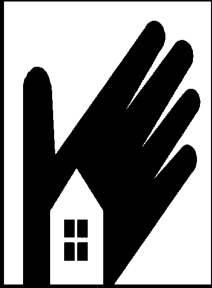
THE Archive



JOURNAL OF THE NORTHSIDE FOLKLORE PROJECT

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The Millennium

By Stephen Hunter

It comes but once in a thousand years, arousing hopes and fears…

S.Hunter

By its very nature the New Year is seen as a time of renewal. Millennial New Years occupy an even more resonant space in the popular imagination. It is interesting to look at the way people perceived the approach of the end of the first thousand years of Christianity. There were dire prognostications of the end of the world or alternately, the fall of western Christendom – the Holy Roman Empire would collapse, the Emperor would be assassinated, Rome would be over run by Muslims and so on. None of this came to pass, although apparently the year 1000 witnessed a lot of drunkenness and debauchery. The advent of 2000 provided doomsayers with even more material. After all, we now have the capacity to destroy the planet. The "quatrains", four-lined verse prophecies of the French astronomer and doctor Michel de Nostradame, better known as Nostradamus (1503-1566), are deeply lodged in the western consciousness. This one sounded specific and ominous:.

> *The year nineteen ninety-nine,*
> *A great king of terror will descend from the sky*
> *To resuscitate the great king of Angolmois*
> *Around this time Mars will reign for the good cause…"*

On another note, I asked a number of Cork people about their memories of folkloric New Year customs and hopes for the new Millennium. Noel Quinn, a trainee at Northside Community Enterprises Sunbeam premises, spoke of his hopes for a peaceful and prosperous Ireland. He was sure that Christianity would still be around in another thousand years. Billy McCarthy hoped that there would be a new emphasis on spiritual values. Everyone interviewed expressed a desire for a just and lasting peace in Northern Ireland, and the gathering dynamic towards this in the year 2000 was seen as a happy coincidence. Most people thought the Millennium had been over-hyped. Eileen, a lady also working at the Sunbeam, said that she had celebrated New Year quietly with her family. Majella thought that a settlement in The North was in sight at last. Her family got together for a party in her home and she also went to church to give thanks for having reached the Third Millennium safely. Bob Seward, director of the Cork Academy of Music, spoke of his wish for a rebirth of community spirit. Seán, also at the Academy, said that his family still observes the old New Year custom of throwing a loaf of bread out of the front and back doors of the house to keep poverty out. He could remember his grandparents doing this and the practice would appear to have ancient, probably pre-Christian origins.

During the 1830s the Cork writer T. Crofton Croker described essentially the same ceremony being performed with cake, on the last night of the year. In *The Year In Ireland: Irish Calendar Lore*, Kevin Danaher provides several other examples – the cake might be bitten three times by the head of the household, then dashed against a door post in the name of the Trinity. He points out that in earlier times December 31st and January 1st were not major festivals in Ireland. January 1st only officially became New Year's Day with the advent of the new calendar in 1751. Before that, March 25st had marked the legal New Year here. Most rural people still regarded February the 1st, the first day of spring, feast of Saint Brigid, as the beginning of their farming year. Blackpool's Mick Moriarty, a.k.a "The Baldy Barber", remembered his mother giving him "handsel silver" – in his case a two shilling piece – every New Year's Day. In most parts of Ireland handsel was traditionally given on Handsel Monday, the first Monday of the New Year. January 1st would appear to have been more popular in the southwest, especially Kerry. Often the gift would take the form of small sweet cakes. Mick also spoke of his desire for peace and justice for all our people, and his hope that society would not become so blinded by materialism that we lose the capacity to care for one another.

Editor

Martin O'Mahony

Dublin Field Trip

Members of The Northside Folklore Project undertook a field trip to Dublin during April 1999. The main focus was a visit to our sister-project, the **Dublin North Inner City Folklore Project**, based in Amiens Street, on Dublin's inner Northside, not far from Connolly Railway Station.
57 Amiens Street, Dublin 1.
Tel 01-8551076

This project, begun in the late 1980s, is supported by the Alliance to Work Forum, but receives no direct state funding. Despite operating with only two members and struggling on a tight budget, it has produced more than ten publications, including a superb study of 13 North Inner City streets, "Crinan", by writer and artist Jimmy Wren, and fine folkloric calendars. Its driving force is Terry Fagan, who met us on the edge of the famous former Monto Town district, which features in the well-known song, *The Waxies' Dargle.*

I've just been down to Monto Town,
And I asked Uncle McArdle
But he would not give me a couple of bob
To go to the Waxies Dargle…

The term "Monto Town" derives from a local thoroughfare, Montgomery Street, previously World's End Lane, renamed in 1776 after Elizabeth Montgomery married Luke Gardiner M.P. In 1907 it became Foley Street, in memory of one of Ireland's most famous sculptors, John Henry Foley, born there in 1818. The Waxies' Dargle" was a Dublin candle makers' fair held during the nineteenth century. The "waxies" would congregate on a bank of the Dargle River, which rises in the Wicklow Mountains, for their annual bash. "Uncle McArdle" refers to a local pawnbroker. Before reclamation began in 1717 Amiens Street formed part of the North Strand, the foreshore of the Liffey Estuary, which seems quite distant now. Terry guided us through the area, and supplied some fascinating and often grim history. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries Monto Town was a notorious red-light district, a mixture of very poor tenements and brothels, with a British Army barracks nearby.

Liberty Hall Pk, Dublin. *S.Hunter*

The main victims of this brutal and exploitative trade were women and children. There was a hierarchy of prostitution, the houses generally falling into three "classes". Many young women, especially those arriving in the city from poor rural backgrounds, were tricked into this lifestyle, often with promises of employment in domestic work. Once involved, they found it almost impossible to escape. As their looks and health broke down they were passed down the grades of houses, until they found themselves on the street. These establishments ejected women who became pregnant, who were then left to fend for themselves. Almost the only people to offer them or their children any assistance were local residents, themselves often desperately poor. A few of these people abandoned as children, known as "Montoes", are still alive today, aged in their 80s and 90s. The area was honeycombed with tunnels, used as escape routes by brothel employees during police raids. Some of these passages apparently remain in existence to this day.

A notable visitor was Queen Victoria's son, the Prince of Wales, who resorted to the Monto while stationed at the Curragh military camp in 1861. As King Edward VII he graced one of the district's more exclusive houses with his presence during his royal visit to this country in 1904. Among the concerns of folklore is the attempt to record the thoughts and perspectives of those who have traditionally been voiceless, and to give these as much weight as those of the rich and powerful. History notes that this notoriously self-indulgent monarch died in 1910, surrounded by comforts, his passing eased by the costliest medical care then available. One wonders what became of the victims who were served up to him in Monto Town. With the changed ethos of the Free State there were increasing demands for the trade to be ended, culminating in large Legion Of Mary demonstrations in the area during 1925. Shortly afterwards the Civic Guards closed the remaining houses, with many of the women involved being placed in Magdalene Penitentiary homes. They still had very little control over their lives and many were used as virtual slave labour in Catholic Church-run laundries.

Over the years the old tenements have all been demolished to make way for urban redevelopment. Terry took us to Liberty Hall Park, an attractive park set among apartment blocks. Like many urban areas, this district has suffered severely from drug abuse problems over the last 25 years. Action involving the local people and a number of agencies appears to be turning the tide in this battle at last. Our park visit was cut short by an unseasonable fall of spring snow, so we departed for **Number Twenty Nine Lower Fitzwilliam Street**, a magnificently restored four-storey eighteenth century town house near Merrion Square.
Tel 01-7026165
Entrance on the cnr. of Lwr. Fitzwilliam and Upper Mount Sts.
Buses from city centre: 6,7,8,10,45.
Nearest Dart station: Pearse Street.
Closed Mondays and for two weeks prior to Christmas.

These premises are jointly maintained by the Electricity

Supply Board and the National Museum of Ireland and present a reconstruction of life for a typical upper-middle class professional family in Dublin during the era 1790–1820, with a wealth of period furniture, clothing and household artefacts.

From a social history point of view the material provides many insights, one being the influence of Oriental styles in furnishings, such as the Japanese matting in some of the rooms. Another is the fact that the class of people represented here, the doctors, lawyers and bankers who over the next century were to gradually replace the old landed ascendancy as the political élite, were used to doing far more for themselves than the latter group.

They employed servants, but still knew how to brew a cup of tea, or black their boots if necessary. Number Twenty Nine forms yet another jewel in the capital's glittering crown of cultural amenities and with its reasonable prices and welcoming atmosphere should definitely be on any visitor's list of places to go in the city.

Corner Store, Dublin Inner North. *S.Hunter*

Country Shopping Day

December 8 has long been regarded as the beginning of the Christmas shopping season....

Before towns and villages came to possess the facilities that they have now, the day would see a veritable stream of country people into major centres like Dublin, Cork and Galway. This was known unofficially as the "The Farmers' Shopping Day" or "The Farmers' Day Off". Traders and residents in Shandon decided last December 8th to use the date to recreate something of the ambience of a nineteenth century market day, using the Shandon Craft Centre (site of the former Butter Exchange) and Firkin Crane Centre (site of the historic Shandon Castle) as bases. The festivities included actors in period dress, street theatre, musicians and a fine array of vintage cars, horses and carts. One focus was provided by an RTE Cork Radio outdoor broadcast with Geri McLaughlin interviewing celebrities and passersby. This was also a timely opportunity to publicise the Northside Folklore Project's new book, "Life Journeys: Living Folklore in Ireland Today".

