

# THE CORRAN HERALD

A Ballymote Heritage Group Production.

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Summer 1992

Price £1.00

**Bringing back**

*'The Wee Railway'*

**Jack Martin**

In 1959 the County Donegal railways closed down. There was of course a big loss of jobs and the traffic that went on rail for years was put on the road. It was sad to see the disappearance of the little trains, which were in their own way a tourist attraction. The little trains ran through Barnesmore Gap practically on the roadside, and it was grand to see them unhurriedly making their way as it were through the rocks. The track which would seem to be stuck to the side of the cliff was carefully laid and even after all the years since the closure parts of the line still remain. Now the trains ran all over Co. Donegal but I just mentioned the Gap because it is a very picturesque place and it was grand to stop on the road and watch the little train passing.

But good news has come. A section of the line mentioned above is to be reopened. There was a line section between Fintown and Glenties mentioned for reopening, but the newly formed South Donegal Railway Restoration Society opted

*It was grand to see them unhurriedly making their way, as it were, through the rocks.*

## BALLYMOTE FRANCISCAN FRIARY



*Above is a view of the Franciscan Friary at Ballymote in its present rather sad state.*

*On Sunday August 2nd. next, at four o'clock in the afternoon, a special Mass will be celebrated beside this Friary to honour its 550th anniversary. The bishops of Achonry and Elphin, and several members of the Franciscan Order, will attend. The Mc Donogh chalice, named after an early Guardian of the Friary and dating at least from the late 17th century, will be used.*

for the Barnesmore section which will start at the former Meenglass Halt one mile from Ballybofey and run for 9.2 miles to a new terminus to be built near the famous public house known as Biddy O'Barnes. New stations with facilities for refreshments and new car parks will be provided. All this replacement and rebuilding will be very costly, but when completed it should provide a wonderful tourist attraction.

A large fund-raising campaign has

started and the whole huge undertaking could become a reality within five years. Some of the old rolling stock has been discovered and that too will be put back as near as possible to its original state. For other items I fear the Society will have to seek further afield.

We wish the Society every success in its huge venture and amid all the talk of lines closing and whatever, it's grand to hear of a line opening for a change. We pray God's blessing on their labours.

★★★★

## HERITAGE WEEKEND 1992

Ballymote's third annual Heritage Weekend will take place from July 31st to August 3rd in the Teagasc Centre. As in former years a full programme of Lectures, Outings, and Entertainment, as well as an art exhibition has been drawn up. We heartily recommend it to you and your friends.

The weekend schedule of events is as follows:-

### Friday July 31st.

8.00pm Official Opening by Dr. Seamus Caulfield, U.C.D.

9.00pm Illustrated Lecture "SLIGO AT WAR 1689 - 1691" by Dr. Harmon Murtagh, Athlone R.T.C.

### Saturday August 1st.

11.00am Lecture "CÉIDE FIELDS: ITS ANCIENT AND RECENT DEVELOPMENT"  
by Dr. Seamus Caulfield

2.00pm Outing to Carrowkeel and monuments in surrounding areas. Guide: Martin Timoney.

8.30pm Lecture "TURLOUGH O'CAROLAN AND HIS SLIGO PATRONS" by  
John Mc Ternan, Sligo Co. Librarian

### Sunday August 2nd

4.00pm Franciscan Friary, Ballymote: 550th Anniversary Celebration Mass

8.00pm Lecture "THE ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF PLACENAMES" by Tom Mc Gettrick  
*Music afterwards by Dolores Taheny and Martin Family*

### Monday August 3rd.

11.00am Lecture "IRISH GEORGIAN HOUSES" by Derry O'Connell

2.00pm Outing to Strokestown House and Heritage Centre.

8.00pm Lecture "FOLKLIFE: THE NATIONAL COLLECTION" by Dr. Anne O'Dowd,  
National Museum of Ireland  
*Music afterwards by Colm O'Donnell and friends*

Transport is available for all outings. The Art Exhibition will be open each afternoon and evening; the participating artists are Bernard Mc Donagh, Nuala Hurl Dockry, Mary Dockry, Beatrice Bohan, Brenda Friel.

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# BALLYMOTE HERITAGE GROUP:

## The Last Twelve Months



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THE HERITAGE WEEKEND of 1991 was a great success, both from the point of view of the organisers and of the participants. Clearly an event of this type at the August Bank Holiday answers a need for very many people.

In August Paddy Brady retired as Chairman and was succeeded by Eileen Tighe. Great credit is due to Paddy for the enthusiasm, interest and energy that he brought to the position of Chairman. Eileen has maintained the high standards and we wish her every success in the future.

In Autumn Cecil King was made an Honorary member of the Group and Bishop Flynn became its second Patron.

**Lectures:** In October Ted Smith of Barton Smith, Sligo, gave a lecture entitled "*The Changing Face of a Family Business over 200 years*". In January Martin Timoney spoke on a trip to Denmark, under the title "*A Sligo Archaeologist on tour in Denmark*", and in April Joyce Enright lectured on "*Yeats: Sligo in Pictures and Poetry*".

