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In Brief

Family in fire escape

AN Ardee family had a lucky escape when fire broke out in their Dawson Demesne home in the early hours of Sunday morning last. Mrs. Bridget McCague, a widowed grandmother, was alerted to the fire by the smell of smoke at around 4 a.m. on Sunday morning. She immediately woke up the other members of the family including her young grandchildren. They all managed to make their way to safety before the flames took hold of the building. There were no injuries. Units from Drogheda and Ardee fire brigades fought the blaze for more than an hour containing it to the kitchen where the fire is believed to have started.

Sandra joins travel firm



SANDRA FINNEGAN, Patrick Street, Drogheda, who has been working in Dublin for the past five years, has returned to work with the Globe Travel Agency in Drogheda.

On leaving school Sandra entered the interesting world of the travel agent, working with the local firm Arrow Tours. To gain additional experience in her career she moved to Dublin, joining Ray Treacy Travel, who as well as handling the needs of the general public specialise in servicing groups of sports enthusiasts setting off for football fixtures on the continent.

Car theft probe

DROGHEDA Gardai are investigating an incident in which a car was stolen from the Stearnen area on Monday night last.

Two other cars, one of which was stolen in Dublin and the other in Gormanston were found abandoned in the Stearnen area the same evening. The car stolen in Stearnen has not been recovered.

NEWS

TRIO JAILED

Father and two sons jailed after elderly man tied up and robbed.

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JUDGE M. P. SMITH

ENTERTAINMENT

TIME OUT

Best for local scene news, gossip and pictures.

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Stefan Dennis

PEOPLE

HIGH FLYERS

Drogheda students set for major maths contest.

Page 7



David Gargan

SPORT

STILL ON TOP

Drogheda United keep ahead after win over Bray Wanderers.

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FRANK FLANAGAN

Front runners FF links

4 groups bid for new radio licence

FOUR separate groups of Drogheda, Dundalk and mid-Louth businessmen emerged this week as applicants in the race for the single radio licence to be allocated to the Louth/north Meath area.

Two of the front runners have strong Fianna Fail connections. None of the applicants would reveal their plans this week, but these are expected to be revealed when the Independent Radio and Television Commission holds public hearings.

The successful applicant will be known in six weeks and the new station is expected to be up and running by mid-summer.

One of the Drogheda consortiums is headed by well-known businessman and former South Louth Comhairle Ceanntair F.F. P.R.O., Donal Kinsella. And a Dundalk based group contains two F.F. activists, Eugene Caulfield, chairman of the Horticulture Board and close associate of Horticulture Minister Seamus Kirk, as well as Waterunder builder, Peter Govern, who previously ran for election to the Fianna Fail National Executive.

The four nominations being considered for the licence are:

● Fergus McArdle, Kearney McArdle and



DONAL KINSELLA heading consortium.

Co., 12 Crowe Street, Dundalk.

● John T. Davis, Community Communications Ltd., c/o The Meath Chronicle Ltd., Market Square, Navan.

● Michael Comyn, chairman, Two County Radio, Donaghys Mill, Trinity St., Drogheda.

● Donal Kinsella, Louth/Meath County Radio, c/o Touche Ross,

Earlsfort Centre, Earlsfort Terrace, Dublin 2.

Also involved in the Donal Kinsella consortium are Liam Muldoon, accountant; Vincent Hoey, solicitor; Harry McArdle, Height for Hire boss, and his brother, Frank McArdle, rent-a-bin contractor and poultry and meat shop owner in Dundalk. If they obtain the licence the radio station will be Drogheda based.

Front runner in the Dundalk consortium, Fergus McArdle, is a brother of the McArdle brothers in the Donal Kinsella Drogheda based consortium.

Behind Fergus McArdle, a director with Dundalk F.C., in Dundalk is Eamon Hiney, chairman, Dundalk F.C., and owner of Centre Travel and a number of fruit and veg shops around the locality; Peter Quinn, owner of the Imperial Hotel; Eugene Caulfield, chairman, Horticulture Board, and Peter Govern, Waterunder, Drogheda, a building contractor and Fianna Fail activist.

The other Drogheda consortium fronted by Michael Comyn, formerly of Boyneside Radio, involves Eobain McDonnell (although the application is in his wife's name, Concepta), building contractor and former Boyneside Radio boss; John Keenan, Bellingham Castle, and former Tel Star Radio, Dundalk, boss; Drogheda Community Services, fronted by chairman, Dermot Kierans, and Joe Keely, Keely Clothing Manufacturing, Drogheda.

The final consortium is headed by Jack Davis, managing editor, *The Meath Chronicle* newspaper, Navan. Also understood to be involved with Mr. Davis is the Dundalk Democrat newspaper.

A large number were indictable offences, perhaps indicating a rise in local crime levels. However, court administrators say that this may be as much to do with the fact that the Gardai were "getting on top" of the crime situation.

In addition, District Justices were showing more reluctance to deal with cases where the offence was of such a serious nature as to warrant stricter punishment than that meted out by the District Courts (jail sentences restricted to two years).

There have been calls for more time to be allotted to the Circuit Court sessions, which at present take place over three days.



DESTRUCTION . . . Boyne Valley Tourism Development Association official, Tomas O hEocaidh, at Glenmore, Oldbridge, near Drogheda, this week protesting at the cutting down of a large number of trees on the banks of the Boyne. (See story Page 3).
Picture: Ken Fingean

Settlement in ex-golf club manager row



JOE CARR . . . agreement reached.

THE former secretary/manager of Laytown and Bettystown Golf Club, Joe Carr, has reached an "out of court" settlement with his former employers just a week before the second hearing of an unfair dismissal action.

