

# ROSCREA

Union Golden Jubilee

# REVIEW

No. 36

Newsletter of the Cistercian College, Roscrea, Union

Winter 1980



MR. FRANK LYNCH  
President of the Union

The Roscrea Past Pupils Union celebrates its Golden Jubilee in 1980, and it is my pleasure and privilege to be President of the Union for this very happy occasion. During my many years of involvement in the Union affairs the question that constantly arises at meetings and social functions is 'What does the Union mean to past students?'. I must confess that the answer which I have received on many occasions is hardly convincing, and I would like therefore to tell you, my fellow past students, what the Union means to me.

We have all experienced that warm glow of satisfaction and achievement when we came to the end of our days in the College. This is usually tinged with regret at the sad realisation that many of the farewells which are usually accompanied with promises to keep in touch with old friends, these friends who have shared the joys and frustrations, the pleasures and thrills of College life will part and probably never meet again. If we, the members of the Union could harness a very small part of this feeling for the College at the time of departure our problem would be to accommodate the attendance of the various social functions and in so doing continue the friendships that had been forged during school years and carry this into later life.

Unfortunately, the pressures of the competitive world into which the young student enters after leaving the College

## *The Roscrea Union* *Its relevance after fifty years*

are such that all his energies and efforts are taken up at least for the first 6 or 7 years in pursuit of the necessary qualifications to equip him for his future. This may give rise to the charge one hears, particularly from the younger generation, that the Roscrea Union is an old mans club, run by old men. If this is the case, we are failing. We are failing to attract the younger past students and unfortunately they will be the losers for our failure. In all voluntary organisations, the burden of communicating the objectives of the Union falls on a small group of dedicated individuals who have to compete against the social and business pressures of competing interests in their attempts to communicate effectively with members of the Union, and to enlist their support for our social functions during the year.

I hope that my friends in the other Branches will forgive me if I refer to my experience in the Dublin Branch. As Chairman of that Branch I had the support of a number of young, energetic and enthusiastic committee members. These, together with many of the older loyal members of the Branch have sustained branch activities over the years.

The pressure on these committee members is great, for that reason we owe them, and our colleagues of the other Branches a tremendous vote of gratitude. I have no doubt that without their support the Roscrea Union would find it very difficult to organize what have been very successful social functions. These are, in my opinion, an essential part of branch activities, and if they were to cease the Union would be the poorer for it.

I have met past students of many colleges and schools throughout the country who are attempting to organize Unions modelled on ours. They think it worthwhile and I am sure you will agree that your Union which was established in

1930, and which commands the respect, envy and admiration of other similar groups is something of which we can be proud.

I did not intend when asked by Rev. General Secretary, Fr. Dermot to address the President's message in the form of a rallying call, however, if this is how it is seen, so be it.

Your Union is relevant, even in this day and age. Our founders, many of whom are no longer with us have given us something to cherish and I know that with the support and loyalty of all Roscrea past students the Union will continue to prosper. We can look back with pride on its achievement. One immediately thinks of the magnificent achievement of the swimming pool and is encouraged by the amount of support, moral and financial which was forthcoming from the Union membership. I can assure you that the swimming pool is appreciated by the students of the College, and it stands as an eloquent tribute to the past students of Roscrea and their concern for their Alma Mater.

To the students of the College, our future members, I would like to wish those of you who are sitting for exams this year the very best of luck for your future success and happiness and if, the older members of the Union can be of any assistance I am quite sure Fr. Peter or Fr. Dermot will be very happy to put you in touch with us.

Finally, I would like to say a very special word of thanks to all those members of the various Branch committees who organised the many excellent social occasions to mark the Union's Golden Jubilee. My wife and I had the pleasure and privilege of attending these, and they were very happy occasions. We look forward to meeting you again in the future, until then my very best wishes to you all for 1980.



## C.C.R. — 75 Years On

Seventy-five years in a human life represents almost the allotted span, in the life of a College it is only early maturity. Yet those seventy-five years have been tremendous ones for C.C.R., her achievements in those years are something to be looked on with pride. This brief article is not the place for going into detailed lists. Suffice for us to say that she can look back, and count her blessings — the blessings of so many sons who have gone forth on the sea of life to follow their chosen vocations, in their after lives a credit to the alma mater.

