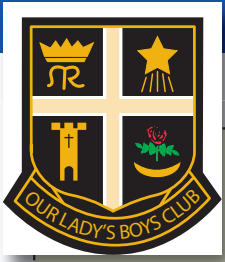
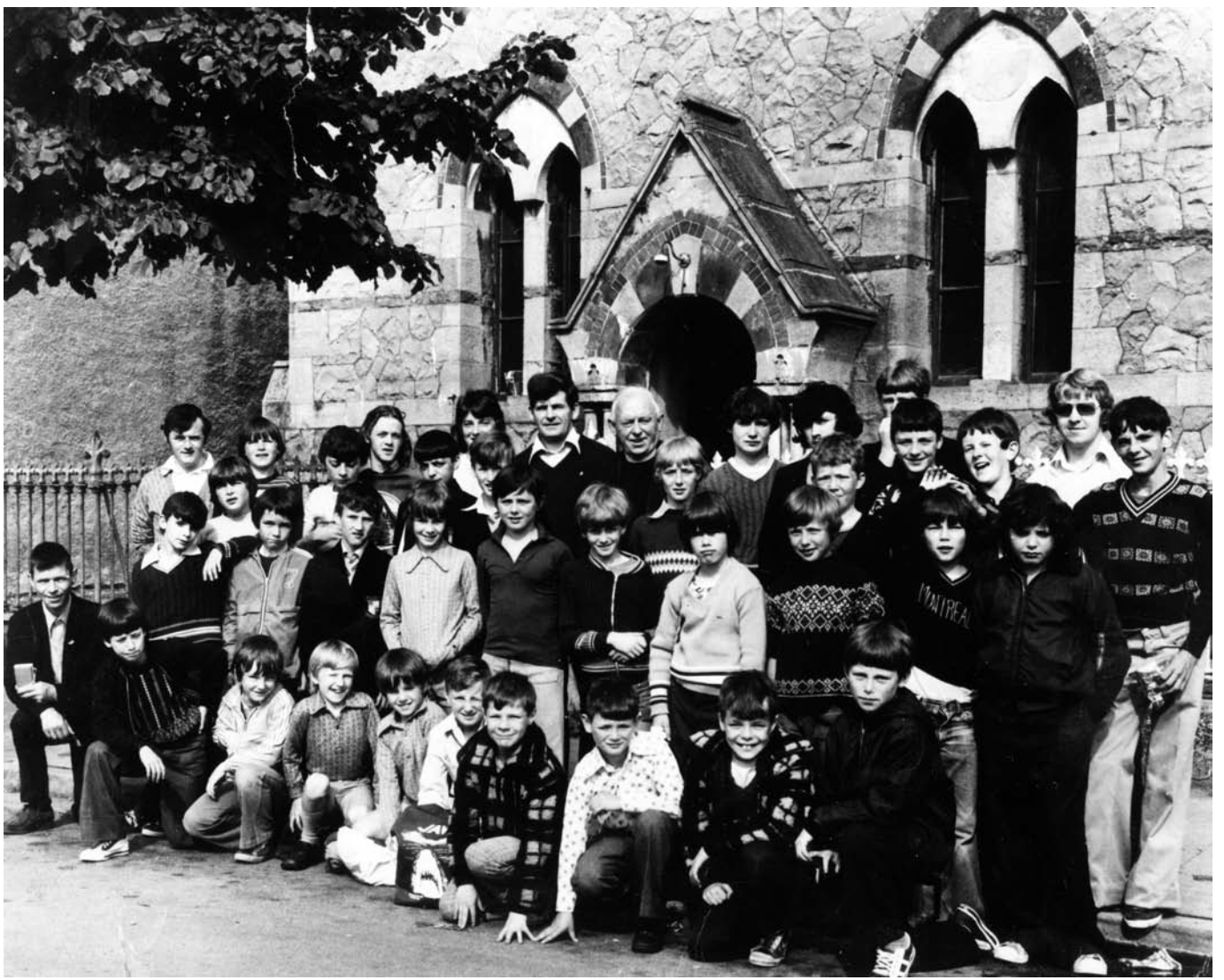


