

THE CROWN



The Crown has a long and interesting history dating back to the 1800's. The Knight's, the Merdiths and the Poles were allotted land around the Castleisland area. William Knight was the beginning of the Knight dynasty in Castleisland; he was an Inn Keeper and farmer. He married a catholic, their son Henry continued the business and later Henry's son Sam, coming down to the late Billy Knight who married Betty in 1954. Many of us remember Billy very well. He sponsored the Knight Cup for Castleisland Races and the local Rugby Club made the Crown their headquarters. Galwey-Foley, a bank manager in Castleisland started the Rugby era in Castleisland. Billy was a great character and one of my favourite stories is of a priest who came to Castleisland from Waterford to perform a wedding ceremony. He called in to the Crown to have breakfast. He met Billy and gave him his order, some time past and Billy said to him, did he get served, he replied "No". The priest heard Billy shouting - "Where is the bitch with the Priest's tay?" The priest enjoyed this and told the story at the wedding. At the time when Betty and Billy were first married the Crown used to open at four in the morning on Fair days, the breakfast consisted of steak, double eggs and sausages. Bed & Breakfast was 9 shillings, a good steak for five shillings, this was about 1958. Over the years many a good singsong was enjoyed with Betty Knight playing the piano and Betty Bradley joining in. In recent years it has become a platform for local traditional music. The Crown hosted many a great local function. The fairwell party was a night to be remembered. Betty and Liam thanked the customers for their support over the years and wished every success to Phil and Maria O'Connell.

The Crown's famous visitors over the years include Daniel O'Connell, Eamon de Valera, Charles Parnell and Sean McBride. They all spoke from the Balcony. In later years many top entertainers from the Band era stayed in the Crown, which was also a great favourite of our own Con Houlihan who held many a great discussion on "world affairs" there.

Betty Knight has touched many a heart from far and near and we wish every happiness to her, Stella, Liam, Elizabeth, Deborah and their families in the coming years. They have enriched all our lives.

Liz Knight serves up the last pint to Moss Curtin and Paddy O'Sullivan at the party in The Crown in January.

Pic: Mike Brosnan.