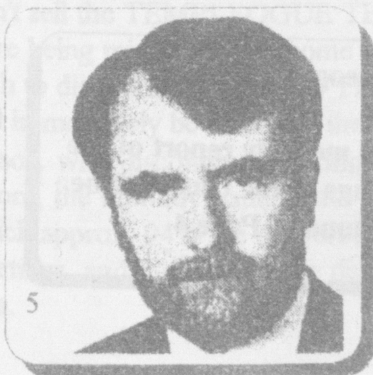


Templeogue Telegraph

Neighbourhood COMMUNITY MAGAZINE

November, 1993

Price 30p



WORKING FOR THE COMMUNITY!

You may have seen some or all of them before, or you may have seen their photographs before. We think it worth while however to show them all together here.

No. 1 is one of our community Gardaí, Tony Maher, who operates out of Terenure Garda Station and looks after much of our district as shown in our October cover map.

Nos. 2,3,4 and 5 are, respectively and in alphabetical order of second name: Councillors Seán Ardagh (FF), Cíait Keane (PD), Stanley Laing (FG) and Pat Upton (Lab), all of whom are kind enough to keep us up to date on County Council activities as they affect our area.. They all live within the distribution area of the TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH.

(See within for map of the Electoral District)

THE TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH CAN BE CONTACTED BY RINGING 909128.

IN VIEW OF THE RECENTLY INTRODUCED REVISION OF TELEPHONE CHARGES WHICH MAKES CALLS LASTING OVER THREE MINUTES DURING "NORMAL" BUSINESS HOURS EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE, READERS MAY WISH TO NOTE THAT PHONE CALLS TO THE TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH MAY ALSO BE MADE AFTER 6.00 PM MONDAYS TO FRIDAYS OR AT WEEKENDS.

CORRESPONDENCE, WHETHER ABOUT ADVERTISING OR WRITTEN MATERIAL FOR PUBLICATION IN THE TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH, SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO :

THE MANAGER
TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH
74 TEMPLEVILLE DRIVE
DUBLIN 6W.

All the friends and neighbours of Nellie Milner (Templeville) have asked us to tell her that they miss her, and send her their best wishes for a speedy return to good health.

Deadline for December 1993 issue of THE TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH.

We apologize for the misleading notice in the October 1993 issue giving a mid-November date as the deadline for the current (i.e. November) issue. However, we were able to make contact in good time with most of our regular subscribers for their reports.

FOR THE DECEMBER 1993 ISSUE THE DEADLINE FOR ADVERTISEMENTS AND WRITTEN MATERIAL IS:

**THURSDAY 18TH
NOVEMBER 1993.**

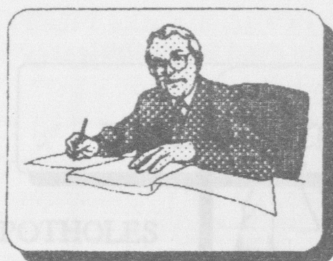
As usual space may be reserved for a short time thereafter, by prior arrangement with The Manager.

**DECEASED MEMBERS OF
TEMPLEOGUE LADIES'
CLUB.**

The Club announces that a **Special Mass for Deceased Members** will be held in St Pius X Church on Wed. 10th November

Templeogue Ladies' Club

The usual monthly report of the proceedings of the Club will be found at Page 4



From the Manager's Desk

by Paddy Heneghan

In this issue we must tackle a few complaints about the TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH which have come to the desk over the last few months.

One is that the Manager is always changing his image, and that in person he is not quite so good-looking as the magazine depicts him to be. Sadly, what you see above (and have been seeing in various issues) is one of a series of computer graphics, and we have to accept this complaint is justified. Truly the Manager in person is no computer graphic!

We also have to accept that a few readers have not been able as yet to pay their subscriptions. God bless your hearts out there, to be worried about such a matter. We have, however, now made contact with the majority of our subscribers, and we hope to finish off this part of the work in the near future. We have, as most readers will now know, avoided asking the young people who make deliveries to handle money collections. This is for their own security, and we respect subscribers not pressing them to take cash. It also speeds up delivery!

