



Louisburgh Boy's National School.



Michael Fergus working with horse and cart.



Tully Bridge 1950's  
Left to right: John Kilcoyne, Lady Journalist from the U.S.A., Mick O'Malley, John D. O'Dowd and Jackie Bowe.  
Vote No. 1 BLOWICK (Joe) can be seen on the Bridge.



1960 - Eddie Joyce of Coolacoon and John McDonald.





**Winners Junior Team 1957 – Canon Heaney Cup**

Back row (l. to r.): Myles Gibbons, Accony, Noel Lyons, Accony, Charlie O'Malley, Askelane, Michael O'Malley, Doughmakeon, Tommy Donnelly, Carrowniskey.  
Front row (l. to r.): Jarlath McHale, Emlagh, John McGreal, Doughmakeon, Paddy Gibbons, Accony (Capt.), John Gibbons, Accony and Geoffrey Gibbons, Accony.



*John Tiernan, National School Teacher, Cregganbawn, Louisburgh.*

## Reading the Landscape

*Read the sea for the future,  
what storms it's preparing,  
what appetite's rumbling in  
its submarine belly. But look*

*to the ocean for signs of the  
past  
and it will stare back  
inscrutable,  
fickle ripples dissolving to  
calm,  
waves rising and falling like  
milk.*

*The land is an open book,  
leafing us field by field  
into history. Corrugated  
hillsides  
tell of laughter and plenty,*

*of cold, bare feet and of hunger.  
Each stone in the wall, in the  
gully,  
the ditches, wears a palm print,  
traces  
of sweat. Here was a church,  
there*

*the green road that led to it,  
a mass rock with pre-Christian  
connections. Ghosts cross our  
fields, walk  
our lanes, sit in the shadow of  
the gable.*

*Say a prayer for those silenced  
by the weight of the sea.*

**Geraldine Mitchell**



**All-Ireland U-12 Duet Champions 2005**  
Molly O'Toole and Jillian O'Malley  
(above) pictured at the All-Ireland Fleadh  
Cheoil in Letterkenny after beating off  
competition from Ireland and abroad and  
taking 1st place. Well done girls and keep  
up the traditional Irish music.

The same year Jillian O'Malley (below)  
took 3rd place in the Solo Concert Flute  
U-12 and 3rd place also in the Grúpaí  
Ceoil u-12. Jillian is pictured here with  
her three All-Ireland medals.





## The Day of the 'Reek'

*Mary Whalley*

*Not to be confused with 'Reek Sunday Pilgrimage' to Croagh Patrick.*

For those without hay sheds, the reek was the method used by farmers to preserve hay for cows and cattle during the winter months, up to the modernization of farming in the west of Ireland from the 1970s.

Perhaps it is because I have a keen sense of smell that, when I recall the day of the reek, it is the smells associated with it which are most vivid.

I envisage the making of the reek as taking place on a very hot summer's day, for this was the ideal weather required for the job. Now the smell I am immediately aware of is the leg of mutton roasting in the oven to the side of the open turf fire. This was large enough to feed three table sittings and brought post-haste from Louisburgh by myself, or another female member of the family, at the first indication from my father that we were going to make the reek. It would have been bought at Mrs Gibbons in the Square and carried on the handlebars of the bike, the weight of the leg determining very much the course of the bike.

This was a very busy day for my mother, whose main aim was to have the traditional meal of the day ready in good time for the workers, with help as she required it. Regardless of the very hot day, it was necessary to



*At home with my step family in the late 1950's at Geoffrey Gibbons (Myles's Reek).*



*At home with my step family in the late 1950's at Geoffrey Gibbons (Myles's Reek).*

keep a large fire burning so as to cook the enormous pot of potatoes, two or three heads of cabbage and to keep the joint sizzling in the oven.

With both kitchen doors and windows wide open, the air outside was full of the smell of cooking reminding the workers that appetite and their work would be well rewarded.

The air was also heavy with the sweet scent of the crisp dry hay as the loaded carts passed the kitchen door on their way to the reek, leaving behind clumps of hay on the gatepost as they squeezed through. The smell of the hay clung to the clothes of everyone involved, mingling with the smell of body sweat from the workers. Now and then, between the hayfield and the garden where the reek was being built, the strong smell of fresh horse manure lingered until it was beaten into the dusty roads by the horses' hooves.

This was a big day for the farmers as they joined forces to help one another to make the reek. The time involved was about six hours, the number of workers required about ten to twelve men. Any able visitors to the village willing to help were always welcome. Some were needed to



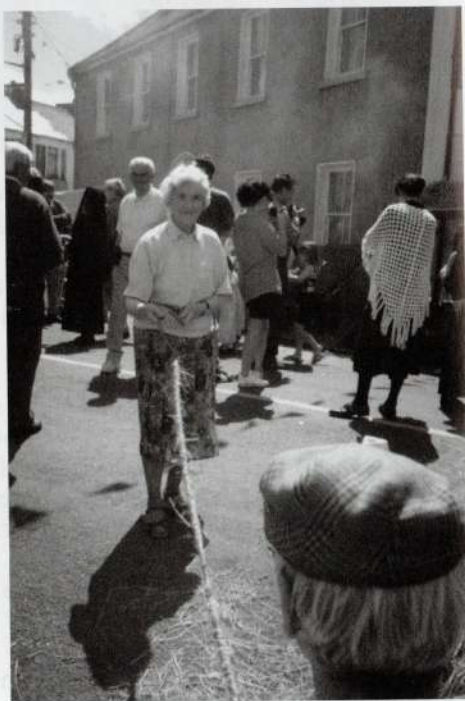
fork the hay onto the carts in the hayfield, others to fork it to those building the reek. These were the men who had become skilled in the job over the years. Conversation was usually light-hearted, but it was from the younger generation that the sound of laughter and enjoyment came as they rode in the empty carts, or on top of the hay. The carts were driven by the young lads, which was a great attraction for the young ladies of the village and those on holiday. This was particular only, I believe, to the reeks in Accony.

It was indeed a very special day for the younger generation, when they were given freedom to enjoy themselves and they made the most of it. They were allowed jump on to the cocks of hay and slide to the ground before the hay was loaded onto the carts. They had the joy of going onto the reek and seeing the countryside from on high. Some might even get to eat on the third sitting.

They had helped to save the hay, to build the foundation forrarch for the reek. The next stage would be to secure it for the winter by thatching, when the children would be needed again to hand up the rushes. Already they had twisted the rope súgáns which would be required.

But now to the afternoon tea which, for my mother, was a much easier task. This was an occasion for her apple pies (the apples picked from our own trees), cooked in the big frying pan to the side of the fire. It was a more leisurely meal for the workers as the reek, by then, was almost finished, unless there was still time to make a smaller reek elsewhere.

Of course there were summers when the weather was so bad that saving the hay and finding a day suitable for reeking was very difficult. Great consultation took place before making the reek in these circumstances as and when the neighbours arrived. Would the day hold out? Would it rain at the turn of the tide? These were the



**Heritage Day in Louisburgh**

*My brother Geoffrey demonstrating the art of Súgán making. Anne is twisting the rope.*

questions being asked of those who were known to have skill in forecasting the weather from watching the tides. It was a great responsibility for those making the decision and the atmosphere was usually very tense. So often the rain did come at the turn of the tide and before the reek was finished, which meant bringing the reek to a head quickly and abandoning their efforts for another day.

If all went well, my father could rest easy at the end of the day while more fun was to be had for the children playing around the newly made reek.

The children of the modern generation would probably be completely unable to imagine the tremendous excitement and anticipation of The Day of the Reek and the joy-filled wonder of every moment.

Reeking is now a thing of the past. Tractors have replaced the horse and cart, and silage has replaced hay. It has more food value, is labour saving, and fine weather is not such an essential requirement.

A little about súgán making. This operation involved two people, one letting (feeding) the straw from inside the barn to another who wore a simple device, strapped to the waist, called a twister. Walking backwards a distance of about fifty yards each time, this was turned continuously by hand. Since súgáns were also used for thatching the dwelling houses, the outhouses, as well as the stacks of oats, this fifty yard stretch was covered many times over the course of some weeks. A 'hag' consisted of three to four of these lengths joined together. There is no need today for thatch and súgáns. This holiday job of twisting for children has gone and no tears have been shed at its passing.

*Mary Whalley, nee Prendergast (Pat Lannons) is Accony born and bred. She resides in Surrey.*



*1940 – Freda Meade, her father Joe Meade with James Lyons from Furmoyle. The rest are from Accony.*



## Order of Malta

The Order of Malta continue to run a 24/7 service from Louisburgh. We still run approximately 53 calls a year and give First Aid cover to any event been run locally. The ambulance purchased in 2002 has now been replaced with a state of the art 2008 Renault Master built in Manchester with cardiac facilities and everyone is pleased with the facility.

The 2002 has been sold to Westport. The cost of the new vehicle x-equipment was €92,000. People of the parish and our volunteers who fund raise for us we thank most sincerely. It takes a considerable amount to keep us going each year especially Insurance costs.

The Cadet Unit is back on track we are pleased to say and a bright bunch they are.

There is a dedicated crew involved who work tirelessly each year. We are so thankful to them.



*Church and State under the eye of the Order of Malta*

*Photo includes Junior Minister Tom Moffatt, Fr. Tommie Mannion, P.P., Canon Gary Hastings, Holy Trinity Church, Westport, and Maureen Kilcoyne.*

## Sunday Morning in our House

*James (Lannon) Prendergast, Accony and Newfoundland*

I think it is about time that someone captured, for posterity a verbal or written picture of what it was like to survive a Sunday morning in our house. I'd like to say right from the outset that our experiences were mirrored by all or most all of the families in outlying areas in the Parish of Kilgeever, especially outside the town of Louisburgh. I will be describing the period from 1936 to 1950, since that is the time I am now reflecting on.

As my sister Mary remembers, preparation for Sunday Mass began early on a Saturday morning. Everything down to the smallest detail was considered and placed in readiness for the Sunday morning. Nothing was left undone which might cause aggravation and annoyance or result in a late start to the journey.

On the first Saturday of each month all school children over the age of seven years (the "age of use and reason") must go to confession, so we would spend the early morning with our siblings comparing what we should tell as our sins. I think everyone went with the same list. We would



*Sunday morning – not setting out for Mass but to visit relatives.*



learn our sins off by heart, in case the priest asked us a question that may throw us off course. We would head off into confessions feeling very proud of ourselves to be so well prepared. We had some Poltogs to debate with one another and discussed if so and so could meet the classification of a SIN. I think it would be safe to say that we all must have tentatively agreed at some point, that an AVERAGE would be a safe bet. For example, I wonder how many times a Priest has heard something like this; I told a lie 3 times Father, I disobeyed (a good many of us had a lot of trouble with the pronunciation of that word until we got the swing of it) my parents 4 times; I forgot my morning and/or evening prayers 5 times, and that's all Father - the last four words uttered, in a terrible rush. Even under cross-examination by the good Father, it was difficult to sway us from that litany. Even our teacher, poor Mrs. O'Toole, helped us in the compiling and conning of our LIST. We . . . well; I suppose I can only speak for me when I say that I always felt so proud of myself when I delivered my list, as it had been prepared.

Now, before I go any further, I think I should give the background to my reflections. First, our house was like most others in the village at the time. It had three rooms. No, no, no, not 3 bedrooms. I mean three rooms consisting of the little room, the kitchen and the upper room. The entire house was small, in today's standards, but we all felt well provided for. We had no electricity, no indoor plumbing, and no lighting except for one paraffin lamp in the kitchen. In addition to my parents, there were ten of us in family. Large families were the norm.

There were rarely less than seven of us getting ready to go to first Mass on any Sunday morning or holy day of obligation. For the purpose of this article, I will pick a Sunday morning in January and the rain is pouring with a 20 miles per hour wind. I pick that type of morning because when I reflect on Sunday morning in our house, this is the type of morning that is most vivid in my memory. I'm quite sure there were other types of mornings but I don't have a clear recollection of them. From a very early age, I had to harness the horse, by the light of a storm lantern, and "put him to the car".

Before taking care of the horse and car, I, myself, required help in dressing. Although everything I needed would have been set out for me beforehand, through the rummaging and flustering activities going on by candle light in the bedroom, things got displaced. Of course, we all know that when boys' clothing becomes displaced, that means it's hidden from them. Hence, the question so frequently asked by the boys, "where are my . . . trousers/ socks/ shoes . . . It will never cease to amaze me how boys (and men) can be staring at something or actually holding it in their hand and be inquiring as to the whereabouts of it, while girls and women can

find things so readily. This particular remark applies generally, not just to the topic at hand. One day, (when I grow up) I may be able to find the answer to that one.

Now, I'm not sure if today's gentle reader has got some vision of what it was like to prepare to go to Mass from our house. My sister Mary described it like this, "Sunday morning exit to Mass was anything but tranquil". I have tried to capture another English word to describe it but I have failed. So, I resort to our native tongue, which I think, English has no equivalent . . . "rira agus ruaille buaille" . . . yes, I think that about captures it, even better than pandemonium.

I would never lay claim to be an expert on SIN. Of course, I mean, in the definition of it, otherwise, I suppose I was passable. However, as I was growing up and experiencing Sunday mornings in our house and my arm being twisted, figuratively, to learn catechism and the like, I reached a conclusion. Yes, in my disrespectful youth, I developed the unfounded conclusion that Sunday morning in our house and the preparation for Mass could be, of and by itself, "the occasion of sin". Since those days, I have spoken with many who are "experts" on sin and they all have assured me that the circumstances I describe do NOT have ALL the ingredients to constitute the strict definition of "the occasion of sin". Now, isn't that wonderful news for all those of us who may have been concerned? An old adage comes to mind here, "a person convinced against one's will is of the same opinion still".

Now, we had a clock, which I think kept reasonably good time. I have always suspected, but never proven that someone, well intentioned, no doubt, put it ahead a quarter of an hour or so, in case someone was cutting it close to the time on the clock. Some horses in the village were slower than others and thence left the village a little earlier. If, by chance, those cars were on their way, before some of our passengers were close to being ready, concern would be expressed. If two or three happened to be gone by, excitement could reign. In those circumstances, it made no difference what the clock said; the clock had to be slow if most or all of the cars were already left for Mass.

