THE Archive

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JOURNAL OF THE CORK NORTHSIDE FOLKLORE PROJECT

Iris Thionscnamh Béaloidis Cheann-Thuaidh Chorcaí

Issue 15

Uimhir a Cúig Déag

THE Archive

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Front Cover Photo: Courtesy of the Cork Operative Society of Masons and Bricklayers Historical Society

Project Manager's Note

As you may have already noticed, there are big changes in Issue #15 of *The Archive*. First, we have a new name and are now officially the **Cork Northside Folklore Project**, CNFP, making our identity in the wider world a little clearer.

Secondly, we have made a dramatic visual leap into colour, while retaining our distinctive black and white exterior. It was good fun planning this combination, and satisfying being able to use colour where it enhances an image. The wonders of digital printing make it possible to do this with almost no additional cost. We hope you approve!

As is normal, our team is always evolving and changing with the comings and goings of our FÁS staff, but this year we have had the expansion of our UCC Folklore & Ethnology Department involvement. Dr Clíona O'Carroll has joined Dr Marie-Annick Desplanques as a Research Director, and Ciarán Ó Gealbháin has contributed his services as Editorial Advisor for this issue. We would like to thank all three of them very much for their time and energies.

One thing that hasn't changed, at least not for the better, is the state of our funding for *The Archive*. Luckily we have once again received a **Local Heritage Grant** from **Cork City Council** towards our printing costs, for which we are very grateful. However, this covers only a portion of the total and all other funding has disappeared, leaving us for the first time in our history, unable to guarantee a next issue.

From the start, Dr Desplanques made the decision that *The Archive* should be a free publication, as a way of giving back to the community that provides our material, our staff and our home. We want to continue to honour this commitment. The money needed for printing is virtually our only hard cost; no one is paid for any material included in the journal, and all other work, including layout, design, editing and proofreading is completed in-house by our team.

If you believe our work is important and value *The Archive*, you can help by purchasing one of the items listed below, by making a direct donation or by encouraging others to donate. Every cent helps, and all those donating will be thanked in our next issue. We know times are tough everywhere, but if each reader could spare us one or two euro, it would mean that there will be *The Archive* Issue #16 for you to enjoy next year.

Mary O'Driscoll

Corrections

In *The Archive* #14, we incorrectly credited two photos in the article, 'Urban Exploration'. The cover photo and photo on page five were both taken by Chris Wright. We apologise sincerely for this inadvertent error, and thank him for the use of these images.

We also apologise to Pat Poland for an error in his article, 'The Auxiliary Fire Service in Cork 1939 – 1945'. We referred to him as being the District Fire Officer, North Lee, when in fact this position was held by his father, Matt Poland. This was solely our error and we regret any confusion it may have caused.

Thanks to the Cork City Council Heritage Grant Scheme, whose continued financial support made this publication possible

Picking 'Blackas'

by Gráinne Mcgee

Working on the Cork Northside Folkore Project, I have had the privilege of reading many people's memories of growing up in Cork, and slowly the seeds for a new interest were planted; to go blackberry hunting. Blackberry picking excursions feature prominently as a Corkonian childhood adventure, with popular destinations including Fairhill, Blackash and Murphy's Rock. Not that blackberry picking was unknown to me. In Kerry, we used to go as kids, out with our sand buckets along the hedgerows, but this was a distant childhood memory. However, recessionary times call for recessionary measures and looking at the expensive prices for a small punnet of blueberries or blackberries in the supermarkets only strengthened my resolve to rediscover some of Cork's old blackberry trails.

On further research, a lot of these trails have since disappeared, swallowed up in the outward expansion of Cork city. What would once have been considered countryside, areas on the Northside such as those beyond Fairhill, Spring Lane and Dublin Hill, Ballincollie Road or Ballyphelane Road, have since the 1960s been built up with residential housing or industrial development. Likewise on the Southside, the agricultural lands of Togher and Blackash, once popular blackberry picking destinations, are now an extension of the city. Therefore it seemed Murphy's Rock was the safest bet to find some blackberries, as it still lies largely untouched by modernisation.

Martin Mcgee picking blackberries
Photo by Gráinne Mcgee

Armed with bucket and wellies, I made my way to Murphy's Rock. It is quite wild and takes some navigating, but I emerged triumphant with a half bucket of berries. The only fright I got was when three piebald ponies started galloping towards me, thinking my blackberry container was a feeding bucket! After this, I ventured further afield, sometimes accompanied by my dad. From country lanes by Churchfield, to the byroads of Macroom and Baile Bhúirne, people were so delighted to see someone out picking 'blackas', I got the impression it was now an unusual sight. This is just a reflection of the times we live in. Twenty years or so ago, blackberries were considered a treat. The children went out to forage for berries, from which their mothers' made lovely jams or tarts. In Cork, children used to sell blackberries to local shops or on street corners, to supplement their pocket money for the cinema or swimming pool.

In earlier times, the blackberry was considered a valuable food source in Ireland. They were eaten directly from the hand or made into a form of porridge by mashing oatmeal and the berries together. The bramble or briar itself was also highly valued; the longer shoots of which were used in wickerwork, in the making of bee skeps and in the securing of thatching. The roots of the bramble were used as the core for *sliotar*s and pipes and in providing dyes for wool. The bramble had also many medicinal properties. It was used in remedies for ailments such as diarrhoea, skin cuts, swellings and sore feet. No wonder the blackberry bramble was protected under old Irish Brehon laws, which named it one of the 'bushes of the wood' and prohibited any unlawful clearance of brambles from a field.

However, the most common and well known use for the soft fruit is in the making of jam. I travelled out to talk to Mairín O'Lionáird of Folláin Teo, the award winning jam and preserve makers. Folláin Teo source as much fruit as possible from local pickers, favouring the complex flavour of the wild varieties, so they are very much in tune with harvest times and local lore surrounding the blackberries, or *sméara dubha* as they are called. The season begins in August, and 2010 was a particularly good year for the pickers, as it was dry. The berries need heat and sun to ripen and very wet weather can mean a poor harvest. Also, if the local Council come along with hedgerow cutters, it can bring a very abrupt end to any thoughts of berry picking.

The jam is made as soon as possible from the fresh berries and Mairín gives a general outline of the jam making process. The quantities are roughly half and half, fruit to sugar. The trick is to cook the berries slowly at first for 20-30 minutes to soften the fruit and to let the juices evaporate. Only then add the sugar to avoid caramelisation. Cook at the highest possible temperature, then quickly take the saucepan off the heat, to cool in a sink of cold water. To test for 'setness', add some of the jam to a cold plate and press it with your thumb to see if it will 'wrinkle'.

Blackberry season traditionally ends on the 29th of September on the feast of Michaelmas. It is a popular belief that the *púca* goes round and soils the blackberries on this date, '*...go gcacadh na púcaí ar na sméara, is dócha*.' Of course, around the end of September a frost will destroy the blackberries, rendering them inedible. I may have been a little too late this year to make jam, but I will be more than prepared for next year's blackberry harvest.

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A Safe Harbour for Ships

by Geraldine Healy

Sitting on a bench in the railway station at Cobh (Queenstown), Co Cork, a glance at the tranquil early evening scene belies little of the former activity of this magnificent harbour. A train from Cork is due at 7.00 pm. In the quiet few moments before it appears, people walk their dogs on the pier, a motorcycle comes to a halt with a young couple alighting. The rippling waters of the lower harbour shimmer below. In the clear blue of the evening, a few small vessels go about their unknown business by the naval base at Haulbowline. A tanker refuels at a jetty further out. A man stands with a fishing rod hopeful of a catch. All is tranquil. A step back in time reveals the story, hidden in every nook and cranny about the harbour. Lifting back the veil on this place more than repays consideration. Ultimately it is a tale of many surprises.

The Cove of Cork officially became known as Queenstown after the visit of Queen Victoria to Cork city and harbour in 1849. It is situated on the Great Island close to the mouth of Cork harbour. The greater harbour area stretches from the familiar white lighthouse of Roches Point at its entrance, to Monkstown, Glenbrook and Passage West and reaches inland to the Cork Quays. In 1922, the town reverted to its original name in its Irish form, Cobh. In this review, the town becomes a good starting point to begin my story of one of the world's great natural harbours.

'Sailing Vessels in Cork Harbour' c. 1850
by George Mounsey Wheatley Atkinson
Image courtesy of Crawford Municipal Art Gallery

The poignancy of the Irish diaspora was visible to all in the events which unfolded in mid-nineteenth century Queenstown. From the time of the famine of the 1840s, a steady stream of emigrants left the quayside. They were outbound to the United States and Canada on vessels commonly referred to as 'coffin ships', or sometimes as 'whited sepulchres'. These latter ships, in some instances, had been in service as slavers. From the decks of these ships, many people glanced back at the 'holy ground' of Queenstown, destined never to return to these shores. Typhus and tuberculosis were often present on these ships. Conditions were cramped onboard with no room for privacy of any kind. Water was rationed to a measure per day. Allied to the hardships of transatlantic travel was the fact that many of these people had already experienced severe hardship before departing from Ireland. On January 1st, 1892, Annie Moore became the first person to pass through the new immigrant screening centre on Ellis Island in New York city. Annie Moore and her two brothers had left Queenstown on the SS Nevada on December 20th, 1891, to sail for North America.

As the years went by, the vista from the pier in Queenstown changed. The era of the liner had arrived. The Cunard steamer, The Canada, was the first liner to call to Queenstown on November 6th, 1859. Mail was carried across the Atlantic on these ships. In 1928, as many as 354 liners called to the harbour. On April 11th, 1912, the RMS Titanic made a call to Cork harbour. It was on its ill-fated maiden voyage. The ship sailed to meet its destiny in the cold waters of the North Atlantic. The world awoke to the shocking news of its sinking.

Cork harbour saw further tragedy in May 1915, when the liner RMS Lusitania was torpedoed off the Old Head of Kinsale with the loss of 1,198 civilian lives. In the *Atlas of Cork City*, the historian, Dónal Ó Drisceoil, relates how bodies were brought ashore and laid out in Queenstown before their internment in mass graves. This major maritime disaster precipitated the entry of the United States into the First World War.

American involvement in the Great War on the side of the allies in 1917, had repercussions for Cork harbour and the town of Queenstown. On May 4th, 1917, the US Navy arrived in its waters. For the duration of the war, Queenstown was a hive of activity with servicemen strolling the promenade, shopping and spending their leisure time in the town. From that time to the cessation of hostilities in 1918, the British and American naval command worked to undermine the exploits of the German U-boats with great success.

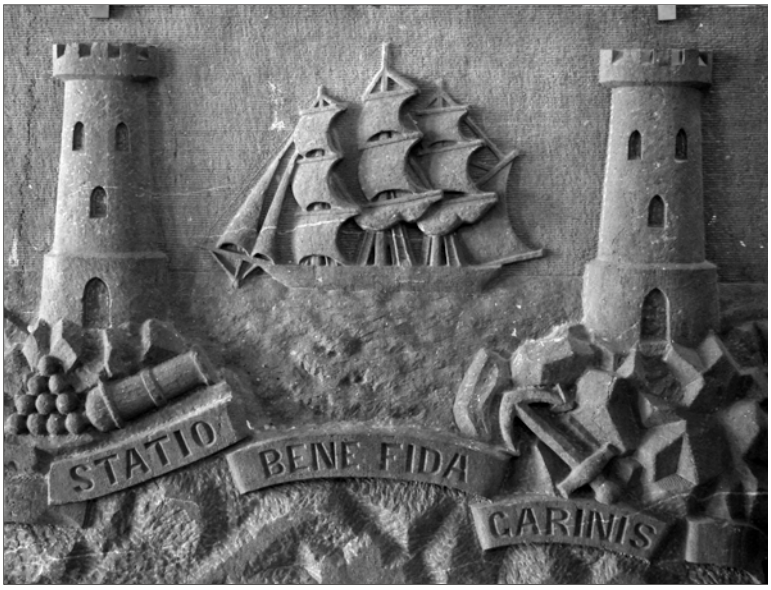
Advancing through the harbour from the town of Cobh, one moves further upstream towards the city and port of Cork. A rich maritime inheritance awaits discovery there. At the time of the outbreak of the American War of Independence in 1775, the greater harbour area welcomed more than 700 ships a year. It was a busy place. Wartime victualling for the British Navy meant constant business for Cork traders. The fact that the harbour provided such a safe berth for ships, due to its physical features, meant that it often was a gathering place for vessels destined for transatlantic convoys. Indeed, Cork is well placed on the shipping route from Europe to the Americas. The rich pasturelands of Munster provided the produce to provision these ships enroute to distant tropical lands.

Cork city and harbour had far-flung trading connections in the eighteenth century. In *Perspectives on Cork*, Professor Patrick O'Flanagan details Cork's trade with the east coast of North America, from Newfoundland to Boston and the Virginias. Trade with many Caribbean islands also took place. In Europe, Cork traded extensively with the Portuguese capital, Lisbon. In his book *Old World Colony*, David Dickson indicates the traded goods, 'butter, hides, woollens and barley were traded for the return of wines, Brazilian sugar and salt'. Professor O'Flanagan in-

forms us that Portugal was the largest market for Cork butter at that time. Further details from the same source confirm that Cork was the chief supplier of butter to the New World in the eighteenth century. Cork was also the leading provider of salted beef to the European mainland in those years.

Against a background of the frantic mercantile activities of the eighteenth century, the affluent classes in the city began to look to the harbour for recreation and social diversion. In or around the year 1720, the antecedent of the present Royal Cork Yacht Club was founded as the Cork Water Club. In Robert Gibbing's book *Lovely is the Lee*, two English gentlemen, making a 'Tour through Ireland', describe the fleet of the Cork Water Club, under sail in 1748. They state, 'It is somewhat like that of the Doge of Venice's wedding at sea'. We are told that the painting and gilding of the vessels exceeded the King's yachts at Deptford and Greenwich. Imagination paints the picture of the scene. A flotilla of little boats attending the main fleet with flags flying, drums and trumpets resounding as the vessels plunge through the waves. There was an air of exclusivity about the club with membership limited to twenty-five persons. Dignitaries from the city graced these occasions with their presence.

During the Napoleonic Wars, the British Navy was supplied with Cork cured beef from the rich Munster hinterland. Indeed, the harbour thrived on the steady commerce resulting from conflicts in Europe. During the first half of the nineteenth century, the quayside scene reflected Cork's distant trading connections. Walking along the wharves, one could see goods such as muscatel raisins, oranges, almonds, coconuts, pineapples, lemons, salt, fish and anchovies being unloaded for sale by the city's merchants. There was definitely an exotic mixture of sights and smells on the Cork quays, with orders being given in foreign languages echoing through the warehouses.