Carol Hudson

The Archive Issue 4

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"The Farmer's Day Off" *S.Hunter*

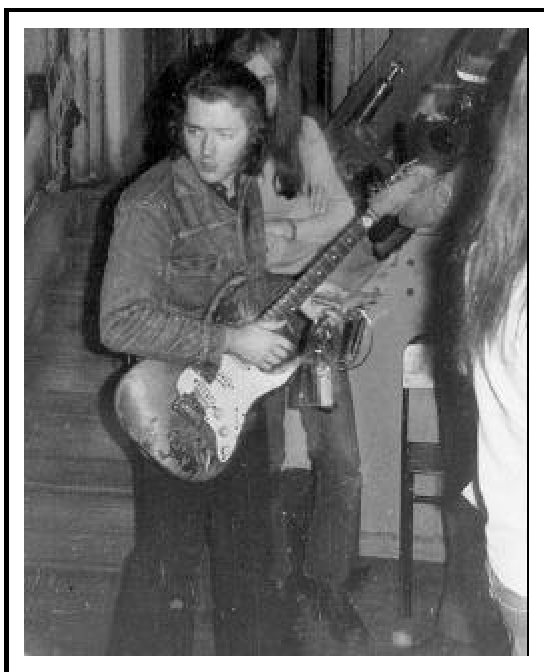
"Won't See His Like Again"

By Stephen Hunter

The one particular trait that personified Rory Gallagher was his single-mindedness and sense of purpose. Throughout his distinguished career he never veered from his pursuit of distilling the purest blues into an expression of the form of this music which will always set him apart…

Marcus Connaugton

With over 30 million record albums sold world-wide, Rory Gallagher ranks as one the most famous figures ever to be associated with Cork.



Courtesy Seán Leahy, Leeside Music, MacCurtain St.

One of the first Irish rock acts to enjoy major international success, his stature as an instrumentalist and singer/song-writer in the blues and rock fields is assured.

Born March 1948 in Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal, the older of two children (brother Dónal was later to be his manager) his family moved to Cork in the early 1950s, where he lived for a time on the Northside's MacCurtain Street and was educated at Saint Kieran's, Pope's Quay and the North Monastery School. From the age of nine he taught himself guitar, excelling on the instrument. He was also to play alto saxophone, harmonica and mandolin with great flair. His untimely death in London on 14th. June, 1995, deprived the world of a tremendous talent and left countless admirers with the feeling that they had lost a friend. Memories of those who have passed on prematurely possess a special poignancy. We look to those who knew them, often only fleetingly, to amplify our knowledge. As Robert Browning wrote of another, even more celebrated bard:

Ah, did you once see Shelley plain
And did he stop and speak to you?
And did he speak to you again?
How strange it seems, and new.

I never met Rory. I saw him twice in concert, in 1980 and 1991. Both were electrifying events. I hope here to provide a few glimpses of the man through the eyes of Cork people who remember him from his earlier days, and to talk briefly about the nature of his art and genius. Blackpool's Mick Moriarty (The Baldy Barber) recalls him from the period of his rigorous teenage apprenticeship in The Fontana (later The Impact) Showband during the mid-'60s. "He was instantly recognisable, with his long flowing locks, walking across Patrick's Bridge with his guitar. At that time he was playing in the evenings after school." Mick O' Leary, originally from the now-vanished complex of lanes around Blarney Street, remembers Rory's gradual ascent to stardom. "He was in the Fontana and he wasn't playing blues, the nearest would have been some Chuck Berry songs." Rory revamped the Fontana into The Impact Showband, which eventually broke up in Germany. He then formed Taste with Eric Kitterihgham and Norman Damery of The Axles. Mick continues: "I saw them in the Cavern in Leitrim Street, the Shandon Boat Club and the City Hall; mostly small audiences. They were very exciting, mainly raunchy rocking blues. One night the band held a kind of informal poll among the audience at the City Hall as to which of four songs they should release as their first single. 'Blister On The Moon' won it, being released on the small 'Major-Minor' label, with 'Born On The Wrong Side Of Time' the 'B' side. Another of the four songs was 'Pardon Me Mister', which to my knowledge has never been released anywhere."

Richard McCracken (bass) and John Wilson (drums) were later recruited so as to secure a recording contract with Polydor. There was more than a nuance of jazz to Taste's music, with Rory's busy expressive saxophone playing earning him the soubriquet "Yakety Sax". The trio developed a larger following at Belfast's Maritime Club, then secured a residency at the Marquee Club, Wardour Street, London. Mick had moved across the water, and went to see his fellow-Corkman perform. "I'd known Rory to say hello to. That time in Cork you had an affinity with just about anybody with long hair. You were very much a minority. John Gee, manager and M. C. at the Marquee, would announce 'Rory Galla-*g*-her' – with a hard '*g*' sound, 'From Belfast!" – And we'd all shout 'Gallla-*h*-er, from Cork!' One day I was sitting in Piccadilly Circus with Patsy Twomey, a Cork lass, who called out to him as he passed by. He came over and we talked. I met him after a couple of Marquee gigs, but never spoke to him much, I'm sorry to say. A lot has been made of his shyness, but he was also a determined strong-willed man; in that business he had to be. He was a great musician and performer, someone Cork should be proud of."

Another Northsider, Dolores Quinlan, was a shop assistant in Eason's Patrick Street premises during the mid '70s, when Rory, now a London-based star, would make return trips to his hometown. "We would see him going upstairs to the record department where Sheila MacCurtain (*daughter of Cork's republican Lord Mayor Tomás MacCurtain)* worked. We would

Days of 'Taste' *Courtesy The Examiner*

know through eye-contact where he was going. We'd make excuses to go there, then follow him downstairs when he went to get his New Musical Express magazine. He always had the correct money, so we never had to give him change. We'd all be giggling to each other, but he was oblivious to all this. I never tried to strike up a conversation with him, although he was unfailingly polite and friendly. We even knew that he went to 6.30 Sunday evening Mass at Saint Augustine's on Grand Parade with his mother, so we'd go there too." Seán Lucey, founder of the Dixies Showband, shared a plane ride from Cork to London with the young bluesman around 1974. "I was travelling with a guy named John O'Connor, who was going to audition for the job of singer in our showband." John got the job, and as a consequence of the meeting changed his stage-name to Rory O'Connor (*coincidentally also the name of Ireland's last independent High King*), which he thought had a more striking ring to it. Seán continues: "Rory had paid for two seats and kept his guitar in the one next to himself. 'This is my baby', he said jokingly." Rory's solicitude towards the instrument was well-founded. The battered 1961 sunburst Fender Stratocaster, for which he had paid £100 in Crowley's music shop (*then on Merchant's Quay, now in MacCurtain Street*) in 1963, was once stolen from him, and against the odds, returned. It became a celebrated trademark. A truly modest man, his dress-style of boots, blue or black denim jeans and tartan-patterned lumberjack shirts with button-down pockets – the practical and comfortable attire of working people – reflected his complete lack of pretension. At a subliminal level the tartan may have conveyed a broad sense of Celtic identity.

Rory declined an offer to join, "the Greatest Rock 'n Roll Band in the World", The Rolling Stones, after the departure of Mick Taylor in 1973, although he recorded with them for a few nights. Later there were recordings with boyhood idols Muddy Waters, Albert King, Jerry Lee Lewis and skiffle king Lonnie Donegan. Taste's split came at The Isle of Wight Festival in 1970, with the trio staying together until the end of the year to complete some engagements. Early in 1971 Rory produced his first solo album and recruited Belfast men Gerry McAvoy (bass) and Wilgar Campbell (drums) as his backing band. With the intermittent addition of other musicians, especially keyboardists and Mark Feltham on harmonica, "Rory Gallagher and his Band" encompassed a great variety of styles and influences throughout the 16 magnificent albums that followed up until 1994, generally exhibiting a fuller and somewhat harder-edged sound than Taste.

Both outfits presented fine reinterpretations of American blues songs, sometimes performed by Rory in a solo context, such as his steel-bodied National guitar reworking of "Gambling Blues" at the 1969 Montreux Jazz Festival, or his rendition of Blind Boy Fuller's "Pistol Slappin' Blues." His reshaping of the Louisiana singer Leadbelly's (Huddie Ledbetter, d.1949) "Out On The Western Plain" made a big impact at concerts. This had been a youthful favourite and benefits from a felicitous marriage of Black American and Celtic influences. Instead of the standard EADGBE tuning, Rory's Martin acoustic guitar is pitched DADGAD, based on a Celtic bagpipe tuning, giving it a plangent, chiming effect. Other country blues, like William Harris's "Bullfrog Blues" or Bo Carter's "All Round Man" were updated and presented in a more rocking context by the full band. There were exciting treatments of modern city blues classics, including Junior Wells's "Messin' With The Kid" and Sonny Boy Williamson II's "Don't Start Me To Talking." His rendition of white country singer Hank Snow's (1910-1999) "I'm Moving On" invites interesting comparisons with versions by The Rolling Stones and George Thoroughgood. But his own compositions comprised the bulk of his material. These inventively extended the boundaries of blues-based music in terms of chord patterns, verse structures and lyrical content.

His lyrics are masterly in their descriptive power and expressive range, although to remove them from their musical context does them less than justice. They are essentially Romantic in origin, in the sense that they suggest a world of adventure and possibilities lying in wait at our doorsteps, of everyday reality transformed into a more magical dimension. They draw extensively on the folkloric motifs typical of the vast open spaces of North America, almost, I would suggest, an America of the mind. A land of mythic characters and boundless opportunity, a fabled realm that beckoned to people on this side of the Atlantic (and one is tempted to say, beckoned with particular appeal to the inhabitants of this island) with promises of freedom and affluence. Often these lyrics seem to refer back to an ethos that is 19th.century in origin - without being dated or indulging in trite nostalgia - to an era of expanding frontiers and the dawn of social emancipation. Yet they are also modern, readily understandable in terms of the society around us. And even when they are imbued with menace or hints of violence (a frequent stance or device in blues, and one not always to be taken too liter-

Bluesman of the Future *S.Hunter*

ally) they never descend into the misogyny or other anti-social brutalities of some contemporary rap music. In line with blues tradition, they bewail the cruelty of fate and the unfairness of the human condition. They celebrate outlaws and other outsiders and are leavened with just enough wry humour to prevent them ever collapsing into bathos.

"Back On My Own Stomping Ground", "Doing Time" and "Seven Days" all have prison connections, while the protagonist of "In Your Town" is on his way to exact retribution on corrupt officials who unjustly imprisoned him. Some songs are redolent of the "dime novel", the urban myths of modern detective fiction, one of Rory's favourite literary forms. The hero of "The Last Of The Independents" is a double outsider, a hit-man with a sense of honour who refuses to do the Mob's bidding; "Continental O.P." pays tribute to the crime author Dashiell Hammett. In "Race The Breeze" an ageing

Courtesy Seán Leahy

gambler smilingly peels cards from the bottom of the pack while the train he is on gathers steam. "Country Mile" describes the exhilaration of travel, almost of movement for its own sake. "Sinner Boy" and "Wayward Child" are songs of adolescent angst and rebellion. The hell-raising rock band of "Brute Force And Ignorance" unsettle the mayor of a staid town, who sneaks out to watch them perform:

Brute Force And Ignorance have just hit town
Looking like survivors from the lost and found"

"Kickback City", "Smear Campaign" and "Loan Shark Blues" contain more specific elements of protest. "Failsafe Day" deplores the 1980s build-up of nuclear weapons. "Daughter Of The Everglades", "Shadow Play" and "Moonchild" convey feelings of ethereal fantasy. There are unsentimental love songs, such as the haunting minor-keyed "Just The Smile".

