



ROSCREA REVIEW

No. 96 – NEWSLETTER OF THE CISTERCIAN COLLEGE ROSCREA UNION

Spring/Summer 2014



College President Brendan Feehan, Union President Simon Coyle and CCR Board of Management Chairman Frank Thompson pictured at the recent Business Lunch in Fitzwilliam Lawn Tennis Club.

In this issue...

- Simon Coyle's year as Union President;
- Message from new College President, Brendan Feehan;
- Reports on various Union events including Dublin Branch Business Lunches;
- Meeting one of CCR's oldest living pastmen;
- Reunions of classes of 1953, 1963, 1983, 1987 and 1988
- Farewell (but not goodbye) to Marcelline Cody;
- The sad passing of Gerry Maher;
- Other obituaries;
- News of Pastmen; and lots more.

EDITORIAL

Welcome to the Spring 2014 issue of the Roscrea Review. This academic year, now drawing to a close has seen on the one hand the retirement of College President Marcelline Cody after years of sterling service to CCR and the arrival at the helm last January of Mr. Brendan Feehan who was formerly on the staff of St. Mary's College, Rathmines. The Union owes an immense debt of gratitude to Marcelline for her great support, her attendance which added immensely to very many Union occasions and the sheer warmth of her welcome whenever pastmen individually or in Reunion groups visited the College. Brendan knows he has big shoes to fill, but we have every confidence he will do so in the months and years ahead.

Recently a Board of Management has been installed,

replacing the Board of Governors. As well as representatives of parents and staff, it is pleasing to note that three pastmen are members: its Chairman Frank Thompson (CCR 1963-'68), Tom Stokes (CCR 1962-'67) and Barry Devereux (CCR 1976-'80). Indeed Frank will have a dual role for a year from May when he takes over the Union Presidency from Simon Coyle. We wish them all every success in their various roles in the years ahead.

October 2013 brought deep sadness to the entire CCR family with the sudden passing of Gerry Maher, pastman, CCR teacher and Deputy Principal, Union President to whose family we extend our deepest and heartfelt sympathies. Gerry who retired just a few years ago was on holiday in New York where his daughter Ciara and her husband Steve live and had the joy of meeting his new grandchild Cate before succumbing to a massive

heart attack. That Gerry, so full of life and joie de vivre should be taken from us so suddenly is a stark reminder of just how tenuous a hold on life we all have. Tributes to Gerry appear elsewhere in this Review. *Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dilís.*

The President and Board of Management are very anxious to develop even greater links with the past student body. To that end, Katherine Donovan has recently been appointed Alumni Officer and is spending even more time than before on such matters. We thank Katherine for all the work she has done on our behalf over many years and wish her well in her "new" role.

As Simon Coyle's year as Union President draws to a close, we thank him for great year as President and wish Frank Thompson every success as he takes up the role.

athanratty@gmail.com

Simon Coyle, Union President 2013 - 2014

Simon Coyle FCA is a Chartered Accountant and Joint Senior Partner in Mazars Chartered Accountants. He was part of the Class of 1967-'72. Following CCR he took Articles with Coffey Gubbins which became part of Craig Gardner/Price Waterhouse. In 1980 he moved to Paris where he spent two years working throughout France, Belgium and Spain. On returning to Ireland in 1982 he

joined the firm of Chapman Flood. In 1998 the firm merged with Rawlinson Hunter Mazars and was subsequently branded Mazars. The Firm employs 200 in offices in Dublin and Galway and is part of the international Mazars Worldwide firm. In addition to his responsibilities as Senior Partner he heads the firm's Insolvency and Financial Advisory Services Division.

Simon married Caroline Sherry (no relation to the famous CCR Sherrys) in 1985 and they have three children Killian, Natalie and Owen. He is the brother of Michael Coyle who served as Union President in 2011-12. Both Simon and Michael have previously served as Chairman of the Dublin Branch. He is a



member of Milltown Golf Club and Lansdowne RFC both of which have several CCR pastmen amongst their membership.

Message from Union President Simon Coyle

What's another year? Johnny Logan sang plaintively in the 1980 Eurovision Song Contest. On 12th May 2013 another year was the one I was just about to embark on having been invested at the Union AGM in the College. With, as I write, scarcely two months to go the year has flown, has been most enjoyable and a revelation. It is no wonder that the Presidential term of office was reduced to one year. Not many could withstand two years of the utter deference, respect and affection shown to me over the past year. A truly humbling experience.

Within a matter of weeks I attended the 6th year graduation lunch in the College at which the soon to be fellow past students of the College received their Union ties and were given a little insight into the functioning and purpose of the Union. This function was also one of the last that Marcelline Cody attended in her capacity as outgoing President of the College. It would be remiss of me not to recognise the great work that Marcelline undertook as College President during her tenure bringing as she did that female touch to what traditionally has been a very male oriented environment.

Summer rolled on and I missed a number of Branch Golf outings including Dublin and the Midlands which were held within a week or so of one another at the end of August.

Union day at the College on Sunday September 15th was

preceded on the Saturday by the Abbot's Cup in Roscrea Golf Club. A remarkable round of Golf by Ronnie Culliton (8) yielded a 47 point tally and a most popular winner. Classes of 1963 and 1983 held anniversary dinners in the County Arms in Birr that evening both of which were very well attended and enjoyed by all. As of Union Day itself it was a relatively quiet affair as the boys in the College were on a week-end off. It is essential that we revert to a day which sees some substantive interface between the Union/Past Students and the current students at the College. Insurance issues have been cited as the reasons for the disappearance of Past vs Present sporting fixtures. These must be overcome or alternate low-risk activity developed to take their place.

October saw the passing of my friend and classmate of 1967-72 Gerard P Maher (Gerry Ball to those who knew him affectionately). This was a considerable shock given its sudden and unexpected nature. The attendance at his funeral spoke volumes with regard to the affection in which he was held. Conor Massey has agreed to pen a short obituary to Gerry elsewhere in this edition of the Review. On a much happier note the month also saw the class of 1953 hold their 60th anniversary of leaving the College over two days. This was a remarkable event in its organisation by Michael O'Carroll, its hosting by the Monastery and its attendance by 20 or so of those still on the right side of the grass. I was lucky and privileged to have been invited and to witness at first hand the affection with which the attendees still held CCR and each other after such a long period of time. Subsequent to the event a DVD of some 100 photographs taken throughout the function

was forwarded to all the attendees as a memento of a great weekend.

November saw the Dublin Branch Dinner which again was a great success with over 110 in attendance including a couple of dozen of those who left the College in the past five years. Dom Richard gave a very impressive presentation of the investment plans the Monastery and Board of Management have for the College over the coming years. A spend programme of €4 million to add to that which has already been spent to date should see the finessing of the physical infrastructure of the College to the highest of standards. So impressive was the presentation and so re-assuring of the commitment of the Monastery to the College that I took the presentation to the North America Branch Dinner in New York on 22nd November. Held in the Private Dining room of Delmonico's Restaurant on West 36th Street and very ably hosted/organised by Niall Rafferty this was a most enjoyable event to which I was able to bring my good lady-Caroline. Luminaries from around the US and indeed Canada were in attendance. John Coughlan (in the Ice Cream distribution business) Des O'Brien (Publican and Restaurateur) and Charlie Scoope (Roscrea Enterprises!!) were amongst the attendees who regaled and entertained us that evening. What a nice bunch of interesting fellows and great to see the ladies out in force to hear old stories of the deprivations and hardship of CCR student life all those years ago!!

On December 15th I had the pleasure of attending the Annual Carol Service in the Monastery Church. The College Orchestra and School Choir were centre

stage for the event displaying outstanding musical and vocal talent to a packed attendance.

Together with a good number of pastmen I attended the Leinster Schools League Cup Final in Donnybrook on 18th December. The match was played under lights prior to which there was an "Early Bird" dinner in O'Connells on Morehampton Road. Tom O'Connell (1967-'72) made sure that we were very well looked after and dispatched to the match suitably fortified. The match did not go CCR's way and in truth Newbridge were the better team on the night and were to prove so again when the two sides met after Christmas in the Leinster Senior Cup. There is always next year.

On 21st February, the eve of the England-Ireland Rugby International I travelled to London for the UK Branch Dinner in the Royal Air Force Club in Piccadilly. Fergal Keane (1967-'72) chairs the London Branch and I was delighted to see Finbarr Bennett and his brother Anthony amongst an attendance of 30 or so stalwarts. A very special mention must go to Manus Moran (1941-'45) who is the member through whom the facilities and hospitality of the Club are extended. I was delighted also to see Brendan Feehan, the new College President took the time out to travel and represent the College. The function was a mixed one and all the ladies present brought a wonderful colour and appropriate restraint to the occasion.

March 7th saw the Dublin Branch host another business lunch following on the successful inaugural event held in June 2013. Dick Spring regaled us at the first event with stories from his political career and the importance of not working,

whilst Cathal O'Connell of Paddywagon fame shared his experience of establishing and building a business.

By the time you read this the South East Branch dinner of 3rd May in the Ormonde Hotel, Kilkenny and the South West Branch Dinner in Sunday's Well Tennis Club on 9th May will be history. Rob O'Shea in ringmaster for the former whilst Gerry O'Meara is looking after the latter. The Kilkenny event affords the Union the opportunity to make a well deserved presentation to retired College President Marcelline Cody. These events will be covered in detail in the next issue of the Review.

When all is said and done in a year that has to all intents and purposes gone in the blink of an eye what are the reflections with which I am left? There are many, not the least of which is the great affection in which the College is held and all that it means to the great majority of pastmen. All of those that I have met are proud of their association with the College and with those with whom they travelled through the CCR journey.

Given those sentiments it is imperative that the Union and College combine to provide a basis upon which contact / communication with and between pastmen is enhanced. The Union and College should combine to bring further structure and functionality to communications with pastmen. If the Union is to maintain its significance to both its existing and prospective members it must adapt its offering to compete with the alternate social and business networks that are available today to all and sundry. The Union database is proprietary to the Union and its branches and should be centrally maintained in

relevant and detailed formats.

The coaching and career guidance experience that is available from within the past student body should be deployed by the College to the current student body. This would serve to mark the current student body with the significance and potential of the Union. The implications of urban centric development has served to put a strain on the Regional Branch network. We may need to look at consolidation of certain branches and we do need to look at the reinvigoration of certain others by passing on the baton of leadership to younger pastmen with renewed levels of energy and imagination. There is a symbiosis between the College and the Union, the health of each being somewhat dependent on the other. A vitalised, well connected Union which is seen by past/present students, parents and the parents of prospective students at the College as such is a tremendous support to the College in attracting and maintaining student numbers.

The Union therefore has a role to play and I am delighted to see that representation on the new School Board of Management features a number of pastmen and the parents of current students at CCR.

In closing may I again take this opportunity to thank you my fellow pastmen for the support and camaraderie shown to me throughout the past year. Might I also express my very best wishes to my successor Mr Frank Thompson (CCR 1963 – '68) who is also the Chair of the Board of Management and to Dom Richard and the community and Katherine Donovan for their support of the Union throughout the past year.

