

northCLARE/southGALWAY

New Gort principal aims to continue high standard

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THE new principal of Gort Community School has pledged to continue its development for the benefit of students and staff over the coming years.

Brian Crossan, who was deputy principal in Scariff Community College for five and a half years, will succeed Denis Corry, who was worked as principal of Gort CS for the last 22 years.

Mr Crossan will be responsible for 62 teaching staff and overseeing the provision of education for 750 students.

The Longford native told *The Clare Champion* he plans to maintain the high standard of education in the school.

"I want to continue on the great work that has been done to date by the principal, Denis Corry and deputy principal, Amy Talbot.

"I also want to set priorities for the year ahead in collaboration with staff. Gort Community School is a very respected school in the area and has a very good reputation," he said.

The new principal is very familiar with the South Galway area. Married to Kinvara woman, Sharon Tannian, whose extended family is well-known, the father-of-three is very involved in hurl-



■ Gort Community School's students council leadership team of Evan Ashton (outgoing chairperson), Rebecca Smyth (incoming chairperson), Donal Moloney (incoming vice-chairperson), Polly Edge-O'Neill (outgoing vice chairperson), with outgoing principal Denis Corry and new principal Brian Crossan.

ing and camogie with the local club, which included a stint as chairman of the juvenile section.

During his time in Scariff Community College, he was part of a peer-collaboration project, which involved teachers sharing information to create a dialogue about methodology and best practice in the classroom. The initiative was introduced as a result of a Forbairt project, which was rolled out with the help of Mr Crossan and two positional leaders in September 2016. With four

positional leaders involved this year, Mr Crossan said the project is gaining momentum.

A curriculum team in Scariff is also working on higher order questioning, which is tied in with peer collaboration. Examining the type of questions that are used in classrooms, teachers are focusing on asking more thought-provoking questions that challenge high achieving students.

Mr Crossan was heavily involved in other initiatives at Scariff, such as the rollout of the

new junior cycle framework and planning for the recently green-lighted €1 million extension.

Mr Crossan completed his Bachelor of Technology Education training in Thomond College, Limerick, along with a Masters in Advanced Manufacture and Technology and a graduate diploma in Educational Leadership at University of Limerick.

With 24 years of teaching experience, he has been in senior management for the past seven years.



Dogs have their day in the sun

(Clockwise from above) ■ Kieran Ellis of Clarinbridge and Michael Barrett of Barefield with Lexi and Cassie at the fundraising dogathon in aid of the RNLi and The Hogsprickle at Gort. ■ Veterinary nurses Karen Platt and Bev Truss, founder of The Hogsprickle Wildlife Rescue. ■ Colin Matel with Zeig and Zelg. ■ John Murray and Barbara Storey with their children, Tony and Lena Storey-Murray, and their dogs, Ruby and Paddy. ■ Elaine Kelly of Ardhanan arrives with Céilí. Photographs by John Kelly



Moher Cottage pours the best cuppa

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COFFEE lovers across the country have voted a North Clare café as having the best in Ireland.

Moher Cottage in Liscannor was voted by Today FM listeners as having the best coffee in Ireland, having received 28% of a total 10,000 votes cast by listeners to the Weekend Breakfast with Alison Curtis.

The competition attracted entries from all over the country, with another Clare entry, The Wooden Spoon in Killaloe, also making the final shortlist.

Caitríona Considine, who owns the business with her husband, Kevin, near the Cliffs of Moher, said she was delighted with the award, especially as Moher Cottage only opened its doors two months ago.

The shop also stocks Irish handmade craft and design items, unique to the area, many of which Caitríona sourced after meeting fellow entrepreneurs on the ACORNS 2 programme, an initiative funded by the Department of Agriculture, to help women starting out in business.

"I was very privileged to be accepted onto ACORNS 2. The programme gave me the opportunity to learn from the experiences of other early-stage female entrepreneurs and also more seasoned successful women in business.

"I now have a network of professional business contacts,



■ Caitríona Considine at Moher Cottage in Liscannor.

which includes some of Ireland's finest designers and makers, whose products I now stock in the store," she said.

"Winning the public vote for the best coffee in Ireland has been a great boost to the business. We have also made the regional shortlist of only one of two businesses in Munster in the Bank of Ireland start-up awards in the creative retail category, which was fantastic," she said.

Caitríona, who gave up her job in the corporate world to pursue her dream, believes the high-quality coffee brand they source

and the hard work done behind the scenes are some of the reasons for the win.

"We believe we have something special here in Moher Cottage and, so far, thankfully our customers are enjoying the experience, which is so important to us.

"We have great coffee but, more importantly, we are a new family business, built up from our old cow shed and pigsty in the most wonderful community in Liscannor," she said.

The couple also run Considines Bar, which is located across

the road and has been in the family for four generations, with its first licence on record from 1868.

"Everyone has been amazingly supportive right from the very beginning and we now employ some of our neighbours.

"It really is a team and community effort. We plan to continue working hard to keep moving forward to secure the future of both businesses and look forward to a busy summer, meeting locals and tourists from around the world visiting the wonderful Cliffs of Moher beside us," she concluded.



