

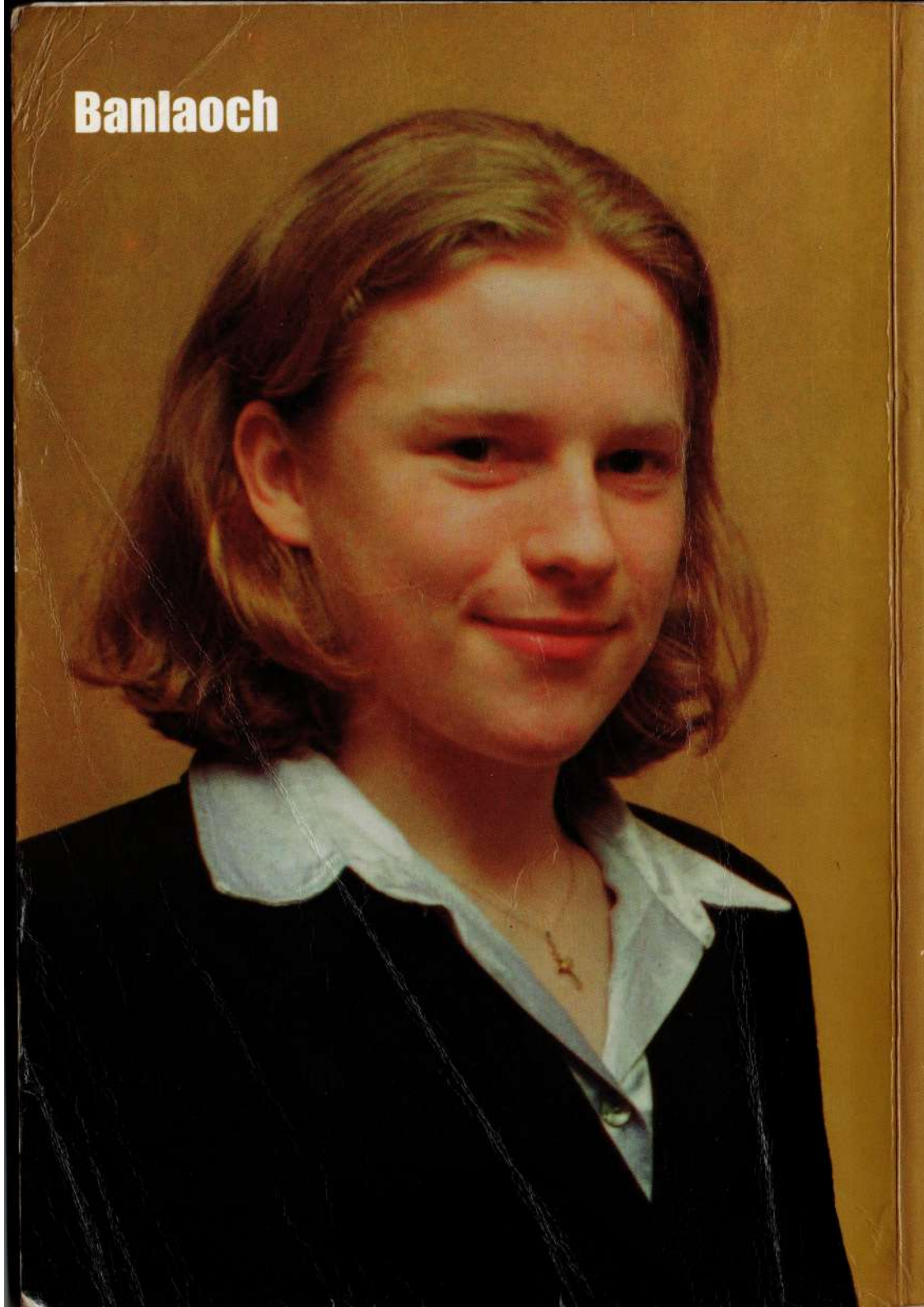
# An Cúinneal



No. 21

Louisburgh 1999

**Banlaoch**





## DEDICATION

We warmly dedicate this Number Twenty One of *An Choinneal* to the people of Kilgeever Parish – especially to all who have died over the past forty years and to the Louisburgh people all over the world who have shown loyalty and generosity to their native sod.

*An Choinneal* salutes the political career of Martin J. O'Toole and wishes him all that is good in his retirement.

We warmly welcome the election of Peter Sweeney to Mayo County Council and wish him the best as we enter a new millennium.

The parish is proud of Claire Egan, daughter of Jim and Mary, Derrygarve, on her winning the All-Ireland with her county (see photo, back cover).

And finally we thank God for the gift of a new priest, Richard Gibbons, son of John and Mary, Furmoyle, who was ordained at St Patrick's Church, July 4th, 1999. (see photo, front cover, and article inside.)

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our thanks to: Ger Delaney, South Mayo Family Research Centre for his kind permission to reprint Edward Gill's "*Emigration from Louisburgh, Co Mayo, to Clinton, Mass., U.S.A., 1905 to 1911.*"

Fr Kieran Waldron for his permission to use an extract from his *History of Sancta Maria College*, and for photos of Convent etc.

And a suggestion: The following is part of a letter from Mary Prendergast, Raheny (and Accony): "I mentioned to you in the past about the Infants' graveyards in the Kilgeever Parish . . . As we may be the last generation that will be aware of the location of these graveyards, perhaps it is time that a suitable memorial be erected as a reminder to ourselves and future generations that very many families have children buried there . . ."

A wonderful and Christian suggestion, Mary, for the new Millennium.

*An Choinneal* is a periodical of Kilgeever parish (Louisburgh, County Mayo). The oldest parish magazine in Ireland, it has appeared in alternate years since 1959.

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*The Editor wishes to thank all the people whose voluntary efforts have helped to produce this 21st issue, and the many shopkeepers in town who exhibit and sell the magazine without any commission.*

*Because of continuing postal uncertainties we request all our foundation members to acknowledge receipt of this number, even formally. Members' copies are posted on the day after publication. American copies are posted direct from Delran, New Jersey by our agent Mrs. Mary (Dunne) Richter, who with her husband Bob has set up a new and even more efficient distribution system this year.*

*Please notify us if any change of address.*



## Overseas Committees

American General Agent and Distributor  
 Bob and Mary (Dunne) Richter, 299 Tenby Chase, Delran, New Jersey 08075  
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### LONDON

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### BIRMINGHAM

John McNally, 209 St. Saviour's Road, Sattley, Birmingham, B81 HW

### LIVERPOOL

Patrick Coyne, 21 Hemon's Street, Bootle, Liverpool, Lancs., England.

### DONCASTER

Father Gerard Harney  
 Saint Peter-in-Chains, Chequer Road, Doncaster, England, DN 12AA

### COVENTRY

Mrs. Nellie Prendergast, 76 Norman Place Road, Coundon, Coventry, England.

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# An Còinneal



**Front Cover:**

*Rev. Fr. Richard Gibbons*

*Ordained Priest on Sunday, July 4th, 1999.*

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**NUMBER TWENTY-ONE.**

**CHRISTMAS 1999**

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*All the way from Louisburgh*



## Our Contributors . . .

*P. J. Gibbons* is a journalist and native of Furrmoyle.

*Edward Gill* is a native of Ballyhip and an engineer by profession

*Anne Halstead* lives in Vermont and is of Aillemore extraction.

*Fr. Kieran Waldron* is PP of Killereeran, Co. Galway. Taught at Sancta Maria College.

*Rev Desmond Quinn* works in Manila and his article re Fr John Heneghan, Martyr, appeared in *The Mayo News*.

*Una O'Malley* lives in Kinnadoohy and is a member of the committee of *An Choinneal*.

*Therese Philbin* is daughter of John and Mary Philbin, Carramore; she is aged 11 and is a pupil of Scoil Phádraig Naofa.

*Tracy O'Toole* of Kinnock and Sancta Maria College where she is now a student in 5th Year.

*Frank Burke* from Kildare; his poetry shows a deep love of his native place.

*Teresita Durkan* is a native of Bunowen and works in Valparaiso, Chile.

*Tom O'Malley* remembers the golden days of Louisburgh G.A.A.

*Richard Lyons* was born in Furrmoyle in 1922 and is domiciled in Minnesota, USA.

*Nicola Lyons* is from Bunowen and teaches at the English College, Tokyo.

*Richard Marsh*: his article, "The Sign Of Peace", is from "*The Messenger*", Nov., 1997.

*Mary Whalley* introduced herself in 1997 as Geoffrey Pat Lannons sister. Born in Accony, she lives in Surrey.

*Nicola Mulchrone* is daughter of Oliver and Evelyn (nee McNally) and is granddaughter of Mrs Nora McNally, Feenone.

*Séamus McNally* is a son of Roonith Hill and lives at Deerpark, Westport.

*Seán O'Malley* is Deputy Head at Rice College, Westport.

*Walter Davitt* of Curra penned a tribute to Joe Murphy, R.I.P.

*Norah (Burke) Boylan* lives in North Yorkshire.

*Deborah Maxwell* is aged 11 and a student of Scoil Náisiúnta Phádraig. She is daughter of Eileen and Joe Maxwell, Ballyhip.

*Martin Harrity*, Worcester, Mass., USA.

*Peter Sweeney*, MCC lives on Church St., and is the youngest of Mayo's County Councillors. Peter is also a fully qualified Undertaker.

## Where are we going?

Editorial

**T**hat question has been posed by a thought-provoking study (*Quo Vadimus?*) carried out by Father Michael McGreal S.J. for the Archdiocese of Tuam over the past year. The study has been the subject of continuing analysis by the parish priest, Father Tommie Mannion, and his pastoral group. Their analysis centred especially on conditions obtaining in our parish in 1999. It paints a dreary picture and one which is being repeated now in many of the parishes of the archdiocese (which is spread over a big area of Mayo and Galway.) It is, however, a predictable picture in view of the accepted decline which is rampant now throughout the West of Ireland. While one half of the country – the eastern half – is rolling in the affluence of what is being called the "Celtic Tiger", (some have called it the "selfish tiger"!) few practical signs are evident that our community is being really improved. In many cases it is quite the contrary. Some nine years ago the Western Irish Bishops spearheaded a movement begun by farmers who were aware of the impending threat to our rural society. That made an impact, but only in a necessarily limited way. The voice of the local newspapers, let alone the public, were drowned out by the acclaim for Ireland's performance as a thriving economy. In 1991, an ongoing feature in the *Western People* began a public protest under the motto "How long must the West Wait?". It highlighted a count-down on how long the West will be left uncared for. By last June the count had gone to seven years and forty-six weeks! The west still waits!

Speaking bluntly, what in effect has happened and is happening to the parish is that the population is dwindling alarmingly. People are being squeezed out. To put this into a broader context we might compare the population of this parish of Kilgeever and the town of Louisburgh at the beginning and at the end of the present century. In the census of 1901, the population of the parish was approx. 5,000. In Autumn 1995, it was a mere 1,585! Perhaps more indicative still, in 1901 Louisburgh was a busy little centre with 393 people living in its four streets. At the end of the century it has no more than 98 residents; with only 45 full-time households! And to fill in that picture, there are now only 216 children in what have become



only two schools. Time and "progress" has ordained that over the years the traditional school centres of Tallabawn, Killadoon, Carrowniskey, Cregganbawn, Tully and one of the two schools in Louisburgh town have disappeared. Of course educational and economic factors can rightly explain some of these changes. But in spite of our so-called advances, there is the frightening landscape of the future: the Baptism record lists the number of children under the age of four years as 59 (38 in Louisburgh area and 21 in Killeen). In less than five years our national schools in the parish will have gained 59 pupils but will lose a massive 114! And all the while we have in the parish only 463 family homes. We have ninety-four people living alone. And – a disturbing imbalance – at least 150 holiday homes. Older readers of *An Choinneal* may recall a forecast made by An tAthair Pádraic Ó Máille in the issue of 1965. (It was reprinted by the *Mayo News* during this last year.) He cited, as a scenario for the future, a prediction which he had heard of "One civic guard, one priest, one school" for the parish in ten years' time (i.e. 1975). Even now, thirty-five years later, the parish has not wasted away to that extent. But the bitter, undeniable reality is that, despite all our advances – in education, in living standards, in all kinds of laudable improvements, in the accepted comforts of modern life – the parish is in real danger now of disappearing as a community. So where indeed are we going? That question in its wider form was put in a thoughtful seminar in County Clare last year. It asked: "Are we forgetting something?" Any reader of *An Choinneal*, or anyone who has the future of Louisburgh – or indeed any like rural community – at heart should spend time and thought on that question. Fundamentally, it is an issue of *people*. People are at the heart of the question and must be at the heart of any answer we might seek to give. There are faint signs that the west, even at this late stage, is going to get a better deal in a growing economy. But do we want an *economy* or a *society*?

It is not fanciful to think that with new-found riches we are likely to become more selfish. That is the way of human nature. That is the sad history of so many peoples who attained wealth to find later that they lost the real riches. In the light of this year's survey and its analysis, is there a selfishness that dictates that we leave our own environment despite having good employment, to join without ample reason the shallow-minded rat-race to an urban centre in Ireland or abroad? Is there a selfishness abroad so that, for instance, some young farmers who if they had sufficient acreage might still be tempted to put down roots in the parish, but cannot? Instead, they see gross under-use of reasonably arable land. Is there selfishness in the fact that family land is being put on the market (true, it is at an unbelievably

crazy price of approximately £50,000 per acre) while returning emigrants cannot compete? And still, to wind the vicious circle more tightly still, these prices are often paid for a proliferation of holiday homes which, however well they might be planned and built, are of minimum benefit to the community either socially or economically. True the local G.A.A. club has continued to foster a spirit of *pietas* and commitment. But in general matters of the spirit there is reason to ask questions and to raise challenges. The local branch of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association is at a very low level. That has its own knock-on effects to which people are happy to close their collective eyes. And the recent ordination of a native of the parish alerts us the fact that there is at present no student for the priesthood in a parish which was widely acclaimed as being the leader in the whole country.

So with all our success in the economy, are we forgetting something? Has the spirit which was so much a part of our existence been diluted by our very success? Are we forgetting things like the spirit which was once known as the *meitheal*, of community help which made real community a living action? In our rushing out to our new-found jobs, are we forgetting the simple yet basic need to know – simply to know – our many new neighbours and to make a point of speaking to them? Related to this there is a growing need for more people in the parish like those who always took on the voluntary work for some needed cause – even the simple but demanding chore of collecting. Are we too busy? Are there many people in our parish today (whether old or young) who are lonely, simply because more people don't care or haven't the time? And what about the old loyalties – loyalty to family, extended family, church loyalty, or parish loyalty even as this is manifested in our games? Are we opting out? Are we forgetting something in the way we rush to the nearest town or city for anonymous shopping rather than continue to foster the old loyalties even at the cost of the few extra pennies? And are there new pressures in our economy, such as overtime or shift-work, which leave less time for parents to be with their children, let alone having the enriching influence and company of the grandparents. The idea of taking stock at the end of the century and of the millennium is likely to be overdone as 1999 moves into history. What are we planning for the Louisburgh of the new millennium? *An Choinneal* suggests to its readers that when they consider how much we have changed directions in recent years, do we realise where exactly we are going? And are we forgetting something?

León Ó Mórcháin



## Forty Years On

With this issue *An Choinneal* is forty years old. The changes that it has seen over the forty years are – to use a modern word from the Irish political scene – seismic. To finger through the pages of past issues is to sample the magnitude of those changes. In many ways the magazine has been able to record that changing scene and has been able to make its comment and its assessment. A glance at the first, and then the present (twenty-first), issues will underline that change in the magazine's form and content. We hope that there has also been a continuity; that through the *Coinneal* the parish was given a voice. It is good to remember those who were on the original Editorial Board, many of whom have since passed away. They were: Father John Burke the parish priest at the time, Father Joseph Moran, Dr Columb McHugh, Sean T. Morahan and the present editor who has until now continued in that office. He recalls the origin of the idea and how it developed: "Canon McGarry of Maynooth College and later Ballyhaunis had in 1950 founded the now well-known pastoral magazine, *The Furrow*, which is now in its fiftieth year. In that way the concept of a magazine was in the air. Some time about February in my final year at Maynooth (1952), I went to speak to Canon McGarry about an idea I had for my home parish – namely the founding of a parish magazine. I recall that he was full of encouragement. It was long after that that I ventured to propose my idea in public in Louisburgh. Eventually, a real window of opportunity presented itself when the Guild of Muintir na Tíre was founded in the parish. The Guild was very active and successful, but naturally enough there was hesitancy in venturing into such a new literary field. For one thing the cost at that time was daunting. It might cost in excess of a hundred pounds! Eventually, a decision was made. I recall the Guild members who were strong in support — Dr McHugh, Seamus Durkan, Dick Lyons and Tom Harney (who with typical magnanimity declared that we should support the idea even with personal money if it did not turn out to be a financial success!). It eventually cost £100 pounds for a thousand copies and was printed by the *Mayo News*. The proposed cover price, half-a-crown (i.e. twelve-and-a-half-pence) was raised to three shillings! A later run which had been held in print was made available with a more substantial bluish

cover than the original yellow and black (the Louisburgh club colours of the time). The magazine had a delayed publication for many reasons. One of the editorial board, my father, had died long before it appeared in print."

The first number arrived in Louisburgh on Saturday, 20 December, 1959 – just in time for Christmas reading, but some seven years after it had been at first proposed. In fact, in the meantime another parish magazine had stolen our thunder; but since it did not continue, we claim to be "the oldest parish magazine in Ireland". The second issue of *An Choinneal* was the really testing one. For various reasons the initial enthuze was not there, so the decision was made to produce it privately. There was an increased delicacy now, but I recall with satisfaction the express support of three people at the time – Dr Mc Hugh, Seamus Durkan and Dick Lyons – if a decision was to be made to produce a second issue. The production of that second number was fateful. The *Coinneal* had survived! Further developments followed. Foundation membership was opened in 1963 (for five pounds life membership!) That same year two long-term officers – Clementine Lyons as secretary and Seamus Durkan as treasurer joined. Later Mary (Dunne) Richter became American distribution agent.

So much for history. Twenty-one issues and forty years have intervened. How now? As we pass from out the umbra of the receding century and millennium there must surely be a new and challenging dawn. Any serious review of the past must ask questions. Has the character of the *Coinneal* shown enough change, or has it been too static? Is there a difference between being conserving and being conservative? If we take it as accepted that the magazine should continue into the future, is the present menu and mix of articles in need of overhaul? What is the right balance to be observed between current affairs and history in a parish magazine? And in view of all the change we are experiencing, what should be the emerging role for the *Coinneal*? Should it "go with the flow" or should it try to go on conserving? These are critical questions for the future, even for the immediate future. But the fervent hope of many Louisburgh people will be that the candle will continue to burn into the dawn of a new millennium and beyond, and will bring our own distinctive light "all the way from Loulsburgh."

León Ó Mórcháin



## Millennium Ordination

When the day finally arrived the atmosphere in the Gibbons house at Furmoyle was positively electric. It was a day we had all been looking forward to for some time and no one was more anxious than Richard himself. He must have had a thousand things racing through his mind but Richard's cool demeanor would give nothing away. Not alone was it the culmination of years of study for Richard, it was also the realisation of the hopes and dreams of his parents and family. Those of us who still had fresh paint under our fingernails scrambled to find an available wash basin while Richard made his final preparations before leaving for the church.

It was Sunday, July 4th 1999, somewhat ironically the Ordination of Richard John Gibbons to the priesthood coincided with American



*Archbishop Michael Neary, Fr. Richard and former Archbishop of Tuam, Dr. Joseph Cassidy.*

Independence day! It was also the first ordination to take place at St. Patrick's church, Louisburgh in over 22 years, and the last this Millennium. The last ordination at this church was that of Fr. Oliver McNamara from Chapel Street in June 1977. Since then, however, life in Catholic Ireland has undergone sweeping changes. For a parish which could once boast the highest number of living priests than any other in Ireland, vocations in the parish of Kilgeever became a rare occurrence. Richard's ordination was therefore a reason to rejoice not only for his family but also for the people of the parish.

For his family, it all started on the day Richard graduated from University College Galway. Richard, though, had already put considerable thought into the prospect of a religious life. The eldest of a family of six, Richard is the son of John and Mary Gibbons of Furmoyle. Being the first to graduate, Richard had always set high standards for his siblings who include Loretta, Myself, Aine, Marie Therese and John Edward. Richard was graduating with an Honours L.L.B. Degree. We had a lot to live up to. On the day of his graduation Richard had travelled separately with our parents to Galway. They had planned to make a pitstop at the Tuam residence of Archbishop Joseph Cassidy. Following his conversation with the Archbishop, Richard had decided that he would embark on a year of study at the Irish College in Rome the following September. That summer he spent working for a Dublin law firm and by September he was anxious to begin his studies in the Irish seminary. Coping with a new language, not to mention a completely different line of study, proved no obstacle to Richard. He felt comfortable and content in the knowledge that he had made the right decision. While I was traipsing across the U.S. following the next big story I often wondered and worried about how he was coping. We exchanged letters all the time and each one I received confirmed more and more how happy he truly was. We all felt proud telling our friends about him. Richard had always seemed like the perfect candidate for the priesthood. As one year rolled into another it was soon time for Richard's Deaconate in Rome. Our parents flew out a couple of days beforehand full of joy and pride. Dad had also remembered to pack the violin. Richard brought them on trips to all the major sights of this ancient city as he had done with many other Irish visitors on numerous occasions. He was now not only a deacon but also a seasoned tourguide! The highlight of their visit however had to be their meeting with Pope John Paul.

Just one year later and Richard was preparing for the biggest day of his life. All the years of study were coming to a close as he was about to be





*Back (l. to r.): John Edward, Marie-Therese, John, Fr. Richard, Loretta, P. J.  
Front (l. to r.): Áine, Archbishop Neary, Mrs Mary Gibbons.*

ordained at his home church in Louisburgh. The excitement in town was palpable. A huge "Comhghairdeachas" banner swayed in the summer sunshine just outside the church. Bunting zig-zagged from rooftop to rooftop. Just a mile outside town renovation work was just being completed on the family home. Dad had decided to take on an ominous task. Those of us available to help out were enlisted. When the job was complete, with only moments to spare, we were all really proud of a job well done.

