

The Come-Home Idea

In our last issue a feature we called "Now Here's an Idea" had one submission from Tommy McCormack now of Mooneen. His idea was, briefly, to stage a "Come Home Week" in Louisburgh in 1990. We publish here a recent interview.

Q.: Congratulations on your brainchild of a "Louisburgh Come Home" week in 1990. Did the idea catch on generally among Louisburgh emigrants?

A: Yes, but not to the degree I expected. We blame ourselves mostly for not getting the message across to all. Those we did reach co-operated admirably. But we do feel that if the exercise is to be repeated we will need much better and more extensive organizing tactics at our own end, here in Louisburgh, by way of making more contacts and communicating the idea of the real get-together as we envisaged it.

Q.: How did you go about the organizing of such an ambitious undertaking?

A: The first step was to include a letter in the 1988 edition of *An Choinneal*, outlining the idea, and asking for overseas contacts with interested Louisburgh emigrants wherever they might be. A meeting was convened to which all local groups were invited. At that meeting the following committee was formed with representation from all community groups: Chairman: Tommie McCormack; Secretary: Mrs. Mary Fergus; Treasurer: Sean Cave; Finance Sub-Committee: Imelda O'Grady, Rosari Tiernan and other members: Annie B. Casey, Eileen Gaffney, Father John Fallon, Father Tadhg Ó Móráin and Mrs. Dymphna Coyne. A number of people responded to the letter in *An Choinneal*; correspondence was entered into with those and with others whose names we got from the Secretary of *An Choinneal*. Fundraising, and organizing a calendar of events, were our main occupation during the early months of 1990.

Q.: How long did the festival last and what were its main features and attractions?

A: From Sunday 22nd July to Tuesday 31st July 1990. Opening day was comprised of an official welcome by the Parish Priest at 11.30 a.m. Mass, and a formal welcoming address was later delivered on the Square by Father John Fallon, after which music was provided by Westport Town Band and local musicians. The opening festival dance was held in the Parochial Hall on that night; music was provided by Basil and the Shamrock Band. A most enjoyable night was had by all and many old acquaintances were renewed. During the day, two football matches were played in the Town Park; these were organised by the local G.A.A. Club. An evening event was organised by the local Guild of the I.C.A. featuring an Arts and Crafts exhibition, a performance by the Strawboys and a dance during which tea and refreshments were served to all.

On Saturday, 28th July, a model aircraft flying display was held in Durkan's field. This novel event was thoroughly enjoyed by all the spectators. Other events included two treasure-hunts, a junior disco and a *ceílí* in Lecanvey Hall on Reek Sunday night. The Festival officially came to a close on Tuesday, 31st July, at the annual "Community Reunion Dance," which was held in "The Derrylahan". A huge crowd attended and enjoyed this function which proved to be the highlight of the Festival.

Q.: I have met Louisburgh people abroad who met old friends at that festival, for the first time in twenty, thirty or forty years. Was there, in fact, a mass return of emigrants?

A: The short answer is, regrettably no! Why this is so, still poses a question for us. So, if we may, through the pages of *An Choinneal*, we seek answers to the following questions from any interested reader:

1. If you did not come, were you not informed or not aware that the festival was on?
2. If you did come, was it because of the Festival, or would you have come anyway?
3. Again if you were here, please let us know what you enjoyed about the Festival; also what honest criticisms you have to make to us.

Q.: What is your outstanding satisfactory memory of the whole event?

A: For me the highlight of the Festival was meeting the members of my own family again, sixteen to twenty of whom travelled from New York especially for the "Come-Home Week." That, combined with the obvious joy, delight and nostalgia they enjoyed on meeting friends and acquaintances from their school-days, confirmed to me that my original idea was worthwhile.

Q.: And have you planned another such gathering?

A: A "Come-Home Week" – no! I foresaw this "Come-Home Week" originally as a pilot for a festival, geared towards a "Come-Home Week" every five years. However, if this plan is to materialize, it will entail the involvement, dedication and, above all, the commitment of the entire community.

Q.: I recall that in your letter in the 1988 Coinneal you made the point that although people come home regularly they miss each other unless such a "Come-Home Week" is arranged for a specific year. Is that still your idea or are you thinking of making it an annual event?

A: A "Come-Home Week" every year would be too much to expect – considering the heavy financial and family commitments of our emigrants. But as I have already stated, a five-yearly get-together would be more feasible.

Q.: About the time of year: summertime is an obvious choice, but it appears to me that because of work on farms or in tourism, local people find it hard to become actively involved. Could you visualize a "Come-Home Week" at any other time of year?

A: From my point of view a Christmas time get-together could be an alternative, whether this would suit our emigrants – taking into consideration annual leave, school vacations, etc – I cannot say at this stage. But I would welcome your readers' suggestions.

Q.: *If you had a request to make of Coinneal readers so that the next festival might be even a greater success, what would that request be?*

A: To the Louisburgh readers I will say: if you want an annual festival in Louisburgh, ask yourselves how can *you* help to make it a success, Can you and will you give of your time, energy and talents. If you can say "yes", don't just answer "I will be *involved*" – but rather "I am going to be *committed*".

To our *overseas* friends I say: "Please keep up the links with home, and if possible come and join us at our next get-together." May I, through the pages of our magazine express sincere thanks to the Festival Committee, and all who helped to run this, our first "Come Home Week." We hope it is the first of many.

Many thanks, Tommie, and we all hope that your appeal will be listened to and bear increasing fruit. Any suggestions or constructive criticism will be welcome here.



Bríd and Jim Corrigan, Mary Smyth (Castlepollard), Stephen and Lily Wallace and John Wallace – at the Cregganbawn-Castlepollard Reunion.

A Credit Line of £85,000

From that headline, Merchant Finance banking might spring to mind, but what's being described is Louisburgh Credit Union Ltd. Louisburgh Credit Union is in operation for two and a half years and has lent eighty five thousand pounds out to its members – an astonishing figure.

Our Credit Union has, on the first of October 1990, sixty thousand in shares and a total membership of two hundred and five. It works on the simple banking principle of clients saving their money together and the demand for borrowing will be at varying times. The purpose for a Credit Union in Louisburgh is to encourage regular saving, thereby building up a fund of money for the benefit of its members. This fund will be used to create a source of credit for the benefit of members at a fair and reasonable rate of interest (one per cent per month on unpaid balance of loan). Every member of the Credit Union is an owner and has an equal say in its running. Each member has one vote (regardless of amount of shares) at the Annual General Meeting where the board of directors, supervisors and auditor are elected.

The Board of Directors are delighted with the growth of the Credit Union, the success of which belongs to members. The directors are continually trying to emphasise to the community that the Credit Union is there for everyone and that it will cater for all needs: big shareholders, small shareholders, weekly, monthly, seasonally and yearly savers. All are welcome to obtain the benefits. All money lodged with the Credit Union is one hundred per cent guaranteed by many layers of protection enforced by the Irish League of Credit Unions.

Since commencement Louisburgh Credit Union Ltd., has been a team-effort, involving directors, supervisors and most importantly the members. It is a tribute to these two hundred and five people that a Credit Union is going to permanently reside in Louisburgh.

Accony

Pat Prendergast, Secretary



Credit Union: Back row (left to right): Patrick Conway, Eamon O'Malley, William McDonnell, Séamus Durkan. 3rd row: John McConnell, Tom McCormack, Seán McEvilly, Michael Grealis, Tom Duffy, Pádraic Mannon. 2nd row: Michael Gormley (league), Paddy Hoban (Mayo Chapter), Father John Fallon, James Scott, Rose Donnellan, Pádraic Geraghty, Paddy Glen (Mayo Chapter). Front row: Anne Duffy, Breda Hastings, Anne O'Toole

Running Tape

A string of memories from 1989 and 1990

Twenty-eight Louisburgh Ladies receive certificates after having successfully completed a "Return to Work" FAS course A memorial Cross was unveiled at Doolough to mark the 140th Anniversary of the Doolough Tragedy The professors and students of St. Scholastica College, Duluth, Winn., were accorded a warm welcome to Louisburgh at a reception in Durkan's Hotel Traditional musicians entertain at Old Head Successful concert at Sancta Maria College Bernadette Burke, Askelane was the winner of the Mayo Fed. I.C.A. Nat. Raytex Baking Competition. She received the Raytex Trophy Bishop James Fergus dies at Easter Sad death of John David Gibbons, son of Davy Joe Gibbons, Cloonlara 19 acres with a cottage type dwelling fetched a great price of £46,500. The estate of Mary Kate Gibbons (deceased) Bunowen Archbishop Cassidy issued a statement on the proposal to mine for gold on Croagh Patrick French students visit Gráinne Uaile Interpretive Centre Popular Louisburgh Post Office Assistant, Rose Donnellan was Guest of Honour, at a special presentation function in the Parochial Hall, Louisburgh John O'Reilly, Shraugh and Noel Gallagher, Aitanaveen, visited the European Parliament, Strasbourg, while on an educational tour with students from Ballinafad College Seamus Maxwell is a First prize winner at Westport Spring Show and Sale Sancta Maria students produce an attractive tourist brochure on Murrisk, Lecanvey and Kilsallagh Janet Durkan and her staff at Allergan were the winners of the overall star award, on catering, for the Republic of Ireland Former Clan Chief, Anthony O'Malley, Doughmakeown, is presented with a portrait of himself by the O'Malley Clan, on the occasion of his 90th birthday Micheal O'Donnell, Kinnock, wins a holiday at the Waterford Island Hotel, on the Late Late Show Mary Fergus, Cahir appeared on the Ronan Collins Quiz on R.T.E. Radio Confirmation in Louisburgh and Killeen. Fifty children in Louisburgh and thirty-seven children in Killeen Louisburgh school teacher Micheal O'Malley, was the lucky winner of a trip for two to the British Grand Prix Martin Joe O'Toole is newly elected T.D. for West Mayo. Great celebrations in Louisburgh Joanne Ball, Tooreen, was the Mayo winner in the Rose of Tralee final in the Beaten Path. Her prize was a holiday for two in Paris Louisburgh celebrates with Father Alexis Morahan on his ordination Eleanor Lyons, Bunowen, is now senior Travel Administrator at Westport Travel Carramore and Old Head Beaches have been awarded a "Blue Flag" for safe unpolluted waters Tommy Duffy, Falduff, has retired as Commandant with the F.C.A. Tommie and his family were guests of honour at a presentation function at the Derrylahan O'Toole Rally celebrations took place at the Derrylahan with the election of Michael O'Toole, Leenane as their chief. The

international Rally was opened by Martin Joe O'Toole T.D. Congrats to Anne Marie O'Malley, Thallabawn and Una Morrison, Killadoon, who have secured permanent teaching posts. Both are pupils of Killeen National School and Sancta Maria College Nora and Patrick Grady of Murrisk celebrate their Golden Jubilee with their family. Patrick is a native of Cregganbawn Mrs. Evelyn Durkan (Derrylahan) was the winner of a Bendix washing machine in a draw held in aid of Temple Street Children's Hospital O'Malley Clan Rally celebrations officially opened by our new T.D., Martin Joe Basil and his Band entertained a huge crowd at the Louisburgh Parish Re-union Pitch and putt has become very popular in Louisburgh Annual Pilgrimage to Kilgeever Blessed Well on August 15th. . . . PLE Austin Duffy won the award for the best potential N.C.O. at Finner Camp Sergeant Michael Kilcoyne (Letterfrack) and Tully has been successful in the Garda Inspector examination Caroline Deacy, Ballina, granddaughter of John and Kathleen (Jim) O'Malley, Cahir was the winner of a Gold medal for the long jump under 14 at the Community Games National Finals at Mosney Louisburgh was bedecked in Green and Red for the big game Mayo v Cork. Basil (Dan) contributed with a song for the team Mrs. Anne O'Brien, Bunowen Road travelled to New York to attend at her son Tommy's wedding October 1989 Congrats to Noel Sammin on being appointed West Mayo Division's representative as a selector on the Mayo Under 21 Board Mother and Toddler Group meet at the Resource Centre each Wednesday Louisburgh Supreme in West Final against Westport Brid Ni Dhomhnaill, Recess School, Principal and a native of Louisburgh has been presented with The Patrick Pearse Award by the President Dr. Patrick Hillery November 1989 Fr. Liam Durkan, a native of Bunowen has been appointed Parish Priest of Leenane Senior Citizens Party a huge success Presentation function at the Derrylahan for retired F.C.A. Commandant, Tommie Duffy of Falduff December 1989 Michael O'Malley, son of Tommie and Maureen was recently conferred with a B. Technology Degree at U.C.G. Sweeney's Funeral Parlour has opened at the Glebe, Louisburgh Maisie Tilsley, Thallabawn on "Live at 3" television programme on over 55 singing contest January 1990 Michael Hannon, Award-winning Louisburgh tenor starred in Taibhdhearc, Galway John F. O'Malley becomes new chairman of Louisburgh G.A.A. John Coyne, Liverpooldian of Louisburgh decent, has secured a senior executive position with Sealink, British Ferries February 1990 A Falduff Louisburgh man, John Moran, celebrated his 100th birthday in Kilcock, County Kildare. He is brother of Joe Moran, Falduff Louisburgh pays tribute to Doctor Colm McHugh at a retirement function in Louisburgh Parochial Hall. Glowing tributes were paid to Doctor McHugh Michael Dillon and Alan Gillis attend at Killadoon Beach Hotel March 1990 Timmy and Winnie Hastings celebrate forty years of married life together Mr. Michael Moran, formerly of Falduff, has been re-elected President of the Association of Electrical Contractors of Ireland Choctaw Indians lead Famine Walk from Doolough to Louisburgh. They were hosted by Louisburgh Community Council Canon Gerard Harney P.P. Doncaster celebrated the Silver Jubilee of

his ordination with a reception for his family and friends at the Derrylahan Father Austin Fergus C.C. Tuam also celebrated the silver jubilee of his ordination Louisburgh teachers retire. Mrs. Evelyn Leamy retired from Killeen N.S. Paddy Gallagher and Basil Morahan have retired from teaching at Colaiste Rís, Westport After their marriage in Duluth, Davy O'Toole and his bride, Sue, travelled to Louisburgh to celebrate with family, friends and relations. Davy and Sue met while Sue was studying in Louisburgh . . . James O'Malley and family, Corragaun, Thallabawn, travelled to England to be present at his nephew's ordination in June The Louisburgh 'Welcome Home Reunion' Festival was a huge success. Many ex-patriots travelled from distant parts to meet and celebrate with their friends Congrats to Ger McDonnell, Main Street, on qualifying as a Remedial Teacher Louisburgh shocked by sudden death of Kevin Kilcoyne, Kilsallagh Shankhill Radion and Model Aircraft Flying Club gave a spectacular display of Aircraft Aerobatics in Louisburgh during the holiday season Mrs. Lesli O'Dowd honoured by Omagh District Council, for her work to protect the environment Monsignor Scahill retires as P.P. of Balla Father Francis McMyler has been appointed P.P. in Balla Lucky win for Davy Gibbons, Cloonlara. Davy was the lucky winner of a Toyota Starlet in the Win-Electric Draw Michael Gallagher, Aitinaveen, was successful in securing a place at Letterfrack School of Fine Woodwork and design Michael and Chris Gibbons, Carrowniskey celebrated the tenth anniversary of their wedding John and Eileen Kerr celebrated the Silver Jubilee of their wedding Students at Sancta Maria College had their debs ball at the Derrylahan Congratulations and good wishes to Sergeant John Healy on his appointment to Westport Garda Station Some fifty people from Castlepollard, Co. Westmeath will be hosted by the Cregganbawn Community for a weekend in October. Most of the visitors were former residents of Cregganbaun.

Contributed by Margaret Gallagher

Remembering Sion

An incident which happened in my village when I was grown up, somehow has remained with me all my life.

A neighbour known for his fast temper, came in from the fields one evening in early summer. As his wife poured his tea, he asked her where she got the water from. (Sometimes it was drawn from a well some distance away.) On hearing it came from the river which flowed closeby, he jumped up from the table, grabbed a can and sprinted across the fields towards the well. Returning with the can filled with sparkling water he told her to "boil that".

Later she asked him why. He told her that X family up the river lit a fire close to the water, then proceeded to wash and boil all their dirty winter clothes. Afterwards the whole family had a swim and a wash the first of the year.

Environmental awareness somehow caught up with this man fifty years later. May the Lord have mercy on his gentle soul.

Recollections

My first visit to Louisburgh that I recall was during the time the Bridge was being reconstructed. The mode of transportation at that time was the "mare and cart." Our mare, I remember, felt uneasy, indeed nervous, at the sound of her hooves on the wooden planking at the temporary replacement bridge. A trip to town at that time meant two things: going to Mass, and then Joe McNamara's and Pete (Dan) O'Malley's sweet shops. Time was very organised then – school, monthly Confession, sodalities, Old Fair Days, the Stations and political speeches after Mass at election-time. The Mission in particular was the highlight in the parish, where spiritual reward took place amidst social excitement.

We had just a few motor-cars in the town then. "Hackneys" we called them. I remember only five, and I still recall Joe Love and Tommy Harney pumping petrol by the hand-pump with its stirrup-like handle. The decade of the 'forties saw its share of excitement, sorrow and progress in the town. World War II brought scarcity and rationing and a strange-looking contraption on the front of the motor-car engine. It was called a charcoal burner – a troublesome barrel-shaped device which promptly disappeared when petrol became more plentiful. It was at this time, too, that the new National Schools were built; followed by the Barracks, and later the Parochial Hall. It seemed that the town was on the move; and so it was.

A County Council stone-crusher came – the John Fowler Steam Engine turned to the left outside the Bridge and a great road-building scheme commenced through Collacoan, Shraugh, Log More, Cregganbawn and further. Some years later the scheme was repeated from Louisburgh to Furmoyle, Carrowniskey, Killeen, Killadoon and on to Thallabawn. With the exception of the crushing of the stone, all operations connected with the road-building were completed by local manual labour. For many of us young lads "Towler's Engine" was our first introduction to a mechanical machine at work. Bord na Móna, too, brought much-needed employment to the area. Its turf production in the Shranacloy, Laughta and Creggan Rua mountain was an economic success. Along the shoreline kelp, sea-rods and shellfish were gathered and sold; supplementing, and at times replacing, the meagre income from the small holdings.

Emigration was with us in the 'fifties as it is today and in the Spring of 1951 I found myself at Westport station taking the morning train. The journey took me to Cobh and then I had a short ride in the tender out of the harbour to board the Cunard Liner Cabin 23, C Deck. During a memorable journey of five days' duration, one experienced a true feeling for the vastness of the Atlantic!

Life in the New World did not post a difficult adjustment for the emigrant. In fact, it was a pleasant new experience: there was work, money to spend, lots of new

friends, Irish and Canadian dance-halls and the nightly recitation of the Rosary on radio by his Eminence Cardinal Cushing of Boston. This was a carefree time for the new emigrant but it was at this time also that we learnt to use again the *meitheal* system – a group helping one in need. The great cities of the U.S., most notably Boston, New York and Chicago, facilitated the emigrants in fully expressing their heritage and culture. The late John F. Kennedy brought status and pride in being Irish. The emigrant Irish on their part assimilated into the mainstream of American life. Only the accents remained!

On visits home we noticed progressive changes taking place: rural electrification, radio, more motor-cars, (the mare and the side-car disappearing), tarring of the village road, an expanding modern secondary school and the Louisburgh Holiday Cottages. Material progress was evident, yet it developed in harmony with the natural beauty of the area.

Fate had intended that we return home and so it happened. An adjustment had to be made from city to country environment, from a multi-culture to a homogenous society, from a company-employee to a family farm. Those adjustments can be difficult, but the caring nature of the Louisburgh people made them easy. Today, as in the 1950's many of our young people will go abroad. Their experience will be different; some will return to stay, others to visit. The onus lies with us to ensure that Louisburgh will be a desirable place for home or holiday as we journey forward towards the twenty-first century.

Doughmackeon

Michael P. O'Malley



Boys N.S. 1985 with Mr. Ball

An Cipín

The introduction of the primary school-children of the parish in this feature in this feature in the last issue met with widespread welcome and commendation. We are happy to repeat the process. Readers will understand that these are the offerings of eleven- or twelve-year-olds. They are reproduced here with a very minimum editing so as to preserve the fresh, unspoiled flavour of the young minds. If there are some factual or historical inaccuracies here or there (and such has been the charge about the pieces in the last issue) we are happy to live with these, and we ask that our readers would understand.

