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# Foreword

This year, 2009 has been a particularly difficult year for the Editorial Committee of An Caisleán as we lost not one, but two of our most dedicated and loyal members. In December 2008, Joe Carroll the lynch pin of this publication passed away peacefully, and the decision had to be made whether we would publish an annual this year. However, Peggy Duffy was the one who suggested that we should continue as a tribute to Joe. Sadly, Peggy too passed away in June of this year, leaving us with a huge challenge to meet. We have tried to do justice to their memory and have, we hope, succeeded in some small way.

Included in this, our 13th edition, we have tried to emulate the winning formula of past publications by bringing you, our loyal readers, a varied and interesting selection of articles, poems, features and of course, many photographs depicting people and events of local interest during the year, as well as many from the past! Our articles range from such topics as an eyewitness account of the sinking of the Titanic, compiled by Dermot McCabe, recalling how parishioner Nora Keane survived this historic tragedy, to a story of determination and self-belief, penned by Joan Siochru, which saw a young local boy, Tony McCarthy who was orphaned at a young age, become self-educated and form and run a very successful business for the past thirty years. We have also included poetry, some light-hearted, a short story by Sean Hartigan, and childhood memories of growing up in Castleconnell and its environs by Gerard Kingston, Jack Byrnes, and Johnny Walsh. So we hope that there is something of interest for you and also for those who are overseas, as we know from our correspondence that you all especially enjoy your annual literary journey home!

We are very grateful to everyone who contributes in any way to An Caisleán and hope you enjoy this edition. Also, we have a limited number of back issues, should any of you be interested, available from any member of the committee.

## **Editorial Committee:**

**Steve Reidy, Pat Skehan, Mary Dillon, Joan Ó Siochru,  
Vincent Carroll, Anne O'Flynn, Sean Hartigan, Anne Berkery.**



# Pastoral Messages

***From Fr. Kyne P.P., Castleconnell, Ahane, Montpelier and the Rev. Stephen White, Dean of Killaloe and Rector of All Saints Church, Stradbally.***

## Fr. Kyne's Address



Once again it is my pleasure to contribute an article to this year's edition of 'An Caisleán'.

In these very challenging times for individuals, families and society at large my attention was recently drawn to an advertisement on TV which stated:

“ The heights you attain depend on the depth of your roots”

We know from nature that life and beauty of any branch depend on it being attached to the tree so that the sap could flow from the roots and give life to the branches.

So too in the face of life's challenges, people are becoming more conscious of the importance of family roots, community roots, local roots, and for all who try to follow the Lord and become rooted in him, who has been described as the 'ground of our being', nurture well being of spirit and soul.

It is wonderful to see families in the parish coming together more and more especially in the many estates organising celebrations, birthdays, barbeques, parties and being available to one another in a supportive capacity. Society cannot survive without the thread that binds so much of what is good when people work together. It reminds us that behind 'the winner takes it all façade' there is an abundance of selfless people who are motivated by care, love and community spirit. A recent example was 'The Triathlon' (100 athletes, their families and many volunteers in the background) held at the 'World's End', among countless examples.

Behind every good deed is a volunteer, someone from the community/parish giving his/her worth so that others can ultimately give theirs.

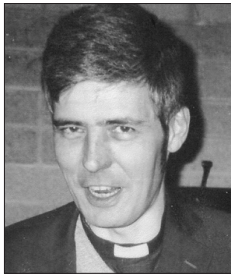
In the course of our history as a nation, especially in difficult and challenging times, there was an expectation that one had to play one's part, that one had a civic duty, a public responsibility for the national good and no doubt that call will be reawakened for all of us more and more in the months to come.

Like Elijah the prophet who was reassured by God as he himself was losing hope and consequently made the journey to Horeb the symbol of his hope in God. Likewise Joshua who called the tribes, his people. To commitment and faithfulness to one another and to the Lord so that blessings would come as a reward of that faithfulness.

I echo the prayers of all of you that our country will place more emphasis in Christian values, in community spirit, and that greater availability of work will breathe life into our communities again.

**B. Kyne P.P.**

## **Pastoral Article for An Caislean 2009**



My first response to being asked to contribute an article to An Caislean once again this year was “Where on earth has the year gone? It seems no time at all since I wrote the last one!” But, indeed, another year has gone around, and I am once again very pleased to contribute to this excellent community publication and resource.

For many, many people-indeed probably for the whole population-financial matters have been very much to the fore during the past twelve months or so. We have witnessed the impact of the so-called “credit crunch”, seen property prices tumble, new car registrations plummet, jobs lost, pay packets remain static or even fall, and so the litany of economic gloom could go on. Many of us have experienced more than the usual difficulty in “making ends meet” and for some there has been real hardship.

In the face of all this, I want simply to draw attention to the need for what has always been one of the greatest of Ireland’s traditional virtues-generosity. In communities experiencing financially difficult times we need, more than ever, to be generous- and generous on a wide variety of levels. Personally generous to one another in times of need- emotionally and practically every bit as much financially. Generous to our churches so that their mission of being beacons and bearers of God’s kingdom of love is not hampered by lack of resources. Generous in our giving to aid and disaster funds and to development work in the “third world”-for while we may feel some hardships, life itself rests on a knife-edge for many in the poorest parts of our world.

With my own parishes I am aware of countless instances of people

“watching out” for each other and being there for one another, and I am certain that such caring behaviour is reflected throughout all of our local communities. Such kind neighbourliness is instrumental in maintaining and building up that sense of belonging within our local communities which all of us in this locality value so highly.

“Be generous”-a motto for the next twelve months. And may God’s overflowing generosity and love continue to bless all of our local communities and churches in Castleconnell, Ahane and Montpelier as we move forward into another year together.

With all good wishes for the forthcoming year.

**Stephen R. White**  
**(Dean of Killaloe and Rector of Stradbally)**

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# IN MEMORY OF A FRIEND

The year 2008 was ebbing away when word came to me that Joe Carroll had died. I was saddened and shocked at his sudden death. Joe Carroll was my friend.

Although I knew him since the time I went to National School, it was during the 1980s that our friendship developed. We embarked on a project to collect stories about our village and put them together in book form. Joe was the motivating force behind the venture.

He had the habit of quoting from Patrick Pearse's book 'Pheann an Phiarsaig'. Pearse had spent months in west Connemara collecting stories, legends and lore from the natives. One day Pearse went to visit an old Connemara man only to discover that the man had died. Dejected, Pearse returned to his lodgings, and to make matters worse the horse bolted on the return journey breaking the shaft of the sidecar.

"All stories, all the lore, all the legends will be under the green sod unless I move a lot faster," Pearse said.



*Paddy Tuohy  
and Joe Carroll.*

That idea inspired us to make the effort, and in the early 1980s, we collected stories about the salmon fishing, the eel fishing, the boatmen and the ghillies. We gathered tales of the Shannon Scheme and the great houses that dotted both banks of the river, Billie Puck, the origins of the parish and the building of St. Joseph's Church. We heard accounts of the castle, the turf cutters, the War of Independence, the shooting of Denis O'Donovan, the Enrights, the Castleconnell rod, the Spa Well, the travelling shows and the fit ups who brought magic to Castleconnell during the forties and fifties. In our quest we visited Mick Hassett, Paddy Shyne, Tom Turner, Tommy Gibbons, Dan Mescall, Dan, Breda and Jim Richardson, Mary Enright, Timmy Ahearn, Tom Begley, Tom Baggott, Vicky Jackson, Fanny Coffey and many, many others. Sitting in Joe and Helen's house late into the night we digested and edited the material until the fire burned low. We received great welcomes and hospitality wherever we went and it was always matched by Helen in her house.

Joe had a great skill with words. He was truly a craftsman-a craftsman with his hands as a plasterer but also a craftsman with words. He wrote with a gentleness and an honesty, he had a leaning towards people and portrayed them as individuals with talents to offer. He wrote about people whose families had died out with nobody left to remember them-people such as Annie, Maggie and Jamsie McMahon of Lacca who had treated Joe with Christmas fare when he was hunting the wran many years before.

After a long gestation the book eventually came together. It was launched by Michael O Siochru in Castle Oaks in June 1991. It showed the power of Joe's writing that when snippets were read from the book about the fit ups at Hartigan's Hall with the smell of paraffin oil and red tinsel, seasoned people were to be seen shedding tears of nostalgia.

Joe's early writing was with pen and ink, but adapting to the age of technology with zeal, he became one of the principal editors of 'An Caisleán'. He wrote 'No Lock on the Door', a book about growing up in the Spa and its people. He won a national award with his short story 'The Rural Man' and he also penned a novel 'Balcraheen'. One aspect, which was always apparent in his writing, was his love for Castleconnell, the River Shannon and its people.

When on our travels collecting the stories and anecdotes, Joe would point out houses and bungalows he had plastered. They were with neither flaw nor blemish, each done with honesty and integrity. I believe Joe's work is a monument to him and will stand blameless like his noble character. He was interesting, witty, intelligent and I was privileged to have known him. When great writers are mentioned he will walk tall among

them because of his gentleness and his craft with words. He was a true gentleman.

'Days of the Slanesmen' is an article Joe wrote about cutting the brown peat in the nearby bogs of Castleconnell. He finished that article with these words:

*"Silence has settled over the once great peatland, a silence that is only broken now by the lonesome cry of the curlew. The slanesmen have gone their way."*

So too, Joe Carroll has gone his way. Good luck to you Joe, and may the green sod of St. Joseph's rest lightly on you and may God give peace to your gentle soul.

**Paddy Tuohy**

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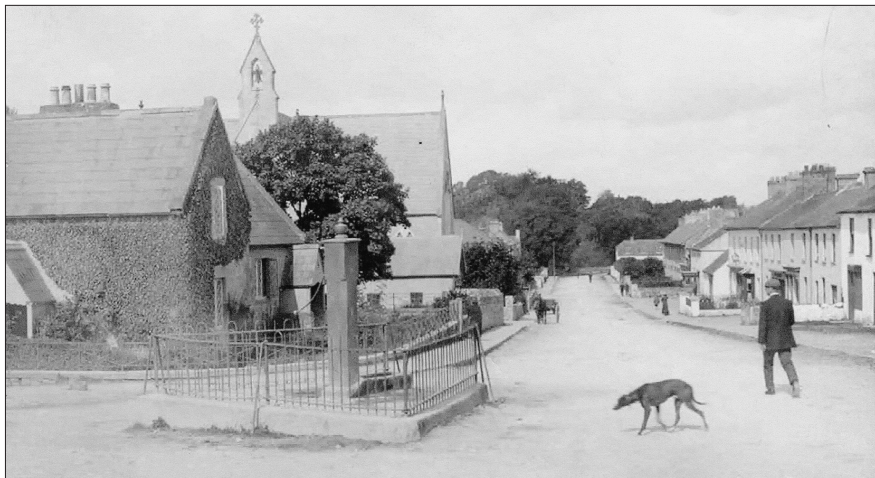
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# *Rolling Back the Years*



*Old Castleconnell*



*Catherine Ryan, Carmel McInerney, Marie Keane  
Jan 1960, Stella Ballroom, Limerick.*





*Tom Hogg and Matt Whelan.*



*Keane's Commercial Hotel - now The Worrall's Inn.*

*An Caisleán - The Castleconnell, Ahane, Montpelier Annual 2009*



*Lena Ryan, centre, with her sister-in-law Mai Ryan and niece Marie Jones outside her shop in the old street in 1960.*



*Paddy Murphy and Pat Vaughan.*

# Tí Seán



## Tí Seán Restaurant

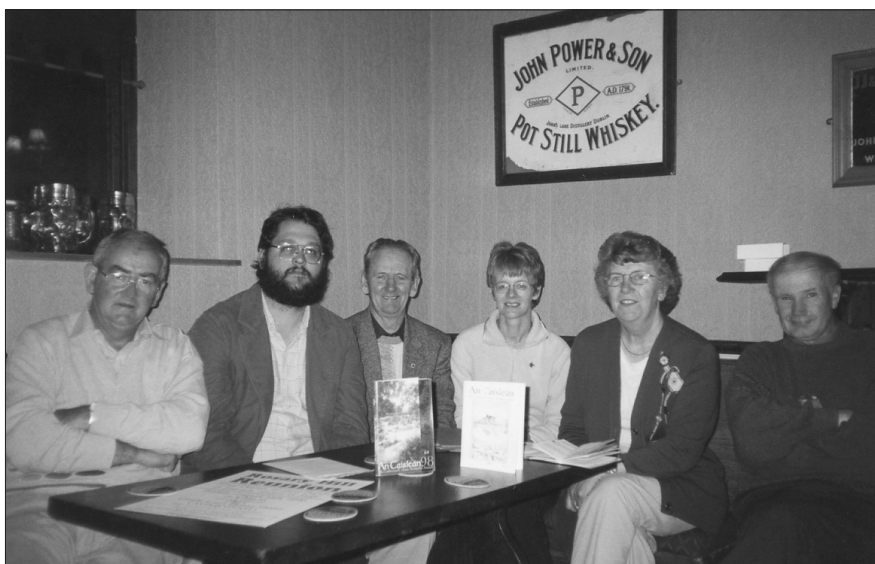
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*Fanny Coffey, Fr. J. Minogue, Martin Carroll and Mary Likely. (in Killarney with Care of the Aged).*



*Sean Hartigan, ....., Joe Carroll, Joan Ó Siochrú, Irene Hynes and Pat Skehan (An Caisleán committee meeting)*





*The Ferry with Summer Hill House across the river.*



*Liz Bourke, C. Collins, Majella Reidy, Ruth Collins, Patrica Jones, Eithne Whelan in happy mood at the Ahane Camogie Function.*



*Pat Conway, Whack O'Driscoll, Ide O'Driscoll, Tommy Conway  
at the Railway Station*



*Frankie Rainsford, ..... McDonald and Sean Reidy (circa 1965)*

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N. Rohan, David Barry, Andrew Murphy, Breda Cahill and Grainne  
Byrnes.*





***Ahane Minor Hurlers about 1986***

*L. Cosgrave, T. Coffey, D. O'Neill, T. Burns, T. Graham, J. Darcy, J. Ryan,  
S. Butler, E. Graham, T. Herbert.  
P. O'Sullivan, C. Naughton, K. Herbert, D. Harrison, D. Collins, C. Hassett,  
and D. Ryan.*



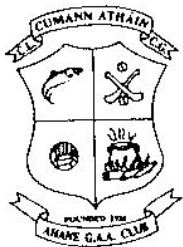
*Steve Reidy, Jim Roche and Paddy Collins. (1986)*



*Coolbawn House Hotel in the 1950s.*



*Castleconnell from the air, circa 1960*



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***Enjoying a pint in Bradshaws Pub, circa 1960.***  
*Paddy Beggelton, Chapel Hill, Charlie Ryan (Bunny) and Paddy Ryan Newgarden.*



*M. Bourke, T. Bourke, Jack Bourke, Bog Road; W. Joyce and P. O' Driscoll.*  
*circa 1980.*





**At the launch of the video on Castleconnell, The Jewel In The Shannon Crown, in the Castle Oaks hotel were, Anne Mulqueen, Peggy Duffy, Mary Tierney, Peggy Joyce, Dan Sheehan, Sean McCabe, Theresa Jones, Pat Skehan and Joe Carroll.**



*Olive Veale, Mary Murphy, Marcelline Veale, Martha Carroll, Mort Cosgrave, Peggy Kingston, Peggy McCabe, Eileen Cahill and Bunty Murphy.  
Dance in Castleconnell Hall in the 1950s.*



### **1st Class Castleconnell School 1978**

Back Row L to R.: M. Keane, T. Garvey, C. Hyland, T. Dowdall, D. Meskill, D. Meehan, G. Conway, R. Reilly, A. Traynor, C. Bromwell, M. Joyce and Mrs Ryan (Teacher).

Middle Row L to R.: J. Kiely, A. McCarthy, C. Mooney, R. O'Donovan, P. Cush, N. O'Donovan, S. McCarthy, D. Quinn, J. Lysaght, P. Bridgeman, D. Coleman and M. Sheehan.

Front Row L to R.: S. Ryan, K. Madden, P.J. Keating, G. Ryan, D. O'Dowd, G. Bolger, R. Easton, T. Kelly, T. Blake, J. Gillick, M. Kelleher and C. O'Shea.

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*Nora  
Richardson  
Chapel Hill and  
Grandson Tony  
McCarthy (from  
the 1940s).*



*John Byrnes,  
Newgarden, in  
his Greenhouse  
about 1973.*





*Back: T. McCarthy, C. Ryan, T. Shanaghan, D. McGill, T. Madden, T. Ryan,  
D. McEvoy, J. Tuohy.*

*Front: P. Hurley, P. Byrnes, J. Shanaghan, H. Gerraty, D. Quaid.  
(Roadstone, Birdhill in the late 1960s)*



*Castleconnell United A F C, 1965*

*Back L to R: T. Sheehan, D. Tierney, H. Kingston, G. Tierney, J. Ryan, G.  
McCormack, J. Hurley.*

*Front L to R: P. Byrnes, P. Hurley, M. Tierney, M. Hurley and N. Rainsford.*



***Charity Walk in Annacotty Village circa 1970***

*Included are Sean McCabe, Pat Walsh, Michael Conroy, Martin Carroll,  
Raymond Kelly and Tony Kennedy .*

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# ACM Community Centre

The ACM Community Centre Management Committee was established in 1998 and, with the help of donations and borrowings, purchased the current building in Castle Street, Castleconnell in 2001. The building was originally 2 pre-famine cottages and was in poor repair at the time of purchase. Shortly after purchase, an initial refurbishment was completed which was followed by a more extensive renovation in 2006 with the complete replacement of the roof structure and the restoration of the streetscape which had been blocked up several years previously.

This year sees the completion of the final step with the construction of a large extension to facilitate both a Childcare Centre and also the 'Holly Tree' theatre. The Childcare Centre includes a breakfast club, pre school service and after school service. The Holly Tree theatre is a small intimate theatre capable of seating approximately 80 people complete with stage, lighting and sound systems.

From the initial opening in 2001, the Centre got off to a flying start tapping into a gap in the community. With the help of the Community Employment scheme, the Centre offered meeting room facilities and a community secretarial service. Current users of the Centre include An Caisleán Group, ACM Management Committee, Yoga Classes, Weekly Prayer Group, Art Classes, ACM Film Society, FÁS, Vincent De Paul Society, Community Council, Craft Fair Committee, Limerick Community & Voluntary Forum, Limerick Youth Service, Weight Loss Group, ACM Childcare Management Committee, ACM Drama Society, ACM Choral Society, Cards night '45', ACM Evergreens Social Club, ACM Historical Society, ACM Childcare Service, Computer classes, Art classes etc.

Over the last year, as well as managing a large construction project, the ACM Centre founded the ACM Music, Arts and Drama Society comprising of a musical society, drama society and film club. In addition, the ACM Kidz Childcare Centre expanded by adding a Breakfast Club and Pre-School Facility to its existing After School facility. The new service was opened by the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese on October 27th. This was a marvellous occasion and was attended by a large cross section of the community.



The members of the Management Committee for 2009/2010 are as follows: John Mac Namara (Chairman), Pat Dempsey (Vice Chairman), Breda Casey (Secretary), Mary Golden (Treasurer), Mark Meleady (PRO), Patrick Dickson (Asst Secretary), Mary Gleeson (Registrar), Angela Dempsey, Catherine O'Connor, Lettie Sloane, Stephen Clothier (Technical Officer), Tom Tyrrell (Building Maintenance Officer), Bernie Mac Namara (Grants Officer), Cora Moran (ACM Kidz Chairperson), Irene Cullen (ACM Kidz Treasurer), Ena Walshe, Dillie Edmonds, Phylla Lynch, Maura McNamara, John Blake and Judy O'Hare.

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# poetry Corner

## Ryans at the top of the street

*The village of Castleconnell is a very famous place  
'Twas known as "little Paris" that's surely no disgrace  
They came from over Europe to fish and taste the Spa  
And the general proceedings left many a one in awe.*

*The Hoggs made the Enright fishing rod world famous was the case  
John Enright set world records-'twill not be seen again  
Hartigans Hall and the Shannon Hotel at wonder they did stare  
And many's the one that fainted at the antics of Lord Clare.*

*Enough of that now we'll proceed to speak of recent times  
I'm speaking of when I was young around eight years or nine.  
The place was more or less the same as my small but lively feet  
Would carry me quite quickly to Ryans at the top of the street.*

*'Twas the greatest shop in Ireland-just three ladies on the staff  
Kitty, Madge and Annie, always good for a bit of a laugh  
Small boys like me were greeted just the same as great big men  
And all the ladies of the place, they loved to ramble in.*

*'Twas really very small you know, if you doubt me just ask Madge  
In the front there was the main shop, at the side there was the fridge  
The fridge was our attraction, inside there was ice cream  
For two old pence, we'd get the best, 'twas every young lads dream.*

*The greatest thing about the shop were the things they had in stock  
Syrup of Figs and candles, jam and sticks of rock  
The best of ham and rashers, butter, bread, milk, cakes and tea  
Big jars of sweets and bull's eyes, fresh eggs, tomatoes, cream.*

*From a needle to an anchor Ryans had it in the shop  
They'd pluck it from a shelf so high and never let it drop  
Rows and rows of jars and tins piled high upon the shelf  
When the order was completed - "Here's one for yourself."*

*But the best of all was Christmas I can see it all so plain  
We'd rush to see the fairy lights with the nose stuck to the pane  
Inside were decorations festooned like Tara's Hall  
And the heater in the corner gave a welcome warmth to all*

*We'd gaze upon the goodies- Roy Rodgers guns and hat  
The latest thing in cap guns- "Santa is bringing me that"  
Ludo, Snakes and Ladders to pass away the hols  
And for little girls a great big choice of Teasetts and sleeping dolls.*

*They tell me that we have progressed since I was eight or nine,  
Today we have the great big shop under many a different sign  
'Tis super this and super that, each is an enemy camp  
They think they are doing a favour with double green shield stamps.*

*They have no time to listen to the different tales of woe,  
Or to share the happy news there is of Paddy, Mick or Joe.  
They have no time to talk to kids who bustle at their feet,  
Like they did at Ryans that was known to all as Ryans at the top of the street.*

*But Ryans they have retired you see, and I think quite wisely too,  
For years and years they served us all without any great to-do  
We miss Ryan's shop and I often think- "wasn't it a lovely treat,  
To be sent to get the messages at Ryans at the top of the street".*

**Sean Hartigan**

# Maher's Bar

Main Street, Castleconnell

*Music Every Weekend*

*Setanta Sports*

*Big Screen T.V. - Pleasant Atmosphere*



## The Dearth of Light

*Counterpane of white on white,  
Playmates staring through candlelight  
Reflecting on waxen stillness, pure,  
Mischievous innocence now no more.*

*Heartbroken parents incoherent in grief  
Their beautiful child, his lifetime so brief  
Passed away, a true white-feathered soul  
Celestial sky, star-filled, strangely peaceful.*

*Gathering darkness drew in the night  
Desolation and distress, a dearth of light,  
Simplicity embracing laughter and tears  
Tomorrow's promise, imagining fears.*

*Happy memories, moments cherished  
Soothe inflamed hearts, love so treasured.  
This beam of light with melodious voice  
Now singing God's praises in Paradise.*

In memory of Denis (1959-1967)

**Anne Berkery**

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# Middle Age Lamentation

*My clock's ticking fifty,  
I'm no longer nifty,  
And my blood pressure's  
dangerously high.  
My doctor had stated  
I must medicate it  
Or else I'll be waving goodbye.*

*My body's a mess,  
My mind's in distress,  
I've tablets for this and for that.  
When the first symptoms show,  
To the clinic I'll go,  
My battery's permanently flat.*

*My memory is failing,  
My arthritis is ailing.  
I oft times will suffer illusion.  
And when I get the urge,  
For a physical splurge,  
My body breaks out in confusion.  
  
