

Fethard & Killusty NEWSLETTER 2013



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Congratulations to John and Margaret Fitzgerald, Monroe, Fethard who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in October 2013, photographed with their family above.



Sr. Monica Kevin OSU, originally from Barrack Street, photographed on a visit to Presentation Convent Fethard in August 2013. L to R: Sr. Clement Wall, Sr. Maureen Power, Sr. Winnie Kirwan, Sr. Monica Kevin and Sr. Celsus Ryan.

*Front Cover Photograph – Fethard's Three Centenarians 2013
Celebrating their 100th Birthday this year L to R: Nellie Shortall, Josie Casey and Chrissie Byrne.*

FETHARD & KILLUSTY NEWSLETTER 2013

Dedicated to our friends and relations
living away from home

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A year to remember?

by Joe Kenny (Editor)

An eventful year is slowly coming to a close. It will be one of those special years that many will remember for varying reasons, some for good and some for bad.

One of the highlights of 2013 was, and I think we can safely claim, that for the first time in Fethard's long history, we celebrated the birthdays of three centenarians in the parish in one year. Our heartiest congratulations to Chrissie Byrne (Killusty), Josie Casey (Derryluskin) and Nellie Shortall (The Valley) who together have created a unique record that will not be surpassed for a long time,

if ever, and definitely not by men!

Local small businesses and some large businesses took a real hammering over the past few years' recession and this became very obvious this year with the closure of XL Grocery Shop (formerly Whyte's Grocery) on Main Street; SPAR Supermarket (Tom Hennessy) at Kerry Street; Newport's Newsagency on Main Street, after 93 years service to the Fethard community; and Dawn Fresh Foods Factory, formerly Lydon House Exports, built on the Killenaule Road in 1974, and taken over by the Waterford based Dawn Meat Group in 1984. Other



100-year-old Josie Casey, Derryluskin, receives a huge round of applause at a special Mass in Holy Trinity Parish Church Fethard to mark the occasion of her 100th Birthday on September 3, 2013. Josie is photographed here with Fr. John Meagher OSA, Canon Tom Breen P.P. and Fr. Anthony McSweeney C.C.

noticeable effects of the recession, enforced shorter opening hours for some businesses, tighter restrictions in credit, severe cutbacks in employment, high emigration and, unfortunately, also an increase in suicides.

If all that wasn't bad enough to bear, we were also required to pay a lot more for everyday services along with the new property tax and a metered water supply – a big change from ten years ago when the banks would literally 'throw' money at you!

Another notable feature of 2013 was the great work by voluntary community groups and individuals who appear to never fail in their commitment to fellow inhabitants and their community. This year alone we have the Fethard Players celebrating their 100th anniversary; Fethard Historical Society their 25th anniversary; Abymill Theatre its 25th anniversary; not to mention all the long-standing organisations that have provided community services for decades such as the GAA (founded 1887), Legion of Mary (founded 1852), ICA (founded in 1926 by Olivia Hughes), Country Markets (founded 1947), Community Council (founded as Fethard Development Association in 1967), Community Games (founded 1967), Day Care Centre (founded 1996), Athletic Club NACA (founded 1956), St. Rita's Camogie Club (founded 1912), Bridge Club (founded 1975), Senior Citizen's Club (founded 1982), Meals on Wheels (founded 1967), Fethard Ballroom (re-opened

1993), and in Killusty we have the Soccer Club (formed in 1969) and Pony Show (formed in 1962). For the younger generation we've had various youth clubs based in the old Tirry Club since the 1960s. These clubs later continued to operate from Fethard Ballroom up to today where they are based in the suitably equipped Convent Community Hall. Others still surviving today are the Fethard Scouts (founded January 1987) and Girl Guides (founded November 1987). Last but not least, the 'Emigrants Newsletter' is still surviving since its first publication by the Legion of Mary in 1959.

There are many other voluntary groups in Fethard that have, and still provide fantastic support to the community over the years and maybe someday we will be in a position to fully acknowledge this contribution before it is stifled and slowly eroded by ridiculous regulations and individual indifference.

Fethard is very lucky to have such a vibrant community and to be such a wonderful town to reside. This year we may seem to have lost a lot of ground but, as over the past 800 years, Fethard has adapted and learned how to survive. I have no doubt that we will leave this town well poised for the next generation and a better place to live in, like our ancestors also did for us.

I take this opportunity to wish all our readers at home and away, a very Happy and Holy Christmas and a Very Prosperous New Year! ●

Graveyard Committee

by Gerry Long

This year the Graveyard clean-up group expanded their amount of activity. The number of cemeteries cleaned went from two to three when Rathcoole was added to the existing Tullamaine and red City were also cleaned.

Overall the cleaning operations were very well supported by the volunteers who gave their time and labour during the long summer evenings and did a splendid job on the undergrowth of briars ivy and grass etc. which infested the graveyards. The Committee greatly appreciates these volunteers and new hands are always welcome.

The dry summer facilitated the painting of the Marker crosses in the graveyards a job that was impossible with the previous years wet weather, again we would like to thank our great team of painters who undertook the work. The effort was also greatly aided by the acquisition of new equipment, which proved far more suitable for the various tasks, which were necessary during the cleaning operations.

The committee would like to thank all those who aided in the purchase of this equipment, principally Tipperary SR. County Council who grant aided the committees efforts and whose staff and officials were always helpful and courteous towards our requests.

One of the major problems which was encountered during this summers efforts was of course the extremely good weather which under normal circumstances is to be welcomed. It was however responsible for extremely fast rates of regrowth thus making some of the good work already undertaken moot. However by continuing this work the

committee feels that it gets easier and more an act of maintenance from year to year.

A program of works for the next year is already in progress and we look forward to next spring and summer when this program of works can be undertaken. For further information or if you would like to volunteer please contact Seamus Barry at 086 2547162. ●



Pat Bourke, John Barry, Jimmy O'Shea, and Jarlath Connolly at the Marker Cross at Rathcoole Graveyard summer 2013.

Parish Greetings!

Greetings to all at home and away as we approach Christmas and the New Year.

Who am I? As we journey through life the real challenge is allowing God to guide us on the path to fulfilling our true destiny and being able to answer the question, 'Who am I', honestly. In today's world it's hard to hear God's call with all the distractions but he does say, come follow me.

We are called to be Christians

to reach out to each other. Why not start this Christmas and New Year to reach out?

Fr. Anthony and I send our greetings and best wishes to all at home and those in far off places, Australia, Canada etc. May you have happiness, peace and understanding this Christmas in your homes and a place for the child Jesus in your hearts. ●

Fr. Tom Breen and Fr. Anthony McSweeney

Legion of Mary

The Legion of Mary, Fethard, wish to send greetings to all readers for a happy, contented Christmas and New Year. We ask Our Blessed Mother to shower all parishioners and readers with the many blessings and graces received from her Divine Son which will strengthen our Faith and aid us in living authentic Christian lives.

The Legion of Mary meet each Monday and any new member will be made welcome. Members are a lay movement who wish to make faith the aspiration of life in order to achieve personal sanctity. This is the goal of a Christian determined to reach eternal salvation. Being in the Legion helps members to work seriously toward this goal.

Life is more pleasant for all of us when we help one another. The Legion of Mary members appreciate

the prayers many of you offer toward the growth of faith in the Parish. You encourage fellow parishioners with your constant attendance at daily Mass; at the rosary; at our graveyard rosaries in November and rosaries in October and May; at processions in May and at Corpus Christi. We can look back and observe that the effort to come together to pray has been worthwhile.

Legion members visit nursing homes. They enjoy speaking to many of our Fethard friends now living in these homes; they are always made welcome by these people and come away refreshed and happy to have met such patient and thoughtful natives of our locality. In order to appreciate the work being done by the Legionary you might wish to come along to our meetings and learn first hand how we pray

and work.

The meetings have Fr. Meagher as Spiritual Director. We are so happy to be enriched by his presence each Monday evening. Thank you, Father, for your support and direction given so kindly and cheerfully. We express appreciation to the support of our parish priests, the Presentation Sisters and the ever-present Augustinian

hospitality. Our common goal leads us to give our best efforts in the lives we lead so that one day we may join those of our parishioners who have successfully completed their journeys here and now praise and glorify the Blessed Trinity in Eternity.

Your Legionaries wish you well during the Christmas season and throughout the coming year. ●



L to R: Michael Coady, Johnny Coady and Annie Coady, Tullamaine, Fethard

Augustinian Abbey



Welcome to Fr. Lazarus Barkindo OSA, a Nigerian Augustinian

I am reminded by the faithful editor, Mr Joe Kenny, to start thinking of writing a report from the Abbey for the Newsletter of 2013. How quickly the year has gone and with the clocks going back one hour we are reminded that Christmas is at the corner.

So on behalf of the Augustinian community in Fethard, I wish all you readers at home and overseas a blessed Christmas.

The Abbey has survived the scare that it might be closed as noted on pages 8-9 in last year's Newsletter.

There I spelt out the situation of the Augustinians in Ireland where we are all on standby facing the possibility that some communities must be closed. I then appealed to you readers to pray to our 'Lady of Fethard' that we continue to minister here in Fethard. Thanks be to God we are not closed and behold the same community of four friars have been re-appointed to continue on in Fethard.

Three ladies celebrated their 100th birthday this year while in our community, and Fr. John Meagher

celebrated his 97th birthday this year. He is healthy and strong and always eager to get on with his walks.

A unique addition to our community came in December 2012 in the person of Fr. Lazarus Barkindo OSA, a Nigerian Augustinian. He has since settled in very well into the community and ministry within the church. He is also delighted with the friendly reception of the local people as he takes his walks around the town.

What can I write about Fr. Gerry Horan who has completed his twelve years here the last eight of which he operated out of Fethard as our Provincial. He is again resident

here in Fethard community but a chaplain to St. Augustine's college Dungarvan. He drives there each day, five days a week.

As for myself, I will go down as the last Prior of Fethard. We were amalgamated to the two communities in Dungarvan. The Prior, Fr. Tony Egan, who resides in Dungarvan is now also the Prior of Fethard. It will be interesting to see how this experiment works over the next couple of years.

Finally on behalf of the community of four, I wish you all a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year. ●

Fr. Martin Crean, OSA



Fr. Martin Crean OSA photographed with Geraldine Maher, formerly from Main Street, at a reception in the Abymill Theatre following the Christmas Carol Service in the Augustinian Abbey on December 16, 2012.



Redcity ladies L to R: Moll Dalton, Lois Burke and Nonie Dalton c.1980

St. Patrick's Stone, Rathsallagh

by Gerry Long

The location of a monolithic standing stone at Rathsallagh, Rosegreen is not really surprising. The surrounding area is rich with remains of early habitation. Ring forts and the nearby small but important moat at Rosegreen are ample evidence of a vibrant early history, now forgotten, in the area. The stone which was called St. Patrick's Stone by earlier generations, supposedly marked a point in the saint's journey from the Decies territory of Waterford to the kingdom of the Eóghanacht whose capital was at Cashel, where the saint rested by sitting on it.

This tale is not as fanciful as it at first seems. Firstly, the present Diocese of Lismore and Waterford terminates just a short distance from the former site of the stone. Secondly the well-known compendium by James White, 'My Clonmel Scrapbook' contains an article by B.J. Long about St. Patrick's progress through South Tipperary which gives a rough guide of the saint's journey through the county and places him in areas closely adjacent to the site in Rathsallagh where the stone once stood.

Folk tradition and memory have long been understood to point to a basic truth which underlies that tradition, as well as that the fact that the stone had stood from the remote past and so may be a site of either territorial boundary or pagan veneration. This would add weight to the idea that in the past it had a ritual function which with Christianisation was transferred to their principle apostle in Ireland.

Aside from this, its former site in clear view of Slievenamon, an antique sacred mountain, as well as its colleagues the Comeragh, Knockmealdown, and Galtee ranges, would also point to its sacred and magical past. Sadly, like many



A current view of the site of St. Patrick's Stone at Rathsallagh, Fethard. The base of the stone is all that remains, some fragments may be in the nearby drain. The stone, however, appears to be at its original site but now sadly shortened by the ditch digging process.

such antiques the stone fell victim to land improvement by new landowners whose sympathy with the past was non-existent and so it fell to the progress of the bulldozer. Recently however, the stone itself, though damaged, has been located and could perhaps be restored to its former site. The stone when found, had been truncated and was now about three foot and six inches shorter than in former times. The remains of the topmost part having been fragment-

ed may well be among the rubble around it. A drainage ditch had been cut by it, which stopped at a rise of ground five metres past it. The progress of the mechanical digger may

have caused the current damage! The author would like to know more of the folklore connected with the stone and any information would be greatly appreciated. ●



*Anglim children photographed with their friends at Knockelly overlooking the river Banogue c.1945.
L to R: Bunny Anglim, Joan Anglim, ?, ?, ?, Teresa Anglim, Mary Anglim, ?.*

Fethard Fever Hospital 1849

The following article, one of many supplied by the late Michael Hall, Kyle, Drangan, was taken from the Clonmel Chronicle published on Tuesday, March 6, 1849, entitled 'Fethard Fever Hospital – extraordinary clerical influence.'

*To the editor of the
Clonmel Chronicle.*

Sirs, Though I am but an obscure and very humble individual, holding a few acres of land in this neighbourhood, still, I trust from the independent charac-

ter of your journal, that you will give a place in your next publication to the following statement of facts, undeniable, stubborn facts.

As I have neither talent nor inclination to dilate on these facts, I will allow them to speak for them-

selves. A poor neighbour of mine, the Widow Morrissey of Coolmoyn, had four of her children attacked with Typhus fever some short time ago; they were removed to the Fethard Fever Hospital, where two of them still continue; a few days back the fifth, and only remaining child, a grown up young woman, became ill of the same disease; application was made at the hospital for her admission, and the physician of the institution, with his usual humanity, ordered the hospital car to be sent for her. The Rev. Pat Laffan, R.C.C. of Fethard, was also called upon to visit her, as is usual in such cases, in order to administer the last rites of her religion before her removal to hospital; this the Rev. gentleman refused to do, but directed that she should be brought in the car to his stable yard, stating that he would there anoint her. The sick girl was accordingly removed on Friday last, for the purposes of being conveyed to the hospital, and when within a quarter of a mile of Fethard, and three miles from her mother's cabin, was met by the said Rev. Pat Laffan, accompanied by a medical man. The two doctors, that is to say, the Doctor of Divinity, and the man of drugs, proceeded to examine the patient and held a consultation; the result of which was their coming to the conclusion that case was not one of fever at all, and that the poor girl should go back to the place from whence she came. Father Pat, observing with a leer, that if she

went into hospital, her fine head of hair would be subjected to the scissors, a cruel and inhuman operation to which all persons entering this particular hospital are, he says, obliged to submit.