'Statio Bene Fido Carinis' - 'A harbour safe for ships'
Carving of the Cork City coat of arms in the Cork Public Museum, Fitzgerald Park
Photo by Dave McCarthy

In his book *The Story of Cork*, the late Seán Beecher outlines that these were the days of the great three and four masted sailing ships, which called to Cork after their long transatlantic journeys often having rounded Cape Horn en route from the west coast of America, India and Australia. He states that, 'the average time for a journey was 115 days but the three masted clipper the Falls of Garry made a sailing from Portland Oregon in 85 days'.

In the early nineteenth century, many ships bearing troops for Europe departed from Cork. Convict ships often lay at anchor in the harbour. They contained deportees from all over Ireland. The newly founded colony of Botany Bay in Australia was one of their destinations.

It was a time before the advent of wireless telegraphy. This necessitated calling to the port of Cork for orders. Indeed, it has been said that 'Queenstown for Orders' was the most common flag signal among ships in the Atlantic in the nineteenth century. During those years, a visit to Queenstown for orders added greatly to the proliferation of shipping in the harbour.

During this period, shipbuilding was an important industry in the harbour area. In 1815, the first steamship to be built in Ireland was launched at Passage West, Co Cork. In 1838, SS Sirius, out of Passage, arrived in New York harbour with the honour of being the first steamship to make the east to west crossing of the North Atlantic. By the time of the American Civil War in the 1860s, the age of steam had arrived. It was now commercially viable to cross the Atlantic in steam-driven vessels.

No story of Cork harbour could be complete without mention of the passenger ship, the MV Innisfallen. In the 1940s and 1950s, thousands of Cork people travelled backwards and forwards across the Irish Sea in this trusty vessel. David Martin McCarthy in his book, *Cork's Docks and Dockers*, writes, 'She was a vital link between those forced to emigrate in search of employment and the families they left behind'. Standing on the deck of the Innisfallen, waving goodbye to one's relatives, for a young emigrant like myself in 1978, there was something very final in seeing the ropes being pulled from the quayside and hearing the ship's engines rev up. Many of these emigrants rarely saw their native Cork again except on intermittent holidays.

Because of our harbour, Cork people have a distinct maritime identity. Today, Cork harbour receives visits from the great trading vessels of the world. Much of the present day commercial activity of the harbour centres on the deep water terminal at Ringaskiddy. These facilities afford access to the south and south-west of the country, linking Cork to European and intercontinental shipping lanes. Above all, the harbour is a living and vibrant entity, providing us with a beautiful environment in which to work and enjoy our leisure. We have a responsibility to respect and care for it. Over the centuries the harbour has proven to be a safe haven for many seafarers, and the vessels they sailed are celebrated in great fashion by our beloved coat of arms.

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Tell the Mason the Boss is on the Move

by Jim Fahy

When you look around any part of the city, you see the spires of the many churches dotted around the various parishes. These churches, along with buildings such as the City Hall, Customs House, Court House and the Cork Savings Bank, are the heartbeat of our city. We are very lucky, as owners and custodians, to have such buildings within our stewardship. Sadly, they can often go unappreciated. I would love to have lived back when these buildings were being worked on. I look at them through tradesman's eyes, because I am a mason.

When you hear someone talk about 'freemasons', you automatically think of funny handshakes and secret signs. The masonry trade, over the centuries, developed ways of communicating so that no one could understand what they were talking about, particularily when they wanted to talk about a job while outsiders were present. However, as part of The Cork Masons, we are working to rekindle the heritage of a noble and dying trade and demonstrate the beauty, skill and art that lie in hundreds of years of construction in Ireland.

Going back for generations, my family have been masons. Skills were passed from father to son and kept within the family, because like many other trades at the time, it was a 'closed trade'. This meant that if your father was not a mason you could not become a mason. You could become a doctor or a brain surgeon but not a mason! Within the rules of the time, if a sister of a mason got married outside of the trade her son would not be allowed into the trade. This I assume, was because he would have a surname which was not traditionally associated with masonry. If a mason died and he had a son, the son would be bound to a relative, or to the society, and they would oversee his apprenticeship until it was complete. At the time, the Ancient Guild of Masons and Bricklayers was a very strong union. This was perhaps due to the trade being closed. Masons were known by name, with the majority marrying within the trade.

In the past, the masonry trade was the most important trade in the construction industry. The mason was the architect, engineer and clerk of works; he dealt with the client directly regarding what they wanted, and would recommend to the client changes or alterations to the structure. But as times changed, the client gradually began to insist on being more involved in the way the building was constructed. This didn't suit the masons as they believed that no outsider should tell them how the work should be done.

So the masons came up with a way of distancing themselves from the client. They put forward one of their own to relay instructions from the client to the master mason, and he in turn passed information and progress reports back to the client. This eventually became a permanent arrangement and the middleman no longer did any masonry work, becoming involved in financing and making profit from masonry jobs. These men became known as 'speculative masons' and those doing the actual masonry work were known as 'operative masons'. This divide was the beginning of the group we now know as the 'freemasons'.

Masons had their own language known as *Béarlager na Saor* - or 'the language of the masons' which was a mixture of old Irish, English and a bit of gibberish. When you were an apprentice in those days, you were expected to learn the language as part of your apprenticeship and you could not divulge it to anyone outside of the trade. This tradition echoes that of the traveller and gypsy cultures, where 'Cant' or 'Shelta' are spoken. It was said that on occasions, masons who shared the language with outsiders were themselves put to death for breaking their strict code. I have spoken with a lot of the older generations of masons about where this language originated and some have said it came from the biblical story of the building of the Tower of Babel.

An example is '*Bin the airig the aish is on the cushtru*' which means, 'Tell the mason the boss is on the move.' To create further confusion, a word could mean something different depending on the sentence in which it was used. For example: *geab ludar* = bad work; *geab lapac* = small pony or donkey; *geab aishe* = apprentice or son; *geaboo* = daughter.

A few insider words and phrases include: Who is that *aish*? = Who is that man?; *borbud* = married, literally priested; *bruigneoir* = a smith; *airig fluc* = a plasterer; *airig aish* = foreman mason; the *boo* = wife, girlfriend or partner; *dikeen* = pawn shop; *dreanans* = tool.

The unfortunate thing about the secret language was that once the trade started to open up to the general population, the older masons would not teach the *Béarlager* to the new apprentices because they were not traditional masons. Today, the language is on

Masons on site in 1939, possibly near Passage West. The man holding the donkey and smoking is Tombo Johnson. The photo was donated, with his ceremonial mason's apron, to the historical society by his sons, Ted and Jack

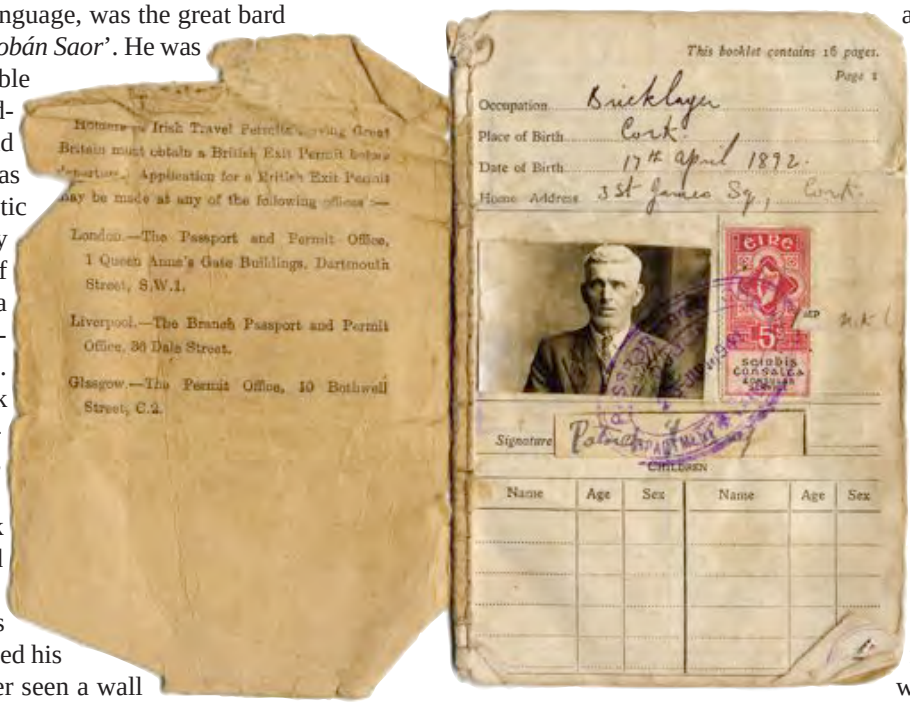
the verge of extinction.

Masons would have carried great influence with the upper classes, as clients wanted the very best stonework to impress their friends and neighbours. The masons were held in high regard in Cork. They were allowed to enter and leave the city without having to pay the levies and taxes expected of ordinary citizens. They were also allowed to vote for and hold public office on the City Council.

Neilis Osboragh working on the Farranferris Housing Scheme

The mason, when undertaking large contracts which could take years to complete, would relocate his family and his apprentices to the new site and live there until the job was finished. To prove to future employers that a mason had served his apprenticeship, masons devised an informal method of certification. The master mason the apprentice was serving under, would get a piece of paper and rip the paper with his teeth. He would hand one piece of paper to his apprentice, and send the other piece to the master mason on the next job. When the newly qualified mason turned up on the next job, if the two halves of paper matched he would then be employed as a fully pledged mason. This was proof that he had been 'indentured' into the trade.

It is said that the person who gave the masons the *Béarlager na Saor*, or the masons' language, was the great bard mason known as the '*Gobán Saor*'. He was reported to be responsible for all of the stone buildings in Ireland and across Europe and he was also known to be a mystic and wise man. One story of the old man tells of how he was building a stone wall for a neighbour, to divide his land. He was busy at work when his daughter arrived with his lunch. As the *Gobán* sat down to eat, his daughter took out her knitting and started to work on it. The *Gobán*, who was never shy of praise, asked his daughter if she had ever seen a wall so straight in all her life. The daughter looking up the length of the wall agreed it was truly a beautiful piece of work. She took a piece of wool from her knitting, pulled it taut between her fingers and asked him was the wall as straight as the string. And the story goes that from that day on he used a string line to build his walls.



This booklet contains 16 pages.
Page 1
Occupation Bricklayer
Place of Birth Cork
Date of Birth 17th April 1892.
Home Address 3 St James Sq., Cork.
Signature
Name | Age | Sex | Name | Age | Sex

Working papers of Pat Falvey, Master Stonemason

The masons were known as the journeymen of the building trade, travelling from job to job seeking out work. There is evidence to suggest that as monks travelled throughout Europe, they took with them masons to build monasteries, abbeys and monuments. In Ireland, they would travel the highways and byways, calling on farmers and landowners to see if they had any work either repairing walls, building and even inscribing headstones.

What people don't realise is that the masons of old would have been able to carve inscriptions, figures and statues as well as build houses, castles, and stone walls. Marble, granite, limestone and sandstone were used for magnificent arches and bridges with beautifully finished copings. Cork's major buildings were predominantly built with white limestone and red sandstone. Interestingly, it is said that these stones inspired the red and white of the county's flag. Grand buildings on this scale are no longer built. Stone and labour have become expensive. The masonry trade has taken a terrible beating in the last 20 or 30 years and I suppose a lot of this has to do with the movement away from direct employment and the emergence of subcontracting.

When the masons were directly employed they could only be taken on by the foreman mason on the site, and he would make sure that the work they did was always good. But they also had a clerk of works to oversee the quality of all the trades on site. He was always an experienced tradesman himself and he would be able to spot any of the shortcuts that could be employed.

The banner of the Cork Operative Society of Masons and Bricklayers, which dates back to the 1843 monster repeal marches in Cork, is usually stored in The Cork Public Museum, Fitzgerald Park. It is currently under restoration in Dublin. It was used in St Patrick's Day parades when all of the masons would walk behind it wearing their sashes and ceremonial aprons, and it was also in the opening parade of the 1902 Great Exhibition. Fundraising to complete the restoration of the banner to its original condition is underway.

Set in Stone *is an hour long documentary film made to commemorate a noble trade and its heritage. The DVD is available from The Cork Masons for €10. Contact James Fahy, Farrenbrien, Minane Bridge, Co Cork, 085 1151774. They would greatly appreciate if readers would get in contact with any photos or stories relating to the construction industry they may have. They will be added to the archival material in the Cork City and County Archive, in Great William O'Brien Street.*

Front cover - Cork Masons Union representatives in the St Patrick's Day Parade, 1956. Patrick Falvey (left - seated) William Varian (centre) Denis Gallagher (right – seated). All photos courtesy of the Cork Operative Society of Masons and Bricklayers Historical Society

Street Games

by Noreen O'Connell

Our streets, parks, terraces and avenues are a lot quieter now than they were when my friends and I were growing up. Back then they were a hive of activity, with the sound of children laughing and shouting being heard from morning 'til late evening, especially during the long summer holidays. Today, children playing on the streets is something we see less and less of. There are much busier roads, computers in every home, and families have much more expendable cash than we did. Yet the tradition has not completely died out. Small bands of youngsters can still be seen outside, engaged in street games. Their laughter and boisterous behaviour is just like ours was. Our old favourites included Pickie, Glassy Alleys, Skipping, Release, Ball-against-the-wall and Scraps to name but a few.

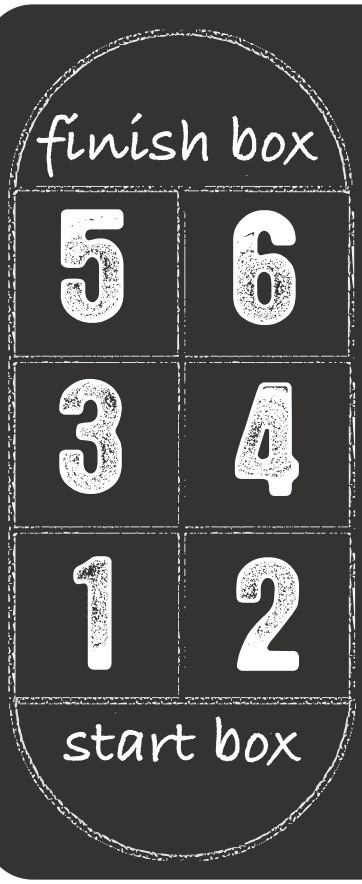
Glassy alleys is similar to marbles. This was a favourite with the boys; however many girls became 'dingers', or experts, often depriving the boys of their entire stock of marbles. The rules were simple. You had to throw your glassy alley, or marble, further than your opponents. It sounds easier than it is. If you throw too gently you risk being shy, or short of the mark. If you throw with too much force you might knock your opponent's marble, which means you lose the game and your marbles.