This gets even funnier the two times of year that the clocks change. Now, it should be simple enough to follow a well-worn slogan, i.e. the clocks fall back in the fall and spring ahead in the spring. But nooooo . . . Do we have old time Mass today or is it new time? There were just as many opinions on this as there were people. Many could agree on this, but this was further complicated by the question, "Is the priest going by Old Time or New Time today" We might conclude that this would indeed be a strange question were it not for one other factor. Yes, the Priest sometimes



would announce the Sunday before that Mass will be on the old time when the clocks will be on new time. I remember this being a frequent source of consternation, in preparing for Mass.

Well, on the typical Sunday morning that I am recalling, we are away in good time. The rain is pouring, the wind is blowing, but we are all happy. We're obviously in good time because we have caught up to 4 or 5 cars. We arrive in town, soaked. We carry the cushions and rugs into Pat Scanlon's house. Pat and his family were our good Samaritans; they were extremely patient, generous and kind and never complained about our hauling our wet things in from the rain and drying ourselves at the fire they had always prepared for us. None of us will ever forget their kindness.

Of course, I, in my day, would take the horse from the car and tie him in Pat Scanlon's yard, in the shelter. Then, I would bring up the rear on the parade up the street to the Church. On my Sodality Sunday, I'd go up to the front portion of the Church to take our Sodality position. Although there was no heating in the Church, we still partially dried out during Mass.

When Mass was over and the weekly shopping was done, I would (in my day) put the horse to the side-car once again. When all of the cushions and rugs were returned to the car, we were ready to face the prevailing southwest wind and rain. Upon our arrival home and the horse taken care of, we could then have breakfast.

There are times when many people will have the faith in their religion questioned but when one contemplates the number of miracles that can happen on a Sunday morning in our house, the faith can be once again restored. Firstly, that all members of the family could operate in such close quarters; that each one could find a garment that belonged to them; that the garment could be fitted properly to its owner and that each person could look well dressed and neat and tidy and to quote the catechism, "showing in our exterior the greatest devotion and reverence for such a holy a sacrament". The fact that no one ever died or got very sick from such exposure to downpours of rain; the fact that, as far as I can remember, we were always in time for Mass and never had an accident on the journey; no one of any of the families that I knew got angry with any other member of the family (that is, furiously, I mean) in competing for space preparing to go to Mass. Those were all noteworthy and miracles in their own right for attending the main one of transubstantiation.

Those were hard times, in truth, but, yes, I would do it all over again if the situation presented itself.

## Accony National School Reunion July 2009

*Pat Prendergast*

Plans are afoot for major celebrations in July 2009 when the St. Patrick Accony N.S. Reunion will be held on the Saturday 18th July 2009. This will be a major event for the villages of Accony, Roonagh, Em-lagh, Pulgloss, Dough-makeon and Askelane whose children were educated there up until 1971 when it was closed and pupils transferred to the two schools in Louisburgh. It will provide the opportunity to rekindle old friendships as no doubt many classmates have not met in years. The school as it stands was opened in 1937 and the previous school stood on the same site for decades beforehand.



*Accony National School.*

The planned celebrations are for a full day event with Mass, time for a chat and meet the neighbours at the school grounds followed by a function in Louisburgh later that evening. The ad-hoc committee are blessed with the tremendous support it has received from Neil, Brid and Rusty James, the current residents of the school. They have agreed to open their doors for the reunion and allow former students the opportunity to retrace their steps once more. Not alone have they welcomed the idea but are enthusiastic members of the committee. Arithmetic continues to this day in the school as Brid, operates her successful Accony Accounts – an accountancy business from her home.

It is also proposed to publish a commemorative booklet – therefore the committee will welcome contributions such as school reminiscences, history of the school and its predecessor on the same site, and of course old photographs are all very welcome.

Please contact Pat Prendergast at [acconymayo@hotmail.com](mailto:acconymayo@hotmail.com) with your article/photographs to be included in the booklet or if you have any suggestions on how to make the day a truly memorable occasion.



## Keep Your Word

### An tAthair Leo Morahan

In this feature, you are invited to test your memory of the old Irish words which were in use widely in the parish even in the recent past. Some of them are still in use. The approximate pronunciation is given just after each word.

Try this in any Louisburgh gathering. Four possible meanings of each word are given. The trick is to choose whichever you think was, or is, the one used in Louisburgh (Kilgeever) parish.

And a sincere thank you to An tAthair Leon.

- 1) **Aghrá** (pr aghraw): a) "my love"; b) orderly and tidy; c) hassle or trouble (aggravation); d) a sod of earth.
- 2) **Bata** (pr botheh): a) a wide rimmed hat; b) butter made from goat's milk; c) the hind-quarters of the human; d) a stick.
- 3) **Brabach** (pr brobuch): a) grasping or selfish; b) some sweet gift or food; c) the linking strap on a horse's harness; d) cross-grained or bad-humoured like a bold child.
- 4) **Cáithneach** (pr kawneach): a) fault-finding; b) a small elderly woman; c) a kind of sea-weed; d) distant or unfriendly.
- 5) **Cúl** (pr kool): a) the late evening time; b) laid back; c) a person's head of hair; d) a heavy mist.
- 6) **Driopás** (pr jrupawss): a) loose coins or change; b) the lard made from the fat of pigs; c) a difficulty; d) a person whose nose is inclined to 'run'.
- 7) **Gadaí** (pr godhee): a) a young female Gárda; b) a rogue; c) part of a wickerwork creel; d) an old lady's garter.
- 8) **Giobach** (pr gyubach): a) pointed like a nose; b) a family name; c) the entrails of a fowl, used in cooking; d) unkempt or untidy.
- 9) **Grianán** (pr gyreenawn): a) the yolk of a fried egg; b) the tasty entrails of a spring chicken; c) bleached seaweed; d) the sunny side of a house.
- 10) **Leadhuine** (pr lyahghine): a) a short garden spade; b) a simpleton; c) a child's gurgling laughter; d) a sly disparaging hint.
- 11) **Nioc** (pr nyuck): a) a running knot; b) an undisciplined boy or man; c) heavy frost; d) a wooden screw.

- 12) **Órú-órú** (pr ohroowohroo): a) a traditional prayer; b) a very annoying itching on the skin; c) a child's game with a skipping rope; d) an exclamation of great wonder.
- 13) **Peata** (pr pathah): a) a spoiled child or person; b) an ornamented slab of homemade butter; c) a medical ailment; d) longwinded talk.
- 14) **Scrámóg(s)** (pr shrawmogues): a) a scraggy person or animal; b) the scrapings of a pot; c) a certain type of shell fish found mainly in Accony Thiar; d) crab-apple jelly.
- 15) **Teallach** (pr cheallach): a) shifty or unreliable; b) strong and healthy; c) hearth-stone in an old home; d) shallow and smallminded.

### Solutions:

- 1) **A ghrá** is simply "my love". It's used more often to a child, less often to a friend and even sometimes in a disparaging way. Example: "Eat up this, a ghrá", or "God help your sense, a ghrá!"
- 2) **Bata** is a stick or a cudgel, especially if it's being used as a weapon. Example: "Give them bata!" (This expression is now, properly, obsolete!)
- 3) **Brabach** is some sweet gift or food. Example: A mother returning from town might be asked "Mammy, did you bring any brabach?"
- 4) **Cáithneach** is a type of sea-weed. Our resident environmental expert, (who travels to lecture occasionally at Boston) assures us that this was the traditional fertilizer for meadows harvested in places like Bunowen and Carramore!
- 5) **Cúl** is a head of hair. Not a wig, just the genuine thing; and the more the better!
- 6) **Driopás** is a difficulty, a problem or a stumbling block. Example: The electric power is off and you really wish to have a cup of tea before you leave. But the way you use the word is important. You don't say: "I have a driopás". You just text your modern friend and admit "I am in an awful driopás." That will help to solve your driopás!
- 7) **Gadaí** is a rogue. In the dictionaries it is a thief or robber. But when we use the word it's more often as a friendly correction. Example: "Aren't you the gadaí to play such a trick on me!"
- 8) **Giobach** is unkempt or untidy. It describes someone who cannot comb his hair (even her hair!); someone who is scruffy or ragged in appearance.



- 9) **Grianán** is the sunny side of the house. This word is in the usual language dictionaries, but the main reason it is included here is only a historical one. This was the name given to a house in Carramore years ago, say 1940-1960, which was owned by Pat and Mrs Mary O'Toole. Mrs O'Toole (nee O'Reilly of Shraugh) was a well-loved teacher in Accony and a native Irish speaker. Obviously she christened their home. (Old-time Accony pupils get no bonus marks for scoring here!).
- 10) **Leadhuine** is a simpleton, a half-wit. Rather than suggest examples, which might well be offensive, let's explain that the Irish word itself literally means a *half-person*. The term "half-person" is not listed in standard English dictionaries.
- 11) **Nioc** is an undisciplined boy or man. This is such a curious term that even the usual Irish vocabularies do not list it. However, the word is well understood in our own lingo. Examples: "That pupil is an awful *nioc*!" or simply, "You're a right *nioc*!" (Ceist: I wonder is there such a thing as a female *nioc*!).
- 12) **Órú-órú** is an exclamation of wonder. Example: "Wasn't that a terrible calamity in the Middle East! *Órú-órú*." Or more critically, "There are five yanks coming in the gate." *Órú-órú* indeed!
- 13) **Peata** is a spoiled child or a spoiled person. The original meaning of the word is a pet. Example: "Don't be acting the *peata*!"
- 14) **Scrámóg(s)** is the scrapings of the pot. Just let your mind revert to your childhood. The family porridge saucepan has been emptied before you arrived, but you are very pleased to be given the *scrámógs*!
- 15) **Teallach** is the hearthstone, that busy, busy centre of all domestic activity, business and conversation. Example: "They haven't left the *teallach* all evening!" or "Will you take your feet out of the *teallach* and put down a fire!"

**Well, how did you behave? Here is a ready reckoner to test yourself:**

15 correct-Up to the top of the class and into the *grianán*!

14-10 correct-Excellent! You deserve some *brabach*!

9-7 correct-Quite good. But we suggest a serious diet of *scrámógs*.

6-5 correct-you are in a bit of a *driopás*. You need more study of the back issues of *An Choinneal*!

4-3 correct-Are you a serious student? Or are you just a bit of a *nioc*?

2-1 correct-We would never use the word *leadhuine* about you, but you need to come home for a good holiday, a *ghrá*

Not even one correct answer-*Órú-órú*!

## A Distinguished Son of our Parish: John Robert Clynes

### *An tAthair Pádraig Ó Máille*

I wonder how many people from our parish, at home or abroad, know that a founder member of what became the British Labour Party spent a number of his childhood years in the parish? John Robert Clynes was born in 1869 and died, well within living memory, in 1949.

Patrick Clynes, a Leitrim man, evicted by his local landlord in 1851, emigrated to the Manchester area of Great Britain and worked as a corporation gravedigger for twenty four shillings a week (two euro twenty five in today's currency). He married Bridget Scanlon who had left Breakowny (Furmoyle) around the same time. They had two sons and five daughters, the eldest being John Robert, born on March 27th 1869.

The following notes – and that is all they are – are intended as a challenge to some young scholar at home, or, even better in England, to undertake a serious study of this son of our parish who actually spent some of his formative years with his mother in her sister's home in Doughmakeon. Her sister had married into the Canon household, and they welcomed John Robert and his mother when she came back to Ireland to convalesce from a serious illness.

John Robert was well remembered in the village when I was in primary school. My father told us often about this man who had achieved political distinction in England. My grandfather father and grand uncles had often talked about playing with John Robert in Canon's as little boys growing up in Doughmakeon.

When John Robert's mother recovered her health she returned with her son to her family in Oldham. In later years John Robert corresponded regularly with his cousin, John Cannon, in Doughmakeon. There is no record of this phase of his life in the biography, *From Millboy to Minister* or in the entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography* from which the rest of these notes are drawn. It would be interesting to know whether he recalls those years in the *Memoirs* which he wrote in later life.

On his return to England he went to school briefly and hated it; a quarrel with his teacher brought a sudden end to his formal education. At ten he started work in the cotton mills at half a crown a week (twenty cents in today's money) and at twelve he became a full-timer at ten shillings a week (one euro). He bought a tattered dictionary for six pence and a grammar for eight pence and taught himself to read and write. To



supplement his income, he earned three pence a week for reading to three blind men. This experience aroused his interest in local politics and encouraged him to study: he paid eight pence a week to an ex-schoolmaster for tuition.

By 1883 he was an adult mill worker. He was reading the leading political and social commentators of his time and practising oratory with a friend in a disused quarry outside the town. He started writing pieces for the local press describing the hardships of child labour and on trade unionism which was still in its infancy.. He organised a union for his own grade of workers, and at the age of thirty he was employed full-time at thirty shillings (three euro) a week as organiser for the National Union of Gasworkers and General Labourers.

John Robert's strength in the labour movement can be traced to his quiet manner: he was, according to his contemporaries "a man of peace". By 1892 he was president of his local trades council in Oldham. He travelled widely, even to conferences in Belfast and Switzerland. In 1904 he was a founding member of the British Labour Party. He was elected to parliament in 1906 and was chairman of the Labour Party by 1908.

He remained a member of parliament until his retirement in 1945, except for a brief period when he lost an election in 1931. In 1917 he became a minister under Lloyd George and served with distinction in several ministries between 1917 and 1931. He is remembered for supervising the introduction of ration cards during the first world war. He became a member of the Privy Council in 1918.

When he was re-elected to parliament in 1935 he chose the role of "elder statesman" of the labour movement generally. He is described in the Dictionary of National Biography as "... wise in counsel, sincere and loyal in all his relationships. Quiet and unobtrusive, he possessed sound judgement, the result of serious reading and steady thought. ... None of all the labour members among his contemporaries commanded higher respect." (D.N.B. 1941-1950, p.162).

In 1893 John Robert had married a fellow worker from the mills, Mary Elizabeth Harper. He died on October 23rd 1949 and was survived by his wife and two sons. His only daughter had pre-deceased him. In 1919 he had been honoured by the universities of Oxford and Durham with Doctorates in Civil Law. He published two major volumes of Memoirs which are long out of print but must be available in libraries in Manchester or the English national library. They would serve as source material for a more detailed study of this distinguished son of our parish.

I believe he deserves to be remembered among us. His relatives still live in his mother's home village. They are in Doughmakeon, in Louisburgh town and Carramore, in Cross and scattered to the four winds wherever people from the parish went to seek a better life. My own great-grandmother was Scanlon.