*Our invitation went out to the three schools in the parish and we again commend the high standard of the essays received. It is **not** a competition of any kind; but the three most appropriate essays were chosen from each school. The various teachers earn our sincere thanks and appreciation for their cooperation.*

*An Cipín means "the match". The future of An Choinneal seems assured! This year's subject is: **"The most interesting person I know"**.*

BARBARA TIERNAN (DOUGHMACKEOWN)

In the summer of 1990 my cousin, who lives in America, wrote to us and asked if he could bring a pen-friend, who was Chinese, with him on holiday to Ireland. The day they were due to arrive at the airport finally came and we set out to meet them both at the airport. We were all very anxious to meet the Chinese man. We were surprised when they came from the plane at how small he was. He was about four-feet-eleven, and as he was an adult we thought that very small. His name was "Ning Chang". He wore a loose shirt and loose-fitting trousers. He was a very dark colour and his hair was cut very short. In comparison to our American cousin who wore loud colours it was quite a contrast. We set out for home and as we drove along he seemed very surprised at the amount of space we had, and that we did not seem to have all that many people. In his country there are so many people and quite a lot of bicycles. He noticed that we did not cycle all that much in Ireland.

When we arrived home he had a meal of rice, using chopsticks; and he asked to sit at a low table. As his holiday started with us, we noticed he did things differently from us. He spent a long time in the morning praying to his God and his head bowed down while he did so. At meal-time he would sit only on the floor to eat. He told us he very rarely ate meat, just on special occasions. He like to drink tea, and that seemed the only thing we had in common.

At first he did not seem happy or settled. He came from rural China and had never lived in a house with a TV, washing machine etc. Everything seemed very

strange to him. As the days passed we got to know him better and we took him out to see the countryside. He told us about his country, their customs, traditions etc. He was so happy to get an opportunity to come and live with an Irish family and get to know the customs and traditions. Their holiday soon ended and we were very sad to see him go as we had grown very fond of him. He was happy returning to his own country but sad leaving Ireland. He was definitely the most interesting person I know.

AUSTIN KEANE (BRIDGE STREET)

The most interesting person I know lives four doors away and is a very good friend of the family. He owns a grocery shop. He is a member of the local Credit Union and a member of the Deep Sea Angling Club. He like to play pitch-and-putt and has the odd game of handball at Carramore. He likes to go for occasional walks in the countryside.

His kindness is by far his nicest quality. He has a kind word for adults and children alike; and foreign visitors to Louisburgh like to listen to his stories and history of the area. He is one of that kind generation of people who go out of their way to make people feel at home and welcome in Louisburgh. He is a daily Mass-goer and leads the people in the rosary in the Procession.

In his lifetime he has seen the good days and the bad days. He has seen days when things were scarce; when horses and side-cars were the only means of transport; when the streets were packed with the hustle and bustle of a fair day; when a pound would buy all the gold in the world and when all the houses in Louisburgh were full. Himself, and his stories of those days, make Séamus Durkan the most interesting person I know.

BERNADETTE O'MALLEY (CLOONACH MEANACH)

The most interesting person I know is a woman that is very close to me. She is always kind in every and any way she can be. The woman I am talking about is, of course, my mother. Her name is Mary O'Malley but formerly Kilcoyne. She lives in Thallabawn now but is originally from Cregganbawn. She was the youngest of three; she was also the only girl and has two brothers. She is a full-time housewife and she reared six children. She is about five foot high, has short dark-brown hair, has blue eyes and wears glasses. She is a very reliable person as she makes home-made bread and bakes other cakes and buns too. She also makes her own home-made butter.

She is a very busy woman. Her normal week-day starts at eight o'clock in the morning when she gets up first. She lights the fire, puts on the pot of tea and gets everyone else out of bed. When everyone else is gone out either to school, or to do the work on the farm, she then has the house to herself so she sets to work tidying the house. She hooovers and cleans. She doesn't feel the time long going by until we are in again. But somehow, she always seems to have the house cleaned and a lovely

dinner prepared and on the table every day. Her day of chores does not end at a certain hour of the day. She always has something to do up until the time she goes to bed.

Her hobbies are: reading, walking, sewing and knitting. She is always waiting with a helping hand. I love my mother very much and I don't think I could live without her.

STELLA O'MALLEY (DOUGHMACKEOWN)

It was Sunday morning, February the nineteenth, nineteen-eighty-nine. I woke up with a yawn but I could sense that there was something wrong. I got up and went to the kitchen. There the news was broken to me gently. Mammy was trying to hold back her tears; she said in a sad voice: "Granny has gone to holy God." I felt my little world had collapsed. I had lost my Granny and a true friend.

She was a very interesting and special person. Her name was Ellen O'Grady but everyone knew her as "Nellie". She was a woman of great faith, hope and charity. She was loving, caring, understanding, kind, gentle, unselfish – she had fantastic qualities. She was unique. Her philosophy was: God's will to be done. She lived by faith in her daily life, especially in the last years when she went through her passion. She had both her legs amputated in a space of five years. She went through a lot of suffering in her life. My Granny conceived twenty-one babies, nineteen of whom are living. At eighteen-and-a-half my Granny married her husband, James O'Grady, on the twenty-third of June, nineteen-thirty-two. My Grandad and Granny celebrated their golden jubilee in nineteen-eighty-six. My Granny was a very special person to me and the most interesting person I ever knew.

CELIA O'TOOLE (THALLABAWN)

My uncle is the most interesting person in many ways to me. He lived nearby and he took us anywhere we wanted to go. His favourite place was the beach, because he loved listening to the waves crashing against the rocks. He also loved to be in Clifden on a summer's evening. He liked traditional music and listening to stories of old and telling of the fun they had. He had one brother and five sisters. Three of his sisters are in England and two of them are in America, and his brother, who is my dad, is in Ireland.

I used to watch him mend clocks and watches of all colours, kinds, shapes and sizes. He had a special tree outside and on Christmas Eve he would put lights on it. When I was small I used to think it was magic.

He had two dogs, called *Rex* and *Towser*. They showed all kinds of tricks, like giving you the paw to shake. We all used to have great fun with them, but eventually they died. My uncle was interested in wild-life and knew all about the different animals. He loved old traditions, especially of his own area. He would sit and tell stories about life when he was a boy. Life then was so different. That is why I found my Uncle Joe a very interesting person.

MICHAEL DAVITT (CURRADAVITT)

The most interesting person that I know is Patrick Davitt, who is my grandfather. Born on the 11th January 1908, he was the eldest of a family of five. His mother died when the youngest child was two years old. His father, Michael Davitt, had to raise the family on his own. With Grandad being the eldest son, he had to go to work in England on a farm at the age of seventeen. His wages were thirty-six shillings a week. Every week he had to send three-quarters of the wages home to his father, for the times were bad in Ireland. After ten years he came back home and on March 10th, 1937 he got married to Brigid Gavin from Cregganbawn. They had fourteen in family. In 1937 war broke out and all food was rationed, and my grandfather had to do all the work by hand – like sowing potatoes, mowing hay, saving turf etc., for there was no machinery in those days. He also told me that the horse and bicycle were the means of transport long ago.

On the 28th March, 1987 they celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary. My grandfather told me that I am the fifth generation in our house. First there was my great-great-grandmother, John Davitt; second there was my great-grandfather Michael; third my grandfather, Patrick Davitt; fourth my father, Frank Davitt, and fifth myself, Michael Davitt. My grandfather also told me that we are related to the founder of the Land League, Michael Davitt from Straide, Co. Mayo.

Today my grandfather is the oldest in our village; he is eighty-three years old. Our village is situated in a valley overlooking Clew Bay. Anybody who knows my grandfather would agree that he is a very interesting person to talk about events and happenings of long ago. And he is always ready to crack a joke with people. So, Grandad, I wish you many more happy years among us, blessed with the gift of such a good memory.

PETER NEE (FEENONE)

The most interesting person I know is my father. He knows all about trees; he knows when to plant them, and thin them, and when they are cut down. He showed me how to tell how old they are; and when they have to be cut he knows if they are good or bad. He told me they make glue from trees and how they get it out of the trees. He said they keep trees until a certain age and then plant them with lots of other trees. He also knows a lot about fishing and all the different fishes there are. He brings me fishing with him sometimes and he is good at fishing. I know now where certain fish are and what bait they go for, and what size of hook to use. I go out on our *currach* with him and we go to the good fishing places and catch nice fish for our tea. He said that sometimes storms start under the sea.

My father is good at history and geography. He tells me about when there were old battles long ago and who were the leaders. He is also good at geography; he knows the villages and towns we go through on our holiday. He knows a bit about animals, too. He knows the names of different animals and birds and where they go in the winter and the different types of nests the birds build. Sometimes a bird goes

into our shed and can't get out; and my father tells me what type of bird it is. He knows about other animals, too. Once I found a baby rabbit and brought it home, but my father told me to let it go because its mother might be looking for it. So, that evening I brought it back to the field I found it in and let it go. All the other rabbits ran to it and I saw its mother bring it back to its burrow. And the next day my father said that he had seen the rabbit playing with others and was very happy.

SINÉAD MCDONAGH (ASKELANE)

Well; I did not know what to write about except for my father. As you know his name is Joe. Of course who wouldn't! To be honest he's not really the most interesting person I know, but I don't really know anyone else. Well, anyway, he is busy outside messing with things almost all the time. I would really say that the garden is his hobby. It's turning out alright at the moment. Of course I don't know what it will turn out like at the end. Speaking about that, our garden is in a mess at the moment because he is trying out a new stile. Whether it will work or not, I do not know.

Well, that's enough about outside. Now inside – well, television is the word for that. When he watches it, he never stops watching it. Well not exactly *never stops*; but near enough to it. I would ask him to turn it over and he would say: "In a minute" and never do it. And then it is bed-time. Well, I will say he is a bit of a softie at times. Well, all the time. I would have to say, anyway, that he lets me get small things I ask him for, including money for school. And going on my tour, he will give it to me anyway. When he is working I would help him. By all the things I have said about him good and bad, I love him.

CIARÁN GREALIS (FALLDUFF)

The most interesting person I know is Martin Joe O'Toole. He is our local T.D. Last year he was elected to Dáil Éireann. Before that he was a Senator. He was elected a Fianna Fáil Senator in 1977. He is sixty-five years old. When he left school he was a small farmer working with his father. He drove a truck repairing roads with the County Council. He started in politics in 1955. He was thirty years old then and was elected to the County Council. As well as politics he had a small, beef-exporting business. He bought cattle all over Connacht and sold them to Scotland. He also owns an island in Clew Bay where he keeps a lot of sheep. He is very well liked in our area. In the last election he got almost all the votes in our parish. Everybody voted for him even though they believed in the opposite party. Every evening there are cars parked outside his house. People come from over forty miles to get Martin Joe's expert advice on their problems. He visits Clare Island regularly and when he calls there, they give him a great welcome. Usually he spends the day helping them to live their lives better and to get what they are entitled to. They like him so well that they hold a party that night to show how much they appreciate him. That party can go on well into the night and next morning until his boat leaves. He is also a great

man for his family. There are four boys and four girls in his family. His wife's name is Bridgie. She is a really nice person. Although he is a very busy man he still finds time to fish in nearby Clew Bay. Sometimes when I meet him down at Old Head he is very friendly to me. He makes me feel special and that is what makes him the most interesting person I know.

MICHAEL (BALLYHIP)

Many interesting people come from the Louisburgh area. They are well known and some of them are famous for what they have achieved in their life-time. The person I know may not be famous, but to me he is the most interesting person I know. He was ordained to the priesthood in All Hallows College, Dublin in 1969. Two years later he went to Rome for further studies where he got his degree. He was teaching in a seminary in the North of England. A few years later he fulfilled his life-long wish – to go on missionary work to Kenya. The stories he has told me about his work there, are the reason why I find him most interesting.

He lived in a hut with no electricity; only candles for light, and no running water. He mostly lived on rice and fruit. At night he put a mosquito-net over him to prevent him from mosquito-bites. Even though it was a backward place he loved working there; and the three years he spent there were happy ones. He has also visited the Holy Land, travelled through Jerusalem, Galilee, Bethlehem and Mount Sinai (where Moses got the ten commandments). He told me he was taken by boat across the Sea of Galilee and even chanced a swim in the Dead Sea. At present he is parish priest of Pensby, Merseyside. This year he travelled with pilgrims to Medjugorje. I am looking forward anxiously to his next visit home and some more, interesting stories. He is a very pleasant and caring man. I nearly forgot to mention that he is a good singer and a great dancer. I have seen many trophies and medals he has won for céilí dancing when he was at school. I love to see him come to my home. To me he is someone very special: he is my uncle.

His name is Father Geoffrey O'Grady.

Stones in the Parish

On the road between Louisburgh and Leenane, some mile north of Delphi, there is a limestone slab which was originally set into the cliff-face but is now set into a cement pillar. It reads:

DHULOUGH PASS ROAD
CONSTRUCTED BY THE
CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD
FOR IRELAND
1896
C.D. OLIVER ENGINEER

A Postcard from Louisburgh

There's a postcard on my table which cries out the voice of home
To the *deoraidhe as Cluan Cearbán* – makes no matter where I roam.
As I study it and ponder every detail that it shows,
Down the mountain-side of memory, recalls rolls and ever grows.

There's the blessed, loved turf-fire glowing warmth to heart and soul,
Kindling thoughts of tales of childhood (where I played the hero's role):
See the Redcoats in their malice killing off our simple life!
See them driving scorching wedges 'twixt a father and his wife!

Characters are there in person. Long John Silver I can see,
With his greedy, rheumy rum eyes, ripping wings off busy bee:
Tarzan leaping from the tree-top of the flame to rescue Jane:
Brian Boru, with strength almighty, beating back the brutal Dane.

In the church, there's Canon Healy, gimlet eyes aglow with fire,
I can see them moisten, soften, as the first strains of the choir
Swell in awesome adoration of the newborn Christmas Child.
Christmas! full of precious memories in our clime, so cold and wild!

Then the picture fades and changes to a loving, sharing squad
Who were caring towards each other – conscious of their loving God.
They were my own family siblings full of good and life and love;
Each one fitted to the others as a finger to a glove.

Yes, those flames are my TV set! In them I can fantasize at will,
Change the channels as mood changes, cut the volume, view a "still",
Tune the picture, fade the colour or increase it as I may –
Sad it isn't instant replay. *Faraor!* That was yesterday!

Sydney

Seán Morahan

The Other Poverty

Speaking at the conclusion of the Louisburgh Combat-Poverty project in early Summer 1990, Mrs. Clementine Lyons, Cathaoirleach, (who is also Secretary of An Choinneal) spoke of the sometimes-forgotten meanings of that word "poverty." We reproduce here, with permission a "Mayo News" report of her address. — Editor.

Mrs. Lyons said there was, in any community, the poverty of deprivation, poverty of non-caring, poverty of opportunities, poverty of moral values and the poverty of environmental destruction. "When I think of deprivation I think of a situation in which people are being deprived of their God-given right to do an honest day's work for a decent wage within their own area or country, not in foreign lands. Another form of deprivation, is the loneliness and isolation experienced by people of advanced years whose families have emigrated and who are thrown to the mercy of non-caring nations and society in general," said Mrs. Lyons.

She said everyone had a responsibility to ask themselves what they were prepared to do to preserve, for further generations, the quality of the environment and protect it from being made a veritable dumping ground, bereft of all the beauty and splendour that nature endowed it with.

Mrs. Lyons said people should be prepared to cry "halt" to the pollution of moral values when people, and particularly the youth were being manipulated by modern trends and pressures. "Just think of how we are being shaped and moulded in our thinking, in our attitudes and in our actions, by television programmes like "Dynasty" and "Dallas" and many others. Are we informed enough to be able to assess the value of what we see and read in the media and then to make just judgements on its suitability for our young people or indeed for ourselves? If we are not happy with such programmes, what are we doing about it? Have any of us ever written even four or five lines to the Controller of Programmes protesting about the continued portrayals of such scenes on our National TV station?" she asked.

"This particular topic is far too wide to deal with in a few moments but I do want people to ponder deeply on the moral values being presented, as a result of which the young and the old make wrong decisions and choose wrong priorities in life," she said.

Mrs. Lyons said the key element in any overall strategy to combat poverty was an awareness of the problems and a willingness by people to involve themselves in effective remedial action. "We have no use for the proverbial 'jockey on the fence' type who criticises from the fence without ever getting into the saddle. This community, no more than any other, cannot count itself immune from such short-comings.

"Schemes, grants and projects may come and go but it is up to the people of any community to be united and willing to co-operate with their leaders and organisations to, firstly, be aware of what is happening in their community and secondly, to be ready to impose their own valid local viewpoint and become seriously involved in finding ways of linking the expertise at local level into the policy-making process at national level," she said.

Letter from Home

Dear Austie:

First off I must say God bless Margaret Gallagher and all the news of the parish she has put after other in them Random Tapes in this *Coinneal*. She has saved me the world of searching old Mayo Newses and writing down the different things. But thank God anyway I'm well enough to be up and about and able to write to you with the *Coinneal*, like I do always.

Well, you heard about the Come Home week. Wasn't Tommie McCormack great to go through with his idea. He wasn't very satisfied, I'm told; because, though a fair share came home (from America the weight of them) somehow the people at home didn't get that involved. That's the way always with some of them, leaving it to others to do things. I don't know what book I was reading years ago and the man said: "That crowd will throw you a rope only when you're on dry land". But wait till you see, when the Come Home is a big success every one will want to be a part of it. Of course Michael is getting a bit on now for doing any organising; and of course a lot of the young people are gone away. I remember a bishop in Cork years ago carding the government for all the emigration there was, that would be in the fifties. "Ye are driving them out as exiles for want of work," says he, "and then when they come home on holidays ye count them as tourists and tell us that the tourist industry is improving!" I was sorry that Irene and yourself couldn't come though, because the weather was fine and those that came were delighted with all they met they hadn't met for years. Besides it would be a nice time for Irene to see Louisburgh. But you'd really want some big open-air event like the Carramore Races or Carrowniskey where the people could be moving through other at their ease and meeting like that. I used to like it myself always better when the people used to come home for Christmas, the way they used have more time for visiting and talking. That's how it was longo, when the bus from Westport would be crowded every night a week before Christmas and then Christmas morning at Mass the place was crowded with people. 'Twas grand.

The whole summer was good for tourists this year but better still it was good for the hay and the turf. As Dadda said the hay and the turf will be there when the tourists will be gone. Eileen was thinking seriously of doing B and B as they call it. I said nothing but it wouldn't suit us at all now at our age to have people in the mouth at you in your own house. But those that do keep lodgers did very well out of it this year, although they won't let on. Oh yes, there was a gang from Trinity College, Dublin staying in the parish there in the beginning of November. A few of them came into the village two days after other there a fortnight ago. Another survey of some kind. Asking questions out of face. But they were nice.

Are ye far there from Oklahoma? You might have heard of the Choctaw Indians. A company of them came here for the Doolough walk this year. You should see the get-up of them between colours and feathers and everything. But we heard that they don't dress like that at home at all only for putting on a show now and again; I suppose, like ourselves and the Irish costumes you'd see on dancers or on calenders, *moryah*. But they say sure enough that them Choctaw Indians – well, not those but the ones that came before them – sent seven hundred dollars to Ireland when the Great Famine was here. Mind you a dollar must be worth something that time. It's gone wallop here altogether lately. Soon they say it will be two to the pound, now it's down to one-eighty-one already. What's wrong at all? I suppose it's Bush and the Gulf. He'll be blamed anyway. What do ye think of him? I think myself he's a bit of a *geidimín*, and too given to what Margaret Thatcher will say. Mind you I think the pick of them all is Gorbachev. I have pity for him the creature and the dogging he's getting at home in Russia lately down, because I think he means well. Isn't he just like any man you'd meet of a Sunday coming to Mass from Furmoyle or the Colony? And as Dadda said that *ball dóráin* on his head only makes him look more human. He was at the mart in Westport last week and met all the friends; Dadda I mean.