C.C.R. has been fortunate in its Presidents, from Fr. Justin to Fr. Peter. Under each President there has been a steady growth; each has left his own indelible stamp on the College. If one is to single out one, it must be Ailbe. Ailbe's presidency spanned thirty three years; he came at a difficult period midway through the Great War, when Ireland was beginning to assert in arms her right to freedom; he served through the troubled days, through the depression of the thirties, and the problem days of World War Two. Those of us who were not born then, can only stand amazed and marvel at the achievements of this man. One can only marvel too at the wonderful rapport between Ailbe and each generation of boys; to read Neil Kevin's moving tribute, or to meet today pastmen who declare themselves proudly to be "one of Ailbe's Boys" is indeed the confirmatory testimony. "Si monumentum Requirit, circumspice . . .!"

With the Presidents, C.C.R. has been fortunate in its lay staff over those years. It has had many loyal and dedicated servants. Some like Bill Barry, Jack Murphy, Tom Cole and so on, are now reaping the rewards of their teaching in Heaven. The monastic and the lay have continued basic and contrasting elements to the educational structure of the college. The happy integration of the spiritual and the temporal elements of life is one of the successes of C.C.R.

The traditions of the College, and its ethos, have developed over seventy five years. They have stood the test of time, the rigours of depression and exhilaration of joy and of sorrow. The various components that make up the College tradition are matters that should not be cast aside. Living in an era of questioning of values, and of change merely for the sake of change, there is often a temptation to do so.

As we look back on seventy five years, let us look forward also to the future — to the centenary. May we say now as Bishop Quinlan in his message to the Jubilee in 1957:

"Ave mater alma esto perpetua".

## The Dublin Dinner

This gathering followed in the great tradition of the first founders of the Union. It was a stag function and there were representatives from every decade since the foundation of the College. Rt. Rev. Msgr. Charles Hurley and Comdt. Michael Cummins were probably the senior men of the assembly. One society gossip columnist called in during the evening and wrote afterwards in her paper: "There were some 150 past pupils of Roscrea gathered to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of the foundation of their Union. They all had made it, there was not a nonentity among them"!

The guests of honour were Dr. John Sunne, Prof. Denis Crowley and Thomas P. Hogan, who had been members of the first committee who met under Fr. John Ryan with a view to organise a Past Pupils Union for Roscrea in December 1929. As a token of esteem and to mark the occasion a set of Rosenthal Chrystal champagne glasses was presented to each.

Special attention was focused on Msgr. Laurence Forristal whose appointment as auxiliary Bishop of Dublin had just been announced. In his speech later on, Dom Colmcille said that when he was a prefect in the ref. Larry Forristal was a kid at his table.

The meal was superb — a credit to the Committee and the caterers. The speeches after the meal excellent. John Dunn gave of his best, and his anecdotes and reminiscences covered a period of time beyond the life span of most of the company. It was a pleasure to listen to him and he raised many a laugh. Another notable speaker was Gus Martin whose experience of Roscrea was more varied than previous speakers, a student, a teacher a parent. He was more than an "Ailbe's man", he worked under Frs. Thomas, Aidan, Declan and Patrick. Dom Colmcille in his speech quoted Gus as having once said: "The monks were sensible enough to understand that they knew nothing about education so they left that to the lay teachers, and got on with the job — hence the success of Roscrea".

Dr. Bernard Sherry — the Chairman and host of the Dublin Branch — disclaimed all experience in public speaking, but nevertheless held his audience with wit and skill displaying the typical flair of Sherry clan. His claim to be an Ailbe's man was loudly applauded by his brothers Seamus and Kevin — the second generation of Sherrys were wondering what it was all about.

During the course of his speech the President Mr. Frank Lynch thanked the General Secretary, who was present, for his work on behalf of the Union, and took the occasion to express the appreciation of the Dublin Branch by

presenting him with a beautiful volume illustrating the art treasures of Ireland from 1500 B.C. to 1500 A.D. He also thanked him for doing the parchment scrolls which accompanied the presentations to the three Guests of Honour.

## Union Day

Sunday 7th October we had our Union Day. This year we opened the proceedings with High Mass in the Abbey church. It was attended by both past and present students as well as the monks. The Lord Abbot was chief celebrant. To the satisfaction of many of our senior men the music was the traditional Gregorian Chant that conjured up many nostalgic memories. Miss Bergins's school choir also gave much pleasure.