In the words of John Shanahan – Bon Courage à Tous.

New College President takes the helm

Last December, the Board of Governors announced the appointment of **Mr Brendan Feehan** as President of Cistercian College Roscrea with effect from 1 January 2014.

Originally from Ballyagran, Co. Limerick, **Brendan Feehan** M.A. H.Dip.Ed. taught Business Studies in St. Mary's College CSSp, Rathmines, Dublin, where he was actively involved in many areas of school life. At the time of his appointment to the post he was Year Head of Fifth Year.

Since his appointment, Brendan has attended several Union functions and impressed those in attendance with his dynamism and vitality. Below is his first address to the Union membership at large.

Dear CCR pastmen,

As I finish my second term as College President/Principal I am very pleased to be afforded the opportunity to address you, the pastmen, as you are very much part of our family here in Cistercian College. The College is appreciative of your hard work and the assistance you have given the College over the past years and decades.

The advice of St. Benedict "The strong has something to strive for and the weak are not discouraged" is as true in Cistercian College today as it was at its foundation in 1905. I am very honoured to be leading a College that has such a proud and rich heritage and an exciting future. The College has the unique distinction of being the only school in the world managed by Cistercian Monks – this is very important to us, it defines who we are as a College community and how we interact and relate in this unique place of learning.

We are honoured to be studying, playing, praying and living in the environment we are fortunate to be situated – an 800 acre campus in the shadow of an abbey and Monastic community that we draw so much inspiration and faith from.

The College is going through an exciting time of change and renewal, in the past six months it has seen the Board of Governors being replaced by a Board of Management and the appointment of a new College President/Principal and Deputy President/Head of Boarding, Niall McVeigh. As a College community we are determined to

further build and enhance the College's iconic reputation as one of Ireland's leading educational places of learning where the student is central to all we do; where the students' care and experiences are paramount. The College is looking to the future with a renewed sense of confidence and excitement; as an institution with a proud and rich heritage and tradition we will continue to guide and develop young men who are confident and enriched by the Cistercian experience.

Our development plans have the students' interests at the core – modern student centred living quarters, curricular innovations, enhancement and further improvement to the student areas making it even a more student centred place of learning. We are embarking on an ambitious development project to upgrade our information and communication technology infrastructure to meet the College's needs in the coming years; placing the use of ICT central to the learning and teaching experiences of the young men in our care. Boarding school models and structures have changed and altered radically in the last decade and at Cistercian College we are determined to be a leader in all aspects of the educational field.

Our students continue to achieve at the highest levels in the varied activities and disciplines they engage in be that academics, music, sport, public speaking as well as a myriad of other facets of College life they are

exposed to. As a College we value every student as an individual and endeavour to meet their individual needs to allow them take their true place as leaders in society. Cistercian College will continue to be a dynamic place, constantly altering and changing to meet the needs of this changing society.



The Past Pupils are very important to us; I am taking this opportunity to extend the hand of welcome to you as pastmen. The College is genuine and serious about the link and engagement we have with past pupils; we see you as members of the Cistercian College family. We have begun the process of enhancing our database so we can send a monthly newsletter informing you of all the activities, changes and innovations that are happening in the College over the coming months and years. In developing the Alumni Office within the College we are committed to the link with you the pastmen - this office will have the sole objective of keeping a channel of communication open between us both. I value your input and opinion. The College is anxious to further develop the link with pastmen by drawing on their expertise in areas such as careers and advice to enable us to develop and enhance our evening and weekend programmes.

As the College moves forward, we are committed to maintaining the high academic standards as well as aiming to ensure offering each and every student has a unique and holistic experience, where they are valued, cherished, respected and encouraged to be true to themselves and others with a mature prospective, a global outlook and a sense of unique identity.

Please feel free to contact me on president@ccr.ie

*With kindest regards,
Brendan Feehan.*

College News:

As referred to elsewhere in this Review, the College now has a Board of Management Board with Frank Thompson (CCR 1962-'68) as Chairman.

Subsequent to the appointment of Mr. Brendan Feehan as College President, Mr. Niall McVeigh has been appointed Deputy President and Head of Boarding, and Mr. Gerry Grealish continues as Dean of Studies. For more details see <http://www.ccr.ie/index.php/school-life/senior-management-team>



Appointment of Alumni Officer:

In a step that will surely enhance the services she renders to the Union, Katherine Donovan has been appointed Alumni Officer. The Union welcomes that appointment and congratulates Katherine and wishes her continued success in the post.

The College Website and the Alumni Ezine:

The College Website has been greatly enhanced and it is now the go to place for news of what's happening. There is a huge amount of information on the site and it is very well designed and easy to navigate. Indeed, for those of us seeking news of matches, @CCRoscrea on Twitter is the fastest source of real time information!

Ezine for pastmen:

From late Summer / early Autumn the College hopes to produce a bi-monthly ezine which will be sent to any past student who wishes. It will give reasonably up to date College News and will feature news and information on prominent CCR pastmen. If you wish to receive this, please inform Katherine of your email address at katherine.donovan@ccr.ie

RTE Documentary on CCR:

Many of us heard the recent RTE documentary about CCR entitled "Live Where You Learn". It was broadcast on 31st May and among other things dealt with 5th and 6th class boys who were spending a weekend sampling life as boarders. Also featured was the reunion of the Class of 1953 among whose numbers was Michael O'Carroll who spent many years working for RTE. The consensus was that it represented good publicity for the College. Anyone who has not heard it can download it from the RTE website, either by scrolling through the site or by directly clicking www.rte.ie/radio1/podcast/podcast_documentaryonone.xml and scrolling down through their list of documentaries.

U-20 Rugby World Cup

We were all delighted at the selection of three young pastmen from the Class of 2013, Ciaran Gaffney, Oisín Heffernan and Rory Moloney were selected for the Irish Squad for the U-20 World Cup in New Zealand. Indeed Sean O'Brien from the same Class would have captained the side had he not suffered an injury recently. Those men gave us great pleasure during the recent epic Cup runs, and it was wonderful to see them performing on a much bigger stage where the Irish Squad did so well to reach the semi finals before losing to a powerful English team. Onwards and upwards, guys!

UIS Golf:

The CCR Union team in the Union of Irish Schools' golf competition at Milltown G.C. on put up a fantastic performance scoring 76 points, just a point fewer than winners, St. Mary's College. Castleknock also scored 76 points and as their second card was better they were runners up. Our team was Hugh O'Neill (CCR 1964-'69), Liam Nicholl (CCR 1965-'70), Greg Swift (CCR 1972-'75), the current holder of the Matt Hyland Cup, and Ronnie Culliton (CCR 1979-'84), the current holder of the Abbot's Cup. We noticed on the Winners Shield that CCR were winners of the trophy in 1943! Roll on next year!

Rugby Support Group Draw

Back in January, the Rugby Support Group held its now annual Grand Slam Draw. Many pastmen responded to an email shot I sent out and it was nice to be handing over €2,000 on the night to the RSG on behalf of pastmen. For the third successive year one of the tickets sold through the email shot came up trumps – Aidan McNulty won 4th prize, a round of golf for 4 in the K Club, and no one deserved it more than Aidan who has given decades of continuous service to the Union and College.

In case you don't get an email urging you to buy a book of tickets for next year's draw, feel free to contact me in time at pathanratty@gmail.com ! Incidentally, this year's other prizes were 2 tickets, flights and accommodation for the Heineken Cup Final in Cardiff, 2 tickets and accommodation for Ireland v. Italy, and 2 tickets for Ireland v. Wales. Ironically, the top prize was won by a Welsh friend of Con Moloney (father of Rory and Colin) who owns the Grand Hotel in Swansea – he hardly needed the flights! A pity there was no Irish (or Welsh) team in this year's final!

South West Branch Function

Maryborough
Hotel, Cork
19th April 2013

Despite this year's long, dreary winter, the elements were kind for the barbecue arranged for the South West Branch in the Maryborough House Hotel. Little did we know then what a marvellous summer was in store for us! It was the last CCR Union function Jim Keating would attend in his capacity as Union President, and the first time at a South West Branch Dinner for Jim's wife Sandra.

Incoming Union President, Simon Coyle travelled down from Dublin and Union General Secretary, Katherine Donovan and as our Patron Dom Richard Purcell were also welcomed to the event. We were delighted to welcome local pastmen, James Quain, Kevin Morrissey and P.J. Hourican back to our Reunion.

The function commenced with a tribute to Branch Member, Sean Walsh of Fermoy who died earlier in the year. Despite indifferent health in recent times, Sean was a regular attendee at our gatherings, including the previous year's event in May 2012. A former Head of Research in Teagasc, Sean had distinguished careers in both research and in academia. His expertise was very much in demand internationally, Libya, Saudi Arabia, China, Holland, Portugal and Cambodia

being among the countries where he conducted numerous assignments and projects.

As is usual for the event, the conversations and camaraderie continued into the small hours. While the amazing performance of the SCT in the recent rugby semi final against eventual winners Blackrock College was on everyone's minds, people were still there to enjoy themselves and catch up on all developments since the last South West Dinner.

Jim Keating presented Margaret O'Shea with a bouquet of flowers to mark the branch's appreciation of her support over the years. Of course, Jim's very successful tenure of office was helped very much by the support he received from Sandra, so it was appropriate that at Jim's last Union event as President, incoming President, Simon Coyle, on behalf of the Union presented Sandra with a bouquet of flowers.



Jim Keating addressing the gathering.

South West Branch Function *continued*



Cathal and Marion Bredin.



Pat and Margaret O'Shea.



Simon Coyle making a presentation to Sandra Keating.



Kevin Morrissey and Dom Richard Purcell.



Dom Richard Purcell.



Katherine Donovan.



John Lynch and James Quain.



Gerry O'Meara.



Jim Keating presents Margaret O'Shea with a bouquet of flowers.

Matt Hyland Noel Windle Golf 2013

The Matt Hyland / Noel Windle golf outing moved to a new venue in 2013, Edmondstown Golf Club, 2 miles south of Rathfarnham. It was held on Friday 16th August – and while the day wasn't like one of the scorchers we had in July, it was still very pleasant. In fact the committee was concerned as the previous day was very wet - a rare thing in Summer 2013 but apart from an early shower most golfers played in pleasant sunshine. Forty one played golf and we were joined by another ten for a very good meal and pleasant "afters".

After a few near misses, Greg Swift with 40 points won the Matt Hyland trophy – he had spent much of the previous year "minding" it for his erstwhile playing partner, 2012 winner Fr. Peter Garvey who was hospitalised at the time. Kay Garvey (Fr. Peter's sister) won the Noel Windle Cup with 38 points. Frank Thompson on 39 points was runner up to Greg with Dave Hernan close behind on 37 points. Yvonne Malone a long time supporter of this event, and 2012 Lay Captain of Edmondstown was runner up to Kay on 33 points.

First prize in the Team event went to Brian Culliton's team – he played with his son David, and Tony Salmon and they won with 85 points on a countback from Frank Thompson, Tony McCarthy (Captain of Edmondstown) and Pat Hanratty.

