The Archive

ISSN 1649 2943

Issue 19 • Uimhir a Naoi Déag • 2015

JOURNAL OF THE
THE CORK FOLKLORE PROJECT
Iris Bhéaloideas Chorcaí

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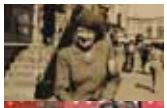

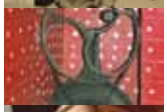

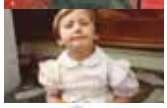

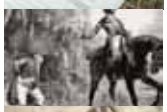

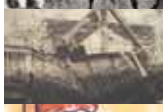

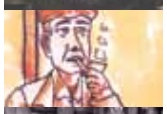

The Archive

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Acknowledgements
The Cork Folklore Project would like to thank: Dept of Social Protection, Susan Kirby; Management and staff of Northside Community Enterprises, Fr John O'Donovan, Noreen Hegarty; Roinn an Bhéaloidis / Dept of Folklore and Ethnology, University College Cork, Dr Stiofán Ó Cadhla, Dr Marie-Annick Desplanques, Dr Clíona O'Carroll, Ciarán Ó Gealbháin, Bláthnaid Ní Bheaglaoí and Colin MacHale; Cork City Council, Cllr Kieran McCarthy; Cork City Heritage Officer, Niamh Twomey; Cork City and County Archives, Brian McGee; Cork City Library, Local Studies; Michael Lenihan, Dr Carol Dundon

Cover Images
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The Archive printed by City Print Ltd, Cork
www.cityprint.ie

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Nancy McCarthy – A Key to Cork's Cultural History

Annmarie McIntyre

Annmarie McIntyre recently graduated from UCC with a Masters in Digital Arts and Humanities. As part of her dissertation project, she produced an interactive web-based documentary using archival materials relating to Nancy McCarthy.

By all accounts, Nancy McCarthy (1902-1988) was a wonderful person to have known. She was a colourful character; strong, witty, sharp, interested, loyal, independent, energetic, practical and determined. She did her own thing, went her own way and spoke her mind, and people loved her for it. Carving out a career as a pharmacist, she opened her own shop in 1946, a highly unusual move for a single woman in Ireland at the time. She was an important figure in Cork's cultural scene throughout her life, having joined the Cork Drama League as an amateur actress on its establishment in 1928 and later becoming a dedicated follower of the Cork Film Festival and Cork Ballet Company as well as a committee member on the Cork Orchestral Society.

Nance, as she was known to friends, grew up seventh in a family of ten children. Her father, Charles McCarthy was a well-known plumber with premises on Emmet Place. At the age of twelve, Nancy was sent, with her sister Eileen, to a boarding school in Mountrath in County Laois. In an interview with Pádraic Ó Raghallaigh, which aired as a six-part series on RTÉ Radio in 1988, Nancy recalls, 'I loved the quietness and the order of the convent because it gave me plenty of space for my mind to work. [We] were a turbulent family and you were always being battered by crisis at home. [...] I came home from the convent determined to be a nun but that decision evaporated.' Instead she qualified as a pharmacist, working as an apprentice and attending lectures at the Crawford Municipal Technical Institute (now Cork Institute of Technology). She spent a year living in Birmingham with her brother Andrew and his partner Nel, and working for Boots Cash Chemists. After returning to Cork, she worked in Blairs Chemist on Patrick's Street before establishing her own shop in Douglas which she ran successfully for forty years.

In her twenties, Nancy struck up lifelong friendships with Frank O'Connor (to whom she was briefly engaged), with Seán O'Faolain, and with many of the other literary, artistic, patriotic and intellectual figures of her day who tried to shake free of the establishment

Nancy McCarthy between 1951 and 1954
Photo by Nancy McCarthy, courtesy of the Boole Library, University College Cork.

that determined the cultural climate of pre-fifties Cork. Nancy likened the city at the time to a 'cultural desert', and she recounts the frustrations that eventually led O'Connor and O'Faolain, in particular, to bring their talents elsewhere. She said, 'I think nobody realises quite the atmosphere in which these men fought and wrote and [...] paved the way for all the subsequent writers in Ireland.'

Nancy was a critically acclaimed amateur actress. She recalls her audition for a small part in Lennox Robinson's *The Round Table*, produced by Frank O'Connor and the Cork Drama League. Exhausted from their inability to find someone to play the leading role of Daisy Drennan, O'Connor asked her to instead read for Daisy's part. Nancy obliged and was later informed that O'Connor turned to Seán Hendrick at that point and said, 'God, the damn woman stutters.' Nancy didn't stammer on the stage, however, and she got the part. Later, at the Abbey Theatre, Frank O'Connor compared his cast unfavourably to Nancy, bellowing at them, 'My God, there's a girl in Cork and she could act ye all off the stage!' She impressed others too; in 1931, a columnist in the *Evening Echo* wrote, 'Miss McCarthy is, without doubt, one of the most gifted amateur actresses that have ever appeared on a Cork stage.'

Throughout the many surviving accounts of Nancy's life, we find praise for her ability to tell a story. To quote Seán Dunne, 'A single question would draw up a store of memories delivered in a mellifluous Cork accent with a flow that, in full flight, smacked of the true storyteller.' Described in her obituary in the *Cork Examiner* as a 'witty raconteur', Nancy spent many of her holidays in Dún Chaoin in Kerry, where her ashes were scattered following her death in 1988. In a commemorative issue of the *Cork Review* dedicated to Nancy, the principal of the national school in Dún Chaoin Mícheál Ó Dubhshláine recalls, 'long nights by the fire and she telling stories like Peig Sayers, except it was not the Blaskets she dealt with, but the folklore of the city: William O., the burning of the Opera House, the Tailor and Ansty, Frank O'Connor, and so on.'

Nancy became a close friend of Frank O'Connor's second wife, Harriet O'Donovan Sheehy, who described her as an 'enchanting and prolific letter writer' whose correspondence, she recalls, 'would be like a warm hug coming for me through the letterbox when I felt low.' Indeed, Harriet served as executrix of Nancy's estate, and it was she who donated Nancy's personal archive to UCC Library Archives Service at the Boole Library, University College Cork. This collection is an observation of life as Nancy saw it and a wonderfully articulated account of the changing face of cultural Cork in the twentieth century. It includes letters, diaries, photographs and other memorabilia. The collection is open to the public by appointment with the Archivist via libraryarchives@ucc.ie.

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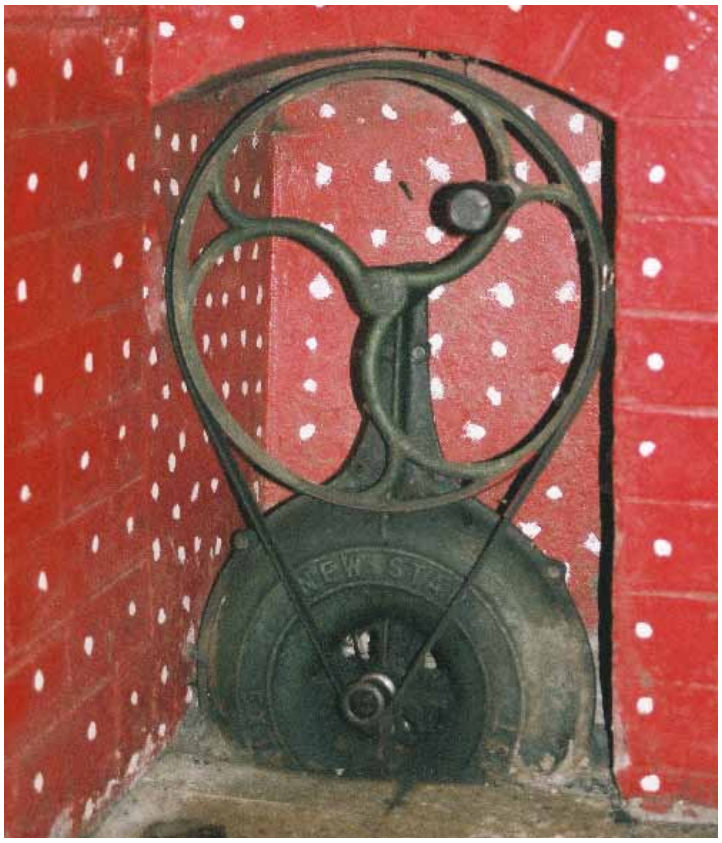
Special thanks *to Colum Kenny for permission to use a research interview that he carried out with Nancy in 1978 for the television documentary* A Star Danced; *also to Emer Twomey, Mary Ahern, Tom McCarthy, Niall McCarthy, Jim McKeon, Ann Quain, Harriet O'Donovan-Sheehy, Myles McCarthy and Orla Murphy.*

Bygone Buildings

Aisling Byron

Hearth featuring original crane, fan bellows and keeping holes

All photos by Aisling Byron



Fan bellows

One of the most familiar sights of the Irish countryside was the thatched house, modest yet aesthetically pleasing buildings, constructed through the use of local building materials which resulted in their sitting snugly into a landscape of which they were literally a part. So familiar was the thatched house that to many they are an indispensable feature of the landscape and yet they are rapidly disappearing.

The thatched house is an intrinsic component of Irish vernacular heritage and represents the end of a long building tradition that can be traced back to the *clocháns* (bee-hive huts) of the fifth century. (Campbell 1937) They were principally designed with function in mind, as their primary purpose was shelter from the most extreme elements. Vernacular buildings were constructed by local craftsmen, to whom knowledge of the building culture of their own locality was passed from previous generations, via the oral tradition. By force of circumstance, the best locally available materials were used in a style that reflected local climatic and geographic conditions. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries only the very wealthy could have heavy loads brought over long distances, and this, coupled with the types of transport in use during this period, did not permit the ordinary man to bring his building materials from afar.

One of the most distinctive and significant features of Irish vernacular architecture is the degree of regional variation that is to be noted throughout the country. The basic house developed in accordance with family need and fortune, however its development followed different lines in different places, with a considerable degree of local distinction in the elements of the house.

'Ireland may be roughly divided into two main geographical areas, the first southern and eastern, consisting of Leinster and almost the whole of Munster; the second including most of Ulster and Connaught with the southwest corner of Munster. The former is level, open, fertile, easily accessible country; the latter more rugged, less fertile, less easy of access. The approaches from the east and southeast from southern Britain and western France led directly into the desirable area. Hence it was in early and easy contact with the world outside. In historic times the Viking harbour settlements, the Norman manors, and the medieval towns were established in the south and east and scarcely touched the northwest. Thus the south and east of Ireland formed an area of penetration and acceptance of new cultural influences, while the north and west remained an area of retention and survival of older elements. This is very clearly reflected in the traditional forms of the dwelling house, in which one set of characteristics belongs to the south-eastern region and another to the north-western.' (Ó Danachair 1975, 13)

From the available field evidence, it would appear that Irish traditional houses can be divided into a two-fold scheme of classification, the 'lobby-entry' house and the 'direct-entry' house. This is characterised by the relationship between the entrance and the hearth. In the lobby-entry house a lobby is formed directly inside the entrance door by a screen wall constructed between the entrance and hearth. Externally the chimneystack is more or less in alignment with the entrance door. The lobby-entry is the house type found in most of the east and southeast of the country. In contrast, entry to the direct-entry house is unimpeded, as the hearth is at the opposite end of the kitchen from the entrance door. The direct-entry dwelling has a northern and western distribution pattern, and appears to be the older house type throughout Ireland. Many direct-entry houses had opposed doors, a feature which links this house typologically to houses with combined quarters for people and cattle, known as byre-dwellings. These were dwelling-houses of one, or perhaps two, units which housed the milch cows (cows kept for milking) at the lower end of the living area, and the family at the hearth end, with only a drain or stone walkway separating them.

In the west and north of Ireland a projection in this plan provided a bed outshot close to the hearth. In the daytime the bed was usually screened from view with a pair of curtains, timber doors or straw mats. The bed outshot is now obsolescent in Ireland however, and with the continuing abandonment and destruction of the older houses it is a

rapidly disappearing feature of the vernacular building culture of the northwest of Ireland.

The plan-form of the traditional house was linear, one room deep, with one room leading from another. Any extensions maintained the linear form, and internal partition walls with a core of timber posts, some interwoven with straw or rope wattles, and coated with clay are well known. The smallest house, a humble one-room dwelling, was the home of the rural landless labourer. A two-room house had a bedroom added at the hearth end, while in the three-room house the kitchen, the main focus of the house, was placed centrally between two bedrooms or between bedroom and parlour. In larger, more prosperous, houses a fourth room was added.

Stone and tempered clay (clay mixed with straw or rushes), predominated as building materials for mass walls in vernacular housing in Ireland in recent centuries. Of the two, stone was the most common, the most enduring, and the most widely used material in Irish traditional buildings. Stone was usually bonded with a variety of mortars, mainly lime, but also by lime and sand mortar, clay and a mixture of clay and lime. Tempered clay was also an excellent walling material, provided that the clay was properly prepared and applied. Clay houses are found mainly in the drier east and southeast of Ireland, and had a number of advantages over stone as a building material. It was cheaper than quarry stone and reasonably easy to use. It also has excellent insulating properties, keeping the house warm in winter and cool in summer. If maintained well, a clay house was just as sturdy and sound as a stone one. The walls could be up to a metre thick, and in the south and east of Ireland were normally constructed to head height, on which a hipped roof, with four sloping sides, was placed.

Hipped roofs predominated in the southeast, as they were less likely to encounter strong winds, whereas in the far west and north of the country stone houses were most usually built with upright gables, in order to enable them withstand storms from the Atlantic Ocean. A variety of different, locally sourced materials, such as slate, were utilised in the roof coverings of vernacular buildings throughout Ireland at different periods. However thatch of wheat straw was the most widely used roofing material in the vernacular tradition.

The introduction of the combine harvester in the 1960s, though welcomed by farmers, resulted in significant difficulties for thatchers, as it cuts straw too short for thatching purposes. Poor quality and lack of available locally grown materials has prompted many

External view of half-door

thatchers to source materials from outside of Ireland, thus undermining the tradition of local acquisition of thatching materials. The difficulty facing the growers, harvesters, and thatchers of straw is to change the current, relatively poor, image of straw thatching. A common misconception is that wheat straw is an inferior thatching material, and has neither the durability or longevity of a roof thatched in reed. If the challenge is not met successfully, we will probably lose our straw roofs to reed or to other, manufactured, materials such as artificial slate or tile.

Thatching techniques were also a fundamental element of regional variation in the vernacular house, and at least five main thatching methods were known in Ireland, however scalloped thatching was the most widespread. Scallops are large U-shaped pins made by bending a sharpened pliable stick of hazel or willow. Anything from four to ten thousand scallops were required for a single roof, depending on the size. Scallop thatch was one of the best thatching methods, as the smooth surface, which was achieved in employing this method, allowed the rain to run off the roof rather than lodge and cause differential rotting. Other less prolific regional thatching methods were used alongside scalloped thatch, and these included roped thatch, thrust thatch, pegged thatch and staple thatch. (Evans 1972)

Thatching is a traditional craft, often handed down from one generation to the next. In previous generations the volume of thatched buildings in any locality was ample to sustain several thatchers, each with their own, slightly varying, technique. Currently however, with the massive decline in the number of thatched roofs, thatchers are obliged to travel over much wider distances to find employment. This movement of thatchers is hugely significant in the tradition of thatching, as it may result in a merging of regional styles, and the outright loss of some, resulting in the removal of centuries of tradition and connection with the locality, embodied in the choice of materials used, and the style and technique employed.