The Obituary List was not as long as usual: Dr. Robert Holmes Ievers, 1918; John J. Coffey, 1930; James Egan, 1932; John Reynolds, 1966; Vincent Hughes, 1931; Dr. Terence Cosgrave, 1917; Msgr. Con Cummins, 1925; Very Rev. Hugh O'Donoghue, PP, 1925. Those other colleagues who have passed on over the past fifty years of the Unions history, and the seventy five years of the College's existence were also prayed for.

After the High Mass we retired to the "Billiard Room" for lunch. There were more at the lunch than at the High Mass — maybe 11.00 a.m. is a bit early for a Sunday morning!

The Annual General Meeting was held in the Staff Room in the classroom block. It began at 1.30 p.m. The most important item on the agenda was the introduction of Mr. Pat O'Shea as President elect of the Union for 1980 . . . more about that later. The problems of Dormant Branches once more came up for detailed discussion. But only South Tipperary and Clare/Limerick had representation, and there were promises for renewed effort. There will be more about that also.

At this meeting also, the subscription list for the Swimming Pool Fund was closed. The President proposed a special vote of thanks to Gerard Bates for his untiring work on behalf of the Swimming Pool. A vote of thanks was also proposed to Gerard Houlihan who first put forward the idea; to the Lord Abbot for his courage in accepting such a challenge and for his confidence in us to carry out the work; to Fr. Prior who helped supervise the accounts; to those whose generous loans made the initial work possible; to all the subscribers who helped us complete a very good job; and to Jim Fehily who designed and planned the whole thing.

The possibility of honouring the surviving members of the founding committee was also discussed, and a decision was referred to the next Central Committee Meeting.



The Past v Present matches began at 3 p.m. right on time. Much to the surprise of the Past they were beaten in the Rugby 16-12. But they won the hurling.

There was a sherry reception in the "Billiard Room" after the matches. The place was very crowded but in spite of the crush, there was plenty of chat and many joyful reunions. Several of the teaching staff joined the crowd.

The Dinner which followed was most enjoyable. It began on time. The Lord Abbot presided, with Frank Lynch the President of the Union and Fr. Peter Garvey, President of the College. Gerard Bates acted as M.C. There were about 120 present. The menu presented by Srs. Anthony and Rita was most satisfactory. Avocados and Salmon Mayonnaise; Cream of Asparagus soup; Roast Sirloin of Beef, Yorkshire Pudding; Creamed and French Fried Potatoes; Baby Carrots and Garden Peas; Strawberry Vodka Romanoff; Cheese and Savouries; Coffee and Biscuits; Wines; Soft Drinks. And then came the speeches. Unfortunately there was no public address system so much of the eloquence and the pearls of wisdom that dropped from the lips of the speakers was lost on the crowd.

## OBITUARIES

Colonel Thomas F. Elliot, former Director, Army Medical Corps, died October 30th, 1979. He was 68, and was educated in C.C.R. and left there in 1930. He qualified in medicine in the Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin.

Tom began his career with the Army in 1940 and was officer Commanding Field Ambulances during the early part of his career, throughout the uneasy years of the emergency.

In 1946 he was appointed Senior Medical Officer in the Curragh and remained there until he became Officer Commanding the Military Hospital at Collins Barrack, Cork. In 1961 he was transferred to Dublin as O.C. of St. Bricin's Hospital. In 1965 he was appointed Director of the Army Medical Corps in succession to Dr. Robert Holmes Ievers. He served in the Congo with the 34th Battalion in 1960.

We offer to his wife and son our deepest sympathy.

Eric (Harry) Hall, 1912, died suddenly at his home in Palmerston Gardens, Rathmines, on the 27th December. His funeral was attended by the President of the Past Pupils Union and members of the Central Committee. Eric himself was President of the Union from 1942 to 1945.

His early years after leaving school were spent in the army during the first World War, and later in India where he attained the rank of Captain. For the rest of his life he was involved in Irish industry and various commissions to



HARRY HALL

promote its welfare. Apart from his own firms, Guidhall Gloves Ltd. and Library Bindings Ltd., of which he was Director, he was involved with the National Savings Committee, Confederation of Irish Industry, National Industrial Safety Organization, National Development Association and the Factories Advisory Council. The country will be the poorer for his passing. May he rest in peace.

