Irish Gathering, Saturday, 1st September, 2012

The 11th Annual Irish Gathering took place at the usual venue near Clonmel, County Tipperary. Many thanks to Sandy Stokes for again opening his house, gardens and facilities for the function. Much appreciated. This year the weather was fine with long sunny periods and those attending, 44 in all, were able to enjoy the proceedings, both indoor and outdoor.

It had become customary in previous years for those travelling from afar to stay at Nagles Guesthouse/Pub and to have a party on the Friday night. Last year a band playing traditional Irish music was arranged by Sandy in the pub and was well-received. This year, due to another function at the pub, the band could not play there so Sandy brought it to his house, together with those staying at Nagles. So, in effect, a second gathering of some 20 people took place on Friday evening which lasted until after 11pm and drank Sandy out of house and home.

The downside was that Sandy and myself had to be up at 5am the following day in order to set up the pig (40kg) on the spit and start the fire and check it every fifteen minutes. After seven hours the pig was ready, together with all the trimmings, and Peter Biddulph was called upon to perform the duties of carver. Our thanks must go to the ladies involved who assisted in the preparation of the Lunch, which seemed to be enjoyed by all. So, thanks, Eve Norris, Marie Berry, Anne Mills, Nicky Hall, Joan Meekin.

As usual a second meal was available in the evening from leftovers and, again as usual, the BSAP hard core was still around until after 10pm.

First, however, a small ceremony was held to remember one of our stalwarts, (4789) Eddie Matchett, who had just died. Tom Meekin gave a short eulogy, after which A Minute’s Silence was held. Condolences to his wife and family.

This year we were pleased to welcome some new faces; Frank Sadlier, Larry Farren, Seamus Power, Norman McNarry, Tony Marillier, John Coleridge, Paddy O’Shea, also guest Shane Beary (exRLI, Selous Scouts, SAS).
Later during the afternoon, Biff Way conducted the raffle in his inimitable way. Thanks to all who donated prizes. A most successful auction was also held by Biff for a bottle of Whisky donated by Robin Harvey. There was a reserve of euro40.00 on this but in the end 152.00 was realised. This was due to Tony Marillier and Peter O’Hara in turn donating the bottle back for re-auction. Thanks all. All told, an amount of £250 was raised for Association Funds.

In attendance were: 5272 Pat Deasy; 5681 Robin and Carole Harvey; 5625 Biff and Netta Way; 4583 Paddy Leen; 5584 John and Marie Berry & guest Nicky Hall; 10083 Norman McNarry; 4896 Frank Sadlier & guest Barry Dowling; 5615 Tom and Joan Meekin; Associate member Stan and Anne Mills; Geoff and Maggie Woods, Mike Harris (guests); RRAF Rob and Rosemary Davey; 5508 Gordon and Eve Norris; Rev. Noel Scott (guest). P.R. Paddy and Bernie O’Shea; P.R. Chris Kavanagh and W.F.R. Wendy Kavanagh; P.R. 10378 John and Marge Coleridge; 6651 Larry and Althea Farren; 8278 Tony Marillier; 5601 Eric Robb; 7348 Peter O’Hara, D. Drury, (guest); Rh. Army Shane Beary; 8196 Tom Devoy; 7211 Peter Biddulph and Maggie Mitchell; 6507 Seamus Power; 5586 Sandy Stokes; and last but not least UK Assoc. Deputy Chairman 7391 Alan and Lynn Toms, whose attendance was appreciated.

Apologies received from;  6264 Bob and Katherine Flynn; 9225 John and Linda Scott; 9207 Garth Long; 4853 Fred and Maggie Punter; 5595 Jim and Pat Caborn; 4209 Julian Burkitt; 5196 Graham and Kathy Mageean; 5635 Dave Riley;

Next Gathering will be on Saturday, 7th September 2013.

John Berry (5584)