The ordination was to take place at 2.00 p.m. and the church looked exceptional. Papal flags hung all around and the floral display was just breathtaking. The pews were filled with friends and relatives some of whom had travelled thousands of miles to be here for this very special occasion. There were several familiar faces among the many priests including Canon Tadhg O'Móráin, Fr. Brendan Kilcoyne, Fr. Pádraig O'Maille, Fr. Kieran Waldron, Former Archbishop of Tuam Dr. Joseph Cassidy, Fr. Vincent Kelly (cousin of the family), Fr. Gerard Moran and of course Archbishop Michael Neary who presided over the ordination ceremony. A group of Richard's

colleagues from the Irish College were also in attendance. The choir was simply outstanding. Led by Sandra Mayberry they really did themselves proud. The whole ceremony seemed to go by so quickly. Cameras flashed around the altar for the next half-hour or so as Fr. Richard stood proudly in front of us. Two faces in particular stood out from the crowd though, gleaming with a special pride and joy of their own, mam and dad had been looking forward to this day more than anyone. I, however, was a little bemused by the fact that I would now be referring to my older brother as 'Father'!

Following the photographs we all travelled the short distance up the street to a reception at the Derrylahan. The look on dad's face as he spoke so eloquently of his eldest son proved the magnificence of this occasion. When the celebrations ended in the small hours of Monday morning I don't think anyone wanted to go home. Fr. Richard's first mass would take place on that Monday evening and this was a day for the parish of Kilgeever as well as the half-parish of Killeen to really celebrate. Fr. Richard was busy putting the final touches to his homily. Daunting I'm sure.

The church was packed to overflowing on what was another glorious summer's day. In his homily Richard had focused on the need for prayers. Prayers for priests and the work they had to do and prayers for vocations. He had the whole congregation hanging on his every word. He had no trouble connecting with the people of the parish and half-parish who had gathered in force. Following mass he gave his blessing to those in attendance and more snapshots were taken. The pastoral committee, chaired by John Lyons, were waiting to greet him at the Parochial Hall. The short walk from the church yard to the hall was most memorable as a bright trail of burning coals led the way. The street was crowded. A "Congratulations Fr. Richard" sign hung both outside and inside the hall as a big cheer went up. After a presentation was made to Richard by John Lyons, on behalf of the parish, Richard acknowledged the tremendous support he had received from everyone present. That support and recognition is indeed what's going to help him get through the tough times which lie ahead. As he stands before us a son, brother and priest Richard is well armed and well qualified for his new role. Following his ordination Richard spent the month of August in Tampa, Florida where he was filling in for another Irish priest. He is now back in Rome where he will complete one more year of study.

Good luck Fr. Richard. We're all with you.

*P. J. Gibbons, Dublin*



# Emigration from Louisburgh Co. Mayo to Clinton, Massachusetts, U.S.A. 1905 to 1911

By Edward Martin Gill

Courtesy: Mayo Family Research Journal, Ballinrobe.

Clinton, in the State of Massachusetts, and approximately forty miles west of Boston, was the favourite "emigration town" for many hundreds of young men and women from the Louisburgh area, particularly during the last decades of the nineteenth century and the early decades of the twentieth century.

The lack of industry, the uneconomical small farms, crop failures and evictions, all played their part in forcing the younger generation to emigrate. Encouraged by reports from earlier emigrants on the excellent prospects of securing a well-paid job and on the superior standards of living, led to mass emigration from most European countries during the early decades of this century, but not to the same extent as from Ireland.

Emigrants from European countries namely Norway, Sweden, Finland, Russia, Poland and The Netherlands converged on Liverpool and there embarked on trans-Atlantic Passenger Liners, bound for Boston, U.S.A. Liverpool was at that time the principal embarkation port for emigrants to America from Northern Europe, as was Naples for emigrants in Southern Europe.

These Passenger Liners, in particular the *S.S. Ivernia*, the *S.S. Saxonia* and the *S.S. Cymric* would, having left Liverpool, sail south through St. George's Channel and drop anchor off Queenstown, Co. Cork and there many hundreds of young Irish men and women would be ferried on board. Many of these would be from the Louisburgh area making Clinton their final destination. For instance the *S.S. Ivernia* sailing from Queenstown on the 26th of April 1905 had nineteen emigrants from Louisburgh on board

and thirteen of them were travelling on to Clinton; the *S.S. Saxonia*, sailing from Queenstown on the 2nd April 1907 had seventeen Louisburgh emigrants on board, and fifteen of them went on to Clinton; the *S.S. Ivernia*, sailing from Queenstown on the 21st May 1909 had forty-two emigrants from Louisburgh on board and twenty-six of them went on to Clinton.

The Ships' Passenger Lists for these ships are held in the Public Library, Copley Square, Boston, Massachusetts, and they record the ship's name, date of sailing from Queenstown, the emigrant's name, nationality, age, the name of the town where they lived, their final destination and their sponsor's name and address in America.

After 1907 the Ships Passenger Lists also record the name of the emigrant's next-of-kin, and in most cases this would be the emigrant's father or mother. Prior to 1902 the principal items of information recorded were the emigrant's name, age, and nationality.

The list below shows (a) the ship's name, (b) date of sailing from Queenstown (c) the number of emigrants from the Louisburgh area and (d) the number who were going to Clinton.

Ship Name	Date of Sailing from Queenstown	No. Emigrants from Louisburgh area	No. of these who were going to Clinton
S.S. Ivernia	26th April 1905	19	14
S.S. Cymric	1st July 1905	3	1
S.S. Ivernia	2nd April 1906	7	7
S.S. Saxonia	16th May 1906	9	6
S.S. Ivernia	27th June 1906	3	3
S.S. Ivernia	22nd Aug. 1906	3	2
S.S. Ivernia	19th Sept. 1906	2	2
S.S. Saxonia	2nd April 1907	17	15
S.S. Saxonia	21st May 1908	9	3
S.S. Ivernia	7th July 1908	1	1
S.S. Ivernia	29th July 1908	1	1
S.S. Ivernia	26th Aug. 1908	1	1
S.S. Ivernia	23rd Sept. 1908	2	1



Ship Name	Date of Sailing from Queenstown	No. Emigrants from Louisburgh area	No. of these who were going to Clinton
S.S. Saxonia	9th Sept. 1908	3	2
S.S. Saxonia	7th April 1909	25	17
S.S. Cymric	18th April 1909	7	3
S.S. Saxonia	5th May 1909	6	2
S.S. Cymric	16th May 1909	1	—
S.S. Ivernia	21st May 1909	42	26
S.S. Saxonia	2nd June 1909	5	3
S.S. Ivernia	16th June 1909	4	3
S.S. Ivernia	11th Aug. 1909	3	2
S.S. Saxonia	25th Aug. 1909	1	1
S.S. Ivernia	7th April 1910	7	6
S.S. Saxonia	11th May 1910	8	4
S.S. Ivernia	25th May 1910	4	2
S.S. Saxonia	8th June 1910	6	5
S.S. Ivernia	21st June 1911	17	11

## Emigrants

Between April 1905 and June 1911 approximately two-hundred and fifteen young men and women emigrated from the Louisburgh area via Queenstown, Co. Cork, to Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A., and of these approximately 66% went on to Clinton. Originally called Clintonville, Clinton is a small town on the banks of the Nashua river and in the 1840s had a population of approximately three-hundred but by 1900 had a population near to eleven thousand, and by 1910 a population of near thirteen thousand. So what attracted so many emigrants to this small town, and what was the reason for the extraordinary increase in population?

Clinton, due in part to its proximity to the Nashua river, had been built up into a large textile manufacturing town between 1850 and 1900. The principal mills in operation by 1900, were the Lancaster Worsted Co., the Bigelow Carpet Co., and the Clinton Wire Cloth Co. There were several smaller factories established at that time, like the Belle Vue Mills, the

Broadfelt Worsted Co., the Sterling Worsted Co., the Gibbs Loom Reed and Harness' Co., and others manufacturing furniture, footwear and machine tools.

Those who emigrated there from 1900 onwards were in the fortunate position in as much that due to earlier emigration in the late 1800s, they all had a sponsor, either a brother, sister, aunt, uncle, or cousin, who had a permanent address and a job in Clinton. The prospects of obtaining work for both men and women was also extremely good in those years. Many women were employed in the mills, some as young as sixteen years working sixty or more hours each week. A new state law, however, set a limit of fifty-four hours per week for women and children in 1911. Many women were also employed as housemaids, in the hospital and as children's nannies. The men too were employed in the factories, but mostly in construction work, because in 1896 work commenced on the largest construction contract in the eastern states of America adjacent to and for the town of Clinton. It was the construction of the Wachusett Reservoir and Dam on the Nashua river. At the peak of its construction nearly five-thousand men were employed directly or indirectly on the contract, and approximately seven hundred horses and carts. The work involved the removal of eighteen inches of top soil over an area of approximately eight square miles and the construction of a concrete dam two-hundred and twenty feet high, one thousand feet long, and eighty-five feet wide at ground level. When the reservoir and dam were completed in 1908 numerous other construction projects commenced, some were directly related to the reservoir and dam project, others to municipal improvements. New approach roads and bridges were built, factories and houses were demolished and rebuilt to suit the new layout of the town. A new railway station was built which involved 'the construction of an elevated railway track, together with new bridges and approach roads around the station. In 1909 electrical power was brought to the town. Factories were refurbished and enlarged to accommodate the new and more efficient electrical plant. Manufacturing output increased as a result and more labour was employed.

In 1909 extensive construction work also took place in the religious and education fields. A new parish (Our Lady of the Rosary) was created, resulting in a new church, rectory, school and accommodation for the Sisters of the Presentation Order, who taught at the school, being built. Clinton had now two Catholic churches and an inter-denominational Catholic



congregation of over four thousand. This was a far cry from the 1850s when twenty to thirty Irishmen stood around a makeshift altar in the open air waiting for a Priest from Worcester to come and celebrate Mass.

This was Clinton in the early 1900s, with its many flourishing worsted mills, carpet manufacturing mills, mechanical and machine shops, furniture stores and factories and many others; where work and opportunity were plentiful. However, the working hours were extremely long and the working conditions, not changed since the mid-1850s, were tough especially for the teenagers, but with the introduction of electrical power, and new factories and machinery, better working conditions and better wages, and most important of all the limiting of the working week to fifty-four hours for women and children in 1911 Clinton was, at the start of the second decade of the 1900s, a progressive, prosperous, and happy town for the earlier emigrants who had set up their homes there, and a town of great prospects for the new emigrants. Listed below are the young men and women who left the Louisburgh area between 1905 and 1911. The list also gives the names of the ships they sailed on, their age, and their final destination.

#### S.S. Iveria, 26th April, 1905

Name	Age	Sponsor	Final Destination
Anthony Kilcoyne	17	John Kilcoyne (brother)	190 Main St., Clinton, MA
John Berry	26	Michael berry (brother)	136 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
Nora Gahaghan	18	Michael Ball	16 Sterling St., Clinton, MA
Ellen Carr	25	William Rice (b. in law)	34 Grove St., Clinton, MA
Lucy Carr	22	William Rice (b. in law)	34 Grove St., Clinton, MA
Bridget Staunton	16	Margaret Staunton (sister)	219 Cedar St., Manchester, NH
Alice Durkan	19	Delia O'Malley (cousin)	130 Summer St., Clinton, MA
Thady O'Toole	30	(nephew)	148 Union St., Clinton, MA
James McDonagh	20	Nora McDonagh (sister)	58 Canal St., Manchester, NH
Thomas Wallace	20	Stephen Wallace (uncle)	Newmarket, NH
Thomas Tierney	19	Pat Kittridge (uncle)	236 Main St., Clinton, MA
John Hestor	21	Patrick Hestor (brother)	179 Pleasant St., Clinton, MA
Annie Walsh	18	Mary Walsh (sister)	268 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Mary Duffy	18	Bridget Grady (cousin)	53 Perry St., Manchester, NH
Margaret Navin	18	Nora Navin (sister)	25 James St., Clinton, MA
Annie O'Malley	16	Mary O'Malley (sister)	25 James St., Clinton, MA
Austin Kittridge	18	Catherine Kettridge (sister)	Manchester, NH
Michael O'Malley	23	Kate O'Malley (sister)	216 Main St., Clinton, MA
Michael Duffy	23	Austin Duffy (brother)	16 Park St., Clinton, MA

#### S.S. Cymric, 1st July, 1905

Name	Age	Sponsor	Final Destination
Nora Burns	20	Not recorded	Wallace St., Chicago, IL
John Joe O'Donnell	22	Mrs Lyons (sister)	60 South Ave., Chicago, IL
Bridget Gannon	17	(sister)	95 Sterling St., Clinton, MA

#### S.S. Ivernia, 2nd April, 1906

Name	Age	Sponsor	Final Destination
Catherine O'Malley	17	Mary O'Malley (sister)	284 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Jane O'Malley	17	Nora O'Malley (sister)	269 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Charles O'Toole	17	Mary O'Toole (sister)	269 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Tommy O'Malley (ret)	17	Mary O'Malley (sister)	284 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Maggie Jennings	22	Annie Gannon (aunt)	88 Green St., Clinton, MA
Edward Gill	26	Thomas Duffy (b. in law)	19 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
Bridget Fox	19	Bridget Kelly (cousin)	19 Beacon St., Clinton, MA

#### S.S. Saxonia, 16th May, 1906

Name	Age	Sponsor	Final Destination
John Ruddy	27	Michael Burns (cousin)	93 Allen St., Leominster, MA
Nora O'Malley	18	(cousin)	Leominster, MA
Austin O'Toole	32	Catherine O'Toole (sister)	24 Richmond St., Clinton, MA
Bridget Harrity	19	Martin Harrity (father)	73 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Peter Harrity	10	Martin Harrity (father)	73 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Katie Harrity	9	Martin Harrity (father)	73 Summit St., Clinton, MA
John McDonnell	29	Mary McDonnell (sister)	48 Front St., Clinton, MA
Martin Malley	24	Mary O'Malley (cousin)	31 Harrison St., Clinton, MA
Annie Burns	21	Mary Burns (sister)	513 Govern St., Lowell, MA

#### S.S. Ivernia, 27th June, 1906

Name	Age	Sponsor	Final Destination
Ellen Mitchell	18	Bridget Mitchell (sister)	198 Main St., Clinton, MA
Nora Kittridge	18	Margaret Kittridge (sister)	17 Nashua St., Clinton, MA
Ellen Hastings	19	Mary Hastings (sister)	198 Main St., Clinton, MA

#### S.S. Ivernia, 22nd August, 1906

Name	Age	Sponsor	Final Destination
Michael McNamara	40	Mrs. A. McNamara (wife)	22 Berlin St., Clinton, MA
Honora McNamara	17	(uncle)	22 Berlin St., Clinton, MA
Margaret Kerrigan	24	Mrs. B. Burke (sister)	650 Milbury St., Worc., MA



### S.S. Ivernia, 19th September, 1906

Name	Age	Sponsor	Final Destination
Bridget Flynn	58	Patrick Flynn (son)	48 Front St., Clinton, MA
James Flynn	24	(brother)	48 Front St., Clinton, MA

### S.S. Saxonia, 2nd April, 1907

Name	Age	Sponsor	Final Destination
Katie Prendergast	18	Nora Prendergast (sister)	Lawrence, MA
Bridget Kittridge	23	Margaret Kittridge (sister)	17 Nashua St., Clinton, MA
Mary Ann Mitchell	24	Nora Moran (aunt)	198 Main St., Clinton, MA
Nora Hastings	17	Bridget Hastings (sister)	27 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Mary Hastings	16	Winifred Hastings (sister)	44 Nashua St., Clinton, MA
Patrick Gaghan	19	Mary Gaghan (sister)	109 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Patrick O'Malley	2	Mary O'Malley (sister)	190 Main St., Clinton, MA
Peter Gill	22	Thomas Gill (brother)	56 Fairmount St., Clinton, MA
Tim Hastings	23	Ellen Hastings (sister)	198 Main St., Clinton, MA
Katie Walsh	16	Margaret Walsh (sister)	268 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Annie Gill	19	Thomas Gill (brother)	56 Fairmount St., Clinton, MA
Thomas Grady	23	Mary Grady (sister)	45 Worcester St., Clinton, MA
Peter Brown	22	Thomas Kilcoyne (cousin)	109 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Anthony O'Malley	18	Maggie O'Malley (sister)	71 Front St., Clinton, MA
Nellie O'Malley	17	Margaret O'Malley (sister)	73 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Delia Sheridan	20	Annie Sheridan (sister)	20 Winter St., Clinton, MA
David O'Malley (ret.)	31	(aunt)	Worcester, MA

### S.S. Saxonia, 21st May, 1908

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Patrick Ball	20	Austin Ball, Tully	Peter Ball (uncle)	8 Marshall St., Clinton, MA
John McConnell	22	Michael McConnell, Collacocon	William Gibbons (uncle)	46 Middle St., Manchester, NH
Honora O'Malley	16	Mr. O'Malley, Ballyhip	Mary O'Malley (sister)	216 South Main St., Clinton, MA
Patrick Prendergast	24	Pat Prendergast, Kilgeever	John McCarthy (b. in law)	167 Patk St., Lawrence, MA
Margaret McCarthy	27	Pat Prendergast, Kilgeever	John McCarthy (husband)	167 Patk St., Lawrence, MA
Helen McCarthy	4	Pat Prendergast, Kilgeever	John McCarthy (father)	167 Patk St., Lawrence, MA
Mary McCarthy	2	Pat Prendergast, Kilgeever	John McCarthy (father)	167 Patk St., Lawrence, MA
Charles O'Toole	20	Mrs. Catherine O'Toole, Accony	Delia O'Toole (sister)	207 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
Maggie McLoughlin	20	Paul McLoughlin, Tully	Mrs. M. Webster (sister)	9 Dunbarton Road, Manchester, NH

### S.S. Ivernia, 7th July, 1908

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Anthony Kilcoyne (ret)	21	Thomas Kilcoyne, Cregganbawn	Thomas Kilcoyne (brother)	289 Main St., Clinton, MA

### S.S. Iveria, 29th July, 1908

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Annie McCarthy	36	John McCarthy, Falduff	Patrick Armstrong (cousin)	146 Union St., Clinton, MA

### S.S. Ivernia, 26th August, 1908

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Delia O'Toole	33	John Cox, Devlin	Mrs. Pat Haynes (sister)	76 Park St., Clinton, MA



### S.S. Ivernia, 23rd September, 1908

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Edward O'Malley	NR	Mrs. A. O'Malley, Feenone	Michael O'Malley (brother)	25 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT
Thomas Durkin	22	Michael Durkin, Louisburgh	Alice Durkin (cousin)	5 Richmond St., Clinton, MA

### S.S. Saxonia, 9th September, 1908

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Patrick Mitchell (ret)	30	Mrs. A. Needhan, Culleen	Mrs. A. Mitchell (wife)	185 Mechanic St., Clinton, MA
Anthony O'Malley	17	Charles O'Malley, Clare Island	Mary O'Malley (sister)	105 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Edward Gibbons	23	Thomas Gibbons, Louisburgh	Anthony Gibbons (brother)	30 Lincoln St., Brighton, MA

### S.S. Saxonia, 7th April, 1909

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Patrick Foy	21	Mrs. Mary Foy, Louisburgh	Annie Foy (sister)	60 Pine St., Clinton, MA
Michael Connor	33	Mrs. Mary Connor, Falduiff	Martin Grady (uncle)	24 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Kate Gibbons	20	Patrick Gibbons, Roonith	Mrs. John O'Malley (cousin)	16 Loring Ave., Winchester, MA
Mary Gibbons	18	Patrick Gibbons, Roonith	Mrs. John O'Malley (cousin)	16 Loring Ave., Winchester, MA
Thomas McNamara	23	Austin O'Malley, Devlin	Mrs. P. Grady (aunt)	18 Cedar Court, Clinton, MA
Bridget O'Malley	18	Charles O'Malley, Ballyhip	Mary O'Malley (sister)	130 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Winnie Frazer	20	John Frazer, Barnabawn	Mrs. K. Kelly (sister)	79 Front St., Clinton, MA
Owen Grady	22	Owen Grady, Remadoher	John Grady (brother)	8 School St., Sumerworth, NH
John Burke	24	Thomas Burke, Devlin	Maggie Burke (cousin)	55 Beacon St., Manchester, NH
Julia O'Malley	16	Tim O'Malley, Feenone	Annie O'Malley (sister)	18 James St., Clinton, MA
Katie Navin	19	Tom Navin, Forrigal	Margaret Navin (sister)	18 James St., Clinton, MA
Mary McDonnell	21	Michael McDonnell, Carrow'ke	Michael McDonnell (brother)	6 Cedar St., Framington, MA
William Jordan	20	Patrick Jordan, Carrowniskey	Nora Brennan (aunt)	6 Cedar St., Framington, MA

Honora Mack	18	Anthony Mack, Carramore	Mrs. P. Maguire (aunt)	366 Bremem St., Boston, MA
Mary Durkin	17	Mrs. Brid Durkan, Feenone	Mary Davitt (cousin)	274 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Nora Frazer	19	John Frazer, Barnabawn	Margaret Frazer (sister)	274 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Delia Gannon	17	Austin Gannon, Kilsallagh	Mrs. Brid Needham (aunt)	108 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
Julia Needham	18	John Needham, Kilsallagh	Mary Needham (sister)	18 Gage St., Clinton, MA
Mary Ryder	16	John Ryder, Falduiff	Annie Ryder (sister)	18 Gage St., Clinton, MA
Patrick Kittridge	22	Martin Kittridge, Derreen	Kate Kittridge (sister)	2 Ledge Court, Clinton, MA
Mary Gibbons	21	Michael Gibbons, Laughta	Mrs. M. Kelliher (aunt)	27 Arkwright St., Manchester, MA

### S.S. Cymric, 18th April, 1909

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Thomas Grady	20	Patrick Grady, Crickeen	Michael Grady (brother)	659 Dexter St., Central Falls, RI
Annie O'Malley	19	William O'Malley, Feenone	Mrs. A. Rossum (sister)	4 Danworth Court, Somerville, MA
Thomas Armstrong	23	Patrick Armstrong, Criglime	Patrick Armstrong (brother)	148 Union St., Clinton, MA
Catherine Foy	18	John Foye, Kilgeever	Julia Kittridge (cousin)	25 Worcester St., Clinton, MA
Annie Grady	23	Patrick Grady, Crickeen	Michael Grady (brother)	Pawtuck, RI
Sarah O'Malley	27	William O'Malley, Feenone	Mrs. A. Rossum (sister)	4 Dundforth Crescent, Somerville, MA
Joseph Conway	24	Michael Conway, Kilsallagh	Michael Conway (brother)	146 Main Street, Clinton, MA