We must thank readers for the unfailing warmth and courtesy with which we have been greeted when we call. We try to call during daylight hours for obvious reasons, and we have no objection at all to producing identification. Indeed we welcome the developing concern with security. There have been a few subscribers - very few, I may add - who gave us a "hard time", suspecting that someone was making a lot of money out of the TELEGRAPH. We should be so lucky, as they say in the Bronx! The cost of producing and delivering the TELEGRAPH in fact exceeds the annual subscription of £3, but thanks to our advertisers the shortfall is being met. One reader more au fait with the costs of printing and publishing found the annual subscription so low that he had to dab tears of mirth from his eyes when we told him how much we were looking for. He found absolutely risible the fact that he could get a year's supply of THE TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH and still receive change from the lowest denomination of banknote in circulation! That's more like the spirit.

The Gardai received a complaint about very aggressive selling in recent weeks in this area of a Templeogue magazine, amounting in the complainant's view to intimidation, and they referred the irate person to us. A case of mistaken identity, we were happy to tell her. Of course we don't sell the TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH in an aggressive way, and it was obvious that we were being mixed up with some other publication. We should make clear that if any readers wish to discontinue taking the TELEGRAPH, they have only to ring and let us know, and they will immediately be taken off the circulation list. Happily, this rarely happens, and for each person who discontinued during the year, there were at least six new subscribers. For the record, the monthly issue of the TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH still runs to 1,000 copies, of which approx. 94% are delivered on annual subscription. A few are bought casually at club meetings, and the balance are delivered to schools, houses of residence, and advertisers in the area.



MRS MARY CHRISTINA WHITE

We were deeply saddened to learn of the recent passing of Mary Christina White, Wainsfort Park. A former resident of Terenure with her late husband Hubert, she retired to live in Greystones in the 70s, returning in January 1991 after suffering a stroke to live with her daughter Imelda and Imelda's husband Terry Gogan. She made a remarkable recovery and later joined the Templeogue Ladies' Club.

A personal friend of the late Canon Union's, she was present at the laying of the foundation stone of St. Pius X Church. She had a special devotion to St. Pius X, and the following interesting coincidence occurred at the time of her funeral Mass. A friend of hers in Bristol, of a different faith, unknowingly arranged to have her prayed for in a local Catholic Church - which also turned out to be dedicated to St. Pius X - and at the 10 o'clock Mass!

While proud of a family connection with another local resident, the late Austin Clarke, Mary Christina had an abiding interest and pride in her own family's connection with The O'Donnell, and finally in June 1992, at the age of 82, she fulfilled a lifetime ambition when she attended The O'Donnell Clan Rally in Donegal Town, accompanied by Imelada and Maria. She also had a wonderful rapport with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Mary Christina is survived by her daughter, Imelda Gogan, past president of the Irish Federation of Women's Clubs, Imelda's husband Terry (one of the originators of the TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH), Breda Schuster (Lucan), Maria and husband Noel Lakes, daughter-in-law Molly, and their families. Sadly she was predeceased in 1985 by her only son, Frank, the well-known Irish international athlete.

The last tribute we leave to Dorothy, a friend made in Bristol over 40 years ago, who finally in August last fulfilled a wish to visit Ireland and who stayed with Maria Christina at her home: "It was a privilege to have shared her wealth of talents - her knowledge of history, her culture, her sense of humour and her self-respect. She was a real LADY".



TEMPLEOGUE LADIES' CLUB

At the October meeting there was an interesting and informative presentation from Mr Liam McDonnell and Mr Michael Gregg of Premier Dairies, followed by a lively question-and-answer session. Premier Dairies generously distributed free samples of their Yogurt and their Light Dairy Spread....one for everyone in the audience.

Geraldine O'Rourke continues to excel in flower-arranging. She took First Prize at the recent Irish Federation of Women's Clubs Flower Arrangement Competition for her "September Symphony" - a photograph of which was on display at the meeting. There was a general consensus that Geraldine's prize was richly deserved.

All the Club's activities continue, with the exception of Monday afternoon "Boules", which ceased at the end of October. Next year's resumption is planned for late Spring/early Summer, depending naturally on weather conditions. The organiser's resounding cry of "A BEAUTY" for every good "throw" will sadly be silenced until then.

Club members had a most enjoyable evening on Tuesday 19th October at the Rathmines and Rathgar Musical Society's presentation of Gilbert and Sullivan's The Mikado at the National Concert Hall. Everyone agreed the production was excellent: the singing, choreography and costumes were of an exceptionally high standard. Sincere thanks to Mr Dom Carroll who made the block bookings and reserved some of the best seats in the house for club members.