The Rev. gentleman then actually compelled the poor girl to get out of the car, and walk back again (a distance of three Irish miles) to the hut from which she was so lately removed. Her mother vainly protesting, with tears in her eyes, that food of any kind had not been in her cabin for two days, that she had neither fire nor candle light, and she had nothing on earth to give her sick child save a drink of water from an adjacent stream.

Hearing of this girl's unexpected return to my immediate neighbourhood, and having myself suffered severely from fever a short time back, I naturally became much alarmed; for notwithstanding the opinion of 'the great medicine man' above alluded to, I felt confident that her disease was the same as that with which the rest of her family had been attacked. I accordingly, on the next day, procured the attendance of Dr. Burgess, the respected physician of Fethard dispensary; he was accompanied in his visit by Dr. Flynn, medical officer in charge of the Fethard Fever Hospital; what these gentleman thought of the case will appear from their joint certificate, which I herewith enclose you for publication.

The unfortunate creature was

again sent to the hospital and on reaching Fethard, her mother, at the poor girl's most urgent entreaties, called on the Rev. Pat Laffan, to request that he would administer to her the usual sacraments of her Church before being placed in the institution. Instead however, of complying, he got into a furious passion, and, to use the widow Morrissey's own words, 'began bouncing with madness about the floor', ordering her immediately to quit his presence.

She is now in the hospital, her life being in great danger, without having received the last solemn consolations of the Roman Catholic Church, and should she die, she will not be the first who were refused those melancholy rites, because they accepted the advantage of the Fever Hospital and the services of its physician.

There are many other quite extraordinary proceedings arising out of the reverend gentleman's morbid hostility to the Fethard Fever Hospital that have been too long withheld from the public, and it is high time that public attention should be brought to bear upon them. This letter, however, being already too long, I will conclude for the present; but with your permission, I shall most assuredly resume the subject in a few days.

I remain Sir, Your obedient
Servant,

An Observer.

Herrick's Cross, near Fethard,

Feb 28th 1849.

Doctor's Report

We the undersigned, hereby certify that we have this day visited Nancy Morrissey, of Coolmoyne, and found her labouring under confirmed Typhus fever.

*Signed John Flynn, M.R.C.S.E
medical attendant of Fethard Fever
Hospital.*

*Frances Burgess L.R.S.C.I..
Medical attendant to the Fethard and
Drangan Dispensaries.*

February 24th, 1849

Another point of interest

*The following excerpt is taken
from 'Epidemic Diseases of the Great
Famine' (18th-19th Century History,
Issue 1 (Spring 1996), The Famine,
Volume 4)*

The temporary fever hospital at Fethard, County Tipperary, which had been opened in June 1847, was denounced from the altar on several occasions. The ambition of the parish priest and his curate, as they informed their flock repeatedly, was to see grass growing at the door of the hospital. One of their clerical harangues was delivered prior to the opening of a detached convalescence ward. Later that night, the building was maliciously burned to the ground. A similar arson attack had occurred in Belturbet, County Cavan, in April 1847. ●



Winner of the Killusty Sheepdog Trials 1955 was Raymond Dunne pictured above being presented with the Mrs La Terriere Cup. Also in the photograph are Jack Ryan, Fethard, Paddy Morrissey, Cloran, Michael O'Flaherty, Killusty, Pierce O'Donnell, Grangebeg and Rody Holohan, Cloneen.



Roche family, The Boreen, Rathkenny, Fethard c.1943. Back L to R: Jack Roche (at gate), daughter Bessie, wife Alice, son Paddy. Front L to R: daughter Peggy, son Billy and daughter Winnie. Other members of the family were Mick, Jimmy, Stephen, Johndy, Ray, Josie, Alice, Mary and Bridie. Jack (father) died in 1945 and Alice died in the 1960s, both buried in Magorban and headstones in Cloneen.

A Funeral in Lisronagh, 2008

by John Cooney

*She was an old timer; of that, we were all sure.
Her middle-aged children stood their ground,
While her grandchildren of early adult years
Appeared more the chief mourners.*

*A country funeral in a country graveyard.
There was an element of relief
That she had died.*

*The relief of finally going in old age
When the last few years were hard,
When suffering had come to her
In its myriad physical forms.*

*'One thing goes, one after another'
Was the matter-of-fact description from her children,
None too specific*

*About any organ and its function.
The hint of disintegration
Was enough to be going on with.
We knew already*

*Or suspected what old age might bring;
The withering of the senses
The weakness of limbs
The cantankerous personality
The frequent ugliness of features
The pain of pain.*

*Sorrow also came from the family to us
Mixed with relief.
And then there was gratitude
Gratitude for her long life
For her fecundity
For her presence*

*For the wealth life had bestowed upon her,
For all the little stories that emerged about her,
For always knowing the right thing to say,
For her touch parking – a touch to the car in front and behind,
For her own protective shield,
For her appreciation of the countryside.*



*When the prayers for the dead had been given at the graveside
 A small man self-consciously stepped from the crowd
 And for a brief second it seemed
 As though, the circumstance had got the better of him,
 And he was about to seek permission to say the few words.
 Instead, he put a hunting horn to his lips
 And blew a sound across the cemetery
 In honour of the deceased
 Who had allowed the hunt through her lands.
 As the second of the three blasts spread outward
 A horse trotted from a nearby meadow to the graveyard wall.
 With ears upstanding in alertness
 He neighed.
 Without shyness he looked in at us
 And neighed again.
 The horn blower furtively withdrew into the crowd.
 The sound which had pierced the air ceased
 And the air settled back into its slumber.
 Yet the sound continued in our ears
 Not brittle or loud or shrill.*

*It remained rather than echoed
As we stood in amazement
Mesmerised by the standing horse.
All of which outdid our regard for the fox
Who in open field or deep in cover
Would surely not have recognised the false alarm
As its heart must pulsate before
The supposed coming terror.*

*Unexpectedly, we were the spectators of a tradition
That was ancient,
That knew its place,
That usually called forth into the countryside
Arousing excitement for the chase
Or blowing for home
But now was calling to the heavens
For one of theirs was dead.
The bugle of longing poured forth
By the open grave of one
Who had smoothed over my own rough edges,
Who was a mother of a friend,
A beloved one of the earth.
Tribute to her had been paid in the ritual
By these people in their old-fashioned ways:
Sowers of seed, riders of horses
Carers of cattle, keepers of dogs
Great funeral goers, season watchers,
These country people, more accustomed
To the silence of departure, were a mild lot,
Who knew death well on their farms.*

*Gallopers in a tradition
That had trotted from food to fun,
And those others, adverse to any pack of hounds,
Had stood together to bury the dead.
They also shared in that deep yearning
And tender longing for life
That is to be found within us all
But found also within the fox and horse
Within the rabbit gripped in the dog's mouth
And within the lamb suckling fiercely
On a bottle held by the farmer. ●*



Members of the Ryan family from St. Patrick's Place photographed in 1996. L to R: Maura, Patricia, Kathleen, Johnny, Margaret Cummins (Aunt), Brendan and Danny.



Evelyn Fogarty, Fethard, and Tony Flynn, Powerstown, with their son A.J. enjoying a riverboat ride at Heritage Park, Calgary, Alberta. Evelyn & Tony emigrated to Canada in 2010.



Bob Byrne and Báinín Ryan, The Green, in the 1940s

The Green, Fethard & World War One

Fethard's Fair Green was situated outside the town walls to the north east of the town proper. It was a level piece of ground used at various times for fairs, political meetings, football matches, circuses and as an army parade ground.

The Green was also the name given to the houses built adjacent to the Fair Green. For the purposes of this brief run through the history of the area, I have included four "streets" – the Lower Green (on some maps called Lower Green Street; this ran from the corner of Moore/Burke St., opposite the Abbey to the Fair Green itself and includes the lane facing north to the open Green; the Upper Green (sometimes called Upper Green Street, and which includes a small lane running north west to Barrack Street, continuing to the Killenaule road), the Back Green (a short lane parallel to Upper Green on the west), and the Rock. Occasionally called the Rocks, this was a rocky patch of ground between the lane off the Lower Green and Abbey Street.

At the time of Griffith's valuation (dated 1850 for the town of Fethard) there were 153 houses in the Green. These were mostly thatched cottages comprising one or two rooms, in various states of repair. Some were vacant, and others designated as ruins. As time went by this process accelerated. Almost none was owner occupied – they were all

rented, generally by labourers, and it was not uncommon for people to move if a cheaper rent became available, or if the condition of a house disimproved. By 1901, the row of houses where Thomas Daniell lived in 1850 no longer exists. This would be an extension of the present Back Green into St Patrick's Place. Over 20 houses in the Rock have also gone in the 50 years. The number of houses has dropped to 60 for the area as a whole. By 1911 this has been reduced by a further two.

While the number of houses declined between 1901 and 1911, the population of the Green increased from 153 to 203. Many of the houses had more than one family, and many were related either directly or through marriage.

Subsequently, eight new houses were built in a terrace in 1912. These were constructed on the west side of the Green proper, and finished just opposite the entrance to Barrack Street. They were built by the local Town Commissioners. Because of a shortage of funds, the Commissioners refrained from including gardens. The houses were single storey, opened directly onto the street and had only a yard at the rear. In 1927 four ex-servicemen's houses were built immediately further up the street on the same side. These were terraced and had a small front garden, and a larger rear garden. To ensure access from the rear,



*This page: Map of The Green area taken from the Ordnance Survey 1904.
Opposite page shows Fethard Military Barracks on The Square c1900.*



a lane was created around the back of these houses, and continued to the Lower Green. This enclosed the ground behind the original eight 1912 houses, whose owners promptly annexed it to create their own gardens.

The occupants of the houses in the Green in the early years of the 20th century were mostly general labourers, agricultural labourers, or the occasional craftsman or soldier, with most of the women (whether married or not) engaged in some sort of domestic work. There are a number of widows and deserted wives with their children. These families depended largely on casual or seasonal employment for their income. Many would have depended entirely on seasonal farmwork, and quite a few were related either directly or by marriage. In 1901 all the occupants

were Catholic, though as we shall see, some were not born so.

We are going to take a closer look at some of the families who lived in or were associated with the Green in the early years of the 20th century. We will begin (following article) with those families associated with the British Army.

The British Army barracks in Fethard was one of the oldest in the country. Initially a cavalry barracks, it had a parade ground of over 15 acres. Later a battery of the Royal Field Artillery was stationed there. It was destroyed in 1922 during the civil war.

There had been a military presence in Fethard for over a century by 1901 and some of the soldiers met and married Fethard girls while stationed in the barracks. On census night 1901 there were 107 males listed there. ●

Fethard Soldiers

by Michael O'Donnell, a son of Joe O'Donnell formerly from The Green

There were plenty of Fethard natives who joined the army. Nicholas Wall of the Green joined the Leinster Regiment in 1897 and saw service in Malta and Egypt, as well as South Africa during the Boer War. He achieved promotion to the rank of Sergeant and was discharged in 1905. He reenlisted in Clonmel in October 1914 at the age of 45 years and 107 days. He was reinstated to the rank of Sergeant, and recommended for home service only. At least some of his service was as a military policeman. He was discharged in 1920 as no longer fit for war service. He was 51.

Nicholas Wall returned to Fethard, and lived out his life quietly through the turbulent days that followed. He and his wife Johanna, a native of Thurles, lived in the back Green in the house next to Piery Foster. He died in 1952.

Most Fethard recruits, however, joined in that initial rush of enthusiasm that greeted the opening of hostilities in 1914. In a list of 140 names of Fethard men who were due to be presented with Certificates of Honour published in the Clonmel Chronicle in 1917, there are 36 from the Green and the Rocks. This list helps to give a benchmark of how the war impacted on this part of Fethard. If we take the 1911 population as a guide – there were 98 men

of all ages in total living in the Upper Green, the Lower Green and the Rock – and exclude women, more than one man in three from the Green enlisted. If we then exclude those too young or too old for army service, we see that the proportion of those ‘of age’ must have been substantially higher, closer to one in every two.

This list (also published in a previous “Fethard and Killusty Newsletter”), is incomplete: a supplementary list was to have been published by the army authorities at a later date, but seemingly never was. It does not include Charles Moulson, obviously, because he enlisted in Cahir, and was no longer a Fethard resident at the time of the war. Christopher Keogh is not counted as being from the Green, his wife was living there at the time of his death. Richard Lonergan is included, though his address is given as Market Hill.

