

CHURCH BELL TOLLED AT 2.20 A.M. Lahardane remembered its Titanic dead

UP to 60 people turned up in the grounds of St. Patrick's Church, Lahardane in the early hours of Wednesday morning last for a memorable and poignant event – the ringing of the church bell to commemorate the sinking of the Titanic exactly 97 years earlier.

The historic Timoney Bell pealed out for 25 minutes in memory of the 14 people from Addegoole Parish who were passengers on the Titanic when it made its fateful, final voyage.

There were two slow knells for each of the eleven lost – three joyous minutes for the ones who were saved. The bell-ringing was per-

formed at 2.20 a.m. – the exact time the Titanic slid beneath the icy waters of the North Atlantic on April 15, 1912.

Just beforehand, Dr. Paul Nolan, a member of the Addegoole Titanic Society, gave a brief talk on the economic circumstances which gave rise to the need for large scale emigration from Ire-

land, especially to the United States, in the early part of the last century.

Afterwards, Titanic Society member Mick Molloy expressed delight at the huge turnout. "There were a lot of relatives of the Titanic passengers there and what was awful nice was they all wanted to take a turn at ringing the bell," he said.

The Addegoole Titanic Society, formed in 2001, decided to commemorate the sinking of the Titanic and the dreadful loss of so many young lives by tolling the Timoney Bell annually at the exact time the Titanic sank.

In April 2002 the society erected a memorial in the church next to the spot where the baptismal font once stood.

The church bell was erected in the late 1940s, funded by Michael Timoney, the great early 20th century Irish philanthropist and scholar. Lahardane has a most unique claim to fame.

Namely, that from here in early April 1912 fourteen residents, set out together to catch a steam ship, transatlantic liner from Cobh to the new and exciting American world.

They fatedfully boarded the

new age phenomenon of their time, RMS Titanic, at Queenstown (Cobh) on the April 11, 1912 and set sail for New York on that bright

eventful afternoon. Only one hundred and thirteen steerage passengers had boarded at Queenstown, 12 per cent were from Addegoole. Their ship of dreams would soon become a ship of demons.

On April 15, 1912 at 2.20 a.m. the Titanic, having struck an iceberg some three hours and twenty minutes earlier, slipped under the black, icy, waters of the North Atlantic, leaving over

1,500 people to drown. Eleven passengers from Addegoole perished, three miraculously survived, getting onto lifeboats, and being

picked up just after 4 a.m. by the Carpathia. They eventually arrived in New York some four days later. It was one of the greatest

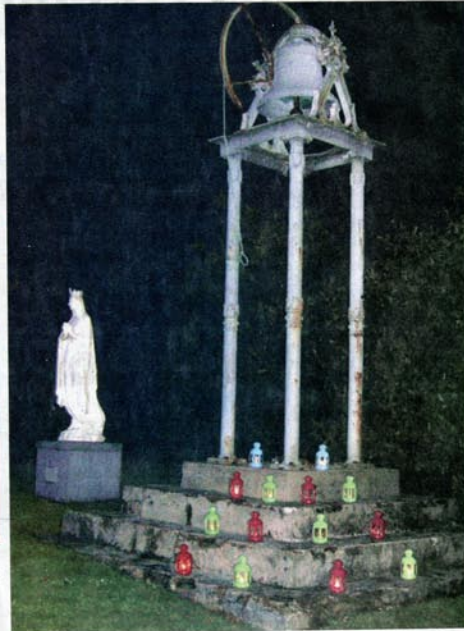
peacetime catastrophes of the 20th century. Commemorations are expected to reach a climax in 1912, the 100th anniversary of the tragedy.



Mick Molloy chats to Pat Canavan, Knockmarla, who had a relative on the Titanic.



Pauline Barrett who also had relatives on the Titanic.



Fourteen candles on the Timoney Bell at Lahardane – one for each of the passengers from Addegoole Parish on the ill-fated Titanic.

Photo: John Carry

Campaign to stem jobs losses

MAYO County Council has passed a motion to start a countywide campaign group to halt and reverse job losses in the local economy.

By Frances Toner
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The group is proposed to be similar to the hugely successful Castlebar Community Development Association, set up in the late 1990s, following the closure of major job provider Grumbacher Brushes and the threatened closure of Travenol, which later became Baxter Healthcare.

The committee will be tasked to "think outside the

box" and come up with innovative ways to stimulate and attract new business to the county in the face of rocketing unemployment levels in Mayo and a worsening recession.

The Fine Gael whip Councillor Paddy McGuinness put the proposal forward at an emergency meeting of Mayo County Council called by the party to discuss funding

cuts introduced in the Supplementary Budget.

Councillor McGuinness said unemployment has already increased by 12.4 per cent in the past 12 months in Mayo against a national average of 9.5 per cent.

"We have to take action," he said. "We cannot just be dependent on statutory organisations to address this. We could do something at a county level similar to what the Castlebar Community Development Association did for Castlebar. It happened before. We can do it again."

"Rather than just giving out about what the Government

are and are not doing, we can do something ourselves."

Councillor McGuinness was involved in the original setting up of the Castlebar Community Development Association.

The association brought together 58 statutory and voluntary agencies from across the community to stop job losses and attract new industry to the town. The association was hugely successful between 1987 to 1996.

Major job providers Volex, APC and Johnson Industries were all established during that time. The group also built the en-

terprise centre at the Bacon Factory, which has since been sold for €1 million.

That fund has been used to fund other community projects such as Mosaic and the development of new facilities for the Castlebar Town Band.

Councillor McGuinness asked county manager Mr. Des Mahon to head up the new campaign.

Cathaoirleach of Mayo County Council, Councillor Joe Mellett, supported the proposal.

"We owe it to everyone in Mayo to fight this too and nail Rural Ireland has to unite to survive," he said.



Tommy Canavan, Tommy Canavan (junior), Teresa Canavan and Anne Cullen, relatives of Pat Canavan who died on the Titanic.