THE ENVIRONMENT

POTHOLES

Councillor Seán Ardagh has been assured by the County Council that the potholes at Orwell Park Dale will be repaired as soon as possible.

LITTER PROBLEMS

One might be forgiven for thinking that the estates around Templeogue had been planted with Green Bottle trees this Autumn, as the roads since the last week of October have been strewn with small plastic containers as if a fall of plastic leaves had occurred. This has been the result of the passage of the marathon runners through the area. There was apparently little follow-through in the thinking of the company which promoted the marathon, or on the part of the County Council to deal with the eyesore. Let's hope that a lesson has been learned for future occasions. Meanwhile the group which had been undertaking periodic clean-ups of the Templeogue Village area got in touch with us. Spokespersons Marylou Murray (Springfield) and Doris Walsh (Templeville) genuinely thought when they began this project that people would be interested enough to join them - after all, one hour a week was not too high a price to pay as the reward of a litter-free area would be immediately obvious. But enough people did not care. Quite a few stopped to praise the enterprise, but no-one stopped long enough to pick anything up! After a few weeks the group felt they were being regarded more as eccentrics than environmentally-conscious residents. Representatives of the group were however invited to a meeting of the local traders and thanked for their effort. They were told that

each shopfront should be the responsibility of the shopkeeper (they couldn't agree more!). Some shopkeepers do clear in front of their shops as part of their daily routine, but others...well.....! During the school holidays the area was comparatively clear, but since September even though there are four or five new bins, litter is being dropped thick and fast. The inescapable conclusion is that litter control should begin in the home environment and be re-inforced in school. Note: The AIB Templeogue recently carried out a sweep-up of the laneway between their premises and the Statoil filling station. In addition to take-away food bags, the slips from the cash dispensing machine were a significant part of the volume of litter. Maybe the taking of a "litter-origin census" would be more effective in putting pressure on the producers of the "raw material" to solve the problem than having groups of concerned citizens trying to tackle the job on their own. Just a thought!

MAN'S BEST FRIEND AND THE "YELLOW CARD" PROBLEM.

Elsewhere we publish some thoughts from Michael Sheehan (Templeogue Wood) on the subject of standard equipment with which all exercisers of dogs should possess if they contemplate visiting Templeogue Wood. For his part, Michael will be equipped with a "Yellow Card" - but surely producing yellow cards is at the root of the whole problem!

STREET LIGHTING (ORWELL PARK)

Councillor Ardagh learned in reply to a question which he put that, out of a total of 118 lights, 18 have been upgraded during routine maintenance. There is no provision in this year's estimates to upgrade the remainder. They will, however, be considered in next year's estimates. (South Dublin Roads and Traffic sub-committee meeting of 22 October 1993).

APPREHENSION OVER DANGEROUS WATERCOURSE

The Co. Council has now installed the grid at the outlet pipe from the portion of the old City Watercourse adjoining Orwell Shopping Centre, as promised to Councillor Pat Upton (Templeogue Telegraph, Oct. 1993). The watercourse is still a receptacle for a considerable amount of litter, which seems to build up again quickly despite the periodic efforts by residents to keep this feature clean.

FUNDING FOR ROAD SAFETY MEASURES AND MAINTENANCE OF SECONDARY ROADS.

Councillor Stanley Laing PC reports having received large numbers of requests for improvements to roads and footpaths, and in consequence tabled a motion at the South Dublin Area Committee on 22 October calling on the Minister for the Environment to provide extra funding for the maintenance of secondary roads and for road safety measures. The ensuing report was non-committal, referring to the anticipated publication of the next programme for the distribution of Structural Funds. Councillor Laing thinks it important for residents to understand that since domestic rates were abolished the Council is largely dependent on commercial rates and a block grant from the Department of the Environment for road maintenance. In theory the Department is responsible for national roads funding and the Council for secondary and estate roads funding. The Council's resources are completely inadequate with many roads and footpaths now below desirable standards. Over one million pounds worth of approved traffic facilities are outstanding at present.

The Templeogue Telegraph observes that resurfacing of roads in the Fortfield area has been done, but to a very poor standard, so

that if Fortfield is any example even when the Council gets around to doing some of these jobs the result can be so poor that it will be under pressure to re-do them. No reflection on Councillor Laing who assures us he continues to do his best to see that the finance for all necessary works is provided.