Chasing and release kept us occupied for hours and we never grew tired of it. The games are similar. The main difference being chasing is based on one child being 'it', while release is more of a team game, played by two rival groups. Scraps was the sole domain of the girls. We kept our pre-bought or homemade coloured pictures in a book to swap with our friends. These were great for rainy days when it was too wet to go outside. Ball-against-the-wall was played by tossing anything from one to three balls against a wall. There was only one rule, don't drop the balls!

I spoke to a number of people while I was writing this article, to see how many of the old games they could remember. I was pleasantly surprised at the response. All of them remembered the games and many could bring to mind bits of the songs that accompanied them. The most popular game seemed to be pickie. It was usually, but not exclusively, played by girls. When the boys got bored with cowboys and indians, cap guns, dinkies and their beloved glassy alleys, they would often give us a game. Like all of our games it cost next to nothing to play. All you needed was some chalk and an old shoe polish tin or ointment tin. We didn't need a fancy arena or indoor activity centre, the game (like all of our games) was played on the street, in terraces, avenues and at times on the road. In fact, anywhere we could draw a pickie box was fair game to us. Admittedly, there was a lot less traffic on the roads in those days. Any motorist who was unfortunate enough to come across us was forced to make his way patiently through the melee before continuing his journey.

Pickie often took hours and sometimes days to complete a game. There were many variations, which caused heated debate among the participants. Some rules dictated that moving the tin from box to box must be made with one kick and some pickie boxes had up to ten squares. While the game and rules might seem simple to us now as adults, it is a deceptively difficult game. It requires a high degree of fitness, concentration and excellent co-ordination to be successful. My colleagues and I recently played a game with less than desirable results. Between us we managed to draw out our 'box' and remember the rules. That was the most successful part of the experiment. As children, we thought nothing of kicking a tin around the box on one leg. As adults however, we soon realised we lacked the stamina, co-ordination and agility we had in our younger days. The game brought back happy memories and soon we were calling 'out' and disputing line boundaries, just like we did when we were children.

How to play Pickie



In chalk, draw out a pickie box similar to the one on the left, and stand in the start box with your polish tin.

The aim of the game is to kick your polish tin onto square 1 whilst hopping on one leg. From here you must proceed to square 2 and then diagonally up to square 3, continuing in sequence until you reach the finish box.

Kicking the tin to the wrong box means you are out. If the polish tin lands on the line or outside the intended square, you are out.

If you hop on a line, change legs or stand on two legs you are also disqualified and must rejoin the queue to start again.

Up to twenty children could be playing at any one time so this could mean a long wait for your turn.

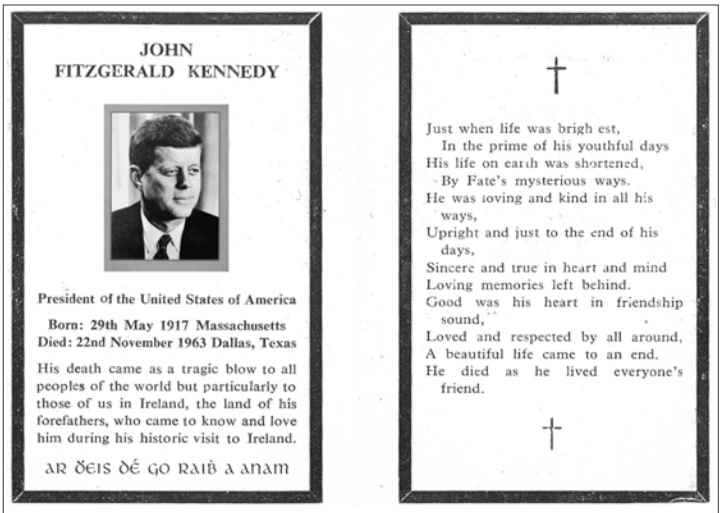
Majella Murphy demonstrating a game of pickie
Photo: Grainne Mcgee, CNFP Archive

The Day The President Came to Town

by Helen Kelly

He was Ireland's most famous emigrant son and when news broke of his visit to Ireland in 1963, the people of Cork pulled out all the stops. Nothing was too good for John Fitzgerald Kennedy, President of the United States of America, and they were going to show him just how proud they were of him.

Arriving by helicopter at Collins Barracks, the President was met by Lord Mayor Sean Casey. The bands of the 4th and 12th battalion played 'The Boys of Wexford' and 'Kelly the Boy from Killane'. Patsy Kelly, whose family lived in the barracks, was only eight years of age at the time. Describing the visit she says, 'My father was a sergeant in the army and I remember the preparations leading up to the visit. For months before, the houses in the barracks, or married quarters as they were called then, were painted and polished and every effort was made to have the army uniforms looking spick and span. Every single button was Brasso-ed and we used to shine the big black boots with a spit. There was great excitement because most of us had never even seen a helicopter before. I remember him as a warm, good looking man.'


JOHN
FITZGERALD KENNEDY

President of the United States of America

Born: 29th May 1917 Massachusetts
Died: 22nd November 1963 Dallas, Texas

His death came as a tragic blow to all peoples of the world but particularly to those of us in Ireland, the land of his forefathers, who came to know and love him during his historic visit to Ireland.

AR DEIS DÉ GO RAIB A ANAM

Just when life was brigh est,
In the prime of his youthful days
His life on earth was shortened,
By Fate's mysterious ways.
He was loving and kind in all his ways,
Upright and just to the end of his days,
Sincere and true in heart and mind
Loving memories left behind.
Good was his heart in friendship sound,
Loved and respected by all around,
A beautiful life came to an end.
He died as he lived everyone's friend.

JFK Mass Card
Image courtesy of Margaret Mac Donald

Even the presidential car breaking down half an hour before his arrival didn't cause any major disruption. A call was put out and within twenty minutes they were supplied with a 1934 Rolls Royce from a Cork firm. The President made his way around the city taking in Military Hill, Wellington Road, Summerhill, McCurtin Street, Patrick's Street, Grand Parade, South Mall, Parnell Place and Albert Quay. Thousands lined the streets all along the presidential route to catch a glimpse of him, and on the parapets of both Parnell and Clontarf bridges hundreds of men and youths clung precariously.

They waited patiently outside City Hall while the President was conferred with the Freedom of the City. When he did emerge they surged forward shouting, 'We want Jack', and some of the crowd broke through. St John's Ambulance treated a few at the scene who were slightly hurt. The President himself tripped, and fell backward on the seat of his car as the spectators rushed towards him, but he quickly regained his composure and continued with his now famous gesture of spontaneous hand shaking.

I was one of the people outside City Hall that day, and though only four years of age, I can still remember my grandmother shouting to me, 'Hold out your hand. Hold out your hand'. That moment has stayed with me and I shall always treasure that great feeling that came with touching the hand of the most important man in the world.

Jim McKeon didn't get to see the President that day as he had been on shift work the night before, but he did get to see the security contingent that preceded his car, as he made his way home from work. He says, 'They reminded me of Clint Eastwood, with the long macintosh coats. My best friend did go, and guess what he said? He said that the President was the head off of me. I had blonde hair and a tan at the time so that must be how he thought he looked like me.'

Many had flags and Margaret Mac Donald, who worked in the Marina Bakery, describes how they improvised, 'We used the wrappers from a sliced pan that the bakery made called "The American Pan" because they were red, white and blue.' Those who were more affluent were able to buy specially produced large pictures of the President and Jackie Kennedy. Margie O' Mahony from the Northside remembers the large picture which took centre stage in their sitting room, 'My mother loved it so much', she says, 'that she even had it put in a gold frame.'

Local businesses also took advantage of the much publicised visit. Fitzgerald's Electrical advertised a Pye television in the *Evening Echo*, June 27th, 1963. It read 'Get your new television in time for President Kennedy's visit', and RTV Rentals of Patrick's Street and Prince's Street advertised a free £4 TV licence to anyone who rented a television before June 29th. Overhanging Parnell Bridge on a crane, a large sign read 'Any obstacle in the President's way. Ring William O' Brien'.

In the wake of the President's visit, lost property at Garda Headquarters, Union Quay included: eighteen ladies' shoes of assorted sizes, colours and shapes; ten ladies' handbags, big, small and medium; two ladies' gloves, matching; one gentleman's wristwatch.

Coincidentally, my father worked as a television licence inspector and we had a black and white TV when many people couldn't afford one. I remember November 22nd, just five months after the President's visit to Cork. As we celebrated my brother's birthday, a news flash came on the television saying he had been shot. All the neighbours poured in to watch, and they also came for the state funeral, which was televised days later. I remember old Mrs Dempsey from next door crying uncontrollably.

The people of Cork mourned President Kennedy as they would a close relative. They even produced and sold a mortuary card in his memory. Margaret Mac Donald bought hers from a vendor on Patrick's Street. However, we have a more permanent reminder of the President on Monaghan Road. Jim McKeon explains how it came to be, 'There was a park on Monaghan Rd known as "the three quarter pitch" and after the presidential visit, the name was changed to Kennedy Park'. This was the place from which the helicopter departed and the people of Cork bid farewell to their American hero. The crowds went home, the barriers were taken away, and the curtain came down on one of the greatest spectacles the city of Cork had ever seen. They did him proud.

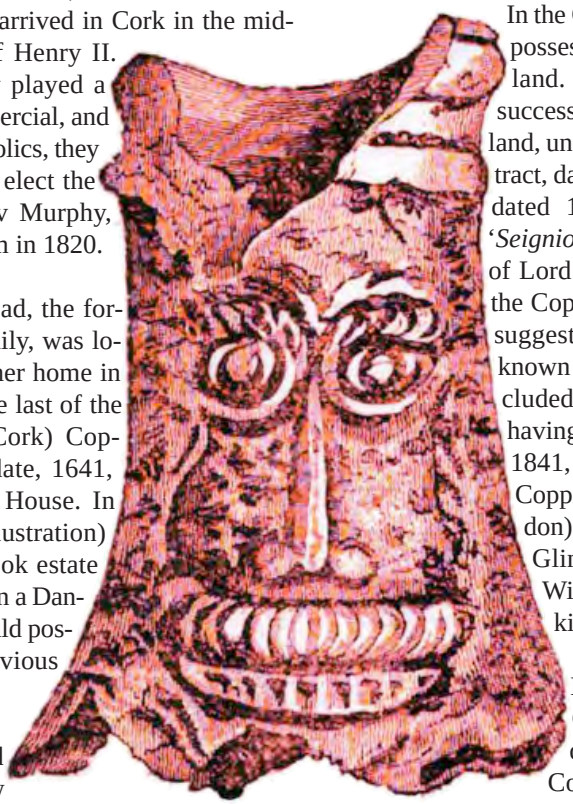
The Coppingers of Ballyvolane

by Breda Sheehan

A recent visit to the Maldron Hotel provided an opportunity to visit the tomb of Stephen Coppinger of Ballyvolane, in Shandon cemetery, which adjoins the back of the hotel. Mrs M. J. O'Connell in the *History of the Coppingers* (1884) states, 'Stephen died in 1681, and his tomb is located in the east side of the churchyard of St Anne's, Shandon. The quaint old tomb is shaped much like a child's Noah's Ark... The inscription was quite legible, cut deep into a large smooth stone facing the road'. Armed with location and inscription, finding it should not have posed a problem, or so I thought. One sad broken graffiti covered tomb in the lower graveyard did resemble Noah's ark, the inscription, sadly was illegible.

During the sixteenth century, Cork's ruling elite included the Coppingers, Terrys, Galways, Goulds, Roches, and Sarsfields. The Coppingers, of Danish decent, first arrived in Cork in the mid-twelfth century during the reign of Henry II. From the 1300s to the 1600s, they played a prominent role in the political, commercial, and religious life of the city. Devout Catholics, they reputedly had the historical right to elect the Catholic bishop of Cork, until Rev Murphy, Bishop of Cork challenged that claim in 1820.

Ballyvolane House, Ballincollie Road, the former residence of the Coppinger family, was located a short distance from my former home in Spring Lane. William Coppinger, the last of the Ballyvolane and Barrycourt (Co Cork) Coppingers, recalled having seen the date, 1641, etched on the pier of Ballyvolane House. In 1810, an interesting artefact (see illustration) discovered in the adjoining Valebrook estate was considered similar to one found in a Danish Fort, or Ráth, in Limerick and could possibly point to much older previous settlement in the Ballyvolane area.



Neck of a Danish earthen jar found in Valebrook, Ballyvolane in 1810
Image courtesy of *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 1831

Ballyvolane House (sadly destroyed by fire around 1990) which now forms part of the site of Chapel Gate Estate, had a colourful and interesting history. It was the story of the gallant Stephen Coppinger and the tyrant Oliver Cromwell however, that fired my childhood imagination. At that time, wealthy Irish Catholics would usually send their sons and daughters abroad to be educated. Stephen apparently studied at the University of Louvain in France, and whilst there met briefly with the future Lord Protector of England, Oliver Cromwell. According to one version of the story, Stephen was leaving a bank or merchant house, happy to have received his allowance, when he saw a dejected looking English student who had not received any payment. He approached the stranger and offered to lend him money. The stranger gratefully accepted and gave him a signed IOU as a guarantee, and a ring as a token of his gratitude. The signature on the guarantee was that of a young Oliver Cromwell.

Many years later, Coppinger was amongst the recusant Catholics summoned before Cromwell in the Court of Claims, held in the King's Old Castle. He did not recognise Cromwell, who wore a wide rimmed hat that partly covered his face. Cromwell, perhaps having recognised the ring worn by the Irish landowner, asked if he was the same Stephen Coppinger who had once helped a stranger down on his luck in France. Having confirmed that he was, Cromwell granted him the retention of his lands for his act of kindness all those years ago. During his stay in the south of Ireland, Cromwell allegedly made Ballyvolane House his base and celebrated Christmas there in 1649. Despite a number of legal challenges to the Coppinger land over the following decades, the property was still intact at the time of Stephen's passing in 1681.

