

# Bishop Comiskey makes a rare appearance



Fr Brian D'Arcy and Brendan Comiskey last night

DISGRACED cleric Bishop Brendan Comiskey made a rare public appearance last night at the launch of the memoirs of veteran radio broadcaster Donncha O Dúlaing.

Bishop Comiskey resigned as Bishop of Ferns 12 years ago after admitting he failed to deal adequately with the activities of paedophile priest Sean Fortune, who killed himself after being charged with abusing more than 29 boys.

The bishop, 79, was among more than 100 people who gathered for the launch of Mr O Dúlaing's memoirs, a gathering that included singer Daniel O'Donnell and Fr Brian D'Arcy.

Mr O Dúlaing, presenter of popular weekend show Fálte Isteach, told wellwishers at Dublin's GPO how compiling the book had been marvellous experience. He said: 'It's very strange to see your life coming

By Irish Daily Mail Reporter

back before you because here it is, here it is in truth and in magic. To be here this evening I suppose is the biggest privilege I have ever had.

'I got 900 cards when I was out sick and I have read most of them and went back again on Fálte Isteach and fálte isteach is the word.'

'I always think of the wireless, I think of people at home, I think of the matches. The GAA and Comhaltas have been central to my life and my own family have been wonderful and marvellous,' he said.

'What's happened here is a bit of magic that I never thought would happen to me.'

'The spirit of the past is alive and well and breathing deep this evening.'

# Fears for babies of the Google generation

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young children into computer programmes to try to produce prodigies. She said these newly dubbed 'cyber babies' are part of 'the largest unregulated social experiment of all time. You often hear parents talking about their three-year-old or two-year-old and how they have the skills of a Google executive when it comes to manipulating their iPad.

'These children may grow up to be brilliant when working with computers, but can they catch a ball, can they cross a road safely in terms of estimating speed? These are vital skills.'

Ms Haugh, from parenting site mummypages.ie, warned: 'Some parents are using apps, like lullaby apps [full of lullabies and stories to help a baby drift off to sleep] where they can learn some of their first words from.'

Irish expert Ms Aiken, whose studies into the impact of digital technology on people has attracted the attention of the White House,

## 'A distorted view of reality'

as well inspiring the latest series in the CSI franchise, CSI: Cyber, raised the mounting problem in Ireland on the John Murray show on RTE Radio 1 yesterday.

'For a one-year-old, that's the golden period in terms of how their perception develops,' she said.

'On a tablet and with cartoons there is a 2D false-depth perception, it's not real and if a child is spending a lot of time during a critical development period looking at that then what is the development impact of this? Do they end up with distorted views of reality?'

Along with her concerns over the development of sensory and co-ordination skills, Ms Aiken is worried about the development of social skills.

'I saw the saddest thing a few weeks ago,' she said.

'I was on a train journey to Galway and I saw a mother who was feeding her baby and for the 30 or 40 minutes she never looked at her

## CYBER EXPERT

REGARDED as one of the world's leading experts in cyber psychology, Mary Aiken is director of the RCSI CyberPsychology Research Centre.

Her research at RCSI focuses on virtual profiling and behavioural analysis, specifically youth behavioural escalation online. American channel CBS recently announced the latest series in the CSI franchise, CSI: Cyber, was inspired by the work of Mrs Aiken. Patricia Arquette plays the main character, a cyber psychologist at the Cyber Crime Division of the FBI. Mary is a producer on the show, which is due to air in spring 2015.

baby's face once. She was looking at her mobile phone, and I think in terms of bonding if that was to happen all time it would be a problem.

'Babies want you to look into their face, that's where they learn their social skills, that's how they learn to recognise, emote and emphasise. But if the parent isn't even looking at the child, what is that going to do in evolutionary terms?'

Professor John Suler of Psychology at Rider University, in the US, who is internationally recognised as the founder of the field of cyber psychology, echoed Ms Aiken's concerns to the Mail last night.

'Letting kids play with each other and out in the backyard or wherever is such an important tool in their development. Sitting inside on these devices is a sedentary activity. We're at a stage in cyberspace where people are hypnotised by it, and hopefully there will be more of a balance in the future.'