PLANNING PERMISSION FOR TAKE-AWAY FOOD SHOP AT 3 WAINSFORT DRIVE.

There was an appeal by the College and Wainsfort Residents Association against the granting of this planning permission which had been sought by Merit Trading Company c/o O'Dwyer and Associates, 8 Townyard House, Townyard Lane, Malahide, Co. Dublin (change of use from retail to take-away food shop). Permission was refused on 14th Oct. 1993 by An Bord Pleanála. According to the order of the Board, taken into consideration (inter alia) were the location of the site within a residential estate, and the likely late night activity. It was considered that the proposal would endanger public safety by reason of traffic hazard because of the generation of further late night on-street parking in an already congested location.

TAKING IN CHARGE OF THE ORCHARD, FORTFIELD ROAD.

Councillor Pat Upton has been informed by the Manager that the remedial works required to bring The Orchard, Fortfield Road, to taking-in-charge standard are minimal, involving minor repairs to a section of paving and a manhole. Due to delay in carrying out these works the developer has recently been advised that if he wishes to avoid legal proceedings he should complete the works without further delay.

TEMPLEOGUE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

A further meeting recently took place between representatives of residents, traders and local councillors. Cllr. S Laing reports that the consultant's report on the condition of Templeogue House is awaited. A Principal Officer of the Co. Council will address a meeting locally when this report is available.

COUNTY ENTERPRISE BOARDS

Cllr. Laing also tells us that these boards have now been established, and both he and Cllr. S Ardagh are members. Further news is expected soon.

REPLACEMENT NAMEPLATE (WILDERWOOD GROVE)

Cllr. Cáit Keane has been informed by the Co. Council that a nameplate will be provided for Wilderwood Grove (W.O.R.K. group of estates) as soon as possible. If the residents wish to have a granite namestone they must however provide it at their own expense (in consultation with the Area Engineer).

SECURING OF TEMPLEOGUE CEMETERY AGAINST VANDALISM.

The Co. Council consider the boundary at the Cemetery to be adequate and informed Councillor Cáit Keane that without major expenditure it would not be possible to prevent young people using the cemetery.

SIGNS SOUGHT AT WILLINGTON PARK

Cllr. Keane has been informed that due to demand for certain types of road signs (e.g. Cul-de-sac, Children at Play and New Road) and the Co. Council's limited resources, residents would have to provide such signs themselves (in consultation with the Area Engineer).

CLOSURE OF LANEWAY - ORWELL PARK VIEW

The residents of the surrounding area have requested the closure of the laneway leading from Orwell Park View to the open space to the rear of Nos.114 - 119. Cllr. Pat Upton has been informed that the various Co. Council departments have been asked for their views and if the South Dublin Roads and Traffic Committee agree the extinguishment of right of way procedure can be initiated.

KEEN TO PURSUE A FEW NEW APPROACHES!

Cllr. Cáit Keane tells us that she has been pursuing a number of interesting and useful ideas.

She recently urged the Co. Manager to incorporate a Waste Reduction Competition into the Tidy Districts Competition. Readers will recall that two Templeogue Estates (W.O.R.K. group and Glendown) have scored recent successes in this competition. Waste reduction is one of the aims of the Co. Council's Waste Disposal Strategy, but the Council feel that it would be impractical to judge this type of competition.

Cllr. Keane has also been pressing for exemption of national schools from rates and charges. The Co. Council advise that recognised national schools are not liable for rates, but are charged a fixed annual sum for water supplied..

The question of a Dublin Tourist Assistance Service (similar to a scheme set up in Amsterdam two years ago for tourists who become victims of crime) will be referred to the Minister for Justice if Cllr. Keane's recent Co. Council Motion is passed.

A SAINT FOR OUR TIME

by MJD

(We continue the story of Dublin workman Matt Talbot. Following three months of sheer hell, Matt's pledge to abstain from alcoholic drink holds, and he turns all his efforts towards increasing his union with God).

In the human weakness of Matt Talbot, God once again made His almighty power manifest. The man was transfigured by grace, but only after a trial of humility and courage. What the gifts of the spirit can achieve in a lowly soul who lives habitually under their spell is amply shown by the ultimate serenity and refinement of this reformed alcoholic. God raises people for public veneration and when needed he sets them up as models for the faithful. Matt was a layman and this is a new age of the laity in the Church. The times call for a great worker saint, a man sprung from a working class family to be a model for all workers. We need a man like Matt Talbot to help us atone for the sins of self-indulgence. God heard Matt's desperate plea for help, and reaching out lifted him to his feet. He invited him to tread the steeper, narrower path leading to heights of spiritual perfection.