### S.S. Saxonia, 5th May, 1909

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Hanna Grady	21	John Grady, Kilgeever	Mrs. A. Kittridge (sister)	11 Dormont St., Hudson
Mary O'Malley	20	Patrick O'Malley, Feenone	Anne Ruane (cousin)	74 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Helena Gibbons	18	James Gibbons, Roonith	Nora Gibbons (cousin)	16 Park St., Clinton, MA
Dominic Burke	24	Walter Burke, Bundoragha	Thomas Burke (brother)	1101 West 51st St., Chicago
Margaret Grady	19	Thomas Grady, Forrigal	Kate Grady (sister)	75 Lehere St., Hudson
Nora Grady	19	Anthony Kilcoyne, Kilgeever	Owen Kilcoyne (uncle)	Rochester, NY



### S.S. Cymric, 16th May, 1909

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
John Geraghty	31	Patrick gerraughty, Duaghmakeon	Patrick Walsh (uncle)	75 Phillips St., Roxbury, MA

### S.S. Ivernia, 21st May, 1909

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Bridget O'Toole	21	Tim O'Toole, Innishturk	(cousin)	Framingham, MA
Catherine Mayberry	16	Thomas Mayberry, Ballyhup	Ellen Mayberry (sister)	99 Haskell St., Clinton, MA
Anne Grady	17	Mary Gannon, Kilsallagh	Annie Gannon (aunt)	128 Lawrence St., Clinton, MA
Ann Farragher	17	Mary Farragher, Accony	Joe Conighies (uncle)	68 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Alice McHale	19	James McHale, Accony	Mary Anne McHale (sister)	5 Richmond St., Clinton, MA
Mary Manning	18	Richard Manning, Kiladoon	Patrick Manning (brother)	148 Union St., Clinton, MA
Cath. Hastings	19	Michael Hastings, Devlin	Mrs. Smith (sister)	504 Chestnut St., Manchester, NH
Marg. McLaughlin	20	Mrs. B. McLaughlin, Shraghnacloy	Mary McLaughlin (sister)	221 Lane Ave., Clinton, MA
Katie Burke	19	Michael Burke, Askelane	Bridget Burke (sister)	16 Harbour St., Clinton, MA
Michael Sammon	22	Mrs. Ellen Sammon, Askelane	Kate Sammon (sister)	18 Hastings Court, Clinton, MA
Mary Burke	19	Martin Burke, Douaghmakeon	John Burke (brother)	79 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Thomas Burke	20	Mrs. Catherine Burke, Askelane	James Burke (brother)	79 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Kate Gannon	18	Patrick Gannon, Falduff	Ann Gannon (sister)	Clinton Hospital, Clinton, MA
Austin Burke	23	Michael Burke, Duaghmakeon	Mary Burke (sister)	42 Front St., Clinton, MA
Marg. Kilcoyne	19	Patrick Kilcoyne, Cregganbawn	Kath. Kilcoyne (sister)	73 Front St., Clinton, MA
Thomas Kilcoyne	24	Bryan Kilcoyne, Cregganbawn	Annie Kilcoyne (cousin)	3 Parket Ave., Manchester, NH
Michael O'Malley	21	Michael O'Malley, Accony	Mr. W. McNamara (uncle)	2 Cross St., Clinton, MA
Patrick Kilcoyne	21	Anthony Kilcoyne, Cregganbawn	Owen Kilcoyne (cousin)	23 Kilcom St., Rochester, NY
John McQuillen	21	Pat McQuillen, Falduff	Mary McDonnell (aunt)	Newmarket, NH
Michael McDonnell	19	Dominic McDonnell, Louisburgh	Bridget McDonnell (sister)	743 Main St., Clinton, MA
Bridget Burke	18	Michael Burke, Clare Island	Mrs. Ann Burns (aunt)	Clinton, MA

John O'Malley	19	Arthur O'Malley, Askelane	Ann Burns (cousin)	95 Allen St., Lominst.
Patrick Frazer	20	Michael Frazer, Kinnadoughey	Bridget Frazer (sister)	231 Central St., Manchester, NH
Bridget Tierney	20	Patrick Tierney, Cregganbawn	Ellen Tierney (sister)	23 Acre St., Clinton, MA
Mary A. Jennings	22	Martin Jennings, Aylemore	James Jennings (brother)	17 Duncen St., Dorchester, MA
Hannah Kittridge	18	Mrs. Cath. Kittridge, Cregganbawn	Ellen Kittridge (sister)	131 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Annie Corrigan	19	Austin Corrigan, Cregganbawn	Mary Joyce (cousin)	123 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
Peter Toole	28	Mrs. Ellen Toole, Accony	Maggie Toole (cousin)	82 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Patrick Corrigan	24	Austin Corrigan, Cregganbawn	Mary Joyce (cousin)	6 Bourne St., Clinton, MA
Michael Jennings	22	Martin Jennings, Louisburgh	James Jennings (brother)	17 Duncan St., Dorchester, MA
Austin O'Malley	24	Mrs. Cath. O'Malley, Pulglass	Michael Burns (cousin)	95 Allen St., Leominster, MA
Patrick Kilcoyne	21	John Kilcoyne, Cregganbawn	Mary Kilcoyne (sister)	123 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
John Brown	25	Peter Brown, Cregganbawn	Peter Brown (brother)	10 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
Austin Duffy	26	Patrick Duffy, Louisburgh	Michael Duffy (brother)	147 Havebourne St., Lynn, MA
Patrick Kittridge	23	Austin Kittridge, Altore	Michael Kittridge (brother)	57 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
Kate Durkin	18	Martin Durkin, Louisburgh	Mary Durkin (sister)	88 West Main St., Westboro, MA
Peter O'Malley	21	Patrick O'Malley, Clare Island	Mrs. Mary O'Toole (sister)	2 Water St, Clinton, MA
Michael Burke	20	Martin Burke, Askelane	William Burke (brother)	183 High Street, Brookline, MA
Maggie Mack	16	Bernard Mack, Cullen	Mary Mack (sister)	216 Bennington St., Lowell, MA
Redmond Burns	28	Austin Burns, Clare Island	Annie Burns (sister)	568 Lawrence St., Lowell, MA

### S.S. Ivernia, 16th June, 1909

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
John Ryan	20	John Ryan, Moneen	Maria Ryan (aunt)	106 Pont St., Clinton, MA
Patricia Durkin	20	Michael Durkin, Askelane	Annie Durkin (sister)	13 Easter St., Worcester, MA
Nora O'Donnell	21	John O'Donnell, Pulglass	Not recorded	52 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
Willie Burke	27	Mrs. Burke, Askelane	Annie Burke (sister)	72 Front St., Clinton, MA



**S.S. Saxonia, 2nd June, 1909**

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Mary Needham	25	Mrs. Mary Needham, Cullleen	Patrick Needham (uncle)	78 Grove St., Clinton, MA
Anthony Grady	24	Mrs. Annie Grady, Kilsallagh	Mrs. Peter Grealis (sister)	118 Chestnut St., Chicago, IL
Mary Fergus	23	Thomas Fergus, Mullagh	Kate Fergus (sister)	92 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
Mary Grady	21	Patrick Grady, Clare Island	Beth Grady (cousin)	5628 Morgan St., Chicago, IL
Mary Scanlon	30	Margaret Scanlon, Fermoyle	Mrs. Bridget Moran (sister)	97 Park St., Clinton, MA

**S.S. Ivernia, 11th August, 1909**

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Mary Davitt	19	Richard Davitt, Kinnadoughy	Mrs. Bridget Morrison (aunt)	95 Front St., Clinton, MA
Katie O'Dowd	22	Michael O'Dowd, Louisburgh	Lucy O'Dowd (sister)	304 Cedar St. Clinton, MA
James Reilly	30	Edward Reilly, Collacoan	Peter Moran (cousin)	107 Green St., Somerworth, NH

**S.S. Saxonia, 25th August, 1909**

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Celia O'Donnell	18	John O'Donnell, Carrowniskey	Thomas O'Donnell (brother)	289 Main St., Clinton, MA

**S.S. Ivernia, 7th April, 1910**

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
John Malley	23	Michael Malley, Louisburgh	Mary Malley (sister)	287 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Austin O'Malley	25	Michael O'Malley, Duaghmakeon	Bridget Burke (cousin)	42 Front St., Clinton, MA
John McNamara	26	Michael McNamara, Carrowniskey	Not recorded	St. Louis, MI
Annie McNamara	22	John McNamara, Clare Island	Mary McNamara (sister)	12 Beacon St., Clinton, MA

Nora McNamara	20	John McNamara, Clare Island	Mary McNamara (sister)	12 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
John Williams	20	John Williams, Cross	Bridget Williams (sister)	255 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Thos. Tierney	19	Patrick Tierney, Aylemore	Mary Kittridge (aunt)	236 Main St., Clinton, MA

**S.S. Saxonia, 11th May, 1910**

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Edward O'Grady	21	Anthony Kilcoyne, Kilgeever	Nora O'Grady (sister)	243 Allen St., Clinton, MA
John Grady	22	John Grady, Bunowen	(uncle)	Charles River Village, Everett, MA
Annie Grady	20	John Grady, Bunowen	(uncle)	Charles River Village, Everett, MA
Annie O'Malley (ret)	35	Michael O'Malley, Moneen	Charles O'Malley (brother)	94 Summit St., Clinton, MA
John O'Malley	21	Michael O'Malley, Moneen	Charles O'Malley (brother)	94 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Martin Hestor	18	Martin Hestor, Falduiff	Not recorded	Clinton, MA
Michael Ball (ret)	24	Michael Ball, Ballyhip	Mrs. M. Berry (sister)	19 South St., Summerworth, NH

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Thomas Staunton	22	Thomas Staunton, Feenone	Not recorded	Manchester, NH
Annie Haran	18	Paul Haran, Louisburgh	Mary Haran (sister)	141 East St., Clinton, MA
John Frazer	24	Michael Frazer	Patrick Frazer (brother)	Manchester, NH
Annie O'Toole	19	Mrs. M. O'Toole, Immishturk	Margaret O'Toole (sister)	24 Richmond St., Clinton, MA

**S.S. Saxonia, 8th June, 1910**

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
John O'Toole	18	John O'Toole, Accony	Charles O'Toole (brother)	103 Front St., Clinton, MA
Bridget Donnelly	21	Thomas Donnelly	Will. McNamara (cousin)	9 Cross St., Clinton, MA
Bridget Duffy (ret)	26	Mrs. B. Duffy, Ballyhip	Kate Duffy (sister)	106 Summit St., Clinton, MA



### S.S. Saxonia, 8th June, 1910

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
John Grady	45	Michael Grady, Ballyhip	Anthony Grady (brother)	110 Mass Ave., Cambridge, MA
Bridget Grady (ret)	38	Michael Grady, Ballyhip	Anthony Grady (brother)	88 Green St., Cambridge, MA
Charles Grady	26	Michael Grady, Ballyhip	Anthony Grady (brother)	88 Green St., Cambridge, MA

### S.S. Ivernia, 21st June, 1911

Name	Age	Next of Kin	Sponsor	Final Destination
Margaret Malley	17	James Malley, Aylemore	Delia Needham (cousin)	181 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
James McMyler	22	Thomas McMyler, Carramore	Not recorded	Framingham, MA
John O'Malley	25	Mrs. Ann O'Malley, Feenone	Mary O'Malley (sister)	117 Pleasant St., Clinton, MA
Thomas Kittridge	23	Mrs. Nora Kittridge, Deereen	Margaret Kittridge (sister)	120 Grove St., Clinton, MA
Mary McConnell	15	Michael McConnell, Collacoan	Mary Ruddy (aunt)	14 Ring St., Clinton, MA
Ellen Burke	16	Michael Burke, Duaghmakeon	Bridget Burke (sister)	42 Front St., Clinton, MA
Hannah O'Malley	18	Michael Burke, Louisburgh	Annie O'Malley (sister)	18 Ledge St., Clinton, MA
Delia Joyce	17	Owen O'Malley, Shraugh	Maria Joyce (sister)	47 Beacon St., Clinton, MA
Thomas McNally	21	Thomas Joyce, Cross	Not recorded	Framingham, MA
Patrick McDonnell	20	Thomas McDonnell, Carrowniskey	Not recorded	Framingham, MA
Katie Grady	23	John Grady, Kilgeever	Annie Grady (sister)	45 Winter St., Clinton, MA
Patrick Burke	22	Martin Burke, Askelane	Bridget Burke (sister)	79 Summit St., Clinton, MA
Bridget McNamara	21	Michael McNamara, Carramore	Bridget McNamara (sister)	42 Front St., Clinton, MA
Patrick O'Malley	21	Patrick O'Malley, Cross	Bridget O'Malley (sister)	287 Oak St., Clinton, MA
Kate Ruddy	21	Thomas Ruddy, Thallabawn	Not recorded	Manchester, NH
Abbie Burke	24	Mrs. Mary Burke, Askelane	Not recorded	Charlestown, Waltham, MA
John McDonnell	24	David McDonnell, Cross	Not recorded	Charlestown, Waltham, MA

Source: Mayo Family Research Journal

## The Civil Parish of Kilgeever





## My Grandfather-James Andrew Gibbons.

James Gibbons was born in Aillemore in 1864; he was one of seven children whose parents were John Gibbons and Bridget Mc Hale-Gibbons. He emigrated to the USA in 1883 at the age of 19. He first located in Boston, but soon he changed to Clinton, Mass., a town with a large Irish influence. James was employed at the Bigelow Carpet Mill in Clinton and he became foreman there. James met and married Anne McDonald, a young Irish girl from Liverpool, England. Anne's mother was a Kittridge, probably from Mayo. They were married in St. John's Catholic church in Clinton in 1896.

James and his wife opened their home to many young Irish lads from the Louisburgh area as his position as foreman allowed him to arrange employment for the young men. Many of the Irish families in Clinton today trace their early years in the USA and Clinton back to the efforts of James in securing jobs for them at the mills in the Clinton area and the warm homelike reception they received upon arrival from Ireland.

James Gibbons lived to the age of 85 in Clinton. He and Anne raised four children; their only son, Joseph, became a doctor and practised in the Boston area. He retired from medicine at age 80 and a medical building in West Roxbury (Boston) was named in his honour. Dr Gibbons passed on in February, 1999, aged 101. His sister, Marie, lived to age 94; another sister, Teresa is 95 and Alice is 93.

Marie Gibbons married George Gannon, an Irishman with Mayo blood. They raised five children and several of the girls married Irish boys with Mayo connections as Shaughnessy, Sheridan and Fallon. Most of the children of these marriages live in and about the Clinton area today. I have walked the St. John's Cemetery in Clinton and the Killeen Cemetery in Mayo and find the same family names in both, indicating the tremendous family connections between these two locations. I love Mayo and am especially proud of my connection with the wonderfully warm Gibbons families of Aillemore and Feenone.

Anne Halstead,  
1155 Penny Lane, Danville, Vermont 05828 USA.

## The Sisters' Arrival in Louisburgh

*Eighty years ago the Sisters of Mercy arrived in Louisburgh. As our tribute to their work we have included the account of their first years from Fr Kieran Waldron's History of Sancta Maria College (1986).*

When one considers that secondary schooling became available for all, in places like Ballyhaunis, Glenamaddy, Headford Dunmore only in the late fifties and early sixties, one must ask the question why was Louisburgh, a very small sea-side town, favoured so early as 1920. Further, the establishment of a co-educational school at post-primary level is even more intriguing. Public transport to Louisburgh was not to begin for another eight years; yet, ironically, it was its very remote seaside location that attracted the Sisters of Mercy of the Tuam community to select it. Through a newly-introduced relaxation in Church law governing religious, some of the larger religious communities had begun to acquire small holiday homes at the sea-side for their sisters. One Summer's evening in Tuam, as Archbishop Gilmartin was passing the Mercy Convent, he stopped to greet the nuns and a Sister Margaret Mary dropped the idea of such a holiday home. The Archbishop suggested they would contact Canon Healy P.P. of Louisburgh about such a possibility. The Presentation Sisters, who eventually went to Keel instead, were also interested in Louisburgh. Mother Magdalen wrote to Canon Healy who promptly invited the nuns to visit Louisburgh to see the place and when she and two other sisters came, they fell in love with the place immediately.

It was decided to rent McDermott's Hotel pending the erection of a convent and on 7th October 1919, pointedly the Feast of Holy Rosary, two sisters, Mother M. Gertrude Chambers and Sr. Columba Waldron arrived by side-car from Claremorris Convent having taken the train to there from Tuam - a two days journey, presumably. They were followed on 1st November by Sister Michael Mannion and Sister Veronica Lanagh. Mrs. McDermott and indeed the people of Louisburgh were kindness itself in welcoming and helping them to get adjusted to such a new venture. Clearly the new establishment was to be more than a holiday home and very quickly



Mother Gertrude had established a very successful small knitting industry to give some local employment. She had had previous experience in Tuam in this area.

Sister Michael meantime, a legendary figure in Louisburgh musical education, had immediately begun teaching music and plans were being laid for the opening of a Secondary school. There was an understanding that the Sisters would eventually take charge of the Girls' National School and this was achieved eight years later upon retirement and transfer of teachers.

An historic announcement was made at Masses in June 1920 that a Secondary school was to be established. Suitable pupils, boys and girls, were invited to submit themselves to an entrance exam. About twenty five candidates sat for this examination. Some few pupils who were too old were not accepted and the first class began in late 1920 in the present dining-room of McDermott's (now Durkan's) Hotel. A list of the first pupils is provided in Appendix 1. After two years, some of the pupils sat for the old Junior Grade and two pupils Bridget Hannon (nee Burke) and Katie Geraghty who obtained scholarships transferred to Mercy Convent Tuam. Thus began a trend of transferring after two or three years to other second-level schools, notably Mercy Convent Tuam and St. Jarlath's College where they did Middle and Senior Grade and the King's Scholarship. It is interesting to note that even from the first group of pupils several went on to qualify as National Teachers, priests etc. The original teachers were Mother Alphonsus, Sr. Dympna, Sr. Aquinas, Sr. Josephine and Sr. Michael.

The fee per student was the very princely sum of £9 per year. Music lessons were extra at £1.6.8 per term. It is interesting to note that the amount spent by parents on musical education was almost half the fee for all other subjects which at that time included Religious Knowledge, English, Irish, History, Geography, Mathematics and French. The annual rent paid for the Hotel was £78. Whatever state grants were allowed were contingent on results obtained. This legislation was altered by the Intermediate Education (Amendment) Act of 1924 by which financial assistance became payable for each 'recognised' pupil and through part payment of teachers salaries.

## Louisburgh's Fr. John Heneghan Malate Martyr – Remembered

**M**alate parish, one of the oldest in Manila founded more than 400 years ago is the only remaining Columban parish in the city. In its long turbulent history it has experienced many upheavals and tragedies, not least of which were the tragic events at the end of the 2nd World war. After Dresden, Manila has the doubtful distinction of having being the second most ravaged city of that bloody war. More than 100,000 innocent civilians were killed, often savagely by the retreating Japanese forces, and accompanying allied forces shelling. Malate parish itself lost some 20,000 of its parishioners, among them the five Columban priests, now commonly referred to as the Malate Martyrs. Four of them, Frs. Patrick Kelly, John Heneghan, a native of Louisburgh, Peter Fallon and Joe Monaghan were taken in the last days of the war by the Japanese forces and never seen again. Fr. John Lalor was killed by an American shell in his beloved Malate hospital as he lay resting after his exhausting work of looking after the sick and dying. The date was Feb. 13, 1945. It is only now after more than 50 years than Manila is remembering and coming to terms with the traumatic events of the final days of the War.

A fitting and moving tribute to the Columban priests and 200,000 parishioners was paid on Feb.. 2, 1997, with the unveiling, blessing and dedication of a life size PIETA in bronze to their memory, by Jaime Cardinal Sin, just alongside the historic Church of Our Lady of Remedies.

Present in the very large attendance were relatives of some of the five priests, from Ireland and Britain; the Irish Ambassador to China, Philippines and Cambodia, Mr. Joseph Hayes, who made the journey from Beijing, also present were the ambassadors of Spain and France and a number of diplomatic corps, and the Mayor of Manila, and the local Congressman. Most people along the large attendances were the living relatives of those who were killed, who had travelled from all over the Phillipines, some even coming from overseas.



The beautiful Bronze PIETA was designed by Peter de Guzman, one of the most renowned Sculptors in the Philippines. He was also the artist of the Memorial which was erected in 1995 in Intramuros, Manila, commemorating the City's war dead on the occasion of the 50th anniversary.

After the unveiling and blessing ceremonies, Mass was celebrated by Cardinal Sin, before a packed Church. Some 40 Columban and other priests were concelebrants. The Cardinal paid tribute to the Columban priests who stayed with their people during the war years. He excoriated the evil and insanity of war.

A reception was held after Mass for some 300 guests, in the Malate Catholic School which now replaces the Malate Hospital of wartime days. There were some moving testimonies from the various people present, giving their personal reminiscences of the fateful days of February 1945. The keynote speaker was Filipino Ambassador to Spain, Jua Jose Rocha.

The inscription on the Pieta reads:

"In memory of the people of Malate who were killed during the Second World War and the five Columban priests who stayed with them and died with them. The compassionate figure of OUR LADY OF REMEDIES calls the Church to heal our crucified world, to walk with the poor and oppressed, and to be the voice of those who cry for justice. Mary, who inspires the women of Malate, represents the women of all times; women bring life into the world and most understand the sacredness of life and insanity of war; with them, we pledge to work for a world without war where all people will live that peace which Christ promised."

Present in the very large attendance were relatives of Fr. John Heneghan of Louisburgh, Co. Mayo – one of the Malate Martyrs – his nephew Monsignor John Heneghan of Yakama Diocese, Washington, U.S.A. and a native of Louisburgh; his nieces Sr. Kathleen and Sister Mary Rice, both Sisters of St. Louis and natives of Monaghan, another niece, Mrs. Mary Cox of Louisburgh and her son Eamonn and daughter Jojo. Also present was a nephew of Fr. Peter Fallon, Fr. Willie Fallon a native of Dunmore, Co. Galway and a priest of the Diocese of Salford, England.