## Slán Abhaile

The following parishioners have died in the period covered since our last issue. May they rest in peace!

### 2004

October: Margaret Moran, Falduff.  
Bridget Gavin, Laughta.  
Michael Kelly, Formoyle.  
John Browne, Derryheigh.  
Phil Foye, Doughmakeown.

November: Ann McNamara, Chapel St.  
Thomas Bowe, Long St. and Dublin.

December: Eddie O'Malley, Baloor.

### 2005

January: Fr. John Jennings, Carrowniskey and Boston USA.  
Patrick O'Grady, Six Noggins and London.  
Mary Heneghan (nee O'Malley), Six Noggins and Shrulc.  
Nora Staunton (nee Needham), Feenone and Chicago USA.  
Martin Gibbons, Cregganroe and Nottingham.  
Mary Bridgid O'Malley, Emlagh and San Francisco USA.

February: Margaret Hallinan (nee Mc Namara), Carramore and  
Worcester, USA.  
John Casey, Long St. and Dublin.  
Michael Fadden, Killadoon.  
Tom Kilcoyne, Shranacloye.  
Fr. Austin Gannon, Falduff and Preston.

March: Delia McHale (nee Burke), Emlagh and Maynooth.  
Michael Gibbons, Collacoon.  
John McDonagh, Cahir.  
Eddie O'Malley, Cahir and Philadelphia, USA.  
Tommie Duffy Woodfield

April: John O'Grady, Cregganbawn.  
Michael Gibbons, Killadoon.  
Nora O'Neill (nee Duffy), Furmoyle and Blackrock,  
Co. Dublin.  
Austin O'Malley, Derrygarrow and Coventry.  
Mary Connor (nee Gill), Ballyhip and Boston, USA.  
Peter O'Malley, Askelane and Dublin.



- May: Maureen Gorman (nee McNamara), Louisburgh and Westmeath.  
Una Scanlon, Bunowen and Wicklow.  
Alice Taylor (nee Warde), Carramore.  
Redmond Prendergast, Accony and London.  
Michael Garrivan, Devlin and Chicago, USA.  
Mary Munnely (nee Gibbons), Aillemore.
- June: Pat Kilcoyne, Cregganbawn.  
Annie Kilcoyne (nee Kilcoyne), Cregganbawn  
Kathleen Jennings (nee O'Grady), Kilgeever and Dublin.  
James Gibbons, Aillemore.  
Eoin McGroddy, Louisburgh.  
Michael Burke, Carramore and Boston, USA.
- July: Nellie Rynne (nee Egan), Derrygarve and England  
Tommie Joe O'Malley, Doughmakeown and Boston, USA.  
Celestine Collins, Long St. and Belfast.
- August: Catherine McCarthy (nee Murphy), Devlin and Boston, USA.
- September: Lily Scott, Roonagh and Chicago, USA.
- October: Michael Ball, Ballyhip.
- November: Phil Taylor (nee O'Malley), Cahir.  
Thomas O'Grady, Glenkeen
- December: Mary Aspinal (nee McConnell), Shraugh and England.  
Tommie Gibbons, Askelane.  
Mary O'Grady, Kilgeever.  
Tommie Duggan, Cahir.

**2006**

- January: Sr. Ailbe Coyne, Killadoon.  
Tony Staunton, Curradavitt.  
Sadie Gibbons, Cloonlara.  
Emer Kelly (nee Gaffney), Chapel St. and Cloona, Westport.  
Michael Durkan, Askelane and Devon  
Bridie O'Toole, Carrowclaggen.
- February: Kevin Keegan, Ballybofey, Dublin and Collacocon.  
Nora Gibbons, Feenone.  
Nora Gardner (nee Philbin), Carrowniskey and Boston, USA.  
Richard (Dick) Duffy, Askelane and Dublin.

- Nancy Coakley (nee Scanlon), Bunowen and Miltown Malbay.  
Anthony Garrivan, Devlin and Belclare, Westport.
- March: Tom Fergus, Feenone.  
Mary Kate Carter (nee O'Malley), Collacocon and Rugby.  
Katie Kilcoyne, Shrahnacloye and Dublin.  
Kathleen Gaskin (nee Mc Greal), Doughmakeown and Boston, USA.  
Bridgie Baster (nee O'Reilly), Laughta.
- April: Michael Grady, Crickeen.  
Geoffrey Burke, Doughmakeown and Birmingham.  
James Burke, Ugool and Cheam, London.  
Tommie O'Malley, Bunowen and San Francisco, USA.  
Mary Mannion, Killadoon.  
Nora McTigue (nee Burke), Derrygarve.  
Michael O'Grady, Glenkeen and Northampton.  
Brigie Allen (nee Mc Greal), Doughmakeown and New York, USA.  
Rita Scott, Shraugh and Dublin.  
Michael Kilcoyne, Crickeen.
- June: Mary Egan, Derrygarve.  
Mary Teresa Lawrence (nee Gibbons), Askelane and England.  
Tom Rhattigan, Askelane.  
Joe Gavin, Woodfield.  
Paul Joyce, Collacocon.  
Margaret Rennick (nee Needham), Feenone and Scotland.  
Charles Gaffney, Chapel St.
- July: John O'Malley, Long St. and Tullamore.  
Patrick Giblin, Roonith Hill.
- August: Michael J. Prendergast, Bridge St.  
Joan Duffy, Falduff.  
Annie Giblin (nee Gibbons), Roonith Hill.  
Michael McConnell, Shraugh and England.
- September: Tony Burns, Cahir.  
Thomas Cannon, Carrowniskey and Dundalk.  
Fr. Liam Durkin, Bunowen and Leenane.  
Johnnie Mulvey, Collacocon and Castlebar.  
Joe Gibbons, Carrowniskey.  
Winnie Ball-Torpey, Ormskirik, Lancs. England.



- October: Katie Kilcoyne, Crickeen and Westport.  
Mollie Walkin (nee Harney), The Square and Galway.  
Nora McDonagh, Polgloss.
- November: Anthony Mannion, Killadoon and Dublin.  
Bridie Turner (nee Durkan), Askelane and Chicago, USA.  
Paddy Kenny, Bridge St. and Wexford.  
Paddy Grady, Curradavitt and Yorkshire.  
Paddy McGreal, Derrygarve and Tooreen.  
Tommie Harney, The Square.
- December: Jim Maxwell, Kilgeever and Manchester.  
Fr. John Ball, Ballyhip and ballinlough.  
Josephine Hegarty (nee Joyce), Shraugh and Manchester.  
Bernard O'Malley, Corragaun.  
Johnnie Durkan, Askelane.
- 2007**
- February: Austin O'Grady, Louisburgh and Leitrim.  
Kitty Smith (nee Hester), Falduff and England.
- March: Tanya McCabe (nee Corcoran), Bunowen and Drogheda.  
Michael Joe Kilcoyne, Shranacloye and London.  
Nora O'Connor (nee Kilcoyne), Shrahnacloy and Castlebar.  
Michael Gavin, Glencullen.  
Michael Gibbons, Roonith.  
Nora O'Malley, Curracony.  
John Lyons, Accony.  
Michael Prendergast (Redmond), Accony and London.  
Anthony Kennelly, Carramore.
- April: Noreen Folan (nee Maxwell), Kilgeever.  
Maureen Duffy, Falduff.  
Myles Gibbons, Carrowniskey and Essex.  
Mike Ruddy, Collacocon and Coventry.
- May: Tommy Gibbons, Emlagh and Dublin.
- June: Patrick Jordan, Feenone.  
Christopher O'Grady, Tully.  
Bridie Kennelly, Carramore.
- July: Una O'Shea (nee O'Malley), The Bridge and Cape Cod,  
USA.  
Patrick Kilcoyne, Cregganagopple.

- James Kilcoyne, Cregganbawn and Liverpool.  
Mary Baynes (nee Frazer), Kinnadoohy and Durlless.  
Lily Naughton (nee Kenny), Bridge St. and Dublin.  
Paddy O'Reilly, Collacocon and Coventry.
- August: Stanley Sek, Collacocon and Poland.  
Nora Monaghan (nee Jennings), Aillemore and Dublin.  
Anthony Burke, Doughmakeown.  
Josephine Harkin (nee Scott), Shraugh and Ballinrobe.  
Julia Carr, Ballyhip and Framingham, Mass., USA.
- September: Kathleem Fox (nee McDonnell), Tallabawn and Liverpool.  
Kitty McNamara, Carrowniskey.  
Sr. Cecilia Ruane, Mooneen and Braintree, Essex.
- October: Patrick O'Malley, Cloontia and Kildare.
- November: Nora Gallagher (nee Durkin), Bunowen and Cavan.  
Annie Connolly (nee O'Malley), Askelane and Caranaclay.  
Edward Hallinan, Kilgeever and USA
- December: Dominick McGreal, Thallabawn and Leixlip.  
Anthony Durkin, Bunowen and USA.
- 2008**
- January: Martina Duffy, Roonagh and Ballina.  
Maureen Wartors (nee McGreal), England.  
James O'Toole, Thallabawn and Drumcondra.  
Teresa Gibbons, Dereen and Drogheda.  
Peggy Burns, Cahir.
- February: Mary Gallagher (nee McMyler), Carramore and Ballina.  
Sadie Gibbons, Roonith and London.  
Annie McNamara, Aillemore and Boston, Mass. USA
- March: James Prendergast, Accony and Chicago.  
Gerald Ryder, Falduff and West Virginia, USA.
- April: Paddy McNamara, Collacocon and Toronto, Canada.  
Joe Murphy, Mooneen and Howth, Co. Dublin.  
Dr. Andrew Harney, The Square, Louisburgh and Saul,  
Co. Down  
James Lyons, Old Head  
Josephine Cannon (nee Geoghegan), Cregganbawn and  
Westport.



Mary Anne McDonnell (nee Gibbons), Cregganroe and Furrigal.

June: Michael O'Malley, Corragan.  
Bridget Fitzgerald (nee Garavan), Devlin.  
Jimmy O'Malley, Roonagh  
Sr. Jarlath (Bridget) Prendergast, Accony and Tralee.

July: Mike Needham, Cregganbawn.  
John Kerr, Derry, Bunowen and Westport.  
Michael Cannon, Carrowniskey.  
David O'Rourke, Louisburgh and Ballinrobe.  
Jack Morahan, Louisburgh and Sydney, Australia.  
Bridie Kilcoyne, Cregganagapple, Cregganbawn.  
Eugene Duffy, Woodfield, Cregganbawn.

**Editor's Note:** Canon Eugene Nee visited Killeen Cemetery in Summer, 2005; the following excerpts are from his reflections:

"A cemetery is a monastery of prayer, peace, reflection, silence and respect. The cemetery is a place where our own are remembered with love and affection, with forgiveness if necessary, with prayer and with flowers. Out of respect for the departed, the upkeep of our cemeteries is a top priority.

"We give thanks to God for our ancestors, grandparents, parents and neighbours gone before us. We say thank you to them for passing on to us the torch of faith and respect. We thank them for a rich heritage, an enduring value system, a sense of self worth and the notion that life is worth living boldly and to the full in an ever changing way of life.

**Editor's Note:** Readers will be aware that the names registered in our *Slán Abhaile* are taken from the *Louisburgh and Killeen Newsletter*. Therefore, the week of publication may not coincide with the date of death and so An Choinneal regrets any inconvenience caused.

### When you thought I wasn't looking . . .

*When you thought I wasn't looking, I felt you kiss me goodnight,  
and I felt loved.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw tears come from your eyes,  
and I learned that sometimes things hurt, but it's alright to cry.*

## A Tribute to Mary (Mollie) Baynes Durless, Kilsallagh

*Who died on the 12 July 2007*

The death has taken place at Mayo General Hospital of Mary (Mollie) Baynes, Durless Kilsallagh, Westport. Formerly Mollie Frazer, Kinnadoohy, Killadoon, she was aged 83 years and was predeceased by her husband Eddie. She was born in Kinnadoohy, May Day 1924, and went to national school in Killadoon. In her working life after she left school she went to work and trained as a waitress and later a cook in a Armada Hotel, Spanish Point, in Co Clare. After a number of years she returned to Westport, where she worked as a cook in the home of Lord Altmount, The Desmane, (Westport House) Westport. After spending a number of years in Westport House, she left and went to work for Michael Heneghan, Bridge Street, and the North Mall, Westport. She met and married Eddie and set up home in Durless, where she spent the rest of her life. For many years she played a major part in the running of the family farm, until her family were able to take over and work it. For many years she helped provide tea sandwiches and minerals to the pilgrims, on the day and night vigils, on the top of the reek, on the last Sunday of July. She looked forward to this challenge for many years as it was an annual pilgrimage for her and having completed this she felt she had her penance done for another year.



*Mary (Mollie) Baynes.*

Throughout her life, she had an active interest in current affairs, and politics. She keenly followed events in last years General Election, and British politics was also of great interest to her. With the reception of the RTE and BBC Channels she would not go to bed until after the News at Ten on BBC and the Dail Report was over every night. She will be fondly remembered as an excellent cook and baker, and countless visitors to the family home enjoyed her home-made bread and butter, tarts, and scones. Mollie took kindly to advancing years and enjoyed her weekly visits to the Louisburgh senior citizens' group, she was collected and delivered to and from her home every Friday for many years by the local bus service



provided, driven by Sean Harney. She looked forward to this outing every week, the meeting of her many friends, bingo, (where she often had a good win) having the cup of tea and a good chin-wag. Up to her death she attended Mass every Saturday evening in St Patricks Church Lecanvey. At her funeral Mass Fr Gill paid tribute to Mollie, "a wonderful Christian life" devoted to her family, faith, and community.

"She had the rare distinction of being a member of the Pioneer Total Abstinence Association and she clearly showed that you can have a full active and enjoyable life without resorting to alcohol," he said. In a post-communion reflection, Mollie's granddaughter, Dawn, paid the following tribute to her:

### *Our Mollie*

*Mollie was always an affectionate term  
For a woman we loved so dear.  
We look upon her peaceful face and on it we shed a tear.  
Your hands are folded gently Mollie  
And in it you hold your faith  
You sat in silence with your beads and beside the range you'd wait.  
Your wait is over now Mollie,  
You were next in queue  
Your family by your side,  
To bid a fond adieu.  
We sat by your bed Mollie  
To say our last goodbye  
We held your hand tightly  
And watched your life pass by.  
Our hearts are breaking now Mollie,  
But we understand,  
Eddie came to collect you,  
He took you by the hand.  
You gave us a big smile  
You told us you loved us all  
It gave us consolation  
While your chest did rise and fall.  
You were always our great solider.  
You fought the battles of life,  
You brought up your children  
And you brought them up right!  
Eddie came to collect you,  
He didn't leave you on your own,  
He took you in his arms  
And ye walked together home.*

You always looked after me Mollie. I am proud to be your granddaughter and god-child. You saw me come into the world and I had the privilege to see you leave.