William J. Adams, formerly of Tullamore, Co. Offaly, died in the USA on 29th December, 1979, aged 86. He was one of the first group of students who came to the College in 1905. He spent only one year in the College. May he rest in peace.

William A. O'Hanlon (1947) a native of Castledermot, Co. Kildare, died last autumn. May he rest in peace.

Kevin "Pat" McDonnell (1939) formerly of Ballycastle, Co. Mayo, died at his home at Foxrock Park in Dublin some time ago.

We also received notice recently of the death of Thomas P. Houlihan, Ash Street, Clonakilty (1926). He had built up a thriving bakery business in the town and his products had won prizes in Ireland, England and America. He died in June 1979. In September the same year his friend and best man, Thomas F. O'Keeffe (1928) of Mitchelstown, also died. May they rest in peace.

The death occurred last November of Gerard F. Geary (1943) a native of Limerick, one of four brothers who were in Roscrea in the late 30s and early 40s. Gerard was unmarried. May he rest in peace.

## CHRISTMAS OPERA

Last Christmas the boys in the College produced "Fiddler on the Roof". Tommy Linden of Birr was the producer, and the whole show was conducted by the inimitable Miss Francis Bergin.

At the final show for the parents the Union Gold Medal was presented to Brian O'Sullivan, native of Fethard, for first place in the Inter 1979.

Rev. Robert Hennessy (1923 and his brother Joakim (1920) both died last December. They were two of four brothers who were educated in Roscrea and natives of Aherlow. Three of them were priests in USA. They were nephews of the late Fr. Joachim O.Cist. a founder member of Roscrea Abbey.



REV. ROBERT HENNESSY

## NEWS OF PAST PUPILS

Professor Sean Mackey (1932), formerly of Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, who retired from the chair of engineering at Hong Kong University, two years ago, has been made a Knight of the Order of Saint Gregory by Pope John Paul II. This honour was conferred in recognition of his service to the welfare of the Catholic Church in the British colony over the past twenty two years. Professor Mackey worked closely with the Salesians of Dom Bosco, and he was chairman of the St. Thomas More Association. He is now a consulting engineer in the colony.



PROFESSOR SEAN MACKEY

## AN FIOLAR

There are still some copies of the Abbey Centenary Issue available at £3 each. A hard-bound copy of the annual will cost you £6 plus postage — special orders only.

Have you paid for the copy you got last Spring?

## CENTRAL COMMITTEE DECISION

Professor John Dunne, Professor Denis Crowley and Thomas P. Hogan are elected Honorary Vice-Presidents for Life, of the Union.



Michael D. Murray (1965) is the new State Solicitor for Limerick City. He graduated from U.C.D. in 1970 and is the youngest State Solicitor in the whole country.



W. J. SLATTERY

Billy Slattery (1953) who is Secretary and General Manager of the Irish Credit Bank Limited has recently been in the news. To quote Joe O'Connor, a fellow city man: "Billy has recently been elected to the Council of the Institute of Chartered Accountants, and topped the poll, a signal honour, as only once before did a Limerick man get his feet under that august piece of mahogany.

Ger Falvey (1972), Douglas Road, Cork, recently received the M.P.S.I.

Hugh Curran (1971) of Ballyroan, Dublin, who is Managing Director of Dawson Money Brokers, recently became engaged to Veronica Farrell of Ashbourne, Co. Meath.

Paul Enright (1973) of Enniscorthy, received his wings at a ceremony at Dublin Airport last year, following the completion of his training as an Aer Lingus steward.

The Houlihan brothers Stewart (1961) and John (1963) formerly of Mitchelstown, are both married and living in England.



Monsignor Laurence Forristal, PP, VG

Rt. Rev. Msgr. Laurence Forristal (1949) has recently been appointed auxiliary bishop to the Archdioceses of Dublin to help minister to the ever increasing number of Catholics in the city and its suburbs. At the time of his appointment he was a Vicar General of the diocese and parish priest of Rivermount. He was a native of Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny.

Bishop Forristal is the second bishop to come from C.C.R. The other was the great missionary Bishops Thomas Quinlan of Korea, whose heroic efforts

on behalf of his fellow prisoners during the terrible Death March in the hands of the Chinese Communists, has carved a niche for him in history.