The Lonergans were long-time Green residents. Richard’s grandfather, also Richard, ran a cooperage from his yard on the back Green. This Richard Lonergan was grandfather of James Gorman, Jim Ahern and great-grandfather of Paddy O'Donnell, who enlisted, as well as ancestor to Fethard families the Allens and Hollys. The Lonergans were associated with the Green



Irish Volunteers 1914. This photograph was supplied by Joan Merriman, Dublin, back in 1998 featuring the Irish Volunteers in Fethard in 1914. The postcard was belonging to her mother, Mrs Creed, who worked in Fethard Post Office at that time. Michael O'Donnell, from Owing, gave us the following information: "These volunteers often drilled about Kilnockin and they used guns made of timber. But this was not unusual as I recall Major Hughes telling me that when he went to Cahir (I think it was) to train he also had to use a wooden gun because of the shortage of armaments. My father also told me that the later, post-1918, Volunteers were trained by Paddy O'Donnell of The Green and Dick Butler from The Valley. Both had seen service in the British Army. R. M. O'Hanrahan was the Officer Commanding. Row 1: 1. Ned Sheehan, Red City; 2 John Ryan, Sparagoleith; 3 Mickie Napier, Rocklow Road; 4 Jack Fitzgerald, Main St.; 5 not known; 6. Martin Tierney, Kerry St.; 7. Willie Walsh, Monroe; 8. Jim Carty, Sparagoleith; 9. Paddy Gleeson, Knockelly; 10. William Carey, near The Abbey. Row 2: 1. Jimmy Brien, Market Hill; 2. John O'Fitzgerald, The Back Green (later of St. Patrick's Place); 3. Tom Corcoran, The Valley; 4. not known; 5. not known; 6. not known; 7. not known; 8. Piery Napier, Abbey St.; 9 Mickie Mara, Burke St.; 10. Tom Finn, Burke St. Row 3: 1. Jimmy Connell, St. John's Hill. 2. Dave Hayes, Mockler's Terrace. Row 4: 1. Patrick O'Flynn, Burke St.; 2. P.J. Henahan, Main Street; 3. not known; 4 not known; 5. not known; 6. not known; 7. ? Power, Rocklow; 8. Willie Leahy, The Green; 9. not known; 10 not known; 11. Lary Doyle, Back Green; 11. 'Oily' Keating, The Valley. Row 5: Patrick Daniel, Watergate St (the man with the beard and large hat); this was all he recalled in this row. Row 6: Did not know anybody. Row 7: Only knew Ned Cummins, Ball-alley."

since the early 1800s and moved to a cottage (still standing) at the foot of Market Hill, probably during the war years. They were definitely still on the Green in 1911, according to the census, and Dick Lonergan was still there in 1913 at the time he played football for Fethard.

Dick Lonergan was a handy

footballer, and was on the breakthrough Junior County winning 1913 team with his cousins Tom and Mick O'Donnell and Jim Gorman. He worked in the Post Office first as a messenger, or telegram boy, and later as a part-time postman. His job was to collect packages from the station and bring them to the post office on



1913 Fethard Football Team nine of whom were from The Green. Front L to R: C. Burke (The Green), T. Saddler (Rathkenny), T. King (The Valley), T. O'Gorman (The Green), Frank 'Scout' Butler (The Green), T. Curran (The Valley), P. Keating (The Valley). Back L to R: D. McCarthy (The Valley), Laurence Kenny (The Green), D. Lonergan (The Green), D. Heaney (Kerry Street), M. O'Donnell (The Green), T. Conroy (The Green), T. O'Donnell (The Green), J. Coffey (The Green).

a handcart. For this he was paid the princely sum of 2/3 (two shillings and threepence, around 30c) per week. He left the post office in 1911, and while he originally enlisted in the Royal Irish Regiment, he later transferred to the London Regiment where he joined the 8th (City of London) Regiment – the Post Office Rifles. Here he reached the rank of Corporal. Richard Lonergan was killed in action in France in September 1917.

The Certificate of Honour list does include three from “The Rock”, which may be a different designation from “The Rocks”, because the family names are not familiar.

Missing from this list, inexplicably,

is John Quirke, who is noted in ‘The Tipperary War Dead’ by Tom and Ruth Burnell. We are not 100 percent sure, but we think he is one of the Quirkes who lived further in the Lower Green from the O'Donnells. This John Quirke joined the Irish Guards and was killed in France in 1917, aged 22. His mother and father are given as Johanna and Robert Quirke of the Lower Green, Fethard.

Another of the same 1913 team as Richard Lonergan that joined up was Frank ‘Scout’ Butler. The Butlers lived next door to the O'Donnells on the Lower Green. Frank's three brothers enlisted too. All joined the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. James Butler was killed in France in 1916, and Thomas,

who it seems had been awarded the Military Medal in the Balkans, was also killed on the Western front in 1917.

The third brother Pad Butler survived the war. He is the only one of the brothers whose records survive to any extent. Like his brother Thomas he was on the Mediterranean expedition in 1915. He was captured at Kavala in present day Greece, and held as a prisoner of war in Philippopolis (now Plovdiv) in Bulgaria. Many years later Bob Byrne would refer to him – behind his back of course – as “The Bulgarian”. He wasn’t released until the war ended, and was initially awarded a 30 per cent disability pension for malaria suffered while in captivity, though this was removed on review. His discharge papers note his ‘good character’. I’m sure he’d have preferred the pension! Pad worked at odd jobs around Fethard, including for a time the Rectory. He lived with his family in Harry Dobson’s old, small cottage facing the ex-servicemen’s houses. He subsequently moved from there to St. Patrick’s Place.

Scout himself seemed none the worse for wear from his war experiences. He was an outstanding footballer and went on to play for Fethard through the latter part of the glory days (they won six titles in the 1920s), and Tipperary. He also represented Munster when this was a serious achievement.

He hadn’t been on the All Ireland winning Tipperary team in 1920, and

didn’t expect to be called upon for the exhibition match in Dublin that November. He was in Smith’s pub, frequented by ex- and current British soldiers on the Main Street (next to McCarthy’s) enjoying a Saturday night drink when he got the word that the selected goalie had cried off. He is reputed to have said that he wouldn’t have had as much to drink if he knew he’d be playing the next day. He sat beside Tommy Powell from Clonmel on the train to Dublin. It was November 21, 1920, Bloody Sunday.

The story of Bloody Sunday is well known, and I won’t go into the details here. Tommy Ryan of Tubbrid, Cahir and an active Volunteer, also played for Tipperary on Bloody Sunday. He subsequently gave a first-hand account of the treatment of the players by the Crown Forces to the Bureau of Military History. They were lined up against the railway embankment wall in front of a firing party. They fully expected to be shot.

I don’t think Scout talked a lot about his experiences. He did tell Tom O’Donnell many years later that when accosted by one of the Black and Tans, he had saluted and rattled off his unit and service number.

“Where’s your rifle, soldier?” the Black and Tan asked.

“I left it back in Flanders!” quipped Scout.

Whether it made any difference it is hard to say. Afterwards, Tommy Ryan was told by an officer that the players were never going to be

shot, they were “only” hostages for the good behaviour of the crowd!

Scout may have told Paddy O'Donnell this story, for Paddy used the same trick when stopped by soldiers near Cahir later on during the troubles.

Scout continued to live in the Butler's house on the Lower Green, next door to the O'Donnells, tipping away at odd jobs. One of the things he was very handy at was thatching, and he thatched the O'Donnell's cottage next to his own. Tom O'Donnell reckoned Scout could turn his hand to anything. He supplemented his meagre income by playing soccer, usually in Tipperary Town, for which he would be paid, and at which he also was a good goalie.

One British soldier who returned from WW1 much the worse for his experiences was Dan Trehy. He was born in the Green in 1884, and became a gunner with the Royal Garrison Artillery. Burns could have called him the Mesopotamian, or more probably the Arab, because he served in the Middle East, seeing action in North West Persia (now Iran) and Iraq. The whole war was horrendous, but the privations suffered by some of the British forces in this theatre were extreme.

Here is an excerpt from Tony Newport's article in the 1993 Fethard Newsletter:

“Dan Trehy, a native of the Green, served in the British Army and saw more than enough of active service during the 1914-1918 war. His expe-

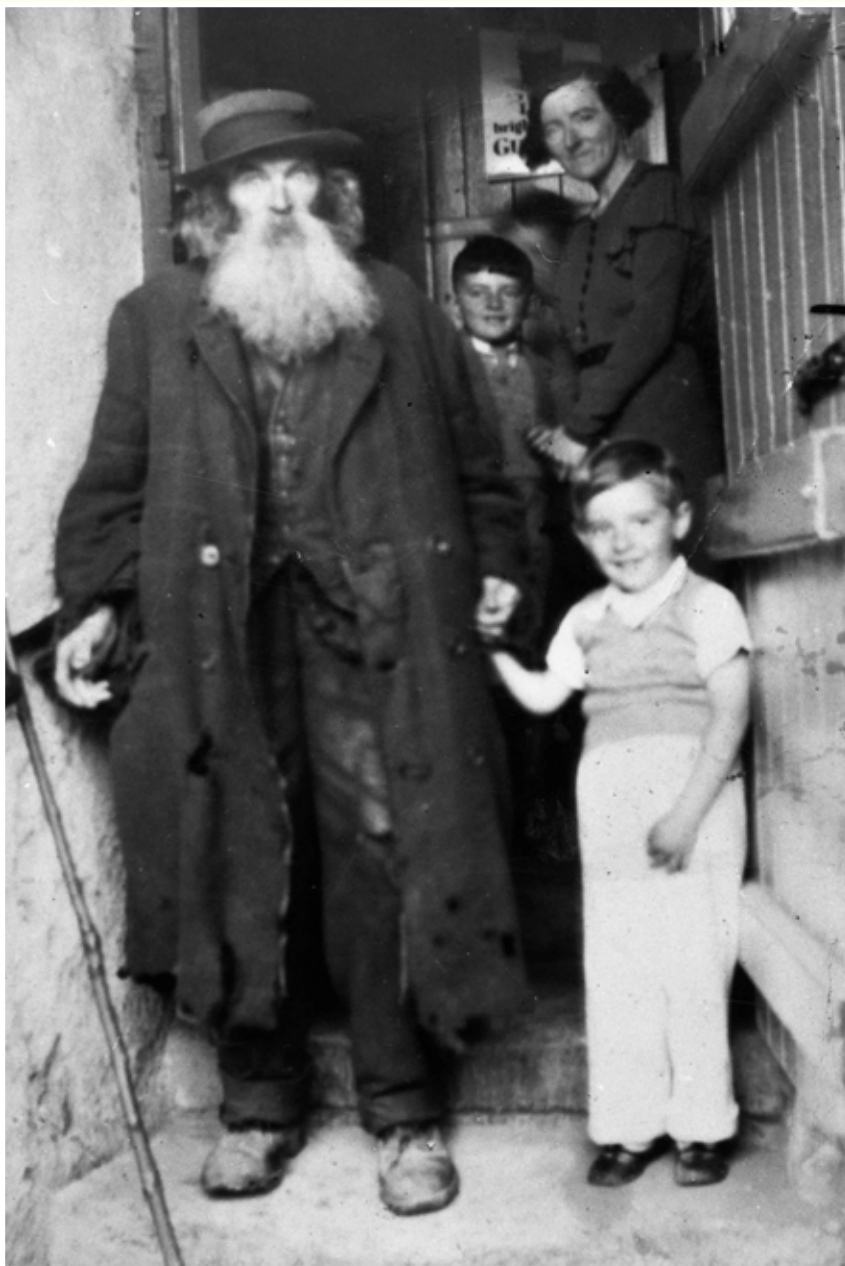
riences left him, like many of his comrades, badly shell-shocked. This explains his reason for adopting what the hippies and rainbow people now call “an alternative life style.”

Dan just did not conform. He drew his pension each week and drank it. He slept rough, that was his way. With his full-length beard and St. Patrick-like staff he was quite an imposing, if somewhat, unusual figure. Also, he always wore a grain sack across his shoulders fastened in front with a six inch nail. He possessed a fine singing voice and when in singing form he sat on one of the large square stones at “Bob Byrne's corner” on the Green, and gave full voice to the Rose of Tralee which was one of his favourites.

Dan Trehy, for all his eccentricities, was a decent man. He had many houses in the parish where he was always welcome to a cup of tea and a seat by the fire. He took ill one night on the Green around fifty years ago. The local people made him as comfortable as possible in a ruined house where the telephone kiosk on the Green now stands. The following morning he was dead.

Dan Trehy died in the house that had been vacated by Pad Butler, and previously occupied by Harry Dobson.

Reputedly, the first Fethard man to be killed was Michael Dagg. (He was not however, the first to die. This dubious distinction fell to Patrick Mahoney who joined the Royal Irish Regiment and died before leaving



Dan Trehy, a native of the Green, served in the British Army during the 1914-1918 Great War.

for the front, aged 41, in August 1914. He is buried in Redcity.) Michael Dagg was possibly already a soldier, because he was in France as early as August 13, 1914. There are conflicting dates for his death: his 'official' date of death is October 17, though his army record indicates he was killed in action on September 15. Michael Dagg's family lived in one of the cottages on the lower Green, on the left-hand side as you come up from the Abbey. He had been working as an agricultural labourer since at least 1911, and was only 19 at the time of his death.

His death did not act as a deterrent even to his own brothers. John Dagg also enlisted early, certainly before Michael was killed, but his younger brother Patrick joined up in 1915. Both survived the war.

Patrick Dagg is a study in himself.

He was one of six children born to Patrick Dagg and Kate Ryan in the lower Green. Patrick Dagg senior had come from Derrycloney, near New Inn, and was already a widower when he married Kate Ryan, but with no children from his first marriage.

He was steward (farm manager) on the farm of JJ Guiry of Peppardstown, but moved to the Green following his marriage. His wife died in 1906, and his children seem to have been scattered to various relations. In 1911, Michael, at only 15, has already left home and is farm labouring in Kilbreedy, near Killenale. John and Richard are with their uncle Richard Dagg at Derrycloney, near New Inn. Maggie is down the road in Derrycloney with Dagg's neighbours and relatives, the Byrnes. Patrick and Mary Dagg are at home with their father on the Green.



L to R: Gussie O'Donnell, Annie Ahearn and Paddy O'Donnell in LDF uniform taken on the Green.

Annie is with her mother's people the Ryans at Milltown close to Guiry's farm. Her uncle, John Ryan, would give evidence at an inquest into her death many years later – she was killed in an accidental fall from a bicycle in 1929 – that she had been raised there. The youngest, Thomas, is not entered on the census, but was, we think, being cared for by relatives in Killurney. Thomas later surfaces as a farm labourer in Dagg's farm in Derrycloney, during the war of independence, but “mar a déarfá, sin scéal eile”.

Given their background, I suppose it's not very surprising that these lads would be eager for adventure and some change in what must have been very hard lives.

Patrick Dagg joined the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. He became a Lewis Gun specialist. This was a distinctive gun with an aluminium cooling sleeve giving it a characteristic long tubular shape, and a circular pan-shaped magazine sitting on top. It was also unusual in that it was air-cooled. Most automatic weapons at that time were water cooled as it was not otherwise considered possible to keep the barrel cool enough in extended firing to give it a reasonable service life. A Lewis gun team usually consisted of two men, though on combat operations as many as five men could be deployed in the team, the additional members carrying spare magazines in special canvas bags. Their role was to provide rifle cover for the Number One

and Two. The Number One fired the gun, while the Number Two changed the magazine.