You will always be missed and never forgotten. You were the heart of our chain and you are a link that can never be replaced. Thank you for everything. We love you always Mollie.

May you rest in peace.

*Love Dawn xxx*

## **A Tribute to Sean Baynes, Durless, Kilsallagh**

*Who died on 29th of November 2007*

The death has taken place peacefully, following a short illness of Seán Baynes, Durless, Kilsallagh, Westport. He was aged 45 and was son of the late Eddie and Molly Baynes. Sean was born on the longest day of the year 21st June 1962; he received his education at Bouris N.S, and Sancta Maria, Secondary School, Louisburgh. He choose farming as a career and took all courses and classes available to him to gain the knowledge on how to work the land to its maximum, and to get the best from his stock on it. Therefore he improved the quality of his land and the quality of his stock, so much so he had standing orders with butchers, and other farmers, who wanted some of his animals for killing and breeding. Seán had a way with animals, they did not seem to fear him, as he walked amongst them, they may stop grazing and raise their heads to watch him and his dogs go by. He was envied by many the farmer because of the dogs he had, all his life he loved dogs and would breed and train them himself. He never feared loading sheep, he could pull his jeep and trailer into the field and stand by the door of the trailer and his dogs would do the rest without any fuss. It was a pleasure to watch, as if the sheep were enchanted they co-operated fully with all. He was a lone farmer and planned his work ahead of him; he would make sure he had time to complete any job he started. He was happy in his own patch of this earth and truly can it be said that the land and environment entrusted to his care during his years on this



*Seán Baynes.*



earth were none the worse for his term of tenancy. As Seán's neighbours tells me, you could set your watch by him, He was a man to time and true to his word if he had promised you anything. He was always at the end of his phone for anybody that needed help with cattle, sheep, silage, hay, turf, fencing, driving machinery, or servicing them.

Those who were fortunate to be friends of Seán's or know him, would know Seán was never in a hurry, he would stop on the road when he would meet his neighbours and friends, switch off his jeep and have a good chin wag about everything, a strange sight these days, because everyone is in a hurry. Seán was not just a farmer, he was gifted with other talents as well, he was a very good carpenter, and he had also a very good knowledge of mechanics and machinery in which he used dabble. He enjoyed days at sheep shows and he had a keen interest in vintage machinery, he attended all the shows and ploughing championships every year around the county and the larger ones in the country. He enjoyed socialising the week ends with his friends in Louisburgh and even though he was a Pioneer and a member of the Lecanvey Pioneer Association for over thirty years he showed that he did not need alcohol to enjoy himself, when you would hear him laugh, you would know it was from his heart.

Every year since the age of six, Seán was amongst the pilgrims to the Reek on the last Sunday of July. His final pilgrimage this year was with Fr. Micheál Mac Gréil to Mámeán Patrician site in North Connemara. A man of strong faith, Seán was a regular at Saturday evening Mass all his life. This was still evident as he showed his strong faith by clutching his beads in his hand in the final hours before he died. Following the death of his mother on the 12th of July 2007, life was getting a little easier for Seán as he and his brother took care of her prior to her death. He was diagnosed with cancer at the end of September and after battling with treatments for a period of two months, died on the 29th of November in Mayo General Hospital. His sudden passing caused great shock and sadness in the Louisburgh Community and in all areas where Seán had been known. This was evident by the large crowds that flocked to Sweeney's Funeral Home, Louisburgh, and the guard of honour drawn from the I.F.A. and the Lecanvey Pioneer Association, that flanked the hearse for the removal of his remains to St. Patrick's Church, Lecanvey, and the burial in Kilgever Cemetery, following Requiem Mass the following day celebrated by, Fr Paddy Gill, Lecanvey, Cannon Eamonn Concannon, Newport, and Fr Leo Morahan, Louisburgh, Fr Gill paid an elegant tribute to Seán in his inspirational and consoling ceremony. This day was the worst weather of the year giving storm, lightning, thunder, hailstones, rain, and even the sun shone on the coffin. It would seem all elements of the weather came to say good bye to Seán on his final day, as he worked under all those conditions on his farm, they came to bid him farewell.

I will finish by stating that Seán had actually one fault and I think anyone who had the privilege of knowing him will recognise it. The man could never say no to anybody.

May you kind and gentle soul rest in peace, Sean, your memories and good deeds will never be forgotten.

The family of Seán are grateful for the kindness and attention given by the doctors, nurses and staff to Sean, in the Oncology Unit and B-Block in The Mayo General Hospital. They are also thankful for the kindness given by the doctors, nurses and staff of The Galway University Hospital during his short stay there. A special word of thanks is also extended to the nurses who attended him for the short period after his release from hospital. To the wonderful relations, neighbours, and friends for their understanding, help, and kindness, shown and given, to the family during these heart breaking times, they are most grateful,

An abstract from 'Thyrsis a Monody' by Matthew Arnold is a proper and fitting way to best describe Seán.

*It irk'd him to be here, he could not rest.  
He loved each simple joy the country yields,  
He loved his mates; but yet he could not keep,  
For that a shadow lour'd on the fields,  
Here with the shepherds and the silly sheep.  
Some life of men unblest  
He knew, which made him droop, and fill'd his head.  
He went; his piping took a troubled sound  
Of storms that rage outside our happy ground;  
He could not wait their passing, he is dead.*

*So, some tempestuous morn in early June,  
When the year's primal burst of bloom is o'er,  
Before the roses and the longest day —  
When garden-walks and all the grassy floor  
With blossoms red and white of fallen May  
And chestnut-flowers are strewn —  
So have I heard the cuckoo's parting cry,  
From the wet field, through the vext garden-trees,  
Come with the volleying rain and tossing breeze:  
The bloom is gone, and with the bloom go !!*



## Funeral Homily for John Lyons (1911-2007)

*20th March, 2007*

Just before John Lyons came home to die in Mayo, his daughter Anne, with whom he had spent the last months of his long life, asked him how he was. "I'm waiting for the glorious time to be", he told her. And on Saturday night last, when Kathleen bade him a last goodnight, he told her, "I'm waiting for the dawn."

That "glorious time to be", that eternal "dawn" have now come for John. These answers of his sum up very well his life of faith and hope in a better future. We are gathered this morning to commend him to God in that "glorious time to be", that eternal "dawn". He has joined his parents, his brothers and sisters, his dear wife Sara and his son Joseph in eternity. May they all rest in peace.

We are gathered with John's family: with P.J. and May, Anne and Michael, Mary and Tony, Noel and Breda, Kathleen and Noel and with his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, to remember him and pray for him. We share your grief this morning and pray that you will be comforted in the days and weeks ahead.

It is good and right that you should grieve, but in the light of our faith, today is above all a celebration: the celebration of a long, good life lived to the full. We join you in that celebration, in the sure and certain hope that "on this mountain" the Lord of Hosts has indeed prepared a rich banquet for John. That "on this mountain" the Lord does indeed remove every shadow, every tear. We trust in Jesus' promise to his followers: "In my Father's house there are many rooms." John has now gone to his room with God, his loving Father, and we all hope to join him one day in that "glorious time to be", that eternal "dawn".

We can learn from John's life. From his deep courage and endurance: he met with suffering, with deep sorrow, with the burdens of old age and he bore all of them with the courage that comes from faith: faith in God first of all. But also faith in himself, in his family and in his good neighbours, who shared the hard times with him. We can learn from John's deep and generous charity: his practical love and service to many families in their need. John was always there, whenever and wherever there was need. And his strength of body and strength of character made him a welcome presence in times of need.

We can learn from his vision and his creativity: he was always open to the future – to new ways of doing things. He brought us our first mowing

machine in these parts. He showed the way in growing vegetables for the local markets – and persevered even after the vans from afar destroyed local markets. He supported whatever initiatives there were in his time for improving the lot of farmers and life on the farm and in the community. And it was a source of pride to him that his own family were able to make their livelihoods at home in Ireland.

I am privileged to celebrate his funeral Mass. I remember his help to my own family in a bad time when my father was ill in hospital and John eased the burden for my fourteen year old self and my younger brother Tommy over a long hard year. He paid my first, and for a long time, my only wages, and he was generous to a fault. He let me carry the curragh with him up and down to the channel at Suickeyn, and he risked his life with me on fishing trips on Clew Bay. It was quite a risk: I never mastered the oars. I brought P.J. to school on his first day.

We sometimes say at times like this, "Ní bheidh a leithéid arís ann." "We won't see the likes of him again." We are wrong to say this, for all our admiration of John. We have John's like in his family, who carry on in their own lives and in their families the tradition he gave them. He was rightly proud of you all; and I know he is proud these days watching his grandchildren carrying the coffin.

John handed on the torch of faith and of a rich human heritage to his children. We are all part of that heritage, and it is a real challenge to all of



*"Carrowniskey 1978" by Rod Tuach.*

John Lyons, R.I.P., is in the background, while the young man in the foreground was, and still is, Michael O'Malley of Cross. Rod Tuach lives in Cronroe, Ashford, Co. Wicklow, and the photo appears in numerous publications including *A Sense of Ireland*, 1980, p.87.–Ed.



us this morning. Our being here, as well as being a mark of respect to John's family, is also our way of saying "Yes" to the values and virtues that John bore witness to in his life. His life and death call out to all of us to follow his example of facing courage in face of difficulties. We can learn from his deep and practical charity over a long life of love and service. We can learn from his vision and perseverance in working for a better life for his family and for his community.

We are told that God never closes one door without opening another. In his later years John's memory for practical things failed. It was replaced by a truly amazing recall for the poems and ballads that he had learned as a boy. Those of us who, right up to this last week, have him recite "The Trimmings of the Rosary" and other long poems from beginning to end will never forget the experience. I know this is one of the memories his grandchildren will carry with them. To them and to his great-grandchildren, and to all his family, we say: you have a proud heritage to live up to. Our prayer this morning is that you and all of us will be found worthy of this heritage.

Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

*An tAthair Pádraig Ó Máille*

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### **You are listening when . . . .**

*You come quietly into my private world and let me be.*

*You really try to understand me when I do not make much sense.*

*You don't take my problem from me, but trust me to deal with it in my own way.*

*You give me enough room to discover for myself why I feel upset, and enough time to think for myself what is best.*

*You allow me the dignity of making my own decisions even though you feel I am wrong.*

*You don't tell me that funny story you are just bursting to tell me.*

*You accept my gratitude by telling me it is good to know I have been helped.*

## **Theresa Gibbons**

The death has taken place of Ms Theresa Gibbons, Laurel Court, Drogheda, Co. Louth, and late of Derreen, Louisburgh. Aged 54 years, she was daughter of the late Austin and Margaret Anne Gibbons.



*Theresa Gibbons.*

Theresa was an employee of Eircom for many years. She was predeceased by her sister, Anne Cuddihy and her nephew, John Cuddihy.

Theresa's special interests in life included walking, the creations of nature, dancing and sports. News of her passing at such a relatively early age shocked and saddened her many friends in Drogheda and Louisburgh.

She will be very sadly missed by her brother John Joe (Derreen, Louisburgh); sisters Margaret (Louisburgh), Mary Hickey (Meath) and June (Drogheda); Aunt Tess (England), Aunt Mae (Castlebar), sister-in-law Mary; brother-in-law Tom; nephews, nieces, best friends, Ashok, and son, Rahul; cousins, work colleagues and many friends.

Removal took place from Townley's Funeral Home, Drogheda, when Theresa's casket was carried by work colleagues and friends in a Guard of Honour.

Further removal took place from Sweeney's Funeral Home, Louisburgh, to St. Patrick's Church, Louisburgh, where Fr Mattie Long PP, officiated at the reception ceremony. The concelebrants of Theresa's Funeral Mass were Fr Mattie Long, Fr Leo Morahan and Fr Patrick Gill. The readings at the Mass were given by Theresa's niece, Mairéad Gibbons, and her nephew, Austin Hickey. Prayers of the Faithful were read by her nephew, Austin Gibbons, best friend Rahul Chawley and Jim Prendergast. The gifts were brought to the altar by Margaret, June and John Joe Gibbons. Rahul Chawley, whom Theresa reared from infancy, paid tribute to her in a post-Communion reflection. He said Theresa was a very special person in his life, "a real gem among the stones".

Theresa was laid to rest in the family plot in Killeen Cemetery. May her gentle and caring soul have peaceful rest.



## Noreen

Noreen & I were great friends who rekindled a childhood friendship after a gap of almost twenty years.

We met when we were 9 years old at school in Louisburgh in Co. Mayo. We were both the "new kids" as our families had returned from USA and UK. to set up homes where Noreen's father and my mother had been born and raised.

Throughout our early school years a true friendship was formed and was one that really did stand the test of time.

Noreen was always a very smart person who not only excelled in school but in whatever she put her mind to doing. She loved nature and her surroundings as a child were what made her soul soar. We were blessed in where we lived, in a rural area in the west of Ireland. Nestled beneath the Holy mountain of Croagh Patrick and surrounded by green fields which led us in almost any direction that we chose to go to the ocean.

Noreen when she was a child both played and worked in these surroundings, whether it was helping with saving hay or in the bog saving turf for the winter fires that Noreen loved so much. Hard work was never something that Noreen shied away from even in those childhood days and was something that she continued on doing all through her life, leaving home the day our Leaving Cert results came out, travelling to Boston, finding work and making a life for herself.

It is in Boston that Noreen and Seamus made their home and their children were born, First Melissa, then Lucas and then William. As a mom Noreen was a natural; she was kind, loving, supportive, while all the time instilling good morals and making sure that the children knew what was right and what was wrong and all of this without breaking the children's own individual spirits.

Noreen believed in Communication and whether that was talking or writing it didn't really matter as long as words were used properly. This was something that she always encouraged her children to do to explain how they were feeling by USING THEIR WORDS.

Another major love in Noreen's life was music and anything to do with it.



