Book Launch

Local Historian and author Michael Galvin has completed his latest book
"Kilmurry 1906-1910" People and Politics

which will be launched by Society President Prof. David O'Mahony

Date: April 19th
Time: 8.30pm
Venue: Kilmurry National School

In this Edition

- Terence MacSwiney
- The River Bride
- Reports on Recent Lectures
- Kilmurry Church Centenary
- Museum Update

Interested in joining Kilmurry Historical Society???

Contact Terence McSwiney, Hon. Secretary (T 021 7336062) or any of the Society officers/committee members

Have you a story/photograph of historical interest?

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Terence MacSwiney

Terence MacSwiney was one of eight children born to John MacSwiney, of Crookstown and Mary Wilkinson. Terence was educated in the North Monastery but had to leave school at fifteen in order to help support the family following the death of his father in Australia. Despite this, he continued his studies, entered University and earned a degree in Mental and Moral Science in 1907.

MacSwiney became involved in the life of the city joining the Celtic Literacy Society for which he wrote a number of plays. When the Irish Volunteers were formed in 1913, MacSwiney formed the Cork Brigade. He was also President of the Cork branch of Sinn Féin. Following the 1916 Rising he was interned in Shrewsbury and Bromyard internment camps and it was around this time he married Muriel Murphy of the Cork distillery-owning family. They had one daughter Maire who was to later marry Ruairi Brugha, son of Cathal.

In the 1918 general election, MacSwiney was returned unopposed to the first Dáil Éireann as Sinn Féin representative for Mid Cork. When Tomás Mac Curtain, the Lord Mayor of Cork was murdered in March 1920, MacSwiney was elected as Lord Mayor. On 12 August 1920, he was arrested and subsequently court marshalled and sentenced to two years in Brixton Prison. While in prison he went on hunger strike in protest at his internment and the fact that he was tried by a military court. The British government were unwilling to release him fearing a mutiny in both the army and the RIC in the South of Ireland.

MacSwiney’s hunger strike gained world attention. The Americans threatened to boycott British goods while four South American countries wrote to the Pope asking him to intervene. Attempts at force-feeding MacSwiney were undertaken in the final days of his strike but on 20 October 1920 he fell into a coma and died five days later after 74 days on hunger strike. Fearing large-scale demonstrations in Dublin, the authorities diverted his coffin directly to Cork and his funeral which took place on 31 October attracted huge crowds. Terence MacSwiney is buried in the Republican plot in Saint Finbarr’s Cemetery in Cork. Arthur Griffith delivered the graveside oration.

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Abhainn Na Bride (The River Bride)

By
An Gabha Gaelach (Michael O’Murchu)

(published at time of Kilcrea Friary 500th Anniversary (1465 to 1965) in 1965)

The River Bride (the South or sometimes West Bride, not to be confused with the other river of that name which is a tributary of the Blackwater) is one of the principal tributaries of the Lee. It is probably as long as the Sullane, the largest of the tributaries, but does not carry anything like the same quantity of water. While the Sullane, Laine, Dripsey and Shournagh bring a large volume of water to the Lee from the more mountainous border of the basin at the north, the Bride and Owenabec (Abhainn Blui) are the only tributaries of consequence in the more fertile flat and undulating terrain that lies to the south.

The Bride rises at Mulnachrohy (Mol na Croiche) a short distance to the east of Coppeen, which lies about midway between Macroom and Dunmanway. There is nothing significant about its source, just a bog spring, the outflow of which soon gains in size as other similar streamlets join it. It flows due east though Bengour, under the shelter of Horn Hill, till it reaches Beal na Blath, about half a mile to the north of where General Michael Collins was mortally wounded in 1922. Here it is joined by a tributary which almost doubles its strength. It then veers northwards, and keeps in that direction for over two miles. As it nears the village of Crookstown it passes by the storied keep of Cloughdaw (Cloch Atha) another of the many McCarthy castles in Muscrai. This fortress was garrisoned by the mercenary McSweeney’s, in the fateful seventeenth century, when it is said to have fallen to Sir Edward Crook, hence Crookstown.

