

Here's a thought

with Dave O'Connell



If you have any views or opinions on these topics or others, you can contact me at dave.oconnell@ctribune.ie or by post to Dave O'Connell, Connacht Tribune, 15 Market Street, Galway.

Number must be up at last for awful Ireland's Call

If Tony Cascarino and Terry Mancini could keep their countenance for four minutes of Amhran na bhFiann - even if they thought it was the other team's anthem - why is it so hard for our northern rugby brothers to do the same now?

After all, whatever opposition they might have to the Soldier's Song in theory, surely their embarrassment at launching into Ireland's Call with the line "Come the men and come the hour, come the power and the glory" would be even worse.

Gone the men and come the hour, gone the form and the glory - now that might be

more representative of what we're at in France.

But let's not kick a dog when he's down - this is really about putting the past to one side and getting on with things.

And if Ian Paisley can now share a room with Martin McGuinness, why would it be so difficult for the Ulster lads to stand silently for three or four minutes, keeping their thoughts to themselves, while the rest sang their little hearts out for Ireland?

There was a case to be made at the height of the troubles not to sing the anthem of the Republic - particularly when stars like Nigel Carr had their careers cut short by an IRA bomb

blast.

Those were the days when one wing forward - who finally got his Irish call-up after playing over 30 times for Ulster - was asked what it was like to finally get his chance to play for his country.

"I already have," he said. "Over 30 times."

But those days are over - and what right have we to inflict Phil Coulter on the rest of the planet?

Never mind that the lyrics are a cry to war - have you seen the Haka in full flow or translated the words of the Marseillaise and its revolutionary sentiments?

Amhran na bhFiann may have lost its original meaning

long ago, but it's still a stirring song that gets the blood flowing - as opposed to Coulter's effort which packs all the punch of a six stone wrestler.

Ireland's Call is no more representative of our island than that green flag with the four provinces in either corner they're lugging out in front of our beleaguered boys before these big games.

A big song won't guarantee a big performance against Argentina, but it might make our boys look more like a rugby team than the limp chorus from Michael Flatley's newest Irish dance extravaganza.

Then we'd all have something to sing about.



Meghan Kelly from the Mairtín Byrne CCE Branch Castleblakenee who was a prizewinner in the Harp competition at the All Ireland Fleadh Coel in Tullamore recently. She also was part of the St. Colman's Grúpa Coel Corofin who took third place at the Fleadh.

Volunteers really do Make It Happen for the rest of us

We've all seen the stories of modern Ireland - the couple who travel from the Midlands to Dublin before dawn, pausing only to drop off their three kids in pyjamas at a child minder's before heading to work and then leaving so that they can get them in bed in time to ensure they're able to do the same thing all over again in the morning.

That would of course explain why they have no time to join local clubs and societies in their adopted provincial home town.

And that in turn would explain why volunteerism and a sense of community are dead and gone with the dodo.

Only they aren't - they've never been more alive.

Okay, not everyone plays a part, but - for anyone privileged enough to meet last week's winners of our Connacht Tribune/Combined Insurance Make It Happen Awards - there was no question but that community pride was stronger than ever.

Here were people who not only gave of their free time for the betterment and comfort of others - they seemed to enjoy it too.

They cared for individuals or groups in their own community or on the other side of the world.

And when we decided that it would be a nice thing to say thanks to them and give them a little something to help them in the future, it was these self-same volunteers

who expressed their gratitude to us.

It was supposed to be the other way around.

These are not craw-thumpers who think they're better than the rest of us; they're just ordinary people who think nothing of giving so much back.

They're all mentioned elsewhere in this week's paper, so there's no point in singling one or more of them out here.

Other than to say this - each and everyone of them is an inspiration; for their own courage, their caring souls and their commitment.

Never mind the begrudgers - these generous souls truly do make our world a better place.

Headford students turn to Japanese for exam inspiration!

BY CATHERINE REGAN

They'll soon be big in Japan, the students of Presentation College in Headford - and when they get there, they'll be able to speak the lingo too!

Because the success of one student in this year's Leaving Cert has prompted eight more to take up Japanese as they entered the same cycle this month.