*Noreen Maxwell-Folan R.I.P.  
and Caroline Mahon (née  
Finlay).*

She loved all types of music from traditional Irish to the hits from the 1980s and on all occasions could be relied upon to get people up and living it up on the dance-floor. Before she died Noreen had started to learn guitar and was doing music therapy with a truly wonderful man called Denis who had her tapping away to the music while he played guitar and sang her favourite songs.

After so many lapsed years, during which we both grew into very different women we met up and rekindled a wonderful friendship and truly we both often said that although almost 20 years had passed it felt as if we had been chatting to each other the week before. We had many a conversation in the last three years, a lot of laughs and in all honesty a few tears. The laughs were clear to be heard through the house and often we would hear from our respective mothers "what are ye two devils giggling about now?"

We shared secrets, thoughts and dreams for the future all of which were discussed in great detail and usually ended up in me getting a lecture of some sort or that knowing look with the raised eyebrow from Noreen.

I am very thankful to have been given the time that we got to spend together in the last three years but in particular in the last 8 months of Noreen's life. She was truly an incredible woman who drew people to her from all walks of life and all generations. There is not a single day from our time together that I would give back. Noreen taught me so very much, there was a lesson in every day spent with her, Mainly the lessons were be true to yourself, be good to others, try to understand other people even if they are being hurtful because we don't always know the reasons why.

Faith was what kept Noreen going for so long through those last difficult months. She always said "Faith is everything" and I believe that her faith rubbed off on so many people including myself because it was so powerful. Also not only her faith in her Creator but her faith in herself and in all around her, her belief was that there is good in everybody we just have to look for it.

So, thank you my dear friend for all that you have taught me, for the love that you gave me, for the laughs that we had and all the memories we shared and made.

I love you and I miss you but I know that you are watching over us all.

Until we meet again, rest easy and save a space for me.

XXXXXXX  
*Caroline*



## Many Present at Mass for Young Priest

*The following excerpts are from "The Southern Cross", official organ of the diocese of San Diego, California-Friday, January 12, 1940.*

### Two Cousin-Priests Assist at Requiem for Father O'Malley

On Sunday evening, January 7th, death unexpectedly closed the career of the Re. Patrick J. O'Malley. Fr O'Malley, a priest of the Archdiocese of Edmonton, Canada, had been doing temporary duty in the Diocese of San Diego. He was visiting with his cousin, the Reverend John McHale, pastor of Arlington.

On Sunday morning, Father O'Malley seemed to be enjoying good health. He celebrated the 10.15 am Mass in St. Thomas church. In the afternoon he went for a walk and after dinner felt a little weak and retired at 8.00 pm. He suddenly grew worse and Father McHale administered the last rites of the Church. He expired at 9.00pm.

Father O'Malley was born in Louisburgh, Co. Mayo, Ireland on November 21, 1897. He was educated at national schools of Ireland. Coming to America at the age of 17, he studied at Boston College and later at Niagara University. Then he went to St. Joseph's seminary in Edmonton, Canada, where he was ordained in March, 1930.

During his time in the diocese of San Diego Father O'Malley held appointments at St. Bernardine's, San Bernardino; St. Didacus, San Diego, and Nazareth House, Mission valley.

The funeral was held from St. Joseph's Cathedral on Thursday morning. The Most Reverend Bishop celebrated the Solemn Pontifical mass of Requiem. The presbyter assistens was the Reverend William O'Toole of Sacramento. The deacon and subdeacon of the Mass were the Re. Thomas O'Malley of Los Angeles and the Rev. John McHale of Arlington, cousins of the deceased. The Rev. Luke Deignan and the Rev. John Power were deacons of honor to the Most Reverend Bishop. Master of Ceremonies was the Rev. Kenneth Stack. The sermon was preached by the Rt. Rev. Msgr. John M. Hegarty, V. G. The Mass was sung by the priests' choir.

*The following are parts of Monsignor Hegarty's sermon and reflect on the life of Fr. O'Malley at home in Louisburgh-Feenone actually and in the USA.*

"... His life was cut short in the middle of his days. He belonged to a race of divine dreamers who set forth in the morning of the world looking for a beauty that was not to be had on earth. They thought they saw an unearthly beauty painted by the ever-changing sunset on a canvas of moving clouds. And when that earthly day ended and the day of Christianity dawned, the young men of his race set forth with wonder in their eyes and adventure in their hearts looking still for beauty. But now they sought it not in the setting sun, but in the following and in the service of the new Sun, which is Christ . . .

Forty-two short years ago Patrick O'Malley was born in Louisboro (sic), County Mayo. He inherited the poetic imagination of his race. His tender feet stood upon the barren crags of Connemara and his young eyes saw the glorious sunshine and storm-driven clouds chasing each other across the brown landscape. In the little home at mother's knee, he made the sign of the cross, lisped innocent prayers and was told about the God Who made the sunshine, the clouds and the storms.

Then one day with dawning youth, he saw the vision for himself and he heard the voices calling as they called to the Patriarch of old: "Go forth from thy country and from thy father's house, go into the land that I will show thee" . . .

With a soul thus fired and an ambition which is not of earth, he set sail for Ireland's land of promise, the glorious continent of North America . . . Friends and fate guided him to study at Boston College, then at Niagara University and later at St. Joseph's, Edmonton, Canada where he was ordained and laboured for eight years. A little over a year ago, broken in health from front-line trench work in the land of the snows, he came to this land of sunshine in the hope of working still further for God in a land where benign skies might prolong his life of usefulness to Christ. But God had decreed otherwise. The will was accepted for the deed. By the generosity of his sacrifice he completed in a few years the work of a longer lifetime. And now Father O'Malley has gone to his eternal rest with a noble line of ancestry.

Among the sons of St. Patrick assembled about the Eternal throne, he can claim kinship with the noble lion of the West, the great Archbishop McHale, and even to the scholarly McEvelly who left to posterity the fruits of his great intellect.

May the light which guided Fr. O'Malley still guide the sons of Erin's Apostolic race. May those sons still be chosen of (sic) god to carry the light of His gospel to the ends of the earth. May we all take courage from the generosity of his sacrifice and of his example. May the green sod lie



lightly on him in sunny California and may Mary Mother, the Mother of Ireland, be his advocate before the Great White Throne."

*Editor's note: Fr. Kieran Waldron's "Priests Ordained in the Twentieth Century from Kilgeever Parish" (An Choinneal 2004) includes Fr. John McHale of San Diego diocese and Fr. William O'Toole of Sacramento. Both were natives of Louisburgh town itself while Fr. Thomas O'Malley hailed from Bunowen.*

*The subject of the above excerpt was Fr. Patrick J. O'Malley of Feenone; he was uncle of Tommie Joe O'Malley of Thallabawn.*

*The editor of An Choinneal thanks Tommie Joe for the article and also is thankful to Mrs. Kathleen Morrison (nee O'Toole) of Bridge St. for her help in identifying the other three Kilgeever priests.*

### Good Example

*I'd rather see a lesson  
Than to hear one any day,  
I'd rather you'd walk with me  
Than to merely show the way.*

*The eye's a better teacher  
And more willing than the ear,  
And counsel is confusing  
But examples always clear.*

*The best of all the teachers  
Are the ones who live the creed,  
To see good put into action  
Is what everybody needs.*

*I soon can learn to do it  
If you let me see it done,  
I can see your hand in action  
But your tongue too fast may run.*

*And the counsel you are giving  
May be very fine and true,  
But I'd rather get my lesson  
By observing what you do.*

## My Friend on the Island

*Tommie Lyons*

It was a glorious fine summer's morning. We were on holidays in Mayo. The children were young and I was - younger. We decided to do a trip to Clare Island. The children were so excited about getting on the ferry at Roonagh and gliding out into the open sea. They enjoyed watching the furrow which the boat made in the sea and the white wake that it left behind.

When we arrived on the island we went for a walkabout for the few hours that we had to spare looking at everything as if we expected that people and houses were somehow different out on an island. We eventually found ourselves at the church and I found myself walking through the cemetery where much of the island's history is written on the headstones.

Looking at names and ages, some very young and some old, on these headstones you got some sense of the harsh life that the islanders had lived. Looking at the headstone of a child of fifteen I thought of the difficulties her parents had in getting help when the child was ill. What if the child needed urgent hospital treatment and the sea was too rough for a crossing as it often was? What of the people who got heart attacks for example? How did they manage? In many cases I suppose they didn't. Yet most of them according to the headstones had lived very normal lives. Perhaps it was the simplicity of their lifestyles and diet.

Still musing over all these things as I left I suddenly noticed a small headstone outside the cemetery wall. It bore the name of a sailor of the Royal Navy. During the '39 to '45 war it was not unusual to have bodies washed ashore all along the coast, all victims of the violence of the war at sea. We would hear of these things as children but we never knew of any difficulty in arranging their burials. Seeing this poor sailor's grave placed outside the wall shocked me and set off a train of thought that still comes up on the screen of my memory so very often.

Why was he so discriminated against in death? Was it possible that our Church would not allow him into our Catholic cemetery if he was not a catholic? Obviously it was. And when you consider it, there was only perhaps a foot of soil underneath the wall between him and those inside. Their remains were mingling down there at that level anyway. It was truly incredible. It was however a beautiful grave in its own right. The grass all around was cropped by the sheep as short as the grass on a golf putting green.



But why was he left there by his family and relatives? His name was there so the war office would have advised his family of his death. Perhaps they were too poor to bear the expense of having him buried in the family burial ground near his own home in England. If that was the case can you imagine the grief of a mother who had to reconcile herself to having her son, after all his valour at war, buried with aliens who would not even let him in to their cemetery? Of course he may not have family at all and then again he may have had a wife and children or even a sweetheart. Whatever he had or wherever he came from our treatment of him, whether in humane or religious terms, was disgusting.

On that day the island was bathed in sunshine but there were other days and other times when storms lashed their shores. These storms of nature the islanders could manage but when the dark clouds of suffering and bereavement were visited on them it was harder to bear but bear it they did, strengthened by their own Christian stoicism. They would see the arrival of a body on their shore as another act of God and they would accept it. The burial outside the cemetery they would accept too in docile compliance with authority from whatever sources it was exercised.

This picture stayed with me all through the years that followed. I thought of it when my daughter was getting married. As I watched the young couple on the altar I thought that they too were making their own island. After all every home is in effect an island where they enjoy their own privacy, their own dreams, their own plans and their vision for the future, their own enjoyment and celebrations. Then as surely as night follows day they will be visited by the dark clouds of trouble which they will have to face together. I found myself praying that their island would always be bathed in the sunshine of health, happiness and contentment.

I thought of my friend on the island again when I was preparing the St V. De Paul appeal on one occasion. Some of the families I knew had their island or home under the shadow of clouds always, every day, every week, every month, and every year. They never saw the sunshine of hope except through the help we gave them. Then they too would experience trouble landing on their shore in the shape of ill health or the grief of bereavement.

One day, many years later, my wife and myself went on a day trip to the same island. This time there were no children just an elderly couple strolling along parts of the island we had not seen before. We inevitably came to the church. By this time there was no longer any resident priest on the island but the Church was beautifully bathed in flowers. Of course I went to visit my friend as I had come to refer to him.

Low and behold the wall had been knocked down between the sailor's

grave and the cemetery and rebuilt out around his grave and he was now part of the island's deceased community as it were. He was at last accepted. Not only that but his grave was decorated with ornate sea stones, symbolic perhaps of the way he had arrived. There he was like a king on his throne with all his subjects all around him.

The island community had at last asserted itself and embraced the sailor as one of their own. The decorations on his grave were a simple symbol of the hospitality that should have been afforded him when he first arrived, washed up by the storm on their shore, escaping in the only way he could from the terrible brutality of a terrible war

Now as I admired his grave, really pleased with what had transpired, I thought of his mother, or his girl-friend, or his wife or family or whoever mourned him. They could all rest in peace now – peace at last.

*T.M.L.*

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### **You are listening when . . . .**

*You allow me to make my experience one that really matters.*

*You realise that the hour I take from you leaves you a bit tired and drained.*

*You grasp my point of view even when it goes against your sincere convictions.*

*You accept me as I am – warts and all.*

*You don't offer me religious solace when you sense I am not ready for it.*

*You look at me, feel for me, and really want to know me.*

*You spend a short, valuable time with me and make me feel it is forever.*

*You hold back your desire to give me good advice.*



## Letter from Home

Dear Austie,

Well here I am again, thanks be to God! This is the third time for me to start but I hope to get it done this time. They were at me ever ever so I should sit down and write to you, like I used to do before I was sick. But you know yourself the way it is for a person. I suppose I should be grateful to God that I am this well now. And you'll understand if I fail; or if a lot of what I write will be *ráiméis*. They say there's no fool like an old fool.

I must thank you Austie for how good you were to me and how often you made that trip when I was sick in hospital or at home. I hope that you'll never have to darken the door of any hospital yourself as a patient. It isn't that the doctors weren't good and very good. And the nurses, God love them, as the man from Mooneen said longo after a spell in the hospital "It was like a honeymoon, for nurses"!.

Still I am very glad to be leaving them and coming home. But sure as the old saying was "It's a step-mother that would blame me!" But there's míle murder for a long time here about the state of the health department in Ireland. A lot of poor patients were left out in the corridors or stretchers, the creatures. But I was lucky the times I was there. And the wheelchair itself isn't too bad. I hope to get off it soon.

Now I am always asking Daddy what'll I write, and he'll only say: "You were always the one in this house that was the quill-driver". Well, the cattle aren't going so well lately down. Some trouble about the price of beef in Europe and other inferior stuff coming from Argentina, I think. But the sheep are standing up well. There's people into sheep now that were never into sheep. We had 82 lambs in the spring and five that died. They are ready for the market any day now, going to France or Germany. Sometimes I hate to think that the lambs we reared in the village have to be slaughtered like that; but I suppose that's the way the world spins around. We never took the advice of going vegetarian! Did ye?

Well we always used to have a meeting of the senior citizens (that's what they call us) every Friday. Then we used to have a meal in the old Convent in Louisburgh and music and bingo after that. But the Convent is being done up—improvements I suppose, so we had to forego that part of it until the building is done. Poor Johnny Mc Connell was a prime mover in looking after the old people on the Fridays butn he got sick a year ago. However I hear he is coming-to famous. Maybe he'd be with us when the Convent is opened again.

