

Silent night on Clare Island



The light of Christmas burns a little brighter for Robert Timmermans and the rest of the residents of Clare Islands off the Mayo Coast.

The residents of Clare Island experienced a silent but much brighter Christmas this year thanks to ESB. The island's former system of generator-driven power was replaced by a con-

nection to the National Grid using a cable to the mainland.

ESB was the first state body to bring services to the island in the early '80s. According to the Clare Island Development

Officer, Donal O'Shea, this played no small part in the ensuring development which has taken place.

(Full story, page three)

Silent night, bright lights on Clare Island

ESB was the first state body to bring services to Clare Island in the early '80s. According to the Clare Island Development Officer, Donal O'Shea, this played a large part in the development of the island community and social life. Donal also feels that people on the mainland do not realise there are services which one takes for granted on the mainland, and which have been absent on the islands.

"We can now use appliances we could not use before like electric cookers, storage heaters, dishwashers and computers," he said. He added that he hopes more companies will now follow the lead of ESB and bring new life to the island.

LIGHTS TWINKLE OUT A WELCOME

Cliara Development Company Ltd. is a body set up with a Board of Directors to promote the island development. Following the appointment of a Development Officer in



Keith and Lisa Moran of Clare island off the Mayo coast at their home on the island celebrating Christmas, by lighting a set of decorative electric Christmas lights.

1995 and an Administrator in 1997, the company has expanded rapidly and has been responsible for, among other projects, the building of a helipad,

Community Centre, camping site, water scheme, roads, an airstrip, and restoring Granuaile's Castle. The company is also involved in negotiations on the

building of a new pier. "It is great to see all the lights in the new Community Centre," commented John Roche, the Island Administrator. "It seems that ESB and

electricity has really brought the building to life and has made the shoreline along the beach of Clare Island a much warmer place. Each light twinkles out a welcome to people as they arrive on to the pier of Clare Island. It is a great thing to see."

NEW SYSTEM A GODSEND TO FARMING COMMUNITY

Humphrey O'Leary is a farmer who lives beside the existing diesel generator sets. He believes the new system will open up opportunities in small industries.

"With the noise of the old generators gone the sounds of the sea can be heard again, and you are reminded that you are living on an island," says Humphrey.

States local IFA Chairperson Jane O'Toole, "The new system is a godsend to the farming community, as farmers can now use heavier equipment on the farm."