

Fethard & Killursty NEWSLETTER 2008



€10

TOWN - HALL,

FETHARD.

MONDAY, FEB. 17, 1873,

Amateur Christy Minstrels.

PROGRAMME.

PART I.

Overture—Opening Chorus—"The Bonnie Blue Flag."	
Song—"I'll throw myself away"	E. SHEA.
Song—"A little dance to-night"	E. CUMMINS.
Song—"Dearest May"	P. BYRNE.
Song—"Lottie Lane"	E. SHEA.
Song—"Poor Old Joe"	W. O'BRIEN.
Song—"Mill May"	E. CUMMINS.
Song—"Way down in Calro"	J. SHEA.
Song—"Let the dead and the beautiful rest"	E. SHEA.

AN INTERVAL OF FIVE MINUTES.

PART II.

Solo—"Take back the heart"	E. SHEA.
Song—(Comic)	E. CUMMINS.
Song in Character	E. SHEA.
Stump Speech	
Burlesque	

PART III.

Song—"Ten Little Nigger Boys"	E. CUMMINS.
Song—"Old Bob Ridley"	J. SHEA.
Song—"The Belle of Baltimore"	E. SHEA.
Song—"The Indian Warrior's Grave"	E. CUMMINS.
Song—"I'm going Home to Dixy"	J. SHEA.

Select Music Conundrums and Dialogues between Songs.

Admission—Reserved Seats, 2s; Second, 1s; Gallery, 6d.

Doors Open at 7½ o'Clock, to commence at 8 o'Clock.

TICKETS may be had of Mr. J. McCarthy, Grocer; Mr.
T. Mockler, Draper; Mr. W. Lonergan, Grocer.

HACKETT BROS., Printers 101, Malin-street, CHAMPEL.

FETHARD & KILLUSTY NEWSLETTER 2008

Dedicated to our friends and relations
living away from home

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A town of strangers

by Joe Kenny (editor)

Representing Fethard & Killusty Community Council at this year's national 'Pride of Place' awards ceremony in Cappoquin and accompanied by our diligent secretary Edwina Newport, we were privileged to have Mary McAleese, President of Ireland, as special guest.

This 'Pride of Place' competition is hosted by Co-operation Ireland comprising of officials from local authorities in both parts of the island and is all about acknowledging the fantastic selfless work being done by people in communities all over the island of Ireland. It is recognition of the voluntary work being done to create communities for tomorrow while respecting the heritage and culture of the past. It is also about giving local authorities

an opportunity to participate in the heart of their communities. Fethard & Killusty Community Council were nominated for this year's competition by South Tipperary County Council.

Addressing the large attendance of representatives from small and large communities throughout the 32 counties of Ireland, the President made some very pertinent remarks relating to community life in Ireland. One in particular that struck me was, "Without community we are a nation of strangers".

Even in Fethard it is possible to see the 'stranger' syndrome creeping in to our society as less and less people get involved in voluntary community work. The sad part is that 'strangers' sometimes expect all the benefits of



Fethard & Killusty Community Council members who represented South Tipperary County Council in the 1,000-2,000 population section of the national Co-Operation Ireland 'Pride of Place' Awards Ceremony held in Cappoquin on Saturday 9th November. L to R: Cllr Tom Ambrose, Chairman South Tipperary County Council; Edwina Newport, Joe Kenny, and Margo Hayes, Liaison Officer, Community & Enterprise, South Tipperary County Council



Chairman South Tipperary County Council, Cllr John Fahey, presenting scrolls to Joe Kenny (Chairman Fethard & Killusty Community Council) and Joan O'Donohoe (Chairperson Fethard & District Day Care Centre) at a special 'Chairman's Reception' held in the County Chamber, Clonmel, on 30th April, in recognition of the community work achieved by both organisations in the town of Fethard.

community life without realising how communities work. If, for instance, we were to take away the Community Centre, Day Care Centre, Abymill Theatre, GAA, Fethard Ballroom, ICA, Country Markets, Senior Citizens, St. Vincent de Paul, Community Field, Rugby Club, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, Historical Society, Sports Centre and indeed, the Fethard Youth Centre, from Fethard, there wouldn't be much support for family life in Fethard!

All these, and a lot more, are voluntary groups whose contribution form the heart of Fethard community and the projects therein. In these times of change and with our population showing growth for the first time in many years, let's hope that a rekindling of community spirit will also flourish in the generations to follow.

President McAleese made the

point that, "Historically, Irish people always respond and it is in our DNA to overcome adversity". Indeed, she explained that the old proverb, "Ní neart go cur le chéile" (There is no strength without unity), exemplifies the spirit of community inherent in Irish people.

The overall deserving winner in our section was Cappamore, Co. Limerick. We thank South Tipperary County Council for nominating Fethard and for the enriching experience meeting other community groups at the Gala Dinner and Awards Ceremony held in Cappoquin Community Centre on 8th November 2008. Who knows what the future holds . . . maybe someday our community in Fethard will also be 'Pride of Place' for community and strangers alike. ●

Parish greetings

Greetings to all at home and away, as we come to the end of 2008! A most unusual year in many ways particularly in the financial world.

In our everyday world it is good for all of us to remember that we are precious in God's sight, loved individually and unconditionally by Him. If we do not realise our self worth and unique purpose in life we can create a vacuum that can be easily filled by the ungodly. If we truly believe in our

unique dignity as sons and daughters of God, let's focus on the Lord in a special way this Christmas and as we look forward we may do so with hope. This season is a time to rest and be refreshed and to be renewed in faith.

May you have happiness, peace and understanding in your lives and in your homes this Christmas and may you always have a place for the Baby Jesus in your hearts. ☉

T.F. Breen P.P. and Canon J. Power.



Archbishop Dermot Clifford on a visit to the Secondary School. L to R: Fr. Tom Breen P.P., Ernan Britton (Principal), Dr. Dermot Clifford, Archbishop of Cashel and Emly, and Marian Gilpin (Deputy Principal).

Christmas greetings from the Abbey

Warm Christmas greetings to all our Fethard exiles from the Abbey priests. We hope all goes well for you.

We are glad to tell you, especially those who have not been home for over a year, about improvements in the Abbey Church. After years of

meetings, letters and telephone calls, the long-awaited refurbishment at last got under way in November 2007. The church was re-wired, new light fittings were installed in the body of the church, and a new public address system was put in place. Most obvious of all, in January 2008 the church

interior was painted. As a result, the whole place looks much brighter. But there is still a lot to be done: the floor has to be sanded, the pews have to be repainted, the Stations of the Cross need to be cleaned and the sacristy must be re-floored and painted. We hope that on your next visit home you will like what you see.

Fathers Gerry Horan, John Meagher and Timmy Walsh join me in asking God to bless abundantly all of you and the members of your families this Christmas, and to grant you, health, happiness and peace of mind in 2009. ●

Peter Haughey O.S.A.



Guest speaker, Martin O'Connor, co-ordinator of the Bishops' Appeal — the Church of Ireland's World Development and Relief programme — photographed at the Harvest Thanksgiving Service held in Holy Trinity Church of Ireland, Fethard. L to R: Fr. Tom Breen P.P., Fr. Peter Haughey OSA, Martin O'Connor, Fr. John Meagher OSA and Rev Barbara Fryday.

Church of Ireland news

Work continues on the upkeep of Holy Trinity Church. Some necessary refurbishments were completed, and the two bells in the tower are now working.

On Thursday 29th December 2007 Dr Paddy Stokes was buried in Holy Trinity Churchyard following Requiem Mass at the Parish Church.

To his wife Diana, his children and grandchildren we send our deepest sympathy.

On Sunday 23rd December our annual Carol Service was held. It was very well attended and a good start to our Christmas celebrations.

On 29th December Therese O'Brien and Warren Beatty were mar-

ried. We wish the young couple a long and happy life together.

Holy Trinity Church benefited from the estate of the late Mr Wyndham Hughes. Our grateful thanks go to Wyndham's mother, Mrs Joan Johnston, for her generosity.

On Friday 18th July 2008 we held a memorial service of thanksgiving for the life of Revd Robert Brendan Haythornthwaite. The Revd Haythornthwaite died in France on 29th December 2007 and his funeral service followed at the beginning of January this year. The interment of his ashes took place in the churchyard of Holy Trinity Church, Fethard. An address by Bishop Edward Darling took place at the thanksgiving / memorial service preceding the interment.

The service was very well attended as so many remember his family live in this area.

On the 21st September the church was beautifully decorated for the Harvest Thanksgiving Service. The preacher was Mr Martin O'Connor and €250 was collected for the Bishops' Appeal. A most successful concert by Paul Dooley was held in Holy Trinity in connection with the Walled Towns Day Festival. The committee very kindly gave a generous donation towards the upkeep of Holy Trinity Church.

On Sunday the 19th October Fintan Magner was christened. His sister Matilda read the gospel and family came from Australia for the very happy occasion. ●



Photographed at the Harvest Thanksgiving Service in Holy Trinity Church of Ireland Fethard are L to R: Hillary Carter, Rev. Arthur Carter and Noel Major.

Legion of Mary

The Legionaries of Mary wish all of you peace and joy this Christmas and New Year. The Legion of Mary has been in Fethard since Tommy O'Connell, Main Street, started The Legion way back in the middle of the last century. The aim of the Legion is the glory of God through the guidance of the Holy Spirit under the leadership of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

We thank all of you who supported us with friendship and prayer

during the past year. We remind one another that we can gain individually and collectively if we turn to the Eternal Word Television Network on Sky 589 or listen to EWTN on Sky Radio 0147.

The use of all means available to us enables us to reach our final destination. All of us can strive to glorify God each day left to us, as we journey to meet Him when He calls. ●

Fethard Legionaries of Mary



Photographed at Kilmacdagh Graveyard after reciting the November Rosary for the Holy Souls are L to R: Toby Purcell, Paddy Power, Michael Power, John Hassett, Marie Taylor, Eddie Kelly (Passage East), Jodie Lee, Christy Williams, Bee Gould, Paddy Butler, Mary Holohan, Dan Sheehan and Joan Allen.

FETHARD FESTIVAL BABY SHOW WINNERS 1973

Birth to 6 months: 1st prize (boy) - Robert Hickey, Lisronagh; 1st prize (girl) - Valerie Colville, Fethard;
 2nd prize (boy) - Jonathan Hannigan, Fethard; 2nd prize (girl) Tanya Comerford, Kilkenny;
 3rd prize - Aisling Cleary, Clonmel.
 6 months to 1 year: 1st prize (boy) - Martin Coen, Killusty; 1st prize (girl) - Margaret Vokes, Clonmel;
 2nd prize (girl) - Orla Murray, Clonmel; 3rd prize - Deirdre Costello, Clonmel.



Roger Mehta who graduated in Radio Broadcasting from the Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Dublin in 2007, is photographed above with his fiancée, Ada Fordonska, and his brother Kumar Mehta (right).



Tommy Bulfin photographed celebrating with work mates on the occasion of his retirement from Dawon Foods in Fethard in December 2007. Tommy worked in the factory for almost ten years and was held in high esteem by all his friends employed there. L to R: Lar Looby, Stewart Looby, Brendan Higgins, Tommy Bulfin, Pierce Lyttleton and Maureen McNamara.

I knew a great man from Fethard

"WHEN THE ONE GREAT SCORER COMES TO WRITE AGAINST YOUR NAME,
HE MARKS NOT THAT YOU WON OR LOST, BUT HOW YOU PLAYED THE GAME."

It was a lovely summer's evening but then all summer evenings are lovely when you are young. The usual crowd, numbering between 20 and 30 and ranging in ages from as young as 9 or 10, to perhaps late twenties, were gathered at Clonmel Cross at the bottom of Market Hill. Almost every evening a game of football and hurling would be played in the field at the cross. Teams would be picked by rival captains with the best being selected first and then right down the line to us little boys. The captains were respectful of our feelings and would 'block' select at the end so as no one suffered the indignity of being left till last. Great games were played out at Clonmel Cross in the early 1950s with all of the local families participating, from Garrinch, Cahir Road, Red City, Market Hill, and even some from Lisronagh and Coleman.

One particular Sunday evening sticks in my memory. A car drew up as a game was in progress. A slim, dark haired young man, with a hurley and

gear bag, alighted and the car headed up Market Hill towards Clonmel. The game came to an abrupt halt as the participants all drifted towards the newcomer. He vaulted the wall which bound the field and asked which

side was behind. The game recommenced with the newcomer contesting for the 'weak' side. Nothing remarkable there one would say, except that the new arrival, a local lad from Garrinch, had just returned from the Ennis Road grounds in Limerick where he had won his first Munster medal, the Minor Hurling championship with Tipperary. It was of course, Liam Connolly.



Liam Connolly talking to Michael Maher, former Tipperary teammate, at the 1980 County Football Finals in the Barrack Field.

The Connollys were a lovely family of four boys and one

girl, whose father died at a very young age, leaving Liam, the eldest, as the father figure. Liam was our superstar as we grew up in the 50s. He was the man we modelled ourselves on, both on and off the playing field, and what a role model he was. Quiet and unassuming by nature, his slim build

provided a disguise for the powerful athlete that lay hidden beneath. In assessing his greatness, one could not discount his amazing consistency at both club and county level, in both hurling and football. As with all great players, his positional sense was second to none and ensured that possession was constantly gained. In possession, he invariably choose the correct option, distribute or finish.

To attribute greatness too lightly is to demean the honour and perhaps embarrass the recipient. Greatness means the ability to perform effectively at the highest level in one's chosen discipline, over a period, consistent with the maintenance of an outstanding level of sportsmanship.

If that definition is acceptable, then we can lay down the "terms of reference" from which judgment can be measured, allowing for the demands and constraints of a team sport.

- *Did the subject attain the highest level possible in his chosen discipline?*
- *Did the subject perform at that level for a period, i.e. not just one game or indeed one season?*
- *Did the subject's performance make a decided difference in contributing to the team success?*
- *Was the subject's conduct, both on and off the field, above reproach?*
- *Did the subject, in the thrill of victory or in the agony of defeat, display the same level of respect for his opponents?*

We would have no hesitation in ticking all those boxes in Liam's favour. Additionally, we would have to add that he not alone excelled in

one discipline, but in two.

In football, although he could play almost anywhere and did, his best position was perhaps at centre back. From this pivotal area, his great covering and reading of the play allowed him not only to defend but also to attack. Rarely would one see him jump for a ball from a standing position, but running into the ball he would invariably spring high to obtain clean possession. If he had been born in Kerry, he would have had several 'Celtic Crosses' in their major code. He had few opportunities to showcase his talents with the big ball. The Munster draw during his period saw the minnows oppose either Cork or Kerry on alternate years, ensuring just one big game per season. He never missed the opportunity to demonstrate that he was at home among the best. His exploits with the Tipp footballers in Clonmel, Tralee, Killarney or Cork, did not go unnoticed, and merited selection on a number of provincial teams.

In hurling he was seen to best effect in attack, where his lightning strikes won many games for Tipperary. He contested two Minor All-Irelands, winning in '53 by five clear goals against Dublin, but losing the '54 final to the same opposition by 4 pts. Even allowing for that exposure, it would be difficult for him to graduate to senior ranks with his county, coming from the South Division which was noted at that time for its football, not hurling. Many minors came and went and never made the transition to the



Press cutting dated Saturday 7th July 1962. Pictured above is a group taken at the Tipperarymen's Association dance at the Glocca Morra Club, London, on Whit Saturday. The dance was attended by the Tipperary Senior Hurling Team. Included in the picture are L to R: R. Hogan, Cloneen; Jim Stapleton, Sologhead; P. Gleeson, Drangan; Joe Ahearne, Fethard, manager Glocca Morra Club; Jimmy Doyle, Thurles; Liam Connolly, Fethard; and P. Burke, Cloran, Cloneen.

big stage. Fate was to take a hand. To improve hurling in the South Division where only two senior clubs, Killenaule and Carrick Swans, operated at that time, an amalgamation of junior clubs was allowed to enter a team in the senior championship in '56 and '57. Coolmoynce, Sean Treacy's from Carrick, and Kilsheelan (plus the 12th Batt. of the army from Clonmel if memory serves me right), as Na Piarasaigh were entered as Group C. Other junior clubs made up Groups A and B. The South Championship was rejuvenated and the '57 final was contested by Killenaule and Na Piarasaigh before a sell-out crowd in Fethard. After a thrilling draw, the replay was held on a very wet day in Clonmel. Another titanic struggle ensued (all the games were titanic to us young lads) and we roared the juniors home

to victory.

Going outside the division to the county semifinal against Lorrha, Na Piarasaigh were allowed to pick any junior from the South, and this allowed the great Theo English and another county man, Mick Ryan, both playing with Marlfield, to be selected. Lorrha were overcome in Thurles and Na Piarasaigh went on to the final in Cashel against the famous Thurles Sarsfields. The Thurles men were an all conquering outfit powered by the Doyles, Wall, Byrne, the Murphys and the Keanes. What chance had the juniors from a football side of the county against a team whose exploits against the famed Glen Rovers of Cork (in the annual Cork Church Fund games) was the stuff of legend? Indeed there were many shrewd judges who maintained that the full Sarsfields team should be

used to represent the county.

The men from the South thought differently and actually led with ten minutes to play. Liam Connolly was a colossus that day and ranged all over the field, displaying his vast array of talents to the full. The juniors lost, but only just, and this exposure brought Liam to the attention of the county selectors for the following year.

Liam opened quietly against Limerick in the '58 championship, but burst on the scene against Cork in Limerick. We were positioned behind the goal at the Ennis end of the grounds. The game was in the final minutes and Cork holding on to a two

point lead, when the great Cork custodian, Mick Cashman, made a brilliant reflex save from a Tipp forward. The ball rebounded. This was the opening that Liam had waited for, had indeed anticipated, and positioned himself perfectly to finish to the net for the winning goal. Tipp went all the way that year and Liam collected his first Senior All Ireland Medal. He was to collect two further honours in the grade, '61 and '62, with a loss to Wexford in the final of 1960. In the latter game, John D. Hickey, noted for his flowery language, delved into the classics to produce the heading for his report in the Independent – "The



Tipperary, 1958 All-Ireland Hurling Champions

Tipperary team, winners of the All-Ireland Hurling Final at Croke Park, Sunday 7th September. Back L to R: Noel Murphy, John McGrath, Mick Maher, Kieran Carey, Larry Keane, John Hough, Liam Devaney, John Doyle, Jimmy Finn, Mick Burns, Ray Reidy. Front L to R: Martin Maher, Liam Connolly, Jimmy Doyle, Tom Larkin, Theo English, Tony Wall (captain), John O'Grady, Mickey Byrne, Donie Nealon and Terry Moloney. Result: Tipperary 4-9, Galway 2-5.



Coolmoynne Junior Hurling Team early 1950s. Back L to R: Cly Mullins, Gus Danagher, Liam Connolly, Sean McCormack, Dick Wall, Jack Wall, Tony Newport, Paddy O'Flynn. Front Gus Neville, Seamus Hackett, Tom McCormack, Christy Williams, Michael McCormack, Michael Dineen, Jimmy McCarthy.

Assyrian came down like a wolf on the fold, and his cohorts were gleaming in Purple and Gold" (from Omar Khayyam).

All great players, from whatever sport, arrive at a time and a place when everything comes together to allow them to turn in a performance which is almost superhuman. The great Jack Nicklaus arrived at that point in the Augusta Masters of 1986, when he birdied 5 of the last 7 holes to seal an unlikely victory and deprive the great Sevy of the Green Jacket. Liam's 'Masters' was to be the Munster Final of 1960. Cork came to Thurles on 31st July as rank outsiders, with the remnants of the great team of the 50s, Paddy Barry, Mick Cashman, Jimmy Brohan, John Lyons and of course the incomparable Christy Ring. All were at this stage in the twilight of outstanding inter-county careers,

but there is too much class in Cork to ever discount them, and they made an almighty bid for victory. The resultant contest produced a classic.

The great Bill O'Donnell, who wrote for many years in the Nationalist on Gaelic games under the penname 'Divo' (derived from his interest in another code), headlined his report, "I have never seen a greater trial of strength".

Tipp needed to be at their very best to turn back the Cork challenge and none were better than Liam. If there were man of the match awards in those days he would have won it hands down.

Tipp's total of 4-13 on that day was barely sufficient to deprive Cork, who scored 4-11. The contribution of the Fethard man, as he performed in a zone that only the privileged few are ever fortunate enough to enter,

was vital.

Divot reported that Cork opened as if this was to be their day and Paddy Barry found the net in the first minute. The home team played second fiddle for the first quarter when Cork had opened a five point lead. Then, "Liam Connolly showed his worth when he gathered a Devaney pass, made his angle, and despite being harassed by several Cork defenders, shot a great goal. Barely had Cork recovered, when Connolly made a goal for Sean McLoughlin."

In his summary of the individual displays, Divot commented, "It was in the right corner that we had the real star of the game. Liam Connolly had the game of his life. Who shall forget

his first goal, when he gathered possession near the corner flag, and with complete disregard for personal safety burst through a forest of defenders to find the net. Or when he repeated his juggling act a few minutes later to present McLoughlin with the first of his pair."

There was always the suspicion that the supreme effort required to dispose of Cork in Thurles that day was the underlying reason for defeat to Wexford in the final, when Tipp failed to perform. But they were back again in '61, with the opposition on this occasion provided by Dublin. Powered by the Foleys, the Boothmans and the famous Snitchy Ferguson, the Metropolitans made a determined bid



South Tipperary Minor Football Champions 1952 after returning with cup. Back L to R: Bill 'Councillor' O'Dwyer, Gerry Mackey, ?, Tom McCormack, Tom Heffernan, Tossie Stapleton, Joe Dalton, Paddy Tierney, Jimmy Ryan, Paddy O'Flynn, Austin O'Flynn, Brian O'Donnell, Sean Condon, ?, Jarleth Finn, ?, A. O'Connell, Dick Byrne, Dick Fitzgerald, Austin McDonnell, ?, Mikie 'Cautious' Cummins. Front L to R: Alfie Brett, Paddy O'Rourke, Liam Connolly (captain), Pat Ryan, Mick Dineen, Mick O'Keeffe, Tom McCormack (Ballintemple), John Keating and Dick 'Reddy' Power. Sitting in front L to R: Gus Neville, Percy Flynn and Bro Albert Small (manager).

for victory, but in a pulsating finish Tipp prevailed by the narrowest of margins.

The Dublin full back on that day was Noel Drumgoole, who later settled in Limerick, and founded the Na Piarasigh club in the late '60s. I was fortunate to captain them to their first county football title in 1975 on a team managed by the Dublin man.

Noel assessed Liam Connolly as perhaps the most lethal corner forward he encountered, as much for his distribution and the space he created for others, as for his scoring exploits.

Let us not forget that Liam competed on the Tipp team of 58/63, a forward division which was composed of Jimmy

Doyle, Nealon, Devaney, McLoughlin, McKenna, the Moloughneys, just to mention a few, a team often described as perhaps the best to ever represent the Premier County, a team not easy to get on, and still he held his own.

He was on the bench for the '63 League Final against Waterford, a game Tipp lost in Croke Park, and drifted away from the panel at the young age of 27. He was to reappear again on the '66 Intermediate team when he collected his fifth All Ireland

medal.

A quiet, unassuming gentleman, he was our hero and brought great honour to his family, to Fethard and to Tipperary. In a career that spanned over 25 years of both hurling and football, I am not aware of him ever coming to the attention of the man with the whistle for an unfair challenge or an ungentlemanly act. Nor did he complain if unfair tactics were used to negate his own contribution.

In the Fethard of the 50s and early 60s, when the road was 'long and weary', Liam lifted our spirits and gave us a few good miles. He could have capitalized on his fame during that period. He was marketable material and many

offers came from interested companies. He choose to remain in Fethard and who was to say that he was not right. He was 'targeted' by one particular oil company, but refused the offer, remarking, with typical self depreciation, that the only oil he knew anything about was hair oil.

He had a great sense of humour and seemed to enjoy how intense some players became, particularly in club games. I remember one occasion when Fethard and Ardfinnan contest-



Liam Connolly with his niece Marie who is a daughter of Joan Connolly, Ballybunion.

ed a County football final in Clonmel in the late '60s, refereed by Walty Scott from Mullinahone. Hostilities had just commenced, and Fethard was on the attack, when the referee's attention was drawn by the cheering of the crowd at the opposite end, where a veteran Fethard defender and an Ardfinnan forward of similar vintage, were observed in a "schumoosle" (Michael O Hehir's terminology) on the ground. Walty called a halt to proceedings and made the long journey upfield to the scene of the crime. On his approach the combatants disengaged and began to run back into position. The veteran Fethard defender, endeavouring to dust himself down and settle the collar of his jersey which was almost detached from the body, was seen to hold up a restraining hand to the referee and utter, "Nothing wrong here Walty". The referee, to his credit, judged the situation to be under control, with no harm done, and having waved an admonishing finger in their direction, journeyed back to the other end. Liam found this so amusing that he would repeat the phrase many times, both in training

and before matches.

May the sod of his native Fethard rest lightly on him, and Liam, thanks for the memories.

*"Think where man's glory most begins and ends,
And say my glory was I had such friends." (W.B. Yeats)*



*Do not stand at my grave and weep,
I am not there . . . I do not sleep.*

*In Clonmel, Kilsheelan, or in Cahir,
When the game is on, you will find me there.
Or other fields where I made my mark,
perhaps in Limerick, Thurles, or Croke Park.*

*But in the Barrack Field, I'm always there,
To watch the Fethard teams prepare.
I'll lean against the old stone wall,
I'll catch each kick, I'll play each ball.*

*Do not stand at my grave and cry,
I am not there . . . I did not die.*

— Tom Burke

POSTSCRIPT

SOME YEARS AGO, I WAS INVITED TO PLAY IN A GOLF CLASSIC IN KILLARNEY IN AID OF DOWN SYNDROME. AS IS USUAL IN THESE EVENTS, A MARQUEE WAS SET UP HALFWAY ROUND WHERE EACH PASSING GROUP WAS TREATED TO LIGHT REFRESHMENTS AND FINGER FOOD. WHEN OUR GROUP STOPPED, I NOTICED THAT THE GREAT KERRY FOOTBALLER, MICK O'CONNELL, WAS ACTING AS HOST (MICKO IS VERY ACTIVE IN SUPPORT OF THIS PARTICULAR CHARITY). MICK ASKED US EACH IN TURN WHERE WE WERE FROM, AND WHEN HE HEARD FETHARD, HE REPLIED, "I KNEW A GREAT MAN FROM FETHARD, LIAM CONNOLLY".

First juvenile title in thirty-nine years!



Fethard Under-15 Football Team County Champions 1969. Back L to R: Frank Flanagan, Tom Halpin, Joe Kenny, Andy O'Rourke, Thomas McCarthy, John Keane, Davy Morrissey. Middle L to R: Michael Healy, Michael McCarthy, Davy Ryan, Michael O'Riordan, Michael Kenrick, Aidan Maher, Noel Sharpe, Sean Aylward. Front L to R: Eddie Fox, Andy O'Riordan, Joe Keane and Michael Prout.

Fethard's first juvenile title in thirty-nine years (*from The Nationalist September 1969*).

There were scenes of great excitement in Fethard on Friday evening last when the under-15 juvenile footballers returned home with the County Juvenile Championship trophy won at Cashel, where Moycarkey provided only token opposition. Fethard gave an outstanding display at bright open football and having led by 5-4 to 0-1 at the interval went on to add a further 4-4 without reply, leaving the final score: Fethard 9-8; Moycarkey 0-1.

This was the first time in thirty-nine years that a county juvenile title came to Fethard and it is quite

a coincidence that the recipient of the trophy on last Friday evening, Fethard's Michael Kenrick, is son of Jack Kenrick, the man who led the successful side in 1930.

Fethard advanced to meet Arravale Rovers, the urban-rural champions, in the final of Turas na nOg competition and had a four-point winning margin at the final whistle. This victory brought to the Fethard boys the twenty tickets for the All-Ireland football final in Croke Park awarded each year by the Tipp County Board for this competition. Congratulations to the team and their mentors on their win and indeed on their many fine victories throughout year. ●

Patrician Brothers Bicentenary

Wednesday 30th January 2008 was a red-letter day, a milestone in the lives of our schools and our community, a dignified day of celebrating the bicentenary of the foundation of the Patrician Brothers who gave of their dedication and lives to bequeath to us an excellent tradition of education, a strong ethos, and the courage to move on to an even more challenging future.

The church celebration was indeed moving. Commencing at 11am in the Parish Church, the palpable excitement could be felt from early that morning as the student population, staff and ancillary staff put the final touches to what was the culmination of months of planning. All three schools — Patrician Presentation Secondary School, St. Patrick's Boys School and Nano Nagle National School, gathered in anticipation of a

memorable event, and indeed it was.

The Mass opened with the choir singing 'Let all Creation Sing' — a fitting opening for a mass of thanksgiving. The chief celebrant, Canon Tom Breen P.P., concelebrated with Canon Jim Power, Fr. John Meagher OSA, Fr. Jim Holway, Fr. Michael Barry, Fr. Tomás O'Connell, Fr. Tony Lambe and the Very Rev. Archbishop of Cashel and Emly, Dr. Dermot Clifford, who presided over the ceremony. This was a day to celebrate for the Patrician Brothers who travelled a distance to remember those who went before them and who dedicated their lives to provide education for young boys in Fethard since St. Patrick's Day 1873. Among the Patrician guests were Bro. Cormac Commins, Bro Matthew Hayes, Bro. James O'Rourke, Bro. James Moran, Bro. David Byrne, Bro. James Murphy and the Provincial, Bro



Photographed after the concelebrated Mass for the Patrician Brothers Bicentenary Celebrations in Fethard are L to R: Fr. John Meagher OSA, Cormac Horan, Canon James Power, Canon Tom Breen P.P., Bro Camillus Regan, Dr. Dermot Clifford, Archbishop of Cashel and Emly, Fr. Jim Holway, Fr. Tony Lambe, Fr. Michael Barry, Fr. Tomás O'Connell and Niamh O'Meara.



Provincial, Patrician Brothers, Bro Camillus Regan and Dr. Dermot Clifford, Archbishop of Cashel and Emly, laying a wreath on the Patrician Brothers Grave in the grounds of Holy Trinity Parish Church.

Camillus Regan. Members of the old Patrician Brothers Past Pupils Union and guests from all over the parish joined them.

The principal, Mr Ernan Britton, welcomed all and there followed a moving ceremony where memorabilia of the Patrician Brothers were presented to the celebrant – a picture of Bishop Daniel Delaney (founder of the Patrician Brothers) by Percy O'Flynn; the Patrician 'Green Sash' by John Whyte; an old school roll-book by Laurence Kenny; a football to signify association with the GAA by Alan O'Connor; and lastly a wreath presented by Mr Dick Prendergast to place on the Patrician grave in the adjoining church yard. The lessons were read by deputy principal, Mrs Marian Gilpin, and Mr Denis Burke.

Laura Rice and Sarah Hayes led the choir in the responsorial psalm, 'Lord, it is good to be here'. Canon Tom Breen P.P., in his homily, spoke about the coming of the Patrician Brothers to Fethard in 1873, the formation of the Primary and Secondary schools, the Brothers' dedication to religious and community life in Fethard, and some of the many local customs the Brothers had, particularly with the Augustinian Abbey.

A poignant moment at the communion was the beautiful rendition of 'Dóchas Linn Naomh Pádraig' by our musical director Kevin Hickey and John Shortall on violin. The prayers of the faithful were read by Ms Mary Lysaght, David Gorey, Siobhán O'Brien, Kate O'Brien and Mrs Margaret Prendergast. The pri-

mary school children joined the secondary school pupils with 'Prepare Ye the Way of the Lord', led by Declan Doyle.

Laura Rice sang a lovely version of 'Amazing Grace' at communion, and Mr Gus Fitzgerald read a very apt and sincere reflection on the Patrician Brothers. The concluding hymn was the very appropriate 'St. Patrick's Breastplate'. This was followed by the wreath-laying ceremony. Flanked by a student guard-of-honour, and led by Bro. Camillus Regan, the Brothers made their way to the grave to pay tribute to those who went before them. John Shortall played a moving slow air on the whistle.

The church and the altar looked

beautiful and for this one must thank Fionnuala O'Sullivan, Marie Holohan, Mandy Quigley, the sacristan Mrs Pauline Morrissey and all those who helped prepare the church for the ceremony. Pat Doheny of 'Premier Music' provided the sound and the local Credit Union kindly donated the flowers. Our thanks also to John O'Donoghue, Clonmel, for providing the P.A. system for the wreath-laying ceremony.

The reception at the school was a wonderful relaxed occasion commencing with a tree-planting ceremony by Bro Matthew Hayes. Ms Mary O'Sullivan procured the silver birch, which, hopefully, will grow to its full elegance in memory of this great day.



Patrician Brothers photographed at the Bicentenary Celebrations in Fethard L to R: Bro. Cormac Commins, Bro. Camillus Regan, Bro James Moran, Bro. James Murphy, Bro. David Byrne, Bro. Matthew Hayes and Bro. James O'Rourke.

The main hall in the school was a buzz of activity where generous parents had provided beautiful food and Larry Kenny, Centra Foodmarket, supplied the hot food. The Parents' Association were wonderful and kept the 'kettle boiling', very ably assisted by Mrs Margaret Phelan, who has such huge experience from the Ballroom committee.

Past pupils, board of management, brothers, staff, past staff members, parents and students, and, of course, the Presentation Sisters, joined by Sr. Fidelis for the occasion, mingled happily with one another and enjoyed the

fine fayre. Ms Mary Anne Fogarty enjoyed showing the guests all the work the students had prepared, artwork and Ms Pat Looby's display case of memorabilia remembering the Patrician Brothers.

This was the first school celebration of the Patrician Bicentenary and, one hopes, it will leave a lasting impression on all who took part in it. Even the elements smiled fondly on us and the sun shone. May it always shine on the Patrician Brothers and all those who helped to make it a truly remarkable day. ●

Fethard Senior Citizens

Our meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month in the Tirry Community Centre where all present are served with tea, sandwiches and cakes, followed by a guest speaker, music or bingo.

Last December we had Mass for our Senior Citizens in the Augustinian Church Fethard at 11.30 after which everybody boarded the bus for the Anner Hotel Thurles where we held our Christmas Party. It was great success and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Our Easter outing was to Kilkenny where we visited the new shopping centre and later went to the Springhill Court Hotel for dinner. Our members had a good selection of Easter Bonnets which were put on display and judged by hotel staff.

Our summer outing this year

was to Carlow where we visited the Arboretum. We were blessed with a beautiful fine sunny day and as we browsed around the gardens, some of our members bought some flowers and plants. We had a very enjoyable dinner at the Lord Bagnall, Loughlinbridge.

In August, we paid our annual visit to Tramore and again we had one of the very rare fine evenings returning later to Slievenamon Golf Club for dinner.

Preparations are now under way for this year's Christmas Party and we take this opportunity to thank everyone who helped us in any way, financially or otherwise, to keep our club going.

A very Happy and Peaceful Christmas to all our friends at home and abroad. ●

Fethard Festival Challenge Game 1985



Fethard 1957 County Champions taking part in a Fethard Festival Challenge Game game in 1985.

Back L to R: Liam Connolly, Liam McCarthy, Jim Williams, Tony Newport, Ned Sheehan, Sean Moloney, Christy Aylward. Front L to R: Pat Woodlock, Jimmy O'Shea, Sean Connolly, Cly Mullins, Seamus Hackett, Jimmy McCarthy, Pat Ryan and Frank Coffey.



Joe McNamara's Over 40 All-Stars. Back L to R: Jimmy Connolly, Michael Croke, Waltie Maloney, Dick Fitzgerald, Vincent Woodlock, Sean Hannigan, John Ryan, John Fitzgerald. Front L to R: Lory Byrne, Sean Walsh, Peter O'Sullivan (Capt.), Joe Keane, Miceál McCormack, Ned Connolly and Tom Purcell.

Billy Fitzgerald 1943–2008



Billy Fitzgerald, who died 3rd May in Essex, England, photographed with Michael Fitzgerald (right)

The news of Billy's death in May evoked feelings of shock and great sadness. Shock, because to see that one of your own age has passed on brings you up against your own mortality. Sadness, because it brought back a flood of memories of childhood and growing up together on The Green in the 1950s.

