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Percy French afternoon tea recital at Gleeson's

To celebrate the Percy French Summer School, Gleeson's Townhouse are proud to present 'Tish Dunleavy and Friends from Leitrim' who will entertain afternoon guests with a recital of the life of Percy French through song and story this Friday, July 16th. Afternoon tea will start from 3 pm. For booking or enquiries contact Gleeson's on (090) 66 26954.

Molloy family call for public inquiry into priest's death

The family of Fr. Niall Molloy have this week called for a public inquiry into his death and the manner in which the subsequent investigation was conducted.

Fr. Molloy (52) was found dead on July 8th, 1985, at the home of his friends Richard and Teresa Flynn of Clara, Co. Offaly, following a family wedding in the home. Businessman Richard Flynn was charged with manslaughter and causing actual bodily harm, but at the 1986 trial, Judge Frank Roe directed the jury to return a not guilty verdict. A two-day inquest also in 1986, found that Fr. Molloy died as a result of head injuries.

This week Fr. Molloy's nephew Bill Maher (59) called for a public inquiry into events surrounding the death of his uncle and the subsequent Garda investigation. Mr. Maher has established an online petition at www.thepetitionsite.com/10/justice-for-fr-niall-molloy. In sponsoring the petition, Mr. Maher stated, "The family, parishioners and friends of Niall still want justice to be done and a full public inquiry into the events surrounding his killing and the subsequent cover-up." Over three hundred and thirty people have signed the petition to date.

Speaking to Roscommon People, Bill Maher said, "We have always wanted an inquiry. We have never been happy at all with the way the case was dealt with and what emerged and in particular the way the judge handled the trial. When we arrived [at the trial] we were told it would last three days and it was underway for four hours when Judge Roe, who personally knew Niall and shouldn't have heard the case, dismissed it because of the possibility that he died from a heart attack and stated that Niall had a bad heart when he didn't, as borne out in the inquest. Niall died from head injuries.

"I can't serve on a jury if I know any of the people involved. So we were very unhappy with that. We were happy with the inquest, but that only establishes how someone dies. We always hoped the Gardaí would pick up again on it and they never did. Some years later Veronica Guerin revealed in the Sunday Independent that Judge Roe knew all the parties involved, when she saw a copy of the file from one of the General's men."

Asked if anything can be achieved by a public inquiry

given that 25 years have elapsed, Mr. Maher replied, "The family feel we never got closure, the true facts never came out. Nowadays there is a lot of talk from politicians and the church about transparency and a new Ireland and we feel it's time there was transparency in our case.

"As you can see by the crowd at the Mass, Niall is still held in great affection by his family and parishioners. We still miss him and would like his reputation tidied up."

Chief celebrant at the Mass on Thursday last, 25 years to the day after Fr. Molloy's death, was Christopher Jones, Bishop of Elphin, who worked with the late Fr. Molloy in Sligo in the late 1960s and 1970. He was joined on the altar by five other priests, many of whom had worked with the late Fr. Molloy. Also present at the Mass were members of Fr. Molloy's extended family, many of whom live in Roscommon town.

200 people attended the 8 pm Mass, including many of Fr. Niall's former parishioners.

At the outset of the Mass, Bishop Jones recalled the details of Fr. Molloy's ministry. A native of Carrowroe Park in Roscom-

mon, he attended Summerhill College in Sligo for five years before going on to be ordained at the Irish College in Rome at the age of 24. His ministry as a priest saw him serve in Loughrea for a term, before returning to the diocese of Elphin, where he was to spend the rest of his life. He worked in Tibohine, Athlone and Sligo before being appointed to Castlecoote, where he was to spend the last ten years of his life. Bishop Jones noted that the late Fr. Molloy died tragically 25 years ago in 1985. He recalled working with Fr. Niall in Sligo, describing him as "a gentleman".

Local parish priest, Fr. John Leogue delivered the homily at the Mass. He noted that he was the next priest to be ordained for the diocese of Elphin after Fr. Niall Molloy and recalled that since his arrival in Castlecoote he has heard many fond memories of Fr. Niall and sees his picture still on view in many front rooms across the parish when he visits local homes for the stations.

After the conclusion of the Mass, local people and Fr. Molloy's family met for refreshments in the adjacent St. Ciaran's Community Centre.

Amanda recalls her first kiss!

Amanda Bruner recently recalled her first kiss as she performed the launch of the 50th Shannon Boat Rally and a book entitled 'Stories of a River' at The Dock in Carrick-on-Shannon last week.

Amanda and her family participated in many rallies and have very happy boating memories of growing up on the Shannon. "I vividly remember my very first kiss and my first dance that happened on a Shannon rally. We loved boating as a family and had great fun on the river. It was an exciting time for all the families, especially the kids and the teenagers, spending a very active ten days outdoors on the river in Irish weather. I have memories of happy days of camping out, fishing, swimming and meeting and making many lifelong friends on the Shannon Rally."

Speaking at the launch, the Commodore of the 50th Shannon Rally Donal Ó Siachain, said, "This year in celebrating our 50 years we have

an unprecedented numbers of boats entering the rally. The response to our celebrations has been phenomenal with many of our friends from the earlier rallying years rejoining us this year.

He thanked Waterways Ireland, main sponsors of

this year's event and said that Waterways Ireland are very active in facilitating a large flotilla of over 150 boats that will travel from Carrick to Athlone and around Lough Ree over the ten days of the rally from Friday 25th July to the Sunday 1st of August.



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