The internal finishes of vernacular buildings were simple. Few intact traditional interiors now survive however. The hearth was the social focus of family life in the vernacular house until the latter part of the nineteenth century. The kitchen was the area wherein most of indoor life was lived, the warmest and most spacious room in the house, often the only one with the ceiling rising to roof level. Honoured guests were invited to sit at the fireside and were given precedence there, not at the table. The centrality of the kitchen in traditional life is evident in folklore, and a large number of folk beliefs pertaining to the fire and hearth have been recorded throughout Ireland.

Peat was burned at floor level on a cobbled hearth or stone slab, and the area immediately around the fire was also paved. When coal became popular, however, the fire had to be lifted off the floor, or given a stronger draught by installing a built-in 'fan bellows'. These forced air through a tube into the floor of the fire and were introduced in the nineteenth century. Some hearths had two 'keeping holes' or 'boles' which were niches in the wall on either side of the fireplace. There was a male and female side for storing the man's smoking pipes, or the woman's knitting etc. (Evans 1942) Pots were hung over the fire by means of a wrought-iron crane, made by the local blacksmith. This took the form of an upright pivoted frame with an extended arm from which cooking utensils could be hung.

The focusing of social and domestic life around the hearth was reflected in the locating of furniture within the kitchen, particularly of the larger pieces. Kitchens were regularly used as sleeping places, and the 'settle bed' was one of the most significant pieces of furniture, traditionally located adjacent to the hearth. This took the form of a bench seat with a fairly high back, hinged at the bottom so that the box seat folded down to make a low bed at night. The dresser was the second most significant piece of furniture in the kitchen, and the most important in terms of both function and ornament. The third piece of furniture of importance in the kitchen was the table, which was not usually of significant size and was often positioned against a wall. Relegation of the table to this peripheral position relates to, and further emphasises, the importance of the hearth area in the vernacular house. 'To the Irish the table is a work place, whether with a chisel or a pen or a knife and fork, but the fireside is the place for rest and good talk and pleasant company.' (Ó Danachair 1962, 17)

Micky Butler's house in Licketstown, Co. Kilkenny

The parlour was an extra room located on the opposite side of the chimney to the kitchen. It was used as 'the good room' for special occasions, and often featured the only decorative furnishings in the house. The introduction of relatively luxurious parlours, and fireplaces in both parlours and bedrooms was undoubtedly a pivotal point in the specialisation of the internal use of space, and ultimately resulted in changes in how the house functioned. Not only were these rooms a means of indicating social status within the local community, but they also facilitated for the first time the comfortable use of rooms away from the hearth and kitchen.

One or two small bedrooms usually lay directly off the kitchen, accessed by one or two doors in the wall opposite the fireplace, while another bedroom was commonly located off the parlour at the other end of the house. Extra sleeping accommodation was also frequently provided with a loft at one end of the house. Lofts were accessed either by a simple ladder or by a steep narrow wooden stairs, which were frequently enclosed, and accessed by means of a door at the bottom.

Light for the loft was usually provided by a small square window in the end wall. The development of sleeping areas on upper levels in half-lofts, lofts and attics, as they respectively evolved, finally led to the removal of sleeping areas from the kitchen, and would have impacted on the prevalence and inclusion of the settle bed in the furnishings of the vernacular dwelling. It also broke with the tradition of linear extension of the dwelling at ground level.

For constructional reasons, and also because window glass was a luxury, windows were few and small in size, and placed on the side away from the prevailing winds. Tax had also been levied on windows in the nineteenth century. For greatest efficiency, window openings widened internally, although most of the light came through the doorway. The most traditional type of door is the timber battened door, usually of wide planks, with a similar half-door outside. The half-door was dual purpose, allowing light in whilst keeping out unwelcome animals. Externally some doorways were also constructed with wind-breaks, which are shallow projections affording a certain amount of protection to the entrance. Unfortunately, as a result of being so easily altered, many original doors and windows have been removed from thatched buildings and few remain, having been replaced with modern equivalents.

Vernacular architecture is a distinctive characteristic of the local cultural landscape. However a national systematic survey of vernacular architecture has yet to be carried out, and consequently there is at present no agreed figure for the number of thatched buildings remaining. Nevertheless, that there has been a drastic decline in the numbers of these buildings over recent generations cannot be argued. As early as 1962, Caoimhín Ó Danachair observed that you can travel the whole fifty-seven miles from Cork to Bantry without ever getting a glimpse of a thatched roof. (Ó Danachair 1962)

Today, thatched houses are perceived as old-fashioned and unsuitable for modern standards of living. Their image in modern society and attitudes towards them are among the most significant problems they currently face, and will have an enormous bearing on the fate which awaits them.

In rejecting the old in favour of modern equivalents, an important point to consider is why modern rural house types have not developed to follow in the footsteps of the vernacular tradition. From the end of the nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, cottages were designed and built by the local authorities or the landed estates, and successfully drew much of their design, size and features from the vernacular housing which it was mainly intended to replace.

The now ubiquitous modern bungalow is not however simply designed and intended to combine greater comfort and practicality with reduced maintenance costs, in response to contemporary needs. As a family home, the modern house aims to reflect individual social status, and as such it is also designed in order to fully exploit its capacity to publicly display wealth and prosperity. As a sad consequence the Irish countryside has been blighted by often garish and ostentatious buildings. The entire appearance of many rural areas has been radically altered as a result of the almost uniquely Irish phenomenon of bungalow construction in the countryside, which represents a rejection of the architectural forms of our past.

The challenges facing the survival of thatched buildings in the future are substantial. However there is much that can be done to address these difficulties. Greater financial aid, active support for traditional crafts and skills, and the provision of access to information and resources pertaining to the repair and conservation of vernacular buildings for owners, are all practical possibilities with the potential to make a very real difference. Despite a multitude of obstacles it is still possible to arrest the decline of our traditional building stock and sympathetically adapt them to meet modern needs. The potential for their regeneration, repair and re-use is extensive, but only if we as a society consider our vernacular heritage to be of sufficient worth.

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Sweet Memories

Dr Margaret Steele

Margaret eating Jelly Tots c1984 Photo courtesy of Steele family

In November 2014, the Cork Folklore Project welcomed our youngest ever researcher. Ten-year-old Alannah Murphy from Douglas visited us with her mother, Orla. Alannah's research topic was 'A History of Sweets in Cork' and she was planning to submit the project to Councillor Kieran McCarthy's Schools Heritage Project. Alannah and Orla listened to excerpts from our sound archive, including part of an interview with Dan Linehan of Linehan's sweet factory.

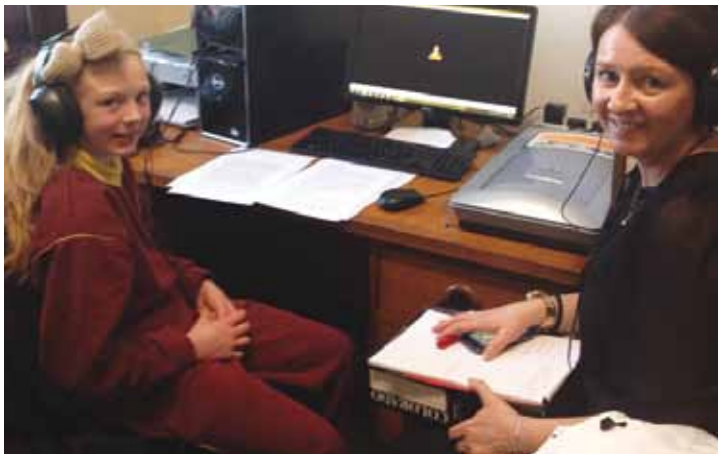
The continuing love for institutions like Linehan's as well as the recent proliferation of shops and websites selling old-fashioned sweets shows that Alannah is tapping into a rich seam of nostalgia. She certainly got all the researchers at the Folklore Project thinking about our own memories of the sweets and sweetshops of our childhoods. We chatted about Wham bars and Stingers, Refreshers, Black Jack sweets, Gobstoppers and Golf Ball chewing gum. We remembered complex orders designed to get as much sweetie goodness as possible for our limited money: one of this and three of those and two of something else, and of course 'the rest in jellies.'

The conversation brought me back to my favourite childhood shop, Miss Ford's. This shop was special to me not only because of the excellent selection of sweets, but also because it was one of the first places I was allowed to go by myself. And I held Miss Ford herself in the highest of esteem, because I felt she treated me with the respect due to a paying customer. Back then, shop assistants knew most of their customers' business and status, and would often serve them accordingly. This meant that, as a child, how soon you were served might depend on why you were there. You had some hope of being served in turn if you were there on grown-up orders, perhaps with a list written by your mammy. But if you just sauntered in under your own steam looking for sweets, you might well be sent to the back of the queue as your elders and 'betters' got served milk, newspapers or cigarettes over your head.

Not at Miss Ford's though. She took her smaller customers seriously. At quieter times, she might even let you in behind the counter to facilitate closer scrutiny of your options. Miss Ford sold retro sweets before they were retro. Cola bottles (fizzy and non-fizzy), bon bons, pear drops and clove rock were all on display in large glass jars on her shelves. She sold them by weight, and, for favoured customers such as myself, might sometimes add an extra sweet or two after the needle on the scale had come to rest. Miss Ford had a till but it was really no more than a cash box with notions, because she totted up all bills with pencil and paper, muttering figures to herself. Well-known and trusted customers could get their messages on tick. Their purchases would be noted in a book and paid for at the end of the week. Back in the 1980s, this practice was already very much on the way out, but Miss Ford remained loyal to her older customers and attentive to their needs.

I learned the rudiments of etiquette at Miss Ford's. It was where I was taught to say 'please' and 'thank you', to wait my turn, and to address my elders as 'Mr' or 'Mrs'. Miss Ford undoubtedly set the tone, but the geography of the shop also seemed to demand good manners and neighbourly conduct. It was just one tiny room, with a peninsular counter cutting it at the waist, and a couple of fridges and a little freezer cramping you in even further. You were so close to your fellow customers that it would have been odd not to have a chat with them, especially when they all knew you, and would quiz you as to the whereabouts and general wellbeing of your parents, grandparents, cousins, uncle on the missions, cousins in America and all belong to you. At times it seemed like a wonder anyone ever got any shopping done there with all the chat. But Miss Ford was working away efficiently all the while, organising the chaos and keeping the 'queue' (which tended to be more notional than physical) moving. Even so, at busy times, like after mid-morning Mass in the Bons Secours or the Poor Clares, there might be people outside, sitting on the window sill gossiping until there was room for them in the shop. People simply accepted that the wait and the chat were part of the process of getting your messages.

Alannah's interest in Cork's past awoke memories and nostalgia for my colleagues and myself, and we enjoyed her visit thoroughly. We were delighted when, in April, we received a lovely 'thank you' card from Alannah, and the news that she had been placed first in her category in the Schools Heritage Project. This year, we also helped Miss Woods' sixth class in Scoil Oilibhéir to research their contribution to the Schools Heritage Project. Their research was on Blackpool National School. They have not only completed an excellent project, but have successfully campaigned for a plaque to be placed at the former site of the school on Brocklesby Street. Both Alannah and the students of Scoil Oilibhéir have done great work. At the Cork Folklore Project, one of our aims is to preserve accounts of life in Cork for future researchers. When young people make use of our archive, as Alannah and Scoil Oilibhéir's sixth class have done, it is more than fun for us; it also inspires and validates our work.



Alannah and Orla Murphy Photo by Stephen Dee for the CFP Archive

Water Monsters in Irish Folklore

Dr Jenny Butler

When a 'water monster' is mentioned, most people will associate it with the Scottish Loch Ness Monster, but not so many are aware of the multiplicity of water monsters in Irish folklore. The legends range from monstrous fish to huge frightening hybrid beasts lurking in lakes, rivers or seas. There are some stories of unusual fish, or otherworldly versions of known fish species, such as the ghostly salmon: 'Drowned people were sometimes said to appear after death in the form of large black salmon on a river.' (Ó hÓgáin 2006, 254) Strange things are said of eels, such as that horsehair lying in the water can turn into an eel. Some say eels can come up from the water and travel along the wet grass during the night. (Danaher 2004, 98) Some find their way into graveyards to eat the corpses, as was the case with the big eel in Tully churchyard, Galway Bay, that 'used to come and to root up the bodies.' (Gregory 1992, 18) There are beliefs about 'monster eels, twenty feet long or more, guarding treasure chests at the bottom of the lakes or in deep caves.' (Danaher 2004, 98) In different parts of Ireland, there are tales of the 'horse-eel', described by the nineteenth-century folklore collector Thomas Crofton Croker as 'a great conger eel, seven yards long and as thick as a bull in the body with a mane on its back like a horse.' (Harrison 2001, 201) There are legends of such a creature swimming in Lough Cleevaun in the Wicklow hills, and one was also spotted near Loch Auna, County Limerick: 'the creature had a horse's head and its body tapered off like that of an eel.' (ibid., 212) It is believed that such horse-eels are carnivorous and will eat any animals or humans who enter the lakes in which they reside.

In the oral tradition, there are many legends of fantastic lake-dwelling creatures, while literary sources also mention a dragon-like creature, the *ollphéist*, that inhabits watery realms. Many of the literary sources are hagiographies or biographies of saints. The accounts typically involve the saint battling such a creature and 'many an Irish lake is reputed to have a monster bound in its depths by the prayers of a saint.' (Danaher 2004, 99) Typically, stories tell of how a monster was ravaging the countryside until a saint overcame it and drove it into a lake, where it remains trapped until the Day of Judgement. Stories are still told of sightings of the serpent or *piast* of particular lakes. Lough Curra in the Galtees, for example, is where a great serpent was banished by St Beircheart while St Ciarán of Clonmacnoise sent a monster to the depths of Lough Ree on the River Shannon. The monster is banished by might or by trickery on the saint's part: 'An example is the widespread folk legend, told of several saints, of how a great reptilic monster is banished into a lake […] We read of several such banishings in the hagiographical texts, but the folklore alone stresses that the monster is tricked by the saint into remaining in the water until "Lá an Luain" (which actually means the Last Day, although the monster takes it to mean the following Monday).' (Ó hÓgáin 2006, 445-446) This story is attached to the Devil's Punchbowl above Killarney and 'we are informed that people walking by the lake still hear the melancholy question "isn't it a long week until Monday?" echoing from the dark depths.' (Danaher 2004, 99)

Lough Derg, County Donegal, is said to be named for the blood of a monster called Caoránach, which was banished there by St Patrick. The creature broke its bonds and escaped from the lake and once on land encountered a bodyguard of a local chieftain, whom she swallowed whole, sword and all. The man carved his way out of the monster's belly with the sword and the blood and gore gushing from the dying monster turned the lake red, bestowing upon it the name of 'red lake' (from the Irish *dearg* meaning red). A heap of natural boulders at the northernmost tip of Station Island on Lough Derg is said to be the bones of the Caoránach. (Dames 1996, 43) Other stories say the Caoránach survived and can be seen swimming during stormy weather. There is said to be a monster in Lough Graney, County Clare, that is only seen once every seven years. (Gregory 1992, 277) Seven is a magical number in folklore and is often found in folktales as a time measurement.