*Rev. Desmond Quinn, Manila*

## The Crafts: Cultivating the Potatoes

One of the memories that the composer of the song, "Galway Bay", brought with him from Ireland was that of "people in the uplands digging potatoes". When that song came on the air, it was very popular, as it more or less depicted life in the countryside at that time—about 1942. At the present time it is possible that children growing up in the country have never seen a ridge of potatoes being sowed or dug and certainly never saw them piled up in pits of the size that were a feature of the countryside of that time and earlier.

It has been said that if the Emergency of the war years should happen again, there would be a greater food shortage this time, because the self-sufficiency of that era has disappeared to a great extent. Farmers then were making a big tillage of potatoes particularly, a fair amount of oats and barley and some, but not a lot of, wheat. There was very little ploughing done here in the west of Ireland, so spades were doing overtime. About the year 1934 or '35 the Dept. of Agriculture decided to give a little financial encouragement of £5.00 per acre to farmers on a reclamation scheme. The land under this scheme would have been what is now called "marginal". It needed to be drained and tilled, and the first crop sown in it was potatoes. It had to be made into ridges and furrows, manured with stable manure, and the slits (cut potatoes) or whole potatoes of certain size were set down on the manured ridge, about a foot apart. Then the clay from the furrows was "poured" over the ridge with a spade and clapped into shape on the "brow" – the edge of the ridge.

When the stalks came up and were about 2" in height, another coat of clay, called the mould, from the furrow was shovelled on again carefully between the stalks. When they were about 8" high, the stalks were sprayed to protect them from blight. Blight is a "bad word" in the Irish folklore as it brought about the famine of the 1840s and subsequently the deaths of several thousands of people. This upland "marginal" land produced several tons of



dry and palatable potatoes which were preferable to those which grew on the lowlands. That "Galway Bay" composer may have had a good taste in his mouth as well as a memory in his heart. When the potatoes were dug and picked, or rather in the process of being dug or picked which took weeks, pits had to be made. The site for a pit would be made by digging down the two opposite brows of two ridges and tramping it well to make the soil solid. Then each day's work was picked and the vessels emptied; the resultant pile was shaped in the form of an upside-down "v", about 3ft wide and 2ft high. It was covered over by a good coat of rushes and over that a thick coat of clay which was put on carefully and clapped firmly to make it weatherproof. As the days passed and the work progressed, pits of several yards were appearing in the fields, and because they were so well covered with clay, were capable of withstanding frost and snow. Thus the humble spud was and is a versatile vegetable and has filled many variations of cooking in the kitchen.

People throughout the country and beyond have reason to bless the day in 1590 when Sir Walter Raleigh brought the first potato to Ireland.

*Una O'Malley, Kinnadoohey*

## Remembering Sion

One of the lessons in our Second Standard Irish reading book was about the lark – An Fhuiseog: “ ‘Sí an fhuiseog an t-éan is túisge a labhras ar maidin”. (The lark is the first bird that speaks in the morning). There was a whole lesson about her. Our clever teacher, hoping that her class would use the new Irish word we had learned, gave us a composition on the daisy. As in most matters I asked my father about the daisy and he said, “You could say that it is the first wild flower that puts up its head in Spring.” So I wrote, “ ‘Sé an nóinín an bláth is túisge a chuireann a cheann anuas”. Smilingly, our teacher said, “That’s what I wanted, that you would show that you make use of every new word you learn. But you should have written “aníos” instead of “anuas”. “Anuas” is “down from above”, “aníos” is “up from below”.

## “God Save All Here”

In the issue of the “Irish Catholic” of Thur., Aug. 12th of this year, an article with the lovely once familiar greeting “God save all here” caught my eye. It was the start of an address by the Archbishop of Cashel and Emly, Dr. Dermott Clifford, at the opening of the annual Kickham Weekend in Mullinahone, Co Tipperary. His Grace started by saying, “God save all here. God save you kindly.” This traditional greeting evokes memories of a bygone age when people had time for each other and when the presence of God was sensed more than in the fast-moving world of today. This article in the “Irish Catholic” coincided with a wish I had for some time to have the following poem included in “An Choinneal”:

*There is a prayer that's breathed alone  
And heard in dear old Erin's land  
'Tis uttered on each threshold stone  
With loving smile and clasping hand.  
And oft perchance 'tis murmured low  
With sorrow, sigh and falling tear  
The grandest greeting man may know  
The prayer, "God save all here".*

*In other lands they know not well  
How priceless is the holy lore  
That hedges with a sacred spell  
Old Ireland's home and cabin door.  
To those it is no empty sound  
Who think with grief and many a tear  
Of long-loved memories wreathing round  
The prayer, "God save all here".*

*Live on sacred greeting still  
With peace to bless each threshold there  
The echoes of her home to fill  
With fervency of holy prayer.  
And, guarded by its holy spell,  
The actions, soul and conscience clear,  
Be graven on each heart as well  
The prayer, "God save all here."*

This poem is taken from a school-book of the early 1930s; I would say that it was a 4th Standard book. There are several other poems such as “The Paschal Fire of Patrick” by Denis Florence McCarthy, an inspiring poem too.

*Una O'Malley*



*The following four interviews are from the excellent Transition Year publication "Through the Mists of Time"; they give an insight into days gone by. Our thanks to Mr. Vincent O'Loughlin, Principal, Sancta Maria College, for permission to print.*

## **Cregganbaun Days**

*Interviewer – Niamh Philbin*

*Interviewee – David McGreal*

**M**r. David McGreal was born in 1904. He spent almost forty years teaching in Cregganbaun National School in the parish of Kilgeever until he was sixty-three when he retired.

Cregganbaun National School was a small school that served the local children. Mr. McGreal was the principal and he taught from third class to sixth class. Mr. McGreal's wife Margaret was the other teacher in the school and she taught from junior infants to second class.

The school itself was a two roomed building with an outdoor toilet. There was a small yard and the children played in this at break – the boys on one side and the girls on the other. In each classroom, there was an open fire and it was the children who supplied the fuel for this. The amount of fuel a child brought depended on the wealth of their parents. Those whose parents were well off brought a cart of turf annually while those who weren't brought one sod of turf daily. A blackboard stood on an easel in one corner of the room and a cane stood in the other corner although it was only there as a threat and was rarely used. Along the back wall there was a row of hooks and the children hung their school-bags and coats on these. The children sat on wooden benches at wooden desks. Each desk had an inkwell. The younger children wrote on slates known as clareen and the older children wrote on copies.

The children who could afford them carried cloth bags to school while the less well off just tied string around their books. For their lunch the children brought bread and butter. The same subjects were taught then as today, but there was a lot more emphasis on learning things off by heart. Every child leaving the school would have the same standard of Irish as today's leaving certs. Very neat and tidy handwriting was extremely important and a lot of

time and care was spent trying to achieve this. The children did not usually receive written homework instead they were given tables, spellings and poems to learn off. Tests were given regularly in these.

The school hours were the same as today and the children received the same amount of holidays except they also got fair days off. The young children usually started school in late spring when the weather was fine. All the children walked to school and if a child had no older brothers or sisters they were brought to school by their neighbours. Many children took the "short cut" across rivers and through fields to reach the school. The children who crossed rivers and streams knew when there would be a high risk of flooding and on these days they waited at home.

To retain two teachers the school had to have a minimum of twenty eight pupils. This was no problem up to the mid fifties, as there was a lot of large families in the area. In 1955 nine families made a voluntary move to Castlepollard in Co. Westmeath. Twenty four school children moved. After this it became a struggle to keep the school open.

Children started school at the age of six and left at the age of fourteen when they had done their primary cert. Very few attended secondary school and it was very rare for someone to go to third level. When children left school they worked on their parents' farms. When they reached their late teens many made the decision to emigrate to England and America where they worked as building labourers.

The parish priest visited the school on a regular basis and would spend a while talking to the children. The children looked forward to these visits but it was a different story when it was their religion exam. Once every year a priest from another parish would come to the school to have a religion exam. The children dreaded these exams. On that morning they would arrive in school wearing their Sunday clothes. The priest would enter the classroom and starting at the top would ask every single child a catechism question.

The children made their communion in first class and a lot of preparation went into both this and confirmation which was made in fourth? fifth or sixth class. The children had to know all of their religion book and they lived in fear of not being able to answer a question and being left behind.



Every so often a Department of Education inspector called to the school to examine the children. On one such occasion a young female inspector called to the school. Mrs. Mc Greal was always very good to the children and in return the children would often bring her in a live hen or rabbit. One day a child had brought in a live hen to Mrs. Mc Greal, in her cloth schoolbag. She had left the bag hanging at the back of the classroom, The young inspector was very nervous and as she was examining the children she noticed the bag moving. 'Did I just see that bag' moving?' she asked Mrs. McGreal. When Mrs. Mc Greal replied that she may have she quickly made an excuse and left the room as fast as she could.

Mr. Mc Greal lives five miles from Cregganbaun National School. He drove to school every morning up to World War 2 when he had to discontinue due to a shortage of fuel. He then started to cycle. After the war ended he continued cycling up until about ten years before he retired.

Cregganbaun National School closed about fifteen years ago due to declining numbers.

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## The Long Arm Of The Law

*Interviewer – Kevin O'Malley*

*Interviewee – Pat Farren*

**T**his story is about how the Garda Síochána changed down through the years. I interviewed a guard that has spent time in the Louisburgh Station. He gave a run down on how he spent his time.

The new Barracks was built in 1936. Since then we have had different sergeants and officers to run the station. We have had Sgt Deely, Sgt Ray, Sgt Conroy. Since the early seventies we have had Sgt O'Rourke, Sgt McCaffrey, Sgt Healy and Sgt Cannon. Now since 1996 we have Sgt Power. He is a married man with two children and is now living in the Barracks. Most of the Sergeants have lived in the Barracks while on duty in Louisburgh. One of the officers who came to Louisburgh in 1964 was Pat Farren. I had

a talk to Pat and he gave me a run down of his term in Louisburgh Garda Station.

At that time the old high uniform was still being worn, and the baton was in a leather case down by their side. The hours of duty in Louisburgh at that time was either 10 am to 6 p.m. or 10 am to 1 p.m. and 8 p.m. to 12 midnight. The night of a late dance in the town hall he would be on duty until 2 am. Day-time duty consisted of walking round the town or cycling out the country? checking on dog licences or doing what we called "the tillage" - in other words checking what tillage crops, as well as how many hens and cattle each farmer had.

Once every week he had to cycle to Killadoon and collect the dole forms at the old Killadoon Post Office. He also visited the National Schools in the area to see if any child was missing from school over a long period of time. His duty at night consisted of clearing the pubs at closing time and checking out bicycles with no lights. Once every month in Westport he attended the court if he had prosecutions coming up in the District Court. For example you could be summonsed for not having lights on your bicycle or unlicensed dogs.

In a quiet town like Louisburgh the life of a garda was very easy then. Some days you would spend all day in the barracks until 5 p.m. A day you would spend like that would be called B.O. (Barrack Orderly.) You would deal with passports and complaints from the public in general.

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## Music and the Stations

*Interviewer – Seán Tiernan*

*Interviewee – Johnny Tiernan*

**I**n my grandfather's time the stations were a major event in each village. The stations were an old custom where mass was said in rotation, in Spring and Autumn in one house. All the neighbours gathered for this special event where they caught up with the latest gossip, prayed together and had some fun and dancing. It also gave the owners of the house a good



reason to clean and decorate the house. Here is my story about the stations in around 1949.

The excitement would start at around 9.30 a.m. The family who were holding the stations would have cleaned the house from top to bottom till you could eat your dinner off the floor. The whole village would gather. Everyone who came brought something ranging from cake to tea to butter etc. The priest would then arrive and hear confessions in a private part of the house, usually the parlour. Afterwards the priest would celebrate mass in the kitchen where the people of the house would have prepared an altar using a raised table, the tablecloth, candles, candlestick holders, water and salt (to bless the water). They would use some straw (neatly tied) to sprinkle the holy water.

After mass was said they had breakfast which consisted of grapefruit for a starter and boiled eggs, bread and tea afterwards. The priest ate his breakfast with "the man of the house" and a few good talkers such as Anthony O'Malley (R.I.P.), Dick O'Toole (R.I.P.) and William Burke (R.I.P.) in the parlour. The rest of the men and women ate in the kitchen where the atmosphere was more relaxed as they looked forward to the evenings events.

After school the children from the village would come and be fed "white bread" and "red jam". They would then have sweet cake to complete the feast. The people in those days didn't have much alcohol but still made the most of their evening.

In the evening the crowd would socialise in the kitchen and the parlour. For a typical stations in Doughmakeon Mikey Tiernan (R.I.P.) on his accordion, a fast and good player, Johnny O'Toole, skilled on his fiddle and Johnny Gibbons a good singer and fiddle player would entertain the crowd. The atmosphere was very lively at this stage with feet moving to the tempo of the music and musicians trying to keep up with each other. Different people would sing and dance into the early hours of the morning (around 3 o'clock or so). The most favoured tunes played in those days were: "The Maid Behind The Bar", "The Sligo Maid", "The Sally Gardens" and "The Boys From Ballysedare". This was a night very much enjoyed.

Nowadays the stations are very rare around the Louisburgh area. Who knows maybe it will catch on again.

## The Snow Of Forty Seven

*Interviewer – Pauline Maxwell*

*Interviewee – Jack Bennett*

**I**t was the month of February and the people of Shraugh continued with their work as normal. Shraugh, a small village east of Louisburgh has a dramatic range of scenery, from the tall purple mountains to the flat terrain with various hues of green. On the 11th of February the drama began. Snow had fallen heavily the night before and continued to do so. Arising that morning, the Bennett family found themselves prisoners in their own home. Forcing their way out the door they were suddenly panic stricken – the livestock! They trudged along through the deep, heavy snow. Finding the livestock in good health the Bennett family rounded the cattle up and proceeded back to the farm. The snow was still falling heavily but still worse was to come, the Black Frost. It snowed all day long while the frost came at night.

By late March, early April the fodder for the animals was getting very scarce. The men had to go to the bog with their scythe to try and cut some ciob-mountain sedge. In desperation they had to use as fodder the sugans that Willie Bennett (R.I.P.) had already prepared for the thatching of his home later on in the year.

The men of the village had to postpone their Spring work. The fields could not be ploughed and harrowed for the usual crops to be sown. They did not need to replenish the big bags which the sower wore around his waist with the appropriate seeds. It would be a joyful sight, man sowing the seed, hoping that when it hit the earth it would yield a good harvest in due course. This, however, was not to be as the snow lay thick on the ground.

The local Blacksmith, Tom Glynn (R.I.P.), was a very popular man. His forge was situated at Austin Lyons' gable. Tom had a hand in trades from making grubbers, ploughs, harrows, wheels and shoes for the horses. With the weather that was in it Tom was busy making horses shoes. Eammon O'Donnetl (R.I.P.) was a very strong willed man and when asked to bring a load of food to Mr. Scahill from Westport he turned to Tom to make him



four spiked horse shoes. Spiked horse shoes were in great demand due to the snow because with normal horse shoes snow would get caught in the shoe and the horse would easily slide. O'Donnell being the man he was, told Mr. Glynn that he would let him know just how good his horse shoes were! ! After leaving the forge he drove his mare onto the ice at Durkan's pool. When the horse didn't slip he considered the shoes of good quality and then proceeded on his journey.

Johnny Tiernan (R.I.P.), the local postman, was the purveyor of all news, good or bad, and as bad news travels fastest of all, he could easily report on how the snow was affecting the farmers on route. The postman now had to make his round by foot as the snow was too thick for his bicycle.

The Bennett family lives close by the river and to collect their mail they would have to venture to the river bank where Johnny would be standing on the opposite side in fear of crossing in case the ice broke. He would place the mail in a bag which would be tied to some twine and then would be slid across the ice.

Morrison's shop on the corner was provider for all. They stored everything from a thimble to a suit length. That is where the men purchased their leather hob-nail boots, knickerbockers and the wool that knitted their home made jumpers. As trips were few to Morrison's with the harsh snow, the locals purchased in bulk.

Even though the snow was heavy on the ground it did not dampen the people's spirit.- They still had their weekly house dance. The music for the hooley was provided by the local musicians, such as Jack Bennett, John Gibbons Mullagh (R.I.P.) and Paddy Gibbons (R.I.P.), Ballyhip. A great night used to be enjoyed by one and all.

In the month of May everyone cried a sigh of relief as thaw started to set in. The thick snow still lay on the mountain tops but the land was gradually getting back to normal. What lay hidden under the snow had to come to light at last. It was fifty years this year since The Great Snow of '47.

*Source: Through The Mists of Time – Vol. II, 1998  
Transition Year Students, Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh*

## Sancta Maria College Musical “Seven Brides for Seven Brothers”

Sancta Maria College Louisburgh have successfully put on their fourth hit musical “Seven Brides for Seven Brothers”. With a large cast of 29 principles, 19 singers and 31 dancers, it was one of the best shows Sancta Maria College has ever put on. From Thursday 4th February to Sunday 7th February students wowed audiences every night in Louisburgh Community Hall, which was filled to capacity each night. There were strong performances given by all of the cast especially Clare O’Grady (Killeen) and Padraic Keane (Louisburgh), who played the lead roles of Adam and Milly.



*Marina Rice, producer of  
“Seven Brides for Seven  
Brothers”.*

*Pic. Frank Dolan*

“Seven Brides for Seven Brothers” is a story about Adam Pontipee wanting to have someone to clean and cook for him and his six brothers. He thinks the best way to do this is to marry someone. Once he finds Milly he convinces her to marry him but tricks her by not telling her about his brothers. Milly's joy turns to dismay once she reaches the cabin and finds out about the brothers, but soon she grows to love them. One day they all go to the social gathering in the town and the brothers fall in love with six girls but there is one problem. They all have suitors. The boys end up in a fight and are not allowed into the town. Once at home for a while they begin to feel sorry for themselves so Adam tells them to go and kidnap the girls. They do that and then cause an avalanche so no one can get to them. When Milly finds out she is very cross and tells the brothers that they are not to set one foot in the house until the Spring. Adam gets mad and leaves them. A few months later Milly has a baby girl and Trideon goes to visit Adam. Adam comes back after the Winter to bring the girls back to town but the girls





*The stage crew in Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh's production of "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" – (front) Nuala McDonnell, Fiona Dyer, Maria McGreal, Catherine Biggs, Thea Cronin, Liam Hyland. (Back) Robert Edgerly, Lorraine Harney, James Flanagan, Denise Moran, John Needham, Neill McNulty, Róisín Scanlon. Pic. Frank Dolan*

don't want to go. The townfolk come to get them and they hear a baby cry. Each of the girls pretend it's her's and so it ends with the brother marrying the brides at a shotgun wedding. Adam and Milly renew their vows for love this time.

It was a lovely story and great praise should be given to everyone involved, including a hard working stage crew who worked to make everything run smoothly. Each and everyone involved will remember this event and be happy that they were part of it. Those four nights will stay in our fondest memories forever.

*Tracy O'Toole*

### **The Youth of Louisburgh – A happy parent responds**

I attended the Sancta Maria College production of "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" in February of 1999, in my Community Hall of Louisburgh. I was overwhelmed, to say the least. This production was of such a high standard, that I was engrossed from beginning to end. The cast were excellent,



*Claire O'Grady played "Millie" in Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh's production of "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers." Pic. Frank Dolan*



*Padraic Keane played "Adam" in Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh's production of "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers." Pic. Frank Dolan*



*Tracey O'Toole was the stage manager for Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh's production of "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers." Pic. Frank Dolan*



*Siobhán O'Malley and Yvonne McNeill were the Programme team in Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh's production of "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers." Pic. Frank Dolan*



the production team were excellent and the producer was second to none. I was so happy to be able to say that such a high quality production was performed by a small community like Louisburgh. My children and lots of other children were at it and all of them talked about it for days and weeks even.



*Peter Brennan and Conor Wilson were responsible for the Poster Design for Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh's production of "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers."*

Pic. Frank Dolan

These students and their teachers and whoever else were involved in this production deserve the highest praise for the amount of energy, time and work that went into putting on such a successful performance.

It's great to see that our youth are such talented, interesting and go ahead kids and I hope that this tradition will last long into the future. Congrats to all involved.

*Excerpts taken from the speech given by Mr. O'Loughlin on the final night of the Sancta Maria production of Seven Brides for Seven Brothers.*

It is my proud privilege to congratulate and to thank all involved in the musical tonight. To put on a show like this it needs lots of things. I mention only three – talent, opportunity and expertise.

The first – talent, we have piles of it, you can see it on the stage tonight, from principles and cast in their singing, dancing and acting. It was a pleasure to hear and watch tonight and every night. I'm sure in due course, we will see and hear them on bigger stages. Also the talent behind stage is essential. The management of props, costumes and people is extraordinarily difficult. We thank all involved in this production.

The second thing is – the opportunity. We have Transition Year which



*Robert Edgerly and John Needham designed the set for Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh's production of "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers."*

Pic. Frank Dolan

gives scope for this type of thing. We have Leaving Cert Vocational Programme which allows people to get credit in Leaving Cert for work done in this area.

The third thing is – expertise. This is our 4th show. 1st had a bible theme "**Joseph**", 2nd had a science fiction theme "**Shop of Horrors**", 3rd was "**Grease**", and the 4th Country and Western theme "**Seven Brides for Seven Brothers**". The expertise for four different types of shows comes from Miss Marina Rice. I mention two aspects of Miss Rice. Her never ending patience in



*The Townsfolk and Suitors, who took part in Sancta Maria College Louisburgh's production of "Seven Brides for Seven Brothers" – (front) James Biggs, Seán Beirne, Maria Gill, Aoife Prendergast, Fintan Egan. (Back) Padraic O'Grady, Neill McNulty, Desmond O'Malley, Conor Wilson, Catherine Biggs, Stephen O'Malley, Oliver Smith.*

Pic. Frank Dolan



rehearsals and her absolute trust in cast and production team at the back to do what is expected of them, to deliver. Miss Rice is not behind prompting. They know their job and they do it. What they staged for the last four nights is proof of that work and they all deserve congratulations.

The expertise of the staff is essential also and experience of people working with musicians and having expertise in light sound and camera is an experience that will last long after topics in maths are done. It was an experience that will last them for a lifetime. I congratulate all that were involved.