His four sons were not so lucky. By the end of the century, they suffered exile and lost their lands, when they sided with King James II during the Williamite wars. According to local folklore, when Stephen's grandson, Capt Edward Coppinger, was injured in the Battle of Bottle Hill in 1691, a loyal follower is reputed to have transported him to Ballyvolane on his back, where he received the last rites and died a few hours later in his own bed.

In the Court of Claims, 1701, the family regained possession of some but not all of the Coppinger land. Stephen's grandson, and namesake, was successful in his claim to Ballyvolane House and land, under the terms of his parents' marriage contract, dated 1669. In his French marriage contract, dated 1700, Stephen's title was recorded as '*Seignior de Ville Toreau*', the French translation of Lord of Bullstown. A bull's head depicted on the Coppingers of Ballvolane family crest would suggest that Ballyvolane was once possibly known as Bullstown. Land lost by the family included Dodge's Glen, later Goulding's Glen, it having been disposed of by the Commission. In 1841, Thomas Crofton Croker stated that, 'Mr Coppinger called on me at the Admiralty (London). He told me that his property at Dodge's Glin, near Cork was a forfeiture of King William's time, the possessor having been killed at the battle under Sir James Cotter.'

Elizabeth (nee Moore) widow of John Coppinger (grandson of Stephen) who died in 1770, was possibly the last of the Coppinger line to reside in Ballyvolane House. John Coppinger allegedly diverted a stream through his land in Ballyvolane to construct a bathing house for his young daughter, Mary Anne. In 1767, she married the Hon Charles Howard, heir apparent to the Duke of Norfolk (later the 11th Duke). Before her marriage, Mary Anne leased out all the Coppinger land in Cork city and county for 1,000 years for the sum of £3,660. A clause in the contract did however, allow for the redemption of the lands if the monies were repaid by a specified date.

It is possible that the contract was a short-term means of raising urgently needed funds, possibly a marriage dowry. Mary Anne, described as a tall, stately, beautiful woman, died within a year of her marriage. According to Barrycourt folklore, one night while Mary Anne was dressing for a ball she was seized by premature labour pains and died giving birth to a stillborn child. At that time,

a jester who frequently visited Barrycourt predicted the day and hour of her death. It was said that the prophecy predicted accurately the exact time she had been struck down. It would appear that the lands were redeemed shortly after her marriage as her uncle, the first William Coppinger of Barrycourt, Co. Cork, inherited the properties on her death.

The tenancy of Ballyvolane House and lands then passed to the Catholic Church. In 1795, Cork's first seminary was established in Ballyvolane House, Ballincollie Road. The college operated at various times as a seminary, or boarding school, until the 1820s. A field to the west of the house was said to be a burial ground associated with the order, and it is said that horses neighed when near it. Another story mentions an underground tunnel that led from the house to a burial ground in Valebrook, known as the Monk's field.

After the closure of the college, the family of Rev D. Mc Swiney occupied Ballyvolane House. When the second William Coppinger of Ballyvolane and Barrycourt died in 1863, the property passed to his nephew, John O' Connell, under the proviso that he take the Coppinger name. A year later, Ballyvolane House and lands were offered for sale in the *Cork Constitution*. The property, described as having sixty-four acres of prime grazing land with a stream running through it, had a lease hold interest of 999 years dated from 1784. The property was eventually sold to the Ellis family, whereupon Ballyvolane House became known locally as Ellis' Lodge. It is possible that after that time two residences in the area, that of Daunt's (formerly Sainthills) now the site of Valebrook housing development, Ballyvolane, and the Glen Rovers Clubhouse (formerly Flynn's) in Ballincollie Road, became known as Ballyvolane House. These properties should not be confused with the original Ballyvolane House, the former residence of the Coppinger family.

With the exception of place names such as Coppinger's Acre, Hollyhill, and Coppinger's Lane adjacent to Griffith Bridge (North Gate Bridge), the only remnant of the rich culture and history of the Coppingers of Ballyvolane is the tomb of Stephen Coppinger described by his descendent M. J. O'Connell. To date, despite extensive research no official record of the location of the tomb has been uncovered.

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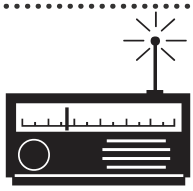
The Wireless

by Billy McCarthy



The wireless made its appearance in our house about 1950, amid great excitement as well as some trepidation. Until then, our home was devoid of such appliances, due I suspect, to Dad's simple, innocent view of life that conceived the notion that through the wireless, we children would be open to all the undesirable influences of the modern world.

However, one day as my father was out on one of his long working days, my mother signed the hire purchase agreement in Fitzgerald's Electrical shop on Grand Parade. We seemed to spend all that day helping her in deciding on a location and preparing a space for the wireless. To us, it was just about the longest day of our lives. At 5 o'clock that evening, the van pulled up at our front door, and through the window we observed the driver as he got out of his vehicle with a slip of paper in his hand, checking the house number before reaching for the door knocker. He didn't get quite that far, as the door swung open and he found himself gazing into three or four small, grinning faces. 'Would this be...?'. 'Yes, it is', came the immediate reply, 'and the wireless is for us.'

We watched in wonder as the man retrieved the cardboard carton from the back of the van, brought it in, and placed it on the dining room table. It seemed to take forever, as he pealed away the sticky tape, and removed the gleaming new Pye wireless set from the carton. I can clearly recall the man placing the big set on the shelf from which the statue of the *Infant de Prague* had been removed earlier in the day. He next attached a wire to a pole that stood at the bottom of the yard, ran it through the back window and inserted it into the back of the wireless. This wire was called 'the aerial', which apparently was required to take the signal out of the air, or something. The power cable was then plugged into the electrical socket that had been used to power the votive light in honour of the *Infant de Prague*. It seemed that Dad's worst fears were already becoming a reality.

The set was at last switched on. The briefing regarding the controls seemed to go on forever, but the most fascinating feature was the 'magic eye' located at the top centre of the wireless. The magic eye would indicate whether or not the set was tuned exactly to your particular choice of station. Eventually the man went away and we were left to our own devices and the workings of this fascinating object, that was threatening to throw our home into total confusion. Only when the wireless was satisfactorily tuned to *Radio Éireann* did somebody discover the *Infant de Prague* lying on the floor minus its head. 'That's Ok,' says Mam, by now as excited and enthusiastic as the rest of us, 'hide it in the drawer and I'll fix it with Torcement tomorrow.'

And so the evening passed. The nighttime approached, but nobody noticed, until the sound of Dad's van was heard, as it pulled up at the front door. Immediately there was quietness, almost silence in the house as the sound of the wireless was turned down and each face displayed a guilty pallor. The sound of the key was heard as it turned in the lock of the front door. The youngest child in the family ran to greet her Daddy with the words, 'Daddy, Daddy, come in and see the new wireless the man brought in the van today.' Dad arrived into the living room to be greeted by a stony stillness, that indicated something was amiss. Looking around at each of us in turn, he burst out with, 'Well, is someone going to turn up the sound so we can hear what they're saying?' Mother did the honours and nobody uttered a word until, at the end of the news and weather forecast, the National Anthem was played and *Radio Éireann* closed down for the night at 11.15 pm.

Billy McCarthy is a regular contributor to The Archive.

Online Gaming Culture

by Gearóid O'Donnell

Computer gaming has become increasingly popular in the modern world with millions of people playing regularly. The computer games industry is now worth more than the film industry, with certain games costing millions to develop and employing hundreds of people. Computer gaming has also become more mainstream and is now not seen as the sole preserve of young male computer 'geeks'. These games are now played by all kinds of people on a plethora of platforms such as PCs, games consoles (such as the Xbox 360), social networking sites (such as Facebook and Myspace) and on the iPhone and iPad.

Online gaming is a massive industry with millions of people playing online at any given time, particularly in the East Asian countries. One of the most popular forms of online games are Massively Multiplayer Online Roleplaying Games (MMORPGs). Some of the more popular MMORPGs include 'World of Warcraft', 'Runescape' and 'Lineage', with World of Warcraft taking the lion's share of the market with around 12 million subscribers. World of Warcraft is the dominant subscription-based game and this dominance has seen other MMORPGs, such as 'Dungeons and Dragons Online' and 'Lord of Rings Online' adopt a free to play model, where the basic aspects of the game are accessible for free while extra content and in-game items can be purchased.

Screen shot of online MMORPG, World of Warcraft
Photo courtesy of *World of Warcraft Online*

'Eve Online' is one of the more interesting MMORPGs which despite having only 300,000 subscribers (of which only about 30,000 are active), generates a lot of enthusiasm. Eve Online is set in deep space in the far distant future and features combat between massive starship fleets and a fully functioning economy. At the core of the game are the many player-owned virtual corporations which can feature thousands of players all concerned with expanding their influence and increasing their bank balance. Virtual wealth, which is accumulated over the course of the game, has real monetary value, though it's not worth much; €4 million in virtual wealth is only worth €1.20. Not surprisingly Eve Online has had its share of in-game financial scandals, with players founding banks and taking deposits before disappearing overnight with the money, leaving their virtual customers with no other choice but to hunt them down and exact in-game vengeance. There have also been cases of in-game industrial espionage with players joining a corporation, becoming a trusted member of the corporation over many years, rising to a position of power and stealing every penny in one fell swoop. In one case, a player had his ship worth €32,000 (real currency) destroyed by virtual pirates!

Until very recently, computer gaming was nearly the sole domain of young men content with a steady diet of action and adventure. Computer gaming was just not very female-oriented. This has all changed with the advent of social gaming on social networking sites, such as Facebook and Myspace. The most dominant game is 'Farmville', in which the player runs a virtual farm, raising animals and grow crops. It has over 80 million users with the majority being women. This came as a bit of a wake-up call to the game publishers, who had for years assumed that women were just not interested in computer games. So the big publishers are now busily buying up as many of the social gaming developers as possible. Another way in which games developers have succeeded in broadening the appeal of gaming has been through 'casual gaming', on devices such as Nintendo's Wii and Microsoft's Kinect. These both use motion tracking technology, which more easily involves the player in the action, and requires a lot more physical activity. These games have been roundly criticised by more 'hardcore' gamers, who view them with suspicion as they feel developers may abandon more traditional game types in favour of 'casual games'.

The industry may be dominated by several large publishers with massive international operations, but there has been an increasing demand for games by independent, or 'indie' developers. Indie games are intimately linked with the 'modding' community, which consists of amateur enthusiasts who spend their time modifying their favourite games to add extra content, to improve gameplay and graphics or to effectively create a completely new game. 'Mount & Blade' and 'Minecraft' are indie games which rely heavily on a dedicated modding community. Mount & Blade is an open world medieval combat simulator where the player takes on the role of a warrior in a medieval realm, besieging castles and taking part in tournaments. Minecraft is a survival game, where the player must construct tools and buildings, resulting in some rather creative architecture and to-scale recreations of famous world monuments, such as the Arc de Triomphe and the Taj Mahal.

Computer gaming is quite a diverse and increasingly popular pursuit, with game creators beginning to demand more respect for their medium and for it to be recognised as a valid art form, alongside film and music. This has caused no end of controversy with even the film critic, Roger Ebert, joining the fray. Initially, he declared that computer games could never be considered as art, but later rowed back on his opinion as a result of the online outcry. Supporters of computer games as art feel that the interactivity at the core of gaming gives it an advantage over traditional forms of storytelling. Whether you agree or not, the very fact that it is being discussed highlights the evolution of computer gaming from being perceived as a childish distraction towards a new appreciation as a fully fledged entertainment medium.

Piaras Mac Gearailt (1709-1795), Cúirt na mBurdún, agus 'Bata na Bachaille' in Iarthar Déise

le Ciarán Ó Gealbháin

I mBaile Uí Chionnfhaolaidh, i bparóiste Chill Modhomhnóg, in oirthear Chorcaí, a saolaíodh Piaras Mac Gearailt, tuairim is an bhliain 1709*. Ba dhream gustalach go maith iad na Gearaltaigh tráth, ach faoin am a bhfuair Piaras teacht ar shealúchas a shinsear, ní raibh fágtha ina seilbh ach baile fearainn Bhaile Uí Chionnfhaolaidh féin. D'iompaigh sé leis an bProtastúnachas d'fhonn greim a choimeád ar a chuid, rud a ghoill go mór air an fhaid a mhair sé. Ní théadh sé 'chum teampaill' ach nuair ba ghá dho, ámh, agus le himeacht na haimsire, d'éirigh sé as a bheith ag triall ar shéipéal Chill Chríodáin ar fad. Ina theannta san, chum sé an liodán deabhóideach 'Tréithe na Maighdine Muire' ag moladh mháthair Chríost, a raibh faillí mhór déanta inti ag an gcreideamh gallda dar leis. Maireann cúig aisling pholaitiúil leis (Ó Foghludha, 1905; Ó Cróinín, 2007) ach 'sé an dán seacaibíteach (nach aisling é) 'Rosc Catha na Mumhan' an saothar is mó cáil dá chuid.

Geata Reilig an Chnoic i mBaile Mhac Óda
Sampla le Ciarán Ó Gealbháin

Ba mhinic i gcomhluadar filí eile é: Tadhg Gaelach Ó Súilleabháin, Donnchadh Rua Mac Conmara, Éamonn de Bhál (arbh as Dún Guairne do), agus Seán Clárach Mac Domhnaill mar shampla. Thugtaí 'Ard-Sirriam Leithe Mogha' air, arbh fhéidir 'chief poet of Munster' a thuiscint leis (Corkery, 1924). Deirtear gur chaith sé leathchéad bliain ina cheann comhairle ar Chúirt na mBúrdún, cúirt filíochta a thionóltaí i dtigh an Ghearaltaigh féin i mBaile Uí Chionnfhaolaidh, sarar ghéill sé 'Bata na Bachaille', comhartha Ard-Sirriam Chúirt na mBúrdún, dá chara agus dá chomhfhile, Éamonn Ó Flaithbheartaigh, sa bhliain 1791 (Ó Foghludha, 1905). Is í sin an bhliain is déanaí ar féidir aon saothar a lua leis, agus cónaí faoin dtráth sin air mar a raibh a iníon pósta, i bparóiste na Claise Móire i gcontae Phort Láirge (Ó Conchúir, 1982). Is ann a d'éag sé, ach tugadh abhaile é chun a churtha i dteannta a mhuintire i mBaile Mhac Óda uair éigin thart faoin mbliain 1795.