Since Christmas the usual detailed planning of the next Heritage Weekend has been going on. This is now practically complete. It includes a special Mass to celebrate the 550th anniversary of the Franciscan Friary (Abbey) in Ballymote. Weather permitting, this Mass will take place beside the Friary itself, and the famous Mc Donagh chalice which dates from the late 17th century will be used.

### The Corran Herald

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In April a fund-raising Fashion Show was held in the Castle Hotel. This event proved to be a most enjoyable and entertaining evening and can only be described as a runaway success.

The Group look forward with confidence to another successful year in 1992/93. □ □ □

# THE SMOKING HABIT

P. J. DUFFY

Researchers have long since discovered that tobacco was smoked in the Americas long before it came to Europe. In the Mississippi Basin tobacco pipes of bone clay and wood over 2,500 years old have been found.

There are stories dating back to remote times which tell of religious rituals held in temples in Mexico, where tobacco was burnt in sacred vessels in much the same way as incense is burnt at today's religious ceremonies. It is said that the congregations became addicted to the sweet-smelling nicotine in the plant, and so the habit of people smoking it in pipes spread rapidly across the continents.

In 1560 Francesco Hernandez a Spanish physician brought tobacco plants to Spain for Philip II. Around the same time, the French ambassador to Portugal brought tobacco to France from Florida.

The tradition that Sir Walter Raleigh introduced pipe smoking to these parts is said to be inaccurate. Actually it was Ralf Lane, Governor of Virginia, who was the first man to smoke a pipe in Great Britain in 1556. The tobacco plant itself was brought to England by Sir John Hawkins in 1565.

The first company of tobacco pipe makers was granted a charter by James I on October 5 1619. When sailors and sea captains returning from the Americas in the seventeenth century made smoking fashionable among the ordinary people, stringent laws were brought in to stamp out the practice. Despite this move, tobacco smoking spread rapidly right across the Continent of Europe, reaching our own country sometime around the latter part of the seventeenth century.

Cigarettes were introduced into the country on a small scale around the

final decades of the last century. Although cigarette smoking gradually became popular among the young folk of both sexes, it did not gather momentum until that period between the two World Wars. By and large, the older generations stuck rigidly to their pipes.

Many types of early pipes were made from baked white clay at places like Knockcroughery in Roscommon and at High Street in Sligo Town. You had the pipe with the small bowl, and long bent stem, for use at wakes. These were usually bought by the dozen and after the burial of the deceased they were taken out and tucked underground on waste sites which were often situated alongside public roads.

The most popular kind of pipe was undoubtedly the dudeen, which for a period was used by almost every working-class man, and many women in the country as well. The most affluent section of society would be likely to be found smoking pipes by famous manufacturers like Mearsuem and Kapp and Peterson, and made from briar root.

Down through the centuries smoking was something that was viewed, and looked upon as a symbol of satisfaction and contentment. At various periods in our history it has been celebrated in song and in story. The following lines have been selected from some old fashioned ditties that have been published and sung down through the years:

*With your dudeen made of clay,  
and your steamin' bowl of tay.*

*I'll go my way and draw my pay  
and smoke my pipe alone.*

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*May the angels smile down on you  
Coilin-a-Threeen where I enjoyed peace  
and quiet and I smoked my dudeen.*

An old scholar who resided in our area used to refer to the flavour of tobacco smoke in this way

*"Its joy producing fume is an antidote for gloom"*

There is no doubt about it, but at certain times, and under difficult circumstances it gave people confidence and stability.

You had the all-familiar sight of top business executives smoking their pipes while attending at meetings. We had pictures of elder statesmen relaxing at home with their pipes. A notable example was deceased dictator Joseph Stalin.

At rural social gatherings it gave the ordinary man and woman something to do with their hands, other than thrusting them into their pockets. A sort of "bold status" so to speak.

Between the two world wars, and especially in the early thirties, the sale of tobacco and cigarettes rose steeply as more and more people became hooked on the habit. At the time of the outbreak of world war two tobacco and cigarette manufacturers had their resources already stretched tightly, trying to keep ahead of demand. As fighting progressed and spread across Europe, supplies of tobacco grew scarcer and scarcer, until the time when acute shortage set in.

It became almost impossible to obtain popular brands of cigarettes like Players, Gold Flake and Sweet Afton. During this time supplies bearing strange labels were imported from abroad. These included names like White Rolls, State Express, and Planes, which had the drawing of a little red aero plane stamped on each cigarette. The Player company brought out a cheap brand of slender cigarettes called Drumheads.

An old smoker with a palate for the real thing described these new fangled cigarettes as coffin-nails. An old rhyme of the day summed up the situation

*"Now the White Rolls we are smoking and we're coughing and we're choking, we're hoking and we're poking for the butts we used to throw".*

It was said at the time that these cigarettes which were imported from America were stored in damp warehouses, and had already lost their flavour before being dumped onto the markets of unsuspecting traders and consumers. Demand was so intense that there wasn't enough of these new cigarettes to go round.

