

## **New seafarers' memorial at Sea Sunday in Kinsale**

**BY LEO McMAHON**

Just minutes after singing the recessional hymn 'For those in peril on the sea' at the annual Sea Sunday service in St. Multose's Church, driving rain and wind on the Pier Head served as a poignant reminder as the magnificent new Lost at Sea Memorial was officially blessed at Kinsale Harbour last Sunday before a large attendance who braved the elements.

Among them were Mary Bohan with children Sally-Jean (12), James (10) and Joseph (7) with their friend Isabel Lordan and Anneta Jagla with son Wojcieck and daughter Ola, Mary and Anneta being the widows of Ger. Bohan and Tomas Jagla who were tragically lost at sea on the Kinsale based trawler 'Honeydew II' off the south east coast in January 2007.

As pointed out by harbour master and committee member Captain Phil Devitt, their deaths and that of others before them prompted the building of a new and unique memorial to all Kinsale people who lost their lives at sea. Designed by Rob Jacob and built by Ray O'Callaghan, it features on a plinth, a miniature of the famous 'Kinsale Hooker' boat in cedar with the inscription in granite of a verse from the poem and ballad 'The Boatman of Kinsale' by Thomas Davis and a pewter sail. Situated near the 1601 Mast, the previous anchor memorial will be incorporated into the harbour-side site as a place for reflection.

Representatives of various maritime related organisations marched in the rain after the Sea Sunday service to the new memorial. Capt. Phil Devitt paid tribute to everyone involved in the project and work on the memorial which was only completed the night previous, especially fishermen's representative on Kinsale Harbour Board, Eamonn O'Neill who initiated it, Rob Jacob of JLS Design and Ray O'Callaghan and council stonemasons. He also acknowledged the late Gerald Gimblett who inspired the anchor memorial donated by the Hurley family which would again feature at the site; Kinsale Town and Cork County Councils staff, stonemasons Barry Ryan Paving, other committee members, Canon David Williams and fellow Sea Sunday organiser Noel O'Toole.

Prayers were recited and the memorial was jointly blessed by Canon David Williams and Rev. John K. O'Mahony PP and a wreath laid by chairman of the harbour board Michael T. Frawley. As the tricolour was raised at the mast, a lament was played by the Pipe Band of the Irish Air Corps. The Lost at Sea Memorial Committee comprises Eamonn O'Neill, John O'Mahony, Albert O'Neill, David Hurley, Billy Lynch TC, John Walsh, Canon Williams, John Thuillier and Phil Devitt.

A short march followed to the Pier Head where there were readings by Canon Douglas Goddard, senior chaplain to the Mission to Seafarers in Belfast; Canon Williams and Fr. Micheal O'Neill, O.Carm. Prior, the blessing of the boats and the wonderful singing by Micheal Hurley with the crews of Courtmacsherry and Kinsale Lifeboats of 'Home by the Sea'. Flowers and a scroll listing the participating organisations on Sea Sunday were dropped into the harbour from the Kinsale lifeboat by crew members Jack Coldrick, Annette Coughlan and Nicholas Searls.

Boats blessed included Lilla, Wheels, Sea Hawk, Saramy, Aras, Petit Loups, The Jolly Joker, Delos, Whispering Star, Lady Nell, Gull, the rib Liquid Cooled and on Pier Head itself, the Swallow 2 recently built by Carrigaline man Neil J. Prendeville of Kinsale Yacht Club, a replica of the club's first sail dinghy designed by Joe Thuillier. Neil was accompanied by Bill Thuillier, Joe and Carmel Thuillier and Jack Hornibrook. Neil's tutor was John Geary of St. John's Central College, Cork.

The final ceremony involved a small group who went on board John and James O'Mahony's fishing trawler 'Sean Mar II' to a point off in the harbour Summercove. John O'Mahony placed a wreath and flowers gathered in a basket from different organisations in St. Multose's were placed into the sea during prayers in English and Polish broadcast on VHF radio. Here also, in a moment of tranquility after all the wind and rain, Mary Bohan and her children threw in red and yellow balloons which were originally bought for her late husband's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. Piper Kevin Cronin of the Ambulance Service played 'Dawning of the Day' and a flotilla of local trawlers accompanied 'Sean Mar II'.