N.B.: The Dublin Branch are making a presentation to Bishop Laurence Forristal on the occasion of his consecration. If you would like to contribute to this presentation please contact Dr. Bernard Sherry (Dublin Chairman), 11 Palmerstown Avenue, Palmerstown, Dublin 20, or the General Secretary of the Union at the College, Roscrea.

Dr. John Carey, Dr. Chris Carey's son, was married in London recently. His wife is an Australian girl.

Brendan Hyland has moved to Roscrea where he practices as a solicitor.

Anthony Bonnett has returned from London and is at present working with another architect from C.C.R. in Tullamore, i.e. Michael Garvey.

Jim Glennon, Skerries, has been selected to play for Ireland in the next international rugby match at Twickenham. Donal Spring is one of the replacements.

#### THE SOCIAL SCENE

As usual the South Eastern Branch got off with a flying start this social season. They had their Dinner Dance at the New Park Hotel, Kilkenny on the 23rd November. The host for this occasion was Pat O'Shea, Chairman of the Branch, who is President-elect of the Union for next year.

The Lord Abbot, who was unable to attend, was represented by Fr. Kevin Daly. In his speech, where he echoed many of the sentiments and advice of Pope John Paul to the youth of Ireland, he gave us an interesting insight into the life of the College and the commitment of the monks to prepare the students to take a responsible part in the world of tomorrow.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We wish to acknowledge the receipt of subscriptions and new Banker's Orders for the maintenance of the Review which have been received since the last issue:

Mr. Thomas W. Enright, T.D., Birr.  
 Mr. E. O'Loughlin, Dingle.  
 Dr. B. Sherry, Dublin.  
 Mr. John McEvoy, Dublin.  
 Mr. Colm Irwin, Navan.  
 Mr. Patrick J. Chambers, Ennistymon.  
 Mr. Harry Hall, Dublin.  
 Captain Aidan Quigley, Dublin.  
 Mr. Dan Ryan, Golden.  
 Mr. Cornelius Leonard, Trim.  
 Mr. Jack Philbin, Dublin.  
 Dr. Gerard Meehan, Galway.  
 Mr. Tim Murphy, Blackrock.  
 Mr. Justin O'Connell, Dublin.  
 Dr. Peter Power, Dusseldorf, W. Germany.

#### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

The life, growth and unity of a Branch to the whole concept of the Union depends on regular well organized social functions. This year of the Golden Jubilee of the Union shows a promising revival of some Branches. The two functions already held this season — The Dublin Dinner and the South Eastern Dinner Dance at Kilkenny — have set a very high standard of attendance, so we hope that members will co-operate with branch officers and patronize the functions they organise.

In order of time the following have been arranged:

**Midlands:** 1st February, Hayes' Hotel, Tullamore; Dinner Dance, further information from Michael Connellan, Longford; Tom Maher, Tullamore, Eamonn Ryan, Lanesboro.

**South Tipperary:** Thursday 14th February, Hayes Hotel, Thurles; Dinner Dance; further information from Kevin Dwan, The Mall, Thurles; Pat Rafferty, Nelson Place, Tipperary; Peter McCarthy, Cashel.

**North Tipperary:** 8th March, The Fox's Den, Cloughjordan; Dinner & Social; tickets strictly limited; further information from Richard Liffey (Jnr.), Shinrone, Phone 36; Michael Madden, M.P.S.I., Roscrea; Jim Phelan, dentist, 26 Church St., Portlaoise.

**South West (Cork):** mid March, Innishannon Hotel, Dinner Dance; consult Gerard Murphy, Conor O'Flynn, Newmarket, Denis O'Donoghue, Kenmare.

#### NORTH TIPPERARY BRANCH

at The Fox's Den,  
Cloughjordan  
are holding a

#### DINNER & SOCIAL GATHERING

for the members of this Branch and their wives and/or girl friends on Saturday 8th March

Accommodation is limited so book NOW from:

Richard Liffey, Birr Road, Shinrone. Phone 36.

Michael Madden, M.P.S.I., Main Street, Roscrea. Phone 21058.

Jim Phelan, B.D.S., Portlaoise. Phone 21832.

#### SOUTH TIPPERARY BRANCH

#### DINNER DANCE

at  
Hayes Hotel,  
Thurles on

Thursday, 14th February,

Consult

Kevin Dwan, Thurles. Phone 304.

Peter McCarthy, Cashel

Pat Rafferty, Tipperary, Phone 51555.