Other prizes went to John Thompson and Colleen O'Neill (Longest Drives) and Aidan McNulty (Nearest the pin.)

Because of the very enjoyable day had by all rounded off by a wonderful meal, the Committee has decided to go back to Edmondstown for this year's event, on a more typical date – Friday 20th June 2014.

As always we are very grateful to our sponsors.

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Joe Harford



Dublin Branch Chairman Vincent Coyne with Edmondstown GC Captain, Tony McCarthy, Pat Hanratty and Frank Thompson.

Matt Hyland / Noel Windle
Golf *continued*



Lean Hyland presents the Matt Hyland Cup to Greg Swift.



Vincent Coyne presents the Noel Windle Cup to Kay Garvey.



Refreshed after a day in the sun: Aidan McNulty, Yvonne and James Malone.



Vincent Coyne presents the Ladies' Runner Up Prize to Yvonne Malone.



Katherine Donovan gets a well deserved bouquet of flowers from the Chairman.

Meeting one of CCR's oldest known living Past Pupils

This story started in May 2013 while I was still Union President and had recently sent a letter to all of the 3,300 past men asking if the details that we held on file for them were correct. Over time the returned questionnaires began arriving at my home address. Out of curiosity I had kept a note of the year that they had left the college - 1940s 1950s and 1960s. Yet no one from the 1930s had returned until finally I received one from a pastman named Denis O'Donovan, who had attended the college between 1936 and 1939, with a birth date of 1920, which would now make him 93! I made a mental note of this pastman and pondered the idea of meeting up with him soon to perhaps record his recollections of his time in CCR.

I had subsequently forgotten all about Denis due to the fact that we had around this time, started a process of selling our house and moving into Tullamore. We eventually sold our house and moved in September of 2013. In March of this year while searching through my CCR File, I happened to find the slip of paper that I had kept belonging to Denis. I contacted Pat Hanratty and told him about my plan of contacting Denis for a possible interview. Pat immediately thought it was a great idea and suggested that it could be used as a possible

feature for the upcoming Roscrea Review. So I wrote to Denis at his address in Rathgar only to receive a letter from him a few weeks later, mentioning that the new owners had forwarded his post to his new address in Chigwell, in the U.K.

Undaunted, I knew that I would be travelling to London at Easter to see our granddaughter and rang Denis to let him know of my plans. He readily agreed to meet me and, as I was thinking of writing an article for the Review, with his agreement I recorded our conversation at his house in Chigwell, Essex, on 18th April.

Denis was born in Cork in 1920. His father worked in London as a Post Office Clerk around the same time as Michael Collins but returned from England in 1924 to work as a civil servant in Dublin. Denis went to the High School in Rathgar for three years, and continued his studies in Coláiste Mhuire in Parnell Square until he was 16. His love of the Irish language was nurtured here.

Denis arrived in CCR in September 1936 at the age of 16 and left in June 1939. He went on to tell me that he had had wonderful memories of his time in the College. Fr. Ailbe was President and liked by all of the boys. Father Gerard was very kind to the boys and even at that time, was called the 'Pan', while Fr. Benignus had the nickname of Wolfe Tone! Indeed, he



Denis O'Donovan and Jim Keating.

remembers the students having nicknames. These were generally based on sporting figures at the time, such as Joe Louis and Buddy Baer. His own nickname was based on a Wrestler of some prominence – he wonders did this mean that he must also have been not beautiful to look at! The students were a great mixture of country, country towns and city boys. About 200 students were boarding at the time.

He developed a love of the stage under the guidance of Music Teacher, Herr Rudolf Raesfeldt. He recalled playing Don Alhambra del Bolero in *The Gondoliers*, The Learned Judge in *Trial by Jury* and he sang The Last Rose of Summer in one of the annual 'Cats' Concerts'.

He remembered Herr Raesfeldt as being a great Music and Drama teacher, and a strict disciplinarian. The students had heard rumours that Herr Raesfeldt had been a U Boat Commander in the First World War. At the time, none of them had any inkling of the horrors that his country was starting to unleash on the world.

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Other memories Denis had of his time in CCR were of the newness of the Pavilion (only opened in 1930), of a Brother and a local workman being killed in June 1936 during the building of the spire in the Monastery Church and that four monks and four pupils died in the typhus epidemic in late 1933.

Among Denis's mementos of his time in CCR is the Guest House Book that was always available (for free) to any traveller visiting the Guest House, which included a poem he had written, in his beloved Irish Language. (See below).

On his final day in the College Fr. Ailbe – as was his custom – ‘paraded’ Denis and his friend, Aidan Quigley, into his office. Ailbe showed them a photo of some Army Cadets and some literature concerning the Cadet

School at the Curragh, and recommended the Army to both of them as a career which should interest them. As we now know, Aidan did in fact enter the Cadet school and Air Corps, subsequently becoming one of their top pilots and later had a distinguished career with Aer Lingus on the North Atlantic routes. Indeed Aidan was the pilot of the plane that brought Pope John Paul to Ireland in 1979. But Denis went on to get his Degree in UCD, spending a lot of time in the UCD Dramatic Society, subsequently joining the Army as a Volunteer during the Emergency.

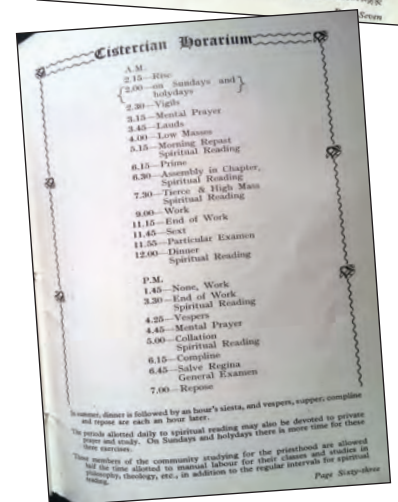
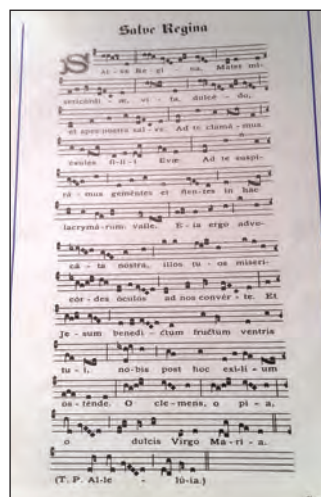
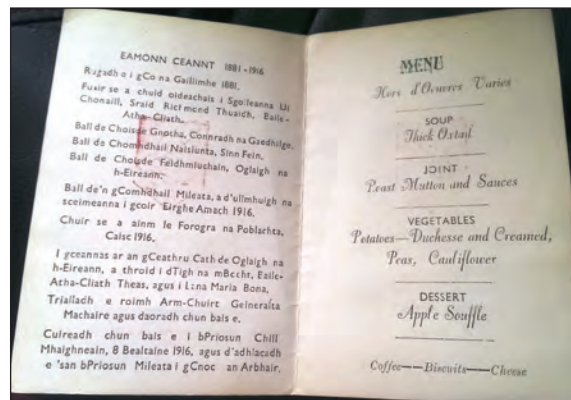
Denis enjoyed his time in the Army so much so, that he went on to join the Cadet School and was commissioned in 1941 and served for 28 years, retiring as Commandant, having served two terms of United Nations service

in the Congo in 1963, and Cyprus in 1966. He then entered the Central Bank of Ireland in 1968.

Denis had two sons, Ciaran and Brendan, & one daughter, Catherine, who died in 2013. His wife, Kay, passed away in 1999. One of his sons is Caretaker in the High School, Rathgar.

When I was saying my goodbye, Denis said that his greatest joy was that a Past President of the Union had taken the time to come and visit someone as inconsequential (?) as him.

Footnote: I include here photos I took of some of Denis's treasured memorabilia both from Roscrea and the Army. JK



HURLING SUPPORT GROUP

Annual Golf Outing

Like most events held in Ireland in July 2013, the Hurling Support Group's annual golf outing took place in Roscrea GC in glorious sunshine – a very welcome change from 2012 and other recent years' events.

Over 20 teams of four took part with excellent scores being posted. The winning team was that of Coláiste Phobal, Ros Cré, (Community College, Roscrea, which was formed in 1999 with the amalgamation of Sacred Heart Convent Secondary School, Roscrea Vocational School and the Christian Brothers School) with an amazing score of 96 points.

Runners up were Johnny McDonnell's team with 92 points while in third place was a team from Centenary Co-op. The then College President Marcelline Cody's team came fourth and Union President - Elect Frank Thompson's team took fifth place.

This year's event will take place on Friday 4th July with a shotgun start at 3.0 p.m. Let's

hope for weather like last year's and a good turnout!

All patrons of the HSG event were deeply saddened by the tragic death in a motor accident in January of Jim Nash's youngest son Barry (CCR 2006-'12). Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

We are heartened to know that Jim will be involved again in the organization of this year's event.



The winning team from Coláiste Phobal, Ros Cré: John Haugh (Deputy Principal), Billy Conlan, Vera Smyth and Orla Egan.



Marcelline Cody's team with their prizes. From left; HSG Secretary Ann McIntyre, Josephine Hickey, Kathleen Moylan, Jim Nash, Marcelline and Mary Fitzgerald.



Frank Thompson accepting a prize from HSG Chairman Jim Nash on behalf of his team.

Dublin Dinner

2nd November
2013

The 2013 Dublin Dinner was once again held in the Davenport Hotel and was attended by well over a hundred pastmen as well as guests from other Unions. The guest speaker was former CCR teacher **Brendán Ó Ruairc** who entertained us brilliantly with stories from his days' teaching and from his post-retirement career as a racing commentator and tipster.

The event again drew a very encouraging blend of pastmen from every decade from the 1940s through to the present one with the classes of 2007 and 2010 being particularly well represented.

NB, as listed on the Union Calendar this year's Dublin Dinner will be held on the earlier date of Saturday 18th October in the Morrison Hotel, on Lower Ormond Quay.

All smiles as members of the class of '84 reunite with their erstwhile Irish teacher. From left: Ronnie Culliton, Aidan Bergin, Peter Logan, Breandán O'Ruairc, Mark Redmond (House Captain), Bryan McCoy and John McGovern (SCT Captain).



Dublin Branch Chairman Vincent Coyne and CCR Union President Simon Coyle with guests from other school unions: Gareth Halpin (St. Mary's College), Peter Gray (Clongowes), Brian Kennedy (Gonzaga), Louise Scott (King's Hospital), Brian Delahunty (Pres. Bray) and Kevin Broderick (St. Michael's College).



From the class of '68: Pat Keane, Jim Keating, Jim Ryan, Frank Thompson, Michael Coyle and Michael Haugh.



Dom Richard, Tom Ambrose and a pensive Larry Branigan.



Dublin Dinner *continued*



Dublin Branch Chairman Vincent Coyne presents a bouquet of flowers to retired College President Marcelline Cody.



From the class of 2010: Damien Egan, Robert Durcan, Michael McCrohan, Emmet Ryan, Ross Farrell (House Captain), Lee Murray, Oisin Kilgallen, Brian Moylett and Tomas Hanley.