Well the town of Louisburgh is picking up a lot lately down. Morrison's of the corner is done up; painted anyway; and I hear there's planning permission on it too. There's several new houses, up this Caher side of the town, and beyond the clinic and on the Westport road. And there's restaurants to beat the band—there's Hudson's Pantry in Main Street and Louisburgh 74 where Joan Harney had the Burgher longo; and there's Gaffney's and the Chinese (if you please) all on Chapel Street. Not to mention atall the Westview Hotel where McDermott's Hotel was (and Durkan's Weir after); and then the Derrylahan. All great restaurants and then Andy Durkan has a special kind of food bar for the Sancta Maria boys and girls. But here's a joke. Someone was visiting Bridie O'Malley in the town-she does have oceans of visitors. And this one was counting out all the restaurants of the town. And the other one said: "You have left out the best restaurant of them all, Bridie's". Sure that isn't really a restaurant at all but several goes in for a cuppa from Bridie. She's great God bless her. I must call in again when I go to the town, there's a connection there.

But isn't it acrying shame that Carrowniskey P.O. is closed? For one thing it was so handy if a person wasn't dressed up to go down and post the letter. And I well remember when I was in Worcester longo how I just loved when the letter would come through the letter box with the stamp on the envelope "Ceathrú an Uisce." That itself would keep me going for the week. And sure the way that things are going maybe Killadoon is next for the dustbin. Progress *moryah!*

We heard that someone, some official, came to the Louisburgh school back in November or so, and asked the old people to come and tell their own stories to the present-day children. I thought it was a great idea but they didn't think of coming back to us. As Daddy said if they came to the "west" that's where they could have got the real stories!"

Well I have real news for you, family news; but it's not news yet, so don't let it on your breath until you hear it from others. Our young woman (Mary) is expecting before the year is out. And she mentioned once or twice that she really intends to have her baby at home in the house. Of course I didn't put to her or from her, that's her own business; but in my own heart I am so delighted. That will be the first baby born in this house, in the village even, for the last thirty-four years. God send her and her baby luck.

Aunt Honnie comes regular ever since I was sick. She's great, but himself is getting slack, the creature. Pains in the bones. Arthritis, I suppose. Still he has the good appetite, Daddy used always say that he'd eat the quarter sessions. And sure enough, Mary put down a few lovely pancakes before him the last time he came and I knew well that that wasn't



white water to him. But I couldn't say anything. He didn't come since. Their Tommie doesn't seem to write to them so much now. Are you near him at work? I know that the two Feenoone lads meet him regular anyway; but you could give him a nudge sometime if you strike up against him. Very few Yanks here yet this year—the fall in the dollar maybe.

Oh yes I never told you that the farmers' market is in full swing in Louisburgh town. Every Friday. A lot of the stalls closed for the winter, but fair play to Nora Lyons of Furmoyle (she's married to John Joe McDonnell's son, Joseph) she kept her stall open, with every home-made jam and fresh-laid hen-eggs and vegetables and onions and lettuce and all, all through the winter and spring. And duck eggs even.

You heard that the Louisburgh horse-show is revived. Well it was a great day again this year. Weren't for the weather I would have gone down to Carramore to support it even in the wheel-chair and maybe you remember too the lovely races we had longo in Carramore and in Cross. They might revive them too.

You'll get the other news from the *Coinneal*. I'm sending, like the marriages and deaths and new jobs and that. Isn't it great that they kept the *Coinneal* going. It will be fifty years on the go next year. I remember we got the first one in Boston early in 1960 but they had got it in Louisburgh the Christmas before that. There's talk here of getting out a special one again for the fiftieth jubilee for Christmas 2009, whoever will live to see it. Would you ever think of putting in something again yourself. What you wrote the last time was great and not a one knew it was you.

Anyway keep on writing to us when you can. I have no real satisfaction with those emails and texts and such. Daddy said there's nothing like the piece of paper you can have in your hand and you can know that it was Austie himself wrote it and licked the stamp. God knows what I would like is, to see not the letter but yourself coming down the *boreen* again.

I won't force you at all. But maybe you would.

God bless you, Austie, and all that's there with you.

*Mother*

## Maria

On the 16th December, 2005, my first granddaughter was born. She had Downs syndrome and was being transferred to Crumlin Hospital the next day due to medical problems. When I heard the news, I thought my heart would break with sadness for my daughter Clair and her husband Philip.



*Maria McKiernan.*

A hundred different thoughts ran through my head. How would they cope with all the difficulties of a special needs child? All negative thoughts, though, of course, I didn't voice any of those. Then Mother Nature kicked in and prompted me that here I was, a granny who was healthy and young enough to help with all the practical things.

The next morning we went to the hospital to see our granddaughter before she was transferred to Crumlin. I felt a great joy when she held my fingers so tightly. All I saw was our beautiful Maria attached to all the different tubes and I prayed that she would survive her treatment. She looked so frail I felt a fear I daren't express. But such fears were unfounded thanks to the wonderful care she got in Castlebar and Crumlin. Maria came home on the 16th January, 2006. I knew that our lives would take a different direction and I knew that our priorities would be changed.

It was then that we experienced the wonderful kindness of people. Maria was welcomed into the community like a princess. Kind words and gifts came from family and friends; and what amazed me more were the gifts from people we didn't know that well. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody for their kindness.

Maria is now two years old and is the joy of our lives. She has weekly contact with the staff of Western Care for physiotherapy etc. She has started to walk and although her speech is slower to come along, she is well able to communicate her needs to us.

I now know that with a little help and the loving support of family and friends, Maria will live a happy life.

*Dympna Grealis*



## A Chance Meeting

*Maureen Maguire (née Gavin, Ballyhip)*

I drove slowly through the moon-like terrain. The sun's shadow gently moved sideways over the barren mountainside, sometimes hovering for a moment before continuing its mapping out of the many cliffs, waterfalls and streams. The low hills were strewn with boulders, as though an Ice Age catastrophe had thrown them down with a vengeance and there they still remained.

The track wound its way through the valley floor and on towards the river. Once there, you had two options: you could turn back leaving this beautiful hidden valley to the sun, the streams and the stars, or, you could remove your footwear, wade across the river and follow the sheep-track. This would eventually take you to the pretty village of Drummin. Thick stumps of deal protruded through the watery bogs on both sides of the narrow road, all looking as if they had been sculpted under cover of darkness, yet proudly declaring an ancient and colourful history.

I parked up by the river. The landscape had softened. A few acres of lush green fields were proof of hard-working, forward-looking people of simpler days. Two or three white washed cottages adorned the area. Slipping back into my childhood, I picked up some flat pebbles and tried skimming them across the sparkling water. Suddenly, a crunch of gravel from behind made me lose my aim.

"While since you practiced that," he said, as I slowly turned around. "Good evening to you, are you lost?" he enquired. "No, not lost at all, just driving around and I found this lovely place." I tried not to stare too hard as the gentleman fired umpteen questions within the first minute. "Where did you come from? Where are you staying? Have you any people here?" I knew what he meant and I wondered if all sightseers and lost travellers suffered the same set of personal questions.

As he pondered over my answers I noticed the weather beaten forehead beneath a brown hat, trousers tied up with a strong piece of string. He wore Wellingtons, one of them turned down at the top, and the pipe in his mouth looked as if it was part of his face. Talking practically non-stop seemed no effort as the pipe seemed glued inside his lips. What really drew me to this image were his cheeks. The contents of at least one tin of Germolene were plastered all over them. How such a thick layer sat there contentedly was a mystery to me. However he didn't explain its use, nor did I ask. By now, my mountain man had worked out that I was a

namesake of his own, some third cousin and who was counting anyway?

"You must come in and meet the girls," Paddy said. As we strolled towards the pristine white cottage, I saw a fine Rhode Island Red cockerel with a happy looking harem of well-fed hens feeding in the lane. "Great layers," he announced. Paddy led the way. "Come in, come on in," he repeated.

I was warmly greeted by the two girls, both of whom looked to be in their eighties. The big iron kettle was boiling. It hung on the crook over a blazing turf fire. Paddy explained his relationship to the girls. "Ah, sure you're one of our own, so you'll wait now and have the tea with us," said Maggie as she scalded the teapot.

It was obvious that the sisters doted on the brother. Folding down the bedspread in the cailleach, Maggie said "into bed with you now for an hour, you're worn out after the hill." Paddy didn't hesitate. He slipped out of the Wellingtons, untied the string keeping his trousers up and let them drop down by his ankles. Third cousin or not, I wondered where the striptease was going to end and it was obvious that Paddy wasn't shy. But it was evening and despite the warm fire, a cool breeze blew in the open doorway from the river, so Paddy decided to leave the long johns on.

As he fixed himself in the bed, Maggie was back again. "Here you are now, Paddy, a dropeen of whiskey, get that down you." Paddy dutifully obliged. You could see he was used to the attention. Leaning on one elbow, he demonstrated how much spare room he had in the bed. "I'm still on the lookout for a fine decent woman, do you know of any?" he asked a wicked glint in his eye. The girls were embarrassed but well used to his ways and hung on to every word he said.

"Plenty of fine women in Louisburgh," I said. "Ah sure I seldom manage to get there nowadays. We get a lift to Mass but you can't hang around long enough to give the dolls the glad eye when transport isn't your own." "I suppose it's not easy, Paddy," I had to agree. "I have a bike out there in the barn but it's pension age now, a bit like meself. Mind you, many is the place it took me and it's a good job it doesn't tell stories." He laughed till the bed shook.

Which was the older, I wondered, the bed, the bike, Paddy or - my best bet - the cailleach. The whiskey was taking effect and Paddy was half sitting up in his warm cosy bed like a lord. Nobody mentioned the germolene, now covering most of his face because of the heat. Apparently, according to himself, he had an eye for my Aunt Maggie many years before, but he reckoned he didn't try hard enough. Someone else nabbed



her when he wasn't looking. Again he beckoned to the spare room beside him in the single bed as I said goodbye.

I couldn't help but notice the beauty of the kitchen, the gleaming delph on the red and white dresser, the lighted Sacred Heart lamp beneath the picture, the buckets of water on the form inside the door, the welcoming fire in the hearth, the jam jar with wild flowers, homemade bread on the table. Maggie and Bridgie sitting by the fire and Paddy cosy in his long johns dreaming of what might have been.



*John McDonnell and his mother.*



*Martin Ball.*



*Kevin O'Malley and Austie Fergus - 1957.*



*Katie Donnelly and Bea Donnelly (Fergus).*

All photos courtesy of Joe Fergus, Gortalisheen.

## Random Musings on a Love Affair with a Mountain

*Maura Gannon*

When I was a child, I thought that it was very normal for my dad to climb the Reek to mind the church on top. Everyone minded something—the hens, the ducks, the house as one grew older, the flower beds and so on.

True, he did “mind” the church on top but it wasn't quite the same type of fairytale as minding the house. My Dad's involvement with the Reek was as follows;



*Austie Gannon.*

- 1916: Aged 11, he served his first Mass on the summit.
- 1918-1923 approx: Stall attendant in diocesan religious stall on the summit.
- 1923 onwards: Acted as steward on Pilgrimage Sunday together with stall and maintenance work.
- 1940-1941: Worked on project carried out by Charlie O'Malley of Westport. Thereafter, took complete care of the church etc.
- Early 1950's: Erection of outside Oratory. Statue of St. Patrick erected in church.
- 1961: Patrician year-presented with Patrician Gold medal.



*Church on the top of Croagh Patrick.*



- 1963-1965: Re-construction of Oratory and building of two side-aisles.
- 1974: Presented with Bene Marenti Medal in recognition of 50 years service.
- 1974-1979: Continued his work until serving his final pilgrimage in 1979.

All of the above is just the bare bones of the work undertaken, but the stories and incidents behind the "bones" make for interesting telling.

The aforementioned trips went on throughout the year but became almost daily in the weeks leading to the pilgrimage. Everything had to be perfect, inside and out, repaired, replaced, painted ó bhun go barr. All materials were packed into large sacks, secured, balanced and loaded onto donkeys for the journey go barr an chnoic.

Me! I'm rarely late for any event agus ní ón ghaoth a thóg mé é. 7.00am was departure time, everything being ready since the previous night. Dad's faithful lieutenant, Jack Cummins, would arrive at 6.30am and sure enough, man ready and "rarin' to go". Transporting the statue of St. Patrick to the summit was a mammoth task. It was wrapped like an Egyptian mummy and then (long before hospital trolleys) secured to a stretcher and carried to the top by relays of local people.

Then there are the little things: the pink rambling roses lovingly brought up on Reek Saturday and still in bloom on the 15th August, the fine, clear winter days when Dad would announce that he was going for a walk and nobody asked where.

It was always a tradition that no GAA matches were played in the county on Reek Sunday and there were no inter-county matches in the province until the powers that be decided to stage the replay of a Connacht Final in Castlebar. It poured and we lost. The sun shone on Cruach Phádraig. My dad was dry coming off the mountain and I was soaked coming home from Castlebar!! How times have changed; soon they'll be playing matches on Christmas Day.



1965 – Fr. T. Cummins, Marty Grady (Jack), Mickey Kelly, Austie Gannon, Joe Gavin.



Mickey Kelly, Austie Gannon, Archbishop Cunnane, Fr. Éamon O'Malley.

The pilgrimage timetable was daunting. A busy week meant that everything was in place and the outside oratory was ready. Garland Friday's Mass was celebrated within the church and though Dad came home on Friday evening, he climbed again at approximately 10.00am on Saturday. He was suitably and well dressed for the occasion and woe betide any priest who would just arrive and expect to say Mass there and then, thus ignoring the Rota set up. The offending priest waited his turn. Dad saw to it that everything ran smoothly from the first to the last Mass of the weekend.



Busy lads.

By 4.00pm on Sunday he was at home and after a rest and sustenance, he would go to Murrisk to empty the donation box at the statue there. On Monday morning the oratory on the summit was taken down and stored in the church with everything else making its way by donkey back to sea level. And Dad appreciated the hot cups of tea, courtesy of the stall holders.

If that schedule looks formidable, let's look at the years 1962-1965 when the last major extension was carried out, ie the re-construction of the oratory and the two side aisles built to facilitate easier access for confessions.

More recently, as I listened to a report of a world record being broken and the shortage of rations towards the end of that event, I was reminded of the importance of a dependable food supply for my dad, Marty Grady (Jack) and George Gill during the execution of the building project on the summit. The men remained on site from Monday through to Friday, during which time materials were ferried up by Marty Grady, Eamonn Gill, Joe Gavin, John Kindregen, Paddy and Jim Gannon. The then method of transport was the humble donkey all through the wind and rain of three long years of toil.