Dr Suler, a visiting scholar in Ms Aiken's Cyber Psychology Research Centre in the Royal College of Surgery in Ireland, warned parents of the dangers of an uncontrolled internet.

'When kids go into cyberspace on their own, it's like letting your kids free into the middle of New York City on their own. Parents wouldn't



Advice on good parenting: Mary Aiken

allow that. When you go out into cyberspace, you don't know who is there, what predators are there.

'Bullying is another important issue: kids are becoming the victims of other kids or people who are out to take out their hostilities, and these children are the targets.'

'You do see this epidemic reaction then when you get one depressed, suicidal kid online with other kids with similar feelings and the problem spreads.'

'There is a powerful tendency to spend too much time on comput-

## 'We are hypnotised by cyberspace'

ers, tablets and phones and not in the real world.'

A recent study from Early Childhood Ireland claims found that it has also been estimated that most children spend about three hours a day watching TV. Instead, it recommends that children under the age of two should have no screen time at all, and that children over the age of two should be limited to one to two hours a day.

UK cyber-psychologist Berni Good told the Mail: 'There are no

hard-and-fast rules in terms of time limits - balance is key, get children to eat more healthily and exercise more frequently and set limits for screen time.

'There's not enough research yet to make concrete statements. From a psychological perspective the jury is still out in terms of the impact on development, and whether they will carry their virtual behaviours. These are issues because this is all new technology and we will have to see if this changes human behaviour. But engaging [with technology] from a young age can help learning from a young age, and preventing technology entirely can also cause problems. We can't go back on technology now.'

Don Myers, president of the National Parents' Council, last night told the Mail that it is important to switch off and focus on real life. 'Every young child seems to be on these platforms but they've never actually been shown or trained how to use them.'

'They won't be able to kick a ball or catch a ball, they're glued and tuned into this fiction world. Parents need to take the time out to make sure their children get into the real world.'

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# Multinational firm dropped €1m contract with Rehab

By Fergal Blaney  
Political Correspondent

REHAB Enterprises lost a major contract worth €1million a year in June, just months after the Rehab charity's controversial appearances before the Public Accounts Committee.

The latest accounts for the main commercial arm of the Rehab Group show that losses came to €318,000 on turnover of almost €20million last year.

Staff costs at the company went up by €316,000 with six people added to the payroll. Details are also provided in relation to consultancy fees paid to former chief executive Frank Flannery, who was a director of the firm briefly in September of last year.

Mr Flannery received payments totalling €409,000 from the Rehab Group between 2007 and 2013 and the Rehab Enterprises records show that €30,000 of this related to consultancy for Rehab Enterprises over 2012 and 2013.

The accounts' notes reveal that the bottom line is likely to be impacted this year as they show there was a 'post-balance sheet event' that will cost the company €1million this year.

The note states that: 'Rehab Enterprises Ltd were formally advised in early 2014 that a contract with a substantial existing customer would not be renewed upon expiry of current contract at the end of June 2014.'

'The contract was awarded on a worldwide basis to a single supplier rather than a number of worldwide regional providers.' A Rehab spokesman said the customer was a multinational company which Rehab provided a 'logistics and storage service' to. The average amount of the contract was just over €1million per annum.

Rehab Enterprises was the source of controversy when it came up during numerous sessions of PAC earlier this year when the accounts of the Rehab Group were being scrutinised.

# Norris slams 1916 'traitors'

DAVID Norris yesterday described the 1916 leaders as 'traitors' in the Seanad.

The senator said he agreed with former Fine Gael leader John Bruton about the men and women who fought in the Rising.

Mr Bruton had claimed a lot of destruction could have been avoided if the leaders had more patience. Mr Norris told the Seanad yesterday: 'They were seen by the British as traitors to the empire but they were traitors to their own cause because Eoin MacNeill, the commander-in-chief, had cancelled the Rising and yet they ignored that.'

Fianna Fáil senator Mary White said she took serious issue with the views of Senator Norris and those of the former taoiseach.

She said: 'In 2016, we will celebrate the freedom achieved by those who fought on these streets.'