# OUR LADY'S BOYS' CLUB



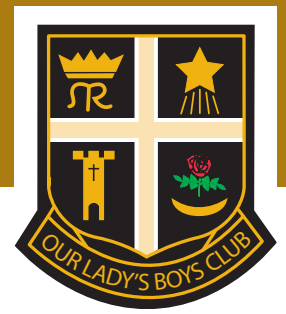
## NEW CLUBHOUSE PROJECT

**LOOKING TOWARDS THE FUTURE**



A GROUP OF BOYS OUTSIDE THE COLUMBAN HALL WITH  
FATHER MICHAEL MCGRATH ON THEIR WAY TO THE ANNUAL CAMP  
C. 1970

# OUR LADY'S BOYS' CLUB



## OUR LADY'S BOYS' CLUB TODAY

### What we do

Our Lady's Boys' Club was founded in 1941 by Father Leonard Shiel S.J. and is one of the longest-running youth clubs in Ireland. It aims to foster civic responsibility among young people, develop their inter-personal and social skills and provide positive alternatives to alcohol and drugs by encouraging them to become involved in sport.

The work of the Club is increasingly relevant in today's Celtic Tiger Ireland where poverty and social problems can lead to young people drifting on to the wrong path and spiralling out of control - into a cycle of crime, anti-social behaviour and substance-abuse.

OLBC is an important source of guidance and support to many young people in Galway city, particularly those from disadvantaged areas. It acts as a steadying influence on their lives and helps to divert them away from the dangers of drug- and alcohol abuse by helping them to develop new interests. Research has shown that young people involved in healthy, activity-based pursuits or sport are less likely to abuse alcohol or be led into anti-social behaviour. OLBC focuses on addressing physical and mental wellbeing through sport and providing good facilities for their enjoyment.

### Sport

OLBC encourages its members to become involved in different sports and games where they can learn about competition and achievement as well as participation and cooperation. The Club has a soccer section, a rugby section, and a golf society for members and former members. A huge variety of games are played in the clubhouse weekly, including rings, draughts, volleyball, basketball, table-tennis, badminton, snooker and pool as well as inter-club activities and computer-training.

### The Annual 'Camp'

A week's holiday in summertime always referred to as "The Camp" has taken place without a break since the founding of the Club. This is a much-anticipated highlight in OLBC's yearly calendar and the camps are spent in different locations in the West of Ireland and usually take place in the first week of July.

This summer the Boys' Club ran its 67th annual camp in St. Colman's College, Co. Mayo. 75 boys and the committee enjoyed a carefree week of swimming, horse-riding, roller-bowling, soccer and baseball. They also attended Mass each morning in Claremorris Church and a special Mass was celebrated on Knock Shrine by the Bishop of Galway, Most Rev. Martin Drennan, for all members and supporters of the Club past and present.