To this point the Bride, more or less ekes out its way between hills, including a few rocky passages akin to rapids, in its course from Beal na Blath to Crookstown. It supplies the mill-stream to the famous Bellmount Mills where the no less famous “Howard’s Oneway Flour” has been manufactured for generations. At Crookstown, however, it enters its own well known broad level valley across which it flows at first about a mile, before accepting its direction from the valley to flow eastwards with it to its destination, some ten miles away.

Winding to the right at Bridelands it skirts to the north of the famous fortress of Castlemore, supposed to have been built by the Anglo Norman De Cogans, before MacCarthy supremacy added it to the long chain of castles possessed by that mighty clan. Incidentally, this great stone Norman type structure is built on the site of a much older dun, or old Gaelic stronghold, known as Dun Draoghaeann, a garrison of the ancient pre MacCarthy Ui Eachach clan, and second in importance, only to the royal seat of that clan at Rath Raithleann, now in Gurranes, Templemartin.

The Bride soon enters the picturesque wooded estate of Ryecourt, where Tonson Ryes have resided for generations. These seem to have been the inheritors of the possessions of the Bayleys (or Baileys), who got possession of Kilcrea Abbey and its lands during the seventeenth century, through the marriage of John Bayley’s daughter to George Rye. The “Great House”, known as Ryecourt was, of course, one of the many such mansions that in those Georgian days, were erected in the vicinity of the more ancient castles, of which they were the more modern replacements of the new masters. Other such examples are Crookstown House, not far from Cloughdaw Castle; the present day Dripsey Castle (home of the Bowens and now the residence of Mr John a O’Shaughnessy, managing director of Dripsey Woollen Mills) which stands quite close to the Mac Carthy keep of Carrignamuck; and perhaps, the best example of all, Puxleys mighty mansion at Dun Baoi (Dunboy) in Beara, so close to the walls of O’Sullivan Beara’s castle of the famous siege. Ryecourt was burned down during the war of independence. The present owner, Mr Tonson Rye, still resides, with his wife and daughter, on the estate. He is a well known race horse owner.

In Ryecourt, the Bride is joined by a little tributary, which is important enough to have an ancient Gaelic name, the Broinn. This little river rises in the bogs around Knockadooma and bounds Bellmount on the east, while the Bride does that to the west. At the point where it joins the Bride, there once were artificial small lakes, so beautiful that it was known as “Small Killarney.”
To the north of Ryecourt is the village of Farnanes where some O’Mahony’s descendants of the Ui Eachach are still to be found. As late as Cromwellian times, one Jeremiah O’Mahony forfeited his possessions for his participation in the war against Cromwell. To the south is Cloughduv of hurling fame, where the spire of St Josephs Church is a landmark that can be seen for miles, fittingly crowning a magnificent building. Cloughduv has never failed to bring forth great hurlers in any generation, including the different generation of Barry-Murphys, one of whom was the famous Dinny Barry, who not only was one of the greats of his time, but bids hold for inclusion among the greats of all time.

The Bride flows through Coolmakee (Cil Mucai) where it enters the great ‘Bog of Kilcrea’ (which now is not in Kilcrea), and passes through Currahaly (Currach Aile) at one side and Scart, Annsgrove, Aherlabeg, Rathard, and Aherlameore on the other. The stretch of river between Coolmakee and Kilcrea Bridge, about tow and a half miles is almost straight, due to the great draining project initiated by John Bayley, and completed by the Ryes. The course of the old, meandering river may still be seen in many places. It is joined by another named tributary from the south, the ‘Ould Caol’, at Rathard, on the lands of Mr Richard Good of Aherlow House. This tributary rises in Ballingulla (Baile an Ghiolla), not far from Kilbrennan, where the remains of an early monastic foundation are still found, and where tradition tells that St. Fionbarra went to school. Incidentally, St Fionbarra’s father was said to have been a moulder in the employ of the King of Raithleann and resided at Seanamhuileann, close by the famous Rath, where, tradition asserts, the saint was born.

To be continued…..

Lecture 23/3/2011

The Galvin Brothers, Michael and Bishop Edward Galvin

Fr. Michael Kelleher pictured with Noel Howard, Der Kelleher Bridget Goulding, Dan Joe Crowley and Terence McSwiney.