'One of the commonest types of lake monster', folklorist Kevin Danaher informs us, 'is the *each uisce*, the water horse, these, if we are to believe the stories are to be found in almost every lake and large river pool in Ireland, and are often seen playing about on the surface, dashing the water on high to the terror of the passers-by, and these are well advised to hurry on their way and leave the creature to his fun.' (2004, 100) A water horse is associated with Carrowmore Lake in County Mayo, with legends relating how it would come on shore to graze in the fields, where youths would climb on its back. When it plunged into the lake, the stories tell, the lucky ones were able to jump off and were safe, albeit drenched, while nobody knows what happened to those who remained on its back as they never returned. Other lakes with legends of a water horse include Lough Nahanagan in the Wicklow Gap, and Counfea Lough in the Comeragh Mountains. There is a story attached to Lough Shanakeever, County Galway, of a man who went to fetch a donkey that had been left by the lake: 'From a distance of about 200 yards, he saw a black animal the size of a foal apparently circling his donkey (as though stalking it). The creature had a long neck and a head without ears. As he approached the scene, the creature saw him, returned to the Lough and sank from view.' (Harrison 2001, 218) There are also legends of water cows, such as the herd of white cows that are said to emerge from the depths of Lough Gur in County Limerick. Water bulls are said to be even more dangerous than those that live on land. In June 1966, a man named W.J. Wood was fishing in Lough Attariff, in the hills between Clonakilty and Dunmanway, when he saw what seemed like a water cow: 'Suddenly and quietly, a long dark brown object surfaced at a distance of about a hundred yards, facing directly towards me. It had the head of a well-grown calf and large glittering eyes almost at water level. The distance appeared to lessen and the creature's approach angle altered until it was parallel to me, about ninety yards distant. It seemed to be about ten to ten and half feet long and protruded above the surface 5 or 6 inches. After about two minutes the animal submerged.' (ibid., 207)

Stories of land animals also existing in the sea are also told, for example, this one recorded by Lady Gregory: 'It's said there's everything in the sea the same as on the land, and we know there's horses in it […] One year at Kinvara, the people were missing their oats that was eaten in the fields, and they watched one night and it was five or six of the sea-horses they saw eating the oats, but they could not take them, they made off to the sea.' (Gregory 1992, 16) Another story she collected involved a mare that was hit a heavy blow by her owner with a stick 'and that night she had a foal that was dead, not come to its full growth, and it had spots over it, and every

Sea Serpent [Public Domain], via Wikimedia Commons

spot was of a different colour. And there was no sire on the island at that time, so whatever was the sire must have come up from the sea.' (ibid., 26) Similarly, there are stories of sea cows, as Lady Gregory was informed by a fisherman on Kilronan pier: 'A man on the south island told me how he saw a calf one morning on the strand, and he thought it belonged to a neighbour, and was going to drive it up to his field, when its mother appeared on the sea, and it went off to her.' (ibid., 22)

Specific lakes are said to have their own unique monster living in them. A figure in the shape of a huge man covered with long hair has been seen coming out of a lake under the cliffs of Com Shingaun, which are located to the west of the road from Carrick-on-Suir to Dungarvan. The Carrabuncle lives in Lough Geal, meaning 'bright lake', in County Kerry, situated between Dingle and Tralee. The Carrabuncle swims around at the surface in the darkness and makes the lake gleam: 'He is a great creature, bigger than a bull, and studded all over with every kind of jewel and precious stone, and it is the glitter of these which make the lake shine like the moonlight.' (Danaher 2004, 101) The Dobharchú, or Dorraghow, a large fur-covered dog-otter hybrid with orange flipper-like feet, has been seen in the waters around Omey Island in Connemara, County Galway. While *dobharchú*, meaning 'water hound', is the modern Irish word for otter, the Dobharchú is a specific creature, 'king of the otters', and 'a figure of fear on land, he can kill people and animals and drink their blood.' (MacKillop 2004, 144)

The details of appearance vary, but there are numerous stories of serpentine creatures in a variety of lakes. Some are described as horned, or having two bumps protruding from the head, or as having a spikey head like a gigantic catfish, or with a single spike on the snout. Lough Abisdealy, County Galway, has been the place of sightings of such a creature: 'It was long and black, with a long neck and a flat head, and three loops of its body buckled in and out of the water as it travelled quickly across the lake, giving the appearance of a giant snake.' (Harrison 2001, 209) The word 'serpent' crops up a lot in reference to this kind of lake monster.

A type of creature described as a 'sea serpent' was reputed to inhabit the waters in and around Britain and Ireland. There were numerous recorded sightings in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. During late August and early September 1850, a spate of such sightings was recorded around the south coast of Ireland, in particular off the Cork coast. Roger W. Travers, in a letter to the Cork Reporter of 11 September 1850, referring to the area of water off Courtmacsherry Bay, describes an event he, along with three others, witnessed while out on a yacht at approximately 1 am. An extract from the letter reads: 'In an instant, the attention of all on board was riveted on an object which at first struck me as like the upheaved thick end of a large mast, but which, as it was made out plainer, proved to be the head of some huge fish or monster. On bearing down towards the object, we could distinctly see, with the naked eye, what I can best describe as an enormous serpent without mane, or fur, or any like appendage. The portion of the body above water, and which appeared to be rubbing or scratching itself against the beacon, was fully 30 feet long, and in diameter I should say about a fathom. With the aid of a glass it was observed that the eyes were of immense size, about nine inches across the ball, and the upper part of the back appeared covered with a furrowed shell-like substance' (ibid., 204-205). Sailors, and even the captains of vessels, claimed to have seen one of these sea serpents. One account came from Captain Jorgenson of the Norwegian ship Felix, who described the one he saw near Rathlin Island off the coast of County Antrim in early July 1910: 'The creature he saw appeared to be writhing on the surface, where it appeared for only a brief moment. Captain Jorgenson thought that the part of the body he saw was at least 14ft long.' (ibid., 203-204) It is clear that Irish waterways have a variety of fantastic creatures associated with them, with legends and first-hand accounts spanning at least three centuries.

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Bailiúchán Béaloidis Ghaeltacht Thír Chonaill

Mícheál Ó Domhnaill

Na Dúnaibh, Co. Dhún na nGall ag tús an chéid seo caite Grianghraif le caoinchead Mhichíl Uí Dhomhnaill

Timpeall na bliana 1907, tháinig fear darbh ainm Rudolf Trebitsch as an Ostair go hiarthuaisceart Dhún na nGall agus rinne sé taifeadtaí fuaime ar roinnt cainteoirí dúchais Gaeilge ansin. Meastar go bhfuil na taifeadtaí sin ar na taifeadtaí fuaime is luaithe dá maireann de chainteoirí Gaeilge as Gaeltacht Dhún na nGall agus iad i mbun cainte agus seanchais. Is iomaí taifeadadh a rinneadh ar chainteoirí Gaeilge Ghaeltacht Dhún na nGall ón am sin i leith. Ar an tionscadal is deireanaí a rinne taifeadadh cuimsitheach ar bhunadh na Gaeltachta i nDún na nGall bhí Tionscadal Béaloidis Ghaeltacht Thír Chonaill – tionscadal a thug faoi sheanchas béil agus cuimhní cinn a bhailiú ó dhaoine a bhí ag dul anonn sna blianta.

Idir na bliana 2008 agus 2011, thug taighdeoirí faoi scáth Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge (OÉ Gaillimh) i nGaoth Dobhair faoin tionscadal bailithe béaloidis seo, áit ar cuireadh agallamh ar 230 duine as Gaeltacht Dhún na nGall agus ar dearnadh 380 uair an chloig de thaifeadtaí ina iomláine. Is é Dónall Dinny Ó Gallchóir a chuir na faisnéiseoirí faoi agallamh, agus tugann siad léargas fíorshuimiúil dúinn ar an am atá imithe. Faightear sna hagallaimh seo cuimhní cinn, scéalta agus eolas ó ghlúin daoine a chónaigh agus a mhair le linn na fichiú aoise – tréimhse chorrach a thug athruithe móra agus cinniúnacha chun cinn i saol agus i sochaí na hÉireann. Faightear spléachadh sa bhailiúchán seo ar shaol na feirme agus na farraige, ar chúrsaí fostaíochta agus imirce, ar sheanleigheasanna agus piseoga, ar shióga agus ar thaibhsí, ar chúrsaí spóirt agus caitheamh aimsire – gan aon amhras, clúdaítear beagnach gach gné de shaol an duine sa bhailiúchán taifeadtaí seo. Lena chois sin, tugtar léirstean maith dúinn ar chaint bheo na ndaoine, faoi mar a mhaireann sí san am i láthair agus an saibhreas canúna atá le sonrú fós fud fad na Gaeltachta.

Is díol spéise é go bhfaightear iliomad tagairtí sa bhailiúchán seo do nithe nach maireann feasta sa traidisiún. Tá cúpla tagairt sa bhailiúchán mar shampla den tábhacht a bhain leis na mná caointe nuair a bhásaigh duine sa phobal. Bhíodh na mná caointe coitianta tráth ar fud na hÉireann ach chuaigh an gnás a bhain leo in éag go mór sa naoú haois déag. Sa bhailiúchán seo tugtar le fios dúinn gur mhair an traidisiún a bhain leis na mná caointe isteach go maith san fhichiú haois ar na hoileáin amach ó chósta Dhún na nGall. Seo a leanas mar shampla cuntas ó Phádraig Mac Fhionntaigh faoi na mná caointe i dToraigh:

‘Tá cuimhne agam orthu. Bheadh ceathrar nó cúigear acu agus bhí siad leagtha amach acu fána choinne, an t-am a chuirfí síos an corp ins an uaigh. Ins an am sin, cha raibh an brat glas seo againne ar chor ar bith. Nuair a thosófaí agus líonfaí an chréafóg isteach garbh suas go dtí an béal agus an t-am a bhí sin uilig déanta agus an scraith ar an rud, choisricfeadh an ceathrar nó an cúigear acu seo iad féin agus thosódh siad a chaoineadh. Bhí iontas orainne fá dtaobh de sin ach bhí a fhios ag an tseanmhuintir go mbeadh seo ag gabháil ar aghaidh ach cha raibh a fhios againne seo … Caoineadh, sórt de chaoineadh … b’fhéidir go ndéanfadh siad deich mbomaite nó ceathrú uaire de sin, d’éireodh siad ar ais ansin agus iad ag glanadh na súl.’

Tá sé suntasach chomh maith gur chuir na glúnta a chuaigh romhainne an-mhuinín i gcúrsaí leighis traidisiúnta agus sna horthaí leighis go háirithe. Seo a leanas cuntas ó Mháire Uí Cheallaigh as an Choimín agus í ag cur síos ar an ortha a deirtí ina hóige maidir le scornach tinn nó ‘sceadamán frithir’ mar a thugann sise air:

‘Bhí leigheas acu in am amháin ar sceadamán frithir. Ba é an rud, dá mbeadh sceadamán frithir ort fad ó shin, ní bheifeá ag gabháil ag an dochtúir fá choinne tablets a fháil! Ach, bhí leigheas acu agus is cuimhneach liomsa nuair a bhí muid inár bpáistí, shuífeá ar stól beag íseal, stól beag íseal a bheadh ann ar ndóigh ag páiste, agus thiocfadh duine inteacht agus chuirfeadh sé a dhá lámh mar sin ar d’aghaidh agus déarfadh sé “An leonadh é seo? Ní hea, ach gortú. An gortú é seo? Ní hea, ach leonadh.” Rud inteacht mar sin a déarfadh sé agus bhíodh sé ag cuimilt suas ar do dhá phluc agus bhí sé ábalta tú a leigheas, agus an bhfuil a fhios

agat caidé mar a thug siad ar an sceadamán frithir an t-am sin? Seile seain. Sin leigheas na seile seain.'

Mar pháirt den tionscadal, rinneadh taifeadtaí i mbeagnach gach cearn de Ghaeltacht Dhún na nGall, an ceantar Gaeltachta is mó sa tír ó thaobh achair. Bailíodh ábhar ó Fhánaid go Gleann Cholm Cille agus ó na Cruacha go hÁrainn Mhór, ceantar ollmhór a bhfuil an-saibhreas cultúrtha agus teanga le fáil ann. Gan amhras, cuidíonn bailiúcháin de thaifeadtaí den sórt seo leis an saibhreas traidisiúnta, eolais agus staire atá le fáil sna ceantair seo a chaomhnú agus nochtann sé os ár gcomhair amach an saibhreas canúna agus foclaíochta atá le fáil iontu.

Mar chuid lárnach den tionscadal, rinneadh digitiú, innéacsú agus cartlannú ar na hagallaimh go léir agus mar thoradh ar an obair sin, tá deis ag an phobal anois teacht go héasca ar an ábhar. Rinneadh spíonadh agus briseadh síos ar na hagallaimh uilig a rinne na faisnéiseoirí agus rinneadh iad a rangú ansin de réir téamaí ar leith. As an obair sin nochtadh tuairim is 3,500 téama nó míreanna sainiúla cainte as ábhar cainte na bhfaisnéiseoirí ar fad. Rinneadh gach téama acu sin a rangú nó a aicmiú faoi cheann de na 14 phríomhchatagóir ina rangaítear

Teach Dhónaill Uí Bhaoill, grósaeir, Co. Dhún na nGall, c. 1900

ábhar béaloidis de réir an chórais a leag an béaloideasaí iomráiteach, Seán Ó Súilleabháin, amach ina leabhar *A Handbook of Irish Folklore* (1942).

Tá deis anois ag aon duine a bhfuil spéis acu sa bhéaloideas nó sa stair áitiúil éisteacht le haon cheann de na 3,500 píosa ar leith atá sa bhailiúchán. Tá an chartlann dhigiteach seo le fáil ar an idirlíon ar an suíomh gréasáin www.bealoideas.com. Is féidir cuardach a dhéanamh ar an suíomh seo de réir ábhair/téama, de réir ceantair nó de réir ainmneacha na bhfaisnéiseoirí iad féin. Is féidir cuardach ginearálta a dhéanamh chomh maith.

English Summary

Between 2008 and 2011, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge (NUI Galway) in Gaoth Dobhair undertook a folklore project involving interviews with 230 people from the Donegal Gaeltacht resulting in a collection of 380 hours of recorded conversations with them. These interviews have captured a snapshot of times past and the reminiscences, remembrances, stories and anecdotes of an older generation who experienced and lived through the significant and turbulent societal changes of the 20th Century. From the working life of native Irish speakers on the farm or the bog or the island, to issues of emigration and American wakes, saintly prophesies, stories about fairies, superstitions and ancient cures – virtually all aspects of life in a different era are discussed. The process of digitising, cataloguing and archiving the interviews on to computer has enabled the fruits of the project to become widely accessible to all members of the community. This digital archive is now available on the specially constructed website www.bealoideas.com, and it is searchable by topic, geographic area, interviewee name, or keyword, enabling researchers to focus in on specific areas of interest to them.

Photo and a Story

Stephen Dee

Set into the old walls that surround the majestic Saint Mary's Collegiate Church in Youghal is a strange eerie niche in the shape of a coffin. While walking amongst headstones it's surprisingly the last thing you expect to see and its history is even more startling. As famine swept Ireland in the 19th century, Fever Hospitals were built to cater for the dying. So many died that it became impossible to keep up, and mass graves lined with quicklime became the answer. The poor were at most risk and could not afford coffins. This niche housed a specially-constructed coffin, one fitted with a bottom that opened via a lever. Bodies of paupers were placed in the coffin wrapped in a shroud. After the funeral, the lever was pulled and the body slid out. The coffin was then returned to the wall to await the next body. This is just one of many interesting sights to behold at Saint Mary's Collegiate and a visit is highly recommended.