Just the smile that is spreading all over her face
Warms up the room and could set fire to the place...
And the fog it is spreading all over the town
Watch where you stand or you just might fall down
On the ground...she's in town...

"Who's That Coming", "20/20 Vision" and "At The Depot" all testify to love's excitement and confusing power. "Edged In Blue", "At The Bottom" and "I'll Admit You're Gone" could be described as introspective blues-ballads that contemplate loss and feelings of depression. The sophisticated, jazz-tinged "Calling Card" is an expression of stoicism in the face of adversity. "Ghost Blues" explores the anguish of a man beset by alcohol problems. The lyrics delight in word play and the possibilities of common phrases reshaped and employed in new settings. In "Used To Be" there is both regret at love lost and a mighty, roaring affirmation of the need to forget recriminations and carry on living:

But I ain't gonna' blame you if you ain't gonna blame me...
Better get used to being my used to be!"

Like most great artists, Rory seems to be holding back just enough of himself to distil a sense of something mysterious about the whole creative process which transcends the merely personal. He operates from within a strongly-founded tradition with great assurance, so that these songs attain a type of classicism and become truly the joys and sorrows of Everyman and Everywoman. We feel we can hear him saying something like "Yes, I know life can be lousy and that you're hurting. I've been there too. But listen to this awhile and we might both feel better..." His great technical virtuosity, the product of years of application, enabled him to create an aura of high showmanship, but it was always at the service of his message, of the need to communicate, not an end in itself.

One notable characteristic of his playing is its *warmth*. He might unleash an explosive flurry of growling, bent notes, yet there always seems to be at the back of this a sensitivity, a kind of aesthetic precision that prevents his work ever straying into the more self-indulgent reaches of heavy metal. His playing is often intensely vocal, seeming to answer and mimic his own singing, yet he is also capable of creating marvellous abstract constructions that are challenging in their complex symmetries and intensely satisfying in their resolutions. He hammers on the instrument in a driving percussive manner that evokes the no-holds-barred physicality of a barrel house player of the 1930s, or he can just as readily execute a bouncing ragtime or folk-influenced piece with the lightness of touch of a Segovia. With a deep understanding of the potential of various "open" tunings, where the guitar is tuned to automatically produce the notes a particular chord when strummed, he became a renowned exponent of the "slide" or "bottleneck" style of playing which this facilitates. And always there is space, space between both Rory's guitar phrases and the different instruments in the band; light and shade; a realisation that exciting as volume may be, it is ultimately only another tool to be employed and that the last thing the listener needs is to deluged by an unrelenting wave of sound. He was fortunate to enjoy the services of many fine musicians. A constant from 1970 to 1992 was the bass-playing of Gerry McAvoy – driving, fluid, empathetic and utterly dependable, it was the perfect foil to the guitar-master's pyrotechnics and the bedrock to which the band's sound was anchored.

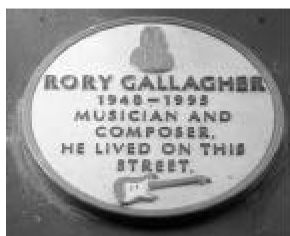
The old country blues, with its stark poetry and hypnotic rhythms, was a mother-lode to which Rory constantly re-

turned. His final album "Fresh Evidence" includes a powerful interpretation of the Mississippi Delta bluesman and folk-poet Son House's sombre "Empire State Express." This recounts the drama (no less powerful for being commonplace) of the unhappy end of a relationship and the departure of a loved one:

I asked the depot agent, please let me ride the blinds (x2)
He said 'I wouldn't mind, but this Empire State ain't mine...

I'm going to tell you all, what this Empire State will do (x2)
It'll take your woman away, and it'll blow back black smoke on you...

Eddie "Son" House (1902-1988) was a type of artist who appealed mightily to Rory. Rising above a background of poverty and institutionalised racism, he succeeded in creating for himself a life of great spiritual and artistic richness, if only of modest material success. A man of innate dignity and kindness, his personality possessed a kind of authenticity that by comparison makes the arrogant posturing and brat behaviour of media-created celebrities such as boy-band members and super-models seem all the more shallow and nasty. Rory felt a great debt to Son and others like him, transmuting their music and presenting it to an audience of millions. In a recent illuminating talk for RTE radio entitled "Giant At My Shoulder", film-maker and musician Philip King summed it up thus: "This music is not something that is 'fashionable' or disposable, it's something that is there forever. He carries the music from one generation to the next. The heart and the soul that beats in the music still beats on, even though Rory himself is gone." I attended Rory's funeral at Bishoptown's Church of The Holy Spirit on a damp afternoon in June 1995. 2000 mourners packed the church and hundreds lined the streets outside. Walking back to the city through a warm screen of summer rain, I reflected on the nature of his achievement, as well as the mystery of a life cut short. Over the next few days I wrote "Tribute To Rory", a song from which I always receive an emotional charge when I play it:



Joint started rocking when he set to work
Beat-up Strat and a lumberjack shirt
Tell it like it is, don't deny the hurt...

Ballyshannon village to the streets of Cork
Isle of Wight Concert to the halls of New York
He could make it sing, make that guitar talk...

Lonnie Donegan sounding through the family home
Leadbelly records on the gramophone
Homework waiting, but he couldn't leave that music alone

Son House hollers rising from the wax
Play it note for note with those Bill Broonzy tracks
Wailing at the brassware, call him "Yakety Sax"

Conversing with the blues at the break of day
All the time listening, not too much to say
Sort of unassuming, Lord, but the kid could play

Night train rumbling on to somewhere new
Songs of the people, tales of me and you
Bent notes popping, colour him deepest blue

Rain soaks the streets of this old town
Put him on the C.D. baby, drop that frown
I can see him smiling, smiling though the tears come down

And the messages we send/ Say more than we first intend
Though I pray that time will mend/ I just know that I lost a friend
And I don't believe we gonna see his like again...

From 1996 to 1998 Carlsberg beers, (a franchise of Guinness Brewers), sponsored "The Bowling Green Festival", a June Weekend blues festival based around a number of Southside Cork taverns, honouring Rory's memory. The driving force behind this was Mick Healy, of "Mojo's Blues Bar". With his retirement the event has been discontinued. Let's hope that someone will see fit to take up the challenge of reviving it in the Millennial year, here in this great artist's native city. For truly, we are not likely to see his like again.

Community Archive

The Northside Folklore Project exists primarily to collect and record the folklore and oral history of the Northside of Cork City and beyond. We welcome public feedback and are always seeking to strengthen our ties with the community whom we serve and among whom we are based. We would like to hear from you – it might be memories you would like to share, photos, books and pieces of memorabilia that are of interest, or suggestions you have. You can phone, write or drop into our base at the Sunbeam Industrial Park, access from either the Commons or Mallow Roads.

You are the lifeblood of the Project, without you we can't survive. Our archive holdings consist of material documenting the local traditional and popular culture. Topics being researched at present include local artists, "Bonna Night" and other customary festivals, Big Houses and other historic buildings, local characters and popular figures past and present, such as Christie Ring, Rory Gallagher, and Sinead Lohan. We are also interested in aspects and interpretation of our surroundings and natural environment such as the River Lee and other waterways. One specific project for instance focuses on the popular nicknames attributed to streets, buildings or areas of the city and beyond. We are Northside based, but our interests are far wider than that, so whether you live north or south of the river or out in the country for that matter, do contact us.

Thank You

The Coal Quay

By Madeline O'Higgins

I'd pen a ditty of this beauteous city,
So wise and witty 'twould beget renown,
And with thrush or curlew, I'd extol purlieu,
The Coal Quay Market of my native town...

Phineas O'Gander, 1870

Trading first began in the Coal Quay in 1690. Since then it has undergone many changes, including the name. Originally called "Ferry Quay", the area has also been known as Potato Quay ("Potato Market" was once sited where Kyle Street is today), Newman's (later Newenham's) Quay - after two Cork sheriffs. There was Timber Quay and nearby, Cockpit Lane. All the names paint a picture of colourful times. An early corn market was converted into "Paddy's Market", a Corporation Bazaar. In 1843 "Saint Peter's Meat Market" was the largest building in Cornmarket Street, and "Vegetable Market" lay on the east side. It has had its booming periods and quiet times, but in recent years it has started to come alive again, especially on Saturdays, with people trading in anything and everything.

There are few of the old dealers left to tell their stories, but those I spoke to recollect the smells and sounds of the market and the quick-witted dealers calling out to attract customers. Some remember Kathy Barry and her *shebeen* (a place where illicit alcohol was sold). She is celebrated in Con Hannigan's poem "The Queen of Cork's Coal Quay Market."

"*Like those two famous landmarks*
The Lough and Shandon Steeple
She was part of dear old Cork
And was loved by all the people..."

Other characters were "Bothered Dan", who dressed in tin from the Coal Quay's tinsmith and thought he was a king, and Andy Gaw, who held people's horses for a bob or two while they shopped, and then often gave the money to poor children. I interviewed Kitty O'Driscoll, a 70 year old lady from the Travelling Community who gave birth to 23 children. She spoke of her memories of the Coal Quay - her mother selling at a stall and herself playing there as a child. She recalls the "shawlie women" and still has her mother's shawl. As she brought it down from the closet she told how everyone helped each other out and how all the Coal Quay people would get together, maybe on a Tuesday, and recite a Rosary around a statue of Our Lady. As she was telling her story you could see by her face that she was drawn back into those days again...