And haven't we got a new president ourselves; a woman, Mrs. Robinson. I gave her number two; and I think that Dadda did the same but of course we'll never know! 'Twas a strange election, awful quiet for a start and then it got nasty at the latter-end and things were said. People were sorry for Brian Lenihan the way things went; but then again as we always told ye if you stick to the truth through thick and thin the truth will never let you down. Austin Curry seems to be a good man, too; he was late starting but he was very impressive on the television. And what do you think of your Louisburgh ICA group if they didn't take a bus specially down to Ballina celebrating the night that Mary Robinson came home. At least I think it was the ICA; but they say there was women on that bus that never gave her a stroke. That didn't stop them from having the night out. Mind you I'd say she will make a good president. Maybe a little too much bravado on the television in her speech after winning; like, if she wasn't as boastful it would look better. And a strange thing for me to say, she went on a bit too much about being for all the women of Ireland. That could cause some *achrann* out here, because isn't she supposed to be for all the people? But she'll learn, no doubt when she's in the job a while. As Big Thomas used to say longo, a mare can throw all kinds of leps until you put the load on her!

Well, poor Doctor McHugh has retired; and indeed and indeed he has the good wishes and thanks of the whole parish for all he did for us so well for all the years. Do you remember the early morning you went for him when Ellen took the bad turn and how pleasant he was after being taken out of bed. And it was only after we heard he was out with another patient the night before until three. Well he can rest now, although he's still practising all the time in a private capacity. Many's the family in the parish has reason to thank him; and what harm but, as Martin Joe said the night of the do, he used to break out in spots at the mention of money. At home or abroad people should not forget.

And how is Tommie Joe at all, it's often and often I do think of him. Is the job going well for him? Keep advising him, Austie, about saving for the time to come. When he got the visa here that time he thought that it was the key to heaven he had and still when we were leaving him to Shannon I could feel how lonely he was, the tears weren't far away. There's a bishop here in Ballina now, a Bishop Finnegan I think, and he seems very interested in the welfare of our emigrants. He was over in Boston and Chicago and New York there in the latter-end of October; maybe ye heard. It was given down in the *Western People* last week that he had good news and bad news. The good news was the extra visas and the bad news the way there's recession in the building and the catering industries in the States – the very two he'd be interested in. He said, too, that the green card entitles you to an opportunity for higher education, third level I suppose, and that an honours Leaving Certificate could even spare you one year in the course. Does Tommie Joe know that? Because he got honours in the Leaving Certificate. If I can lay hands on that paper I'll cut the piece out and send it to you. At his age they pay more attention to an uncle than to the parents. But then he's better working as he is than to be joined up and sent off to the Gulf.

Talking of the Gulf and that, would you believe that there's a few people from the parish out there too? There's Seán Kerr (Eileen Dunne's son) and a son of Tony Maxwell's; they are both in the forces and they must be out on the Gulf itself. Then there's Celine Lyons (a daughter of Austie and Clem) who escaped from Kuwait (where she was married) with her family to Jordan; and I heard that David Ray is there too; and there might be more that I didn't hear of.

Well that's my *scéal* for this turn. I have to have this ready now for the postman when he comes. Then I'll move round and do a few jobs before nightfall. I was up in the old house Saturday where a calf I'm feeding with the bucket had strayed in. I looked around, of course, for old times' sake and what did my eyes rest on but the collar we had for the mare when ye were young! It's in good enough shape still but it went through me to think of the times we had in that old house; how the horse and cart meant so much to us, and how we were depending on the wages Dadda would have at the end of the week from the Council. And how simple we all lived and still how happy we all were. You didn't see much of those times but you often heard me talking about them. I thought of something I heard Canon Healy said in Killeen Church one Sunday morning before Mass. He was going up and down the church looking at his flock and a word here and there. Then he picked out this youngster from Thallabawn who was wearing a home-made *báinín geanse*. "Who made that?" says he to the *gasúr*. "My mother, Father." "Good woman," says he and her not there at all; "that's real industry!" And you know, when I think of his words I think how every house in the whole village that time and all the villages were really little factories of industry. We had enough potatoes, and vegetables, and milk, and eggs, and butter, and bread, and bacon when we killed the pig; and all or nearly all from our own few acres of land. We carded and spun the wool for the clothes and knitted the socks and *geansies*; and we had our own turf, and the fodder for the cattle. And we sold enough eggs to buy the matches or candles or tea that we had to buy;

and the fair day brought in the bigger money for bills. Sure it was hard; but the thing is we were awful happy and contented; whatever has got into the world for the last forty years. And when we danced them times, well we really danced and knew how to enjoy ourselves. What's more, there was more *nature* in the people that time. I'd give all the Late Late Shows or Eurovisions I ever saw on television for one happy night around the turf fire in that old house when ye were growing up. Think will it ever come back again? Dadda says the only thing that would bring us all back to our senses again would be if we had a really bad recession in the whole world and make people work to feed themselves. I hope in God it's not a war that will do it.

Are ye thinking of coming anytime? Don't come unbeknownst, anyway. You know how a country house is, even if we have every convenience; and Eileen always likes to have everything prim and proper before a visitor.

God bless you and yours Austie. Write when you have the *Coinneal* read.

A happy Christmas to ye all!

*Your loving
Mother*

Extracts from Slaters Directory 1846

At Old Head there is a coast guard station

The weekly market in Louisburgh is on Mondays; the fairs are on 1st May, 1st July, 1st October and 8th December.

The whole area (town) comprises 16 acres.

The population of town is approx 400.

Post Office is run by W. Heneghan.

The Dispensary – Dr. Thomas Griffin L.R.C.P.

Church of Ireland – Rev. John Forbes.

Catholic Church – Rev. William Joyce, P.P., Thomas Heaney and Anthony Waldron, curates.

Private Residences: John Forbes and Thomas Griffin.

Old Head House is occupied by Lady Marion Wilbraham.

Old Head Lodge is occupied by Mrs. Rutledge.

Fallduff Lodge is occupied by Patrick O'Dowd.

The total area of the parish – 58,098 acres.

The total population of the parish – in 1891 was 5,538.

Rural Life of Old

I would like to take the reader through the period prior to the Great Famine and try to retrace the lifestyle that existed in rural Ireland then. It was an Ireland of warm-hearted people, and their continued struggle for survival has ensured for us today an invaluable tradition and culture that will exist far into the future. Personally I owe a great deal to many people, now deceased, who helped me to understand the miserable conditions that existed in that period, and how little could be done to improve those same conditions imposed on tenant-farmers by absentee landlords.

Let us look at a tenant-farmer renting seven acres at £3-7s-6d. annually. This sum had to be paid on *Gale days* – set aside twice a year for rent collection. If the farmer cut seaweed for kelp he would be charged a royalty, depending on the price he got for his labour. The housing conditions were very poor: at the most only two rooms for a whole family. The building of such houses took only from five to seven days to complete, definitely a house would be liveable in a week or less: all that remained to be done was to cut notches in the door so that when the sun shone the occupants could tell the time of day!

A father, mother and four children would spend a day in mid-March doing the following work: the father would be busy sowing the potatoes: he needed at least three acres with a reasonable crop, to be safe. The younger children would pick stones and spread the slits while an older child would draw stable manure or seaweed to act as fertilizer, while the mother was cooking and busy knitting. All clothes were either homespun or woven by a weaver. When the sun shone on a particular notch on the door it would signal dinner time. Dinner usually consisted of potatoes, salt, fish and milk. It was the mother's job to cut the slits (potatoes halved) for her husband. So that one bag of potatoes would sow a great amount of ground, if seed was scarce she would cut them into three pieces with only one "eye" in each piece. This way they would go even further. The mother's labour could be seen in great hanks of thread hanging from a ladder that was pushed into the house through the gable-end and rested in the bog-deal collar-ties all day.

The father would sow potatoes in long ridges until very late in the evening. The children might stand and gaze at the landlord's agent passing by, admiring the bright buckles on the horse's head-collar, the saddle and riding boots and long black jacket that he wore. They never saw such things and must have wondered how this leather would look on their mare. They had never seen their father wear such a jacket; only a *báinín* with no buttons!

At night-fall the children would gather around the fire and dine on oatmeal porridge and milk. Some visitors would arrive: a man, his wife, and another man with a lame step. All said "God save all here", as they entered the house. The man

with the lame step would tell stories to the children about his life at sea. Although the children had never been to school they could read the stars and predict bad weather. They knew all about sails and sextants, by listening to the old man. He had shown how to read charts; and the basis of arithmetic by stroking in the ashes with his stick.

The women worked with the aid of a tallow candle spinning wool into thread and dyeing the wool with *scraith-chloch*, a moss that grown on rocks. When boiled, this moss turned the water like a thick wine. The wool was then steeped in the liquid and salt was added. When dry, the colour is permanent and of a foxy-red shade. This coloured wool mixed with white wool gives a lovely, mottled effect to the garment. The other men talked as they made horse-hair ropes called *lúbachs*. They smoked chalk pipes lit with a *cipín* of bog-deal from the fire. They talked about a man that was seen cycling on a bicycle: no one believed it, or could understand how such a machine worked! Since the sun had gone down nobody knew what time it was except by looking at the evening star and how far it had moved; or the moon and its position in the sky. As the children in this house grew into adults, great changes were to take place.

The great hunger was only a few seasons away. No doubt, they would be under great pressure to survive. The stories of the old man would soon be reality for some of them and their relations. They would see the use of the sextant, the reading of the stars, the full sheet and tacking as the left home and inched their way to a new world. On their way to that new world they would recall the big, stone hearth where they baked lots of potatoes in the hot ashes; and the beggarman talking at the half-door to their mother. When she would give him an egg he would say "Thanks and may the Lord increase your store!" as he walked into the falling mist. The only money they ever saw was paid to the landlord's agent. It had come from the oats, pigs and the food they sold. If the landlord did not collect all that this year, it had to be saved to pay the rent next year . . .

Now the land-birds were flying around the wind-filled sails: it was only a matter of hours before they reached land. All they had left behind was a few kitchen pots and a candlestick; now a memory.

Devlin South

Joe Murphy

Stones in the parish

Within the old abbey of Kilgeever near the west wall and running parallel to it there is a grave with the following inscription on its (standing) headstone:

LORD HAVE MERCY ON THE SOUL
OF
THOMAS DUGGAN
STUDENT OF ST. JARLATH'S COLLEGE, TUAM
WHO DIED 2ND JUNE 1911
AGED 19 YEARS
ERECTED BY HIS SORROWING PARENTS

Any Letter, Tom?

He was born at the beginning of the century, the first child to be baptized in Saint Patrick's church Killeen. He was a student of Saint Jarlath's College, Tuam and was there on the day that his fellow-student, Thomas Duggan, Cahir, Louisburgh, lost his life while swimming in the nearby river. He became a teacher, patriot and emigrant in the 'twenties but returned to Killadoon upon the death of his brother, Ned, in 1931. From there onwards he served our district as post-master until his death in December 1969. His name was Tom Maguire. I had the privilege of being born next door to him. He was a man both beautiful and good. Son of Master Austin Maguire, he taught in Killadoon National School as one of the assistants to his brother, Patrick, who became principal on his father's retirement. Tom became an active volunteer during the troubles and at one stage was missing for a week, much to the consternation of his parents. He turned up safely however, and kept up his activities to the end.

In 1924, Tom and his wife Maura (nee Gibbons, Carrowniskey) emigrated to the United States. That ended his teaching career. They arrived at a bad time, as the following year the crash of the Stock Exchange took place. They were re-called home, however, on the death of his brother Ned. His father operated a good business in grocery and provisions and had a lorry on the road. (Incidentally, John Kitterick of Aillemore was his driver). His parents set Tom up in a new house, built on fifteen acres of land which he already owned. He ran his post-office and shop well. His father died in 1932 and, within a year, Tom was a widower with two children, Kathleen and Audie. He was not a man to submit, and here the extended family of that era came in. His mother Kathy (nee Gibbons, Cloonlara) while staying in the old home nearby with "The Master" and "Miss" and family, strolled over to the post-office daily and kept company with the children while performing light tasks. His sister, Rose Maguire, was a teacher in Carrowniskey National School and came to stay at week-ends. A second sister, Annie, taught in Dublin and came during school holidays.

Tom was an exceptionally fine postmaster and devoted his life to his new, tough career. He had no luck with the business and the shop lapsed except for stocks of tea, sugar, tobacco, cigarettes and the loaves of bread brought by Tommy Joe O'Malley each Friday morning from his brother's bakery in Louisburgh. The lay-out of the shop always fascinated me. It was laid out in the traditional manner with labelled drawers built into an oak partition which separated it from the kitchen. Invoices threaded on wires hung from the ceiling. At slack times Tom slipped into his kitchen, only to hear the heavy knocker to summons him to his front door!

Mail was delivered six days a week to the post-office, but every *other* day to the homes. Tom kept the remaining mail under lock and at all times during opening hours people came to see if there was "any letter in the box" for them. My parents were very close neighbours of Tom's and they had a great love of his children. I myself was in awe of him in my early life – being told he was a schoolteacher. He brought his children up to be great lovers of country life, taking them hunting (a sport in which he excelled), mountain-climbing and swimming. From his own library, he also gave them a great love of reading. Once when in Louisburgh I called on his niece, Laura Keane, to collect some magazines for Kathleen. When I called to deliver them, Tom answered the door and as he took them he said: "If only you two would read something of lasting value!" His friends dropped in casually on him and I remember some of them: Joe McGreal (Thallabawn), Waltie Burke (Roonkeel), Jim Gibbons (a native of Askelane but reared in Grady's of Cloonty), John P. Gibbons and young Dan (O'Malley of Cross). He loved to entertain them in his comfortable parlour. Each Christmas night his son, Audie, was sent for grandfather, they both enjoyed reminiscing about older times. At ten o'clock Audie was called upon to lead the old man home; carefully down the steps. It was time for high tea in both houses but grandfather couldn't distinguish the treacle-cake from the traditional oatmeal bread, baked in front of the fire. The effects of his revelling were getting to him and all he wanted was to be led to bed to sleep!

Tom took a great interest in local affairs. When the L.S.F. branch was formed in Killeen he became one of their leaders. I remember seeing them marching and drilling at Killeen on a Sunday evening. His military experience from the War of Independence was brought to the fore. He was a committed Christian and helped many charitable organisations. He suffered another big loss in July, 1963 when his son Audie – then into his thirties – was drowned while swimming at the Sruthar about two miles from his home. Again Tom did not falter and fulfilled his postal duties until his death in 1969. His daughter Kathleen married a Doctor Devan in Limerick and is now a widow. She visits the old home regularly to see her friends and she looks after the loved one's graves. I can do no better here than borrow the inscription of Tom's and his family's headstone:

And with the morn, the angel faces smile.
That we loved long since and lost a while.
In iothlainn Dé go dtugtar sinn!

Roonith

Mrs. Chris McNally (nee Mannion)

Austy!

Austy was up and running before the game had ended. I saw him coming like a runaway concrete mixer, arms flailing, jacket flapping, red tie streaming in the wind and his face on fire with excitement. He ran right through me, sweeping me up in his stride and bouncing me in the air.

"J . . . , Michaelleen" he said "Lough Conn wouldn't have kept up with you when you got that last ball".

I could only assume that Lough Conn was the last famous personage in Mayo before me, and I couldn't help feeling a twinge of jealousy that I should have to share my moment of glory with him.

Seconds earlier I had scored against Leitrim and clinched the game. The poor young keeper had frozen on his line and the ball flashed by his frightened face.

We sang all the way from Galway to Castlebar, through Newport and Westport, then home between the hills and the sea.

"I know you love me, Kathleen Dear" . . . "Rise it, Austy!" . . . "Your voice was ever fond and true" . . . "Good man, Austy!"

Over the following week Austy brought the news of the game to The West and the goal took many a turn in the telling. Had I not swept through the entire defence and aimed the ball for the angle where the crossbar met the upright, the precise spot where it couldn't be reached, much less saved, by any goalkeeper know or living within the walls of the world? Vanity prevented me from editing the account or adjusting it for accuracy. It was the Summer of '57, I was sixteen and a half and my head was bursting with pride. I even began to feel a little less jealous of Lough Conn, who, in any case turned out to be a horse that had won some race in England called *The National*.

And so it went on for two magical summers. We were too good for Sligo, their defence got their footballing knickers in such a terrible twist that a half-hit shot trickled through their legs and past the keeper. It was the kind of goal that makes defenders want to eat small forwards. Austy's mischievous cackle taunted them from the touchline. "You'll bate them on your own, Michaelleen" he laughed. My marker tore small strips of skin from every part of my body he could reach until I was saved by the final whistle. In Roscommon I discovered, too late, that the right full back had formulated an ingeniously simple defence strategy. He waited until the ball, the referee and most of the players were at the other end of the field. Then he scythed my ankle so viciously that it ballooned in an instant into a throbbing mass of blood and fluid.

"Agh, Go home ya shaggin' sheepstealer".

Austy was outraged.

"I'll break your jaw ya dirty blackguard".

He was restrained on the line. I loosened the boot and played on, afraid that a substitute might retain his place for the rest of the season.

Mayo won but I had played badly and felt miserable.

"If you hadn't jumped and palmed the ball down to Rochford in the last minute they had us bet" Austy said sympathetically.

The *Western People* saw it and told it the same way. It was an enchanted time.

"We're going all the way this year" we said.

"Ye'll have to beat Kerry first".

"We'll beat them home to Tralee".

"Take care, I hear they are big and strong and mighty catchers".

"We'll beat them home", "Give us a song there".

"My Mary of the curling hair . . . The laughing cheeks and bashful air . . . The bridal morn is dawning fair . . . With blushes in the skies. (All together now!)

Siúl, Siúl, Siúl, Aroon . . ."

"Man, Austy".

Spindle-necked and shy we gathered at our city hotel and waited for Kerry. We strolled in the park and talked about Kerry. We went to bed and tried to sleep, and thought about Kerry. We could hear the revelry in the bar below. Finally Austy came in and began to undress, scolding us for not being asleep. Then in a fit of mischief he hitched up his underpants and leapt four feet in the air with a wild whoop.

"Hup Mayo-o-o."

The hapless bed shook as he laughed. His laughter followed us to sleep, familiar and soothing, like his lilting songs and the tunes that danced from his fiddle.

Next afternoon in Croke Park we wondered why everybody had forgotten to warn us about the passion of Kerry football. They harried and hustled, chattering and screaming at each other. One moment I was jumping high for a ball that was almost



Austy

in my grasp, in the next I was on my seat on the grass, cluster-bombed and stupified beyond pain. But in the rain and the excitement they made mistakes and when two of them collided, I flew like a snipe through the gap. The tension exploded out of Austy's chest with a bull's roar, and all the words came out together.

"Man, Michaelleen! Ye have them now, stick into them".

I was trying to find ways of getting around them.

Brave Kerry hearts fought back, overtaking us and leading all the way to the finish. In the end we stole the game with a goal so late that our heads and our spirits were down in the dressingroom.

But win or steal we were in the final and nobody was going to stop us; least of all a bunch of pale-faced city kids. We would course through their defence like my mother's salts; we would jump so high they would think they were standing in holes in the ground; we were going to blitz the city slickers!

"The pale moon was rising above the green mountain" . . .

"We'll sing it for the Kerry lads."

"Sing your own song, Austy!"

"I'll take you home again, Kathleen . . .

To where your heart shall feel no pain."

"Man, Austy!"

In the first frantic seconds of the final I sent messages screaming to my hands urging them to stop shaking, but they couldn't hear me. I cursed my knees for turning to jelly but they wouldn't heed me. I ran left and right in alternate darting circles like a headless chicken. The defender followed step for step as if mesmerised by the ceremony. I prayed the ball wouldn't fall in my patch until I had been restored to health! It came by way of a ricochet from the tips of fifty clutching fingers. I played from memory, feinting to the right and kicking on the turn. The Summer magic still flickered. The ball soared and curved and sailed straight through the posts.