I've a growth on my rear,  
Which has caused me to swear,  
And curse the impatience of age.  
But the experts have said,  
It's benign and quite dead.  
The surgeon will you soon assuage.*

*Now my hair's turning grey,  
I'm so sorry to say,  
It was once in a wild Afro curl,  
But now it's quite dead,  
This tuft on my head,  
I no longer can billow and twirl.*

*I was once an Adonis,  
But time's come upon us,  
I've lost all my muscular texture.*

*From watching the telly,  
I've reared a fine belly,  
It's becoming a permanent fixture.*

*When my brain sends a text,  
To engage what comes next,  
My hand or my leg wont react.  
Where once I had speed,  
And could run like a steed,  
I didder and dodder that's a fact.*

*My eyesight is fading,  
I've glasses for reading.  
My teeth spend the night in a glass.  
And it grieves me to mention,  
Next stop is the pension,  
Along with my transporting pass.*

*It's a sad old cliché,  
Every dog has his day,  
But I still have a yearning to bark.  
Though I'm aching and paining,  
And exertion's heart breaking,  
In the embers there still lies a spark.*

*I'm lamenting my youth,  
But tis I know the truth,  
It's now over and lost in the past,  
This acceptance is sore,  
I no longer can score,  
For ever, I thought it would last.*

*Although I am frettin,  
Tis I'm not forgettin,  
From this ageing I'll never be cured.  
I'll cherish each day,  
And I'll temper my say,  
For life's to be lived not endured.*

**Jack Byrnes**



## ***Lena's Sweet Shop***

*Large shop window displaying all kinds of treats,  
Gobstoppers, sherbets, bull's eyes and choc sweets,  
Sticky fingers and lips pressed up to the pane  
"Is there anything else I can get for the change?"*

*"Come here, let me see what money you've got"  
Says the kind-hearted Lena to the young wide-eyed tot.  
"You haven't enough for that it would seem",  
However, he leaves with his mouth full and his face all a-beam.*

*Teenagers gathered on Lena's window sill  
Eyeing the talent. Now who'll pay the bill  
For the Taytos and coke and some lucky bags  
If we pool our cash, we can buy five fags!*

*A date at Lena's at half past eight,  
Sitting in by the fire chatting to Kate,  
Minding our manners in case she got cross  
And out on our ears we would go in the frost.*

*Patient and pleasant, generous too,  
Lena was loved by all she knew.  
Her door is now closed, she has her reward  
For the kindness once shown to one and all.*

**Anne Berkery**

## *UP AHANE*

*'Twas in the year of sixty-five,  
That Castleconnell came alive,  
When Fr. Murray came to town,  
He called on all the girls around,  
"Come on" he said and "join the game,  
The County Final is our aim".  
And after that the time just flew,  
Bringing Co. Finals too,  
Sixth of August 1971  
Gaelic Grounds here we come.  
Bands played, we prayed,  
Flags waved and people screamed,  
To greet the gallant girls in green.  
Twelve in all they take the field,  
To try to make the Emmets yield,  
Helen in goals did look good,  
With Bridget tough as full-backs should,  
Margaret, Kitty and Mary to the fore,  
Hurry up with the sliothar and let's get it o'er!  
Betty Carrie and Nor at their best at midfield,  
And Emmets failed to make them yield.  
Mary T., Phil and Joan, our forwards so true,  
And Peggy "Old Faithful" made her return debut.  
Jo, Bridget, Hannah and Teresa "the patient"  
Were our four subs according to regulation.  
Here comes the ref, the whistle goes off,  
Come on ye stalwarts and show who's the boss,  
Tom Hogg on the side-line, you'd think he was playing,  
There he goes shouting, wonder what he's saying?  
"For the love of God, hit first time pulling  
And be first with the boss when the sliothar is coming"  
Dave, Sean and Mike were there on the line,  
With hurleys galore for replacement time.  
The score was opened when Peggy hit home  
A goal-'twas a beauty and a pass from Joan,  
Mary T. soon added another to the score,  
"Up the Bog Road" was heard with a terrible roar,*

*And after that we never looked back,  
From Goalie to forwards we were all intact.  
Three points were added by Carrie and Joan,  
When the game was o'er, Emmets had one score.  
And late that night when at Hickey's we met,  
Paddy and Gerry said " 'twas the greatest yet"  
Says Denis "We'll always be on top"  
Says Eleanor "With me as Sec. why not?"  
And then Bridget's coach Jim, about to go out,  
Adds "Hurrray for the girls, they're the best, no doubt".  
Five in a row, now we have won,  
Thanks to the players every one.  
Our County Shield, we display with pride  
Because we have beaten every side,  
County Champions true we are once more,  
"Up Ahane" says I--- make it ten times more!*

**Ann Barry**

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## Dawn

*A milky east pours on a swan-lit lake,  
Dew drenched branches glitter  
Awakening winged choirs  
To chirp a whistling rhapsody,  
Petals serenaded, blush and exhale fragrance  
High to fluttering bough tops,  
Opalescent waters murmur at the shore.  
From a distant peak the morning artist tinctures  
Swans and leaves with goldspray,  
Embellished ripples shimmer  
In a heaven of hues and music,  
In a realm of sweet tranquility  
The eastern patterns change.  
Flapping wings splashing water  
Slit the gilt in two  
As a whitening swan arrows through  
A sparkling stream  
And from darkness  
I arise enraptured  
Bright with wonder  
At the Supreme Being.*

**Mícheál ó Siochrú**

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# BESIDE THE SHANNON SHORE

There's one sweet spot in that dear  
land

My homeland far away  
And there my heart still lingers  
Tho' in far-off fields I stray  
'Tis dear old Castleconnell  
That I long to see once more  
That friendly place – my own dear  
home  
Beside the Shannon Shore.

*Refrain:*

*O lovely Vale beyond compare  
No matter where I roam  
In all my dreams I'll still be there  
Beside the Shannon Shore.*

'Twas there I spent my boyhood days  
By lovely Shannon's side  
And its salmon pools and trout  
streams  
Were my pleasure and my pride  
And from far distant places  
In those pleasant days of yore  
The anglers came to cast their lines  
Beside the Shannon Shore.

How often in those bygone days  
Down by that splendid stream  
I rambled at my leisure  
Still immersed in youth's fond dream  
My heart it was enraptured  
As I heard the Falls deep roar  
And I watched the swans glide  
gracefully  
Beside the Shannon Shore.

I've roamed down by the World's  
End

At evenings gentle fall  
There I've heard the thrushes singing  
And the lonely curlews call  
I've watched the salmon leaping  
And I've seen the skylark soar  
Oh I'll ne'er forget those carefree  
hours  
Beside the Shannon Shore.

To think of all those gallant men  
Who loved the hurling game  
They played on many a sportsfield  
And they won a glorious fame  
With strength, and might and  
courage  
As they hurled to the fore  
Oh they're remembered still with  
pride  
Beside the Shannon Shore.

Oh I have roved in many lands  
And many sights I've seen  
And there are none so fair  
As my own dear Isle so green  
And soon I will return  
And please God I'll rove no more  
And I'll spend my days in that sweet  
place  
Beside the Shannon Shore.

*Refrain:*

*O lovely Vale beyond compare  
No matter where I roam  
In all my dreams I'll still be there  
Beside the Shannon Shore.*

**David Quaid**

# Evergreen Rambling House

*You meet him in his cabin rude,  
Or dancing with his dark haired Mary.  
You would think they knew no other mood,  
But mirth and love in Tipperary.*

**Charles J. Kickham (Knocknagow)**

Stories of yore, fairy lore, poems, recitations and songs. Then there are tales, tall tales and super yarns. All intermingled with the gentle pulse of music-as beautiful as it is haunting. This is the menu at the Evergreen nights at the ACM buildings on Old Street, Castleconnell.

The walking stick is passed from person to person. Those who wish to perform, do so. The only rule is that nobody, but nobody, is put under any pressure. Sing if you want, recite if you wish, or just simply listen.

But it's wonderful to see how inhibitions disappear. On only the third round of the stick, people who never before performed in public will take part with gusto. Barriers are demolished, new friendships are forged.

Tea and scones add to the conviviality and relaxation of the night. Visitors to our village from Wexford, Silvermines, The United States and Japan have attended and enjoyed the evening.

The Evergreen Club, established two years ago, was the brainchild of Peggy and Tom Tyrrell. It caters for people whose hair is beginning to go blond or is blond already but its aim is to keep the mind young and active by remembering lyrics and verse-hence the name: Evergreen.

An enjoyable celebratory dinner was held in Herbert's in May of this year. A planned picnic to the bog at Gouig had to be cancelled due to the bad summer weather. The Evergreen Club has added greatly to the social fabric of the village, with its gentle, happy atmosphere. Thanks are due to its loyal patrons who support the Evergreen Rambling House in every way.

**Paddy Tuohy**



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# CASTLECONNELL/AHANE CREDIT UNION CELEBRATING 25 YEARS

A public meeting to form a Credit Union in our Parish was held in the community hall Castleconnell on Monday night 11th April 1983. The meeting was well attended and was addressed by Directors from Monaleen, St Patricks, Arch Confraternity, Derg Credit Unions and Matt Heffernan field officer Irish League of Credit Unions, who outlined the correct procedures for the successful launching of a parish Credit Union. A decision was taken to proceed with the formation of a fully registered Credit Union under the Credit Union Act 1966.

A study group was formed and the following officers were elected:

**Chairperson:** Frank Spillane RIP

**Secretary:** Pat Hayes

**Treasurer:** Helen Hartigan

The study group made an application for affiliation to the Irish League of Credit Unions and continued to meet every Monday night in the hall in Castleconnell.

On Monday 20th June we were informed our application was successful and were assigned to Limerick/Clare Chapter 13. Our common bond covers Ahane, Castleconnell, Montpelier, O'Briens Bridge, Bridgetown and Clonlara.

The study group started collecting savings from all members of the group and also granting loans.

A bank account was opened in the Trustees Savings Bank, Glentworth Street, Limerick.

On Monday 9th January 1984 a public meeting was held in Hickey's Function Room in Castleconnell according to the rules laid down for such a meeting.

## **Directors:**

Frank Spillane RIP, Chairperson

Pat O'Connor RIP, Vice Chairperson

Pat Hayes, Secretary

Helen Hartigan, Treasurer

Dick Enright, Stephen Reidy, Jack Keane, Kathleen O'Shea,

Mary McDonough, Gerry Kingston RIP, Paddy Hurley.

**Supervisors:**

Sean Walsh, Martin McCabe RIP, Anne Hayes

**Credit Committee:**

Pat O'Connor RIP, Stephen Reidy, Paddy Hurley, Dick Enright, Mary McDonough.

**Auditor:** G. N. Power & Co., Inver House, O'Curry St, Limerick.

On the 30th September 1984 our total income was €1526.00.

Loans to members were €17760.00 (43 loans).

The Credit Union operated from Sheehan's premises Main St., Castleconnell. In 1988 the Board of Directors made a decision to purchase our own premises. We bought a site and moved into our own purpose built office in 1989. In 1996 we went computerised and in 2001 the Board decided, due to the increase in business, to open Monday to Friday with late opening on Friday nights.

This year we are celebrating 25 years.

On the 30th September 2009 our total assets are €12.7 million and our loans outstanding are €7.8 million.

There are five members who helped form the Credit Union in 1983 still involved to day.:

Helen Hartigan, Stephen Reidy, Mary McDonough, Anne Hayes and Pat Hayes.

**The Board of Directors for 2008-2009 are:**

Stephen Reidy, Chairperson

Helen Hartigan, Vice Chairperson

Sheila Byrne, Secretary

Mary O'Regan, Treasurer

John O'Connor, Pat Hayes, Donal Walshe, Noel Cremin, Breda Fitzgerald,

Mary McDonough, Tina Joyce.

**Supervisory Committee:**

Patricia Enright, Chairperson, Patricia Moynihan, Teresa Kiely, Peggy Meehan, Peggy Duffy RIP.

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# Miscellaneous Newspaper Reports from 100 Years Ago

## March 1909

During the past week search parties have been engaged daily in trying to recover the bodies of Messrs Reynolds and Frazer, who drowned on Wednesday night 17th last. Messrs. Michael Mackey, Head Bailiff, his son John and the brothers John and Michael Carroll recovered the body of ferryman Reynolds. These good men persisted in dragging the long stretch of river from the head of the Falls to Clareville until both bodies were recovered from their watery grave.

An Inquest on the bodies revealed ‘accidental death by drowning’. The Jury added the following statement. “In view of the many drowning tragedies that have occurred in this locality, we desire to impress on Limerick and Clare County Councils, the urgent necessity of erecting a bridge at Castleconnell”.

The bridge was erected in 1942.

## May 1909

### Prosecution at Castleconnell

At the Castleconnell Petty Sessions, a Publican from Montpelier was charged with a breach of the Licensing Act by supplying porter to four men. The evidence for the prosecution was that a servant girl conveyed porter in a can from the defendant’s licensed premises to an out office. Mr. Moran Solicitor appeared for the defendant and witnesses having been examined, the Magistrate by a majority dismissed the charges.

## **June 1909**

### **Castleconnell Junior Hurling Club**

An important meeting was held at Ahane on Friday evening for the purpose of starting a Junior team. The following were elected unanimously J. Butler, President, E. Lawlor, Captain, J. Richardson, Vice Captain, E. Vaughan, Treasurer, J. Richardson, Hon Secretary, Committee J. Brennan, W. Minihan, J. Callinan, F O'Brien, J. Vaughan. E. Richardson, Tom Ryan.

## **July 1909**

The death took place of Lady Frazier at her residence, "The Grange", Castleconnell. She was in her 86th year and deservedly popular in the district in which she resided for so long.

## **October 1909**

### **Proposed Farmer's Creamery for Annacotty**

A meeting of the Farmers of the parishes of Ahane and Monaleen was held at Annacotty with a view to starting a co operative creamery of their own. The popular and esteemed pastor of Monaleen Rev. Fr. O'Driscoll was moved to the chair and there was an immense attendance. The Rev. Chairman said that they were assembled there for the purpose of trying to do their own work, to help one another and help forward their own industries. The following committee was then appointed, Messrs. P. Ryan, T. Moloney, John O'Brien, M. Coffey, M. Fenton, J. Flannery, T. Nunan, R. Leonard, H. Bugler, M. Gibbons, J. Gibbons and D. McMahon.



A hurling match was played in Markets Field between Caherline and Castleconnell.

“Quote from Reporter”. The Caherline team is not what it used to be. There is lots of room for improvement. What are they going to do with the man who fouled the Castleconnell player openly by chopping at his hands Why not expel him. He is not worthy of his place on the team. Castleconnell hurling was on the whole a fine exhibition of the game. One or two players especially “Tyler” Mackey and J. Carroll making splendid play throughout.

*Excerpts from the Limerick Leader 1909 compiled by Joan Siochru.*

***Best Wishes to "An Caisleán"***  
***From***  
**Bonner's Bar**  
**O'Brien's Bridge**

*The bar with the personal touch*  
*For good drinks and comfort*

## **The Irish “Battle Front” 1919**

Dublin presents a real “warlike” appearance (according to a special correspondent of the Empire News). Shiploads of troops have poured into Ireland, and the scene in the vicinity of the quayside presents the appearance of a “battle front”. There are horses, machine guns, artillery gun carriages and tanks strewn around in all directions. The war material has been dispatched to various parts of Ireland, and there is also a big consignment kept in Dublin, there being a big procession of tanks through the city. Many different regiments have arrived and it is stated that there are many more under orders. Different reasons are assigned for the presence of such “armies” of soldiers, and it is hinted that the Government may take action at any moment regarding the proclaiming of Sinn Féin. Others are of the opinion that the imposition of such a number of troops into Ireland is merely a precautionary measure in case of emergency.

## **Destroyed by Fire 16/06/1920**

Mountshannon House, Annacotty, about three miles from Limerick was burned down on Monday night or early yesterday morning. The building, which was erected by the first Earl of Clare was a magnificent structure, and for many years was the residence of the Clare family. The last members of the family who occupied it were the Hon Normanby FitzGibbon and Lady FitzGibbon, and on their death it remained unoccupied for a considerable time. Eventually it was purchased by the late Mr. T. Nevins, the wealthy Irish American who resided there with his family up to the time of his death, some sixteen or seventeen years ago. The Estates Commissioners subsequently acquired the house and the lands, which were distributed among some of the evicted tenants of the County, the house passing into the possession of Mr. David O’Hannigan, J.P. Kilbelane Castle, Milford, County Cork who bought it from the Commissioners. Mr. Hannigan did not live in the house but he had some furniture there, which was destroyed by fire.

*Taken from the Limerick Chronicle Compiled by Joan Siochru*

## **Death of Mr. William Enright, of Castleconnell**

Not merely the local public, but also those numerous visitors who summer after summer frequent the picturesque village of Castleconnell, alike for its splendid fishing and invigorating air, will learn with sincere regret of the death of Mr. William Enright, which sad and unlooked for event took place on Sunday night last. Mr. Enright had been for some time suffering from the results of a severe cold, which ultimately settled upon his lungs, and though the best medical advice was obtained and every care used, all proved unavailing. The name of the esteemed deceased had become almost as familiar as a household word. Together with his famous fishing rod and tackle manufactory, the products of which have found ready customers all over Great Britain, he was also one of the lessees of the celebrated eel weirs near Killaloe, and from which were exported to the London and even to the Parisian markets almost daily consignments of those splendid silvery eels which are so highly esteemed by epicures. The Shannon Hotel, which was founded by the father of the deceased and was constantly being added to has been for years past the summer rendezvous of some of the most noted English and Scotch anglers. In private life, the character of Mr. William Enright was unsullied, and he has left behind him a name and reputation for probity and integrity, possessed by few. The deepest sympathy is universally felt for his sorrowing widow and bereaved family. The funeral, which was a most representative one, and largely attended, took place this afternoon, the interment being in Castleconnell Churchyard.

## **Death of Thomas Nevins** **Well Known Contractor of East Orange, N.J., Dies Suddenly at His House in Ireland**

London, Aug. 21 - Thomas Nevins of East Orange, N.J., died at his residence, Mount Shannon, Castleconnell, County Limerick, Ireland, today. Mr. Nevins was a large shareholder in many electric traction companies in the United States. He was also connected with railroad and gas enterprises in New Jersey.

Mr. Nevins was a well-known contractor, and resided when in this country at Holly Hall, Harrison Street, East Orange. He and his son, Thomas A. Nevins went abroad some months ago to look after certain

franchises they had acquired for a trolley line between Liverpool and Manchester, England. When he left this country Mr. Nevins was in robust health. A cablegram received in Newark yesterday afternoon from Mr. Nevins' son said his father's death was sudden.

Thomas Nevins was born at Kells, County Mayo, Ireland on May 30 1844. He came to the United States in 1864, settled in Orange, and embarked in the contracting business. His early work was in connection with the macadamizing of roads. He afterward secured a bluestone quarry, which laid the foundation of his later wealth.

He then became interested in the development of trolley systems, and purchased and finally secured control of the street railroad interests of Detroit, Mich. His business ventures were successful and he amassed great wealth.

In England Mr. Nevins had engaged to consolidate the tram lines lying between Liverpool and Manchester and to convert them into trolley roads under the name of the South Lancashire Electric Traction Company. Mr. Nevins is survived by his wife, his son Thomas and two daughters, Lillian and Mary. All the children are married.

