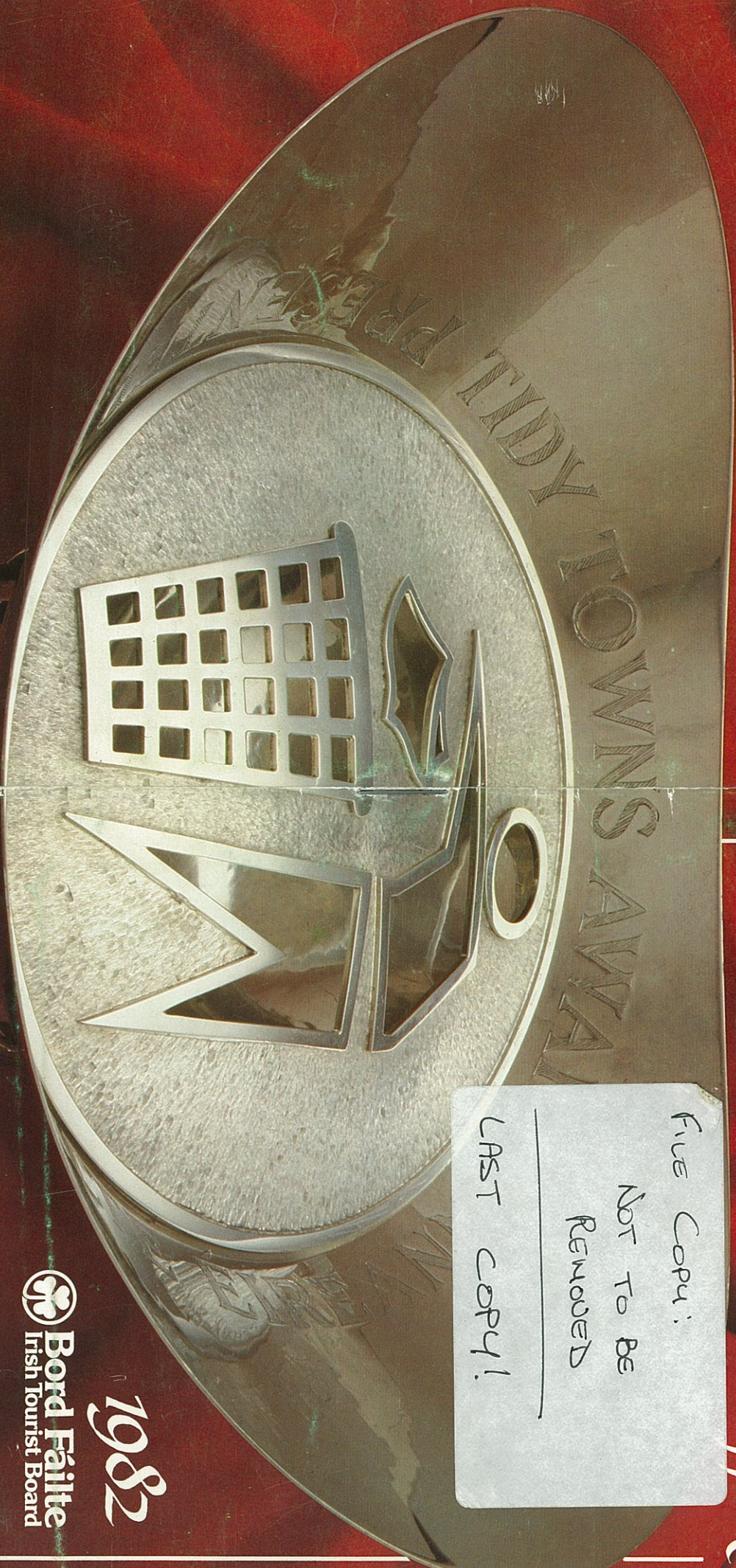


Tidy Towns
25th
Anniversary
of Community
Effort

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On behalf of the Board of Directors and Executives of Bord Fáilte, I welcome you to the Silver Jubilee Presentation of National Tidy Towns Awards, in this lovely village of Mountshannon, which won the competition in 1981.

We are honoured that the President of Ireland, Dr. Patrick Hillery, will present the awards in this Jubilee Year. His attendance is a tribute to all of those who, by their efforts at local level over the past quarter century, have made this competition an important part of community life throughout the country.

Today is a celebration of cooperation and community spirit. We are all guests of the people of Mountshannon. I thank them for the efforts they have made to welcome such numbers to their lovely village. Tidy Towns are invariably welcoming towns and I hope everyone will enjoy — and take away happy memories — of the manner in which the inhabitants have cared for their environment.

Ar son Bhord na Stiúrthóirí agus Bhord na bhFeidhmeannach de Bord Fáilte cuirim fáilte romhaibh chuig Bronnadh an Iubhailte Airgid de Dhuaiscanna Náisiúnta na mBailte Slachmhara. Cuirim fáilte romhaibh chuig an sráidbhaile galánta de Bhaile Uí Bheoláin a bhuaigh an comórtas i 1981.