Patrick Dagg had married Alice Brett before the war. Her mother was a Delahunty from the Rocks and she had lived in this house further down the lane from the O'Donnells. He reached the rank of Corporal, and was wounded in action in September 1917, an action for which he was awarded the Military Medal. He was gassed and received a bullet wound to the shoulder. He was removed to Grove Military Hospital in London, and returned to Fethard on furlough for a short time at the end of that year.

He returned to England and for some reason he transferred to the 3rd Lincs and Yorks Regiment before his discharge from the Army in 1919. He was awarded a 30 percent pension on account of the wounds he suffered. His pension was made payable to his wife in the Green. Shortly after his discharge from the Army he joined the RIC.

This seems a strange thing to do given the situation in the country, and his record indicates that he may have only served for some months. In this period he and his family moved from the Green to Lakefield Lodge, the lodge of the O'Brien estate, close to Clonacody Cross. By this time their second child Margaret Mary had died. Paddy O'Donnell would say that Pat Dagg was well known and that no one in Fethard had any problem with him.

But his subsequent actions indicate that somewhere along the line he ran into difficulties, and in 1922 he and another ex- RIC man embarked from Liverpool for Canada. Prior to departure they had been staying with their families on the same street in West Derby, Liverpool. Pat Dagg was accompanied by his wife Alice and daughter Catherine, now their only child. Their immigration papers show that their passage was paid for by the "RIC Authorities." This, and the fact that also accompanying them were William Fairclough Jones, another ex-RIC man, and his wife, indicate some sort of official support or sanction for the voyage. It is difficult not to come to the conclusion, then, that Pat Dagg did have some problems and was forced to emigrate arising from his RIC membership.

The Dagg family settled in Montreal and after some other work, Patrick got a job with Canadian National Railways.

Others from the Green listed for Certificates of Honour include: Mick Cummins; his brother Tom, who was gassed, and died from complications related to this in the 1930s; three Fitzpatricks, all of whom seem to have been sons of the shortsighted RIC man who reputedly tried to arrest the pump following a fracas

in the Green; three Higginses, sons of Thomas Higgins, an army sergeant; Jack Slattery, another neighbour of the O'Donnells, whose relatives still live on the Green; and Jim Gorman, a cousin, who died from a burst appendix in 1927.

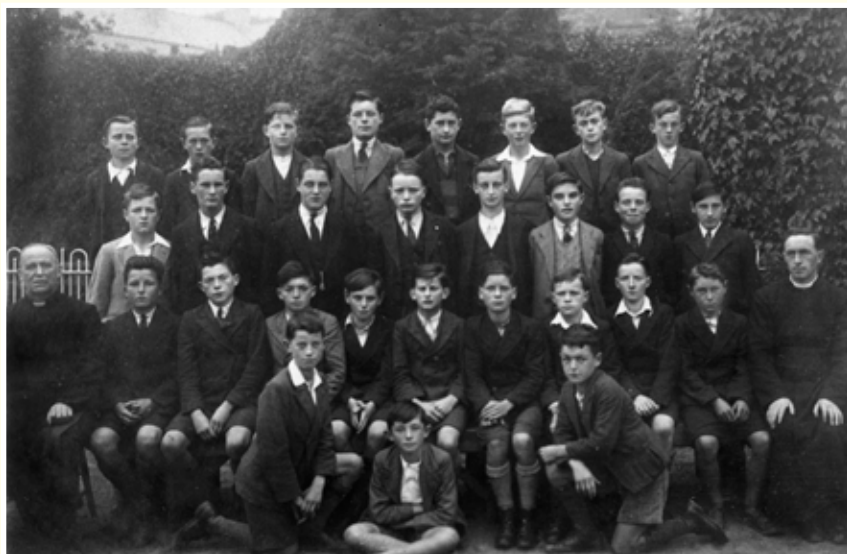
This made Jack Slattery, Paddy O'Donnell, four Butlers, and John Quirke all from a small lane of houses branching off the Lower Green. Three of that group were killed, a tally probably representative of the country as a whole.

There were others, whose stories tangent on ours – Jim Ahearne, another cousin, later a

postman in Fethard and one the four ex-servicemen who lived in the 1927 houses; Thomas Shine, brother of MaryAnne and with the Green as his address and also subsequently a postman; Jack Carey, not from Fethard at all but Coolbawn, but who was a neighbour of the O'Donnell's on the Green afterwards, and who remembered the day Willie Redmond was killed, and the news travelling down the line. Mick Shea, not from the Green either, but who lived there in the 1930's before moving to St Patrick's Place. Mick put his foot over the parapet of the trench to check if it was safe and had his heel blown away. He walked with a limp ever afterwards. ●



Maryanne O'Donnell, The Green



One of the first secondary school classes in Academy House (the old Fethard Laundry)



Katie O'Brien and Eddie O'Brien outside Boland's Photography shop in Market Street, Clonmel.



Tom and Ned King taken outside their home on the Back Green.



L to R: Dick Keating, Johnny 'Luggy' Leahy, Ms Strappe and Dennis Coffey.



Lory Kenny with his first wife, Ciss (Dooley) outside their shop on the Green. Ciss died 16th May 1945.

Fethard ICA Guild



Aileen Heverin (author) and Hannie Leahy at the unveiling of a plaque to Olivia Hughes on June 22, 2013

The year 2012-2013 was a busy year for our guild, with 28 members on our books. Our meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every month. We take a summer break in July and August.

During the past year we had Tai Chi classes in October, November and December and again after Easter for eight nights. We had guest speakers on health and wellbeing, task and community care and creative writing. We had demonstrations on beauty products, felting, Reiki, "Go for Life" and flower arranging.

During the year one of our past members, Phyllis McDonald, died. May she rest in peace.

We had our Christmas dinner in McCarthy's Hotel, twenty-six members attended. We held our summer outing in June to Russborough House and Garden, then on to Rathwood with a meal in the Lord

Bagnell. A good day was had by all.

In June we had a re-launch of the Olivia Hughes monument on Main Street. It was held the weekend of the Gathering. Light refreshments were served in the ICA Hall. We purchased several tickets for the Fethard Business & Tourism Group draw.

In October several of our members and a few non-members went on a weekend trip to An Grianán and Newry, everybody enjoyed it.

Our AGM was held in March and officers elected were: Catherine O'Connell (President), Anne Gleeson (Vice-President), Margaret Phelan (Secretary), Judy Doyle (Assistant Secretary), Phil Wyatt (Treasurer). Committee Members: Anne Horan, Sheila O'Donnell, Marie Crean, Kathy Aylward, Nora Ahearne, Frances Murphy and Dolores Cleary. We are always happy to welcome new members at any time. ●

Do You Remember . . . 1999

Though the prophets of doom warned us that our advanced technology would be laid waste as the calendar turned from one century to another yet the people of Fethard, and especially the Community Council, looked with hope to a future for the little town, and actively planned for that future. As the year 1999 opened the County Council, on the advice of the local Council, presented plans for the improvement of The Square. During the month of January these were made available to the people for inspection. The plan was intended as a day-to-day guide for change which would include the renewal of footpaths and paving, putting in place new street furniture, and improving the public lighting. When the new

century opened the hope was that Fethard would give an appearance of excellence.

Over the second half of the twentieth century various plans for the improvement and development of Fethard's infrastructure had been proposed by the County Council. The first appeared in 1967 and this was reviewed and revised by others which were presented in 1972, 1977, 1983, and 1994. It was the hope that the proposals of 1999 would differ from those of former years in that the emphasis would now be on the heritage status of the town and the conservation of the central area that lay within the old town walls, especially the medieval aspect. Another Town Renewal Scheme, in which various organisations were requested to par-



Taking part in the Fethard and District Credit Union Primary Schools Table Quiz, January 1999, were L to R: Suzie Harvey, Amy Quigley, Stacey Grace and Tracey Coady.



A new footbridge was installed over the river Clashawley on Friday, September 17, 1999, as part of the riverside walk development taking place at The Valley, Fethard.

ticipate, was put forward in the July of this year by the County Council on the urging of the Department of the Environment. This was a six-year scheme which would be implemented in two phases and under its terms tax incentives were to be offered to private individuals or companies who were prepared to build or improve residential, commercial or industrial properties. Fethard was one of four towns eligible under the latter scheme. And so as the town prepared for the new century two proposals were in hand to improve the appearance of the place.

And preserving the local heritage could be quite a task. For example, during the month of July at least four high-laden trucks got stuck on the North Gate (Sparagoleith) arch. It says much for the ancient masons that the structure survived the attempts on it, but there were sev-

eral valid complaints that there was no public sign on either side of the Gate to indicate its height and width.

During the same month of July the County Council began cleaning the river on its north bank from the Convent Bridge down to that part of it south of the Abymill Theatre. With this the Council intended to erect a footbridge across the Clashawley which would join The Pound pathway and The Valley. By September the works on the riverside walk and the new footbridge were under way, and the wall about The Pound was being repaired. The final portions of the new footbridge were put in place on Friday night September 17, and to complete that operation the tallest crane ever seen in Fethard was on hand for the job.

As a new bridge was being thrown across the Clashawley another older bridge, however, was

being seriously damaged. On Friday night, December 10, a truck, or something similar, struck and damaged the stonework of the former railway bridge that spanned the road at Jesuit's Walk.

The many wonderful improvements in hand or planned had in them no place for the old and the lame who would like to cross the Main Street. Nowadays the car is king and sometimes, perhaps, a monster in the hands of an un-courteous whizz-kid. While the changes were being undertaken many hoped that the County Council would erect a pedestrian crossing so that nervous senior citizens could transact business on either side of the street. My favourite small town in Queensland,

where the car is also king, has three such crossings with traffic lights on its long Main Street. This makes 'mooching' about so convenient.

But the Community Council continued to strive for further improvements. On the night of Thursday 19 October they sponsored an information session about the renewal schemes proposed for the town. They urged the County Council to re-connected the town wall floodlighting to the town lighting supply. The flood lights were first installed by the Friends of Fethard and switched on by President Mary Robinson on Saturday, July 24, 1993. Due to high running costs and the disbandment of the Friends of Fethard, the lights were switched off some years later.



Fethard & Killusty Community Council newly appointed board of directors in May 1999 to take over until the AGM took place in November. Back L to R: Joe Kenny (chairman), Michael O'Hagan, David Sceats, Paddy Croke (FÁS Scheme Sponsor), Fr. Ben O'Brien OSA (treasurer), Peter Grant (FÁS Scheme Sponsor). Front L to R: Megan Sceats, Nellie O'Donovan, Thelma Griffith, Diana Stokes and Edwina Newport (secretary). Also on the board is Pamela Lawlor (public relations officer).



Jack Kenny cutting the tape at the official opening of Sabatini's Chip Shop, The Square, under the management of Suzanne and Orlando Di Ruzzo. January 16, 1999.

On the more private level they recommended that the Main Street should be lit over the Christmas period; a bright welcome for the new century. The Community Council had received a quote from the Rossa Lighting and Effects group for such lighting, but a cost of \$4,500 was considered high and was seen as being difficult to collect. The members of the Council were hoping for substantial donations from willing sponsors.

The Community Council held its annual general meeting on November 9, and the committee that would monitor Fethard as the new century opened were: Joe Kenny,

chairperson; Edwina Newport, secretary; Father Ben O'Brien, OSA, treasurer; and Pamela Sweeney, PRO. The members of the board were: Paddy Croke, Thelma Griffith, Diane Stokes, Peter Grant, Megan Sceats, David Sceats, Jimmy Connolly, and Nellie O'Donovan. On them would now fall the mantle of striving for the betterment of Fethard.

But private individuals also made changes. In May Pierce Dillon retired from his pharmacy business on the Main Street. Pierce had maintained his chemist shop here over the previous forty-five years and now it closed. Others, with the hope that

is always so strong in the human breast, opened new enterprises. A new chip and fast food shop opened in the town in mid-January. This was Sabatini's Chip Shop and was under the management of Suzanne and Orlando Di Ruzzo. It was situated in the premises formerly known as The Lantern. The Castle Inn on Watergate Street began under new management on Monday, April 26. The pub was now being run by Noel and Irene Sharpe. Noel had worked for a number of years in Carroll's Pub in Burke Street. Incidentally, over the doorway of the Castle Inn can be read the following inscription: *'Licensed to Open on all Fair Days of Fethard, 6am'*. Nowadays, only the very old will know the relevance of that. In the fall of the year Concepta Hurley began a fancy goods, small toys and gift shop on the Main Street.

Another of the great benefits that Fethard enjoyed in this year of 1999 was its web-site. Built up and maintained by a far-seeing Joe Kenny. Throughout this year its popularity grew and grew, for example during the month of January it was having as many as a hundred visits in a day. And fourteen years later the site is still a wonderful contact with Fethard whether we are abroad permanently or just on holiday. Despite such changes, and they are coming more and more to be the new way, the printed word was still holding its own. The Newsletter was sending 1,200 copies each year to natives living away from Fethard;

this was another wonderful venture begun by the Legion of Mary and the late Don Byard in the early 1960s and which is now in the competent hands of the same Joe Kenny. In 1999 the cost per copy was £4. But for those of us living in Ireland or in South Tipperary the weekly column in The Nationalist was a must. The year 1999 was the fortieth year that local man Tony Newport contributed his weekly report on local events. Back in 1959 Tony was persuaded by the late Brother Albert and the late Willie Darmody, then editor of The Nationalist, to contribute a weekly column on Fethard. He did, and so Tony succeeded Paddy McLellan who in turn had succeeded his father-in-law Bill Tierney. And year after year Tony continued this excellent work, though there must have been occasions when it seemed like a millstone about his neck. Without his work, short articles such as this could not have been compiled and what he did in his column, week by week, will in time be woven into the lattice of modern Fethard history.