As a young boy I remember a local man going to town in search of smokes and returning home with two White Roll cigarettes. He had visited several public houses, and consumed a fair amount of alcohol in anticipation of securing a couple of packets. Needless to say, he was feeling very sorry for himself. Another incident I do recall was that of a local workman standing on our kitchen floor, and searching his pockets for cigarette ends. He eventually found one in his waistcoat pocket. It had gone flat, and the tobacco was protruding out at both ends. He proceeded to roll it between his thumbs and first fingers. This done, he then took up the tongs from beside the kitchen fire, and finding a tiny red coal, he lit up. After two or three long blasts which he inhaled into his lungs, he stubbed out the remainder on the

**An old man summed it up thus**

***"Now gentlemen, whatever ye think or don't think, there is no substitute for the real thing and that's that".***

hearth, and while doing so uttered the following words "Well the Devil take ya Hitler, and hell won't be full until you're in it". He was certainly feeling the pinch, and was, it seemed, constantly plagued by nagging withdrawal symptoms.

Around this time, a woman of the roads called to our house in search of alms. She was carrying a young baby inside her shawl, and was given gifts of milk and other essentials. When we thought she was about to move out the doorway, she suddenly turned back, then took a full cigarette from an inside pocket and lit it at the kitchen fire. "Well bad cest to you", cried my late mother, "but it's fine fools you must think we are. You people have plenty of money to buy cigarettes, and none at all for food".

"Orah hould your whist mam, and have a bit of sense", replied the woman of the roads, "Where do you think we'd be without the ould fags, shure they're great for calmin' the nerves".

Looking back now to those stringent years, and taking into consideration the terrible conditions under which these people existed, there was, no doubt, plenty of logic in her argument.

The smokers too were feeling the pinch as supplies of plug, and finely cut tobacco gradually went off the market. The half quarter measure was constantly being chopped into ounces and half-ounces to make the supply stretch.

Old men were constantly experimenting with new substitutes. Dried out plants like dandelion, colts-foot, and dock leaves were plucked from their stems and spread out under the hot sunshine. When the seasoned product was put into a pipe and lit it gave off a whiff that smelt like burning gorse. One old fellow thought he had the right recipe when he added a little drop of linseed oil to his mixture to give it a flavour. That in turn gave off a fume that smelt like the exhaust fumes of a worn-out engine.

An old lady who lived in our locality had her own substitute for tobacco. She would conserve the used tea leaves from her teapot, then dry them out and smoke them to her hearts' content.

An old man who I knew, summed it up thus "Now gentlemen, whatever ye think or don't think, there is no substitute for the real thing and that's that". His idea of heaven was a good frothy pint of Guinness and a pipeful of Murray's Warrior Plug tobacco.

When the war finally came to an end, and supplies of tobacco returned to normal, people young and old indulged themselves in the pleasure of smoking as never before. Cinemas, dance halls, and various other places of public entertainment became polluted to saturation point from the fumes of cigarette and pipe smoking. To anybody with a shred of intelligence, it was obvious that this state of affairs was most unhealthy. Yet it carried on until 1962, when the Platt report on smoking, in relation to lung cancer was published in London by the Royal College of Physicians. This was followed by a further report "Smoking and Health", published in 1971, and which established a definite link between smoking and cancer and other health problems.

In the mid-seventies the Irish Government officially discouraged smoking on the grounds that it was injurious to health.

# Townlands & Other Placenames

by Tom Mc Gettrick

*If you were asked how many townlands in the County what would you say? A thousand maybe! That's a lot but you would have to go up a bit, to over one thousand two hundred and fifty. Sixty-eight of these are in the Parish of Emlaghfad and Kilmorgan (Ballymote). There is duplication of names like Carrigans Upper and Carrigans Lower, Ballinacarrow North and Ballinacarrow South etc. but they are separate townlands on the Ordnance Survey Maps.*

Townland names are an important part of our heritage, they are based on our native language. They are in most cases as old as our history and they will stay into the future regardless of what success the revival of our language may have. Many of them are captions for lost or forgotten local history, topography or genealogy which is now untraceable. In the vicinity of the town are Rathnakelliga, Camross, Ardconnell, Cloonagashel, Carrownree (Carnaree), Ballybrennan, to mention but a few. These names revert easily to their original Irish form and one might ask questions like - what was the treachery at Rathnakelliga? Who was Connell who looked upon the world from a height? Did the crown rest uneasily on Carrownree's king and did he make non-aggression pacts with the kings of Ardee and Tiraree and lots of

other kings round about? Who were the people who fortified themselves at Cluain na gCaiseal? In the case of Camross (Crooked Wood!) ancient tree stumps found there would part explain it - and there is a townland Crooked Wood in Westmeath.

The Ordnance Survey of the 1930s stabilized the names and the boundaries of the townlands but many names which are still used and which have an identifiable location did not get on to the Ordnance Maps. Some examples of these in the parish are Marlow, Ring, Freeheen, Gobbadagh, Clochnavart, Roy, Cumeen. Others which occur in the Parish records Flohena, Turlagh, Red Town and Cugeenee seem to have lost their identify.

There was a more intimate list of names of landmarks, fields, laneways, houses used only by people who lived in close domestic or social association with one another in the narrow confines of rural society. One walked to any of them across the fields and they were all signposted in the mind. You knew the way at an early age. From my home in Cluid I could reach in a few minutes Cluain na gCri, Srathmore, Clais, Port na Saileach, Ultach, Roy, Baile na Faithche, Loch an Ealai, Carraigin Rua etc.