*The New York Times*

*Published: August 22, 1902, copyright The New York Times*

# **Pat Carey**

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# Melancholy Fatal Accident

## 5/1/1867

(Taken from the files of The 'Limerick Chronicle' )

On Saturday night a man named Thomas Fitzpatrick, a shoemaker, residing at Knockbrack, in this County, along with his wife was accidentally drowned in the Canal Lock under the following circumstances. It appears that both parties came to Limerick on Saturday, in their cart, drawn by an ass and purchased edibles and other household necessities for their family. They did not leave Town till about eight o'clock, when there was a very strong wind blowing, with showers of rain and the atmosphere was extremely dark. When they reached the corner at the end of Clare St., instead of continuing to the right, in the darkness that prevailed, they mistook their way, and drove up to the Canal Harbour, into which the animal walked his living freight. Immediately one of the persons in charge at the Canal, who had heard the heavy splash into the water, procured a light and a boat hook and proceeded in the direction of where he heard the fall in, but he could not see anything there. Next morning, the Police, with others came to the place, with a man named Hanihan in the employment of the Grand Canal Company, got a boat hook with a lighter and after a short search picked up the body of a man and shortly after, that of the woman was taken up. Both were conveyed to the dead house. The body of the ass and also the cart were afterwards found. The age of the man was about 38 years and that of his wife 34 years. Fitzpatrick bore the character of being a sober and industrious man. An inquest was held yesterday by John Gleeson Esq. and a most respectable jury when the foregoing facts were elicited, and it was also proved that the deceased when they left for home were perfectly sober.

In the man's pockets were found £3 notes and some pence. The jury returned a verdict of accidental drowning owing to the extreme darkness prevailing and the insufficiency of protection where the occurrence took place and they requested the Coroner would apply to the Commissioners of Public Works to have the place rendered more secure for the protection of life, as several lives had been lost there within the last twelve months. The deceased leave three children unprovided for.

*Tom and Catherine Fitzpatrick were the grandparents of Paddy Fitzpatrick R.I.P. who was Principal in Lisnagry Primary School for many years.*



**1706 1712 1725 1732 1744 1749 1753 1791 1821**

A	1.75	1.98	2.18	2.16	1.91	1.95	2.2		
B	2.06	2.32	2.56	2.53	2.23	2.28	2.57	4.42	6.80

**Tables:** Royal Academy Vol. 82 no6. Provincial population estimates in millions  
Pre 1821 via Hearth Money and through local vicars etc., After 1821 figures are  
official.

*Dublin Penny Journal Aug 25 1832 page 71.*

*A Practical View of Ireland by James Butler Bryan Barrister at Law*

1672	Sir W Petty	1,100,000	1777	Hearth Money Collections	2,690,556
1695	Capt South	1,034,102	1785	“ “ “	2,845,932
1712	Thomas Dobbs	2,099,084	1788	G P Bush	4,040,000
1718	“ “	2,169,048	1791	Hearth Monies	4,206,612
1725	“ “	2,317,374	1792	Rev Dr Beaufort	4,086,226
1726	“ “	2,309,106	1805	Thomas Newman Enham	5,395,456
1731	Estimated Clergy	2,010,221	1814	Incomplete Census	5,937,856
1754	Hearth Monies	2,372,634	1821	Census 55 Geo 11c 120	6,801,827
1767	“ “	2,544,276			

## British Parliamentary Papers

1841	Dublin Castle	8,175,238	Established Church	832,064
			Presbyterian	642,356
			Dissenters Protestants	21,808
			RC	6,427,712
1851	“	“	<b>If No Famine by 1851 est.</b>	<b>9,018,799</b>
1861	“	“	1851-1861 Emigration	1,163,418
1871	“	“	1861-1871 “	849,836
1881	“	“	1871-1881 “	623,933
1891	“	“	1881-1891 “	770,706
1901	“	“	1891- 1901 “	433,526
1911	“	“	1901-1911 “	346,024

## Census Records Castleconnell

<b>1813</b>	<b>1821</b>	<b>1831</b>	<b>1841</b>	<b>1851</b>	<b>1861</b>	<b>1871</b>	<b>1891</b>	<b>1901</b>	<b>1911</b>
#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#	#
3252	2150	5616	5433	4133	3315	2946	2026	1703	1644
<hr/>									
<b>1946</b>	<b>1951</b>	<b>1961</b>	<b>1966</b>	<b>1971</b>	<b>1979</b>	<b>1981</b>			
#	#	#	#	#	#	#			
1615	1646	1453	1447	1467	1957	2245			

	Houses 1841	Population 1841	Houses 1851	Population 1851
Stradbally	627	3322	524	3137
Castleconnell	199	1106	92	555
Montpelier	87	505	76	441
Killeenagariff	438	2724	225	1399

**John Sheehan 2009**

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# CASTLECONNELL IN MY EARLY YEARS

By **Gerry (Gerard) Kingston**

The day I was born Hitler was preparing to take over Europe. In fact, I was just two months old when he started his conquest. Mind you, a lot of this was unknown to me but events in Europe did colour much of what happened to me. Examples include the fact that we had scarcities of food and clothing and even with money one often had to go without these items.



I was born in Limerick City in July 1939 and moved to Castleconnell, a small, beautiful village on the banks of the Shannon within days. My earliest recollection is of a visit to Trim, Co. Meath. There I was in the care of my grandmother who minded me whilst my mother was having my new brother. I discovered later that this was between January and May 1941.

One beautiful evening with a clear blue sky, I heard a loud droning and asked Granny what it was. She brought me out to the garden and said “It will get louder.”

As she looked up at the sky, she said “Just watch. Do you see that black cloud way up in the sky over there?”

She continued as she pointed southwards, “They are the Jerries going to bomb Belfast.”

Now as I watched, the cloud got bigger and as it was overhead, I could see that it consisted of tiny black crosses. The shadow of that event is embedded in my mind ever since.

Back home my earliest recollections are of the soldiers who lived in our village.

Two battalions of them, and they seemed to be everywhere. We had parades to Mass on a Sunday with bands playing and we had small kids trying to march in front of them. If you fell back, you got a boot up the backside to keep ahead or move you out of the parade, and a reminder as you tried to sit on a tender bottom later.

On many a Sunday afternoon as the family went for a walk along the narrow country Forge road, we inevitably ran into a squadron of the “boys in green” speeding along with motorcycles or cars pulling Bren guns, without a care for anyone, and sending us scurrying for the ditch. Alternatively, we would come across a tank that had broken down at the side of that bog road.

The village had eleven pubs and four others within a mile or two. Drink was a major past-time around there. On a sunny Sunday, five or six trainloads, or so it seemed, of visitors from Limerick City invaded our tiny village. The men folk headed for the pubs and the rest to the riverbank to enjoy the sunshine, maybe swim and have picnics. Come evening the women would literally drag some of the men folk to the trains, as they were incapable of standing up. They often left a trail of vomit on the road.

The village experienced the army “red caps” more than the Gardai, as they raided the pubs for soldiers who were AWOL.

In spring mornings, there was the sound of marching men with swishing capes headed for the many bogs around the area. Instead of rifles, they had sleans on their shoulders as they headed to cut turf for their winter fires. There was not the same spring in their steps as they returned home after an exhausting day out. We used to sing “Itchy, scratchy, itchy scratchy,” in tune with the sound of the march past.

The river was a major part of life for me in those early years. As soon as I could, I became a good swimmer. This gave great peace of mind to my mother who knew that if I did fall into the river I could save myself. It also meant that she did not forbid venturing near it to fish. The village is famous for its salmon fishing. Royalty often visited in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The salmon were still there in my time but were reserved for the rich. However, the occasional salmon went missing despite bailiffs. I caught pike, eels, perch, and small bream. On the Mulcair River a few miles away: we caught large bream-up to ten pounds weight.

It was on the Shannon, or more correctly at Clune Well, by the age of twelve that we built our outrigger canoes, which we hacked from solid logs and attached crude branches as outrigger gear to prevent capsizing. Of course, we used real boats specially designed for our river Shannon. They were long, narrow and flat-bottomed, which I paddled in deep water and poled along in shallow places. I learned to navigate up and down narrow, fast flowing streams either alone or with a companion. Here too I learned to make green heart fishing rods and tie flies ably coached by the late John Enright. Come autumn, we would gather with the men who with gun, bag and dog, would head out to shoot pheasants, widgeon and woodcock. We helped beat the bushes for the shooters.

The village grew around the pump. It was our source of water and possibly life. In the winter, the County Council men wrapped it in straw to keep it from freezing which it occasionally did despite its wrapping-especially in 1947. It stood on its pedestal at the top of Main Street: at the junction with Railway Road: In the Summer when it went dry, we had to carry our drinking water from Clune Well, which was at the bottom of the village and a long way from where I lived at the top of the hill and close to the railway station. This built muscles and added to my fitness and exercise routine, of the constant outdoor life.

At the bottom of Old Street, was McRyan's forge. This was a great place to spend your afternoon in wintertime, helping to pump bellows and watch the smith shoeing the horses. It was very cosy and you were in out of the wind, the rain, snow and sleet or the freezing fog.

As I reflect on my life then, this was a very happy time except when I looked for something unusual. The war did not appear to intrude very much in those early years. My parents sheltered us from the excesses of shortages, but the army was probably a distraction and a reassurance of safety.

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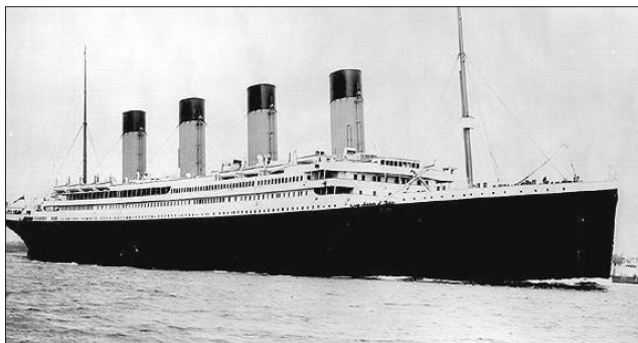
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9.00am to 9.00pm Sunday



# *Nora Keane and a Night to Remember*



*“It was terrible that wreck! It cannot be described in all its horror and detail. I think of it with the terrible fear upon me again”.* These are the words of Castleconnell woman Nora Keane who made her own small place in history as one of only 705 people to survive the sinking of the Titanic. More than 1500 more perished in the early hours of April 15th 1912, less than three hours after the world’s biggest and most luxurious liner struck an iceberg. Nora’s recollections of that disastrous night, told to a reporter at ‘The Patriot News’ of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, resonate down the generations. *“I was ready for bed as were most of the passengers who had not already gone to sleep when the officers came and told us to leave the ship. They told us to put on life preservers as the vessel was in bad shape. We did this: then went on deck”*, she said. Prior to the steward’s announcement, there had been no indication of trouble Nora said, although she recalled sensing a slight shock. The night was cold and clear on deck and Nora found the officers had perfect control of everything.

There was some excitement amongst some of the people but not what you would expect under the circumstances. The officers called out who was to go in the lifeboats and the crew showed every courtesy in lowering women and children into the boats. Nora Keane was fortunate she got out in the fourth or fifth lifeboat. The men passengers stood back; without doubt they sacrificed their lives to give the women and children the preference, she said. One man however, made it into their lifeboat. *“No one saw him go when we got into the boat, we tramped over him for some time, but didn’t see him or even know that we were stepping on a human form”*, said Ms Keane. But the man afterwards proved useful: being able to

handle the boat, which contained 55 passengers. *"The sea was calm, it was not a large boat and we were much crowded"*, had the sea been choppy, the lifeboat surely would have capsized. Nora told the reporter. She also recalled the horror of being unable to help victims in the water. *"Two men floated by us, both of them had life preservers; one of them dropped low in the water. He did not call, the other called us to take him on board, but it was impossible. Our boat barely floated. The man in the water called "Good Bye", and then his head went down a little later. He disappeared out of sight.... that was the case with many others"*.

It was a terrible sight to witness, one which cannot be forgotten. The sight of men in the sea was awful, she recalled. From the lifeboat, Nora saw the Titanic go down, at approximately 2.20am on April 15. The ship seemed to go down, forward and rise to an awful height all at once. There was a roar and a deafening sound. The cries and moans of those passengers and crew in the water were awful....very soon there was nothing to be seen or heard. Nora recalled that the ship went down about 100 yards from where their boat was, with bodies drifting past them and pieces of the wreck all around. She remembered the band playing *"And that band played, I don't know how the men did it, while we drifted"*. Men jumped into the sea, but the band played on. *"Some of them must have stood in water that was by then over the deck, while they played, for we were on nearly the same level with the deck, then"*.

They played *'Nearer My God to Thee'* till the ship rose and then went out of sight. *"They must have been playing when it went down"*, said Nora. *"And the 705 survivors were picked up by the Carpathia about daybreak"*. It was 'The Patriot' who told her brothers in Harrisburg that she was safe, having previously reported their anxiety about her. At 9.15 am on April 18th, the Carpathia docked in New York where Nora was met by her brothers Dennis, William, Patrick and John Keane. Dennis described the scene for 'The Patriot'... *"The ship made a beautiful appearance as she came almost silently up. There was no sound. I believe that a pin could have been heard fall up to the time the gangways were lowered for the passengers. Down the planks came the survivors. The big lines of police stood silent too. Then people would break out of the ranks and take their loved ones in their arms"*, he said.

Nora was born on March 30th 1864 to John and Honora Keane and was one of a family of seven boys and two girls. She emigrated with five brothers to the US in the 1890s and settled in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. She had been on an extended visit to her mother in 1912 when she booked her passage back on the Titanic. It is believed that she intended to return on an earlier boat, but decided she would be more comfortable on the Titanic,

where she was a second class passenger; having paid £12 -7 shillings for her ticket numbered 226593. She was just 48 at that time. Sr. Noreen Keane her grandniece, recalls *"She was a tall woman who walked with a very straight back"*. She also remembered that she was a very religious person who often spoke about the Titanic, and how she lost her rosary beads when she was on the tender bringing her out to the ship in Cobh, then Queenstown. She considered this a terrible augury and kept repeating to her cabin companion, Edwina Trout, later Mackenzie that she felt something awful was going to happen.

Mrs. Mackenzie told Sr. Noreen when they met in 1983 that on the night the Titanic sank, Nora's response to the stewards pleas to hurry up to the deck was *"I am not going anywhere without my corsets"*. This corset nearly got in the way of Nora Keane being saved from a watery grave... because it took so much time to lace it up that her companion, Edwina Trout became quite anxious with her. Arthur Merchant, Titanic scholar explains: *"Winnie returned to her cabin, one woman Susie Webber had already left, the other, Nora Keane from Ireland was still dressing"*. The three women had been sharing compartment 101 on E deck aft, Edwina Celia Trout, 27 was from Bath, heading back to a sister in Massachusetts. Aussie Webber was from Devon bound for Hartford, Connecticut. Both also survived.

After the tragedy, Nora returned to Harrisburg where she made her home with another brother Michael, who had a hotel there. Her name continued to appear in local directories until 1919. According to Sr. Noreen, Nora returned to Castleconnell in the 1920s and lived with her brother, Peter and his family until her death on December 20th 1944 at the age of 80.

**Dermot McCabe**

# Professional Photography



***David Gaynor***

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# The Sick Call

By Sean Hartigan

It was just after 2am on the night of November 1st, when a knock came on the door. The mother of the house awoke from her sleep, and opened the door to find a priest standing outside. She had never seen this priest before and when she asked his business, he told her he needed a hackney car to take him on a sick call. The mother's son owned one of the two hackney cars in the parish and this type of request was not unusual.

The woman's son, who was the driver, arose from his slumber and went out to the yard to start up his car for the journey, a very comfortable Ford Sedan. He had also never seen this priest before, and as he ushered him into the back seat, he asked the priest where they were bound for. The priest instructed the driver to travel to Newtown village, which was five miles away.

It was a dark night as they set out on their journey and there was no conversation between them because it was customary not to speak to a priest on a sick call, who was carrying the sacred host. Shortly they reached Newtown village, and when they arrived in the square, the priest instructed the driver to turn left and drive the two miles to Kileen Rath cemetery and then to take the first left after that.

They soon reached Kileen Rath cemetery and shortly afterwards the first turn left appeared. It was a narrow boreen and showed few signs of use, by either horse drawn cart or motor car. They drove down this boreen slowly and shortly the priest ordered the driver to stop. They had stopped outside a small country cottage and there was light in the two small windows at either side of the front door. The door opened, letting light out onto the short footpath and a man came out to greet the priest, and led him into the house. The door closed behind him.

The hackney driver remained in the car, lit up a cigarette and reflected on his trip. Even though he had a very good knowledge of families in the neighbourhood, he had never been to this house. He had nothing to do now but wait for the priest to return. He turned the car with some difficulty in readiness for the journey home.

After about 25 minutes, the cottage door opened and the priest emerged. He was accompanied by the man from the house. The priest opened the door of the hackney car and sat into the back seat and the man from the cottage closed the car door and waved goodbye. They drove again

back the narrow boreen and soon reached the turn to the right towards Kileen Rath cemetery. They shortly passed the graveyard and soon arrived in the square of Newtown village.

Because the driver did not know where the priest hailed from, he decided to ask the priest where he would like to be dropped off. The priest told the driver to drive back the way he came, which he did.

A few miles further on, they reached a crossroads and again the driver enquired about the priest's destination. This time there was no reply from the priest. When the driver repeated the question and still got no reply, he looked in his rear view mirror, but could not see the priest in the back seat. He stopped the car and got out and opened the back door. The priest was nowhere to be seen. The stunned driver decided to drive slowly back part of the way to try to find the missing priest. He even drove all the way back to Newtown village but there was not a trace of the priest to be found.

The driver, who was now in a state of shock, decided to turn his car in the square and head for home, still keeping a sharp look out for his absent passenger.

When the hackney driver returned home and announced the story of the missing priest, there was consternation in the house. He was bombarded with questions as to when he last saw the priest, when the priest last spoke to him, did the priest try to get out of the car whilst it was travelling along the road, etc etc. Eventually, they decided that they would continue the search in the daylight and after having strong tea and brown bread, they went back to bed.

The grey light of a November dawn awoke the hackney driver's household and after a brief meeting amongst themselves, it was decided to inform their parish priest and their local gardai. The hackney driver was accompanied by his father and they called to the parish priest first. He was very puzzled by it all, but he quickly confirmed that there were not any visiting priests in the area. The local gardai were next to be informed and they were equally surprised.

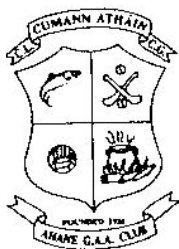
After a brief discussion, the four men decided they would retrace the previous night's journey and so the parish priest, a garda, the hackney driver's father and the hackney driver all piled into the car and headed for Newtown village.

They soon reached the square in Newtown Village and like the previous night, they turned left for Kileen Rath cemetery. Having passed the cemetery they continued to the first turn on the left. In daylight the boreen seemed much narrower than the night before, so the hackney driver drove along very slowly and shortly pulled up outside the cottage where he visited last night.

The four men got out of the car and stood in front of the cottage. The hackney driver couldn't believe his eyes. The parish priest, the garda and his father were all looking at the driver as if awaiting an explanation. The cottage that was so well lit up and had people living in it the previous night, did not now exist. Instead it was a complete wreck and a falling down ruin. The roof was partly caved in with ivy growing through part of it, the hall door lay flat in the ground, briars grew in through the windows, a rambling rose disappeared up into the roof, a box hedge in the small front garden was completely overgrown and the little front gate that the man of the house opened for the priest the night before, was no longer there.

It was plain for all to see that this cottage had not been lived in for several years. The hackney driver assured the other three men that this was the cottage that he stopped at with the priest the previous night. The driver went on to describe the lights in the house, the man of the house coming out to meet the priest and later to see the priest to the car. The driver then explained how he turned the car whilst the priest was in the house, and pointed to the spot where he had difficulty turning.

The four men moved a little closer to the turning spot and there, before their eyes, they saw the tyre marks of a car. After a closer inspection, it was clear to be seen that the tyre marks were from the wheels of the Ford Sedan hackney car that had turned there the previous night.



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# WHAT YOU SEE IS NOT NECESSARILY WHAT YOU GET!

I have known her for almost 63 years.

While I don't personally remember her first years, I have seen photographs that show a sepia study of a plump bare-footed toddler with cherubic platinum curls, a slightly startled expression with a hint of a trembling lip. She clutches a cheap white plastic duck. This was the mandatory moment in time, captured by Egleston Brothers, 123 O'Connell Street Limerick.

An only child, she could regularly be spotted being carried to school on the back of her mothers "high nelly" bicycle. They would speed along, propelled by gravity, then walk the steep incline up Roses Avenue.

Being so often on her own she lost herself in a world of fantasy. She draped herself in a royal blue chiffon scarf which she had shredded and braided, to mimic plaits which she tossed and lovingly readjusted in the reflection of the large bay window while constantly talking to an imaginary friend.

She loved to run, to climb, to roller skate and to dream. The teenage years were no different to any other teenager. They were exciting, restricted, explosive, romantic, rebellious, acne riddled and often traumatic. Blond curls had now given way to lank greasy rats-tails which were revived by a mousey perm.

Highlights and the "body wave" improved the social scene dramatically and numerous Prince Charmings came and went in rapid succession.

The winkle picker stilettos of the sixties ruined her feet but elevated her morale. She was at times frumpy and ultra conservative in her classic suit, modest hemline, (just below the knee), sun haze stockings, twin set and pearls. I once saw her wearing a red velvet, Robin Hood style hat with a leopard skin brim and red shoes. I wonder did she ever hear the phrase "red shoes, but no knickers!"

Marriage and children changed her shape and her priorities, the body wave gave way to rollers, the page boy bob and inevitably the rinse. Size ten was but a distant memory as the pounds piled on.

Housebound, she missed her friends and work colleagues and threw herself into the security of being a loving wife and a good mother. Through all these years she smelled of Ponds Cold Cream, Lily of the Valley and Yardley's April Violets.

She was safe and secure, living on the edge of the social scene.

She could have died like this, and I wonder if she didn't move would they eventually notice that she was probably dead!

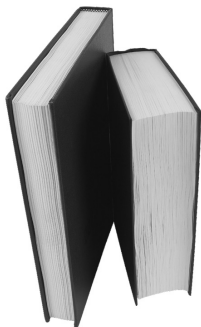
The rinse had now become a thing of the past and she was grey, purely because she was worth it!

Then hitting sixty running she chopped and spiked her hair, invested in a bottle of Champs Elysees perfume and threw a big party; she joined a creative writing class, started painting abstracts, swam naked in the Mediterranean and invested in a pair of bright red shoes!!!!