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## Remembering Sion

*A leinbh i dtúis do shaoil  
mo chomhairle cruinn beir leat:  
an té dá dtáinig ciall le haois  
cuirse gach ni 'na chead.*

*Ná santaigh ráite baois  
ná an dream 'na mbíd acu;  
sula dtiocfaidh iomad ded aois,  
bíodh aithint ar Chríost agat.*

Perhaps some reader would remember the rest of this poem and have it included in the next "Coinneal". There were some lines about forming good habits, instead of bad ones, which ended:

*oir an tslat nuair chruann le haois  
is deacair a sniomh 'na gad.*

**Editor's note:** Students of Sancta Maria College will know that the next two verses of this poem, Comhairle Don Duine Óg, appear in the students handbook. There are six verses, each of four lines, in this poem.

*Ní fios cé chum.*

## Y.E.S.

**T**ransition Year Students 1999 in Sancta Maria College have taken part in Y.E.S. Scheme – Young Entrepreneurs Scheme.

As a participant you are asked to:

1. Set up a real business, on your own or with a group, maximum 5 students.
2. Sell a product or service in school or outside.
3. Keep accounts.
4. Write a business report
5. Mount an exhibition.

A school winner "Sweet Wreaths Ltd" and "Ash Tex" advanced to County finals, where "Sweet Wreaths Ltd", took 2nd place and went through to the Regional Finals.



*Ash-Tex Ltd. – Conor Wilson (Westport), Joan Rennick (Teacher), Frank Fullard (Mayo Young Entrepreneurs Representative), James O'Malley (Lecanvey), Finola Foy (Teacher)*





*Sweet Wreaths – Joan Rennick (Teacher), Lorraine Harney (Bunowen), Nuala McDonnell (Mullagh), Frank Fullard (Mayo Young Entrepreneurs Representative), Tracy O’Toole (Kinnock), Róisín Scanlon (Kinnock), Finola Foy.*

“Ash-Tex” consisted of a team of two: James O’Malley (Lecanvey), and Conor Wilson (Westport). They made a selection of ashtrays with specially designed logos or more common logos like “Centrall Park” from T.V. series “Friends”.

“Sweet Wreaths Ltd” consisted of a team of four: Tracy O’Toole (Kinnock), Róisín Scanlon (Kinnock), Nuala O’Donnell (Mullach) and Lorraine Harney (Legan). They made a selection of wreaths and sweets for lots of occasions – Easter, Christmas etc.

The Regional Finals took place on April 18th 1999, in the “Welcome Inn Hotel”, Castlebar, Co. Mayo. “Sweet Wreaths Ltd”, unfortunately didn’t make it to the All-Ireland finals. They were the first team from Sancta Maria to ever reach the Regional finals.

*Tracy O’Toole*

## Keep your Word !

**T**his feature is intended to entertain, but also to preserve for posterity the remnants of old Irish words that were in use in the local vocabulary within living memory. Are these words in use any more? Are there many readers — and are there any young readers — who can identify with them? If so, the feature serves its purpose. It has been a source of encouragement that, ever since the feature was revived, it has been received with pleasure. A word about format. The words are set out singly indicating their spelling, followed in parenthesis by their approximate pronunciation (in Louisburgh dialect). Then follow four possible meanings of each word, arranged as a quiz. You are challenged to find out from your knowledge and memory, which is the right meaning of each word. To make things easier, a few of these have been repeated from old issues. So, if you are having a Louisburgh evening in your home, try this as a party game. We recommend! The answers to this quiz are on page ??

- (1) bráisteach (*brawh-ish-tyeach*): a) brazen or bold; b) heavy rain; c) a weed; d) leather braces for a man’s trousers
- (2) búithreach(t) (*booh-ir-heacht*): a) public disapproval at a football rmatch; b) wailing or crying; c) a “sidelang”, that is a rope by which an animal’s two feet were tethered; d) a pathway .
- (3) faic (*fwaick*): a) a resounding thump; b) the handle of a spade; c) funny or strange; d) truthful
- (4) fáiteach (*fotch-uch*): a) a simple potato dish; b) very hot to handle; c) oatmeal porridge made on milk; d) frightened
- (5) geospal (*gyoh-spel*): a) a scripture reading; b) a puny, under-developed person; c) a home-rnade twig or brush; d) a young goose that has not yet been fully feathered.
- (6) grámór (*graw-more*): a) an embrace; b) grabbing; c) a species of wild bird; d) a musical instrument
- (7) gcruachás (*groom-chás*): a) a cropped hair-style; b) a cooper’s instrument; c) a predicament; d) a second crop or “catch-crop”
- (8) pluc (*pluck*): a) a commemorative slab on a building; b) courage; c) a fat cheek as a child’s; d) a feather bed



- (9) *pus (puss)*: a) a pet cat; b) a person's mouth; c) excrement from a wound; d) an old-time cure for a heavy cold
- (10) *Santach (sonn-thuch)*: a) granular; b) an old name for Father Christmas; c) greedy; d) Sunday clothes
- (11) *Scréachán (shkray-chawn)*: a) scratching; b) a crow or jackdaw; c) a thorn bush; d) a "screecher"
- (12) *Sonc (sunk)*: a) drenched or saturated, b) a prod or poke; c) a plug in a churn or bucket; d) a pet name for a calf.
- (13) *Sláinte (slaw-intche)*: a) a tool for turf-cutting; b) very drawn-out speech; c) a jam made of wild fruit; d) "Good health!"
- (14) *smut (smuth)*: a) dirty language; b) a white cloth used in bee-keeping; c) a mouth; d) a home-made bait for sea-fishing
- (15) *Tuí-bórach (thee-boh-ruch)*: a) a special cut of steak; b) a wooden vessel used for making country butter; c) a straw rope; d) a gimlet

Keep this as an alternative

- (15) *Scut (Scuth)*: a) begone! 2) a bob-tailed pup; c) a young blackguard; d) a short fishing line.

### Answers to "Keep your word ?

- 1) *Bráisteach* is a weed. It is in fact the wild mustard plant with the distinctive yellow flower, which was detested by farmers as they saw the weed spread. It is otherwise known as the cockle (of scriptural fame.). "I'll be down on my knees all summer trying to clean the bráisteach from the oats." Interestingly, the general name in Latin for the genus of cabbage is brassica – obviously from the same root!
- 2) *Búithreach(t)* is wailing or crying. O'Donaill's Irish dictionary says that it means the act of bellowing, roaring, or lowing as one or other of the animals. All of which could apply to the wailing we know as *búithreach(t)*. We use the word in all of these senses; but we apply it also to the onomatopoeic crying which we associate with uncontrolled emotion. "As soon as she saw the corpse, of course Mary Ann started the *búithreach(t)*."
- (3) *Afaic* is a resounding thump. Interestingly enough, Chambers' English

dictionary says that the (English) word is colloquial, and its origin is "from the sound made." Is the Irish word also from the sound made, or maybe there is a common origin? "He gave him a *faic* that put him into the middle of next week." And does any reader know who or what was meant by the name "Paddy Whack"? Here is an attempt at description from memory: it's a carefree, careless person, preferably single, perhaps seen cycling recklessly, letting an occasional shout, uncommitted etc. . . . Another Irish word has the same sound and means "nothing".

- 4) *Faiteach* is frightened. It describes a child who is afraid to venture out into the dark; but even more so a person who is scared of any unusual or unexpected noise. "Don't you notice how *faiteach* Johnny is, the way he jumps aside whenever a car is passing".
- 5) *A geospal* is a puny, under-developed person. But it is more (or perhaps less!) – because it means someone who is lurking in your vicinity and seems always to have unfinished business. "Every time I see that *geospal* hanging around, I feel that it's a sign of bad luck!"
- 6) *A grámór* is an embrace. In fact the word is made up of two simple Irish words: *grá* meaning *love*, and *mór* meaning *great*. So an embrace is a great love! A child is told: "Say good-night to Daddy and Mammy with a *grámór*".
- 7) *A gcruchás* is a predicament. The word has an interesting make-up which has two parts – *crua* meaning *hard* and *cás* meaning *a case*. The hard case could be anything from having the cow kick the bucket of milk to having no change in your pocket when you thought you had. "Look at the *gcruchás* I'm in now – having no one to go to the town and the post is leaving in half an hour!"
- 8) *Pluc* is a cheek, especially the rounded cheek of a plump child. "He's eating too much, you can see it in the *plucs*." Sometimes we have got so used to a mixture of Irish and English that we are not sure whether a word came first from Irish to English or *vice versa*. So *pluc* is cheek, and therefore *cheeky*. And when a child crams his mouth with food we say "he is *plocking*".



- (9) *Pus* is, first of all, a person's mouth. It is used particularly about a sulky expression. It describes someone who is grumpy without any good or obvious reason. "She has a *pus* on her that would boil the kettle." There is of course another English, medical, word of the same spelling and sound; so nowadays you must be careful that you are not mixing up a person's mouth with the excrement from a wound! Professor Hogan in his Anglo-Irish dictionary says that this is an Irish expression – *ag pusáil* – and that it will be included in his next edition! Professor Hogan musn't have ever been in Louisburgh!
- (10) *Santach* is greedy. You could nearly gather the meaning as you listen to the word. At table anybody who has his eye on the next potato while he is peeling this one; or anyone who is wishing for a second legacy while forgetting about a needy family member, or simply anyone who will not share – we are not fond of him. He is *santach*! "I hear they are trying to get more land. They were always *santach*!"
- (11) A *scréachán* is a screecher. A hen that has been disturbed from her perch and loudly expresses her disapproval, would qualify. Even more so would a woman or child – or even a man – who protests loudly at a perceived injustice when the injustice was not based on fact. The screecher might even be one who has an infuriating laugh. "For heaven's sake close the door and shut out that *scréachán*!"
- (12) A *sonc* is a prod or poke, whether it be a physical one – such a nudge or jab, or a dig at cards when a player, quite properly, prods the dealer. "Ah, when you had the lone ace of hearts, you had a right to give him the *sonc*." More insidious still is the social *sonc*. "We were all taking away nice and friendly and, all of a sudden, she gives me this *sonc* about what the children said in school".
- (13) *Sláinte* is "Good health"! It is the Irish drinking wish. The proper full phrase is "*Sláinte mhaith!*" which means not just health but "good health". (For more about that word, turn to the *Scholar's Bag: Slán and Shalom* on page xxx). Irish professional people in England have a special word for "Good health". They have begun to use cynically the expression "*Cathaoireacha!*" meaning "chairs" – This is meant to poke gentle fun at the English pronunciation of "Cheers!" So does language grow and expand!

- (14) A *smut* is a mouth. Especially it refers to the mouth of an animal, the part we usually refer to as the snout. Of course we make the word pay a further debt. We use it freely to describe the stumpy snout of the animal so, naturally then we use it also to depict a person whose snout has been shortened by being grumpy or sulky. Will you smile, instead of having that *smut* on you all day!
- (15) *Tuí-bórach* is a straw rope – but of a particular kind. It was in fact a double rope, woven first as a *súgan* and then doubled onto itself to form a matrix which in turn became a stronger cable. It was eventually used for matting – such as was required as part of a donkey's straddle. "The *tuí-bórach* was all worn away from the straddle."

(The following no 15 to be kept in reserve lest it be needed.

- (15) *Scut* is "begone!" It is the natural shout to a prowling cat. This is in fact a relic of two words – *a* and *cut*. It might appear forced now to explain that it means "O, Cat", but in fact that would express the mind of any housekeeper who wants to chase away the creature who is marauding between the jugs and china! If there is more urgency "*scut a dhiabhail!*" a stronger phrase, is used.

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## Discipline

**M**artin was living alone. I visited him one moonlit night and as he opened his front door I noticed that there was a hole in the middle of it. I knew him well enough to suggest that he might fix the hole but he said: "Ah no; that's for the cat". As we sat by the open fire I felt a breeze coming from the back door, and sure enough I could see the moonlight through a hole in that door, too. "Martin," I said; and I made my amazement known as gently as I could. "Yes," said Martin, without the slightest discomfort. "You have two cats." Trying my look a step further I suggested: "But Martin couldn't the two cats use the same hole?" I had pressed my luck too far! "That's now where you're wrong," he said. "When them two cats are lying there beside the hearth and I decide that it's time to go to bed, when I say '*scut!*' I mean '*scut!*' "



## Scholar's Bag

### A phonetic relic

There is one very distinctive sound, the sound of the letter the "ch", in the Irish of certain parts of Mayo, among them Louisburgh. But let us begin from the beginning. Try this experiment on any Louisburgh-born person who is, say, more than fifty years old. Ask them how do they say, in Irish, *he went*. And listen very carefully for the way the answer is given. More that likely, they will say something like "*Fuaigh sé*". ("*Fooy shay*"). Nearly all other Irish speakers would say "*chuaigh sé*" (*Hooey shay*). Perhaps, even, some older reader of *An Choinneal* is still able to recite bits of the Apostles Creed in Irish. So, how about trying the part "*fuaigh síos go hlfreann*"? This is a special pronunciation peculiar to our parish and a few other areas such as Tourmakeady, and Menlo beside Lough Corrib. But of course, with the influx of outer influences (including Munster Irish, which has been pushed by modern teachers) that old relic of our speech is fast dying out.

Relating to that speech fragment, the Scholar is interested to note some other traces of this same pronunciation (where *ch* is given the sound of *f*) in our English-Irish. Sometimes the sound has been frozen into the new language and must be dug out if it is to be noticed. Here is one easy one: The Irish word for a game is *cluiche* but it is now widely pronounced *cluife*, and in fact recent dictionaries list that spelling as a recognized form of the word.

Further instances might be of interest (watch out for the interchange between the two sounds of *Ch* and *F*: There are old people still in the area of Chreachwell (Galway) who pronounce it "Craffell". The placename Clifden is a corruption of the real Irish name *Clochán* but the *F* sound still surfaces in the Anglicized name. Perhaps the most interesting of all is one well-known family name. That name was, of course, originally an Irish surname which in Irish we still write *Ó Murchú*. And what is the old *sound* of that name? It is of course, *Murphy*. So, the Irish name became English and yet the old Irish name is still pronounced as Irish! Another instance of a name frozen into the other language is the village of Knocktopher (County Kilkenny) which is signposted simply "*An Tóchar*".

### Slán and Shalom

There is a growing practice by which young people of many races salute each other by "Shalom!" It has become fairly common among young people in Ireland. This is traced back to a Hebrew word – in wide use among Jewish people – which means "peace" or "well-being". It is tempting to see in this the remains of another word with which we are very familiar in Ireland, the word "Sláinte" which we use as a toast to "Good Health". (See *Keep Your Word*). Apart from the vague similarity in the shape and the sound of the two words, there is a common burden of meaning. The root Irish word is *slán*, and like the Hebrew word it means healthy, whole, wholesome, full of well-being, and holistic. There is a Galway organization to help those who are afflicted with cancer and it has taken the name *Slánú* (*healing*) which is a word for saved or redeemed. Again a European fable, of the cock arising from the cooking pot on Good Friday, has its own Irish version which finishes: "Mac na hÓighe *slán*" (literally, the Virgin's Son is safe). This in turn became the recognized Irish traditional version of the actual crow of a cock. It is in fact uncannily close to the actual familiar, onomatopoeic sound which rang throughout many a farmyard in Ireland before the Celtic Tiger began to prow.

In this same context, there is the Irish farewell wish "Go dté tú slán!" (*Go in good health*). And, of course, the more usual one, "Slán", which has become a very common farewell among younger people today. (Could it be that there is a link between this and "*so-long*" which has now disappeared as a farewell salute?). We can hazard a guess that the other Irish word *iomlán* is closely related, coming from *iom-slán* and meaning complete or entire.

### Sapper's Mark

This is a three-pronged symbol cut into stone and set in certain definite places. One might easily pass these by as merely incidental or of no significance; but they relate to corresponding points on the Ordnance Survey maps of an area.

This is how the word came. A sap is a trench, and the sappers were privates in the Royal Engineers (formerly the Royal Sappers and Miners). Older people in Louisburgh spoke of the Sappers who pitched tent in the parish during one severe winter in the second decade of this century and continued their work to the admiration of the local people. Many of the

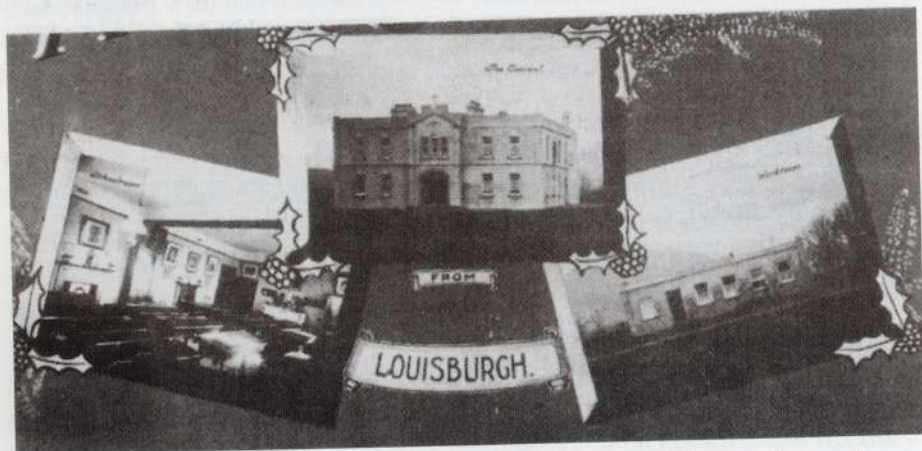


sapper's marks are identifiable in the parish still notable one on the pier at Old Head (and one at the foundation stone of the Louisburgh church.) Wouldn't it be worth while to make a collection of all the known sapper's mark in the parish area?

### The new post

How long is it ago since the symbols on the Irish post-offices and mail-cars displayed the logo "P T". It has quite an interesting history. The P and the T are easy to decipher they represent *Post agus Telegraf* (the Post and Telegraph department of our Irish State.) Even as children we were intrigued with that symbol and often called it jokingly *P seacht T*, referring to the middle symbol, seven (*seacht*). We knew that the seven was in fact the symbol for *and (agus)*. So in translation it was "P and T." This, was an abbreviation which was used widely by people who wrote in the Irish language, just as the American symbol E (for the Latin *et*) is now coming into use by some people.

Some old Irish books, in the Gaelic script, used that old abbreviation, 7. A text of collected stories entitled "Íosagán" written by Pádraic Pearse used that abbreviation widely. So much so that one frustrated reader complained that "he loved the stories themselves but he hated them ould *agus*".



Christmas card showing the two partitioned classrooms of the twenties and thirties situated in the Convent.

## Improvements and Future Developments in Louisburgh

By Therese Philbin

Louisburgh is one of the most beautiful places in the world. It has tall elegant mountains, miles of long sandy beaches, crystal clear rivers and lakes and acres of bogland and forests. It is the home to several types of wildlife and animals and of friendly and caring people. It is a unique place and I feel that we should share this beauty with people in the rest of Ireland and in other countries who are not as fortunate as ourselves to experience this beauty.

Tourism is the provider of some income to the community of Louisburgh, but it is clear that the tourism is not developed to its fullest potential. In following paragraphs I would like to put forward my opinions on what I would like to see in Louisburgh and what I think should be improved in order for the people of Louisburgh to provide and benefit from an outstanding tourist area.

There are many things that I would like to see in Louisburgh in order to encourage more and more tourists to come to the area. These hopefully would make their stay more enjoyable. The most important would be a hotel with a Leisure Complex. This would attract tourists and also provide valuable employment for the area. Activities that I would like to see developed for tourists that could be popular also for the people of the area are: hill-walking, a cycling club, a playground for children, a cinema, and a bigger library with access to computers and language learning facilities. One big necessity for the town of Louisburgh is public toilets. As someone said, "There is always room for improvement".

In Louisburgh's case there are many improvements to be made. One example is the traffic situation in Louisburgh. This was proposed by Peter Sweeney, candidate for Co. Council elections in the "Mayo News", 7th of April.

I think that the derelict houses should be renovated to improve the general appearance of the town. More plants and shrubs should be planted and improvement of the existing flower beds on the roads into Louisburgh.

While all this could be done with tourists in mind, the people of Louisburgh would also benefit from the creation of more employment and better facilities. These facilities would be there to make life more enjoyable for the community in the winter months when the tourists are not around.

**Editor's note:** Therese Philbin is daughter of John and Mary Philbin, Carramore. She is a pupil of Scoil Phádraig Naofa, Louisburgh and is aged 11.



## Louisburgh Pastoral Centre.

Just a brief outline of the history of this building and how it came to be used as a Pastoral Centre.

### History:

Up to three years ago, June '96, this building was used as a Primary School for the girls in the parish. The boys had their own separate Primary School approx 4 mile out the road; in Sept '96 both schools were amalgamated and the new school was built on the site of the old school at Tooreen. At that stage this building, now the Pastoral Centre, was in relatively good shape structurally and when it was vacated it was given to the Parish by the Sisters of Mercy at a nominal cost to be used for the needs of the Louisburgh community.

### Why we need a Parish Centre in Louisburgh:

Louisburgh itself is not well populated. Like many other villages west of the Shannon it is vital that its identity is maintained. Youth and Elderly are vital groups within any community and rather than wait for Gov. to come to our aid, it was decided that we ourselves, as parishioners, would do something. At that particular time, '96-'97, there were three groups in particular who needed accommodation urgently: Louisburgh Community Playgroup, Louisburgh Community Project, Senior Citizens' Group.

### How it Began:

Fr. Tadhg O'Morain, PP had negotiated the purchase of the building with the Sisters of Mercy in '96. In Sept., '97, our new PP. Fr. Tommy Mannion, assisted by our then curate Fr. Paddy Mooney, set up a Parish Council. From this group of approx twenty members, a sub-committee was asked to oversee this particular project. Both priests further negotiated with the Dept. of Education and Science; the Dept. is satisfied that the building will be used for parish development.



*The Pastoral Centre*

### Funding:

This sub-committee of nine members began to move fairly rapidly in order to get the building re-furbished. Thus began the search for urgently needed funding. We couldn't burden the local community again as they had already contributed towards the Parochial Hall, the new Primary School and various other worthwhile projects in Louisburgh. So, aid and funding was sought from organisations who are interested in promoting growth and development particularly in rural and disadvantaged areas.

A: Maigh Eo Theas ag Dul Chun Cinn gave a marvellous injection of cash to begin with and they increased this to £14106.00. We are deeply grateful for this funding.

