

Tommy Shanahan

I was born in Mitchell St, Thurles on the 18th February, 1921. I was the fourth in a family of twelve, seven boys and five girls, and we were a very happy family. The house was not very big but it was a happy home. We moved to a new house in Bohernave in 1933. I started school in the Convent at four. It was not far from where we lived. There were some nice nuns there and I made my First Communion at the convent school at age seven. From there I went to the CBS at the far end of the town so it was a big change having to walk over a mile to school. I did not enjoy my time with the brothers; they were hard men and did not spare the strap, but I seemed to pass all the exams from one class to another.

I left at sixth class as you had to pay over four pounds a year if you wanted to go on to the secondary classes. My parents could not afford that kind of money, not back in the twenties, so food was more important than education.



Chairman of Tipperary (NR) County Council: Tom Shanahan wearing the chain of office.

I did go to the Tech for two years, and left at fourteen. I did the odd jobs for people, milk rounds and the usual messages for people.

My brother John, RIP, was working on the railway as a boy porter, so when he came of age at twenty I got his job - ten shillings a week and the uniform and it was then I started my real education. I was assistant to Jack Murphy who was in charge of the parcels' office and was

At work in the Signal Box at Roscrea Railway Station.



also a Labour Co. Councillor. So he set me on the road in all kinds of railway work and the trade union movement and politics.

I came to Roscrea in 1944 having worked in other stations as well. I had a signalman's Certificate and Guards as well. I loved the Railway work. I got married in 1946 to Nancy Hogan and had six in family.

I was first elected to the Co. Council in 1967 and served on most of the Committees. I enjoyed my years as councillor and I hope served the people of Roscrea and North Tipperary. It was great to see so many new houses being built as they were badly needed, and the big extension to the Vocational School, the one thing I wanted to achieve. I often referred to it as the poor man's university.

I have seen great changes in Irish life some for the better and I hope peace will come to Northern Ireland in my time, as at 81 years the time is running out for me.

It was a great honour to be chosen as one of the People of the Year for Roscrea. I only did what any good person might do and I did it my way.

