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Clare Champion 14th January 1961

**CLARE'S PROGRESSIVE YEAR IN MUSIC**

**Summary of C.C.E. Activities in 1960**

THE members of Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann in Clare will long treasure many happy memories of 1960—a year which saw new friendships established with Gaels at home and abroad, successful Fleadhanna and concerts throughout the county, new strides in the preservation, revival of dying traditions and an imposing list of honours captured by Clare musicians.

With twenty-two registered Craobhanna in 1960, the Banner county maintained the steady pace it has set over the past few years, and was able to extend a guiding hand to the musicians of Cork and Kerry, where properly constituted County Boards were being formed. Indeed Clare’s artists, adjudicators and administrators have been in constant demand in all four pro­vinces and they found that love of traditional music is a bond uniting all types, classes and creeds. Inci­dentally, two new trophies captured by Clare musicians at the All-Ireland Fleadh were presented by the Antrim and Derry Fiddlers Association.

The annual County Fleadh Ceoil, held this year at Kilrush was a well organised and highly successful event. The hard-working committee can be well satisfied with their work. Two days and three nights packed with music, song and dancing comprised the official programme, but the gatherings of musicians and Gaeilgeoiri, seancaithe and dancers lasted well into the following week. In fact these unofficial functions seem to capture the musc-sought spirit of "the Hidden Ireland."

At the All-Ireland Fleadh at Boyle, we witnessed a great display of enthusiasm -=- Gaelic Leaguers from the North and East —mingling eagerly with the bauneen-clad Connemara men Who will ever forget those sixteen-hand reels on the Hill of Boyle in the dusk of a Summer’s evening.

**KEEN COMPETITION**

Here, in the face of the keenest competition, Clare captured an en­viable aray of laurels in solos, duets and trios; while the Tulla Band took the Ceili Band Champion­ship for the second time.

The Oireachtas competitions in the Autumn saw a further list of Clare prizewinners, with the Killfenora Band taking premier hon­ours..

Well done also to the All-lreland Champions, O Loughlin and Mur­phy (duet), J.C. Talty, M. Falsey, Anthony McMahon, Chris Droney Martin Talty, Seamus Connolly, Robert McMahon, etc. The list is veritably intervenable and the names are familiar to every follower of Irish Music. A word of thanks is due to Willie Clancy and Paddy Canny for their countless fine performances all over Ireland.

A special word of praise is due to Ceoltoirí na Cathrach who once again proved to be the outstanding Craobh in the county. The great work done over the years by Jim Ward, Martin Talty, Willie Clancy and company continues to show wonderful results. It is heartening for the men who have carried the banner for so long to see young musicians bringing fresh glory to their native parishes and carrying on a glorious and powerful tradition.

A very wholesome and pleasant feature of the organization is the spirit of goodwill and comradeship that exists between rival musicians. Men who have won (or lost) in competition by the narrowest of mar­gins, are the first to admire their opponents' style, repertoire, to ex­change tunes and show that in Irish music It is not winning but taking part that holds the glory.

During the year numerous con­certs, ceilis and Feiseanna were pro­moted by the various branches throughout the county, while fre­quent meetings and impromptu sessions helped to keep enthusiasm at peak level.

In an effort to promote and improve Irish dancing an organization (Cumann Rince Tuaithe) has been formed within the county and is getting monetary aid as well as full co-operation from the parent body. The standard of both country-set and fior ceili dancing is rather low at present in most areas, as is noticeable at Fleadhanna and Ceilithe.

This coming year should see a vast improvement in this sphere and if the public give the necessary cooperation, then Ceili dancing will be much more enjoy­able.

**SEVERE BLOW**
The death of Mrs Elizabeth Crotty. Kilrush. President of the Clare Co Board from its foundation came as a severe blow to the musicians of Ireland. It would be impossible in this short survey to pay adequate tribute to her. Suffice it to say that she has long held a special place in Irish hearts and her memory will remain evergreen among her countless admirers. Ar dheis De go raibh a n-ainm.

On the administrative side Sean Reid took the Secretaryship into his capable hands once again. The resignation of Martin Talty from the Chair was received with much regret Happily Martin will continue to be one of the mainstays of C.C.E., and is a prominent member of several national committees.

The vacated chair, was filled by the Rev. J. Saunders, C.C., Quin, former Chairman of Tipperary Co. Board,

What of the coming year? Several ambitious and practical schemes are being undertaken to bring the best of Irish music into every parish hall and community centre. A comprehensive recording programme is also planned. There is still a few native Irish speakers and sean-nos singers among us, neglected and practically forgotten in this age. Their songs, music and seanacus must be preserved for future gen­erations.

So, with a full programme, Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann faces the new year with hope and confidence**.**