I left school in 1960, Billy, I believe, the previous year. I left for England in 1962 and thereafter saw no more of Billy. I had heard the odd bit of news about him from my own family and hoped that, perhaps, our paths would cross one day. Sadly it was not to happen in this life.

Life in Fethard when we were growing up was vastly simpler than today. There was little money for amusement so we made our own. I recall days spent in Grove Wood getting into all

sorts of scrapes, playing Cowboys and Indians, tearing our clothes when we climbed trees. I remember crossing the "Boardy Bridge" over the railway line to get into the inner recesses of the wood. I recall us both as altar servers at The Abbey in the early 1950s. and was happy to see our First Holy Communion photo in the newsletter a few years back.

Billy and I lived a hundred yards apart. I saw him almost everyday. We were friends, we spent much time together and, then, we went our different ways. However, the memories of childhood are perhaps the strongest. I still see a good, generous person whose friendship I valued and whose passing has left me the poorer.

Go ndeanaid Dia trocaire ar a anam. ●

Tommy Healy

Fethard Historical Society

In many ways 2008 was a 'working year' for the Fethard Historical Society as members had to spend a lot of time dealing with all the different agencies and consultants who were involved with the town during the year. There were three large reports being put together – on the Town Wall, the Town Hall and the overall Public Realm Plan. This generated a lot of meetings and research work for many of the committee. Fethard is also a member of the Irish Walled Towns Network (see separate report). There was also ongoing work on a new South Tipperary Leader plan, a County Tourism plan, a County Development plan and all these needed inputs to ensure that the Fethard area featured prominently. But

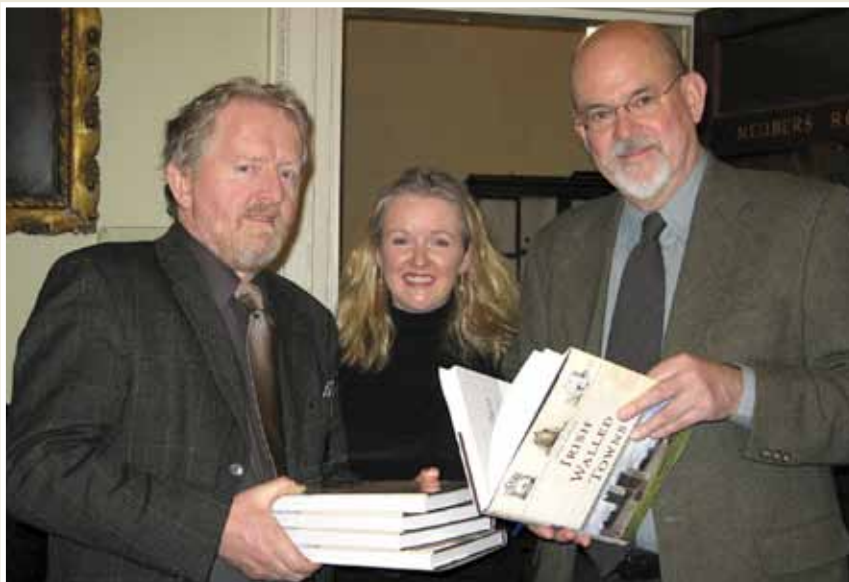
it can be reported that all the efforts of all the community activists over many years are finally paying off and it is now acknowledged at national level, especially by Fáilte Ireland and the Heritage Council, that Fethard is 'top of the class' as far as walled towns are concerned.

Tipperarian Book of the Year

The year began with a presentation on 26th January in the Abymill for the 'Tipperarian Book of the Year' and the winner for 2007 was 'Finding Tipperary' which was compiled and written by Mary Guinan Darmody and Denis G. Marnane. The annual Tipperarian Book Fair was again held on the second Sunday of February (10th) in the ballroom and it contin-



Photographed at the presentation of the 2007 'Tipperarian Book of the Year' at a reception organised by Fethard Historical Society are L to R: Terry Cunningham, Mary Hanrahan, Mary Guinan Darmody, Des Marnane and Dóirín Saurus (Chairperson Fethard Historical Society). The award was presented to Mary Guinan Darmody and Des Marnane for their book 'Finding Tipperary' – a guide to the resources of the Tipperary Studies Department, Tipperary County Library, Thurles, Co. Tipperary.



Photographed at the official launch of the 'Irish Walled Towns' book at the Royal Irish Academy, Dawson Street, Dublin, are L to R: Terry Cunningham (Fethard Historical Society), Allison Harvey (Irish Walled Towns Network) and John Givens (Author).

ues to attract a large number of book dealers and the book buying public. The fair is the society's main source of funds for the year. The society will gratefully receive donations of books for the 2009 fair which will be held on Sunday 8th February.

Walled Town Medieval Festival

A lot of our efforts went into the organising of the Medieval Festival on 23rd/24th August. Again, like last year, we were very lucky with the weather and the 'Medieval Event' in the Valley on the Sunday was a very colourful and family friendly event. The children of the three local Primary schools, under the direction of local artists Pat Looby and Austin McQuinn, must again be congratu-

lated for their very colourful parade. Hopefully the Festival will go ahead again in 2009 on the weekend of 22nd/23rd August coinciding with National Heritage Day. Funding from the government may be more difficult to get next year, so a big community effort will be required to ensure that the Medieval Festival can continue and hopefully expand.

Lectures and Outings.

The 'normal' activities of the society, with lectures, outings and our monthly meetings held on the last Tuesday of the month, continued throughout the year. The local outings to Baptistgrange (20th May) and Buolick (24th June) were particularly revealing but the visits to Carnahally

Centre (near Cappawhite, 3rd July), Kilmallock and Lough Gur (27th September) and Kilkenny City (15th November) were all very special in their own way.

Photo Competition

The Society organized the local section of the national Irish Walled Towns Network Photo Competition. Last year's (2007) local winner, Laurence Kenny, won national honours with his splendid photo of the Valley area. This year's Fethard winner is Edwina Newport and we wish her well in the national competition. We would again like to thank photographer John Crowley of Clonmel for judging the competition and to all those who entered.

Presentation to Jimmy O'Shea

The Society presented an inscribed framed copy of Laurence Kenny's winning photo of the Valley to Jimmy O'Shea as a token of thanks for his wonderful work, over many years, in maintaining the Valley area in such great condition. His persistent good example has resulted in a 'people's park' being developed by the County Council all along the river between Madam's Bridge and Watagate Bridge.

Books for Publication

A book on 'Heraldic Memorials in Fethard' by Gerard Crotty will be published by the Society in early 2009. It will cover all the medieval family plaques and coats of arms to



Members of Fethard Historical Society braving the weather on their outing to the medieval parish of Buolick

be found in the town, especially in old Holy Trinity Church and graveyard and also in the Abbey church and surrounds. Failte Ireland has generously given funding towards the publication which will be of particular interest to families with Norman roots such as: Butler, Everard, Purcell, Cantwell, Shortall, Hackett, Tobin, Roche, Stokes and many more.

A 'Complete History of Fethard', running to hundreds of pages, is also very near completion by local historian Michael O'Donnell, Owinging, and originally from Kilnockin. This will be a costly publication and the society will be seeking help from both public and private benefactors to defray some of the costs of this eagerly awaited event. Please contact the society if you would like to contribute to the publication of this definitive history of the Fethard area. The Society also pays

the annual subscription to County Tipperary Tourism Committee and this ensures that Fethard appears in their annual tourism brochure.

Committee

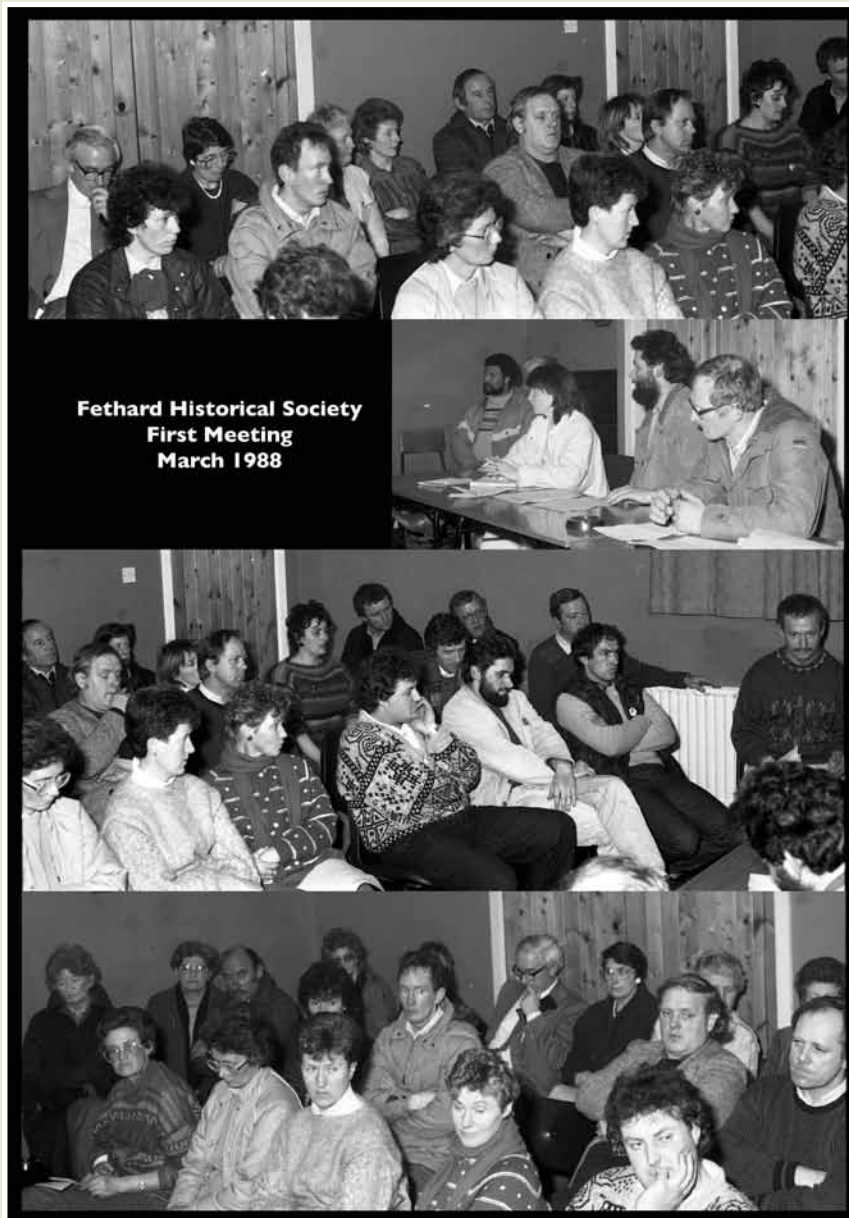
The officers and this year's committee are, Chairperson - Terry Cunningham; Assistant Chairperson - Dóirín Saurus; Secretary - Catherine O'Flynn; Assistant Secretary - Marie Taylor; Treasurer - Pat Looby; PRO - Mary Hanrahan; Tim Robinson, Peter Grant, Marie O'Donnell, Kitty Delany, Ann Gleeson and Colm McGrath. The committee of the Fethard Historical Society send our best wishes to Fethard people wherever in the world that you may be.

The society can be contacted by email at history@fethard.com or by writing to Fethard Historical Society, Fethard, Co. Tipperary. ●



*Fethard Historical Society's first committee elected 20 years ago on Tuesday 23rd March 1988.
Back L to R: Vincent Doocey, Jimmy O'Connor, Diana Stokes, Christy Mullins, John Joe Keane, Michael O'Donnell, Marie O'Donnell, Joe Kenny (PRO). Front L to R: Joe Ryan (Vice Chairman), Mary Hanrahan (Secretary), Peter Grant (Chairman), Denis Burke (Treasurer), and Mary Healy.*

Fethard Historical Society 20th Anniversary 1988-2008



The Walshes of Carrigeen

Looking through a booklet of poems published in 1977 by Jimmy Walsh, formerly of Carrigeen, Fethard, who spent most of his life in England, I began to recall some pleasant memories I have of his old home. It was a well known and much frequented place when Jimmy was in his youth, and for years after he emigrated, as his mother Bridget (nee Heffernan of Ballyvaden) was a famed bonesetter, well known over the length and breadth of Tipperary and even beyond the county.

The Walshes were our nearest neighbours on the northern side of our farm in Rathcoole, and we used to call on each other's houses at least spasmodically. There were seven children in the Walsh family, five boys and two girls. They were a bit older than most of us Hayeses. Peter, the youngest of the Walshes, was the same age as my eldest brother Mattie, and was in the

same class in the Brothers' national school. Mattie was recently recalling some of his memories of Brother Leo who taught them both when they went into the senior class. He remembers that Leo's favourite term for any

of the pupils who did not immediately come up to his expectations in class was, "You mope". No doubt every boy in the class was called a 'mope' from time to time, and was glad if he escaped with just such a put-down and discrediting term.

One of Jimmy's poems, entitled *The Old Homestead*, stirred some of my own pleasant memories of Carrigeen. My oldest memory was being taken there 'on holidays'. I was very young at the time, maybe

no more than four or five. The two Walsh girls, Mary and Annie, and my mother were on very friendly terms. They visited us often before Annie emigrated, and they liked sharing time, especially with the younger



Peter Walsh, Carrigeen, and Pat Hayes, Rathcoole, as Mayor and Mayoress of Moyglass in a Fancy Dress Parade of Fethard Carnival around 1940



Mary and Annie Walsh with some of the young Hayeses around the year 1934. Sitting in the back are Mary Walsh, Mattie Hayese, and Annie Walsh, and in the front are Kitty, Gerard, and Pat Hayese.

members of our family. I must have been something of a favourite, as Mary and Annie asked my mother if they could they take me home with them for a few days.

I don't recall how I was taken the mile or so up the Moyglass road and over Black's Bridge to Carrigeen. But I recall been taken into the sedgy 'island' in the large pond, the so-called 'lake', close to the farmyard, where water hens and a pair of swans nested. I also recall being taken up to the top of the castle and shown where Rathcoole was.

My main early memories, however, are of the large kitchen, with its homely, open hearth fire, and people coming to have some form of bone-setting done for them by Mrs Walsh.

That same kitchen features prominently in Jimmy's poem. What his verses lack in poetic quality is made up for by the affection of his memories. Writing around 1977 he describes how his mind wandered back to the old homestead that he had left some fifty years before, and imagines himself peering through the window:

*I peered through the window and there within ,
Was Mam making bread with her rolling pin.
The great open fire was glowing red,
Whilst hanging from the crane, a large pot overhead.
I saw the big kitchen with its concrete floor,
Where we played games and chalked up the score.
I walked inside to the smell of fresh bread
And mother laughed out at something I said.
On the table too was a huge apple tart,
And a little oil lamp 'neath the Sacred Heart.*

Another childhood memory of mine is being at our own avenue gateway watching as the funeral of Jack Walsh, Jimmy's father, passed on its way to Fethard parish church. I remember the horse-drawn hearse, followed by a few motorcars, and the seemingly endless procession of pony and traps and bicycles.

Mrs Walsh's hospitality and big-heartedness were renowned. One instance of the spontaneity of her big-heartedness will stay with me forever. It was a day when we were saving hay in a meadow beside the road, and Mrs Walsh happened to come long in her pony and trap after shopping in Fethard. When she saw us she stopped the pony and began beckoning. Two or three of us, sticking our forks in the ground, raced down to the road, and as we did she threw a big bag of sweets in over the wall, and continued on her journey.

A much later memory is being

at Carrigeen sometime in the late 1940s to see the threshing, which was a great neighbourly event. I recall Martin, the second youngest son, who was a priest of the Pallottine Order, immersed in helping, as much as any of the other men, in the manoeuvring of the mill into the haggard. Martin was convalescing at home at the time, and I'm sure he was not supposed to be engaged in any kind of physical work.

Martin was ordained in Rome in late 1942, but could not return until after World War 2. He was not long working as assistant priest in Hastings, in England, when the poor state of his health became apparent. The undermining of his health was put down to the nerve-racking years and the undernourishment he endured in Rome during the war period, particularly when the Nazis were occupying Rome. But Martin was not one to stand and watch. As the threshing machine was



Fr Martin Walsh's ordination card, recording his ordination in St Peter's Basilica in November 1942 at the height of World War 2 the year the Nazis began their occupation of Rome.

being put into place that late autumn day in Carrigeen, there he was with a shoulder to one of iron wheels. It had been discovered by then that his illness was developing into multiple sclerosis. He died at the Pallottine Novitiate at Cabra, Thurles, in June 1952. Seeing her vivacious son in a wheelchair must have been immensely sad for his widowed mother, and his death at the age of 32 a huge bereavement.



The inscription on Fr Martin's grave in the former novitiate of the Pallottine Order in Cabra, Thurles. He was the first priest to be buried there. His two cousins, Fr Willie Costigan, and Fr John Costigan, of Moyglass, are buried in this cemetery also.

When on holidays from college I used to call fairly often to Carrigeen, particularly after Martin's death, to have a chat with Mrs Walsh by the open fire. During the Christmas holidays Walsh's pond was a side attraction for me, as it was sure to hold a small flock or at least a pair of mallard ducks. I used to stalk as close as I could to the likely spots of the pond to get a shot. On a few occasions I was accompanied by the late Canon Christy Lee, who was then a curate in Fethard, and, like myself, keen on a day's shoot. We would stealthily approach the pond from two sides, and one of us was sure to get a shot. Nearby was what we used to call 'The Racecourse' – the scene of the Fethard Races in the 1910s and '20s. It had some broad drains and in wintertime the low-lying, rushy parts of it became sodden. It was an ideal habitat for migratory snipe and duck in those days, and I hardly ever came away from it without a brace of snipe and a few teal or widgeon.

One winter's day, around a year and a half after Martin's death, I was out with gun and dog in the open expanses of the former racecourse, and got caught in a sudden deluge. The refuge that immediately came to mind was Mrs Walsh's kitchen and open hearth fire.

Thoroughly drenched, I must have presented a sorry sight at the door, and the customary welcome was particularly memorable. I was given some of Martin's clothes while my own were put drying by the fire. The kettle was soon singing over the fire, while a piece of the huge apple tart, such as Jimmy remembered in his poem, was warming in the oven pot.

Mrs Walsh died after a long illness in July 1955. It was during a hot, sunny spell of weather, and the front yard was cluttered with people in groups chatting, while others were in a long line slowly making their way into the parlour to pay tribute to a great neighbour, who had dispensed hospitality and healing in bounteous measure. Her inherited bone-setting gift passed on to her nephew Jimmy Heffernan. Her youngest son, Peter, was the last of the family left at home, and after his death the old homestead which saw so much life and hospitality became empty. Jimmy ends his nostalgic poem, *The Old Homestead*, on a melancholy note:

*... I knew the old homestead was derelict now,
Nothing was there ne'er a man or a cow.
My parents and Father Martin have gone to their rest,
And six others scattered, as you might have guessed.*

Emigration, which affected so many families especially in the middle decades of the 20th century, took a heavy toll on Carrigeen. Jackie Walsh,

the eldest son, was the first to take the boat to England where he joined the RAF. Jimmy was the next to leave, and he too joined the British army. In one of his poems, *Journey to Aden*, he describes going in 1940 in a convoy of ships from Scotland southwards down the Atlantic and round the Cape, and then up to Aden, at the entrance to the Red Sea. It was there in that former British colony, noted for its hot climate, that he spent three years of the war. After the war Jimmy and his German wife settled in Germany for a while, and later returned to Middlesex, England, with their two sons, Peter and Steven. Michael (Mikey), the third son in the Carrigeen family, and his two sisters, Annie and Mary, emigrated as well. Annie went to Australia. Mary became a nurse in England and eventually returned home to Carrigeen, where she spent the last years of her life.

Sometime after the death of Peter, the last of the family to live in Carrigeen, the farm was purchased by Coolmore Stud. The old homestead

is long since replaced with a modern dwelling, and larger barns stand in the former farmyard overlooked by the early 17th century castle. The name



Carrigeen Castle, a gabled tower house, probably dating from the late 16th or early 17th century, marks the site of the former farmyard of the Walshes

Walsh's Farm is on a painted sign on the locked entrance gate, shaded by two great macrocarpa trees. At least the family name is still recorded there. The Irish version of the placename Carrigeen is Carraigín Bhreannóg. I wonder what is the meaning of second word in that old Irish name. ●

FOOTNOTE

JIMMY WALSH'S BOOKLET OF POEMS IS ENTITLED *ARKLE AND OTHER POEMS*, BY JAMES F. WALSH, 1977, PUBLISHED BY ARTHUR H. STOCKWELL LTD., DEVON.

— *by Willie Hayes*



'In Line for the Common Market' — Fethard Carnival 1962



Presentation to Patrician Brothers Secondary School 1984 'Munster Cup' team members who also made their way onto the Tipperary Minor Football Panel who won the Munster Championship title in 1984 and reached the All Ireland Final against Dublin. Most unlucky of these was centre half Willie O'Meara whose broken knee in the Munster Colleges final cost him his place on the County Minor Panel and the Munster Minor medal won by Brian Burke, Tommy Sheehan, John Hackett and Tom Anglim. Back L to R: Michael O'Gorman, Michael Leonard, Billy O'Farrell, Bro John Gallagher, Vincent Doocey, Paddy Broderick. 3rd Row L to R: Timmy O'Connor, Mary O'Sullivan, Kathleen O'Connor, Mary Ann Fogarty, Dinny Burke. 2nd Row L to R: Ann O'Donnell, Anna Judge, Deborah Conway, Mary Lysaght, Annette Coffey, Dick Prendergast. Front L to R: Sr. Consolata, Tommy Sheehan, John Hackett, Tom Anglim, Brian Burke and Bro Virgil Duggan (Principal).



L to R: Percy O'Flynn (Lady Anna) and Danny Kane (Ole King Cole) from Hogan Musical Society's "Old King Cole" production 1986



The Fethard Volleyball Team which represented Munster in the Community Games All Ireland in Mosney 1985. Back L to R: Claire O'Riordan, Dorothy Keane, Anna Bradshaw, Cathy O'Donnell, Lorraine McCormack, Pamela Lawlor. Front L to R: Margaret Quinlan, Rebecca Conboy, Mandy Conboy, Mildred Lawlor, Monica Kenny and Mairead Croke



Fethard Foróige members photographed on a weekend outing to Youth Hostel in the woods near Bansha July 1985. Back L to R: Arthur Daly, Maureen Connors, Evan Colville, Mary Tynan, Miceál Broderick, Monica Kenny, Margaret Sayers, Niall Connolly. Front L to R: Alan Colville, Mark Moloney, Michelle Fogarty, Jim Connolly, Ollie Reddy and Lizzy Reddy.

Badgers over 30s soccer and social club

It has been a year of mixed fortunes for the club. At the end of last year we enjoyed some lively competitive games at the new Astro turf in Killenaule. This was helped in no small part by the presence of a very talented part-time Badger, 'Towney', and his equally enthusiastic son. Between them they kept us on our toes and pushed us to the max! Thanks lads.

We again took on the Clonmel Post Office team and won, but ironically we would win our very first silverware in another discipline altogether thanks to Pat O'Donnell and the Tag Rugby Club who invited us to enter a team in their annual competition. We didn't think we would come anywhere as we practiced just two nights and people really were not sure

what they were doing. Strange ball? No net? Keep the line? Lucky for us Pat found a woman who was a leader of men and with Jenny Fogarty at the helm we kept the line and got through to the finals. Sadly, we missed out on the last game but our thanks to Monica Hickey who did a great job at short notice to make up our team. The Badgers do not have any female members but any who wish to join are very welcome. So we missed out on the main trophy but did win a shield, and great celebrations were had by all. Hats off to the Fethard Rugby Club who ran this very social competition over a few Saturday nights with great celebrations after each one.

Membership in the club has been as ever, changeable. We welcome



Bowling Badgers L to R: Philip Furnell, Pat O'Donnell, Bryan Steedman, Andy O'Donovan, Kevin Ryan, Liam Croke, Richard Thompson and Mick Tyllier.



Tag Rugby Badgers winners of the shield 2008 Back L to R: Martin Ryan, Pat O'Donnell, Richard Thompson, Alan Connolly, Liam Harrington, Kevin O'Dwyer. Front L to R: Colm McGrath, Liam Croke, Michael Ryan and Monica Hickey.

Martin Ryan and Neil McCormack who have been a great asset. On the down side we lost a few of the older fraternity as they bowed out to injury or the stresses of everyday life, hence we wish Kari the very best of luck with the pilates and Owen with the ballroom dancing.

Because of bad weather this summer we missed out on our annual guest game and barbecue with Monica and John Bermingham at Croc an Oir, but we made up for it by going out for a great night of bowling and talking over a few pints. If the soccer goes belly up we could have a very competitive bowling team as Kevin Ryan, Bryan Steedman, Liam Croke and Andy Donovan clocked up more than a few strikes on the night. Thankfully

Richard Thompson is at the younger end of the Badger age group and will have plenty of time to practice.

Well done to Kevin Ryan, our new chairman, who organised the bowling night, wiping the eye of others who have been trying to organise it for the past three years.

Though the weather has been lousy this whole year our luck has held out and most Wednesday nights between 8 and 9.30 have been good. In fact, early in the spring, when we came back to the field the ground was rock hard from the early dry spell. Seems a long time ago, but it's an ill wind, as they say, and the ground has been almost perfect since, nice and soft. Happy days! ●

Fethard Scouts - 27th Tipperary



Fethard Boy Scouts and Cubs photographed with leaders at St. Patrick's Day Mass 2008

Our Scouting year, as always, runs from October (2007) to August (2008). There were many activities and events throughout the year, especially in 2008 as we celebrated 100 years of Scouting in Ireland. In October we attended a fun weekend in Mount Melleray which was enjoyed by all. Our last activity for 2007 was a hike from Killusty over Slievenamon to Kilcash on 16 December.

We started 2008 with our weekly meetings and outdoor activities, including orienteering training, ending with a competition in March in Co Waterford with Fethard winning all of the under-14 1st and 2nd individual and team events. A weekend in Kilcully Scout Camp & Activity Centre near Cork City was most

enjoyable with a few hours spent in the city on Saturday afternoon.

A County Centenary Hike organized by the County Coordinators was well attended by all the local groups from around the county. A competition weekend in Mount Melleray in May proved to be just that, very competitive. We did well, winning one event and coming second in another, our training had paid off. With the weather improving and the evenings much brighter we held a lot of our meetings outdoors, with short hikes, cookouts and games.

The big event was yet to come, the International Jamboree from 2nd to 10th August. We needed to do some hard training for this and another weekend in Kilcully under canvas.

With new sleeping tents, a marquee and other essential equipment purchased, we put ourselves to the test first in Kilcully in July and as all went well we were ready for the Jamboree.

The ten-day Jamboree was held in Punchestown, Kildare. The logistics of this major event were enormous, 12,000 scouts! Having previously done some training and preparation at home and in Kilcully, the experience gained stood to us. Even the atrocious weather, God, in all his goodness, threw at us, failed to prevent our Scouts from having great fun, games and craic.

They showed how to make music and song in the rain and the four hot meals a day, prepared and served up to us by our leaders, meant the Fethard Scouts were always ready for anything. One of our leaders (Mikey) even showed us how to do some hurl-

ing in the mud. It was most unfortunate that the weather was so bad that the attendance of our Cubs had to be cancelled.

We thank all who supported us during the year, parents, our Group Council; treasurer Mary O'Donnell, chairperson Mary Healy, secretary Peter Grant, the Ballroom Committee for their facility, all the leaders, Sean Cloonan, John Walsh, John McCarthy, Mikey McCarthy, Dermot Culligan, Liam O'Brien, Michelle Hammond and Philip O'Donnell who we have missed so much since he took a break and whose return we look forward to in the coming months. We wish him well with his exams in the new year.

We wish all in the Parish and surrounding areas a very Happy and Holy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year. ●



Fethard group photographed before leaving for the Scouting Ireland Jamboree at Punchestown on Saturday 2nd August 2008



Gay Horan, Chairman Fethard Ballroom Committee, accepting the National Community award from Scouting Ireland on behalf of Fethard Ballroom. The award was presented by Sheila Power, County Commissioner, at the weekly Sunday night dance in Fethard in recognition of the Ballroom's contribution to the local scout group on an ongoing basis. L to R: Paul Collins (ARC Scouts), Mary Healy (Chairperson Fethard Scouts), Robert Phelan (Group Leader Fethard Scouts), Sheila Power (County Commissioner), Gay Horan (Chairman Fethard Ballroom), Sean Cloonan (Chairman County Scouts), Joe Keane (ARC County Scouts), and Peter Grant (Secretary Fethard Scouts).



Irish Girl Guides 'Abbey Park' photographed with leader, Theresa Hurley, at the St. Patrick's Day Mass held in Holy Trinity Parish Church Fethard.



Irish Girl Guides photographed with leaders Theresa Hurley and Judy Doyle at the St. Patrick's Day Mass held in Holy Trinity Parish Church Fethard.



Slievenamon Ladybirds photographed with leader, Catherine O'Donnell, at the St. Patrick's Day Mass held in Holy Trinity Parish Church Fethard, celebrated this year on Saturday 15th March 2008

Not Barchester Towers

Almost twenty years ago I began reading the novels of Anthony Trollope. Starting with his "Barchester" series, I have worked my way through almost thirty of these fascinating portrayals of life in mid-Victorian England. I say England, mindful of the fact that Trollope's first two successes were set in Ireland to which he had been sent in 1845 as a Postal Surveyor for the GPO. These two I am leaving until last so for the moment let me stay with his great series on the intrigues of the high ranking clergy of the Church of England. The second of these "Barchester Towers" describes the clash between competing ideologies within the Established Church in mid century. The old bishop, Dr Grantley and his son the archdeacon could be described as High Church. The bishop who succeeds him, Dr Proudie, is Low Church. The result is a running feud between the two factions, much of it deadly serious, some quite comical.

At the same time out in the real world the Established Church was facing opposition and from several quarters. The Oxford Movement led by John Henry Newman to promote reform within the church led Newman himself to embrace Rome. The effect was of earthquake proportions. Here was one of the Anglican Church's brightest stars departing the fold, and for Rome. Catholicism was enjoying a revival in part due to the relaxing of the Penal Laws but also due

to the large influxes of Catholics from Europe, first from France as the 'Revolution' led to persecution of those who remained loyal to the pope, and almost immediately afterwards as the Napoleonic Wars caused large numbers of Irishmen to enlist in the Royal Navy and Marines. The Famine led to an even greater influx and so the fortunes of the Catholic Church underwent a radical transformation. From being a faith practised discreetly by a few, often wealthy families who clung on after the Reformation, it became a faith with large numbers of adherents who just could not be hidden away.

In Plymouth where I have spent the whole of my teaching career, a priest, the Capuchin, Thomas Flynn arrived in 1793. He set up in a chapel over a stable and soon was saying Mass and ministering to an ever-growing flock. His baptismal register, which I have been reading, records numerous occasions when he administered the sacrament to the children of fathers now serving in the navy or marines. He left for the USA in 1803 having re-established the church on a very sound footing. By 1850 numbers were such that the hierarchy was established, the first bishop of Plymouth being George Errington who served for just five years. His successor, William Vaughan, was a man with ambitious ideas and his first task was to build a cathedral. Against almost impossible odds he

succeeded and on March 25th 1858 it was opened with a solemn High Mass with several leading figures of the church attending. This building celebrated its 150th anniversary this year and, to commemorate it, a history of it was published on which I have been working as researcher during the past two years.

Bishop Vaughan had big ideas. He would have liked to have been able to engage Augustus Pugin to design his building. Pugin, fresh from designing the Houses of Parliament, was the leading architect of the age. He was, however, rather expensive so the Hansom brothers were hired instead. Joseph Hansom had already achieved fame by designing the hackney cab which bears his name, a mode of transport familiar to all who enjoy Sherlock Holmes films. The Hansom brothers quickly produced a design and work began almost as soon as they had completed their sketches. Despite two building mishaps the church was completed in less than three years, a feat it is difficult to imagine even today.

The funds for this ambitious project came from two sources, a few large donations from wealthy Catholics and the pennies of the poor who, at that time, constituted the bulk of the congregation. Most of these poor were from Ireland, most would also have been serving in the forces or working in the Royal Dockyard at Devonport. To go back to the end of the previous century, Fr Thomas Flynn records,

1797

"12TH JANUARY, I BAPTIZ'D AN INFANT NAMED MARGARET BORN 20 OF DECEMBER OF THE PRECEDING YEAR, DAUGHTER OF WILLM. AND MARGARET DALTON, BELONGING TO THE MARINE BARRACKS OF STONEHOUSE NEAR PLYMOUTH. THE SPONSOR WAS ANDREW HOGAN."

The new cathedral was soon in use for the everyday functions of a church. On 23rd July 1856, John Maher of Thurles married Margaret Niblock of Fethard. The priest officiating was Canon Edward Windeyer. It would be interesting to know who this Margaret Niblock was, is there any family in Fethard which can trace a connection to her?

In the summer of 1875 a new curate, Patrick Sheehan, arrived at the cathedral. He had been ordained a few weeks before for the Diocese of Cloyne and his own bishop, having no parish for him, had lent him to Bishop Vaughan in Plymouth. The practice of Irish bishops "lending" spare clergy to English dioceses was quite common and persisted for decades. This curate was to achieve considerable fame later in the literary field. He was the redoubtable Canon Sheehan, parish priest of Doneraile and author of novels such as "Glenanaar", "The Graves at Kilmorna" and "Luke Delmege". In "Luke Delmege" the experiences of a new curate working for a demanding bishop are based entirely on Sheehan's experiences working as curate to Bishop Vaughan for Vaughan was a



Tommy Healy, formerly from The Green Fethard, is photographed above at his daughters wedding which took place in Plymouth Cathedral, October 2007. L to R: Julie Healy, Troy Mitchell, Kathleen Healy, Tommy Healy and Ruth Bath (nee Healy).

gifted man who demanded very high standards of his clergy and Patrick Sheehan must have felt that he had been thrown in at the deep end. Sheehan's experiences as chaplain to Dartmoor Prison, which held several Fenians at the time, gave him material for "The Graves at Kilmorna." The sight of heavily fettered convicts going to their work in the nearby granite quarry left an indelible impression on him. He also acquired a reputation as a powerful preacher and some parishioners could recall over fifty years later sermons he delivered while here. His time in Plymouth was short; he was recalled to be curate in Cobh in 1877 but it left him with an even stronger desire to raise the moral and material standards of his people. It also brought him into contact with people of different faiths and of none, and

made him a very liberal-minded cleric.

Canon Sheehan was one of innumerable Irish priests who began their careers at Plymouth Cathedral and went on to serve their flocks in other parts of this geographically large but demographically small diocese. When I arrived here in 1968, I encountered the formidable figure of Fr John Kinane, a native of Goolds Cross, who was parish priest of an adjoining parish and who served his whole career in this diocese. He retired to Goolds Cross just a few years ago after more than fifty years of service among us. He died in 2002 but is still remembered with great affection by those who encountered him. The present administrator, Canon Bart Nannery, is a Longford man.

For forty years the cathedral has been an ever-present backdrop in my

career working in Catholic schools in Plymouth. At St Boniface's College where I spent 29 years, the cathedral has been the setting for the school carol service each year. When I first arrived at the school in 1975, it was run by the Christian Brothers, three of whom came from Tipperary, Mark Devitt from Cashel, Liam Ryan from Tipperary Town and Denis D'Arcy from Nenagh. Ryan and D'Arcy now practise their profession in celestial realms and Devitt, like me, is retired. For all of us the cathedral was part of our lives and work in Plymouth.

I have found working on the his-

tory of such a place infinitely absorbing and extremely interesting. It has made me feel part of the great movement which revived the faith after two centuries in the wilderness. The building itself continues to fascinate me, so steeped is it in the history of the past two centuries. I was delighted when my own daughter, Kathleen, a regular visitor to Fethard, chose to be married there in October 2007 and I had the pleasure of walking her down the aisle of a building, which has been part of my life these past forty years. ●

Tommy Healy (November 2008)



Tea Party at Carrigan's, Clonacody 1970s. L to R: Nell Mullins, Statia Leahy and Mary Nagle. In the background are John Halpin, May Walsh and Gerry Skehan.