Fr. Kelleher gave an excellent lecture to a packed hall on March 23rd last. He began by describing the events leading to the death of his grandfather, Michael Galvin at the Lissarda Ambush. He gave a rare and touching insight into the human cost of this tragedy by allowing the audience a glimpse into the life of his family, who suffered such a tragic loss. Fr. Kelleher went on to speak of his Grand Uncle, Bishop Edward Galvin who spent much of his life as a missionary in China where he founded the Columban Fathers. The evening was enhanced by the contributions of those present, many of whom had personal memories of Bishop Edward.

Thank You

The Society would like to thank all those who support it in any way but we would especially like to thank the Principal and Staff of Kilmurry National School for making their facilities available at present.

Lecture 8/2/2011

John Bowen Colhurst

John Mulcahy gave an excellent talk on Captain John Bowen Colhurst whose family owned Dripsey castle. Colhurst is a character that has divided historical opinion. As an army officer in World War I he made some questionable decisions leading to the deaths of many soldiers under his command. This indiscretion led to him being stationed in Dublin where he infamously had Francis Sheehy Skeffington executed along with a number of other innocent civilians. He was court marshalled and found guilty of murder but insane. He was sent to Broadmoor Asylum and on release he emigrated to Canada where he seems to have lived an ordinary and uneventful life.

Francis Sheehy Skeffington executed under orders from Captain Colhurst

Museum Update

As our present building is too small to properly preserve and exhibit our collection we now plan to re-locate the present museum to a new, purpose-built, building on our site in Kilmurry village. This new building will provide state-of-the-art additional exhibition and storage space and will enable us to extend and further develop the society’s exhibition and storage capacity.

The Museum Building Committee is currently working on this ambitious project and the Committee expect to announce further details shortly – watch this space!

Website: currently under construction

Visit us on ‘Facebook’

E-mail: kilmurry.historical@gmail.com
Kilmurry Church Centenary

By Con Long

There were no special celebrations for the centenary of Kilmurry Church however there was a fairly substantial programme of changes carried out in the years immediately preceding the centenary in 1958-1959.

The two old schools were removed. The entrance gate from the road was changed from being directly in front of the main door, with three steps down from the road to the churchyard to its present position where it is much more suited to modern transport. The present surrounding walls were erected replacing the existing stonewalls. The layout of the churchyard was changed from being more or less level to its present form.

A good deal of voluntary labour was used in removing rubble from the schools and walls and laying out of the churchyard. Help was organised on a townland basis with different townlands detailed to help out on different days. A number of palm trees were removed from either side of the churchyard.

New entrance doors both inside and outside the church were installed as well as a new porch inside the main entrance. The confessionalists were changed from being two freestanding cubicles, one at either side just inside the main entrance behind the seats, to their present position. New seats were purchased, the walls of the Church were dry lined, the floor was tiled which up to this had been a wooden floor.

The altar was changed following Vatican 2 with the marble surround at the back of the altar erected and the present altar rail installed. This altar rail replaced a previous wooden one which ran straight across with a short piece at either side reaching the wall at right angles to the main altar.

Kilmurry Church Consecration Ticket issued in 1861

Kilmurry Historical & Archaeological Society
Incorporating Tennis Outline Historical Museum

Kilmurry Museum
Opening Times
Sunday 2.30 - 5.30 pm
(April to October)
Or by prior arrangement with, any of
The Society Officers
Enquiries: 021 7336062/086 3183296

Society Officers 2010/11
Life President: Professor David O'Mahony
Vice President: Con Long
Chairman: Noel Howard
Vice Chairman: Tony Murphy
Secretary: Terence McSwiney
Asst. Secretary: Bridget Goulding
Treasurer: Con Long
Asst. Treasurer: Michael Garvey
PRO: Ger Roche
Curators: Mary & Anthony O’ Sullivan

Committee: Sile Ni Buachalla, DJ Crowley, John FitzGerald, Stephen Gilbert (Newsletter Editor), Tim Hartnett, Sheila Healy, Mairead O’Herlihy, Richard Hinchion, Peggy Howard, Gerard Roche, Tom Sheehan, Sarah McSweeney, Sean Murphy, Anna O’ Halloran.

Patrons: Maire MacSwiney-Brugha, Denis Long