"My father and mother would come in by pony and cart and tie up alongside Mrs Twomey's shop on the corner. All the Coal Quay is changed completely. There used to be wagons belonging to the travelling people, and the women had shawls and baskets. I have my own mother's shawl yet. My mother would come up here for her stock - soaps, glasses, needles, pins, anything to make a few bob, and go to the country to sell them. My father was known as Barlow. He used to be trucking and dealing. He'd meet a fellow that had a nice pony, maybe give him £10 to swap for a cart and he'd give him £10 to swap for a pony if one was as good as the other. There used to be fairs at the corner. My father was part of the Coal Quay people. He was Quilligans. My mother was from Kinsale. I remember Kathy Barry. Oh Lord help us, and a beautiful woman she was, with a lovely black shawl on her! If there was a hurling match coming to Cork, she'd put on a load of crubeens in a big pot, and the best feed they'd ever have was Kathy Barry's crubeens. If you ever go to Dennehy's pub you can see her photograph. All I miss out in the Coal Quay is the old stalls of cloths down on the street. They'd spread the cloth out and pile the clothes on top of them. Afterwards, they'd tie everything up in the cloth in a big knot, put them in a pram, then shove them up Spangle Hill. They were tough but happy times.

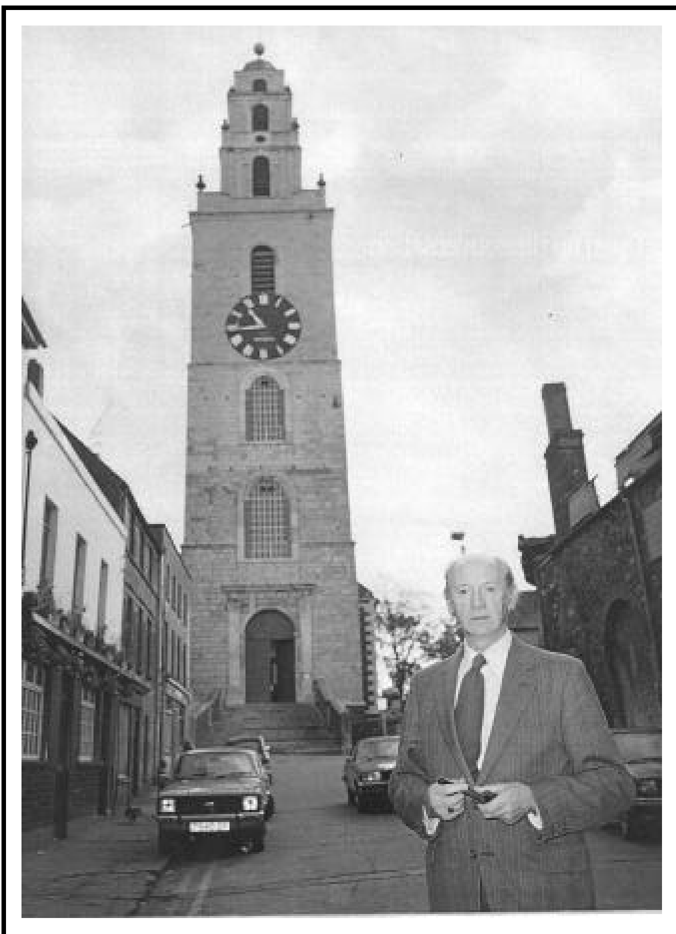
The Coal Quay *Courthesy of The Examiner*

The Real Taoiseach

By Valerie Curtin

As Corkonians mourn the passing of their beloved "Real Taoiseach" they stop to reflect and remember the man who not only was a legendary hurling figure but also the man who led Ireland into the European Economic Community (forerunner of the European Union) in 1973.

Jack Lynch was born on August 15, 1917 into what could only be described as "troubled times". After seven hundred years of English rule the struggle for independence continued and for Irish people caught up in it life had to go on. Mary Forde, from Orrery Rd., related to me what life was like in Cork when she and her brother and sisters were growing up. Jack Lynch was raised in Bob and Joan Walk, Shandon, while Mary's family lived nearby in Wolfe Tone Street. On the day that Jack started school at St.Vincent's Convent, he pushed in on the school bench for Mary's brother Teddy, who started school on the same day. Teddy was soon to become his school chum. Mary recalls: "They used to come up and throw their sacks into Nanny Burns's (Mary's grandmother) and go up to Johnny Collins's field to play hurling. My mam used to say, 'Ye'll have no shoes, Jack when you go home you'll be murdered over the toes of your shoes for climbing the wall in', and they'd love nothing better than a chase from Danny Collins. He used to be chasing them to get out of his field."



Courtesy Magill/ Blackpool Historical Society

"There was another lad by the name of Dinny Sullivan. All his sisters went away to America in the 1920s and Dinny and his mam were waiting to join them. Dinny lived with his mother in a little cottage in Sky Lane. His mother Maggie was always at hand helping with the home births and for the washing and laying out of those who had just departed this world. She was there for your coming and your going, one of the 'fior feasa', or the wise women as they were known. Anyway, we'd go up and knock on Dinny's door. The lads would be inside with a projector that Dinny had got from America. They'd have the pictures on the wall. We thought it was great. They'd say 'Ye can't come in and ye can't keep following us'. Jack and Teddy and Gene would come out and Jack was so gentle he'd say, 'Teddy, let them in'. I used to have two bars of chocolate that I had taken from the shop to bribe them. We had a shop in Wolfe Tone Street, we sold everything from an anchor to a needle. We had a big kitchen behind the shop and a parlour. We lived there as well."

"After receiving their First Holy Communion at St. Vincent's Convent, Teddy and Jack went to the North Monastery School. Jack no longer lived near us after his mother died. I remember meeting his mother when I would call with a book for Jack from Teddy, they used to exchange books. They used to say that she was very ambitious for them. He had two sisters, Renee and Eva, who are both still living and three brothers Theo, Charles and Finbar. Theo and the Rev. Father Charles are deceased. Finbar still lives in his native Cork. Jack's dad used to wear a bowler hat and smoked a pipe, he always had a smile for you. A relative of Jack's called Nanny Lynch used to call to my grandmother Mary Burns, who was originally Mary Cronin from Ballyvourney. She married John Burns from Fenit. She bought a cottage up a lane near us and kept pigs and chickens in a field at the back. She used to bring a fellow called Paddy McGrath up from Ballyvourney to thatch the cottage for her. My grandparents used to talk in Irish and when Jack and Teddy would look in after school, Jack used to talk in Irish to them. Of course the North Mon. was always a great school for the Irish. Jack was very clever and was a lovely gentle boy. Teddy didn't go to the secondary school, he got a job. Jack succeeded in getting a scholarship to the secondary school at the North Monastery School. All secondary schools required a fee in those days."

Part of the first generation to grow up after independence, Jack held the office of Taoiseach from November 10, 1966 until March 1973, and again from July 1977 until December 1979. As leader he built on the legacy of his predecessor Seán Lemass, seeing the need for stability, economic growth and realism on the question of the North. He believed passionately that divisions there could only be healed by dialogue and compromise. He rejected the use of violence as a means of unifying the country and famously remarked, when it was suggested that in 1969 he should have sent in troops to protect the northern nationalists, that the Irish Army did-

n't have the capacity to get to Newry (about five miles north of the border), let alone to Belfast. He was possessed of a dry sense of humour. On one northern trip he and his party were pelted with snowballs by the Rev. Ian Paisley, who shouted "We'll have no Pope here!" "Just which one of us does he think is the Pope?" asked Jack quizzically. In the hearts of the people of Cork's Leeside he remained the "Real Taoiseach" or sometimes "The People's Taoiseach". This fact was evident when on his death in October 1999 the crowds lined the streets to pay homage to him. As former Taoiseach Liam Cosgrave said of him "At one time he was the most popular politician in the country since Daniel O'Connell."

Courtesy The Examiner

As people in Blackpool mourned the passing of Jack Lynch, I spoke with Norah Coleman and asked her why Jack Lynch was known as "The Real Taoiseach". She said, "Because he acted like a Taoiseach and he respected the people and he never told lies. When he would come down to Cork he would always go out to the Glen and I remember when he lived up at the top of Redemption Rd., every Sunday morning at about half past ten he would come down Broad Lane and he used to have a hurley, a bag and boots, and he'd come down there and if you were at the door he'd give you a wave up. We went to the matches up the Dyke and down the Glen. On the day of the Eucharistic Procession there was always a match up the Dyke. Glen Rovers held a special Requiem Mass for him in Blackpool after his death. All the Glen people were there, all the local crowd. He got a lovely turn out from the people in Blackpool".

Mary Forde told me that though Jack was ill himself when Teddy died in 1997 he rang Mary to sympathise with her and the family. His old school chum was not forgotten. Kitty Healy of Blackpool remembered his kindness when her father died. Her father had served as Lord Mayor in the early days of the Cork Corporation. "Jack sent me a telegram to sympathise and to say that due to pressure of business he couldn't come to Cork for the funeral. My memory of Jack Lynch is that he was a sincere kind gentleman. He never forgot anyone, we were all the same to him. I remember the political rallies. They had famous rallies for de Valera, but they had just as good rallies for Jack Lynch. The crowd would come in from Blackpool and down Shandon Street, past Molly Owens. Molly used to sell crubeens and offal and she would have an apple stall outside St. Mary's Hall when we used to go to the pictures. She was mad Fianna Fáil, she had tar barrels for everyone, like the bonfires for de Valera, my goodness you couldn't believe it. We used to have flags out of the windows. There was great interest in politics then. The young people have less interest in politics now, but I suppose you cannot blame them".

I asked Jerry McCarthy, formerly a member of the Garda Siochána and now a tutor at Northside Community Enterprises Ltd., if he knew Jack. "Everybody knew Jack", he replied. He recounted an incident that happened when he was on duty in the Blarney Park Hotel. "We were waiting for Mr. Lynch to leave and he eventually came out. 'Where is that damn driver? He is never around when I want him', he said. I thought that he was serious but when I looked again he was winking at me, it was the way that his driver Ned O'Dea was always waiting for Jack! Jerry said that he will always remember another incident in relation to Jack. "I played with St. Finbarr's in 1964 in the County Final and we played Glen Rovers. It was a tough game. The Glen beat us. We had a seventeen-year-old young fellow by the name of Con Roche playing with us and I recall Con being very upset after the game. But what I remember most was that Jack Lynch approached him before he went to celebrate with the Glen. He came over to Con and shook him by the hand and said 'Con, there are better days ahead for you, don't be too disappointed, we all had to go through that, look to the future'. Undoubtedly Jack was correct. He recognised a good player. Con Roche in latter years went on to win All Ireland and County medals with the 'Barrs' ".

