the UK and six other north west European countries shows that although Denmark, France, Germany the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden have all reduced capital spending **The UK needs to allocate substantially more funding to house building.** On housing as a proportion of gross domestic product during the past two decades, all have consistently spent more on housing than the U.K. In 1987, these six countries spent an average 4.7% of GDP on housing (Germany and Norway spent 5.1% and 5.2% respectively). While the UK figure was 3.7%. One report points out that if Britain's new building expenditure as a percentage of GDP during the 1980's had been on the same scale as Germany's, more than 600,000 additional houses would have been built.

Clearly, to go any way towards combatting homelessness as part of a long term strategy, the UK needs to allocate substantially more funding to house building. But there are also a number of short term options open to government and local authorities: in May 1988, London boasted some 23,000 vacant council dwellings, of which just over one-sixth were available for letting; empty dwellings in the private sector totalled close to 100,000. Officials in various welfare agencies are pressing for vacant housing, owned not only by local authorities, but also by housing associations and even the private sector, to be made available in order to alleviate this critical problem.

"...the homeless make up a group that is still poorer than the poor; all of us need to help them. We are convinced that a house is much more than a single roof over one's head. The place where a person creates and lives out his or her life also serves to found, in some way, that person's deepest identity and his or her relations with others..."



the irish centre

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Hon. Secretary: Mrs. Mary Allen

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Mr. F.C. Caulfield: Mr. T. Dunne.

Community Services Report

1989 was another busy year for this department, The Centre interviewed 4,500 callers and answered 8,400 telephone enquiries. These 13,900 persons presented assorted problems totally 23,055.

Thirty one percent of our clients requested help with identification difficulties. In the majority of cases identification would have been required for the Department of Social Security.

Our main response to these queries would be to send for a Birth or Marriage Certificate. Since the recent benefit changes, Irish people making fresh claims for Income Support face extreme difficulties unless they have a number of forms of official identification (including a Birth Certificate) to support their claim. The staff frequently dealt with people who were refused payment of Income Support despite having a Birth Certificate.

Employment advice and assistance is a service availed of by twelve per cent of clients. The majority would have requested assistance in obtaining labouring work on building sites. This reflects the immediate needs of clients, as labouring work is seen as easily accessible to young unemployed Irish, and payment is usually in cash at the end of the week. Information is provided on site safety and alternatives to labouring work, such as courses run by Migrant Training Scheme or at skill centres, and callers are encouraged to use the phones in the centre to try and get work. Help with travel costs is given, when necessary to get to work the next morning.

Our second-hand clothes store and shower facilities were used by up to six per cent of clients. These were particularly welcomed by the homeless or those living in squats, who wanted to prepare for an interview or just restore some self pride.

Repatriation is often a very lengthy process. Staff have to contact friends/relatives in Ireland to guarantee payment of the fare before we can arrange a travel voucher. Refusal to guarantee payment means we are unable to repatriate a person, so we then have to look at other ways of obtaining help.

Changes to the Social Security System

1989 was yet another year of changes to the Benefit System. For the bureaucrats this system is now more effective and easier to administer, but for the claimants, claiming benefit has become a time consuming bureaucratic task that is almost impossible to comprehend.

The first stage in claiming benefit is to sign on as available for work at the Unemployed Benefit Office. This used to be a relatively straightforward task, but in March 1989 the Unemployment Benefit Office and Job Centres were merged into

(continued on page 13)

The Irish Association of the Costa Del Sol and Associates

Tel. Malaga 385099

We would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy St. Patrick's Day. We will remember you all when you are at the Parade in London and at your St. Patrick's night Banquet and at the Embassy. I will tell you of our St. Patrick's night in the next issue.

We are looking forward to Holy week when over one million visitors flock to this area. In Malaga itself there is a procession every night through the streets with a large crucifix, also our Lady of Sorrows everybody in black and white with candles and the floats brightly lighted. It takes between 60 and 100 men to carry the floats. Then up in the hills the agony in the garden, the crucifixion and the resurrection take place or is re-enacted with the local people and real animals which looks like a real eastern atmosphere. It's the most fascinating thing one could ever behold not only non Catholics but non Christians come in thousands every year to see such a wonderful sight.