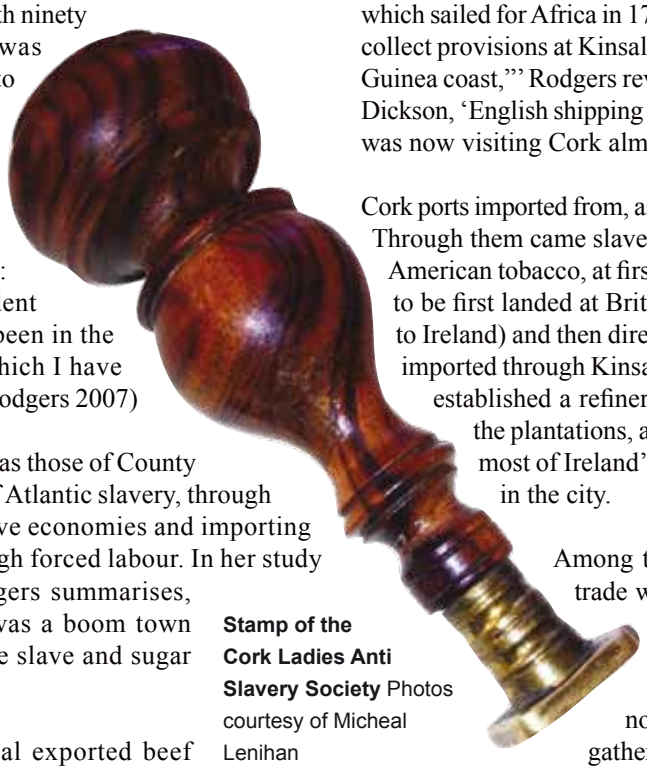
Special thanks to Rev. Edwin Hunter for his help.

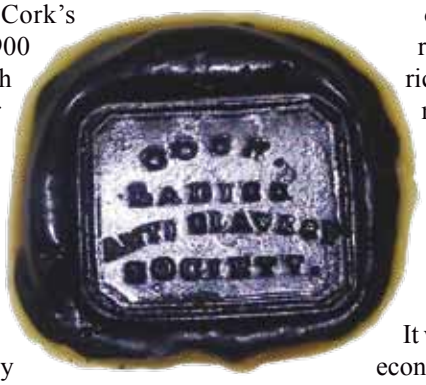
Coffin-shaped niche at St. Mary's Collegiate, Youghal
Photo by Stephen Dee

Cork and African Slavery

Seán Moraghan

Ireland was not directly involved in the slave trade: the shipping of captured African men and women across the Atlantic to the Caribbean, the West Indies and America, where they were forced to raise plantation crops of sugar, tobacco and other commodities. This situation had not arisen from any moral scruples; the country was simply prohibited from engaging in the business because it was reserved for the benefit of English traders. There appears to have been some occasional illegal Irish trade: Laurence Fenton cites the record of an Irish ship, the Prosperity, from Limerick, which sailed to Barbados in 1718 with ninety six slaves. After the restriction was lifted in 1780, a handful of plans to set up Irish slave trade companies emerged, but these never came to fruition. Individual Irishmen did take part in the business, such as David Tuohy, from Tralee, who moved to Liverpool as a young man: in 1771 he wrote to a correspondent in Cork commenting that he had 'been in the African trade for many years in which I have made a pretty fortune.' (Quoted in Rodgers 2007)





Stamp of the Cork Ladies Anti Slavery Society Photos courtesy of Micheal Lenihan

Nevertheless, Irish merchants, such as those of County Cork, did gain from the existence of Atlantic slavery, through exporting goods needed by the slave economies and importing commodities produced there through forced labour. In her study of Ireland and slavery, Nini Rodgers summarises, 'In the eighteenth century Cork was a boom town [...] the source of its expansion the slave and sugar islands.' (2009, 127)

From the 1600s Cork and Youghal exported beef and butter to the Caribbean. At the height of Cork's beef export business, when between 500 and 900 cattle were being slaughtered in the city each day, that region formed the greatest market for the produce. Rodgers explained how this beef was graded in the early eighteenth century, with the best 'mess beef' for the plantation owners and the cheapest 'cow beef' ('the fattened carcases of elderly dairy cattle') for the slaves. (ibid. 128) Between 1690 and 1760 the Caribbean plantations were also the largest market for Cork butter. 'Wealthy Europeans in the islands were as emphatic in their preference for Irish butter as for Irish beef,' noted David Dickson (2005, 143). Exporting beef and butter successfully was possible because Cork merchants had devised ways of preserving both products so that they resisted the high temperatures of the tropics and the New World.

'Numerous other items and smaller trades flourished' in the city because of the Caribbean trade, Rodgers (2009, 128) explains. Pickled tongues and spiced salmon were popular with British and French slave owners; the French islands bought Cork candles in large quantities; and salted herring was also packed in the city and shipped for slaves to eat.

Provisioning the plantation economies may seem like a second-hand connection with slavery per se, but as Rodgers points out, not having to assign slaves to raising food crops 'enabled the planters to concentrate their labour force on commercial crops.' (2000, 176)

As well as providing saleable cargoes, Cork ports regularly provisioned English ships with foodstuffs for the use of captain and crew on their way to Africa for slaves or en route to the slave islands. 'One of Liverpool's earliest slaving voyages was made by The Blessing, which sailed for Africa in 1700, its owners [...] ordering the captain to collect provisions at Kinsale and then take "the first fair wind for the Guinea coast,"' Rodgers reveals. (2009, 96) By the late 1600s, notes Dickson, 'English shipping on the outward journey to the West Indies was now visiting Cork almost as a matter of routine.' (2005, 117)

Cork ports imported from, as well as exported to, the slave economies. Through them came slave-produced goods such as sugar, rum and American tobacco, at first indirectly (as the cargoes were required to be first landed at British ports and subsequently re-consigned to Ireland) and then directly. In the 1600s American tobacco was imported through Kinsale, Youghal and the city. Four merchants established a refinery to process the raw sugar produced on the plantations, at the site of the Red Abbey in 1681. Soon most of Ireland's imports of unrefined sugar were landed in the city.

Among the city merchants who benefitted from trade with the slave islands was Richard Hare, who supplied goods to planters in Antigua, Barbados, Jamaica and other islands. Like most Cork merchants, Hare did not own ships, instead acting as an agent, gathering and packing provisions for delivery on English shipping, often carrying a slave product, rum, for the return journeys. In the mid-1700s, Patrick Goold, seemingly a member of a Cork Catholic merchant family, operated between Cork, America and the island of Montserrat, where he appears to have been based. (Dickson 2005, 168; Truxes 2004, 101, 152) Another merchant, Youghal man John Perry, made a fortune on the sugar island of Antigua before returning home.

It was not only merchants who engaged with the slave economies. The Galways, a family from County Cork, emigrated to the island of Montserrat in the late 1600s, where they built up a large sugar plantation of their own. Irishmen also travelled to act as estate managers or overseers; one such man, identified only as S.K., and probably from Cork, later gave an anonymous account of his experiences in Antigua (S. K. 1789), in which he related that slave workers could lose hands and feet, crushed in machinery; could be whipped with up to 100 lashes; and might be tied to weights to prevent them from running away. He also told of a slave woman who was sexually harassed by an overseer. (In spite of these observations, the author was not in favour of the abolition of slavery, merely of its better regulation.) There were also positions available in the colonial civil service: James Cotter, apparently of a Catholic County Cork family, served as a legal officer and deputy governor on the island of

Montserrat between 1676 and 1682. (Akenson 1997, 96-97) Young Irish boys appear to have been sent over to the plantation islands as servants, through the efforts of Catholic merchants who approached Cork City educationalist Nano Nagle in the late 1700s; she in turn asked these boys to teach Christian doctrine in their new lands and to '... take great pains with the little blacks to instruct them.' (Quoted in Rodgers 2009, 129)

Some men from the city and county (or who had Cork connections or addresses) were slave owners. A database recently established by University College London carries information about slave owners from Cork who were compensated officially after the British government abolished slavery in its West Indies territories in 1833. (See "Legacies of British Slave-ownership" at www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/.) It lists twelve individuals and the number of slaves they held. (In contrast, there were two slave owners from County Waterford, and none from counties Kerry or Limerick.) Sir Edward Hoare (1801-1882), of Annabelle, owned almost 1000 slaves in Jamaica; Church of Ireland clergyman, Rev Archibald Robert Hamilton (1778-1857), of South Terrace, Cork City, owned 258 slaves on the island; merchant Christopher Owens, of Cobh, held 127 slaves on an estate in Antigua. Simeon Hardy (1776-1834) was a Cork merchant and shipowner who settled for a time in Martinique and in Dominica, afterwards returning to Cork in 1810 and trading Irish goods for Barbados sugar; his son (or nephew) Simeon Junior was compensated for thirteen Barbadian slaves (whom he may have acquired through Simeon Senior). Merchant Henry Osburne Seward had extensive business in the West Indies, and was compensated for over 50 slaves in British Guiana. All (or almost all) of the Cork slave owners appear to have been Anglo-Irish or English, and Protestant.

On occasion, Cork experienced closer contact with slavery than by trade alone. Some ships calling to Cork harbour held slaves as servants rather than as cargo, and some of these used the opportunity to jump ship and flee. In November 1755, 'a Negro servant, the property of Capt. Carroll' was helped on shore and ran away. A notice placed in the *Cork Journal* claimed that he was believed to be in Great Island, and offered a reward for his capture, but by the end of April 1756 the notices about him stopped being printed, and we must imagine that he made good his escape. In the spring of 1769, a servant named Jerry escaped from a ship. He was described as having 'strong negro features' and as wearing 'a light-coloured grey coat, dirty leather breeches, white stockings, and wore a curl behind that matched the other part of his own woolly hair.' (Quoted in Lenihan 2010, 225) The notice placed in the *Cork Evening Post* offering a reward for his apprehension also declared that two Cork merchants, Mr Devonshire and Mr Strettell 'have volunteered their services for his recapture.'

There are rare examples of slave boys being offered for sale in Cork. In 1762: 'To be sold for account of D.F., a black Negro boy aged about 14 years, remarkably free from vice and a very handy willing servant.' (Quoted in Rodgers 2009, 127) In 1767, a ship captain offered 'a likely Negro Boy, about four years old, American born, and past all disorders.' (Quoted in Truxes 2004, 93-94.)

The Offical Medallion of the British Anti-Slavery Society, 1795 Josiah Wedgwood [Public Domain], via Wikimedia Commons

As long as Atlantic slavery had existed there had been opposing abolitionist movements in America, Britain and Ireland. Daniel O'Connell, the leader of Catholic Ireland, vigorously opposed the practice and the trade; and local anti-slavery societies were formed in many Irish towns and cities, including Cork, by Quaker and Protestant campaigners. The Cork Anti-Slavery Society was formed in 1826, although Richard S Harrison notes that there was opposition 'from the powerful West Indies merchant lobby and their spokesman, Herbert Osborne Seward. They argued that the slaves were well treated and quite happy until outsiders started interfering on their behalf!' (1992, 69-79)

The abolition of slavery and of the slave trade was a slow and piecemeal process. Even the British termination of slavery in the West Indies merely turned former slaves into 'apprentices.' In the American arena, it took the Civil War (1861 – 1865) to destroy what was there quaintly called 'the peculiar institution', and even then freed slaves were subject to racism, abuse and murder. While slavery existed, Cork merchants and other individuals, as well as the local economy, benefitted from it, and local and national consumers carelessly enjoyed its goods.

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Sound Excerpts

As part of our ongoing archival preservation work, Cork Folklore Project staff member Seán Moraghan has written summaries of many of the interviews in our permanent collection. Here he has selected some of his favourite samples from those interviews on a wide variety of topics.

Eileen Jones

I remember when we were children now, the mothers only opened the door in the morning and we were gone. Up into the quarry. Playing all day. Five to one, Goulding's hooter used go, and that was time for your dinner. You'd come down, you got your dinner. You went out again. You weren't seen no more and your mother wouldn't have to look for you because she knew where you were. And at quarter to six Goulding's horn went again and that was tea time, and you came down for your tea. Out after tea again, playing around, playing skipping, playing anything at all.

Breda Sheehan

There was one character that sticks out in my mind. I don't know what his real name was but we would have known him as Quilla and at that time we used to put our money together and we'd go down to Con Con. We used to call him Con Con but his actual name was Con O'Connor and he had a hardware shop in Dublin Street and we'd go down there and we'd buy a rope and we'd tie a little loop on the rope and we'd put it around one of the wooden ESB poles and we'd loop one end of the rope through the loop we had made and I don't know how we did it but we managed to keep tugging the rope until we actually got it up the pole. And when we'd have it as high as we wanted then we made another loop at the end and we'd swing on the pole. And I always remember one time a big gang of us, we'd collected all our pennies and got the one and six – one shilling and six pence – to buy the rope and Quilla came down and he cut it. And of course we were all terrified of him so when we'd see him coming we'd all scatter, but we'd watch then from a doorway and he'd be cutting our rope and we'd be nearly crying. We'd be in an awful way. He was terrified that we were going to pull down the electric pole and that if the pole had come down it would have blown all the electricity and we could have been killed. That was probably the reason behind it. But then we'd start saving again for the next rope.

Josephine O'Shea

We had a very bad period right into the mid '50s but after that Lemass came on stream and things started to pick up. Before that, the only employment places here were the Sunbeam and Goulding's fertilizer factory and Denny's who had the bacon factory. They would have been the main people who employed the young people in this area, and I think a lot of the youngsters, that was all that their parents wanted really, was to get them out of school, get them into the Sunbeam, get them into Harrington Goodlass Wall, into Goulding's, or into Denny's Cellar where they would be making a bit of money which helped those parents to rear the remainder of the families, because they had big families in those days.

Horse and Cart Photo by Roy Hammond

Liam Ó h-Uigín

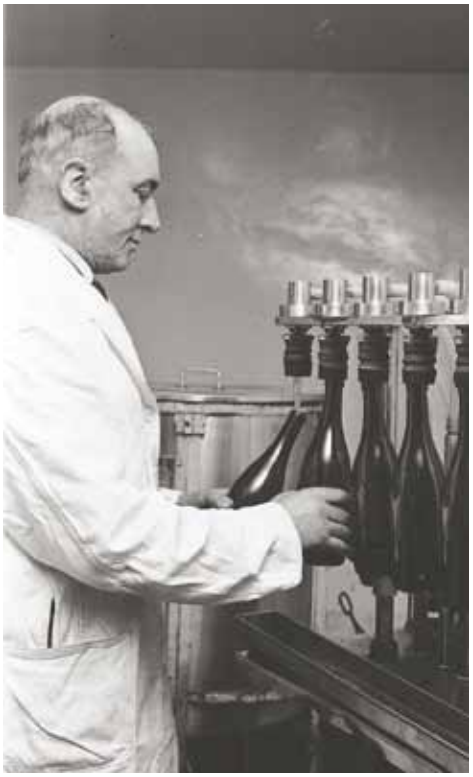
I was a messenger boy in Musgrave's in the early '50s. There was lots of messenger boys in Cork that time, particularly in the English Market, and all my friends were messenger boys. We all had these bikes with the big baskets in front and some of the lads could be sent up to Montenotte or down to Tivoli with a pound of sausages, all that kind of thing. And we used to have great fun with the bikes, because none of us had our own bikes but most of the lads were allowed to bring their messenger boy bikes home and you'd be going for a spin and you'd be sat into the basket with your legs sticking out the side and all this business, and 'twas great really. And I remember there was a messenger boys' strike. All the messenger boys in the city went on strike in the '50s. Now Musgrave's were a great crowd to work for, and they insisted that the messenger boys were not to be sent out on the bikes, because if you were seen on the bike during the strike, the bike would be taken off you by a group of other messenger boys and it could be thrown in over Patrick's Bridge and end up inside in the river. 'Twas all great excitement.