*In Carraigin Rua their eyes are red,*

*Blowing the fire to the boxty bread.*

There's nobody to light a fire there

now. Ultach was a large farm. It was held in Griffith Valuation times by Philip Gumley who had other properties in and around Ballymote. He owned most of Rathnakelliga and Stoneparks. That his ancestors came originally from the North possibly as weavers with the Fitzmaurices when they brought the linen trade to Ballymote, would give a meaning to the name Ultach on his lands in Rathdooneymore. This farm, like Oldrock and many others, was involved in agitation following the Land Acts and was eventually divided between the small farmers surrounding it.

Anglicisation has given some Irish place names a rather amusing form. Here are a few examples scattered here and there that can be vouched for, Ovens, Ringabella, The Oil, Lick, Billy, Molly, Knockdown, Annabella, Yellowbatter, Ned - they all come from simple Irish words.

There was compulsory tillage during the last world war. A Department Official called on a farmer about his acreage.

"What's the name of this townland?" he asked.

"Drumfarnoghty" he replied.

"How do you spell that?" asked the Official.

"Yerra don't bother spellin' it, just write it down". (If he hadn't been to school, he met the scholars).

*More anon. \* \* \**

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# THE Carrick- banagher Wake

\*\*\*\*\*

According to Canon O'Rorke's history of Sligo, in the last century wakes were often scenes of great disorder, - coarse songs and criminal tricks. The songs were usually composed for the occasion as lampoons on people present. The tricks were much worse and often ended in a free fight in the wake-house, turning everything upside down, quenching the lights and sometimes the corpse itself was tumbled out of its resting place.

One such trick was called "the hen". It consisted of a man wrapped in a white sheet so that he could not be recognised and armed with a piece of iron shaped and sharpened like an awl. With this he "pecked" after the manner of a hen and punctured the skin and flesh of someone against whom he had a grudge. Naturally the victim resented this treatment and a fight started in the wake-room and often ended as already described.

The following happened at a wake in Carrickbanagher sometime in the 19th century. The "hen" expected his victim to try to escape when the pecking and puncturing got too much for him, so he arranged with his friends to be ready outside the door to attack with short sticks to prevent the victim's escape. The plot was carried out, and the unfortunate young victim - the only son of a widow, was stretched dead on the door step the minute he appeared outside. This tragedy seems to have taken great effect on the people of Ballisodare and Kilvarnet parish in which Carrickbanagher is located. From then on, according to O'Rorke this parish was more free from disorder at wakes than any other in the county. □ □

## First Communion 1992 Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal, Ballymote



Front Row: (Left to Right) Cathy Irwin, Nicola Scanlon, Helen Hough, Edward Mc Gettrick, Karl Meehan, Anne Mc Gettrick, Clare Brady.

Middle Row: Aisling Barret, Michael Doddy, Darragh Creegan, Lisa Conlon, Dale Tonry, Anthony Hogge, Jenny Gallagher.

Back Row: Finbar Hannon, Lorraine Kyle, Kieran Meehan, Mairead Hurley, David Martin, Susan Mc Govern, Colum Scanlon.

Also Included are: Ms. Dolores Taheny (Vice Principal), Very Rev. Canon Flynn, P.P. Ballymote and Sr. Regina (Principal)

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# I Remember Ballymote

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## Monsignor Val Rogers

---

When I was asked to write an article about the Ballymote of 60 years ago I didn't know where to start .. and even now I'm not too sure. Looking down memory lane is not all that easy, especially when one is getting on in years, so I have decided to record a few snapshots of the town and people I knew so well.

### **The Family**

The vast majority of my memories are both pleasant and happy. I was the second youngest of a family of five girls and three boys. My father died when I was six and left my mother not only to rear us, but, to take over the business, about which she knew very little. The business survived; and she formed bonds of friendship with and

between all of us that we still keep in touch with each other and are very good friends. So, I pray that God may grant my parents eternal rest.

### **The Town**

Physically the town has not changed very much. The standard of houses and shops has improved over the years .. and the roads and streets are vastly improved. I remember the time before the main street was concreted. Maybe my memory is playing tricks with me, but the pot-holes of those days would dwarf their present-day cousins! At that time the pathways were covered with very uneven flagstones .. and to this day my knees bear testimony to the fact that they were dangerous!

### **The Neighbours**

The names of many neighbours come to mind. We had McDonaghs on both sides of our house .. and the Dockeries .. and the Gardiners .. and the Cryans .. and the McGettricks .. and the Farries .. and the Quigleys .. and the McGlynns .. and the Walshes .. and Tommy Carroll. I could go on and on. Many of them are dead and gone .. May they rest in peace .. many others are alive themselves or are still living on in their families.

### **The Schools**

Like most other people I have a few unpleasant memories of my days at school, but, they are far outweighed by happy and grateful memories. I spent my first few years .. up to my First Holy Communion .. in the Convent school and I remember with great joy nuns like Sisters Vincent, Laurentia, De Sales, Patrick and many others. Indeed, for many years after I left their school I used to visit the Convent and after my ordination I often said Mass in the Convent Chapel.

The remaining years of my primary school education were spent in the Boys' School, with John A. Barnes and Miss O'Dowd. Like the nuns I found the teachers helpful and encouraging; and, if I didn't turn out to a genius it wasn't their fault.