**Barbara Hartigan**

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# An Caisleán Miscellany

## "THEN AND NOW"



*Jackie Mac's on Main Street.*



*An Caisleán - The Castleconnell, Ahane, Montpelier Annual 2009*

## “THEN AND NOW”



*The board of directors of Castleconnell/Ahane Credit Union Limited for 1989*  
*Back Row: Stephen Reidy, Gerry Kington, Dick Enright, Matt McCormack, Pat O'Connor, Pat Hayes.*  
*Front Row: Mary McDonough, Ann Madden, Frank Spillane, Mary O'Regan Tina Joyce, Helen Hartigan.*



*The board of directors of Castleconnell/Ahane Credit Union Limited for 2009.*  
*This is the Credit Union's Silver Jubilee Year.*  
*Back row: Pat Hayes, John O'Connor, Helen Hartigan, Stephen Reidy, Shelia Byrne, Noel Cremin, Donal Walshe.*  
*Front Row: Mary O'Regan, Breda Fitzgerald, Mary McDonough, Tina Joyce.*



## "THEN AND NOW"



*Michael and Peggy on their wedding day.*



*Peggy and Michael Clancy, St. Flannan's Tce. who will celebrate their 50th Wedding Anniversary in January 2010.*

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# Noreen Celebrates 30th Anniversary of Kidney Transplant

Noreen Fitzgerald of St. Patrick's Villas, Castleconnell, together with her husband, Michael and her family and friends happily celebrated the 30th anniversary of her kidney transplant at a function in Bradshaw's Bar recently. Noreen was only 29 years old and the mother of three young children, Margaret, Majella and Peter when after more than ten years of ill health, she was one of the first in this area to undergo a successful kidney transplant operation. She was joined on the night by many members of her family, friends and neighbours who were delighted to be part of such a joyous occasion. She was overjoyed to see so many celebrating her success and thanked all who had supported her through the years. We wish her many more years of good health and happiness.

**A. B.**



*An Caisleán - The Castleconnell, Ahane, Montpelier Annual 2009*

# PEGGY DUFFY

The death of Peggy Duffy on June 23rd was met with great sadness not alone in her native parish but also much further afield. Peggy was extremely well known through her tireless work fund-raising for her community, her commitment to all parish activities and especially as an ambassador for sport. She had friends from all over Ireland, having played camógie for Limerick in Croke Park and she won nine County Senior Championships, six County Senior Leagues, four Munster Club Championships and two All-Ireland runners up medals with Ahane. She also served as Secretary to the Limerick County Board from 1967 to 1978, was Chairperson during the 1960s and she was Treasurer of Ahane GAA Club during the 1970s.

Peggy was the youngest daughter of Patrick and Agnes Mc Cabe whose family were steeped in Irish tradition and culture with a particular love of the Irish language. She always had many varied interests and she spent her youth



playing camógie, supporting hurling and football and involved in drama. She married the late Garda Leo Duffy, who sadly passed away just five years later and she then returned from Castleblaney to her beloved Castleconnell.

Here, she threw herself selflessly into working for the community, sometimes attending three meetings in one night, having just returned from work as Office Manager in Dawn Dairies. One of her great achievements was as the organiser of the American Tea Party during the Parish Festival in the 1980s. She was also one of the driving forces behind the clearing and upkeep of the local cemetery. She organised Sales of Work, Charity Walks and Cake Sales to name just a few, to raise funds for many different causes over the years ranging from The Care of the Aged to St. Vincent's to schools in Africa. In her role on the Supervisory Committee of the Credit Union, she acted with complete honesty and integrity and her advice was always considered and sound. Her organisational and literary skills were invaluable as a member of

the committee of 'An Caisleán' and her logical and experienced voice will be greatly missed.

Her prowess on the camógie field is well known, but when she retired as a player, she devoted her energy to the young girls of the parish, coaching us in the skills of the game and driving us to matches all over the County in her Mini Minor. That Mini travelled the length and breadth of the country following camógie, hurling, football, volleyball and Scór competitions to name just a few of her interests and it was always full to capacity and more! Together with Kitty Ryan as trainer she also coached Rosary Hill School to win 2 Munster Colleges Camógie Finals in the 1970s. The young people who came into contact with Peggy all through the years had a great affection for her and she had a particular affinity with them.

Peggy will be sadly missed by her family who remember her as a kind and generous aunt and a wise confidante. She was a true and loyal friend whose loss will be sorely felt by her close core of friends and it is a testament to her warmth that so many people arrived at her funeral from all over the country. In the words of a former camógie player from the parish now living in Australia, on hearing of Peggy's death she said "It's the end of an era and we were lucky to have been part of it".

Ar Dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

**A. Berkery**

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## "EXILES RETURN"



Left: Pat Kearney, retired senator from British Columbia, Canada with her cousin Tom Kearney, Stradbally.



Right: Danny Bourke from Las Vegas.



Above: Ruth Philips (Hartigan) and husband Jerry from Louisiana USA celebrating their 50th Wedding Anniversary in Castleconnell with grand niece Daisy Ann Cleary.

Left: Frank and Eileen Hartigan from Gloucester, England.



# “What a Party”

16th April 2009

Family and friends gathered in the Hotel Castle Oaks to celebrate and congratulate Rita Fennessy of Wood Road, Castleconnell, formerly Killeenagarraiffe, Ahane on her Ninetieth birthday. She showed her great health and enthusiasm for life as she joined her family of 7 children, 27 grandchildren and 2 great grandchildren and her two sisters Bridie and Josie.

She has had phenomenal experience of life being the eldest of 7. She had to stay at home and help her mother lovingly bring up her brothers and sisters when her father died when she was 16. She always says “hard work never killed anyone as long as the mind is happy” and she has proved that herself. We should all follow her example.

She is happiest with people, enjoys entertaining, insisting that every dish she prepares is cooked to perfection. At Christmas her cakes must be perfect but if by chance one is not to her full satisfaction she passes it on to her son John who is only too delighted to accept.

She was a rock to her husband John on the farm keeping all the records up to date enjoying being involved. To this day she still checks the calving monitor at calving time.

She enjoys bingo and insists that most visitors have a game of 45. Her musical attributes are being passed on as she gives her grandson Brian violin lessons three times a week. We all wish her many more years of good health and happiness.



*Mrs.  
Fennessy and  
grandson,  
Brian.*

# Sarah brings many honours home to Newgarden

Sarah Lavin, eldest daughter of Ger and Emily, Newgarden, Lisnagry has had a phenomenal year winning medals and beating records throughout 2009.

In February, she competed in the Celtic Schools International U16 Indoors coming first. She also came first in the Munster Championships U16 Indoors in the 60m, 60mH and 200m all achieving Records.



In March she came first in the All-Ireland Championships U16 Indoors, again achieving records in 60m and 200m while winning the 60mH.

May saw her bringing home no less than 8 medals from the North Munster Schools, Munster Schools and winning 1st and 2nd in the 200m and 100m respectively in the U17½ All-Ireland Schools.

In June she continued her winning streak collecting all first places in the Limerick Community Games U16 and the Munster Championships Outdoor U16.

July brought 6 first placings in the All-Ireland Championships Outdoor U16 and Schools International (Antrim) U17½. She competed in the Celtic Games Outdoors U16 as Captain and brought two firsts home with her and followed this with 2 more first places in the HSE Community Games winning the 100m and the relay.

We would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the whole parish to congratulate her on her many achievements and to wish her continued success in her athletic career.

**A. B.**



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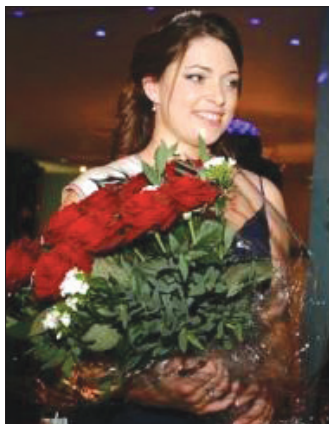
# Siobhán O'Reilly

## - Luxembourg Rose

For as long as I can remember I have been watching the Rose of Tralee festival on TV. As a child my parents took me to the Rose of Tralee parades which I found fascinating and seeing the Roses on the floats was just amazing. Little did I think that one day I would be part of this wonderful festival.

I grew up in Ahane and attended Lisnagry National School and from there I went to Newport Secondary School. From a young age I had a keen interest in Irish music and dance and competed in many All-Ireland Fleadh Cheoil and Scor competitions and was fortunate to win All-Ireland medals in these competitions.

I also had the opportunity to travel with Scoil Rince Uí Ruairc across Europe, to French cultural festivals, and performed at large festivals and live TV shows for La Nuit de la Saint Patrick. So I guess I got the travel bug from this, as I moved to Luxembourg to work with KPMG when I completed my Law and Accounting degree at the University of Limerick.



When asked to go forward for the Rose of Luxembourg by KPMG, my friends and colleagues encouraged me to enter. There were numerous different events organised which took us around the city of Luxembourg, however the Rose Ball was the most memorable night of my life, when I was crowned the 2009 Luxembourg Rose. On the night I had great support from family and friends, including many friends from Ahane who came over to support me. So it was off to Tralee for the festival and floats in August.

This year the festival commenced on the 16th August in Dublin, where 50 roses from all over the world gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Rose of Tralee. I cannot describe what an absolutely amazing experience the festival was, both for me, my family and friends from Luxembourg and Ireland. It was a fantastic opportunity to meet some of the most accomplished, admirable and highly respected people from the Irish society.

In Dublin we were taken to Dail Eireann, to meet various government officials and ambassadors. We visited RTE for photo shoots and interviews. The tour also consisted of more relaxed outings, tours of private castles and manors, boat trips and the welcomed spa treatments and dinners in some of Ireland's most amazing hotels. Part of the tour also included an overnight stay at The Carlton Castletroy Park Hotel. It was an amazing moment when family and friends from Ahane were there to greet me off the bus with Luxembourg flags and banners waving. This was particularly special being back in my home territory and to have so many well wishers. My Aunt Dolores came from Sydney for the festival which was also a great surprise. At the Castletroy Park we also met up with the escorts for the very first time and I was delighted that Ahane was also represented in the escorts this year by Liam Connolly from Ahane, which added to the festival atmosphere in the parish.

After 5 days of travelling around the country in style, in our own specially customised bus, we eventually arrived in Tralee where we were treated like royalty for the next 5 days. There were so many fabulous events to remember, The Rose Ball, the street parades and fireworks, and of course the highlights of the festival were the nights in the Dome for the TV interviews. It was wonderful to see all the Ahane and Luxembourg flags and banners when I came out onto the stage for my interview with Ray D'Arcy, it is something I will always remember. I wish this year's winning Rose Charmaine Kenny from London lots of success and believe she will be a fabulous representative for the Rose of Tralee.

It was indeed a privilege and an honor to represent Luxembourg in this year's festival, a role I will continue to undertake until I hand over my crown to next year's winner. It was a very proud occasion for me to represent the parish of Ahane/Castleconnell as a Rose in this year's festival and I would like to say a big thank you to everyone for their huge support.

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# *Pictorial 2009*



*Castleconnell National School Communion Class 2009*



*Ahane National School Confirmation Class 2009*





*Castleconnell National School Confirmation Class 2009*

*Back row: P. Skutela, K. Zdun, J. Haughey, D. Hurley, C. O'Dowd, B. Maughan, G. Byrnes*

*Middle row: Dearbhile de Paor (Principle), T. O'Connor, M. Culhane, L. Hill J. Reddy, E. Cosgrave, C. Ryan, K. Caffrkey, Majella Sutton (Class Teacher)*

*Front Row: S. Mullane, C. Ryan, A. O'Neill, K. Park, M. Hardiman, N. O'Donnell, K. O'Donnell, K. O'Connor.*



***Lisnagry National School Communion Class 2008***

*Back Row: R. O'Neill, G. Allen, P. Langan, E. Minihan, R. Fox, A. Herbert, D. Keogh, S. O'Reilly, A. Rousome.  
Middle: P. O'Grady, F. Currtin, R. Reale, J. O'Keefe, D. Quigley, L. Hickey, P. Ryan, M. Fahy, F. Bourke, E. Cosgrove, C. Ward.*

*Front: J. Vaughan, S. Callinan, S. O'Driscoll, R. O'Driscoll, S. Murphy, J. Bridgeman, R. Dillane, L. O'Sullivan.*



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**If you wish to contact me please  
ring 087 2493377 anytime.  
Maria Middleton-Spellissy  
Director of Care**





*Ahane National School Communion Class 2009*



*T. Tyrrell, P. Tyrrell, M. McCaffery and P. Touhy, founders of the Evergreen Rambling House .*



*B. Joyce, N. Lyons, Mrs. O'Brien, S. Harvey, day outing in Galway 2009*



*Harry Mulcahy and Fr. J. Minouge,  
day outing to Galway.*



*Leana Byrnes with her daughter  
Terry Poole on a Care of the Age  
outing to Galway, Leana is in her  
96th year.*





*Cyril Acheson celebration his 95th Birthday on a Care of the Age outing to Galway with John Shiers and Mary Cumber.*



*Mary Duggan and Molly O'Gorman enjoying their day in Galway.*

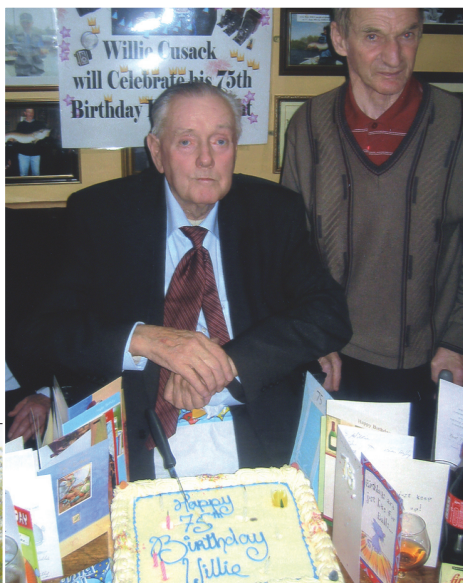


*Mrs. Fenessney celebrating her 90th Birthday.*



*Dick Ross, Larry De Cléir and Leslie Hartigan, Castleconnell Folk Club.*

*Right: Willie Cusack celebrating his 75th Birthday in Bonners Bar O'Briensbridge with Louie Corbett.*



*Below: Patsy and Willie Keane with their grandson going for a drive in a pony and trap.*





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*At the Mulqueen Family Reunion, May 2009*  
*Back Row: Berna Hugh (nee Travers), Christie Travers, Grainne Barry, Liam O'Reilly, Elaine O'Reilly, Laura Barry, Marie O'Reilly.*  
*Front Row: Geraldine McEvoy (nee Travers), Philip Byrnes and Anne Byrnes (nee O'Reilly).*



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**10 Years in Castleconnell**



*Maura McMahon and Tom Tyrrell  
chatting in Castleconnell.*



*Caoimhe McDonald and Elaine  
Walshe down by the Ferry.*



*Arthur Prenderville and Joe Ryan enjoying the sunshine in O'Briensbridge.*





*Ger Fitzgerald with his team of walkers and helpers who walked from O'Connell Monument in Dublin to the O'Connell Monument in Limerick in aid of the People in Burma take a break in Castleconnell.*



*Confirmation Day at All Saints Church, Stradbally.  
Back row: Lucy Greene, Bishop Trevor Williams, Bishop of Limerick, Dean Stephen White.  
Front row: Roisin Castles, Andrew O' Brien, Lauren Hannon, Oscar Carty, Niall Hartigan.*

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*The footbridge at Castleconnell in summertime.*



*The footbridge at Castleconnell in wintertime.*



*Left: Kelly Ryan, Lisnagry. Kelly won the under 15 Limerick Fleadh in both Irish and English Singing. She went on to win the Munster Title in English Singing.*

*Below: Ahane U8s Hurling Team with mentors Pádraig Smith, Denis Murrihy and Joe O'Grady.*







*William Coffey (formerly of Gardenhill) was presented with his gold Pioneer Pin by Seamus Ahern in Castleconnell Church Sacristy on Oct. 9th.*



*Michael Butler was presented with his gold Pioneer Pin by Seamus Ahern in Castleconnell Church Sacristy on Oct. 9th.*

*G. Walpole and E. Bourke.  
Lisnagry F.C.*



### ***Lisnagry Soccer Team 2009***

*Back row: E. Bourke, G. Walpole, G. Wealehan, A. Ryan, A. Grey,  
K. O'Connell, F. Ahern, A. O'Connell.*

*Front row: K. Murphy, B. O'Connell, D. Coffey, J. Barry, I. Hannon, T. Kenny.*

## Ahane Fun Day 2009



*An Caisleán - The Castleconnell, Ahane, Montpellier Annual 2009*





*M. Ryan and B. Quirke at Ahane Clubhouse.*



*Pat Skehan on behalf of An Caislean Committee presenting Mary Tierney with a cheque for the Care of the Aged.*



*Ahane GAA Torch Run celebrating 125 years of the GAA.*



*Happy group of Ahane and Moneleen Club supporters and members on Torch Run, pictured at monument to Jackie Power in Annacotty.*





*Ahane N.S. Winners in the Credit Union School quiz. Liam Conroy, Eoghan Hussey, Gearoid Harnett and Josh Ryan.*



*In the Credit Union School Quiz - the winning Lisnagry Team .  
Ciaran O'Mara, Javil Ayres, David Rowsome, Eimear Haritgan.*



*D. Walshe and P. Rainsford at Ahane Club House.*



*Mini marathon 2009 at UL. S. Madden, A. Reidy, M. Frewen, M. O'Brien, M. Naughton, M. Reidy and Baby Caoimhe Naughton.*





*S. Reidy, R. Reidy, H. Gilhooly, Fr. Minogue. Lourdes Sept. 2009.*



*P. Tierney, Carrigaline; T. Condon, Bunkey and M. Tierney, Gloucester.*



*Some members of St. Vincent's Graduation Choir enjoying a re-union at Herbert's Bar, Sallymount, April 2009.*



*Gerard Fitzgerald on his walk at Gouig.*



*Gerard Fitzgerald and his walkers.*





*Waiting for the walkers to arrive at the parish hall:  
T. Fitzgibbon, A. Higgins, P. Higgins, N. Barry.*



*Eleanor Kingston, Mary Tierney, Peggy Duffy & Kate Childs enjoying a cuppa in the back garden.*



*J. Piggot, A. Smith, T. Herbert and S. O'Connor at Ahane Club House.*



*P. Collins, P. O'hEidhin and P. Kennedy.*





***Ahane Ladies Junior Novice League and Championship Football  
County Winners 2009 in their first year competing in this division.***

***Team mentors:*** Carmel Power, Pat Quigley, Billy Connolly

***First Aid:*** Emmie Byrnes.

***Team members:*** Back row - Carmel Power, Martina Collins, Marie Power, Laura O'Connor, Sarah Morrissey, Niamh Mulcahy, Gráinne Harrahill, Laura Byrnes, Judith Mulcahy, Karen Murphy, Sarah Joyce-Power, Lorraine Quigley, Pat Quigley.

Front: Billy Connolly, Amy Ryan, Mary O'Connor, Anne Kennedy, Sarah Crotty (Capt.), Michelle Quigley, Edel Quigley, Claire Mulcahy, Sinéad Greany, Niamh Power, Tara Cannon.

*Players missing from photo: Fiona Quirke and Louise Rennison.*



***The Joyce Family***

*In September the Joyces held a family re-union at their home in Stradbally of nieces, nephews, grand nieces and grand nephews. It was chance to catch up after some years and to meet new members of the family. They came from Australia, USA, England and the four corners of Ireland.*





*Under 9 Relay Team in the Limerick Outdoor Championships  
Ciara Macken, Laura Nash, Kayleigh Blake and Sinead Brennan.*



***Ahane Under 10 Camogie Team***

*Back row: A. Tuohy, S. Hartigan, E. Knapp, A. O'Halloran, G. Allen, A. Reynolds,  
N. O'Curry, C. O'Halloran, O. Twomey.*

*Front row: E. Allen, A. Herbert, S. Callinan, S. O'Curry, A. Reynolds, C. Twomey,  
A. Twomey.*



*Thomas Blake received the award of best male athlete of the year presented by his trainer Noelle Morrissey.*



*Medal Winners County Championships Shannon Smith and Hilary Smith.*



*Under 12 Camoige Team*

*Back: E. Curtain, C. Macken, S. Ryan, C. Blake, K. Conway, K. Blake.  
Front: K. Herbert, A. Quinn, R. O'Mara, A. O'Curry.*





*Ahane Camoige Players Aine O'Curry, Chloe Blake and Kathleen Conway.*



*Michael Hogan presenting Siofra Keane her the first place trophy in Sparring at the Karate Club in Castleconnell.*



*Beavers at Curraghchase with Leaders Mary O'Regan, Aiden Culhane and Margaret Byrnes.*



*Castleconnell  
Scouts 2009*

*Venturers  
Nicole  
McGill,  
Kadi  
Murphy  
and Kate  
Brosnan.*




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*Laura Barry, Cedarwood Grove, on her pony “Ballinacourty Boy” at Millstreet Horse Show.*



*Anne Marie Walpole on her pony “Western Lad” at Millstreet Horse Show.*



*Students from Lisnagry at the Karate Club in Castleconnell.*



*Willie Reddy, President of Castle Golfing Society, presenting the President's Prize to the winner Eddie Madden.*



*David Whyte, captain of Castle Golf Society, 2009.*



*Gareth Walpole, above, who won the Castle Golfing Society's Captain's Prize for the second year in a row.*



# *President Mary McAleese Visits Castleconnell*



*The President in Castleconnell.*





*The President giving her speech.*



*Meeting and greeting!*



*The President leaving Castleconnell.*



*Mr. and Mrs. Pat Shanahan, Sean Hartigan and Mike Carmody.*

# School Reports



## Castleconnell National School

The 2008/2009 school year has been exceptionally busy for our school. Having welcomed five new teachers in September 2007 we began the school year preparing to celebrate the retirement of two of our most experienced staff members. In October we paid tribute to Mrs. Lilly O'Grady, who had been teaching in our school for ten years. In March Mrs. Kathleen Toomey retired having given over thirty years' dedication and commitment to the education of the children of Castleconnell. Mrs. Toomey's teaching career was celebrated by the school community at the school at the end of June and pupils from 3rd and 4th class paid tribute to her by performing musical numbers from "Oliver" and "The Sound of Music".