1953 Inter Cert Class Fethard Presentation Convent. Back L to R: Margaret O'Flynn, Rosie Walsh, Lucy Hanley, Frances Evans, Eileen Woodlock. Second Row L to R: Rita Tierney, Marie Dineen, Elizabeth Dunne, Ann O'Donnell, Mossie McCarthy, Ursula Ryan. Front L to R: Mary Sheehan, Stella Tobin, Patsy Byard, Kathleen O'Donnell and Mary Ryan.



A young Tom McCormack and Mick Dineen.

Who were the "Clashawley Pirates" at Fethard Carnival?



Do You Remember . . . 1973?

If you, reader, are under forty years you certainly don't remember the Fethard of thirty-five years ago. And yet to those of us who are older it seems but a few years. So for those who are on the wrong side of forty I hope to revive a few memories and for those under perhaps I'll give them some description of a Fethard they never knew. What I have made use of to compile this short piece are the weekly news items that appeared in the Clonmel Nationalist.

Did you know that the Fethard and Killusty Newsletter was fourteen years old in 1973, and so in 2009 will be celebrating its half century. Thirty-five years ago the Newsletter was pub-

lished and distributed by the Legion of Mary and its print order was six hundred copies. In those days the editor may have been the secretary of the Legion who, in 1973, was Kathleen Keane. As I scribble these few lines I'm looking at my 1973 copy. Since then the Newsletter has undergone many changes and much improvement, not least the great use made of colour photography. The legion of Mary also promoted the annual reunion between the people of Fethard and their family and relations then living in the Greater London area. A group of local people were in the Irish Centre at 52 Camden Square on 24 May where a very enjoyable gathering took place.



Legion of Mary Fethard London Reunion 1968. Back L to R: Ellen Walsh, Paddy Tobin, Jimmy Coffey, Jimmy Mullins, Paddy Lonergan, Ann Lonergan, Michael Coffey, Michael Browne. Front L to R: Tommy O'Connell and Moira McInerney.

So as to obtain some description of the Fethard of 1973 the report issued by the judges of the Tidy Towns competition will serve well enough. Theirs was a detailed commentary on the state of the town to which they allotted eighty points out of a possible one hundred and fifty. They described the town as a fine market centre with a heritage of old buildings, but not enough effort at that period was being made to highlight the qualities of those. There were then a large number of derelict buildings with some in very conspicuous places. They expressed their horror at the amount of litter that was being dumped about the town walls, especially on the south side facing the river. But the judges liked the attractive shape of the Main Street. We have to thank our long-ago ancestors for that and possibly a medieval Archbishop of Cashel who may have helped in the planning of the shape. They admired the shape and condition of most of the houses about The Square, though they were less than pleased at the derelict condition of one large house on the north-east side of it. They feared that this house might be knocked down and so leave a gaping space in a lovely Square. Fortunately, that house has been renewed today and so The Square is intact. The judges noted the number of historic ruins, but thought that the Fethard people of 1973 were treating them as an embarrassment and not as a potential valuable characteristic. They commented that there was no easy access to the ruins about Holy Trinity Protestant

Church. In 1973 the town wall along by the river was sadly neglected and being used as a litter dump, 'with an unsightly temporary building to complete the degradation'. They bewailed the treatment of the town wall along its northern course: increasing the height of the wall by a handball alley and the erection of a lean-to building. This sort of defilement, they wrote, should not be allowed to happen to historic ruins of national interest. Conservation led by professional advice was what they recommended. Another of the buildings that got adverse notice was the mill on the south side of the Abbey. Today this is the Abymill Theatre and a credit to the initiative of the people of Fethard, but in 1973 the Tidy Towns judges were lamenting the condition of such a fine building. All the approach roads to the town were being maintained in a worthwhile manner. Today the town is very fortunate in that its treasures are appreciated, are being carefully guarded, and are being preserved to a high standard.

As much has changed in the fabric of Fethard over those thirty-five years so, too, have the business premises in the town. For that reason I do think it worth compiling a sample of what was then in Fethard. John O'Shea's Lounge bar; O'Connell's House for Value; South Tipperary Farmers' Co-op; O'Flynn Tailors, Burke St.; Henehan's Grocery, Main St.; Whyte's Garage, Main St.; J.F. O'Sullivan, Chemist, Main St.; Greyhound Autos; Billy O'Flynn,

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Advertisements from The Nationalist Newspaper in 1973

Grocer, Burke St., and Barrack St.; Thomas Bulfin, Victualler, Burke St.; Derek Wall, Publican; Dick Hayes, Betting Office; The Forge Tavern; Kay McGrath's Fashion House; Trehy's Garage; Henehan's Furniture Store, The Square; Pierce Dillon, Chemist, Main St.; Richard Gorey, Butcher, Main St.; Larry Shortall, The Valley Stores; Eileen Looby, General Grocer, Kerry St.; Sherrards Machinery; Munster Sawmills, The Station Yard. So many changes in so short a time span. But in 1973 some new businesses did open in Fethard. Three such were that of Laurence Kenny who had lately opened a light hardware store for the handyman on The Green. Another was Mrs. Tess Lawrence who opened a café and tearooms at Burke Street. This last reminds me of an account which the writer Frank O'Connor published in 1942 of his journey around Ireland on a bicycle. In the summer of that year he arrived in Fethard, but all he had to say about it was that it was a bad town for a cup of tea – he could find no café and he didn't feel like a pint of stout. And the third was a fully equipped playground (Margaret's) which opened on the Cashel Road next to the Market Yard. Naturally it was popular with the local children.

But many other organisations have survived and thrived. One such is the Credit Union. In 1973 the Union was four years in operation and had a membership of four hundred. The office opened on every Saturday night and the staffing was voluntary. The

members' investments had reached £17,000 and the loans were close to £33,000. Over the years since it has continued to provide wonderful help to the people of Fethard.

Another which has survived the years is the Sports Centre in the Barrack Field. In 1973 two tennis courts had been completed and another was almost ready. A double handball alley had been built during the summer by local contractor, John Harrington and Sons. The new alley had both an outdoor and an indoor court with timber flooring and a glass back wall, which made the alley usable all the year round. There was spectator accommodation, and up-to-date dressing rooms. It was estimated at that date that the total cost of erecting and finishing the centre would be in the region of £10,000. But costs were being kept down through the wonderful efforts of local voluntary workers.

But there were many other sports organisations in Fethard in that year. For those who were fit and well able to run there was the Barrettstown Harriers. They held their meetings on two Sundays in each month. Some examples of where they coursed were at Cashel and Jossestown in January, at Mobarnane and Downey's Cross in February and in October they ran at Brookhill, Kilnockin and at Jossestown. Only the very fit were able to closely run with them. Also for active people the town had a Badminton Club which had sufficient numbers to field two teams in the league competitions of that year. One of their very

good players was Norma Hanrahan. In that year, too, Fethard were fielding a rugby team, but it seems to have been a juvenile team only. For a long number of years Fethard had a Coursing Club. Among the committee for 1973 were Danny Carey, chairman, Michael Keane, treasurer, and John O'Donovan, secretary. And among the names on the general committee I saw that of Hugh Lynch. In this year long-standing members Percy O'Flynn and Jack Kenrick did not put their names forward for re-election. The club had three cups up for contention: the P.J. Henehan cup, the J.F. O'Sullivan cup, and the Coolmoynes and Fethard Gun Club cup. Fittingly, two of P.J. Henehan's sons were on the committee.

The girls from the Presentation Convent Volleyball team were doing particularly well and in the 1972-73 season the girls achieved an all-time record by reaching the All Ireland Final in all three categories of the competition, Junior, Cadette and Senior. Luck was against them in the finals but success was to follow in 1974. The outstanding players were Angela Dillon, Trudy Hanrahan and Josephine O'Brien. Included in the teams that year were Bernadette Coady, Anne Hayes, Catherine Newport, Jacinta Kearney, Ella Fogarty, May Morrissey, Pattie Harrison, Elizabeth Holohan, Eleanor Smyth, Angela Dillon, Rita O'Connor, Trudy Hanrahan, Breda Gorey and Josephine O'Brien.

St. Patrick's Athletic club was five years old in 1973. The club did well

in county and Munster events, and their better performers were Conor Lonergan and Pat Fallon. These two did particularly well at the Tailteann games held at Belfield, Dublin, on Sunday 22 July. The club had a novel idea for seeing out the old year of 1972 and seeing in the new one. This was road races about the town starting at 8pm on Sunday 31 December. The entry fee was 10p, and the races ended at the Capitol Ballroom. When the races ended there was a social get-together, with turkey and ham supper, in the Ballroom; a very modest 60p was the entry charge for this. Jim Noonan's group from Killenaule supplied the music – do you remember them? On that afternoon of Sunday the 31st there had been a walk from the Main Guard in Clonmel to the Ballroom in Fethard.

Of course Fethard had a Football Club. Beyond a few general comments I do not intend writing on the GAA in Fethard as the subject has been competently dealt with in yearly annuals and in county and parish histories, the publication of which reflect great credit on that organisation. In January the local football club elected its committee for the coming year. Christopher, Canon Lee was to be the president and Dick Fitzgerald was elected the chairman. The treasurers were Michael O'Riordan and James O'Shea. The selection committee proposed for the year were Cly Mullins, Jimmy McCarthy and Ned Sheehan. But in this year the local GAA club fielded teams under the



Cadette Volleyball Team defeated by Eccles St, in Carlow 1972-73 L to R: Josephine O'Brien, Trudy Hanrahan, Norma Hanrahan, Ella Fogarty, Eleanor Smyth, Helen Roche and Kathleen Culligan.



Senior Volleyball Team defeated by Eccles St, in Carlow 1972-73 L to R: Deirdre Smyth, Elizabeth Holohan, Elaine O'Meara, Ella Butler, Lillian Gorey, Eileen Wright, Rita O'Connor and Angela Dillon



Junior team defeated by Middleton in Dungarvan 1972-73 Back L to R: Yvonne Donovan, Mary Morrissey, Pattie Harrison, Mary Ahearn. Front L to R: Paula Pollard, Ann Hayes and Paula Carey.

name of St. Augustines which was a combining of Fethard and Kilsheelan. Under this name both parishes had a team in senior hurling. But in May of this year some efforts were being made to have a local hurling team and Miceál McCormack was enthusiastically attempting to get young men to swing the hurley stick. Locally the game of hurling had declined in the 1960s after having survived in the parish since about 1914; but throughout those decades the driving force had been the men from Coolmoynes. Importantly, in this year of 1973 the local GAA club were strongly determined on purchasing the sportsfield from the Board of Works.

Another sport which had long associations with Fethard was the

Tipperary Foxhounds. In this year Captain Evan Williams retired as their Master, having already served for nineteen seasons. To mark his leaving a pleasant function was held at Knocklofty House, the then home of the Earl and Countess of Donoughmore. To honour the occasion the Captain was presented with an inscribed silver tray, seventy-two pieces of cut crystal and a bound and hand-inscribed volume which contained the names of all the subscribers to the event, the names of former masters of the hounds between 1802 and 1972, and a list of all the successes and prizes gained by the foxhounds. The new master was Michael Higgins and the first whip was still Michael Flanagan. At their new season meet in

Fethard Players

Present West End Smash Hit

"SEE HOW THEY RUN"

(A Comedy by Philip King)

at Presentation Convent Hall, Fethard
at 8.30 pm

**January: Sun. 21st, Tues. 23rd, Thurs.
25th, Fri. 26th, Sun. 28th**

Admission: 30p (bookable) and 20p.

Booking at Post Office, Fethard, from 9 am to 6 pm. Phone:
Fethard 1.



*See How They Run performed in the Convent Hall from 21st to 28th January 1973.
L to R: Percy O'Flynn (Sergeant Towers), Goldie Newport (Miss Skillon), Michael Woodlock (Rev
Arthur Humphrey), Danny Ryan (Rev. Lionel Toop), Carmel Rice (Penelope Toop), Eddie O'Sullivan
(Lance Corporal Clive Winton), Joe Hanley (Bishop of Lax), Anne Connolly (Ida, a maid)
and John Shortall (The Intruder). The play was produced by Danny Kane.*

Fethard in early November the town was crowded and gay. And what a picture the riders made as they came through the arch at Sparagoleith on their way to Rocklow to raise their first covert. The excitement of chasing a fox can be read in any of the hunting scenes in Anthony Trollope's novels.

Ponies also featured in the annual Killusty Pony Show which was held in July. For the event entries came from over the island of Ireland, from Britain, and from the Channel Islands.

But Fethard did not neglect its mental entertainment and the leading advocate of this was theatre. Towards the end of 1972 certain counties who were members of the Amateur Drama League had decided to opt out of the competitive drama festivals and hold a festival where drama could be appreciated for its own sake and not

for whatever awards or prizes it might garner. The areas in revolt were to be found in Tipperary, Waterford, East Cork and West Kilkenny. And Fethard was chosen as the centre for the festival which opened in the Presentation Convent Hall on Sunday 3 December 1972 and ran for a week. The festival director was Austin O'Flynn and the committee was chosen from among the ten amateur drama societies in the area. This change was praised by the late Brendan Long of the Clonmel Theatre Guild as it dispensed with the competitive element which had become so strong a feature of amateur drama presentations. Such competition, according to Brendan, was having an unhealthy influence on the general drama movement.

This particular event opened with the New Theatre Group of Kilkenny

presenting Robert Bolt's 'A Man for all Seasons', and over the week plays by John B. Keane, Tennessee William, Sean O'Casey and Brian Friel were staged. A judgement on the performances in each play was delivered by Mrs Aileen Coughlan of the Athlone Theatre Guild, though no prizes were offered. Readers of the Irish Times will recall Aileen as a leading personality in the drama movement, a critic with considerable insight, and an organiser of the Athlone finals in the competitive drama movement. As the local Fethard Players were the organisers of the event they did not offer a play on the occasion, but it was an excellent boost for local drama as throughout the week well-balanced and well-performed plays and exceptional talent were on view.

But the Fethard Players did present the comedy 'See How They Run' at the Presentation Hall on alternate nights between Sunday 21 January 1973 and the following Sunday. The admission charges were 30p and 20p, and the producer of the piece was Danny Kane. The cast were, Anne Connolly, Carmel Rice, Danny Ryan, John Shortall, Goldie Newport, Michael Woodlock and Joe Hanly. On the first Sunday afternoon they very kindly laid on a matinee for the senior citizens of the town. The play was taken to Ballingarry on Sunday night 4 February and on Sunday 11 February it was presented in Dungarvan. At the latter place the Players had hopes that their production would again win the Decies Drama Festival champion-

ship as they had done the previous year. But they had to settle for second place. Later in the year, under their producer Austin O'Flynn, the Players were rehearsing Agatha Christie's 'Ten Little Niggers' which they staged in the Town Hall over the week from Sunday 27 January 1974. The cast in this particular piece of drama were, Carmel Rice, Percy O'Flynn, Eddie Sullivan, Danny Kane and Gerry Skehan. A very young-looking Joe Kenny was on sound for the occasion.

Local young and up-coming talent also got its chance when the boys and girls of the secondary schools presented G. B. Shaw's 'Heartbreak House' in the Convent Hall on three nights between Friday 16 March and Sunday 18 March. Their play, which was on the Leaving Certificate English course of that year, was produced by Paddy Maher, a teacher in the school. Among the cast were, Rita O'Connor, Mairead Ryan, Tom Costello, Breda Gorey, Angela Dillon, Conor Loneragan, John O'Mahony, John White, Vincent Phelan and Pat Fallon.

Entertainment of another order was the Festival Week which was run by the Development Association and was held on the week commencing Sunday 24 June. It opened with a fancy dress parade. Did you know, reader, that Fethard had been organizing a fancy dress parade since about the mid 1920s and that in the pre and immediate post-War years it drew crowds to the town. The parade walked to the sportsfield led by the

Thomas Kent Girls Pipe band from Fermoy. Here the entrants were judged and a set of winners found. On the same day there was a football tournament which began at 3.30pm. This was refereed by Sean Moloney, no mean performer himself on the football field. On the sportsfield there was a baby show, platform dancing and a ladies' football tournament. The day ended with a dance in the ballroom which had its name lately converted from the Capital to the Country Club.

On the Monday evening there was a motor car treasure hunt over a distance of ten miles. At half past eight that evening there was a senior football challenge between Fethard and Clogheen. Noteworthy, the ball was thrown in by Frank 'Scout' Butler of Fethard who had played on the Tipperary football team on 'Bloody Sunday' 1921. On Wednesday night there was autocross racing on Market Hill. And on the same night a Festival Queen was chosen. The remaining week nights had dancing and various

sessions of music. On the Sunday night the festival closed with a performance from St. Patrick's band from Kilkenny, a feis in the town hall, a pedigree dog show at the sportsfield, and an exhibition of volleyball at the Presentation Convent. It all ended with the 'Farewell Festival dance' in the Country Club ballroom.

As the Country Club ballroom has been mentioned it is as well to tell that the Capitol ballroom, as it was known, had passed to a new owner in April. The purchaser was a Danny Doyle, a dance-hall promoter from Adamstown, Co. Wexford. During April and May he had the ballroom refurbished with new lighting and heating and a new lounge. And he changed the name to 'The Country Club' to emphasise that in future the dancing was to be to country and western music. Mr Doyle, a Wexford farmer, was not new to the dance-hall business as he ran five other dance-halls. He also had a sponsored radio slot on RTE which

The Country Club Ballroom
FETHARD

SUNDAY
NEXT
28th Oct.

Tweed

This band is now topping all others in Tipperary.
Watch out for ROYAL SHOWBAND next week.

COMING Thurs. 1st November: JIM CANTWELL'S BIG BAND

was presented by Brendan Balfe. Do you remember those radio slots of fifteen minutes duration? The new ballroom re-opened on Sunday 20 May with the music of Gene Stewart and the Mighty Avons. On that same week it sported Joe Dolan and The Drifters. The new manager was Paddy Lonergan of Fethard.

As can be read above, the Development Association was the driving force behind the week-long festival in the town. But the association did involve itself in other necessary matters. In February, for example, it was seeking help from the County Council in having houses built in the town for young married couples and also for the aged. Father D. Cunningham, then a curate in Fethard, acted as spokesman for the association. As was pointed out to the Council, the housing for the aged was sub-standard with, in a number of instances, no running water or proper toilet facilities. Father Cunningham was also ahead of his time in that he was seeking 'home help' for those who were old and living alone – a service that is widely available today,

but was novel some thirty-five years ago. The association met with various councillors, including local man Jack Ahessy, and pleaded their case. What the outcome was I don't know. Possibly it was not great in those rather hard economic times.

Fethard in 1973 had its May procession on Sunday 6 May at 7pm. The Blessed Sacrament is still borne about the streets of Fethard in solemn procession today. The procession has

survived in certain parishes but the attendance is far from what it was in the pre-1973 years.

Throughout the year the local Augustinian friary featured in the news. In July a Provincial Chapter was held in Dublin at which the following Augustinians were appointed to Fethard: Father Anthony Leddin to be Father Prior, and Father

J. Brown to be sub-Prior. The other priests appointed were Fathers C. O'Connor and N. MacFadden. Father O'Mahony who had been in Fethard was sent to the Australian mission. This reminds me that a momentous Provincial Chapter was held in Fethard in June 1649 at which some forty

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*Abbey altar boys photographed in the Abbey grounds with Fr. Leddin OSA in the early 1960s.
Back L to R: Michael Nevin, Michael Kenny, Michael Cummins, Richard Burke, Don O'Connell.
Front L to R: A.B. Kennedy, Jimmy Hayes, Philip Dillon, John Joe Keane, Jerry O'Riordan*

Augustinians attended. This was just a few months before Cromwell landed in Ireland. Soon after, most of the Order had to flee to western Europe and Father William Tirry paid with his life for remaining on in Fethard. But to return to 1973 matters, in September the friars had a visit from the Prior General of their Order who recalled that as a young man in Rome his Father Prior was none other than the Fethard man Father John O'Flynn OSA. The friars were hoping to have their church painted and brightened up before the end of the year, and as Christmas came around the crib in the old ruined part of the church was put on display.

Changes of a different sort were happening in the Presentation

Convent. At the end of the year the Sisters were selling the contents of their farmyard. On offer they had seven dairy cows, one Friesian heifer, four Friesian yearling heifers, a seven-year-old donkey with its harness and a cart on rubbers. All had to go as had a milking machine, churns, a cooling unit for the milk, feeding troughs, and milk bins (what were they?). They also sold off 1,000 bales of bawn hay, 220 bales of straw, and 106 drills of turnips. The sale was at the farmyard on Tuesday 18 December. If you can remember the nuns' farmyard then you must be on the wrong side of fifty; pupils of the former boys' national school would be very familiar with it.

In this year the Patrician Brothers

were celebrating one hundred years of teaching in Fethard. To mark the occasion a fine booklet was written by Jimmy McInerney. Presumably every 'old boy' has a copy tucked away somewhere. The first Brothers had arrived in Fethard on 5 March 1873 and had their first school on the Main Street next to the parish church. They later opened a classical school ('The Academy') in the same building, but after a few years this failed and Fethard did not have a permanent secondary school until the 1940s. When we remember that in 1871, two years before the Brothers came, almost half the people of Fethard were illiterate we realise what great benefits the Brothers and the Sisters conferred on the town and countryside. The coming of the Brothers was celebrated in the parish church on 3 June with a special Mass which was attended by Dr. Thomas Morris, Archbishop of Cashel and Emly. At the Mass Billy Kenrick played the organ and Don Byard conducted the choir. Prior to this the Past Pupils Union had their annual dinner-dance in Hearn's Hotel on Friday 4 April and had an attendance of 240. Tickets cost £2 and the music was supplied by the Sam Doherty Trio.

The town had a number of active societies in this year. The Irish Countrywomen's Association was one such. They offered a number of interesting and practical demonstrations to their members, and a meeting of the county federation was held in the Convent Hall on 12 December.

During the summer a bus-load of about fifty members went on a tour to Glengarriff and to the lovely Garnish Island. They also spent a delightful afternoon looking over Mrs Vigor's splendid garden at Coolmore.

There was also an Apostolic Society of about eighteen members which met on every Tuesday evening. The purpose of their coming together was to prepare and sew vestments, albs and linens of all kinds for the priests on the missions. Towards the end of the year the finished products were put on display in the Convent Hall. The society purchased vessels, crucifixes and candlesticks which were sent out to the missionary priests. And they paid the salary (£100) of a catechist on one of the Augustinian Mission stations. Locally, the society was also active. They took a bus-load of senior citizens on a tour of Cork on a wet day in June. They also ran a weekly whist drive which had become part of the social life of Fethard. Any surplus money from the whist tables was used to fund a Christmas dinner for the old folks of the town.

The Meals-on-Wheels Society was active as well. Throughout the year this group delivered some 250 dinner plates to people who lived alone or were incapable of preparing a hot meal for themselves. The meals were given out three times in each week to an average of fifteen people. All the work – preparing, cooking and delivering – was undertaken by voluntary labour. The total cost of the food was about £500. During the year

Fethard Past Pupils Union Dinner Dance in the early 1970s



Margaret Lyons and John Keane



Miceál and Mary McCormack



Betty (Bradshaw) and Pat Fahey



Angela (Bradshaw) and John Connery

Fethard Past Pupils Union Dinner Dance in the early 1970s



Joan (McCarthy) and Johnny Barrett



Josie (Keane) and Gussy Fitzgerald



Concepta (Healy) and Pat Hurley



Anne (O'Neill) and Jimmy Connolly

the society received gifts of meat and vegetables and also subscriptions of money: £10 from Macra na Feirme; £50 from the Augustinian Fathers; a dance organised by the local Fianna Fail cumann brought in £50; private subscriptions brought £18; and bottle collections taken up locally made £53. A special Christmas dinner was cooked and delivered. In this year the society consisted of thirty-six members and six car-drivers who delivered the food. This same six ferried twenty or thirty people to a chiropody service when it was in Fethard. Their kitchen was next to the town hall and had been equipped by the County Council; the society was hoping for a refurbishment before the year's end.

The Fethard Country Markets were still in being and had an advertisement on week-ending 17 March that from 23 March the market would open for an hour each week (10.30am to 11.30am) for the sale of home-made confectionary, jams, fresh farm eggs, fruit in season, and vegetables. Like the Country Markets, the Fethard branch of Macra na Feirme was also an active element in the social life thirty-five years ago. Throughout the winter the branch held various get-togethers such as a question-time in the Muintir na Tire Hall on Friday 12 January. This they followed up with a supper and dance in the ballroom. At this time the officers in the local branch were Michael Smyth, Coolbawn, Pauline McGrath, Lisronagh, Michael Woodlock, Rathdrum and Bob Frewen of Tullamaine. With the coming of

summer they held a field evening at the Fethard Mart on Friday 22 June. Each competing team was composed of four men and two ladies and they dealt with such subjects as Open Stock Judging, Farm Management, Tractor Backing and Household Management. There was also a supper on this night which was served in the Muintir na Tire Hall and this again was followed by a dance in the ballroom. On this particular evening some forty-two teams participated. The members also took a bus trip to Galway in September, but rain fell on them all the way from Fethard back again to Fethard. Their spirits, however, were not dampened and they ended their year with a Halloween Dance which cost no more than 60p.

The long-running Chrysanthemum Show was held in the ballroom on Wednesday 7 November between 2.30pm and 4.30pm with an admission charge of 15p. There was a large attendance and a fine range of prizes on the day. The three winners in the class one category were Mrs M. Leahy of Derryluskin, Mrs E. O'Donnell of Crampscastle and Lady Donoughmore from Knocklofty. But other sorts of flowers were being noticed in Fethard this year: tulips at Annsgift. Thirty-five years ago Mr and Mrs Hulsebosch were growing about fifty acres of tulips on the farm formerly owned by Major and Olivia Hughes. Their farm manager was a Mr Naundorf – a name that will be familiar to the many from about Fethard who picked tulip bulbs dur-

ing the summer. The Hulseboshes had purchased the farm in or about 1963 and had turned it over to growing tulip bulbs – not flowers – which they exported to Holland. Because the concentration was on growing bulbs the flower-heads on the tulips were removed at an early stage by a special topper. The bulbs were then allowed to mature and were lifted and picked in July; this was where the schoolchildren came in. The bulbs were then dried, graded and exported. For all those kids who cycled out to Annesgift in 1973 bulb picking is now hardly more than a distant memory.

The local fire brigade was a voluntary service which had been founded in 1960 and by 1973 was offering an excellent service to the town. In January of that year the members had to undertake an exhaustive course in fire fighting, and during the same month they were presented with a new fire engine. The names of the men who made themselves available for this demanding voluntary service are worthy of recall. John Whyte was the fire officer and the other nine members of the team were, Percy O'Flynn, Michael Ryan, John Murphy, Sean Ward, Austin O'Flynn, Alfie Brett, Tony Hanrahan, Frank Coffey and John Shortall.

And then there were the little bits and pieces that enliven the news in any year. At a County Council meeting in March one of the local councillors complained that the public lighting in Fethard was so bad that one could not see a cock of hay in the

middle of the Main Street. The local Housing Co-Operative was actively seeking new members with the hope that an estate could be built on land purchased on the Kilnockin Road. These societies were very active in the 1960s and 1970s when it was difficult for young married couples to get a new home. The Tipperary Aero Club were expecting up to twenty small planes from other clubs at the Fly-in which was held at Michael Smyth's airfield at Coolbawn. The event began at 2.30pm on Sunday 16 September. Planes from Dublin, Cork, Galway, Longford, Wexford and Kilkenny flew in for the occasion, and it was estimated that about one thousand people turned up on the day. In June we read that Mr Vincent O'Brien had acquired a substantial interest in Tim Vigor's stud farm at Coolmore. Was this the beginning of the Coolmore we know today? On Thursday 14 June, to mark the arrival of the first contingent of Gardai in Fethard on 14 June 1923, retired Garda Eugene Lynch, who was one of that first batch, came back on a visit to Fethard. In his own small way he celebrated that special occasion when law-and-order returned to Fethard. Garda Lynch had spent four and a half years in Fethard. When the new Gardai came they occupied the barracks on the north side of The Square which had been vacated by the R.I.C. roughly a year previously. Much later this barracks was sold by the Dept. of Justice and became home to the late Mr Tom Barrett. And during the year a circus

Fethard Carnival Fancy Dress Parade 1973



came to town. No, it was not John Duffy and Sons, nor was it Fossetts'. It was Courtenay's which opened on Monday 17 September with acts from Spain, Morocco, Hungry and Ireland. It also had a mini zoo which displayed lions, snakes, monkeys, horses and dogs. The performances were at 4.30pm and 8pm, and if you couldn't sneak in under the tent you had to pay 30p, 40p, or 50p for adults and children cost 20p, 25p, or 30p. The notice does not tell where the circus pitched its tent. Up to 1973 there were two banks in Fethard, the Provincial and the Munster and Leinster. On 12 February these amalgamated and became the Allied Irish Banks and all business was transferred to 20 Main Street. But much more upsetting for the people of Fethard was the strike among the bus drivers on the Shamrock Bus service during the month of July. This company served the Thurles/Fethard/Clonmel route four times daily and their absence was a source of much inconvenience.

An old warrior on Armistice Day Saturday 11 November 1972 brushed up his suit, pinned on his medals and put his poppy in his button-hole. With head erect and a walk that gave the lie to his eighty-seven years he marched down the Main Street to ten o'clock Mass in the parish church, but he was on his own. All that band, including their leader, the Major, which had marched year after year on that day to the parish Mass were now dead and Mickey Kearney of The Valley was the only survivor. And very soon there

would be nobody. Mickey had served throughout the Great War in the 10th Hussars.

The end of 1972 also saw the death of another and different old warrior. Sean Walshe of Coolenure, Fethard died in St. Patrick's Hospital, Cashel on Sunday 17 December 1972. He and his brother Maurice joined the Moyglass Company of the Irish Volunteers in the late spring of 1917; on that night about thirty young men handed in their names. Sean at the time was living with his parents at Curraghtarsna. At that meeting Sean was elected 1st Lieutenant and his brother became company adjutant. The company mostly had drills, parades and marches during 1917 and 1918. Sean acted as polling agent at Mockler's Hill for Pierce McCan in the general election of 1918. He was part of the contingent that attacked Drangan RIC Barracks on the night of 4 June 1920. Sean's particular job on the night was to block the road between Ballinure and Drangan. He also led an ambush on a party of RIC cycling between Ballinure and Cashel in which the sergeant was killed and a constable injured. The remainder of the constables, who surrendered and gave up their weapons and bicycles, were allowed to go free. After this he was on the run and could only occasionally visit his home until the Truce of July 1921. Following the shooting of Tommy Donovan of Drangan at a raid in Killenaule on 31 October 1920 Sean was appointed commandant of the 7th battalion of the 3rd Tipperary

Brigade. Up to the date of the Truce he was active in a number of events in south Tipperary. After the Truce he devoted himself to increasing the membership of the I.R.A. and he was in charge of a training camp which had been organised at Ballinard Castle; he later moved to Mitchelstown. He took no part in the Civil War of 1922/23. Full military honours were given at his graveside by a colour party from Kickham Barracks, Clonmel. His children were Liam, Sean (the later well-known figure), Jim, Francis, Diana, Patricia, Claire and Agnes.

A number of people died throughout 1973 who should have some claim to our attention and remembrance. On 6 January 1973 Nathaniel Burke of Barrettstown died.

He was formerly a veterinary surgeon and was born at Bansha. He had spent twenty-five years as a vet in British Nigeria. He should be remembered for his association with and for the help he gave to the Irish Augustinian friars. When the missionaries from that Order landed in West Africa in 1940 he gave those first priests invaluable help. His wide experience of Nigerian ways and customs helped greatly to ease the early work of the missionar-

ies. Another well-known and prominent figure who died in January was William Mulligan of Villa Therese, The Valley. He was a native of Co. Roscommon, and was a senior figure with one of the insurance companies. During his years in Fethard he gave his time to many good causes and social events, and in his later years was a leading member of the local branch of the Credit Union. Mr Willie Farrell

of Kerry Street died in February. In his young days he had worked as a clerk at Buggy's on the Main Street. How many readers of this, I wonder, can recall Buggy's? Willie later moved to Co. Wexford, but returned to Fethard on his retirement. In March Willie Heffernan of Congress Terrace

died at the good age of eighty-five. Older readers of the Newsletter will recall the bicycle repair service offered by Willie and his father. Those were the days when the bicycle was an important element in our lives; indeed our only mode of transport. But Willie was a man of many parts. He was a founder member and the first treasurer of the Fethard Football Club; he was an enthusiastic member of the Fethard Brass Band; and he was a



Willie and Mary Heffernan, Main Street, with their children Peggy (baby), Paddy (centre) and Mary (1 year old). Photograph taken c.1916.



*Fethard Carnival 1970. Photograph taken at Fashion Show "Past Times - Going to the Theatre"
L to R: Ann Coffey, Mary Gorey, Goldie Newport, Marie Lawless and Ester Nevin.*

keen race-goer. And Willie rode and owned one of the first, if not the first, motorcycles seen about Fethard. In his youth Willie was an outstanding athlete. Though an all-rounder he concentrated in the main on the long and high jumps, and on cycling. He won in his day a number of titles at club and county level. Deservedly, his coffin was wrapped in the Fethard Football colours and he was buried in the Catholic plot in Holy Trinity Protestant Church graveyard where all old Fethard natives take their final rest. Another who had long associations with Fethard football died in Clonmel after a long illness aged

sixty-nine years old. This was Jack Weston. Jack, an old native of Fethard, was a building contractor by trade. Incidentally, he built the Presentation Convent School on the Dungarvan Road outside Clonmel. He was an ardent sportsman with a particular interest in hurling and football. In his young days he played in goal for the great Fethard football teams of his day ('The Fethard Fifteen'). Very old followers of Fethard, if any are still alive, will recall his dazzling performances as he kept the goal mouth. Another of the old Fethard footballers to die in this year was Ned Cummins who a few months previously had sold his

home in New York and retired to a house on the Cashel Road. Ned was a stylish football player and no bad handball player. Ned's father had in his time been captain of the Fethard football team. Ned himself played on the Tipperary county football team that won the All-Ireland in 1922. He emigrated to New York in 1926 and found employment with the city transport system. In time he rose to a high position on the supervisory staff. But he remained a Fethard man all his life as did Jack Weston. In July Michael (Mike) Croke of the Rocklow Road died. For over forty years he had served as postman in Fethard where in the early days, like so many other

such men, he began his day's work at 6am and walked around his delivery route which was about sixteen miles. In his early years he served under Mrs Carter who kept the post office in Burke Street.

But to end this short account of the year on an upbeat note. At the end of 1973 the Esso Oil company calendar for 1974 appeared. Over the dates for each month it had colour photographs of the different crafts to be found in Ireland. The picture for the month of July was Phyllis and Helen O'Connell engaged in Lumra Rug making in the garden of their home on the Rocklow Road. ●

Michael O'Donnell. (Owning)



Fashion Show "Off To" c.1967 L to R: Helen O'Connell, Betty Holohan, Anna Henehan, Goldie Newport, Billy Flynn, Joan Anglim and Veronica Bulfin .

Fethard Past Pupils Union Dinner Dance in the early 1970s



Gerry Fogarty and Mary Sheehan



Rena and Chris Maher



Eileen and Tom Purcell



Chrissie Murphy and Bro Ultan

Fethard Past Pupils Union Dinner Dance in the early 1970s



Matthew and Mary Tynan



Betty Holohan and Ollie Delaney



Michael and Mary McCarthy



Thomas Barrett and Joe Kenny

Fethard Past Pupils Union Dinner Dance in the early 1970s



*Pat Hurley, Tony Hanrahan, Frank Carroll
and Deborah Comtoay*



*Patricia Brett, Jeff Hanrahan and
Sheila Burke*



Eithne Dunne and Ian Maher



John Shortall and Nellie Shortall

Fethard Past Pupils Union Dinner Dance in the early 1970s



Tommy and May Carey



Nell and Paddy Broderick



Pat Sheehan and Martha O'Dwyer



Austin and Ann Woodlock



This old school photograph c.1933 was supplied by Stasia Nagle, Bansha, who is a half-sister to the late Paddy Grant from The Green. Back Row L to R: Larry Meagher (Ballinard), Gerry Maher (Drumdeel), ?, Gussy Cummins, ?, ?, Paddy Walsh (The Green), ? Hannigan (Ballypaden). Fourth Row L to R: Kevin Danagher, Jimmy O'Shea, George Mathews, Tommy Fitzpatrick, John McCormack (Kilnockin), Willie Maher (Cloneen), Paddy Coady, ?. Third Row L to R: Tom Ryan, Mikie Slattery, Henry Heffernan, Jimmy McCarthy, Michael O'Donnell, Philly Anglim (Farranaleen), Philly Dillon, Dinny Flynn. Second Row L to R: Michael McInerney, Eddie Butler, Paddy McCormack, Dick Grace, Bob Grace, Tara Ryan, Joe Ahearne, Christy Somers. Front L to R: Joe Green, Jackie Madden, Peter Walsh, Gussy Heffernan, John Donovan, Percy Dillon and Tom Kelly.