John O'Keeffe, who works in Con Murphy's Gent's Outfitters in Patrick Street recalls: "My earliest memory would be of going to the camp field with my father, it would have been St. Nicks. and the Army. I remember this tall figure of a man and to me as a young fellow he looked very imposing and stately and my father said 'He is a Bachelor of Law.' He knew who he was of course, and that he had won all those medals for the hurling and football. That would have been around 1947". John O'Keeffe played with a folk group in the 1960s when it was popular to wear a flower in your hair! John recalls an incident in the Barleycove Hotel in the '70s when the Fianna Fáil Ardchomhairle was being held there. "We sang and then someone said that Jack would sing and he came up and he sang the 'Blarney Stone' and we backed him. I said to him, we always wanted to back Jack. That was the slogan at the time – 'Back Jack'. 'It's a bit late now' said Jack's wife Máirin. Her husband had just lost an election. John had a story about the Kilkenny Beer Festival in 1969. Jack was Taoiseach at the time and was attending the Festival. "He was on the stage and he saw us standing by and he said 'There is a group from my own county coming on here

now and they're very good, I know you're going to enjoy them'. Jack wasn't aware that it was a competition. The next day the Evening Press declared, 'Taoiseach tips Festival Winners', because we went on to win the competition! But Jack was completely relaxed, he was a natural gentleman. In Barleycove you wouldn't know that he was the Taoiseach, he was just one of the lads. He came up and sang and seemed to be able to switch off and give the attention to what was happening at the time."

Blackpool's Kitty Healy summed it up like this: "Jack Lynch was a bit of class." The Former Taoiseach Jack Lynch died on October 20, 1999, in the loving care of all the staff at the Royal Hospital, Donnybrook, Dublin. His wife Máirin was at his side.
I ar dheis Dé go raibha anam.

Sporting Career.

A legendary hurling figure Jack Lynch won six "All Ireland" medals between 1941 and 1946 including an "All Ireland" football medal in 1945. On that fateful September Sunday in 1939 when the British government declared war on Nazi Germany, Jack captained the Cork team against Kilkenny in the All Ireland Final. Kilkenny were champions on the day, but victory was sweet in 1942 when Jack was captain once again and they brought the McCarthy Cup back to Cork. Only the great Christy Ring won more club medals than his quiet clubmate. As Jimmy Barry Murphy said; "Jack Lynch came to symbolise the pride, courage and sheer joy that represents Leeside's G.A.A. heritage".

Jack Lynch, 1917-1999

Called to the bar Trinity College 1945.

A City in Mourning — *Valerie Curtin*

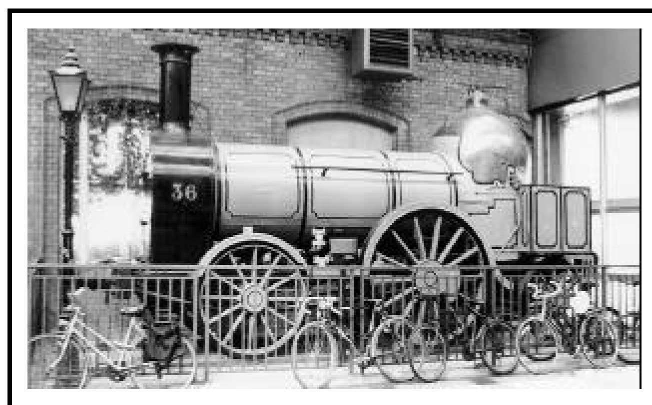
Married Máirin Murray August 10, 1946.
Elected T.D. in 1948.
Parliamentary Secretary 1951-1954.
Minister for the Gaeltacht March- June 1957.
Minister for Education 1957- 1959.
Minister for Industry and Commerce 1959-1965.
Minister for Finance 1965-1966.
Taoiseach November '66- March '73/July '77- Dec. '79.

The Railway

By Carmel Higgins

The railway houses of Lower Glanmire Road harboured a tight-knit, train-loving community…

I was reading recently about the coming of the railways to Ireland in "Ironing the Land", by Kevin O'Connor. Many railways were started during the Famine of the 1840s and are inextricably bound up with the social history of our country. The book and its excellent RTE TV series set me thinking about my own childhood. From my earliest years to adulthood, the railway literally formed the background to my life as the line ran at the back of our home. Unknown to my parents, my younger sisters and I often crossed the track in search of bluebells. We lived near Kent Station in the Lower Glanmire Road. The houses there were owned by C.I.E. , who let them to their workers at nominal rents. It was a tightly knit community, typical of many in the 1950s and '60s. My father worked from 1922 to 1967 as an inspector of signals for C.I.E., then known as the Great Southern and Western Railway. Like all employees' families, we had a free travel pass. We went to the seaside at Youghal in summer, to Cobh, to Kerry for our holidays, and for an annual trip to Dublin Zoo.



Old Engine, Kent Station — *Carol Hudson*

My 12 year old nephew, Colm, is a train enthusiast and says of Kent Station: "I used to love coming into Cork's station because I knew that within minutes I would be playing on the old unused train." Arnie, Colm's dad, recalls their times together there. "Some ten years ago I brought my toddler son up to the station for a little walk. At that time he was an avid fan, through bedtime stories, of the Rev. W. Ardy's *Thomas the Tank Engine and Friends*. On entering the station he spotted the 1901 green engine, only to him it was 'Percy the tank engine'. I demonstrated tackling that would do the Irish rugby team proud in ensuring that a two year old did not run from the footbridge as he constantly shoveled imaginary coal into Percy's fire."

Marrianne, Colm's mum, also has memories of a childhood spent in the shadow of the railway station: "Some of the first sounds I can remember hearing were the puffing, shunting,

and whistling of trains in and out of Kent Station. We lived about 100 yards away in a tall terraced house which backed onto the line. We could clearly see the trains for Cobh and Youghal come and go from the upstairs back windows of our house.

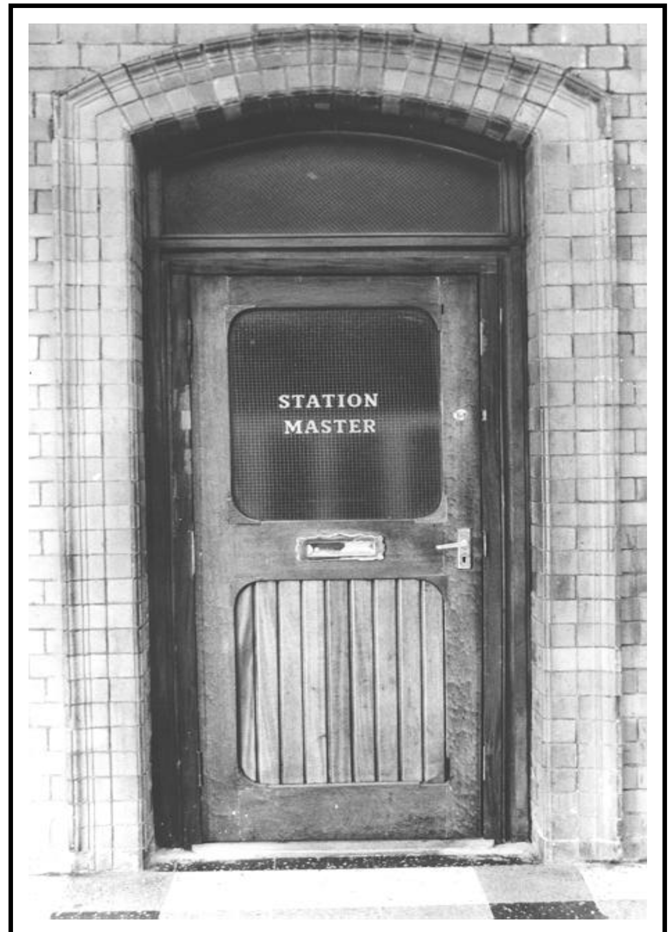
Kent Station *Carol Hudson*

Sometimes if the engine driver spotted us he would blow the whistle and our day was made! We had neighbours who were ticket collectors, porters, train drivers, inspectors and signalmen. Some of the women worked on the bookstall, the sweet kiosk or the ticket office. At that time, the early '60s, the old steam engines were still in use. These proved irresistible to us as they puffed in and out of the Blackpool Tunnel. When a train had departed for such strange, and to us, then unknown destinations as Dublin and Waterford, a cloud of white smoke would hang in the air for some minutes afterwards. We knew every stop on the journey to Cobh. At one stage the train travelled over a bridge which spanned an arm of Cork Harbour. It took only a few seconds (we always counted), but if you leaned out of a window at that point all you could see below, on either side, was water. This was a high point of the trip as we especially loved the weird and wonderful sounds that the engine's wheels made travelling over this section of line. The old carriages had a corridor running down one side, with a large window looking into each compartment. Once inside your compartment, the windows could be opened or closed by hauling on a thick leather strap and securing it to iron studs. Each journey never failed to thrill."

Carol Hudson

My brother Bill vividly remembers doing summer work on the railway: "During my school summer holidays in the 1970s I worked for C.I.E. Catering Services. As the new boy I got all the worst jobs. Each morning at 8.00 a.m.
I'd make and pack the sandwiches for the canteen in Kent Station and for the dining car on the trains. Twenty-three pans of bread on a slow day, and there were not many slow days. At 10.30 I'd head off to platforms 5 and 6 with my laden trolley. I was supposed to shout, 'Minerals, biscuits etc. for sale!' I never did unless my boss was around and even then you'd want to be standing within a foot of the trolley to hear me. One day I was standing at the top of the causeway on platform 6 waiting for the 11.30 train to depart so I could return to the canteen for my break, but the train stayed put. The Gardai arrived and began telling people to vacate the train. The whole station was being evacuated because of a bomb scare. Everyone rushed, in an orderly fashion, to get out, with me and the trolley bringing up the rear.

When I got to the canteen it was locked, so I pushed the trolley all the way out on to the Lower Road and up the hill towards the city. The thing didn't have breaks, so I needed level ground before I could stop. The Lower Road was crowded with people and some were kind enough to buy something to lighten the load. The trolley was emptied of all its contents long before the all-clear was sounded. I arrived back at the canteen to cheers of my fellow-workers – or was it jeers for being so stupid as to take the trolley with me? Anyway, my boss was happy, never before in her memory had the trolley returned empty. For the rest of that summer I was famous – 'Trolley-boy', they called me. No more sandwiches did I make after that day. I was in charge of the trolley and spent most of my days venturing up and down the platforms of Kent Station."