B: National Lottery (Dept. of Health) assisted us with £6500.00 and again we wish to acknowledge this and thank them also.

C: Western Health Board - £2500.00 .

D: Dept. of Social, Community and Family Affairs - £1000.00.

Once again, our thanks to all groups.

These fairly substantial grants made the work of refurbishment possible.

Work carried out on the building: We were very fortunate to have Liam McNamara, a Louisburgh man, as our main contractor. The project included:



- (a) Necessary facilities for pre-school children, mainly the installation of low-level toilets and the re-furbishing of a suitable room for the children and their carers.
- (b) Facilities for the Disabled included the building of a ramp to provide access for wheel- and pushchairs. This was a totally new addition and was a rather tricky undertaking, but it's turned out well. An Invalid toilet is also included in the building.
- (c) Electrical and Plumbing-fairly extensive modernization and repair work was carried out by local electrician PJ Sammin.
- (d) The roof was repaired by Jim Cooney.
- (e) The three rooms were refurbished, carpeted, painted and carpentry work was done according to the needs of the various groups who would be using these rooms.
- (f) New entrance was necessary to allow access to the car park which was the old school yard. This will be properly marked out when the housing for the elderly is completed. Exteriors have been painted and essential repairs are carried out. A new front door was installed.
- (g) Washeteria has been set up in the building; Anne Grealis is wished every success in this essential venture.

#### Facilities provided in the Centre:

- (a) Youth: Louisburgh Community Playgroup. With new regulations regarding public buildings it was necessary to bring the Centre to the required regulatory standards.
- (b) Louisburgh Community Project Group provides many useful facilities within the local community. (see report)
- (c) Senior Citizens have their regular meetings and social events in the Centre; their room will also be used by the residents of the new Housing Scheme for the Elderly as a Day Care facility.

#### (d) Other groups:

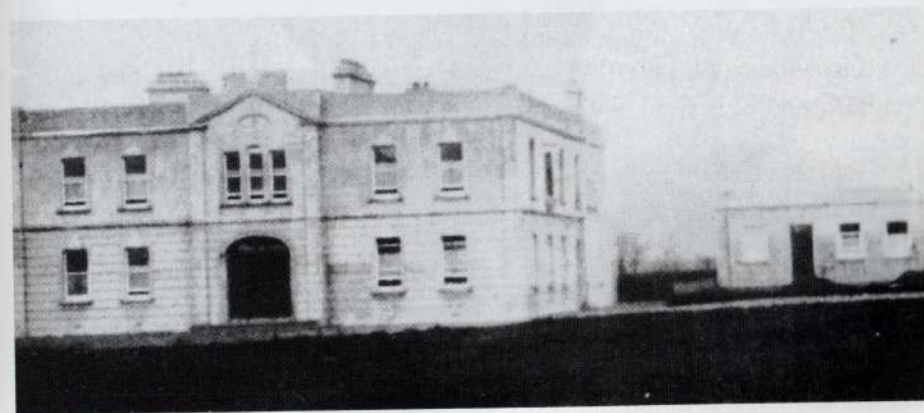
- Parish Council
- Apostolic Workers
- Society of St Vincent de Paul
- Renew Groups
- Adult Ed
- Louisburgh/Killeen/Kitali Group
- Washeteria; an essential service, especially during the tourist season
- Order of Malta who have been given permission for a temporary shelter for their ambulance

Committee Members: Fr Tommy Mannion, PP; Sue O'Toole; Sr Mary Kelly; John Mc Connell; Patrick Sammin; Bob Reaney; Joe Fergus; Michael O'Toole; Fr Mooney, until his appointment to Leenane.

We wish to acknowledge and thank all the other various members who helped; they include Playgroup members, Senior Citizens, Louisburgh Community Project, Ann Grealis and FAS.

*Sr Mary Kelly*

**Editor's note:** The Centre was officially opened by Mr Eamonn O' Cuiv, Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.



*The Convent and 'Workroom' as it was in 1926.*



## Order of Malta

A meeting was held in the Parochial Hall on March 11th 1998 to see if there was any local interest in setting the Order of Malta in Louisburgh. It transpired that interest was very high and with great encouragement from our local doctor, Dr. Patricia Heneghan, who is now our medical adviser, and Fr. Tommy Mannion our Pastoral Director we set forth.

For the next eight weeks courses in basic first aid were held in the hall every Wednesday and at the end an assessment was held and everyone passed with flying colours.

It was then decided to set up this branch in Louisburgh as a sub-branch of Westport for the first year.

The Westport Unit then acquired a new ambulance and the Louisburgh Unit was asked if we would like to take their old ambulance – we jumped at the chance. Upon receiving the ambulance we took it out of service for two weeks in which time some minor repairs were made. At this stage I have to say it was as a result of a very generous donation by our local factory, Nomadic Limited, that made this possible. Mr. Jerome Gannon, Managing Director of Nomadic Ltd., himself an Order of Malta member, was delighted to be of assistance to us.

We had our Inauguration Mass in St Patrick's Church, Louisburgh in September and Nomadic representatives Michael Tiernan and Eileen Walsh officially handed over the keys of this ambulance to us.



This is not the first branch of the Order of Malta here in Louisburgh. In 1968 a branch was set up under the late Michael Gallagher RIP. This was an active branch at that time and we now know that there were 16 members. They would cycle to the Reek on Reek Saturday night (those were the days of night pilgrimages) and after the removal of any injured by stretcher to waiting ambulances from the mountain they would cycle back to Louisburgh on Sunday morning.

Our ambulance is housed, thanks to the generosity of Seamus and Ann O'Toole, at Moneen but plans are in the pipeline to build our own garage in Louisburgh.

There are 24 active members in the Louisburgh branch to date and continuous training is taking place. It is hoped that the cadet corps will follow and these will be future volunteers of the Louisburgh unit of the Order of Malta.

Sgt. Jimmy Corrigan  
Officer in Charge  
Louisburgh Order of Malta



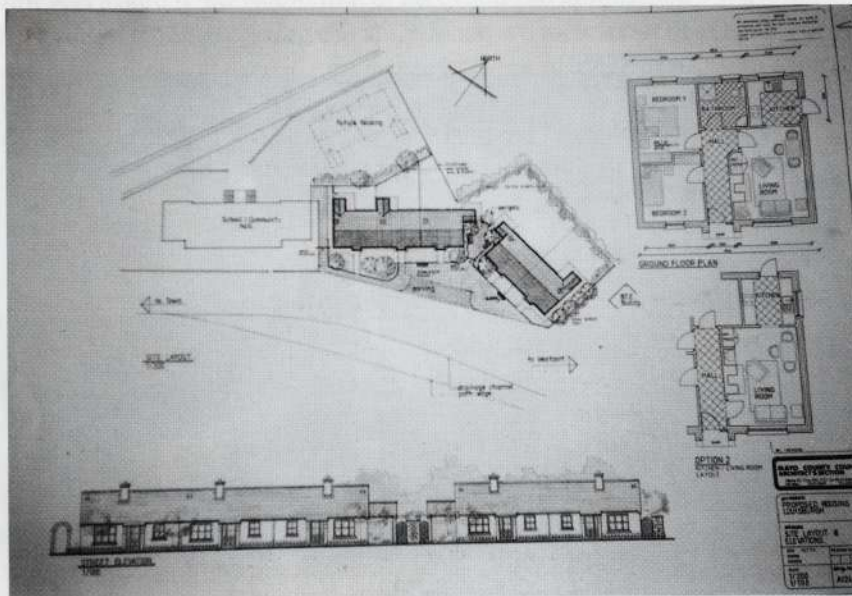
*Louisburgh Order of Malta Inauguration Day.*



## Housing for the Elderly

With so many elderly people in our parish, some of them living in isolated locations, the need for the provision of community housing was identified. Towards this end a group came together in Nov. '95 and formed a committee under the chairmanship of Fr. Paddy Mooney. Other members are John McConnell, Eileen Kerr, Mary Fergus, Marian McNamara, Teresa Sammon, Bernadette Burke, John Davitt, Sally Davitt and Imelda O'Grady. When Fr Paddy Mooney left the parish to take up appointment as PP of Leenane, Fr Tommy Mannion was elected chairman. Despite many difficulties along the way, work has now started on the construction of five houses on a site on the Westport Road beside the Pastoral Centre and convenient to all amenities. As five houses may not cater for all social housing needs in the parish, it is hoped that a second phase may be added in the future.

*Imelda O'Grady, Old Head.*



## Louisburgh Community Project

The Louisburgh Community Project was first established in 1994 as a local response to needs identified by local people. It soon became part of the network of Community Development Projects around the country operating under the National Community Development Programme.

The Project is funded from the National Lottery by the Department of Social, Community and Family Affairs. The funding provides for the project's core costs.

### The Project aims are:

- To support community activity.
- To develop new initiatives in meeting gaps between existing provisions and the needs of the community.
- To encourage and enable people in the community to become involved in the Project and Community Development generally according to their needs and interests.
- Act as an information service and give administrative support to Community Groups ie. Typing, photocopying, fax and telephone facilities.

### Other Initiatives

- Publication of a Community Newsletter, distributed throughout the Parish free of charge. The Newsletter contains details of Community activity, local issues, welfare entitlements, Project activities etc.
- Rural Transport Initiative – Louisburgh Community Project in association with South West Mayo Development company successfully negotiated with Bus Éireann and secured a new public bus service for Louisburgh and the surrounding area. This new service came into operation on 9 October 1998.



The two public bus routes are being provided in response to the transport survey, which was undertaken by Damien Woods. Damien, an independent researcher working in co-operation with Louisburgh Community Project, spent many evenings during the Summer of '98 calling randomly to houses in the Louisburgh/Killeen rural areas, seeking views on the current public bus service. Thanks to the openness, help and co-operation he received from members of the community, Damien was able to complete a study of the service and make recommendations based on the opinions of the people.

The new routes give all members of the community, who in the past have not had access to bus services, the opportunity to travel into Louisburgh and out to the rural areas again, every Friday throughout the year.

This service will be monitored by Bus Éireann and will only continue to operate if members of the community use the buses.

For further details on routes, enquiries etc. contact the Project.

- We liaise and link with both local primary and secondary schools in the area and have organised various Arts activities for the students eg. "Haushi Kutin Wind Quintet, Horse and Bamboo workshops, Recycling Arts Project, Community Development module with Transition year students, Rowan Tolley-Mime workshops etc.
- We are currently organising "Sonas" Mayo's first ever Children's Arts festival which will take place from 11- 17 October 1999 in Louisburgh. Activities will include various performances and workshops in puppet-making, mask-making, storytelling, jewellery-making, puppet shows etc. Clann na Ulaidh, a group from Belfast, will visit Louisburgh during the festival. This group was set up to promote Education through living history, story telling, archery, battle re-enactment and jewellery making. This will be an opportunity for all the family to go back in time and see how the Celts lived – re-enacted by Clann na Ulaidh.

Briega Hawkins, from Belfast, has worked with children and adults with disabilities for the past twenty years. Over the past few years Briega was

involved with an award winning production in the Waterfront Hall Belfast, performed entirely by adults with Downs Syndrome. Briega will be visiting Louisburgh during the week of the festival and will give children and adults with and without learning difficulties the opportunity to demonstrate their creativity. Briega will work with groups from Sancta Maria College and Carrowbeg Enterprise. There is a wide range of activities to cater for all ages during 'Sonas'.

- Establishment of Cupla Focal Club – the group meet every Monday night. Informal gathering where we all learn a few words of Gaeilge – have a bit of 'craic', cupán tae agus comhrá !!
- We also initiated a Women's Mini-Marathon Meet and Train Group – 6 local women participated in one of the biggest Women's Mini-Marathon event in the world on 13 June '99 in Dublin. The group collected £600 which we donated to Louisburgh Order of Malta.

If you would like to find out more about any of the activities above please contact Breda or Peg at 098 66218 (Tel) 098 66412 (Fax), E-mail lcpl@anu.ie.



## Apostolic Work Society

The Society was founded in Belfast in 1921 by Agnes Mc Cawley. Its purpose is to provide vestments, altar linens and sacred vessels for missionaries in Third World countries. Its members also make clothing for children in those under-developed areas.

When possible they provide financial aid. They help by prayer for the missionary work and workers. The funding is dependent solely on raffles, functions and an Annual Collection.

*Evelyn Leamy,  
Bunowen*



## Louisburgh, Killeen, Kitale Partnership

**A**fter a visit from Sr. Mary Dunne to Louisburgh, in September of last year, a partnership was set up in October 1998, to help alleviate the hardships experienced in Kitale, Africa. As a group of about fourteen we undertook to help raise some funds which we could send to Sr. Mary through the Medical Missionaries of Mary.

These funds are to be used to help the local people to become self-sufficient, through farming their own lands. Some of the money will be used to help buy medication for lots of children and adults affected by AIDS.

This group of local people known as the Louisburgh, Killeen, Kitale Partnership has raised over £1,000 to date. This money has been sent to Sr. Mary and we have received confirmation of receipt. She is very grateful for our help and kindness in thinking of her and her cares.

We hope to continue this project for the coming future and we thank all who have contributed to this worthy cause. New members are welcome at any time.

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## Remembering Sion

Our beloved teacher of revered memory, Mrs Maguire, taught us this verse of song of good advice:

*“Be good, sweet and maid  
And let who can be clever.  
Do noble deeds,  
Not dream them all day long.  
And so make life, death,  
And that vast forever  
One grand sweet song”.*

## Louisburgh Pastoral Council

**L**ouisburgh Pastoral Council is a voluntary body in which priests, religious and laity join together as a people of God to build up Christ's kingdom and to share responsibility for the development of the parish.

The Council was formed through parish nominations in September 1997 and the membership was extended through the co-option of people from Apostolic organisations in the parish. Specific Functions include:

The development of lay-participation in liturgy;

The organisation of courses, study-groups etc;

The support of family life.

### Membership

Fr. Mannion, PP; Fr. Darcy; John McConnell; Sr. Marie King;  
Sr. Mary Kelly; Marian McNamara; Kathleen Broderick; Patrick Sammin;  
John Lyons; Padraig O'Toole; Sue O'Toole; Brigid Sammin; Elaine Duffy;  
Imelda O'Grady; William McNamara; Breta O'Malley, Carmel McLoughlin.

### Sub-Committees:

Eucharistic Ministry  
Mass Readers  
Choir Pastoral Centre Committee  
Housing for the Elderly Committee  
Church Renovations Committee  
Liturgy Group  
Louisburgh/Killeen/Kitale Association  
Finance Committee.

The Pastoral Council Chairperson is John Lyons and the Secretary is Brigid Sammin.



## Féile Chois Cuain

In the Autumn of '94 a group of Traditional Music enthusiasts came together with the aim of promoting traditional music and song in the locality. It was decided that a Festival would be the ideal vehicle for providing a 'shop window' for the Traditional Arts. The idea of a Traditional Music Festival had often been mooted before but was always put on the 'mear fhada'. However with the 'Louisburgh 200' celebrations being planned for '95 this was the ideal opportunity and it was decided to incorporate 'Féile Chois Cuain' in the '200 celebrations.

The Mayo Co. Co. Arts Officer, John Coll, was supportive and promised every assistance – he proved as good as his word. An ambitious programme was drawn up featuring Classes (by top quality musicians and singers), Lectures, Céilí, Sessions and a Grand Concert – featuring outstanding exponents from all over Ireland and beyond. 'Féile' was fixed for the '95 May Bank Holiday weekend. It proved an outstanding success and has now become an Annual event.

The festival is now very well established and attracts great numbers of performers and enthusiasts each year. Accommodation is provided for fifty to sixty guest musicians/singers and these are augmented by many others from Mayo, Connemara and elsewhere. One of the features of 'Féile' is the number of musicians and singers who return each year. Many have come initially to teach classes but continue to return year after year, having thoroughly enjoyed their previous visits to Louisburgh. A list of those who have taken part in 'Féile Chois Cuain' is like a 'who's who' in traditional music circles.

The Grand Concert is the highlight of the week-end and features the very best of traditional music and song. This is a superb concert and matches any Comhaltas Tour Concert for quality. Raidio na Gaeltachta has broadcast the music and sean-nós content of the Concert each year. The music and

singing classes are proving very popular. All of the teachers are All-Ireland standard and are experienced teachers of music/singing. It is the policy of 'Féile' to have new 'teachers' each year. The idea being to give 'students' an opportunity to hear and learn from as wide a range of experts as possible. The policy has proven very successful to date.

The Sunday night Céilí is extremely popular and draws dancers from near and far. While the emphasis is on music and song, the special features are a very important and enjoyable part of the week-end. These have included talks on 'Sean-nós', 'our musical tradition – orange and green', 'humour in song' and 'our sea shore'.

A talk by John Lyons on the influx of Ulster people to the locality following the battle of the Diamond in 1795, a feature on the Famine – songs, poems and prose, almost all composed locally – performed by the Louisburgh Drama group, and a 'Diaspora' concert featuring musicians and singers whose parent/s came from the locality, were of particular local interest. The whole week-end is stitched together by the almost non-stop sessions taking place in the pubs, or outdoor as the weather permits. In '98 & '99 participants in 'Féile' have provided the music and singing at last Mass on the Sunday of the festival.

The committee wish to thank everyone who has supported the festival, in many different ways, over the past five years. A special word of thanks to all the guests who have attended, while they may be big names and masters of their craft their generosity and helpfulness has to be experienced to be believed. They surely are a breed apart.

The committee involved are: Mairéad Staunton, Kilsallagh; Séamus Heneghan, Tallabawn; John Joe McDonnell, Mullagh; John O'Toole, Doughmakeown; Tommy Grealis, Falduff; John O'Toole, Tallabawn and Michael O'Grady, Old Head. Tim Tiernan, Doughmakeown, one of the founder members, has since moved to Ennis but continues to take a keen interest in the festival.



## Louisburgh Parish Hall

Hall Committee:

Chairperson, Fr Tommie Mannion, PP;

Vice Chair, Sr Mary Kelly;

Secretary, Eileen Maxwell;

Assist. Sec., Gwen Harney;

Treasurer, Mary Philbin;

PRO, Ayleen O'Malley

Members: Patrick O'Grady; John F. O'Toole; Mary Keane; P.J. Sammin;  
Breege McCormack; Mary O'Toole; Angela McGuinness.

The Committee are grateful to Seán Harney, Michael Healy and Michael Reilly for supervising the Discos. The following Committees use the Hall on a regular basis: Louisburgh GAA; Louisburgh FCA; Louisburgh ICA; FAS: Art Class; Badminton; Feachtas; Co. Library; Order of Malta; Community Alert; Discos; Playgroup Committee; Community Project; Western Care; Hospice Support Group; Pioneer Association; Louisburgh Holiday Cottages; Louisburgh Traders; Louisburgh Community Council; Louisburgh Credit Union AGM; Féile Chois Cuain; Sancta Maria College annual musical.

Since publication of the last "Coinneal" the Hall Committee lost one of its most loyal members, Basil Morahan, R.I.P., who was the driving force and inspiration during the period when the Hall underwent major renovations a few years ago. Fr Paddy Mooney, former Chairperson, has been transferred as PP of Leenane. His many gifts and talents were invaluable during the time of great change in the Hall; the Committee wish him health and happiness in his new position. The Committee also wish to record their appreciation of Sr Mary Kelly who is leaving on a career break of one year. Forther information re bookings etc from P.R.O., Ayleen O'Malley, Long St., Louisburgh.

## My Own Place

*If I had grown up in the place where I was born,  
Where the buildings reach up to the sky  
And the Great Lakes the size of the ocean,  
Would dazze the sight from your eyes  
Where the Irish they settled in their thousands,  
And the green flag was proud to be seen  
In the city that they call Chicago,  
How different my life might have been.*

*But my parents brought me home to Ireland,  
Where Muilrea Mountains runs down to the sea  
At the entrance to the grand Killary Harbour,  
Where it meets the islands in Clew Bay  
Inishturk, Inishbofin, Cahir and Clare Island,  
Were like paintings every day of my life  
Where I grew up on the West Coast of Ireland,  
I would have missed this chapter of my life.*

*I would have missed the wild scenery round Louisburgh,  
And the good friends I made going to school  
As we picked the wild sloes and blackberries,  
On our way home from our school in Killadoon  
Then the creels on the donkey were hoisted  
to bring home the turf or the rack from the sea  
Our chores we accepted without question,  
They varied each season of the year.*

*With my uncle we dug up the sandeels,  
That were bait on the end of the line  
We would push out the curragh from Gorteen;  
Those memories linger on in my mind  
But sadness upset my young life;  
Ned was drowned on a fine summer's day  
By our own place at the foot of the mountain,  
Where the Atlantic rolls into Clew Bay.*

*The ruins of the old house are still standing,  
The cackle of hens from the half door are gone  
In my mind I think I hear music,  
For the sets that went on till the dawn  
Now I'm back and fixed up the old cottage,  
A wee bit up, and over the brae  
It's my own place at the foot of the mountains,  
Where the Atlantic rolls into Clew Bay.*

Frank Burke



## A Sound Education Among My Friends

One of my first journeys was to Doctor O'Grady's house in Mooneen to be vaccinated. At sixty-one I still bear the marks of it, though I'm not sure now what the vaccination was for. Later on, when I heard in catechism class that some sacraments like Baptism and Holy Orders "confer on the soul a character or spiritual mark that can never be effaced" I was sure I knew what was meant. It had to be the spiritual equivalent of the vaccination rings engraved among the freckles on my upper arm under the rim of my short sleeve.

Europe went to war in September 1939 when I was two-and-a-half, but I had no idea what war meant. So I followed my father around the fields, and slept on his coat sometimes when he was working in his shirt-sleeves. I sat with old Paddy MacDonald while he rested under the hawthorn at the crossroads to smoke his pipe. He lived in a little house in Long Street, and sowed a few ridges of potatoes and vegetables in what he called his *treasnóg* in one of our fields.

He was the only man I knew who regularly smoked a clay pipe. He called it his *duidín*. Even my father who often had pipe trouble had a series of little wooden pipes. One of them had an amber stem and I thought it must give his tobacco a fine golden flavour. Matches were scarce, especially during the war, so the men brought lighted coals to the field when they were working away from the house. They kept the coals alive by stacking sods of turf around them in the shelter of a little hollow structure of stones. I used to call it the fire-house, and I hovered around it and watched the flame with as much devotion as any vestal virgin in a temple of ancient Rome.