But I couldn't hear his voice for the din. The falcons couldn't hear the falconers and the city lads were settling to their task with practised connivance. Scores followed Dublin score until a strange sickness gathered in our stomachs. Then I thought a mighty catch might life us. But a Jackeen flicked my heels towards the sun. The stands swung upside down and danced a mad woman's reel in the sky. The lights went out and I heard the urgent chatter of the stretcher men. Rochford, Gibbons (Tom Geoffrey), Corcoran, all fought on to stem the flow of scores but to no more avail than the old warrior of The West plunging his sword into the flowing tide. Austy drove his silent heroes home to Mayo.

There was a crack in the hospital ceiling and I studied it for hours, wondering why it was there; and why I was there; and how we had come to fall so spectacularly, at the final fence. I thought about Austy's convoy heading west. He used to say that the most difficult time for a driver was when he was heading west at evening time

with the sun "about two lengths of a *láighe* up in the sky". It was worst of all on that September evening.

But perhaps, somewhere closer to Cross than Croke Park, he turned his care into a little "shop" that dealt beer and spirits from the half-lit nether regions, and raised a last defiant chorus:

"What the hell about it! We'll win the senior next year."

"Come on Austy!"

"And when the fields are fresh and green. Now, all together!"

" 'Man, Austy!"

Clarinbridge

Michael Lyons

The First Bicycles

The first bicycle to appear on the road dates back to about 1800. In 1818, when cycling first became popular, there was the hobby or Dandy-horse. It had no chain. In 1839 a bicycle known as the *Kirkpatrick's* was an improvement on the previous model. In 1869 the *bone-shaker* took over, a slight improvement but still it had no chain. In 1879 the *bicyclette* appeared; it was the first to be driven by a chain and free-wheel. In 1884 came the Rudes *ordinary* (or *penny-farthing*) a big wheel and a small wheel which had no chain.

In 1890 the *Singer's Safety* appeared. It had tyres, and looked very much like any of today's bicycles. In 1920 the *Rover* was the fastest bicycle on the roads: it had a chain-cover and mud-splashes. Bicycles were being ridden by millions of people by that time throughout the world and their manufacture was big business.

Contributed by Joe Murphy (Devlin South)

Beloved Village

Ballyhip is a great village. There were great people living in Ballyhip in the past as there are at present. As far back as 1798 the men of Ballyhip took part a rising when, as history tells, "we routed the Redcoats from old Castlebar". At the present time there are priests, schoolteachers, tradesmen and progressive farmers from our village. The townland of Ballyhip consists of three parts: Ballyhip, Dereen and Gurteen. The village known as Ballyhip has five different areas: Bhaile Thiar, Baile an Droichid, Baile an Geata, Barr a'Bhaile and Bléan a'Tamha. Until recently the townland was congested and it was easy for stock of any description to trespass. Sometimes controversy arose and sometimes mistakes were made; but, generally speaking, the Ballyhip people were great neighbours. If any one villager was in any trouble, the rest gathered and helped in every possible way.

A small river flows through the townland of Ballyhip. It is a branch of the Bunowen, or Leachta River. When it rains heavily it overflows its banks and causes damage to crops. Sometimes hay and oats are swept away. Cattle have been lost by getting chocked in the overhanging bushes along the river bank. If those bushes were cut, piled up and burned; and if the overhanging banks were pulled in by machine, there would be far less flooding. When flooding occurred no government official came to inspect or offer compensation – as was done in Cork recently, when thousands of pounds were spent in correcting the damage!

At one end of the townland, in Dereen, there is a road which leads down to the river. There are stepping-stones there, reputedly existing since the time of Finn MacCool, and they are a tourist attraction now. Baile an Droichid stone bridge with three arches, built about two hundred years ago, spans the river. After all the heavy floods, the arches still stand as good as the day they were built.

There once was a hall in Ballyhip, built around the 1920's by the young men of the townland. At that time this country was under British rule and the people rose in rebellion wanting to form a government of their own. Lloyd George sent across the Black and Tans (they were given that name because they were hastily recruited and had no proper uniform). Those Black and Tans were disliked by the Irish people. When I was a boy some of them pushed in the door of our home at break of day, searching for my father. My mother had no welcome for them and she told them so in no uncertain manner! The hall was a meeting place for "the Boys". Dances and plays were held there. The population of the townland was much greater than it is now and boys and girls gathered at the hall to play cards and discuss the events of the time. I remember being in the hall as a boy and seeing the tricolour hanging there. It was generally known as the Sinn Féin Hall. Then there came the big 'flu, which started in the trenches during the First World War. The epidemic swept across Europe into England and then to Ireland. Thousands died, among them some of the young Ballyhip men who helped to build the hall. Some more of these young men emigrated, leaving the hall to fall into disrepair. We must admire those men, especially as at the time the hall was built, no grant or dole was available. It showed

the true spirit of the boys at that time. The hall was a landmark and it sheltered many people passing the way. Where are they now? In the words of a well-known song: "some are dead, some have wandered, no more to their homes shall those children return. Lonely the place now and lonely the moorland, the young men are scattered, the old folks are gone". The hall has now been demolished but its memories linger on. May all who were associated with it rest in peace!

Dereen

Austin Gibbons

The foregoing article has a poignant dimension now in that its writer, Austin Gibbons, died in October 1990 after the article arrived for publication. May he, too, with his associates of old, rest in peace. – Editor

The Farmer's Son

Where'er are scattered the Irish nation
On foreign land or on Irish ground
In every calling, and rank, and station
Good men and true will always be found;
But 'midst their masses and ranks and classes
When noble work must be dared and done,
No heart's more ready, no hand's more steady
Than the heart and hand of a farmer's son.

His homely garb has not fashion's graces
But it wraps a frame that is lithe and strong;
His brawny hands may show labour's traces
But 'tis honest toil, that does not man wrong.
For generous greeting, for social meeting
For genial mirth or for harmless fun
'Midst high and low men, 'midst friend and foremen
O where's the match for a farmer's son?

Some other men may have words more flowing
To prove and plead for dear Ireland'd cause;
And others, too, may have ways more knowing
To win her smiles and her fond applause.
But when her story is crowned with glory
Where'er the battle be fought and won
In front to gain it and still maintain it
You'll find most surely a farmer's son!

Collected from Mrs. B. A. Morahan

Parish Weddings

Felicitations to these happy couples:



Marie Staunton, Curradavitt, and Patrick Kilcoyne, Cregganbawn who were married in Holy Family Church, Killeen 1990.



Beth Kilcoyne, Cregganbawn, and Mark Deegan who were married in St. Patrick's Church, Louisburgh 1990.



Bernadette Kilcoyne, Cregganacopple, Louisburgh and Tony Butler, Dungarvan, Co. Waterford, who were married in St. Patrick's Church, Louisburgh 1988.



Kathleen Kilcoyne, Cregganacopple, Louisburgh and Tommie Canavan, Clifden, who were married in St. Patrick's Church, Louisburgh 1989.



Jim Moran, B. Comm., Kilsallagh Lower, Louisburgh, and Sharon Boles, Dublin 1990.



Tommie Moran B.A., T.H.HDE, Kilsallagh Lower, Louisburgh and Susan Klemes, Chicago, Ill., married in Chicago 1989.



Julia Martina O'Malley, Cross, Louisburgh and Noel Dempsey, Kennety, Birr, Co. Offaly, married in Kilburn 1989.



Pádraic O'Malley, Cross, Louisburgh, and Bernadette Lawless, Cappataggle, Ballinasloe, Co. Galway married in Dollis Hill, London, 1989.



Joanne Ball, Louisburgh and Peter Tuohy, Westport were married in Louisburgh 1989.



John Ball, Louisburgh, and Sheila MacAndrew, Limerick married in Limerick.



Mary Trainer (Boston) cousin of Thomas Fadden and Maurice O'Brien, Worcester, married in Worcester.



Thomas Fadden, Killadoon, Louisburgh and Margaret McGuire, Liscarny, Westport.



Anne Prendergast, Accony, Louisburgh and Jack Ling, Innistioge, Co. Kilkenny, married in St. Patrick's Church, Louisburgh, 1990. (Photo: Michael Donnelly, Ballyheane).



Rose Donnellan, Baileborough and Louisburgh and Tony McMulkin, Enniskillen, were married in Cathedral Cavan, 1989.



Ann Cox, Main Street, Louisburgh and Tom Staunton, Killsallagh, were married in St. Patrick's Church, Louisburgh, 1990.



Patrick Cox, Louisburgh and Carmel Fergus, Westport, who were married in Westport 1990.



Thomas Kitterick, Shranacloye, Louisburgh and Shirley Cornwall, Knappagh, Westport, were married in Holy Trinity Church, Westport 1990.



Cathal Prendergast, Emlagh, Louisburgh, and Patricia Dyra, Newport, married in St. Patrick's Church, Newport, 1988.



Breege Duffy, Cregganbawn, Louisburgh and Gerard Joyce, Ownee, Westport, were married in Holy Family Church, Killeen.



John O'Toole, Thallabawn and Mary Geraghty, were married in Ballinakill Church, Loughrea, Co. Galway.



Tommie O'Brien, Main Street, Louisburgh and Mary Veronica Murry, Long Island, New York were married in Long Island.



David O'Toole and Sue Van Tassle U.S.A. in the Derrylahan after their wedding in the U.S.A.

Remembering Sion

I remember one wedding in Louisburgh. The only thing that was different was that we knew it was a "made" match and knew who made it. And, of course, we knew that the couple were both elderly.

But then we made it special in another way. We knew well that there would be no confetti so my school-companion and I (we were both at primary school) pooled our funds and bought a pound of rice in Paddy Martin's. We then went to church and took a strategic position on the gallery. When the newly-married couple came down the aisle and were in line of fire we released the pound of rice on all and sundry. I believe that they took it as a rare compliment. But I wonder now what did Jimmy Mannion think – or say – when he arrived with dustpan and brush!

Fruit of Youth

One of the most delightful childhood memories for me is the recollection of the joys of rambling the boreens after school. On a sunny or soft day it was an unforgettable experience to saunter slowly along Bunowen, Carramore, or Collacoon roads, breathing the happiness of freedom, listening to the lark and the linnet; the ever-present possibility of adventure was there, yet with the feeling of security in familiar and beloved surroundings.

Above all, there were the delicacies available just for the picking or gathering: either growing wild on the roadside trees and brambles – like the crab-apples, sloes and blackberries – or as forbidden fruit, in the gardens one passed on the exciting journey home. Who can forget the beautiful apples there for the taking in Mrs. Haran's garden, or McEvilly's, or Pat the Board's in Bunowen, or even in Father Heaney's garden? Or the lush, succulent gooseberries in Julia Nicholson's and Michael Carroll's, the Harans', Dick O'Toole's, or McEvillys'?

But, above all, there is a special, sweet nostalgia in remembering the currant-bushes and their tiny, tempting fruit – glistening red or shiny black – growing so freely and abundantly in every back garden on the west side of Bridge Street: Scahills', Jennings', Tadys', and the previously mentioned oases (incidentally, most of the remaining gardens of Louisburgh were nearly barren). Certainly those currants could have been enjoyed at the family table, served properly with sugar and cream, or in delicious home-made jam. But there was a very unique, almost bewitching flavour when, in the midst of merry meandering, they could be picked while juicy and ripe and eaten directly from the bushes!

Sad to say, currant-bushes have, over the years, become scarcer and scarcer. But in the United States, the black-currant is becoming popular, particularly in New England where almost every home has its patch of currant-bushes. Soon on our market shelves we shall see American-made black-currant preserves along with the Irish and English imports, and we can look forward also to another pleasure — baskets of fresh, blackcurrants to bring back thoughts of halcyon childhood days.

Bronx, New York

Patrick J. Scanlon

Museum Pages

We would welcome any old parish photographs for publication in future issues. – Editor.



Cregganbaun N.S. 1951

(photo supplied by Wallace family).

1. Back row, left to right: Walter Burke, Kathleen Corrigan, Sally Davitt, Kathleen Gavin, Michael Kitterick

2 row, left to right: David Keegan, John Dunne, Austin O'Grady, John O'Grady, Patrick Corrigan, Tommy Joe O'Grady, Patrick Grady, David McGreal

3 row, left to right: Michael Kilcoyne, Anne Needham, Sheila Gavin, Bridget Kitterick, Evelyn Burke, Kathleen Needham, Maureen Needham, Nan Gavin, Molly Grady, Tommy Wallace

4 row, left to right: Father Willie Davitt, Michael O'Grady, Michael Needham, John Kitterick, Jimmy Wallace, John Burke, Patrick Kitterick, Anthony Corrigan, Patrick Needham, Jimmy Grady, Christopher Tunney

Museum Pages . . .



Pupils of Carrowniskey N.S. 1932
submitted by David Gibbons (Roonith), Chicago.

Front row, left to right: No. 1, Patrick Gerald Gibbons, R.I.P. No. 2, John Naughton. No. 3, Austin Philbin R.I.P. No. 4, Edward Gibbons. No. 5, John Cannon. No. 6, Do not know. No. 7, Do not know. No. 8, Do not know. No. 9, John Jennings. No. 10, James Berry, R.I.P. No. 11, Dick Gibbons, R.I.P.

Second row, left to right: No. 1, John Duffy. No. 2, Do not know. No. 3, Bridie Scanlon, R.I.P. No. 4, Do not know. No. 5, Christina Gibbons. No. 6, Sarah Scanlon. No. 7, Ann Gibbons. No. 8, Do not know. No. 9, Do not know. No. 10, Do not know. No. 11, Do not know. No. 12, Do not know. No. 13, Do not know. No. 14, John Tiernan? No. 15, Thomas Philbin, R.I.P.

Third row, left to right: No. 1, Richard King (R.I.P.) Principal Teacher and his daughter Rene. No. 2, Ann Lyons. No. 3, Ann Kirby, R.I.P. No. 4, Beatty Love, R.I.P. No. 5, Nora Jennings. No. 6, Do not know. No. 7, Gretta McNamara. No. 8, Ann Scanlon. No. 9: Sadie Gibbons. No. 10, Eileen Gibbons. No. 11, Theresa Duffy. No. 12, Sadie McNamara. No. 13, Mary E. Gibbons. No. 14, Bridgie Philbin. No. 15, Do not know. No. 16, Rosaleen Love. No. 17, Annie K. Gibbons.

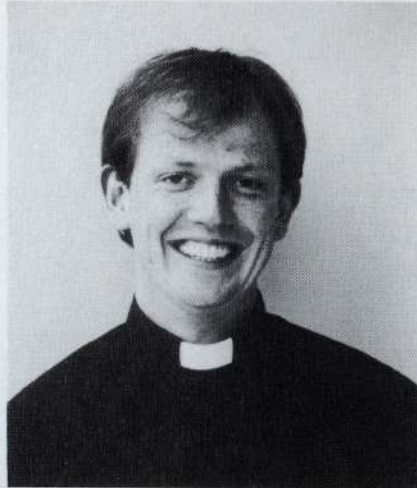
Back row, left to right: No. 1, Owen Philbin? R.I.P. No. 2, Michael Jennings. No. 3, Richard Lyons. No. 4, Do not know. No. 5, Do not know. No. 6, Michael Gibbons. No. 7, Do not know. No. 8, Redmond Lyons. No. 9, Do not know. No. 10, John Lyons. No. 11, Ted Naughton. No. 12, Pat Naughton. No. 13, Myles Gibbons.

Comhgháirdeachas!

We are happy to congratulate our fellow-parishioners on their achievements.

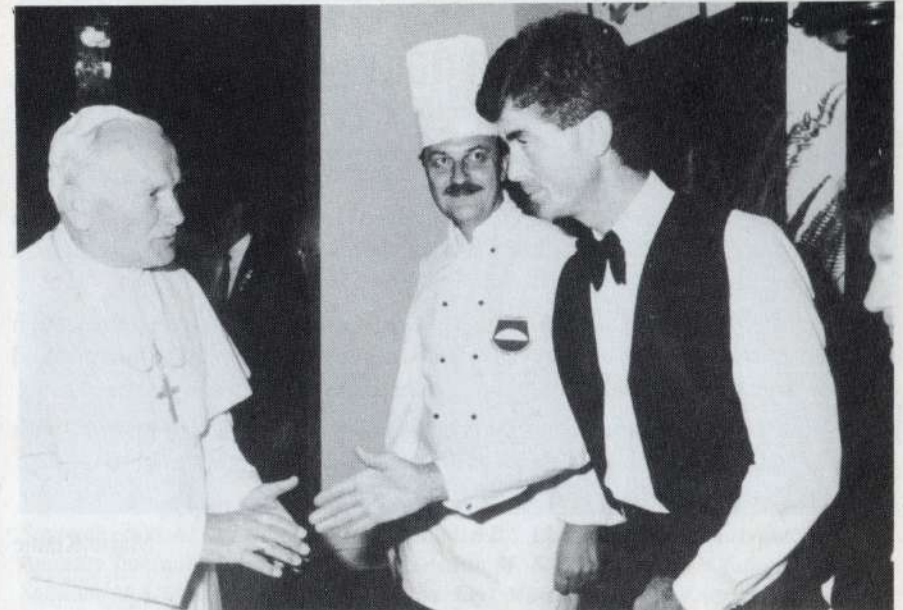
Alexis Morahan, son of Oliver and Patricia (Cullen) of Mooneen was ordained priest in Kiltegan by Archbishop Joseph Cassidy on 11 June 1989.

Father Alexis is a priest of Saint Patrick's Mission and is at present working in Johannesburg.



Morahan family Moneen Louisburgh on the occasion of Father Alexis' first Mass. Alexis is son of Oliver P. and Patricia and was ordained to the priesthood on June 10th, 1989 at Kiltegan. Back row, left to right: Brendan, Gerard, Oliver (jun), Mrs. Patricia, Lucy, Fr. Alexis, Conor, Patricia (jun), John, Claire, Irene, Leo. Front row, left to right: Joe Burke, Florence, Oliver P. Anne and David.

Comhgháirdeachas! . . .



Austin O'Malley with Pope John Paul



Wigan Group touring the West with Father Paddy McNally last May, also visited Knock Shrine. Included in photo are John O'Grady, Curradavitt, also O'Grady family and relatives from Cloonty, O'Donnell's (3 brothers from Kinnock), the McConnell's (Shraugh) and McNally's (Westport)

School-leaver!

On 28 June 1990, Mrs. Evelyn Leamy (*nee* Durkan, Bunowen) N.T. retired from teaching; and on that day unknown to her, the teachers and pupils had prepared a farewell party for her in the school.

Father O'Móráin, Father Fallon and the teachers thanked her for her dedication and her hard work and wished her luck in her retirement. Mrs. Leamy in turn thanked the parents in the whole area for their cooperation in all her teaching years.

With three cheers and a song she turned the key for the last time bringing with her memories of good and bad and leaving behind an indelible stamp on society.

Sláinte agus fad saoil di!

Marie Keane



Mrs. Leamy with school-colleagues and Father Jennings.



Staunton ovation! Left to right: Marie Staunton BA. LLB, Head and Legal Advisor of U.K. Amnesty International; Ellen Staunton, Austin M. Staunton (Marie's father) Austin V. Staunton M.A. (Lecturer at Lancaster University). Marie and Austin V. are grandchildren of the late Andy and Alice Staunton, who lived at the Killary Farm, Thallabaun near Louisburgh, Co. Mayo. P. A. Staunton (second son) was not available for the photo.



Presentation to Rose Donnellan with organizing committee: Back left to right: Jimmie Scott, Breege Staunton, Tommie Duffy, Peter O'Malley, Martin J. O'Toole T.D., Seán Harney, Seán Fergus, Frank Kenny, Johnnie McConnell, Joe Staunton. Front, left to right: Evelyn Leamy, Marie Moran, Aileen O'Malley, Rose Donnellan, Annie B. Casey, Mary Fergus, Kathleen Morrison.



Miss Breda O'Malley (Thallabaun, Louisburgh), daughter of Tommie Joe and Mary O'Malley, who received her B.Comm, with Hons. at U.C.G. Breda was educated at Holy Family School, Killeen, and Sancta Maria, Louisburgh.