Carol Hudson

An Gael agus an *Gowl a....*

By Siofán O Cadhla, UCC

Withoud Runt poor Pig look like da sausies withoud da skin. Crap!
Enda Walsh, *Disco Pigs*

Carol Hudson

Bhí Comhairle na Cathrach ar a ndícheall ag iarraidh na Gaeil a choimeád amach as an gcathair riamh, sa bhliain 1704 sheoladar iarratas go dtí Páirlimint Shasana "setting forth the grievance the English lie under by the encroachments of the Irish into their respective trades, and also setting forth the great number of Irish flocking into this City [Ó hÉaluighthe 1944:34]. Bhí cáil na filíochta ar limistéir na cathrach, ar Charraig na bhFear agus ar an mBlárnain, áiteanna a raibh tarraingt fhilí móra na Mumhain orthu. Dúirt Wakefield i dteannta na bliana 1820, "even in the city of Cork...the common people speak Irish...the Irish language is so much spoken in the city of Cork and its neighbourhood that an Englishman is apt to forget where he is, and consider himself in a foreign city [Nic Craith 1993:16]. Dúirt Quarry, séiplíneach i bParóiste Naomh Mhuire an tSeandúna, "the lower orders in their dealings with one another frequently speak the Irish language" [ibid: 18].

Is é tuairim Buttimer [1993:609] go raibh an Ghaeilge á labhairt agus á scríobh sa chathair "whether settled in or near the city or visiting it for other purposes, it appears from the extant information that Gaelic speakers continued to employ Irish in undertakings which had a significant urban dimension." In litir go dtí Pilib Barún i gContae Phort Láirge scríobh an Dochtúir Seán Ó Murchú (Easpag Chorcaí 1815-47), "you think it odd, that until the age of 40 years I was totally unacquainted with the Irish language, but upon my being concecrated Bishop of Cork, I felt it a duty of conscience to learn that language, and thereby to be able to examine in the Irish Catechism such persons as should be presented to me for Confirmation [Ó hÉaluighthe 1944:35]. Tá tagairt shuimiúil ag de Barra d'fheirmeoir ó bhruach thuaidh na cathrach a bhíodh ag díol bainne agus a bhí ina fhile Gaeilge [de Barra 1997:43]. Tugann ÓhÉaluighthe [1944:36] mar fhianaise an gearán a dhein an file Donnachadh Caoch Ó Mathúna nuair a tugadh Sasanach air ag Margadh Chorcaí de chionn gur chualathas Béarla a labhairt aige "Ionnas gur meastar le haicme de chlainn Mhíle/Dar Muiris, gan mhagadh, gur Sasanach tintí mé." Tá raidhse tagairtí do bhóithríní agus do sráideanna na cathrach sa dán a chum Dáibhí de Barra in 1823, sa dán féin tá bithiúnach á fhiach ar fuaid na cathrach, deir de Barra [Buttiner 1993:604]:
Chuardaíos *Shandon Street* suas/
Is Ard an Gheata Nua (*North Gate Bridge*)/Agus Bóthar na Blárnan.

Tá rian na Gaeilge ar chaint na ndaoine sa chathair inniu. Tá sé seo le feiscint (i) focail Ghaeilge a mhaireann sa chaint, leithéidí *bausekawn* (básachán), *bladderawl* (bladaráil), *bruss* (brus), *codderauling* (cadráil), *gob* (gob), *pus* (pus) nó *gammy* (cam) (ii) gramadach nó comhréir na Gaeilge a bheith ar an mBéarla, *is it codding me you are*, *over-right me* srl., (iii) fuaimíocht na Gaeilge a bheith ar an gcaint, an rud a dtugann Ó Cuív "the common tunes," the rising and falling tones" nó "the sing-song effect" air [Ó Cuív 1944]. Sí an ghné is suntasaí den fhuaimíocht seo ná an afada gur dócha gur leath sé isteach ó Ghaeilge Chorcaí. Maireann sé in ainmneacha áite, Baile Uí Mhaoláin mar shampla, deirtear *Ballyvolane* agus ní *Ballyvolawn* Ní shásódh an diabhal ná Doctor Foster an "a" seo ach scarúint le Gaeilge agus é féin a ghreamú d'aon fhocal Béarla a dhrannaigh chuige, rud a d'fhág *Pana*, *Knocka, Shandona, Barracka* againn agus foirmeacha ar nós *bathina* (swimming togs), *smaha (kiss, hug), sterina (go car), raza, blacka, bearas (without stockings), a faeka (a fool), a bona.* (iv) gnéithe nach mbaineann go díreach leis an teanga, sé sin, dulanna macnaimh agus smaointe, iompar agus deasghnátha na ndaoine, *the dead man, the dead list, the dead house, the bahn (bahnshee), the haulinghome, Bona Night* srl,.)

S. Hunter

Tá cúpla

bailiú beag de na focail seo déanta cheana féin, ceann ag Beecher [1983] agus ceann ag Ó hÉaluighthe [1944], ní heol dom féin aon cheann eile. Níl aon fhocal anseo a bhí sna seanliostaí mara bhfuil brí nua nó brí ná fuil luaite leo aige.

caulkinga (?)(walking stick)
cawhake (caoch) (fool)
clapping (claspaíl) loud noise made while eating
cluheracawneen (infant)
cnavshawling (cnáimhseáil) (moaning, complaining)
connyshure, connyshurin (conisiúr) ((old women, chatting, gabbing).
cracking (cnagadh) loud noise while breaking sweets
craw (crá) (upper chest area)
cree nor cris (crí/croí ná crios) there isn't cree nor cris on it.
dawfake (dá phéac?) (a fool, in Cónal Creedon's *Passion Play*, a dawfake family, having two families?)
dazza (deas) (nice, goodlooking) you're me dazza!
deeling (Dia linn)
deoram (a drink)
dudy-flukes (dúdaí/diúd +?) (ornaments, little things)
durn (duirn) (door durns or saddles)
fastook (fastúch?) (a big fastook, a big awkward person)
flathooluck (flaithiúlach) (generous)
fudgies (fuadán?) (little things (stolen?) odds and ends)
foostering (fústar) (fussing)
galluses (gealasaí) (braces for trousers)
gowly Flynns (gabhail Uí Fhloinn) (the cross on Bandon Road, now Hurley's Shop)
gibbing (giobadh) (sustained irratation) picking and gibbing
gibbles (giobal) (rags, balls on clothing)
giddam (giodam) (excitment, energy)
glugger (gliogar) (false thing or a spit)
gomallogue (gamall) (fool)
gowl(a) (gall) (fool)
gob gobbing (gob) (mouth, a spit)
grawl (gabháil) (a small child)
groishlucks (goilseach) (originally ear-wig) (small insects)
kippen (cipín)(a stick) you have to keep the kippen to him
lapsy-pa (?) (a fool but also brewer's droop) a touch of lapsy-pa.
layer-is-mo-launta (mo léir is mo leannta) (an expression of regret or sarcism)
leech (righineacáil, snámh?) (walk slowly) leeching along.
lyeberlish (leadhb ar leis) (originally "a sorry nag") (a mess) the place is in a lyeberlish.
mahgalore (maith-go-leor) (drunk or getting there)
mausey (mása) (originally large hips) (disgusting in general)
mawla (márla) (the malable substance played with in schools)
mawta (máta) (outsized stools, faeces)
olagoaning (ologón) (crying, whimpering)
oxter (ascall) (under the arm)
pizawn (píosán) (from French for peasant) (miserable looking person)
rawmeishing (ráiméis) (nonsensical talk)
scrawney (scrábach?) (miserable)
skaks (sceach) (branches, bushes, twigs, even cloves)
slocking (sloging)(slad) (steal)
smasher masher (maise?) (a good looking person)
sooluck (súlach) (gravy, juice)
slug (slocadh) (a drink)
smaha (smeach) (smack, kiss)
smuts (smúit) (dust particles)
spalpeen (spailpín, labourer) (the spalpeen, a street off Shandon Street, Dominick Street?)
stars, on the (ar na stártha) (drunk)
strakara (stracaire) (a big strong person)
taescawn (taoscán) (a drink, a drop)
taspy (teaspach, fervour)
tawhaelin (táithfhéithleann, honeysuckle) (as tough as tawhaelin)
taw-taw (hata) (a hat)
tuct (tocht) (strong feeling of sadness felt in chest)
unconscious (gan aithne gan urlabhra?) (drunk)

The first section of this article gives evidence of the strength of the Irish language in Cork city in the early nineteenth century, readers without Irish may read this in English from quotation to quotation. The second part of the article suggests that there are at least four ways in which Irish influences the English spoken in Cork city (i) Irish words (ii) Irish syntax and grammar (iii) sounds, pitch and tone (iv) ideas and modes of thought; adherance to festivals, rituals etc. The long "aa," a refugee of Cork Irish (Ballyvolane as opposed to Ballyvolawn) is a dominant feature of Cork English and can change the lives of swaney (*saonta,* innocent) English words forever (*Shandona, Knocka).* These are translations at a third remove, Seandún –Shandon -Shandona. This third space, the space in between Irish and English, standard-Irish and standard-English, colloquial Irish and colloquial English, Standard English and Non-standard English, Official and Unofficial drives much of the hybridity, innovation and creativity of the contemporary urban cultural process. We are just beginning to realise that this is okay, this is what happens, as Spike Milligan recently said 'I'm Irish, I think sideways.' The Cork accent has recently been given a creative rattle by writers like Enda Walsh and Cónal Creedon. Christy Kenneally is another who has brought it into his stories, recalling "the language problem" of the priests in his parish he says, "on any Saturday night in the box they could hear that someone had been 'connyshurin', 'doin'a foxer' or 'slockin' and within the secrecy of the confessional, who could ask for translations?" [Kenneally 1996:119]. The words of poet Paul Durcan seem to describe this language problem well enough "not merely Irish but English as well, not merely English but Irish as well." Words already documented on the other lists were not included unless there was a different or additional meaning not previously noted. Except for a few words I have heard myself this list has been gathered entirely from two people, Mary and Sally O' Donovan and I would like to thank them. It seems that Ó hÉaluighthe's pessimistic view in 1944 regarding the vanishing words of Cork is unfounded. It would be interesting if readers could send their own words to *The Archive* and add to the list in English or Irish.