Photograph taken outside slaughter house L to R: Cly Mullins, Jimmy Madden and Spot Leahy.



'De Camptown Races' 1945 L to R: Pat Hayes and Pat Mullins (jockey), Paddy Anglim and Mickie Stokes (jockey), Bill Holohan and P.J. 'Sa' Anglim and Jim Sullivan.



50th Anniversary of Fethard ICA in 1977. L to R: Joan Anglim, Francie Noonan and Olivia Hughes

Abymill Theatre



Fethard Players cast of 'My Three Angels' staged in the Abymill Theatre from 28th November to 3rd December 2008. Back L to R: Pat Brophy, Marian Gilpin, Jimmy O'Sullivan, Joe Hanly, Cohn McGrath, Matt O'Sullivan, Niamh Hayes. Front Anne Connolly, Gerry Fogarty and Angela Dillon-Whyte.

This May 26th 2008 Abymill theatre celebrated its 20th Anniversary. It took place in McCarthy's Hotel where Joe Kenny presented a virtual memorabilia of wonderful scenes and events associated with the Theatre.

Marian Gilpin, secretary of Abymill, and representing the Fethard Players made a presentation to Austin O'Flynn, and thanked him, on behalf of all groups associated with the theatre, for his foresight and innovation throughout the years.

Fethard players staged their production of 'My three Angles' – a seasonal comedy at the end of November.

The secondary school production took place in December – 'Malibu' – a musical set in California written by

Jodie Gilpin and produced by her mother, Marian.

The theatre still enjoys its Thursday night Bingo and a host of other activities are held in the building – dancing, Pilate classes and other artistic pursuits.

The board of directors appointed at the AGM held on 27th May were as follows: Chairman – Joe Kenny, Secretary – Marian Gilpin, Treasurer – Agnes T. Evans, Administrator – Austin O'Flynn. Board: Michael McCarthy, Carmel Rice, Eileen Maher, Vincent Murphy, Bernard Walsh and Mary McCormack.

A thank you to all who helped to make Abymill a viable establishment and particularly to Austin O'Flynn, without whose care and

attention Abymill would not have sustained its potential. We also thank Gerry Fogarty and Jacinta O'Flynn for their help running weekly bingo,

our caretaker Christy Mullins, and our maintenance and cleaning crew, Michael McCarthy, Mary and Benny Morrissey. ●

Abymill's 20th Anniversary

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Abymill Theatre, the existence of which must rank as one of the delights of living in this area. Originally built in 1847 by Richard Harding, this building served as a corn mill until it ceased to function as such in 1933-'34, by which time it also contained a shop and a bakery that supplied bread to the locality. In the 1940s the building served as a corn storage depot for Vincent O'Brien who was later to gain national and international success with horses; these animals continue to influence,

the history of the locality, from the stationing of a colonial garrison in the town to the present.

By 1983, the mill remained in the ownership of Mrs Pauline Coffey of Burke Street, but it was now being looked at as a possible solution to the ongoing difficulty faced by the Fethard Players who had no home and so were forced to stage their productions either in the town hall or the Ballroom. A plan was not so much hatched out but more an idea came to be that the mill could be cleaned up, dug out, seating would be inserted



First Abymill Management Board. Back: Carmel Rice, Michael McCarthy, Noelle O'Dwyer, Tommy O'Brien, Mary McCormack, Jimmy O'Shea. Front L to R: Jimmy Connolly, Agnes Evans (Treasurer), Austin O'Flynn (Chairman), Marian Gilpin (Secretary), Joe Kenny (PRO). May 1988



Coffey's Mill staff c.1930-40s. L to R: Tom Clarkin, manager, Tom Daniels (O'Donnell), Jack 'Baker' Dwyer, Mary Daniels (O'Donnell), Nicholas Keating, Will Power, Tommy 'Phillips' O'Connor.

and then a stage built. Looking back at it from today's vantage point, it was something of a madcap idea with little chance of success but foolishness, bravery and determined idealism won the day.

Atisha, the great Indian sage, advises us to, 'commit random acts of kindness.' And so Mrs. Coffey, a feisty woman who lived well into her nineties, sold the mill for a nominal sum to a trust which effectively gave the building to the people of Fethard. Mr Ogden White, one time owner of Kiltinan Castle, donated a substantial amount of money, on the good sale of a fine horse, towards the cost. Sponsorship was sought, donations given and applications were made and

approved by the National Lottery. Anco – the precursor to FÁS – had been approached; architects and engineers had given advice and after considerable deliberation, the go ahead was given for work to commence in 1985 and this monumental task took three years to complete.

Joe and Pauline Coffey are well remembered by many people in Fethard for the three tennis courts in the back of their house where more than one generation enjoyed their youth. Mrs Coffey is also remembered by the undersigned who, on a chilly day in the 1990s having crossed the footpath from his heated car to McManus grocery shop – a grand distance of four feet – and met Mrs

Coffey and complained about the cold while she by way of reply, gave a withering look and asked, "Have you ever stood naked in a bog on a cold winter's day?"

A building committee had been formed by 1985 and it is rumoured

that prior to their participation not one of them had a grey hair. It has to be repeated, however, that great credit is due to them for their perseverance and willingness to undertake the responsibility. As the work commenced and progressed, as happens in many building jobs, the actual renovation became far bigger than originally envisaged. Foundations had

to be supported, a fire escape had to be added, new floors were built,

a basement had to be dug out, nine universal beams had to be inserted by crane and for good measure, the tail end of Hurricane Charlie passed by. The foreman on site was Tom Burke from Ardfinnan and with Tony Lawton from Dublin and Joe Nixon from Waterford, it is estimated that

about sixty apprentice tradesmen over the three year period completed the main work as it is found today, and it is suggested that more than one of the apprentices subsequently settled in the town. One of the masterstrokes of the enterprise was that for the main seat-

ing area, a slope down to the stage was made with the poured concrete and a fall of three and a half feet was achieved as well as a slope in the stage of about one inch per foot. The seats came from the Belltable Theatre in Limerick where they had been used in a cinema and two hundred of them cost a fiver each so recycling has been with us for some time.



Coffey's Mill workers photographed outside the Mill in July 1911 L to R: Tom Daniels (O'Donnell), Crampscastle, Jim Butler (Scout Butler's father from The Green)

On Thursday 26th May 1989, the Theatre was opened, mass was

celebrated in the Abbey and Catherine O'Shea, the mayoress of the town, cut the ribbon. People were invited to view the restoration and the new home of the Fethard Players and the Hogan Musical Society who in truth were the twin power-houses of the project. The first show that was put on

in the Abymill was a variety concert featuring performances by most of the local talent.

Over the next two decades, each year both the Fethard Players and the Hogan Musical Society, who are resting these latter few years, performed, practised and produced their shows in the Abymill. In recent years, both the primary and the secondary schools put on their shows for three nights, there is a dance show each year that goes on for six nights, bingo is held each week on Thursday nights and the historical society and a woman's group frequently hold their meetings in the venue. Touring theatre companies, musical recitals, local rock bands and many shows have taken place over the

years. Galloglass Theatre Company from Clonmel had its first show in the Abymill; an Irish premier of a play by Arthur Fugard, the renowned South African playwright also took place there, and recently there was the BBC televised production of the final of a talent show for the lead role in Andrew Lloyd Webber's West End Musical, *Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Perhaps the big question on that night was not who would be Joseph but who from the town managed to obtain a seat in the audience. One other note of interest is that posters from the plays and musicals produced over the years are displayed in the foyer and these are of great interest to patrons of the theatre.



Cleaning out the mill September 1983 are Back L to R: Michael Allen, Austin O'Flynn, Jimmy Connolly, John Fogarty, Jim Allen, Percy O'Flynn. In front kneeling L to R: Michael McCarthy and Jimmy O'Shea.

By all accounts there was little opposition to the restoration project and many people have contributed to its ongoing success over the last two decades. The White Memorial Theatre in Clonmel and Brewery lane in Carrick-on-Suir were going concerns before the Aby mill but this restoration project is considered by some to have served as a catalyst for other groups and individuals within the county to undertake similar ventures for their own communities.

Can Fethard be defined by its buildings and its wall and the stories they tell us?

Or, is a town really composed of its people and the energy these people bring to the town. Here we have a building that worked as a corn mill, then decayed and became derelict but modern construction turned the building into a theatre, a living and vibrant space within the community. There are other buildings within the town that may require similar thinking or do we hold them forever in their present state, loath to change them.

The caretaker for the last few years

is the ever-obliging Christy Mullins and the management committee of the Aby mill, charged with the task of keeping the venue going for the future are Agnes Evans, Joe Kenny,

Jimmy O'Shea, Marian Gilpin, Bernard Walsh, Vincent Murphy, Michael McCarthy, Carmel Rice and Eileen Maher.

If you are still alert after this rambling piece you may be wondering why there is no mention of a certain individual. He is somewhat like the humble shepherd who leads from behind, who shuns the limelight while directing the

players in a trustworthy fashion. He is, of course, the instigator, the inspiration and the main player, the one who has given so much to the community. You will see him on the last night of the annual Fethard Players production when he is called on stage by the cast. They clap and cheer, as does the audience, while he briefly takes a shy bow as befits a wonderful man, he is Mr Austin O'Flynn or should that just read Austy. ●

—John Cooney



*Pauline Coffey photographed at the opening of the Aby mill
26th May 1988*

Opening of the Abymill Theatre 26th May 1988



*Ladies helping with the catering at the opening of the Abymill Theatre on 26th May 1988
L to R: Jacinta O'Flynn, Noelle O'Dwyer, Joan O'Connor, Mary McCormack, Carmel Rice,
Annie O'Brien, Kathleen Harrison and Nell Broderick.*



Catherine O'Shea, 'Mayor of Fethard', cutting the tape at the opening of the Abymill

Opening of the Abymill Theatre 26th May 1988



Group photographed at the opening of the Abymill Theatre in 1988



Pupils from Nano Nagle National School performing at the Opening Concert 27th May 1988

Opening of the Abymill Theatre 26th May 1988



Willie Corbett, Mary Byard and Mrs Willie Corbett



Group of children in the Abymill 1988



L to R: Jennifer Whyte, Kay O'Riordan, Pat Looby and Geraldine McCarthy

Opening of the Abymill Theatre 26th May 1988



L to R: Tessie Leahy holding baby Noelle, Olive and Derry Curran



L to R: Diana Burke, Tom Burke (Foreman), Joe Nixon (ANCO), Pauline Coffey and Deirdre Burke



L to R: Laurence Kenny, Davy McCormack, Jimmy Connolly, Maureen Purcell and Mick Ahearne

Opening of the Abymill Theatre 26th May 1988



L to R: Fr. John Stapleton, Gerry Nevin, Moira Morrissey and Johnny O'Flynn



L to R: Nuala Delaney, Nellie Fitzgerald, Phyllis McDonnell, Pauline Coffey, Tess Maher & Joan Anglim



L to R: Michael O'Donoghue, Jimmy Connolly, Sean Ward, Johnny O'Flynn & Willie Ryan

Abymill Theatre 20th Anniversary 26th May 2008



L to R: Mary Fogarty, Mary McCormack, Jenny Fogarty, Eileen Burke and Miceál McCormack.



Austin O'Flynn cutting the cake at the Abymill 20th Birthday Anniversary Party in McCarthy's Hotel



Serving his community

He was a small man, dressed in typical Solomon Islands garb – T shirt, baggy shorts and flip flops. He first made contact with me late one afternoon in Honiara, the administrative capital of the Solomon Islands, an archipelago in the South Pacific made up of over one hundred islands.

In the office later than usual, I was told by the night watchman that a man was asking to make an appointment to see me. His name was David and he was from the island of Malaita and he wanted to discuss a small road building project.

Reckoning that the discussion would not take too long, I agreed to see him and asked the night watchman to send him in. When he came in, he introduced himself as David Kausamai, the headman of the village of Kiu on Malaita Island.

He had a big envelope and handed me a sheaf of papers which documented the project that he wanted to be considered. The documents were well presented and the work was costed for site clearing and materials for a rough road approximately five kilometres in length. He explained the background to the request in great detail to me also. The people of

his village produced copra, the dried skin of the coconut and this was the only cash crop of the area. It was a bulky product and it had to be carried in sacks down a dry riverbed to the nearest wharf where the buyer called every week.

David wanted a small grant, the equivalent of about one thousand five hundred euros, to buy stone and sand in order to build a rough road from Kiu to the wharf. The work would be done voluntarily by the villagers and that would be their contribution to the project.



Jimmy Trehy, Donoughmore, Lisronagh, photographed with his sister Mary at Tipperarian Book Fair

After checking the Roads Allocation of the European Union to the Solomon Islands Government, it was apparent that with approval from the Government the funds could be made available. It was agreed to make the request to the Government of the Solomon Islands and David said that he would follow it through in the Ministry of Transport. And because the amount involved was small and voluntary input significant, the request could be sanctioned by the European Union office in the country.

With the official business out of the way, David relaxed and, over cups of coffee, we chatted about various

matters. Inevitably, my visitor asked what country in Europe I came from. I told him that I came from Ireland and I lived in Dublin, the capital city.

"Ah," he said, "I have been to Dublin, a very friendly city". I looked at him in amazement and asked him what brought him to Dublin. The story that he told me was fascinating.

He had been a Member of Parliament for his area and served two terms in Parliament after Solomon Islands got independence in 1980. He was, he said, a very reluctant M.P. because in 1980 he was illiterate. But because his family were always the chiefs of the area, he had been chosen to stand for election.

During his first term in Parliament in Honiara, he took lessons and achieved a reasonable level of competence in 'pidgin' the most commonly used dialect in the Solomons. He contributed "a little bit, no more" to parliamentary debate on issues that concerned his constituency.

At the end of the life of that parliament, he was re-elected and the party to which he was affiliated had a majority in the House. He was offered the Education Ministry and, though it was a frightening prospect for him, he accepted. In his typical humble way, he said that he had a very able Permanent Secretary and between them they developed an education policy the primary purpose of which was to develop literacy programmes for all ages.

During his time as Minister, he and his Permanent Secretary travelled

to UK to attend the Commonwealth Conference and also to attend a Conference in Primary Education in Dublin. His time in Dublin was short but very informative and he got ideas from the discussions which were afterwards adapted to Solomon Islands conditions and incorporated in his education programme.

At the end of a very busy four years, David Kausamai was exhausted and in poor health so he decided not to stand for election again. But his education programmes became the foundation of the education system into the future. It was supported financially by the British Overseas Development Aid Programme and the Solomons have benefitted from training of teachers by trainers from UK and – yes – a few Irish also.

David's contribution to education was recognised by the British Government and he was knighted by the Queen when she visited the Solomon Islands in 1989.

I met Sir David on a few occasions after that and had the pleasure of being present when his road was officially opened in 1999. And, while his health was not good, he presided over the ceremony and feast that followed. In the atmosphere of his home village, it was obvious that he is held in high esteem by his people. ●

— by Jimmy Trehu

Jimmy retired some years ago from his position as EU's Resident Advisor in the Solomon Islands and now lives at Donoughmore, Lisronagh.

Fethard and District Credit Union Ltd.



Credit Union Student Awards 2008 for Business and Enterprise were presented to two groups. 'GNT' and 'Gardens' L to R: the 'Gardens' team of Adam O'Donnell, Dylan Cahill, Sean White, Mr. Jonathan Gilpin (vice-president of Chapter X Irish League of Credit Unions), and the 'GNT' team of Ted Barrett, Noel O'Brien and Gavin Lonergan.

In a difficult year for international banking institutions the credit union has maintained a personal and valuable service to our community. Our Friday morning opening from 10am to 12 noon and Saturday nights from 7 to 8.30pm remain busy. We also have loan application opening hours from 7.30 to 8pm every Tuesday.

We continue our involvement with various community events one of the main one being the business and enterprise award at Patrician Presentation Secondary School Awards Ceremony. The presentation to two groups of young entrepreneurs – 'GNT' and 'Gardens' was made by Jonathan Gilpin now Vice President of Chapter X of the I.L.C.U.

Our annual general meeting takes place in December and the Primary

Schools' Credit Union Table Quiz in January 2009.

Board members: Marian Gilpin – President; Kate Healy – Treasurer; Eddie O'Brien – Secretary. Credit Committee: Jonathan Gilpin, Kay Spillane and Jacinta O'Connell. Credit Control: Kathleen O'Connell and Betty McLaughlin. Supervisory: Philomena Morrissey.

Since the last publication of the newsletter we sadly lost one of our supervisors, Marian O'Connor RIP. John Barrett also retired during the year. We appreciate the valued service they both gave us.

To any of our members who are unwell we wish a speedy recovery, and we take this opportunity to extend seasons' greetings to all our members and friends at home and abroad. ●

A mother's love remembered

Wednesday 16th July 2008, our mother Rita died unexpectedly at home in Friarsgrange. She had been discharged from hospital on the Monday evening before, after spending a week in South Tipperary General Hospital in Clonmel. She had been diagnosed with a bleeding duodenal ulcer and had received some treatment for it.

Her sudden and untimely death caused a huge shock and disbelief to us her family but to a whole community of neighbours, and friends far and wide. Our family spent many hours discussing her death and trying to make sense of it all but we just could not understand it. Our telephone never stopped ringing with people enquiring if what they had heard that morning was correct. People called to our home, still not believing that Rita had died. We as a family were completely overwhelmed by the hundreds of people who came to offer sympathy and words of condolence.

During those very sad days we heard many stories about how her kindness, compassion and devotion to

caring for frail elderly people or terminally ill people had touched so many people over her lifetime.

At the age of 17 she travelled to Liverpool and trained to be a nurse at The Countess of Chester. On her return to Ireland she married our father, Mick, at the age of twenty-one. Her nursing skills were soon called upon when her mother, 'Granny Fahy, suffered a stroke and was left with

some degree of paralysis. Despite having two young children, she cared for Granny 'til she sadly passed away. Over the years she also nursed family members, neighbours, friends and many sick people from the locality. Regardless of the time of day or night, if someone needed help, she would be there.

She was a very warm hearted lady who loved the simple things in life. A keen gardener, she spent many hours in the garden growing vegetables, fruit and beautiful flowers. She especially loved sweet pea and picked bunches of them for visitors and people sick in hospital. She always baked bread and cakes, cooked delicious meals and made jams and chutneys with



The late Rita Kearney with grandchild Peter Boland

the homegrown produce. One of her trademarks was her apron which was put on first thing each morning and came off last thing at night. In fact when she arrived home from hospital she put her apron on as soon as she got in the house!

She loved sitting in the garden looking at Slievenamon. The view from our house is spectacular and she was always very proud to tell people that she lived in 'the valley of Slievenamon'. I am sure we all could sing the song 'Slievenamon' before we went to school. Each spring she would watch out for the arrival of the first swallow. She looked forward to the swallows nesting in the old sheds as they did every year knowing that summer was on its way. When the time came for them to leave again, she was sad watching as they began to gather on the telephone wires outside the house.

She was also a great historian and could trace back many years of local history with lots of interesting stories to tell. She had great respect for the beliefs and knowledge of the generation she always referred to as 'the old people' and loved talking to them about bygone times.

Mammy worked very hard all her life and on many occasions she also cared for sick people at night, after spending the day rearing her seven children at home. We now look back and wonder how she managed it, always greeting everyone with a big smile and a huge welcome.

For the last 20 years she went to

Carne Beach in Wexford with Fethard Senior Citizens and she loved this 'holiday'. We know she really enjoyed these times helping as carer and she loved telling us all about what had gone on, the music, sing-songs, dancing, card playing and those who would recite poetry. She loved dancing, singing and telling yarns herself. She also enjoyed a drink and a cigarette and was great company to be with.

She was a wonderful mother, grandmother and great-grandmother and had always been there for us throughout our lives. She taught us to have respect for others and ourselves. She was a lovely, kind, caring and compassionate person whose gentle nature touched everybody. She never judged people by race, religion or social standing; she always looked for the good in people.

We know that our mother is in a better place now but it does not ease the pain and sadness in our hearts. Her memory will always live on in our hearts and in the hearts of our children and in their children.

Good night and God bless you Mam, we all love you and miss you more than words can say. Thank you for all you did for us, Daddy, Cinta, Joanne, Michael, Jim, Monica, Rosemary and Rita.

May I also take this opportunity, on their behalf, to thank everyone who came to offer their condolences. It was very much appreciated. ●

— Monica McCahery (Kearney)



*Boy in front Lory Dineen, Greta Lavin, Sally Finn, Mary Byard, Mrs Croke (Aggie Barrett's mother).
Back: Marie Dineen, Don Byard, Betty Dineen, Agnes and Frances Evans.*



*Bournemouth 1955. L to R: Rita Allen (Hennebry), Patsy Byard, Madge Lally (Kenrick),
Wendy Allen (child) and Billy Allen, Barrack Street.*



Budding musicians John Casey and Declan Mulligan.



L to R: Rosie Walsh, Patsy Byard and Helen Marshall

Greetings from Killusty National School



Kate O'Donnell, Killusty National School, presenting a cheque for €350, the proceeds of a coffee morning, to Sinaida Jansen, South Tipperary Hospice, on behalf of the people of Killusty. Also included with the pupils are Ms Frances Harrington (Principal), Tracy Wallace (Special Needs Assistant), Helena Delany, Josephine Madkey, Sarah O'Sullivan, Ann Darcy (School Secretary) and Jim Bond (South Tipp Hospice).

Another busy year in Killusty National School. In September 2007 we had three new entrants, Cathal Ryan, Kieran O'Donnell and Phoebe Duggan. Our academic year, punctuated by various activities unfolded thus:

- A school Mass in September, celebrated by Rev. Fr. T. Breen, started our school year in a prayerful way. Our school community also attended Masses during Lent. In December, our carol service was enjoyed by all the parents and the school community. We also visited the local nursing home where our pupils entertained the residents with Christmas songs. The year was brought to a close with a Graduation Mass in June to celebrate the 'Moving On' of Michelle and Shannon.
- First Holy Communion was received by Aoife Sheehan, Chelsea Kenny,

Jack Pollard, Lorna Smyth, Luke Coen, Rebecca Kenny and Thomas Morgan.

- Michelle Walsh, Shannon Hickey, Kate O'Donnell, Niamh Crotty, David Morgan, Derek O'Brien and James Harrington received the Sacrament of Confirmation.
- Rev. Pat Coffey, a member of the Diocesan Support Team, visited our school to appraise the religious education programme in our school.
- We went on our school trip to Waterford Institute of Technology for an activities based day.
- We had our Sports Day, with Cloneen N.S. and Kilvennon N.S., in Cloneen.
- Our various fundraising activities included the Hospice Movement, The Irish Heart Foundation, Brother Paul's Eldoret Appeal and Mrs Quinn's Charity Shops appeal.

- We attended a performance of 'The Bus' by the Barnstorm Theatre Company in the Watergate Theatre in Kilkenny.
- We also attended 'Santa's Sleigh' in the Excel Theatre in Tipperary town.
- Our pupils also enjoyed recorder tuition on a weekly basis throughout the school year.
- All pupils enjoyed their Irish dancing lessons in term one.
- Swimming lessons were enjoyed, over a ten-week period in term two, by all pupils in First to Sixth classes
- There was 'A Big Splash' in April, when our Junior and Senior Infants descended on Clonmel Swimming Pool, to whet their appetites for the swimming lessons to come.
- All pupils enjoyed a 'Fabric and Fibre' art day in May.
- 'A Fire Safety in the Home Day', facilitated by a member of the Fire Department in Clonmel, provided a valuable learning experience for all.
- Participation in the Buntus Programme, a physical activity training programme, delivered and supported through the South Tipperary Sports Partnership and funded by the

Irish Sports Council, by all the staff, ensured a huge variety of physical education experiences for the pupils going forward.

- The Magic of Music Programme, in term three, developed the children's love and appreciation of music further.
- Our pupils participated in football and hurling matches, and weekly training sessions with Noel Byrne, GAA representative.
- Our pupils enjoyed Kool School, an eight-week programme of co-operative games and physical health education in the summer term.
- Our sixth class Michelle Walsh and Shannon Hickey moved on, in June, to commence their Secondary Education, bringing with them, we hope, an appreciation of our vision for them.

Yes, a year full of variety, helping us to implement our vision for Killusty N.S., that each child would be developed intellectually, socially, spiritually, physically and morally.

A Peaceful and Happy Christmas and New Year to you all. ●



Table quiz team L to R: Kate O'Donnell, Niamh Crotty, Shannon Hickey and Michelle Walsh

Like to spend a week in Fethard?



Open 25 years, the Sunday Fethard Car Boot Sale drawing in larger crowds than ever

Local tour guide Colm McGrath has made a few suggestions on what one could do on a week's holiday in the Fethard area. Colm is based in Fethard and his 'Tipp Tours' offer very affordable, full personal holiday packages. For further information visit his website www.tipptours.com

FRIDAY

Up early for a hearty breakfast at the Gateway B&B on Rocklow Road, not because I have to get up early but because I want to get to the Country Market held early every Friday morning in the medieval town hall on Main Street. The plan is to get some fresh cakes and meet some of the characters of the area. Afterwards take a stroll around to the antique shop and Town & County for a potter round before coffee and a scone at McCarthy's. Now set for a nice brisk walk around the Rocklow Road through to the Cashel Road via the quiet grassy

river walk, calling into Fethard Folk Museum which is jam full of amazing old farm machinery, carts and carriages and fascinating implements of a bygone age.

Back to the hotel for dinner; hopefully the Guinness stew is on the menu today — I hear it's great. This afternoon I am going to relax back at the Gateway, maybe have a chat with Paddy because tonight might be a late one as I intend sitting in on the local band's weekly Friday night session; an intimate evening with the 'Pheasant Pluckers'. Going to meet a friend I met along the way in Burke's Bridge Bar first, just the place for a nice quiet cosy chat.

SATURDAY

Up early to investigate the cattle mart, take in the atmosphere; wheeling and dealing and strong smells of frightened livestock. Might drop into Jimmy Sullivan's chemist for a dash of eau de toilette on the way for my cof-



fee and scone this morning.

Later I am calling in on Emily's Deli on Burke Street for something tasty that I can bring with me as I go for a long walk in Grove Wood and surrounding area. I hope to take in Crampscastle Pottery too and maybe pick up a nice piece of pottery as a gift or souvenir of my stay in Fethard.

Tonight I'm going in search of some loud live music and no better place to begin than Butler's Sports Bar on Main Street. Always a lively crowd there, as well as the music to enjoy. But variety is the spice of life and Lonergans pub on The Square also provides some great live performers and an equally warm atmosphere (a must visit for Halloween and Christmas for spectacular makeovers).

The only way to end a night like tonight is with a bag of chips from The Lantern take-away for the short walk home.

SUNDAY

After an all-important lie-in there is much to choose from and so little time. I have to get to the Car Boot Sale, one of the best in Ireland, which is held every Sunday from 11am to 4ish? Time goes by so fast here with so much to see and you always meet some interesting people to talk to.

Today I'm having dinner in Sadel's Restaurant on Burke Street. Hard to believe this was once a tiny pub where only a small select few were allowed to experience its hospitality. Today it's a beautiful spacious eating-house and guesthouse with the cosy atmosphere still.

Being the day that's in it, there has to be a game of hurling or football to attend either in the local Barrack Field or one of the many surrounding clubs.

Tonight then I might just skip the light fantastic on the beautiful dance floor of Fethard Ballroom for

some popular dancing to a live band.

MONDAY

Have booked a full day tour with Colm from TippTours.com. A good part of it takes in the Walled Town itself and it's truly amazing to hear the stories behind the ancient buildings of the town as well as the more recent history and characters of the town. It really puts things in perspective!

I'm staying out on Tipptours farm accommodation in Rathkenny tonight to experience the greater rural area. It's just four miles from the town and the route to it offers some great scenic views of the real valley of Slievenamon.

Colm has arranged for a visit to the famous Thatch Pub in the village of Cloneen just a couple of miles away.

TUESDAY

Up and out on the open farm at Rathkenny, first a brisk walk with the dogs through the rolling hills and newly planted woodlands which offer breathtaking views of Slievenamon, the Galtees and Knockelly Castle. Later, going to experience some of the workings of a farm with sheep, cattle, goats and hens etc..

In the afternoon may try a hand at the treasure hunt or go down the road to Mullinahone for fun on the quads at Guiry's Farm.

WEDNESDAY

Moved back into town for my last couple of nights. No vacancies at the Gateway B&B but that's okay as there was a cancellation at the Cozi B&B, Redcity, on the Rosegreen Road, and it's on another lovely side of town. Today I am feeling energetic and have



Sunday night dancing at Fethard Ballroom



Pheasant Pluckers session at McCarthy's Hotel

managed to get myself a slot in the Slievenamon Golf Club for a round of the greens with lunch there to follow. Plan to take it easy in the afternoon so might just get a DVD in town. Also while I am there, call to Carroll's Framing Shop as I noticed a great selection of pictures and photos of the area that would make great gifts.

Tonight I am going to the community field where I hear the Badgers over-30s play soccer every Wednesday evening and all in that age bracket are welcome. Long time since I played any football so I'll bring the phone numbers of Kari Laaksonen and Kathy Doran, both local experts in massage.

THURSDAY

My, the week has really flown . . . better start packing all those gifts and go and check the travel times at the Internet Café based in the Community Information Centre in Barrack Street. The last time I was there I met some great characters at the Day Care Centre.

I'm treating myself to a Chinese

lunch today at Loneragan's Bar. I also had an offer of a game of tennis at the Sports Centre just outside the Town Wall so that should work off any excess. Afternoon I'm taking a trip out to Clonbrogan, the birthplace of John 'Red' Kelly, the father of Australian outlaw Ned Kelly. The local pub has the full Kelly story documented and on display.

Tonight I'm having dinner at Kellett's Restaurant adjacent to McCarthy's Hotel and afterwards I'm going to chance my luck at the weekly Thursday night bingo game in the beautifully restored Abymill Theatre. Who knows, I might even win a few Euro to replenish my pockets for the trip home.

Well, time to get back to work after a very 'different' but enjoyable holiday. If you feel like giving it a try and need some guidance from one who knows! Give me a call or drop me a line: Colm McGrath, Rathkenny, Fethard, Co Tipperary. Tel: +353 52 9152129 Mobile: +353 86 3502360 Email info@tipptours.com ●

Fethard ICA Guild

The year 2007-08 was again a busy one for the Guild, with 29 members on our books. One of the main events of the year was a Craft Display & Sale held on 21st October in aid of two charities. The sale was a wonderful success with a total sum of €1,714 raised. Later we presented a cheque for €1,000 to Concern and €714 to the Christina Noble Foundation.

The second big event of the year was the success of Marie Crean, who this July at the RDS won 1st Prize in the National Crafts Competition, plus the RDS Perpetual Challenge Cup as overall winner for her beautiful crochet christening gown, cap and booties.

Over the year we had very interesting speakers on many subjects ranging, from beauty treatments and make-up, health care from a local practice nurse to flower arranging. Later in

the year we had a very enjoyable night trying our hand at some painting, and another night getting some very good advice on the care and management of our gardens. We would like to express

our sincere thanks to all those speakers who gave so generously of their time and expertise.

The summer outing this year was to the Castlecomer Craft Village, a place well worth a visit. We travelled on to a garden centre and then spent some time in Kilkenny city, finishing up the day with a lovely meal in Hotel Kilkenny.

Our AGM was held in May and the officers elected for the year were, President, Anne Gleeson; Vice

President, Sheila O'Donnell; Secretary, Anne Horan; and Treasurer, Margaret Phelan.

We meet on the 2nd Tuesday of every month and are happy to welcome new members at any time. ●



Marie Crean, who won 1st Prize in the National Crafts Competition at the RDS, plus the RDS Perpetual Challenge Cup as overall winner for her beautiful christening gown worked in crochet.



'Not All Tea & Buns', Fethard ICA float at Fethard Festival 1984 L to R: Nellie Shortall, Hannie Leahy, Annie O'Brien, Marie Crean, Mary Leahy and Mrs Fahey



Fethard finest athletes photographed on a sunny day in November 1982. L to R: Dawey Purcell, Evan Colville, Pat Phelan, Noel Maher, John Stokes, Christy Looby and Keith Tobin



Jackie Mulcahy-Mackey, formerly of Red City, Fethard, and now living in Croyden, Surrey, England, is photographed riding his first winner at Southwell, England, in 1948. (photo supplied by Chris Mackey)



L to R: Tommy O'Shea, Kim Lonergan and Jim Carroll. August 1999



L to R: Ann Kenrick, Phil Kearney, June Kennedy and Concepta Healy. Taken September 1965.



David Purcell 2nd Prize in Fethard Festival Fancy Dress Parade 1979



L to R: Gene Walsh and Austie McDonnell 1947



*Platform dancing during the first year of 'An Tostal' at Kilnockin includes: Danny Carey, Tom Butler, Neddy Trehy, Tess Murphy, Toby McCormack, Peggy Kenny, Alice Keane, Eileen Carey,.
(Supplied by Tom Butler)*



Platform dancing at Kilnockin — includes Jack Fleming, Tommy Butler, Paddy Butler, Mary Fitzgerald, Sarah Murphy, Nellie Noonan. (Supplied by Tom Butler)

John Joe's Corner

by John Joe Keane

Terrier Racing in the Sportsfield

The grand parade of the Carnival had reached its destination, the Barrack Field, many events were taking place, and to the left, going in the gate stood the starting boxes, acquired by Sean Henehan. All the participants brought their pets to compete, sheepdogs, mongrels, terriers and various others. Into the boxes they were put. Around came the hare the trap doors were lifted and streaking ahead were Joe O'Dwyer's terriers, small and swift. Other dogs went off the track, and Joe was in business, his dogs were in demand and the breed became famous.



'German Goddess', Marian Springer, who was au pair at Walshe's. Burke Street.

they went on their daily walks and talks with their armful of colourful flowers, sometimes in wicker baskets, the finer world.

Fruitful Paradise unlocked

As a child, knocking on a door in The Green and requesting apples from the landlady, Mrs Delmege. Being led to the orchard of abundance and supplied, of a sunny day, with a near flat basket of pears, apples, plums, raspberries, strawberries, really, a hard to believe hamper of nature's goodness. Could only marvel at what careful husbandry could achieve, to a farming mind, it was a wonderful, interlude in an otherwise frugal time of measurement, watchfulness, and big difference, fine.

The Abbey Florists

At Mass, Benediction, all devotions in hard times, there was always a supply of fresh beautiful flowers brought by Jo Barrett (Mrs O'Connor), Mary O'Connell of the Cloneen road, and Girlie Healy, who in their own way performed remarkable feats in acquiring, arranging and brightening the church. Quiet ladies whose dedication could be seen as

German Goddess

Heightened teenage years of flairs, really we were an eager motley crew. An au pair from Germany, a furore that was the centre of attention, more and more. She glowed by the campfire, behind McGraths, tall, tame, blond, what a hoo haa. Dancing in the Tirry Club to records. Ice cream cones at Flynn's,

rewards. Alas, her heart was to a French man, sophisticated, mature, serious and grand. The ship, passed in the night, an interlude part of growing up as we should.

Suited for God

Brought down to O'Flynn's of Burke Street, measured, at seven years of age, tailored and fitted to perfection, skilfully. Oh the night before communion, fasting after

twelve o'clock, next day in the parish church receiving our maker for the first time, a large photograph, taken outside the chapel, up to the station, on to Thurles' steam train, heading for Clonmel, going to Woolworths, picking and choosing sweets. Money in 'do phóca' and putting away the suit for another time, afterwards. Would not be possible without parents and teachers. ●

Bro Paul in troubled Kenya



L to R: Seamus Hayes (Playing for Life) photographed with two Patrician Brothers based in Kenya, Bro Paul Brennan and Bro Cohn O'Connell. Bro Paul would like to thank the Fethard community for their ongoing support for his work in Eldoret, Kenya, which is much needed and appreciated.