Is mór an onóir diinn go mbromfaidh Uachtarán na hÉireann an Dr. P. Ó hIreighle na duaiscanna sa bhlian Iubhailte seo. Is comhartha omóis é dóibh siúd uilig a rinne sár-obair agus a chruúhaigh de thairbhe a gcuid iarrachtaí ag an leibheál áitiúil le cúig bliana fichead anuas, gur chuid tábhachtach é an comórtas seo i saol an phobail ar fud na tíre.

Is comórtadh é an lá inniu ar chomhoibriú agus ar spiorad an phobail. Is ásonna muid uilig ag muintir Bhaile Uí Bheoláin. Gabháim buíochas leo ar son na n-iarrachtaí a rinne siad chun fáilte a chur roimh a oiread sin daoine chuing a sráidbhaile galánta. Is bailte storfháiteacha bailte slachmhara, agus tá súil agam go mbanfídh cách sult as an dóigh ar thug muintir an bhaile aire dá dtimpallacht. Tá súil agam go marfídh a rian ar bhur n-aighe as seo amach.

P. V. Doyle,
Chairman Bord Fáilte.



On this 25th Anniversary of the Tidy Towns Competition a special word of thanks must be extended to the men, women and children who have joined in the environmental protection work which this competition encourages.

The setting up of a Tidy Towns Competition was an enlightened move, at a time when economic conditions in Ireland set a greater priority on things other than tidiness, conservation and environmental protection. In the intervening twenty-five years there has been considerable change in public attitudes. More and more people, recognising the priceless heritage which we have in our environment; in our towns and villages as well as in our mountains, rivers and lakes, have become more aware and more vocal, on the need for individual and community action. The Tidy Towns Competition has given the impetus and the leadership both in creating that awareness and in providing the forum within which the people of this country can actively participate in caring for their surroundings.

The faces of our towns and villages have been improved by this Competition. I wish, and I know Bord Failte wishes, that we could say that it has solved our environmental problems. But this country still has a long way to go before we can say we have come to grips with such problems as litter, pollution, neglect of ancient buildings, the removal of derelict sites and the many other blights on our urban and rural landscape. The fact that these problems continue must not, however, be allowed to take from the enormous influence which the Competition has exerted on thousands of people in hundreds of communities up and down the country.

The Tidy Towns Competition is a continuing reminder to all of us of our responsibility as citizens to take care of our environment in all its aspects. Recent decisions by the Government in regard to the new Litter Bill and the Heritage Council demonstrate an increasing commitment by the Government to assist communities in their efforts to keep Ireland a beautiful and pleasant country in which to live.

I congratulate Bord Failte on its achievement in keeping the Tidy Towns Competition to the forefront over the past twenty-five years. By so doing they have performed a major service to the country. I hope that their commitment will spur many more towns and villages throughout Ireland in the efforts which are urgently required to tackle and overcome the challenges which face our distinctive and priceless environment.

Desmond O'Malley,
Minister for Trade, Commerce and Tourism.



When the Tidy Towns Competition was initiated 25 years ago, none of its originators could have foreseen the impact their idea would have on Irish people, and on the appearance of so many of our towns and villages.

In its first year, the Competition attracted entries from 52 centres, and a not inconsiderable amount of cynical amusement! But all that has changed. Each year has brought new entries, and the return of old friends, so that in this Silver Jubilee year, we have over 800 entries, and the Competition is a firmly established national event, involving tens of thousands of men, women and children who do voluntary work for the good of their communities.

The Tidy Towns Competition is one example, and a very potent one at that, of the manner in which tourism has contributed socially as well as economically to the life of the people of Ireland. Tourism provided the motivation for the Competition, but the principal benefit has been to the communities themselves. It has helped in great measure to replace apathy with pride, to bind concerned individuals together as a community. There is, of course, much work to be done, but there are more people to do it as each year brings more and more people into the Competition and over to the side of those who recognise that we have a special country, and share a common responsibility to cherish it.

The Ireland that will meet the expectations of our own people will satisfy the discerning visitors we seek to attract here. In helping to raise our own standards, the Tidy Towns Competition continues to have a very direct relevance to the future of the tourist industry and I hope that the future years will see an acceleration of the contribution this Competition makes to the life of those who live in our towns and villages.

The success of the Competition is due to the support it has been given from many sources. Firstly, I would congratulate and thank all of those, young and old, who each year participate actively — and there are at least 50,000 who do so. I thank also the full range of voluntary organisations who lend support to their Tidy Towns Committees, the Local Authorities and their staffs, without whose involvement the improvements achieved to date would not have been possible.

We in Bord Failte hope that in promoting local community effort in our towns and villages we have not alone developed our tourist industry, but have made a significant contribution to the development of a national effort which will be concerned with the future of this country of which we are so proud.

Michael MacNulty,
Director General, Bord Failte.