Paddy Cremin

There was a tradition in Cork City, particularly from the Second World War on, that the minute you came to fifteen or sixteen you went over to your brother or sister over in England. And the reason that I joined the army at all was that I had an elderly father, so I had to stay at home and it was the best option. And then we were after getting a corporation house in Roche's Buildings and I mean it all fitted in, the army career would have fitted in with the house like. And to get a house at that time, I mean it's a huge thing now but then it was the very, very same thing.

I had three uncles that served in the British Army. One of them was killed during the First World War and, of course, you always heard the stories of what they had been through. And then one of the uncles got a house, an army house, eventually in 1930 out in Whitethorn. They were the 'homes for heroes' that had been promised by Lloyd George after the First World War, and there were several schemes of them built in Cork. I mean you had Whitethorn, you had Hay Gardens, you had Kerry Hall Road – all lovely houses. And I was always taken out

Sound Excerpts



Bottling Plant
Photo by Roy Hammond

to these houses and the subject of the British Army would come up. It was part of your background, part of your life like, you know.

Tom Foley
I worked in Murphy's Brewery, in the bottling store, and I worked there for ten years, which was very interesting. But I changed jobs a lot actually. I started as a boy, and then we went out on the horse and cart, delivering bottles and barrels and everything. It was great to get out all right, but you'd get drenched in the bad weather, it was a nightmare in the bad weather, and of course you're covered in red paint from the edges of the barrels, from rolling them. So I kind of changed around to doing men's jobs all over the place and in the brewery, so I had experience from the very start of the process right to the very end. And I ended up actually working with electricians, so I learned a lot of electrical trickeens then, which are very handy.

In the '60s, they started to mechanise and get lorries and vans and stuff. I remember the last horse that was there, and actually it was difficult at the time to get someone to drive the horse. There was no shortage in the early '60s of people that knew how to handle a horse, but not even ten years later there was only one chap who looked after the horse. I remember the last horse dying down the stable, it was very emotional. The chap, Jimmy, that used to look after him and drive him, was crying and everyone was crying, and the vet was running around, and it was very sad. But even though I love horses now, I could see even at that stage that there was no one there really to mind them and they were very unsuitable for the roadways. Cork was getting too busy. The leisurely kind of pace of the horse was gone.

Peggy Kelleher
In our very young days, when we were maybe fifteen or sixteen, we went to a place up in St Vincent's Convent, it was called the Oratory, and that was run by the nuns and that was an experience in itself. The nuns used to run it and they used to act as monitors at the dance and it was very strictly watched altogether. The boys would be at one side of the room and girls would be the other side of the room. And the nuns used to watch to make sure that there wouldn't be any what they called 'close dancing', in case we'd be getting ourselves into any bother. I don't know what the youngsters nowadays would think about all that, but anyway, it was the way of life as far as we were concerned, we didn't know any better or any worse, and we were innocent. We didn't quite know what we were being separated for even. But anyway we made great friends and 'twas great fun and I suppose it was a great adventure for youngsters to be going off at fifteen.

And then, of course, coming sixteen, seventeen and eighteen, we began to have what we thought then were very serious boyfriends – really they weren't, but we thought of them as very serious boyfriends. And, of course, about nineteen or twenty then, if you were going with a chap for more than six months without any sign of a ring on your finger, it was very bad news, because we expected and hoped – I don't know why – to get married in our early twenties, and in those days any girl who went over twenty-five was considered – gosh, she'll be over the hill soon at about twenty-five. So we were all aiming to be married at about twenty-two or twenty-three. It worked out for some, it didn't work out for very many of us, but it didn't make any difference in the end. The boyfriend and girlfriend thing just gradually got more serious as we got older, you know? The groups dropped off and there were couples instead of groups going to the balls and the dances.

Eibhlís de Barra
And then the girl, when she got married, would not come across the city. The man would have to come. The girls didn't go far away from the mother's house. Like in my own case now, my grandmother was in Gilabbey Street, my aunt lived in Saint Finbarre's Road, Brandy Lane there, and my mother lived in the lane. So they were very near her. But she was head of the clan then in the main house. And the grandmother then would keep her eye on the children here, looking after their needs a bit. At night then, you see, the men didn't stay at home, because there was all oul' sheds where they'd have bowl clubs, hurling clubs, pigeon clubs, doggie clubs, all these, so the men would go out. And what would the women do then? Gather up the children and we'd all come to the main house, the grandmother's house. The grandmother would be like the chief of the clan. And they'd be sitting around the fire, the children would be on little timber blocks and the adults would have the chairs, my aunt, my grandmother, and they'd be all talking of things long ago.

Proposal on sign, the corner of Bridge Street c1987 Photo by Roy Hammond. All photos courtesy of the Hammond family

Oral History as a Social Justice Tool

Tara Arpaia

Cork Folklore Project equipment and accessories Photo by John Sunderland

When I began working at the Cork Folklore Project, I wondered how my background in human rights law could contribute to the Project's research. I found myself working with a conservation architect, a graphic designer, an archaeologist, a published writer, several doctoral candidates and an IT specialist. I, meanwhile, didn't have the faintest idea what vernacular architecture, intangible culture or archival summaries were.

At CFP, I soon found that my work had a common thread: listening to people telling their stories. This struck me as a point of compatibility and even continuity with my legal interests. Most of us, regardless of background, instinctively know that stories have power that goes well beyond their entertainment value. My mother once told me that the American war against Vietnam only began to inspire large-scale protest when the media began showing footage of civilians, of children burning and terrified. The war was no longer just an idea or a matter of official action. It became, in the minds of millions, about people. We relate to faces and voices; we empathise with stories and we have an extraordinary capacity for generosity and compassion when faced with the anguish of others. This empathy is what makes oral history such a powerful tool.

Documented history, in terms of official records, dates and names provides a structure for our understanding of historical events. But do they, in themselves, teach us anything about who we are as a species and what we are capable of, both good and bad? Would we have developed the concept of universal human rights based solely on whatever official records might provide?

The power of the document still dominates legal practice. Those who have the power to generate documents determine the story that, whether accurate or not, becomes the record and is, therefore, deemed the objective truth. There is a sense of security in this practice but its danger lies in the fact that the information we obtain from such documents is often unreliable. The consequences, particularly for vulnerable people and communities, are real injustice and inequality.

Nigerian writer Chimamanda Adichie says that: 'Power is the ability not just to tell the story of another person, but to make it the definitive story of that person.' As part of my work at Cork Folklore Project I had the opportunity to interview a woman who survived a childhood in state care in one of Cork's Magdalene Laundries. Other oral history projects, such as the one at University College Dublin, have also archived personal accounts of Magdalene survivors who experienced barbaric abuse while in the care of the state. The overwhelming struggle that these people faced to be heard and to have their stories included in the official record is a bleak indictment of our tendency to actively suppress voices that conflict with the story we'd prefer to be true. The interviewee describes not only not being believed but also being punished and savagely criticised for speaking up for herself as a child. The fact that she actually spoke up at all is extraordinary given the fact that having a voice that counted was never something she had known.

Even in the absence of active suppression, however, voices can still be silenced, perhaps unintentionally, perhaps by well-meaning people. When I lived in Belfast, my sister-in-law talked to me once about people's reservations about the proposed human rights commission. The idea was a good one but she explained how she anticipated that the Commission would be dominated by academics and 'experts', people who weren't known to solicit the opinions of the local communities for whom they would purportedly advocate. She found this paternalistic and alienating. It assumed, she argued, that people such as she couldn't define their own experiences or aspirations. She did not feel consulted. As oral history researchers, we need to avoid this kind of outcome at all costs. Rather we must maintain what my CFP colleague Margaret Steele refers to as a 'we-perspective' by 'talking to and with people rather than about them.' This is especially important when entire communities share a collective identity that includes an expectation of injustice and inequality. In that context, advocacy alone can further alienate, and attempts to empower can end up re-enforcing existing power relations rather than upsetting them.

In international human rights, the reliance on personal accounts over official documents has given rise to the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the International Criminal Tribunals for Rwanda and the former

Yugoslavia, among others. These tribunals deal directly with victims. The victims have the opportunity to define their own experiences, and they are consulted. The impact that survivor accounts have had on social justice in the last century alone has been invaluable in shaping our understanding of who we are and what we are capable of for good and bad. The voices of concentration camp survivors and the victims of sexual and domestic violence from previous generations have significantly re-informed the singular dominant perspective that allowed these abuses to thrive.

Adichie argues that the single story creates stereotypes and reduces complex individuals to only one or two elements. She argues that the single story 'breaks the dignity of a people, but stories can also repair.' Collecting these stories and including these perspectives into our growing appreciation for history is part of what I get to do at the Project. I see a patchwork of diverse perspectives emerge from what has always been deemed a homogenous account of what it means to be Irish and from Cork.

The CFP archive also contains the personal account of a woman who watched Patrick Street burn from her bedroom window as a small child. Her memories of the former Cork Opera House where she played as a child sit alongside the voices of hopeful new immigrants from Turkey, Iraq and China. We have young voices and old voices and they are as alike as they are different. We have Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Buddhist, Quaker and Unitarian histories in Cork. We have rich and poor, Northside and Southside, and everything in between. We can begin to more fully explore the question 'Who are we?' because, as both an oral and documentary history project, we are using all the tools available to realise an inclusive perspective.

Inclusive perspectives promote equality. This helps realise the most fundamental principles of democracy in a substantive and accessible manner. In contemporary Ireland, after decades of advocacy, the Ombudsman for Childrens' Office finally came into being in 2003. Along with this came the emphasis on 'the voice of the child' in decisions and legal actions that would impact on their lives. This is a fundamentally democratic development and, in my view, is a substantive step towards a more inclusive society.

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Five Reasons You Might Not Want to be Interviewed and Why We Think You Should Reconsider

Dr Margaret Steele

After eighteen years and over five hundred interviews, we continue to be amazed by the generosity the people of Cork have shown to the Cork Folklore Project. Above all, we are grateful to our interviewees who give their time and effort so freely to share their stories and memories.

Sometimes, however, people are interested in being interviewed but they want a bit more information about the process before they make a decision. Here are some of the most common reservations people express, and our responses.

'I don't know anything about folklore.'

The word 'folklore' might make you think of fairies and leprechauns. But if you remember skipping rhymes from your childhood, if you know how to play don or camogie, or if you have worked in a trade, then you know folklore. Many of the artefacts we see in museums today were once commonplace. Our way of life, too, will seem 'historical' to those who come after us. Folklore is about the nitty-gritty of everyday life, not just as it was in the past, but as it is today.

'I'm not an expert.'

We do two kinds of interviews. One is life histories. Naturally, you are the best possible expert on your own life. The other kind of interview is about a particular topic, such as Blackpool in the 1950s. For these, you don't need to have held any special office, or to remember all the names and dates. We want stories, memories, sights and sounds. If you can give us a flavour of the topic, then you are exactly the kind of expert we want!

'Ah sure, everyone knows about that.'

Sometimes we ask about experiences that you might feel are very common. But we find that everyone recalls them and expresses them differently. Even if others had similar experiences, you might have an insight or recall a detail that they do not. Or perhaps you might have a really engaging way of telling your story and bringing the experience to life for listeners. The more people we interview, the better an overall picture we get of life in Cork, past and present.

'What if I say something I regret?'

Thankfully, most people are happy for their stories to be preserved in our archive, and to have their contribution recognised publicly. However, every interviewee has the option to restrict access to their interview. We can even remove your interview completely and permanently from our archive if you feel that is the best option for you – although we are happy to report that to date nobody has asked us to do so. The bottom line is that we will not store or use your interview without taking all reasonable steps to make sure you are happy for us to do so.

'You should talk to so-and-so – she knows way more about it than me.'

Often, people direct us to a local historian, or to someone like a club president or chairperson, maybe someone who is versed in history or used to speaking in public. But we want more than just facts and figures. We also want to know what it was like to be involved as a direct participant in various aspects of the cultural life of Cork. Traditionally, academic history has often focused on leaders and rulers. The Cork Folklore Project, like a lot of folklore and oral history projects, is very keen to preserve the experience, knowledge and perspective of the so-called 'ordinary' people, because once you do a few interviews, you quickly realise that everybody is extraordinary in their own way.

We hope this list has given you some insight into our interviewing and archiving process. Cork is bursting at the seams with fantastic potential interviewees and we don't have the resources to interview you all, but if you would like to contribute an interview to our oral history sound archive we'd love to hear from you!

Tales from the Blackwater
The Cave of Slaughter

Stephen Dee

The Mouth of the River Blackwater at Youghal Photo by Stephen Dee

Flowing through three counties, Cork, Kerry and Waterford, for over 105 miles, the River Blackwater is steeped in the history and folklore of the lives it touched, the lives it shaped and those it claimed. One such life is that of Daniel O'Keeffe, a wealthy man who was forced to become an outlaw and eventually gave in to his own notoriety by embracing his dark side. His is a turbulent tale of love and hate, where passions reached extremes on the shores of the Blackwater.

Seventeenth century Ireland was a landscape torn apart by religious war, Irish Catholics rising against English and Scottish Protestant outlanders, in a struggle to determine who would govern the country. Many Catholics lost lands and lives, and falling from grace was never so easy, with many aristocrats forced to become outlaws. Outlaws were referred to as 'Rapparees' or 'Tories.' Their sole purpose was to make a stand against the feudal-like landlord systems imposed by outsiders. These didn't take the form of great battles, but often followed guerrilla warfare tactics. It is said that often goods taken in raids were distributed amongst the poor but that may reflect a romanticised view of dangerous heroes more than anything else. Certainly, having the poor majority backing and sheltering you would have been a strategic advantage.

Historical references to Daniel O'Keeffe can be conflicting. Antiquarian and author, Geoffrey Strahan places O'Keeffe in the late seventeenth century, in his book *Irish Fairytales, Folklore and Legends*. There is also a reference, via the Kilbrin website, to O'Keeffe as the 'Gortmore Outlaw' in 1601, but the general consensus seems to follow a mid-seventeenth-century character. However, with so many O'Keeffes, many named Daniel, the accuracy of what follows is ambiguous.

