

*"Caring for our environment"*

Centre : **CLARE ISLAND**  
County : **MAYO**  
Category : **A**

**Results**

Date of Adjudication : 20-06-2000

	Maximum Mark	Mark Awarded
Overall Developmental Approach	60	37
Homes, Harbour areas and other Facilities	60	38
Litter Control and Tidiness	60	34
Roads, Walls and Hedgerows	60	37
Overall General Impression	60	39
<b>TOTAL MARK</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>185</b>

# **Adjudicators Comments**

## **Clare Island, County Mayo**

### **OVERALL DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

The adjudicator was pleased to note that you are receiving a good level of co-operation from the local community – this will help you in your overall endeavours. It is to be hoped that Claira Development Company continue to gain the funds they need to progress their work. It was interesting to read your plans in relation to a feasibility study for an airstrip, the existing helipad was noted. Your revival of the Clare Island/Aran Island Yawl Race (after seventeen years!) is highly commendable as indeed is your blue flag beach and green flag environmental award. You have obviously given thorough thought to the future development of your island. Do ensure that its wonderfully unspoilt nature is guarded.

### **HOMES, HARBOUR AREAS AND OTHER FACILITIES**

The restoration of Granuaile's Castle is now well underway though it was not yet open. The stone walls to the Abbey have been painted and goods are stored within it. Are these related to its future restoration? The adjudicator was fascinated to read in the enclosed pamphlet that this is Granuaile's burial place and houses some important medieval wall paintings. Do ensure that this wonderful historical asset is restored to its former glory. The information board on wildlife at the harbour strand proved extremely interesting reading but the last year's adjudicators comments in relation to sign posting of a discreet nature are extremely valid. Perhaps a more detailed map could be drawn up as, although the existing map reads quite simply on paper, it is difficult to follow in view of the fact that there are far more roads on the ground! The completed Community Centre was well presented on the day but a rusty port-a-cabin adjacent created a bad impression. A pretty whitewashed cottage beside the latter was admired. Moran's B&B sports some unusual stone walling adjacent to its driveway. The Granuaile House appeared slightly stained and should be freshened up before next year's competition. A pretty cottage garden to a long single storey house on the road to the Abbey was greatly admired. Indeed houses throughout the island were in a good state of repair. The very fresh church is an attractive simple building, the school was fine and the Abbey has been commented on elsewhere in this report. The graveyard was slightly overgrown but the (Early Christian?) Cross within its environs is another fine historical asset.

### **LITTER CONTROL AND TIDINESS**

The standard in this category was quite good on the day

although there were problem areas. A full litterbin was noted, by the telephone box, which was in very good condition. The beach was also litter free but a soft drink can was evident to the roadside above. A single Malteser packet was noted along the roadside and a plastic fertiliser bag dumped in the ditch adjacent to the road leading to the abbey. In terms of tidiness perhaps storage of goods could be more successfully screened from public view. The B&B signs at the pier and beach are reasonably unobtrusive but one or two are in need of a fresh coat of paint. Whitewashed sheds were generally in good condition, however, one or two red roofed tin sheds appeared quite rusty and should be replaced and/or painted in a traditional red colour. A weedy forecourt area was noted to the front of the ESB sub-station and opposite the Abbey.

## **PRESENTATION OF ROADS, WALLS AND HEDGEROWS**

The roads of the island were generally in good condition although that from the church and Abbey leading through the valley is quite rough! The hedgerows were alive with honeysuckle, ferns, montbretia, and wild bog cotton was evident to the marshy area leading down from the lighthouse back towards the harbour. An unusual red butterfly was noted. Other islands in the competition have made studies of the butterflies attracted to their areas. The stream area by the beach with its cheerful yellow bog irises was greatly admired.

## **OVERALL GENERAL IMPRESSION**

The first impression the visitor gets of the island is of the proud Granuaile Castle guarding the busy harbour and long beach with its magnificently clear water. This is an attractive approach and affords the visitor a magnificent aroma of the sea and view back to Croagh Patrick on the Mainland. The island has a fascinating history, geology, and is of great cultural and biological significance. The adjudicator was particularly fascinated by the grassy tillage drills, dating from when the island had a larger population in previous years. In regard to any developments taking place on the island, one must keep in mind the survey that was carried out by Robert Lloyd Praeger MRIA back in the early 1900's. The objective of the survey was to compile detailed information on the status and distribution of the flora and fauna on the island at that time. This is a most valuable baseline study and remains a point of reference for all future work in this area. Good luck with your future endeavours.