A reception followed at the Kinsale Yacht Club where fine hospitality was provided by Angela and Bernard Hurley, Aoife, Eoin and Carroll.

## **SEA SUNDAY**

Earlier in the day, St. Multose's Church was packed to overflowing for the annual Sea Sunday service dedicated to the Mission to Seafarers where there was wonderful singing by the community choir conducted by Rosalyn Williams, prayers in Irish and Polish read by Canon Williams and Fr. Mariusz Placek O.Carm. and Bible readings by Michael Frawley, Capt. Devitt and by Mayor of Kinsale Mary Evans.

In an eloquent address, Canon Goddard thanked all involved with the matters maritime for their care of the thousands of seafarers who passed their coast. He specially praised the people of Kinsale for being a wonderful example of community co-operation by holding the annual Sea Sunday and erecting the Lost at Sea memorial which linked past, present and future.

With 93% of goods transported by sea, it played a vital role in people's lives, trade and travel and recalling fascinating stories in 30 years involvement with the Mission to Seafarers, said he had learned a lot from people who worked at sea, especially fishing and merchant men, and urged all involved with Sea Sunday to build and grow what they had already.

### **Achieved.**

There was a minute's silence to remember all who had died at sea after which the choir sang 'Fierce rages the tempest'. Flowers from the different maritime organisations were placed into a basket which Ewen Tubridy of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution brought in a procession led by the Irish Air Corps Pipe Band and a colour party through the town to the new seafarers' memorial and blessing of boats ceremony.

Canon Williams acknowledged the representation at Sea Sunday of the RNLI (Cearbhall O'Donoghue), Irish Coastguard (Seamus McCarthy and John McCarthy) the Naval Service, Royal Navy Association, Cork; the RDF, An Garda Síochána (Supt. Pat Maher, Insp. Brendan Fogarty and Sgt. Pat Ryan), Customs and Excise Service, Irish Lights, Apostleship of the Sea., Civil Defence (Gary O'Leary), Fisheries Board, Sea Scouts, HSE Ambulance Service and Accident/Emergency Unit, Slua Muiri, Fire Service (Bobby Wright and Charles Henderson), South and West Fishermen's Organisations, Red Cross, the harbour board, Kinsale Town Council, Kinsale Outdoor Education Centre (Victor Fusco), the ONE, British Legion, Valentia Radio and Irish Air Corps.

There was a special welcome for the widows and families of Ger Bohan and Tomasz Jagla including his daughter Ola (Alexandra) who made her 1<sup>st</sup> Communion the previous day, the Merchant Navy Association, Barry Wales which has a Friendship Pact with Kinsale (represented by Joe Norton, Pat Tobin, Keith Greenway and Raelene Burns) and eleven members of Royal Navy Squadron 771, Culrose, Cornwall led by Lt. Cdr. Stephen Hopkins. This group, with its Sea King helicopter took part in a rescue training exercise the previous day with the Irish Coastguard in Kinsale Harbour and also visited St. Mary's School, Knocknaheeny.

The large attendance who braved the elements included harbour board members Eamonn O'Neill, Courtenay Good, Alan Coleman MCC and Billy Lynch TC, Charles Henderson TC, fellow town councillors Tomas O'Brien, Fred Treacy; Christy O'Sullivan TD, Jim O'Keeffe TD, Sean and Ann Bohan, Helen Bohan, Nicola Bohan, Joe and Marie Bohan, Valerie Good, Connie and Gina Madden, Martin and Maria Shanahan, Jim Good, John and Alice Kennedy and Colette Devitt. Timmy O'Donovan did an excellent job in charge of public address.

At the reception in Kinsale Yacht Club we met Thomas Grahn, who, on May 15 at 20 years of age became the youngest Swede to cross the Atlantic Ocean single handed on board the yacht 'Maja'. He set sail from Stuart, Florida, USA and reached Kinsale 45 days eight hours and 55 minutes later. At Kinsale he was accompanied by his brother Patrik and having rested was getting ready to head home for his 21<sup>st</sup> birthday in Sweden.

At sea in a solo circumnavigation of Ireland since May 11 is Kinsale Leo Club member Aileen Mann on board Silver Dipper to raise money for charities.

Leo McMahan

Senior Reporter

The Southern Star