Sadly though, all has not been progress and enlightenment. There was a time when churches were accepted as sacred places and so not to be tampered with in any way. But by 1999 that was changing. On New Year's Eve vandals set fire to the Church of Ireland building on the Main Street and created \$40,000 worth of damage. That there were and are mindless blackguards who would take pleasure in attempting



Fethard GAA stalwarts photographed at a reunion in the Fethard Ballroom in 1999 L to R: Philip Dillon, the late Joe Keane, his wife Margaret Keane, Michael O'Riordan, Pierce Dillon and John Keane.

to burn down an ancient building and a centre of continuing worship is even still hard to comprehend. Was the old century to end on such a note in Fethard? Commenting on the calamity the Rev. George Knowd said: 'It's a sad reflection on parental training and parental control that such could happen'. And on Sunday night, August 15, the windows along the Main Street and Burke Street were broken by vandals. On this occasion four youths, who were not from the town, were being questioned by the Gardai. And the same Gardai were dealing with another menace that was becoming increasingly common in our towns, big and small. That was drug sales and drug addiction. On Wednesday night, February 10, a member of the Garda Drug Squad together with a former drug addict gave a talk to all who were interested in the Abymill Theatre. It

was hoped that those who attended would have a better knowledge of the different types of drugs, of the signs of drug abuse, and of the helpful sources available to those who had to cope.

But for all the highs and lows the people of Fethard continued to enjoy the benefits of clubs, groupings and organisations. Pre-eminent among those was the G.A.A., possibly the oldest club in the town, and football was the major game. In this year the footballers went all the way to South Tipperary final which they played against Moyle Rovers in Kilsheelan. The first game ended in a draw and the replay was again held in Kilsheelan on December 5. On the latter occasion the local side were well and truly beaten. Another more successful event was the election of Miceál McCormack, who was the local club secretary, as vice-chair-

man of the South Tipperary G.A.A. Board. If my memory is still sound it was many a long day since Fethard had a representative at that level, the last was probably John Keating. Over a twenty-year span (1978-97), nevertheless, Fethard G.A.A. players, both old and young, have been prominently featured in The Nationalist and South Board awards. Senior footballers such as A.B. Kennedy (1978), John Keane (1979), Dinny Burke (1983), Michael O'Riordan (1984), Michael Fitzgerald (1991), and Willie Morrissey (1997). Among the young footballers were Michael Fitzgerald (1982), Brian Burke (1983, 1984 and 1985), and Paddy Ryan (1989). Among the 'golden oldies' of the sport who were honoured

were, Pat O'Keeffe (1980), Dick Allen (1985), and Liam Connolly (1994). And heroes such as those did help to keep the G.A.A. spirit alive locally. A week-long training session for juveniles was held in the Sportsfield from Monday, June 28 to Friday July 2. The ages of the participants ranged from five to twelve years and some 162 children turned out each day. All the training and supervision was voluntary. At the end of the session the kids were presented with medals. The same sports complex could offer many other facilities. It had three hard courts for tennis. There were also amenities for squash, racquetball and handball for both juveniles and adults. And 'state-of-the-art' lighting was installed in the autumn



Frank Meagher's new WRC Escort rally car stopped outside McCarthy's on Wednesday evening on its way to the Killarney Rally April 1999. Pictured as it is about to leave are L to R: Bill O'Sullivan, Kieran Hayes, Paul Barrett, Richard Hayes and David Purcell.

which was, no doubt, an enormous help in training over dark evenings and nights.

The town could also offer a form of water sport in its active fishing club. Despite having such a club the first salmon of this season was caught not by a line and reel but by a heron at the Convent Bridge. It, however, bit off more than it could chew and so when it attempted to rise from the river it could get no farther than the roadway with the fish sticking out of its gullet. The bird landed outside of Burke's Bridge Bar where it disgorged its catch. It then flew off leaving the fish. What happened to the salmon? The official fishing season on the Anner and Clashawley did not open until March 17 when Thomas Fogarty landed a two-and-a-half pound trout. In this year a member of an old fishing family, Jim Sayers from St. Patrick's Place and Dublin, was selected for the team to represent Ireland in an international fishing competition held in Slovakia between June 24 and 29. The Irish team came eleventh out of a field of fifteen teams.

At home there was athletics throughout the year. At the under-seventeen level the town had Avril Prout and Brian Sullivan. In the national indoor championships held in Nenagh on the weekend of February 6-7 Brian won both the men's under-eighteen 800 metres and the 1,500 metres. At the BLE games held in Dublin Jacqui Stokes had a good win in the ladies' long

jump. During the previous week she had been successful in Munster, and she was selected to compete on the Irish ladies' team in competitions held in Slovenia during the weekend of 22/23 May. And in championships held in Dublin in July she featured prominently. But for others who had enjoyed success in their day it was the final run. In June the news was announced that Thomas ('Tommy') Leahy of the Kilnockin Road and Leeds died. Tommy, whose photo appeared in the 1999 issue of The Newsletter, was the son of Jerry and Bridget Leahy. He was, in his day, a brilliant athlete and his achievements in the 100 and 200 yards sprints were still spoken of long after he had left Fethard. Back in 1959 he emigrated to Leeds where he made his life. Tommy died after a short illness. At his request his body was taken home to the Augustinian Abbey where he had served as an altar boy and he was buried in Calvary Cemetery on his beloved Kilnockin Road.

But there were other outdoor sports with local participants. In the early part of the year local man Sean Devaney from Grove was active in coaching school-children in the game of rugby. He was maintaining a good local tradition because Fethard had a good rugby side in the 1930s. And for women there was camogie. By mid February the training of young girls for the local camogie teams had commenced. This training was undertaken by



St. Rita's Camogie Team, Fethard, who won their first county title in thirty-four years when they beat Clonoulty in the final 3-10 to 1-3 on Saturday, May 15, 1999, in Thurles. Back L to R: Mia Treacy, Jennifer Keane, Marie Holohan, Edel Fitzgerald, Caroline Fitzgerald, Niamh Sheehan, Jean Morrissey, Aisling O'Riordan, Imelda Spillane, Bernie Horan, Mary O'Mahony, Vanessa O'Donnell, Gwen Cooke. Front L to R: Laoise O'Connell, Olivia Phelan, Audrey Conway, Nora O'Meara, Fiona Conway, Emily Sayers, Noelle Murphy, Sandra Spillane, Sharon Lawton (captain), and Sandra Maher. In front is Ronan Fitzgerald (mascot)

Liam Treacy assisted by Dennis O'Meara. The hope was to present teams at the under eighteen and under twelve levels. The St. Rita's Camogie Club had their first outing of the season when they travelled to Templemore for a challenge game which they won by six points. Their first official game was played against Ballingarry on Sunday, March 28. On Saturday, May 15, the junior A team played Clonoulty in the county final held in Thurles. They had a good win. It had been thirty-four years since a local camogie team had won a county final. The names of the girls who made up this team are worth recalling: Jean Morrissey, Sharon Lawton (the captain), Imelda Spillane, Mia Treacy, Nora O'Meara, Aisling O'Riordan, Olivia Phelan, Jennifer Keane, Sandra Spillane, Marie Holohan, Caroline Fitzgerald,

Niamh Sheehan, Audrey Conway, Edel Fitzgerald, Emily Sayers, Fiona Conway, Mary O'Mahony, Bernie Horan, Sandra Maher, Noelle Murphy, Vanessa O'Donnell and Gwen Cooke. A team travelled to The Ragg on Sunday, October 17, to play against a team from Clonoulty in the junior county league. They won.

For younger and less energetic girls there was a branch of the Girl Guides in the town. At the beginning of February they resumed their weekly meetings on Monday night in the Ballroom. As so often happens in organisations for children there was a lack of adult help. And this complaint was not confined to the Girl Guides alone which was a shame as such sporting and cultural groupings had much to offer to young people. It is worth pausing, perhaps, to recall that Ladybirds who were only four-



Fethard's young GAA stars photographed at Community Games football in the Barrack Field, May 1999

year-olds in 1999 are now in their late teens – how quickly the years pass!

Hunting and racing have been part of the history of Fethard for centuries past. Records show that horse-racing had been an element in Fethard's social life since early in the eighteenth century. The earliest known was under and to the west of Kilnockin Hill. Later racing took place in the Kilnockin/Coolanure area over fields that are now the property of Coolmore Stud. And within the memory of many there was racing at Tullamaine. But where was the racecourse at Ballintemple and what were the years? During the summer of 1999 a query ran in the Fethard column of *The Nationalist*: Was the race meeting held over the fields opposite Glenagaddy Quarry? I don't think the questions were ever answered. But there are no doubts about that well-known hunting group, the Tipperary Foxhounds.

They held their opening meet of the new season in Fethard on Monday October 25, at 11am. A mounted field of some eighty-five horses and riders left The Square as did a large following in cars. Foxes were plentiful on the occasion and the weather was good. But in this year the Foxhounds had to discontinue a service which they had offered to farmers over the previous one hundred years. This was the disposing of dead animals. The facilities at the Tullamaine Knackery did not meet new European Union standards, and renovation would have been too costly for the Hunt to support. Its loss to local farmers was considerable. A more positive report with a connection to the Foxhounds was the full-length profile in the English journal *Horse and Hound* on John O'Shea of Ardsallagh. John had worked in the Captain Williams stables based in McCarthy's Hotel yard and also

for the Tipperary Foxhounds. He had emigrated to England in 1963 and had worked about Essex and Suffolk. Eleven years later he was appointed as huntsman to the East Essex hounds and there he remained. Another connection with the Foxhounds was recorded when at the end of June a Mr. and Mrs. Condon called on a visit. Their grand-uncle was Tommy Ryan. Old folks will recall Tommy in his red coat as whipper-in to the Foxhounds when Mrs. Sylvie Masters was the master.

Another hunting organisation, the Ballylusky White Heather Harriers, was still enjoying considerable support from their Fethard patrons. They began the year on Sunday, January 10, with a run about Moyglass and over the remainder of the year they had runs at Loughcoppole, Cloneen, Lismalin, Rocklow, Peppardstown, and Drangan. In October the Harriers

organised a special walk and hunt in aid of local man Hughie O'Brien who was convalescing following injuries. Four hundred turned out on that day walking, on ponies, on bicycles, and in pony-traps, and the ages ranged from eight to eighty. They had a wonderful day following the dogs about Ballyhomuck, Ballyvadlea and Garranguile. From John Peel with 'his hounds and his horn in the morn' to our own day, people have enjoyed hunting with dogs. Coursing with greyhounds also had a dedicated following throughout the year, and on Sunday, November 14, the local club held its first meeting of the new season when dogs competed for the Dick Burke trophy.

But indoor sports had their patrons and their followers. One such was the judo club which began its year at Galway in March with some success. Among the Fethard



Fethard Secondary School captured the MacGabann Cup for the first time when they beat Our Lady's, Templemore, 1-13 to 2-5, in the final played in Dr Morris Park, Thurles, May 1999. Front L to R: John Noonan, Kevin O'Donnell, Alan Phelan, Nicky Murphy, Conor McCarthy, Kenneth O'Donnell, Paul Hackett, Billy Hunt, Ian Kenrick, John Lonergan, Glen Burke. Back L to R: Denis Burke (coach), John Looby, Kenneth Byrne, Cian Maher, John Fitzgerald, Paul Croke, Tommy Gahan, John O'Meara, Damien Cannon, Philly Croke, Paddy Cooney, Diarmuid Burke and Eoin Doyle.

winners were Eric O'Donnell, Liam Halley, Stephanie Lawrence, and Dan Gorey. It was in this year that the founding member and coach, Johnny Sheehan (1st Dan), resigned. Johnny had been chairman of the local club since its founding in 1982 and his dedication to judo had been absolute. The club was being run by Eric O'Donnell and Valerie Colville who were also coaches to the young participants. Another of the indoor clubs was badminton which in 1999 was fifty-three years old. The local team consisting of Pat Ryan, Jim Connolly, Ger Browne, Catherine Morrissey, Fiona Lawrence, and Aisling and Catherine Kenny, represented the club in a number of events including the Munster championships in Tralee on January 23-24.

There were other clubs to tempt

the leisure of locals. A Garden Club was active during the year and it took a group to visit the Mallow Garden Festival on Thursday, June 24. The Flower Show, another old Fethard event, was held in the Ballroom on Sunday, September 19, in the afternoon. Many stalls displayed their wares and teas were served. As always, the profits from the event were given to local charities. The ladies also had an effective I.C.A branch in the town. The Bridge Club resumed its play after the Christmas break on 11 January. In 1999 the club had been in existence for over twenty-five years and in that year had sixty members. It provided a challenging night out on Mondays and Wednesdays in the Tirry centre. And in this year (from September 23 onwards) the club offered a series



Taking part in the Fethard and District Credit Union Primary School's Table Quiz January 1999 were L to R: Tracey Lawrence, Lucy O'Hara, Sarah Costello and Melissa Rochford.

of lessons for those whose grasp of the game was weak. They held their Christmas party in the Tirry Centre on December 15, the President's Dinner was held in the Hotel Minella Clonmel on Sunday, May 9, when various prizes were presented.

Young and not so young farmers also had their clubs and representations. There was Macra na Feirme, for instance, which generally met in Lonergan's Bar. This was a lively social organisation which attended a number of events during the year such as Macra Capers at Boherlahan, a basketball competition at Cahir and volleyball in Tipperary town. A number of members travelled to Shrute in Co. Mayo as supporters to Brendan Morrissey who was involved in the Culchie Festival. The club held a disco in the Rugby Centre at Clonmel on Friday night, January 29. They fielded a table-quiz team and a ladies' soccer team (Catherine Mellerick; Corina, Lorraine and Emma Morrissey; Caitriona and Bernie Horan; and Barbara Ahearne) which competed in the Macra All-Ireland finals. During the summer season the club organised a Karting Grand Prix at the race track at Rosegreen at which the winner was decided on Sunday, September 12. A total of sixty teams took part in this affair. And at the end of the same month of September eight members travelled to a farmers club near Cardiff in Wales. They ended their season by attending the Queen of the Land festival at

Tullamore on November 13-14. The reigning queen of the festival was a Fethard girl, Lorraine Morrissey. For the needs of the farm owner and worker there was the Irish Farmers' Association which was also represented in the town.