The loss of Dromagh Castle, homestead of the O'Keeffe clan, was the breaking point of Daniel's tale. His father, Hugh O'Keeffe, lost his title and his lands in 1641, and this perhaps forced Daniel into his outlaw route; however, other tales claim that Daniel accidently killed McDonough, the Chieftain of Duhallow, and this was the catalyst for his career. The aforementioned 1601 account could fill in these gaps as it claims that in order to prevent a Chief named Donagh McCormac changing sides to the English, he was captured and escorted north with Daniel as his jailor. When they came upon some English soldiers Daniel killed this Donagh rather than allow him to be taken by the English; perhaps this was what happened with McDonough. Either way, Daniel was forced to go on the run and become an outlaw, adopting the name 'Donal a' Rasca'. *Rasca* is an old Irish word and according to the website logainm.ie refers to small amounts of water such as a puddle or quagmire. He possibly earned this name as he made his home in a cave by the river Blackwater. Some sources refer to him as Donal A'Casca. According to Ó Dónaill in his Irish/English Dictionary '*casca'* means 'cask', a container used for storing food and liquids, generally alcohol. So perhaps this other version of his name hints at the kind of item he was known for taking. Daniel was a scholar and a poet and, like Robin Hood, he began earning a name for defending the weak and helpless. He survived by stealing herds of cattle for ransom. He would then use the Blackwater to take him up into Mallow, the largest town in the area, for supplies. His cave could only be accessed by boat or by swimming and was said to merge into many other caverns stretching beneath Mount Hillary.

Daniel was a tall, handsome man and eventually he caught the attention of a young woman named Máiréad Ní Cheallaigh (Margaret Kelly). Daniel wooed her, and from translations of his own poetry we get an impression of a man who still lived a life unafraid of the law and who was indeed protected by the local people, as reflected by the first line:

At the dance in the village
thy white foot was fleetest,
thy voice mid the concert
of maidens was sweetest;
The swell of thy white breast
made rich lovers follow;
and thy raven hair bound them,
young Mauriade ny Kallagh.

Máiréad left her life behind and joined Daniel in his cave. We can only speculate on what life was like for the young lovers but as Daniel's reputation grew, Máiréad took over the boat trips into Mallow for supplies. Someone must have pointed her out as Daniel's lover because on one such trip Máiréad was accosted by English soldiers stationed in Mallow. Instead of holding her they offered her a chance at a new life via a large sum of money which they promised to bestow on her on his capture. Perhaps his romantic appeal had dwindled in the harshness of the reality of being an outlaw's mistress, or perhaps she was a vain woman who wanted more, as he wrote:

With strings of rich pearls
Thy white neck was laden,
And thy fingers with spoils;
Of the Sassenach maiden;
Such rich silks enrob'd not
The dames of Moyalla
Such dear gold they wore not
As Mauriade ny Kallagh.

She decided to take the offer and give him up, making arrangements to lead Daniel from the cave, where soldiers would be waiting to apprehend or shoot him. On returning to the cave she began to enact her plan, but something went wrong. Daniel discovered the parchment promising her money on his capture, and in a rage at her betrayal he stabbed her through the heart. She died on the cave floor, earning it the title 'Cave of Slaughter.'

After her betrayal his robberies became more violent and the people began to turn against him, because of both the change in his nature and his murder of Máiréad. A nurse who was sought to look after him when he contracted a fever after a jaunt in the Millstreet area turned him in to the English. Due to being quite ill, the soldiers were lax in their vigilance and using a knife he had kept hidden on his person, Daniel cut the ropes that bound him and escaped before they reached Mallow. His eventual demise would come in the shape of a trusted friend, a man who had welcomed Daniel into his home on many an occasion. On one particular evening as Daniel attended dinner his host organised with the red coats to ambush his home. His wife however believed this unjust and attempted to warn Daniel of this betrayal. When he asked to have his milk warmed she used the phrase '*Más maith leat a bheith buan caith fuar agus teith*', 'If you want to live old make use of hot and cold' (Flanagan) to let him know that by the time his milk was heated he would be captured so he should flee. He ran from the house but it was already surrounded and he was shot dead.

Image of a rapparee [Public Domain], via Wikimedia Commons

No more shall mine ear drink
Thy melody swelling,
Nor thy beaming eye brighten
The outlaw's dark dwelling

Echoing the tales of Robin Hood and *Phantom of the Opera*, O'Keeffe's was a tragic tale of love and betrayal, an anti-hero for seventeenth-century Cork. Like all great anti-heroes he needed a lair and his cave of slaughter came under scrutiny in the nineteenth century. Up till 1914 the location of Daniel O'Keeffe's hideaway was thought to be well established, bordering a second cave known as Norah Meeccanah cave, a madwoman thought by some to be a fairy, who was said to leap from her cave entrance into the river Blackwater. However in 1914 the Reverend Michael O'Sullivan, on whose land the caves lay, did an extensive search of the area and discovered, approximately 200 yards from the presumed cave site, a rabbits burrow that on further investigation gave way to a larger opening at the base of an 80foot wall of rock. He wrote how after crouching for two yards he came upon five man-made steps that led to a small chamber which opened up into a chamber where a man over 6 feet tall could stand upright for up to a distance of 40 yards. This cave was on his neighbour's land but offered a more plausible location of what the Cave of Slaughter might have resembled.

Evidence found at the site also showed that large stalagmites had been sculpted, one into the shape of a man and another into an angels wing. At the end of the cave was a chasm measuring 30 feet deep by 8 feet wide, the bottom of which was filled with water. With this almost certainly being the real 'Cave of Slaughter', it was renamed due to its substantial size to become Donnellaroska Cave, reflecting its connection with Donal a' Rasca.

Daniel O'Keeffe was a poet, a lover, an anti-hero and a villain, the latter two forced upon him through circumstance of time and political upheaval. Human emotions betrayed him and he ultimately betrayed himself casting the blood of his lover into the river Blackwater.

My deep grief I'm venting,
The Saxons keen ban dog
My footsteps is scenting;
But true men await me
Afar in Duhallow.
Farewell, cave of slaughter,
And Mauriade ny Kallagh.

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Special thanks *to James Buckley of IRD Duhallow and Jack Lane of the Aubane Historical Society for their input.*

Bridge Strike!

Patrick Walsh

Detail of the damaged portion of Clontarf Bridge Courtesy of the Irish Examiner

Here is another interesting story from local historian and regular contributor, Pat Walsh. Pat's special area of interest is Cork's railway history, and his book on the Youghal and Cobh Railway is a work in progress.

Nowadays sea-borne trade to and from Cork is, for the most part, handled at Ringaskiddy or Tivoli docks. In centuries past, however, port activities centred on jetties and quaysides in the very heart of Cork City itself, from the enclosed medieval dock on which Castle Street stands, to the Victorian quays around the present day Customs House and beyond.

In the period that concerns us, ships could dock right up to Brian Boru and Clontarf Bridges. Until their mechanical gear was removed in the 1950s, in fact, these along with the previous Parnell Bridge, were of the opening type, allowing smaller craft to dock upstream as far as St Patrick's and Parliament Bridges.

On 3 November 1965, Albert (Kennedy) Quay along with Penrose and Horgan's Quays at the rear of the railway station were a hive of activity as the MV [Motor Vessel] City of Cork was inward bound to its berth beside Clontarf Bridge. She was one of a dozen ships that arrived in Cork Harbour that day, eight of them docking at the city quays. Owned by Messrs Palgrove Murphy and Company, the City of Cork was plying her regular route between Antwerp, Hamburg, Dublin and Cork, carrying general cargo. At about 2.50 pm she approached her berth, but as the minutes passed the 1,200 ton vessel was moving dangerously close to Clontarf Bridge and showing no signs of stopping. In spite of the anchor being dropped in an effort to halt her, astonished onlookers watched as she struck the steel and timber structure, smashing part of the wooden footpath to pieces before ploughing into the road/rail section and coming to a shuddering stop, about eight feet in. The impact was such that it forced the bridge to partially open, tearing the tarmac road surface and putting the rail line out of alignment.

Fortunately, nobody was injured but things could have been so very different. Just minutes before the collision, Garda Edward Carmody, who was on point duty at the City Hall side, had signalled a southbound double decker bus to proceed off the bridge. Witnesses told how they sped from the scene of the imminent accident, or in some cases, abandoned their cars and ran to safety. Immediately after the collision, the City of Cork reversed, tied up and began unloading her Leeside consignment. As soon as she began to move, the displaced former lifting section again settled down. Incidentally, the ship's captain, D J Gibbons, told waiting reporters that he was busy and had nothing to say. The City of Cork was only very slightly damaged and sailed again that night. A report from the Harbour Master sent to the Harbour Commissioners the following week claimed that the pilot phoned down to the engine room to have the engines shut off but this did not happen.

Though owned by CIE, the cost of maintaining both Clontarf and Brian Boru Bridges fell in equal part to the corporation, the Harbour Commissioners and the national carrier (see *The Archive* Issue 16, page 13). Consequently, engineers from each authority carried out inspections of the crash scene. It was discovered that one of two steel girders supporting the road and rail section had been badly fractured and repairing or replacing it would necessitate complete closure of the bridge for at least a month.

For the Corporation, this threw traffic management into chaos as nearby Parnell Bridge was already closed following structural defects being detected. This meant that now, the furthest downstream bridge on the south channel was Parliament Bridge, already overburdened with increasing traffic volumes. At an urgent meeting held on the evening of the incident, emergency plans were drawn up to facilitate traffic flow and some of these decisions made back then are still with us today.

Some thoroughfares, such as Clontarf Street and certain quays either side of the south channel, were closed to through traffic while an extensive one-way system was introduced in the following days. It involved routing inward traffic from the southeast of the city into South Terrace, Georges Quay, Parliament Bridge and Parliament Street to the South Mall. To alleviate outward southbound traffic congestion, Parnell Bridge was reopened for this purpose only and Anglesea Street was made one-way outward bound, as it is today. Cross-city traffic from the Lower Glanmire Road and the northeast suburbs had to turn right on crossing Brian Boru Bridge and pass the front of the bus office before turning into Parnell Place towards Parnell Bridge and South Mall. Again, what must be kept in mind is that Clontarf and Brian Boru Bridges and adjacent streets formed the furthest downstream artery for cross-city traffic at that time. The city engineer, Seán McCarthy, asked for the co-operation of motorists with the Gardaí and appealed to them not to bring their cars into the city centre but to walk or take the bus instead.

Within a week, CIE had replaced the damaged girder with one cannibalised from a disused bridge near Desert in West Cork but the Corporation refused to reopen the bridge until a new one was fitted. On 4 December a girder fabricated at Verolme Dockyard in Rushbrooke was inserted, and the following night Clontarf Bridge reopened to road traffic. Rail movements to Albert Quay yard did not resume until five months later.

Further downstream today we have the Michael Collins and DeValera Bridges, and to keep through traffic away from the city centre, the Lee Tunnel and the Passage to Carrigaloe ferry. But the next time you are passing by the Parnell/Clontarf Bridge area, think of the collision and resultant traffic chaos that was experienced there fifty years ago on 3 November next.

Mr Tom Nagle

Billy MacCarthy

Tom Nagle Drawing by Ciara Murphy

Mr Nagle, who lived next door to us was a retired school master, a highly respected, pipe-smoking gentleman who was always given his full title when addressed by adults and children alike. The big apple tree he grew in his back garden was his pride and joy and he cared for it lovingly. Each autumn the tree produced a huge harvest of large cooking apples and though they were hard and bitter we were not deterred from eating the fruit that fell from the benevolent branches that extended out and over our boundary wall. My mother had given us strict warning that we were never to steal Mr Nagle's apples but one day when we had some friends in to play, a lad by the name of Willie Maverley, who was older than we were and the accepted leader of the group, paraded us around the yard military-style, with the lead soldier carrying a pole which was intended to strike a branch as we passed under the tree. Before we got that far we heard Mr Nagle moving around his yard, so our leader gave instructions to abandon operations for the moment. During our period of inactivity my brother John, who had a distinctive rural accent though he had lived the entire eight years of his life in the city, blurted out, 'Can I have an apple, Tom?', to which our neighbour replied, 'You can of course, boy', as a number of apples were thrown over the wall. To cap it all my so mannerly younger brother called out, 'Thanks, Tom.' Had she seen and heard what went on that day, my sainted mother would have lain awake all night with the shame of it all.

Mr Nagle was a familiar sight as he stood at his front door, smoking his pipe and having a word for all who cared to stop and chat. I was one of the privileged few to be trusted with a two-shilling piece and asked to go to the shop of Mr Jerome Lynch on the corner of Quaker Road and Summerhill South to purchase his block of Clarke's Perfect Plug tobacco. I always found it fascinating to watch as this master of the art used his penknife to cut chunks off the plug, kneading it between the palms of his hands and putting it in the bowl of the pipe. Even the act of firing up the briar was a joy to see as the tobacco reddened while Mr Nagle in turn applied the lighted match and patted the contents in with his index finger.

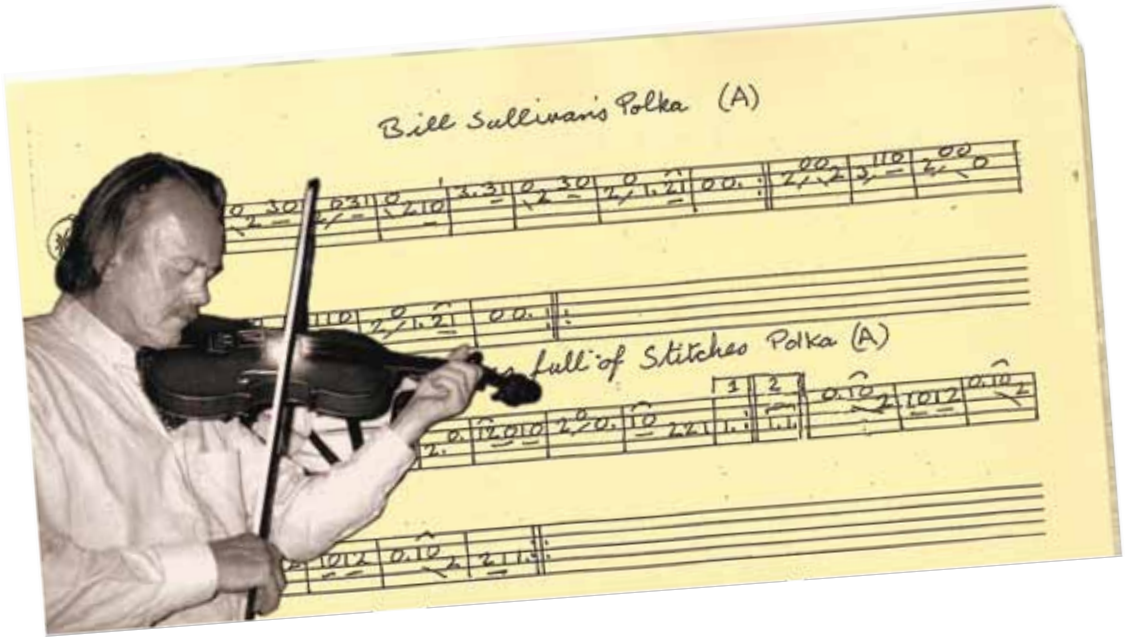
I still tend to laugh out loud when I recall one particular morning when I was probably about ten years of age; I went out to our back yard to find no trace of my uncle Johnny's Red Setter, Judy, who was boarded at our house. I immediately set about searching the neighbouring rear gardens and St John's graveyard which was located near to our property, but without success. I next crossed the back gardens to Park Eoin housing estate and on to where this area joined the top of Quaker Road, adjacent to The Timber Cross. With still no sign of the missing dog I proceeded down towards my own house until I encountered Mr. Nagle standing with his back against the door frame and quietly enjoying his morning smoke. Being well acquainted with our close and friendly neighbour I had no hesitation in putting the question, 'Mr Nagle, did you see our Judy?' Mr. Nagle looked down at me, took a deep draw on his pipe before replying, 'I did indeed, boy. She passed down here about ten minutes ago and I thought it was the Lord Mayor who was coming with the fine chain she was wearing around her neck.'

