

# TOWN TALK

## A WEEKLY ROUND-UP OF DUNDALK DOINGS

### Estate action call

Ashling Park residents claim that their estate is being used as a dumping ground and are demanding action from the Dundalk UDC on this and other problems affecting the area.

The residents say that children can only play on the road, and fear that a fatal accident will occur unless something is done about the situation in the estate.

They have five main grievances: getting the area cleaned up; the lack of signs to slow traffic; repairs to houses; old age pensioners clothes lines not being repaired and cookers in the houses not being repaired.

Recently the residents formed a new committee comprising: chairman, Joe Ashmore; vice-chairman, Jim Martin; secretary, Patsy McGuire; assistant secretary, Pat O'Quigley; treasurer, Mrs. Quigley; assistant treasurer, Mrs. Rutherford; p.r.o., Joe Kelly. Sub-committee: Patsy Cassidy, Mrs. Mary Donnelly, Billy Hayes, Mickey Hayes, Mrs. McGee.

Last week they had a meeting with local Colr. Mary McGuinness who has undertaken to have their problems investigated. Other councillors were unable to attend the meeting. The committee hold their next meeting on Tuesday next.

### Living skills course

Louth V.E.C. and the National Manpower Service are involved in running a unique style course for youth.

Entitled "Skills for Living" it's being staged one day a week for 15 weeks for persons under 21.

It's a pilot scheme and the Louth V.E.C. are the first in the country to be asked to take part in it.

C.E.O., Dr. Peter Connolly explained to members at last Thursday night's monthly meeting, that the course was aimed at meeting the specific needs of the participants. If they had a literacy problem they would receive tuition for that.

Ten people, all under 21, had been recruited for the course. They would receive £30 a week, and would be instructed in such matters as the country's tax structure, social welfare code, interview techniques, industrial relations, physical education and looking after their health etc.

### A yoga course

A course of 12 classes by the Tony Quinn Yoga Group, begins this month in the Carrol Mead Hall, Pearse Park and in St. Gerard's Hall, Alphonse Road.

The courses are for beginners, intermediate and advanced pupils, both male and female and cover relaxation, breathing, exercise, nutrition, meditation and philosophy.

The group has now been operating in Dundalk for six years.

A group of I.C.A. ladies trying out indoor bowls in the town's indoor sports complex at a recent promotional night.



### A drama group set up

It appears that the split within the ranks of the Castle Players drama group is beyond healing. For after a meeting called last week to try and sort out the divisions within the group, the outcome was that a majority, who describe themselves as "active members" have set up a new society.

They have named themselves the Dolmen Theatre Group, and their chairman is Louth Co. Councillor, Mr. Mícael O'Donnell. The other officers are: vice-chairman, Tom McDermott; secretary, Jean Connolly; treasurer Patricia Smyth, and PRO Brid McBride.

They claim the reason for branching out on their own is due to "some difficulties in the past year over production decisions and a reluctance to adopt more progressive policies."

Their plans for the new season include presenting Brian Merriman's "Midnight Court" in the Newry Arts Centre, as part of the one-act drama festival in late October. The same cast that represented Ireland at an international theatre festival in Detroit, U.S.A., in July last will take part in the production.

In November then, the group will stage Bernard Farrell's comedy "Canaries" in the local Town Hall, with Gerry Roddy as producer. Gerry produced such recent Castle Players productions as "All In Favour Said No", "The Chastitude" and "Resurrection Men."

But the biggest venture the group is undertaking is the staging of Brian Friel's "Translations". It has taken the professional theatre by storm not only in Ireland, but England, Canada and America.

The Dolmen Group have secured the amateur rights for the play to give local theatregoers an opportunity of seeing it.

## Castle Players have busy season ahead

Castle Players programme of events for the coming season include the revival of Louth Drama Festival, the formation of a "community theatre", the setting up of a library of plays and a "Poets Corner."

These projects were discussed at the recent annual meeting in Mountpleasant Hall when chairman, Oliver Rodgers said the past year had been the most memorable since the group was founded, with three plays being performed.

He expressed his dissatisfaction with those responsible for selecting plays for Dundalk Amateur Drama International. For the second time in two years Castle Players had been called on at the 11th hour when one of the invited groups was unable to travel.

"Last year we were there as fourth choice because no other group would take part at such

short notice," he said. He suggested that the festival committee should select a local group to act as substitute so the members would have adequate time to prepare.

The entire autumn programme of Castle Players will be rehearsed, stage-built and performed at Mountpleasant Hall, in the tradition of community or people's theatre.

New members are being sought, particularly young people and a role — on or off stage — is guaranteed.

Extensive alterations have already been carried out to the hall by voluntary workers with technical advice from Mr. Paul Clarke of the Northern Ireland Arts Committee, who recently designed new lighting and layout for Dundalk Town Hall. The 230-seater hall is expected to be ready for a first

production by November.

The planned library of plays will be available for the use of such groups as Macra na Feirme, I.C.A. and sporting organisations and the "Poets Corner" is an idea to give young poets somewhere to read their work. Anyone interested should contact the secretary Pat McKenna, Feede, Mountpleasant.

Meanwhile the revival of the Louth Drama Festival, which will be held in Mountpleasant Hall will mean the oldest festival in Ireland will exist once more. It was last held seven years ago when Castle Players won four of the major trophies.

The Players new committee is: chairman Oliver Rodgers; vice chairman, Eamon Callan; secretary, Pat McKenna; treasurer, Alice Matthews; PRO, Paddy Craven, who will also be in charge of production.

### A VEC expo

Louth V.E.C. will this year again run an adult education exhibition in the Dundalk Shopping Centre and it will be staged at the end of the month.

C.E.O. Dr. P. Connolly told last Thursday night's V.E.C. meeting that the cost of courses would work out at 90p an hour.

The committee were offering a range of courses of a general education and hobby nature, leaving certificate on a part-time basis, or classes of an art or skill development type.

These would be held in the committee's three vocational schools, Dundalk, Dunleer and Bush and there would also be courses held during the day in the old technical school in Chapel St., Dundalk. Pensioners attending the courses would be only asked to pay a nominal fee.

## Gorta collection

The annual church gate collection in aid of Gorta, the Irish Freedom from Hunger Campaign, will take place at all Masses in Dundalk on Sunday.

The Co. Louth Committee of Gorta, established in 1981, has received "marvellous" support from the public, according to chairman, Mr. David McCarthy.

"Thanks to the awareness among the people of Co. Louth to the problems of the Third World this county has been one of the top five fund raising counties since the inception of the local committee."

Already £20,000 has been raised and two projects, one costing £6,000 in India and one costing £10,000 in Tanzania have been undertaken, said county treasurer, Brian Hanratty, who pointed out that "Gorta helps people to help themselves."

## Scholarship

Former De La Salle student, Eamon Bishop, from Mill Road, Dundalk, who is to study at the National College of Art and Design, is one of the four winners of the prestigious C. A. Smith Scholarship award scheme.

Eamon and his co-winners were among several hundred Leaving Certificate students who competed for the awards. The scholarship is worth £600 per year over the four years of his diploma course at the National College.

Eamon, a son of Eamon and Margaret Bishop, was taught art at the De La Salle by Miss Doreen Babe.