Two former Chairmen of CCR Board of Governors: Conor O'Hara and Diarmuid Ó Murchú.



Members of the Class of 2007 with Union President-Elect Frank Thompson: Back Row: Andrew Richardson, Eoghan Madigan, Neville Quinn, John Verling, Martin Feeney. Front Row: Frank Thompson, Brian O'Donnell, Joe Moran and Matthew Quinlivan.



From the class of '65: Jim Coffey, Aidan McNulty, Frank Cullen and John Sherry.



Marcelline Cody with three B.Comm. graduates from the UCD class of 1973 – her husband Donncha and (left) Aidan O'Connell and (right) Gerry O'Meara, both from the CCR class of 1970.

Inaugural Dublin Branch Business Lunch

14 June 2013

After much planning, detailed research and significant discussion, the Dublin Branch of the Union held its inaugural business lunch on 14 June 2013 in Fitzwilliam Lawn Tennis Club. An impressive attendance of 60 past men heard Dick Spring (CCR 1963-'68) former Tanaiste and now Executive Vice Chairman of FEXCO discuss the merits of building relationships, followed by a typically robust round of questions and answers.

The business lunch concept had been a much discussed idea, reflective of a desire to tap into the deep well of the past pupil relationships. The Committee sought the support of a core group of past men, ably assisted by Union president Simon Coyle who gave the idea his enthusiastic support.

Many venues were considered but following a meeting with Fitzwilliam, arranged by Aidan McNulty (whose daughter is the resident professional), the Appian Way club was the unanimous choice. The lunch was attractively priced at just €25, each attendee received a personalized name tag, Dublin branch business cards were printed and distributed and after the event a full list of contact details was circulated to all attendees.

As in all well run organisations, a post mortem was conducted afterwards to identify the things which worked and which could have been improved upon. The view of the committee was that the event should become a permanent fixture in the Dublin branch event calendar.

2nd Lunch - 7 March 2014

Following the success of the inaugural business lunch in 2013, the Dublin Branch again put its shoulder to the wheel to arrange a second such event in March 2014. Publicising the event was certainly assisted by the billing of Cathal O'Connell from the class of 1986 and the founder and CEO of Paddy Wagon Tours as guest speaker.

Taking on board the advice received from the 2013 event, a list of all attendees and their business contact details was circulated in advance. The event was once again professionally hosted by the Fitzwilliam Lawn Tennis club who produced an excellent lunch. The quality of the food was commented upon by many of those who attended. The Dublin Branch was particularly delighted to welcome new College President Brendan Feehan to his first ever Union event. Proceedings were opened by Brendan who spoke enthusiastically of plans for the future of the College.

Cathal proved to be an entertaining and engaging speaker who impressed his audience with tales of building and expanding a business in the cut-throat tourist sector. Ignoring the naysayers and with an eye for a publicity opportunity, Cathal's business has grown from just two (unreliable) buses to one which now carries 90,000 customers a year across Ireland. Not one to rest on his laurels, he has his eyes firmly set on expanding overseas. The rumour is that Trafalgar Square is his next stop! We wish him well.



Barry Connolly (2005) with his father, Hurling legend Joe.



Aidan McNulty (1965) and his son Declan (1992).



Michael McNamara (1970) and his son Troy (2005).



Guest Speaker Cathal O'Connell (1986) in full flow!



Michael MacNamara (1970), Brendan Phelan (1979) and David McDonagh (1980).



Conor Brady (1966), Frank Thompson (1968) and Jim Coffey (1965).



Conor Massey (1959), Kieran Fitzgerald (1979) and John Sherry (1965).



Pat Keane and Jim Keating (both 1968) with Mark Mulcahy (1997).

Dublin Branch Business Lunches *continued*



Guest Speaker Dick Spring (1968) with Frank Cullen (1965).



Union President Simon Coyle (1972), Conor Brady (1966) and Sean McCann (1968).



Barry Connolly (2005), Fergal Lavelor (2003) and Gareth Dolan (2004).



The Chairman calls the gathering to order.



Dick Spring speaking to a captive audience.



David Lucey, Eoghan Comerford and Sinbad Wilmot, all from the class of 1989.



Tadhg Campion (1971) and Brendan Hyland (1969).



Networking? David Lucey (1989) and Ronan Whitty (1999).



Declan Martin (1971), Colm Bergin (2006) and Greg Swift (1975).



Brendan Phelan (1979), Ray Hernan (1982) and Justin Phelan (1979).



Dom Richard with three from the class of 1985, Don Harrington, Donal Taaffe and Manus Agnew.



Ronan Whitty (1999) with David Hernan (1989).

REUNION

Leaving Cert Class of 1953

Sixty years could be a reasonable lifetime – two average generations. It is hard to believe that the Class of '53 never had a reunion. The members were scattered to many parts of the world, most with thoughts and reflections of their days as students at CCR; only a few years after the Hitler war, when Ireland was staggering to its feet, when emigration was a natural thing

and few jobs were available at home. But they never got together as a group since June 1953.

It was over a glass of wine, in the sunshine of Andalusia, in 2013, that a plot was hatched between two class members – Fr. Sean O'Toole and Michael O'Carroll – to strike out and have a reunion. The project was encouraged by another student from 1953 – Abbot Emeritus Dom Kevin Daly, the Guest Master at Mount Saint Joseph's Abbey. The Abbot, Dom Richard Purcell, gave the project his approval; the date was set for October 19, 2013, and so the troika set about making the lists, checking them twice and, if possible, finding some lost members.

In 1953 there was no automatic membership of the Past Pupil's Union. Some graduates went on

to university, others joined monasteries or seminars, others went to work in Ireland, and many emigrated. Through the good offices of the PPU, through Katherine O'Donovan, the Development Officer at CCR, and Google, we were able to trace over ninety per cent of the Class of 1953. Sadly 24 class members had, by October 19, gone to God, including some high profile students such as Gus Martin, Liam Maloney, Gerry Culliton, Noel Maloney, Dan Kennefick, Des Dockery, Noel McCarthy and Liam McDevitt.

We failed to make contact with six – John Charles Efford, Donal Moran, Joe McElligott, Noel McElroy, Jim O'Regan and Barry O'Sullivan. Both Pat Cox and John Chapman were interested in the project, but were not well enough to travel to



GROUP PHOTO TAKEN AFTER MASS IN THE COLLEGE CHAPEL.

Front row: Fr. Sean O'Toole, Billy Furey, Ned Ryan, Brian O'Boyle, Dom Richard Purcell.

Middle Row: Dom Kevin (Martin) Daly, Gerry Moroney, Dr. Joe Daly, Bill Lalor, Brian Banaghan, Dr. Richard Fogarty.

Back Row: Pat Rafferty, Tom Condon,, Owen Fox, Tom Maher, Michael O'Carroll. (Inset bottom right: Billy Hayes and Tim Riordan who attended on the Sunday.)

Class of 1953 Reunion *continued*

Roscrea. Otherwise, there was much enthusiasm from at home and abroad, some indicating that they would attend, others saying they would love to but because of family or personal circumstances, they could not. On the day itself, Cyril Maguire, Tom Hastings and Billy Slattery, had to withdraw because of illness.

So, on Saturday October 19th, 2013, fifteen hardy souls assembled at the Guest House circa 3 o'clock. Most had not met during those sixty eventful years. Bill Lalor travelled from Mississippi, USA; Gerry Maroney flew in from Saskatoon, Canada; Brian O'Boyle came from Essex in the UK, while Tipperary was represented by Pat Rafferty. Billy Hayes and Tim Reardon had a prior engagement, so they checked in from Tipperary, for breakfast on the Sunday morning.

Others in attendance were Tom Condon, Dr. Joe Daly, Dr. Richard Fogarty, Owen Fox, Brian Banaghan, Tom Maher, Ned Ryan and Billy Furey. Mass was celebrated by the Abbot in the College Chapel at four o'clock, and concelebrated by Dom Kevin and Fr. Sean O'Toole, both from the class of '53. The College Choir sang at the mass after the lists of the dead, the sick and those to be remembered, were read by Michael O'Carroll. Abbot Richard's homily was inspiring, telling of the modern CCR, the objectives, its philosophy, the challenges and plans for the future.

After Mass the official photographs were executed and



Dom Kevin Daly and Dr. Richard Fogarty.



Michael O'Carroll reads the lists from the Class of '53 to be remembered – the dead, the ill, those in attendance and those we were unable to contact.



Ned Ryan, Fr. Sean O'Toole and Brian Banaghan in the old Billiard Room, now the Centenary Room.



Tom Maher and Michael O'Carroll.



Pat Rafferty at those very familiar stairs!



Tom Condon and Fr. Sean O'Toole.

the guests were taken on a tour of the College's modern facilities by some senior students, all of whom told of their love for their alma mater, the food, the study facilities, the sport activities and their admiration for the teaching staff. The Gym, Swimming Pool and Sports Hall facilities were impressive, as were the state of the playing pitches. But gone was Fr Austin's museum, as a result of health and safety

regulations. Ireland is still rearing some strange rule-makers!

There followed a reception in the lounge of the Guest House, where a DVD was shown depicting the '50s at CCR, as well as more modern aspects. Thanks to Tom Hastings and Billy Hayes for some excellent photographs. Each person attending got a copy of the DVD

Class of 1953 Reunion *continued*

and a copy was sent to every person still alive on the list from 1953. The DVD with music was put together by Charles D. Byrne, formerly of RTE TV. It was well received by those at the reception which included Cistercian monk Fr Flannan Hogan, the house Captain, from 1952, and the Leinster and All-Ireland shot-putt champion from that same year. Also present was Dom Peter Garvey, the former College President and Abbot of Moone Abbey, Co. Kildare.

Dinner followed, which had as its guests of honour Abbot Purcell and Simon Coyle, the President of the Past Pupil's Union. It was a lavish affair, thanks to Chef Marc Loughnane and his staff. I am glad to report that all the students from 1953 behaved themselves admirably. No tuck boxes and no abuse of butter! After dinner the party retired to the lounge where the memorable day was completed with a variety of night-caps, courtesy of the Guest Master. Pat Mulhall's message from Canberra, Australia was passed around, and commented upon. Thanks Pat!

Sunday morning and the party reassembled for breakfast in the dining room, to be joined by Billy Hayes and Tim Reardon. More chat, more memories jogged, and although Brian Banaghan was supposed to return to his home in Nenagh on Saturday night, he stayed talking so late that the security gates were all locked by the time he tried to leave. He found a comfortable bed and, as was his right, he paraded to breakfast like the rest. There is no better way to start a day than with an Irish breakfast.



Billy Furey, Tom Maher, Michael O'Carroll and Gerry Moroney.



Brian O'Boyle and Fr. Peter Garvey.



An inspiring homily from Dom Richard.



Joe Daly and Bill Lalor.



Ned Ryan and Owen Fox.