"It was the best of times; it was the worst of times . . ." Dickens's words could be applied very aptly to the last week of 2007 for us here in the north Rift Valley of Kenya. Our people celebrated Christmas in their inimitable style here as finances permitted and looked forward to a peaceful election day on

27th December. They got a peaceful and very interesting election and the winds of change swept over the land from the beautiful Indian Ocean in the East, to the mighty Lake Victoria in the West, and from the desert of Turkana in the North to the Maasai Mara Park in the South.

Who could have really foreseen

what would happen on December 29th . . . total mayhem and in many cases plain savagery over the disputed results of the election. Thirteen hundred paid the ultimate price and nearly 40,000 lost whatever little they had. Panic and fear gripped the land. Roads became cluttered with truck and bus-loads fleeing as best they could to God knows where. Some are still far from their one-time homes and still living in tents. Education of children was severely disrupted and in the long run, a threat of food shortage. Our own new Patrician school in Kabongo saw enrolment drop from a possible 440 to 230. Our numbers have recovered to about 395 now, thankfully.

Then on 29 February, as a result of a coalition cobbled together by Kofi Annan, people were able to wish each other a very much delayed "Happy New Year" . . . almost euphoria.

The world saw what was happening here . . . perhaps saw more than we ourselves who were in the middle of it! It needn't have happened. It shouldn't have happened. It should never happen again.

That is our prayer and the prayer of all right-thinking Kenyans. May the scars heal sooner rather than later and our politicians have something to answer for! ●

— Bro. Paul D. Brennan, Administrator
of the Patrician Complex at Kabongo.
Email: patriciankabongo@gmail.com



Laurence Kenny photographed with Tracy Piggott on this year's 'Playing for Life' trip to Tanzania and Malawi. Tracy is a founder member of 'Playing for Life' charity which is involved in tremendous development work in Africa, offering relief, assistance and empowerment of peoples in need through sport & vocational training. If you would like to be a volunteer next year, contact Seamus Hayes, Kilconnell, Fethard, Tel: 086 2307330 or visit the website: www.playingforlife.ie

Padraig Ua Floinn



Mr and Mrs Padraig O'Flynn, Burke Street, Fethard, on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of their wedding, which they celebrated on Thursday 27th June 1957. Mr O'Flynn was one of the first to join the Sinn Féin movement and was a founder member of Fianna Fail, since when he has been chairman of the Comhairle Dail Ceanntair. One of the many gifts received in honour of the occasion, was a beautiful set of Waterford Glass from the three local Fianna Fail Dail deputies, Messrs. Breen, Davern and Loughman. The above informal gathering was pictured on the occasion of the latter presentation. Left to right, Front: Mr. F. Loughman, T.D.; Mr and Mrs Padraig O'Flynn; Mr. Dan Breen, T.D. Back: Messrs. Sean Cleary, N.T.; J. Stapleton; P.J. Coffey, B.E.; Rev. Fr. John O'Flynn; Messrs. John Feehan U.D.C., Cashel; Michael Davern, T.D., J. Kennedy, M.C.C., T. Ryan.

In any local area where there has been a serious community struggle for power and freedom, there is often found, thereafter, in the uncertain victory, a reluctance to describe the old rivalries or the deeds committed even in the name of a people forced to take up arms in order to extract themselves from the tight clutches of a neighbouring empire. However, it would appear there is a necessity to partake in the uncomfortable act of remembering in order for us to gain a thorough understanding

of the past so as to not end up with a glib and lazy view of what has taken place and fail to see that our mistaken views of the past can lead to difficulties for the future.

There is a double debt of gratitude owed to Padraig Ua Floinn from Burke Street, Fethard in this regard as not alone did he participate in the war of independence but he was willing to recall what happened through his participation in the Irish Military archives undertaken in August 1955. Two incidents are described which

indicate the complexity of relationships that existed at the time when the colonised tackled both the coloniser and those who were in the service of the coloniser.

Briefly, to set the scene, Mr O'Flynn was born in Lisronagh in 1875 and having trained as a tailor, he moved and set up a tailoring and outfitting business in Fethard in 1897. On Easter Sunday 1913, a company of Irish National Volunteers was founded in Fethard at Kilnockin Hill and Mr O'Flynn was elected company captain. When the 1914-1918 European war of empires broke out, the Irish National Volunteers split into the National Volunteers who followed Mr Redmond and the Irish Volunteers who followed Mr Pearse. Needless to say, over

time the split also occurred in Fethard and a branch of Irish Volunteers was subsequently set up in the town and it contained about forty members. Perhaps it may be appropriate to commemorate this group who struggled for our freedom.

During Easter Week in 1916, there were rumours around that a general arising was to take place.

Communications between the volunteers in Fethard and Dublin were mainly channelled through Pierce McCann — who was born between Fethard and Cashel and who, after the rising, was a T.D. for South Tipperary and who later still, died in a British jail. Mr O'Flynn's premises in Burke

Street was used as the centre from where dispatches to outlying posts were organised, including Clonmel.

Initially, there was an order for the units to participate in the rising and mobilise and then later there was a counter command. Eoin McNeill is today credited with the issue of that counter command and he is, of course, the grandfather of the second last leader of the PDs who faced a similar dilemma during the last general election

about whether to go or stay with Bertie Ahern during the election campaign.

On Easter Sunday evening 1916, Mr O'Flynn describes how Sergeant Clancy from the R.I.C. Barracks in Fethard approached him to inquire whether there was truth in the rumour that the Rosegreen Brigade of Irish Volunteers was to mobilise and attack the Fethard Barracks as the Sergeant



Éamon De Valera making his way to Fethard Parish Church for Padraig O'Flynn's Funeral



Padraig O'Flynn's remains leaving Fethard Parish Church for Lisronagh

was mindful lest he should move his wife and children out of their barrack accommodation. Apparently he was assured that no rising was to take place and that his family was safe.

In the following month after the rising did take place in Dublin, the British authorities conducted a serious investigation around the county. Two people from this locality were arrested and interned in Frongoch camp in Merionethshire, Wales. On the day of their arrest, the County and District Inspector of the R.I.C., accompanied by Sergeant Clancy and others, called on Mr O'Flynn to inquire about his whereabouts on that fateful Easter Monday. As the questioning began Sergeant Clancy is alleged to have stepped forward and assured both inspectors that Mr O'Flynn and his brother-in-law were both present when they had been checked by the Sergeant on that fateful day which was not strictly true as, when the sergeant

had talked to Mr O'Flynn about the Rosegreen Brigade, Mr Morrissey had been on his way to bring news to Rosegreen of the counter command.

Mr O'Flynn was able to continue his activities and he addressed public meetings in many parts of the county. In the 1919 local elections he was elected to the County Council for the Fethard area where he also served as a presiding magistrate in the new courts and was also responsible for the collections of subscriptions to the Dail Eireann fund. He also remained active with the local volunteers.

One day about three weeks prior to the truce, Major King, Commander of the British Garrison in Fethard sent a message to Mr O'Flynn to come immediately to the army barracks and, even though he had been brought there previously for questioning, Mr O'Flynn states that he agreed to the request. There, Major King informed him that three British soldiers had



been found spying in the Rosegreen area and had been killed. Major King advised Mr O'Flynn to leave Fethard as he feared that the troops under his command would extract reprisals within the community and that Padraig O'Flynn would be a target. He left the town on that day and his wife had to go with their children to Tullamaine when members of the British Army raided their premises. In a matter of weeks, however, the treaty was signed and ordinary decent and

respectable people who had taken up arms were able to return again to normal day-to-day life as three-quarters of the island was granted limited freedom by the London Parliament.

Padraig O'Flynn with members of his family ran a successful tailoring business (noted indeed for its sales of blueshirts in a later decade) in Fethard for many years until he died in 1959 at the great age of 83. He is buried in the old cemetery in Lisronagh. ●

— John Cooney



January to December

The following 'old rhyme' was sent to us by Tom O'Connell whose mother, Kathleen from Burke Street, related to him from memory on 16th November 2008. She must have learnt this off in school around 80 years ago. Kathleen was 90 last August.

January: brings the snow
Makes our feet and fingers glow
February: brings the rain
Thaws the frozen lakes again
March: brings breezes loud and shrill
Stirs the dancing daffodil
April: brings the primrose sweet
Scatters daisies at our feet
May: brings flocks of pretty lambs
Skipping by their fleecy dams
June: brings tulips, lilies, roses
Fills the children's hands with posies
July: Hot July brings cooling showers
Apricots and Lily flowers
August: brings the sheaves of corn
Then the harvest home is borne
September: Warm September brings the fruit
Sportsmen too begin to shoot
October: Fresh October brings the pheasant
Then to gather nuts is pleasant
November: Dull November brings the blast
Then the leaves are swirling fast
December: Chill December brings the sleet
Warm fire and Christmas treat.

Fethard Ladies Football

This year, Fethard Ladies Football came up against some very strong teams at under-12 and under-14 age groups. We can look forward to next year with some very talented players keeping the club going. At junior level we were unable to field a full team for either league or championship. We seem to have a breakdown between under-16 and junior teams. This is where we have some very good players who are unwilling to continue playing.

Congratulations and well done to Sinead Delahunty and Barbara Ryan who brought back two All-Ireland Intermediate medals to Fethard and the club. The committee is: President Fr. Tom Breen; Chairman Thomas McCarthy; Hon Sec. Joseph Keane; Treasurer Maureen McCarthy, Derryluskin; and Trainer / Coach Michael Ryan, Tullamaine.

Thanks to all parents for their help and cooperation during the year. We look forward to a successful 2009. ●



L to R: Sinead Delahunty and Barbara Ryan photographed holding the Mary Quinn Memorial Cup following Tipperary's win over Clare in the All-Ireland Intermediate Football Final. Congratulations to the Fethard Club girls and the entire Tipperary team who did their county proud!

Fethard GAA Club



Fethard Senior Football team who were beaten 0-8 to 0-3 by Moyle Rovers in the South Final

Club Officers for 2008 are: Chairman Jimmy O'Shea, Secretary Mary Godfrey, and Treasurer Nicky O'Shea.

The Fethard Club had a mixed year on the playing field having participated in five South Finals and winning two titles, Intermediate hurling after a replay, and Junior A football. We lost out on the Senior Football, Minor A Football and the Minor B Hurling titles.

South Intermediate Hurling Final

The much awaited South Intermediate Hurling final replay was played in Kilsheelan on Sunday 2nd November and ended the GAA year with Fethard winning their 6th title, third since 2000, in a very sporting game, they were lucky to get a vital goal near the end of the match which gave them a lead for the first time. After some excellent displays from Aiden Fitzgerald 0-11 (8f), Chris Sheehan 0-2, the game ended on a scoreline, Fethard 1-13, Moyle Rovers 0-14.

Shane Walsh and Aiden Lonergan shone in defence but on the day it was a great team performance. J. P. McGrath between the posts did not put a foot wrong and, for his first Intermediate match, showed years of maturity. Astute substitute, Benny Hahessy, won out the day for the Friary town. Well done to all in bringing the Jerome O'Dwyer Cup back to Fethard.

Team: J. P. McGrath, Michael Carroll, Shane Walsh, Eoin O'Connell, Aiden Lonergan, Michael Ryan, Cian Maher, Brian Coen 0-1, John P Looby, Jamie McCormack, Aiden Fitzgerald 0-11 (8f), Miceál Spillane, Christopher Sheehan 0-1, Eoin Doyle, Kenneth O'Donnell. Subs were: Benny Hahessy 1-0 for Kenneth O'Donnell 54min, Dean Tobin for Miceál Spillane 56min.

South Junior A Football Final

On Friday night, 26th September, Fethard Junior A footballers won the South title on a scoreline, Fethard 2-7, St Patricks 0-9, our 12th title in



Fethard 7-a-side football team of the past (supplied by Marie O'Sullivan) L to R: Jimmy Hayes, Joe Ahearn, Hugh O'Donnell, Dick Hayes, Mick Hayes, Tom Wright and Mick Byrne, Killusty.

total and created history as the first team to win a South adult title played under lights in Ballyporeen. Fethard had fine displays from the full back line, William O'Brien, Nicky Murphy and Philly Croke. Philly Blake and Alan O'Connor cut off attacks with Aaron O'Donovan, Miceál Spillane and Conor McCarthy in good form up front.

The team was: J P McGrath, William O'Brien, Nicky Murphy, Philly Croke, Philly Blake, Willie Morrissey, Alan O'Connor, Thomas Keane, Cathal Gorey, John Leahy, Martin Coen 1-1, Miceál Spillane 0-1, Johnny Neville, Tom Anglim, Conor

McCarthy 0-5 (3f). Subs were: Michael Carroll for Tom Anglim (10m), Aaron O'Donovan for Cathal Gorey (20m), Eoin O'Connell for Johnny Neville (45m), Shane Kenny for Martin Coen (60m), and Mike Kelly for Philly Blake (62m).

Paul Fitzgerald

Pride of Place in the Fethard Club must go to Paul Fitzgerald when, on 1st November, he brought home the first ever Donnelly Sponsored Railway Cup football medal to Fethard GAA Club. This was Munster's 15th success in Portlaoise. They won on a scoreline, Munster 1-9, Connaught 0-7, having defeated Ulster in the semifinal the

previous week in Fermoy. Paul played in goal and kept a clean sheet. Having been a member on the Munster panel since 2005 without success, he now holds a memorable place in the history books along with the great Jim Williams, Clonmel, who was the last Tipperary man to win in both 1941 and 1946. Jim was a member of the Munster panel seven times in the period 1936 to 1947. Many other great players from the Fethard Club played on losing sides over the years – Dick Allen, Tony Newport (goalie), Gus Danagher, Dinny Burke, Brian Burke and Tom Anglim. Dick Allen played for six consecutive years from 1934

to 1939 without success. Well done again to Paul who hails from Kiltinan and is the eldest son of Gus and Josie Fitzgerald.

Our condolences to the Sayers family on the passing of John (Buddy) who graced our playing fields in his younger days winning a South Senior football title in 1950 before departing our shores for England; also to the Hanrahan family from The Green on the passing of Sean. Go ndeana Dia trotaire orthu.

South Tipperary GAA History 1907-2007 Books are still available. Contact Noel Byrne, South Secretary, Email: claremore@eircom.net ●



A lot of familiar faces in this photograph . . . Who knows the other team?

Fethard Bridge Club



Photographed at Fethard Bridge Club's Coffee Morning in aid of Hospice L to R: Carol Kenny, Mary Fitzgerald, Tina Shine, Catherine O'Shea, Ann Marie O'Sullivan, Bernie O'Meara, Kathleen Kenny, Johnny Nevin and Tommy Bulfin.

Fethard Bridge Club is now in its 32nd year. At our AGM on 21st May 2008 the following officers and committee were elected: President Gemma Burke; Vice President Kathleen Kenny; Secretary Anne Connolly; Treasurer Rita Kane; Assistant Treasurer Anna Cooke. Tournament Directors, Alice Quinn, Betty Walsh, Frances Burke and Gemma Burke. Partner Facilitator, Berney Myles and the following committee members: Bernie O'Meara, Nell Broderick, Marie Delaney and Ellen Rochford.

At our President's Prize dinner held at Fairways Restaurant on 16th May 2008 our president Bernie O'Meara presented the following prizes: President's Prize to Brigid Gorey and Betty Walsh; Committee Prize

to Anna Cooke and Bernie O'Meara; Club Championship (Hayes Trophy) to Alice Quinn and Berney Myles; Player of the Year (O'Flynn Trophy) to Alice Quinn; Individual Champion (Dick Gorey Perpetual Trophy) to Alice Quinn; Most Improved Player (Suzanne Opray Trophy) to Anne Connolly; and The Lucey Trophy to Gemma Burke and Carol Kenny.

We note the death this year of former club member, Eve Goodbody, Clonacody. Eve was a popular member of the club for a long number of years. Although she hadn't played bridge for the past few years she will be fondly remembered by the club members.

We played for the free sub for the coming year on 1st October and 8th October and the winners of the gross



President's Prize presented by Bernie O'Meara to Brigid Gorey (left) and Betty Walsh (right).

free sub were Carmel Condon and Brendan Kenny, and the free nett sub was won by and Bernie O'Meara and Anna Cooke.

On 12th November we held a charity night and donated the proceeds for the evening to the Augustinian mission in Ecuador and the Presentation Sisters in Zimbabwe. Our Christmas

party was held in the Tirry Centre on 14th December at which our Christmas prizes were presented.

May we take this opportunity to wish all bridge players (and non-bridge players!) at home and abroad a very happy and holy Christmas and a prosperous New Year. ●



Player of the Year, Alice Quinn receiving her prize from Bernie O'Meara (left).

Boherlahan memories

by Tony Newport



Traditional farming scene saving hay

Sometimes we are asked where we were when events of world-wide significance took place. I have no difficulty in recalling where I was when the first Olympic Games after the 1939-45 World War took place in London in 1948. I was on holiday in Boherlahan. Teenagers of today, no doubt, who go to France, Spain, the Canary Islands or wherever to celebrate their Leaving results will ask what on earth could you find to do in Boherlahan. I will try in this article to tell them and I hope wherever they go, whether it's Biarritz, Barcelona, Brazil or the Bahamas, they will have as much fun, craic and enjoyment as we had in Boherlahan all those years ago. This is an account of the many

visits to Boherlahan during the late 1940s when I went to visit my great Boherlahan friend, Jack Doherty. I first met Jack Doherty when he visited our shop in Fethard, having played a hurling match with Boherlahan in Fethard sportsfield on a Fethard Carnival Sunday. This was the start of a long friendship and indeed I was saddened to learn that Jack had passed to his eternal reward, in England, just over a year ago.

However, in Boherlahan I was introduced to my first visit to the bog. Early on a Monday morning we set out for the bog on our trusty bicycles loaded to the hilt with cakes of brown bread, apple tarts, a few skelps of home-cured bacon and cider flagons

of milk. I thought we were going for a week. I did not know then what a bog appetite was like. When we arrived, having left the bicycles at Mrs Todd's, Horse & Jockey, the slanesman was already there. This was a man, I think, called Tom Gleeson, an excellent slanesman, but very eccentric. I was shown how to catch the sods flying from his slane and place them on the cart. "Catch them soft", I was told, "or they will bust". I soon got the knack. However, with lack of concentration I took my eye off the ball, so to speak, and turning I discovered a flying sod almost on my chest. Making a very quick grab at it, it burst in bits, with about half the sod landing on Tom's bald head in the bog-hole below. We very nearly had the first Bord na Móna strike, as Tom downed the slane and threatened to leave until it was explained to him that I was a

novice at the game and he calmed down and resumed.

When it came to the tea-break, Jack complained that he found the going hard as he was very much bothered by a boil on the side of his forearm. I told him I had heard that if you put some boiling water in a bottle, emptied the water out, applied the neck of the bottle to the boil it would draw it out. We decided to try the remedy. It worked very well except for one snag – we got the boil and its contents into the neck of the bottle alright but we also got the bottle welded to Jack's arm, and the problem was how to get it off. No alternative but to break it. Luckily for Jack it worked reasonably well. He tied a piece of rag on the arm and carried on regardless. Thus passed my first day on the bog.

Other events that took place on the bog were chasing and trying to



Cutting turf

catch the young wild ducks. When they were learning to fly they could not travel very far. The idea was to chase them 'til they were exhausted and catch them. I'm afraid we got a lot of wettings, but very few ducks. There were also stories of salmon making one way spawning trips up the streams and laits that led from the bog to the Suir. Of course I would not take part in any such poaching activities. We also went catching hares for the annual Boherlahan coursing. The boys of the club purchased a new, very long hare net from Kilroy's of Tullamore. The first day out a fox hit the new net. Pandemonium! "He'll bust it, he'll bust it", someone shouted. The poor fox did not chance it as my friend, Jack, ran up, caught the fox by the throat and choked him.

Tuesday and Thursday nights meant a bi-weekly trip to the GAA field for training for the Boherlahan hurling team. I wonder if some of today's players had to face a three-mile cycle to the training field, after a hard day's manual labour on the bog or on the farm, how they would fare out? Not so good, I expect. On most of those nights, Boherlahan could muster two full teams in the GAA field and a full match was played. Indeed, I felt honoured to be asked to play in such illustrious company. The players I can remember from those far-off days are Jimmy Maher, Eamonn and Jack Doherty, Bob Manton, a very classy James O'Meara and Sonny Maher. I felt doubly honoured when Jimmy Maher, one of Tipperary's leg-

endary goalkeepers, gave me a hurley he had made himself. It was my most treasured possession until I broke it accidentally by hitting the goal post with it in the half dark in Fethard sportsfield. I mourned that hurley for a month.

With regard to the hurling, Jack was home from England a few years ago to attend a wedding which was also attended by the great Mickey 'Rattler' Byrne. On being asked, did he know Jack, Mickey replied, "Do I know him, the big foxy so and so. I can still feel the belt he hit me in Boherlahan the day the new field in the village opened". As they say, sin scéal eile.

While on the subject of hurling, Jack Doherty, Senior, was an old Tobberadora hurler and played full-back on the Tipperary 1916 Senior All-Ireland winning team. The arguments with regards to the merits and demerits of hurling standards from his day to the forties used to range fast and furious. Jack always finished by saying, "Will ye shut up, ye don't know what ye are talking about. Look at those what ye call solo runs, in my time if Sean or Paddy Kenny took off on one of those he'd need medical attention before he was gone very far". "Were ye that tough, Mr Doherty?", I'd enquire, innocently. "Tough, sure one day we played Borris in the 'Jockey' and, even after bringing on several spectators, they ran out of subs". Red cards and yellow cards how are you. He was highly amused one morning while milking the cows



Notice how many families had seats outside their houses where they could sit and have a chat while smoking their fag. L to R: Agnes Allen, Bidden Brown and Jim Ryan sitting on seat in Kerry Street.



Macra Field Day in Fethard in the 1960s



Does anyone recognise the young girls in these photographs from the 1950s or 60s?



when his grandson, his daughter Maggie's boy, home on holiday from London said, "Oh, Granda, in London we get our milk from a nice clean bottle, not from a dirty old cow". The same boy, on his first day in school in London, when asked his nationality, said, "I'm not sure, Mum's Irish and Dad's a Corkman".

Rev. Dean Lee told me the following story concerning Jack Snr. One day, when driving from Thurles to Cashel he picked Jack up at Grangemore Cross on the Dublin/Cork Road. On enquiring if he was he going to Cashel, Jack replied, "I am Father, my son Jack has a friend of his, a young fellow from Fethard, staying with us. We were thinking that the home-cured bacon out of the stan might be a bit strong for him, so I am going to Cashel to get a bit of fresh meat for him". "Who is he?", enquired the Dean. "His name Father, is Tony Newport", Jack replied. "Well, if it's the same Tony Newport I remember when I was a curate in Fethard, you need have no worries on that score. I guarantee you, put it on the plate, whatever it is, Tony will eat it". He never said a truer word. A typical example of Tipperary hospitality at its best.

One of the highlights of my many visits to Boherlahan were the dances in the Parish Hall. Boherlahan hall was unique in the diocese. When the usual hours for dancing in every hall were 9pm to 3am in the winter and 10pm to 4am in the summer, in Boherlahan as it was a Parochial Hall,

all dances had to start at 8pm and finish at 12 midnight. Boherlahan was the only hall I ever danced in, and I certainly danced in enough of them, where all the patrons were in by the time the second dance concluded. The dances there were most enjoyable. The bands I remember playing there were Mick Coates from Templemore, Kieran McNamara and Jackie Glasheen from Thurles and Mick Fogarty from Cashel. There was also a very good outfit from Roscrea, I just can't recall the name of the leader. One night, amongst the attendance was a member of the travelling community. He wore a bomber jacket with elasticated cuffs and a wrist-watch outside the elastic. The Boherlahan hall was roofed hay-barn style and became sauna-like in the summer. Our traveller friend, with his jacket, was certainly not dressed for the temperature. He had also liberally applied a few four-penny bottles of hair oil, available in every huckster's shop. Very soon, our friend was coated in a liberal mixture of perspiration and hair-oil. Nothing daunted he carried on regardless. Fair dues to the Boherlahan girls, he seemed to get plenty of dances. Every window of the hall had a few of his fellow travellers peeping in to see how he was getting on.

Speaking of the Boherlahan lassies, sure where would you see the likes of them? Top class dancers, each and every one, and great exponents of the Cashel Set which they could step out in style. I was told that the



Fethard Badminton team in the 1960s. Back L to R: Tony Newport, Jimmy McCarthy, Cly Mullins, Liam Connolly. Front L to R: Anne Connolly, Ann O'Sullivan, Philly Kenny and Goldie Newport.

Boherlahan lads had a most unusual chat-up line. Of course, I would not dream of using it myself as it did not sound the right approach to me. Instead of, "What do you think of the band?" or, "Do you come here often?" the Boherlahan chaps had, "Do you know what, for a big girl, you don't sweat much". Now, that is what I was told, and in those days I'd believe anything.

Another recollection I have of Boherlahan hall, is of Eamonn Doherty, Jack's eldest brother, who had to have a leg amputated from below the knee. On the day he was fitted with his artificial limb, the hospital authorities put him on a Thurles train in Kingsbridge. He was met at

Thurles station and brought home by pony and trap. That night we loaded him onto a bicycle, tied a greyhound collar and lead to the handlebars, towed him down to Boherlahan hall and got him out on the floor where he danced an old-time waltz – a typical example of the toughness of the Boherlahan men of that era.

Boherlahan, like all Irish districts, had its share of characters. Some of them were knights of the road, like Pak Morrow. Pak had been in the First World War and was badly shell-shocked. He usually carried a tin can on the end of his stick which he rattled to attract attention. He would call to Doherty's, get a bite to eat, sleep the night in the barn, get breakfast and

leave next morning with a few bob. Johnny The Junction lived on his own on the Dublin Road with more than a few rats for company. He told us, "the big fellow that comes out of the hole in the corner nearly got me the other night. I let fly with a lump of a stick at him, I did not get him but I cut the glasses off him". Bill Coman, 'Bill the Black' as he was known, a man who took part in the Connaught Rangers Mutiny, a regular attender at Boherlahan coursing was another I recall.

These are just some of the memories I recall of those happy days in Boherlahan so long ago. Yes, the dance has ended but the melody and memories linger on. Sitting at the big open fire in winter-time, at night, in Doherty's kitchen, a fire which incidentally did not go out day or night, winter or summer, for well over 100 years. The yarns, the stories and the craic. To hear one of the lads say, when the fire ran low, "go out for a few Monday morning sods". It took me a while to figure that this meant large sods of turf, the ones that were cut first on a Monday morning when the slanesman was fresh. Sitting in Doherty's kitchen was the last place I heard the cricket sing, I wonder if there is one left in Ireland now.

I hope I have brought back memories of at least some of what rural life and amusement was like, way back then in rural Ireland. Certainly, if boredom, recessions and depression existed I, or others of my time, never heard of them or, thank God, never

suffered from them either.

*Thus in the stilly night
'ere slumbers chain has bound me
Fond memory brings the light
Of other days around me . . .*

And, I recall the days

*When all the world was young lad
And all the trees were green;
And every goose a swan, lad,
And every lass a queen . . .*

These are just some of the memories I have of my trips to Boherlahan, can it be all that many years ago?

In Retrospect

Time moves on and so do we, and as time passed, my visits to Boherlahan became less frequent. My friend Jack Doherty, like thousands of others took the emigrant ship, old Jack and Mrs Doherty passed on. Christy is now the only one remaining of a truly great Tipperary family, still residing in the old family homestead. The old open fire with crane bellows, which had not gone out for over a hundred years, is long since quenched and replaced by a modern cooker in a new house which has replaced the old thatched farmhouse. I did, however, manage to keep in touch with local Boherlahan affairs by meeting with Christy Doherty, on his twice weekly visits to Fethard as salesman with Suir Valley Ice Cream. I have been back to visit the beautiful refurbished and renovated Parish Church and read the names inscribed on the monu-

ments erected in memory of the great hurlers of the parish at Ardmayle and Tobberadora. The old hurling field at Gail is also a thing of the past, where so many great men played, replaced by the excellent new pitch near the village, and the field at Gail may be just a thing of memory. The spring at Tobair na Deora, however, still rises and flows on the great spirit of Tobberadora and its famous Blue and Gold still lives on and is worn still so proudly by the hurlers of Boherlahan and Tipperary. God willing the 'Blue and Gold' will be carried to the highest honour, as so often before, when Tipp win the All-Ireland Senior Hurling title in Croke Park on the first Sunday in September. Coming out

of Boherlahan sportsfield following a Fethard – Cappawhite hurling game last year I noticed two young boys playing hurling, one on goal the other on the twenty-first yard line. I was particularly impressed with the style and artistry with the camán, left and right, of the boy on the twenty-one. Nothing remarkable about this you might think, as I wondered would he some day play for Boherlahan or Tipperary. The only thing unusual about it was the young boy was black, and I'd say it's a safe bet that his name is not Maher or Ryan. Surely another indication of how cosmopolitan Boherlahan, Tipperary and Ireland have become. ●

Slán go fóill agus Tiobraid Árann Abú



Fethard Presentation Convent Fifth year and Leaving Cert 1964 / 65. Front Row. Noreen Crean, Ann Purcell, Phil Keating (teacher), Mary Stapleton, Teresa Skehan (Clonbrogan). Middle Row. Marian Healy, ?, Eileen Lalor, Mary Kenrick, Clare O'Flynn, Eileen Hayes. Back Row. - ?, Joan Leahy, Attracta O'Flaherty.

Lovely Fethard Town

(sung to the air of 'Glenswilly')

*My friends I'll take my pen in hand and write a verse or two
About a spot dear to my heart its tale I'll tell to you
Its stories and its history have long since been written down
It's that place of sweet childhood memory, it's lovely Fethard town.*

*The Valley fair beyond compare where I first saw the light
And old Coffey's Mill sure I see it still where we sported with delight
At Watergate with its Castle great, the Town Wall of famed renown
'Neath Slievenamon where it looks down on lovely Fethard town.*

*St Patrick's Place each familiar face where I grew from boy to man
The plans we made and the games we played in the Ring we hurled and ran
The old Barrack Field where our heroes played sure they seldom let us down
Oh "Come on the Blues" was the cry we'd use in lovely Fethard town.*

*The Abbey old I still behold when I close my eyes to dream
Whose ancient walls could still recall cruel Cromwell's tyrant scream
The Main Street and Square with its "Armchair" so rare
Where old men their days put down
Oh these childhood scenes still invade my dreams of lovely Fethard town.*

*On summer days we would make our way to Newbridge swimming hole
By Barton's stile we would rest awhile as along Grove road we'd stroll
Clashawley and the Jesuit's walk with its abbey long pulled down
These were just a few of the places I knew in lovely Fethard town.*

*And now my story is ended but the memories still remain
Of that dear spot in Tipperary may its beauty never wane
If God would just grant me one last wish as life's road I journey down
'Twould be to rest in that blessed ground just outside of Fethard town.*

—Michael Maher

The Gaels of Fethard

*All Gaels of Tipperary, a warning take from me,
'tis time ye were preparing for the championship to be,
For rumour lately has it, there's a big surprise in store,
As the gaels of Fethard Parish are united now once more.*

*On the ninth day of February, in the year of 'forty-two,
The Burkes' held their convention, their achievements to review,
In his statement to the meeting, the Chairman made it clear,
"That we're out to sweep the County, without a doubt this year,
That with such a large selection", now, says he, "I know we will not fail,
To bring the County honours to the cradle of the gael".*

*"The title bring to the parish and to keep our colours flying,
With the help of propaganda, plus Killusty and Coolmoyne".
"Ah yes", says he, "I must confess that I feel proud to-night,
As I must admit our prospects have never been so bright.
For once more we will have the Hayes', the Walsh's and young Crean,
Leahy, Wall and Treacy, Flynn's, White, Jerry Maher and Walsh from Carrigeen".*

*Then the meeting got excited and began to cheer and shout,
Says the Chairman, "you're delighted as I am myself no doubt.
But now let me continue and be quiet a minute boys,
And you'll learn before I've finished that is not the big surprise,
We will also have Killusty, they'll be with us to a man,
The home of stalwarts of the game, since the GAA began.
The Lees, Byrnes, Holohan, not forgetting Joe Dwyer,
Whose tactics on the playing field we always did admire,
To great veterans of the past our call was not in vain,
We have also got a promise from Ned Lawrence and Joe Keane.*

*With renewed youthful pride and vigour they'd be with us at the hour,
While that wonder-man Jack Nagle swears himself will be a power.
We will halt to rout Kilsheelan on our way to rare Clonmel,
Where the Shamrocks and Commercial's shall fall beneath our spell.*

*Then we'll crush Bob Hall and Killenaule then on to Mullinahone,
 When we're finished with the Kickhams, Tom Walsh will stop his blowing.
 Right on through the County we will whack them every one,
 And never cease our efforts 'til the County Final's won.
 Then we will be County Champions, with the cup and medals safe,
 When the news gets down to Fethard, how the town will celebrate
 There'll be bonfires bright to greet us, blazing high on Market Hill,
 Saying Tipperary Gaels "that shook ye", we can see ye're rocking still".
 Slievenamon looks proudly on Tipperary's best fifteen,
 From the town down in the valley, by Clashawley's silvery stream.*

The author of the above ballad is unknown. Could any reader help out here? A letter to the Nationalist saying the split from Fethard would be the downfall of Coolmoynne prompted the late Paddy Leahy to write the famous reply, in rhyme, which is called "The Downfall of Coolmoynne". Published in a previous Newsletter, it described a great victory by Coolmoynne over Mullinahone in Drangan, without the Fethard players. The only surviving players mentioned are young Crean, now no longer so young, Willie Crean,

still taking a very keen interest in local and county GAA affairs. Jerry Maher is the other one. If Jerry is reading this, in far off Australia, where he now resides, best regards. Jerry, now in his mid-eighties, was one of Fethard and Tipperary's brightest and best young players. Like many others of his time, he was forced to take the emigrant ship, first to England and then to Australia. Jerry, you are still remembered in your native Fethard. ●

by Tony Newport





School group taken 1949-50 in the Presentation Convent Back L to R: Damien McLellan (Main Street), ? Power (Lower Green), Ken O'Neill, Tommy Healy (The Green), Noel Whyte (Main Street), Tommy Whyte (Main Street). Middle L to R: Raymond McSweeney (Munster & Leinster Bank Main Street), Noel Morrissey (St. Patrick's Place), Willie Ryan (Coolanure), Waltie Moloney (Market Hill), Jim Sayers (St. Patrick's Place), Danny Ryan (St. Patrick's Place), ?, Jimmy O'Neill (Congress Terrace). Front L to R: Jimmy Fitzgerald (St. Patrick's Place), Eddie Fogarty (Garrind), Michael Maher (St. Patrick's Place), Alan Power (St. Patrick's Place) and Morgan Fergus (Cashel Road).



Banna Strand, Tralee, July 1962 L to R: Paddy Aykoard, Michael Maher, Jimmy O'Connor, Hugh O'Neill, Rick Flynn and Tony Holden (Clonmel)



Old friends, the late Derek Wall and Jim Kenny chatting in the Castle Inn



*Would you like a job in Tipp? asks our three hurling fans of Kilkenny team manager Brian Coady.
L to R: Larry Kehoe, Brian Coady (Kilkenny hurling manager), Michael Sheehan and T.J. Sheehan.*

Irish Walled Towns Network

We mentioned the IWTN in last year's report. 2007 brought us very substantial funding (€100,00) for two specialist reports relating to Fethard and a third (€53,000) relating to the Town Hall or 'Tholsel'. The Tholsel feasibility study has been undertaken by the international consultants KPMG and we ardently hope that it will unlock the potential of this wonderful building which is one of the oldest municipal buildings in Ireland (1608). On top of all this funding in 2008 we in Fethard were exceptional in receiving a further €197,000 for Capital Works (repairs and reinstatement) to the Town Wall.