This school year has been marked by the worsening economic climate and our school, like many others is suffering the effects of government cutbacks. However our school community ensured that our protests were heard when members of our teaching staff and parent body travelled to Cork to attend a protest against the cutbacks organised by the INTO.

The fact that our school has continued to thrive and develop in the face of these cutbacks is a testament to the spirit of our parent body and teaching staff. We continue to take on new projects in order to ensure that the education our pupils receive is as full and holistic as possible. We began the year by embarking on the "Food Dudes" project which was funded and organised by An Bord Bia. This project provided the pupils with fresh fruit and vegetables for lunch every day and has led to improved eating habits among our pupils. We continued to participate in the Green Flag project and were delighted to be awarded our third green flag for water awareness and conservation. We have also received our award for science excellence from the "Discover Primary Science" initiative. Both the Green Flag and Science projects were undertaken under the leadership of our newly appointed Deputy Principal Mrs. Mary O'Brien.





*Members of Castleconnell National School Green Team*

*Back row: R. Byrnes, E. Cosgrave, M. Byrnes, M. Culhane.*

*Middle row: Mrs. Mary O'Brien (Deputy Principal), C. Breen, A. Fitzgerald,  
T. O'Dowd, Mrs. Mary O'Driscoll.*

*Front row: F. McInerney, Sarah Peril, Annabel Ryan, J. Boland.*

Our school hosted the Feile Luimni this year for the first time. All pupils from Infants to 6th class participated, reciting their chosen poems “as Gaeilge”. This was a wonderful event and all pupils gained from the opportunity to perform for their classmates and parents. In addition to this pupils from 3rd to 6th had many opportunities to perform as members of our school choir. We participated in both the Limerick Festival of Church Music and the Cork International Choral Festival, winning in Limerick and coming third in Cork. However, the highlight of the year for the members of the choir was singing at the wedding of our cherished staff member Miss Sinead Kirby in Ahane Church.

As a community we have continued to care about the well-being of those less fortunate than ourselves. We participated in the “Operation Christmas Child” project again this year and raised over €3,000 in the Readathon for Multiple Sclerosis. Our chosen charity this year was the Chernobyl Children’s



Project. Two members of our parent body travelled to Belarus and our pupils raised money which was then brought out to Belarus as direct aid. In addition to this we have raised over €1,000 which we hope to present to the Chernobyl Children's Project early in the next school year.

As always our pupils had many opportunities to participate in sporting activities. Many of our pupils received excellent coaching in Gaelic football provided by the GAA. We participated in indoor hurling and camogie leagues and the girls reached the finals in the indoor camogie. We also participate in the inter school camogie and hurling leagues and our pupils displayed commendable sportsmanship in both. Pupils from 3rd to 6th class were provided with basketball coaching and our boys' team reached the final of their league. We are extremely proud of two of our pupils, Keegan Park and Michael Culhane who were chosen to play on the Limerick East Primary Schools hurling and football teams. These teams won both the Sarsfield Cup for football and the Mackey Cup for hurling.

The positive partnership between parents, staff and the local community has been very much in evidence this year. Our Parents Association have been actively fundraising for the refurbishment of our school hall and this project will be completed over the summer months. The Board of Management have installed a new security system in the school and have ensured that the building is maintained to the highest standards.

Finally as this year came to a close we said one more "Goodbye". Mrs. Maria Anketell has been appointed as Principal Teacher in Bohermore N. S. She leaves our school community to take on this very important role having given years of dedicated commitment and energy to many young people from Castleconnell. She has always been held in very high regard by our school community and we all wish her every success in her new role.



*Castleconnell NS pupils who received an award for science excellence  
J. Reddy, J. Haughey, K. Cafferky, M. Hillard, D. Ikoghde, B. Egan.*



*Castleconnell N.S. pupils of sixth class who had been members of the school choir since its formation.*

*Back: C. O'Dowd, E. Cosgrave, L. Hill, B. Maughan.*

*Front: N. O'Donnell, K. Cafferky, K. O'Donnell .*



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# Lisnagry National School

September 1st 2008 was a historic day for Lisnagry N.S. as a total of 50 new pupils were enrolled in the school. Of this number, 42 were in Junior Infants-which meant for the first time ever, we had two Junior Infant classes. The capacity of the new extension was well and truly tested. It was anticipated that another teacher would be sanctioned but unfortunately the Minister for Education had other ideas. Teachers, parents and pupils took to the streets of Cork and Dublin. However, it looks as if the days of large classes is still with us.

Having got over this disappointment everyone got down to work and the weeks just flew past. Now at the end of the school year we can recall many highlights. Many will remember the School Concert at Christmas-some on stage for the first time-others possibly for the last time! All are in agreement that it was an unforgettable experience. We had a cast of 259 boys and girls giving their all over three nights to full houses. Thank God the Christmas holidays came immediately afterwards.

The school year also marked the raising of the Green Flag. This was the culmination of a lot of hard work by the biggest team in the Parish (About 600 when we include parents, pupils and teachers). It was indeed a proud moment for everyone when Mr. Kennedy raised the Green Flag on the 15th of June-his last official function in the school.



*Pupils from Lisnagry N.S., David Rowsome and Jack Holliday with teacher, B. Kennedy accepting the Green Flag for the school in May 2009.*

With so much talk about obesity it was decided to tackle the problem. While most boys and girls in the school participate in sport, it was felt that more could be done. A skipping coach was hired for a full day. He spent about 45 minutes with each class and showed the pupils different games they could play. For the next few weeks every pupil seemed to be skipping. Even teachers got the bug!

Every year we ask pupils and parents to raise money for charity. This year was no different. Ms. Bourke (teacher in Junior Infants) volunteered to join the Niall Mellon team building houses in South Africa. Approximately €1,500 was raised for this project and a similar amount was donated to Ms Orla Cregan for her work in Africa. We also made donations to a pupil in Bawnmore and the homeless in Limerick.

On the sporting front it was another eventful year. The boys won the East Limerick Basketball trophy while the girls were narrowly beaten in the final. However, the girls had the consolation of winning the I.N.T.O. 7s in Gaelic Football. The hurling and camogie teams were also very successful- the boys losing to Doon C.B.S. in the final after an epic contest. However, the sport that dominated the year was Badminton. Every morning pupils could be seen at 8.30am waiting for the school to open. Pupils played before, during and after school all through the winter and achieved a very high standard- they even challenged the teacher in a game! It was only a fitting reward for their efforts when they won the Limerick Under 13 Community games Gold Medal.

There were many other events also during the year, swimming in U.L., cross country competitions, chess, Limerick City Sports, quizzes, art competitions, projects, school sports etc. Who said school is all about “Chalk and Talk”?

As proof of that it is almost impossible to find a stick of chalk in the school. The interactive whiteboard has replaced the blackboard. “The old order changeth yielding place to new” or maybe the Irish Proverb “Is ait an mac an saol” is more appropriate.



*Lisnagry NS hard at work in the School Garden*





*Lisnagry National School  
Boys Basketball Team - East Winners*



*Lisnagry N.S. Community Games Winners  
Back: D. Rowsome, C. O'Mara, P. Corbett, J. Holliday, J. O'Brien.  
Front: L. Healy, A. O'Brien, A. Fox, R. Hartigan, K. Leahy.*



*Lisnagry N.S. Junior Infants with Fr. O'Dwyer in Ahane Church.*



*Lisnagry N.S. Emily Knapp and Sine Hartigan "Science at Work"*

# Ahane National School

The year 2008/2009 marked another very busy and rewarding time for all members of Ahane National School. As we look back over the year, many enjoyable days come to mind. We had so many nice memories and we feel very lucky to have had so much help and smiles during the year. In September, we returned to fantastic new facilities, which were officially opened the previous June by Bishop Willie Walsh. We had a wonderful evening on June 19th, when we were joined by pupils past and present, staff, parents, neighbours and friends. On a lovely Summer's evening, the Bishop blessed our school at our especially organised Blessing Ceremony. The children sang and everyone joined in the celebrations. Our sincere thanks to everyone who helped in any way over the past five years.

We have had many other memorable days during the year and feel they deserve a mention. Our Danceathon this year was linked with Irish Music, Language and Culture. We had great fun getting ready for it. We had a special cruinniu every day during Seachtain na Gaeilge. With a strong GAA interest in the locality, pupils took part in the East Limerick Hurling and Football leagues. Pupils also enjoyed other sports such as basketball and swimming. This year pupils were involved in a PE project with UL PE Students, in which the pupils engaged in many different physical activities and games. There are also many extra curricular activities, in which the pupils are involved in after school in the Halla. These include harp, speech and drama, music and dancing.

5th and 6th classes have been busy this year creating Futuropolis. They held an art and architecture exhibition. The senior pupils went to Cappamore to join with lots of schools in a singing workshop called 'The Big Sing'. They had a great day, full of singing; and behaviour was top class. We held a special maths week in our school in October. Many of the children went on a tour of other classrooms in the school to see practical maths activities going on in the different classrooms. 3rd and 4th class had a fantastic siopa set up in the square. Maths is all around us in school and at home.

Our annual 'bring a bulb day' took place in Autumn. For the first time the bulbs were planted using our own compost. We have been making compost as part of our Green School projects over the past years and our compost is now ready for use- it is good and smelly.

There are a number of special initiatives at Ahane National School, which also deserve a mention. The school runs a scheme called PBA or Positive Behaviour Award. This is a system whereby pupils are rewarded for



good behaviour. Each pupil has a card and this is stamped every time they are nominated for good behaviour by peers or a teacher. Children who fill their card get a trip down to the office, where they receive a handshake and a prize from the Principal Ms. Kiely.

5th and 6th classes are invited each year to join the Ahane Leadership Club. This is a very successful initiative, which is now in its fourth year. Officers for the club are democratically elected and they play a very important and positive role in school life.

This year the Leadership club were involved in many projects and activities, most notably being the Green Flag Project. This year our school was awarded the Green Flag. This was a fantastic achievement. Each pupil in the school was involved in this project and they have worked very hard recycling and reducing litter and waste in our school. All their effort has paid off. A special thank you is well deserved to all staff and pupils, particularly the Leadership Club and the 'Green Giants' in each classroom. We had a special day to raise our Green Flag and we had notable visitors on our big day, which included some of our local and Munster heroes.

Science Day was a great success this year. Parents and grandparents visited the classrooms to see the exhibitions. The Ahane Leadership Club was very active on behalf of the Board of Management and their help was much appreciated. The leaders displayed our curriculum and all our school policies were displayed for parents.

First Holy Communion took place in our local church in May. Fifteen children received the sacrament of Holy Communion from Fr. Donal Dwyer. The First Communion Class included Roisin Allen, Rebecca Blackwell, Molly Collins Slemon, Ishaan Conroy, Ciara Coughlan, Owen Griffith, Alice Hourigan, Sean Madden, Dermot O'Brien, Sinead O'Curry, Ciara O'Keeffe, Sean O'Neill, Ellen O'Sullivan, Ailish Reynolds, Deana Ryan. The school choir sang and played music. It was a great day for all involved.

Sixth Class made their Confirmation also in May. Pupils who were confirmed included Sean Coffey, Alison Collins, Michelle Flannery, Ailbhe Keane, David Kennedy, Jennifer Mackey, Kate Minihan, Kate Morrissey, Shannon Mc Inerney. Alana O'Keeffe.

As another school year draws to a close, we wish to thank everyone who helped us during the year. We wish our Sixth Class well as they go on to their next stage in life and we look forward to another exciting year ahead.





*Ahane National School  
Raising the Green Flag with guests Barry Murphy and Ian Dowling, Munster  
Rugby players and Darragh and Sean Madden past pupils and Ahane GAA  
players.*



*Senior Infants Pupils learning about wildlife with “Keith” the Kestrel.*



*Ahane National School had a visit from a mobile farm this year.*



*Pupils with neighbour Jimmy Richardson getting ready for the School Garden.*

# Lisnagry F.C.

2009 brought the promise of an exciting new future for Lisnagry FC. The lack of a permanent home has been a major factor in the running of the club down through the years and there have been several unsuccessful attempts to secure the club's future with a home of our own, upon which we could build dressing rooms fit for purpose and exploit the huge potential for underage soccer in the Castletroy and Lisnagry area. For years now the club has been based at Hermitage Park, a short distance from Castleconnell village, but while many a great match and training session has been held here, our status as short-term tenants has prevented the club from developing the facility as a permanent home.

Long-time club chairman Joe Byrnes was tireless in his efforts to secure a new home and - fingers crossed - it looks like those efforts (and those of other club stalwarts) are going to bear fruit with Limerick County Council finally offering the club a long-term lease at a highly favourable rent on land at the back of Scanlon Park, an agreement would see the club co-operating fully with local residents, for whom the facility would also be a real plus. Indeed, a great many of the children at Scanlon Park already play their soccer with Lisnagry and no doubt this will continue to be the case.

Much work would need to be done to bring the facility up to a good standard, but where there is a will there is a way and we owe it to the many dozens of youngsters who are the future of our club to do everything to ensure that they have a home ground within striking distance of the village. Assuming the deal goes ahead - and at the time of *An Caisleán* going to print, things were looking very positive - the club will embark on a major fundraising exercise. We would be enormously grateful for any help in this respect. After all, everything is for the benefit of the youngsters in our area, who have long been denied decent amenities.

Joe Byrnes decided to step down as chairman this year after many years of fantastic service, for which he deserves the thanks of the local community. Another Lisnagry 'veteran', Ed Burke, has taken on the mantle and Ed is looking forward to an exciting future for the club.

Thanks to the efforts of a hard-working committee and the various managers at different age levels, Lisnagry FC is well placed to grow along with the burgeoning local community. All local children are very welcome at our club and their parents are advised to come along on Saturday morning to Hermitage Park. Alternatively, children should ask a friend of a similar age when the next training session takes place.



After a short period during which the club's name was changed to Wembley-Lisnagry, we have now reverted to our original Lisnagry. Our different teams represented the club proudly during 2009 and we look forward to a prosperous and enjoyable year of soccer in 2010.



*May 2009*

*The Lisnagry Under 11 team in buoyant form with their coaches Tom Kitt, Mike Minihan and Colm Maguire before a match earlier in 2009.*

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*This Lisnagry team graduated to Under 10 status in September 2009 and will be taking part in the Schoolboy Soccer League next year - best of luck, lads!*



*In it together: Lisnagry FC underage players Joey Conway, Thomas Kitt, Tristan O'Sullivan, Adam Myers, Harry Knapp, Darragh O'Neill and Sean Riordan.*

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# Combined Martial Arts Castleconnell/Lisnagry Karate Club

Since being established in 1999, both Castleconnell and Lisnagry Karate Club have offered the community the art of Korean karate (Tang Soo Do) under the dedicated teachings of Ray Hogan and his sons Nick and Michael. The main aims in our training is to create superior fitness, encourage confidence, to develop strength and flexibility and to practice self-defence from the age of 6 to the over 40s.

We cover every aspect of self-defense, from punches to kicks, throws to arm locks and knife to staff while teaching traditional karate in kata (pattern) to techniques. For the past decade our clubs have grown immensely, with class numbers at an all time high! Many parents have asked “do martial arts make their children more aggressive and should they be worried?” My answer is “No”. The opposite is true, we emphasise interaction and learning respect, it is very disciplined and self-contained.

Special thanks to black belts Jaymie and Chloe Small and Tadhg Toomey.

**Ray Hogan**



*Students attending a Mat Day doing “Bunki”, 2009*



*Michael Hogan and  
Tadhg Toomey  
receiving their Black  
Belt Certs.*

# Castleconnell Folk Club

**Cumann Tradisiúin, Chaisleáin Uí Chonail**

## **Looking Back at Fourteen Years of Fun, Folklore, and Music**

Castleconnell Folk Club celebrated its 14th Anniversary in the middle of August 2009 in Bradshaw's Pub, otherwise known as Bridge House Bar, which has been the Folk Club's home since August 1995.

During that long hot summer, some say it was the 10th August, others say it was the 17th.... one way or another it was a Tuesday.....Mike McInerney, 5 string banjo player, and lover of all music traditional and folk, invited Dick Ross and Larry de Cléir to Maher's Bar in Castleconnell to play a few tunes just for the fun of it. This trio of troubadours had met in the Full Circle Folk Club in the Glentworth Hotel in Limerick City, (which used to run at that time on Monday nights), the previous year.

The atmosphere in Maher's was friendly and convivial but the noise level was a little high, so Mike decided to ask Ger Bradshaw if they could use a room adjacent to the Bar in his premises instead, and he kindly agreed. They were joined the following week by Mike's wife and daughter, May and Edel, and Mick Minihan of Lisnagry. In September of that year, as the nights grew a little shorter and the days a bit cooler, news got around that there was a 'bit of music' down in Bradshaws, on Tuesday nights, and the Folk Club was well, delivered, if not exactly born.

Mike would announce that there were only two rules in the Folk Club, one was silence for the performer, and the other was well, 'enjoy yourself'. These rules have persisted to this day, enhanced by the fact that the Club meets in a room off the bar, not in the bar itself. This means that those who go there go for the music. And if they want to drink (and talk to each other), they have the option of going into the bar.

Many memorable nights have been held in the Folk Club down through the years. Folklore nights, Environmental lectures, Songwriter nights, Poetry reading, Fundraising for People in need, etc. Also Christmas, New Year, St. Patrick's Night, Easter, Halloween and all the 'festivals' (moving and otherwise) and of course the annual Anniversary, are all celebrated enthusiastically. On these special nights sandwiches, cakes, cocktail sausages and other gastronomic temptations have been miraculously produced at appropriate times by (it must be said – mostly) the women who attend the Folk Club, ably assisted by hostess Pauline Bradshaw.



The Folk Club has featured on local radio many times, and two c.d.s and one Video have been launched. 'Elikya' the renowned Congolese Band based in Limerick City, which is composed of men and women seeking refuge from a war torn country, gave some memorable performances at the Club. The Sixmilebridge Folk Club and the Nenagh Singers Club have attended from time to time also.

New songs have been learned and sung, others have been written, instruments have been taken up and learned, (if not as yet, perfected!), and people have been encouraged to perform who would not otherwise ever have done so. Celebratory dinners were had in local hostelrys, and memorable trips have been undertaken, most notably the trips to Toor and Ballyorgan, and a guest visit to Sixmilebridge Folk Club. One year the Folk Club anchored a 'Folk Festival' in Castleconnell and also participated in community events such as St. Patrick's Day Parade, re-opening of Parish Hall, etc.

Many cultures of the world would have been represented at the Folk Club down through the years. You never know what's going to happen, or who is going to turn up, and some amazing performances have taken place, completely spontaneously, when least expected.

One of the truly unique things about the Folk Club, (which is remarked upon by many visitors), is that it is effort, and not expertise or virtuosity, that is celebrated and encouraged. In this way the club is truly a democratic institution, and this is respected and valued by all who have performed there, whether once or twice per year, or every week.

It would be impossible to attempt to mention all who have been involved in, or played in the Club since its inception but it is important to thank our hosts, Ger and Pauline Bradshaw, who allow the Folk Club to have such a suitable venue!

And what about future years? Who knows what they will bring. One thing is certain-as long as people want to sing songs, recite poetry and generally enjoy convivial hospitality, they will find somewhere to do so, hopefully that will be Bradshaws in Castleconnell on Tuesday nights.

Tá súil again go mbeimid go léir slán chun mór-thaithneamh a baint as!

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# Castleconnell Youth Club

Castleconnell Youth Club had a very successful year. We have 25 members aged between 11 and 16 years of age attending the club on Friday evening between 8pm and 10pm. The boys and girls enjoy a wide range of activities including soccer, basketball, dance, singing, pool and playing play station.

Sarah Keane, Ashley O' Doherty and James Bermingham entered the Youth Clubs Variety competition this year. Sarah and Ashley entered the singing section as a duet and came second in the Regional Final. James got first place in the Regional Final for his rapping and went on to get second place in the All-Ireland Youth Club Final which took place in Maynooth in April.

The club also entered the Youth Club's Community Games. The boys were sad that they lost their final soccer match but they enjoyed a great day and they are looking forward to entering again this year.

We go on one or two outings each year. This year we went to Galway in April and we did a tour of Mountjoy Prison in June which the group found to be a good experience. The older members attended Ballyloughren in Co Kerry to do junior leadership training with the Youth Service.

Limerick Youth Service East Limerick Outreach Project was established in 2002. The aim of the Project is to increase the range and quality of youth provision in East Limerick. The Project has a special focus on disadvantaged young people with a range of outreach initiatives implemented in Castleconnell and surrounding areas.

The Project continues to expand with increased numbers of young people participating due to the Castleconnell After School Club and the Castletroy halting site.

As the Project enters its eighth year, young people's involvement has been maintained leading to a broader age range of participant involvement. A range of innovative programmes were introduced in 2009, with each one aiming to adhere to Limerick Youth Service's Mission Statement. "To support and encourage young people to be active participants in shaping their futures".

The introduction of the Open Access Policy in 2004 has resulted in participation being promoted in a positive way while still maintaining a focus on disadvantage. This approach has ensured participants are not stigmatised.

The Youth Club would like to thank everybody for the support they receive from the parents and the people of the parish. The Youth Work Leader for the club is Mags Byrnes and she is joined by volunteers Gillian, Brian and Julie. If anybody wishes to join as a volunteer at the Friday night club please contact Mags Byrnes (0876268762) or Julie McCabe (0879576087).