Is léir gur samhlaíodh Piaras mar cheannfhile nó mar Uachtarán ar Chúirt na mBurdún lena linn (Ó Conchúir, 2000). Mar a chonaiceamar, 'Ard-Sirriam Leithe Mogha' a thugtaí air agus is léir go raibh ana-mheas air i measc na bhfilí a bhí suas in aon aimsir leis, óir is mar sin a thráchtann cuid acu air ina gcuid dánta. Tuairimíonn Ó Foghludha gur sa bhliain 1744 a cuireadh tús leis an gCúirt, agus go mb'fhéidir go mbíodh sí á tionól faoi dhó sa bhliain (Ó Foghludha, 1905). Mar atá ráite, bhíodh Bata na Bachaille, comhartha na cumhachta, i seilbh an té a bhí i gceannas ar an gCúirt. Ba gheall le bata an easpaig Bata na Bachaille:

> '... (ach gan é a bheith thar dhá throigh go leith ar fhaid), agus go gcoimeád fadh an tArd-fhile é ar feadh trí bliana, de dhealramh, agus ansin éinne a bhuafadh air i bhfilíocht go mbeadh cead aige é a bhreith uaidh (bhí cloiste leis aige [Ó Foghludha] gur bhuaigh bean ó Eochaill, Aibigéal Brún, an bata aon uair amháin, agus go raibh Máire Ní Dhonnagáin, as na Déise, mar cheann ar an gcúirt ar feadh tamaill)' (Ó Conchúir, 2000: 69)

Deir Éamonn Ó Bróithe (2005) linn i dtaobh an bhanfile dhéanaigh seo, Máire Ní Dhonnagáin (nó 'Máire na gCaointe'), gur rugadh tuairim is an bhliain 1720 í, go raibh sí i mbarr a réime sa tarna leath den aois chéanna, agus gurbh í tuairim mhuintir Shliabh gCua í ná raibh aon bhreith uirthi mar fhile lena linn. De réir an tseanchais, mhair Ní Dhonnagáin i gcomhaimsir le Donnchadh Rua agus Uilliam Ó Móráin (file agus oide cáiliúil ó Shliabh gCua), agus bhí baint aici, mas fíor, leis na scoileanna scairte Laidine acu (ibid.). Bean chaointe ba ea í, leis, agus is cosúil go mbíodh ag éirí ó am go chéile idir í agus an chléir. Naimhdeas na hEaglaise leis an gcaointeoireacht, b'fhéidir, ba chúis leis an teannas eatarthu. Deirtí go minic i dtaobh chumadóirí filíochta go raibh 'faobhar ar a dteangan' nó go raibh 'teanga faobhrach' acu (Ó hÓgáin, 1982: 35) agus níor thaise do Mháire é. Bhíodh sí 'á créil ón oltór' agus arsa an sagart seo lá léi: 'An bhfuil tú ansan a Mháire?' 'Thá mé 's dhá thaobh ar mo theangain; taobh mhín agus taobh gharbh' arsa sí (luaite in Ó Bróithe, 2005: 80). Thugtaí 'Máire an bhata' chomh maith uirthi de réir dhá fhoinse agam** agus thuairimeoinn anseo go mb'fhéidir gur i ngeall ar í a bheith ina ceann ar Chúirt na mBurdún i mBaile Uí Chionnfhaolaidh tráth a lean an ainm sin di, agus í sa tseilbh, dá réir, ar Bhata na Bachaille tamall, uair éigin i dtreo dheireadh an 18ú haois, is é is dóichí.

*Tugann Breandán Ó Conchúir 1702 mar bhliain a bhreithe. Gabhaim buíochas leis an Dr Seán Ó Duinnshléibhe as leasuithe áirithe a mholadh ar an alt so. Liom féin aon bhotún nó locht, gan amhras. Táim buíoch, leis, de mhuintir de Barra, i mBaile Uí Chionnfhaolaidh, a thug cead dom samplaí a ghlacadh ar an bhfeirm acu.

**CBÉ 84: 32; CBÉ 978: 300-301, luaite in Ó hÓgáin, 1982

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_____ 'Na Cúirteanna Éigse i gCúige Mumhan' in *Saoi na hÉigse: Aistí in Ómós do Sheán Ó Tuama*, eag. P. Riggs et al., 55-81. Baile Átha Cliath: An Clóchomhar, 2000.
Ó Cróinín, B.'Filíocht Sheacaibíteach Phiarais Mhic Gearailt' *Eighteenth Century Ireland/Iris an Dá Chultúr* 22 (2007): 164-88.
Ó Foghludha, R. [Fiachra Éilgeach] eag. *Amhráin Phiarais Mhic Gearailt*, Baile Átha Cliath: Connradh na Gaedhilge, 1905.
Ó hÓgáin, D. *An File*, Baile Átha Cliath: Oifig an tSoláthair, 1982.

This article gives a brief account of the life of the 18th century East Cork poet and patron, Piaras Mac Gearailt, or Pierce Fitzgerald (1709-1795). As 'Ard-Sirriam Leithe Mogha*', or 'Chief Poet of Munster', he was well acquainted with his better known contemporaries, Seán Clárach Mac Domhnaill, Tadhg Gaelach Ó Súilleabháin and Donnchadh Rua Mac Conmara. Perhaps his most enduring piece is the fiery* Rosc Catha na Mumhan, *'The Munster War Song'. He was, for many years, the bearer of* 'Bata na Bachaille' *(described as a crozier of no more than two and a half feet long), the ultimate symbol of authority at the East Cork Court of Poetry,* Cúirt na mBurdún, *which convened perhaps twice yearly in his home at Ballykineally, near Ballymacoda. It appears that the crozier may have later been bestowed upon Máire Ní Dhonnagáin, a poet and keening woman from the Sliabh gCua region of West Waterford, perhaps lending something of an explanation as to why she was sometimes referred to in her native district as* Máire an bhata, *Máire of the staff.*

Cork Memory Map Project

we are here

The Cork Memory Map is an exciting new plan in development by the Cork Northside Folklore Project to create an interactive online map. Clicking on a point of interest in the city will let you hear the voices of the community -- people talking about growing up in the area, documenting the memories, folklore, occupational lore, characters and stories associated with the landmarks, streets and lanes of Cork. Please see the following pages for excerpts from some of our already collected interviews.

SOUND EXCERPTS

Here are some excerpts from inital interviews for the Cork Memory Map Project. You can flip back to the previous pages to see where on the map each sound recording is located. These interviews are part of our permanent archive and are available to the public, along with our photographic and video collections.

1 Noel Magnier reminiscing on Bonfire Night

We had our bonfire down Bulldog Lane and on Farran St. There were many houses and the lads up there were sort of rivals to our gang, Gerald Griffin St. In the days leading up to Bonfire Night, we might decide to do a raid on the stuff they were after collecting, and if they wanted it back they would have to sort of pay a ransom. It might be vice versa as well, but there was always that kind of rivalry. Bonfire Night was widespread at that time and the craic around the bonfire was great. Someone now with initiative, would buy a big bottle of raspberry and they'd pour it into a jug and pour water in on top of that and sell glasses of raza at the bonfire for a half penny, or a penny or something. Other people would maybe sell cakes or something like that. All sorts of things were thrown on to the bonfire and even though tyres were scarce, you could still get your hands on them if you knew where to go.

2 Johnny 'Chris' Kelleher from the Lough, who worked as an *Echo* boy, speaks of an event that stands out in his mind

I was selling papers by the Coliseum and there was a chap called Sean O'Mahony. Sean worked over in the mortuary. Sean used to come up to me for his *Echo* every night. He came over this Friday night and he said, 'Johnny, guess who's on the slab over?' I'd have said everybody but the man that was there. He said Christy Ring, and I couldn't believe it. He was after dying suddenly over in Morrison's Island. I turned around after Sean went away and I went to walk down the traffic. I was a bit caught in the chest because to us, Ring appeared to be indestructible. In walking down, the second car on my left was a state car and sitting on the back seat was Jack Lynch. He had it [the window] half down and I was standing outside the door and I said, 'Mr Lynch, very sad news'. At the time there was terrible bombing going on in the North and he must have thought it was something like that, and I said to him, 'Mr Lynch, Christy Ring is dead'. He fell back on the seat and two white streaks came down the side of his nose with the shock. The very words he said to me was, 'But that can't be'. The lights changed and he drove off.

3 Eileen Jones from Welsh's Lane talks of old customs

Mrs Lynch who lived on Bird's Quay was a terror for getting shawls. If someone died, Mrs Lynch was one of those people who would be called to lay them out. 'Twas the first thing she'd ask, 'What are you doing with the shawl?', and she'd get the shawl then like. If the shawl was better than her own, she'd keep it and she'd give hers to someone else who had a shabbier one. She came over one day and she said, 'Noreen, I heard you got a new shawl'. So my mother says, 'I did, Bridgie', and she says, 'You're not wearing it'. My mother says, 'because it's too warm.' 'Era, you won't wear that no more. I'm going to a funeral now. Give me a loan of it', she says. My mother gave her the shawl and never got it back.

4 Pat Saville reminisces about the local businesses in Blackpool

May Rogers had a shop, and Tobin's had a shop, and across from Tobin's there was a chip shop and a cake shop combined. Dick Tobin opened the two of them. I remember when I was younger, when the Glen would be training and they used to use the hall after training. We'd go over to Crotty's shop, which was across from Bird's Quay, and we'd get milk and cakes for the players. We'd bring them down to the Cow, and have them ready, and hope that they wouldn't eat the cakes, that we'd get them. Then across from Crotty's shop, there was Scribbin's, and there was Hyde's shop, and then there was Con O'Connor. He sold all paints and nails. Anything you wanted for doing up your house, Con O'Connor would have it. He had only one leg and they always maintained that he used to make his own leg, 'cause he had a timber leg, and all the young fellas would say, 'I saw Con making his leg yesterday.' We had a chipper down by the church and The Pantry was our favourite haunt when we got a bit older, about eleven or twelve. We'd go down there for milk and cakes, and you could sit down inside and have your milk and cakes in Mrs Murphy's, in The Pantry. Next door to that was a chipper which was Dirty Tom's, I think, or Dirty Dick's. The chips used to be gorgeous because you'd eat them on newspaper, coming up the road and that was our dinner on a Friday. You'd go down to the chipper on a Friday morning, queue up about twelve o' clock, because there used to be a fierce crowd there and you'd get your dinner down there on a Friday.

A

Shawlies on Kyle Street
Photo Courtesy of *The Irish Examiner*

Sean Lane tells a funny story about Banjo who owned Banjo's Pub on Blarney Road

Banjo wouldn't drink in his own pub at all. He'd drink down on the North Main Street. He'd sit on a board then on his old cart, and the horse would find its way home then, over the North Gate Bridge and just walk away up the side of the road. He'd stop outside the pub then and the wife would take him off the cart. She'd put him off into bed and someone would take the tackle off the horse and leave the cart outside. There was a bar and a lounge, both of them with the old timber seats, and the way to get the horse to the stables, was to go through the lounge. So if there was anyone inside in the lounge then, he'd open the door and say 'Up a minute there, lads', and clickedy clack through the lounge, they'd get the horse out. That seemed perfectly normal, and the lads would sit down then again and drink away the pints.

Mary Marshall has fond memories of the quarry in Blackpool

We used to have great times in the quarry racing around. The Blackpool Harriers, or the 'dog boys' as we used to call then, had their club house there. Behind that then, the Lees lived. Gypsy Lee was a great woman for the fortune telling and she had two kids, Lavinia and Walter, whom we used to play with. They used to be queued up a mile long to have their fortunes read, at a half a crown a go. As a child, I made paper flowers with her and she was dipping them in wax. That time, they'd sell the flowers. I asked her one time if she'd tell my fortune and she wouldn't. I remember her husband, Dee. He used to deal in scrap and there used to be old carriages for the funerals and we'd sit into them frightening the heart and soul out of each other telling stories. Mrs Lee would come along and frighten the heart out of us and we'd all run screaming out of it and she'd be roaring laughing.

Jim McKeon on collecting waste for pigs

My daily chore that I hated was to tackle up Pedro the donkey. We had a few pigs, and go round the neighbourhood collecting waste. We just called it waste. 'Twas leftover food, mashed potato, bits of bread or whatever to feed the pigs. So every day when I came in from school all the boys started playing football, I was stuck with this chariot. I went off down the lane, down Fairhill and down around the bottom of Gurranabrather. Saturday mornings then, I went down again with my chariot downtown, to Union Quay Garda Barracks on a weekly collection of their bin. So I brought down a big loose bin, an empty one and put the full one on the donkey and cart. So that was every Saturday morning and it just shows the traffic in town. There would be nothing. There wouldn't be a car in town. You might come across one or two in an hour, but bikes were all over the place. So that was my daily chore and I hated it. When I joined the post office at fourteen as a telegram boy, that job was thankfully handed over to the next brother.

Pat Speight on a disaster at Christmas

I was about fourteen and I remember my mother was cooking the Christmas dinner. At that time, you got your turkey and you cleaned it out yourself. When that was finished my mother used to have all the innards and all the smelly stuff, the gizzard, the whole lot wrapped in newspaper and my job was to go down to the coopa [short for cooperage] and throw it over the wall. That was our way of getting rid of stuff then. It wasn't environmentally friendly or anything. Until this year, I can remember it as if it was yesterday. Mad panic when I got back up, my mother couldn't find the wedding ring. It was gone, gone missing, missing. We tried everywhere. So she said she knew exactly where it was. She lost it inside in the turkey when she was cleaning it out. So I had to go down below to find it. I climbed the wall anyway, got down the other side, the fifteen feet drop and not only was my Mam's parcel there, but there was about fifteen other turkey innards wrapped up in everything from *Examiner*s to the *News of the World*. I had to go through each and every one. I nearly died. I was only a young fella. I was nearly fit to cry, I was so sick. So I told my mother I couldn't find it. 'Tis alright', she said 'I found it, 'twas stuck in a tea towel.'

Brian Boru Street in the 1940s
Photo courtesy of *The Irish Examiner*

Our initial areas of interest for the Memory Map are Blackpool, Shandon, Blarney Street, the Coal Quay and Middle Parish, as well as Barrack Street and Evergreen Street, but we plan to include all of Cork city in the future. Would you like to share your memories of growing up in Cork for this project? Can you suggest someone else who might? Please contact us—we need to hear from you.