### **The Priests**

Strangely enough, my most vivid recollections of Ballymote 60 years ago are connected with the priests especially with Canon Quinn.

Whenever I think of him I picture

### **From the Past...**

## **EMLAGHNAVUGHTON FIFE & DRUM BAND**



Front Row:(From Left) Tommy Hannon, John Mc Loughlin, Jimmie Rogers, Willie Lavin, Val Horan.

Back Row: Willie Mulligan, Tommy Carr, Paddy Rogers, Mick Mulligan.

Other Members of the Band were: J. Keaveney, P. Rogers, J. Rogers, S. Kilcoyne, A.J. Kilcoyne, P. Carr, J. Mc Gettrick, (Cartron), J. Leonard, T. Connor, R. Reynolds, M. Gardner, J. Mc Gettrick, W. Doddy, S. Mc Donagh, F. Muldoon, T. J. Healy, J. Brady, P. Creegan.



him walking up the middle of the main street, with his broad-rimmed hat and his walking cane greeting people on each side of him with a wave of hand. He was a quiet, friendly man, who, in his latter years became almost completely blind.

He was well known for his interest in pedigree cattle. He and Matt Flood used to rear cattle and a story is told that they used to leave the calves to suckle their mothers for longer than was usual. Well, the Canon sold one of these calves, a bull-calf to a Mayo man. In due course a cow was brought to the bull for service, and to everyone's surprise the young bull began to suckle her .. so, the owner took him back to the Canon and demanded his money back because he was not told at the time of sale that he was buying a celibate bull!

Another story told about the Canon was that one bright summer evening he was going for a walk down the Sligo road when he met Tommy O'Grady. So, they stopped for a chat and when the Angelus bell rang out the Canon took off his hat, made the sign of the Cross and said his Angelus. Tommy whipped off his cap, made the sign of the Cross, put his cap on again and whistled a reel while the Canon finished his prayers. "Tommy"said the Canon "that was a very quick Angelus you said". "Ah, yes Canon"said Tommy "that comes with practice!"

Another story told about the

Canon was about the time he, with the help of a number of local farmers, re-enacted the Battle of the Curlews. Suffice it to say that a goodly crowd of men on horse-back, dressed for battle left Ballymote before noon, did battle all day and returned to the town about six o'clock, tired, but, above all thirsty .. and the pubs did a great trade that evening. Matt Flood, known to one and all as 'the Canon's man' did not take any part in the actual battle, but, he joined in the drinking session and at a late hour he was singing merrily on his way home when he met the Canon, who said: "Matthew Flood, you are a disgrace .. with the way you're drinking you're the talk of the parish". "Begorra", said Mat "with that commemoration you held today you'll be the talk of the country!" ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

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### FIRST COMMUNION 1992

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**Back Row:** Neil Benton, Eleanor Faney, Alec Mc Ginley, Josie Mc Colgan, Willie Mc Ginley, Sinead White, Kieran Fahey, Stephen Melvin.

**Also included are teachers:** Ms Jennifer Mc Guinness and Mrs Eileen Tighe, and Fr. Vincent Sherlock C.C.

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# Diamond Jubilee of ORDINATION



The CORRAN HERALD extends congratulations and very best wishes to Very Rev. John Canon Wims, Ballymote, who recently celebrated the diamond jubilee of his ordination.

Canon Wims became a priest in a unique triple Ordination Ceremony which took place in the church of the Immaculate Conception, Ballymote, on June 5th 1932. Pictured above are the three young men who were ordained on that day:

Very Rev. T. Foy, Rev. T. Fleming (R.I.P.) and Rev. Fr. Wims.

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## FLAX GROWING & LINEN MANUFACTURE in

*The Ballymote area*

**Claire Walsh, Cloghogue**

*'Linen manufacture was introduced into Sligo by Lord Shelbourne in 1749. He brought a colony of weavers and settled them on his estate at Ballymote. Then a thinly inhabited and almost uncultivated waste whose population was employed solely in the herding of cattle.*

*Decline in the industry followed his death but was revived by Mr. Fitzmaurice who succeeded to the estate.*

*Each weaver was provided with a cottage, half a rood of land for potatoes and the grass of a cow.*

*The manufacture of union - a mixture of linen and cotton - was introduced and carried on extensively.*

*Bleach greens were erected on a large scale. The linen table was the staple of the County up to the famine (1847) 40,000 pieces being finished annually and shipped to England and America for home and family use.' (This extract was taken from an old manuscript)*

Flax was probably grown on many farms. I know it was grown in Cloghogue and on my grandfathers farm in Mullaghfarna.

The flax bloom was a lovely sight, the flowers are a sky blue but the flax was considered severe on the soil. When the flax was cut it was put to ret (soak) in 'flashes' of water about ten feet by five feet. The flash was lined with flat stones and was about two foot deep. The flax was laid flat and heavy stones placed on top to keep it under water until the outer fibre decayed. The inner fibre is the linen. It was then taken out and scutched. This was the womens job: the girls in the area came together and had a scutching party which was great fun, and there was always a dance in the evening.