The reunion ended with Mass in the monastery church at 10.30 - another nostalgic occasion with beautiful Gregorian chant from the joint College-Monastery choir. Our thanks to the Cistercian Community for making so many elderly men happy! It was estimated that the oldest in attendance was 79 and the youngest 75. Since that weekend we were pleased to get

many messages of appreciation; because it was organised in the first place and also because there was great chat, many stories about fellow students, the many monks and teachers that looked after us so long ago. It was really a magic weekend. The craic was mighty!

Michael O'Carroll

A Return to Education

Brian Maher
(CCR 1972 - '77)

CCR past student (1972-'77) and Abbeyleix man Brian Maher has recently graduated from Dublin Institute of Technology with an MSc in Spatial Planning (Town Planning). Brian completed the 2½ year part time programme with a 2:1 degree and graduated at a ceremony in St Patricks Cathedral. Brian has worked in the architectural profession for over 30 years in Ireland and the UK and has extensive experience of planning in Ireland having been involved in master planning on many medium and large scale commercial and housing projects. Due to the construction downturn Brian like many other construction professionals was forced to consider diversifying and chose to upskill to become a professional planner as an addition to his architectural skills at 51 years of age. Having completed the Irish Planning Institute accredited programme at DIT's School of Environment and Planning, Brian is now offering his experience as a planning consultant in Abbeyleix.

Brian's thesis was on the subject of community participation with the Irish planning system and looked at 4 case study towns including Cashel Co. Tipperary, Clonakilty Co. Cork, Dingle Co. Kerry and his home town of Abbeyleix. The research looked at how communities engage with the development plan-making process and the effectiveness or otherwise of this engagement. Brian visited and met with planners, administrators, elected representatives, community representatives, Chambers of Commerce amongst others to establish what was actually

happening on the ground rather than what the plans and policies said about the towns. The study focussed on the successes and failures in each of the case study towns and advises on best practice for community engagement with the planning system. This study can offer insights to other towns and communities as to how they might engage positively with planning for the future of their towns.

Brian is highly involved with the community in Abbeyleix as Chairman of the Abbeyleix Business & Community Forum (ABC) as well as being a director of the Abbeyleix Heritage Company. He is a member of Laois Environmental Action Forum (LEAF) as well as being the environmental representative on the Laois County Council Planning, Development and Environment Strategic Policy Committee. Brian is married to Abbeyleix woman Ann Robinson and has 2 teenage sons Robert and Drew. Brian and his family have lived for the past 10 years in Abbeyleix after almost 20 years living and working in London.

Brian is very keen to dispel the myth that you are ever too old to return to education and to advocate the concept of lifelong learning. The class of which Brian graduated included two people in their 30's, two in their 50's and a man who was a retired professional man with a previous doctorate in a related discipline. The fact is when you decide to return to study as a mature student it is usually to study a subject that you will have a particular passion for, rather than to approach the study area



as a meal ticket. Some of his classmates from CCR might find it funny that a “dosser” who avoided study with such diligence has now embraced study as a positive paradigm. The term “better late than never” applies.

Brian found the 2 ½ year part-time programme passed very quickly and involved a lot of reading around the subject but most interestingly gave access to a lot of local authority planning departments as well as other research bodies. The collegiate spirit that exists within the profession was a revelation compared with the secretive nature of other construction professions. The information sharing and collaborative engagement was very engaging and the active graduate alumni network is also very refreshing. Brian likens this to becoming part of a new family.



Drew, Brian, Robert and Annie Maher at Brian's graduation at St Patrick's Cathedral.

REUNION

Class of 1983

A stalwart group of just over 20 comrades met in early September 2013. Some early birds played golf in Roscrea in the afternoon – despite our increased experience levels, the Abbot's Cup continues to elude us as a group. The class of '63 invited us to join them for a Mass at which deceased past students, including Joe Hardy from our year, were remembered. There was a reception in the Senior Ref where we met up with Mr. Shanahan, Fr. Peter and Dom Colmcille all looking hearty and in good spirits.

It was then onto Birr where the main gathering took place at the County Arms Hotel. Cormac Ryan with his press experience acted as unofficial photographer. In fact he seemed to be the only one able to produce a few photos from the night! Past class members came from all four corners of the country - Daithí O'Connor up from the Kingdom, John Walsh from Leitrim, Michael O'Gara up from Wexford and a large contingent from the Pale and surrounding counties including Liam Dwan, Fergus O'Regan and David Shiels. Some people were more local with Conor Taaffe living very close to the college and John Dunne and Colm O'Toole also based in the midlands. David O'Brien and James Gleeson came up together from South Tipp. John Roche came over from Munich.

Halfway through the meal Vinny Browne and John Hand arrived having been in the depths of Co. Carlow at a book event. Guest of honour for the night was Breandán O'Ruairc who delivered a speech in English and Irish. He spoke of the bond between teachers and students and the interest which teachers have in keeping in touch with and hearing about their former students. The Abbot and President of the Past students union also gave speeches. Joe O'Shea paid tribute to Fr. Peter who was also invited but was unable to come and wished him well.

There were then numerous speeches with Paul Kinirons acting as anchorman. Michael McGovern spoke about life in the dormitories. Colm O'Toole gave his perspective as a teacher himself now. Anecdotes and

banter were exchanged. The majority repaired back to the bar and the conversation kept going through the night and, even after a substantial breakfast, some new perspectives were still being added.

Unfortunately there were some who intended to come but were unable to make it for a variety of reasons including Eoin McCarthy who helped a lot with organizing the reunion. We wish all the best and look forward to the next one.



Fr. Peter, Colm O'Toole, Dom Colmcille, Breandán Ó Ruairc and Peter Daly.



Class of 1983: Back row (some faces obscured): Morgan Keane, Michael McGovern, David Shiels, Liam Dwan, Michael O'Gara, Paul Kinirons, Daithí O'Connor, John Walsh, David O'Brien, Conor Taaffe, John Dunne. Middle row: James Gleeson, Breandán Ó Ruairc, Dom Richard, Colm O'Toole, Vinnie Browne, John Hand, Joe O'Shea. Front row: Pat O'Donnell, Fergus O'Regan, John Roche, Cormac Ryan.

REUNION

Class of 1963

It has happened! The Class of '63 has passed the half-century! I am reminded of lines composed by a pre-Famine Kerry poet: Trí shaoghail 'siad is eol dom do chuala fós - / Saoghal éadtrom, aerach im' buachaill óg / Saoghal léanmhar, céasta, ag beathú scuaine óig / á's an saoghal déidheannach so im'aonar, ag siubhal na ród' ('Three lives I have known: as a little boy / A life of lightsome, carefree joy / A second life toilsome, bringing up broods / And this last life - trudging alone the roads.')

As on previous occasions the driving force behind our reunion has been Anthony Bardon, assisted by his brother James, Paddy Cunneen, Ger Lyne and Tom Grennan. A total of some twenty eight attendees have signed up for the event – a respectable number. Fortunately, Ger Lyne has been spared a trudge all the way to our reunion: Joe Doyle, veteran of Montrose, agrees to give him a lift to the College, where we arrive on the afternoon of Saturday 14 September. Eighteen of our classmates have already been assembled since the previous evening for dinner and golf the following morning. Our former house captain, Tom Grennan, is among them. Already he has collected John Monks, flying in from the neighbouring island, and Liam Burke, from our own capital. As Tom observes, our hotel - an eighteenth-century pile with 21st-century interior - stands comfortable and inviting.

The gathering on the Friday evening consists of some dedicated golfers and others wanting to extend the reunion. Gathering in the lounge they are presented with photo id's taken from the 1963 class photo – fifty years on there are a



Back row: John Monks, Tom Mulherin, Gordon Ballantyne, Michael O'Neill, Des Houlihan, Frank Canavan, Jim Keating, William Staunton, John White.

Middle row: James Quain, John Mulligan, Pat Ryan, Peter Ahearn, Liam Burke, Philip McGovern, Michael Sweeney, William Conway, Daniel Sheedy, Joe Doyle.

few changes to be remarked on! Dinner runs late into the night. Next morning the golfers and the culturally-minded go their separate ways – the latter to Birr Castle and the gardens and great telescope of the third Earl of Rosse. That afternoon people begin to assemble at the College from around 3 p.m. Prominent is the dashing Mick Sweeney, in his open-topped Morgan, who arrives under envious eyes. Liam Burke, indefatigable thespian, manages to cadge a lift with Mick back to the hotel – an experience, one imagines, to remember.

To the surprise of all concerned, however, we find on arrival the great front doors of the College closed against us! Impregnable - as a medieval castle! However, shortly before 5 pm, Bernie, the household manager, throws open the main door and the reunion is officially under way. It commences with Mass in the College Oratory which was also attended by the 1983 pastmen. The celebrant was the Lord Abbot, Dom Richard, assisted by former Abbot, Fr Kevin. Dom Richard delivers an appropriate homily. A candle ceremony, in memory of deceased classmates, preceded the

Mass; Anthony Bardon providing the musical accompaniment throughout. After mass a memorial tree, an evergreen cotoneaster pendula, is planted by Tom Grennan, ably assisted by Willie Staunton, dairy farmer and father of Jeremy and William, two illustrious rugby players. Maireann an craobh ar an bhfál, ach ní maireann an lámh do chur! Long may the tree outlive us!

It strikes some people that the occasion is more laid back than usual – due, perhaps, to retirement and attendant lack of pressure. Of those attending, pride of place goes to a youthful, ebullient and (dare we say) prosperous Jim Keating, who has travelled all the way from Canada. (Our Jim Keating, not last year's Union President of the same name!) A close contender is John Mulligan, who has come from the neighbouring island. Space precludes us from listing all the other attendees, but perhaps we may be allowed single out old friends such as James T. Quain from Cork, that decent man Frank Canavan from Tuam, and Teddy Forde, who shared train journeys with Ger Lyne at holiday time from Ballybrophy to Killarney. Also in

Class of 1963 Reunion *continued*

attendance was Fr. Peter Ahearne, our only remaining cleric from the class of '63. He didn't have too far to come, he is P.P. of nearby Lisronagh parish in Tipperary.

The obligatory photo call is held at the traditional venue before the main door. Viewing it a week later brings home to me how ruthless is the ageing process, and the meaning of the belief among ancient classical writers that those whom the Gods love die young. I also note that an individual (who shall be nameless) has arrogated to himself the space immediately to the Lord Abbot's right. What hubris! What presumption! Our House Captain, however, with characteristic modesty and dignity, places himself on the Lord Abbot's left. Friend, sit thee higher at table!

There follows a pleasant reception in the College. Among those present, spruce and hale and hearty, is John Shanahan, one of our last surviving teachers. Seeing him transports me back to his 5A/6A French classes, where he so ably expounded not only the niceties of French grammar and vocabulary, but a magical novel by the Breton author, Pierre Loti, entitled *Pecheur d'Islande* - a powerful story of love, loss and the sea. I remind him and he remembers. Dom Colmcille, Dean of Studies in our day and former Abbot was also in attendance. He too brought back memories of those far off days.

Afterwards we take ourselves to the County Arms Hotel in Birr for further refreshments and dinner. At least one of us, who shall again be nameless, is by now, so to speak, refreshed to distraction! But then, to quote W.B. Yeats: 'Why should not old men be mad?'