Reading

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Letters to the Editor

The Archive welcomes correspondence from readers. You may have a memory or idea you wish to share, or might like to comment on something in the magazine. Letters should be short and may be edited.
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*

It's good to see another issue of "The Archive". Collecting folklore is certainly a worthy project! But for Robin Flower, three classics of literature on the Blasket Islands would never have been written; but for the Brothers Grimm, the world would have lost a wealth of ancient tales. The Northside of Cork is hugely endowed in historical riches. Your journal is most interesting, the memoirs therein all worth preserving. Local historical journals have been a marvellous source for me in writing walk books about West Cork. All the best for the future.

Damien Enright, *The Examiner*,
Academy Street, Cork

I was pleased to see a photo of the Waterworks Tower in the last issue of "The Archive". The tower, which stands near the Lee Road on the north-western side of the city, is directly across the road from the old turbine house, the water-driven pumps of which are still capable of supplying water to much of Cork's Northside. Both buildings are of similar Victorian industrial style, being built of red sandstone and white limestone. The tower commands a powerful view of the city – a privilege only enjoyed by the pigeons these days.

John Sheehan
Shanakiel, Cork

Poulraddy before its destruction *S.Hunter*

Our family were delighted with the third issue of "The Archive". An increased number of pages is a great idea and certainly offers more scope. The editor's article "Farewell Poulraddy" on page 13 hit the nail on the head. As one who grew up near that area and has frequent occasion to walk through it, I am appalled by the havoc the developers have caused there. Why on earth do the powers-that-be continue to allow the destruction of old sites of beauty that have so much potential to enrich the whole community? In the mad rush to develop that over-hyped cliché "The Celtic Tiger", we seem to be forgetting some very important things. Our youth suicide rate is among the highest in the world and I fear for the sort of society that our children must grow up in. We should be nurturing areas like Poulraddy and historic buildings like Water's Mill, making them accessible to the whole community, not thoughtlessly wrecking them to make way for things like service stations that could be sited elsewhere. Thank you, "Archive", for speaking out. Poulraddy is gone, but in some small way you have given the ordinary people of the community their "day in court" over this matter.

Breda O'Malley
Blackpool

Shalom Park in Winter *S.Hunter*

I have enjoyed all three issues of "The Archive". Such a publication is useful beyond mere entertainment. Folklore is important. The last issue has inspired me to write with a few queries about the area where I live, especially as I now realise that your magazine is not limited in scope to the city's Northside. I am from Toronto, Canada, where in spite of my family's Italian background I lived in a predominantly Yiddish area. I found it interesting to have settled in Cork in what is known colloquially as "Jew Town". In fact, I have a hard time explaining to people where I live until I say Jew Town, or the Hibernian Buildings. There are several other terraces in this area of the Southside, which is bounded by Albert, Victoria and South Link roads. I have been researching its history. The Jewish people who used to live here came as refugees from Lithuania in the 1880s. They were going to New York, but a crooked ship's captain dropped them in Cobh and wished them luck. They settled here for awhile before eventually filtering away. Some of the families drifted throughout Ireland, assimilating into Irish society, but the majority emigrated, primarily to Palestine, and most Jewish people had left Jew Town by the mid-1920s.

Given such a short sojourn in Cork City, the Jewish community may have left behind a significant chunk of culture. I notice that during Christmas, many homes have an arrangement of electric candles in their windows. Could these be related to the candelabrum that Jewish people light sequentially during the eight day festival of Hannukah, which indi-

dentally begins about December 25th? Is the potato pie indigenous to Ireland, or is it a variation of the Jewish knish, also made of potato and deep-fried? And the spiced beef available in the Old English Market reminds me very much of pastrami, which is Yiddish smoked beef. I look forward to feedback through your magazine to these queries.

Giovanni Malito
Albert Rd., Cork.

Many congratulations on your excellent journal. I am impressed by the efforts of the Northside Folklore Project to capture and record history and general folklore of our city and surrounding areas. I particularly like the fact that everybody has access to this valuable cultural information through "The Archive". So many of our older folk have precious memories that can so easily be "lost and gone forever". With the hustle and bustle of life in our technological culture we can forget our roots. Those who are pursuing folklore academically gain access to the richness of the past through books and museums, but "The Archive" is right "on the street", with people who are still alive giving us their experiences direct. It is a great idea, and valuable work.

Your observations on some valuable buildings, streams and open spaces which are being allowed to vanish are timely. I hope some progressive politicians and business people will see the tremendous tourist and commercial potential for developing and utilising some of the facilities at present being torn down, built over or just plain neglected, e.g. "Farewell Poulraddy", page 13, Issue 3, "The Archive". Maybe a lobby of the more visionary politicians might prevent some further loss. Perhaps "The Archive" could lead the way in organising a self-help clean-up of Northside streams as a Sunday afternoon project. Count me in. Two retired gentlemen in Carrigaline did something like that on the old Crosshaven railway line. Local people were so impressed that many joined in, the Council contributed materials and the project is an ongoing and expanding one, a constantly improving walkway with seats and flowers and shrubs. They obviously did not accept that it was someone else's job to create a better environment . In addition, the concept embodied by your journal has encouraged me to resume some historical maritime research which I had let slip behind. For that I thank you. Best of luck for the future.

Pat Sheridan
Sheridan & Associates
Management Recruitment Consultants
The Mill, Crosses Green

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A neighbour picked up a copy of issue 3 of "The Archive" from the City Library. What a wonderful little magazine! Is it possible to obtain copies of numbers 1 and 2? We loved all the articles – a favourite is "Cork in Song and Story", by Valerie Curtin. There are a great variety of topics covered and the publication deserves to be more widely known. I was fascinated to read the stories of premature burial in the piece about the Cork Vision Centre, formerly Saint Peter's Church. I have heard of very similar tales located in the Cork City Archives in South Main Street, which used to be Christ Church. It would be interesting to know where they were first recorded and which building has the stronger claim on them. One suggestion: would it be possible to give us some articles relating to some of the newer suburbs, such as Mayfield. There must be lots of material just waiting to be researched out here.

(Mrs) L. McDonnell and family
Mayfield

Readers Questions Answered

A much loved landmark, St. Lukes *S.Hunter*

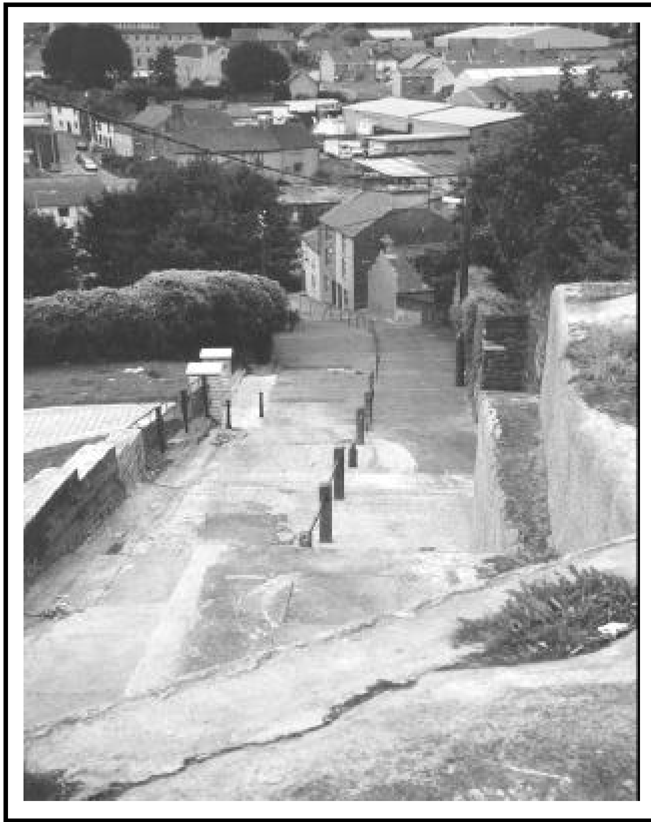
Dave and Emer Coogan asked in Issue 3 for historic/folkloric information about the Tollhouse in St. Luke's Cross and about the Fever Hospital Steps. So far we have been unable to establish a definite construction date for either, but it can be said with certainty that the Tollhouse is a late Victorian structure, erected there sometime after 1871. (A map of that year bears no trace of it). One theory is that the building was a kiosk on the Mardyke during the Great Exhibition of 1902 and was later brought to its present site, but this seems unlikely. Records show that it was a tollbooth used for the collection of fees levied by the Corporation on agricultural produce entering the city. The adjacent stone trough provided refreshment for thirsty animals. The Tollhouse has been used intermittently as a newspaper kiosk down the years and is a notable landmark.

The Fever Hospital Steps form the first stage of the Old Youghal Rd., which probably goes back to the 17th. century. Rising from the valley bottom at Leitrim St. they ascend the western flank of the hill occupied by Collins Barracks. Exactly when this section of hill was stepped has been hard to determine; archaeologist Dr. Colin Rynne thinks that they are essentially a Victorian construction. They have gone through various phases; part of them collapsed when the nearby main water supply burst in 1996. There appear to be 104 steps at present, counting the small separate upper section, near enough to the ninety-nine of popular usage. Local man Pat Murphy, who grew up at no great distance in John Street, remembers going up the steps to play hurling on the piece of open land at the top which is known as Bell's Field or "The Bellser". He and other lads would also slide down the open water gully on the steps' southern edge, using pieces of cardboard as sleighs, or (even more dangerously) ride their bicycles down it. Mary Barrett (née O'Driscoll) recalls going down the steps on her way to school at the North Presentation Convent. She says that on very cold mornings children would be hoping that the steps would be closed because of ice, thus giving them a holiday. Her Uncle Mickey was a great story teller and would have them on tenterhooks with scary tales of the area. He told of coming up the steps

around midnight and being confronted by a ghostly man with a lantern at the gates of the by then derelict Fever Hospital. The man asked Mickey if he would make up the numbers for a hurling team. Mickey assented and soon found himself on The Bellser, taking part in a strange game between two teams of phantom hurlers. When the game was over he was allowed to depart unharmed.