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# Ahane Castleconnell & Montpelier Historical Society

On behalf of the Society, I wish to express our great sorrow at the passing of our well-known local historian Joe Carroll. Joe was a lynch-pin of the Society and indeed the Society came into being following a series of Talks given by Joe and Pat Tuohy in 2007. Joe's contribution proved invaluable in getting the Historical Society off the ground.

The Society had a very busy schedule of talks in the past year beginning in Oct. 2008 right up to May 2009. We had speakers ranging from members of the Society Mick Murtagh and Dr. Pat O'Connor to Murroe natives Herbert Gow and Sharon Slater Clancy and from Dr. John O'Callaghan to our final talk in May which was given by Tracy Collins of Aegis Archaeology.

John O'Callaghan spoke on 'Political Violence 1920-21' John was an excellent speaker and gave a very well-researched talk. Mick Murtagh gave a talk on 'The Shannon Scheme', he also made use of a PowerPoint presentation, featuring some rare photographs of the Scheme in progress, and this was a very popular topic and brought a good attendance.

Pat O'Connor gave a marvellous lecture on the 'The Geology of the Castleconnell Area and its Hinterland'. Pat explained a complex topic in a very easy to understand manner and left the audience looking for more on this subject.

Herbert Gow spoke on 'The Barrington's of Glenstal and some Personal Recollections'. Herbert's family were stewards at Glenstal for many years and so he had a unique insight into that family. Herbert also had many old snaps some dating back to the early days of photography.

In April, Sharon Slater Clancy gave a talk on the interesting topic of 'The Abbey Fishermen'-and the effects of the Shannon Scheme on fishing in Castleconnell. Sharon has published a booklet on this topic and gave a very good lecture on the subject.

The Talks for the year came to an end with an excellent presentation by Tracy Collins titled, 'Stones and Bones: Excavations at Hermitage, Castleconnell, Co. Limerick'. This was a terrific lecture and Tracey had many photos documenting the excavations on the site.

In July, Pat Tuohy led a Walking Trip along the Limerick bank of the River Shannon as far as the Mills at Newgarden. Pat talked along the way explaining the history of the Great Houses, the families connected to them and adding pieces of interest on the flora and fauna as the group progressed along. The Society sincerely thanks Pat for all the Field trips he has led up to the present and hopefully we can look forward to more in the future.

Following on the great success of the John Enright Commemoration Project which came to fruition in October 2008 with the erection of a Stone Monument on the riverbank and the unveiling of the famous son of Castleconnell by Barbara Hartigan, The Historical Society decided on another Project, namely the Surveying, Mapping and Recording of Stradbally graveyards, both old and new. The Committee felt this was a worthwhile Project as much of the information is being lost due to erosion. This has been going on over the summer months and is now almost complete. We would be very grateful for any information that members of the public, with family graves in Stradbally, could contribute e.g. the names of any family members who are not included on a headstone or indeed if there is no marker in place if families could point out the location of their graves. This would ensure that the names of family members who have passed away and also the location of graves are recorded for future generations.

**The Committee for 2008-2009 is as follows:**

Turlough Herbert Chairman, Mary Gleeson Sec., Elaine O'Malley Treasurer, Irene Cullen, Pat Tuohy, Albie Enright and Henry Nash.

Our Talks are held in the ACM Community Centre in the village on the 3rd Tuesday of every month, an announcement will be included in the Local Notes in the Limerick Leader, Notices in the Post Office and local shops and also by community Text.

Please come along and join us for any of the talks, you will be most welcome.

**M.G.**

# Peter Huson

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# Rosary Hill Camogie Team Song

**Air: Men Behind The Wire**

*Red heads, darkies, short and tall  
Make up our team of twelve in all  
And every girl it is her aim  
To win the Munster Final game.*

*Through the little village rang  
Rosary Hill are out to win  
So to the pitch take twelve in all  
To make the reigning champions fall.  
Heedless of the twelve against them  
They went out to win the game  
To Rosary Hill they brought the honours  
Of a victory once again.*

*Not for them a goal or two,  
But indeed eight in all  
Showing their opponents how to rise  
And strike and send the ball  
Round the town the news will echo  
Rosary Hill have won again  
Bringing Munster Final honours  
To our County with their game.*

*So tonight we gather here,  
To give our team a great big cheer  
To Sr. De Chantal, Peg and Kate  
To tell you we appreciate  
All your efforts weren't in vain  
'Cos Munster Champions we became  
To our supporters we do say  
That Munster Champions we hope to stay!*



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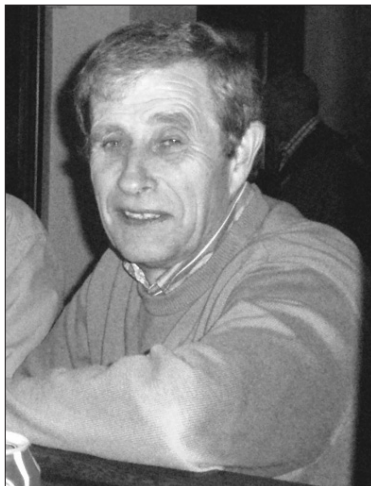
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# A Tribute to Paul Kennedy

Paul Kennedy retired from Lisnagry N.S. on the 1st of September '09 having served as Principal for 34 years. During those years the school has gone from strength to strength under his leadership. He has been a great guiding force in the development of the vibrant, modern school we now have. The wonderful building, first-rate facilities and much admired sports field are due in no small way to his timeless commitment down through the years.



Paul always emphasised the importance of maintaining close links with the local community especially the GAA Club and he certainly gave a great start to the “sporting life” of children in the school. We have much evidence of the skills he imparted in the many talented sportsmen who began their “sporting career” in the fields of Lisnagry N.S.

Most of Paul’s 34 years in Lisnagry were spent in the classroom and he was a very gifted teacher. Among his many passions in life was a great love of History and this interest and knowledge he passed on to many of the pupils he taught down through the years. It must have been a huge change for him when he became an administrative Principal but he rose admirably to the challenge.

We, the staff and pupils were very sad to see him go but we feel he has well earned this time to relax and enjoy the “good things in life”. We wish him a long, happy and healthy retirement. He has left behind a wonderful legacy, one he can be proud of, which we the staff and pupils continue to enjoy.

**Le gach dea-ghuí,  
Foireann na scoile.**

# Ahane peacekeeper honoured at home and abroad

In June of this year, Lieutenant General Pat Nash, a native of Ahane and a former hurler with both Ahane and Limerick, was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal with Honour for his role as Operation Commander, during the United Nation's mission to the African state of Chad. He also has the distinction of being bestowed with France's highest military honour in Paris, Légion d'Honneur by President Nicolas Sarkozy for having led over 4,000 troops in Chad, ensuring the safety of 600,000 refugees and victims of the tragedy in Darfur.



Lieutenant General Pat Nash has had an illustrious career in the Defence Forces and has earned consistent promotions from September 1966 when he was commissioned into the Cavalry Corps. He spent 28 years in service in the Southern Command and in June 2000 was promoted to Colonel. His overseas experience encompasses his work with the UN Forces and also with the European Union Monitoring Mission in the Western Balkans. He has served as a Troop Commander in UN Force in Cyprus, as a Company Commander with the 54 Irish Infantry Battalion, UN Interim Force in Lebanon and Operations Officer with the 17 Irish Infantry Battalion.

Having completed his secondary education in CBS, Limerick, he graduated from the Irish Defence Forces Command and Staff School and has also completed a UN Senior Management Course in Stockholm and New York.

The hard work, and commitment of Lt. Gen. Nash, which ensured the success of the European mission in Chad was evident through the impartial and professional force which he led with such dedication and distinction. His leadership, resourcefulness and devotion to duty earned him international respect and greatly enhanced the reputation of the Defence Forces.

Lt. Gen. Nash is married to Deirdre and has three sons, Alan, Gary and Kieran. He has recently retired and the people of Ahane/Castleconnell/Montpelier parish wish him a happy and healthy retirement.

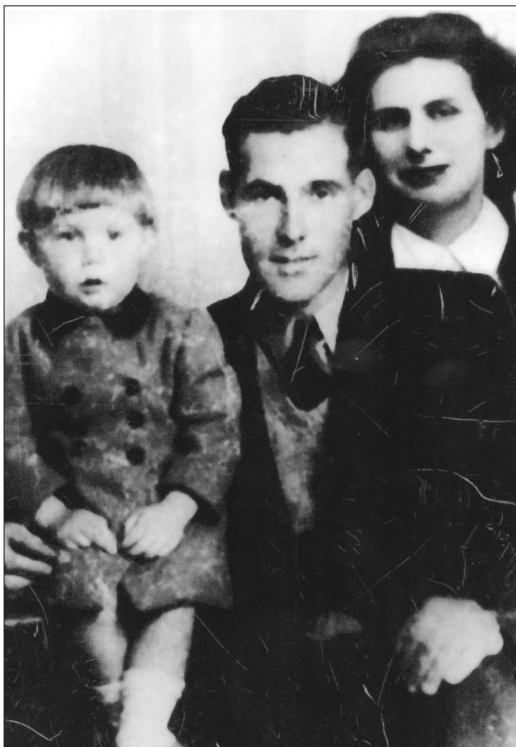
**A. Berkery**

# An Innovative Man

Some family roots burrow deeply into the history of a parish, and so it is with the subject of this article, Tony McCarthy. Local man, family man, sports man and business man. His maternal ancestry Richardson and Daly stretches back into the mists of time in Ahane and Lisnagry.

In the early 1920s, Edward Richardson, a farmer from Ballinacourty married Nora Daly from Ahane. They had three children, Mick, Josie and Maisie. The family lived happily and worked hard until one morning in 1933, Edward died of a heart attack while lifting a milk tankard. Nora, now widowed at a young age, had to carry on farming and rearing her family alone. Six years later Europe was at war and Ireland had "The Emergency".

In July 1941, the 12th Desmond Infantry Battalion of the Irish Army was posted to Castleconnell. Young Jim McCarthy who came from a family of professional fishermen in Cappoquin, Co. Waterford, served with the engineering corps. As well as being involved in the construction of the Castleconnell- Clonlara footbridge, Jim met and fell in love with Maisie Richardson. Soon they were married and settled in allotted army quarters over Bradshaw's Pub. Their first-born son died at birth and Maisie became unwell. Tony was born in Bedford Row in 1943 and as his mother was too ill to take care of him, his grandmother, Nora Richardson took him back to Ballinacourty where she, with the help of Kitty Hassett nursed him into good health. By the time he was three months old, Tony was a thriving baby.



*Tony, Jim and Maisie  
McCarthy.*

Two years later, Maisie gave birth to another baby boy, but he also tragically died. Tony remained in Ballinacourty, secure in the love and nurturing of his devoted grandmother and blissfully unaware of the events unfolding in the adult world around him. When World War 2 ended in 1945, his father Jim, like many other young men was demobbed. He left for England in 1949 to find work as Ireland was in deep recession. Maisie then moved back to Ballinacourty, to be cared for by Nora, as her health had not improved. Nora soon faced another crisis. Compulsory tillage was introduced into Irish farming and proved to be too much of a burden for this brave woman. So she sold the farm in Ballinacourty and moved to a house in Chapel Hill in Castleconnell. Her daughter Josie left for England to begin a nursing career. Nora, Maisie, Mick and a very young Tony had settled into a new life when tragedy struck again. Maisie McCarthy, Tony's young mother finally succumbed to leukaemia and died in 1952 at the age of 29 years. She is buried in Stradbally cemetery along side her two infant sons, R.I.P. Within the next few years, Mick married Theresa Shyne. Meanwhile, Tony was growing up in the care of his grandmother and his childhood was happy in the house in Chapel Hill. Nora took great care of him and praised and encouraged him at every opportunity.

He went to school in Chapel Hill and sometimes in the Gaelic Hall. Although he was a very bright student with an exceptional ability at maths, Tony had "an uneasy relationship" with the Primary School System and left it behind him at the age of 13  $\frac{1}{2}$  years.

He remembers his childhood friends and adventures with great fondness. They fished and swam down by the footbridge in the summer and were not above poaching the odd salmon when the opportunity arose. Autumn was devoted to the pillage and plunder of local orchards and Tony said that military precision was required when carrying out a raid on the convent orchard as the nuns were ever vigilant. Willie Moran's orchard was also a challenge as it was inhabited by a very cross bull. However, Tony and the lads often risked all for a stash of the finest apples and pears. He remembers his grandmother leaving her radio on the windowsill in late August and September so that the neighbours could listen to the matches and there was many a sociable gathering outside the house on these occasions. Tony also discovered Radio Luxembourg and rock and roll through the same radio.

Winter in those days often brought frost and snow and he said you could slide from the top of Chapel Hill down to Byrd's gate if conditions were right. Spring time brought shows and Tony remembers Vic Loving's Travelling Shows, and Dick Naughton's Picture Shows in Hartigan's Hall. He remembers seeing cattle through the cracks in the floorboards as they were



sometimes housed in the basement. He also remembers seeing water coursing through the same basement when the Shannon was in flood. Other forms of entertainment included Jim Whelan's Carnival. Jim was a regular visitor to Castleconnell for many years. Jack Daly, Tony's grand-uncle taught him to how to play the tin whistle and when the McCabes started the Boys Club, he played with the band. He was about 12 years old when the Hall was being built and like many of his young friends he loved fetching and carrying for the men. Tony said that there was a great sense of community spirit in the parish at that time, and although material wealth was scarce, his childhood was filled with security, innocence and a sense of adventure. They were happy days.

By the time Tony McCarthy and his friends reached 13 years of age it was the norm to go working during the summer months. Tony worked for Fr. Fogarty who kept cattle and he also saved hay with Martin Mc Ryan. Then, when he turned 14, he got his first "regular" job. John Byrnes, a market gardener from Newgarden, needed an assistant so Tony took up the position. He stayed with John for 2 years until the monotony of incessant weeding decided his next move.

He gave up gardening and went to work for Carmel and Paddy Lee who ran a very successful business in Castleconnell. He enjoyed working with the Lees and got great training in business matters during his time with them. In 1959 the Munich Air Disaster rocked the sporting world to its foundations and kindled an interest in soccer all over Ireland. Castleconnell was no exception and Tony and his friends started playing this "foreign game" on the Green at St. Flannan's Terrace. They formed teams and used their jumpers as goalposts. They had a great time playing soccer there and had the odd row over playing tactics and the width of the goal posts etc., Tony has been a fan of Manchester United ever since. He was also involved in soccer at a local level for many years.

The Showband scene was at its height during Tony's teenage years. He went to many dances in the New Hall and saw top performers of the time. Dickie Rock was his favourite artist. Then at the age of 17, Tony met Ena O'Reilly, a beautiful young girl from Woodpark. They went out together for 4 years and got married in Castleconnell Church in September 1964. They were aged 21 and 22 years respectively. After a wedding reception in Geary's Hotel in Limerick, they headed off to Kerry on their honeymoon. For the first three years of their married life, they lived with Maureen and Tommy, (Ena's parents) and their son Declan was born while they were living there. Then they got a house in the newly constructed estate, St. Patrick's Villas and lived there for the next 6 years. During this time, their daughters Antoinette and Lorraine were born.

Tony changed jobs again when he went to work for the Bourke family who ran a sand and gravel business in Gouig. Then in 1971, his father who had settled in England, died tragically as a result of an accident. He was 56 years old. His organs were donated and gave new life to four different people. He is buried in Coventry. R.I.P.

In the early 70s, Tony, Ena, Margaret Byrnes and Pauline Byrnes (nee Joyce) among others decided to form a ladies soccer club. They played in various locations for a couple of years. They had great times and won a lot of matches. Tony was also involved with Castle United B Team during the 70s and was manager for a while. Noel Murphy was chairman of the club at that time. Tony's working life took another direction during those years when the Bourke family sold their business to Roadstone. He now decided to get his own truck and start working for himself. Eventually he got a second one and did contract work for Roadstone for the next couple of years. He also bought a site from Paddy Barry in Gardenhill and built a bungalow there in 1973. It became the McCarthy's permanent home. Nora remained in Chapel Hill surrounded by kind neighbours and friends and Tony and his family maintained regular contact with her.

By the late 1970's, Ireland was once again in recession and the building industry was in decline, so one evening Tony told Ena that he was giving up haulage and that he was going to start an Engineering Works. Ena supported his decision because she said "he had never failed at anything he did yet". He had a workshop constructed near the family home and in 1979 "Castle Engineering" was born. Ena set up an office in the house and Marie, (Ena's sister) with her husband John Combley came home from England and John joined Tony as Director of the Company. Then Ger Kelly, (Ena's cousin) joined them and he is still there 30 years later. John is now retired but still does consultancy work with Tony. Ena remains involved in the business. Pat Skehan was very helpful to Tony regarding financial matters from the time he started up until the 90s. He remains a close friend of the family. "Castle Engineering" began operating in 1979, with just three workers and Tony remembers his first customer well. Tom Turner brought him a wheelbarrow and a gate to be fixed "To give the local man the turn", as he said himself. He was very satisfied with the results!

1983 saw the end of an era in Tony McCarthy's life when his beloved grandmother, Nora passed away. She was 89 years old. Tony said that not only was she both mother and grandmother to him, but that she instilled in him a sense of confidence and inner security that he has carried through his life. His wife Ena has always been very supportive as well. Tony said that he was blessed with the women in his life.

As “Castle Engineering” grew during the 1980s, Tony and Ena were busy rearing their own family. However, they found time to join the Castleconnell Volleyball Club which had been founded by Joe Hyde in the early 70s. They were very actively involved in the club for a number of years. The team won many competitions and Tony said that Castleconnell Volleyball Club was one of the first in Ireland to play in U.L.

In the late 80s, Tony, Eamonn Coffey (R.I.P) and Seamus Bridgeman, among others formed a soccer club in Annacotty. Tony was very involved with that club and said that they were enjoyable times. He remained with Annacotty for a number of years.

As the 90s progressed, Ireland became pregnant with a “tiger cub”. From birth it grew very rapidly and was christened “The Celtic Tiger”, “The Tiger” was in full flight by the late 90s and into the 21st century and “Castle Engineering” grew with it, bringing the workforce up to between 30 and 40 workers. They did work for all the big developers and they had contracts (that still exist) with Limerick County and City Councils. Indeed, “Castle Engineering” handiwork is visible in many places around the country as well as in Limerick.

During the last few years, all of Tony’s family have become involved in running the business and although the present recession (which Tony said is the worst one he has ever seen) has meant having to cut his workforce, he is now working on the expansion of the company’s business interests. In this way he hopes to be in a strong position when the upturn comes. He believes that this will happen by the year 2015.



*Tony McCarthy*

Tony's sporting interests have changed as his life moves on. While he still follows the fortunes of Manchester United, he now pursues fishing and boating instead of the rigours of soccer. He has a boat moored in Killaloe. It is named "Chapel Hill" in honour of his late grandmother, Nora Richardson. It is his pride and joy and he loves the peace and tranquillity of the river after the week's work.

Tony McCarthy is now 30 years in the engineering business and he has enjoyed every moment of it. He is a man who is blessed with a sense of the positive and also a sense of humour. These qualities have served him well throughout his life. As well as having their family involved in the business, Tony and Ena are now blessed with four lovely grandchildren, Shannon, Ellie, Jamie and Dylan, all of whom are regular visitors to the McCarthy household. Tony believes that to succeed in business you need to believe in yourself and in your capabilities, you need single-minded dedication and a willingness to stick with it in good and in bad times. It is also very important to exercise full control over your own financial affairs. Tony's advice to young people today is to get a good education first, before you embark on any business venture, as the commercial and social climate has changed so much since he first started out in 1979.

We wish Tony every success in the future and thank him and Ena for sharing a very interesting story.

This article is dedicated to the memory of Joe and Helen Carroll. R.I.P.

**Joan O Siochru**





## ***“The race is run with the body but won with the mind...”***

Running is something you either love or hate, I'm somewhere in the middle. I began running when I was twelve some twenty years ago. It began as a hobby and developed into something that provided me with a life experience and education second to none. Life can be like a race: starting out hard, picking it up and finishing fast. My first race was a local national school race around the village against the local schools of Ahane and Richill. I finished 2nd which meant very little to me at the time. The year was 1990 and those were Celtic Tiger years. Running was an expensive hobby for my parents as it meant travelling to races, paying for shoes and often staying overnight. It was something you couldn't afford to fail at in my opinion and the rewards were hard earned. My first All Ireland was in Cavan where I finished 9th. I ran barefoot as was the custom but that day there was snow on the ground which left my feet bloody and sore. Running like other sports has qualifying rounds like Counties, Munsters and All-Ireland. At the time I was finishing outside the top 3 in all three. I was playing soccer, GAA and a bit of rugby. People like Greg Mackey, George Lee and Frankie Ryan were very supportive in those days. It would be no strange thing for me to do a running session in the morning and soccer or GAA in the afternoon or evening. The time was coming though when I was going to have to choose a sport to concentrate on.

It was at this time that I met Christy Joyce who at the time was involved with Riverside and Bilboa AC. With his encouragement, I decided to concentrate on running. This involved travelling to Bilboa, in Cappamore three times a week to train. I would wait outside my house to be collected for training at 7pm. Often I would not get home till 9 or after and then do my homework and go to bed. The training was hard and I was often dropped in favour of older runners. This is where I gained the best improvements. I began to win Munster cross country in and out of my age which soon lead to All-Ireland success. Many people perceive running as being a solitary sport and it can be but I began to see it as an expression and soon enough I had my own style. I began to gain a reputation as a runner who lead from the front and raced hard. As my juvenile career progressed I was gaining notice. I won seven Munster schools in a row. I was unbeaten in Dungarvan where this race is still run today. The last race I won there, an old man came up to me after the race and said to me “Well done. I've come here every year to watch you race and have enjoyed it- best

of luck in the future". I never forgot that. It inspired me to win more. There is enjoyment out of racing but it is better when you know other people are inspired by it as well.