In proposing the toast to the College and Community Des Houlihan (that best of Clare gentlemen) delivers a characteristically eloquent, urbane and witty speech. I am particularly taken by his neat turning of the tables on the metropolitan sophisticates among our former

classmates in favour of those deriving from more rustic roots. He recalls that: 'A small group came from Dublin - from places like Skerries and Rush. We wondered had they no schools to go to up there? However, if you listened carefully you could understand what they were saying!' He adds that, at a later stage, they began speaking 'normally'! He recalls the loneliness of small boys deprived of their mothers and remembers with affection 'the three wonderful nuns' (in particular 'the tall Sister Rita') nurses and surrogate mothers all. He quotes the erudite Dom Eugene Boylan's reassuring words: 'I cannot believe but that all of you will go to heaven'.

The lessons in table etiquette of the College President, Fr Declan, are remembered with affection, including his recipe for the deft consumption of peas from a knife smeared with honey (his rugged manner and exterior belied both a mischievous sense of humour and a kind heart). He recalls Fr Éanna (still with us) and Fathers Andrew, Benedict, Edmund and Gerard. (I am reminded of the latter once telling me, touchingly, close to the end of my time in College, that the monastic vocation grew heavier - not lighter - with age). And he presents a portrait of the marvellous Gus Martin, representative of a new era, brilliant English teacher and raconteur and later, in Dublin, best of companions to all past students of the College - cruelly cut down in his intellectual prime. At this time Mount St Joseph had a community of some 100 monks. What changes we have seen! In reply Dom Richard congratulates us on our longevity, he being a mere stripling of some forty odd years. He spoke of the mission of the College as being primarily to mould the character of the students to the best of the ability of the staff. He referred to the difficulties in this economic downturn. But the future looks bright for a school that has as its next project the provision of en

suite facilities for the 6th year students!

Then Simon Coyle, President of the College Union, addresses us. He compliments us on our affection for the College after the lapse of fifty years and goes on to provide us with an update on Union affairs. Noting that our gathering is an individual class initiative unconnected with the Union, he expresses the view that the latter should make a greater effort to connect with past students such as ourselves. Standing in the background as Simon speaks, we note a former Union President, friend and near-contemporary, Aidan McNulty, as well as Pat Hanratty, editor of the Roscrea Review and recent Union President.

Another late night spent reminiscing but next morning, bright-eyed and bushy-tailed to a man, we attend the annual Mass for deceased past pupils, especially those who had died during the year. Intimations of mortality! After the Mass some of the group head for the Guest House where they meet with Fr. Éanna, with more reminiscences of school life in the late '50s and early '60s.

Finally, to return to the after dinner speeches: James Bardon delivers a brief but arresting oration. He notes that memory is fallible and reminiscence, in consequence, selective. He concludes by quoting the wise words of an officiating priest at a wedding which he recently attended: 'May you have enough adversities to make you strong, enough failures to make you humble, enough success to keep you motivated, enough challenges to keep you young, enough sorrow to keep you human and enough blessings to keep you joyous and happy!'

For all of us, that seems an appropriate note on which to end.

Ger Lyne and Tom Grennan

The Passing of Gerry Maher

The CCR diaspora received an almighty shock last October with the sudden death of Gerry Maher. Gerry was in CCR from 1967 to 1972, the son of Liam Maher and from 1977 he was a member of staff himself. Only last year, the Roscrea Review contained a tribute to him to mark his retirement from teaching. Many tributes have been paid to him since his death

It seems appropriate to include in this issue a warm personal tribute from his great friend and fellow former Union President Conor Massey and two messages from pupils he inspired: Harvey O'Brien (CCR 1983-'88) Lecturer in Film Studies in UCD and Doug Greally (CCR 1983-'86) a Radiologist with Mountain Medical Physician Specialists in Utah. Along with these I felt we should publish the beautiful email I received from his daughter Fiona some days after Gerry's funeral.

The passing of Gerry Maher last year was the most shocking occurrence in recent Roscrea memory. Just when smiling freely again he was snatched from us. His family, naturally are the ones whom the sword pierced deepest, but the rest of us have felt the wound too. A man's dying is more the survivors' affair than his own and hardly has a death affected us so profoundly.

He had been such a large part of CCR during his lifetime and memories of him abound. He was a Renaissance man, urbane, literary and eloquent. Talking and eloquence are not the same: to speak

and to speak well are two different things. Gerry did the latter and gave us so much pleasure in our listening to him. Behind the bon viveur lived un homme serieux with trenchant and, I generally considered, enlightened views on life and education. His awareness of tradition cannot be questioned and it is a great pity that natural conservatism that is, in many cases a fellow-traveller of tradition, could not accommodate the touch of the Bohemian in his soul.

I have always considered teaching to be the noblest profession and Gerry represented perfectly the many-faceted attributes of the good teacher. Always present in the background was his droll sense of humour. One day in class, he asked how many contributed workwise at home. Amongst those who raised their hands was my late son, Zebedee, a lone Dub among many sons of the soil. "No, no Zeb", Gerry said to him, "putting your dirty plate in the dishwasher doesn't count!"

John Donne wrote that any man's death diminished him because he was involved in mankind. Gerry's death diminished us because he himself was so implicit in mankind. He rejoiced in social intercourse and was always ready to contribute, to participate and empathise. He didn't skulk or sulk. He spoke his mind, he wore his honour like a shield and let detractors pass him like an idle wind. He was the master of the mot juste.

We are poorer for his passing. He is now with his old friend Noel Windle – another true Roscrea man. I hope they are raising beakers full of the warm south together to the old days when we all had such happy times together at all kinds of CCR related events!

Conor Massey



Gerry Maher introduced Media Studies to CCR during my time there. I was part of the second ever class in the subject in 1986. It was an extra-curricular activity during evening study, and involved the close reading of newspapers, together with the study of television (including the general election that year) and film. When I left Roscrea, I first studied journalism, and having had that experience of being aware of patterns of power and representational processes in the media informed by capacity to engage both at third level as a student and professionally as a writer. I went on to study Communications at DCU, and as Gerry would have known, because I told him, I dedicated my BA thesis to him and acknowledged his inspiration for my work. I met him several times again over the years when I came back to speak to the TY students, and so forth, and he knew that I had continued where he left off. I now hold a PhD and teach Film Studies at UCD. My road continues on directly from Gerry Maher's teaching (and from his father's tutelage in public speaking, which I now do professionally every day), and I feel privileged to have been the recipient of his (and his father's) guidance on my first steps.

Harvey O'Brien

Text of an email I received from Fiona Maher, shortly after Gerry's funeral:

Hi Pat,

I just wanted to write you a note of thanks that I hope you could pass on to all the past pupils for me. Now that everything has settled a bit, I wanted to thank the PPU for the overwhelming level and support and respect they showed at Dad's funeral last week. CCR was a huge part of his life for so many years, from our Grandad teaching there, to growing and learning there as a teen, to returning to teach there until his retirement. 'CCR standards' was a great expression in our house growing up!! As it was such a big part of his life, I know Dad would have been incredibly touched and proud of everything you all did last week, from the sheer volume of past pupils who attended, the beautiful guard of honour, and his old friends escorting him on his final journey, and it meant a massive amount to me and my whole family, so I just wanted to say thank you to you all. It is something that we will never forget.

Best, Fiona Maher

There is no doubt that Gerry Maher was one of the greatest teachers that Cistercian College Roscrea ever had. He embodied a lot of what that great school stands for. His wit and intelligence will be missed. My personal favourite memory of Gerry will be his response when he heard I had somehow managed to get into Medical school, saying "I wouldn't want him looking after me". The irony being that he died in the USA, and it would have been an honour to look after him. May he rest in peace, along with all the good memories, including "5 treatments", hanging off the blackboard reciting Keats, and catching us smoking on the golf course.

Doug Greally, posted on Facebook

London Dinner

21 Feb. 2014

The London Branch held their bi-annual dinner on the 21st Feb 2014. There was a great turn out for the occasion and it was nice to see some new faces this year as well as the regular loyal supporters.

All present enjoyed good food, wine and conversation in the RAF Club London. The London Branch would like to thank the College President and the Union President for attending and bringing everyone up to date



Simon, Brendan and Fergal.

with all the College and Union news. One of the staunchest supporters of the event over the years, John McNamara had hoped to attend, but was too ill. Sadly, as mentioned elsewhere in this Review, John passed

away suddenly on the 7th June. London Branch members wish to extend their sympathies to his wife Andrée, daughter Laura and all his family. It is hoped to hold an annual dinner from 2015 onwards.



Some of the men who attended the London Dinner: Pat O'Grady, John O'Shea, Shane O'Donoghue, Gerard O'Meara, Dermot Hurley, Brian Flynn (London Committee), Gerard Fergal Keane (London Branch Chairman), College President Mr. Brendan Feehan, Tim O'Dwyer, Donald Gallivan (London Committee), Anthony Bennett, Jim Keating, Finbarr Bennett, Union President Simon Coyle, Paul Heron, Manus Moran, Michael Grace, John Yurky, Noel Gallivan, and Michael McNamara.

Fr. Flannan Hogan (CCR 1947-'52) died in the monastery on 3rd July 2014, having suffered a massive stroke the previous weekend. Mount St Joseph had been his home since 1947 when the young Tony Hogan came to the College as a First Year student from Cloughjordan, the eldest of three brothers. A bright student and keen hurler, he shone in athletics and in 1952 was the All-Ireland discus and shot putt champion. A popular student too, he was elected house captain in his final year in the College and was one of four college students to enter the monastery that year on 15 August.

On entering the monastery Tony was given the name of the patron of the diocese of Killaloe, St Flannan. He made first profession in October 1954, solemn profession three years later and was ordained to the priesthood on 21 September 1959. Soon after he was assigned to the College as a Dean of Discipline in addition to his responsibilities as teacher of History, French and Latin. Fr Flannan was also gamesmaster for a period during those years.

In the wake of Vatican II when it became possible for monks to attend universities in Ireland Fr Flannan went to St Patrick's College, Maynooth where he studied for a B.A. and H.Dip.Ed., followed by a M.A. focusing on Irish Cistercian history in the medieval period. On his return to Mount St. Joseph he resumed his teaching duties in the College until the late 1980s when he was appointed librarian in the monastery, a position he held until 2000.

A hidden but significant contribution that Fr Flannan made to Mt St Joseph for over 35 years was as confessor in the Public Church, a service that was greatly appreciated by those who came to the monastery for confession. In the confessional he was always gentle, approachable and affirming in bestowing God's grace and forgiveness.

His sudden illness came as a shock to us in the monastery, to Fr Flannan's family and to his many friends and contacts. He received great care in the monastery infirmary where he died peacefully, surrounded by some of his monastic brothers and family.

May he rest in peace.