To scutch the flax, there was an iron comb or rack attached to a wall or door and the flax was drawn through. The outer layer - 'tow' was used for packing e.g. caulking in wooden ships and various other things. It was used in this area for "straining threads" in my youth. There was not much of it left by then. The inner fibre was spun on a linen spinning wheel, a much larger wheel than that used for wool. The women did the spinning. The local weaver was Pat Slane who lived on the Curlews.

The linen was used for sheets and children's and ladies suits. It was also mixed with wool and this was called druggel.

All the older ladies had druggel petticoats mostly grey in colour with a border of blue, black or red.

Linen was considered to have healing power and was much used for boils and abscesses before the antibiotic era.

The home spun linen was thick and the natural colour was a blue/grey but it could be bleached snow white. To bleach it it was laid out on the grass in rain and sun for a couple of weeks. The last flax was grown about 1890-1900 in this area.



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**Do You  
Remember ?**

*Perhaps some of our readers would enjoy trying to identify the faces in the photographs below.*

*If you have photos of past events of any kind in or around Ballymote, THE CORRAN HERALD would be delighted to consider them for publication.*

**History's  
"Hit" List**

*Taken from International Wildlife*

Submitted by Jack Martin

From the earliest chapters of human history, assaults on the air, land and water have been used to strike at enemies or draw attention to a cause. While some attacks are part of a broader military strategy, others have only one goal: to spread terror. Sometimes the difference lies only in the observer's perspective. Following are events that rank among Earth's greatest hits.

1. The Romans demolish Carthage, kill the city's inhabitants and sow salt onto the soil to hinder crop growth.
2. Medieval armies poison enemies' drinking water by dumping the carcasses of dead animals in their wells.
3. General Sherman burns Atlanta, sacks Savannah and devastates the

Southern countryside during the U.S. civil war.

4. Japanese forces in World War II bomb dams along China's Yellow River creating floods that kill thousands and drive millions from their homes.
5. Terrorists in Colombia dynamite a state-owned pipeline more than 140 times in four years, dumping 26 million gallons of oil into waterways.
6. Palestinian arsonists destroy more than 70,000 acres of farms and forests in Israel, including 1.7 million trees.
7. Saddam Hussein unleashes 80 million barrels of crude oil into the Persian Gulf, then sets fire to 600 oil wells in Kuwait, spreading plumes of toxic smoke more than 1,000 miles.

As well as spreading terror, these activities also forcefully illustrate man's ongoing disregard and contempt for the environment. \* \* \*



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### ECHOES FROM A GARDEN

*My garden is a lovesome place  
Where Mother Nature's at her best.  
Here all things rush and race  
In symphonic zest with lovely nature's pace.*

*And Song birds flit both to a fro,  
and some sing high and some sing low.  
And here do I rest at nature's request,  
And list to the symphony of birds and bees  
With an abiding tone and a neverending zest.  
High above me the skylark sings adown,  
Below the Angelus rings,  
And in the old abbey male voices sing  
As if in salute to the risen King.*

*And then in a dream I saw a dark cross  
And perched in the centre was my dear little robin,  
And there on his breast was a deep red patch,  
And when I looked again it was the shape of a heart.*

*Just then I awoke with a frightened start,  
And I was once more of my garden a part.*

Stan Casey

## Safety first for award winners



TOPS IN PROJECT: Deirdre Horan, Cathy Walsh and Noelle Healy, all from Scoil Mhuire Gan Smal, Ballymote, Co Sligo, winners in the water safety project category in the Church and General National Children's Safety Awards competition.

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# Big Pike From Templehouse Lake

(EVENING PRESS, NOV. 26, 1964)

Submitted by Tom McGettrick (prompted by "The Sister Lakes" in our last issue).

"If you want big pike you must go West, young man." This is true of most good fishing in this country, whether it be fresh or salt water.

And just to remind me (and my readers) of how valid that claim is, I have to hand a letter and some photographs from a regular reader, Mr. Tom McGettrick, Secretary of the Ballymote and District Anglers Club in Co. Sligo.

Like all good secretaries Tom has his pictures to back up a rattling good story, and I can do no more than give you Tom's own description of how Johnny McLoughlin caught a pike.

It happened last February, on Templehouse Lake, outside Ballymote.

"Johnny went down to the lake with 22 yards of local pike line. This line hasn't breaking strain; it has horse-power. He had a three-inch spoon. He tied the line to his leg below the knee so that it trolled as he rowed out from the island shore.

## Off balance

"When something struck he was taken off balance, with his feet going a little higher than his head, but a quick recovery got everything under control, as the water boiled up 22 yards back.

"For one and a quarter hours he rowed around and, in what must be a unique occasion in all angling, played the fish with his leg!

"It was a rare struggle; sometimes the line would go slack, but at most times there was an almost unbearable tug.

"But Johnny won it, and when he got him up to the boat and got his hand in behind his gills he finally boated the pike some two hours after the first tug. The pike weighed thirty-four and threequarter pounds."

And maybe if the world angling federation might look askance at Johnny's tackle, I am willing to consider the point that Templehouse Lake holds some big ones as being well made.

## Historic Picture

Tom McGettrick sends me a photograph and a rather historic one, for there are very few club secretaries who can produce a photo of big fish taken in what I might call the days of pre-angling tourism. It shows a great old-timer who went to his reward only the other day: Batty Costello, who died at the age of 86 and who took a 43 lb pike in Templehouse in the late 'twenties.