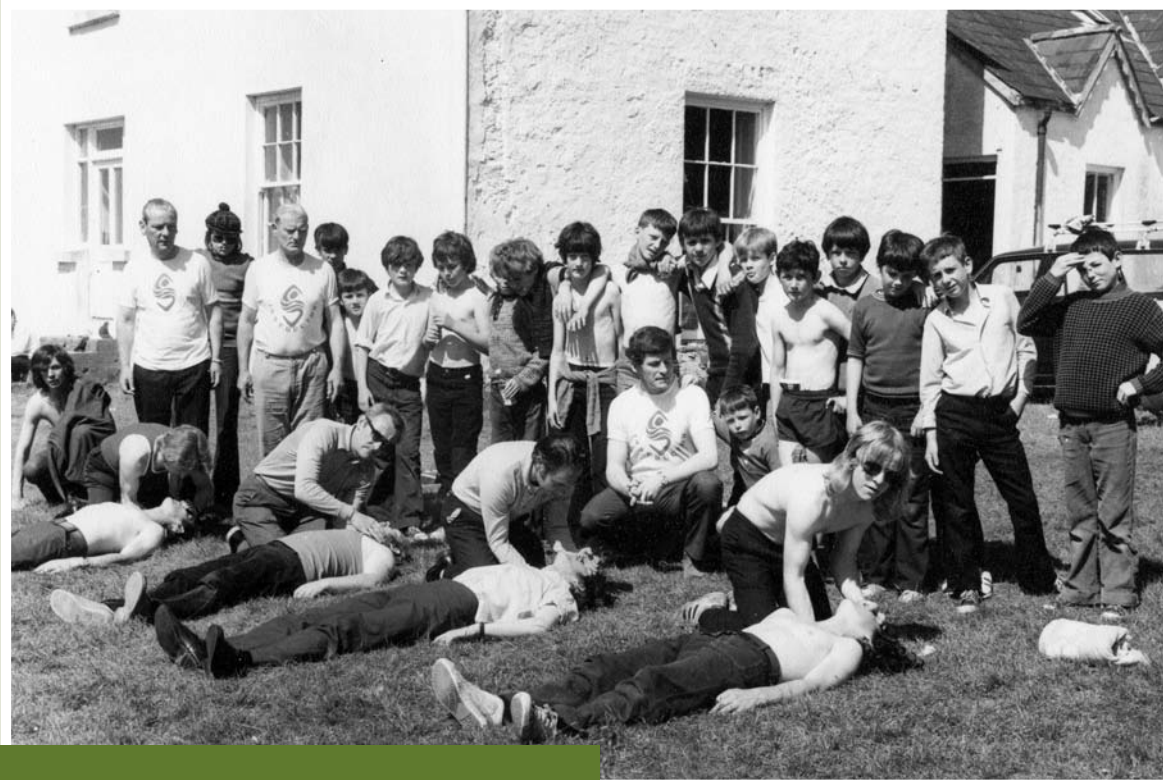


A visit to the Club by members of the C.I.E. table-tennis team in the early 60s was honoured by the attendance of the Mayor of Galway Ald. Peter Greene. Committee of the Club pictured above include Gerry Glynn, John D. Whelan, Paul O'Dea, Jesuit Rector Fr. Hughes, Willie Silke, Henry St. John Blake and Des Kenny



His Lordship Bishop of Galway Reverend Martin Drennan with some of the committee and boys of OLBC on Knock Shrine after he celebrated Mass this year for all members and supporters of the Club past & present.





## Life Saving



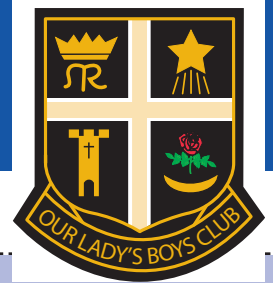
PRIZEWINNERS AT THE CLUB'S ANNUAL COMPETITION  
RECEIVE THEIR PRIZES FROM ALD. PETER GREENE MAYOR OF  
GALWAY.

## Table Tennis

Seated left to right: Willie Naughton, Mayor Peter Greene, William McDonagh, Willie Silke

Standing left to right: Tommy McDonagh, Gerry Lee, Michael Shaughnessy, Henry Blake,  
Michael Cunningham, Jim Dodd, Martin Madden, Gerry Glynn

# OUR LADY'S BOYS' CLUB



## A BRIEF HISTORY

When the Club was founded in 1940, the Government provided no out of school education for young people. There was a great need for social and recreational facilities. Such activity was virtually non-existent in the working class areas of Bohermore, Shantalla, The Claddagh and "The West". The critical core of the Club was (and is) its generic youth Club, which met (and still meets) several evenings a week. The primary aim in those days was to show the boys ways and means of securing their own destiny.

Activities included soccer, rugby, Irish dancing, boxing, swimming, lifesaving, table tennis, rings....all for a nightly fee of one penny. The Rosary was recited, and tea with bread, butter and jam was served to members, an important supplement to their diet for many of the boys.