Abbot's Cup 2013

The 2013 Abbot's Cup was played in beautiful September sunshine on Saturday 14th September. I was in a threeball with classmate John Cunningham and Michael Brody, both of whom had great moments. John, in fact won the Front Nine prize, but as we worked our way through the back nine, Michael Brody's game was getting better and better, and going into the clubhouse he would have been forgiven for thinking that with a super score of 42 points he might have repeated his 2006 victory. Little did he know at the time, that he would not even be runner up - Tom Callanan on a countback had that honour.

Round of the day (of the century?) was that of Ronnie Culliton who had a spectacular 47 points, off a handicap of 8. Wouldn't his late father Gerry be proud of him! To cap it all Ronnie's wife Sharon had the best ladies' round with 33 points. With son Lucas in first year, we can expect the Cullitons to be competing in Roscrea GC in September for years to come!



A winner all right! Dom Richard Purcell presents the Abbot's Cup to a delighted Ronnie Culliton.



Johnny Dolan presents the prize for the best back nine (21 points) to his classmate from 1972, Union President Simon Coyle.



Sharon Culliton receiving the Ladies' Prize from Union President Simon Coyle.



One for the grandchildren! Sharon and Ronnie Culliton on a day to remember for both of them.



A very happy Michael Brody accepting 3rd Prize from Union President Simon Coyle.



Another one for the Class of '72 as John O'Meara collects the prize for best gross score (41 pts) outside the Top 3.

NEWS OF PASTMEN...NEWS OF PASTMEN..

There is a fair bit of news about pastmen sprinkled throughout this Review, but anyone looking for more, especially about people's careers need only open the CCR Alumni page on LinkedIn, where there are hundreds of CCR pastmen.

Three members of the Dublin Branch Committee had significant events recently.

● **David Hernan** (CCR 1983-'89) and his wife Sue had a baby boy, Jesse, provisionally enrolled for CCR for September 2026. David is National Account Manager for Bulmers.

● **Emmet Thompson** (CCR 1995-2001) married Marie Jago in June 2014. Emmet, having qualified from medicine in 2007, is currently finishing a PhD in Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Medicine and lectures in clinical anatomy to the undergraduate medical students at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland.

● **Fergal Cox** (CCR 1987-'92) got engaged to Hazel O'Dowd, a Primary School Teacher from Moate. They plan to marry next February with the reception in Glasson golf Club, owned by Tom Reid whose son Frank was a year ahead of Fergal in CCR.

Busy times ahead for Fergal who left the 'safety' of Rabobank to set up Three Rock Capital last year.

● **Wayne Noonan** (CCR 2003-'09) graduated from Griffith College, Limerick with a B.A. (Hons.) in Business.

● **Austin Murphy** (CCR 2001-'04) captained Clara to glory in the fiercely competitive Kilkenny Senior Hurling Club scene where they won a League and Championship double in 2013. Conor Phelan (CCR 1996-2002) also starred for Clara in that win – despite having given up the game on medical advice some years earlier having been diagnosed with a rare heart condition. For an emotional interview which shows what winning a county final means to any GAA member listen to this Youtube clip.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L4xYAtnCnjs>.

● **Liam Breen** (CCR 1994-'98) from Pallasgreen, Co. Limerick married Sarah Brody from Port Laoise in August 2013. Liam is one of six brothers who attended CCR between 1989 and 2004. Sarah is a daughter of Michael Brody (CCR 1963-'68) and a brother of David (CCR 1995-2001). Liam is an engineer and Sarah is a dentist.

● Liam's brother **John Breen** (CCR 1989-'94), married Helen Wycherley from Rosscarbery, Co. Cork in October 2013. John is also an engineer and Helen is an accountant.

● **David and Colin Mernagh** (CCR 1985-'90 and 1988-'93 nowadays are deeply involved in the family business – Killiane Castle Country House and Farm, Drinagh, Co. Wexford. It is a working farm of 230 acres with 70 cows as well as a luxurious guest house ideally situated close to both Wexford and Rosslare.

● Both **Conor Brady** (CCR 1962-'66) and **Pete Hogan** (1963-'68) whose books were mentioned in previous Roscrea Reviews have been busy again.

Conor followed up his first detective novel set in the 1880s with *The Eloquence of the Dead* a fascinating adventure from the same period.

Pete's latest volume *The Artist on the Island, An Achill Journal* was published in December 2013. In it he describes how he spent a winter as the only inhabitant of Achillbeg Island off the Mayo coast with illustrations.

The Retirement of Marcelline Cody

This time last year the CCR world was stunned to hear that Marcelline Cody had taken early retirement from her post as President of the College. Though in fact only on the staff since September 2000, she made an enormous impact in her time there. A native of Dublin she joined the College as an Irish and Geography teacher having previously worked in Ferbane, Co. Offaly and quickly developed a reputation as an excellent teacher who worked very hard to prepare all of her students to achieve their best in these subjects.

She supported the full College curriculum and attended every College event. She helped promote a love of Irish culture through her work with Irish debating and her interest in GAA and indeed all sports. Her own love of sport led her to work in managing the golf and tennis teams, two sports that she plays herself.

In the year of the College Centenary she was instrumental in organising the Concert held in the Monastery Church in which Mícháel O Súilleabháin from the Music Dept in the University of Limerick and his orchestra performed.

In 2006 she became the first female Principal of the College and during this time she quickly organised to get ICT funding from the Dept and set about equipping all classrooms with data projectors and laptops. The three Science laboratories and preparation room were upgraded to include modern benches, storage facilities, and new flooring and seating.

Successful applications were made to the Allocations section of the DES and this led to two new appointments on the teaching staff, a Resource teacher and an EAL

teacher (English as an Additional Language.)

In 2010 Marcelline achieved another first when she was appointed College President and became the College's answer to Mary Robinson. In her time as President she used her warmth to ensure that all were made welcome to the College - new, present and past students, and parents and all greeted with a smile.

Her maternal nature ensured that her duty of care was evident everyday in her interactions with the students, and this was so important in the context of a seven day boarding school being a home away from home.

When students received their Leaving cert results and left her office for the last time her final words to each student were always "Mind yourself."

Her commitment to and rapport with the Union was legendary, and while she will be sorely missed, from the Union point of view it is quite evident that she is NOT going away anytime soon.

All in the Union wish her a long and happy retirement.

At the recent very successful South East Branch Dinner in Kilkenny, a presentation was made to Marcelline. At that Dinner, Eileen Kelly delivered a wonderful tribute to Marcelline which we now print in full.

A CCR parent's tribute to Marcelline Cody

Eileen Kelly - at the South East Branch Dinner 3rd May 2014.

When Pat O'Shea asked me to say a few words on behalf of the parents of the boys I was genuinely delighted. My delight waned slightly when Pat went on to tell me that I would be speaking in the company of Abbot Richard, Fr. Peter and Union President, Simon. So tonight my words will be few but very sincere and heartfelt.



I speak as the mother of a boy who was in the College during Marcelline's time, but I also speak as the wife of a past pupil. My husband Kevin and his brothers Edward and Jim are all past students of CCR, and so it is fair to say that I can never remember making the decision to send Shane to school in Roscrea – it was something that was always understood between Kevin and myself, and indeed Shane!*

I'm sure all of you mothers in the room will relate to the feelings of concern, trepidation and yes, even a little sadness as we took our oldest child and only boy, with carefully packed suitcase to the College on that August evening in 2006. Shane, bursting with excitement, and me trying to hold back the tears; Kevin trying to keep it all together for everybody, whilst he himself was having flashbacks to thirty years earlier!

Whilst Marcelline was not College President at the time, she was Principal of the School and her approach and many talents which were evidenced on that evening remained a constant throughout the next six years. She instilled in us such confidence in our decision and showed us such kindness that evening – memories which remained with us throughout our journey home and indeed throughout Shane's journey through school.

Marcelline was always present! I don't think we ever visited the College without meeting her – she

Marcelline Cody tribute continued

came forward all the time and we always felt that she was genuinely pleased to see us. She was personable and approachable, and made an effort from that first night to know all the boys and indeed all their parents. We rarely had to ask to see her – she was always there! Whether it was the annual visit to the Opera, regular Rugby matches, Parent-Teacher Meetings, the Christmas Carol Service, or of course the very occasional phone call or visit when we had a concern or a problem, Marcelline was always there – on the front line – and our issues were sorted, efficiently and with her abundance of common sense and understanding.

She was welcoming, interested, enthusiastic, very helpful and we always felt that she genuinely liked and wanted the very best for every boy in her care! It also has to be said that I never failed to be in awe of her energy when I opened the Roscrea Review and saw her picture on nearly every page attending Dinners, Concerts, Debated and Golf outings all over the country – and always in a different outfit!

So, there are my thoughts and memories of Marcelline: those of a mother / a parent. Of course the ultimate tests are the thoughts of the boys! The ultimate compliment – and so, to conclude: when I mentioned to Shane during the week that I had been asked to say these few words he took a second and replied: “Sure that will be easy, Mum; you’ll have plenty of good things to say about Mrs. Cody!!”

And so it gives me great pleasure to wish Marcelline and Donncha and their family every good wish and health and happiness for the future.

Eileen’s husband is Kevin Kelly (CCR 1975-’80) and their son Shane was House Captain in 2011-’12.



South East Branch Chairman Rob O'Shea and Marcelline Cody.



Eileen Kelly gets a well deserved bouquet of flowers from the Chairman after giving an excellent tribute speech honouring Marcelline Cody's retirement.



Rob O'Shea presents Caroline Coyle with a floral arrangement.

Marcelline Cody tribute *continued*



Caitriona and Liam O'Shea



Charlie Scroope (centre) who only spent a year (1947-'48) in CCR but who regularly travels from Toronto to attend the New York Dinner just happened to be at a family wedding at the time of the SE Dinner and came along with his cousins Peter (left) and Paul Scroope. Charlie's packaging and container firm is aptly called Roscrea Enterprises!



The Godfather of the South East Branch, Pat O'Shea.



Dom Richard says a few words.



Union President Simon Coyle addressing the gathering.



Fergal Cox with Con Moloney, father of Rory (CCR 2007-'13) who recently starred with the Ireland U-20 Rugby World Cup team.



Dom Peter and Ed Hearne (CCR 1997-2002)



All smiles from Ronnie Culliton, Liam O'Shea and Con Moloney.



Paul O'Shea presents a raffle prize to Helen Comerford.



Two sporting legends: Ned Byrne (CCR 1959-'64) and Joe Connolly former CCR parent. Ned is the only man to have won an All-Ireland Hurling medal (Kilkenny v Cork, 1972) and gone on to be capped at Rugby for Ireland. Joe's speech after captaining Galway to their first All-Ireland in 57 years in 1980 is regarded as the best such speech ever.

Class of 1987 Reunion

The CCR class of '87 held their silver jubilee reunion a year or so late in the rarified environs of Doheny & Nesbitts on Saturday, 16th November 2013.

Organised by Des Berry, who went to great rounds in his efforts to get people together, the reunion took place amidst the backdrop of the Autumn test encounter between Ireland and Argentina at the Aviva Stadium.

A few hardy souls commenced proceedings in O'Donoghues on Friday night, and were joined on Saturday by an excellent turnout, which included the likes of Philip O'Shea from Costa Rica, and Jamie Haughey from Marbella.