Deaths

It is with deep regret I must report the sad loss of William Walsh fondly known as Bill R.I.P. Bill was the Treasurer of our Association was a founder member of Basingstoke Irish Society, and also a member of the new Irish Association of Spain. Bill died suddenly in Basingstoke while visiting his children and grandchildren at Christmas. Our deepest sympathy to his wife Lynda, his two sons, three daughters and eight grandchildren.

Condolences also to Jim French on the death of his dear wife Nora who also died recently in London. Staunch members of the Waterford Association, Nora was a great support to her husband Jim when at various times he was Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Our sympathy to Jim whom we've known with Nora for nearly 30 years, to their son and grandchildren.

Jane T. Smyth (Mrs.)

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The Laois Association (London)

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Peter Dunne
74 Holmstall Avenue,
Edgware.
Tel: 081 205 1335

P.R.O.
Anne & Margaret Culliton
Tel: 081 572 2738

Treasurer:
N. Grant

Assistant Secretary: Sylvia Dowling

Assistant Treasurer: Kathleen Deagan

Another busy year for the Laois Association! We started our events of the year with our participation in the St. Patrick's Day Parade. Despite transport problems that day, a good group turned out to march behind the blue and white flag.

We organised two very successful dances in 1990. The first one was in June. A great crowd of about 600 turned out to Brent Town Hall in Wembley to dance to the sound of the Benn Brothers. We raised £1000.00 for St. Vincents Hospice in Pinner.

Our second dance in November was equally well attended. This time it was in aid of St. Josephs Hospice in Hackney and we raised £1,247 for this good cause.

In July the Laois Association was well represented at the Roundwood Park Festival. We had our Laois stall at which we sold products which had come from the home county. These were donated by various companies in the county as well as individuals, and ranged from paintings by the Mountmellick artist Mary Redmond, to teddies and other cuddly toys sent by the I.C.A. We also had tapes of the Laois singer Sean Cuddy. We were delighted to have a contingent from the Dublin Laois Association who joined us on the stall.

As usual the men from the Laois Association did a great job as stewards at the gate.

In August the Laois Gala was held in the Montague Hotel Portlaoise. A number of the Laois Association members flew back to Ireland to join their county folk at the gala. 'Friends Together' entertained the large crowd. The Laois Gala is becoming an annual event in County Laois, one of those social events that everyone marks on their social calendar!!

The new committee for the Laois Association was recently elected and these are as above.

See you all at St. Patrick's Day Parade - Horseguards Parade at 11 a.m., on 17th March.

Happy St. Patrick's Day and a very Happy Easter.

Anne Marie and Margaret Culliton - Joint P.R.O.'s

(The Irish Centre continued from page 10)

one. Every new claimant must now be interviewed by a 'New Client Adviser' who works by appointment only and claimants often have to wait up to 5 days for an appointment. Claimants who have not worked and paid National Insurance contributions in the U.K. must claim a means-tested benefit called Income Support. The claim form is issued by the New Client Adviser if he/she is satisfied with the interview.

Then comes the second stage, bringing the claim form to the D.S.S. Here the claimant has to prove their identity by providing documentation that satisfies the officer at that particular office, very often two forms of identification are necessary. Income Support is paid two weeks in arrears, the D.S.S. can issue a crisis payment in the form of a loan but this is very rarely given to single people. Before April 1989 this would be the end of the procedure for people living in Board and Lodgings, or Hostels, but now as the D.S.S. no longer pay accommodation costs to these claimants

LONDON WEXFORD ASSOCIATION

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Chairperson: Miss Theresa Flynn, 102 Hern Lane, London W3 6NX Tel. 081 - 993 5553 | Hon. Secretary: Mrs. K. Watson 51 Goodhall Street, Harlesden NW 10. Tel. 081 - 965 6045 | President: Ref. M. Funge C.C., 247 High Road, Chiswick, London W4. |
|---|--|--|

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Tel. 071 - 724 2824

Assistant Secretary: Mrs. T. O'Connor. Tel. 081 - 458 8589
Registrar: Mrs. A. Fitzpatrick. Tel. 081 - 965 4420

Dear Friends,

Welcome to 1991. I hope you all had a Happy Christmas and a enjoyable New Year.

Dates for your Diary

Mass for deceased members of the association and Fr. Murphy's GAA Club at St. Agnes Church Cricklewood Lane NW2 on Friday 2nd March. The Celebrant will be Fr. Roberts. Tea and coffee will be served in adjoining hall afterwards. All are welcome.