As can be seen from various references above, the Ballroom (the old Capitol Cinema which began life in January 1946) was still functioning and offering patrons dancing facilities. Sunday night dancing was popular and well-attended and there was much praise for the excellent dance floor and the extensive space in which patrons could display their dancing skills.

But at the same time Fethard had organisations that supplied and attended to the needs of those whose circumstances rendered them unable to cope with their daily needs. The local Credit Union branch still helped those whose backs were to the wall. In this year the office also opened its door on Friday mornings between 10am and 12.30pm. And the Union was run by people who gave of their time voluntarily. Another voluntary organisation which supported people at a different level was the St. Vincent de Paul Society which met on every Monday night at the Tirry Centre. The members of such a worthy society are worth recalling: Dinny Burke, Lynn Cummins, Vincent Doocey, Father Sean Ryan (then curate in Fethard), and Peggy Sullivan. Except for a short break during the summer months

they met on every Monday night to deal in the best possible way with the needs of unfortunates. The people of Fethard were also supportive because at its church-gate collection at Christmas the society raised £1,000; and this was one of many such demands made on people's pockets at this time of year.

And the town could boast of voluntary organisations to care for those who lived alone or who were incapacitated. Meals-on-Wheels, for example, delivered dinners to about twenty-five people on three days in each week. The meals were prepared in the Tirry Centre by the staff who also cooked the meals for those attending the Day-Care Centre. The volunteers helped in the preparation of the vegetables and later delivered the meals in their cars. But, sadly, as the century ended the number of volunteers was diminishing. More and more women, the mainstay of the volunteer force, were returning to the workforce as their children were reared. And the Day-Care Centre was also seeking volunteers – the perennial cry of all voluntary organisations. The voluntary committee running this very worthwhile organisation were: Sister Christine (supervisor); Thelma Griffith (chairperson); Julie Wall (secretary); Agnes Evans (treasurer); Mary Fennell (South-Eastern Health Board); and the general members were, Brian O'Donnell, Carmel Rice, Noreen Allen, Maura Tynan, Nellie O'Donovan, Megan Sceats, and Jimmy Lawrence. As well

as being entertained in the Tirry Centre those who availed of the service were taken on trips to various places. In early March they visited the Thurles Shopping centre and then went on to have afternoon tea at the Anner Hotel; and as all of them were God-fearing and respectable people they were back in Fethard by 6pm. The Clonmel Lions Club took them to Hearn's Hotel in Clonmel on Sunday, May 9, for afternoon tea, for song, and for dance. And Tuesday, June 9, they went to Tramore to fly their kites and whatever else we ancients do when we're on a 'day-out'. The centre closed at the end of June and did not reopen again until the beginning of September. During the first half of this year the Presentation Sisters were negotiating to have the Convent Hall passed to the general community of the town. The plan was for it to be used for recreational purposes and to be especially used by the people using the Day Care Centre.

Like the Presentation Sisters the Patrician Brothers were becoming hardly more than a fading memory. A reminder of the latter was the visit of Brother Raymond to the town on June 3. He was the last of the Brothers to teach in Fethard and left the town in 1993 – twenty years ago! From Fethard, Brother Raymond had gone to work in Kenya, but by 1999 he had retired to the Brothers' House at Tullow, Co. Carlow. The schools of those two orders were by the latter year amalgamated and were being



Timmy O'Riordan and Tom Murray buying their preferred morning read in Newport's Newsagency, February 1999.

staffed by lay teachers.

But some old lay societies survived the wear and tear of years. One such was the Fethard Players. By October they were in rehearsal for their production of 'A Letter From the General', a play by the Australian playwright Maurice McLoughlin. The play was produced by the veteran Austie O'Flynn who had been doing this kind of thing since 1969. The play was staged in the Abymill Theatre between Sunday, Nov 21, and Saturday, Nov 27. The cast were: Marian Gilpin, Lisa Rice, Carmel Rice, Anne Connolly, Mary O'Connell, Michael McCarthy, Mia Treacy, Seamus Hayes and Roger Mehta. Like Austie there were some

veterans among that cast. The Hogan Musical Society, which grew out of the old Pantomime Society, was still very much a living entity. On a Wednesday night in mid-January the members of the Society met to begin auditions for a forthcoming production of Fiddler on the Roof of which the producer was to be Waterfordman Bryan Flynn and the musical director Laura Hennessy from Clonmel. The resulting show was staged between Saturday 20 March and Saturday 27 March with tickets at £5 each. This became the most expensive show ever staged by the society and consequently when the performances came to an end the funds were in a parlous state. Various



Rehearsal for Hogan Musical Society's 'Fiddler on The Roof' March 1999. Back L to R: Mary Doyle, Susan McCormack, Edwina Newport, Alex Hunter, Virginie Hyvernatt, Jenn McManus. Middle L to R: Tina Whyte, Eimear Gahan, Eithne Horan, Avril Colville, Siobhán Cleary, Kathleen Spillane, Joan Halpin. Front L to R: Mary Kane, Aileen O'Donnell, Amanda Kelly, Mary Fogarty, Eileen Connolly and Elizabeth McCormack.



Rehearsal for Hogan Musical Society's 'Fiddler on The Roof' March 1999. Back L to R: Eoin Whyte, Chris O'Riordan, Ross Maher, Glen Burke, Francis Lonergan. Front L to R: Miceál McCormack, Peter Carroll, John Lonergan, Davy Tobin and Eoin Doyle.

stratagems were used to improve the finances, such as a Beach Party at the Clonmel Rugby Club on May 29, and later a sponsored walk. But by the end of the year the debt was not fully cleared. The Society's members did not lose heart, however, and so at the end of the year plans were on hand for a new production. The committee elected to face that commitment were: Ellen Shortall (president); Michael O'Hagan (chairperson); Agnes Evans (secretary); Miceál McCormack (treasurer); Marian Gilpin; Joan Halpin; Geraldine McCarthy; Eileen Maher; Chris O'Riordan; Jimmy O'Shea.

Both the Fethard Players and the Hogan Society were more than pleased to have the delightful setting of the Abymill Theatre for their productions. But the Theatre was used for other events. Ballet Ireland came to Fethard on February 19, and presented highlights from Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, and the Nutcracker. There was a full attendance on the night. That Ballet Ireland should include Fethard in their tour reflected great credit on the then management of the Theatre. Ballet Ireland came again on Sunday, October 3, and again had a full house. On May 8 the Theatre was the venue for an Ibsen play 'Ghosts' which was presented by the Impact Theatre Company. During the year drama classes were also held in the Theatre. It is worth remembering that the administrator of the Theatre was Austie O'Flynn and the chair-

man of the committee was Michael McCarthy.

Other cultural occasions for the town were, for instance, the Tipperarian Book Fair which was held in the Ballroom on the afternoon of Sunday, February 14. Because the event was being held on St. Valentine's Day the organisers, the Fethard Historical Society, were offering a special romantic prize. On the weekend of February 27 and 28, the Stray Dog Film company were in the town. They were making a film documentary on the 1848 Rising at Ballingarry and found Chapel Lane ideal for their needs where they even constructed a mock-up forge at the back of what was Scully's yard. On their visit the film crew made the Abymill Theatre their headquarters and pressed the members of the Fethard Players and the Hogan Society into service. In May the South Pembrokeshire Art Group from Narbeth came visiting to investigate the potential for an artistic union between themselves and Fethard. Their plan was to create a working link between themselves and a similar-sized town. Fifty members of the Dutch Everards, descended from the Meath branch of that family, came to Fethard on Saturday, August 7. They were led by Richard Everard and were shown about the town by Dóirín Saurus and Terry Cunningham. Visitors who gave wonderful pleasure to those who sat in the Abymill Theatre on Wednesday, September 15, were the

Irish Chamber Orchestra, which has been described as a 'most accomplished performing ensemble'. The orchestra played works by Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. A group from the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society, who were on a tour of Co. Tipperary, came to Fethard on Saturday, September 18. The group of thirty-five were given a walking tour by Mary Hanrahan and Chris Nevin. And a number of French students enjoyed the charms of Fethard during the summer months, as did a small number of Spanish students. Do we realise that there are quite a number of people in western Europe for whom Fethard is a very real entity?

Cultural groups came readily to Fethard but what was there to draw

the ordinary visitor. One thing was the Pattern Day festival which was held on Sunday afternoon, May 30. The pupils from the junior school paraded from the school grounds, on to the Main Street and from there made their way to the Town Wall. Then a series of festive items took place along the area between the Town Wall and the Clashawley. Another was Coolmore Stud Farm. On Wednesday, April 7, the boxer George Foreman came calling with his friend, the runner Eamonn Coughlan. This was Foreman's first visit to Ireland. But what brought Eddie Jordan to Fethard? He of the Formula One racing team, quite a stir was created when his helicopter landed at the back on McCarthy's Hotel on Thursday, February 11.



Johnny O'Brien and Mick Hogan having a chat up The Green on Friday, 26th March, 1999

Brian Crowley, the European MEP, also called during the same month. The medieval appearance of the place caught his eye as did the local supermarket which even then was displaying its prices in euros and pints.

But Sunday after Sunday visitors both local and from farther came to the car-boot sale at the old Railway Station and to walk through the Folk Museum. The museum had received the award of Most Improved Voluntary category in the 1999 Museum of the Year awards. The presentation ceremony was held in the National Museum, Dublin. The local museum, which was run by the Mullins family, was described as 'a busy and lively museum that attracts enormous crowds on a Sunday including many families with children who rampage enthusiastically all over the colourful play area and enjoy a tea service in the old bus that has been converted for the purpose'. The award emphasised and gave recognition to the contribution that such a place gave to the local heritage.

Inevitably death also came calling both to those in Fethard and to those who over the lean years of the 1950s and early 1960s had to become what is now called economic migrants. As the old century ended the news came, month by month, from England of the death of another old native. These were the people with their sad faces and cardboard suitcases often tied with

binder twine who went to seek work in an alien culture: the people that the German novelist Heinrich Boll met and talked to as he travelled to Ireland. Some came home on visits to see their parents, but many never came back and so we forgot them until we read reference to them in Tony's column in *The Nationalist*. At the end of February Paddy 'Gordon' Ryan, who was born on The Back Green, died. In his days in Fethard Paddy was a member of the old Fethard Confraternity Brass Band. Among the prominent local deaths was that of Sister Alphonsus Noonan. Sister Alphonsus had entered the Presentation Convent as a novice in 1939 and was professed a nun in the same year. She spent the remainder of her life in Fethard as a secondary school teacher. No doubt many women still alive will recall her. At the end of August the death took place of a 93-year-old man who was associated with another era, now only remembered by the very old. This was Paddy Gleeson from Cloran. Paddy supplied the music for the open-air platform dancing that was so popular in the late 1940s and 1950s at Kilnockin and Downey's Cross. He and his likes played for the love of music and their only payment was the contents of a cap passed about among the patrons attending on the night. An especially tragic death was that of Johnny McGarry from Woodvale Walk on Sunday, November 1. He had been married only the previous July to Anne

Morrissey from St. Patrick's Place and had come to live at Woodvale Walk. He worked at the Eddie O'Grady stables at Killeens, Ballynonty.

Every year brings its changes, some good and some of sorrow. But one thing that continued year in year

out was the annual pilgrimage to the Holy Year (1950) Cross on the side of Slievenamon which was held on 15 August. And so the century ended with the traditional walk from Moinfair Wall up the side of the mountain. In this year, though, the Mass was not celebrated at the Cross but a little lower down in O'Donnell's Field. The Cross, which was origi-

nally of wood, was twelve feet high and extended nine feet and was changed in 1974 because the wood had begun to weather. In that year it was replaced with a structure of concrete. Stations of the Cross were added and some smaller crosses placed about. It was planned that for the new century a source of modern power would be in use to illuminate the Cross on special occasions.

And so, again inevitably, Christmas came round. The Pheasant Pluckers sang carols on Tuesday night,

December 21. A Christmas tree was erected on The Square and lit, as was the Town Hall. This was due to the efforts of the local Community Council. Plans had been made to have the Main Street illuminated, but this was not to be because of

danger from overhead electric cables. Early morning Masses on Christmas Day were now a thing of the past. Instead of a 6am Mass in The Abbey the earliest Mass was now at 8.30am in the Parish Church.

With Christmas over local people now looked to the new Millennium. The Community Council planned to welcome the new century with

a celebration held on Wednesday December 29, outside the Town Hall which was illuminated for that special event. And the Pheasant Pluckers again supplied the music and song.

Also to welcome the new century the County Council had agreed to supply power from the town's electric supply so that the south walls could be emphasised as a feature of the town's medieval past. ●

Michael O'Donnell (Owning)



*Dick Burke filling the 'perfect pint' at
The Bridge Bar, September 1999*

Fethard Choral Group



Fethard Choral Group at practice in the Augustinian Abbey. Back L to R: Fiona Browne, Jim Trehy, John Fogarty, Michael McCarthy, Paul Hayes, Paddy Broderick, Brian Guiry, Bernard Walsh, Michael Kenrick, Joan Halpin. Middle L to R: Tina Whyte, Chrissie Cummins, Josie Fitzgerald, Mary Smyth, Susanna Manton, Marie Murphy, Nell Broderick, Marian Gilpin, Shirley Clooney, Ruth Farrell. Front L to R: Ciara Tillyer, Catherine Smyth, Anita Maguire, Geraldine McCarthy, Laura Hards, Majella Walsh, Mary Healy, Maree Moclair, Noreen Sheedy and Ann Barry (Musical Director). Absent from photo were Maria O'Dwyer, Emma Lalor, Gemma Burke and Amy Lalor.

Fethard Choral society, under the musical director Ann Barry, had a very successful year. They participated in the New Ross Choir competition in May and also sang in the choirs 'Evensong' in Saint Mary's Church, Clonmel as part of the 'The Big Sing' on October 4, which was introduced by special guest, Niall Carroll.

The Choral Group recorded a beautiful arrangement of the 'Little Drummer Boy' for the RTE Lyric FM competition.

The choir was formed in September 2012 and has currently thirty members. They held their first public performance in the Augustinian Abbey on Sunday, December 16, 2012, and are currently rehearsing for this year's Christmas Carol Service which will be held in the Abbey Church on December 15, where the children's choir from the local primary and secondary schools will also sing.