My first international race was in Schools International in Bath. It was 6k and I was under 15. I was competing out of my age and it was difficult. I finished 9th which was a good result but I wanted to win it. The following year I was 2nd, a race I ran while injured but we got a team silver so I was happy. The following year I ran the European youths on the track where I finished 5th. It was my first taste of European competition and it was tough. To qualify I had won the clubs All-Ireland, Schools All Ireland and Tailteann Games. I was then selected for the European Schools in which I ran the 3k and 4x400 in the Olympic Stadium in Budapest. I had never been that far abroad before and when we arrived it was 30 degrees so I knew it was going to be tough.

I surprised Management by winning the 1500, 3k and 4x400. I was the first athlete to do so since Frank O'Mara and I only missed the record in the 3k by one second, achieving something of notice, which I'd have to wait a long time to do again.

Running is a simple sport you get out what you put in, but part of your talent is not to get injured. The simplest action can lead to injury. Any athlete can injure themselves easily - a lesson I learned the hard way. After my races in Budapest I went to a water park with the team and coming down a waterslide I fell on my back which jolted my psis joint on my hip. This led to a year long injury spell where I suffered constant discomfort in my hip. The psis joint is not supposed to move but when is subjected to trauma can become destabilised. My training became inconsistent which led to a 2nd place finish at nationals. I was worried.

This was my Leaving Cert year and already the prospect of a scholarship was beckoning. The phone was ringing constantly with college offers. I was unsure of where to go but eventually I went off the beaten track to a place called Boise State in Boise, Idaho. I knew the minute I landed this was the place for me.

In an American college you get a well rounded education as well as top class facilities and training. It is no strange thing that all of our top athletes are based there. I enrolled in a Computer Degree Course - something I could not have done here. I graduated with First Class Honours. I did my internship with the Department of Defence in which I was offered employment but running was still dragging me away. I won numerous Conference Championships and in my final year was All Academic and Student Athlete of the Year.

On the running front, things were very difficult. In America the NCAA

Championships are harder than World Cross Country. I qualified as an individual in my region, beaten only by Bernard Lagat and Abdi Abdirahmin (both World champions and Olympic Medallists now for the US) but still not making an impact. America is like that – you are only a number there. Like every sport running is political and my achievements were being ignored by the Athletics Federation here because I was running in America. I was ignored for various selections of Irish teams but this didn't deter me.

I returned home in 2002 to a different Ireland. I was fortunate to get a job here locally in Roadstone Gouig, where I had enjoyed working with some great lads the summer before. It was difficult to combine work with training as it meant I had to train at 6am and again at 6pm. After a long day on your feet it was often hard to be motivated. I began racing at home again. My goal was the World Champs Half Marathon. I finished 2nd in the National 10k roads and 3rd in Ballycotton where I was beaten by two Kenyans. But the work was taking its toll on my performances. In July 2003 I won the National 10k track-the first Limerickman in 28 years to do so. I declared to the selectors that the 10k was just part of my training for the half marathon in October of that year. Three weeks later I raced the trial knowing that a top three place would suffice for selection. I finished second in Dungarvan half marathon in a time of 67.13. I was happy considering the World Champs were two months away. However, I wasn't selected for the Champs. It was a blow to me as I thought I had done enough. They decided to send me to two International races later, in which I finished 4th and 9th. They were Grand Prix Cross Country Races but I was running against fresh runners, not people like me who had worked hard for 50 hours the week of the race.

It was this that made me decide to aim for the fastest half marathon in the world- the Great North Rim run. The Great North Run has over 100,000 entrants with the top times in the world set there. To me it was as good as a World Champs. In 2004 I headed over to do it. I paid my own flights and accommodation and finished 17th. I wore my Irish gear and was the only Irishman there that day. Afterwards, the race promoter came over to me and asked if I ran for Britain today. I said "No, Ireland of course". "Pity", he said, "you would have been the second British athlete over the line behind John Brown and I have a cheque here for £1000 sterling that I have to give to the next Englishman, a minute behind you". For my placing there was nothing and worse again I had to be back at work the next day at 8am! This sealed it for me: I had to leave my job and start doing this right again.

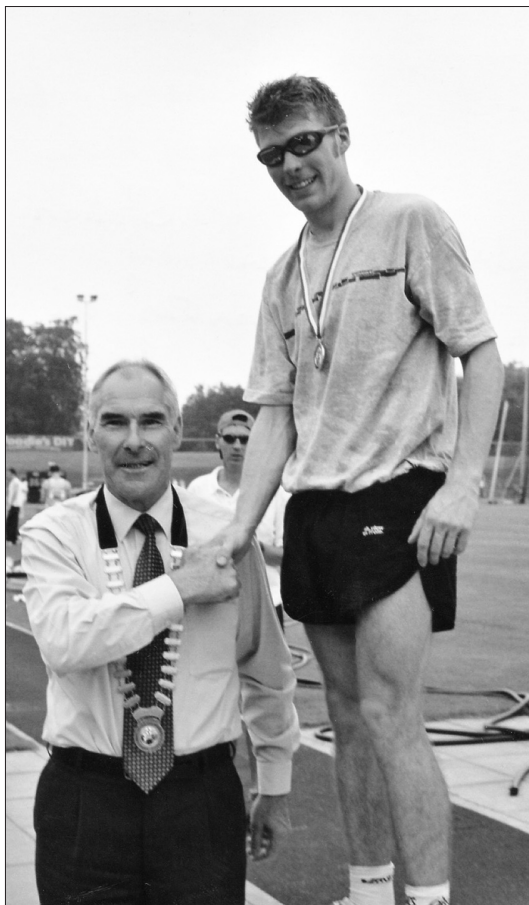
I returned home, handed in my notice at Christmas, and went training fulltime again. My partner Rosemary and I began the unsupported journey of training fulltime. We went training and racing abroad, using altitude tents and paid our own Nutritionist and Strength and Conditioning Coach. For

three years we raced and Rosemary just missed the Olympic standard by thirty seconds for the marathon. In 2007 I decided to return to work as I was penniless and unable to survive in the Celtic Tiger economy. I was fortunate to get a job in the University of Limerick where I train. The job allows me to study and train as well as help people.

I've become an avid supporter of Limerick football and study training methods and conditioning for teams. In my spare time I've contributed articles to [gaelicperformance.com](http://gaelicperformance.com) on training nutrition and conditioning. The training techniques in the States are about five years ahead of here. The fitness coach for the Irish rugby team is a former Cross Country Champion as is the trainer of the Kilkenny Hurling Team. I still compete but not as serious now. I train locally as much as I can and enjoy running

down the nature trail in Clonlara and O'Briens-bridge. The marathon is my next challenge and if I stay injury free I'll do one before the next games. There's an old saying "you're only as good as your last race" well, my last race isn't run yet, because as a runner you always seek to improve, excel and entertain. You never realise how good you ran or hard you trained until you can't do it anymore. Fortunately, I can still do it.....

**Tom Carey**



*Tom Carey and Lord Major of Dublin at Santry Stadium Dublin after winning a 10,000 kilometres All-Ireland Track Race.*



# Memories of Johnny Walsh

Our move to Doonass brought me within one quarter mile of the hurling field. I became a regular visitor and my big ambition was to be on the team of my age group. This I achieved, winning the Co. Clare under 15 juvenile championship in 1960. However, it was the semi-final that I remember as our toughest game, I think it was against Kilmaley and the one where I made my best contribution. I can recall Noel Woods being introduced as a sub to our team, I remember him getting to a ball before me, he missed the ball but he got me! We travelled to that semi-final in J. McCormack's blue van which could be referred to as a mobile gas chamber. We were packed into the back and when we arrived at the gate in Tulla I remember falling to the ground with pins and needles.

The final was also an interesting day, very fine and sunny. Our match was the curtain raiser for the County Senior Hurling Final between Ruane and Scarrif and by the end of our game the ground was packed. Jimmy Smith played that day. We met Crusheen in the final and beat them by a cricket score. After the Senior match, we were taken down for tea and buns (nowadays it would be drugs and women!) Coming from a background like mine where etiquette always ruled and being an only son, there was no way you took a bun from the table without asking. The first plate disappeared and I didn't even get a look in, and indeed when the second plate arrived I would not have got one either if it had not been for Pat Crow shouting at me to take a bun, I got two that day but only because he shouted at me twice!

By about 1958 I was considered big enough to go fishing on my own in the Shannon. I cut a new rod of hazel down in the Woodcock, (a field I was to later rent). I bought a roll of line, hooks and rings in Nestors, O'Connell St., Limerick. (I was always amazed at the service we received for even the smallest order). I used this rod with a reel again from Nestors, this I can recall required a lot of savings.

On sunny days and rainy days, with my dog Spot and my fishing rod, I spent many idyllic hours, indeed months and years from the World's End to the Salmon Pool on the Clare side of the River Shannon supposedly fishing for pike or perch but taking the odd cast onto the main stream with hopes of catching a salmon. (We could never afford the bait required for salmon). Salmon fishing required a licence and this was the most expensive water in Europe. On our way home from school it would be common to see a fisherman with five salmon laid out on the bank. The fishermen and not footballers were our heroes at this time and we had our opinions on all of them. I can remember "Shanks" Tuohy who was a professional fisherman-ghilly as it appeared to us anyway. He always appeared to be carrying a

salmon and was a mine of information on baits and spots to fish etc. John Enright the rod maker, could drop a bait within 1 ft. of a rock, watching him cast was a huge attraction for us. Mr. Benson from Killaloe never talked to us, but Mr. Stackpoole was very friendly. He concentrated on his fly fishing and we thought he was hilarious to watch! But did he ever catch anything?

Part of our fun was avoiding the ESB bailiff Mick Hickey. He was usually at the Limerick side but he could only catch us if he came across the footbridge. In later years I found out of course, he never really tried. I suppose a period like this creates an impression and attachment to the river that not everybody feels.

In Clonlara, I can remember ponies and traps and horses and cars tied to the railings around the church for Sunday mass. I can also remember Hungarian refugees in 1956 coming to Castleconnell and being put up in the Tontines.

Moving to Doonass involved a transfer to Castleconnell National School, which was a round trip of about one mile, compared to the two miles each way trip from Erinagh to Clonlara. It was situated in the main street in the village and was very primitive, i.e. no toilet system and heated by one open fireplace which was situated about three feet from where the teacher sat. It would have been common to be requested to bring a few sods of turf for the fire on the way to school. There would have been a number of classes going on in the same room at the same time. English, Irish and Religion, I recall as the main subjects. Looking back I would see the objectives of this education system as more propaganda value than educational objectives!

At the age of eleven I started serving Mass. Religion was making inroads into my life. I remember on one occasion leaving home at about 6am to serve at least two masses before going to school. I seemed to be completely into or out of a subject all my life. I can remember stalls in the street selling religious items etc. and the debates about the fire and brimstone sermons. My mass serving lasted about three years. I continued on a fairly religious vein for a few years, attending mass every morning in Limerick before reporting to the Technical School. I remember I joined Limerick County Library and read every book they had on the lives of the saints. By about 1967 I was reading philosophy and beginning to question popular assumptions which led to a decline in interest and I attended my last mass about 1970.

In 1958 I started in the Technical School in Limerick. This was my introduction to the first schooling I enjoyed. We had some excellent teachers who appeared to have the philosophy of giving working class people a good education.

I remember Dom Clancy from Corbally, Mr. Hersey, a German, Mr. Hegarty in Science. This was a whole new era for me, some of my hurling colleagues were going to the Christian Brothers which carried more status,

higher fees and the guarantee of six of the best on occasions. However, I hated the tea they served us, it tasted so different from home. In my first year I had 3 pence per day spending money and with this I bought some orange to make up for the tea.

In the second year I had 6 pence per day of which 2 pence was spent on fags and 4 pence on games of snooker in the Mechanics Institute. Myself and Richie Bennis went on to be hot shots at the snooker. He also went on to win an All-Ireland hurling medal with Limerick.

There were cultural differences with the Limerick boys also especially in terms of work ethic. The townies as we called them came to school with one book and one pencil, where as I would have a bag full of books on the back of my bike (maybe half of them comics) travelling with me. I remember on one occasion passing through Mr. Hersey's class late as usual (probably after having a smoke in the toilet) when I tripped over the end of a desk, my books scattered across the floor, comics included, the townies had a great laugh at the Clare culchie. However, Mr. Hersey reminded them that I was at least, reading!

After about one year travelling by bus to school in Limerick I decided to cycle (about 8 miles each way) like most of my hurling mates. This involved leaving in the dark during the winter and coming home in the dark. It took an hour each way but traffic conditions were much more relaxed. I remember cycling down O'Connell St. with my hands in my pockets, cycling four abreast. It was the motorists' job to look out for us! I also remember one occasion when about ten of us cycling over Athlunkard bridge one frosty morning, Pat Walsh from Truagh (no relation), was at the front and of course he turned around to talk and found himself upended on the road and brought all of us down around him (as one would see in the Tour de France), buckled wheels, broken chains etc. He got our prayers in very clear terms!

After completing two years, I did the Group Cert. and came about twelfth of about forty. The philosophy at the time was to look for a trade training and the best training was provided by the ESB, Post Office and Cement factory. The top students got these jobs but there was always a few who seemed to get in because of connections. I was called for interview and asked what was the meaning of Doonass. I did not have a clue and got my first rejection slip! I repeated the year and came third of sixty three on this occasion. At my job interview they repeated the same question I had been asked the previous year. This time I was ready and got called to Ardnacrusha on a five year electrical apprenticeship in September of 1962. There was a short entry in the Clare Champion announcing the fact (it must have been a slow news week!).

These are some of my fondest memories of growing up in Doonass.

# Mr. John Enright's Return

**Reception at Castleconnell. Nov 5th 1906**

The return of the Champion Fly Caster of the World from his visit to America where he recently gained new laurels was the occasion of a great outburst of rejoicement here on Thursday night last. The village for some time before the arrival of his train presented a very animated appearance. Decorations and bunting of different kinds were gaily displayed while on the approach of darkness all the windows were brilliantly illuminated. The grounds of his own home - The Shannon Hotel - presented a most enchanted aspect. The trees in the foreground seemed all ablaze with fairy lamps while, wafted by the gentle breeze the American Stars and Stripes and the Irish Green Flag gave a most effective finish to a most fascinating scene.

At different points village bonfires and tar barrels throwing up their red glare testified that the welcome shown to Mr. Enright was on a whole hearted scale. The Champion on arriving at the Station was met by an immense concourse of enthusiastic admirers. On alighting he was carried on the shoulders of some of his stalwart friends to a carriage outside amidst the cheers of the large crowd. A double line of torch bearers acted as an escort forming an impressive scene. On reaching his home the crowd numbered hundreds and there were repeated cheers for the "Champion" and "The Boss" as he is popularly called.

Mr. Daniel O'Brien D.C. said that as a representative of the people he felt he expressed all their feelings in tendering their heartiest congratulations to their old friend Mr. John Enright on his great victory in securing the World Championship in the "Land of the Free". Their presence there in such large numbers tonight as well as the artistic decorations and illuminations he saw around him were sufficient evidence of the warmth of welcome they offered "The Boss". There was scarcely any necessity for him to go into details as to his late victories as they saw the reports on the American and local Press; but he wished to emphasise the fact that such victories not only brought credit to the Enright Firm and to their village but also to their common country.

Mr. Enright on rising was received with tremendous cheering and was much affected with such a display of kind appreciation and congratulations. He must be thankful he said and very thankful to his friends and neighbours for all the expense and trouble they had gone to in those marks of appreciation of his success. He thanked his friends Messrs. O'Brien and E. Hartigan and all the people of Castleconnell for such a fine



welcome home. Among those at the gathering were Dr. Ryan, Dr. Lavertine, Messrs. James Neville, J. Ryan Mountshannon House, D. McMahon P.C. J.N. Wall, P. Conners, P. Doherty, T. Sheehan, D. Ahern, D. Daly, E. Murnane, A. Scanlan, J. Hogg, E. Coughlan, P. McNamara. All the friends were then invited by Mrs. K. Enright the popular proprietress of The Shannon Hotel to feasting and merriment that lasted until the wee hours of the morning the happy throng separating with the old refrain "He's a Jolly Good Fellow."

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*Car Wash - Agri Diesel - Food Store - Whipped Ices -*

*Video - Coal - Briquettes - Kosangas - Wine - Hot  
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## **Gilhooly's**

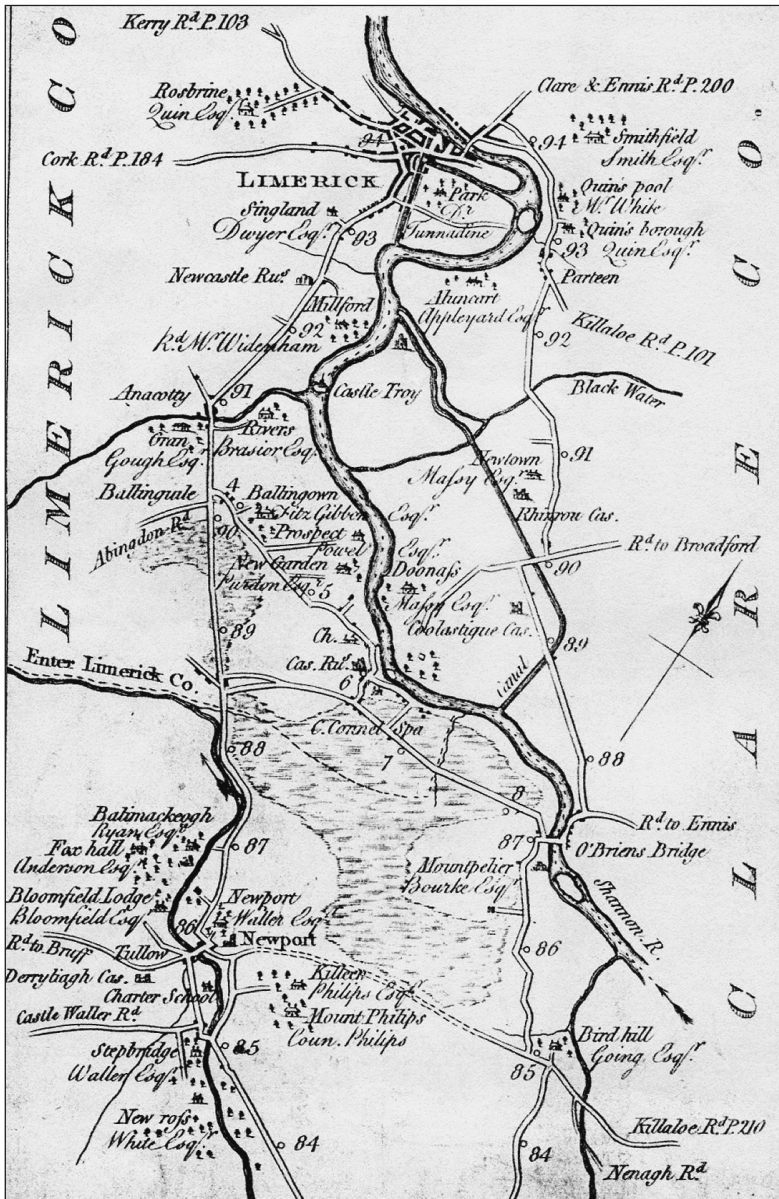
### **Lisnagry**

*Good Luck & Best Wishes from*

***Lisnagry Post Office***

## 1778 Road Map (part) Dublin to Limerick

*Supplied by John Sheehan*



# Funeral Expenses, Aug. 1855

## - Lieut. Gen. Sir Richard Bourke KCB

Supplied by John Sheehan



1855

R. Bourke Esq

Jr

Aug To One best finished Waterproof shell upholstered  
in white Silk - a soft Pillow, and one Extra  
Large Lead Coffin and One Best finished  
Solid oak Coffin upholstered in Black Silk  
and Richly mounted also a Solid Brass  
engraved plate for the late Genl Sir R. Bourke

R. G. L. - The three - £ 18 0 0

1 Silk bound Cap & body Shroudings - " 15 -

Pair Carriage 2 trips - " 10 -

Jr D. Carriage of shell - 5 -

Jr D. Lead & oak Coffins 10 5 -

12 Black Scarfs & Bands. Chief Mourner 6 -

32 Cape & Cuffs for Gentlemen Mourner 7 3 9 4

44 Pair French Kid gloves 7 14 -

11 Jr D. 8 7 2 1 3 10

53 Linen Scarfs for Mourners (Coffin bearers)

and Gentlemen's Servants 6 15 18 0

6 Superfine Scarfs & Cuffs for the Bishop's

Dean, Rector & Doctor 10 3 3 -

73 Mourner hat bands 10 pence 3 2 6

Dark Pair Plumber Soldering up Coffin at Shop 1 0 0

Jr Paid for two horse drivers 8 0 0

£ 61 13 8



Recd. Four R. Loque to Pat<sup>h</sup>. Hartigan Dr.  
 Aug 16<sup>th</sup> By 3 Dozen loaves of Bread. £ 9 - 0  
 " By 3 Dozen of porter - " 3 - 6  
 " Whiskey and porter " 3 - 6  
 " 6 Bottles of porter 5 glasses of whiskey 1 - 3 1/2  
 17<sup>th</sup> Breakfast for 24 Men. " 1 - 0 - 0  
 one quart of whiskey 4 Bottles of porter " 4 - 2  
 one of Limonade. " 2 1/2  
 Bread butter and Coffee for three 2 - 6  
 two biscuits and one bottle of porter. " 3 1/2  
 two glasses of punch - 1 - 0  
 two Bottles of porter " 5 -  
 3 Bottles of porter two glasses of punch. 1 - 4 1/2  
 for Car Men for dinner 3 - 4  
 4 glasses of whiskey " 10  
 one dozen of porter 4 Dr. gingers 3 - 4  
 15 loaves of bread. 3 - 9  
 Two half glasses of punch. " 6  
 £ 3 - 3 - 3  
 Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 1855. Pat<sup>h</sup>. Hartigan  
 George Meall