It was the donkey which brought my cousin Margaret and me safely from the top of the Reek on one very foggy Garland Friday. Initially, we were almost insulted when we were ordered to follow the donkey on the descent. We wouldn't go astray, we were told and so it was. Indeed, the role played by the donkey in the story of Cruach Phádraig never ceases to amaze. Last year, I had six year old Finn from Australia with me on the pilgrimage. Finn was "writing a book" about Croagh Patrick and I read that "...the donkeys brought bottles of water up 'cos Maura's dad used to get thirsty".



Of course we'll climb.



By 1965, the work on the oratory was finished and as Fr. Tom Cummins of Westport said on its re-dedication, it was as solid as the mountain on which it stood. All who worked on the scheme were presented with specially minted gold medals. I proudly wear mine together with an earlier medal in a double brooch.

Another proud memory of mine was when Dad, with Mickey Kelly of Westport, was presented with the Benemerenti Medal by Archbishop Cunnane in 1974. Mr. Kelly provided the lighting on the summit in latter years. Even today, visitors admire the scroll and medal.

There are other memories too, the treat of a bottle of Mi-Wadi on the Monday after the Pilgrimage, the All-Ireland ticket from John Ross of Radio Éireann that found its way into the wrong letter-box on Drumcondra Road, the lightning storms at any time of the year that necessitated a journey to the top in case of damage, the rifling of the donation box and smashed windows in the oratory.

1979 was his last pilgrimage on duty. By then he was using two sticks to help him there and back as a result of arthritis. By 1986, he was unable to climb the holy mountain but was not forgotten by his loyal and good friend, an tAthair León Ó Morcháin who still remembers with a phone call on each Reek Sunday.

Dad had wonderful friends who paid him many sincere tributes. Praise for him and for my mam was worldwide. He passed away in 1983, but thankfully not before reading a poignant telegram: "Austie, I'm with you all the way to the summit. Leon"

My mother of course was the unsung hero of those three years; there were no washing machines or dryers for the endless laundry and shopping was an endless chore.

His was a private faith and his work for the Lord on the summit of Cruach Phádraig was a labour of love. His other passions, apart from his family, were the GAA (hence the importance of the daily paper) and politics. He was a fíor Gael who brought fervour and commitment to all his interests.

Austie Gannon was my dad and of him I am so proud.

"Críost I gcroí gach duine atá ag cuimhneamh orainne" St. Patrick.

**Maura Gannon,**  
Lecanvey, 2008



*Austie Gannon.*

## My Report on a great cruise 2008

*Canon Eugene Nee*

*The following is Canon Nee's report of his trip on Holland-America's "Prinsendam" to S. America and Antarctica, 2nd Jan. – 6th March, 2008.*

On 2nd January, 2008, I flew from Birmingham, U.K. to Fort Lauderdale, Florida where I stayed overnight. The next day we set sail on the "Prinsendam" for an exciting educational voyage of discovery to S. America and Antarctica. We began with a stop at Grand Cayman Island and then at Limon, the port of Costa Rica. From there we travelled through the Panama Canal and then spent the following day touring the historic old city of Panama. On 10th January we sailed across the Equator to a grand welcome in Ecuador. We stopped at Manta and the old capital of Guayaquil, and the busy sea port of Salvery on the Pacific coast. After three days in Ecuador we sailed southwards into Peru for another three days. This included two days of touring in the lovely old capital of Lima, which stands out as the 'City of Saints', filled with lovely churches, an outstanding museum of religious art and populated by very friendly people.

Thereafter, we cruised down the Pacific coastline to wealthy, sophisticated Chile for the next fifteen days. Santiago, her capital, is located up in the Andes, away from the coast and so we spent our time there in the ports, especially the beautiful old church-filled city of La Serena and Valparaiso. Then we cruised on through the beautiful Chilean fjords, viewing impressive glaciers and our first floating icebergs. Reaching the southern tip of the continent, we cruised through the Straits of Magellan and then through the Beagle Channel to the largest, most southern city in the world, Ushuaia, Argentina. We found it to be very modern and beautiful and this tourist haven had its own Irish pub called 'Galway'. We also visited another of the Salesian churches which are all over Chile.

Leaving Ushuaia, we cruised around Cape Horn and crossed the Drake Passage to a breathtaking four days in Antarctica, home of innumerable penguins and other marvelous sea creatures, many of which we had a close-up view as our captain manoeuvred the ship through towering cliffs and immense ice-bergs. It was truly a feast of the senses. And throughout those days, we received excellent lectures from an experienced Antarctic explorer and researcher. From there, we re-crossed the Drake Passage to reach South George Island where we visited the grave of one of the



greatest Antarctic explorers, the heroic Irish man Sir Ernest Shackleton, RIP. He risked the safety of his own life to bring home safe all his companions from the 1916 expedition.

From here, we crossed the Scotia Sea to the Falkland Islands, scenes of the 1980 conflict, where we called on the local priest and ended up meeting the Apostolic Prefector of the islands. Then it was on to Argentina and her capital, the fabulous tango city of Buenos Aires, home of Eva Peron. We visited her grave and thought of "Don't cry for me Argentina". After two days in that 'Paris of South America' we crossed the Plate River to beautiful, welcoming Uruguay and her lovely clean capital of Montevideo. Here again, we visited lovely churches and met friendly people. Unfortunately, the beautiful churches were largely empty, as with those of the Church of England. Only about 20% of the 'cultural Catholics' attend church there. All along this eastern side of South America, i.e. Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil, we heard tales of corruption in politics, the absence of a real middle class and a stratified society with the super rich and the sorrowfully poor immersed in the Hell of poverty.

Now that the mother countries, Spain and Portugal, have joined the EU community of nations, the eleven S. American countries need to get along with one another and go down the road of co-operation versus confrontation to form a Common Market for the good of all; S. America has unlimited resources and wealth, especially in its great people.

On 12th February, 2008, we cruised into the mysterious Brazil of 200 million people, home of the Afro-Brazilian flexible culture which includes a syncretic religion, Candomble or Voodooism, as it is commonly called in other places. In many ways, Brazil today is a great nation, a multi-faith and multi-cultural collection with its brand new capital, Brasilia. Sao Paulo is the industrial heartland of the country with over 8,000,000 people. We, however, sailed into the fun capital, Rio de Janeiro, home of the samba and the legendary carnival. Rio boasts too of its 25000 capacity cathedral and, on top of the Corcovado mountain, the world famous 125 foot statue of Christ the Redeemer with its hands outstretched in blessing over the whole world. We visited Rio's famous beaches, Copacabana and Ipanema.

Brazil is a land of great diversity and dynamism. After Rio, we continued north and visited an amazing sequence of large coastal cities, all with over a million people in each. We thought the most beautiful churches were in Salvador: they included the amazing Franciscan complex and the beautiful Jesuit basilica. Salvador, Recife, Belem and others owe their wealth and power to sugar cane boom of the 18th century-infamous for its imported 3000000 African slaves- and to the rubber boom of the late 19th century. This old wealth permitted religious orders to build ornate

churches which now have empty pews with the rampant evangelical cults claiming nearly 50000000 followers.

Many priests here are responding with charismatic Masses, contemporary charismatic preaching and celebrations. The Brazilians tell us they have a massive shortage of priests and trained lay readers to serve the Church, but the Holy Spirit breathes where He wills. Maybe the best of luck to the Evangelical cults, if they are bringing people back to Christ and moral living-Praise the Lord. Only about 10 to 15% go to church anyway. Wherever you have established churches, whether in Russia, Britain, Scandinavia or South America, we have empty pews. We could not help but note that we have the rich Protestant North America and the poor Catholic South America. There are lots of poverty and corruption there. Separation of Church and State remains the best paradigm. Churches must opt for the poor, the weak and the voiceless.

After Belem, we cruised into the world's largest and widest river-the Amazon, 35 miles wide at one point, 1500 tributaries, containing 1/16th of all the water in the world (including the oceans) and supplying the rain forest, the lungs of the world, which provides 20% of the oxygen of our planet. Along the Amazon we visited the beautiful clean city of Santarem, marvelling at its lovely cathedral before finally reaching Manaus, capital of Amazon state and home to 1.5 million people and its world-famous opera house. We visited its Jesuit cathedral and spent a day cruising through the Amazon rain forest. The river's floating gas stations amused us and we admired the famous "Meeting of the Waters" where the dark blue waters from the Rio Negro mix with the light brown of the Solimoes River to form the Amazon.

After two hectic days in Manaus we retraced our way down the Amazon to the sea, a trip of three days. We did make a day's stop at the lovely town of Parintins, population 100000, where we visited its three fine churches and met a local priest and an English-speaking Italian missionary, two of the ten priests in the city. We also saw the Stadium of the Boi Bumba festival, the Amazon's equivalent of the Mardi Gras Festival in Rio de Janeiro. We 'toured' the city on a pedi-bike for the day. On 2nd March our popular Norwegian captain guided his ship over the bar of the Amazon and set a course for the rocky coast of French Guiana and a brief stop at Devil's Island for a walking tour of the former penal colony. Thereafter, it was a short sail to beautiful Bridgetown, Barbados, with her lovely churches and the restored house in which George Washington stayed on his only visit outside of the USA. Having toured the beautiful island, Fr. Nee flew back to England to do his cousin's wedding in Ireland.

It was a very successful cruise. To God be the glory. Amen.



## Sheep Shearing

I've had many wonderful and memorable days in Thallabawn. One in particular was sheep shearing day which for me was not too pleasant as all the farmers were edgy and agitated wondering what the weather was going to be like for the sheep-gathering in the mountains. The gathering usually took place in May and a Monday morning would see men and boys climb with their sticks and dogs, travelling miles over Mwelrea and Claiscéim almost to Bundorrcha. Nor was the climb confined to the high mountains; the Devlin farmers for instance would gather their flocks around Six Noggins, spending a long day from 7.30am to 8.00pm at their task.

The arrival of the flocks was beautiful to behold. They would be penned in, unaware of their fate in the morning. It would be a long and laborious day for the men too, but their wives had prepared enough to eat and drink.

I used to love packing the wool in big sacks. John Joyce RIP, of Leenane, bought the wool which he sent to the factories for the manufacture of jumpers and socks.

The Connemara people retained some of their wool for carding and spinning. Aran cardigans and jumpers were thus produced for the tourist market and added to the economic strength of the home. We too did our own carding and spinning.

In July or August Tommy Andy Staunton grazed sheep on Inishdéigle. It was a difficult but fulfilling task, as I will explain. Tommy R.I.P. would choose a safe boat on the Dúch and his wife and I would ferry the sheep between the island and the mainland. Keeping control of four sheep and at the same time rowing a boat in deep waters was a daunting task, especially in rough weather. The sheep would be sheared and put out to graze until early autumn.

The trip was repeated after lambing time in spring and again when shearing time came. When the journey to and fro was completed, it was lovely to go back home. And being home meant milking the cows and rising early in the mornings, thanking God for a safe return. The sheep-shearing was enjoyable, but in one sense I was glad when it was all over.

We had freedom, failure, success, responsibility and we faced them all.

*Kathleen Ward* (nee Loftus)  
Bristol, England.

## The Herdsmen

*Eimear O'Reilly*

Before 1916, Ireland was a country controlled by British rule. The people's lives were affected in many ways. It was during this period of time that the herdsmen came from Scotland to Ireland.

Having arrived at Belfast by ferry they took the train to Maam Cross, Co. Galway. Here, they began their journey to Louisburgh. It was here that the herdsmen would shepherd their flocks on the Sheaffry mountains. But before the sheep could be let onto the mountains, the herdsmen would let horses onto them first. If there was no harm done to the horses, the herdsmen were guaranteed that their flocks would not be harmed.

Housing was not a problem for the Scotsmen either when they arrived in Louisburgh. The British had already thought this part of the plan through. Rates and taxes were raised on the rent of the houses. Most families could not afford to pay such a large amount of money during those times; therefore, families were forced out of their homes.

For example, in the village of Laughta alone there were eight houses with large families in each. Due to the increase in the rent, they were forced to leave. One example is the Heraty family who were forced to move from Laughta to Taobh na Cruaiche.

Obviously, because the herdsmen were taking over the land and the houses, tensions emerged in the Erriff-Tallabawn area. But employment







Stone Pen, Lougha.

was afforded and accepted in the area under the general management of chief herdsman Hugh Mc Donnell. These men earned on average £6.00 to £7.00 per annum. Each Christmas they would each receive a chest of tea from the chief herdsman.

However, this was soon to end. After the Easter 1916 Rising the land reverted to its rightful owners. All that remains of the Scotsmen in this area is a large stone pen in Laughta which was erected by the herdsman themselves.

Eimear is a Leaving Cert. Student at Sancta Maria College.

**Editor's note:** While the above is a very useful insight into aspects of our land history, one will be aware of the various Land Acts between 1881 and 1923. Landlordism as a way of life ended as a result of the Wyndham Land Act of 1903 and the 1909 Birrell Act. In 1923, the Land Commission used its powers of compulsory purchase to buy out remaining estates.

### When you thought I wasn't looking . . .

*When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you hang my first painting on the fridge, and I wanted to paint another one.*

*When you thought I wasn't looking, I saw you feed a stray cat, and I thought it was good to be kind to animals.*

## “Local Fairs”

*As written by Mary Prendergast, Accony National School, Louisburgh, Co Mayo*

**Editor's note:** During the 1930's, there was a sense that much heritage had been lost and the lack of any documentary evidence of what had been retained had to be remedied. Therefore, the Irish folklore Commission, through the schools, encouraged children to speak to the oldest living member of their family and their community and to record everything “as if nothing had been recorded in the district.” The essays are available on microfilm in the County Library, Castlebar.

In the old time Ballyheane and Aughagower were the principal places of the fairs. The fair used to be held on St John's day in Aughagower and on the twentieth of August in Ballyheane. The cattle used to be shifting in the month of spring and there were hardly able to walk and the people used to send them to the mountains until the weeds would grow on the potatoes. Then when the weeds used to grow the people used to go for the cattle and used to eat the weeds to put on condition.

