

Homework Project: Irish Folklore and Tradition

Fair days: Fair days were held in towns and villages years ago before there were any marts. The reason the fairs were held locally was to give the farmers a chance to sell their stock.

Transport was limited and rare at the time. Farmers did not have cars and trailers or tractors and trailers to bring their stock. Farmers had to walk their animals from the farm to the fair. They had to start early in the morning to try to be first to the fair so that they would have the best spot to sell their live stock. The animals lined the streets of the town and they were not moved because of traffic for there wasn't much traffic. The town people had to put wooden planks up in front of their property so that the animals would not destroy the buildings. Cattle buyers would come from surrounding areas to buy the live stock. They would haggle over the price for a while. They would often walk away and come back later and buy (this was because they didn't want bringing their cattle all over town with them). Often cattle buyers would go into a bar to 'seal the deal'.

Funny stories: My dad remembers an old man that used to sell a good amount of cattle. He was not used to drinking and in the evening was very drunk. He used to hang on to lamp poles to keep himself upright. Everyone called him "Roley - Poley".

One fair day a bullock got excited and ran into Duggans hotel and straight up the stairs.

A woman in Louisburgh on fair days used to cook meals for people. Some people instead of paying her for hospitality bought a lot of shopping, ate some and left the rest as her payment. One man from outside Louisburgh used to eat the chops she cooked for him. But as well as eating the chops he used to eat the bones as well. Everyone who knew him, knew him as "John Joe Chops".

Stories by my Dad Séamus Duffy

By Aoife Duffy