Memory Map Research Director:
Dr Clíona O'Carroll
The Cork Northside Folklore Project
Phone: 021 422 8100
Email: nfp@indigo.ie

Burlesque in Cork

by Jenny Butler

Burlesque has its origins in eighteenth century Britain. It was theatrical performance that parodied social and political norms, to only late become associated with striptease. Common features of historical burlesque shows were dancing girls, male comedians and acted sketches with topical themes. The dramas were based in absurdity and often ridiculed well-known public figures, contemporary social or political events. This form of entertainment was very popular in Victorian times and was a derisive way to portray those seen as 'social betters', by making fun of established aristocratic forms of culture such as opera, Shakespearean plays, ballet and classical music while mixing these with popular songs, ribaldry, and references to social happenings of the time. Burlesque also became a popular entertainment in North America and the term, 'Vaudeville', refers to variety shows of the period 1880s-1930s. These multi-act shows had bawdy drama and comedic 'gags', as well as the more risqué popular dances, such as the 'Hootchy Cootchy' or 'Dancing the Cooch'.

The burlesque scene is a fusion of glamour, vintage attire, colourful elaborate costuming, dramatic lighting, comedy and sexually suggestive theatrical performance. The 'neo-burlesque' of today incorporates old-style glamour while introducing novel themes and new kinds of performance art. Contemporary stars include the American performer, Dita Von Teese. According to Susan Cox, a Cork-based burlesque performer, 'Everyone has their own idea of what burlesque is … to me personally … it's more about an attitude, rather than how you dress or what you wear. It's more about how you hold yourself and how you come across and how you feel about it'.

There is a thriving burlesque scene in Ireland, with one of the earlier shows being 'The Tassel Club', held in Dublin. Cork's Crane Lane venue is known in the burlesque circuit as 'The House of Jazz, Blues and Burlesque'. Mark Kenny, a promoter and organiser of burlesque events, recalls, 'When I did my first independent show in Cork, which was called Gypsy Hotel, I picked The Crane Lane Theatre, which is a fantastic small venue, looks the part, sound is great.' Although there is a strong local scene in Cork, there is also an international burlesque network of promoters and performers. Mark asserts, 'It's very important that if you have a scene that you bring in external influences because if you pool constantly from local talent – which is fantastic – but things can get a bit stagnant or samey, so I used to bring in burlesque artists from the UK like Vicky Butterfly, Missy Malone, Leyla Rose, who are quite big names.'

Mark also does posters and other promotional artwork for burlesque shows, 'The posters were initially based on artwork from the likes of Gil Elvgren, and also posters from the follies or shows in the twenties or thirties'. Another event in Cork, set up by a group from College of Commerce, was 'Boutique Burlesque', which was also held in The Crane Lane and Mark says, 'They used a lot of jazz bands and performers, some bluesy stuff, some cabaret…being in college they were able to tap into the amount of younger people…they were able to bring a huge amount of people to their shows…they'd have their show maybe one month and I'd have my show the next month and it made a little scene here in Cork.'

Audience interaction during the show is an important aspect, as well as the dress-up factor. Mark found that the dressing-up aspect is quite important to the event's success and remarks about the earlier Cork shows, 'Very quickly I began to see that people really, really were into dressing up for a night out. Some of the outfits on the punters put some of the performers to shame, which prompted me to come up with a rule that no jeans were allowed on stage.' Susan remarks, 'Girls do go all out, proper glam!' Women wear vintage-style dresses, whether flapper (1920s), 50s, corsets or even Victorian style costume and accessorise with hats, feather boas and fascinators while men can dress as dapper as they like in pinstripe suits, hats and ties. Performers and burlesque enthusiasts make their own retro-style costumes and there are a number of online shops catering for the burlesque market. There are also designers who create bespoke items and shops such as Miss Daisy Blue on Market Parade in Cork, that stock vintage clothing.

Many shows are themed and range from the tongue-in-cheek cheesecake, pin-up kind of burlesque to darker, gothic shows. Susan points out that performers need to be adaptable, 'If it's a nautical theme, I'll try to do something sailor-orientated. I love the more cheesecake end of burlesque … I love the pop expressions, the pin-up stuff and that's the end of it I like to stay with for the most part, but that's not to say that I don't completely change it depending on what the night is ... I did Gorlesque last year … my performance was quite horror themed. There was blood and guts and gore.' Some performers stick with classic routines such as feather fan dancing or balloon popping, but there are signature routines associated with certain

Selection of Irish Burlesque Club Posters
Designed by Mark Kenny

performers. Susan points out the time and effort that goes into different acts, 'Not only in the conception of actually thinking of the routine, choosing the right music, doing your rehearsals… costumes and props, I mean it takes weeks and weeks... to get a routine together.'

The burlesque striptease can clearly be distinguished from the sex industry form of stripping, as Susan explains, 'Burlesque is the art of the tease, not about what you're taking off or the fact that you're actually even taking anything off. It's about how you're taking it off and once it's actually off, you're off…as in off-stage...unless you can do something particularly spectacular with your tassels!'

Susan Cox
Photo by Ross Waldron

Mark concurs, 'You'll have a certain amount of dance, invariably striptease to some extent, although an awful lot of the performers would end their act wearing more than you would see on girls in most music videos.' Current burlesque striptease is tasteful and fun for everybody and Mark emphasises that, 'The higher percentage of the crowd is girls…and age doesn't come into it either. Susan agrees, 'Last Wednesday, I sat at a table with four women in their 50s, who had an absolute ball … a couple of elderly men were there that had a great time as well, everything down to teenagers, college kids, there was a huge age range and again – it is mostly women.' The final Boutique Burlesque took place on the show's third year anniversary on January 16th, 2011. However, it's safe to say that there will be many forthcoming shows as Mark and other promoters have plans for future events.

Quotes are taken from a recorded conversation between Jenny Butler, Mark Kenny and Susan Cox, Cork City, 04/02/11.

Jenny Butler is a regular contributor to The Archive *journal on contemporary and urban culture, who also lecturers in the Department of Folklore and Ethnology, UCC.*

Restroom Graffiti

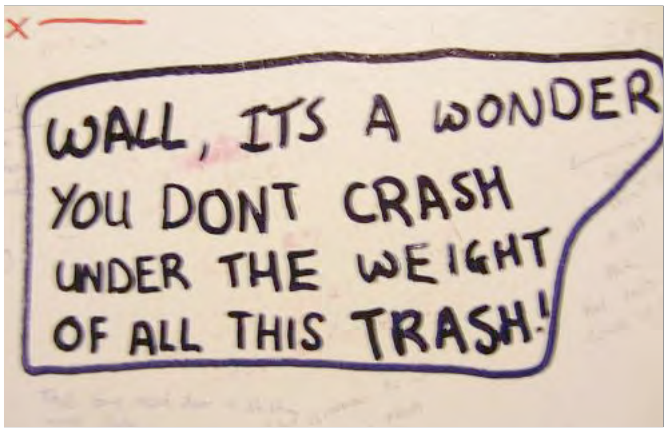
By Michelle Moore

Latrinalia is the artwork of the toilet. The word 'latrinalia' may not be found in a dictionary, but 'latrine' is defined as 'a small pit used as a toilet, esp in a military camp or barracks.' However folklorist, Alan Dundes, coined the term in 1966. Although Dundes' fieldwork and thesis were based on the male perspective, the fieldwork for this article was seen through a woman's eyes and conducted in the ladies' toilets around Cork city.

I remember when I was in secondary school, the talk around the class and the school yard was sometimes directed and focused on what had been written on the bathroom walls. Rumours in the school were spread by the pen. Consequently, from word of mouth, some sexually explicit and pornographic drawings may have been a form of sex education for many boys in the neighbouring school. Many love declarations decorated the stall walls in the girls' toilets and resulted in gossip, which never became tedious. Bathroom graffiti had become utilitarian. It is used as a practical communication tool rather than merely for art.

In Cork city, written words, poetry, telephone numbers, drawings and even advertising decorate bathroom walls in pubs, schools, universities, nightclubs, cinemas, cafes and public toilets in shopping centres. It is argued that these cultural expressions are a form of folk art. Historically, with the growth in urban sprawl came this public decoration.

Jokes, riddles, greetings, philosophical questions, reflections and slang decorate many restroom walls around the city. This wall art is folk in nature, and diverse. This public art's aim is to entertain and its intention (although the artist may not know it) is traditional.



Graffiti on ladies' cubicle wall in Cork city
Photo by Michelle Moore

It is supposed that that the artist feels connected with society, especially in this fast-paced modern world. Some writings claim and reclaim individuality in contemporary Cork. These include: 'Rebecca Woz Ere!' and 'Jose & Maria from Spain on 10th October 2007.' Some proclaim love - 'TA Loves KG 4EVA'. Or not in such cases as, 'Love Sucks!', suggests. Political exclamations convey troubles within Irish society. Rebellious anecdotes, jokes and riddles are offered alongside these exclamations. These narratives can tell a story. This art and its sketches convey spontaneity. Advertising companies have jumped onboard with this craze. They understand that people want to be entertained. Consumerism has followed us into the toilets. Bathroom graffiti has entertained many and may have offended others. Either way these creative practises can vanish quickly with new paint jobs. As society changes and evolves, so too do these cultural expressions.

Michelle is a UCC student, who volunteered with the project. She has studied folklore.

Medieval Medicine in St Mary's of the Isle

by Catryn Power

Following the excavations of the medieval Dominican Priory at Crosses' Green, 1993, over two hundred skeletons from burials, were examined. Findings indicate the presence of a caring altruistic society associated with the monastery at St Mary's of the Isle, as well as of individuals in Cork at the time, knowledgeable in the treatment of life-threatening conditions.

In the southern part of Cork city, an area at Crosses' Green was proposed for redevelopment. This site contained two eighteenth/nineteenth century mills, which were demolished, and subsequently replaced by apartments and offices. Underneath these fine edifices lay a significant archaeological site, the foundations of the medieval Dominican Priory of *Sancta Maria de Insula*, St Mary's of the Island.

Excavation of Dominican Priory in 1993
Photo courtesy of Catryn Power

The Priory was founded in 1229 by Philip de Barry, a Welshman living in Barrymore. Like most Dominican priories, it was located outside the walls of a city. The Dominicans were initially mendicants and took a vow of poverty. The entire island possessed the privilege of sanctuary and hospitality.

The Friars also assisted the community with a wide variety of other social needs, including caring for the higher echelons, the elderly, and pregnant women, as well as beggars, lepers, etc. They gave palliative care, and visited homes of others with serious illnesses, as well as giving spiritual guidance. The wealthier members of society gave patronage to the Friars in the form of money, rights, rents, mills, or tolls. Obviously, the wealthier gained more than the poor; these benefactors might expect hospitality on visits, to secure a burial spot within the monastic burial ground, or receive prayers and masses for their soul or the souls of their families. The Friars at St Mary's of the Isle had been given many benefits. In 1317, they were given free access through some newly built city walls nearby (Dwyer, 1896); the priory also had a mill and fishing rights. The walls of this mill were found during excavations in 1998 (Power, 1999b).

The Priory's graveyard was used by a wide community, both lay and religious. A large number of burials were in a simple pit, without a coffin and more than likely wrapped in a shroud. Many graves were reused, probably in a family plot. Some burials were in stone-lined graves and one, in a stone sarcophagus. There was also the discovery of two charred wooden coffins, and two possible 13th century tomb effigies.

Medicine throughout the world at this time, had been laden with superstitions and mysticism. In medieval universities, Aristotelian logic and natural philosophy were widely employed. When the Domincan Priory at St Mary's was functioning, reading ancient texts was considered to be the best method for the diagnosis and treatment of illnesses and pain. It was believed that the human body was made up of the humours: blood, phlegm, bile and black bile.

Medicine had become a successful and lucrative profession in Europe. The relief of pain was profitable. Wine was used to relieve pain and also acted as an antiseptic. A wound was first purified with wine, and dried out, by evaporation. Opiates were well known in medieval times, and the apothecaries and physicians constantly tried to control the market. Ice was also used as a painkiller. Other cure methods included blood letting, purgatives and the use of mercury. However the use of superstitions, such as astrological seals, also abounded. Some physical cures were given for purely superstitious reasons, such as herbal remedies being approved to rid the body of evil spirits.

Infection was recognised as being of great danger, and drainage of wounds took place. Dirty water was avoided for cleaning. During the medieval period, tumours, nasal polypi, as well as cysts and cataracts were successfully removed. Doctors also knew about the necessity for the closure of wounds as quickly as possible. Guy de Chauliac, the father of modern surgery, recorded the use of pain killers, such as opium, morel, hyoscyamus, mandragora, ivy, hemlock and lettuce, during operations. He also described anaesthetic by inhalation, where the substance was delivered via a sponge soaked in various sleep-producing drugs.

Trepanation is the art of boring a hole in the skull for medical and mystical reasons, including the treatment of insanity, headaches and epilepsy. It is supposed to expel a ghost or spirit from the tormented patient. Another theory is that opening the skull provided the person with an ecstatic spiritual experience! There is worldwide archaeological evidence of trepanning. Most patients survived the surgery. The aim of most cases was to release evil spirits.

The skeletal remains of two men (Burial 138 & Burial 147) from St Mary's of the Isle displayed an opening on the side of the head. The men had survived trepanation surgery. They were buried in stone-lined graves within the church. Both skeletons were in a poor state of preservation. One man (Burial 147) was aged in his late twenties, and the other (Burial 138) in his early thirties. Each opening on the cranium was approximately 3cm in diameter and healing had taken place. In life, neither opening was ever sealed by bone, because the portion of bone had been lost at the time of the procedure. Eventually, new skin would have grown over the hole.

High medical standards and expert surgical skills were displayed by those who carried out the operations on the men buried at St Mary's of the Isle. Both survived for some time after these operations; the wounds were well healed, and showed no sign of infection. The pain relief, if any, used at Crosses' Green is impossible to establish. However, opiates and/or alcohol were no

1525 engraving of a trepanation by Peter Treveris
Image courtesy of Hieronymus Braunschweig's *Buch der Cirurgia*

doubt part of the procedures.

As was the case in England, Ireland's monasteries at the time in all probability had some form of infirmary within the confines of the monastic establishments (Orme and Webster, 2010). The infirmary may have been organised by the monks, or by some lay people, and in such cases by rich female benefactresses. The infirmary would have provided a place of caring for the sick, the elderly, for pregnant women, and for the dying. In the 12th century, Cork had a hospital for the sick and poor, though sometimes not well maintained (Nicholls, 2005); this was a Benedictine foundation, set up in what is now known as Cove Street. The Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem, set up a house in what is now Douglas Street, also in the 12th century.

