



Pictured at the official opening of the O'Dea Clan gathering were James O'Dea, Dublin, Dick Cronin, P. J. O'Dea, Chicago, John B. O'Dea, Illinois, William O'Dea, New Jersey and Peter Considine, Chairman, Ennis UDC.

JACK FROM WISCONSIN IS CHIEFTAIN OF O'DEA CLAN

A VERY successful, at times emotional, gathering of the O'Dea Clan from the four corners of the world, enjoyed the hospitality of Co. Clare over the week-end.

One of the highlights of the weekend was the colourful, humorous election of the Clan Chieftain. The "hot" favourite was Jack O'Day from Wisconsin, the owner of Dysert O'Dea castle, but he met with friendly opposition from Michael O'Dea from Foxrock, Dublin, a nephew of the late, great Jimmy O'Dea, the noted comedian and actor. Jack from Wisconsin was the popular winner, with Michael being nominated Tanaiste. Others selected were Chairman, James O'Dea, son of the late Dr. Tom O'Dea, Kilkee, a teacher in Clontarf; secretary, Risteard Ua Croinin, Dysert O'Dea Castle. Joint Treasurers, Damien O'Dea, a Dublin accountant, son of Tod O'Dea, Kilrush and Garda John O'Sullivan, Ennis who is married to Celia O'Dea, Kilrush. Members of the Clan who wish to be associated with the movement can deposit an annual £15 to a/c No. 05398044 AIB, Bank Place, Ennis which will entitle them to issues of a newsletter and other information.

The week-end opened with a formal welcome from the Chairman of Ennis Urban District Council, Mr. Peter Considine, followed by a sherry reception sponsored by the Clans Office of Bord Failte.

The opening lecture was given by Risteard Ua Croinin

who traced the clan back to 800 B.C. in the Middle East. The Clan's travels extended through Egypt, North Africa and Spain to Ireland. Much work had been done by a number of people, he said, and research showed an unbroken connection, if one were to accept the evidence of old manuscripts, between ancient times and contemporary history.

He went on to talk about the clan's involvement in the famous battle of Dysert O'Dea in 1318 when Richard de Clare was routed, putting a halt to the Anglo-Norman conquest of Thomond. There followed two hundred years of peace in Dysert O'Dea in which tower houses and abbeys were built.

Risteard Ua Croinin said that he proposed to write a book on the clan. Arrangements are being made to cover the costs of publication.

There was a visit to Dysert O'Dea on Saturday and at a meeting that night Mr. Gerard Kennedy, Director of the Clare Heritage Centre, spoke about the O'Deas and the wealth of material available in the Centre to trace family trees. Professor Edward O'Dea of the Dept. of History, Southern Illinois University, also spoke.

During the Election of Chieftain, a number of candidates withdrew in favour of

Jack O'Day, including Kilrushman, P. J. O'Dea from Chicago. P. J., who was accompanied by his wife Mary, brought greetings to the Clan from a host of American celebrities, including the Mayor of Chicago, Richard M. Daley; Most Rev. Timothy J. Lyne, D.D., Auxiliary Bishop of Chicago; Jim Halpin, an Ennisman who is President of the Clare Association in Chicago and from a number of Congressmen and others from the Mid-West. There were also commemorative scrolls from the Councillors of Jersey City, presented to the Clan by Councillor William O'Dea.

The tour of the Burren on the following day was conducted by Martin Breen and Sonya Schorman of the Clare Archaeological and Historical Society. Mass was celebrated by Dom Bernard O'Dea, OSB, a native of Inagh, on Sunday morning.

Before the final farewells to O'Dea's from Turkey, Australia, New Zealand, many parts of the U.S.A. and Canada as well as Ireland, arrangements were made for get-togethers in different countries and it was decided to hold another Clan gathering in about three years time. Arrangements are to be made to issue a newsletter to registered members and the definitive book on the O'Dea Clan will be published if there is sufficient support.



★ Pictured at the O'Dea Clan gathering last week-end, were, from left, Mary O'Dea, Chicago; John O'Dea, Brisbane, whose great grandfather hailed from Cooraclare; P. J. O'Dea, Chicago; John B. O'Dea (Chieftain of Clan), Kay O'Dea, Brisbane and Tom O'Dea, Australia.