All of this was made possible through the presence of a local woman, Tomoko McDermott, who is originally from Japan and now living in Headford. She teaches the language in the school to the Transition Year students, and she is also teaching Japanese in Dunmore and Tuam.

This is the first year that the school will offer the language as an exam subject, after one brave student, Niall O'Reilly, took it upon himself to sit this year's higher Leaving Certificate paper outside of the school curriculum.

The school became involved in the Modern Language Initiative about five years ago and in conjunction with the



Japanese teacher Tomoko McDermott at the Presentation College, Headford.

Department of Education and the Japanese Embassy began to offer the language to their transition year students.

Niall O'Reilly became interested in Japanese after taking the subject as part of his Transition year programme.

Niall became so enthralled

with the language and all of its 26 alphabets that he decided to get private tuition from Mrs McDermott and take the honours exam for his Leaving Certificate.

Last year he won a scholarship to Japan, offered by the Japanese Embassy. He had to submit a project about

Japanese culture and the prize was the chance to spend a month in the Land of the Rising Sun.

While there, his passion for the language and the culture grew even further. He was already studying seven subjects and taking Japanese externally made it eight.

School Principal James White explained that since the inception of the language in the school about five years it popularity has grown and grown although this is the first year that a student has actually taken the Leaving Certificate exam.

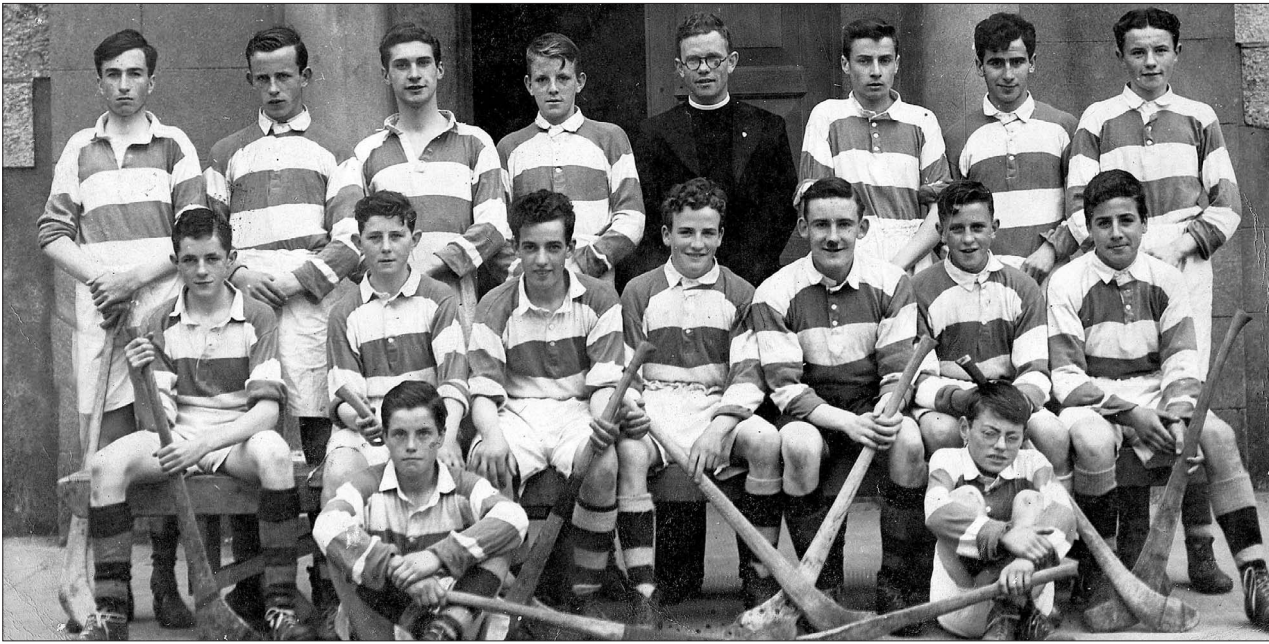
"Up until this year we offered students French and German. Different languages appear from time to time with international students. Interest in Japanese has been developing in the school for some time now.