The sixth of August then became the principal fair day for this part of the country. Then the people began to look after their cattle and feed them far better and they used to sell them on the twenty seventh of June which then became the principal fair day. The fairs are usually held in towns or convenient to them. They are held in towns because the people want to be near the railway to rail them. Buyers never came to the farmers houses long ago.

About twenty years ago, a man of the name Mr. King from Westport came to the villages in our district and he bought about a hundred cattle. The fairs always continued but they are plentiful now than long ago. There were only four fairs in Louisburgh long ago. Their dates were May Day, the first of July, the first of October and the eighth of December. All the fairs that are know of used to be held in towns. The Louisburgh fairs are held on the streets of Louisburgh. There is custom paid on cattle sold: four pence on light cattle and six pence on a cow. This is paid to the Land Commission.

When an animal is sold luck money is given. A shilling on every beast and some people if they know the person, they give a crown or so. The buyers had to pay the custom and the sellers had to give the luck money. When a bargain used to be made the buyers used to dip his stick in the dirt and he used to rub it on the cattle. Some people used to cut a bit off their hair with a scissors.

When an animal is sold the halter is given along with it and if it has no



halter, the seller must buy one. March and April and the twenty second of May are the principal fairs held now for anyone who wants to get a good price for their cattle. The maidman and the English man are then filled up and there does not be any improvement in the price of the cattle until November.

The greatest fair day for sheep nowadays is May day and first of October for strangers who come buying. As for pigs they are selling every day now. There was once upon a time when there was only one fair day for pigs and that was the eighth of December which was called Lá Aonach na Muc. When the butchers were buying the pigs they used to keep one and six out of them. These stories were told to me by Mr Pat Lyons of Accony who is seventy-five years of age.

## The Forts in our school districts

There is a fort very near our school. It is situated very near the sea-shore, it is about fifty yards east of the sea. It is about two hundred yards west of our school. The road which leads from our school to the Accony cross-roads goes between it and the sea. There is a narrow river flowing about a hundred and fifty yards west of the fort, with a wooden bridge crossing it. It has a conical shape being about thirteen feet high. There are stones on the top of it and all around the butt of it. It is said that something will happen to the person who stirs those stones. Their weight is from about two ounces to about two stone.

One day Mr. Tommy Prendergast who lives in Accony aged about sixty-seven years went one day to build a wall to separate the fort from his field. He took some of the stones to put them in to the wall. When he had it finished he got a cold and when he had it a long time he thought that he had done something wrong. So one day he went to the fort and knocked the wall and so he got better again built that wall again. There is another story about that fort also.

One bright moonlight night my Grand-uncle was coming in from Pollglas and when he was passing the fort he saw three men carrying a coffin and one of them told him to help them. He was a lame man and walked with a staff. He left his staff on the coffin and he helped them and while he walked with the coffin he was not lame. When they came to the river they told him to leave it down and he walked away.

He had not gone far when he thought of his staff, he returned again and took it with him. It is said that if he left the staff on the coffin that he would never have been lame afterwards.

## Famous men in our school district

There were many famous men in our school district. Some of these men are not long dead. There were some famous runners, some famous jumpers, famous boatsmen, famous workers, and some famous swimmers.

A man named Mr. James Gibbons from Accony West was a great swimmer. He saved a man from drowning. Mr. James Prendergast from Accony went back to Roonagh to bathe one day. He was only learning to swim. He went out too far and he was not able to come in. Mr. James Gibbons was working convenient to the sea. He saw what was happening and he ran down to the quay and jumped out into the water. He swam to the drowning man and caught him by the arm. But for Mr. Gibbons was such a good swimmer the two of them would be drowned. He brought him in on the beach and turned him on his stomach. He was throwing out water for about two hours. He was then taken home and put to bed and he did not leave it for a long time.

There was another famous man long ago also. He is dead now a very long time. He lived in Accony. His name was Mr Jim Prendergast. He was the father of my great grandmother who is still alive. He was highly skilled in setting bones of animals and of persons. He was called at any hour of the day or night and he never refused anybody. One day a man named Mr. Scott a great grandfather of mine who is now dead was back at Roonagh one day. A big plank came ashore and he got it. He pulled it up on the beach and left the end of it up on a fence. When he had it upon the fence, the stones under it slipped and the plank fell down on his foot and broke it. The foot was broken in many places. Mr Prendergast was sent for. He fixed it such a way as to bring him to the hospital. When the man was brought to the hospital the doctor examined him. He asked what doctor set it for him. He was told that it was only a country man. He said that he could not do another bit for him. He said he wished he had that man that set the bone in the hospital with him. The man came home and his foot got better. He wasn't even lame afterwards.

There are some famous men for carrying big bags. A man named Mr. Patrick Prendergast from Accony carried a five hundred bag of oats from Mr. Thomas Prendergast's house in Accony back to his own house. Mr Dick Gibbons and Andrew McHale jumped seventeen feet and some inches. Mr. John McGreal Doughmakeon cut a year's supply of turf for Mr. Patrick O'Toole from Accony West in one day. Mr James Gibbons Accony West jumped a height of five foot eleven inches. A man named Snroine Mac Conmara from talam ban was a great poet. These poets wrote many nice poems. Another man named "Domnall Meirigesc" was also a great poet. These poets wrote many nice poems.

*Our thanks to Bríd Conroy, Accony.*



## Glory for Louisburgh

*The Mayo News*

It was certainly a case of 'Girl Power' in the historic surroundings of the Edmund Burke Theatre of Trinity College when four Louisburgh ladies talked their way into the record books.

Representing Sancta Maria College, Kayleigh O'Malley, Killadoon, Martina Giblin, Killadoon, Anna O'Toole, Louisburgh and Maura Geraghty, Kilsallagh, became only the second Mayo team ever to capture the coveted Mental Health Ireland National Public Speaking title.

This is the 25th anniversary of the competition which started back in 1982 and the Louisburgh ladies followed in the footsteps of Islandeady's St. Patrick's Academy who won the All-Ireland crown in 2002. Bonfires blazed along the route from Westport to Louisburgh as the four girls arrived home to a rapturous reception. "There was a magnificent atmosphere in the town when the girls arrived home," said their teacher Mr. Michael Davitt. "It's a tremendous achievement to capture an All-Ireland title for the school and the girls deserve hugh credit because they have put in so much effort over the years.

*And our best wishes to Mr. Vincent O'Loughlin, Principal; Mr. John Lyons, Deputy Principal; Mrs. Nuala O'Loughlin and Sr. Anne Feighney, all of whom have retired from Sancta Maria College. Mrs. Pauline Moran, Principal, and Mr. Michael Davitt, Deputy Principal (see photo) continue with the excellent work.*



*Left to right: Michael Davitt, Kayleigh O'Malley, Martina Giblin, Anna O'Toole, Maura Geraghty, Vincent O'Loughlin.*

## Louisburgh Farmers Market – Fridays

During spring, summer and autumn, a farmers market is held every Friday on the Square in Louisburgh. It is an important development for Louisburgh and the surrounding area – offering farmers an opportunity to buy and sell produce and for shoppers to sample local goods.

The market brings colour and crafts and needs support – it will only flourish if people buy things there.

The market is held between 10.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m. each Friday, and stalls sell a wide range of local produce including eggs, cakes, breads, flowers, vegetables, herbs, salad, fudge, chutneys, jams, plants, jewellery and wooden crafts.

For a taste of the area, hot lemonade, lamb burgers and free-range pork sausages are served to make a visit to the Louisburgh Farmers Market an occasion.

As oil runs short, the availability of imported foods will decrease and growing food locally will be vital – please support Louisburgh Farmers Market with your custom. Alternatively, if you would like to run a stall of your own at the market, or supply an existing stall, come down on market days to find out how.

Go raibh maith agaibh.





## Louisburgh Hospice Support Group

Louisburgh Hospice Support Group was set up in 1993. Louisburgh, Killeen, Lecanvey and Murrisk have contributed from 1993 to January 2002 the sum of £46010 (€58420.65). From 2002 to June 2008 €59,054. In total – €117,500.

It will cost €1m to run the service this year. Hospice is grateful to families for donations and bequests received over the years.

This is a very worthy cause and every contribution is greatly appreciated.



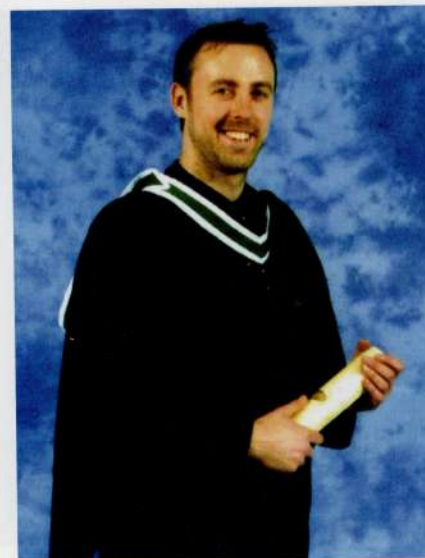
*Louisburgh Support Group Mayo/Roscommon Hospice.*



### *Louisburgh Drama Group present a cheque*

*Left to right: John Joe Gibbons (P.R.O.), Louisburgh Hospice Support Group; Mary Hegarty, Producer, Louisburgh Drama Group; Cynthia Clampett, Administrator, Mayo/Roscommon Hospice; Michael O'Malley, Chairperson, Louisburgh Drama Group; Mary P. Gibbons, Treasurer, Louisburgh Hospice Support Group; Breta O'Malley, Chairperson, Louisburgh Hospice Support Group; Carol Ralph, Secretary, Louisburgh Hospice Support Group.*

## Comhgháirdeas . . .



*Eoin Grealis – B.A. in Economics and Law – N.U.I. Galway.*



*Maria Gill who graduated with a degree in General Nursing from Napier University, Edinburgh. Maria is granddaughter of Mary Kilcoyne, Cregganacopple, Louisburgh.*



*Aisling Prendergast, Cahir, Louisburgh, who was recipient of the prestigious Entrance Award at Trinity College, Dublin – December 2004.*



*Aoife Prendergast, Cahir, Louisburgh, who graduated from N.U.I. Galway with a Diploma in Irish Literature – October 2007.*



# Comhgháirdeas . . .



Charlene Morrison was conferred with a Bachelor of Education Degree (First Class Honours) by Mary Immaculate College, Limerick, in November 2007. Charlene is the daughter of Peter and Leona Morrison, Thallabawn, and is a past pupil of Holy Family N.S., Killeen, and Sancta Maria College, Louisburgh.



Éanna O'Leary, Bunowen, who graduated recently with a first class honours B.A. International Degree from N.U.I. Galway. Éanna is son of Teresa and the late Dónal O'Leary, Bunowen.



Caroline Gill, Kilsallagh, graduated with a Bachelor of Business degree from Institute of Technology, Sligo. Caroline is grand-daughter of Mary Kilcoyne, Cregganacopple, Louisburgh.

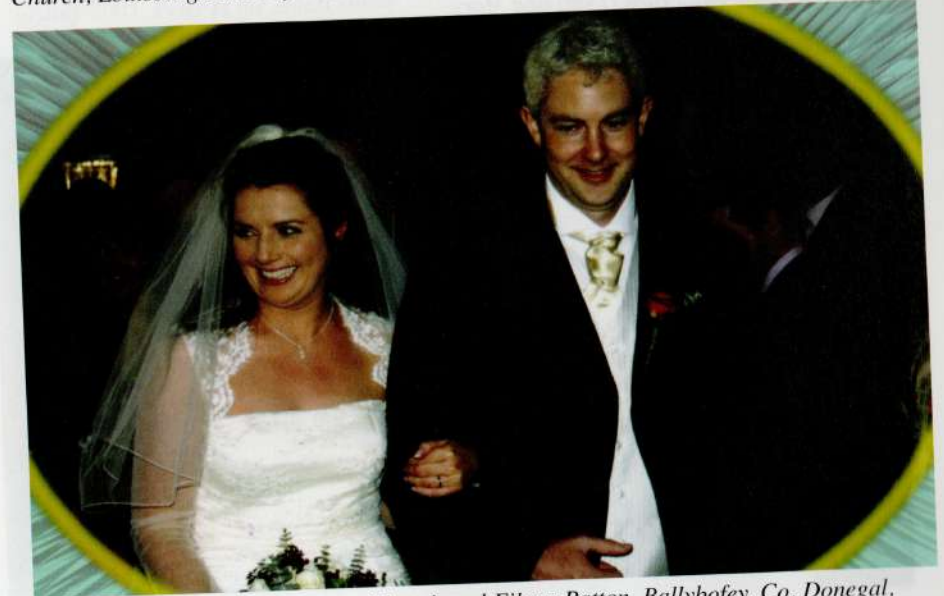


Aoife O'Leary, Bunowen, pictured with President of N.U.I Galway, Dr. Iggy O'Muircheartaigh, after her conferral with a Ph.D. in Microbiology.

# Parish Weddings 2004-2008 . . .



Caroline McCormack and Mark Whelan (Dublin), who were married in St. Patrick's Church, Louisburgh on May 7th, 2004.



David Gibbons, Cloonlaura, Louisburgh and Eileen Patton, Ballybofey, Co. Donegal, who were married in St. Patrick's Church, Drumkeen, Co. Donegal, on 29th December, 2006.



## Parish Weddings 2004-2008 . . .



David Daly, London and Michelle Sweeney, Macroom, Co. Cork, who were married in Thailand on April 25th, 2008. David is son of Kathleen (née O'Malley, Cross) and grandson of the late Frank (Dan) and Mary.



Pat O'Malley, Collacoan, Louisburgh and Solange Mapan, Douala, Cameroon, West Africa who were married on 30th November, 2007, in Douala.

## Parish Weddings 2004-2008 . . .



Peter Scanlon, B.Sc., H.Dip., Bunowen, Louisburgh and Salla Heikinen of Finland, who were married in Helsinki in July 2005. Peter is the eldest son of Vera and the late Joe Scanlon, Bunowen.



Paul and Anne-Marie Healy who were married in Killeen, 30th September 2006.



Majella Tiernan and Enda Kerrigan, Leenane, who were married in Louisburgh on the 12th October, 2007.



## Parish Weddings 2004-2008 . . .



*Joanne Lyons, Bunowen, Louisburgh and Ciarán McGettigan, Tralee, who were married in Louisburgh on 9th August, 2007.*



*Marie Therese Gibbons, Furmoyle, Louisburgh and Stephen Gohery, London, who were married in St. Patricks Church, Louisburgh, on 31st August, 2007.*