There is no saint who is dedicated especially to addicts. Matt Talbot had tumbled upon the twelve steps long before our American friends in the Matt Talbot Retreat Movement thought of them. He had practised almost all of the twelve steps. A booklet containing these twelve steps has been published by Rev. Morgan Costelloe, PP, Vice-Postulator of the Cause of Matt Talbot. Matt's recovery gives hope to alcoholic and all addicts. The following is the Twelve Steps Programme of Alcoholics Anonymous:

- 1 We admitted we are powerless over alcohol - that our lives had become unmanageable.
- 2 We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
- 3 We made a decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of God, as we understand Him.
- 4 We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
- 5 We admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
- 6 We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
- 7 We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
- 8 We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
- 9 We make direct amends to such people wherever possible, except where to do so would injure them or others.
- 10 We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
- 11 We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, as we understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out.
- 12 Having a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry that message to alcoholics, and practice principles in all our lives.

The late Cardinal O'Connell of Boston once said: "Tire not of new beginnings. Build thy life, never upon regret, always upon resolve! Shed no tear on the blotted page of the past but turn the leaf and smile, to see the clean white virgin page before thee. Begin again".

Booklets available from Irish Messenger Publications, 37 Lower Leeson St., Dublin 2



TEMPLEOGUE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

The Society was formed in 1979 by a small group of residents who shared an interest in gardening. Within a couple of years membership had grown considerably and in 1983 the first formal Flower Show was held. This proved to be so successful that it has become a yearly event which is enjoyed by the whole area, both gardeners and non-gardeners alike.

This year the 11th Annual Flower Show was held on 17th July. It was a tremendous success once again. The sight and fragrance of the exhibits, set up in the St Pius X Schools Hall, were quite breath-taking, and the overall standard was extremely high. However, this very excellence could possibly be inhibiting to some, so it has been decided to include plenty of novice classes in next year's schedule, in order to cater for everyone.

Over the years many gardening enthusiasts have passed through the society and every year new members are welcomed. The meeting takes place on the third Wednesday of each month (except July and August) at 8 pm in Our Lady's School, Templeogue Road. There is a different speaker each month and all aspects of gardening are dealt with. During the summer an annual outing is organised to some well-known gardens in Ireland, followed by dinner in an hotel, and these outings have proved most enjoyable as

they give members an opportunity to get to know each other better.

If you have any interest in gardening (no qualification or expertise needed!) why not go along to the next meeting on Wednesday 18th November in Our Lady's School.

Further details may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary, Patricia Halpin, Phone 908766.



MAN'S BEST FRIEND by Michael Sheehan (Templeogue Wood)

Man's best friend is his dog, or so we are led to believe. A friend of mine is the proud possessor of one, Rover by name, which plays Soccer! Rover can dribble a football around the garden and when the ball is thrown he can head it like any top-class centre half! He is almost human and loves to greet visitors when they arrive. At the mention of the word ball he dashes off, gets the ball and places it at your feet, ready for a free kick. For somebody interested in Soccer, surely a "Best Friend". I wonder how he would react if I showed him a "yellow card"!

Which brings me to something about which I am not too happy. I wonder how many of our dog owners are aware of the fact that owners of dogs who foul public places are liable on conviction to a sizeable fine? Apart altogether from breaking the law, it is a danger to public health. It is most unfair when exercising dogs to turn a blind eye to what happens, and leave the onus on somebody else to clear up. In other countries dog walkers have with them, as standard equipment, a shovel, a brush and a carrier bag. I see the same people, early every morning, exercising their animals and disregarding the consequences. Enough said. But dog owners beware! Some morning YOU may get the "Yellow Card" - from ME or from the local DOG WARDEN!

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NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH is a crime prevention programme which enlists the voluntary help of the community in co-operation with the Garda. The community observes criminal activity in its own locality, and reports it - hopefully before any crime actually takes place. Success depends on there being a network of area groups whose members are instructed in prime prevention techniques and other safety measures.