From the beginning, an annual "Camp" was organised, a week long holiday for boys who might never otherwise have had a holiday. They were always well fed, often clothed better, and made much healthier by this week. The recreational element of the outing was its central benefit.

Competition and achievement were important, but so also were participation and cooperation, so the boys all assisted with the cleaning, tidying and washing up duties, in the hope that these chores would imitate and reinforce values associated with family life.

The Club is probably best known for its soccer teams or rugby teams, but it is the behind the scenes work it does that is truly invaluable, rehabilitating boys, keeping them out of trouble, finding them jobs, encouraging them and giving them a sense of loyalty.

If the forties was all about relieving poverty, the fifties was about preparing boys for emigration, counselling them, teaching them how to drive, how to cope with homesickness etc. In the 1960's the emphasis changed again as they began to understand the concept and beneficial role of a social educational process...as well as acknowledging the positive function of leadership in the lives of young people which the Club could provide, OLBC began to appreciate that youth work had to extend beyond mere recreational games and activities.

In the 1970's, OLBC's response to an ever increasing employment problem was the establishment of an employment committee which acted as a contact network where news of any employment vacancies were quickly passed on. During this period, they began to realise the need for professional training of Club leaders if they were to be successful in meeting the social needs of young people.

The problems of the 1980s were largely a continuation of the previous decade. One notable development was the visits it paid to, and received from a youth club in

Portadown. In the nineties, it was felt that the club's traditional organisational structure was acting as an inhibiting factor and change was required.

The club's history reflects the changing society in which it has operated, and illustrates its willingness to change with the times. Today, OLBC is entirely run by ex-members who between them have a vast experience. They are on the threshold of a new future, and they view that future positively in terms of the challenges and opportunities it will bring.



**Mayor of Galway Bridie O'Flaherty with a group of members on her visit to the Summer Camp in Ballinacorney College, Co. Mayo**