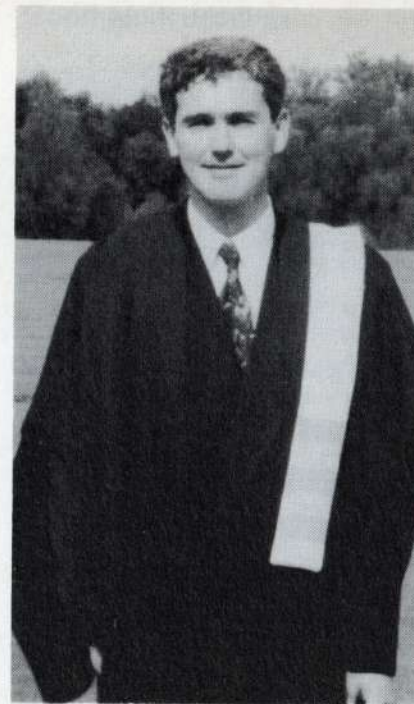
Columba McHugh (Main Street, Louisburgh) obtained B. Sc. Hons. degree in Computer Applications. She was conferred in Dublin City University 1990.



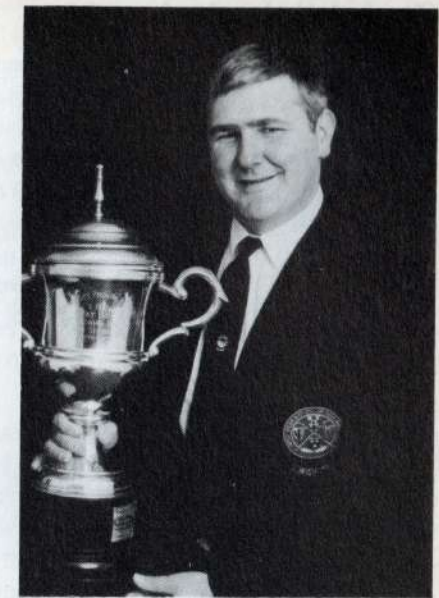
Catriona Jennings (Tallabaun, Louisburgh), who graduated in U.C.G. with a B. Sc. Hons. degree. She was educated in Holy Family School, Killeen and Sancta Maria, Louisburgh.



Helen O'Malley (Doughmackeon) B.Ed. Hons., Coláiste Phádraic, Drumcondra, Dublin 9.



Tom Durkan graduated from the University of Limerick with distinction in Diploma in Business Studies (Banking).



Andy Durkan (Louisburgh) who captained the Irish team to victory in the International Deep Sea Angling Championship held in Wicklow 1990, beating England, Scotland and Wales to win the team event. Andrew also won the best individual of the competition over the two days fishing.

Birthday Wishes For A Very Dear Mother

Another day – another year
And, yes, another birthday's here
The years go by each filled, it seems,
With memories and hopes and dreams;
With sadness, but with laughter too;
To live life fully we must do
Your "New Year" Life's book
Waits to unfold
The pages are all edged in gold
The spaces must be filled by you
Hope they'll be written in gold not blue.

Corragaun

Maisie Tinsley

Comhgháirdeachas! . . .



Olivia O'Malley and Eamonn Sammon presenting a Clár Gaeilge for Seachtain na Gaeilge at Sancta Maria College.



Johnnie Scanlon congratulates Margaret and Paddy Burke on their return to the West after thirty-five years.

Comhgháirdeachas! . . .

Is there such a word as *neamh-chomhghairdeachas*? Could we institute an award of censure for something done badly or something left undone? Something that merits only reprimand from even a detached observer? If so, we suggest that, as a community, we might well make this award to ourselves for the manner in which we are allowing our own Irish language to slip through our fingers like sand: losing it in this generation. If it should disappear, that will be a tragedy; one for which future generations of Louisburgh people will not easily forgive us.

An Choinneal has tried to have one article in Irish published in every issue. Yet, despite our wealth of local Irish and despite the work of our schools, each succeeding issue of this magazine finds it harder to get such a written contribution. We find that a sad development.

There are obvious reasons why our Irish language has not attained spoken popularity – the taste of compulsion, the tinge of chauvinism, the supposed uselessness and the anti-bias which, conveyed to children, makes it actually difficult to motivate their learning skills. But viewing it objectively, would we agree that some bi-lingual community in Canada – the town of Louisburg, let us suppose! – should allow its French (or English) language to be lost forever?

We make an earnest appeal to those who have a command of Irish to contribute, even by proxy, to future numbers of *An Choinneal*.

An Dubh-bhás

The following verses were read as a lament for the dead on the occasion of the first commemorative death-march to Doolough on 19 June 1988:

Tráthnóna Aoine bhí an oiread daoine
Le gorta spíonta; agus iad ag súil
Le cinneadh graoiúil ó na boic mhór' dlithúil
Ach ní bhfuair siad bia natha, ach an briathar dúr.
Do ghluais na céadtaí, gan aon ghreim béilí,
Tré sneachta séidte ins an oíche fhuar;
Ach thit na créatúir; bhí an mháthair séalaith'
Is a leanbh cléibhe ar a cíocha ag diúl.

Nach mór an t-uafás go bhfuair siad dubh-bhás
De bharr a gcrúcháis 's iad ag ithe an fhéir;
Is ar chasán scírdiúla imeasc na sléibhte
Bhí a gcorpáin tréigthe le breacadh an lae –
Gan bhean a gcointe! Ó a Rí na hAoine,
A bheathaigh doine leis an *manna* tráth,
Scaoil anuas do ghrásta ar ár muintir chráite
Is ag bord an Pharrthais go raibh siad leat go bráthach!

Leon Ó Mórcháin

Pathways to God – A Review

During the last summer, I spent some pleasant hours with my colleague and friend Father John F. Heneghan. Our friendship began over fifty years ago in Louisburgh. He is now a pastor in the Cathedral in Yakima, in the state of Washington. In the course of our conversation, I discovered that his uncle, Father John Heneghan, was related to me through my grandfather, Simon O'Reilly. They were both very close friends. Simon was his godfather as well.

Later on in the summer, I began to read a book entitled "Pathways to God", written about 1937 by the late Father John Heneghan. The book was addressed to the People of God by the writer in his desire to impress on them the necessity of prayer in the life of a Christian. He has written it in a very readable fashion. The book, simply structured, has answers to the need of our own time. The reader will find in its contents the fulfilment which modern men and women are seeking. In his monthly contributions on spiritual subjects in the *Far East*, I can recall as in this book under review, the depth and wealth of his devotedness to prayer, and in particular, his devotion to Christ's hidden life.

The greater part of the book is devoted to a detailed analysis of the prayer which Christ taught to his apostles. "The Our Father contains all that was in the heart of Jesus. How sweetly Our Lord revealed the true art of prayer making it as simple as a child's petition to his father". Father John has opened up for us a secret trail of prayer to God in his treatment of the Lord's prayer. It still remains the model of all prayers. Is it not a fact that thousands have discovered the divine springs of peace and stability with no other knowledge or lesson in the art of prayer than that obtained through fingering the rosary beads. I would recommend this exposition on the meaning of the Lord's prayer as suitable meditation material or for personal reflection on eternal values in the consumer atmosphere of our modern times. The author has a distinct gift of expressing the most profound theology in an uncomplicated way. He shows a Pauline obsession as he expresses his deep love of God, and yet has an immense understanding of human frailty. "No one", he assures us, "is a complete failure until he goes to Hell". As a man of prayer, he carries tremendous conviction in this book. He tells us again and again, that prayer is our real life, and that when we pray, we are practising for eternity.

But this is more than a book about prayer. It is an unconscious self-portrait. It reflects a priestly soul at prayer. When he writes about Christ's love for the silence of the night and the attraction of the hills as a place for prayer, he is back among the pilgrims of his much-loved "Reek". It would indeed be his wish that his readers would take heart and discover the riches of the Our Father, this prayer of prayers.

Those who are hungry for God, and wish to communicate with Him in prayer will be enriched by his book. He has told us that many a friendship fails through neglect because the grass was allowed to grow on the pathway between friends. It is thus with the soul and God. There is something important here for everyone: every page reveals the commitment of the writer to God. His life as reflected in his words could be summed up in the words – *pietate, zelo, devotione* (with piety, zeal and devotion). Father John never allowed the grass to grow on his "Pathway to God".

Palmerstown

Vincent Kelly

Here's Louisburgh

For breakfast in Louisburgh I had dollops of sea trout. The night before, heavily scented country girls had gathered in for a *céili* in the local hall – the organisation known as *Muintir na Tíre* was doing its best to keep the west alive.

– extract from *Here's Ireland*, a travel book written by Brian McMahon and published in 1971.

From Leenane on Killery Bay, ten miles onward toward Louisburgh ran a stretch of road which was the fairest I had seen in Ireland. After the village and fjord which was Norway, and the mountain torrent and forest grove that was Switzerland, came a canyon which was Montana, and, beyond it a lake like a miniature Sea of Galilee.

– extract from *Here's Ireland*, a travel-book written by Harold Speakman and published in New York in 1925.

Scholar's Bag

(A medley of local items for the quizzical)

Have you ever thought of the name “Clew Bay” which refers to the basin of water on which Louisburgh is built? What does *Clew* mean? There is a theory (how well substantiated is a good question!) that a medieval cartographer once numbered all the inlets along the Irish coast with Roman numerals. Our own beloved inlet was, for him, number one-hundred-and-fifty-four. In Roman numerals this is written CLIV, and given a misprint or two, we are still well inside Clare Island! It became CLEW Bay.

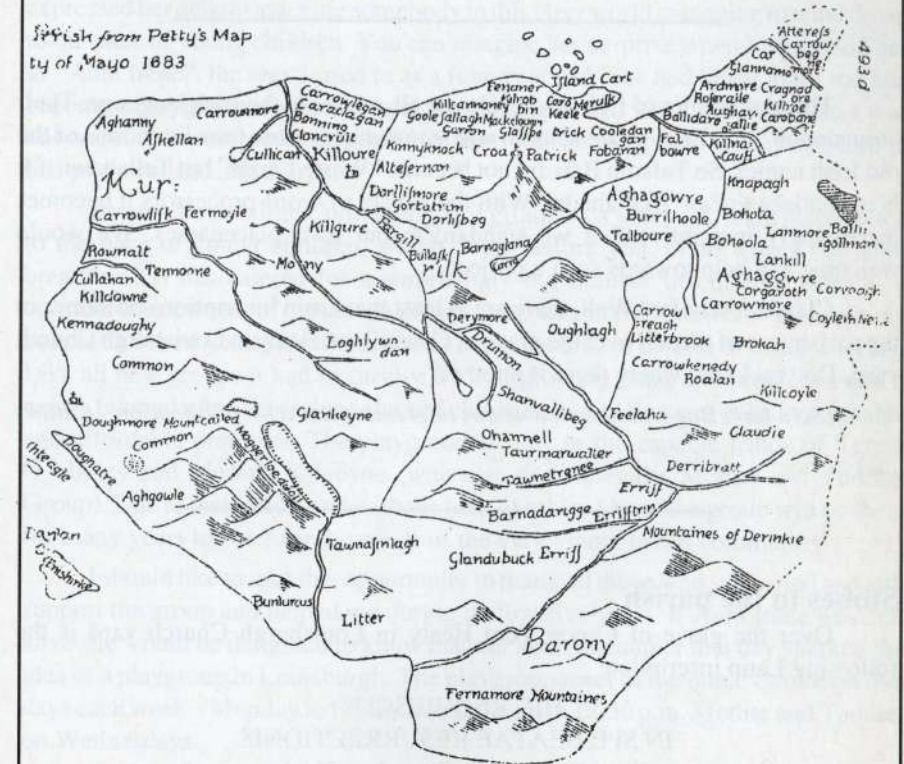
The Irish name is Cuan Mhodka, Modha being the daughter of the harvest god, Lugh (whence Lughnasa the name for August) who was feted in pagan times on Cruachan Aighle – which is, of course, our Reek!

A hundred or more years ago people who left the Catholic for the Protestant religion were locally called, in derision, “jumpers”. A bilingual term. It comes from the Irish phrase “*d’iompaiigh siad*”, pronounced *jumpee sheath* (lit. “they turned”). In our local lingo it was shortened to “they jumped”. So, Jumpers!

"Kilgeever" has been variously translated:

"The Windy Church" (*Cill Gaothmhar*), "The Hermit's Church" (*Cill a' Dithreabhaigh*) and (Saint) Evor's Church (*Cill d'Ibhear*).

Here is another possibility: Petty's Ordnance Map (1683) lists the Abbey as "Killower" (also as "Killoure"). *Cill* is, of course church, abbey or monastery, and *ower* (or *fower*) is a spring well. *Ower* is a place-name near Headford, County Galway; and is also part of the name Aghagower. Because of the holy well in the graveyard the meaning "Church of the Well" is surely a possibility for "Kilgeever". Unfortunately another source, dealing with the Composition of Connacht, refers to it as *Kilgavower*! Were there *two* wells; or what?



Map of Murrisk Barony

The name of this magazine continues to baffle people. The name is *An Choinneal* meaning *The Candle*. But there are pitfalls: because the Irish word *coinneal* is feminine, when it follows the definite article, *an*, it must be aspirated. This is why it must be written *An Choinneal* (and not *An Coinneal*). Using the word in English conversation we suggest these forms:

I must write for *An Choinneal* (or for *the Coinneal*). Send me a *Coinneal*. I have kept all the *Coinneals*.

And if you want to know how to pronounce *Ch*, you must ask someone who is really Irish. *Ch!*

The placenames of Ireland are, almost all, names in the Irish language. Their "translation" into English are seldom real *translations*; more transliterations of the old Irish names. So Talamh Bán did not become "Waste Lands" but Tallabawn. Or is it Thallabawn? or Thallabaun? With the advent of word-processors it becomes increasingly imperative that we standardize our own placenames. We would welcome any help towards such a project.

Classical scholar? Well, there are at least two Latin inscriptions on stones in the parish; one of them is over the grave of Canon Tom Healy in Louisburgh Church yard. Do you know where there is another?

(*Scholar's Bag would welcome any interesting items for publication – Editor*)

Stones in the parish

Over the grave of Canon Tom Healy in Louisburgh Church yard is the following Latin inscription:

HIC REQUIESCIT
IN SPE BEATAE RESURRECTIONIS
Rev. D. Thomas Canonicus Healy
QUI
ANNO AETATIS SUAE 77mo SACERDOTII 51mo
POSTQUAM PER AMPLIUS TRIGINTA ANNOS
IN HAC PAROECIA DE KILGEEVER
PAROCHUS CURAM ANIMARUM
FIDELISSIME GESSERAT,
DIE 6 JAN, 1934
PIE OBIIT
ORATE PRO ANIMA EIUS

Playgroup

Just over six years ago while visiting my parents I took two of our children – then two and three years of age – for a stroll through my nowadays busy home town. Progress was slow with the two but who cared! Weren't we on holidays! We were stopped by an old lady whom I recognized as my former playgroup-teacher. She expressed her delight at seeing somebody in this busy world managing to wind down to the pace of young children. You can imagine her surprise when I addressed her as "Aunt Irene", the way I used to as a four-year-old. She had heard that I too had become a playgroup teacher but was very disappointed when I told her that I was not working in that profession and that there was no playgroup for my children in this place called Louisburgh.

By now Louisburgh Community Playgroup is six years old. It is a place suited to the pace of young children, which, I can assure you, often leaves the adult breathless! It has catered for a surprisingly big number of children when you consider the newness of the idea in the area, and take into account how many young people and even young families have to leave the area to be able to make a living. Like all new groups it had to survive a lot of growing pains and problems; and it nearly faltered a few times due to lack of children, lack of finances or lack of suitable and affordable premises. The playgroup is now in the capable hands of Teresa O'Malley and Martina Kilcoyne (who also facilitates the Mother and Toddler Group). Due to their effort and with the help of others I hope the group will be there for many years to cater for the needs of the very young in our community.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all those who supported and still support the group and helped me during its first five years. If Aunt Irene was still alive she would be delighted to know that our short encounter that day sparked the idea of a playgroup in Louisburgh. The playgroup meet in Resource Centre on five days each week – Monday to Friday from 10 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. Mother and Toddler on Wednesdays.

Askelane

Sabine Pfaff

Louisburgh I Seek

Far away o'er the sea near the foot of Croagh Patrick
Woody by the ocean and harboured by hills
Is the love of my life and the cause of my heartache
As the scene of my childhood my memory fills

On the swift wing of fancy I fly at my leisure
And soar o'er the deep rolling waves of Clew Bay,
O'er the mountain of Patrick I linger with pleasure
And, landing in Louisburgh, a while I must stay.

I'll roam down the banks of the sweet Bunowen River
By her fast-flowing waters, my heart light and gay,
And casting my line for a salmon so silver
I long for the thrill of his valiant play.

To see from the hills at the first light of morning
When the lark's song is greeting the day while it's new
The sparkle of jewels so richly adorning
The valley beneath in a mantle of dew!

Over moorland and meadow I see as it slumbers
The dear little town that can outshine them all
With friends and companions we flocked in our numbers
To school and to Mass and to dance in the hall.

With sadness I'll go to my home by the ocean
Where waves of emotion so wounded my heart
As the father and mother I loved with devotion
Said tearful goodbyes on the morning we part.

For employment had called me to down-town Manhattan
In Melbourne and Sydney I've earned my keep
The bright lights of London like a sea of bog-cotton
I've savoured them all but it's Louisburgh I seek.

Kitty O'Malley

Identity Crisis

Remembering once I was young and
carefree,
The world was my oyster,
The pearl was me,
I worked for a living,
And planned my vacations,
And exercised control,
On life's situations.

But! I hadn't allowed
For a force so disarming,
So utterly ruthless,
So positively charming,
So endearingly coy,
As to render one stupid,
Devastator of plans,
And referred to as Cupid!

Under his spell,
I relinquished my hold,
For reasons obscure
And would not be told,
That Marriage was bliss
While girls would agree,
That she would be "WE",
While he remained "HE".

Thus cast in the whirlpool
Of general homemaking,
Washing and cleaning,
And cooking and baking,
Babies and bottles
And push-chairs and cots
Nappies and pins
And Dodo's and pots.

Creeping and crawling
And climbing and falling,
Chicken-pox, nappyrash,
Teething and bawling,
Measles and mumps
Ear aches and tonsils,
School-bags and sandwiches,
copies and pencils.

They rush through the door
At twenty-past three,
They fling down the bags
And they holler "It's me".
"What's for the dinner?"
"I don't like this",
"I'm having sausages",
"I'm having chips".

And somewhere amid
The chaos and confusion,
What used to be me
A receding illusion,
Grasping at straws,
An identify crisis,
O FÁS! Do I need you,
To pick up the pieces.

Kitty O'Malley

Slán Abhaile . . .

The following parishioners have died since our last issue. God rest them!