During Mr Nagle's final illness he was attended by a number of the women who lived nearby including my mother and Mrs Maverley from across the road. These ladies were, like many women of their time, unofficial nurses and midwives, and when called upon to do so some were able and willing to lay out the dead. Indeed it was considered a great privilege to prepare a body for burial. One day when the patient was issuing his final instructions to his loyal carers he stressed that he wished to die with his boots on and nobody should remove his footwear until he was ready for the coffin. He was promised that his wishes would be respected. He then pointed to the wardrobe in the corner of the room where his good suit was hanging and ordered that he be buried in this, his best attire. Mrs Maverley told him, quietly, that he would be laid out and buried in the beautiful habit of the Order of St Francis, and that he would have two nights in front of the main altar of St Finbarr's South parish church, to which Mr Nagle replied in a most commanding tone, 'No! There'll be no cold storage for me. You can coffin me here at home and carry me straight out to the Botanic Gardens.'

Mr Nagle wore his trusty boots to the end; he was dressed in his cherished brown pinstripe suit, had his two nights in the church and was indeed buried in St Joseph's cemetery, Tory Top Road, the former site of the Botanic Gardens.

All in good times ...

Dr Marie-Annick Desplanques



The late great fiddler, Séamus Creagh, with an example of his unique tablature system

All photos by Dr Marie-Annick Desplanques

Original Project Research Director, Marie-Annick Desplanques, writes on the legacy of her late husband, the great fiddler and teacher, Séamus Creagh.

A while ago, Mary O'Driscoll talked to me about writing a piece for *The Archive* about my path since I have left the Cork Folklore Project. Indeed, the project had sustained my research and passion for community oral history folklore archives, and has taught me a little more of Cork every day for two or so decades. While I was delighted with the idea, the thoughts ran a short yet entangled race in my mind, as in 'What will I tell them?' I knew deep inside that this would also be a way to connect to my other passion and main reason for being in Cork, the love of my late husband, Séamus Creagh, and of Irish traditional music. Traditional music was also how I first met Mary, as a fiddle player, and we have all played in many sessions since. So here I'll let you read of what has lead to what's in store and see how process and tradition can be a combination of loss, change and a future to look forward to, for one and for all.

Séamus Creagh was for me, the man who lovingly lured me from Newfoundland to Cork twenty-seven years ago. We met at a festival in St John's and immediately connected; the sound post was in the right place! Three months later, I was here and our lives were rhythmed by sessions, gigs and *céilís*, too few and far between to make a decent living, yet it was bliss! The Gables with Charlie Healy and many songs from Danny Maidhchí Ó Súilleabháin, was the main session spot that time, with excursions to the Lobby and the Spailpín Fánach and weekly detours to Moore's

Séamus Creagh and Christina Smith (Newfoundland fiddler) in 2006

on MacCurtain street for Sunday nights with Matt Teehan on the box and Máire Breathnach on the piano, playing for dancers. Then there'd be *céilís* and benefits for causes musically and poetically political at local GAA clubs. Occasionally buses and trains would take us to further lands and counties for bigger concerts with Jackie Daly or Paddy Keenan. I discovered the Ireland I know via the best pubs for a session, according to who was playing where and when. Once in county Waterford, I thought I was back in Newfoundland; they not only sounded the same, they had the same names, and looked the same!

So our life went on, initially back and forth between Newfoundland and Cork, surprising us with great times, great sounds and great friends, until six years ago when Séamus passed away. 'I will have left a legacy,' he said to me not long before he died.

The legacy is here indeed, in the memories and the memorial concerts and festivals our friends and fellow musicians have organised to celebrate the music Séamus played and left to all through the recordings and through the teaching and the passing on of his musicianship; the tunes of course, yet also the playing and the sharing, at sessions, for dancers, in concerts, at parties, sometimes at funerals and weddings, christenings even! Music was Séamus's life. He swapped tunes with others; this is how tunes travel through the tradition. Occasionally he would have had one or more pupils whom he would teach in informal settings, such as pubs! Later on though, he made teaching a good part of his musical life. He taught them by ear and in other informal traditional ways, for which he used his own version of a fiddle tablature system, similar to that used by Pádraig O'Keefe, the Slíabh Luachra master fiddler whose music

Séamus and Ciara Galvin in the Galley Inn in Schull in 1998

Séamus and Matt Teehan (box) and Sean Galvin (pipes) in Gortnahue in County Tipperary in 1993

is celebrated in Castleisland every year. The tablature combines strings and fingers; it is, folklorists might say, a vernacular written support to help with learning tunes by ear. This is part of the legacy Séamus left, in some ways a testament to continuity.

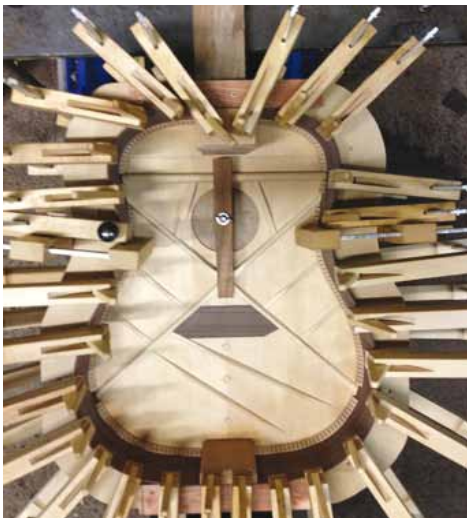
Now the pain of loss is subsiding into the comfort of having the wonderful memories and enjoyment of what is ahead. Since I have left the Project four years ago, I have spent much time looking for the therapeutically creative and have gone back to taking photographs and playing a few tunes. The processing time also allowed me to know how I will give Séamus's musical legacy to the community. I am currently on sabbatical leave from UCC working on the digitisation of Séamus's tunes, as he wrote them down in tablature with corresponding staff notation, also in his handwriting. These will also connect to his playing of the tunes in various settings and contexts. I would like it to be in the spirit that Séamus had and left to all of us and eventually make this available to the traditional music community, through the Irish Traditional Music Archive, among other real or virtual places.

Welcome Back to Crowley's

Sheena Crowley

In Issue 18 of The Archive *we said 'Goodbye to Crowley's' landmark music centre, but now we're saying 'Welcome back' to Crowley's, but with a difference. Check it out!*

On 13 October 2014, Crowley's Musician Centre opened in Cork in partnership with the Oliver Plunkett Bar. Fast becoming one of the most exciting music venues in the city, the pub has created an upstairs space dedicated to local musicians, acknowledging the cultural contribution musicians make to our society. With this ethos it was a perfect fit for the new evolution of Crowley's Music. We have become a musicians' meeting place, where accessories can be bought from early morning until late at night. We have a small collection of used, vintage and handmade instruments that can be rented or purchased, and are keeping up the tradition of a high quality repairs and maintenance service. We also have an extensive programme of tutorials, workshops and seminars by musicians who love to share their knowledge. Finally we promote groups of musicians which changes on a quarterly rotation.



Photos courtesy of Sheena Crowley

This is a unique community concept, where musicians can teach, gig, jam and hang out, as well as availing of the services and products on offer. And all of this in the very relaxed and welcoming environment of a pub, where you can have breakfast, lunch or dinner, a coffee or a pint.

Musicians make our city and we help them do their thing! This is just the beginning …

Crowley's Musician Centre
116 Oliver Plunkett Street
Cork
https://crowleysmusiciancentre.com/
Open Daily
Repairs: 1pm - 5pm
Accessories: 8am - 2am
Upstairs at the Oliver Plunkett Bar

Holy Wells: Sacred Places of County Cork

Geraldine Healy

St Berihert, Inchigeela Road Photos by Geraldine Healy

On the outskirts of Macroom there is a holy well, just off the turning for the Inchigeela Road, and I went to visit it one day.

As I approached the site I got a sense that I was leaving behind the constraints of modern living. With each step, I shed the concerns of everyday preoccupations, dropping my worries like a physical cloak on the roadside as I entered the precinct of the well. There was a profound and palpable sense of the sacred hanging in the air, suspended on the very breeze. In that instant, I seemed to be entering a realm, a special space, where I would be closer to the source of the life force, issuing forth from the Mother Goddess herself as a gift of wellbeing. I brought with me, like so many others, my hopes for health and contentment; a search for inner peace that a place like this can give to one's spirit.

Down the ages, there was a belief that at these sacred sites there was a closer connection to the Otherworld. From early times it was believed that drinking from these wells could give poetic inspiration, wisdom and understanding. In Irish mythology they were thought to represent portals to another world, whose inhabitants could control the very forces of nature itself. With the coming of Christianity to Ireland, holy wells became 'Christianised.' The Roman church put a Christian stamp on the former natural practices associated with these wells. In Christian times these holy wells in effect bestowed the fruits of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These ancient sources of water were then absorbed into the rituals of the new faith.

There are three features usually present at a holy well: the well or spring; a sacred stone, sometimes covering the well; and, notably, a sacred tree. My colleague at the Cork Folklore Project, Stephen Dee, mentioned how 'if an ash tree resided near a water source, it was believed a conduit was opened which allowed mortals and fairies to interact in conversation.' Several trees are closely linked with holy wells, in particular the hawthorn, the ash, the hazel and the elm. Trees were seen as providing a form of protection for the well. Many of the estimated 3,000 holy wells of Ireland have a tree or bush growing close to the well site. The trees were often called 'rag' or 'cloutie' trees. Cloths, particularly red cloths (the colour red being considered very effective against mischief), were attached to branches. These rags represented supplicants' prayers and remained on the tree long after the visit of the pilgrims. The idea was that as a rag cloth rots away so does your illness lessen or your troubles dissipate. These rags are reminiscent of the brilliant coloured flags seen flying from the monasteries of Tibet and Nepal in the Himalayas. Other items, such as rosary beads, medals and coins were also left behind at the wells in remembrance of healing and of favours received.

The holy wells of Ireland were first and foremost places of healing. People came to pray and drink the waters in the hope of a cure for many ailments, such as sore eyes at Tobairín Súl at Lough Hyne near Skibbereen. People hoped for cures for such things as toothaches, sore throats, indigestion, back pain, rheumatism, infertility and depression. They came to ask the local saints connected to the wells for spiritual help and placed themselves under their protection. A round of prayers was said while walking around the well. At Skour Well, again at Lough Hyne, on May Eve, people would come and say prayers and drop a white stone in the well. The first water drawn from a well on May morning was regarded as particularly potent by the supplicants. Pilgrims sometimes kissed the stones of the well site. It was considered very beneficial to drink from a well, taking the water in a little tin cup sometimes tied with a chain to a well.

The wells were associated with a particular local saint and a pattern (patron) day was held at a holy well on the feast day of the saint. Saints were often considered to have used the water of the well and thus conferred a blessing on the site. Pattern days were very popular on the feast of Lúnasa (1st August). Prayers were recited at the site and the pilgrims did rounds of prayers at the blessed place. The rounds were made in a clockwise direction, in the same direction as the sun travels. This type of round was known as a *deiseal*. If the rounds were made in the opposite direction, in other words an unholy round, the rounds were described as a *tuathal*. This latter round was to bring mischief on a person. In Ballyvourney, County Cork, doing a series of prayer rounds forms part of the pattern day held on the 11th February, in honour of St

Gobnait. At every pause, or station, the pilgrims recite the 'Our Father', the 'Hail Mary' and the 'Glory' seven times each. Seán Ó Coindealbhain related that 'on completion of the *deiseal*, the devotee usually drank some of the water of the well.' A special mass is still celebrated by the local clergy to celebrate the pattern day of the saint. After the spiritual obligations were taken care of, merriment was the order of the day. Many a matrimonial match was made at these pattern days. There are stories of unruly behaviour, drunkenness and fighting at some of these celebrations, and consequently, as the nineteenth century progressed, the holding of some pattern day ceremonies was discouraged by the clergy.

The Allihies Folklore Group, reporting in March 1991 on observances at holy wells outlined that 'it seems that the strength of the tradition here is in part due to the religious persecution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.' They wrote that when 'churches and priests were banned the people turned to other places where they could carry out their devotions.' In early times the wells were used for baptism, until the font was introduced for the sacrament in a nearby church building. The great folklorist, Kevin Danaher, in his book *The Year in Ireland*, writes of the times in the year when the holy wells were especially visited. He tells us that, 'many people brought water from a well dedicated to St Brighid and sprinkled it on the house and its occupants, the farm buildings, livestock and fields, invoking the blessing of the saint.' He further related that water taken from a holy well on Good Friday was believed to have curative properties and it was kept for use in illness. At Easter time the water from well sites which were named as Sunday's Well was considered very effective.

It was on an autumn day that I visited the site of the roadside well near Macroom. It was an enclosed site, protected with a stone covering. Silently I said a few 'Aves.' Listening to the sound of the water, I stood transfixed and loath to leave. I wondered, how long had pilgrims been coming here? Did they find what they sought? Around the well people had left little tokens to mark their visits; medals and coins placed at the side of the well. The water was cool, and I bathed my hands and rubbed it on my face with reverence. I filled a little plastic bottle with some of the water for use another day. In this quiet spot one could step back in time, detached from the busy flow of traffic just a few feet away. There is no doubt that these blessed wells still have a vital part to play in the spiritual welfare of today's careworn pilgrims.

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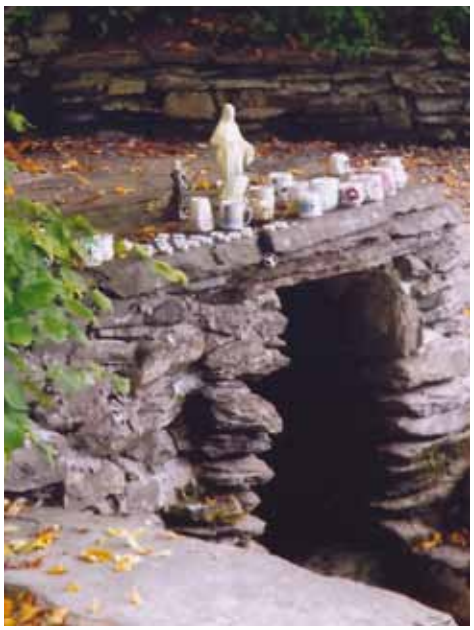
Special thanks *to Stephen Dee for his help.*



St Abban's Well, Ballyvourney

'Mother Lake' and the Knights of Labor

Many have heard of labour activist Mary Harris, better known as 'Mother Jones', who is celebrated annually in Cork at the Mother Jones Festival. However, one of her contemporaries also deserves recognition – Cork-born 'Mother Lake.'

In the aftermath of the Great Famine, Mother Lake was born as Leonora Marie Kearney in 1849. Driven by the hardships of the time, her family emigrated three years later, settling near Pierrepont, New York. By the time of her death she had played a critical role in campaigning for improved labour conditions, particularly for women, and it is claimed that she had the distinction of being the first paid female labour organiser in the US.

Leonora Barry Courtesy of the Terence Vincent Powderly Photo Collection from the Catholic University Archives, the Catholic Universtiy of America, Washington, DC

Her career began as a teacher at age 16, following the death of her mother. She taught for several years but resigned according to law when she married William E. Barry in 1871. Within 10 years Mrs. Barry was widowed and found herself to be the sole provider for two young boys, having lost both husband and daughter to lung disease. She found employment in The Pioneer Knitting Mill, Amsterdam, NY, where she was appalled by the working conditions, pitiful pay and regular sexual harassment during her working week of up to 70 hours.