**PLEASE HELP US REALISE THIS VISION BY MAKING A CONTRIBUTION TO OUR LADYS BOYS' CLUB CLUBHOUSE PROJECT.**





**LOUGH CUTRA**



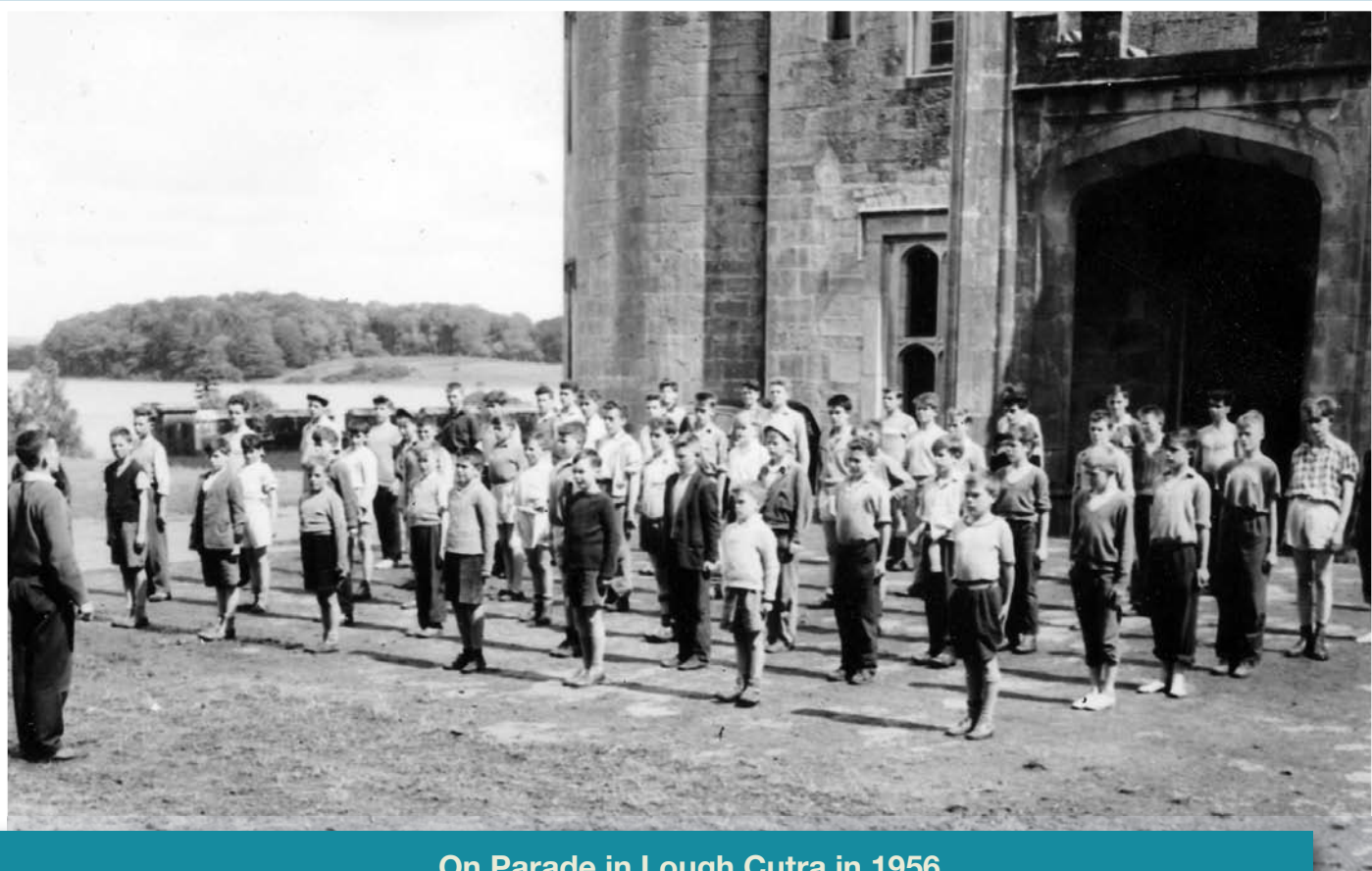
**Father McGrath celebrates annual mass in the Clubhouse for all our benefactors.**

**PLAYING BASKETBALL**



**KITCHEN STAFF ON CAMP  
Tom Cunningham, William McDonagh,  
Pat Mullarky & Joe Geohan**





On Parade in Lough Cutra in 1956



Mayor Martin Quinn and Mrs. Quinn visit on Camp in Claremorris in July 2001



## ARCHITECT'S IMPRESSION OF THE MAIN SPORTS HALL



### The Importance of the New Clubhouse

The club's headquarters at Sea Road, Galway have always been an important base for all the club's activities, a place for our members to meet, to socialise and to take part in games and sport. Unfortunately the poor condition of the building means that it is no longer suitable for the needs of the club and a decision was taken to build a new clubhouse.

A fundraising project is now underway to raise the money needed to rebuild it. The site at Sea Rd. has been purchased and full planning permission has been granted. The new building has been designed by award-winning architects Simon J. Kelly and Company. It will be bright, warm, functional and flexible and will have improved facilities which will greatly benefit the day-to-day workings of the club and address its future needs.



**Galway's then new Mayor, Councillor Gerry Colgan made one of his first official appearances when he paid a visit to the annual Camp of Our Lady's Boys' Club at Letterfrack, Connemara. He is photographed here with (from left): James Carr, Declan Cunningham, son of the Club President, Jimmy Cunningham, and James Carrick. They are three second generation members of the Club.**



## Fundraising Target

The fundraising target is 1.5 million euro, which will be used to erect and fit-out the new clubhouse.

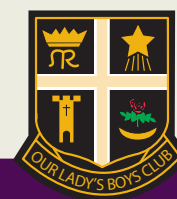
## You can make a difference

Our Lady's Boys' Club has always survived on the generosity of Galwegians and former members. We are now appealing to you to make a financial contribution to this long-standing Galway institution. Your help will vastly improve the facilities and will help us to continue to make a positive contribution to the lives of many of the young people of Galway.