The first two reports were delivered and then sent back and forth during 2008 to be adjusted or fine-tuned. This has been a slightly clumsy process because both reports were undertaken by specialist firms based in the UK.

The Public Realm Plan, produced by the Paul Hogarth Company has been the most contentious because it seeks to apply a vision of how Fethard should be and suggests the means to implement this vision step by step. The resulting Public Realm Plan is a gloriously impressive document and it is hoped that the grand vision it embodies will suit the people of Fethard.

The Conservation and Management Plan for the Town Walls is a technical document produced by Europe's largest archaeo-

logical practice, Oxford Archaeology. This firm undertakes work all over Europe. Our C & M Plan was put together by a team of archaeologists including Oxford's Head of Buildings Archaeology, Julian Munby (one of Time Team's TV archaeologists) and Deirdre Forde from Cork. Deirdre actually moved to Fethard for the job of drawing the detailed inside elevations of the Town Wall by hand. Deirdre moved from garden to garden and got to know a lot of people along the way and she reports that everyone was most helpful and charming although she has now had enough tea and cakes to last a lifetime. The other side, the outside, of the wall is presented in the C & M Plan as a continuous photograph produced with digitally rectified images. The state of repair of each stretch of wall is then described in a gazetteer and each section ranked in order of priority. The C & M Plan provides an ongoing archaeological template and it is a requirement of the Heritage Council that this plan must be in place (and adopted by South Tipperary County Council) in order to qualify Fethard and for funding in future years.

Architect Margaret Quinlan & Associates were the successful applicants from amongst a number of highly regarded conservation practices that applied to implement the Capital Works Programme in 2008. Margaret supervised works on the Town Wall in 2007 and has been responsible for

repairs to Holy Trinity Church. Works on the Town Wall did not get started until late in the year because the funding was itself confirmed at the very last minute and local government tendering and procurement procedures must then be followed to the letter - and that takes time. Other walled towns who undertook capital works to their walls had the same problem of timing.

Anthony Morris Construction of Rathronan, Clonmel were appointed on the instruction of Margaret Quinlan and they have effected a good number of essential repairs in the tight time schedule available. The three main areas that have been cleared and made safe include the late Jimmy Ryan's piece of the wall adjacent to Watergate Bridge. This is the

most public part of the wall in a poor state of repair. Large areas of cut stone that had been 'robbed away' have been replaced using Irish limestone supplied by Killenaule Stone Quarries and the area outside the wall has been cleared of undergrowth and tons of rubbish.

In Tony Sayers's property behind the Sheela-na-gig, it was found that much of the inner facing of the wall had long since been lost and it was felt that the wall was so precarious here that it would soon be beyond saving. All this has now been fixed: repointed, repaired and reinstated. This detailed work has included the rebuilding of the arched embrasure behind the two arrow slits and is a demonstration of the importance of restoration.

Finally, the huge run of wall that



has lain hidden under ivy and bindweed between Barrack Street and Burke Street has been revealed. It appears to be in good structural condition and has now been cleared of invasive vegetation. The largest of the cavities where stone has been robbed out in antiquity have now been refilled with stone and lime mortar and the whole strip of land running along the wall has been cleaned up.

The AGM of the Irish Walled Towns Network was held in Dublin Castle in Thursday 20th November and this saw the launch of the Department of the Environment's document National Policy on Town Defences. Fethard was well represented at the event by Diana Stokes, Peter Grant, Joe Kenny, Tim Robinson, Ann Gleeson and Terry Cunningham. Dinner in St Patrick's Hall was addressed by the Minister, John Gormley and we are pleased to

report that Seamus Maher will continue as Chairman of the IWTN with Labhaoise McKenna (Heritage Officer, South Tipp) and Terry Cunningham on the committee. The new Project Manager for the Heritage Council is Conor Brennan.

While going to press, we understand that conservation and restoration of the walled towns remains a government priority and that funding for the Capital Works to the Town Wall is likely to continue into 2009. From 2009 local authorities will be required to provide 10% of the funding for works. This proportion is set to increase in later years if the financial landscape remains bleak. Hindsight will record that 2008 has been a good year for Fethard's Town Wall and thanks are due to the Irish Walled Towns Network, Fáilte Ireland and The Heritage Council. ●



Fethard Walled Town Medieval Festival



Colm McGrath and his crew at the Medieval Weaponary stand

Fethard's Walled Towns Festival arose from an initiative of The Heritage Council in setting up the Walled Towns Network. This grouping of 21 Irish towns places an emphasis on their medieval heritage in terms of buildings, walls, carvings and history. This heritage is both preserved and celebrated through the Network who designated Walled Towns Day to coincide with the first Sunday of National Heritage Week every year. Fethard has a long history of running a carnival. This carnival was an annual event up to a few years ago and the Community Council were delighted to participate in a revival, albeit in a slightly different format.

Fáilte Ireland when introduced to

the town's potential as a tourist destination gave its support from the outset. The festival organisers are also fortunate in having the support of South Tipperary County Council with staff members Julia Walsh, Outreach Education Officer with the County Museum and Labhaoise McKenna, Heritage Officer, on the festival committee.

Fethard lends itself as a wonderful natural location for a medieval festival as there is a spacious green area along the South Wall, through which the Clashawley river flows. This natural flat open space abuts the 13th century Trinity Church, a mural tower, two castles and a medieval town house. With heraldic flags hanging from the



L to R: Isobel Kennedy and Lauren Dooley who were prizewinners in the Medieval Parade

town wall and flags of the four provinces hanging from the corners of the church tower, the area becomes festive in a very natural and contained way.

People of all ages were encouraged to dress up and join in the parade. The focus to date has been on heraldry with the children carrying beautifully illustrative shields that they have made themselves earlier in the year under the guidance of local artists Pat Looby and Austin McQuinn. The festival appeals to a broad audience by adding a modern flair through music. Two local youth bands, Naked Mr America and Zero Tolerance, played in the Square before the parade began. The historical re-enactments and target practice also had a broad age group appeal. The presence of five wolfhounds leading the parade caught the attention of teenage boys in particular who later took them for walks along

the riverbank. Food prepared by the local rugby club was available at a reasonable rate. Families and friends informally sat around the food area chatting and listening to the music of the Lee Valley String Band.

Paul Dooley, acclaimed harpist and expert on the medieval harp gave a very enjoyable and well-attended talk and recital on the Irish harp in Trinity Church on Saturday night.

Momentum is gathering with the festival each year and local groups come on board to lend a hand. The local rugby club did delicious discount catering and farmers market stalls sold their homemade goodies. Macra na Feirme provided a 'medieval stocks' where wet sponges were thrown at various willing volunteers! There was also a wide variety of novelty tents such as fortune telling, Fair Trade and felting. Local landowners



Willie O'Meara and his daughter Caoimhe from Killusty at the medieval parade



Taking part in the Festival Parade: Tina Whyte and her children L to R: Lucy, Paddy and Katie.



Taking part in the Festival Parade were L to R: Amy Cowlard and Aisling Gorey.



Taking part in the Festival Parade were L to R: Ciara and Abby Tillyer.



L to R: Amy O'Donovan, Sinead Sheehan and Anna Tobin



Enjoying the Medieval Re-Enactment display were L to R: Harry Butler, Conor Ryan, Shane Ryan, Nell Spillane, Lucy Spillane, Jack Spillane, Heather Spillane and Emily Spillane.

provided access to land, electricity supplies, etc. Live music was also held during the weekend at the McCarthy's walled garden.

One of the main features of this year's festival was the Medieval Heraldic Parade from The Square to the Town Wall via Main Street and The Valley. The parade included a large variety of Heraldic Coats of Arms made by the pupils of St Patrick's Boys School, Nano Nagle National School and Killusty National School under the direction of project manager and local artist, Pat Looby.

The festival is a very visual one and emphasis is placed on the visual aspect and this is evident in the post-

ers, publicity, concerts, exhibitions and in the parade. This year two French musicians - Douç'amor - dressed in medieval costumes were flown over for the weekend which they thoroughly enjoyed. They played informally around the town and also played at the concert in Trinity Church. They have experience of playing at medieval festivals in France, such as Carcassonne, and are very helpful in providing feedback and advice on our event. Members of the festival committee have researched medieval festivals in France and are gathering ideas, feedback and proposals for next year's event. ●



Enjoying the festival music L to R: Elsie Malone (nee Burke) home from USA, Mary McCormack, Margaret Tobin (nee Burke) home from Cheshire, England, and Johnny Burke

Nano Nagle National School



Junior Infants Class 2008 Back L to R: Eimear O'Sullivan (Abbey View), Natasha McGarry (Woodvale Walk), Oleg Shabrat (Ard Ailing), Keenan Ahearne (Prospect), Kieran McGuire (Bawnbrack), Patrick Kennedy (Drangan). 3rd Row L to R: Conor Walsh (Baptistgrange), Melinda Csuzi (Kerry Street), Lauren Needham (Slievenamon Close), Cian Lawrence (Woodvale Walk), Patrick Walsh (Kilnockin). Second Row L to R: Ava Ward (Garrinch), Simon Bratwiders (Abbey View), Laura Harrington (Kerry Street), Alex Bradshaw (Slievenamon Close), Michael O'Meara (Garrinch), Toby Collier (Prospect). First Row L to R: Emma Lyons (Coolmoyn), Hanna Sheehy (Garrinch), Tamara Power (Barrack Street), Aine Ryan (Tullamaine) and Aisling Hennessy (Kilnockin View).

Nano Nagle staff for the current year. Sr. Maureen Power (Principal), 3rd & 4th Classes; Mrs Maureen Maher (Vice-Principal), 1st & 2nd Classes; Mrs Rita Kenny, 6th Class; Sr. Winnie Kirwan, Senior Infants; Mrs Margaret Gleeson, Junior Infants; Mrs Mary Hanrahan, Learning Support/Resource Teacher; Ms Denise

Kelly, Learning Support/Resource Teacher; Mrs Peg McGarry, Resource Teacher; Ms Lorraine de Lacy, High Support Unit; Ms Ann-Marie Harty, Special Needs Assistant; Mrs Mary Morrissey, Special Needs Assistant; Mrs Anne D'Arcy, Secretary; and Mr Willie Ryan, Caretaker.

In June, we said goodbye to Ms

Aoife Gleeson who had been with us for two years as Learning Support\ Resource shared with Cloneen N.S. We will miss Aoife's enthusiasm and her infectious good humour and we thank her for her dedication to all the pupils with whom she worked. We are happy to report that she hasn't gone too far and we wish her well in the next stage of her teaching career in Cloneen. We would also like to congratulate Ms Denise Kelly who got married in Killarney this summer, we wish her and her new husband, P.J., every happiness in their future together.

Our school, like so many throughout Ireland, has been affected by the

government's cuts in spending on education. We have lost our ex-quota post, thus losing a teacher from our staff, our Principal, Sr. Maureen has returned to full-time class teaching and all our classes from 1st Class upwards are double classes. In consequence, these class numbers now average 31, the workload for all teachers has increased and, of course, it is the most needy pupils who will be most adversely affected. Grants for resource equipment, etc. have also been discontinued. While this year's Budget is responsible for all the above, we see the cutbacks as a continuum of the reduced spending on education which began as far back as 2000, when the



Sixth Class at Nano Nagle Back L to R: Molly Proudfoot, Rachael O'Meara, Shannon Dorney, Jennifer Rice, Niamh O'Meara. Middle Row L to R: Kate Quigley, Anastasia Blake, Jane Morrissey, Kelly Keating, Larissa Clancy, Amy Stoeney. Front L to R: Clodagh Bradshaw, Michelle Carroll, Hanna Tobin, Kayleigh Higgins, Shauna Mackey and Gráinne Fanning.



Pupils from Fethard Nano Nagle National School and St. Patrick's Boys' School who received their First Holy Communion in Holy Trinity Parish Church Fethard on Saturday 10th May 2008.

Department of Education and Science began to apply ever more stringent criteria to applications for resources for children with special needs. As a result, many pupils who were formerly entitled to one-to-one teaching are no longer guaranteed the individual help they need but must cope as best they can in a group setting. Teachers and parents nationwide have registered their opposition to these arbitrary measures by taking part in public demonstrations throughout the country. We await the government's response with interest!

Our Parents Association is involved in various events throughout the year: the annual cake sale in October, table quiz, the sponsored walk and our ever-popular Fun Sports Day in June. We thank the association and very much appreciate all their

efforts on our behalf. The generous support of our parents is a major factor in the success of all our undertakings and so we would like to take this opportunity to thank them all for their continued support and co-operation.

Fifth & sixth classes made their Confirmation on 18th April in Holy Trinity Parish church this year. The girls were confirmed by Archbishop Dermot Clifford, together with the boys from St. Patrick's Boys N.S. and the pupils of Killusty N.S. making it a real community celebration. Sixteen 2nd Class pupils also made their First Holy Communion on 12th May and, as usual, there was a great turn out to support the children on their special day.

Our school tours took place, as usual, in June with the Junior and Senior Infants going to visit 'Nell's

Farm' near Carrick-on-Suir. The rest of the pupils enjoyed a trip to Bunratty Castle & Folk Park, followed by Cragganowen. The tour of the castle and the houses of 'long ago' fascinated all of them. In Cragganowen, the girls got the chance to explore passage graves, crannogs and a Norman fort as well as a chance to see the currach of 'the Brendan Voyage' fame. It was Irish history brought to life in a most entertaining and instructive way.

Our pupils are going swimming again this year and athletics has also figured prominently during the first term with our pupils competing in Thurles. Ceili dancing will resume next term. Throughout the school year the children participate in a number of local and national art, photographic and writing competitions and we are pleased to report that they have had considerable success in their endeavours. The older pupils have made a number of visits to Clonmel

Library and the County Museum, and we also have the facility of the travelling library coming to our school. The County Library has proved invaluable in enabling us to further extend our Learning Support resources by giving us long-term loans of specialised reading schemes, phonic programmes and supplementary materials. Furthermore, we can use our library membership to freely access the Encyclopaedia Britannica on-line; a major plus for pupils whatever topic they happen to be researching. Local history, needless to say, also figures strongly on our curriculum with tours of the Town Wall supplemented by visits to the Fethard Folk Museum, both churches of the Holy Trinity and, of course, the Augustinian Abbey.

Promoting environmental awareness also continues with ongoing recycling of cans, mobile phones and computer ink cartridges, the promotion of a litter-free environment and



Children from the Parish of Fethard and Killusty who received the Sacrament of Confirmation in Holy Trinity Parish Church, Fethard, on Friday 18th April, photographed with His Grace, Most Rev Dr. Dermot Clifford, Archbishop of Cashel and Emly.



Pupils from Nano Nagle National School who received the Best Environmental Project award from South Tipperary County Council for their project "Live simply, so that others may simply live". The award was presented by Cllr John Fahey, Chairperson of South Tipperary County Council, who was accompanied by Jim Dillon, Environmental Officer, Cllr Susan Meagher, Cllr Jimmy O'Brien, and Deputy Mattie McGrath.

the 'planting-up' of the courtyard. The grove of trees planted just below the playground has matured beautifully, and this past term brightened our days with a magnificent display of autumn colours – a spectacle guaranteed to lift the spirits. It is also a great resource for the school as it contains a wide variety of trees, with a special emphasis on the native Irish species.

Mrs Maureen Maher, ably assisted by the Parent's Association, spear-headed the rejuvenation of our courtyard area by giving it a much-needed 'make-over'. It now boasts a wonderful display of colour throughout the year. The apple trees (in containers) have blossomed, fruited and been harvested to the great delight of everyone. The pupils have also been involved in planting seeds and bulbs, as well as taking responsibility for watering plants during dry weather.

This has been made easier by the installation of a covered tank with a tap, collecting rainwater from a down-pipe, thus conserving water.

We are in the process, too, of developing a school vegetable garden, with the expert help of some parents, near our Nature Walk adjoining the playground. Our first season produced onions, lettuce and beans and the Senior Infants' sunflowers added a welcome splash of colour along the boundary wall. This autumn, the children have been involved in planting a wild flower patch and we look forward to seeing it blossom in spring.

Our sixth class, for the second consecutive year, took part in Challenge to Change, an exciting learning opportunity developed by the Presentation Sisters and funded by Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs and the Presentation Trustees. Their project,

entitled 'There's No Place Like Home', focused on the plight of the homeless in Ireland and abroad. The girls' chosen aims were to highlight the plight of the homeless, to raise awareness in our school and in the local community, to look into the causes of homelessness, to seek solutions by researching best practice and to study agencies who are tackling the problem in Ireland. They undertook the project with great enthusiasm and, under the guidance of their class teacher Mrs Rita Kenny they accomplished an amazing amount. The girls did lots of research using the library, newspapers and the Internet. They then decided to talk to people who are actually engaged in working with homeless people in order to gain an insight into the reality of the problem in modern-day Ireland, which prompted them and then they held a Christmas Carol fundraising event, which enabled them

to donate €1,000 to organisations helping the homeless.

Ms Alice Leahy, who hails originally from Fethard, is the co-founder of TRUST, an organisation providing a non-judgemental befriending, social and health service to the homeless, in operation since 1975. Alice was an obvious point of contact for the girls and she very kindly took time out from her hectic schedule to visit the class and give them the benefit of her vast knowledge and experience. Guest speakers from The Simon Community also came to the school to talk about the work they do with the homeless.

The girls then decided that it was time for them to take a pro-active approach thus taking the project to the next level. Their action plan took various forms:

- They held a Christmas Carol fundraising event, which enabled them to donate €1,000 to organisations help-



Alice Leahy and RTE presenter Pat Kenny, who launched the book, photographed with children from Nano Nagle School who attended the launch as part of their 'Challenge to Change' project on the homeless.

ing the homeless.

- They wrote, by email, to our local representatives regarding their policies on homelessness. Tom Hayes, T.D., responded and promised to visit the school to talk on the issue.
- They sent articles and photographs to the local newspaper.
- They involved classes from First class upwards in our school.
- They invited our local schools, primary and secondary, to see our project and they also did an oral presentation.
- They made a Podcast (a first for our school) with the help of Joe Kenny. It can be accessed at www.fethardpodcast.com.
- They presented their project at the 'Challenge to Change' seminar in

Kilkenny, where they also got the opportunity to view the other projects and participate in related workshops.

An unexpected addendum to the project came in the form of an invitation from Alice Leahy for the entire class to attend the launch of her new book called 'Wasting Time with People' which took place in the City Hall, Dublin at 7 pm on 29th April 2008. All the proceeds of the book go to 'TRUST'. Sixth class were delighted to accept the invitation and it was decided that they would, in fact, spend the whole day in Dublin before attending the launch. Mrs Kenny and Mrs Hanrahan accompanied the class on what proved to be a whirlwind tour of Dublin taking in the Irish Aid



Pupils from Nano Nagle National School Fethard who were prizewinners in the Community Games Art and Model Making. Back L to R: Sr. Maureen Power (School Principal), Svetlana Novikova, Christina Myler, Tara Horan, Emma Walsh, Aobh O'Shea. Front L to R: Megan McCarthy, Róisín McDonnell, Farrah Cummins Doyle, Sarah Slattery, Sally Nagle, Darragh Hurley and Wiktoria Wierzchowska.

headquarters on O'Connell street, the Garden of Remembrance, the Hugh Lane Gallery, the Book of Kells and the Long Room in Trinity College, interspersed with a trip on the Luas, refreshments at Captain America's and 'time-out' in St. Stephen's Green. The girls even managed to squeeze in a little retail therapy along the way- and all this before they even got to the book launch!

Dublin City Hall provided a magnificent setting for the occasion and RTE broadcaster, Pat Kenny, launched the book for Alice, commending her work on behalf of the marginalised in our society and acknowledging the sad fact that the problem of homelessness is an ongoing feature of 21st century Ireland. The girls realised how privileged they were to be invited when they saw that they were the only children present among a very distinguished audience. Alice very kindly mentioned them during her speech, referring to their project, and afterwards they had a photo opportunity with both Alice and Pat Kenny. They also had great fun collecting autographs from, as they termed them, 'famous people' present: Robert Ballagh, Fr. Peter McVerry, Louis Copeland, Justine McCarthy, Mary Wilson and many more. Needless to say, Pat Kenny was a major draw, and he signed autographs and posed for photographs with seemingly endless patience. The most significant encounter, however, was probably the girls' meeting with one of Alice's homeless

friends who introduced himself simply as "Robbie". He was delighted to chat about his life, his daily routine and, of course, his friends in 'TRUST' He, too, posed willingly for a photo with the girls — a telling reminder of exactly what the book launch was all about.

We definitely feel that the whole school benefited from the 6th Class project as is illustrated in the following feedback from Ms Denise Kelly, our 3rd /4th class teacher: "The Challenge to change this year was very impressive. It was clear when my class and I visited 6th Class to hear about what they had done, that each girl was very involved and had learned lots about homelessness in Ireland. My class was invited to help with the Art Display and all the girls really enjoyed making model houses from around the world. We were very impressed with the girls' project and the interesting facts they passed on to us."

In conclusion, it only seems fair to give the final say on the matter to the 6th class girls themselves: "We were happy with our fundraising and our efforts at raising public awareness. We really enjoyed doing this project and learned a lot from it. We thank the Presentation Sisters and Irish Aid for giving us this opportunity."

As we prepare for Christmas 2008, we would like to send seasonal greetings to all who read this newsletter, especially all those Fethard folk who find themselves far from home. Beannacht Dé Oraibh agus Nollaig Shona Dhíbh go léir. ●

Oh, Fethard! I still feel the pain

by James O'Mara

I was invited to a First Communion celebration earlier this year, here in Amagansett on the South Fork of Long Island, New York. It was a beautiful May morning in spring. The cherry and magnolia blossoms that outlined the lush green lawn outside the church made the perfect setting for the families having photos and videos taken of the occasion. As I stood to the side observing the proceedings I could not but reflect on the occasion of my own First Communion in a very different setting many years ago. How vivid still are the memories of that weekend in May 1946 in the village of Lisronagh in County Tipperary.

Our class of a dozen or so boys and girls was well prepared by our school mistress, Mrs Hannon. We knew our catechism back to front and had our first confession heard by Fr. Coughlan in the church of John the Baptist. My new grey suit and accessories were laid out in impeccable readiness together with a white rosette for my lapel and a prayer book with a shiny white cover, a present from my grandmother.

Week-end chores on the farm however had to be done as usual. So there I was on that Saturday afternoon sitting astride a length of firewood, holding it steady while my father and brother Pat sawed it into logs. Perhaps it was the exciting anticipation of the prospective jingle of coins in my new trousers pocket the following day that made my mind wander. One mighty swipe of the cross-cut made

contact with my left hand and to my horror when I withdrew it, the tip of my index finger resembled a crushed acorn with blood pouring from it.

My reaction was that of any eight year old child. I ran screaming to the kitchen in search of my mother. A make-shift bandage was applied to my now throbbing finger and before you could say "Jack Robinson" I was hoisted on the back of my mother's bike and we set off to see the doctor in Fethard.

Having climbed the steep Castle Hill in Lisronagh we were soon free wheeling through the village, over the bridge at Quarry Hole and on our way. There was little if any traffic on the road except for the occasional cyclist or horse drawn cart. The blood was now seeping through the bandage but I clung on gamely with one hand to the belt of my mother's coat.

Perhaps as a distraction to my discomfort she pointed out landmarks along the way, the house in Ballygambon where I was born, the stately Carrigan Mansion visible through the trees at Kelle's Cross. Further on, we passed the Lakefield Estate with its quaint stone lodge at its roadside entrance. Shortly thereafter we reached the top of Market Hill and peering from behind I could see the town of Fethard nestled in the valley down below us, as we freewheeled down the hill. We parked the bike outside McCarthys at the bottom of the town, and walked up the steep



Hannie Leahy received these photographs after Mick Maher of Lisronagh died. He originally came from Coolmoyne. The only one she knows is Paddy Leahy on the tractor who was then working in Annsgift with Major Hughes. The horse and trap was taken outside Maher's house at the creamery cross in Coolmoyne.



hill and across the sloping square to Dr. Stokes' house. Only now did the reality of the situation and the upcoming encounter with the Doctor hit me. Terror gripped my young heart.

Dr. Stokes, a rugby player of note in his youth, was widely respected in the community. The rough nature of the game of rugby however seemed to influence his bedside manner! He did not suffer wimps or whiners easily and rarely if ever dispensed sympathy to his many and devoted patients. He was a tall silver haired man, wore a dark suit, black coat and hat and spoke in a deep gruff tone. He drove one of the few cars in the area and frequently made sick calls to our house to treat my father who was a chronic asthmatic.

We sat alone like mice in a waiting room that had rugby pictures hanging from the walls. Having waited for what seemed to me like an eternity we were ushered into his surgery. While inquiring for my father's state of health from my mother, he filled a bowl with scalding hot water, added a solution that turned it milky white, and then with a vice like grip dunked my wounded finger into the steaming mixture. I knew better than to wince or cry as he kept shaking his head at

what he seemed to consider a stupid thing for me to have done in the first place. He then proceeded to remove what was left of the nail and clipped off jagged pieces of skin. Having applied a new bandage, fitted me with a sling for my arm and instructed me to return in a week, we left for home. When picking up the bicycle outside McCarthy's, a kindly Miss McCarthy who considered I had been through "quite an ordeal" rewarded me with a bar of chocolate for my bravery.

The weeks that followed meant routine return visits to Dr. Stokes to have the dressing changed until finally the healing was complete. Then one Saturday sometime later, dressed again in my First Communion suit I was taken to Michael Keating's studio in Clonmel to have my photo taken. Sadly the portrait did not survive my many changes of address around the world over the years.

I am not without a souvenir, however. As I write this I am looking at the index finger of my left hand that is a little shorter than its right hand counterpart and with a nail slightly askew. It is forever a reminder of my first visit to Fethard – a fond though "painful" memory. ●

Fethard Country Markets Ltd

The Fethard Branch of country Markets Ltd. is still going strong in the Town Hall, Fethard, each Friday morning from 8am to 11am. Those selling home-grown and fresh produce are: Hannie Leahy (baking & knitting), David Curran (vegetables &

cut flowers), Christy Williams (vegetables), David O'Donnell (fresh eggs & plants), Maura Meaney (vegetables, cut flowers & jam), May Kennedy (baking) and Rose Corbett (baking, including gluten free products). ●

I love Fethard

by Lyubov Novikova



*Patrician Presentation Secondary School 'Writers Quill' students award presentation 2008
L to R: Ms Barrett (teacher), Tara Horan (Junior), Joseph Sheehan (Senior), Lyubov Novikova
(Intermediate) and Ms Whelan (teacher).*

My name is Lyubov Novikova. I am a second year student at the Patrician Presentation Secondary School in Fethard. I was born near Kiev, the capital of Ukraine. I came to Ireland when I was 13 and now I am 15 years old. The Ukraine is a very beautiful country. It would be better if we had a good government. There are many beautiful parks and museums. Life is not that different in the Ukraine. I was studying in a school with about 800 other students and the subjects are the same in the Ukraine except I studied Russian instead of French. Students are anxious to do well so as to get a good job.

I came to Ireland not knowing English. Now I know three languages, Ukrainian, Russian and English. It was difficult to start school and not know what was happening. I only knew two

words, 'yes' and 'no'. The school was very good and the teachers and pupils were very helpful to me. My favourite subjects are P.E, French and Maths.

I had many friends in the Ukraine and spent most of my time with them. Every weekend we would go to a disco and have a good laugh. My class was finishing in their school last year and I couldn't go because I didn't get my visa in time. I miss the Ukraine and my friends and relatives so much. I was in the Ukraine for my summer holidays and all my friends were very happy to see me. We had a great time together.

I have two sisters and one brother. My father is working at a stable and it is a really nice place to work. I like roller-skating around Fethard, because it's fun. I'm also good at art. I love to sing and play my guitar and to spend

my time with my friends.

I wrote this poem about Fethard

because I like Fethard and love going
to school in Fethard so much. ●

Fethard

*An ancient castle
A river so clean
A beautiful town
We are all living in
The town is quiet
The people are good
The oldest of churches
In this town stood
A Medieval tower
And not so big school
The lovely classrooms
And students quite good
My town, my Fethard
I love you
Love you!*



Neighbours having a chat L to R: Ann Slattery, Eileen Cahill, Lizzy O'Shea and Micky Flanagan.

St. Patrick's Boys' National School



Sixth Class at St. Patrick's Boys' National School, Back L to R: Adam Fitzgerald, Jack Connolly, Eoghain Hurley, Donal Walsh, Niall Doocey, Tommy Anglim. Front L to R: Charlie Manton, Cormac Horan, Michael Halley, John Bernard O'Reilly and Jody Sheehan. Also in the class are Graham Meagher and Darragh Bradshaw.

Throughout this school year both pupils and teachers have taken part in many enjoyable and beneficial activities and projects. During the autumn term, 5th and 6th class were involved in a South Tipperary Local History Project run by the County Museum. The students, under the guidance of their teacher Mrs O'Sullivan, produced a very impressive PowerPoint presentation based on the history of the Holy Trinity Church, and a realistic model of the Church was created.

We held an Open bay in June for family to visit and view our Art Exhibition. Each pupil created two masterpieces, which were framed and displayed in the hall. This proved to be a great success as the majority of

pictures were sold.

On the sporting front there was involvement in a wide variety of activities. 1st and 3rd class added to and developed their swimming skills in Clonmel Pool. In the field of athletics 3rd to 6th class pupils took part in the Cross Country event in Clonmel. Darragh Bradshaw won an individual bronze medal and all the other pupils won bronze medals in the team event.

The school football team did very well to emerge unbeaten from their group but were beaten by Thurles Gaelscoil in the final. We took part in a hurling competition on the Astro Turf pitch in Cahir organised by Johnny Cummins. 3rd class and 4th class won their category. We also took part in the Lift and Strike Competition



Pupils of St. Patrick's Boys National School Fethard photographed with Eamon Quirk from Bóthar who spoke and answered questions on life in Uganda and Tanzania. 10th March 2008

in Ardfinnan without success. In May we had two teams in the Five-a-Side soccer competition in Thurles and all teams performed well.

We are taking part in the Buntus P.E. Programme organised by the South Tipperary Sports Partnership. This aims to develop sport and increase physical activity among all children.

The pupils took part in a series of eight dance lessons with Maura Tynan, Clonmel. This included waltz, marching, skipping, ballet, step, hip-

hop and other types. 5th and 6th class pupils are looking forward to competing in a Spikeball Blitz in December. This is an adapted form of volleyball to suit Primary School children.

We've had a few staff changes this year. Our best wishes to Mrs Carmel Maher who resigned and has been replaced by Mrs Sarah O'Sullivan. We welcome back and congratulate Ms Carmel Lonergan who returned from a career break during which time she got married. ●

Patricia Treacy & Staff



St. Patrick's Boys School Fethard team who were winners of the Category A section of the regional Credit Union Primary Schools Quiz held in Fethard Ballroom. L to R: Jonathan Hennessy, Eoin O'Donovan, David Smyth and Connie Coen.



St. Patrick's Boys School Fethard team who were winners of the Category B section of the regional Credit Union Primary Schools Quiz held in Fethard Ballroom. L to R: Gerard Gorey, Eoghan Hurley, Colin Grant and Cormac Horan.



L to R: Josef O'Connor, J.J. Roche Freeman, Luke Bradstock and Paul Moloney.



L to R: Brian Healy, Charlie Manton, Tommy Anglim and Niall Doocey.

Patrician Presentation Secondary School



Patrician Presentation Secondary School captured the Junior A (Boys) All Ireland Volleyball title when beating Drumshanbo of Leitrim in the final in Loughrea. An entry of twenty-two teams was finally down to two and Fethard's win over Dungarvan, Lismore and Mountmellick led to the meeting with Drumshanbo.

Back L to R: Denis Burke (coach), Louis Rice, Ted Barrett, Garreth Lawrence, Dylan Fitzgerald, Dion Butler, Gavin Lonergan, Andrew Maher, Dylan Cahill, Bernie O'Connor (coach). Front L to R: Noel O'Brien, Ronan Fitzgerald, Cathal Hurley, Tony Myler, Dean Sharpe, Gavin Carroll and Gerry Horan.

Greetings to all past pupils and friends wherever you may be in the world.

The school members are on the increase each year and we presently have four International students from Brazil, Germany and Italy. This is the third year of this programme, which has been a great success. We also have students from the Ukraine and Poland in Junior cycle.

One of the highlights of the past year was the junior boys winning the All-Ireland Volleyball title.

Of the many events taking place in the school the summer activities with our teacher Mr Damien Byrne of the school completion programme has been a 'Big Hit' in June and August. Presently both our senior boys and

girls are doing very well and winning all their volleyball matches and hopefully we will have two All-Ireland outings in 2009.

Transition Year has been very rewarding over the past few years, and they have participated in a multitude of activities as well as work experience – School Bank, Mini Company, school shop, Daffodil Day and other worthwhile fundraising events, and of course their participation in the annual school show. Last year's show 'Abbajuba' was enjoyed by all. Who doesn't like the music of ABBA! This year we are off to the West Coast of America and surfing land, thus the title 'Malibu'. This script was written by a past-pupil Jodie Gilpin and has an appeal for all ages. It will be

staged in Aby mill on 12th and 13th December 2008.

In January we held a very successful 'Open Evening' where teachers and students mingled with parents and students of out-lying primary schools and our own local primary schools. Prior to our open evening pupils from the school classes in Fethard, Cloneen, Killusty, Drangan and Moyglass enjoyed a period of activities in our school in the areas of physical education and home economics. Of course academic success is also of the utmost importance and here we would like to congratulate our leaving certs and junior certs on their excellent results received at this year's state exams.

We are presently in the process of adding a new dancing area with kitchen and a parent's room. In fact each day brings a new event, and an engaging activity.

One of the highlights of the year is Awards Day which was held on Friday morning, 17th October. Canon Tom Breen celebrated the mass and our guest for the occasion was Brother Cormac Commins, education officer for the Patrician Secondary Schools.

At the conclusion of the mass, Mr Ernan Britton, welcomed all, congratulated the award recipients, and said that this was not just a day of celebration for award winners, but for the entire school community.



Pupils of Fethard Patrician Presentation Secondary School photographed at Pilates classes in the school organised under the 'Women in Sports' initiative by South Tipperary Sports Partnership. Pilates exercises teach awareness of breath and alignment of the spine, and aim to strengthen the deep torso muscles. Back L to R: Valerie Connolly (South Tipperary Sports Partnership), Samantha Morrissey, Ida Carroll, Molly O'Dwyer, Chloe Byrne, Deirdre Dwyer, Geraldine Houlihan (Instructor). Front L to R: Sarah Hayes, Carrie Sweeney, Sarah Conway and Lucy Butler.



Award winners photographed at the Patrician Presentation Secondary School Awards Ceremony. Back L to R: Joseph Sheehan (Writers Quill Award Senior), David Gorey (Gradam na Gaeilge Award & Attendance Award), Dylan Cahill (Enterprise Award), Siobhán O'Brien (Attendance Award), Adam O'Donnell (Enterprise Award), Sean White (Enterprise Award), Noel O'Brien (Enterprise Award & Attendance Award), Ted Barrett (Enterprise Award). Middle L to R: Fiona Crotty (Attendance Award), Lucy Butler (Student of the Year 2nd Year), Lyubov Novikona (Writers Quill Award Intermediate), Tara Horan (Writers Quill Award Junior), Mary-Ellen O'Reilly (Gradam na Gaeilge Award), Melissa Wallace (Attendance Award), Aisling Dwyer (Sports Award), Ida Carroll (Student of the Year 5th Year & Gradam na Gaeilge Award), Mark Fogarty (Attendance Award), Tony Myler (Sports Award), Gavin Lonergan (Enterprise Award). Front L to R: Owen Healy (Padraig Pearse Award & Paddy Broderick Award), Mary Ann Fogarty (Student of the Year 3rd Year), Alannah Browne (Best Overall Leaving Cert Result), Mr Ernan Britton (Principal), Bro Cormac Connins (Education Officer for the Patrician Secondary Schools), Ms Marian Gilpin (Deputy Principal), Mr Jonathan Gilpin (Vice-President of Chapter X Irish League of Credit Unions) and Mr Denis Burke (Organising Committee).