At this time a union called the Knights of Labor (KOL) was on the rise and Barry threw herself into the local chapter in 1884. After just one year she was Master Worker (Head) of the Victory Assembly, and by 1886 had already lead a successful strike and was appointed General Investigator for Women's Work.

Now a paid member of the KOL, Barry spent her time travelling the US investigating and reporting on working conditions. According to reports, her Irish wit, fiery nature and contagious smile contributed to her gift as a lecturer, as she spoke out on issues such as pay equality, racial equality, sexual harassment and dignity in labour. Her activism contributed to the passing of the first factory inspection act in Pennsylvania in 1889.

By 1889, having failed to enrol significant numbers of women, she considered her task a failure and recommended the dissolution of the Women's Department. In 1890 she resigned in order to marry Obadiah Lake, stating that a woman's place is in the home. She didn't live by this statement, however, and her activism continued in the Women's Suffrage Movement and various Catholic charities. It is uncertain exactly when she died, with some reporting 1923 while others state 1930.

Born into famine, experienced in loss and hardship, Mother Lake was driven to inspire a culture of respect and dignity in the workplace in an era where this ideology was still novel. To use her own words:

'Oh, if we would only learn to love humanity more and money less, if our hearts would only respond with love and sympathy for our fellow-beings.'

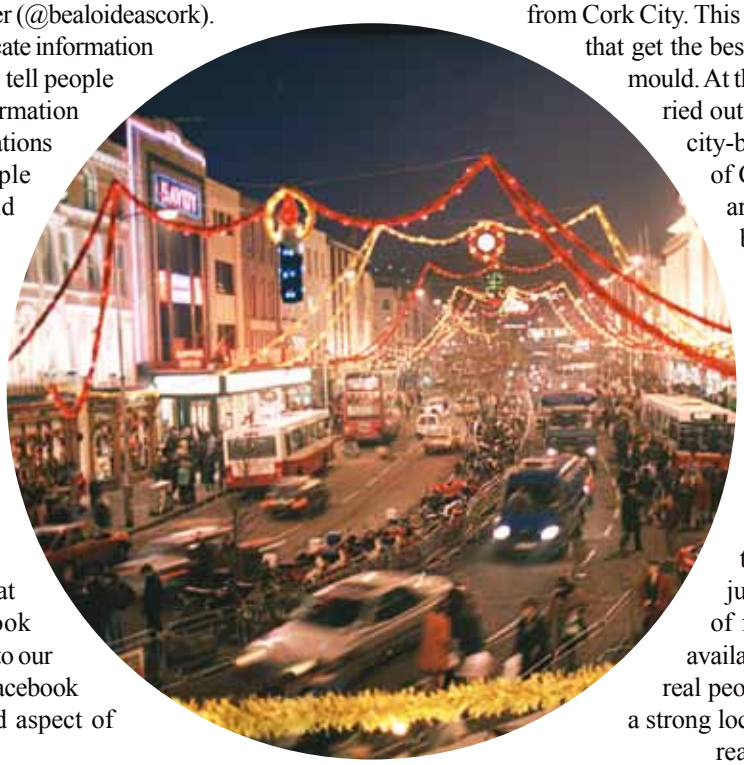
Laura Murphy, with additional research by Robert Galligan Long

The Cork Folklore Project and Social Media

Penny Johnston

Penny Johnston is an interdisciplinary doctoral researcher in the Department of Folklore and Ethnology and in Digital Arts and Humanities in University College Cork. She has been working with the Cork Folklore Project on the topics of community folklore and the digital audience.

At Cork Folklore Project we love our archive of stories about life in the past, but we also like to keep up to date with new trends. We are now active users of two social media platforms, Facebook (www.facebook.com/corkfolkloreproject) and Twitter (@bealoideascork). We use these platforms to communicate information about our oral history collection, to tell people about folk traditions, to share information from and with like-minded organisations and individuals and to keep people informed about our activities and projects. It is now easier than ever before to broadcast our message to a worldwide audience, and with social media there is an added bonus since our audience can respond and 'talk back' to us. Here's an idea of what we do in social media.



Patrick's Street, Christmas Eve 1992
Photo by Roy Hammond courtesy of the Hammond family

Facebook and Twitter

We have linked our Facebook and Twitter accounts, which means that anything we post to our Facebook account automatically gets tweeted to our Twitter followers as well. But our Facebook page is our most actively updated aspect of digital outreach. Facebook posts provide a very flexible format, allowing us to post pictures and long paragraphs of text. We have a good strong following on social media (particularly on Facebook) and many of our posts have a large reach. More than 800 people saw our short picture story about the days when Tayto were 22p (remember that?), but our biggest story ever came about in December 2012 when we changed our profile and background picture to a seasonal view of the Christmas lights in Cork in the early 1990s. Lots of people clearly felt nostalgic for this old view of the city. The 'Likes' jumped significantly and have steadily increased ever since. This emphasises the importance of reminiscence and nostalgia on social media, and on the internet in general.

However, it's important to realise that we don't have to have high counts of Facebook Likes and Twitter followers to get our message out. The reach of your message can depend on who sees it; if one influential social media user shares or re-tweets our message it has the potential to reach a huge audience. When we were launching our LGBT oral history project we tweeted the details to Dónal Óg Cusack. He re-tweeted, and there was an immediate impact on the amount of people following our project on social media. This just goes to show that social media can be a really effective way for a small organisation like the Cork Folklore Project to pass on our news.

At the same time, we are aware that social media can be controversial, mostly because of issues around privacy and the potential for online bullying or trolling. (Trolling is the posting of abusive messages online.) Because of this it is important for an organisation like Cork Folklore Project to have guidelines for our social media practice; we all need to think carefully about what we post online when we are representing our organisation.

What has looking at our social media accounts revealed?

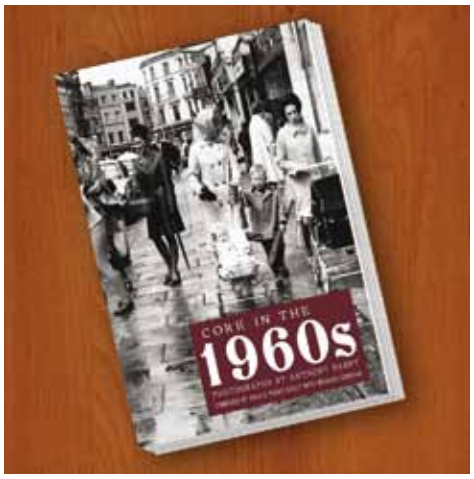
Statistics from Facebook show that our followers are predominantly from Cork City. This explains why so many of the items that get the best response are in the 'I love Cork' mould. At the beginning, most of the work carried out by the Cork Folklore Project was city-based, but now it encompasses all of Cork County. On social media, we are trying to broaden our following beyond the city by highlighting items that are related to life beyond Cork City, including posts that reflect on more general folklore themes, such as festivals and superstitions.

However, our Cork following does suggest that we are not really making the most of the global potential of digital communication. But using social media is not just about gathering large numbers of followers online, it's about using available tools to build relationships with real people. Because our social media has a strong local following it means that there is real potential for the Cork Folklore Project to convert its digital audience to a real life audience of people that will visit the Project, contribute life stories and anecdotes, and turn up at events and engage with other everyday activities of the Project, off line as well as on.

Tayto Crisps in the 1990s Photo from the CFP Archive.

Book Reviews

Local history and folklore publications



Cork in the 1960s: Photographs by Anthony Barry

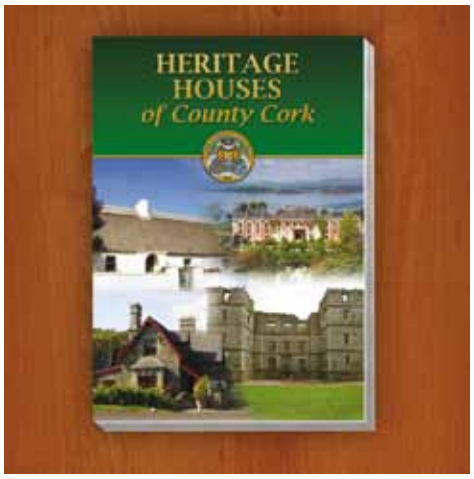
Compiled by Orla & Terry Kelly with Michael Lenihan
Mercier Press,
2014 |240 Pages | ISBN 9781781172490

If you grew up in Cork City, you will find much that is pleasantly familiar in *Cork in the 1960s: Photographs by Anthony Barry*. You will certainly recognise buildings, and you may even know faces. No matter where you grew up, you will recognise universal human experience. You may wonder, as poet Theo Dorgan writes in the foreword, 'Did that relaxed garda ever get off with the obviously interested young woman? ... And all those conversations, where did they find the time for so much talk?' As well as the talk depicted in the book, there is the talk that is inspired by it. This is the kind of book that causes people to peer over your shoulder as you read, eager to share memories and observations.

Barry's photographs have been artfully curated by Orla and Terry Kelly. The captions, painstakingly researched by local historian Michael Lenihan, make this book even more accessible and interesting to those of us who do not remember the 1960s.

This is not, nor does it pretend to be, an exhaustive document. It is a selection from one person's observations. No doubt, from some other person's point of view, some aspects of life in Cork in the 1960s may well, in Dorgan's words, 'seem mysteriously absent.' This in no way takes from the value of this lovely book. There is more than enough here to delight and intrigue a broad readership.

Dr Margaret Steele



Heritage Houses of County Cork

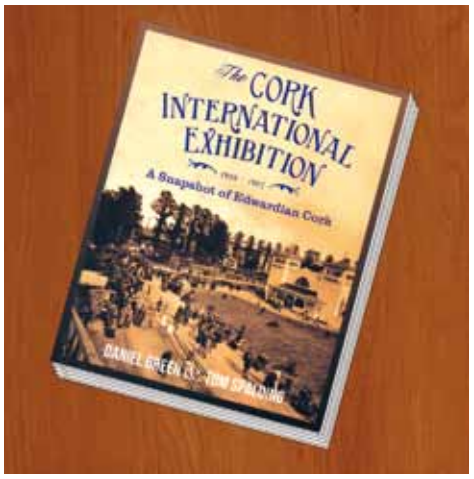
Cork County Council

Cork County Council Heritage Unit,
2014 | 216 Pages | ISBN 9780952586982

The architectural history of Ireland has endowed us with a fine legacy of buildings, and yet the publication of new books pertaining to our built heritage is rare. *Heritage Houses of County Cork* is a wonderful and much needed addition to this field. This comprehensive work leads us on a fascinating journey through the architectural, cultural and social development of the dwelling house, beginning in the Neolithic period (3900BC) and culminating with the more familiar Victorian and Edwardian buildings of the early 20th century. Its excellent detailing and analysis of the differing architectural styles and features, as they developed, provides the perfect platform from which to embark on a more detailed examination of over 30 historic houses in County Cork. All the while it is a visual treat, extremely rich in both photos and illustrations of a huge range of heritage buildings, from modest thatched dwellings to castles and the grand country houses of the elite.

This is a highly accessible book to anyone with even a passing interest in this subject, and without doubt is of value in its potential to enable a greater appreciation for the wealth and diversity of the architectural heritage which surrounds us. It is ambitious in its undertaking to encompass the development of the house over time, but by its own declaration it is in essence a guide-book style publication, the taster menu if you will, designed to leave us wanting more, and it does.

Aisling Byron



The Cork International Exhibition 1902 - 1903: A Snapshot of Edwardian Cork

Dan Breen and Tom Spalding
Irish Academic Press,
2014 | 351 Pages | ISBN 9780716532316

In *Cork International Exhibition 1902 -1903, A Snapshot of Edwardian Cork*, local historians Dan Breen and Tom Spalding bring the Exhibition to life for today's readership. Their collaborative effort creates a beautiful book. The writing is faultless and punctuated with amazing photographs and illustrations.

This book is a true treasure trove for those who have an interest in the history of Cork. The authors give us an insight into how and why the event came about. They begin with the historic precedents, the 1852 and 1853 Exhibitions, both successful in their own right. They recreate the atmosphere of the time by delving into many of the aspects of the Exhibition. They begin by describing the minutiae of organising the event, and then give an account of the Opening Day ceremony. There are chapters focusing on the architecture of the Exhibition, on the various kinds of people who visited it, and on the exhibits the visitors would have seen on education, industry and culture. Finally, there is a chapter on the legacy of the Exhibition.

Anyone who likes photography, early cinema, architecture, art, sport or politics will find something to draw them in. Even just perusing the images, one will be enthralled by the scale of the whole project. This delightful book shows how some of our forebears created a wonderful platform on which to portray the best of Cork.

Louise Madden O'Shea

Thanks to
Cork City Council and the Cork City Heritage Officer, Niamh Twomey

- For a 2015 Local Heritage Grant towards printing costs of *The Archive*
- For ongoing support of our Cork City Built Heritage Collection
- For funding of two Built Heritage DVDs

Thanks to the Heritage Council

- For funding essential archival preservation work under a Heritage Management Grant

Don't forget to put **Heritage Week** on your calendar: August 22 – 30, 2015

The LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) Archive Collection was launched to coincide with Cork Pride Festival in August 2014. The Project was established to document and preserve stories and memories of LGBT life in Cork City and County, with a focus on the period prior to decriminalization in 1993. It is extremely important to record the achievements and struggles that have contributed to a society that today is far more open and accepting of difference, as can be seen from the increasing number of openly gay sportspeople and politicians. The Collection was created by Dermot Casey and Stephen Dee, researchers at the Cork Folklore Project.

We are exploring three main aspects: personal stories including but not limited to identity, coming out and experiences of homophobia; community stories based on certain areas, streets, and forms of social interaction within the LGBT community; and political motivations, chronicling political events, motivations and outcomes such as the creation of the Cork-based IGRM (Irish Gay Rights Movement) in 1976, CGC (Cork Gay Collective) in 1980, and UCC Gay Soc in 1980.

The logo for the LGBT Archive was designed by Dermot, our CFP Graphic Designer. The A of the logo was inspired by the pink triangle, a symbol originally used to stigmatise LGBT people in Nazi Germany, but re-appropriated by the activist organisations that arose from the LGBT community in New York in the 1980s. Dermot was also inspired by the bold iconic images of LGBT activist groups such as ACT UP whose aim was to fight for the rights of people who had HIV/AIDS. ACT UP's slogan, 'Silence=Death', also resonated with our ethos, in that we felt that the LGBT voice was more or less silent in local oral history and needed to be heard.

We have been interviewing members of Cork's LGBT community and hope to conduct more interviews. If you have memories of growing up gay in Cork and would like to share them, please contact us at www.facebook.com/FolkloreLGBTarchivecollection, or 021 422 8100.

UCC's Department of Folklore and Ethnology/ Béaloideas (www.ucc.ie/en/bealoideas) offers courses at undergraduate and graduate levels, while Adult and Continuing Education (www.ucc.ie/en/study/ace) offers short introduction courses in folklore and ethnology.

Every year, we receive more wonderful **submissions for *The Archive*** than we have space to print, but if you are interested in contributing an article, email the project at cnfp@ucc.ie for our submission guidelines.