Making their return to the fold for the first time also were Kieran Dunne, Barra Faughnan and Dominic Reid.

The years fell away as the day took on a life of its own, and friendships and school anecdotes were recalled in fond fashion.

Rounding it off, some more brave souls were to be found in the early hours in The Sugar Club, where an 80's musical repertoire brought back some more school memories, and wet Sunday afternoons in the video room watching the likes of ZZ Top and Van Halen on MTV USA.



Anthony Delahunty, Michael Monahan and Paul Foley.



Steve Crehan and Jim McCormack.



Michael O'Grady, Eddie Kiernan and Pat Somers.

Class of 1988 Reunion

The CCR Class of '88 held a reunion in the Shelbourne Hotel on the 28th of September 2013. The General Manager of the Shelbourne, Stephen Hanley, was a member of the class and was on hand for the night, to welcome his old classmates.

A good turnout of pastmen were treated to an excellent meal, and amidst the historic walls of the Shelbourne, many of the histories of the class of '88 were recalled in what was a very enjoyable night.



Fergal Slevin, David Kruse, Paul McGrath and Eddy Russell.



Simon Kelliher, Pat Somers and Dave Hernan.



Colm Power and Eoin Rafferty.



John Cleary, Pat Somers and Frank Harrington.



Tom Duggan, John Hackett and Vinny O'Hara.

Gerry Grace, Shane Slattery and Niall Doogue.



CCR - 1946

The following short piece was sent to the Editor some months ago – it paints a picture of a CCR, indeed an Ireland most of us wouldn't recognise!

In an age when 2000 healthy young Irish people line up to perform Riverdance, it is not easy to visualise the years of near starvation in Ireland, 1940 – 1946. All major foods were strictly rationed: flour, tea, sugar and butter could only be obtained in small amounts and with coupons. Imported fruit like oranges and bananas were unknown.

Then 1946 arrived and with it all the hope of a new day dawning, and the promise of better times ahead. CCR was no exception to this euphoria of hope, even if it did fare better than most other colleges in the lean years. To his eternal credit, the College President, Fr. Ailbe combined his every effort with the monastery bakery and slaughterhouse and saw to it that no student ever went to bed hungry.

Strict wartime rationing was still in force to the end of 1946, and despite having a flourmill on the property, flour was severely rationed. Bro. Patrick in the bakery also had trouble getting coke to fire the kiln. Whenever bread was in short supply, we received a great fat ring of German sausage for supper. No wonder CCR won the Leinster Senior Hurling Cup in 1946! Vincent Cowen (Fr. Andrew) was a member of that team and wrote a song about it. The refrain went:

*We're some of the Roscrea boys,
We went to Rathdowney and
made our name
And taught St. Kieran's to play
the game;
And when O'Connell's saw us,
they said we did deserve,
Six medals a head and more
brown bread for each of the
Roscrea boys!*

While good food played its part in winning that Cup, the dominant factor was the superb training of Fr. Joseph, in my opinion the most versatile sports master ever to grace CCR. As Jim Power (CCR 1921-'26) he was a member of the team that won the Leinster Senior Gaelic Football Cup in 1924. In 1941 he trained the Senior Rugby team that drew the Leinster Cup Final with Newbridge College, but lost the replay. In 1946 not only did he train the Leinster Senior Hurling Champions, but also the College Athletics team which that year (as in many other years back then) won the College of Science Cup for best team in Ireland.

The fearsome and dreaded TB which resulted from poor wartime food cast a dark shadow over Ireland. Sanatoria all round the country were overflowing with thousands of patients. That shadow did not lift in 1946 – it was only with the advent of streptomycin in the late 1950s that TB was eradicated. When 26 monks left Roscrea to found Tarrawarra Abbey in Australia, we had to have an X-Ray to show we were TB free!

Of that 26, eight were CCR pastmen, only three of whom, Fr. Carthage O'Dea, Fr. Sean O'Toole and myself are still living. The photo shows our group of four arriving in Tarrawarra – from left,



Tarrawarra 1955.

Fr. Hugh McAllister, Br. Gabriel Curtis (brother of Fr. Emmanuel in CCR), myself and Fr. Robert Sheeran. Hugh, Robert and I attended CCR. I was just a novice when we set out for Australia. We all travelled by P & O liners (what a wonderful experience!) Jumbo jets were very much a thing of the future!

A word to present day CCR students and pastmen of more recent times – we older pastmen are grateful to you for your aims and achievements, academic, sporting etc. We thank you for keeping a great tradition alive.

Beannacht agus sláinte!

Eoin (Max) Palmer

CCR 1946 – '52.

Southern Star Abbey,
Hawke's Bay, New Zealand

Editor's note – the above mentioned Fr. Joseph retired to a more sedate life in the Monastery. He was related to an aunt of mine by marriage, and on several occasions I and others were the beneficiaries of the hospitality of the Guest House thanks to him!

- OBITUARIES -



John McNamara
(CCR 1962-'67) (*Johnny Mac*)

Died on 7th June 2014 after a short illness. A native of Athlone, he was a quantity surveyor by profession, and had worked in London for many years. While he was in CCR he was an excellent scrum half and played with distinction on both Junior and Senior Rugby teams. He was capped several times for Connacht schools and subsequently played for Bective Rangers.

His father Jackie (1960-'61) and brother Michael (2004-'05) were both Union Presidents. His brother Jim (1973-'78) also attended CCR.

We offer our heartfelt sympathy to his wife Andree, daughter Laura, mother Eleanor, brothers Michael and Jim and sisters Ann, Deirdre and Eleanor.

John was buried in Teddington, London on 19th June. A Memorial Mass was held in Rathgar Parish Church on 26th June with Dom Richard as celebrant. A large number of CCR pastmen attended as well as members of Bective RFC, and the sailing community both in Dublin and Athlone. In true CCR style, most of those attending moved on from the church to nearby Comans for light (and not so light) refreshments and a lot of reminiscing.

Barry Nash (CCR 2007 - '12)

We were all deeply shocked and saddened at the tragic death of Barry Nash in a car accident near Roscrea on Sunday 26th January last. A native of Scariff, Co. Clare, Barry was a wonderful young man full of life, in his second year at UCD. He was a keen sportsman – like any young Clare man he loved



Hurling, but his special love was Handball. He was a role model for young and old who imbibed the values of Cistercian College throughout his everyday life. Union members join with the community of Cistercian College and the wider community of Mount Saint Joseph Abbey extend our heartfelt sympathies to the Nash family.

George Geraghty
(CCR 1952-'57)

Died on 4th February 2014. While in CCR he excelled in Athletics at the High Jump and Hurdles. In 1962 he played on the Roscommon team that reached the All-Ireland Football Final losing to Kerry on a score of 1-12 to 1-6.

Dr. Aidan O'Carroll (Aodán Ó Cearbhaill) (CCR Class of 1970)

Died on 11th August 2013 after a long battle with cancer. A native of Roscrea, he was Head of School, Culinary Arts and Food Technology at Dublin Institute of Technology. He had hoped to

make it to the Class of 1970's 40 year reunion in 2010 but was unable to attend, although he did send his best wishes to his classmates.

John Gilmartin (CCR 1963-'64), A native of Borrisoleigh died suddenly on 5th May 2014. Jim Keating remembers him as one of his very first friends in his class in CCR. He was a great hurler and Jim remembers being very disappointed that John didn't return after his first year.

Jarlath Morris (CCR 1958-'61)

Jarlath was born in Dun Laoghaire. His father was in the Ulster Bank, and Jarlath travelled to CCR from both Tramore and Arva. After graduating with honours in horticulture from UCD he joined Erin Foods (Irish Sugar Co.) in Carlow and Thurles.

In 1968 he came in contact with Fr James McDyer in Glencolumcille, and joined the ailing vegetable canning co-op in Meenaneary in County Donegal. They were unable to source enough vegetables locally and Jarlath inspired the idea to change the business to fish processing in Killybegs.

The Co-op expanded from mackerel and herring to crab and the enterprise built up to 200 jobs at Earagail Eisc (Errigal Seafoods) in Killybegs and Kilcar. Following cutbacks in the '90s, Jarlath semi retired, but became a consultant to Bord Iaschaigh Mhara.

In 2012 he was appointed Secretary of the Irish Fish Exporters Association. He died after a short illness on 29th May 2013 and his funeral at Meenaneary near his adopted Carrick was attended by hundreds of the workers with whom he was held in very high regard.



Pat O'Shea, Marcelline and Donncha Cody at the recent SE Dinner in Kilkenny. When speaking after the Dinner she politely "complained" that while Brendan Feehan had already been presented with a Union tie (at the recent Business Lunch), she had been coming to Union functions for years and was never offered one. With that, Pat O'Shea took the unprecedented step of taking his tie off and symbolically presenting it to her!

Union Calendar 2014-'15

SOUTH EAST BRANCH DINNER; Ormonde Hotel, Kilkenny Sat. 3rd May 8 p.m.

SOUTH WEST BRANCH DINNER; Sunday's Well Tennis Club, Mardyke, Cork

UNION AGM, College Boardroom, Sun. 25th May, 12 noon.

MATT HYLAND / NOEL WINDLE GOLF

Edmondstown Golf Club - Friday 20th June
Contact Vincent Coyne, 086 343 7196 or Pat Hanratty 087 273 1904
Email: ccrppu.dublin@gmail.com Email: pathanratty@gmail.com

HURLING SUPPORT GROUP GOLF - Friday 4th July

Contact Ann McIntyre, 087 2688052

MIDLANDS GOLF OUTING - Friday 29th August, New Forest G.C. Tyrellspass

Contact Jim Keating 086 817 7597 or Ronan Egan 087 989 4899
Email: jaskeating@gmail.com Email: eganstoneworks@eircom.net

ABBOT'S CUP GOLF AND UNION WEEKEND

13th -14th September
Contact Katherine Donovan 0505 31203

CLASS OF 1989-'94 REUNION - County Arms, Birr and Roscrea,
12th - 14th September
Contact Des Cox 01-428 2638, 086-8062102 Email: des.cox@olchc.ie

CLASS OF 1979-'84 REUNION - Radisson Hotel, Galway, 18th October
Contact Bernard McHale Email: bernardmchale@gmail.com

CLASS OF 1949-'54 REUNION - Abbey Guest House
13th - 14th September,
Contact Gerry Breen Email: jgerardbreen1@eircom.net
or Brian Flynn Email: b.flynn48@btinternet.com

DUBLIN DINNER - Saturday 18th October, Morrison Hotel, Dublin 1
Contact Vincent Coyne, 086 343 7196 or Dave Hernan 087 410 5446
Email: ccrppu.dublin@gmail.com

NORTH AMERICAN DINNER - Friday 21st November (tbc)
Contact Niall Rafferty Email: niall@rafferty.co

LONDON BRANCH DINNER 2015 (tba)
Contact Fergal Keane 00 44 7973412323
Email: gfk@gfkaccountants.co.uk

For other events, check the Union website www.ccrunion.org
for up to date details.