The watch is set up by someone contacting the local station to get assistance. A local Garda will discuss the crime situation in the neighbourhood and arrange a time and place for a first meeting. The person who takes the initiative should do some initial canvassing. Frequent meetings are not required, no one is expected to take personal risks to prevent crime and of course the task of apprehending criminals rests with the Garda Síochána.

Apart from ordinary members, Neighbourhood Watch requires area and street co-ordinators. These would be selected at a first area meeting. These co-ordinators are important "middlemen" between the Garda and the members.

The Area Co-ordinator maintains day-to-day contact with the Street Co-ordinators and allocates assignments such as recruiting new members and distributing a newsletter. The Street Co-ordinator maintains a membership list, and assists at street level. Individual members are expected to 1. Be alert for unusual behaviour 2. Note descriptions of persons, registration numbers of vehicles and other useful information 3. Take necessary crime prevention precautions and 4. Keep records (serial numbers, photos if available) of valuable property (to name but a few of the activities expected).

CRIMEWATCH

Reference is rarely made in the TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH to minor incidents of crime which are often the subject of casual conversations between neighbours. "Did you hear So-and-so had her handbag snatched a few days ago - right outside her own door, too?", or "I believe young What's-his-name was mugged on his way home from a disco last week!". Still more rarely are really serious crimes brought to notice, unless they happen to make the national press. This is perhaps because people don't like the really ugly details to become known among their neighbours. Those who seem to breeze through life unscathed go around largely unaware of what may be happening in our seemingly safe area.

Certainly the TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH has no wish to cause distress by seeking interviews with victims or their families. But it cannot be ignored that Templeogue is not a crime-free area.

To get a perspective on the matter, we called during October to our local Garda Station in Terenure. We were cordially received by Garda Tony Maher, our Neighbourhood Garda. He is one of a team of Gardaí who look after communities like ours at "grass-roots" level. Indeed he would already be well known to many in the district. His "beat" does not co-incide exactly with the area shown on the cover of the last issue of the TELEGRAPH, but nearly enough - and he knows pretty well what is stirring, as he keeps an eye on a substantial part of the district as well as the approach route as he comes up from Terenure.

Our main concern was to establish how Neighbourhood Watch (see previous page for details of the programme) was developing. Most of us are familiar with the blue front-door stickers that announce to potential wrong-doers that the community is on the alert. But are we all that alert and involved?

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Garda Maher was able to assure us that in a number of estates the programme is working very effectively, but it takes a definite input to keep it going. Readers who feel that they don't have access to an active Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator should consult with the Gardaí for information. A Street Co-ordinator should look after about 15-20 houses, and should liaise with an Area Co-ordinator from whom occasional newsletters should be received. All members should be getting definite and regular feed-back.

The TEMPLEOGUE TELEGRAPH would be happy to put its resources at the disposal of Street and Area Co-ordinators who wish to get out bulletins to members.

Various other matters of interest were covered in the course of an informative hour spent with Garda Maher. Watch the next issue of the TELEGRAPH, where this report will be continued.



BRUSHES WITH NEPTUNE by JG Foley

All hell broke loose at home when Con's letter arrived in mid-September from Ennis, saying that the hooker was at last available for the weekend. The wife's eyebrows shot heavenwards. "George," she said, "your mother was always warning me to keep you away from those things". The two lads did a little dance of delight, seeing this as their last chance for a bit of sea-fishing before the season closed.

I should explain there was a tradition in my mother's family that the sea would claim one member in every generation. Her grandfather fell out of a rowing boat while on a fishing trip and was drowned. I once saw the remains of a sailing ship from which her Uncle Bill, a merchant seaman, had escaped - his 13th wreck. On the 14th occasion the Turks got him when, during World War I, they blew up the Royal Edward in the Dardanelles. My mother got off more lightly. She once had to spend the night in a Liverpool hotel, when the mailboat on which she was returning to Dublin was hit by a tanker in the Mersey. She opened her cabin door to be met by a cascade of water tumbling towards her along the corridor outside. It turned out to be no more than lavatory water from an overturned cistern, as the damage to the ship was entirely above the plimsol line. Still, it was a fair blast from Old Neptune's wreathed horn in her direction.