For years the pike stood in the glass case in the Billiard Club in Ballymote's Loftus Hall. I quote from Tom again:

"This was the first of many monsters whose capture you might say has reduced the level of Templehouse Lake down the years". (Isn't that the kind of a colourful thought to put in a brochure: I can see the shore-line retreating with every big pike taken!)

How did the fish end up in the billiard room? Tom explains "The late Tim Healy, the town's billiard champion, was with Batty in the little boat that day and he sort of collared the pike for the billiard room".

"The fish did not get the publicity that modern heavy-weights get, but Batty was photographed afterwards in later years with another capture up around the thirty pounds mark. We had no club in Ballymote in those days but I have been able to get a photograph of Batty and his fish".

In a sort of an appreciation Tom writes of the late Batty: "Batty had all the lore of fishing. He lived near a lub of the Owenmore (river) that had pike, perch, bream and eels and cock pheasants crowing in the wood beyond: he knew the value of one in the pot, too.

"He saw all the fishermen passing and knew what they caught and what they didn't catch. Rudd and tench were stocked in the Owenmore by the Inland Fisheries Trust in co-operation with the Ballymote and District Anglers' Association. He liked nothing better than to see the big rudd in the river: they didn't come until after he had given up fishing".

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# A Dying World



Deirdre Horan, Keenaghan



*When I hear about our world  
That is going to die  
And about human greed  
I feel I'm going to cry.*

*Tears will fall and so will trees  
As long as we still forget  
This world does not belong to us  
And others have to live in it yet.*

If in the above poem I have given expression to my feeling towards destroying our beautiful world. I am enraged to hear about the damage humans have done.

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Darkness was everywhere and God said "Let there be light" and there was light. "Let there be a sky in the midst of the waters". God made the sky "Let the dry land appear," and it was so. God called the dry land Earth and the waters he called Seas."

That was an extract from the Old Testament, Book of Genesis, Chapter one. God created the earth, all living creatures and most importantly, man. God created the Earth to be loved and respected but are we respecting our earth? This is the question many people ask. No, is the truthful answer. How can we say we are respecting our world when we have destroyed so much of it? Okay, most of us don't go out pouring nuclear waste into rivers or cut down forests but every piece of litter dropped adds to the destruction of the Earth and its beauty.

Pollution is a problem worldwide and a source of growing concern. There are three types of pollution, air, water and soil pollution.

Whether you go up the highest mountain or into a dark damp cave you are surrounded by air. Air is of great importance. It is vital for life and of almost equal importance is the quality of the air.. WE should take extra special

care of our air. When smoke and other pollutants combine with fog, they form smog. Cars and other vehicles can damage the air with leaded exhaust fumes. Cars should turn to unleaded petrol. CFC's can harm the ozone layer so we should use ozone friendly sprays.

When people breathe, pollutants in the air may be deposited into the lungs or absorbed into the body and cause illness. For this reason our air supply should be closely watched and managed to assure its good quality.

Polluted water cannot be drunk safely and is harmful to fish and wildlife. Water becomes polluted by wastes from people and households, by agricultural chemicals and by industrial operations.

As water pollution is the result of civilization's progress, the problem becomes greater as population and industry increase. Usually pollution in the sources of water in the home is caused by the solid and liquid wastes from homes and factories. Besides solid and liquid body wastes there are other household wastes such soaps, detergents, grease and dirt. Together these wastes are known as sewage.

Soil pollution is caused by weed-killers and pesticides sprayed on crops. Rain washes these chemicals from the crops and into the rivers and other water

*When I think about the future  
And what it's going to bring.  
Will green grass still grow?  
Will birds still sing?  
Will everything survive?  
Or will it all die?  
Why do humans destroy the Earth?  
Please tell me why?*

In those lines of poetry I ask many questions. What will the future bring? If we don't improve our

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actions there might not be a future. Will the world be safe for future generations to live it? We can't answer this question but we can try to ensure a safe future by changing our ways.

What will happen when all the trees are gone? Will we only realise what damage we've done when the last tree is felled? We fell too many trees each day to use as paper or firewood. When the paper is all used up what use is it to us? We just throw it into a dump where it is left to rot and ruin the beauty of earth. Wouldn't it be so much wiser to recycle it? By recycling we reduce the amount of waste in the world. Some people, like my father, make paper briquettes out of old, unwanted paper and use it in their fires. Ashes help plants grow and with the burned ashes from briquettes the garden can be fertilised.

Glass can and should always be recycled. Broken glass can threaten safety so let's all turn to the safe and wise way – recycling. More and more towns and cities are getting bottle banks. All you have to do is pop your unwanted glass into your nearest bottle bank and you'll be doing your bit in saving the environment.