Mr. Carr's action against the club was scheduled for a further Employment Appeals Tribunal hearing later this month. But a mutual agreement was reached at the eleventh hour which is reliably understood to involve payment in excess of £20,000 to the former employee.

Mr. Carr this week confirmed he had reached a settlement with the golf club for "an undisclosed sum which is acceptable to me." He added that he was now satisfied that the matter had been settled.

Golf club captain, John Riordan, commented "the club is glad to say this matter is now resolved to everybody's

satisfaction. There is now no dispute between Mr. Carr and the golf club."

The issue first came to light at a sitting of the Employment Appeals Tribunal last December during which allegations of incompetence were made against Mr. Carr in running the club. The allegations were refuted by Mr. Carr, whose lawyer queried if the club expected a "Smurfit-type executive" for the £13,000 a year salary they were paying him.

Mr. Carr's employment as secretary/manager started on August 9, 1985, and on September 13, 1988, his notice was given to him. Mr. Carr refused three months payment in lieu when he received his notice.

While this week reluctant to sound triumphant in claiming vindication, Mr. Carr said he was "extremely happy and content to have the matter sorted out to the best of my satisfaction."

MEP's son to seek Euro seat

A SON of Mark Clinton, the former Minister for Agriculture and current member of the European Parliament for the Leinster constituency, is expected to follow his father's footsteps into the political arena this year.

Mark Clinton junior, an army officer serving in the Curragh, is in his mid 30s and until now has been debarred from taking an active interest in politics because of his career.

But with his father's resignation from Europe, now imminent, he has been approached by members of the Laytown-Donacaney

branch of Fine Gael to allow his name go forward for election at party convention, scheduled for the end of February. To take up this challenge, Captain Clinton will have to resign his commission in the army.

Colr. Tom Kelly, Laytown, the man who is personally nominating Captain Clinton for office, told the *Drogheda Independent* "we heard he was interested so I contacted him personally. He said we were the first branch to approach him and was pleased to accept the nomination."

Colr. Kelly's nomination is seconded by Dick O'Reilly and goes forward on behalf of the branch and the whole Slane district.

Mark Clinton junior will be one of four Fine Gael people to go before the convention. The others are Deputy Paddy Cooney, Longford/Westmeath; Senator Charlie McDonnell, Laois/Offaly, and Colr. Brennan, Carlow/Kilkenny.

ing should stand him in very good stead and be very beneficial to him. We feel confident that much of the goodwill that his father has will transfer to him."

Colr. Kelly said the organisation is hoping also to get a second seat in the parliament. The chairman of the nominating branch is Frank Condon.

Mark Clinton, M.E.P., who lives at Newcastle, Co. Dublin, has been in politics for 40 years. He was Minister for Agriculture in the years 1973-77. His nephew, Tom Clinton, North Meath, is president of the I.F.A.

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Jump in Circuit Court cases

LOCAL legal sources have expressed surprise at the sharp jump in the number of cases coming before the Drogheda and Dundalk Circuit Courts in recent weeks.

Hundreds of cases were listed, including criminal charges, District Court criminal, civil and summary appeals, equity, Landlord and Tenant, and Family Law.

A large number were indictable offences, perhaps indicating a rise in local crime levels. However, court administrators say that this may be as much to do with the fact that the Gardai were "getting on top" of the crime situation.

In addition, District Justices were showing more reluctance to deal with cases where the offence was of such a serious nature as to warrant stricter punishment than that meted out by the District Courts (jail sentences restricted to two years).

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Bank acts to stop machine cash fraud

A FRAUD conspiracy which robbed Allied Irish Banks, 98/99 West Street, Drogheda, and other AIB banks of over £22,000 sparked off internal checks within the company on a nationwide basis.

What Gardai described as a "highly organised fraud" at the Drogheda bank and at other branches of the AIB in Dublin is a "matter of concern," a bank spokesman said this week.

Immediate steps are to be taken to eliminate any chance of a similar type 'sting' taking place again.

A spokesman for AIB told the *Drogheda Independent* "in the light of what has happened internal checks are to be taken to ensure there is no recurrence. The chances of this happening again must be eliminated or at least minimised to the smallest possible degree."

Dublin man, Christopher Ryan, Charlemont Street, pleaded guilty to 53 separate counts of fraud committed in Drogheda and Dublin, at the local Circuit Court last week. He was jailed for two years by Judge M. P. Smith.

Ryan, who was described as 'a fall guy' in a fraud conspiracy, got some of the money fraudulently across the counter but the majority of it through the automatic teller machines. A number of accounts were opened in the bank under false names. The addresses

given were usually to vacant, boarded up houses.

An account would be opened with £10 and a Banklink card would then be received, giving access to the ATM machine. Letters would then go out from the bank regarding the PIN numbers and Ryan would come into the bank to receive these.

In one instance the accused lodged 19,000 Canadian dollars, change worth £10,674, with the AIB in Blackrock and all the money was cleared from his account. This stolen Canadian dollars cheque had been "cleared by accident" and the bank was at the loss.

Ryan opened an account at the AIB, West Street, with an accommodation address at Garville Avenue, Rathgar. He had put in four stolen French francs cheques, valued at £20,655.

Judge M. P. Smith said it seemed to him that Ryan was part of a conspiracy to defraud the banks and other financial institutions. Even though he was only the front guy and a small man, he was still an essential part. Ryan "had been afraid" to name his accomplices.

The AIB spokesman would not specify what was meant by "internal checks" and would not elaborate on what these checks would be. "It is a matter we intend to get sorted out" he said.

See Page 4.

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