1988

November:	5	Brigid O'Malley, Roonkeel
	8	Philip Kitterick, Crickeen
	26	Nora Hester, Thallabawn
December:	12	Catherine Healy, Falduff
	19	Evelyn O'Brien (Roonagh) Athlone

1989

January:	2	Thomas Fergus, Feenone
	5	John Gallagher, Cahir
	6	Hugh Prior, Old Head and London
	7	Michael Scott, Shraugh
	11	Anthony O'Malley, Doughmakeown
	12	Charles Prendergast, Emlagh
	16	Pat Joe O'Malley, Curra, Accony
	20	Nancy Houlihan, Tooreen
	23	Austin Armstrong, Althore
February:	7	Pat Joe Prendergast, The Colony
	14	Thomas Scott, Falduff
	19	Nellie O'Grady, Curradavitt
March:	7	Michael Burke, Roonkeel
	18	Richard Gibbons, Roonkeel
	22	Julia Mulvey, Collacoon
April:	6	Molly Tiernan, Furmoyle
	15	Bridget Keane, Louisburgh
	25	Mary Jennings, Killadoon
May:	3	Anthony Kilcoyne, Shranacloya
	11	Annie Mary Burke, Feenone
	17	Martin Mannion, Killadoon
	18	John Farragher, Askelane
	26	Julia Maxwell, Westport and Kilgeever
	31	Patrick Kitterick, Shranacloya
June:	14	Rose O'Malley, Accony
	25	Michael McKeown, Main Street
July:	9	Michael Hester, Doughmakeown
	15	Catherine Carty, Falduff
	20	Walter McEvelly, Doughmakeown

August:	9	Rose O'Malley, Shraugh
	17	Anthony O'Malley, Thallabawn
	18	Michael Hunt, Devlin
September:	6	Delia Kitterick, Dereen
October:	3	Gerard Moran, Chapel Street
	15	Michael Joe Prendergast, Accony
November:	11	Bea Geoghegan, Ballinrobe and Bunowen
December:	1	Michael Jennings, Althore
	11	Michael P. Prendergast, Accony

1990

January:	8	Nora Foy, Kilgeever
	25	Elizabeth McDonagh, Askelane
February:	4	Dick Gallagher, Thallabawn
	12	Mary O'Grady, Six Noggins
	15	Michael Morrison, Devlin
March:	7	Thomas Joyce, Shraugh
April:	3	Patrick Philbin, Cahir
	16	Mary C.O'Malley, Cross
	24	John O'Malley, Aillemore
May:	9	Sarah O'Malley, Doughmakeown
	9	Norah O'Malley, The Bridge, Louisburgh
June:	1	Kathleen Morrison, The Square, Louisburgh
	7	Thomas Flanagan, Accony
	12	Michael P. O'Malley, Bridge Street, Louisburgh
	23	Mary E. Durkan, Main Street
July:	10	James Coyne, Leenane
	28	Edward Cannon, Chapel Street
August:	1	Séamus O'Dowd, Mooneen
	9	John Kilcoyne, Cregganacopple in England
	21	Patrick Ruddy, Collacoon
	25	Austin McHale, Emlagh
	31	Mai McHale, Pulgloss
September:	4	Ellen Keane, Devlin
October:	1	Thomas Kitterick, Cregganbawn
	7	Austin Gibbons, Dereen
	23	Brigid Lyons, Furmoyle
	29	Sara McEvelly, Roonagh Point

The following deaths have taken place outside the parish:

1988 October:

Mary O'Toole (Ronagh) in Cleveland U.S.A.
Mrs. Mary Clarke (nee Frazer) Kinnadoohy in Drogheda

December:

Ellie Joyce (*nee* O'Toole Doughmackeown) U.S.A.
John O'Grady (Gurteen) in Leeds, England
Lena Geraghty (Doughmackeown) in Manchester
Anna Fitzmaurice (*nee* Mulvey Collacocon) in Tralee
Joyce Hastings in Northampton

1989 January:

Patrick Prendergast (Emlagh) Birmingham
John Gibbons in London

February:

Mrs. Mary Mulvey, Chicago, U.S.A.

March:

Tommie McConnell (Shraugh) Wigan
Eamonn O'Malley (Doughmackeown) Leeds, England
Bishop James Fergus Ballagherderreen
Thomas Lyons (Furmoyle) in Minnesota
John Gibbons (Lecanvey) London, England

April:

Mary Newman (*nee* Berry, Carrowniskey) U.S.A.
Harry O'Malley (Bunowen) San Francisco, U.S.A.

May:

Kathleen Branker (*nee* O'Malley, Bunowen) in London

June:

Paddy Lyons (Askelane) in Chicago U.S.A.

July:

Kathleen O'Malley (*nee* Gallagher)
James Berry Carrowniskey in Coventry
Patrick J. Kelly Jnr (Chapel Street) in Westport

August:

Lil Feeney (*nee* Prendergast, Louisburgh) Dublin
Winifred Kelly (*nee* O'Grady) Shrawee in New York
Patrick Davitt Kinnadoohey in Boston

November:

Sarah Marie O'Toole, (infant, Doughmakeown) U.S.A.
John Gibbons Feenone in Liverpool
Patrick O'Reilly (Chapel Street) in Ballinrobe
Mary Burke (*nee* Jennings) Althore in Chicago
Annie McMyler (*nee* Scott) Shraugh in Westport

December:

William Murphy (Kilgeever) Dublin
Bridgid Bukoski (*nee* Sammin Carramore) Worcester U.S.A.
Patrick O'Donnell (Pulgloss) Worchester, Mass. U.S.A.

Mrs. Berry Duffy, (Dublin) Mooneen

Mrs. Ann O'Connor (*nee* Gallagher, Cahir) Killorglin

Paddy Gibbons, Roonith in Blackburn England

1990 January:

Mrs. Mary Prendergast (Accony) in London
Peter Scanlon (Furmoyle) in Blackburn, England
Ann O'Connor (*nee* Gallagher) Cahir in Killorglin
Mary Frazer Kinnadoohey in Boston
John McNamara Aillemore in Boston

February:

Katie O'Donnell (*nee* O'Malley, Pulgloss) Manchester
Agatha Healy (*nee* McGreal Doughmackeown) Coventry
Michael Lannon Prendergast (Accony) Chicago U.S.A.
Jimmy Fergus, Feenone in Chicago
Mary O'Grady, Six Noggins in Birmingham

March:

Annie Corrigan (*nee* Lacey) Cleggan in Blackburn
Mary Kate Staunton (*nee* Burke, Carramore) Boston
Mary Fadian (*nee* Giblin) Carrowholly Westport

April:

Annie McHale (Louisburgh) Rosses Point, Sligo
Mrs. Albie O'Toole (*nee* Coyne) Alliemore in Mass. U.S.A.

May:

William Carr (Ballyhip) in London

June:

Mary McGreal (*nee* Kilcoyne, Falduff) Mass. U.S.A.
Patrick Joseph McHale, Emlagh, in Maynooth, Kildare
Peter Hallinan (Kilgeever) Chicago U.S.A.

July:

Jim McNelis, (Accony) Summerville Co. Meath
Kevin Kilcoyne (Kilsallagh P.O.) Galway

September:

Dr. Anthony Morrison (Louisburgh) in U.S.A.
James Philbin (Carrowniskey) in Boston U.S.A.
Patrick Cavey (Doughmackeown) Coventry, England

October:

Thomas Burke (Bundorcha) in Galway

November:

Pádraic Burke (Bridge Street) in Cork

Genial Giant

4th November 1913 – 9th April 1987



Walter Martin Kerrigan was born on 4 November 1913 in Louisburgh, County Mayo. His parents, Patrick Kerrigan and Sara Gibbons, owned a drapery business in the town. He had one older sister, two older brothers and a twin sister. He went to school in Louisburgh until he was about twelve years of age, when he went to Saint Jarlath's College in Tuam, until he was about eighteen. After this he went to an Ecclesiastical College in Carlow but left after realizing that he did not have a vocation. He then worked locally until coming over to England and joining Newcastle City Police in April 1937. On 25 July 1942 he married Mary Catherine Farnon. They had three children, two daughters and one son. On 1st October 1954 he was promoted to Sergeant. On 1st November 1963 he was promoted to Inspector. In April 1967 he retired from Police.

During his service with Newcastle City Police, he was commended four times. The most notable of these was for an incident which occurred on Sunday, 14 June 1959, when he disarmed and arrested a man who had a loaded pistol. As a result, on October 1959, he was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Bravery. During his years at College, Walter was a very keen and talented all round sportsman, including running, swimming, and his particular favourite, football. (A knee injury curtailed his football career). He went on to enjoy swimming for many years, and also played golf for the Police Force, winning many competitions.

After retiring from the Police Force, he worked as a building sub-contractor for a period of time, then he worked for a local rental company until July 1974 when he suffered a thrombosis in his left leg, which resulted in a below-knee amputation.

Even after this, he continued to enjoy gardening and walking. Although the amputation took a while to come to terms with, he would still not be beaten by it, and on more than one occasion we had our hearts in our mouths when he insisted on doing things like going up a ladder to paint! In the latter months of his life he suffered from fibrosis of the lungs during which he was nursed at home by his dear wife, Mary, until he died on 9 April 1987. Then Mary went to join him in glory on 29 November 1988.

Above all Walter Kerrigan was an excellent example of a true Christian. He loved his Church; and his loyalty and devotion to the Mass was an inspiration to all of us. When he was failing in health, it was my privilege to attend to his spiritual needs at home. The welcome he gave to our Blessed Lord was really something. His prayer-book bore the thumb marks of many years of devotion, inherited from his good parents back home in Louisburgh, which he never lost. The Thirty Days Prayer was his favourite daily prayer. His Requiem Mass and Funeral was among the finest we ever had in our parish as he was held in the highest esteem by everyone. His family Mary, Sheila and Brendan are all a credit to their parents and I am sure the spirit of Walter and Mary will continue to live with us through many generations. May they both rest in peace. Amen.

Newcastle-on-Tyne

Father Tom Cass

Mrs. Hannon

When, some years ago, I wrote a well-deserved appreciation of the late Mr and Mrs Maguire, a past pupil, on reading it, reminded the *Coinneal* secretary by letter that there were three teachers in Killadoon school. He was right, and I had not said that there were two only. The third teacher was Mrs. Brigid Hannon (*nee* Burke, Doughmackeon), who later lived in Bunowen, Louisburgh. She was a wonderful teacher. She then taught the second and third classes and she had a great knowledge of, and love for, the Irish language. I still remember some of the headlines she wrote on the blackboard: "*Is binn béal ina thost*" (silence is golden); "*Is fearr cara sa gcúirt ná punt sa sparán*" (a friend in court is better than a pound in the purse). These and many others were old Irish sayings with more than a grain of wisdom in them! Some of her English headlines that I can remember are: "June is the month of the roses", "The cuckoo comes in summer" and many more, written in well-rounded hand-writing. But the most thing for which I will remember her is the singing lessons, and the songs she taught us: *Pearla an Bhrollaigh Bháin*, (The snowy-breasted Pearl) *Maidin i mBéara* with its lovely "Londonderry" air, *Eamonn a' Chnuic*, one which began: "*Ins an aimsir aoibhinn, aerach nuair a bhí mé fhéin i mo scafaire*"; and the last one which she taught me before I left school: *Cruacha Glas' na hÉireann* (Tá an Fómhar ag sileadh a h-éadaigh inniu ar fud Oileán na naomh – those were its first words).

The only English song that I can remember her teaching us was the hymn, *Faith of our fathers*. Whenever or wherever it is sung now at processions or pilgrimages, including Croagh Patrick, I always thank God for the teacher who enabled me to join in that uplifting and soul-stirring hymn. Mrs. Hannon died on 8 December 1986. May her soul rest in peace.

Kinnadoohey

Una O'Malley



Mary and Kevin Kilcoyne

Forever Remembered

There are some persons of whom the remembrance is always happy. We think of them and it is like a smile in the mind. We, his neighbours think of Kevin Kilcoyne and the happiness he brought; his spontaneity and good will; his total lack of pretentiousness. When we think of these and his many other excellent qualities, we wrap his memory in affection. This locality has lost one of its finest members; and we, his neighbours, have lost a personal friend. May the God of love and mercy care for Kevin who is gone, and bless with consolation those left to carry on.

Kilsallagh

Father James J. O'Malley

Adieu to our loved ones

The good ship she lies anchored,
On a bright September day;
Soon she will be sailing,
Bound for the U.S.A.

As we stand upon the quay side,
Our hearts are filled with woe;
For our Irish sons and daughters,
It is bad to see them go.

Adieu, Adieu, our loves ones,
As you cross the raging main;
When there's better times in Ireland,
Please come home to us again.

Don't forget to write a letter,
And be sure to keep in touch;
With your loved ones back in Erin's Isle,
Who loved you very much.

Those parting words are spoken,
As we clasp our loved ones' hands;
And may God go always with you,
As you leave old Ireland.

The ship at last she has set sail,
Across the ocean wide;
But our thoughts will still be with them,
Even though the seas divide.

They have no other choice today,
But leave their native shore;
To live and work in foreign clime,
And we may never see them more.

Furmoye

Mrs. Sarah Scanlon

Michael Joe and I were overjoyed to see Michael's mother and father and the article by Father Micheál Flannery. It was excellently written and brought home close to us at Christmas.

(Mrs) Gertrude McDermott

Many readers have shared your joy and have commented on that article which uncovered so much of a Louisburgh which is fast receding into history.

I was disappointed that my letter referring to tracing my ancestors and those of my grandparents Austin and Brigid (O'Malley) Keane did not appear.

George Wood (New York)

Stumped! The letter seems to have been mislaid, George. Would it be too much to ask that you write again and we will publish it in our Kith and Kin feature.

I loved the *Cipin* – very good idea. When I was growing up over there I don't seem to remember anyone by the name of Dunne. But I am eighty-five next month.

Ann Burke-Ryan (Connecticut)

*Your age doesn't let you down, Ann: you'll find the answer to your query in a letter here from Father Tommie O'Malley. And, of course, your first remark is dead-on. We all thought the *Cipin* great.*

I am a foundation member, Mary, and enjoy the *Coinneal* and want to continue to receive it. Please accept my contribution of \$100 in memory of Seán Patrick Lyons, a descendant of the Furmoyle Lyons family. Thank you, Tom. We all sympathise with you in the many recent personal bereavements.

Thank you for sharing your precious time to do all you do. It was great reading my

brother Tommie's letter: we are all excited about the re-union. See you in Louisburgh.

Mary (McCormack) Kelleher

You'll also enjoy Tommie's interview in the present issue, Mary.

I certainly hope they can keep the *Coinneal* going. Only too well do I know how expenses have gone up; and they really do a fine job. I carried over the *Coinneals* a few times when I was returning to the States from vacation.

Ann E. Carr

So you did Ann; and earned our gratitude. Regards to all the Ballyhips in the Boston area: they have a special interest in parts of this issue. I personally share the loss of your brother, my school colleague, Willie. Ar scoil Dé dhó!

It presents a delightful selection of photographs and many fine articles for us to ponder with family and friends. Continued success to Ireland's oldest parish magazine!

Helen McCarthy (New York)

I would not dare to disagree with you, Helen. And thank you for your handsome gift.

In Philadelphia I recently met the Gibbons family from Feenone and Eileen (O'Toole) Feeney from Thallabawn. And now I look forward to meeting someone from Bunowen!

(Msgr) Michael J. Coyne (New Jersey)

And what a joy it was, Michael, that I was there to share the encounter. I also met our Louisburgh friends in the Delaware Valley. Sincere thanks for your donations to An Choinneal, and for the typical Aillemore hospitality. Now, would you ever think of doing the Tochar Phadraic so revered by another member of the family?

Bunowen, Sweet Bunowen

In July of 1988 I visited Ballina for the purpose of extending my sympathy to my cousin Ita Fleming on the death of her husband, Ned, who was the first to drive a bus into Louisburgh in my youth. Like a lot of things I do I was a year late and she did not hesitate to tell me so, but I had a nice visit with Annie and Ita and during the course of the evening made a visit to a one-time neighbour in Ard-na-Ri known in my time as Pakie Maille of Bunowen and now known as Pat O'Malley, retired from the Land Commission. We had such a lovely evening full of reminiscing and nostalgia that I felt I should record some of it at least. This is not an autobiography. At least it's not intended to be.

Tommy Geoghegan lived on the other side of the village and when I was three he brought me a live rabbit which I kept in a barrel. I cannot remember what happened to the rabbit but I suspect my father let it free when he needed the barrel for spraying the potatoes. When I was five Tommy brought me to school which was located where the Parochial Hall is now – on the ground floor, with the Girls' School on the second floor. For the next seven years I ran to school around 9.15 in the morning and ran home at 3.30 when we were released. I do not remember ever walking unless you caught up with an older person when it was considered discourteous to run by them. Occasionally we stopped on the way to go through the chapter on catechism or a couple of pages of poetry required for that day. We were told you could retain the knowledge better by doing it in the morning and I found it worked for me better, only I was nearly always late so if you did not catch it for one thing you got it for the other.

We lived about half-way down the village and as you left the town the first building we passed was the Protestant church which was alright during daylight hours but, being surrounded by old graves, was a source of dread to me for many years at night when I had to pass by alone. In those times there was no T.V. and actually no radio, so a great source of entertainment was telling ghost stories, so in October we used to visit Anthony McHale's house after the rosary and benediction and he always had a store of good stories most of which were supposed to be true. Many a night if I had any choice I would not have gone home past that graveyard, but not having any choice, I called on my reserves and made the hundred yards dash until I got past Katie Donnelly's house which was the first after the church. I never really felt safe however until I passed Cally boreen because there was a big main drain that ran along by the boreen and everyone knew that the spirits of the dead did not or could not cross a meandering stream. As I got a little older I thought I should lose the fear so I confided in my cousin Anthony McHale who used to tell the ghost stories and he gave me a little lecture which, though very simple, helped me

Home Thoughts of Bunowen

Landscape more given than chosen
 Needing the gods of sun and spring
 The light of temperate mornings
 To assuage its perennial wildness
 Robins and Rockpools
 To domesticate its Atlantic
 intransigence.

Breakers I was born to
 Bafflingly unendingly
 Belligerently beautiful
 Collapsible renewable
 Heaving white walls
 Advancing rearing
 Disappearing, tracelessly
 Swirling parables
 Hieroglyphs
 Empires
 Shuddering to nothingness.

2

They came to me
 The children of famine
 Among these quiet hills
 Blown robins and sea-crows
 Curlews, wet-bellied sanderlings

What can I bring them?
 Words in a language never theirs
 Forms on these lean landscapes
 Fleetingly shared.

3

Cradle Rock
 Kitchen Rucks
 Lapped Cailleach Dubh
 Carraig na Báirneach
 Childhood and setting suns
 Linger with you.

4

I have been immersed
 In these waters
 Their time
 Only seems
 More timeless
 Than mine.

*Teresita Durkan
 Bunowen and Carysfort
 Summer 1988*

*Bunowen, and indeed all of Louisburgh, support you with love and loyalty,
 Teresita, as you negotiate the breakers. – Editor*

throughout the rest of my life. He said to me: "I think you are afraid you might be a coward, but don't ever think that having fear makes you one, because it doesn't. Everyone is afraid of one thing or another, some are afraid of poverty, some of death, some of ridicule and so on. The important thing is how you handle it". And he said, "Always remember – Courage is not the absence of fear but its conquest." The Lord have mercy on you, Anthony McHale, you were a good carpenter but you were also a much wiser man than you ever realized.

The first dwelling in the village outside the town was Katie Donnelly's, which was a great house for a game of cards during the long winter nights. Her niece, Bea, lived with her, and many a time she lent me her camogie stick. Con Ryan had a garage for his car right next to Katie's house; about a hundred yards further on came the Cally Boreen which gave access to Pat Tom's house. Pat Tom was O'Malley but then were there a lot of O'Malley's in the parish so we needed to differentiate. Pat came from Cahir and he had a brother Peter Tom, who was quite a poet, living there. Pat Tom was married to Boss Keane's sister Mary and their house used to be isolated by high tides occasionally during spring and fall and he also was the only one that had an ass and cart in the village. Next came Scanlon's house also known as "The Pound". Evidently at one time there was a pound to contain straying animals but I don't remember it. The Scanlon's were a lovely family, some very talented, some very pretty. Paddy who was married to Josie O'Malley (Affie) was a boyhood hero of my young days. He went to Saint Jarlath's College in Tuam for five years and played full-back on the senior team the last year. It is many a time I made him tell the story of the day they beat Summerhill College, Sligo by fifty six points to two. Even the backs were straying up the field scoring points that day. Paddy was an avid reader: any time I went in to borrow something he would have a book propped up against the sugar bowl and would always finish the chapter even if a cow was in the drain. He was the best farmer I knew. His father, Petie, was a Land Commission supervisor and Paddy always had lots of drainage tools and all equipment. He was not afraid to use them and was always generous about lending them and advising how to use them to the best advantage. Then there was Molly who worked in Dublin and Bea who was a teacher and was very good looking but died young R.I.P. Next to Bea was Una who was everyone's favourite. She was very pretty and though not physically robust in appearance used to play hurling, football and handball with us and was better than most of us at all games. Not alone that but she was the only girl I knew who would tackle up the horse and cart even though their horse stood fifteen hands high and I could not believe she would have the strength to get on the collar and hames and strap them into place. After Una came Nancy, and Joe who went away to Dublin to work fairly young. I really did not know Joe until he came back some years later but he proved to be a sterling person, solid and dependable and always so neat and clean. Next came Philomena: when I think of her it is always in connection with the kitchen comedies and occasional dramas that were produced from time to time (usually Lent and Advent) where she usually played opposite Mick Gallagher R.I.P. She was very talented and the more I see the sophisticated trash on T.V. the more I appreciate that fact. Phil was never in a bad humour and

Scissors and Sellotape

The new Bishop's father, Mr. James Fergus, Cahir, Louisburgh, Mayo, who is aged 85, hopes to attend the ceremony. His mother's maiden name was Margaret Gibbons. She died in 1915, when Father Fergus was a student at Maynooth College.