Ballymote has always entered the 'Tidy Town' competition. This competition has helped to vastly improve the town's image. Old derelict houses have got face lifts. Flower baskets and boxes appear in spring and summer. It has made Ballymote a nicer and more colourful place to live in. It's a disgrace to anyone to live in a littered town. Bins are supplied so there's no reason for ruining any town's cleanliness by spreading litter. We must all act before it's too late and take the advice I've given in my poem: -

*Let's improve the environment  
In the best way we can  
Let's undo the damage  
Caused by Man.*

*Let's take care of our air  
And of our water too,  
Let's make Earth a better place  
For me and you.*



# Ballymote

## 150

### years ago

#### *From a Topographical Dictionary of Ireland 1837*

**BALLYMOTE**, a market and post-town, in the parish of Emlyfad, barony of Corran, County of Sligo, and province of Connaught, 11 miles (S. by W.) from Sligo, and 94.5 miles (W.N.W) from Dublin; containing 875 inhabitants. This place appears to have derived its origin from a castle built in 1300 by Richard de Burgo, Earl of Ulster, which, after its seizure by the native Irish during the insurrection of 1641, was found to be of such strength as to offer a serious obstacle to the complete subjugation of Connaught; it was at length taken in 1652, by the united forces of Ireton and Sir C. Coote. A small monastery for Franciscan friars of the third order was founded here by the sept of Mac Donogh, and at the suppression was granted to Sir H. Broncard, who assigned it to Sir W. Taaffe, Knt.: an inquisition of the 27th of Elizabeth records that it belonged to the castle, and had been totally destroyed by the insurgents. The town is situated at the junction of six roads, but has not one principal road passing through it: it consists of one main street, and contains 140 houses. The surrounding country is well cultivated, and its surface agreeably undulates; and there is a good view from an obelisk erected by Lady Arabella Denny on a small hill near the town. In the immediate vicinity is Earl's Field, the property of Sir R. Gore Booth, Bart., to whom the town belongs; and in a delightful situation within a quarter of a mile, is the Glebe-House, which commands a fine prospect of the surrounding mountains and the distant hill of Knocknarea. About 2.5 miles from the town is Temple House, the handsome residence of Col. A. Perceval, beautifully situated

on the banks of a lake of that name, and in a fine demesne containing some good timber; on the edge of the lake are the ruins of the old house, which was built by the O'Hara family in 1303, and was afterwards given to the Knights Hospitallers. The linen manufacture was formerly carried on here to a great extent, under the encouragement of the Rt. Hon. Thos. Fitzmorris, but is now nearly extinct. The market is held on Friday for provisions; and fairs are held on the last Monday in January, May 11th, first Monday (O.S.) in June, Sept. 3rd, first Monday (O.S.) in November, and second Monday (O.S.) in December. Quarter sessions are held here in a sessions-house in January, April, July and October; and petty sessions on alternate Tuesdays. The bridewell is the only one in the county: it affords the requisite statutable accommodation and there are a day-room and airing-yard for prisoners of each sex. This is a chief station of the constabulary police. The parish church is situated in the town; and there are a R.C. chapel, a meeting-house for Wesleyan Methodists, and a dispensary. The remains of the ancient castle, built by Richard de Burgo, occupy an area 150 feet square, with towers at the angles, and sufficiently denote its former strength. At the southern extremity of the main street are the ruins of the Franciscan friary; over the principal entrance is the figure of a pope carved in stone, but somewhat mutilated. A book, called the Book or Psalter of Ballymote, was written in Irish by the monks of this place, and is yet extant. There is a fort of rather unusual elevation about one mile from the town.

*Submitted by Jack Martin.*

# Cuan Iosa

*Stan Casey*

About five years ago some local members of the St. Vincent de Paul Society came up with the idea of building houses for the elderly at Ballymote. Adding force to their argument was the fact that many elderly people lived alone in isolated situations, often in fear and dread of being burgled or attacked.

First of all a survey of such persons in the parish was made and sixteen of them expressed a wish to avail of any such houses.

The next great problem was the raising of finance for the project. On the advice of a local T.D. an application was forwarded to the Department of Finance, and to their delight a sum amounting to the main bulk of the money was sanctioned. The rest of the money had to be raised locally.

The houses are now finished and all are occupied. Eight are for married couples and eight are for single people, including four for handicapped persons. The residents are very happy in their new surroundings, being near the Church, railway station and St. John of God Nursing Home. Each house is centrally heated and has telephone facilities laid on.

It is hoped to procure a back entrance which would open on to 'the top of the Rock' and would give the residents more direct access to banks, post offices and shops. Planning permission has been granted for a day centre where the residents can meet socially whenever they wish. This building will be erected in the not too distant future.

Thanks to the care and professionalism of the builders, Cawley and Scanlon, all the houses are finished to a very high standard of excellence.

The local Conference of the St. Vincent de Paul Society deserve great credit and gratitude for their courage and dedication in undertaking and bringing to fruition such a large and difficult project. They wish to express their sincere gratitude and appreciation to all those without whose help the undertaking would not have succeeded: to all the local parishioners who generously subscribed; to Bishop Thomas Flynn; to the Sister of Mercy and the Sisters of St. John of God in Ballymote; to the local Church of Ireland community; to Sligo Co. Council and the North West Regional Health Board; to the Department of Finance; to the St. Vincent de Paul Area Council, Sligo, and the St. Vincent de Paul Area Council, Tubbercurry, as well as the Ozanam Trust Fund of St. Vincent de Paul; and also to every other person who helped in any way.

We wish every happiness, health and contentment to the residents of this lovely new haven of peace, so appropriately named Cuan Iosa.

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