Near the foot of the steps, to their northern or Poulraddy side, there was until about the 1980s a bar (now demolished) called "The Well", named from the famous Lady's Well, an ancient and long-venerated spring a little further down the valley. The Fever Hospital itself lay near the top of the steps, on the same side. It was opened as a "House of Recovery" in 1802, the brainchild of Dr. John Milner Barry, to deal with typhus, and other infectious diseases then rampant in the city. It saw thousands of admissions (and fatalities) over the next century and a half, but overall was an institution that saved many thousands of lives. By the mid-1950s improved standards of health and hygiene had rendered it obsolescent and it was closed down, then demolished in the early '60s.

Editor



The 'Ninety– Nine' Steps *S.Hunter*

The Northside Folklore Project

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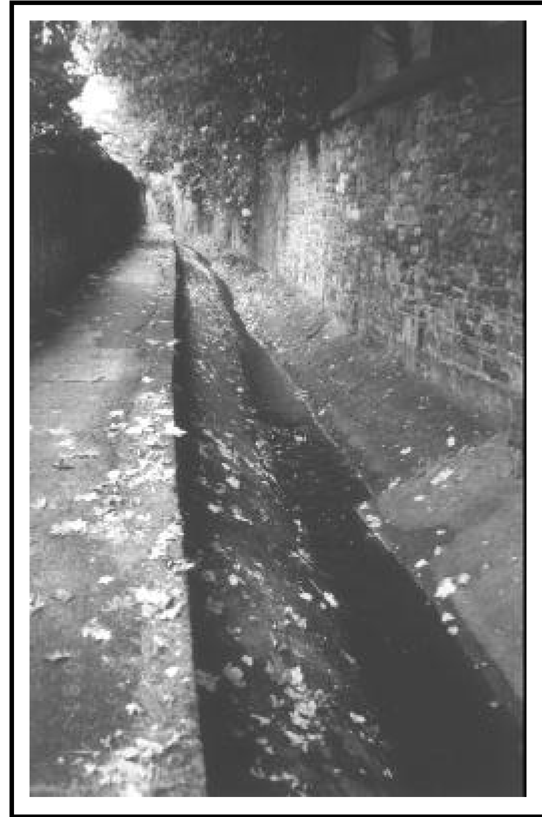


The Backwatercourse "Debtor's Walk" *S.Hunter*

The Backwatercourse may be three or more centuries old. It is an arm of the Glen River and was a mill race used to provide water power, running from above the site of the former Glenties Flats to join the River Bride and form the Kiln River at Leitrim Street, by Murphy's Brewery.

The Glen River divided above Blackpool and one branch, the Backwatercourse, ran down below the Assumption Convent. Here it was known as 'The Bank' or 'The Rats'River'. The path beside it was often called 'Debtors' Walk' because it offered a handy back route for people who owed money to shopkeepers in Blackpool and didn't want to be seen. – Jack Byrne

We also played by that little stream by the Assumptionist Convent, we called it 'The Bank'. You'd make a little boat out of your lollipop stick and put your name on it, then have races. – Con Higgins

Mills and tanneries had made use of the waters of the Bride and the Glen for a long time. They are quite small as rivers go, just streams really, but they've provided a lot of energy down the centuries. – Denis P. Long

This section of waterway and path recently disappeared under the Blackpool By-Pass.

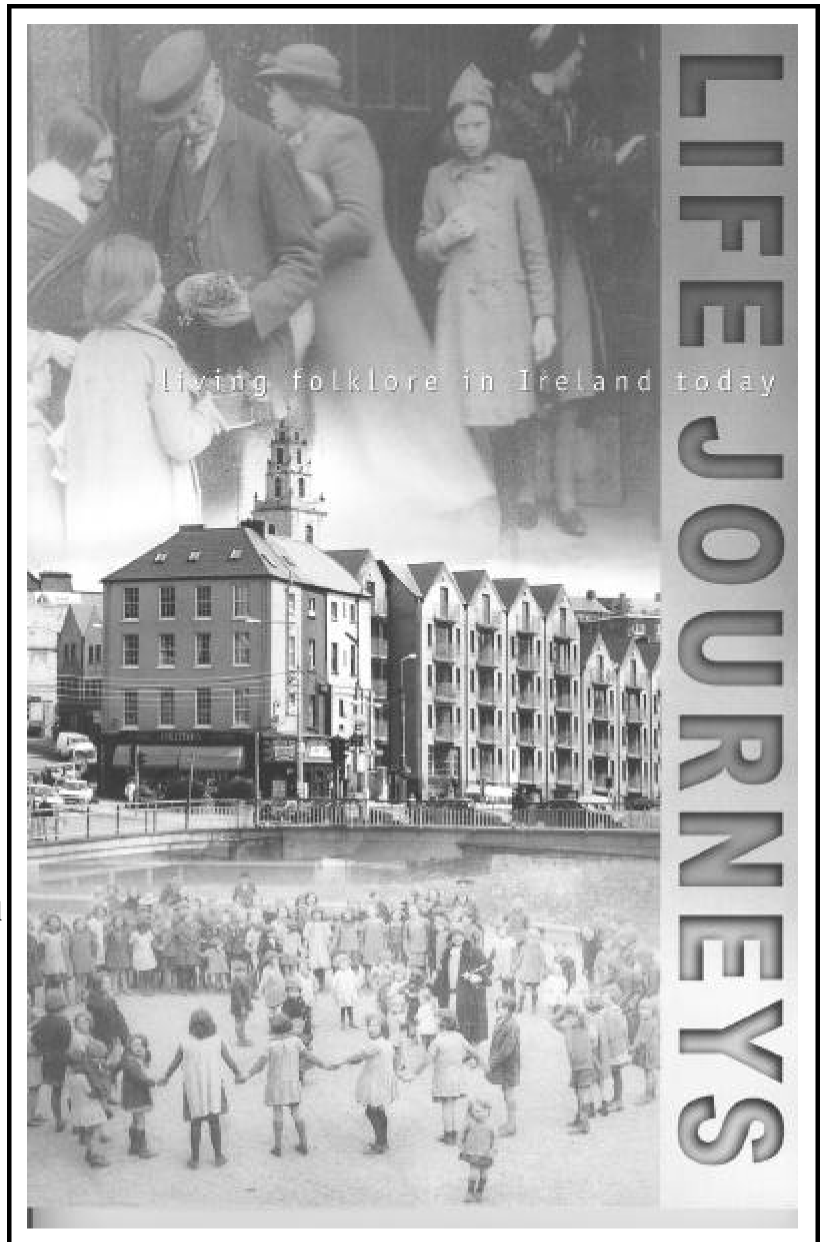
Excerpts from "Life Journeys".

The Northside Folklore Project

Life Histories: Living Folklore in Ireland Today

Published by the Northside Folklore Project

Edited by Stephen Hunter
Production Co-ordination Caroline Crowley



December 1999 saw the publication of the Northside Folklore Project's first book, "Life Journeys". The appearance of this soft cover volume is a milestone for the Project, one made possible by the generous support of the Heritage Council. It is based on material collected in the course of fieldwork undertaken by project staff during 1998 and 1999. The twenty seven interviewees selected for the book range across the spectrum of age and social background and tell their life stories in their own words. Many have spent their formative years on Cork's urban Northside and all have a strong Northside connection. Their reflections illuminate life in Ireland over the last eighty or so years, from the last days of British rule up to the present time.

There is humour, pathos and a wealth of fascinating material – among much else the book encompasses memories of childhood games and schoolyard rhymes as well as historic events, ghost stories not published elsewhere and thoughts about where we are now as a society entering the new Millennium. It includes the recollections of a retired train-driver, an award-winning author, a professional musician, sports and business people and a resident of one of the area's surviving "big houses". The book contains a variety of evocative photographs, including a portrait of each person and others supplying general landscape/ urbanscape relevant to each story. All in all it is an extremely pleasing production, printed by Nicholson and Bass, with a striking cover design by local firm Dowling and Dowling and a title page sketch by William Harrington, an artist much loved by Cork people.

"Life Journeys" has been warmly received and will be officially launched in late January/ early February 2000. The book is available at £8.99 in selected bookshops around Cork. Alternately, readers can obtain it from the Project's Millfield base in person or by post. If by post please make cheques payable to *The Northside Folklore Project, NCE Ltd.* - £8.99, and include £3 for postage and packaging.

An Appeal to Readers

This fourth, enlarged issue of *The Archive* is the first of a new year, a new century and a new millennium. Public reaction to the first three issues has been most gratifying. It has been this, along with frequent requests for back copies, that has encouraged us to produce a bigger journal, with a larger print-run. At a time of profound and accelerating social, economic and technological change, it is more important than ever that we record and preserve some of the more ephemeral aspects of our heritage. Ultimately, the sense of where we have been, where we are and where we are going is essential to our well-being as individuals and as a community. This journal offers a vehicle whereby the Folklore Project as a whole can present some of its findings to the community in which it is based and to a wider audience. *The Archive* is also a valuable means for The Northside Folklore Project researchers to further develop writing and other skills.

NCE, FÁS, University College Cork and The Heritage Council provide the long term support that allows the research of the NFP. However the projects which enable that research to reach the community, constantly need additional funding. *The Archive* is one of those projects. There have been a number of sponsors, but if the magazine is to continue to prosper, consistent sources of funding must be found. The Northside Folklore Project is presently seeking sponsors from the business community to create a rota that would sponsor subsequent issues in full. We publish 2 issues a year and with this latest one we have determined the size and format that it will keep for a while. All support would be gratefully acknowledged. Please direct enquiries to Augusta McDermott, Project Director at the address below.

Acknowledgements

The Northside Folklore Project would like to thank the following

FÁS, The Heritage Council, NCE; Mng Noreen Hegarty, Ass.Mng John O'Leary, Alan O'Mahony, Denise Cremin, Margaret Leahy, Claire O'Connell and supervisors at NCE, U.C.C, Dr. Marie-Annick Desplanques, Dónal Sugrue, Caroline Crowley, McSweeney Photo, Noel Deasy Cars, Colin Rynne, Kieran Burke, Tim Cadogan, Carol Hudson, Geri McLoughlin, Marcus Connaughton, Philip King, Dick Hogan, Noel Baker, The Examiner, Evening Echo, Inside Cork, Douglas Weekly, Seán Leahy, Leeside Music, Dónal Gallagher.

The Northside Folklore Project

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