Dear Paddy MacDonald,

*Oul' Paddy they called you. So I thought you were always old because up to then I was always young. You liked to smoke a leisurely pipe in the*

*shelter of the hawthorn near the ruins of the famine houses. And I, an old-fashioned youngest child, used to follow you down to the crossroads and sit beside you while you puffed away at your *duidín*. If we talked, only God knows now what we said.*

*Your white clay pipe I regarded as an object of great interest. It was like the ones I saw handed around with cut tobacco on plates at old James Durkan's wake. But I had no idea how poor and unsatisfactory a thing it was with its soapy, chalky taste, or how easy it was to break. But breakable it was. You lost your temper in a big way the day your rosy-cheeked wife, Mary, sat on it by accident. You had left it down for a minute on the stool beside the fire, filled and ready for your after-dinner smoke. But that happened to be the stool Mary sat down on when she went to take the weight off her feet after washing the dishes. It was an accident, of course. You knew that. But such a transgression was hard to forgive, tobacco being dear and pipes scarce.*

*"Thrawth," as she reported philosophically to my mother after the Nine Fridays that month, "thrawth, there was no love that night."*

*Oul' Paddy, my friend you were no Wyatt Earp. But every self-respecting man had his own range of sanctions . . .*

### 2

1940 was the last year before I went to school. It would be the last time, as it turned out, that I'd be free from teachers, classrooms, schools, colleges and all the things that make for an indoors kind of education, for well over fifty years. But in 1940 I had a different education as I made my way around the house and fields and shore in Bunowen. My companions at that stage were hens and ducks, geese and turkeys, cows, calves, heifers and bullocks, a quiet red mare, a donkey and her foal, a dog, a cat, the small birds that sang from the hedges and meadows, the seagulls, curlews, wag-tails and cailleach dubhs along the shore, the cobblers and shrimps in the rockpools, the flat-fish in the river, the rabbits in Michael Keane's land . . . A cross gander once tried to make off with a bit of my finger. And the turkey-cocks – our own and MacEvilly's – were a constant puffing, red-combed menace.



I knew the feel of warm eggs in a nest of hay, and loved the colour – but not the taste – of the cool turquoiseblue duck-eggs that were often laid out of doors. I followed the watery wanderings of geese in the direction of the river which was out of bounds for me. It was out of bounds for them too, but they didn't pay much attention to that. I knew the bony feel of a donkey's back under my own small rump, and I loved most of all sitting high on the smooth broad back of Dolly, my father's red mare, held firmly in place by his arms or those of my brother Johnny.

With all that space and freedom to enjoy, why was I so anxious to go to school? A moth to the candle-flame, maybe, or just that all my brothers and sisters – and my best friend, Mau Glynn were already in school. So school was the place to go.

*Dear Michael Tom Durkan,*

*I don't know why I associate you with 1940, that last year before I went to school. An old man, or so you seemed to me then, a cousin and friend of my mother and father, you were mild and jovial and kind. You were also a successful publican and butcher in the town, with a sound head for business. You'd drop into our kitchen on your way to Derrylahan to look after your sheep and cattle – or maybe to select the next animal for slaughter.*

*My mother was grateful to you for the off-cuts, bones and sheep's heads and the like, that you set aside for her. She used them to make some of the best soups I've ever tasted. My father and yourself talked about fairs and cattle-prices, politics and the war. But I remember you best because of the sweets and sugar-sticks – and the occasional golden apple – that you'd produce for me from the pocket of your coat.*

*I loved the sound of the brass tip of your walking stick on our kitchen floor, but I never thought why you had to use a walking-stick. Was it just for driving the animals? You didn't seem as old or stooped then as my father who was to outlive you. Were you stiff with rheumatism or arthritis or some old injury? I never thought to ask. I was too intent on what might come out of your pocket. Ah, the sweet selfishness of youth!*

*But I felt real grief in my heart the day, ten or twelve years later, when I*

*heard in my boarding school in Tourmakeady that you were dead. I was still young then, but I knew that you had died too soon. Old friend of my family, and bringer of good things that nurtured and sweetened the days of my childhood, Gracias.*

3

I went to school, hand-in-hand with my sister Sarah, one morning in May 1941. For the first few days school was fine. A big rosy-cheeked doll, a golden-red china apple, and a furry brown monkey, were all briefly touched and handled – and thereafter longingly contemplated – in Sister Concilio's glass-fronted press in the Infants classroom.

The school was four years old then, the same age as myself. The date 1937 is still visible over the front door on the old weather-beaten facade, but now it's a parish centre and no longer a school. After our brief run with the nun's toys we were expected to get down to business. First we had coloured paper to cut and fold, and márla or placticine to make shapes with. These turned out to be mostly long, colourless worms but the nun didn't seem to mind.

After that, school became a place where you went into the same classroom every morning, sat in the same iron-legged desk, looked at the same dark-stained splashes around the hole for the inkwell, used the same slates and little pieces of chalk to write with, and had the same *glantóir* or sometimes a surreptitious brush of the sleeve – to wipe things clean again.

On the wall there was a picture of Little Bo Peep minding her sheep, and another one with a gamey-looking cat playing the fiddle, while a cow – more athletic than any *bó bradach* I ever saw in Bunowen – jumped airily over the horns of a fine crescent moon.

Four years old, in a pink cotton dress with white flowers and trimmed pockets that my mother had made for me, and a school-bag of navy-blue apron-material with white spots that she ran up on the machine, I thought I was ready for anything. We marched around the room singing, *Sé túirne Mháire túirne sásta /Shiúil sé roinnt mhaith d'Éirinn*, but we didn't know



what the words meant. The masterweavers who had travelled from house to house with a *túirne* or loom in our grandparents time were already figures of the past. But we belted out the chorus *Tra-lala, tra-la-la, tra-la-la-la-léirí* with great gusto anyway.

Soon I settled down to learn my figures and letters, and then reading and writing and sums. A caterpillar on a cabbage-leaf in one of the first reading-lessons turned into a white butterfly without much trouble, and a little star twinkled in the sky, far, far away like all the stars I'd ever know.

Santa Claus came that Christmas in a new language. He was *Daidí na Nollag*, and Irish was a subject we had to learn in school. It was new to me because neither my mother nor father could speak it although our neighbour Tom Glynn could. I didn't realise then that it was the language of my ancestors and a very old language indeed.

*Dear Mr Lynch,*

*I never knew your first name, a strangely unforgotten figure from my first year in school. You were my friend Peto Fearon's grandfather, but your most important role in my life was to stand in your doorway and tell us the time as we sprinted down Long Street to get into the yard before Sister Concilio rang the bell.*

*I went to my Aunt Maggie Durkan's house on The Square every day for my lunch. But she had her little shop to mind – she had to walk in and out, in and out, I don't know how many times a day on her lame leg, to make a living selling penny bars and pints of para ffin and packets of Woodbine. So I might have to wait for my cocoa – or the great treat sometimes of a tasty Irish stew – and getting back to school before the bell rang could sometimes be a dodgy business.*

*That's where you came in, Mr Lynch, with your quiet, encouraging smile. You'd stand in your doorway holding your pocket-watch on the end of its golden chain – the black Roman numerals on the dial were still a great mystery to me – and you'd tell us the time in such a way that, although we knew we were late, we still felt that we might just make it.*

*You were a retired policeman in a dark suit and neat trilby hat. God knows what kind of rough work your calling in the police had brought you in those violent years before Ireland became a Free State. But however it was, it didn't show on your kindly features as an old man. While I have forgotten many of your contemporaries, I can still see you, watch in hand, quietly encouraging us with a friendly smile. And I don't know why – maybe because those were the 1940's and the song was popular then – but whenever I hear the tune "Amor, amor, my love" on the radio, to this day I think of your dark-suited figure standing quietly in a Louisburgh doorway . . .*

4

"Isn't the war awful?" our neighbour Annie Mary said. She had the art of bringing in a generality whenever she wanted to change the subject of an inconvenient conversation. The war was on nearly everyone's lips at the time – to such an extent that, for me, "the war" will always be that one war of my childhood, the Second World War. But in the beginning it just meant names like Hitler and Mussolini and Churchill, and bits that my mother told us from the newspaper.

We had no radio in our house, so my father used to read *The Irish Press* at night, sitting in the small circle of light directly underneath the paraffin lamp hanging from the kitchen ceiling. There were reports about air-raids, and fire-bombs falling on cities like Coventry and Birmingham, London and Berlin. But then the effects of the war began to come a bit nearer.

A mine was washed ashore near Louisburgh and one of our cattle rammed its head through the bars of a gate and was killed trying to run away from the blast. A soldier's legless body was washed in on a raft, and a plane crashed near Emlagh. And one Sunday I saw soldiers marching down the Bunowen road past our house to the sea. They did some kind of manouevres near Fairy Hill. They were members of the Local Defence Force, carrying old Enfield rifles and swinging along to the tune of *Step Together*, but they looked like the real thing to me.

My sisters, Alice and Annie Margaret, went to England in 1943 and 44. My mother and father argued bitterly about them going. I remember my mother saying, "It's not right to let any little girl into a country that's in the



middle of a war. There are bombs falling every night of the week in England.” But Annie Margaret was determined to go. She left Bunowen in 1943, and not long afterwards Alice followed her. In the beginning they worked for Auntie Bridgie in the Brick Hall Hotel in a small town called Skipton in the Dales of Yorkshire. That eased my mother’s mind a bit. It didn’t seem like a place where too many bombs might fall.

*Dear neighbour, Annie Mary,*

*Someone called you “The Twilight Lady” of our village. You were already elderly and wrinkled when I remember you. Prematurely aged, maybe, from the long years you spent minding your semi-invalid mother and keeping house for your bachelor brother, Michael. It was no joke trying to make ends meet on a small farm that was often flooded by the river or soaked by the rainstorms that blew in from the Atlantic.*

*You went to the town at nightfall to sell eggs and buy things for the house. When electricity came to Louisburgh – and brightened up the little streets at night – I heard you telling my mother that the new lights dazzled you. You could hardly see, you said. The contrast with your shadowy little kitchen was too strong, maybe?*

*Your life was full of hardship and struggle, but you were kind too. I drank cups of fresh buttermilk and ate slices of bread-and-butter sprinkled with sugar, in your kitchen, when I went down to deliver The Messenger to your mother. Your brother and sister had gone to America years before. I have since met their children, successful professional people, on summer visits to the little abandoned homestead. But you spent all your life in Kilgeever parish.. You saw your parents die and your brother gradually lose heart for farming. You became a woman of few words and cautious, oft-repeated phrases.*

But just once you made a statement full of candour and unaccustomed feeling that your neighbours remembered. You said, “We all had our chances, so we had, but we didn’t take them. And weren’t we the fools?” A play could be built up around a statement like that.

“Time and tide wait for no man.” By 1943 I was learning to write headlines, copying them carefully with a scratchy N-pen, in a copybook that had narrow blue-and-red lines to guide me. But blobs of powdery blue-black ink seemed to spoil even my best efforts – and probably would still if I had to write with an N-pen . . .

I knew a fair bit about the tide and its comings and goings. I was often at the sea, especially when we had to go picking winkles or sea-rods or carrigeen. But there were things I didn’t know yet about time. I put my finger on one of them when we went back to school after Christmas. Before the holidays we used to write 1943 in the date at the top right-hand corner of our headline copies. When we came back we had to change it to 1944. And soon I became six instead of five.

By then the novelty of school had worn off me. A good ghost story in Bridgie O’Donnell’s kitchen, a game of cards with Mau, climbing trees or catching cobblers with Anthony, delivering the milk in the town for my mother, or digging sandeels with my father – even feeding the calves – anything was preferable to having to sit down and do homework. What I liked best was to go out and ride the donkey, or go for messages on the bike, or go looking for birds nests, or pig-nuts, or hazel-nuts, or sloes or blackberries . . . whatever the season offered.

*And us four, Geraldine, Margarita, Eva and myself:*

*We held hands for ring-a-rosie, kicked the same lid of an old polish-tin for hop-scotch, and shouted “Relievio” when we played on the grey strip of concrete behind the school. We played “Fenians versus Police” for a season and would have rescued the Manchester Martyrs from the gallows if we could.*

*Tip and run. We tipped and ran, two of us to places far away along the Pacific coast; one to a teen-age grave, and the other to a young adult death – both of them buried these many years in the green sloping field in Kilgeever within sound of the Atlantic surf on stormy nights.*

*Geraldine, a widow in San Francisco, me a semi-hermit in Valparaiso,*



*Margarita unhappily dead in her thirties, and Eva the first of us to go – fair-haired, blue-habited, pale like marble on her too-early death-bed, lost to us forever before she was sixteen.*

*“For what after all is the past,” John Updike asks somewhere, “but a vast sheet of darkness in which a few moments, pricked apparently at random, shine?” And what is the present but a fleeting moment in which we can remember with gratitude those who shared with us the happy distant lights of childhood?*

## 6

In 1944 I made my First Confession. What did I confess? Telling lies? Stealing twopence from under the statue on the mantelpiece in the front room at home? I don't remember. All I can clearly recollect is that Father Morley heard my confession, with one hand cupped around his ear, at the end of a long bench up near the pulpit. So I didn't get to confess in the box and I felt a bit let down about that.

Along with catechism answers, catechism-notes, biblestories, prayers, hymns and aspirations, we also had to learn how to stick out our tongues in a dignified way to receive Holy Communion. The altar-rails were too high for us to kneel at, so we had to stand up to receive. I felt a bit short-changed about that too – kneeling devoutly with joined hands being the proper way to receive Holy Communion as far as I was concerned. The good part was that the priest celebrating Mass that Whit Sunday morning was my cousin Father Pat, Aunt Maggie Prendergast's son from Achony, and my brother Liam was one of the altarboys. That made my mother happy.

Afterwards there was a feast in the convent – sweet tea from one of the biggest teapots I ever saw, bread-and-jam and rock buns, and bowls of jelly and blancmange. Then we climbed up to the flat roof of the convent and looked down at the town of Louisburgh and the river. We strewed rosepetals before the Blessed Sacrament in the procession for Corpus Christi, and I got tar on my white dress when we knelt near the old weigh-bridge outside the courthouse for Benediction. I lost the sixpence that Father Morley gave me too. It fell into a clump of whins behind Katie Donnelly's house.

*And The Master, John T. Morahan:*

*Almost any bit of familiar Gregorian chant will bring you – and Mother Michael – vividly to my mind: Pange Lingua, Lauda Sion, Salve Regina, the Missa de Angelis . . . Above all, I remember you singing the Venite Adoremus at Christmas. I can catch the timbre of an ageing tenor voice singing strongly in a cold church on a Christmas morning . . . Or intoning the Kyrie Eleison at a High Mass for a poor man's funeral in the dust of some forgotten week-day.*

*Dapper or Dap, my brothers and their friends, your pupils, called you. I remember you as a small elderly man with a high, balding forehead and bright expressive eyes. And I remember you writing a cheque for three guineas – a goodly sum in those days – to make a generous gesture towards me and my family – especially towards my father with whom you had shared the adrenalin of old election campaigns – the night before I entered the convent in 1956.*

My father wrote to me soon after you died, one of the very few letters I ever got from him. “I feel lonesome now,” he said. “My friend Johnny Morahan has died – and died suddenly.” Well, may your voices ring out together again with all the life of your old friendship. Go gcanaigí go binn ansiúd i bhfochair na naomh.

## 7

Saving your soul – or rather the fear of losing it and spending all eternity in the flames of hell – set me thinking, for a while, about trying to find a way out. I thought I'd like to be a bird. I understood that birds had no souls to save or lose. I used to look speculatively at the ducks – a life foot-loose and fancy-free where all streams led to the river or the sea . . . That might suit me.

Sonny Geoghagan was a rangy young fellow, tall and strong, but still in short pants the first time he came to help my father with the Spring sowing. After that he came whenever we needed help. He sang and whistled as he worked, and I played close by, under a big rock with a long gash in its side. It was a deep narrow crevice that looked very like a thin slanted mouth.



This was supposed to be a fairy rock. If curiosity made you stick your hand too far into that dangerous crevice, you might be pulled down inside and end up in the land of the fairies or the dead . . .

So the rock held all the fear and fascination of a scary place. But Sonny's lively songs and whistled tunes were always comforting. I'd usually move over after a while and sit nearer to where he was working. I'd hunker down on the edge of a ridge while he did his weeding and moulding and singing and chatting. When I was called in for my tea, or had to go away to do a message for my mother, Sonny would put on a sad face and say, "Ah, then Terry, sure you're not going to leave me?" And I'd feel like a deserter going off and leaving him there on his own near the fairy rock.

They were the words of a song, I realized afterwards, but back then I thought Sonny was really sad whenever I left him.

Soon after that he went away to work in London. I felt lonely and I thought of him whenever I played near the fairy rock. I wanted to tell him that I hadn't left him, but that he had gone away and left me. But I never got the chance. He was drowned in the Thames, not very long after he left Ireland. I'm not sure if he even lived to see his twentieth birthday.

*So Sonny, my lost comrade:*

I dropped a flower into the waters of old Father Thames for you the first time I stood by the bank of that river where it flows through the lovely county of Berkshire, not far from my sister Annie Margaret's house in Reading. I don't know which poet – maybe it's T.S. Eliot – I was borrowing from when I whispered, "Sweet Thames flow softly where Sonny ended his songs."

Childhood is the ground of our most lasting experiences, a country to which we can never return but which we can sometimes re-visit.

Teresita Durkan  
Playa Ancha, Valparaiso, Chile  
9/5/1998

*An Choinneal congratulates the people of Killeen in their recent celebrations of the centenary of Holy Family Church.*

## **Killeen, Church and People, Holy Family Church 1897-1997**

**T**he Killeen Church Centenary Committee have just published a magnificent 224-page book to coincide with weekend centenary celebrations.

The aim of the book, according to Mr. Jimmy Egan is to gather between its covers a record of Killeen's past. It is for local people, for students of local history and it should be of special interest to emigrants from the area, as well as for people tracing family roots and for anybody who wants to know more about Killeen.

### **RESPONSE**

In compiling "Killeen, Church and People – Holy Family Church 1897-1997" the Centenary Committee decided to draw on the resources and talents of many people in the area and they got a wonderful response.

Said Mr. Egan – we believe we have a book that is worthy of the reader's time and attention. It's a pictorial and written record of the life of a rural area through the 20th century. There are over one hundred pictures in all, with written contributions from more than 20 writers, some already famous and some, perhaps, on the way to being famous."

### **STRUCTURED**

The book is structured into seven sections, each with a particular focus:

- 1 – Roots – deals with the area's archaeological and natural heritage;
- 2 – A Journey of Faith – A key section, includes a history of Gowlan and



Killeen Church as well as a record of Priests and Nuns of the area and, in keeping with the area's missionary tradition, a personal account by a missionary priest;

3 – The 19th Century – A Social History entitled Land, Religion and Survival with clearances, evictions and proselytism, poverty, etc. Killeen was a microcosm of most of the West of Ireland.

4 – Village Profiles – A key section that will merit attention by all Killeen people. For every townland there is information from the O'Donovan Survey 1838, the list of land occupiers in the Griffith Valuations of 1855 and the householders in 1901 Census, plus analysis, and finally the list of householders in 1997. Plus, a report on the Westport Union (1893) which gives vital insights into life at the end of the 19th Century in West Mayo.

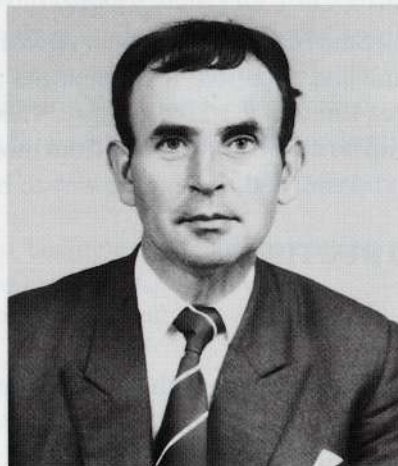
5/6 – A wonderful collection of reflections, stories and poems that would enhance any anthology. Lots of photos in this section – some of social and personal interest – school groups, G.A.A. teams, personalities etc. and also some photos of historic importance.

Finally, Killeen today – A section that reflects the vibrancy of youth. – Plus the many activities going on in the community but with some sobering thoughts also on the reality of rural decline and the need to harness local resources and build for the future. The book is now on sale in Louisburgh and Westport.

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### William O'Grady, R.I.P.

During the years William O'Grady wrote several articles for "An Choinneal" and also had several photos listed. William was a kind and gentle man, widely known and respected in the parish. He died on 31st July, 1998. After his Funeral Mass in Holy Family Church, Killeen on August 4th, he was laid to rest in the adjoining cemetery. RIP.



## A Day in the Life of Thallabawn

**M**y memories go back many years when a full working day was very hard, especially for the farmers and more so in the Spring, Summer and Autumn which were the busiest times of the year,

Spring would start with new lambs and the cows calving. The farmers really had a worrying time, especially at night when the new arrivals generally decided to put in their first appearance. In some cases the animals would have some difficulty in which case the vet would be called upon to assist.

The day would start at 7.30 a.m. with morning prayer, lighting the fire and getting breakfast. To follow this would be the milking and feeding of the animals. The milk would be separated and set up until evening. After this would follow the cleaning of the barns etc. Once more to return to the house to complete household chores and prepare lunch. Lunch would be served at 1.00 p.m. Following this short break we would continue with the baking of the bread, cakes and butter. It would soon be time to concentrate on the preparation of the tea after which the chores repeated themselves as of the first part of the day with the feeding of the animals etc. The custom was the Rosary was said 'come what may', this was a very important part of the day where everyone would gather together before going out to socialise.

This routine wasn't always worked to plan, if the weather was very fine we would be working very late into the night gathering in the harvest. If this being the case, it was "work, work, work" very late into the night where social plans had to be forgotten.

Sunday was our day of rest. The weekdays might sound very hard but there was great enjoyment to be found in all especially when the visitors would arrive home on their holidays. We always knew there would be a spare pair of hands. Everyone worked well together and enjoyed the hard work.

I would say that organisation is the key to any working day in any job.

*Kathleem Ward (nee Loftus), Bristol*



## An Cipín

This is a primary-school feature which, as well as finding our children's views, will encourage school-children to write for the parish magazine, and, in time, for other publications. Thanks to all the teachers and students involved.