# WELCOME NEW BABIES



Padraig Mark Murnane, Derreen  
Andrew Ksivecaite, Castlerock Grove  
Ned Ksivecas, Castlerock Grove  
Alli Enora O'Sullivan, Clyduff  
Amy O'Connell, Lisnagry  
Grainne Therese Lunn, Knocksentry  
Eoin Fiachra Mac Graith, Newport  
Shauna Blake, Mountshannon Road  
Christopher Martin Coughlan, Garden Hill  
Kaitlyan Hourigan, Newport  
Louise Ann Marie Hayes, Bog Road  
Aaron Ian Guidera, Nenagh  
Maeve Christina King, CastlerockGrove  
Eoin Anthony Greene, England  
Eve Catherine Ryan, Lisnagry  
John Timothy O'Brien, Lisnagry  
Meabh O'Callaghan, Garden Hill  
Caleb Byrne, Annaholty  
Leah Megan Hartigan, Drominboy  
Isabelle Kate Collins, Killeenagarriff  
Jamie Patrick Matthew Howard, Fairyhall  
Szymon Raczewski, Castleconnell  
Kate Elise Ryan, Annacotty  
Jay Dillon O'Connell, Lisnagry  
Keegan Lee Easton, Castleconnell  
Roisin Louise Ravenscroft, Coolbawn Meadows  
James Martin Ryan, Gouig  
Laura Kathleen Griffin, Castletroy

Saoirse Margaret Slattery, Fairyhall  
 Abbie Rita Ann Rainbow-Blake, Castleconnell  
 Sarah McGill, Annagh  
 Breen Edward Ryan, Annacotty  
 Jay Paul Porter, Castletroy  
 Mia Louise McElligott, Wood Park  
 Lauren Sarah Hennessey, Stradbally  
 John Kevin Hardiman, Castleconnell  
 Grace Sarah Dillon, Biddy Fort Lisnagry  
 Gabrielle Faith Burns, Killaloe  
 Luke Thomas Allen, Castlerock Wood  
 Darragh John Michael Heffernan, Rhebogue, Limerick  
 Barry James Wilmott, Cork  
 Caroline Comley, Castleconnell  
 Morgan David Lee, Annaholty  
 Kate Marie Duckett, Gouig  
 Harry Derek Nolan, Castleconnell  
 Cian Sean Shiamsi, England  
 Aisling Katherine Choi, Lisnagry  
 Killian Michael Hayes, Cedarwood Grove  
 Patrick James O'Neill, Derreen  
 Eva Beatrice Fitzgerald, Castlerock Drive  
 Marley Madeleine Bridgeman-O'Riordan, Clyduff  
 Brian Robert Moroney, Birdhill  
 Gillian Leon Hartigan, Belmont Road  
 Ian Edward Kelleher, Castleconnell  
 Tommy Matthew Fogarty, Birdhill  
 Roisin Emily Slattery-Wright, Laught  
 Noah Ronan Shire, San Francisco  
 Andrew Gerard O'Connor, New Garden  
 Lee William Hayes, Castletroy  
 Colin Barry, Annagh  
 Emma Lynne Sadlier, Murroe  
 Ben Andrew Gillen, Wood Road  
 Emma Ann Robertson, Castlecourt  
 Jack Paul Mulqueen, Castleconnell  
 Fergal Mac Dera O'Duinn, Castleconnell  
 Robyn Mary Dillon, Castleconnell  
 Teegan Ann Nolan, Scanlan Park  
 Lexi Divito Fitzgerald, Annacotty

Gavin Joseph William Skehan, Castleconnell  
Aoibhe Bridget Mona Lacey, Castlerock Mews  
Isla Bourke-O'Brien, Goiug  
Donal Nathan O'Keeffe, Limerick  
Donncha James Feerick, Ahane  
Kevin McNamara, Castleconnell  
Dylan Francis Casey, Coolbawn Meadows  
Trintan Tony Bird Johannesburg, South Africa  
Michael James Nally, Castlerock  
Michael Thomas Kiely Foyle, Lisnagry  
Niamh Mairead Cahill, School Road Lisnagry  
Grainne Ros Cahill, School Road Lisnagry

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# WEDDING BELLS

**Congratulations and a long and happy life to the following couples who were married during the past year:**



Kieran O'Shea, Lisnagry and Colette Hitchings, Lisnagry.  
Edward McDonald, Kilkenny and Shiobhan Ni Shiocru, Newgarden  
Kenneth Walker, Killeenagariff and Ann Marie Kennedy, Killeenagariff  
Paul Slemon, Co. Kerry and Linda Collins, Laught  
Harry Baggott, Newcastlewest and Janette McMahon, Limerick  
Thomas Dennigan, Longford and Catherine Fitzmaurice, Longford  
James O'Donovan, Dublin and Catherine Daly, Limerick  
David Lee, Dublin and Catherine McDonagh, Mountshannon Road  
Clement Smith, Lower Garden Hill and Louise McSorley, Cork  
Eilise Mackey, Castleconnell and Paul Flannery, Monaleen  
Ian O'Connor, Limerick and Emma Gleeson, Limerick  
Bernard Bartley, Limerick and Sinead Kirby, England  
Thomas White, Montpelier and Neriza Lugod, Phillipines  
Seamus McGowan, Mayo and Marguerite O'Brien, Barrington's Bridge  
Karl McCarthy, Cork and Fiona Liston, Kerry  
Keith O'Riordan, Limerick and Celine Horgan, Limerick  
Thomas Carroll, Laois and Anne Marie McInerney, Annacotty  
Barry Curtin, Ahane and Anna Marie Linnane, Biddyford  
Andrew Milne, Scotland and Rose Marie Fleming, Kilmallock  
Sean Ryan, Oola and Ciara McCaffrey, Castleconnell.



# THESE WE REMEMBER

**During the past year the deaths took place of the following people:**



Betty Butler, Coolree.

John Lee, Newport.

Herbie Kerr, Castleconnell.

Frank Quinlan, Dublin formerly Castleconnell.

Paul Garvey, London formerly St. Patrick's Villas.

Danny Murphy, Limerick formerly Coolready.

Sr. Mary Philomena Moloney of the Mercy Order, New Ross formerly Ballyvarra.

Donal Coffey, Woodpark.

Bridie Egan (nee Shyne), England, formerly Castleconnell.

Andrew Walsh, Castleconnell.

Bridget Minihan, Murroe.

Margaret Langan (nee Enright), Ballyvarra.

Patrick O'Connor, Castleconnell.

Peggy Minogue, Tuamgraney.

Gretta McDonogh (nee Maloney), Shannon, formerly Fairy Hall.

Karen Bridgeman, Lisnagry.

Joe Carroll, St. Flannan's Tce.,

Ned Finn, Killoscully.

Donal Hayes, Kilmallock, formerly Lisnagry.

Joe Ahearn, Grange, formerly Ballymakeogh.

Marjorie O'Sullivan, Ahane.

Mary McGill, Garden Hill

Nuala Fellows (nee McMahon), England, formerly of the Bog Road.

Patrick Birmingham, Annagh.

Canon O'Meara, Birdhill.

Lily Whelan, Scanlan Park.

Michael O'Connell, Clyduff.

Margaret Veronesse (nee Deloughrey), Montpelier.  
 Margaret Hogan (nee McLoughlin), formerly Castleconnell.  
 Nellie Minihan, Ahane.  
 Martin McNamara, Limerick, formerly Ballinacourty.  
 Billy Fitzmaurice, England, formerly Castleconnell.  
 Bridget Maher, Mountshannon, formerly Athlone.  
 Margaret Morrissey, Murroe.  
 Michael Shyne, Annacotty.  
 Ellen Mc Namara, Lisnagry.  
 Peggy Duffy, Castleconnell.  
 Anne O'Connell (nee Minihan), Limerick.  
 Elizabeth Cunningham (nee Tierney), Limerick, formerly Bog Road.  
 Jim Turner, Limerick, formerly Wood Park.  
 Alice Clifford (nee Cooke), South Africa, formerly Annagh.  
 Jim Redmond, Drominboy.  
 Donie O'Brien, London, formerly Knocksentry.  
 Mary McDonald, Castleconnell.  
 Tom O'Shea, Derryhasna  
 Peggy Clifford, Mountshannon  
 Peggy McLaughlin (nee Hall), Portroe, formerly Mountshannon  
 Stephen O'Sullivan, 1 Cois na Sionna  
 Paddy Enright, Annacotty

**R.I.P.**

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# Halloween

*Screeching bats and cackling witches  
HALLOWEEN is full of twitches  
Running away from zany zombies  
Those twitches are full of fright!*

*On a very dark night  
The moon is a spooky light  
On this night vampires and zombies  
Are in sight.*



*Watch out for ghosts and ghouls  
THEY'RE out tonight.  
Colourful fireworks are shooting through the air  
Whirling twirling everywhere.*

By Michael Burns, Aged 9, Montpelier, O'Brien's Bridge.

## *My Halloween Story*

*Halloween night  
A big fright  
Lots of Pumpkins everywhere  
Loads of cobwebs in the air.  
Owls are screeching  
Werewolves are howling,  
Everyone is growling  
Exciting  
Night!*

Brian Metcalfe, Lisnagry N.S.

# Famine Ireland

Any references I heard re the famine was that it did not affect this locality, the big houses took care of it. In Limerick city, it was said to have passed by. The scenario of a bowl atop the body of a dead baby lying across his father's knee crying pitifully for money to bury his child, should change opinion. In the workhouse in 1846 a labourer was heard to say: people were so poor, they were ready to eat each other.

Australia celebrates the Famine with a wall memorial of 400 girls names orphaned by it and open ceremony attended by living relatives. A list of Limerick names is as follows:

Buck, Margaret, Dromcollera, Fitzgerald, Ann, Ballingarry, Guare, Catherine, Askeaton, Hall, Bridget, Castleconnell, Keating, Bridget, Feenagh, Leahy, Jane, Cleary, Long, Margaret, Limerick, O'Brien, Hanora, Glynn, O'Brien, Mary, Glynn, O'Donnell, Catherine, Limerick, Reardon, Margaret, Croom, Shanhaan, Ellen, Ballingarry, Simmoni, Catherine, Kilmallock, White, Johanna, Glin, Woods, Bridget, Glin.

Many attempts were made to aid the wretched poor for various reasons.

1830	1000 girls sent to Australia
1832'42	1800 girls sent to Australia
1855'56	4000 " " "
1848'50	4000 Earl Gray Scheme, Girls sent to Australia.

The girls were picked because of their manner and potential, clothed, educated, schooled socially and then they proceeded on the long journey. On most occasions they were escorted to their place of employment by Parsons etc., basically ended because of local opposition to their possible social background.

(Cromwell transported 5000 girls to the West Indies where Irish names adorn the shop fronts this present day).

Famine is recorded from the late 1700s through 1820, 1830. These had been alleviated by different charities and monies set aside had to be released by Act of Parliament for this new disaster. Private soup kitchens were set up prior to 1847, by Quakers etc. Gov. sponsored units quickly replaced them from the January 27th Soup Kitchen Act and then finished by September 1847.





Research immediately brings up Mrs. Neale, Castleconnell, I believe to be the wife of Richard Bourke's bailiff of Thornfield, Lisnagry, Co. Limerick. By July 1847 it was thought 3,000,000 people availed of the "soup". In 1846 William Howley, Chairman of Famine Relief in Castleconnell wrote to Earl Lincoln for £400 for the cost of 35 ton of Indian maize for Castleconnell to be distributed at half price but eventually given free.

A well-known French chef opened a kitchen in Dublin with the following recipe:

#### Soyers Soup

Leg beef, 2 gal water, 2oz dripping, 2 onions, 2 veg, 4lbs flour, 1lb pearl barley, 3ozs salt 3 ozs brown sugar, 1 biscuit per person.

Francis Spaight said: "I found so great an advantage in getting rid of the pauper population upon my own property, that I made every exertion to remove them. I consider the failure of the potato crop to be the greatest possible value in one respect in enabling us to carry out the emigration system."

Proletizing by Parsons in the form of giving soup only resulted in 35,000 converts by 1851. The famine spread throughout Europe, Belgium 5,000. Prussia, 50,000, France 10,000.

The British Gov spent £8 to £10 million on the famine, however it gave £20 million in compensation to the slave owners of the West Indies. Queen Victoria gave £5 (English writers say more) to Famine Relief. She wrote a letter to be read at Sunday service and £170.5/7 was subscribed followed by a second letter and £301.6/7 was given claiming that she was Famine weary. The British Association collected £45,000. From the highest to the lowest in society, all contributed collections of food, money and clothing. Unfortunately Queen Victoria refused entry to the relief ships of the Sultan of Turkey to Irish ports (in some reports they did arrive). He wished to subscribe £2,000 but was asked to reduce it as it was higher than her contribution.

The US Gov, although at war with Mexico sent two men o' war vessels, The Jamestown and Macedonian under volunteer crew with food relief of 20,000 tons, one-sixth of whose cargo would go to Scotland. A great feast was held in their honour, meanwhile an 8 year old boy was held in Kilmainham Jail for eating grass. Over 100 ships followed but for every ship coming in, 6 laden vessels were going out.

The Pope gave 1,000 Roman Crowns and chastised Irish Bishops for their failure to give credit for the gift and also for their failure to organise funds for the Irish people in their hour of need.

The Choctaw People sent \$170 and a quantity of grain. They were

ridiculed in the local press and referred to as children of the forest. (In 1830 they were force marched by US military from Mississippi Alabama, Louisiana over 500 miles through winter towards Oklahoma. All the old and young died.) (The Long March by Louise Marie Fitzpatrick).



Irish soldiers in India collected £14,000 for the Famine.

In recent times through Government and dictators, millions of people have died needlessly. 20,000,000 Russians, 100,000,000 Chinese, 10,000,000 Ukrainians 6,000,000 in the Holocaust, 50% of the Polish and 3,000,000 Cambodians. (All approximate figures). Millions perished on battlefields and these figures do not take natural disasters into account.

I would like to thank the people of England for their contributions to Famine relief. It was not a time of plenty for most and tending to look at past events with today's eyes is a mistake.

(Sources: British Parliamentary Papers and Internet i.e. Irish Famine Memorial Sydney Australia.).

**John Sheehan 2009**

*Best Wishes to "An Caisleán" from*

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# Childhood Bliss

When the stresses and strains of life begin to invade my peace, I meditate, and when I do, I take myself back to childhood and the happy times I spent with family and friends as we grew up together on the banks of the river Shannon. One of the more abiding memories of those days was when my father, whom I always called Pa took a motley crew of us adventurers, fishing for the very first time.

This would be a day to remember and no stone was left unturned to guarantee its success. To this end we enlisted the help of our neighbours, the Conroys, (who were always part of our dreams and schemes) and a week before the big day we harvested sally rods in the Nut Grove, on the banks of the Shannon. These were our first fishing rods.

In a small timber shed at the back of our house Pa, who it seemed to us, could do just about anything, set about converting ordinary sally sticks into weapons of destruction. He pared and honed them and fitted line guides which he made from ordinary wire. He then commandeered some cast off thread spools from mother's sewing basket and these, when bolted on became our first fishing reels. Then we visited the old quarry dump nearby and rescued corks from old disused bottles, to use as convenient floats. In eager anticipation we waited for Sunday to come and the week seemed to go into reverse as the days dragged by. The next stage of our proposed adventure was the digging of 'blue skull' worms to use as bait and this task was completed on Saturday evening, before the big day. "Hardy Boys" these and able to perform for a long time while impaled upon the hook, or so Pa said anyway! That night in bed I tossed and turned, restlessly dreaming about "Moby Dick" sized fish and the fun that lay in store for us on Sunday.

At last the big day dawned, sun drenched and covered over in a canopy of heavenly blue. Mass was a hurried affair, followed by a mad rush home and the rapid devouring of mother's delicious cooking. Our agitated eagerness contrasted sharply with Pa's slow, methodical approach as he very carefully prepared his "green heart" fishing rod, his brass reel, his roll of nylon fishing line, his jar of unsuspecting worms and his canvas bag, that held all the other tackle he might need. Then we were off. Led by the 'Pied Piper' figure of Pa down through Bunny's field and into the great unknown, which until today had always been off limits to us. We marched through an old orchard and I remember thinking that this place definitely held prospects for the autumn. Helped by Pa's sinewy arms we clambered

over a rushing stream, sparkling like crystal in the noonday sun and continued down through a rushy field heading for the Promised Land. However, the reality of the scorching day began to take effect .... the flies tormented us, the heat drained us and the rushes became major obstacles to small feet, unlike Pa who marched effortlessly along.

After what seemed like an eternity we arrived at a steep grassy incline and when we surmounted it, a most wondrous sight befell our squinting eyes, stretching for what seemed like miles was the fabled river Shannon, shimmering like a huge upturned mirror in the summer sun. Across the other side of the river in Co. Clare stood a tiny summer house nestling comfortably amongst the lush green trees. My mind went into overdrive thinking about the crack we could have in this house if only we had a boat. The tackle was prepared and Pa gave us a grisly lesson on how to fix a squirming worm on a hook. I winced at the torture the unfortunate creature was going through, however this was to become a routine task as the day went on. Then we each found a spot on the riverbank and after being shown how to cast the line, our fishing began. Our neighbour Gerry, who had accompanied us on the trip, did not have a rod. He just wanted to explore the new surroundings. But, when he saw the rest of us engrossed in our riverside task, he procured an old branch from the ditch which he stripped down to a stick, then he persuaded Pa to give him some line, a hook, a lead weight and a float (Pa always kept extras) and joined the ranks of us fishermen. The day progressed and except for a few small perch, no fish of note was landed. Boredom set in and some of us deserted our posts and set off to explore this new and exciting “green jungle”. The name of this Paradise became known as the “Witches Wood” and we would spend many a fun-filled hour playing there in the years to come.

A game of “war” was about to begin when a loud cry erupted from where Gerry was sitting and we all rushed to see what the commotion was about. Thrashing around in the water about twenty feet from the shore was a monster fish, which Gerry had the good luck to hook. Under Pa’s careful guidance he was attempting to bring it ashore. What a battle ensued as Gerry “played” his unfortunate prisoner in and out repeatedly, around some annoying weeds and up and down the river. Gerry displayed a fishing skill that amazed us all and soon he had his prize gasping and panting on the bank. This was a bream, Pa explained, and it was the biggest fish I ever saw. Wide-eyed and gobsmacked we looked at each other. The biggest fish we ever saw and caught with a rotten old tree branch, what was the world coming to? Gerry gained considerable acclaim out of this success in school the following day, but that is another story. We resumed fishing with renewed vigour but alas Gerry’s feat was not to be repeated.

The day began to wane and empty bellies, a blood red sky and overwhelming tiredness signalled the end of our escapade. Except for the



odd eel, a few miserable perch and two small bream, no more fishy species were prepared to give themselves up. So, we reluctantly weaved our way home while the birds sang an evening lullaby and the comforting sound of the cricket wafted in the dew filled air. When we reached home, Mother prepared a feast of Galtee cheese, brown bread, scallions, lettuce, and tomatoes, all from Pa's garden. We devoured the lot and washed it down with cups of hot tea. Then "Blanket Street" beckoned. As I rolled into a very welcome bed, the day and its blissful memories came floating through my mind and I was one happy little boy as I drifted off into peaceful sleep.

**Jack Byrnes**

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# Bridie's Soda Bread and Apple Tart

It was July 1969, a man had just landed on the moon, I was just six years old and we were sitting at the breakfast table in our house up beyond Garravane, when Mammy said, "Martin, 'tis time to take the sow over to Packie, and you can take Mary with you." She had this "cos I say so" voice, so we didn't argue.

Packie and his wife Bridie lived across the meadow, and down the boreen, in a small cottage with chickens, ducks, a cow and the finest boar this side of the mountains. Packie and Bridie had no children and had christened him "Spudnik". His reputation was renowned throughout the length and breadth of the parish and it was said that he could surely pay the rent of a whole village.

The sow seemed excited, and as keen to get on the road as my Mother and Mrs. Byrnes heading off to the Bingo bus on a Tuesday night. The sun dappled the laneway and brought out the purple and rust colours on the briars that would fill our bellies with blackberries in the Autumn. We made a happy threesome, me, my father and the pig.

On arriving at Packie's yard, seeing the tractor gone my father shouted in the direction of the kitchen door, "Are you there missus?"

Bridie appeared, her sleeves rolled up and her great brawny arms, flour to the elbows. "Is it your self" she said, wiping her hands on her navy blue, speckled, wrap over apron. "Packie's gone, so he is, but I can see she's good and ready, bring her round to himself and he'll cover her nicely, so he will."

The sow stood trembling as Sputnik was put to the test. His reputation hung in the balance. Not once, not twice, but three times he failed to perform his duty.

"His aim isn't great today" observed my father. "Give him space" said Bridie as she facilitated romance with her bare hands, cheering him on with all the enthusiasm and noise of a Tipperary supporter at a Munster Final.

The "docking" was completed to my father's satisfaction, "mission" accomplished! "Come in let ye" said Bridie "An we'll wet the tae."

In the gloomy kitchen, Bridie flapped a grey tea towel, to clear the hens that were picking crumbs of pastry off the large wooden table then,

wiping her hands on her apron she cut and buttered some fresh crusty soda cake which she divided between us. I thought it was lovely but was surprised to see my father slip his into his pocket as Bridie turned to wet the tea. He glared at me with such a look when I asked him had he forgotten his teeth. Bridie bent down, flashing two fine gammons stuffed into a pair of pink elasticated bloomers as she triumphantly produced a fine apple tart from the oven. Just as she reached the table, she was overtaken by the mother and father of a sneezing attack. Not once, not twice, but three times she sprayed the apple tart, then after wiping her eyes and blowing her nose on her navy blue speckled wrap over apron, she cut me a good big slice. It was absolutely delicious. The best I have ever tasted to this day. We said our goodbyes and she embraced me to her ample chest and ruffled my hair with her floury hands. I led the way home, skipping along between the briars, paddling in the pools of sunshine, followed slowly by my decidedly delicate Dad and one very tired pig!

**Barbara Hartigan**

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