— The Standard 2 May 1947

Between Hovers

In memory of Joe O'Toole

And not even when we ran over the badger
Did he tell me he had cancer, Joe O'Toole
Who was psychic about carburettor and clutch
And knew a folk cure for the starter-engine.
Backing into the dark he floodlit each hair
Like a filament of light our light had put out
Somewhere between Kinnadoohy and Thallabaun.
I dragged it by two gritty paws into the ditch.
Joe spotted a ruby where the canines touched.
His way of seeing me safely across the dooach
Was to leave his porch light burning, its sparkle
Shifting from widgeon to teal on Corragaun Lake.
I missed his funeral. Close to the stony roads
He lies in Killeen Churchyard over the hill.
This morning on the burial mound at Templedoomore
Encircled by a spring tide and taking in
Cloonaghmanagh and Claggan and Carrigskeewaun,
The townlands he'd wandered tending cows and sheep,
I watched a dying otter gaze right through me
At the islands in Clew Bay, as though it were only
Between hovers and not too far from the holt.

Michael Longley

"hovers": temporary resting place; "holt": otter's den

— Irish Times, 25 March 1989

must have radiated jollity as it seems she was always surrounded by the lads, Mick, God rest him, Eddie Jim, Thomas Nicholson etc. Many a night coming home from town I would hear the laughter long before I could see them; Thomas leaning on the bicycle, and I envying them thinking what an endless volume of jokes they must have because this was three and four nights a week unless it was raining. Joan and Peggy were the youngest but being much younger than me I did not have much contact. I think they both became teachers: Peggy marrying an Agricultural Super called O'Sullivan; and Joan married David Ray and lived in Renmore. The last I saw of them they had a house full of beautiful children. So on down the road you came to McEvilly's where the Dunne's lived at that time. Jack Dunne came to Louisburgh I believe to sink a well for the convent. He lodged in McEvilly's and married Nora who was the youngest of the large family, most of them gone away when I was small. Jack Dunne was a man worthy of mention. Powerful physique, 6' 5" in his stockings and as handsome a man as you could see in a week's travel. He was extremely kind to us children: when he came home at weekends he always had sweets and he would squeeze us into the little car and give us a ride around the block. I remember at the sea one day he had the legs of his pants rolled up and I saw a hole in his left leg. I asked him what made the hole and he said that was a 303 and there were two more up here (rolling down the shirt off his right shoulder); I did not know for a long time that a 303 was a steel jacketed bullet from a service rifle. I used to think if you got shot you died, but I was to learn that unless it hit a vital organ or severed an artery you had a god chance of survival as the bullet from a high powered rifle will go right though unless it hits solid bone. Even then you have a fair chance if there is any kind of skilled medical service available.

Yes Jack Dunne was a talented man and in the time of the troubles 1918-1921 and later in the Civil War saw a lot of action in the South. He was an explosives expert. He knew all there was to be known about dynamite, gelignite, Amanol, Amatol, and Fulminate of Mercury and could make up a bomb or landmine, or a grenade with great skill.

McEvilly's is a good memory for me as the grandfather was very good at gardening and horticulture. There was an orchard at the back of the house which mostly grew sour cooking apples. My father used to say they were so sour they would take the tar off a gate, but out in front, next to our land, was a garden of beautiful eating apples and many a time and oft I helped myself to a good feed without any authorization.

Jack Dunne was the first in our village to own a radio and he mounted an aerial on the top of the hill which was a wonder to all of us. Later on as the children got bigger and more numerous he built a new house further down the village and Matt McEvilly married my cousin, Lottie Scott, from Accony and settled in the family home. Our village it seems always had a lot of children going to school. There were nine in Scanlon's. Six of the Dunnes, Mary who was the first, then Sean who lives in San Francisco and four more girls Geraldine, who married Neil Casey a Kerry man also in San Francisco and Eileen who married John Kerr and returned to

Removing beach sand has become an increasingly topical issue since the institution of the EC-sponsored Blue Flag scheme for approved beaches. Karen Dubsky, co-ordinator of the scheme in Ireland has confirmed that Ballybunion beach in Co. Kerry lost its Blue Flag this year, mainly because of the amount of sand which was removed from it over the winter. A formal complaint over the removal of sand from Old Head beach has also been made by the Blue Flag scheme to Mayo County Council following the publication of an article in *The Irish Times* two weeks ago. Ms. Dubsky said that, following the article, she received a number of complaints from people who had witnessed the removal from Old Head.

– Irish Times 19-7-89

The Western Health Board does not propose to appoint a second Medical Practitioner in Louisburgh to provide General Medical Services to eligible patients. Fine Gael Deputy, Enda Kenny has been told by the Minister for Health, Dr. Rory O'Hanlon.

Replying to a question from Deputy Kenny, the Minister said he had been advised by the Chief Executive of the Western Health Board that two medical practitioners provided General Medical Services to eligible patients in the area up to recently, when one of the doctors retired.

– Mayo News 21-2-90

A committee has been busily working for the past few months on plans for an

O'Toole Clan Rally. The rally has been planned for Friday, 22nd to Sunday 24th September in Louisburgh, Co. Mayo.

Tomás O'Toole (Tourmakeady), Chairman of the organisation committee stated that plans are now at an advanced stage to host the first O'Toole Clan Rally held in modern times. He has promised an action-packed weekend which will include the election of an O'Toole Clan Chieftain during this weekend.

– Mayo News 5-7-89

Doo Lough Pass, Ireland – Like all the locals living on the banks of the burbling Bundorragha River in the shadow of the beautiful, barren Mweelrea Mountains, the Gavins had heard tales of leprechauns – those crafty elves with crocks of gold.

That gold was no more than a gleam in the eye of the gullible – or so they thought. Sure, the ancient Celts had found gold, and there had been a bit of a gold rush in Wicklow more than a century ago. But everyone knew there was no more gold to be found in Ireland. Everyone was wrong.

A Dublin company has struck gold on land owned by the Gavins and about two dozen others around Doo Lough Pass in County Mayo.

"Quite a good trade of gold and quite concentrated" according to Hugh McCullough, chief executive of the company, Glencar Exploration. "I feel like a leprechaun myself," chortled John Gavin, 71, a retired sheep farmer and road-gang worker, as he threw back slugs of Irish whiskey at the primitive cottage he shares with younger brother

Bunowen for many years, then Nuala and Mercy. There were four McEvelly's: Sean who now lives in the family estate; Mary, my first godchild; Séamus and Eileen. Our house came next and there were nine of us but from then on the families got smaller.

There were two cottages built on our land in the 1930's and one of the first tenants was Tom Glynn the blacksmith whose family had mostly all grown up and gone away while he lived in the town but he always had a couple of the grandchildren living with him, whose duty after school was herding his own cow along the roadside. In those times of very little traffic the grass along the roadside was clean and nutritious.

There was an evening I remember well that Tom came home from the forge tired and in foul humour, one of the grandchildren a pretty little girl about ten years old had been in charge of the cow for at least two previous months, her name was Martha Joyce. The cow was missing, evidently she had come a-bulling and headed for Shraugh where Willie Bennett and Austin Reilly owned bulls. Anyhow poor Martha could not give any account of her charge and Tom advised her in no uncertain terms that she had better go, look for, and find the cow. She turned to him and said "What does she look like? Does she have horns?" "Well Sir! I'll tell you now!" he glared through the glasses and raised the stick. Martha ran for our house and kept out of Tom's path for a couple of days at least. The last time I met Martha we had a good laugh about the incident among others. Do you still live in Alberta, Martha? Do you get the *Coinneal*?

Nurse Higgins lived in the cottage adjoining Tom Glynn's. She was the district nurse, she came from Ballyheane and had a brother who was a bishop. John McEvelly also had an uncle a bishop and we would never have been able to stand "Higgy" as we used to call her if we did not have that to fall back on because she never tired of talking about her brother the bishop and I will always remember Pat Gallagher of the town who used to come by once a month to collect an insurance premium. He used to have a hard time getting away from her as she would follow him all the way back to our barns trying to finish a story about her brother, or priests, or nuns, of which she must have known virtually thousands. You would hear Pat shouting, "You told me that before, ma'am" but that would not deter her, she would still be telling the story in a loud voice even after he was out of hearing. When she moved on, Pat Josie O'Donnell of Pulgloss who was married to Bridgie Kneafsey from Curra moved into the cottage. They had three children: Paddy Joe who is in England now and used to be a great pal of mine when he was a little boy – he cried bitterly the morning I left; and two girls, Peggy and Kathleen. Willie Heanue from Inisturk married one of Tom Glynn's granddaughters, Annie McNally, and had one daughter, Maureen. Willie was a natural comedian and it was always a great house to visit because Willie could make you laugh describing just about anything or incident. There is a guy, called Johnny Carson on television here for the past twenty years or more; he is supposed to be a great comedian but I've never been able to find anything humorous in anything he says and he makes millions of dollars entertaining millions of people. I wish they could have heard Willie Heanue in his heyday or his twin brother, Tom, when he was a younger man. Tom came to live in the cottage

Mikey and sister Mary.

—The Philadelphia Inquirer 12-2-89
Once again Mayo has the lowest rate of crime in the country. Official figures show the Mayo Garda Division crime rate was a full twenty per cent below the national average.

And for the same period — 1989 — the annual report from the Garda Commissioner on Crime shows that the Mayo Division had a 57.8 per cent detection rate in indictable crimes — again the highest rate in the country! Mayo had a 4.5 per cent rate of crime per 1,000 population compared with 16.6 for Galway West, 5.4 for Roscommon / Galway East, 10.7 for Sligo / Leitrim and a figure of 24.5 nationally, 49.0 in the Dublin area and 14.3 outside the Dublin area.

— Western People 1-8-90

It was a hot, sunny, lazy afternoon in Louisburgh.

The Mayo township, whose name sounds as if it should be in the Deep South of America instead of the Far West of Ireland, was basking in summery heat and sunshine as the Thirsty Troopers arrived. The main street was almost deserted. It seemed as though the entire population was in siesta. Only a sheepdog, stretched out flat on the cool pavement, raised its black-patched eye to acknowledge the strangers in town. The first bar they tried was closed.

But after a wander around town (which didn't take long, Louisburgh being Louisburgh) they ended up outside the narrow, old-fashioned frontage of the *Bunowen Inn*.

From the outside it looks a bit pokey,

although beautifully maintained in the old stout-bottles-in-the-window style. But it turned out to be surprisingly roomy inside, and the sun shining off the honey-coloured woodpanelling. The calm and restful atmosphere of the warm afternoon was aided and abetted by the slow ticking of an old-fashioned clock. The toilets were exemplary, with everything spotlessly clean and well equipped.

A first-class spot — and a credit to the West.

— 15-5-89

There was a very large attendance, representative of all sections of the Louisburgh community, in The Derrylahan for the recent presentation social held to honour F.C.A. Officer, Comdt. Tommy Duffy, Falduff, Louisburgh, who retired from the force earlier in the year after thirty-three years' service. The function was organised by 'A' Company (Westport area), F.C.A. In a letter of greeting and tribute to Comdt. Duffy (read by C.Q.M.S. McLoughlin), Comdt. Curry said Tommy Duffy's services to the community had been many and varied.

— Western People 27-12-89.

Today, Wednesday, June 6, Rev. Gerard Canon Harney, P.P., celebrates his Silver Jubilee as a priest. Canon Harney was born in Chapel Street, Louisburgh. He is son of the late Thomas and Lorena Harney. He attended St. Aloysius National School and later Sancta Maria in Louisburgh. In 1959 he studied philosophy at Mungret College, Limerick and in 1961 he went to St.

after Willie died and he also had the gift.

When you passed our house the road split at the cross roads where we used to have the bonfire on Saint John's night. The road to the left led to the butt of the river where many a time we got the chance to kill a good salmon in June and July. It was traditional to dig the first of the new potatoes the day we got the first salmon and, although we had a late river, sometimes the poreens were woefully small! But that was the rule and it was strictly observed. There was one house on the road to the butt, Boss Keane's. I don't know how he got the name Boss because I don't recall that he was in politics but he had the tolls and customs which gave him the right to collect a percentage on all livestock sold on fair days in the town and he also ran the weigh-bridge on one side of the courthouse which is now Joe Staunton's Pharmacy. There were four in that family: Annie Mary, who lived and died at home; Bridie, who married in Chicago to a Gibbons man from Aughagower, Michael, who also lived at home and Patrick Rory who also went to Chicago and served in the United States Army in World War Two, sustaining head injuries which left him very crippled when he came home to live many years later.

Boss Keane and my grandfather used to spend many hours in their last years on the bank overlooking the Butt. They wore hard round hats. I think they were called Bowler hats and though I spent many hours with them I can't recall anything they talked about. I probably spent my time chasing rabbits of which there was a multitude in that field. I was too young to remember or make any sense of what they discussed. I used to think that's what people did when they got old, wear a hard hat and sit on a wall, smoke a pipe and look out at Clare Island; and now much later I think maybe that might not be a bad way to spend the declining years with a couple of grandsons chasing rabbits where you could call them if you felt the weakness coming on!

The road that went straight on at the crossroads went between my cousin Tony Durkan's house on the left and Pat Maille's on the right. Pat was an official of the Land Commission which was previously known as the Congested District Board. We knew him as Pat-the-Board to differentiate him from the other Paddy O'Malley's in the village and also because anytime he had to make a decision he'd define his statement with "We the board" have decided. Pat was a man of some learning and it would seem that there was never any love lost between my father, Willie, and him. Pat, having a large family of boys and access to fencing materials and hedge plants — black and white thorn — and implements, always had the best of fences. We always had the very worst which was the cause of great frustration to Willie my father who would on occasion hurl insulting remarks at Pat. I can remember a particular time it must have been in the early 1940's Pat shook his stick at Willie and said: "How dare you address me in that manner. My oldest son is serving under the stars and stripes and my youngest is serving under the green, white and gold". I was very impressed by that little speech and Pat seemed to increase in stature by at least a foot in my estimation. It was true of course. Father Tom served as chaplain in the service of the United States for the duration of World War II and George, the youngest, left the university in Galway to enlist in the Irish Army and served out the full six years.

Kieran's College in Kilkenny.

— Mayo News 6-6-90

Louisburgh Community Council is to meet with local County Councillors, and Dáil Deputy, Martin Joe O'Toole, on Friday night next, to discuss issues effecting the area.

The newly appointed development worker and tourist co-ordinator of Louisburgh Development Company will also be present at the meeting. Mayo County Councillors, Patrick Durcan, Seamus Hughes, Frank Chambers and Pat Kilbane, as well as Deputy O'Toole, have been invited to attend the meeting in Louisburgh Resource Centre.

—Western People 7-11-90

Dan, the Street Singer, who has just commenced a tour of U.K cities, has launched a new tape 'The Strolling Vagabond.' Dan is among the most popular Irish entertainers on the U.K. scene and, through radio and television appearances, is also much in demand here at home.

Popular favourites on his latest release include 'The Strolling Vagabond', 'Bella Marie', 'South of the Border', 'When I Grow Too Old to Dream', 'Isle of Capri', and 'At the End of the Day.' 'The Strolling Vagabond' is now available in all record shops.

—Mayo News 6.6.90

Three potatoes, from under one stalk, weighing over half a stone! That's just part of the bumper crop story experienced this year by Louisburgh

farmer, Paddy Leamy of Bunowen. The giant potato weighs 3 lbs.-11 ozs, giving a combined total weight of 7 lbs.-6 ozs. for the three potatoes, which were among a total of eleven potatoes under the one stalk, grown from one seed potato of the variety, 'Cara'. This was the third crop of 'Cara' variety potatoes grown by Paddy since he purchased the original certified seed potatoes in Co. Donegal but previous crops did not include any unusually large potatoes.

— Mayo News 3-10-90

The Louisburgh Under 16 football team, winners of the West Mayo 'B' title this year, were honoured with a function in the Parochial Hall, last week, at which they were presented with trophies by former Mayo footballer, Martin Carney. The panel of twenty-two players and substitutes, who were defeated by Kiltane in the county semi-final, enjoyed a great night, culminating with a disco. A presentation was also made to Martin, recently appointed assistant to Mayo team manager, John O'Mahony, by Louisburgh G.A.A. Club as a mark of appreciation for his visit.

— Western People 7.11.90

The 1990 Sancta Maria College Yearbook has just been launched and is now on sale in local bookshops. Editors of the Year Book are Caroline McCormack and James Maxwell and for the first time ever the magazine has been professionally printed, by Berry's of Westport.

The Year Book contains a range of interesting articles and photos, covering such matters as coastal erosion, the life

I can also remember Johnny who now lives in Queensland in Australia. He used to work in Tom Harney's garage and one day my grandfather hired him drive us to Kilgeever to see the grave of my grandmother, who had died long years before. That was my first ride in a motor car and that's why I remember Johnny Maille. The other two sons were Eddie who stayed home to work the farm and Pakie (worked for the Land Commission and now lives in Ballina) who came to be very influential in my formative years.

My cousin Tony Durkan lived almost directly across the road from the O'Malley's. Michael Keane, Tony and Eddie were all bachelors, and the subject of marriage always came up when they got together. Tony was the oldest of the three and though he had great regard for Eddie, Pakie was a particular favourite; because no matter how low Tony felt, Pakie was always guaranteed to boost his morale. Tony was of a generation that got caught between the days of the match-making and the advent of the dance halls, when the lads went and picked out their own future partners. I have no doubt that at an earlier time a match would have been made and Tony would have made a wonderful father and husband but always even as he got older and the chances of marriage diminished Pakie would come home on the weekends and give him a great boost. It couldn't be possible that a man with almost a mile of waterfront property looking out over Clew Bay wouldn't be able to get the best of women! Pakie would say it was just a question of waiting for the right one to turn up and no way should he settle for second-best! Many hours we spent discussing the merits of the available girls who might be candidates for Tony's wife.

In those days there wasn't much money available for drinking so on wet days you either went to the forge for entertainment or in our case we visited in Tony Durkan's kitchen; and the merits of the girls were compared and analyzed. It nearly always boiled down to two, both of whom lived in the village, Maria Nicholson and Una Scanlon. They were both less than half his age but Pakie said that made no difference if there was love and understanding. They were both good looking and while the one might be a better woman in the house at the baking and knitting, the other could be a better woman on the ridge or even able to tackle the horse and harrow a field of oats or even be able to go for a cart of turf if a man was sick in bed. The fact that they were both lovely young girls and had their own boyfriends made little difference. Pakie used to say "sure them lads were only fly-by-nights" working in shops in the town and no real substance to them. How could a man even consider them when he'd get the chance to settle his daughter in a place that ran practically from the Butt of the river to Maxwell's Leap. So it went on and on the girls were good sports and knew all the stuff that went on; but they were always nice and courteous to Tony and would never do or say anything to hurt his feelings.

During the war years things were pretty bad on the little farms. There were no social services as we know them now and any house with two old-age-pensioners was considered well off. Any one of working age could go to England where there was lots of work and a few pounds to send home, but those with young families had it tough. We used to spend the summer picking carrageen moss and in the winter there were the sea-rods and winkles and somehow we managed. Tony, not having

of a TD (by local Dail Deputy, Martin J. O'Toole) and a special Burmin report on the Lecanvey Gold Prospect, only recently banned by Minister for Energy, Mr. Robert Molloy. Tommie Duffy writes about his time in the FCA and John Durcan traces the achievements of Louisburgh GAA Club over the past decade. James McHale writes about the origins and rise of soccer. Reflections of Louisburgh over a forty year period have been contributed by Dr. Columb McHugh and there is an interesting article by Helen O'Malley and Áine Gibbons on Enterprise Development. Also included is a map of the Louisburgh area with all the townlands clearly marked and a translation of Irish placenames. There are almost sixty townlands in the area.

The students have produced a high-quality magazine which will be of special interest to everybody associated with Sancta Maria, especially past pupils, and to the general public.