"We decided after Niall's success that we would offer fifth year students the chance to study the subject for their Leaving Certificate."

Eight students in the school have decided to study the language for the next two years - an extremely ambitious and exciting development for the North Galway school.

But with a highly motivated teacher who is able to generate an interest in her native language and culture, it looks like the new programme is already destined to be a huge success.

FAMOUS FACES



A step back in time to the St. Joseph's College (Bish) hurling team of '48-49 with the late Tony O'Sullivan and his Irish international rugby team-mate Johnny Dooley - as well as legendary Irish amateur star Brod Long - all lining out for their school. Pictured are (front - from left) Johnny Dooley and Tony Brennelly with (seated) Brendan O'Byrne, Murt Grealish, Brod Long, Padraic Nolan, Joe Cooke, Peter Briggs and Andy Holland, and (back) Leo Curran, Martin Flaherty, David Moloney, Tony O'Sullivan, Brother Avenistis (Coach) Mick Lawless, Mick Holland and Paddy Kelly.

Rehab survey finds holidays a better option than homes

Going on holiday and buying a car are greater priorities for people living in Connacht than investing in property - that's the finding of a survey conducted by Lansdowne Market Research to mark the launch of Rehab Easy Win.

When asked how they would spend the Rehab Easy Win top prize of €100,000, 45 per cent of Connacht residents said they would spend their winnings on a holiday.

This is higher than the responses received from other parts of the country. New cars were second on the wish list with 31 per cent of respondents

saying they would spend their cash in this way. Investing in property ranked third, with 27 per cent of people saying they would put their windfall towards a new house.

The findings co-incided with the launch of Rehab Lotteries' new Rehab Easy Win with its one in seven chance of winning a prize.

Rehab Easy Win prize money is not shared so match five of the 42 numbers and the top prize of €100,000 is yours alone.

There are two chances to win each week, with prize draws taking place on Wednesdays and Saturdays.

Closing date extended for Galway People of the Year



At a reception in the Clayton Hotel to announce details of the ReHAB Galway People of the Year '07, were: Kevin Clancy, ReHAB; John Glynn, Director and General Manager Clayton Hotel; Galway Hurler Alan Kerins and Ollie Robinson, ReHAB.

The closing date has been extended for nominations from the public for the ten people who will be chosen as ReHAB Galway People of the Year 2007.

The presentation of those Awards, now one of the highlights of the Galway social calendar, will take place in the Clayton Hotel on Saturday, November 17.

And the organisers are now inviting nominations before

Monday morning next, October 1.

Rehab area organiser Ollie Robinson said during the week that in addition to contributions to local communities, people who have excelled as leaders or made significant contributions in areas such as enterprise and employment, education arts and culture, youth, sport, tourism, environment, media, broadcasting, charity work, community involvement,

scientific research, public service, entertainment, personal achievement, leadership or other areas can be nominated.

Nominations and supporting material should be sent to Ollie Robinson at ReHAB Foundation Parkmore Business Park West Galway or email to ollierobinson@eircom.net.

Further information from ReHAB at 091-756653 or 087-24 37 009.

Éamon Ó Cuív, T.D.
CLINICÍ/CLINICS
 Satharn/Saturday, 29/9/07
 Maidin Dé Sathairn - Saturday Morning
 Oifig na Gaillimhe - Galway Office
 9.00 a.m. - 1.00 p.m.
Coinnithe - Appointments
Glaigh ar - Contact 091 562846
 2.00 p.m. - Hurney's, Tullykyne
 3.00 p.m. - Holleran's, Collinamuck
 4.00 p.m. - Kinneavy's, Rosscahill
 5.00 p.m. - Corrib Hotel, Oughterard
 Oifig/Office - Ar Oscaill/Open
 Luan - Aoine / Monday - Friday
 Teach Uí Chiarubháin, Sráid Tobar an Iarla, Gaillimh
 Kirwan House, Flood Street, Galway
 Teil/Tel: (091) 562846 - Facs/Fax: (091) 562844
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