The choir is still open to any male singers who wish to join. ●

Fethard GAA Club

As the end of the playing season comes to a close we look back at our activities for the year. By our standard of others times we would have to feel disappointed to a degree, but on the other hand we have kept the ship afloat for another year and who knows what 2014 will bring. Emigration, no work, and people trying to come to grips with the state of our little country, have put GAA activities to one side for the moment. With perseverance and our back to the wheel, the blues will rise again. Thankfully our finances are in good stead due to a great lotto, the county board draw committee, and a monetary injection from Coolmore Stud for which we are more than grateful. Emigration to the four corners of the world, including New York, UAE (United Arab Emirates), New Zealand and Finland, has made it nearly impossible to field teams, not alone be able to mix with the 'big boys', Nonetheless, great credit must be given to the committee and selectors for getting teams out on the day.

We are joined with St Patrick's in a combination known as Anner Gaels in minor U21 hurling and football. Thankfully we are winning in the U21 hurling and might make an appearance in a south final later this month.

The Juvenile committee are also under the same name with the exception of an U14 hurling team

who went it alone and won the South and County Tipperary grade C hurling championship, beating Thurles Sarsfields in the semi-final and Solohead in the final by a large margin. Well done to captain Jessie McCormack and this inspired young team and their selectors Mick O'Mahoney and Eugene Walsh who took the initiative to enter the team and show the true Fethard spirit. Well done to all concerned.

On a sad note we lost three great Gaels in Joe Keane formerly of the Green, Andy Fox formerly of St. Patrick's Place, and Joe Ahearne of the Fethard Arms on Main Street. Joe Keane had been ill for a while but nevertheless his passing came as a great shock to all and a testament to this was the large attendance at his removal and burial. On both occasions guards of honour of GAA people from far and near were in place along with his work colleagues from Avonmore. So popular was this young man we called 'Dush' from the Green, that as his body was laid to rest, Slieve na Mban was rendered impromptu by his Fethard GAA colleagues.

One of the great hurling men in the parish, Andy Fox, passed on after a short illness. Andy was one of a few who were responsible for the re-introduction of hurling to the parish in the seventies. Here again, grand memories are with us from this man who gave so much of his time to the GAA.

As October drew to a close, our great friend and vice-president of the club, Joe Ahearne, passed away in South Tipperary General Hospital. Joe was a man that played our games in London in the company of Stephen O'Brien, Jim and Sean McCormack and was the second last survivor of our last county winning junior hurling team. Joe was a former chairman of the Fethard Club and a selector of south winning teams in junior and intermediate hurling.

On a lighter note, congratulations to Michael Ryan, Tullamaine, who managed Tipperary to a second consecutive All Ireland

Intermediate Hurling Championship this year. Hopefully in the near future Michael will get a chance to lead the Tipperary Senior side. Well done.

At a medal presentation function held earlier in the year for the winning junior footballers, Jimmy O'Shea made a presentation to Michael from the club. Across the water stateside, Cian Maher captained the New York hurlers to yet another championship and Johnny Leahy, Anns gift, won an Asian games championship with Qatar.

Well done lads. Nollaig sonnagh, go gach duine í paróiste Fhiodh Ard agus Cill Loiste. ●



Michael Ryan, Tipperary Intermediate Hurling Manager, with his family after winning the second All Ireland Intermediate Hurling Final in a row, defeating Kilkenny in Nowlan Park.

Joe Ahearne, Fethard (1920-2013)

With great sadness we learned of the passing away of Joe Ahearne, who parted this life and went to his eternal reward on October 22, 2013, after a brief illness. Sadly missed by his wife Nora, sons Raymond and Joseph, daughters Marie and Noreen, daughter-in-law and grandchildren, family and friends far and wide. Joe hailed from Coolmoynes attending the local National School with his brothers Mick, Paddy and sister Elsie O'Dwyer (nee Ahearne). Mick, Paddy and Elsie were very proud GAA Gaels over the years and had already parted this life before Joe. His other sister Pattie is a nun (Sister Benignus), now in her 89th year and living in South Africa. Their local national school was known as 'Coolmoynes University'.

Joe started his successful playing career as an eighteen-year-old, winning his first senior hurling south title with Fethard in 1938, followed by county and south senior football titles in 1942. In the same year he added a Tipperaryman's Cup medal

also with Fethard and a south junior hurling title with his beloved Coolmoynes – 'Let Fly Coolmoynes'.

Joe sailed to London in 1942 where he remained playing and working until 1949 winning All Britain senior hurling medals in 1948 and 1949, while playing with London and clubs 'Brian Borús' and 'Bro Pearses'. He returned to Fethard in 1949 winning south senior football in 1950. He also won junior hurling south and county in 1950 with Coolmoynes, his pride and joy, and Coolmoynes's first and only senior hurling title in 1951. Joe returned to London in 1951 and came back in 1952 to get married

to Nora Bates in Clerihan church before returning to London where he continued to hurl with Chuchullans, winning London titles in senior hurling in 1954 and 1955. Before hanging up his boots he won many a tournament and Féile. Working by day as a fitter welder, he worked as 'Master of Ceremonies' at night for Paddy Casey in the Inishfree Ballroom on Ealing Broadway for



The late Joe Ahearne

eight years. Joe then moved into the pub business, starting in Peckham where he remained for only eighteen months moving on then to his old haunt, The Malvern, Ladbrook Grove, North Kensington, where I first met Joe and Nora in 1973.

Joe's final move home in 1977 was to the Fethard Arms on Main Street, previously Scullys Hardware & Grocery shop with pub. Joe settled into his public house and farm and would often say, "There's no place like home, Coolmoynes." For the following thirty-seven years the Fethard Arms became the new home of Fethard GAA where many a good night's 'Craic agus Ceol', sing songs and 45 Cards were played in the corner, and not forgetting the many presentations of medals and awards to past and present players. There was always plenty of food available ably provided by Nora and assisted by family members, Marie, Noreen and their friends.

Joe proudly held the position of chairman of Fethard GAA Club from 1990 to 1992. He was also a selector for many years in hurling, winning south senior hurling with St. Augustines in 1982, in Davin Park, Carrick-on-Suir, and the same year bringing the south intermediate hurling title to Fethard when they defeated old rivals and friends Kilsheelan – the other half of St. Augustines – in the final. He was also involved in the 1989, 1992 and 2002 success at this grade and served on the South Board Appeals Committee for almost 30 years.

Joe was very active on the Fethard GAA Committee for many years which included the publishing of the 'Fethard, Coolmoynes & Killusty Centenary GAA Story 1887-1987', compiled by his late brother Mick. Joe attended nearly every match that Fethard was involved in since his retirement. His dedication was honoured when he became Fethard GAA Club's Life President in 2010. His true love was the game of hurling. He will be fondly remembered for his partaking of a 'pinch of snuff' with the box doing the rounds in the pub, followed by a handkerchief not far behind. Of course, who could forget the weekly hard cured bacon obtained either in Emly, Tipperary, Cahir or further afield if required. By hook or by crook they say the fat would kill you! They must be joking, for breakfast, dinner and tea was Joe's motto!

In 1984 when Tipperary won the Minor Munster Final in Killarney, Joe travelled with us bringing a picnic and, with parking at a premium, we parked in the railway station in Killarney and out of his bag he took four well-cooked trout, caught in the Anner or Clashawley river (we can't divulge the actual source), with one for each person present - Mick Byrne, Martin Cuddihy, and yours truly – how tasty!

Farewell old friend and may the Lord look kindly on your soul. Go nDeanaí Dhia Trocaire Orthu. ●

Nollaig O Broin



Fethard Senior Football team in the 1960s. Back L to R: Liam Flaherty, Michael Sheehan, Dinny Burke, Liam Connolly, John Fitzgerald, Pat Byrne, Gus Danaher. Front L to R: Waltie Moloney, Ger Leahy, Pop Barrett, Cly Mullins, Davy Fitzgerald, Mick Holohan, Eamon Butler and Sean Moloney.



Coolmoyne Hurling team c1955 Back. L to R: Cly Mullins, Gus Danaher, Liam Connolly, Jim McCormack, Dick Wall, Jack Wall, Tony Newport, Paddy O'Flynn. Front L to R: Gus Neville, Seamus Hackett, Tom McCormack, Christy Williams, Mick McCormack, Mick Dineen and Jimmy McCarthy.

Fethard Ladies Football



Fethard U12 Ladies, county league winners. Back L to R: Annette Connolly (coach), Miceál Spillane (coach), Emma Geoghegan, Coaimhe O'Meara, Amy Brophy, Katie O'Flynn, Lucy Spillane, Ailish Trayer, Ava Hickey, Laura Kieley, Maeve Ellie Ryan, Rachel Prout, Jacqui O'Flynn (coach). Front L to R: Nell Spillane, Alison Connolly, Kaylin O'Donnell, Maggie Fitzgerald, Ciara Connolly, Aoibhe Browne, Leah Coen, Laura O'Donnell, Hannah Dolan, Carrie Davey and Mark Prout (coach).

Fethard Ladies Football had a very successful 2013 and the following report is a brief review of how we did at each grade.

U6-U8

The year began early with training starting on Saturday, March 23 and continuing until we finished up on September 28. Training was well attended every Saturday especially with the lovely weather we had during the year. The girls played Clerihan, Kilsheelan, Commercials, St. Pats, Mullinahone, Moycarkey and Arravale Rovers. We would like to wish the girls moving from U8 to U10 the best of luck and the same to the girls moving from U6 to U8. These girls have shown great improvement

and we hope they keep enjoying the game.

U10

Our U10 footballers commenced training on March 16 and with a panel of twenty-four girls we played several matches and blitzes throughout the year. On June 22 we held our own blitz in conjunction with the Gathering Festival and we had teams from Moyle Rovers, Cahir and Clonmel Commercials competing. The blitz was really enhanced by the great selection of bouncy castles, bucking broncos and several other sideshows provided by Coolmore as part of the Gathering Festival.

On July 6 we travelled to Monroe to attempt to break the world record



Under 14 girls celebrated a well-deserved victory in the County League Final on Monday, October 29. Back L to R: Aoife Sheehan, Aine Trayer, Laura Stocksborough, Laura Cummins, Sally Butler, Ciara Hayes, Molly O'Meara, Ben Coen, Rebecca Kenny. Front L to R: Emily Spillane, Kate Davey, Megan Coen, Carrie Davey, Sadhbh Horan, Aoibhe Browne, Caoimhe O'Meara, Lucy Spillane and Aine O'Connell.

for the 'largest football mosaic'. Each girl got to place a football in this record-breaking attempt which was achieved and is now entered in the Guinness Book of Records. On August 10 we travelled to Staker Wallace in Limerick for an inter-county blitz playing teams from Cork and Kerry which was a great experience. Five of our U10s were part of the U11½ community games team which won the county final. Eleven of our U10s are moving up to U12 in 2014 and we would like to wish them all the best. Many thanks

to the coaches Sandra Spillane and Willie Morrissey and thanks to the parents for their support throughout the year.

U12

The U12s commenced training on February 16, with good numbers attending every week. They won all their group matches in the championship and were drawn to play Clonmel Commercials in the semifinal. After a close game with

some great football we booked our place in the final. Our opponents were a strong Slievenamon team who started strongly and despite a



U6/U8 blitz in Clonmel, Back L to R: Taryn Purcell, Ava Ryan, Emily Davey, Lucy Kenny, Aoife Harrington. Front L to R: Sarah Moore, Emily Spillane, Zoë Prout and Aine Connolly.

good second half we were beaten by two points in the end. The league was played after the championship and after a series of games we were into the last four, which were played off in a blitz format. After drawing with Templemore and beating Moyle Rovers and Mullinahone we were crowned league champions, finishing off a great year for the girls. This was a significant achievement considering all three teams played their championships at grades higher than our own.

In the U11½ community games we had victories over Powerstown/ Lisonagh, Clerihan, Cashel/ Rosegreen and in the county final played in Semple Stadium we had a comprehensive victory over Moycarkey Borris. This was a great result for the club and for the girls it was a rare opportunity to play

in Semple Stadium, an experience enjoyed by all. We then represented Tipperary in the Munster semifinal in Tralee against Glanmire from Cork and despite a great performance we were beaten by four points. This was a great year for this group of girls who were a credit to the club.

U14

Our U14 season could not have finished better with this team completing a league and championship double. Contesting the County B Championship they defeated Templemore in a thrilling county final, to be crowned county champions. Things only got better as they defeated Brian Borus in the County A League Final after extra time. A great achievement by this team who played super football all year.

As well as the county double, five members of the team, Kate Davey,



The Under 16 Ladies Football team that reached the County Final on Sunday, October 20. Back L to R: Laura Stocksborough, Ciara Hayes, Lauren Dowling, Clíodhna O'Connor, Katie Butler, Jessica Dowling, Ciara Tillyer, Sadhbh Horan, Aine Trayer, Annie Prout, Katie Ryan, Louise Fitzgerald, Muireann O'Connell. Front L to R: Laoise Stapleton, Megan Coen, Kate Davey, Molly O'Meara, Jessie McCarthy, Sally Butler, Aoihe Brown, Sophie Ryan, Anna Slattery and Megan McCarthy.



On Saturday, May 25, Fethard Ladies won the Junior C Football League Final. Back L to R: Tomás Keane, T.J. Keane (mascot), Ciarán Tracy, Sharon O'Meara, Edel Fitzgerald, Eimear Barry, Roisín O'Reagan, Hanna Stapleton, Karen Hayes, Aobh O'Shea, Roisín Trehy, Ellen Welsh, Sophie Meehan, Michael Dillon. Front L to R: Marian Harrington, Sandra Maher, Audrey Conway, Emma Welsh, Jessie McCarthy, Kay Spillane, Sarah Smith, Amy Pollard, Nell Trehy and Annie Prout

Molly O'Meara, Megan Coen, Ciara Hayes and Laura Stocksborough, were members of the Tipperary U14 team that defeated Clare in the Munster Final and were unlucky to lose narrowly to Wexford in the All-Ireland Final in Nowlan Park.