We travelled to Ennis on the Friday, and Saturday at 9 a.m. saw us at a little harbour near Ballyvaughan. It was a gloriously calm and sunny day. The hooker "Snaidhm Seirce" rode close to the jetty, the green waters gently lapping her sides. About six hopeful rod-bearing fishermen, including Con and ourselves, went aboard, and we expected the arrival any moment of a few more who had gone up to the town for last-minute supplies. Con introduced the hooker's owner, "The Panther" O'Connor, who smoked a leisurely pipe as he sat over the little cockpit affair behind the hold. He explained that the "Snaidhm Seirce" (or True-love Knot) was a hooker of the largest class, known as a *Bád Mór*, equipped with half-deck and an engine. There were three smaller classifications known as the *Leath-Bhád*, the *Gleóiteog* and the *Púcán*. The Panther broke off suddenly as the hooker began to drift at an angle to the shore, and he announced that we'd better go up-town on a last round-up or we'd miss the tide. He asked me to go with him to help in flushing out the stragglers from the haunts where he knew most of them would be.

As we completed the round-up and came back along the quay, a scene developed which was so bizarre that reality seemed to have been temporarily suspended. The Panther suddenly started to run up the quay shouting "Holy God, my boat is finished!" and half way along he picked up a plank and jumped over the quay wall, into the sea, clothes and all. He shouted at me to run to the yard across the way and get a ladder. At the same time he hurled instructions in every direction at those who hearing the commotion had come running to the scene. It seems that the hooker had drifted over the concrete ramp that served as a slipway, and was now resting on its keel in the receding tide. The Panther meanwhile was trying to wedge the plank under one of the weatherboards, while the more knowledgeable

among the remaining company were pulling loose stones from the quay wall and wading out with them to The Panther's side. But it was all too little too late. "Snaidhm Seirce" was listing at a 45° angle and the list was getting worse by the minute. The plank and the stones only delayed the calamity. So there we were, stuck fast for the remainder of the morning.

It was well into the afternoon when the tide started to refloat the hooker and we felt reasonably cheerful at the prospect of an evening's fishing as at last we made our way along Galway Bay, destination Kilronan. But a fresh disaster soon became apparent. One of the features of the hooker is a considerable "boilsc" or bulge in its shape. This serves a useful purpose whenever the boat may be lying against a pier, but obviously was not strong enough to support the entire weight of the craft. The Panther had discovered that the little cockpit over which he had been sitting at our first meeting was knee-deep in water. The timbers had been strained and the *galún taosctha* or bailing bucket was produced. The Panther assured the faint-hearted among us that we would now be better off to keep going for Kilronan than to try to get back to Ballyvaughan. No-one save the two young lads was spared in the frantic efforts to keep the water out. We took turns of about 15 minutes each and as I rested between times I could almost see His Pelagic Majesty's Trident coming up for me through the clear waters of Galway Bay.

At approximately 11 p.m. we finally reached Kilronan. The only thought that sustained The Panther and the "crew" was that the licensing laws did not operate on the Aran Islands and that they would be able to get a few well-earned pints before turning in for the night. My two lads were half asleep by this time, and The Panther told me that they could stay on the hooker and use the cuddy or cabin which had accommodation for two. They simply fell into the two bunks, while I settled down on the deck between them.

Such were the excitement and exertions of the day, and the gentle motion of the hooker, that I have to say that I slept for about two hours like the proverbial log. Then came the final disaster. At about 2 a.m. I felt a heavy weight pressing down upon me, and was awakened to find the younger of the two boys hanging like the King of the Swingers from the side of his bunk, with his head resting on my chest. The elder lad was also awake and the three of us had quite a task in the dark to disentangle ourselves. We climbed out of the cabin and surveyed the scene by the light of the moon. We couldn't believe what we saw. The Panther in his anxiety to reach the licenced premises had run "Snaidhm Seirce" right over a ramp which might have been built to the exact same specifications as the one in Ballyvaughan. The hooker was now for the second time in twenty-four hours lying on her "belly" on the shore of Galway Bay.

The three of us made our way to a nearby guesthouse and were out of Kilronan on the first ferry which left us over to Rossaveel. We still have to phone Con to find out how they got the blessed thing back to Ballyvaughan. Maybe they just abandoned it. I just don't believe there would have been enough buckets in Kilronan to keep the water out for the journey back to the mainland. I also think my late sainted mother, great-uncle Bill and my great-grandfather must have been praying for us that September day!

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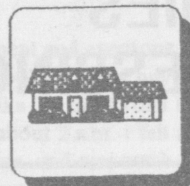
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