Mr Britton then introduced Brother Cormac who spoke about the 'vision' of education for all, held by Daniel Delaney, founder of the Patrician order. He encouraged the students to also have a 'vision' and follow in the footsteps of such great figures as Daniel Delaney and Martin Luther King – 'to follow their dream'.

Brother Cormac presented the Student of the Year 2005 'Druid Cuchulainn' to Lucy Butler (2nd Year); Mary-Anne Fogarty (3rd Year), Ida Carroll (5th year) and Alannah Browne on the best overall Leaving

Cert results. The Padraig Pearse Award, for the best Junior Cert was presented by Mr Britton to Owen Healy. Owen also received the Paddy Broderick Award. Mr Denis Burke then presented the sports person of the year 2008 awards to Aisling Dwyer (5th year) and Tony Myler (3rd year).

Mrs Marian Gilpin, Deputy Principal, then invited Mr Jonathan Gilpin, Vice-President of Chapter X Irish League of Credit Unions, to present the Business and Enterprise Award, which this year of 2008 went to two young groups of



Staff members at Fethard Patrician Presentation Secondary School photographed with Vincent Doocey and family on the occasion of his retirement from teaching. Back L to R: Fr. Tom Breen, Michael O'Gorman, Michael Leonard, Mary Lysaght, Justin McGree, Mary O'Sullivan, Denis Burke, Marie Maher, John Cummins, Majella Whelan, Bernie O'Connor, Billy Farrell, Cathriona Hyland, Dick Prendergast, Joan Walsh, Margaret Prendergast, Noel Maher, Deirdre Mulhall, Paddy Broderick, Ann O'Donnell, Mary Ann Fogarty, Pat Doocey, Nuala Aherne, Francis Tyrrell. Front L to R: Fr. Gerry Horan OSA, Eran Britton, Margaret Doocey, Vincent Doocey, Marian Gilpin and Aine Doocey.



Pupils from the Patrician Presentation Secondary School Fethard pictured with trophy presented to them by the South Tipperary County Museum on Wednesday 20th February. Students presented a project on 'Medieval Fethard', which included paintings, drawings and pupils' photographs of Fethard's rich heritage. The project was presented as part of the 'South Tipperary Schools Heritage Project 2007/2008', which focused on Medieval Tipperary (400AD-1600AD). Back L to R: Esther Müller, James Cotter, Colm Horan, J.P. McGrath, Angelica Bano. Front L to R: Annemarie Limpach and Michelle Garrett.

Entrepreneurs; 'GNT' – Noel O'Brien, Gavin Lonergan and Ted Barrett, and 'Gardens' – Adam O'Donnell, Séan White and Dylan Cahill.

Mr McGree, Ms Whelan, Mrs O'Donnell and Ms Barrett organised the "Fethard Quill Writers Awards". Mrs Gilpin called upon the winners and Ms Barrett presented the Senior category to Joseph Sheehan, Intermediate category to Lyubov Novikova and Junior category to Tara Horan.

The 'Gradam na Gaeilge Awards' were then presented by Mrs Prendergast, who spoke about the number of students who were successful in achieving scholarships to the Gaeltacht this year. David Gorey, Ida Carroll, Mary-Ellen O'Reilly, plus

ten certificates, were presented by Mrs Prendergast.

Mr Britton and Mrs Gilpin presented best school attendance awards to Mark Fogarty, Noel O'Brien, Fiona Crotty, Melissa Wallace, Siobhán O'Brien, David Gorey and Colm Horan. At the conclusion of the ceremony a framed photograph was presented by Mr Britton to Brother Cormac, to commemorate his visit to the school. A special thank you is extended to all who took part in the ceremony, and in particular the organising committee; Mr Michael O'Gorman, Mr Richard Prendergast and Mr Denis Burke.

In conclusion we wish all reading of the newsletter a Peaceful, Happy and Healthy Christmas. ●



Through the Oireachtas Outreach Programme third year students from Fethard Patrician Presentation Secondary School attended a morning workshop on Monday 24th November on the work of the Oireachtas. Local politicians Tom Hayes, Martin Mansergh and Phil Prendergast also attended a subsequent question and answer session with the students. Also included in the photograph with the students and politicians are Majella Whelan, Marinella Raftery, Emma Ryan, Michelle Edwards, Margaret Barrett and Orla Barrett. The Houses of the Oireachtas Education Programme will run in all post-primary schools nationwide over the next two years. Front L to R: Majella Whelan, Tom Hayes, Marinella Raftery, Phil Prendergast, Martin Mansergh, Emma Ryan. Back L to R: Margaret Barrett, Rachel Prout, Michelle Edwards, Orla Lawrence, Gavin Lonergan, Sarah McManus, Gavin Carroll, Shannon Keating, Mary-Anne Fogarty, Damien Morrissey, Jane Fitzgerald, Gareth Lawrence, Jamie Walsh, Andrew Maher, Louis Rice, Tony Myler, Ted Barrett, Noel O'Brien, Alex Bloomfield and Orla Barrett.

Four young pilgrims

by Sr. Monica Kevin OSU



Four young Fethard girls, L to R: Nuala O'Brien, Monica Kevin, Kitty McCarthy and Nellie Carey, leaving on the boat from Cobh to join the Ursuline Order in New York in 1935.

The photo (above) that appeared on the Fethard website during the past year of four girls, Nuala O'Brien, Kitty McCarthy, Nellie Carey and Monica Kevin has sparked a flood of nostalgic memories.

We left home on August 8th 1935 to join the Ursulines of Tildonk in New York City. A space of 73 years dims the memory but there is a residual thirst for home in all of us that we take to our graves.

We sailed from Cobh on a tender that brought us to ocean liner, the U.S. President Harding. That short trip is embedded in my memory as a first class wake and tear jerker. Most of the people who were emigrating were crying anyway and the music was no help. We sailed in the dark of night to

strains of 'Come back to Erin', 'I'll take you home again Kathleen', 'Molly Bawn' et al.

The photograph was taken on the deck of the 'Harding' in 1935. Life on board was exciting and after the first day we had adjusted to movement, got our sea legs and stopped watching the water. There were lots of activities like shuffle board, horse racing (on a table), some dancing on deck to music provided by a German man who had a concertina. As I recall, the Reverend Mother who was travelling with us was not pleased when she heard I had been dancing. In many ways it was a culture shock that was a good experience for young Convent School girls.

After eight days of sea and sky we approached New York Harbour.

To this day the sight of The Statue of Liberty evokes the memories of that day. I knew I was in a foreign land and was determined to make whatever adjustments would be necessary. I had arrived at step number one along my pilgrimage. I knew three years before that I wanted to be a nun. I also believed I was called by God and had a responsibility to respond to that call.

Several other girls from the Presentation Convent School in Fethard had already entered The Ursulines in New York. Cissy Power, a classmate of my sister Mai, had entered a few years before and I recall saying to myself, "If Cissy Power can do it so can I." I recall Mother Benignus telling me that I would not

be lonely, there were so many Fethard girls in the Order. She was shocked to hear my response (from a 15 year old), "We live our own lives."

The pilgrimage has taken all four of us in many directions always in service to the Church and to the people of God. Kitty McCarthy, Sr. Vincent, went home to her reward a few years ago. Now in our twilight years we three are nearing the end of our pilgrimages. We thank God for all His blessings that have come our way and for the loving support and friendship of the members of our community – the Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk – whose motto is, "Ut Unum Sint", That All May be One. ●



Will and Anne Power with their daughter (Cissy) who lived in the Convent Lodge, they formerly lived in the Valley. Cissy Power took on the name Sr. Benignus, at the Ursuline Convent, New York.

New General Superior from Fethard



Sr. Margaret O'Brien O.S.U. photographed with her father, Pat O'Brien, from The Valley, Fethard.

Sr. Margaret O'Brien OSU, of the U.S. Province, is the eldest daughter of Pat O'Brien from The Valley, Fethard, and was elected General Superior at the recent General Chapter of the Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk in Belgium on 5th August, 2008.

The Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk minister in India, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Belgium, Canada, United States and Guyana.

John Cornelius Martin Lambertz, a holy priest of Tildonk, Belgium, founded the Congregation of the

Ursuline Sisters of Tildonk on 30 April, 1818. After 1900, new foundations were established in India (1903), Canada (1914), and the United States of America (1924). In 1935 four young Fethard girls, Paula Carey, Nuala O'Brien, Kitty McCarthy and Monica Kevin sailed from Cobh to join the Ursuline Order in New York. In 1995 all four happily celebrated sixty years in religious life. Sr. Vincent McCarthy died in 1999. The other three, Sr. Paula Carey, Sr. Philomena O'Brien and Sr. Monica Kevin are still based in New York with Sr. Margaret O'Brien. ●

Marriages

Weddings in the Parish

Michael Redmond, Enniscorthy, and Claire Fogarty, Fethard
Andrew Doyle, Rosegreen, and Mary Ellen Needham, Fethard
Kevin Nicholson, Donegal, and Siobhán Carroll, Coolmore
Conor Paul Long, Cork, and Rosemarie Casey
Thomas Connors, Wexford, and Mary Kelly, Wexford
Michael Ryan, Fethard, and Mary Kane, Fethard
John Frain, Rosegreen, and Michelle Foreman, Cashel
Patrick Fennelly, Killenaule, and Marie Cloonan, Fethard

Weddings outside the Parish

John J. Fogarty, Curraghscarteen, and Carmel Ann Ryan, Clonoulty
Mark Hickey, Clonmel, and Joanne Clancy, Fethard
Garret Byrne, Killusty, and Marilyn Myers, Clogheen
Richard Flynn, Abbey View, Fethard, and Sinead Blake, Moyglass
Donal Mullins, Fethard, and Stephanie Pagliaccio, Lausanne, Switzerland
Edward O'Connor, Farranaleen, and Theresa Ahern, Goggin, Bandon
Michael Ahearne, Prospect, and Linda Corbett, Holycross
Thomas Bourke, Tullamaine, Joanne Murphy, Duncannon
Elaine Fogarty, Cluain Ard, and Sean MacCormaic, Kerry Street



Claire Fogarty & Michael Redmond



Elaine Fogarty & Sean MacCormaic



Mary Kane & Michael Ryan



Kevin Nicholson & Siobhán Carroll

In my grandfather's footsteps

by Michael Lavin

I married a lovely Irishwoman the same way my grandfather, John Lavin, did so many years ago. His New York wedding in 1927 was to Monica Halley, one of three daughters born to John and Johanna in Fethard at the dawn of the twentieth century. The family soon emigrated to America and after passing through Ellis Island, relocated themselves to Woodstock, Queens, an outdoor borough of the city. My grandfather's family had also emigrated and settled into the Lower Eastside of Manhattan.

Their marriage produced two children, Eileen and a son named John Lavin. I am Michael, the second son of John. Although I didn't marry a Fethard girl like my grandfather, I did meet and meet and marry a pretty colleen from Strokestown, Co. Roscommon. I met Margaret Duignan in a Dublin café on my first visit to Eire in 1995. Her accent was like music to my ears and she soon agreed to show me all the tourist sights around town, but the day passed too quickly.

There was a truce in the North of Ireland at that time and I asked her would she like to do some exploring. The angles must have been smiling on me because she agreed, but with

two conditions. First was that our friendship was to remain exactly as it was, thank you, and the second was she didn't want to reach into her pocket for money.

How could I turn down a good deal like that? It was a lovely train ride up to the Botanic Avenue

Station. We walked around and over the barricades in the streets of Belfast for three days. The people were wonderful to this 'Tanned Yank' and his 'Smiling Colleen', as they referred to us. Their accent was very different and I only understood half of what they said.

By the time we arrived in Fethard we were like old friends. We loved the majestic walls and we spent time studying the names on dates on the headstones on the adjoining graveyard. On our walk through the town I pur-



John Halley photographed with his wife Johanna (Wall), their three daughters and husbands. L to R: Thomas Burke, John Lavin, Herbert Nasher, John Halley. Front L to R: Evelyn Burke, Monica Lavin, Mary Nasher and Johanna Halley.



Michael and Margaret Lavin photographed in Galway

chased a blue cardigan at O'Flynn's Menswear in Burke Street. At the end of the afternoon we visited my cousin, Ann (Wall) Keane, in St. Patrick's Place and had a wonderful chat. I had with me a copy of my family tree and we could follow it back three or four generations to the point where our families converged. It was a real thrill to meet a distant relative whom I only knew through the stories my father

told me as a boy.

When we finally drove back to Margaret's house in a rented car, on the opposite side of the road than I was accustomed to, she was quick to explain to her stern faced father that the red-headed 'New Yorker' really did have Irish blood running through his veins. We were married some years later by a priest in a small chapel on a tiny Caribbean Island. ●

Fethard & District Day Care Centre

The Fethard & District Day Care Centre, now in its 12th year, is expanding and catering for the needs of our senior citizens as they arise. We purchased a new mini-bus in January with a grant secured from The National Lottery. This enables us to transport more people to and from the centre. The aim and objective of the Day Care Centre is to provide day care and support for our senior citizens helping to live at home in their community. With people now having

a longer life expectancy the Day Care Centre has become a very important place and somewhere they feel comfortable and safe. A daily programme is set out to incorporate as many interests and hobbies that our clients might enjoy. We are currently preparing for our annual Christmas Bazaar and clients are busy sewing and knitting, making a variety of crafts including Christmas cards and Christmas gift tags, hand made tea cosies, hats and slippers, which will be on sale.

Our clients took part in an Arts course sponsored by the South Tipp VEC Adult Education Service. An exhibition of their work will be on display in the centre. We take exercise classes every day and all feel the benefits of keeping our joints supple. We visited Slievenamon Golf Club courtesy of the Clonmel Lions Club and enjoyed a lovely afternoon of beautiful food followed by music and dancing.

We held a Table Quiz in Butler's Bar, Main Street, in February and November. We thank Philip & Anne (proprietors) for facilitating us and all our sponsors of prizes and those who took part or who helped in any way to make these nights a huge success. We also thank the Dualla-Ballinure Gun Club who also helped our fundraising by organising a table quiz.

In April we were honoured with a Civic Reception held by Councillor John Fahey, County Chairman, at Council Offices Clonmel. In May we took part in the Tipp Bealtaine Festival, celebrating creativity in older age. We also spent a week in Bantry, West Cork where we enjoyed great outings, fantastic food and brilliant company. Our summer outing this year was a trip to the Arboretum Garden and

Lifestyle Centre, Leighlinbridge, Co. Carlow. We enjoyed a lovely lunch and evening meal in the Lord Bagenal Hotel.

The Day Centre Committee meets once a month. We still continue to provide our Senior Day, where our elderly neighbours who do not attend the centre can avail of a chiropody service, meet the district nurse and have a hot meal.

We thank the staff, volunteers, transition year students, committee



members who continue to provide the best service possible for our clients. The committee is as follows: Joan O'Donohoe (chairperson), Jimmy Connolly (vice-chairperson) Fionnuala

O'Sullivan (secretary), Liam Hayes (treasurer), Thelma Griffith, Carmel Rice, Nora Lawrence, Joe Kenny, Breda Nolan, Desmond Martin, Marie Murphy, Geraldine McCarthy (supervisor) and Michael Cleere (driver). We would like to thank Nellie O'Donovan who retired from the committee this year for her hard work.

A very happy and peaceful Christmas to our families, neighbours and friends and especially to you our readers from all at the Day Care Centre. ●

Deaths in the parish

The following is a list of deaths that occurred in the parish during the year. We have also included many of the deaths (from information supplied) that occurred away from Fethard and, in brackets, the place of funeral service if known.

Ahessy, Mary Ballinard (Cloneen)
 Briggs, Billy, USA (Killusty)
 Bulfin, Cathleen, The Valley (Calvary)
 Burke, Dick, Lower Main Street (Calvary)
 Ciammins, Billy, St. Patrick's Place (Dually)
 Ciammins, Sean, St. Patrick's Place (Dublin)
 Cunningham, Raymond, Tullamaine (New Inn)
 Dalton, Claire (Morrissey), London
 Fitzgerald, Billy, The Green & Essex (Calvary)
 Fleming, John, Coolmore (Calvary)
 Fogarty, Jim, Garrinch (Calvary)
 Fox, Paddy, Woodvale Walk (Calvary)
 Goodbody, Eve, Lakefield (Lisronagh)
 Grant, Joe, Fr. Tirry Park (Kilfeacle)
 Grant, Mary, Killerk (Lisronagh)
 Hammigan, Peg, Ballyvaaden (Calvary)
 Hanrahan, Alice, Chiswick & Castleblake (Calvary)
 Hanrahan, Sean, The Green (Calvary)
 Hennessy, David, Fr. Tirry Park (Calvary)
 Kane, Marion, The Valley (Cashel)
 Keane, Bridget (nee Carroll) Peppardstown (USA)
 Kearney, Rita, Friarsgrange (Killusty)

Lalor, Jenny, Annsfort (Rathronan)
 Martin, Kitty, Mobarnane (Moyglass)
 McLellan, Phyllis, Clommel & St. Patrick's Place
 Meaney, Martin, St. Johnstown (Peppardstown)
 Molloy, Pat, Moyglass (Moyglass)
 Murphy, Davy, Cashel Road (Dublin)
 Murphy, Thomas, Fethard (Sheffield)
 Nagle, Mary, Knockbrack (Calvary)
 Napier, Nora (Hickey), St. Albans, England (2006)
 Neville, Jim, Mobarnane, Fethard
 O'Connor, Marion, St. Patrick's Place (Calvary)
 O'Donnell, Breda, Knocklofty & Cashel Road (Calvary)
 O'Shea, John, Ardsallagh (England)
 Ryan, Maureen, Cloneen. (Oxford)
 Ryan, Nellie, Coolmoynne (Calvary)
 Ryan, Patricia, St. Patrick's Place (Calvary)
 Sayers, John 'Buddy', St. Patrick's Place (Calvary)
 Shine, Nessa, Burke Street (East London)
 Slattery, Ann, Coolmoynne (Calvary)
 Slattery, Vincent, Coolmoynne (Calvary)
 Stokes, Dr. Paddy, The Square (Holy Trinity)
 Walsh, Tom, Bofanna (Moyglass)



John Fleming



Marion O'Connor



Dr. Paddy Stokes



Pat Molloy



Mary Grant

Newsletter Contact Details

Articles for publication

Joe Kenny, Rocklow Road, Fethard, Co. Tipperary.

Tel: +353 52 6131663 Fax: +353 52 6130051 Email: joe@fethard.com

Donations, Letters, Change of Addresses

Carmel Rice, Brookhill, Fethard, Co. Tipperary.

Tel: +353 52 6131134

Our dear departed 2008

from available photographs



Sean Hanrahan



Nessa Shine



Jim Neville



Kitty Martin



Sean Cummins



Jenny Lalor



Vincent Slattery



Ann Slattery



Jim Fogarty



Patricia Ryan



Nellie Ryan



Eve Goodbody



Mary Nagle



Bridget Keane



Peg Hannigan



Rita Kearney



Buddy Sayers



Marion Kane



Joe Grant



Dick Burke



Billy Fitzgerald



Thomas Murphy



Tom Walsh



Paddy Fox



David Hennessy

Donations Received 2008

Acknowledged below are donations (€10 and over) received from readers and organisations up to 30th November 2008. We would also like to thank all those who wished to remain anonymous.

Aherne, Joan (Murphy), Clondalkin, Dublin
 Allen, Vincent, Edenderry
 Anglim, Joan, The Valley, Fethard
 Anglim, Monica (Woodlock), Neo Jersey USA
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If, for any reason, we have omitted your name, please let us know
 and we will acknowledge your donation next year.

To join the brimming river



For much of my childhood the main source of amusement in summer was the river. In my case it was the Clashawley, which, I am amazed to see, figures in numerous entries on Google. It rises somewhere near Killenaule and flows quietly to join the Anner a mile or so below Loughcopple Bridge.

As a young boy it provided in summer such diversions as paddling. Here you had to be very careful because on the stretch which ran through Fethard you could easily encounter a broken bottle and sustain a nasty cut. I was lucky, I never did step on such a hazard, others were not and squeals of pain and the sight of a foot dripping with gore often interrupted the serious business of catching brickeens and routags, the

great pastime for those of us released from school for two whole months each July. That part of the stream was very dirty, today a cut would require treatment at the hospital A & E department. It never seemed to bother us and I cannot recall anyone suffering anything more serious than having his foot in bandages for more than a few days. Today it would, no doubt, merit stitches and anti-tetanus injections. We must have been a tough bunch for such treatment never happened and we all seemed to survive.

As a teenager I discovered the joys of trout fishing so the Clashawley assumed for me a significance which continues to this day. I got on the most intimate terms with that river and can still in my mind's eye trace its progress from Rocklow to its con-

fluence with the Anner and beyond. However, I shall confine myself to the Clashawley because for over several years it was the source of much simple pleasure and I still think about it nearly fifty years after I left for England.

One of my earliest memories is going to Rocklow House with my uncle Michael who worked there.

I remember seeing all the saddles and bridles laid out in the tack room clean and highly polished. Being a devotee of Roy Rogers, the sight which captured my admiration was the Western saddle and I longed to ride a horse with it and emulate my heroes of the silver screen. However my abiding memory is the sight of the river just below the house. Here it had been widened and deepened, probably in the 19th century when such things were the fashion, to create a mini lake. Trout swam in it and the lake overflowed to join the river and carry on past Breen's Bridge towards the town.

Breen's Bridge was a popular swimming hole during the sum-

mer. The water was deep here and, because it was fed by springs, very cold. To boys of that time the cold seemed not to matter and summer days often resounded to the splash of bodies attempting to execute Olympic style dives into its icy depths. A few hundred yards further on the river flowed past what we called "The

Kennels". I believe the Tipperary Foxhounds had once been quartered there, hence its name. Here a dam of sorts interrupted the flow and created a deep pool where, again, swimmers used to congregate in warm weather. This dam was the relic of an attempt in the early years of the last century to generate electricity and light the town. It had but short-lived success, electric lights appeared in Fethard giving

it the distinction of being one of the first towns in Ireland to be so illuminated. My grandmother told me that the entrepreneur who initiated the scheme went bankrupt and the experiment came to a sad and premature end. However, some of the lamp standards, which still provide light to



Breen's Bridge

the town, date from that time, providing a connection with an enterprising innovation.

Downstream was the osiery, owned and operated by the Cummins family. Here in the swampy ground by the stream willows grew in abundance. In fact looking upstream from the Convent Bridge the view was blocked by the willows which erupted from both banks and met in a canopy in mid-water. The family used them to make baskets and other items such as sheep hurdles and seemed to prosper from the trade. I wonder how much of the trade now remains for the willows are still there and you still cannot see upstream from the bridge.

The Convent Bridge was where in pre-television days groups met in the evenings to discuss the affairs of the football team and the world in general. All that generation has now passed from the scene and contemplation of the sight brings back memories of characters who set you in time and place as you grew up and were the nuts and bolts of your existence. Relapsing into nostalgia is a habit I still find it difficult to resist so I shall move on.

Coffey's Weir was so called because it had been created to enable a portion of the water to be diverted to power the corn mill belonging to that family. In my childhood the mill was still in use, if only perfunctorily, and sacks of grain arrived to be ground into flour or, more frequently, animal feed. The great millstones were still in place, a set of sluice gates was opened

and closed to regulate the flow of water onto the wheels. A few years later the mill closed for good, as a mill that is, for now it houses the Abymill Theatre. The weir itself has decayed and the sluice gates, which diverted the water, fell into ruin long ago. That aspect of the mill is now a sad sight indeed.

Another ruin is the Abbey Bridge. I bet there are many young people who do not know it existed. In my time it was used to take cattle from the field by the Abbey Church to the friars' land on the other side. It was a precarious structure, as I remember, until in the early 1950s, it was rebuilt by Joey Fogarty and Tommy Molloy. Joey worked the Abbey Farm and Tommy was employed at Jim St John's farm nearby. I can recall the two using horses to drag long poles across the old bridge, removing the rotten planks and nailing old railway sleepers to the poles to create the new structure. That too decayed over time, the farm was run down and so the need for the bridge disappeared. Still the centre pier remains in place and, maybe, one day someone will rebuild it.

A short distance further is Whelan's where the river is joined by the stream which flows from the direction of the Rectory and so adds to the volume of water and makes for some very good trout fishing, or it did in my time. It was along this stretch that I caught my first trout, a specimen of about half a pound weight, caught one evening in August 1958 as it was getting dark. It fired my

enthusiasm for the sport and made me a hopeless addict. Thereafter until I left home the seven months long season from March to October would see me plying my trade along either the Clashawley or Anner and getting unbelievable enjoyment from this most absorbing of pastimes. Much of my fishing was done during the long summer holiday from school. I recall catching some fine fish during June and July as it grew dark. There were a few pools where Whelan's passed by the boundary of the Grove Estate which were particularly productive during late summer evenings. Here a large sedge, a very bushy fly, would tempt the wary as darkness fell. Here I recall John Sayers making the efforts of the rest of us look negligible as he could be relied on to double or triple what we mere mortals might achieve.

I remember in particular watching him try to tempt some fish which were addicted to the midge with a small Red Quill and watching his blood pressure rise as these wily old specimens ignored his fly and took the next natural insect to float by. Eventually he gave up, one of the very few occasions on which I saw him frustrated. A few days later I took several of these fish with an imitation midge which I tied on a 4 millimetre long hook and which could only be tied to a nylon cast of hair-like thinness. I gave a couple of these flies to John and it must have been the only occasion on which I found that I had discovered something which had eluded him.

As the river enters Grove it is swol-

len by the springs of the Mullinbawn. It also becomes bitterly cold but yields some very big fish. Here the weeds grow lush producing a wide variety of insect life on which the fish gorge themselves. I once got permission to fish in Grove and made some fine catches there. The stretch below Grove Bridge was especially productive and I caught some fine specimens from the "Turning Hole", an exceptionally deep pool. Here in autumn salmon on their way upstream to spawn would rest and it was one of the few occasions to spot these lordly creatures. The New Bridge, the haunt of generations of swimmers, did not yield much sport for the angler but Tinsley's Bridge at the boundary with Kiltinan did. That is if you were agile enough to negotiate it for, in my youth, it was largely derelict and dangerous. I am glad to hear that it has now been restored.

Kiltinan was where the river received another transfusion of spring water, this time from a stream which flowed from beneath a rock a little upstream from the castle. Here the stone was red, stained, legend has it, by the blood of a martyred bishop flung from the battlements. In reality it is because the rock is Old Red Sandstone, a strange intrusion into a land dominated by limestone. In the late 1950s, I was given permission to fish it by the then owner, Mrs La Terriere. She was a most remarkable character. She was one of the first women to ride astride instead of side-saddle, something which gave her the reputation of being a "fast woman".



L to R: Jim Healy, Monica (Owens) Healy, Michael Healy holding baby Michael, Catherine, Tommy, Ann and Concepta Healy.



L to R: Kathleen Kenny, Marie Dooley and Catherine Healy taking a ride on horse and cart.



Ned Healy at Grove



Nan Healy who lived at Grove Lodge



Dan Hynes, Jim Healy, Ed Healy and Michael Healy taken at Kiltinan.



Dan Hynes, Michael Healy and Tommy Healy on Rocking Horse.

She was not; her generation was the one which produced the suffragettes, women of independent mind and boundless energy. I found her to be a most fascinating character. Her first husband had been killed in the Great War. She had driven ambulances in that conflict and could tell hair-raising stories of her exploits. She kept a collection of shell cases; she once showed me that of a French 75, an artillery piece in which the French Army had an almost mystical faith. It certainly figured prominently in the Battle of the Marne and, I believe, France keeps one example of it on display today to show what gratitude they still have for it. Her second husband, the Frenchman, La Terriere, had a reputation as a rake. He certainly had a penchant for fast cars and his passage through any village caused scenes of panic and consternation. My father once told me that the only casualty he caused was that of a hen too slow to get out of his way. Mrs La Terriere was one of those characters you no longer encounter, when they made her they broke the mould.

Below Loughcoppole Bridge the river widened. Beds of lush river weed bred some formidable fish. Before that abomination called arterial drainage wrecked the natural habitat you could find deep pools which harboured great fighting trout. Catching one on a mayfly in early June is one of my pleasantest memories. The arrival of that insect in late May seemed to deprive fish of any sense of caution or restraint they might have hitherto

possessed. Cast a passable imitation of that insect over them and they were easy prey. I can see why the mayfly season is still regarded as the high-point of the trout fisherman's year; fish were seldom easier to catch.

A mile below Loughcoppole the Clashawley met the Anner at a place we called 'the meeting of the waters'. I do not know if the scene is on a par with Thomas Moore's location at Avoca for I have never visited the latter sight. I did visit Moore's grave in the village of Bromham in Wiltshire some years ago. He lies in the churchyard a short distance from Sloperton Cottage where he spent the last thirty years of his life. I noted that the village is twinned with Avoca the place where the television series "Ballykissangel" was filmed in the 1990s. Where the Clashawley ends the Anner takes over. It emerges from beneath a thick canopy of trees and bushes. I tried on one or two occasions to fish it. It proved impossible, you could not cast easily and the loss of several flies and their attendant casts proved what an impossible operation it was.

As Tennyson said, "at last by Phillip's farm I flow to join the brimming river". When I was young the farm belonged to the Long family. I have been away too long to know if they still own the land. Whoever does they have in their possession a scene which played a vital part in my growing up and which I still remember with great affection. ●

by Tommy Healy (November 2008)

A short walk back in time

Just before Christmas last year, my brother, Paddy died, following a long battle against disability. My family came to the funeral. To them their memories of visiting Fethard, when my parents were still alive, were of a place where you got ice cream every day, mostly supplied by Paddy. People also gave them pennies. This never happened anywhere else!

Last year, like me, they appreciated the crowds who came to the funeral and the warmth of the tributes paid to Paddy. He was laid to rest at the beautiful historic Church of Ireland. During the burial, I was standing higher up so I could look over the Town Wall at four or five houses galloping in a field.

It was bitterly cold so they were wise to keep moving. Though sad, I felt, "All's right with the world, Fethard is a wonderful town".

That I was born and brought up in Fethard, I consider to be my extreme good fortune – even though a long time ago, the memories are vivid and varied.

My grandparents lived in Burke Street – my first venture – out the back gate and turn left. First visit was to O'Flynn's workshop – their display windows were across the street. There were five or six tailors sitting 'cross-legged' on a large platform at table height. They never stopped stitching but were always ready for a chat. I



Two lads, with bags packed, leaving The Green in the early 40's. L to R: Alice Carey, Katie (Kenney) O'Brien, Ursula O'Brien, Mary O'Brien, Bridget and Maggie Carey, Jimmy Walsh and Mattie Higgins.

noticed that tailors' thimbles had no tops — the surface used mostly by dressmakers. One of their number was deaf and dumb but I was able to talk to him as my grandmother had taught me the deaf and dumb alphabet.

I'd then travel down past O'Flynn's ice cream shop where they sold new and delicious whipped ice cream. I didn't often have money and the request for a penny from my Dad usually bought the reply, "Yes I have a penny and do you know why, because I have sense enough to keep it!" So, no ice cream.

I often met 'Jim the Wrecker'. He had a birthday every fair day, once a month. It was cause for a celebration as, also was pig market day, once a week, so he was a cheerful man.

Jack Kenrick had a barber's shop — I had no reason to visit so on past Tom Hickeys. He trained and conducted Fethard Brass Band. The band turned out on important occasions and played "Faith of our Fathers" loud and clear.

Next lived Miss Brown with her father and brother. My conversations took place with her in Main Street where she kept the books with beautiful neat writing at O'Donnells butchers.

Now I turned left into my grandfather's yard. In the kitchen was Maggie Carey, a nice little lady, grey haired and wearing a large white apron. She was often to be found with a mixing bowl on her lap, using a hand whisk to make a sponge cake, singing,

*"Rose on the door,
Kiddies on the floor,
Who could ask for more,
In Sleepy Valley!"*

One dreadful day I found her in floods of tears. Her niece, Alice, was going to America to become a nun and Maggie would never, ever, see her again. She continued with the ironing while telling me all the under-clothes she had to bring with her. I remember thinking she'll never live long enough to wear them out!

Forty years on, Alice wrote to the Newsletter reporting that it was then 40 years since she and two companions from Fethard area had entered the Ursuline Convent in New York and were all alive and well. I wrote telling her of the distress her departure caused her Aunt Maggie. I'm told she did visit Fethard but, not until her aunt's death.

My grandmother was an austere lady, dressed in dark colours with a modesty vest of pleated silk on ecru crochet. She wore a black velvet ribbon or beads round her neck and also wore a wig — I know this as I discovered a spare one in the house soon after her death. She taught me my prayers, how to knit and sow, and several useful 'ditties' — 'Thirty days hath September' . . . and much more. At this stage my grandfather was not often home during the day but I got to know him later.

Next important stop was the Abbey church, Miss May Coffey, wearing a hat and always smoking a cigarette, prepared us for the

procession. This took place on the Sunday after Corpus Christi each year. Beforehand, we were arranged, two by two, according to height and drilled. Each girl (no boys) carried a little basket which we decorated with red and white crêpe paper full of flower petals on the day, but for now empty. We were trained to bow, strew the flowers, bow again, all turn together, eight steps, all turn together, bow, and so on. This continued from the altar in the Abbey, through the church, turn right along the road, right again into the Abbey grounds, and so on to the altar where, weather permitting, Benediction was celebrated in the open air. This was an annual occurrence. I never remember getting a note telling me to be there – we just knew!

After the Abby I often visited Innisfall (the house in which I was born) to see Girlie

Healy – always busy dressmaking – I learned much from Girlie. She visited relatives in America just as the 'New Look' was becoming popular there. She returned brim-full of ideas. I can assure you we in Fethard, were decked out in those lovely dresses with fitted waists and full skirts (kind to those with big bottoms) long before London

even heard of the 'New Look'. At this stage she learned how to draft patterns, which I found interesting. I was allowed to help and, so, promoted from picking up pins. Girlie was a very talented dressmaker, pity she did not train others to carry on.

On the way home, I recall visiting O'Grady's, two ladies. I don't think I ever knew their first names but

they had a garden and would give me flowers to fill my basket for the procession. I clearly remember they gave me a bunch of Lily of the Valley for my First Holy Communion.

Next house of importance was Kenricks – Mrs Kendrick was organist and choir mistress for the Abbey church and a very powerful choir it was. They sang in Latin of course.

Next stop was Holohans – thought it was a pub, I could go in as Josie gave me piano lessons – they

ended when she married and went to live in Derryluskin – "John Holohan from the mountain speaks Irish words galore – The biggest building in the town, is Aunt Maud's candy store." Does anyone remember more?

Maudie Green's shop was tiny. She lived there with her mother and son Joe, who, being a hunchback



One of the dresses that Girlie Healy copied



Josie Carey outside O'Shea's Shop in Burke Street

didn't go out to play with other boys, instead he did beautiful fretwork. He drew pictures on hen's eggs which we had at Easter. I don't remember having chocolate eggs for years yet and then, just one for the whole family.

We have now reached O'Flynn's high class tailoring establishment run by Mr O'Flynn's son Jimmy, who looked after materials and orders while Billy was tailor and cutter. They were known and used far and wide. Mrs O'Flynn, a delightful silver haired lady immaculately dressed, measured the ladies. I know, I had jodhpurs made. I felt very important as 'Mamma', Jimmy and I went up to the parlour where she wielded the tape while Jimmy wrote down the measurements.

Kindly Mrs O'Meara owned the next-door drapery shop run, mostly by Josie, niece of Maggie Carey,

whom we met at my grandmother's house. My father changed his shoes frequently and laces seemed to break far too often, pre-nylon. This meant that whoever was near at the time dashed over to O'Meara's for a new pair. I never remember waiting for money. Whenever the shop was shut, Sundays on half-day, I knocked on the hall-door and was given the required laces – never a grumble or a cross look.

They ordered the comic, 'Rainbow', for me every week. It came without fail I hope I paid for that, I think I did!

Time to go home – I have only travelled one street and am only seven or eight years of age so, you see, even then Fethard was a remarkably interesting town. ●

by Rena Staunton (nee Stokes) London

Fethard Sewage – a pressing problem



Barrack Street during 1937 Fethard Sewage Scheme. The house in the background was occupied by Mr & Mrs Jack Cummins, part of Mary Purcells house can be also seen. Back L to R: Michael McInerney, Alice McInerney, Jim O'Mahony, Agnes Allen, Eddie Coffey, Jimmy McInerney. In front: Mick Hennessy, Kiernan Kelly.