Canney has a personal link with OPW exhibition

IT was a nostalgic occasion for Minister for the Office of Public Works and Flood Relief Seán Canney in launching an exhibition in Portumna Castle last week.

In 1831, an Act of Parliament in Westminster established the Office of Public Works (OPW). The Act was entitled Public Works (Ireland) Act, 1831 and was subtitled, An Act for the Extension and Promotion of Public Works in Ireland.

To mark this anniversary, the OPW put together an exhibition celebrating its history and achievements, part of which will be displayed at Portumna Castle until October. At the launch, Minister Canney outlined his personal interest in the project.

"The former and current staff of the OPW deserve great praise for their legacy of the last 185 years. I am proud to follow in the footsteps of my father, Christy Canney, who served as a district inspector in the OPW for 20 years from the 1960s to the 1980s, serving in Castlebar, Limerick and Galway and who also contributed to the footprint and legacy of the OPW.

"When future generations are looking back at my tenure as minister, I hope that they will be able to say that I made a contribution to the work of the OPW and, in particular, in advancing the provision of flood-relief works and reducing the impact of flood risk on our communities and businesses in this country.

"I am delighted that Portumna Castle and



■ Minister for the OPW Seán Canney.

Gardens, a magnificent location on the shores of Lough Derg on the River Shannon, is hosting this important exhibition of 185 years of the OPW's existence. I am delighted and honoured to be the Minister for the OPW at this time, when we are celebrating the significant and long-lasting impact that the OPW has had on the quality of our infrastructure, the

architecture of our built environment and the allure of our heritage attractions."

The OPW185 exhibition demonstrates the breadth of public works and services carried out by generations of OPW staff over the 185 years of the organisation. The range and breadth of this work includes the design, construction, maintenance and management of piers, harbours, roads, coast guard stations, schools, barracks, garda stations, housing, hospitals, office accommodation, bridges, canals, courthouses, mines, quarries, prisons, railways, drainage, sewerage and water works and post offices.

The work of the organisation also includes the provision of furniture and artworks, conserving and interpreting heritage sites, maintaining war graves, providing flood risk management and provision of visitor facilities.

A timeline has been designed that is 18.5m long, which illustrates the Government Acts that have directed the work of the OPW; the main events in each decade; significant projects; the chairmen of the Commissioners of Public Works and world events impacting on Ireland.

A catalogue of selected files held by the National Archives relating to the OPW has been lodged on the OPW website. It is hoped that the exhibition will stimulate interest in the social history surrounding the provision of public works and the work of the OPW.

NEWS BRIEFS

New Quay lands €24k

NEW Quay is among harbours in nine coastal local authority areas that will receive assistance for development projects.

The picturesque North Clare harbour is earmarked for a €24,000 grant to replace steps and repair the slipway, the Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine, Michael Creed has confirmed.

The €1m package to cover the entire programme augments the €2.8m already approved in March and means that 67 local authority developments in total will receive funding under the 2017 Fishery Harbour and Coastal Infrastructure Development Programme.

Burrenbeo walk

THIS Bank Holiday Monday will see BurrenBeo host a walk on the Slieve Carran Nature Reserve from 2pm-5.30pm. Irish Remedies in the Burren by Dr Dilis Clare is the topic. Due to increasing numbers, this will be the last Burrenbeo Trust monthly walk that will be open to non-members.

Permission sought for temporary crèche in resource building

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CLARE County Council has been asked to grant temporary planning approval for the conversion of part of the North West Clare Family Resource Centre in Ennistymon.

This consists of a temporary change of use for three years of 115m² of the building to a crèche, construction of a rear external door and two metre high fencing to secure a play area, with connections to existing services at Boghere Street, Ardnaculla.

In 2011, a community crèche, Little Deers, was established at the premises of Data Display Limited, which is now Daktronics.

Centre secretary Paul Conway stated in a submission that the group has been actively looking for a permanent and purpose-built facility for some years and are very hopeful of securing a site, in association with Clare County Council, in the next few years for the community of Ennistymon.

"The crèche is full of young people at present and is open to all local children. It has a particularly positive uptake from members of the Travelling community, social housing tenants and local Syrian families.

"The centre has received notice of termination of lease due to business reasons

requiring the space at Daktronics. While this is positive for jobs in the area, it does present a major challenge to our service to social customers in Ennistymon," he stated.

An Grianan was constructed in 1978 by the Clare Committee of Agriculture [now Teagasc] and was purchased in 2010 by North West Clare Family Resource Centre.

Mr Conway explained the proposal is to temporarily house the crèche in the building until the expected permanent facility is established. The rest of the building will continue to provide training and support to the locality. He confirmed five administrative and support jobs currently using this part of the building will be redeployed elsewhere.

By carrying out this temporary relocation, he explained the crèche facility would be protected for the community, as well as 15 full-time and part-time jobs.

As the centre is a registered charity, he requested the authority accept that it should be deemed exempt from the payment of planning fees and return the fee payment at its earliest convenience.

According to planning documents, the company directors are Michael McGovern, Mary Gleeson, Paul Conway, Claire Thynne, David McDonnell, James Sheperd, Jeanne McKay, Pat Kiernan and Jan Godfrey.