Accordingly, the two men with trepanations, found at St Mary's of the Isle, may well have had surgery in a hospital on the island or nearby at Cove Street (then called St John Evangelist Street). They may have then recuperated at the infirmary on the island for a period of time. With such major surgery, it would not be surprising if each man suffered from severe headaches or epilepsy for the rest of his life. Perhaps, these conditions were the reason for carrying out the operation in the first instance.

Also at St Mary's of the Isle, skeletons were found of two other medieval men (Burial 150 & Burial 157), who died from weapon injuries. Both men were aged in their twenties, one 168cm, and the other 176cm in height. In one man (Burial 150), there were three unhealed cutmarks: one to the posterior surface of the left elbow and the final blow, to the frontal bone just above the right eye socket. He was probably attacked by a right handed assailant, with a sword, possibly from behind. The cutmarks show the sharpness of the weapons, as well as their efficacy. Helmets were probably not worn by these men during these particular encounters.

In the second individual (Burial 157), there were eight unhealed cutmarks caused by a sword or axe. They occurred on the right forearm and right lower leg. Death could have resulted instantly from a severed artery. The cuts to his forearm probably took place when he was shielding his face. The final blow to his leg perhaps occurred as he fell to the ground.

Catryn Power is the Cork County Archaeologist. She has written for The Archive *previously. There is evidence to suggest that trepanation is still practiced in parts of the world today.*

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The Urban Landscape

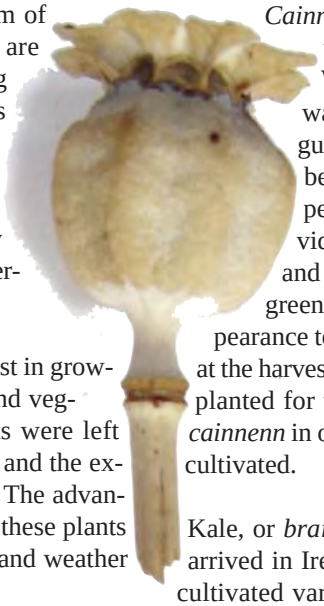
Main Picture: **This grotto at the bottom of Dublin Hill in Blackpool, was built, like many others in Cork, to commemorate the Marian Year of 1954. It is fascinating to see how these grottos have remained unchanged since that era, while the environment around it has changed beyond recognition. Many of the grottos dotted around Cork city are maintained by local residents and it is not uncommon to see statues of Mary in the windows of private homes as you walk through Corks streets.** Top Right: **is a statue of Mary displayed in a second floor window at the top of Shandon Street.** Bottom Right: **A Statue of Mary in an alley just off Great William O'Brien Street.**

Photos: Tom Doig, CNFP Archive

The Heritage of Irish Seeds

by Tom Doig

Folklore is sometimes defined as a traditional form of learning, whereby cultural values and knowledge are transferred from generation to generation among families and communities. We tend to associate this cultural exchange with popular folktales, songs and proverbs, but folklore also shares many similarities with the agricultural tradition of seed saving. Like stories and songs, seed varieties vary slightly as they are refined, developed and passed down from generation to generation and from region to region.



In the past, agricultural societies had a vested interest in growing heavy cropping, disease resistant fruit, herbs and vegetables. Successful crops, when one or two plants were left unharvested, would provide an abundance of seed, and the excess could be shared or swapped with neighbours. The advantage of saving seed from successful crops was that these plants would, over time, become acclimatised to the soil and weather types of that particular region.

While many gardeners grow their own vegetables, they may be unfamiliar with the process of seed saving. For every vegetable, there is a harvesting period when it has reached its peak point of growth, usually in spring or summer. Many gardeners would be familiar with vegetables 'bolting' or 'going to seed', and this event is usually greeted with dismay as it usually renders the plant inedible, and the opportunity to harvest has been missed. Every plant has its own system of propogating its own seed, some will go to seed at th
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parsnips, celery, broad beans, kale, and a comprehensive range of herbs. Foraging for other food such as sloes, blackberries, blueberries and hazelnuts also played an extremely important part in the average diet. Interestingly, no distinction was made between medicinal herbs and vegetables. The curative qualities of food was considered equal to those of herbs and are well documented in gaelic medicinal law-texts.

Cainnenn, in old Irish, translates literally as 'onion' but the exact nature of this variety is still unclear. In Welsh, *cennin* means leek, while in Brittany, garlic was known as *kignen*. In *Early Irish Farming*, Fergus Kelly suggests that the *cainnenn* referred to may be a Welsh Onion, a variety which was valued for its perennial qualities and for the way in which it subdivides underground, in much the same way that chives and garlic do. They were grown to be eaten fresh and green, rather than stored, and are similar in taste and appearance to the scallion. The Welsh Onion could be pulled up at the harvesting stage, divided, and a single remaining clove replanted for the following year. There are many references to *cainnenn* in old Irish texts, suggesting it was popular and widely cultivated.

Kale, or *braisech*, was also a popular food, which most likely arrived in Ireland with the Vikings. Kale is one of the earliest cultivated varieties of the Brassica family, and was a plentiful source of iron and vitamins B and C during the 'hungry gap', in early spring. The development of later Brassica types, such as cauliflower and broccoli, reduced the popularity of kale, but in recent years it has enjoyed a considerable revival and today an abundance of kale varieties can be found. Before the potato arrived, the parsnip was a staple source of carbohydrate throughout much of medieval Europe. It is also likely that these varieties were used to make an early form of *colcannon*, although substituting parsnip with potato.

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Both pages: Selection of calendula, dwarf bean, nasturtium, leek and poppy seeds,
Photos: Tom Doig, CNFP Archive

potatos with the spanish *conquistadores*, who had in turn brought the plant from the Andes region of Peru. The potato flourished in the warm Irish coastal areas, where seaweed could be easily accessed to fertilise the crop in 'lazy beds'. The rich soil of these beds was ideally suited to the acidity loving potato plant.

The potato quickly became the staple food in Ireland, but there were actually very few varieties favoured by the population. The 'Black Potato' was favoured for its exceptional storage properties, and while another variety, the 'Cup' was considered to have excellent taste and texture, it was not a heavy cropper and was considered a luxury variety. Tenant farmers, out of economic necessity, tended to focus on growing potatoes which gave the heaviest yield. It was in 1808 that the first mention of the infamous 'Lumper' variety is recorded. *The Seed Savers Handbook* speculates that the name 'probably commemorates the itinerant labourers of Cork, who worked in the lumber yards of London. The men were known as lumpers and they took the potato back to Ireland.' The Lumper produced a significantly higher per-acre yield than other varieties and a one-acre potato garden could support a large family. The Lumper made up the majority of the Irish potato crop, which by 1845 comprised a remarkable 22% of all cultivated land in Munster. In England, this potato had been grown for cattle feed but in Ireland it supported the working people, who ate up to 6kg a day. Spoiled or surplus potatoes could also be used to feed a pig or cow, and combined with meat or milk, the potato provided a basic, if unvaried diet.

Another problem with relying on potatoes as a staple food source, was that while grain can be stored for several years without drastically affecting its germination potential, the potato is only viable for one year. During the Famine, many starving families were faced with the terrible prospect of having to eat their seed stock before the next planting season. A common practice to increase seed stock was 'chitting', whereby a potato with several 'eyes' or sprouts, would be cut into pieces so that there was one sprout on each segment, increasing the amount of plants which could be produced from one potato. The raw surfaces were dried beside the fire, then left in the dark to sprout before planting.

The Lumper is much maligned as one of the contributing factors in the Irish Famine, but ironically its spectacular susceptibility to the Phytophtpra Infestans fungus from 1845 to 1847 was more than likely due to its great popularity, and the lack of agricultural biodiversity that its widespread cultivation caused. In recent years, the Lumper has been rediscovered by seed saving enthusiasts who have declared it a very reliable and tasty potato. Many historical varieties of potato such as the Lumper, the Black Potato, Champion and the Cup can still be found in the Irish Department of Agriculture's *Potato Varieties of Historical Interest in Ireland.*

The Irish Seedsavers Association (ISSA) based in Scarriff, Co Clare, is dedicated in protecting the heritage of these and other Irish seeds. Similar to our methods here at the Cork Northside Folklore Project, ISSA have developed a process of 'accessioning' or archiving native vegetable, herb, fruit and flower species. When I spoke to ISSA's gardening coordinator Peter Bourke, he told me many fascinating stories of seeds being saved from obscurity or extinction by the enthusiasm of amateur gardeners. The Delaway Cabbage for instance, was a variety that was saved independently by a family in Mayo before being donated to ISSA, and is now a popular variety in their catalogue. Within the Cork area, Brown Envelope Seeds of Skibbereen have been producing their own seed catalogue since 2004. Both of these seed providers differ from traditional seed companies in that while they provide seeds for sale, they actively encourage the consumer to continue to save the seeds for themselves, running workshops and providing information and resources on the subject. On Valentines Day 2008, Cork Food Web held their first Seed Swap at Blackrock Castle. The event proved an enormous success as growers of a wide range of experience came from across the county to swap their spare seeds with others. Many of the early Irish crops previously mentioned, such as kale, Welsh Onion, broad beans and parsnip can be found via Seed Savers, Brown Envelope Seeds or at your local seed swap.

In recent years, the popularity of local allotment schemes in Ireland has led many amateur gardeners to look at the possibilities of seed saving. In gardening terms, there are many aspects to explore, and it is fascinating to discover how each plant 'goes to seed' or flowers, in its own unique way. Once you become actively engaged in the process of saving seeds, you start to notice that they are everywhere, even in the smallest garden. It is far more satisfying to be involved in the complete cycle of sowing and harvesting than buying a packet of seeds from your local gardening centre. Growing locally saved varieties also guarantees a certain amount of resilience thanks to acclimatisation to soil type and climate of that area. In cultural terms, seed saving is also extremely important. Many indigenous societies, such as the MAIZ group in the Chiapas region of Mexico, directly link their ability to grow their own variety of crops with the survival of their traditions and way of life. The same could be said for us here in Ireland. It is easy to forget that it only takes a few missed growing seasons before an heirloom variety, unique to a local area, will become extinct. In an increasingly industrialised world the survival of our rich agricultural heritage lies more than ever with the dedication of the seed saving enthusiast.

If you are interested in learning more about seed saving you can find many resources online.

www.irishseedsavers.ie *provide a variety of workshops and open days on the subject of seed saving with a comprehensive catalogue of heirloom seed varieties.*

www.brownenvelopeseeds.com *also provide seed saving workshops and have their own catalogue containing a wide variety of seeds and starter packs for city gardens and polytunnels.*

www.corkfoodweb.ning.com *is a great networking resource for the Cork area, useful for finding the latest information on local allotments and seed swaps among many other topics.*

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Oral History News

Working Life in the Cork Docklands from the 1950s – An Oral History

by Adrian Roche

Having read about the hundred or so dockers made redundant early in 2009, I felt it was important that an attempt be made to capture their stories and experiences, and that this could best be achieved by collecting oral history.

Throughout Cork's history, the close proximity of the docks to the city centre has ensured that they have been an integral part of the character and day-to-day activity of the city. As economic conditions slowly improved during the 1950s, the amount of shipping increased, and hundreds of men would be employed whenever ships arrived in the port. All of the country's imports and exports were handled by ship at this time.

In the '50s and '60s, many of these men worked in difficult and often dangerous conditions. The work consisted of manually emptying and loading cargoes such as coal, iron and manganese ore, timber, grain, and chocolate crumb. It also included, the loading and unloading of general cargoes of foodstuffs, such as the banana boats, and goods and clothing for businesses around the province. Materials such as coal, iron ore and brimstone were emptied manually, by means of shovel and a large bucket; tasks both dirty and dangerous. Work began at 8am and finished at 10pm, for five and a half days a week, or until the cargo was unloaded. Health and safety regulations were effectively non-existent at the time.

My project looks at both the work and social aspects of life in the area, describing the various types of work; the physicality of the labour; the process of choosing work teams; and how these teams worked together. Several men remember leaving school to bring dinner down to their fathers, where they worked. Many left school in their teens to begin work themselves on the docks. Social aspects, such as sports, games, fishing, as well as going to pubs and dances, are discussed. The project looks at the widespread use of nicknames amongst the dockers, and the jokes and humour used to get through the hard work and long days. In addition, trade union issues and the improvement of conditions in the '80s and '90s are also discussed.

This way of working has now disappeared from the Cork docks. My project endeavours, in a series of interviews, to give a flavour of the working and social conditions experienced over the last fifty or so years, through the stories and thoughts of the people who worked and lived there.

This collection has been deposited in the CNFP Archive. Contact history.roche@gmail.com for further information.

GAA Oral History Project - Our History. Your Story.

by Regina Fitzpatrick

The GAA Oral History Project got underway at Boston College Centre for Irish Programmes, Dublin, on September 1st, 2008. Funded by the Gaelic Athletic Association, the Project aims to record the history of the GAA through the memories and stories of anyone who has experiences or views which they wish to contribute.

The GAA is part of the fabric of Irish life; there is not a town or village in Ireland that it does not touch. Ultimately, this project aims to record the history of everything that happens around the games, and will address themes such as; the role of the club in community life; the changing role of women in the association; travelling to matches; celebrating victories and commiserating defeats; politics and identity; the influence of religion and education, music, language and culture; the affects of emigration and immigration; and the media and literature surrounding the GAA.

The project is carrying out interviews with people in Ireland, and internationally, in order to get the fullest possible picture of what the GAA means to Irish people, at home and abroad. Members of the public are invited to get involved by becoming an interviewee, completing a questionnaire or by sending an email or letter to the project describing their own experiences or telling their favourite GAA story. Contributions are also welcome in the Irish language.

The great Kilkenny hurler, Lory Meagher, gives advice to a Kilkenny player in Croke Park in the 1940s
Photo courtesy of the GAA Oral History Project

Schools are playing a fundamental part in the GAA Oral History Project. Our website, www.gaahistory.com, features curriculum-based resource packs for both primary and secondary schools. A number of internships and volunteer opportunities are also available for second and third level students. In addition to collecting stories, the Project is also focused on gathering related archival material e.g. old photographs, documents, minute books etc. The collection will create a searchable digital archive which will be permanently housed and publically accessible in the GAA Museum and Archive at Croke Park, Dublin. It will act as an invaluable resource, not only for researchers and historians, but also for future generations who wish to understand not only the GAA, but also the social and cultural history of modern Ireland.

For more information and to get involved, please contact: Boston College, 42 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2.
Phone: +353 (0)1 662 5055
www.gaahistory.com.