In the early thirties the disposal of sewage in our town area became a pressing problem. An outbreak of typhoid and the possibility of further cases brought a positive response from the South Tipp Health Board.

The sewage system then was, to say the least, primitive and for surface waste only. Waste land and laneways were to often fouled with human waste – where an unwary traveller was more than likely to put ‘a foot in it’. Dr Naughton, the then County Medical Officer of Health in Clonmel, wrote to a meeting of the South Tipperary Board of Health in Clonmel, “Having previously surveyed the system in part

with Dr Stokes and Mr Connolly (C. Engineer), the existing drainage consists of a stone-built sewer of primitive type and intended, in the first instance, for surface water only.”

This runs on the north side of Main Street, Barrack Street and Burke Street with an appreciable number of lavatories linked up to it. At a number of points along the river, sewage and effluent is emitted. At one point near the ‘pound’ crude sewage in volume pours onto the public passage. In periods of dryness the stream flow is very small and much nuisance arises of foulness from stream and riverbed.

As regards the ‘Green’ area in

Fethard, there is no water laid on. The water distribution system as originally planned has not been completed for this area.

The estimated cost for proper drainage for the town would be approx £3,000 pounds

So having in view the very recent occurrence of typhoid in this town and the possibility of further cases arising from defective sewage and also the large population (over 1200 persons), I regard the installation of a complete modern sewage disposal system as an fundamental and urgent necessity. I many add that it is the most pressing problem I have seen in this county yet!

Secretary – “That matter has been before the board for the past four

years and the last order made was that Mr Mead (County Surveyor) was to submit plans for a sewage scheme for Fethard.” That is three years ago.

Commissioner Meehan decided to ask the minster for local Government to sanction the appointment of a consulting engineer for this and such other sewage or water schemes that may be considered urgent by the County Medical Officer. Suffice to say, that our present system has provided this basic need for the last seventy years and provides us with a sharp contrast in the way things were all those years ago. At least now we can wonder off the beaten track without putting a foot in it! ●

by Jimmy McNerney

Fethard & Killusty Community Council

This year, the Community Council continued with its ongoing efforts to create and maintain a viable, vibrant and visible community in the Parish of Fethard & Killusty. Continuing on in the tradition of Fethard & Killusty Community Council, since its inception in 1976, the present committee and members, while sustaining their ongoing activities, brought some of their projects to completion, and, looking to the future, took on many new endeavours in 2008.

The Board of Directors of Fethard & Killusty Muintir Council Limited comprises of Joe Kenny (Chairman), Edwina Newport (Secretary), Jimmy

Connolly (Treasurer), Very Rev. Canon Breen P.P., Ger Manton, Thelma Griffith, Maria Murphy (PRO), Peter Grant, Paddy McEvoy, Brian Sheehy, Liam Hayes, Diana Stokes and David Woodlock. Meetings are held monthly (usually on the third Tuesday), at 8.30pm, in the Fr. Tirry Community Centre. If you feel that you have something to contribute to the community or if there is an issue you would like to have addressed, please bring it to the attention of the committee or any member of the organisation.

The Community Council would like to take this opportunity to thank and acknowledge the presence and

co-operation of the great staff on the Community Employment Scheme who contribute so much, not alone, to the wider community, but also, to the activities of the Community Council. This year, for various reasons, many new faces joined the scheme, we would like to welcome you all on-board. There is no doubt that the strongest link on the scheme is Joan O'Donohoe. In her role, as Supervisor of the Community Employment Scheme, and manager of the Community Office and the Fr. Tirry Community Centre, Joan is an integral part of the many and varied activities of the Community Council. Always obliging and ever diligent an enormous amount of credit and gratitude is due to Joan. 'Thank You', Joan, for all your work and for keeping the ship afloat.

At the outset of 2008 one of the main objectives of the Community Council was the refurbishment and redevelopment of the former Convent Hall into a dedicated Youth Centre. We are delighted to now have this project completed. Meticulously and methodically well-guided by Jimmy Connolly, Tynan Construction Ltd., Moyglass, worked tirelessly on site for the past number of months and on the first Sunday of December the facility was open for viewing by the community. The committee and members of Fethard Community Council would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank the directors and staff of Tynan Construction Ltd., for their excellent work and attention to detail in bringing the building and its grounds to its current condition. We hope that in early 2009 the



Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Mr Barry Andrews TD photographed with committee members on his visit to Fethard Community Playschool on Friday 22nd August. L to R: Benny Tynan, Abby McKay, Joe Burke, Pamela Morrissey, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Mr Barry Andrews, Deputy Mattie McGrath, Cllr Jimmy O'Brien, Ger Boland (County Childcare Committee), Cllr Tom Ambrose, Chairman of South Tipperary County Council, and Cllr Pat Norris.



Dr. Martin Mansergh, Minister of State, photographed on his visit to view the Fethard & Killusty Community Council's Youth Project in response for assistance to the committee's submission for government funding for a Youth Officer. L to R: Joe Kenny, Diana Stokes, Benny Tynan, Jimmy Connolly, Cllr. Siobhán Ambrose, Dr. Martin Mansergh, Ger Manton, Liam Hayes and Peter Grant

Youth Centre will be furnished and open for use. It is envisaged that the facility will provide a safe and secure place in which young people can enjoy their leisure time. It is hoped that this will be made possible by the involvement of adult supervisors. Already a number of adult volunteers have pledged their involvement to the Youth Centre.

On the 22nd August this year, the Minister for Children, Mr Barry Andrews T.D. paid a visit to Fethard. The purpose of this visit was for him to see, first hand, the work being done with regard to the provision of services for the younger members of the community. Both Fethard Community Council and the newly established, ACORN Childcare Committee had made applications for funding to support their efforts. The Community Council had hoped to secure funding for a dedicated Youth Officer for the Convent Hall. Unfortunately, due to declining economic conditions no new projects are currently being

funded. At present, other sources of funding are being identified by the Community Council.

ACORN Childcare Fethard Ltd are well advanced with their plans to develop a purpose-built childcare facility adjacent to the local primary schools. Their application for funding was endorsed by South Tipperary County Childcare Committee and has been forwarded to the Minister's Department for consideration. A response is awaited, but the current economic environment will probably delay such announcements for the foreseeable future, at least. Meanwhile, the ACORN Committee are progressing with plans, in collaboration with a number of other community organisations, to acquire the identified site from South Tipperary County Council.

In April, a very interesting and well-attended public meeting took place to inform locals of the proposed Fethard / Saratoga Sister City initiative. Two visitors from Saratoga, Dr.



*Mike Cahill from Saratoga photographed with friends of the late Eily Cahill from Coolmoine.
L to R: Tony Newport, Margaret Flanagan, John Slattery, Mike Cahill, Joe Ahearne and Rosanne Carroll.*



At the Fethard and the Town of Saratoga sister town presentation were L to R: Brendan Kenny (Slievenamon Golf Club), Maurice Moloney (Coolmore), Mike Cahill (Saratoga), Cllr John Fahey (Chairperson South Tipperary County Council), Dave Cummings (Saratoga) and John O'Flynn (South Tipperary Farming).



At the Fethard and the Town of Saratoga sister town presentation were L to R: Mike Cahill (Saratoga), C.J. Harrington (Saratoga), Dave Cummings (Saratoga), Cllr John Fahey (Chairperson South Tipperary County Council) and Joe Kenny (Chairperson Fethard & Killusty Community Council).

Mike Cahill and Mr. Tom Cummings, highlighted the many links, both existing and potential, between the two communities. They stated that the three primary links identified were Equine, Cultural / Historic and Youth. An open invitation was extended to the community of Fethard to visit Saratoga and it is likely that an entourage from there will travel to spend some time in Fethard, possibly in 2009.

Fethard Community Council were delighted to be nominated, by South Tipperary County Council, for the Pride of Place Competition this year. This competition is hosted by Co-operation Ireland under its Local Authority Programme in conjunction with the all-island Local Authority Steering Forum comprising officials from Local Authorities in both parts of the Island. The main thrust of this competition is to celebrate community contribution to local society and the creation of civic pride. The Pride of Place Competition is all about acknowledging in a meaningful manner the fantastic selfless work being done by people in communities all over the island of Ireland. It is recognition of the work being done to create communities for tomorrow while respecting the heritage and culture of the past. It acclaims the work being done to create viable, vibrant and visible communities. It is also about giving local authorities an opportunity to participate in the heart of their communities, because while acknowledging that, in addition to providing

essential services, local authorities also have a responsibility to build communities. 2008 is the sixth year of the competition, which has enjoyed tremendous success and continues to grow in terms of prestige and popularity. Since its inception hundreds of community groups have participated in the competition, with nominations being received from almost every local authority in Ireland.

Judging for the Pride of Place competition took place, in Fethard, on Wednesday 16th July. On this afternoon, the judges were introduced to the community of Fethard and the activities – past, present and future – of Fethard Community Council by means of a remarkable presentation, prepared and delivered by our Chairman, Joe Kenny. This was followed by a short question and answer session before departing the Tirry Centre on a walking tour of the town, so that the visitors could see, for themselves, the outcomes of community development in Fethard. The day concluded with the judges being brought along the Town Wall, in the grounds of Holy Trinity Church, which impressed them greatly. The Gala Awards Ceremony for the Competition took place in Cappoquin, Co. Waterford in November, at which Fethard was represented by Chairperson, Joe Kenny, and Secretary, Edwina Newport. This event was hosted by Waterford County Council in association with Co-operation Ireland and The Pride of Place Committee. The venue for the Gala Ceremony, Cappoquin



New Internet Café open to the public at the Tirry Community Centre

Community Centre, a wonderful multi-functional community facility, is in itself a testament to what communities can achieve when local people power is harnessed in a focussed and ambitious way. Special guests on the night were President Mary McAleese and her husband Dr. Martin McAleese. President McAleese has visited countless communities around the island and has spoken passionately about the role that communities play in ensuring that the society we develop, is one which is people centred, inclusive and one which we can all be proud of. It was therefore most appropriate that the President honoured the organisers and their guests with her presence on the night.

An Internet Café was established in the Autumn by the Community Council in collaboration with the National Learning Network work experience programme. This facility is manned by Jack Kenny and is open from 12 noon to 4.30pm on Mondays,

Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The availability of broadband Internet access, for a nominal fee, is especially welcome to those who do not have a computer or Internet access in their own homes. This service is particularly beneficial to school-going youths who wish to access information from the world-wide-web to assist them with school projects, etc.; for newcomers to Fethard, especially those from abroad, who wish to maintain contact with home or for visitors to the area who wish to access e-mails or make further travel arrangements as they go. The Internet Café is temporarily situated in the Tirry Community Centre and will be relocated to the Convent Hall when feasible.

During 2008 it became possible to purchase Fethard Community Lotto tickets on-line at fethard.com. This method of purchase provides an ideal opportunity for Fethard people, who do not reside here, to subscribe to and support the local lotto. The

Community Lotto continues to be the main fundraising activity of the Community Council, many thanks to all those who support it.

The importance and recognition of Fethard as "the most important medieval small town in Ireland", particularly the presence and condition of the Town Wall, gained further prominence this year. Another successful Walled Towns Day, promoted by the Community Council in conjunction with South Tipperary County Council, Fáilte Ireland and the Heritage Council, was held on Sunday August 24th. Blessed with one of the best days weather of the year the event was extremely well supported, by stallholders, side attractions and visitors from many countries. The National Heritage Council of Ireland, through the Irish Walled Towns Network, has

facilitated funding to be allocated for re-development works on the Town Wall. Such work is currently underway in the Watergate area. Also, a Feasibility Study was undertaken by KPMG on the Town Hall (Tholsel). Numerous contributions and opinions were noted on the day and work is ongoing on the final document. Two other documents, also nearing completion, are the Public Realm Plan and Town Wall Conservation and Management Plan. In future, the contents of these plans will be considered in conjunction with the Fethard Town Development Plan. The Fethard Plans Administration Committee was formally established as a sub-group of the Community Council this year.

Two new initiatives currently being promoted by Fethard Community Council are the acquisition of Fairtrade



Members of Fethard & Killusty Community Council photographed with a group of Polish visitors who came to Fethard to look at various community projects undertaken in the town and to learn how they were achieved.

The group visited the Fethard Town Wall, Fr. Tirry Community Centre and the Abymill Theatre and were accompanied by Paul Keating, Irish Leader Support Unit, Tipperary Institute, and Catherine Corcoran, Rural Development, Tipperary Institute.

Status and the possible development of Fethard as a Transition Town. The Community Council are being advised and supported on both projects by Ms. Catherine Corcoran, Fethard resident and Rural Development Specialist at Tipperary Institute. Fethard Community Council have taken the first step to enable Fethard to become a Fairtrade Town. At the September meeting, the organisation ratified a motion of support of the proposal and agreed to serve Fairtrade products at its events. Initial meetings have taken place between the primary and secondary schools to get them involved and to help promote the Fairtrade initiative. The next step is to convene a local steering group to encourage local retail and catering outlets to stock and serve Fairtrade products and to ensure continued commitment to the Fairtrade status. The Fairtrade Mark is the only independent guarantee of a better deal for third world producers and is supported by all the main

development agencies in Ireland. The more Fairtrade goods we buy, the more producers can be supported.

The Transition Town concept is a voluntary community initiative working to help make the transition from a dependency on fossil fuels to a low carbon future. Having realised that governments aren't facing up to the looming energy and environmental crises each town implements its own version of energy descent and begins a "Skilling up for powerdown". What began in Kinsale – the world's first Transition Town – in 2005, has become something of a movement internationally. Maybe Fethard will be the next Transition Town?

In the spirit of the Pride of Place Awards Fethard & Killusty Community Council continues to strive to create a community for tomorrow while respecting the heritage and culture of the past. Happy Christmas and every good wish to you for 2009. ●



Helping with the postage of your Fethard & Killusty Annual Newsletter at the Tirry Community Centre last year were L to R: Shamie Hickey, Brendan Kenny, Eddie O'Brien, Tina Conran, Jessica Conran, Shannon Hickey, Daniel Hickey, Linda Kenny, Rory Walsh. Front L to R: Evelyn O'Connor, Monica Hickey, Margaret O'Donnell, Marion O'Connor (RIP) and Aaron Conran.

The global village



*Photographed at the ABBA Extravaganza Mamma Mania' night in aid of Cystic Fibrosis are
L to R: Mira Nagey, Jessica Cooke and Louiza Lima*

Fethard, like almost every town and village in Ireland, has become more multicultural in the past decade. There are people living here from England, Scotland, Wales, France, Germany, the Czech Republic, Hungary, China, Poland, Australia, Chile, the USA, Brazil and New Zealand. Some of these are here for many years and now call Fethard home. Others are part of the mass migration that Ireland has witnessed from Eastern Europe since the political restrictions have been lifted in their countries and huge numbers were needed to build the new Ireland. As I write, the Celtic Tiger is well and truly gone and record numbers are leaving the country again as jobs are drying up. I spoke to a cross-section of the new arrivals and asked them what they think of Ireland.

Originally, this article was going to focus on the arrivals from the Eastern European Countries, but as I researched the article, I saw that there was a broader sphere, so I spoke with Luiza, a student from Brazil who is here to study English, with Lucie from the Czech Republic, who arrived in Fethard in a very roundabout way and has been here almost four years now, and Sarah who arrived in Fethard from New Zealand to visit her sister nine years ago, met an Irishman (the author of this article), and moved here in 2001.

Luiza Lima is a student from Sao Paulo in Brazil, a city with a population of 20,000,000. She came to Fethard via an agency that places students with families in Ireland. The aim of her visit was to learn English, so she spent her time living with Bill

and Liz Kennedy and their family for four months. She went to school in Fethard and returned this week to her native Brazil with an All Ireland gold medal, which she won with the school volleyball team.

Her stay in Ireland was enjoyable, as she took part in many activities, both in school and outside of it. When asked what she liked, she said that she liked the people, the food and she found the countryside very beautiful. Her major dislike was the weather and the lack of any decent form of public transport. She also found some of the Irish habits a bit strange, such as people saying that they would call, but never did, and the fact that Irish people rarely met up in each other's houses, preferring to go to the pub.

When asked the million dollar question, "Will you return to Ireland?", she said that she would in the future, to visit but not to live. She likes the sunshine in her native Brazil.

Sarah crooks came to Fethard from Palmerston North in New Zealand in 1999 to visit her sister Leisa, whose husband Michael Hurley was working with John Halley's veterinary practise in town. She met her future husband in McCarthy's, and after two years of

to and fro for both of them between New Zealand and Ireland, she gave up her job as a retail manager with the family business and moved to Fethard.

Sarah loves the Irish countryside and has probably seen more of it than most Irish people, as she has travelled to all thirty two counties.



Sarah Murphy with her children Kate and Lily

The cultural difference wasn't that big, coming from New Zealand, though she did have trouble with some accents and the speed of our speech when she first arrived.

Like Luiza, she found the weather hard to adjust to, especially the damp. Another negative was the litter. She couldn't get over the amount that is dumped along the

roadsides from passing cars.

That said, she definitely calls Ireland home now. Married in 2002 and they now have three daughters, Kate, Lily and Suzie.

Lucie Horska came to Ireland from the Czech Republic. Unlike most people who relocated to Ireland from the Czech Republic, Lucy didn't come for a better wage or a higher standard of living. She came because she thought that she was going to a concert. She was at a party, a little the worse for wear, when her friend asked her if she would go somewhere the follow-

ing day. She agreed to go, and when her friend turned up at her door, she asked which concert they were going to. Ireland, came the reply, "We're going to visit a friend in Dublin". So she grabbed her passport and headed off to the airport. That was four years ago. She started out in Dublin, moved to Dungarvan and after that to Clonmel, where she answered an advert in the paper looking for staff in G&T's Restaurant. That was three years ago and she still lives and works in Fethard.

She was a legal secretary in the Czech Republic and now works as a waitress come trainee chef in Kellett's Restaurant in McCarthy's.

Lucy's favourite thing about Ireland is that she gets paid weekly and not monthly as she did at home. As with the other two ladies, she doesn't like our ten-month winters, but that is counterbalanced by the people and the lifestyle. When I men-

tioned that another interviewee hated the litter, she laughed and said that Ireland is shining compared to her country where they only tidy up if some important dignitary is visiting town. She doesn't know how long she will stay in Ireland, but doesn't envisage leaving in the near future.

My intention was to interview more people for this article, but time just ran out. One group that agreed to talk (I'll get ye next year!), are from Hungary. A common thread running through their stories was that one person arrived in Fethard, got a job and a place to stay, and then the others followed on from home. All seem quite content in Fethard.

It will be interesting to see in ten or twenty years time if this first wave of people become part of the 'New Irish', settling and rearing families, as the Irish did in America, England and Australia in past generations. ●

— by Vincent Murphy



*Photographed at the Frank Purcell Memorial Golf Classic Barbecue
L to R: Ivica Garbinska and Tibor Michacs*

Old men!

by John Fogarty

*I heard the old, old men say,
"Everything alters,
And one by one we drop away."
(W.B. Yeats.)*

One Sunday evening after the devotions that old man from somewhere out near Market Hill came staggering slowly homeward along The Valley. Stopping often. Fumbling at his pockets. Searching for something. I remember him well. How he wore a long dark crombie overcoat with shiny forearms. Even though it was July. Black, scuffed-out boots on his feet. A greasy Paddy cap on his head. A collarless shirt.

We followed him along, a bunch of jeering boys, laughing at his erratic, uncertain progress, like the children of Hamelin behind the Pied Piper. Once he swung round and lurched after us, roaring: 'Will ye shag off home to whoever owns ye!'

We fled from him, screaming, delighted. He ran out of breath at Paddy Dahill's and stopped chasing us but continued on, going in the wrong direction, heading back the way he'd come. Someone called to him.

'Hey Pad, yer going the wrong way.' He stopped, realised his mistake. 'Tis all yeer fault ye little bostoons' he shouted. He righted himself, and began to make his way back up The Valley, the river and crumbling town walls to his right.

We followed, calling out to him, trying to provoke him into chasing us again.

He stopped when he got to the row of tall evergreens that concealed the bank house from passers-by. Abruptly he dropped to a sitting position on the grass-covered remnants of the low wall opposite.

He pulled out a packet of Woodbines and shook one out.

'I'm on me way home from Pearl Harbour' he muttered, attempting to light up. 'Got bombed in Pearl Harbour' he said. Then: 'I'm foundered' Suddenly he lurched to his feet, feinting to run after us, almost falling over as he did so. He laughed as we fled.

'Can't ye go home our that ye little feckers - who the hell owns ye at all' he said. He bent forward, elbows on his knees, smoking his Woodbine, eyes fixed on the ground, muttering sometimes to himself, 'Who the hell owns ye at all?' 'Hey Pad, Pad,' we called, wanting him to chase us again.

He ignored us. Just kept dragging deeply on his Woodbine until the red end was almost in to his lips. Then he stretched out on the flat of his back. He didn't move for ages. We wondered if he was dead and began tiptoeing up to him. Fearfully, lest he really was dead - or only pretending so that he could grab one of us when we got close. Suddenly, as we came right up to him his jaw dropped and a loud snarling noise escaped from his

open mouth. We scattered in terror, stopping a short distance away, nudging one another.

'Is he after dying?' someone asked. Some of the older lads said that was the kind of noise people make when they die and others said, no, it was only a snore or a belch. We watched and waited.

After a while Pad turned over and rolled into the grass margin. He woke up with a volley of curses. 'Feck off home to whoever owns ye, ye little bost-hoons' he said, when he saw us still there, looking at him.

After a while he got to his feet and leaned against a lamp-post for ages. We watched him make his way slowly up The Valley, saluting Mamie Mackey and Josie Barrett who watched him pass with disapproving little shakes of their heads. He turned at the judy and vanished into Kerry Street, heading home to Market Hill. We didn't see him again for a long time after that.

There was another old man who lived in a house at the top of Grove wood. Simon was his name. Often

when we were in the Wood we'd go to his house. Not to visit though. It was a tumbledown affair with a rusting galvanised roof. There were a few fields full of briars and buachalainns surrounding it. We'd sneak as close as we could to the house and lob stones onto the galvanised roof. They'd land

with a crash then slither noisily to the ground. If Simon was inside he'd come rushing out. We'd show ourselves from a safe distance then disappear into the wood as he came towards us with intent.

What we wanted was for him to chase us through the wood. And sometimes he did. We were able to keep well ahead of him because he was old and couldn't run very well with his broken boots and stiff legs. We'd hide in

the undergrowth, secure, watching him go past, agitated, muttering to himself. He may have been slow, but he was relentless. Implacable. He just kept going and going. And if he latched onto your trail the fun soon disappeared as he kept up a dogged pursuit. Once he managed to catch



Patsy Fogarty photographed with Phyllis Herrick who used to stay with her aunt Liz Mackey

somebody, Billy Sayers, I think, and gave him a few kicks up the arse. We didn't throw stones on his roof for a long time after that.

Sometimes he'd come to town along the Grove road. He'd make his way down through the wood in his broken boots. Wearing an old belted top coat full of tears. His hair grey, always mussed up. He was thin, very thin, with a grey moustache on his thin face. If we were on The Valley and not gone off somewhere gallivanting, word would flash around that Simon was coming in to town. We'd run out past the creamery to meet him. Shamelessly we'd call out to him for money.

Have you any money, Simon? 'Give us money, Simon! A penny, some ha'pennies, a threepenny bit - anything would do. With a penny you could buy a penny's worth of broken biscuits at Ned Meagher's. A threepenny bit would be real wealth, you'd have to think carefully about how you'd spend that - a sherbet; slab toffee; black twists of liquorice.

Once as he was coming in by

Mockler's Terrace Simon had delved into his pocket and thrown some coins on the road. Mostly pennies. A few hapennies, and maybe, just maybe, the brassy glint of a threepenny bit. A free for all had developed. We'd dived after the coins as they spun and rolled along the road. Everyone desperate to get one. Shouldering one another out of the way. Nobody found the three-

penny bit. Maybe we'd only imagined there was a threepenny bit. But for days afterwards some of us would return to comb the grassy margins along the road and scuff through the accumulated roadside dust. The possibilities that would arise from the finding of that threepenny bit were an irresistible lure. We'd do that too - search for coins - when the amuse-

ments that came for the Carnival had left the Barrack Field. Slowly we'd search

through the big patches of whitened grass where the stalls had been. Always anxious lest someone else should find something first. Usually, though, the Patrick's Place lads had anything that was there hoovered up.

But Hope springs eternal. And for



Fan Dalton and Nora Fogarty (right) photographed at the back of Dalton's house in Redcity. Both were neighbours in the Valley before moving to their new houses in Redcity. c.1960s

a long time afterwards when Simon came to town we'd run to meet him, eyes fixed on that hand, willing it to move towards his pocket. Hoping for a repeat of that day- coins bouncing and rolling along the road. He never did repeat it though. Mostly he just walked on and ignored us. Still the memory of those coins spinning along the road drew us back. Irresistibly.

Later, much later; years later. I'm aged fourteen, left school and out working, like most in my class at school. A few have gone on to secondary school. I work on O'Connell's farm out in Rathvin. Every morning I wait for Neddie O'Connell, who seems very old to me, to come from the house into the yard. He walks with a stoop and wears an old discoloured trench coat. My first job every morning is to help him into that coat, holding it open like an officer's batman as he thrusts his arms into the sleeves, then jerking it up onto his shoulders, pulling it across his front. It's the most dangerous job of the day as he grunts, spits and often clears his nose with a blast, one finger pressed to a nostril as I dodge around straightening him up. Finally, I place a tattered black beret on his head.

With Neddy resembling an Irish agricultural version of Don Quixote he begins the task of initiating me into the mysteries of farm work. He shows me how to muck out stables, saving as much dry straw as possible, throwing out the droppings. From him I learn how to tackle a pony and get him between the shafts of the cart.

Whenever I lift anything heavy, like a bale of hay he always says 'You do the lifting young fella and I'll do the grunting.' He stops often to fill his pipe. As he does he talks and talks. I listen. I like listening to Neddie. It beats forking dung.

He traces to me about the epic hunts that he took part in with the Tipps when he was younger, how he practically lifted his hunter over a stone wall one time beyond in Hollyford. He half-squats, knees touching, hauling upwards on imaginary bridle reins as he demonstrates how he managed it, breaking wind in the process. Another time, he tells me, he faced a massive bank in Ardmayle; he was the only one who got over it on account of the cob he was riding having feet like a cat. Great balance he had, that cob. I learn of how he bought the cob from a farmer out around Cloneen and the great bargain he drove. I begin to form a picture of Neddie dashing gallantly across the countryside, bounding effortlessly over streams, ditches, stone walls, gates.

Then one day Mickey Kearney arrives and I work with him pulling buachalainns. He also spends a lot of time filling his pipe and tracing. He traces mostly about horses that he has broken for various farmers and members of the gentry. And the gallons of porter that he's drank over the years. He talks about The Great War and tells stories about French brothels.

I mention Neddie's prowess in the saddle. Mickey squeals with what I take to be laughter. 'Neddie jumping

is it, sure he couldn't sit straight on a hobby horse!

Later, when Neddie comes along the two of them fill their pipes together and spend ages chatting. I listen and look on. Mickey claps Neddie on the back and tells him what a great pilot he was, what a great 'sate' he had on board his hunter in years gone by when he rode to the opening meets. How all the women used to be eyeing him up. I am confused but say nothing.

Neddie's favourite story, which he tells often, is about some character in the town who was fond of drinking and was frequently to be seen lying on the footpath, scuttered. One day while slumped against a wall on the Main Street the parish priest happened along. 'Drunk again today' he says to yer man. 'Arrah don't worry about it Father, sure so am I' was the answer. Everytime he tells this story Neddie wheezes and shakes with laughter. 'Sure so am I' he repeats.

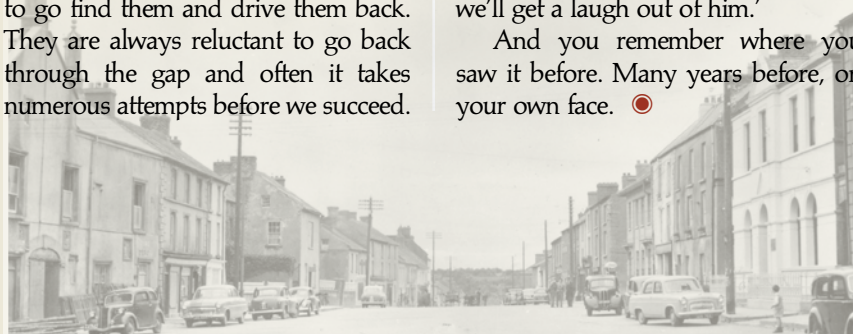
When winter comes we spend a lot of time going around the bounds ditches fencing the gaps where the cattle have broken. But first we have to go find them and drive them back. They are always reluctant to go back through the gap and often it takes numerous attempts before we succeed.

There is one cow in the herd with a white face and two malevolent black rings around her eyes. Neddie blames her for all the breaking.

'Bad cess to her anyway sure the devil must be in that 'aul cripple!' he'd roar in exasperation as she shies away from the gap once more. Neddie takes great care in showing me how to fence a gap with briars, cut from the ditch with a slasher. But next morning when we come with the pony and trap to fodder them the field is empty and the bushes trampled into the ground. The whole process begins again. And continues like that throughout the winter.

Days have passed, become years. Pad, Simon, Neddie and Mickey, those old men of yesteryear, have gone somewhere beyond the horizon. You are older now, but you don't think that you're old, not in the way that you thought the old men of your childhood were old. Then you notice that the youngsters around you are looking at you with a kind of quizzical, indulgent expression on their faces. An expression that seems to say 'sure he'll be all right in a minute just listen and let him ramble on, maybe we'll get a laugh out of him.'

And you remember where you saw it before. Many years before, on your own face. ●



Walking to the USA

— by Vincent Murphy

A man told me one day that he used to ride to Canada from the United States for his lunch, just because he could. He lived along the border of the two countries and could cross between them with ease in the forest without the hassle of passport control, guards and guns. A few years later some men turned airplanes into bombs and made the world a more dangerous place. Governments got scared and ripped a security line through the forest where the man used to ride his horse. He now knows that if he leads his horse onto that strip, he will trigger an alarm that will have him surrounded by men with guns. So now he eats his lunch at home. His story reminded me of the day in the early 1990s when I walked into the USA.

Like thousands of people in the 1980s and 90s, I had to visit the American Embassy in Dublin to look for a visa to visit the USA. Unlike most in the queue, I was lucky enough to have had a job at home, so I was only looking for a holiday visa to go and visit some friends that were working over there. As I waited for my interview at a window in a large open room that allowed no privacy, I listened to the girl in front of me being interviewed. She was crying. The man behind the glass wall carrying out the interview was young and unnecessarily harsh. He was 'God' and she was not getting a visa. He told her to leave. In front of a room full of strangers,

all watching, she had to gather her papers, try to gather herself, and walk out the door. He just looked at me. "Next", he said.

He was bright and articulate and enjoyed putting me in my place. Like the girl before me, he told me that he thought that I was going to work illegally in the USA. I pointed out that I had a job running the family bar and undertaker business. "So you pull pints. You can make more money pulling pints in the States. You don't get much money here", he announced to all who wanted to listen. I explained that the business would one day be mine. He asked me what I would do if he refused me the visa. I pointed out that I was flying via Toronto, so I would quite happily spend my holidays there instead. He gave me a four-week holiday visa.

A few weeks later, having spent a couple of days with my cousin Johnny in Toronto, we set out for New York. We got a drive in a horse trailer from the racetrack in Woodbine to the border at Fort Erie. The driver talked. He had a tale to tell and he told it well. His childhood years were spent in Europe. Then a crowd called the Nazi's met him and didn't like his religion so they threw him into a concentration camp. Another crowd came along and opened the gates and left him out again. They were Americans. He took one look at what was left of Europe and decided that he didn't like it very much, so he got on the first

boat out of there, crossed the Atlantic and ended up in Canada. He was sixteen and he had nothing. But he saw a man riding a race one day and decided that he could be a jockey. He had never sat on a horse in his life, but someone showed him how to ride and he rode his way to the racing hall of fame. He won over 4,000 races. Along the way he had good times and bad times. He had built up three fortunes. He also married three times. Each wife took one of the fortunes. So he was down to training in Toronto and living in the flat in his trailer, moving from track to track. He said that he was never happier in his life. And then he left us off at Fort Erie. We stood at the Peace Bridge, the gateway into America.

As we walked across, people looked at us from behind glass. They were all in vehicles of some description. We were the only ones on foot, so we had the footpath to ourselves. About half way across, we came to a small flag painted low on the bridge wall. It was the Canadian flag. Then there was a gap of a few feet to another painted flag. It was the stars and stripes of the United States. Between them was no-mans land. Nowhere. We stood nowhere on Earth. I wanted to make a phone call to my old teacher but there were no phones around. It was a few years before the mobile phone revolution. "Remember me, sir! It's Murphy sir! Remember what you told me in class one day . . . that I was

going nowhere . . . well I've arrived. Bye sir." And hang up and leave him wonder what the hell that was about. But as I said, I had no phone so I paused for a minute enjoying my time in nowhere, and then stepped into the USA.

We walked past immigration officials checking the papers of people in vehicles, but no one gave us a second glance. So we kept walking and walking. Pretty soon we were at a loading bay for trucks without having our papers checked. So we walked back. We asked a half asleep security man where we could get our passport stamped and he woke up pretty fast. "What are you doing this far into the United States without your paperwork in order . . .?", and he went on and on. Then he told us where the office was.

The gentlemen there were much more polite. We even became the focus of attention of all the staff in the office when we announced that we had walked across the bridge. By the looks that we were given, it had been a long time since anyone had walked from Canada to the USA. They wished us well, but couldn't tell us how to get to the nearby city of Buffalo on foot. None of them had ever taken the journey on foot. So we jumped off the far side of the truck loading bay and onto the grass margin that divided the traffic flowing into and out of the two countries and walked off into the US of A. ●



Dan Mullins, formerly from The Valley, Fethard, photographed with his family of three children and eight grandchildren celebrating Christmas 2007 in New Milford NJ



Pat Broderick photographed with his son Callan while at home in Fethard on holidays in July this year. Pat is living in Melbourne with his wife Rowena for the past fifteen years and have two children, Aisling and Callan. Pat works as a Production Manager with a health company in Melbourne.



Frank Quirke, chairman of the Tipperary Foxhounds presenting Mr Tony Newport with life membership of the Tipperary Foxhounds in recognition of his long years of dedication and support. The presentation was made at the Tipperary Foxhounds New Year's meet held at Fethard on the 1st January 2008.



Lar Whyte photographed with his twin daughters Katie (left) and Siobhán, and also their friend Marie O'Connell (right) at the 60s Rock & Roll Weekend at Lonergan's Bar



John Carroll photographed with Joan Carroll (left) and Ann Browne at the 'Rock 'N Roll' weekend in aid of Paws at Lonergan's Bar.



Photographed at the presentation of the Mick Ahearne Memorial Trophy at the Hospice Fundraiser in Fethard Ballroom. L to R: Gertie Corcoran (organiser), Killenaule,; Tony Marshall (Chairman Dancers Club), Ballyboe, Billy Corcoran (organiser), Killenaule; Monica Ahearne, Fethard, who presented the trophy on behalf of her late husband Mick, Siobhán Barry and Robert Phelan, Fethard, winners of the competition.



Zero Tolerance band at the 'Battle of the Bands' L to R: Ted Barrett, Garreth Lawrence, Louis Rice, Noel O'Brien and Tony Myler. The band also entered the RTÉ 2FM School of Rock competition in October along with thousands of other bands from Ireland. Five bands were picked from each region and in November it was announced on the Larry Gogan Show that Zero Tolerance were one of the five selected from Munster. On 6th December they will go on to the next round and battle against the other four bands selected from Munster. If successful they will go to Dublin for the national finals.



*Purchasing their daffodils for 'Daffodil Day' outside Fethard Post Office are
L to R: Sarah Murphy, Hannie Leahy, Joe Barrett and Kitty Ahearne*



*Photographed at the Halloween Party at Loneragan's Bar are L to R: Gemma Coady,
Oliver Coady, Tony Randell, Frances Coady and Maura O'Connell.*