

Curragh Place of Detention  
Curragh  
Co. Kildare



An Churraigh Áit Coinneála  
An Churraigh  
Contae Chill Dara

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## **CURRAGH PLACE OF DETENTION VISITING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT YEAR ENDED 2003**

*The Curragh Place of Detention Visiting Committee members present their  
Annual Report for 2003.*

There was a change over in members in the first few months of the year, in February / March four new members were appointed and five members were re appointed, however, two of the re appointees declined their membership. These were not replaced. Two other members' term expired during the year and these vacancies also remain unfilled.

The committee held it's A.G.M. in April and following a secret ballot Mr. Thomas Heraghty was reappointed chairman and Ms. Varley was elected vice chairperson.

The committee, as in previous years held it's meetings on the second Tuesday of each month and in addition all members visited individually during the year. Following these meetings all areas of the prison were inspected and also it was an opportunity to integrate with the inmates, no prisoner requested to meet with the committee as a group, however, on their rounds the members were approached with queries and numerous requests.

The committee appreciate the positive and prompt responses by the Governors and Chief to all requests channelled through their offices. This affirmative attitude has contributed to ensuring a serene environment for all who live and work within the prison.

The members are pleased to report that the prison is very well maintained with all cells & recreation areas being kept neat & tidy. During the Summer three inmates painted a mural in the recreation yard and the committee agreed that it enhanced the area.

We found the meals to be of the very highest quality and wish to acknowledge the consistent high standard maintained by the catering staff and to congratulate the kitchen staff and all involved in the kitchen area for once again achieving the "Excellence Hygiene Award".

The committee commends the education facilities in the Curragh and wish

to congratulate the teaching staff.

Currently 90% of the prison population participate in some form of educational activity.

Once again a number of inmates undertook exams at Junior Certificate,

Leaving certificate, Open University & Fetac, (various levels).

An educational awards ceremony was held in October in recognition of the certificates received.

In addition 20 inmates received City & Guilds certs having studied through the computer workshop under the guidance of prison staff.

The committee also recognise the educational personnel's' commitment as well as the dedication of other disciplines within the prison, to the various programmes being run in the Curragh.

In 2003 there was a high level of participation amongst the prison population in the Pre Release Programme, the Thinking Skills Course, the Group Skills Course and in the Sex Offender Treatment Programme.

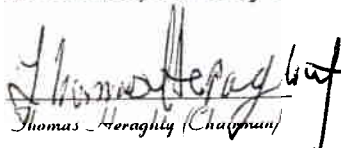
Unfortunately due to the lack of suitable applicants the 2003 / 2004 Sex Offender Treatment Programme was vacated.

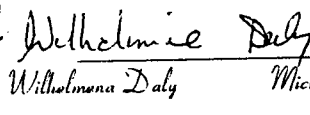
The members were also disappointed that the plans to refurbish the Curragh were replaced with the devastating news that the institution may close early in 2004.

The committee states that the Curragh P.O.D. is vital to the prison service in that it houses many elderly offenders who would find larger institutions more intimidating and would find such a transition very traumatic and therefore would beseech the Minister to reconsider the decision.

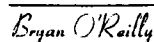
This year we visited Shelton Abbey in our annual inter prison visit.  
We wish to thank Governors & staff of the institution for the hospitality afforded to us during our visits.

Finally, the committee members would like to express their gratitude to the Governor, Assistant Governor, Clerks, Chief Officer and the entire staff of the Curragh for the assistance, courtesy and hospitality delivered to us throughout the year.

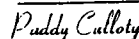
  
Thomas Heraghty (Chairman)

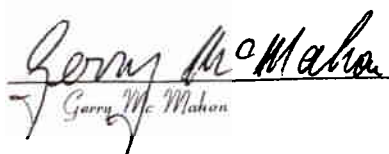
  
Wilhelmina Daly

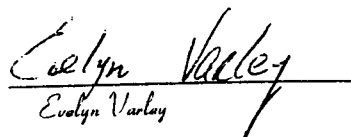
  
Michael Hanrahan

  
Bryan O'Reilly

  
Mairin Hyland

  
Paddy Culloty

  
Gerry McMahon

  
Evelyn Varley