Oral History Network of Ireland

by Adrian Roche

Despite our strong international reputation for folklore and storytelling, the collection of oral history has been very underdeveloped in Ireland, in comparison with other countries. With a rise in interest over the past number of years, it is time to promote and strengthen our oral heritage, to support those working in oral history and to encourage newcomers to the field to collect and preserve the stories of those around them before they disappear.

Over the last decade, a range of oral history projects have been carried out all around the country by individuals, community groups, county councils, local libraries and academic institutions. Examples include the GAA Oral History Project (www.gaahistory.com); Cuimhneamh an Chláir (www.clarememories.ie); County Cork Religious Practices and Customs, funded by Cork Co Council (sound recordings available at CNFP Archive, transcripts available at the Cork City & County Archive); and Béaloideas Chiarraí (http://kerryfolklore.com). Many other projects are being carried out in various counties.

Reflecting this upsurge in the number of oral history projects underway nationwide, a working group has come together to form the Oral History Network of Ireland. The majority of oral history projects here are organised and carried out on a local basis, and now is an appropriate time to create and develop a national body that will allow these disparate groups to share their knowledge, experience and information.

To this end, the Oral History Network of Ireland has been founded. Our aims include offering advice and support in encouraging new and existing projects, allowing oral historians to communicate on a national level, sharing experiences and ideas and discussing standards in practice and relevant technologies. We wish to provide information about the creation, management and preservation of oral history collections. We intend to create a discussion forum to address these, and other topics, on a local and national level, and to interact with oral historians and groups internationally.

Our website, www.oralhistorynetworkireland.ie (currently under construction), will offer information on our aims, the processes involved in oral history, membership, and much more. We are compiling databases to give a complete list of Irish projects both past and present, and to collate a list of written material on the subject from around the country and abroad.

The inaugural Oral History Network of Ireland annual conference will take place in September 2011. The programme will be designed to appeal to people at all levels of experience in oral history. For more information, to be added to our mailing list, or to register your oral history work on our database, please contact history.roche@gmail.com.

The Gathering: Collected Oral Histories of the Irish in Montana

by Bernadette Sweeney

The Gathering is a long-term interdisciplinary oral history project which records and archives Montana's Irish and Irish-American folk histories, performances, practices and traditions. This project will record and build on traditions and connections that are currently in danger of being lost.

This project has prompted high levels of interest and participation in Montana, among the Irish communities of Butte and Anaconda as anticipated, but also throughout the state. It has a broad appeal, attracting people from all walks of life, such as educators, ranchers and retired home-makers, government workers, miners and their descendants. The majority of participants are in the 60-96 year old age bracket. We are conscious that this is a time-sensitive project, a fact that is constantly reinforced by the interviews and interviewees we've encountered so far. We are anxious to retain and document these crucial lived and embodied memories before they are lost.

We have over 110 participants signed up to date, and 25 interviewers helping to collect material in their own communities across the state. This geographical spread is significant as it covers a state that is roughly three times the size of Ireland! It poses one of the biggest challenges to the project but also indicates the breadth and the scope of the Irish presence across the state.

Rita McLoughlin Casagranda of Butte, Montana, holding a photo of her father who came to Montana from Carndonagh, Co Donegal, in 1914 and her mother who came from Ardgroom, Castletownbere, Co Cork, 1923
Photo courtesy of Patrick Cook
Framed Archive Photo courtesy of Bob Mehrens

The human voice is very powerful. For example, in material recorded in 1981, donated by *The Steward* magazine, miner Tom Mac Intyre, describes coming to Butte in 1915 as a 20 year old. To hear these recollections in the voice, accent and intonations of Mac Intyre himself, typified the power and potential of The Gathering for its extended audience. Recollections and interviews that may seem commonplace now will be more meaningful with time. Video material extends these possibilities. It will bring a visual to The Gathering's audience, allowing future viewers to see these speakers in their homes, their living conditions and contexts, their facial expressions and gestures. A five minute segment has been made available online at, www.cas.umt.edu/thegathering.

The Gathering will reinforce and extend ties within the Irish American community in Montana, in the US, and between Montana and Ireland. This work will be shared with academic communities in the US and in Ireland.
Contact: bernadette.sweeney@mso.umt.edu

Ber Sweeney is in regular contact with, and has visited both CNFP and UCC.

Soundings: the poetry of a generation

By Louise Aherne

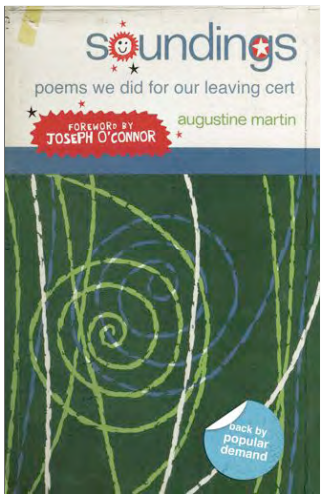
Fashion sense, taste in music and even television series are linked to memories of particular moments in time, events and people. Folklore and oral history record these memories of everyday life. Artefacts can be objects that are linked to everyday practices and rituals. It could be a teddy bear, a blacksmith's anvil, a newspaper or a mass card. A staple in the poetry diet of Leaving Cert students from 1969 to 2000, *Soundings* may have originally been only a temporary anthology published in a hurry, but it made lasting impressions on generations of Irish students.

Published by the well-known Irish printers, Gill & MacMillan, *Soundings* was retired and went out of print in the 1990s. The idea to release another edition in October 2010, came from surprising public demand. *Soundings* was a collection of poetry edited by Gus Martin, a 1960s pioneer in the teaching of English in Ireland. The 280 page textbook became popular with school teachers through out the country, making it an annual essential on booklists for fifth and sixth year students. Studied with bursting enthusiasm or muted distain, *Soundings* was a textbook personified into a tour guide, leading choreographed trails through poetry from Patrick Kavanagh's stony grey Monaghan to Dylan Thomas' Fern Hill.

Like many an Irish schoolbook, a copy was passed between houses and families. Each copy gaining handwritten notes and doodles, as it sauntered into curriculum history. From late nights spent slaving over an essay, bitterly resenting Yeats for even dreaming of sailing to Byzantium, to languid autumn evenings lounging in the hand-carved romance of the sonnets, many teenage hours have been spent in the company of this distinguished textbook.

The collection is surprisingly short to be the definitive poetry curriculum for so many decades, consisting of only twenty four poets; nineteen English, five Irish and one lone American woman. Evelyn O' Sullivan, a UCC Language graduate, clearly recollects a classroom debate on the only female poet, Emily Dickinson, as she thumbs her dog-eared copy, complete with hastily written pencil notes, 'I went to an all girls school, so to only have one woman on the syllabus, did not go unnoticed'.

Possibly as a result of the initial rush to get it compiled and printed for the start of the school year, or maybe of the very dim spotlight trained on Irish poets at that time, *Soundings* successors have had to widen the definition of poetry for the Irish student, to include poems, and poets, who may have been left on the *Soundings* cutting-room floor. Padraig McCarthy both studied *Soundings* as a student, and taught it as a secondary school teacher. He is somewhat critical of the collection, feeling that it was aimed at the upper end of higher level, and did not readily cater for many students in the classroom. However, recently he received a card from a former student. She had bought a copy of the new edition in a bookshop in Galway, and was writing to thank him for introducing her to poetry. *Soundings* was a text of its time. It was a grown-up book demanding critique, engagement and ultimately their respect.



***Soundings* book cover**
Photo courtesy of Gill & Macmillan

Sharp memories can be linked to a time, to a place, with a distinctive sound or smell. *Soundings* ticks all the boxes. O' Sullivan can clearly visualise an elderly 'dusty' teacher reading aloud to the class, in a frumpy red plaid skirt. Her teacher disregarded the Irish poets in place of the classics, forcing her to study them on her own for the exam. She remembers revising in the dining room, with her older brother learning to play the bass guitar in the next room. She credits the rhythm of his playing with enabling her to memorise iambic pentameter. Now living in London, Angela Browne detested studying the book at school. Innocently her husband bought her a copy at Christmas, and to her surprise she enjoyed reading it. Perhaps distance in miles from your childhood is proportionate to your tendency towards nostalgia, be it a true reflection or maybe ever-so rose-tinted.

Soundings is published by Gill & Macmillan, and is available to buy at all good book shops for €14.99, complete with original retro green cover.

Some hand-written sentiments on a *Soundings'* table of contents
Photo courtesy of ImageShack Services

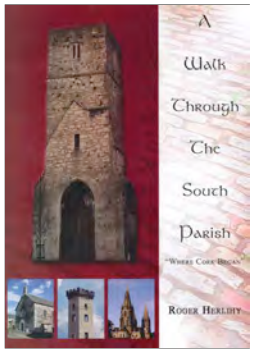
Book Reviews

My City by the Lee by Dr S. F. Pettit, 1987, Studio Publication, Cork, €9.99

My City by the Lee by Dr S. F. Pettit (1987) purchased recently in Eason's, St Patrick's Street, provides a fascinating overview of the history of Cork city. The first edition (1985), commissioned by the Department of Education, was distributed to schools throughout the country in honour of the Cork 800 celebrations. Originally written with students in mind, two chapters were later added for general publication. Each chapter is filled with wonder and colour, from the early settlement of St Finbarr around 600AD, the arrival of the Danes and Normans on our shores, the early development of the ancient walled town to the physical expansion of the modern city.

Of particular interest is the important role the River Lee, and its tributaries, played in the physical development of the city and harbour. Equally interesting is a chapter on the early export trade and the ships that ferried imports and exports to and from various corners of the world. The chapter on the coming of the railway age, from the mid 1850s to the development of modern transportation also makes interesting reading. What makes this book important is that each chapter lists topics that could be further researched by the reader. I highly recommend this book for anyone interested in a light, well written, vivid account of Cork history.

Breda Sheehan



A Walk Through The South Parish 'WHERE CORK BEGAN', Roger Herlihy, 2010, Red Abbey Publications, Cork, €18

An information-rich read, Herlihy's *A Walk Through The South Parish* guides you through the streets and lanes of Cork city's South Parish community. With deep historical links to education, the military, industry, transportation and religion, the book provides the reader with rich traditions rooted in the urban landscape of a city centre community. From Daniel O' Connell's 1840 huge Repeal Meeting in Mary's Street Circus, to Frank O' Connor's uncle having a cobbler's shop in Douglas St, where The Gables pub stands today, Herlihy directs us through the streetscape of historical Cork.

Having spent 44 years either living or working in the South Parish, the author clearly lives and breathes his passion for his local area, its links to the past but also its present day characteristics, describing it as 'an open air museum', where history is 'a never-ending process'.

Containing more than a hundred images, the book is carefully illustrated with photographs, maps and art work of the streets and laneways, buildings and churches of the area. A historical account of a geographic area over hundreds of years, this book is a general overview of politics, architecture and the social environment of the generations of Corkonians, who call the South Parish home.

Louise Aherne

To the Editor

Dear Sir or Madam,
My brother gave me Issue 14 *The Archive*. I did enjoy reading it, took me back so many years. I lived in St Vincent's St, Gurranabraher and spent many happy years there. My Mom died quite young. She was 31 yrs old, left a family of six children, the eldest was 7 yrs old and the baby was 3 mts old. She died of consumption. Me Da was a tailor, he worked from home…Next door was Lehane's shop and I'm sure if it wasn't for the Lehane family and the help they gave us we would have ended up in Good Shepherd's.

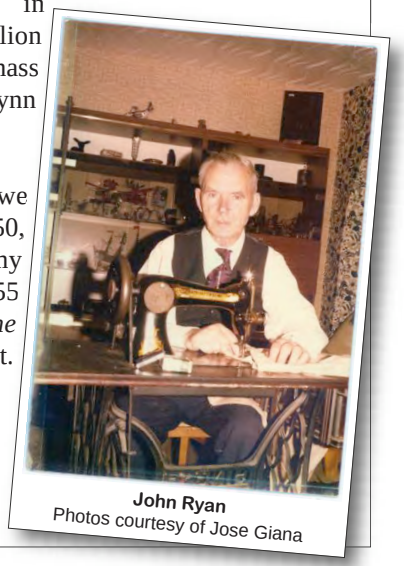
The Ryan Family, including Veronica, Josie, Bernie, Richie, Dermot and Rex

Da did the best he could. He was always busy sewing, making coats from army blankets and turning suits to make them look like new again. He also employed two people as well, Martin Fahy and Ciss Sullivan…

Our childhood was very happy… We would play over the fields near Bonties, make pretend house and build a bonfire, cook spuds in an old tin and eat them. Played skipping, spinning top, I still know all the rhymes, even passed them on to my grandchildren, happy happy days... Me Da would treat us and take us to an ice-cream parlour in Patrick's St and to the Pavilion Cinema afterwards. I loved mass on Sunday with Fr. O' Flynn singing his heart out…

We made the best of what we had. I left for England in 1950, been here ever since, met my husband Tony, been married 55 years….Thank you for *The Archive*. I did enjoy reading it. Long may it continue.

Yours sincerely,
J. Giana (Josie, nee Ryan)
Herts, UK.



John Ryan
Photos courtesy of Jose Giana

Photo and a Story

Seeing isn't believing

As I was walking in the woods, near Nad with a friend, I was asked about what we do in Folklore. I explained that, we are mostly interested in expressions of tradition and the ways in which we ritualise our lives. We are interested in how people acquire and transmit knowledge which is not necessarily written down. Folklorists also study belief, stories of the supernatural and popular superstitions; however, we do not focus on whether these are true or not. As we came by this particular tree, looking at us, I found myself respectfully saying that even if we don't really believe in wood spirits and the likes, it doesn't mean that they are not there… look! It's looking at you!

Dr Marie-Annick Desplanques

The Cork Northside Folklore Project

Northside Community Enterprises Ltd

St Finbarr's College, Farranferris, Redemption Road, Cork, Ireland

Tel:	**+353 21 422 8100**
Fax:	**+353 21 422 8199**
E-mail:	**nfp@indigo.ie**
Website:	**http://www.ucc.ie/research/nfp**
Research Directors:	**Dr Clíona O' Carroll**
	Dr Marie-Annick Desplanques
Editorial Advisor:	**Ciarán Ó Gealbháin**
Project Manager:	**Mary O' Driscoll**

PROJECT TEAM

Design/Layout:	**Tom Doig**
Editorial Team:	**Ciarán Ó Gealbháin, Mary O' Driscoll, Louise Aherne**
Project Researchers:	**Helen Kelly, Gráinne Mcgee, Majella Murphy, Noreen O' Connell, Gearóid O' Donnell, Breda Sheehan**
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