The records now show that there are countless 'club boys' in every walk of life who have made a most wonderful success of their commercial and civic efforts. They will proudly tell how 'Our Lady's 'influenced' their whole outlook to business and pleasure and even how it helped them cope with all sorts of problems.

## Looking towards the Future

At OLBC, young people learn important values and skills that stay with them throughout their lives and help them become honest, hard-working and successful individuals. The Club is very important to its current members and they want to hand on an even better Club to the next generation. By supporting the new clubhouse project, you are investing in young people in Galway and giving them the best chance in life.



**Help to provide the resources  
required to continue our work.**

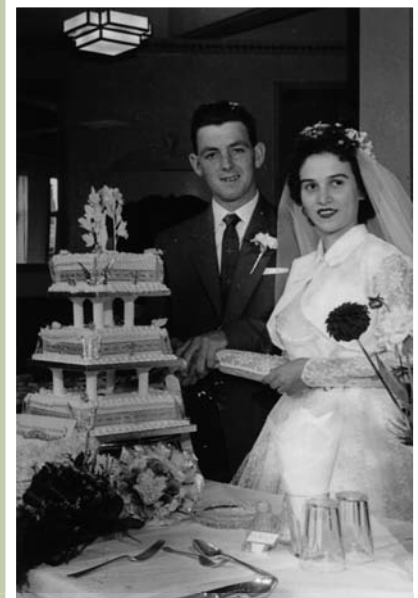


**Mayor Terry O'Flaherty, James MacLoughlin, Bishop of Galway and Club Captains**

The committee would like to take this opportunity to thank the people and businesses of Galway for the loyal support over the last 67 years.



**Mayor Brian Walsh doing the Reading at Knock Shrine**



**Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Power**



**Fr. McGrath S.J. and committee**







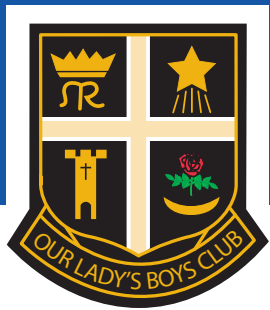
**Mr. and Mrs. Eamon Hosty**



**Des and Maureen Kenny meet Pope John Paul II**



**Discussing Connaught Rugby**



# Our Lady's Boys' Club

**President:**  
Jimmy Cunningham  
086 8030300

**Secretary:**  
Kenneth McDonagh  
087 1337261

**Treasurer:**  
Pat Giles  
086 8226318

**Chairman:**  
Padraig McDonagh  
087 9441629



**ONE OF OUR FIRST LIFE SAVING GROUPS PICTURED AT CAMP AT LOUGH CUTRA CASTLE IN GORT IN THE EARLY 50S.**

**Front Row left to right: Mike Cronin, Jimmy Cranny, Sean Berry, Pat Broderick, Tommy Kelly, Joe Hegarty, Mick Broderick**

**Middle Row: William McDonagh, Jim Cunningham, Martin Folan,**

**Back Row: Tom Cunningham, Des Kenny, Paddy Thornton, Eamon Hornibrook, Joe McLoughlin.**

**Please fill out this form & send it to your Bank Branch.**

Please debit account no: \_\_\_\_\_

Account name: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

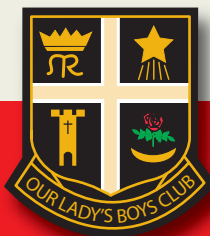
Frequency:  Weekly  Monthly

Beginning: \_\_\_\_\_

End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Pay to: **AIB a/c 31958014  
18, Eyre Square, Galway  
Sort Code: 93 72 23**

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_



**OLBC is a registered charity. Donations which are TAX ALLOWABLE can be made to the OLBC Building Project by using the form aside or direct to any of the committee listed below.**

## **FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE**

**J.P. Cunningham, Michael Grealish, Tom Kenny, Bobby Deacy, Mike Cunningham, Mick Turley, Pat McCann, Tom Connell, Tomás Cunningham, Michael Dooley, John Hardiman.**