St. Patricks Day Parade on Sunday 17th March. Parade leaving Horse Guards Parade 11.15 a.m. for mid-day mass in Cathedral. A good turnout is hoped for the occasion. Our Buffet Dinner Dance in the Cavendish Ballroom Spotted Dog Willesden High Road NW10 on Saturday 18th May music by PJ and Classics. Late Bar.

Darts League presentation dance at the Grosvenor Rooms Walm Lane on Friday 5th July. More details in press at a later date.

London Irish Festival Sunday 7th July at Roundwood Park. Anyone interested in helping out on the day please contact any above phone numbers. The money raised goes to welfare. Jumble sale at St. Agnes Hall Cricklewood Lane NW2 on Saturday 25th May. Anyone wishing to donate towards it please phone me on 081 965 6045 and I will collect.

Our Annual Dinner Dance in Grosvenor Rooms Walm Lane NW2 on Saturday 16th November music is by Cascado.

Congratulations to Michael Sills on being elected Vice President of CICA. Also to Martin Kirwan on his re-election as Secretary to GAA Minor Board and to Phil Roche as Registrar.

Get well wishes to Tommy Devereux and George Browne.

Our sympathy to Sean McGrath, Mrs. O'Leary, Paddy O'Brien, Michael Morrissey, Eddie Cunningham and to any of our members who suffered bereavements since my last editorial.

Yours sincerely - Kitty Watson, Hon. Secretary.

(The Irish Centre continued from page 13)

they have a further hurdle to cross. They have to make a separate claim to the Local Authority for Housing Benefit. This involves a great deal more form filling and sometimes an even longer wait for payment.

This is the change that has had the greatest effect on our work with clients. Before April 1989 (October 1989 for Hostels) people living in Board and Lodgings or Hostels could receive extra money for meals to cover the costs of eating out. Now these claimants receive the basic rate Income Support from the D.S.S., the rent element of their accomodation costs plus eighty per cent of the rates element are paid by Housing Benefit. They have to pay extra charges (e.g. meals, service charges etc.) from their Income Support. Thus the majority of these claimants are worse off.

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President: Mr. John Cleary.

Chairman: John Comolly

Treasurer: Mr. F. Corrigan.

Secretary: Mrs. Mary McCormack, 29 Platt Street, London NW1 1RP

A Cairde

Here we are in the last decade of the 20th Century. This is a very special year. This is a palindromic year and many of us hope with help of God to enjoy another palindromic year - the year 2002. As a rule a palindromic year occurs only every 110 years.

Much has been written about Christianity in Ireland and most scholars agree that the Faith began to permeate in the Southern half of the country before 400AD. It was our National Apostle who made such an impact on the Northern Part of the country. We must remember, when St. Patrick laboured in Ireland, travel was not easy so we don't know how far down the country he got. We do know he had an army of missionaries who radiated into every part of the country preaching the Gospel as preached by St. Patrick himself. So whether St. Patrick himself preached the Gospel in your particular county or one of his missionaries did, you owe our National Saint everything.

On the St. Patrick's Day Parade we would like to see you all in the Parade and not in the sidelines looking on. This is a show of pride and gratitude for giving us the most wonderful gift of all - "Our Faith". There is a lot of hard work in preparing the floats. The expense of each float is borne either by the County or Province. The Ulster Province thanks once again the generosity of Mr. McMahon for the low loader for the float. Don't forget - walk in the Parade, be among the proud, not among the shamed.

The Annual St. Patrick's Day dinner and dance takes place on Saturday 16th March at the Irish Centre. Tickets available from your County representative.

Congratulations to Mary McCormack who has been re-elected President of the Council of Irish Counties. We in the Association thank the other counties for the honour they are paying to us for the re-election of Mary.

John is already making plans for the Irish Fair on July 7th. There again your help will be welcome.

We in the Association wish all our friends God's blessing this Easter with Happiness and Peace.

Winnie Corrigan.

(Westmeath Association continued from page 7)

Ceoltoiri Eireann' aim to preserve Irish music and culture there. In Dun na Si - the Fort of the Fairies - is the headquarters of the local branch, and is well worth a visit. Opened in 1985 it is a splendid building. The homely atmosphere lends itself well to the celebratory 'Seisiuns' held at the venue regularly and featuring the cream of traditional musicians, singers and dancers from near and far. Pat Looney P.R.O.

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