—Mayo News 23-5-90

“L.O.V.E.” – “Louisburgh Offers Veritable Earnest” was the relief and hospitality message from Louisburgh in 1972/73 to groups from the North of Ireland who were hosted to holidays away from strife-torn Derry. Louisburgh again extends a warm welcome to a special group from Derry on this Friday night, May 25, when the “Derry Rumours” group will provide the music for a social being held by Louisburgh Development Co. Ltd. in ‘The Derrylahan’, Louisburgh. The Derry group’s leader is Richard Moore who was blinded as a result of being hit by a rubber bullet in Derry when he was nine

years old. “Derry Rumours” have had several successful tours, including in the U.S.A., and have been backing group for some of Derry’s more famous performers, including Phil Coulter, Dana and Joseph Locke.

—Mayo News 23.5.90

Congratulations are extended to popular Bus Eireann driver, Joe Broderick, who this week celebrates 30 years of service on the Westport–Louisburgh bus route. Joe, a native of Ballinrobe, succeeded Gerry Flynn as bus conductor on the route in late September, 1960. After many years of service with bus driver, the late Martin Coughlan, Joe subsequently took over the combined role of driver/conductor. A prominent member of a number of voluntary organisations in Louisburgh, Joe (with his Tipperary-born wife, Kathleen and family) resides at Bridge Street, Louisburgh.

—Mayo News 3.10.90

Killeen Community Council are accelerating their fund-raising campaign for the purchase of the local Vocational School from Mayo Vocational Education Committee with a view to having the school premises developed as a Community Centre. Following agreement by Mayo V.E.C. to dispose of the school property to the local Community Council, a nominal deposit (of £600) was raised and paid by the Community Council to secure the premises.

—Mayo News 3-10-90

any children and being too old to negotiate the hazards of the Black Shore for the Carrageen and the sea-rods saw things go really down the hill. There was a time he was reduced to a big horse he called Ted who ate all the grass and did no work but was his pride and joy, and one cow and three asses.

It must have been 1942 because there were some mammoth tank battles being fought in the desert in North Africa. General Montgomery whom they called the Desert Rat was desperately trying to stop Rommel, the German General who was called the Desert Fox, from smashing his way through to take Egypt and the Suez Canal. We were hearing about places called Tobruk and Bengazi and Bzerta and El Alamein, we didn’t get, or couldn’t afford, a newspaper: only occasionally we’d get to hear the news on the radio. The only radios around were battery-operated, and out of service most of the times! So Pakie Maille was our main source of news.

I remember him coming home one weekend and telling Tony not to sell his asses as the price was going to go way up. At that time the best ass in the country wouldn’t cost more than one pound. Next weekend he told us how, on his way home from Longford he was held up for two hours with seven miles of asses heading for Cork. Of course the question was who would need asses in those “modern” times of tractors and machines. Pakie’s answer was that the German Panzer divisions and Montgomery’s armies were bogged down in the desert, that the petrol had run out and the tanks were useless hunks of iron sitting in the desert. The war was now being fought on camels, who would soon be decimated; so the war was going to be won on asses and a man might get as much as ten pounds for an ass, or even more!

Another weekend Pakie and Eddie and Michael Keane made up a crate of old boots and shoes and let it out at the butt of the river, about three hours later it was bobbing in the tide outside Tony’s land at Lochaun and we made sure Tony was informed. He nearly drowned himself pulling the crate out of the tide and he got lots of help to carry it up to the house. The following Tuesday being dole-day, everyone in the parish it seems heard about Tony getting the crate of shoes and the great bargains that were going. Most of them called at our house looking for directions to Tony’s and the bargains. The following Sunday on the way to Mass my mother was asking Tony in all innocence what kind of shoes they were, his answer was, “The devil o’ worse . . . was ever put on picking winkles.” I think a lot about Tony and how his life must have been! None of the comforts we take for granted today: no electricity, no running water in the house or barns, no radio, no newspaper, no woman to cook a meal; in fact the only comfort he had in his later years was to stop in at Pat Josie O’Donnell’s house where Bridgie the wife would give him a bowl of soup or a cup of tea and he could sleep on the couch for an hour or two before going home to a cold house. But I never did see him miserable or dejected or obviously unhappy unlike a lot of people I see today, who live in the lap of luxury comparatively speaking. Tony died on Saint Patrick’s Day 1970. I had a son born at that time and I named him Tony. He’s a fine athlete and gets his education through baseball scholarships. I’m sure Tony would be very proud of him bearing the name and all.

Louisburgh-born teacher, Mr. Basil A. Morahan, was recently honoured by the Board of Management and teaching staff of Coláiste Rís (C.B.S.), Westport with a special function to mark his early retirement from the profession. Many of his former colleagues – both lay and religious – and members of his family attended the function which was held at ‘The Asgard’ Restaurant, Westport Quay.

It was an evening of nostalgia with a number of speeches, largely of a reminiscing nature, some serious, others emotional and sometimes humorous. But that wasn’t surprising. It was Basil’s night – a man who, during the past sixty or so years turned his hand to many things – labouring, singing, writing, real estate and teaching – giving each 100% commitment.

– Mayo News 13.6.90

Those who moan that the spirit of self-help and community development has completely disappeared would do well to acquaint themselves of the work and achievement of the Louisburgh Development Company.

This entirely voluntary local group – nobody gets a penny for what they contribute to the operation – has succeeded in tackling the problems of rural decay and weakened morale in a way which should prove an inspiration for other small, embattled, communities. And the great triumph of the Louisburgh group is not just in what has been achieved – and there is plenty to show for its efforts – but the spirit of self confidence, dedication and will-to-win in tackling anything that needs to be tackled. Positive thinking is a

community’s most valuable asset; in Louisburgh, it is the cornerstone of success.

Clementine Lyons, the chairperson, in her annual report, outlines an impressive catalogue of projects completed. But there is one sentence which, in a nutshell, captures what community effort is all about. “This year,” she says, “we will be developing the tourism aspect of the Resource Centre by having installed a Bord Fáilte Tourism Information Point – but at our own expense!”

If Louisburgh Development Company doesn’t deserve backing and success, tell me who does.

– Mayo Post and Advertiser 7.6.90

Mayo County Engineer, Mr. Joe Beirne, responding to a query by Cllr. Patrick Durcan (Westport) at a meeting of Mayo County Council, said plans were being prepared for the provision of public toilets at the Silver Strand, Thallabawn, Louisburgh. The project did not, however, receive an allocation in the Beach Improvements Grants received from the Department of the Environment for 1990 and was being re-submitted for inclusion in the 1991 schemes.

(Killeen Community Council have welcomed the moves being made to provide public toilets at the Silver Strand which is rated one of Europe’s top beaches).

– Mayo News 3.10.90

Frank O’Malley claims he was one of the last of the 1960’s wave of emigrants

Today I walked down to the sea and was sad as I usually am when passing Keane’s house, empty and silent for so many years in a beautiful location. A poem comes to mind which we had in third class, the last line of which was: “A house that has echoed a baby’s laugh and held up its stumbling feet is the saddest sight when it’s left alone that ever the eye could meet”. I think Patrick Rory was the last baby to toddle across the floor all of 75-80 years ago. I continue on down to the butt and sit on a white rock and notice the river has changed its course and left all the sand on the Carramore side. My grandfather, John Bill, and I dug a lot of sand-eels on our side in my earlier years. I think of all the men who used to haul wrack out of that shore in spring in the days when there was no money for artificial fertilizer. We used to cut the black wrack for the spuds and put our red wrack on the meadows. I think of two great men, Pat Cannon of Shraugh and Michael Ball of Ballyhip, putting out stones for the crusher when there were hardly any tarred road around. They had two mighty horses and cleared a big wide area in our black shore nearly like a road, which made it easier for me hauling in black wrack at a later time. Apart from the river changing course erosion hasn’t been too bad. Cloch Mhaol is much the same.

The river is low today because the weather has been fine. Darrigle sticks out way over beyond Carramore hill. The highest gravel bank in Ireland, my mother used to say. She was a McHale and grew up inside Darrigle looking straight out at Clare Island with Mulranny on the right and Innishturk away to the left. I think of my comrades who are dead and gone. Matt Scanlon and Mike Salmon, all three of us in love with the same girl at the same time! She was the best dancer in the hall and smart too. She didn’t marry any of us, though Mike was favourite! Sonny Geoghegan drowned in the Thames on a beautiful Easter Sunday morning, his brother Seán killed off his motor-bike in the midlands in his early twenties; James Foy, Tooreen who was very intelligent, and my namesake Johnny Durkan of Askelane all gone at an early age.

Over the banks in Carramore I can see the cottages. Hyland’s and Pat Burke’s and the ball-alley still standing after all the wild winter storms of sixty five years, without a coat of plaster or reinforcing steel rod. I think of all the sweat and occasional blood spilt on that floor even though it was never a good floor, and the great games and players that played there! Rick Philbin, Seamus Hyland and the champ himself Paddy Philbin who could beat anyone, as long as he was allowed to use his feet to but the ball on the wall, (something not allowed anymore). I suddenly realize I have a one year old grandson who is a Séamus Hyland. He should be a rugged youngster; his father is a logger or lumberjack and I hope I live long enough to see him play a game or two in that old ball-alley.

I think of Martin and Michael Friel. My mother used to comment that the sight of them pulling out of Carramore in a *currach* with the two pipes going full blast was a picture of pure contentment. I have forgotten the mark for the “Maids” but I’m sure Johnny Needham will remind me. That was always a great mark for a cold fish or “pollock”. Was it the tower of Innishturk off Darrigle and the gap of Carramore on the church? It’s been a long time, too long for me! I get up and move along around

who went to England with a good Leaving Cert. and the ambition to continue his education. There was a period before the present time when many young emigrants went off with nothing but hope in their hearts. Frank worked by day and studied at night. He was in Coventry near his brother Tony, an engineering graduate from U.C.G., who then worked for Coventry Corporation. His other brother Myles, also a U.C.G. graduate, was beavering away in accountancy. The three brothers worked very closely together and it was from this close liaison that O'Malley Construction was founded.

– Galway Advertiser 18-10-90

The team of Trinity College students who arrived in Louisburgh last week to compile a town plan for the village, departed this morning (Tuesday). Louisburgh Development Company have expressed great satisfaction with the work of the students, and the results of their findings will be known shortly.

– Western People 21-11-90

The quarterly meeting of Mayo ICA Federation will be held at Browne Memorial Hall, Foxford on Monday, October 1 at 8 p.m. The National Treasurer, Mary O'Reilly, has been invited so it is hoped that as many members as possible will travel. It is planned to organise transport.

A meeting will be held in Louisburgh Parochial Hall on next Monday night, September 24, at 9 p.m. to organise the

resumption of Badminton Club activities in the hall. All members are urged to attend and new members will be very welcome (beginners will be given every possible assistance and coaching to learn the easily-acquired skills of a very enjoyable indoor sport).

Louisburgh Development Company is seeking applications for the appointment of a Development Worker to co-ordinate and further develop the services of Louisburgh Resource Centre and work with specific groups (the elderly, women, etc.). A background in community development and administration is desirable. Applicants, with C.V., should reach the Secretary of the Company, Resource Centre, Chapel Street, Louisburgh by this Friday, September 21.

A large, dead grey seal was washed up on the shore at Carrowniskey Strand, Louisburgh, last week. Injuries to the seal's head seemed to indicate that it had been shot and did not die from natural causes.

A special Cookery and Craft day is planned for Saturday, October 20 in Town Hall, Ballina. The event is sponsored by Calor Kosangas and the First National Building Society. There will be 18 classes in the open cookery section, with 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes for each. There will also be a section for under-17s and one for people with special needs.

Guild meeting: Thursday, October 4, at 8.30 p.m.

Cloch Mhaol and over the beach at Lochaun, I can see Tony Durkan's house has been rebuilt, now owned by a man from Frankfurt; and my friend Thomas Nicholson farms the land. I can see it's been drained and manured and loaded with grass and I think of poor Tony who could hardly grow enough grass on the place to feed that big horse "Ted", and the three useless asses between rushes and water. It's always good to see progress and for Thomas it happened at a great time. Rearing a houseful of youngsters was never easy and every little bit helps. At the end of the beach I come to the Lambeth Walk – built in the early 30's to accommodate the nuns going to their bathing-place and the local fishermen to their currachs. Considering the whole walk was built for less than one hundred pounds it has held up fairly good in parts, at least it is still easy enough to make it to Logathamba and the Kitchen rocks, which brings to mind James Gibbons, ("Jamet" as we used to call him) and the two Nicholson's, Patrick and Geoffrey, from the other side of our village who fought in North Africa against Rommel and were with the British eighth army in Italy against Kesserling where they left many dead comrades, They had a younger brother, Robert, who taught in Ghana in Africa.

All of us used to sit around the kitchen rocks on fine Sundays where "Jamet" used to test our intelligence with all kinds of mathematical problems. His daughters, Sara and Mary Kate and Maggie, are all gone now but its nice to see the old homestead is still in the family, the old house on the bog road. Nora Dunne tells me my father was the ganger of the Lambeth Walk but I'm almost sure it was Austie "Soldier" O'Malley from the town. To find out I'll have to get back again to Pakie Maille! Thomas Nicholson tells me Pakie and Father Tom were down at the old house today, but I searched the town and can't locate them. Probably gone back to Ballina. I am deeply disappointed, someone must have mentioned I was at home! Each time I come there are less links with the old past . . . O'Malley's house is empty for a long time. George would be the last baby to toddle across that floor. I has been owned by Michael Morrison of the town for forty years. I don't want to get lonesome again. Bunowen is a very live village with lots of new houses, or should I say mansions, and lots of children on the road going to school. There are no more O'Malley's or Keane's or Durkan's on our side and occasionally I feel a little guilty about that but you have to do the best you can with what you have, where you are; and I do have the privilege of coming home occasionally and sitting at the Butt for an hour and if there's no one around I'm not ashamed to admit I do have a good cry and it makes me feel better, and when I finish my walk all the way around under the banks over beyond Derrylahan I really feel I am home. Climb up to the top of the hill and it's all there spread out before me. It was always a lovely village and I know it's a better place to live now than in my time. I may sit on a rock at the Butt of the river and cry for my lost youth but it's the way of the world. The generations will come, live out their span, be it long or short and pass on. But like Anthony McHale said: "It's the way you live it that's important. Do the best you can with what you have, where you are, and if you can't help a man don't ever do anything to hurt him, life is all too short".

Worcester

Johnny Durkan



Alma Mulvey and Michelle Ní Ghradaigh dancing a Col Beirte during Séachtain na Gaeilge 1990.



Claire Kitterick, Shranacloya, 2nd year student with her technology project at Sancta Maria College.



A group taken on the night before the Famine Walk 1990 when the Combat-Poverty Committee entertained the visiting walkers. Included are Father Niall O'Brien and his mother Don Mullin (AFrI), and Hollis Roberts and Erlene Noah both from Oklahoma.

A Letter from "America"

The following letter will interest many of our readers on either side of the Atlantic.

Dear Editor: I first visited Kilgeever Parish in August 1961, after ordination in Louvain, Belgium. My father, Austin, came from Doughmackeown, and his brothers were: Anthony of Doughmackeown (Tony Shop), Thomas (died in 1949), James (died 1963), Mary (died in Ugool 1962), Austin (died in 1967), and Michael (died 1984). All of that is for you to place us . . .

Mary Duffy, my first cousin, introduced us all to *An Choinneal*, which had so recently begun its distinguished publishing career. Over the many years and the many visits I have read copies here and there; and one of the excellent stories, seized upon I believe by Afri, appeared in 1967. As an offering for the Saint Patrick's Day issue of *America*, I retold this story. It offers nothing new to you, but I wanted you and your associates to know that the story, with the citation of the magazine, will be read by our 35,000 subscribers. My family and I have great nature for the parish, and fall on *An Choinneal* with delight. I enclose a cheque for \$25.00 in appreciation of the work that you do, and especially for the *Letter to America*.

Sincerely,

Tom O'Malley S.J. (Associate Editor)

We have already expressed our good wishes to Father Tom and our satisfaction that our story (originally written by John O'Dowd) got further circulation. A few paragraphs of Father Tom's article in America will give our readers a taste of what America's readers were to enjoy.

"Here we are in the parish of Kilgeever, with its tiny ruinous "abbey", its holy well and ancient burial ground and its newer cemetery . . . In the town there is Saint Patrick's, built in 1856-62. Further to the south there is the roofless ruin of Gowllawn and the newer chapel of Killeen. My father was born here. His father was born here about 1850. And so he and his parents survived the famine years of the end of the 1840's and the more recent famine in 1880 . . .

A wonderful magazine, *An Choinneal* (The Candle) tells of the traditions of the parish of Kilgeever. I remember reading, in the 1967 Christmas issue, the story of a desperate march of starving Irish through the pass by the dark lake . . . The Irish are wont to recount the terrible things done to them. But an inspired celebration of this march in 1988 takes another cue. In a sponsored walk entitled *A Road to Remember*, "Action from Ireland" organized a group of volunteers to walk from Louisburgh to Delphi . . .

It is not to tell the sad stories of the past that "Action from Ireland" organizes this walk . . . They hope now to re-enact this march . . . to give thanks for the beauty of the earth, to remember the evil of which we are capable, and to turn our hearts to those millions of the earth who die amid its beauty every day . . . Perhaps "Action from Ireland's" Famine Project will call the Irish at home and the emigrant descendants to their inherited destiny. They were the first colonial people to find their freedom. They, a people of oppression and famine in a land of beauty and plenty, will call us to think of our brothers and sisters, and to have the care and imagination to find lasting ways to help them: lest we do to others the wrong that was done "our own": for they are all of them our own.

Editor's Page

So that is *An Choinneal* Number seventeen: "All the way from Louisburgh"! It goes without saying that I hope you enjoy this issue and that, whether you are a native of the parish at home or away, or a descendant of Kilgeever by blood or by friendship, you will find here something of entertainment, of happy memory and of real value. I am happy to report that, as set out below, our financial situation is such that for the past few issues (since my meetings with our emigrants in Boston, Chicago and San Francisco in 1986) we are able to have, after the sale of each number, sufficient funds to produce the following one. It is not, of course, the ultimate in security; but it is a tremendous improvement on our position of 1982 when we almost went out of existence. An appeal was made at that time. It stirred Louisburgh people all over the world and Louisburgh at home and abroad rallied to set us on this more firm footing.

The most recent development is the decision taken by our Louisburgh people in the Philadelphia area. As recorded in this issue (page 37) the *Coinneal* committee in the Delaware Valley aim at setting up a trust. They encourage other committees to join in this project so that eventually a basic investment could be made, the interest from which would fund the production of a *Coinneal* every two years. Such a project would solve our financial problems and leave us free to concentrate on the actual material for such a magazine as we want to have.

A propos of that, I would like again to encourage our readers to consider making written contributions for publication. I am acutely aware that we have old people from Louisburgh still alive at home or away who have lived in a most interesting time and have experiences and stories which are the very basic material that make the *Coinneal* uniquely ours. My appeal is that someone who knows such a person should visit and encourage them, perhaps by offering to write down or tape-record their contributions. The tragedy is that so much of our lore, language and culture has disappeared, never to be retrieved. Fortunately, as I write, I know of one or two efforts being made to visit and encourage older Louisburgh natives to tell their tale. Even since our last number two of those who wrote – Pat Joe McHale and Patrick McKetterick – have been called away. It must be a real consolation for their dear friends, as it is for us, that they both have written for publication material which might not be available to us if they had not made the effort.

With this issue I send my personal greetings for Christmas to the many people who have helped in its production; especially this year to my friends in the Delaware Valley who gave me such a welcome because of what the *Coinneal* means to them. To them and to all: may the warmth of a Louisburgh Christmas permeate your home. May the love that we share bring meaning and peace to your life. *Go mbeire muid beo an t-am seo arís!*

Leon Ó Mórcháin

Synopsis of Account (Provided by McCann & Company, Auditors)

November 1988	Balance at bank	£2785.80
Nov. 88 to Oct. 1990	Lodgements from sales and donations	£6,593.36
Deposit interest		£ 259.45
	Total	£9,638.61
Printing Costs	(Christmas 1988)	£4,000.00
Miscellaneous expenses		£ 61.00
	Total cost	£4061.00
Balance at Bank on 31 October 1990		£5577.61