The subject was: **My Village in the Year 2000**

I would see my village in the year 2000 as an advanced village. It will have computer centres for children and adults. Even more into the millennium my village might turn into a big city. There will be advanced technology for schools, farms, police stations and pubs. My village Altóir – which means altar – has a megalithic tomb in it which dates back to the Bronze Age. That would be my village in the year 2000.

*Paul J. O'Grady*

My name is Brendan Scanlon and I live in Fermoyle meaning round hill. My village like most villages in rural Ireland has changed dramatically over the last few years and will continue to change. At present there are about twelve farms in the village but years ago there were about fifteen farms. This is a big change and will continue to change into the year 2000. My village's population is declining because young people are moving out and getting jobs in places where jobs are plentiful. More and more strangers are building holiday homes in the village, which is another big change. I think my village will change and will be a totally new village in another twenty years.

My name is Linda McNally. I live in Feenone. Feenone means The Wild Lamb. Back in 1855 Lord Sligo owned Feenone. In 1947 there were 22 families in Feenone. There are 26 families in Feenone in 1999. In Feenone

we live very close to the primary school, shop, church, and a beach. In Feenone there is a graveyard where small children were buried a very long time ago. Most families in Feenone make a living on farms. Every year the hotel in Killadoon holds a Darts competition. Feenone have always taken part and have won two finals. In the year 2000 I hope Feenone will increase its population. I hope there will be more houses. But I don't think my village will change much in the year 2000.

In the year 2000, we will be move into the new house. Then my sisters will be going to Dublin. There will be only four left at home. I will be in sixth class then but I will still be in the same classroom. There are six houses in my village. In the year 2000 there won't be any more. The dog will have pups and the donkey will have a foal.

*Mary Joyce*

The name of my village is Thallabawn. Thallabawn means White Ground. There are seven houses in my village. There are two B & B's. and in the summer lots of tourists come to stay in my village and they visit the two beaches. Most people own farms. The most type of animal you will see are sheep and cattle. There is one vacant house in my village. Going back a few years there were many more houses. A few people have emigrated. There are 6 children in my village. Many people say they wished they lived in Thallabawn. In the summer many people go up to the bog. In the year 2000 there will be 2 more houses in my village. Many people will be coming to school. Farms will be bigger. I will be in sixth class and 13 years of age. In the year 2000 my village will not be much different.

*Mary Josephine McDonnell*

My village is called Thallabawn which means "White Land". In 1841 the population of my village was 291. In 1851 there was a population of 136 and by the end of 1901 there was a population of 28. Now in 1999 there is about a population of 70. By the year 2000 there will be a population of 75 or more. In my village there are a lot of new houses being built which



will make the population bigger every year. During the summer the roads in my village are very busy with tourists going to the beach. There are three B&B guest houses in my village. The people in my village are busy as well. In the year 2000 there will be more houses and more guest houses I suppose. My village will be much the same in the year 2000. It will never change unless for the houses.

*Edel Ruane*



My name is Liam Scanlon and I live in Furmoy. The people in my village are very nice. There are fifteen houses in my village. There are forty people in my village. Most of the families were big but now most of the family members have married and moved away to their own homes and families. The biggest family in Furmoy in the year 2000 is Liam Scanlon's. There are 12 farms in Furmoy. I think there will be less farms in Furmoy because people from other countries looking for houses are buying up most of the land. Old people are selling their farms to tourists who build holiday homes. Others build houses on the land but they do not farm. They work in factories because farming does not give them enough money. I hope to be in the village for the year 2000 and much longer.



Curradavitt, pronounced Quirra Daavit meaning Coire Daibhid, Davids cauldron or salt pan, is the name of my Village. Curradavitt is situated near the centre of my Parish, about five miles south west of Louisburgh and 11 miles west of the road from Louisburgh to Bundorragha harbour. In 1841 my village had a population of 33, ten years later in 1851 the population had surprisingly increased to 43. Then in 1901 the population dropped to 31. In 1947 the number had increased again to 50. And today in 1999 with five families the population is 27. In the time of Landlords, Curradavitt was ruled by Lord Sligo. Many changes have taken place during the last ten years in my village. 10 years ago every family were producing their own, milk, meat, potatoes, vegetables, eggs, fowl, making all their own bread and butter. But sadly with all the major changes in farming and Ireland being under the E.U. rule small farms in Ireland are almost extinct. Every house is

modernized today with electricity, running water and all modern facilities. By the year 2000 most jobs will be done by the press of button. Unfortunately there will be no more long sunny evenings spent on the bogs saving turf and playing our games as our houses will be heated by the press of a button. Now with computers and new technology we can fax a message to anybody, anywhere in the world in minutes from my village Curradavitt.

*Patricia Davitt*

In the years gone by there was a school and a shop in the area of Cregganbawn. There was also a few thatched houses, which are no there now. Years ago, the Post Office was owned by the Tiernan family. Then it was transferred over to the O'Grady's who still own it. There are only seven houses. In the year 2000 my village will probably be the same except for one thing. There will be one more house which will be owned by Patrick Kitterick. I would say that would be all the changes in the area of Cregganbawn.

*Thomas Kilcoyne*



My name is P.J. O'Malley. My village is Feenone. In Feenone most people are farmers but one builds and one is a carpenter. The Feenone darts team won twice and came second twice. In the year 2000 I think the County Council will make roads that have less pot holes in them. The water is clear and good. The school will have less people from Feenone going to it. Maybe more business people will come to Feenone from college and start a business here. Some people from Feenone go to work in places such as Allergan, F.A.S and Nomadic Display.



About 50 years ago there were five house with a population of 32 people in Althore. Today there are four houses with a population of 17 people in Althore. One family immigrated to Castlepollard. Their land was divided among the local farmers. I think there will be less farmers in the year 2000.



Back in 1980's the children went Cregganbawn N.S.. That school is now closed. The children go to Killeen N.S. now. The people in sixth will be going into Sancta Maria College during 1999 and the year 2000. There is a blessed well at Althore. Many people who visited the well got cured. There is lake in our village called Althore lake.

*Kevin Armstrong*



### **Farming 1999**

This has been the worst year ever in Ireland. Firstly the weather was bad for two months. There wasn't any sun. The land got soft, so no fertilizer could go on the land. There was no growth what so ever. Nothing could go on the land not even cattle. There was no grass for them to graze on. Some animals starved. The farmers found it hard to keep all the stock alive. Animals were costing the farmers a lot of money. Some farmers had to sell some stock so they could keep the rest of the animals alive. Most people got out of their stock completely and got themselves jobs so they could earn money. The cattle, calf prices had gone rock bottom. It was hard for farmers to get out of stock. Farmers from Louisburgh-Killeen went as far as Ballyhaunis to sell their stock. As the months went by the farmer went short of silage. Every day the silage went down fast. So at the end some farmers bought hay and fed it to the cattle. The farmers would have to improve so the farm owners could do some work with the land. Then came more rain but no sun-shine.

*Mary Joyce*



My village is called Feenone. My name is Blain McNally. In 1897 there were twenty-two houses. Today there are twenty six houses. There is a Darts team. They have won two finals in a row and they went to the final this year. There is a school in Feenone and there is a B&B and there is one holiday house. Most of the people make a living on farms and in Feenone there is a childrens graveyard. In the year 2000 I hope there will be more houses.

## **Parting with Clare Island**

By Tom O'Malley

On a cold January evening in 1971, having parked at O'Donnell's sweetshop, myself, Christy Gibbons and Joe Keane went sprinting through the hailstones to the Hall, up the stairs and into the Tennis Room where the AGM of Louisburgh GAA was being held. Surprised I was to see such a large gathering present because at the AGMs I had attended in the early sixties you could count the people present on a hand and not run out of fingers. Among the crowd were people from Clare Island.

The meeting got underway on time and when the new officers were elected and were looking forward to a bright future year for the football team a shock was in store. The Clare Island delegation, led by Charles O'Malley and Kieran McCabe, announced that they wished to separate from Louisburgh and field a team in the West Mayo Junior Championship as they had enough players of their own and many of them would not get any games with Louisburgh. This was a bad blow because for many years now a third of the Louisburgh team would have come from the Island, people like Winters, McCabe, Burns, O'Toole, O'Malley and Gallagher.

There was no objection to their request and everyone wished them well. Little else was discussed at the meeting and when it broke up, with Maurice Lynch our chairman, we slipped round the corner to the safety of Gaffney's to see what could be salvaged. We had little more than half a team so where would we get the rest? You can never beat a businessman for a good idea, for it was Frank Kenny, who had come in for a late pint, who suggested we start a local competition to see what would be available. Four teams were entered for the O'Toole Cup and the first round of two games were fixed for the first Sunday of March. Three teams of nine were there but we had only eight. The player missing was Pat Farren who was in Clare Island on duty and was due back on the three o'clock mailboat. A car was driven in a hurry to Roonagh to collect him. As he leaned on a bollard watching the boat being reloaded, he seemed a little startled to see three excited youths rushing



towards him. He came and played a storming game at corner back. Many thought that he would be our regular cornerback, but he never played again!

Everyone was pleased with the abundance of talent available and a Louisburgh team was picked for the coming championship. We played a couple of challenge matches and performed fairly well. James Gibbons transferred to us from Castlebar Mitchells and had a settling effect on a crowd of tearaways. We played our first championship game against Westport on a fine Sunday in April and after a hectic game a draw was the result. That was a good result for us as it gave the younger players confidence. By the way, on that Westport team were three former Louisburgh players. There was Seamus Nee who was still one of the best mid-fielders in the county, and the Coughlan brothers, Paraic and Martin. There was talk of trying to get them to return to the fold but it came to nothing. Also on that team was a flying winger they were calling "Ringo" who many thought would make it to the podium in Croke Park some day; but instead he made it to a more illustrious podium downtown.

We won our next three games and then we were to play Clare Island who also had won all their games. The buildup to this game was charged. We were scared they'd beat us on our home ground, and apart from a few girlfriends and mothers we didn't seem to have a supporter ever. Some of the funny fellows would say, "They'll row through ye", or other such comments. I heard one man say to one young player, "Just wait 'till Red Cannon gets a claw in you". Now, John "Red" Cannon, once a stalwart Clare Island defender, though he could never be described as abounding in skill, was as solid as the granite the Lighthouse was built on, and even though he played no more, his reputation filled many a forward with dread.

As the day approached, many hoped for bad weather so the game might be put back to the end, and if we both kept winning the two teams would be in the semi-finals; so, the match would be irrelevant. Such was not to be. The day was perfect. Clare Island were the first on the field in their maroon and white, followed closely by ourselves in amber and black. With the aid of the breeze in the first half they were dominating in a game that was played at a frantic pace. But despite playing a fast and skilful game with courageous tackling and good passing movements they were finding it hard to get scores. On the other hand, whether it was home advantage, or luck or

whatever, that thing called "form" was, it seemed, to be with us. Our forwards, some of whom couldn't be relied on to score from twenty yards normally, were slinging shots over their shoulders from fifty or sixty and they went sailing between the posts. Still, they fought hard to the end, but we emerged victorious. In goal that day for us was the safe and agile Paddy Keane. At cornerback was Rayo Lyons from Chapel St., as talented a young player as you'd get. At full-back was Ray Lyons, Accony, as good a defender as ever togged out, and in the other corner was Christy Gibbons, who seemed to be standing in that corner like a Rock of Gibraltar since he was fourteen. P.J. Keane and T.J. Gallagher on the wings kept turning defence into attack. P.J., who moved to corner-forward later, had a terrific shot. At midfield John Gibbons was at his brilliant best and was ably assisted by the hard-working Pat Gallagher. The half-forward line of Tommy Lyons, Accony, John Morahan and Michael O'Malley, Long St., were fast and accurate as were full-forwards Donal O'Leary, James Gibbons and Sean Fergus.

Clare Island were as follows: M. Gallagher; M. Burns; B. McCabe; E. O'Malley; C. McCabe; K. McCabe; O. O'Toole; A. Burns; B. Winters; J. Gallagher; M. O'Toole; M. O'Malley; M. Burns; C. O'Malley; M. Moran. They all battled gamely to turn the tide and none more so than the great Bernie Winters and the classy Mikey O'Toole from Inishturk. We won the remainder of our games and went into the semi-final against Parke who we duly defeated.

Then we were in the final against Breaffy. It was played on a fine Sunday in September in St Patrick's Park, Westport. There was a huge crowd that day which unnerved many of our inexperienced players. We got off to a dreadful start and were 2-5 to 0-2 down after twenty minutes. Then we began to settle. Heads were still down at half-time until Maurice Lynch, our trainer, gave a cool assessment of what was necessary. John Gibbons, our captain, followed with a rousing speech. Last of all, Fr. Leo Morahan jumped on a chair and gave an exhilarating oration. Heads that were down rose up and we bounced on to the pitch, a revitalised team. We laid siege to the Breaffy goal and had levelled the scores at full-time, Breaffy 2-9, Louisburgh 3-6 But in a minute of injury time disaster struck. A nippy Breaffy forward had carried the ball down to our endline but well out near the corner flag. As a couple of our lads kept crowding him into the corner, where he would have to kick the ball or foul, our biggest man, who seemed to get annoyed at



this delay when there was a game to be won, came running and with a big fist like a sledgehammer high above his head brought it down and chopped the ball from the player's grasp. Tom Kelly, a fair referee, had no option but to award the free; the forward placed the ball on the 14 yard line and pointed. That was the last kick of the game. Many curse our luck to this day, but some would say, "Better when that giant fist came down it was the ball it fell on".

A final word on Clare Island. After they lost the derby to us they seemed to lose interest, as would probably have been our lot had the result gone the other way. They lost games to teams they would easily have beaten before. If the elements had prevented them travelling that and our match was put to the end, I'm sure they would have been in the semi-final instead of Islandeady. So, if fate were kinder, we could have met in the West Final. Now what a day to treasure that would have been!



**Louisburgh Junior B team, 17/06/1951, at McHale Park, Emlagh.**  
 Back (l. to r.): Paddy Kerrigan, Enda McGreal, John Prendergast, Francis Lyons, Tommy Gibbons, Paddy O'Malley, John Frazer.  
 Front (l. to r.): Michael McGreal, Anthony Durkan, Michael Gibbons, Myles Lyons, Austin O'Malley, M. J. Prendergast, Michael Gibbons, A.N. Other (can a reader identify him?).  
 Photo courtesy John Staunton.

## Bicycle Races in Ireland

*Richard Lyons was born in Louisburgh, County Mayo, Ireland on June 5, 1922. The Irish thatched cottage which was home to Richard was nestled in a beautiful place called Furmoyle. Richard's parents, Mary and Redmond Lyons, raised 12 children in their humble, love-filled home. During Richard's teen years, he worked in Westport at Hastings Garage. He came home to Louisburgh on the weekends and his only means of transportation was his bicycle. Today at the age of 75 years old, Richard lives in Prospect Heights, Illinois, USA. Richard spends most of his days golfing. In fact, when the weather gets too cold for golfing-in Prospect Heights, Richard and his wife, Jean, head to Florida where they enjoy warm sunshine and even more golf for the winter months. Last summer, while vacationing in Northern Minnesota with his children, grandchildren, and nephew, Richard told stories about bicycle races which took place in the early 1940's. The following account is in Richard's own words . . .*

Everyone was good at the bicycle at that time because it was the regular means of transportation. People rode their bicycle to and from town, to church, and to school. There were very few cars for hire at the time, and there were no private cars on the road except for doctors' cars, social permits since it was during the war and gas was rationed.

The only problem with riding a bicycle was if you ever broke a chain. The hilly roads were bad for breaking chains and you would have to wheel your bicycle home to fix it. A flat wouldn't be as much of a problem because we carried a pump on the bicycle and a kit to repair the flat. The kit was on the back of the saddle in a little pack.

It was the summer of 1941 or maybe 1942 and I would have been 19 or 20 years old. Well, anyway one Sunday after Mass while I was in town, I heard that there would be a bicycle race that afternoon at 1 p.m. I'm not sure if this was the first bicycle race, but I know it wasn't an annual event. I decided to compete and give it a shot, anyhow.

The race started down at the bridge in Louisburgh and we took the Westport Road down to the turn at Old Head and made the complete round-about back again on to Louisburgh by way of the Westport Road again. Paddy Gaffney set off at a fast pace and I kept with him and the rest were behind us. We kept the pace up until we came back by Toole's in Moneen.



At that point, they were going too fast and I could not keep with Paddy any longer. I had to stop peddling – I was out of breath. That is when Austie Toole took up the chase after Paddy, but Paddy was still leading!

So, I was falling back and a few more passed me including Éamonn O'Donnell. As I was in the back, it dawned on me that I had to go through the town of Louisburgh to get home to Furfmoyle. There was no other way to get to Furfmoyle – only going down through the town of Louisburgh. And seeing that the people from the town would be out watching the race, I didn't want to be the last. After a little breather, I decided well I'd step it up a little and I started to pick up the pace again. After a while I noticed I caught up to Austie Toole and Paddy Gaffney.

Just as we were coming into the town by Anthony O'Donnell's fields, Paddy Gaffney seemed like he was running out of wind and he pulled off to the side of the road. So I stayed in pursuit of Austie and I was only a wheel's length behind him all the way into town. I purposely didn't try to pass him because I thought he would pull away from me again and make me look bad. I was so happy just to be second! When we landed on the bridge in Louisburgh, the first thing Austie said to me was that I could have passed him because he didn't have anything left in him.

It turned out that they did have prizes. Austie got a pound and I won ten shillings for second place. I didn't care about the prize; I wanted to race for the fun of it – for the competition. By the way, Austie was a great athlete in himself. He played football for County Mayo as well as other sports. He died at a very young age, Lord have mercy on him.

At the dance that night in Louisburgh, Paddy Gaffney told me about the two races in Cross on Wednesday which was an annual thing. So Paddy said, 'Richard, you come out and win the first race, and I'll win the second.

Well, I didn't make any plans to come out for the race because I was working in Westport at the time. During the week, though, I met Ted Naughton when he came into Hasting's Garage. He drove a truck for Anthony Jordon at the time. He heard that I was coming out for the bicycle race in Cross and he said that Mickey Hunt of Devlin said that he planned on winning

the race himself. I felt a bit of a challenge so I decided to come out. My two brothers, John and Jim, and myself, cycled back to the races.

So, we got on the strand back at Doughmakeon and the three of us had a race all the way – we had our own race. As a matter of fact, I don't know who won that race, but we had great fun.

At that time they were getting ready to start the bicycle race in Cross and they saw us coming. Mike Stanton and Kevin McGuire were on the committee and were in charge of starting the bicycle race. They held up the race because they heard I was in it even though I hadn't really intended to enter the race.

The race started off and once again I couldn't keep up with the group in front. Austie O'Malley of Cross was leading and was riding the same bike Austie Toole rode on Sunday. Mike Hunt and ten or twelve others at least from all over the West were in front and I couldn't keep with them. We had to go up to the post and back; and as I was coming near the end, I could see I was gradually creeping up on the lead. The last one I caught was Austie O'Malley of Cross, and I passed him 200 yards from the finish and won the race.

At the time, one of the old-timers from the West said, "Lyons saved himself for the end". The truth was, I wasn't saving myself. I just couldn't keep up with them at the beginning of the race – the pace was too fast.

The first one I met after the race was Paddy Gaffney and he was happy I had won. We went behind one of the tents where they served food and refreshments. He was getting ready to start his race and I remember him taking two raw eggs and swallowing them whole. It was supposed to be good for your wind!

The second race was an open race which consisted of people from Castlebar, Paddy Hare and Paddy Joe O'Mally from Westport. These fellows were all champion bike riders and all on racing bicycles. Austie Toole of Moneen, who won on Sunday, and several more were also in the race. My brother Austie was in the race and took my bike, but I told him that he wouldn't have a chance because the brakes were loaded with sand.



Well, the results were that Paddy Gaffney did win the race even though he rode an old bicycle. It turned out that the racing bicycles were at a disadvantage in the sand and Paddy was very strong and in good shape. I don't know, maybe the two eggs did it!

That same year, there were Galway Horse races which were held annually. A few fellows from Westport who I knew – James Connolly, Mike Feehan from the West Hotel, and John Flynn were going to the races. So I decided to take the week off from work and go with them. We decided to meet at the bus depot in Westport on a Monday morning.

I cycled fifteen miles into Westport that Monday and when we arrived at the bus depot, the bus manager came out and said the bus leaving Ballina for Galway was full and was not picking up anybody in Westport. That is when one of the fellows who was a cattle jobber from below Newport mentioned something about cycling; and that is when we agreed we would cycle to Galway, which was fifty miles away.

After we cycled the fifty miles to Galway, I went to a dance that night. I had cycled a total of sixty-five miles that day. That is what it was to be young and in shape. I wouldn't do it today at seventy-five years old.

It is really too bad today that nobody rides a bike anymore in Ireland. They all have cars now. In those days, a person riding a bicycle would always stop as he would pass a house or maybe talk to a farmer on the side of the road. The farmer was happy to take a break from what he was doing and get the all the news of the day.

That is the thing that's lost today with the changing times. Now, the cars just drive by and nobody stops to talk. When you think back, it was really a wonderful time growing up . . .but nothing lasts forever.

*Submitted by: Marian Lyons Alvarado and Thomas Lyons*

**Editors Note:** Paddy Gaffney of Chapel Street and Cleaveland, USA, died in December, 1998, RIP.

## Japan Through the eyes of a Louisburgh Woman

**K**onnichiwa! My name is Nicola Lyons. I'm originally from Louisburgh in County Mayo, but my current home is Koshigaya City in Eastern Japan. I arrived in Japan a little over a year ago as a participant on the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (J.E.T.). To say the months I have spent here so far have been among the most rewarding in my life would be no exaggeration.

There are two types of positions offered by the J.E.T. Programme: Co-ordinator of International Relations (C.I.R.) and Assistant Language Teacher (A.L.T.). I work as an A.L.T. for Koshigaya City Municipal Board of Education. My duties are quite varied and very interesting: instructing the English language to Junior High School students (12—15 years old), assisting and advising Japanese teachers of English, curriculum development, liaising between Japanese administrative and teaching staff where matters of language-education are concerned, liaising between Japanese administrative staff and other J.E.T. Programme participants, advising other J.E.T. Programme participants, assisting in English language speech competitions, introducing aspects of Irish culture to the community through a variety of media, designing and producing teaching materials, planning and co-ordinating English-language clubs at Primary Schools, and making plenty of guest appearances at numerous functions because . . . well because I'm an Irish J.E.T.!



*Nicola Lyons*