U16

Our U16s reached the County C semifinal where they lost narrowly to Boherlahan. In the county league they went one step further. Leading by one point with only minutes left in the county final against Lattin-Cullen they were unfortunate to concede a late goal. This was a very young team who were unlucky not to win a trophy this season.

Minors

Our minor ladies championship is still in full swing and after a loss to Cappawhite in their opening game, a fine display against Mullinahone in their second game has put them

back on track and in good stead for the remainder of the championship. Best of luck ladies!

Juniors

The Junior ladies started training on the cold frosty nights in February under the scrutiny of Michael Dillon and assisted by Tomás Keane and Ciarán Tracy. They competed in the Junior C League competition beating Cahir, Thurles Sarsfields and Three Friars from Mullinavat. In the league final played in Monroe against Mullinavat the girls came out victorious on the day playing some excellent football. After winning the league it was decided to move up to Junior B for the championship. We beat Galtee Rovers in Fethard, drew with Moyne Templetuohy away and received a bye from Ballyporeen. This put us into the semifinal against Ballyporeen which was played in Fethard. In a high scoring game

which ebbed and flowed the girls came out on top. In the final we played Galtee Rovers again, this time in Ballylooby. Galtee were stronger than us on the day and had a well-deserved victory. The experience gained in the B should stand to the girls in next year's championship.

Gaelic 4 Mothers

It was another good year for the ladies this year despite participation being lower than other years. However, the ladies put in some tough training and some tougher games against St Pats and Dualla to mention a few. All the hard work paid off as their year culminated in the Annual GFM blitz in Portmarnock in October where they performed brilliantly to win all of their games. Well

done ladies and mentor M.J. Croke.

It was a tremendous year for all involved with the club with both highs and lows but we will take away some great memories from 2013. With five county titles won and our minors still involved in their championship all bodes well for the future of ladies' football in Fethard.

The club would like to offer a huge 'Thank You' to all of our sponsors over the years. Without your support the club would not be able to continue. We would also like to thank all the players, parents and supporters who followed us near and far throughout the year.

Remember new players are always welcome. Lets hope 2014 is as good. ●



Fethard's Gaelic 4 Mothers team travelled to Portmarnock on Saturday, October 19, to compete in the All-Ireland blitz. Back L to R: Trisha Fitzgerald, Teresa Hurley, Carina Condon, Eleanor Kenny, Aine Doocey, Annemarie Kenny, Alice Butler, Anita Manton, M.J. Croke (coach). Front L to R: Noreen Harrington, Pamela O'Donnell, Annette Connolly, Hazel Galloway and Cabrina Roche.



This photograph appears to be Fethard / Killusty hurling team c1950. (Maybe some reader will have more details). Back L to R: Frank Kearney, Johnny Duggan, Tom Sheehan, Micky Flanagan, Ned Sheehan, Bill Meaney, Vincent Allen, Johnny Ferris, Alfie Brett. Front L to R: Pat Ryan, Sean Connolly, Sean Moloney, Liam Flaherty, Gerry Mackey, Joe Barrett and Paddy O'Rourke.



Coolmoynce Hurling Team c1955. Back L to R: Christy Williams, Dermot Barry, Jack Wall, Eamon Butler, Mick Dineen, Tony Newport, Dick Wall, Pat Woodlock. Front L to R: Gus Neville, Jimmy O'Donnell, Joe Clarke, Tom McCormack, Liam Connolly, Cly Mullins, Mick McCormack, Seamus Hackett, Nicky O'Shea.

Tipp Ladies managed by local man



Members of the Tipperary Intermediate Ladies Football management team 2013.

Back L to R: John Kinahan (Trainer), Sean O'Donovan (Manager).

Front L to R: Mary O'Shea (Selector), Kay Lyons (Administrator) and Elaine Powell (Physio).

Fethard local man Sean O'Donovan was ratified as Tipperary Ladies Gaelic Football Manager in 2012. His management career started five years ago when he supervised the Moyle Rovers Under 16 team. The following year Sean managed two Junior teams for Moyle Rovers - Junior A and Junior D. Both teams were successful in their County Finals and the Junior A team competed in an All Ireland Quarter Final in Manchester. Following this successful year he advanced to Moyle Rovers Intermediate Team which won their County Final in 2011.

Sean O'Donovan, when putting together his management team

for Tipperary Ladies Football, asked Fethard native Kay Lyons to join the team. While the team competed well in 2012, 2013 was to be their year reaching an All Ireland Intermediate Final.

The 2013 journey began in early February when Sean led the Tipperary Ladies to a four goal victory over Wexford in the first round of the league. Further victories against Down and Sligo, a walkover from Wicklow and defeats at the hands of Longford, Leitrim and Armagh ensured Tipperary qualified for the knockout stages. A one point victory over Leitrim set up a league semi-final clash with Armagh. In a tough and tightly contested game Tipperary were defeated by two points, thus



Sean O'Donovan (manager) and team members celebrate their semifinal win at Semple Stadium

ending their Tesco Homegrown National Football League.

Sean O'Donovan and his management team continued their training and match preparations for the next competition, the Munster Championship. With only three teams competing in this Tipperary ensured their place in a Munster Final with a loss to Waterford and a defeat over Limerick. The Munster Final in Castletownroche, Co. Cork on July 13 was a tough game in very hot weather. Waterford, yet again, were victorious which meant Tipperary went into the All Ireland Round 2 Qualifier on August 10, against Limerick.

Although Tipperary had a competitive National Football League they prepared with even more intensity for the All Ireland Championship.

A victory over Limerick in the Round 2 Qualifier ensured a Quarter Final against Longford. This was not a game to be taken lightly as Longford had beaten Tipperary earlier in the year. Tipperary fought hard for a victory but as the final whistle of normal time blew the teams were level, Tipperary 3-9, Longford 3-9. Extra time was required to separate these teams. Tipperary found the determination to continue and add another two points to their score line while Longford could only add a point. Tipperary claimed the victory Tipperary 3-11, Longford 3-10.

Tipperary Ladies now had a semifinal in Semple Stadium to look forward to and it was their premiere in Semple Stadium, Thurles. With due care in the preparations Sean O'Donovan got the ladies ready for

an even more thrilling game than we, the supporters had seen all year. Fermanagh looked to have the game in hand when they had built their lead up to eight points at the start of the fourth quarter but Tipperary were tireless and never gave in. Tipperary, who never actually led in the game until the hooter went, took the victory from Fermanagh by one point in the last second of the game when Claire Carroll and Niamh Loneragan combined to score a goal and two points. It was a game which showed the true character of the team.

An All Ireland Final and Croke Park was the next step for this team.

The preparations began in earnest on September 8 and it was no easy task for manager, Sean O'Donovan, Kay Lyons and the other members of the management team. Cavan were their opponents but Tipperary's late steal from Ulster Champions, Fermanagh, was the talk prior to the All Ireland. Tipperary went into the final as under dogs, something they laid to rest in the first quarter of the game as they took the lead. Cavan, however, came back into the second quarter and reduced Tipperary's

lead to one point at the half whistle, Tipperary 1-7, Cavan 0-9. In the second half Cavan mounted the pressure and Tipperary's legs began to give way. Tipperary were forced into errors and Cavan took advantage of this. In the twenty-sixth minute of the



Sinead Delahunty, Castlehiggins, Fethard is a member of the team and now plays with Foxrock/Cabinteely

second half Aisling Doonan, Cavan, was fouled for a penalty which Bronagh Sheridan netted. Tipperary fought on and added two more points to reduce their deficit. As the final whistle blew, Cavan were victorious on a score line of 1-14 to 1-12. While ultimately disappointed to lose, Tipperary gave of their all and they left Croke Park with pride and honour in themselves,

their team and their management.

Sean O'Donovan and Kay Lyons have been with the team for the last two years and have quietly built on the Tipperary Ladies Football successes. It is with thanks to Sean O'Donovan and Kay that Tipperary continued their eighteenth consecutive year in All Ireland Finals in Croke Park. A dynamic duo at management we look forward to next year in anticipation of what successes they will give the Premier County, Tipperary. ●

Through the eyes of a brother

Andrew (Andy Fox), a proud native of St. Patrick's Place, peacefully passed away at Millford Hospice, Limerick on June 24, 2013 at the age of just 63 years. Andrew's wish was granted when he was laid to rest with his parents in the town he loved so well - Fethard.

In his younger days Andrew was very active in Fethard GAA proving to be very accomplished in both football and hurling. He went on to distinguish himself in both coaching and administration, and was very much to the fore when it came to keeping hurling alive during challenging times in the Fethard club.

He was a very keen badminton player in his day and I recall many a heated battle between us on Sunday

afternoons in the town hall. Suffice to say we spoke very little on the way down, but even less on the way back. Dare I say, I had the edge on him in badminton, I guess that it's easy say that now. Those were great days playing alongside some of the most gifted players in the country.

On the academic front Andrew showed he was an exceptionally talented student. Through natural ability and his application to study he received a scholarship which enabled him to attend Cork University to further his education. Our near neighbour, Johnny Sheehan, very kindly gave Andrew lifts to and from university and this very kind gesture took a great deal of pressure off our father at the time when roads or cars



Fethard players and supporters in the Fethard Arms after winning the South Intermediate Hurling Final 1982. L to R: A.B. Kennedy, Andy Fox, Davy Morrissey, Michael Keane, Noel Harrington and Noel Sharpe.

were not as they are today.

On successfully completing his studies in Cork he went on to realize his dream and true vocation, which was to become a teacher. He began his teaching career in Scoil Ruain in Killenaule where he remained until illness forced him to retire at a young age.

Andrew loved teaching and was recognised as one who always went above and beyond the call of duty, enabling his students to fulfil their true potential and equally important, to enjoy their time in school.

From a sporting perspective he coached many great hurling and football teams in Scoil Ruain helping many to represent their county at various levels. He was held in high esteem by fellow teachers and parents of students he was involved with over the years.

In 1997 Andrew retired from the career he truly loved and I have no doubt but that day proved a very sad day for him as it did for many others.

Some time prior to his retirement Andrew moved to Thurles to live, however, on leaving Fethard he requested that the 'Fethard Newsletter' be sent annually to his new address. This enabled him to keep in touch with all activities pertaining to his hometown. Andrew, and indeed Fethard people throughout the world, always found this annual newsletter a great and welcome source of information. Long may it continue and well done to those who make it happen.

Over the years Andrew developed a great love for music and song. I am reliably informed he possessed a fine singing voice, no doubt inherited from his mother who was a most talented singer in her own right. While I can recall my mother singing all her old favourites at the kitchen sink, to my dismay I never heard either of them sing formally, and for the record, Andrew would never have been found singing let alone dish washing at the kitchen sink either.

Teaching, sport, coaching, music and song were very much part and parcel of what Andrew was all about, however, he was first and foremost a family person, who was most proud of his Fox and Coffey roots. Compiling a family tree was probably his way of saying how important both were to him.

His nieces and nephews will remember him for the kindness and thoughtfulness he had for each one of them. He loved celebrating special occasions with his extended family who were forever in his thoughts. My sister Mary's late husband, Sean Walsh, was always a well loved, respected and important person in Andrew's life and the happiness he brought into Mary's life was most appreciated.

Andrew loved nothing more than to wander off in his own time to visit and chat with many of his valued relatives wherever they were. If ever somebody felt unwell or alone, rest assured he would be there for them.



Andy Fox (second from right) photographed with principal Frank O'Sullivan (centre), teacher Paddy O'Reilly (left) and pupils from Killenaule Vocational School on the building site of Scoil Ruain in 1980. The school was officially opened in 1981.

His unannounced visits were always most welcomed.

Andrew was blessed with many great friends in both his hometown of Fethard but also his adopted town of Thurles. Our family was always well aware of how respected and popular he was in Fethard. We were both taken aback, but pleasantly surprised, to see such huge numbers from Thurles turning up for his funeral. Andrew left Fethard some twenty-three years ago thinking he was going to put manners on those 'Thurles Rogues'. I suspect somehow he gave it up as a lost cause, only to find that he himself became one of them in the end. To all the good people of Thurles and in particular those Lovable Rogues in Larry's, we extend our sincere thanks for the way in which you looked after Andrew over the years.

At his funeral we were particularly pleased to see so many of his former students coming to pay their respects to the person they rightly believed to be very special and a gifted teacher. Photographs of those fine hurlers he coached in Scoil Ruain adorned his living room with pride.

While I am reluctant to mention his many friends for fear of missing out on somebody, I feel obliged to make a brief reference to two people who were exceptionally kind and supportive to Andrew over the years. Mick Hassett, his great teaching colleague and good friend from his teaching days in Scoil Ruain, who, to his credit always stood by him through thick and thin. Mick acknowledged that in Andrew he probably had the finest teacher ever to grace his school, and in particular,

his favourite subject, maths.

The other person is Andrew's great friend, Phil. In many ways they were very similar which explains why they got on so well. They both loved a cup of tea and a fag first thing in the morning over a little gossip. They loved their music and pints in Larry's and would often burst into song, to the delight of their esteemed audience. One of the greatest things they had in common was their willingness to help others. Andrew was a great person to give help or support but receiving payments, gifts or favours never rested comfortably on his shoulders. His words were always the same, 'This is a gift from me to you!'

My sister Mary devoted her life to watching over Andrew when sick and I suspect as a final gesture of

thanks he allowed her to hold his hand as she sought to comfort him.

Many years ago I stumbled across a lovely little story. It was about a man who had just passed away and decided to look back on his journey through life. By all accounts he was a good man, and expected to see the Lord's footprints alongside his, especially during difficult and sad times in his life. But for whatever reason it appears there were many occasions when only one set of footprints could be seen. On noticing this, the man turned to the Lord and asked, "Why did You abandon me when I needed you most?" The Lord replied, "My son, that was when I carried you, for I could never abandon you."

When Andrew passed away, strangely enough I found myself



Scoil Ruain teammates and members of the Tipperary Minor Hurling Team pictured accepting a set of jerseys from Bernadette Cantwell, Cantwell Electrical, following the school's victory in winning the Munster Vocational Schools Hurling Final. L to R: Liam Cahill, Paul Shelly, Pat Croke, Bernadette Cantwell, Michael Hassett (principal Scoil Ruain) and Andy Fox (teacher). April 1993



L to R: Andy Fox, Mick Breen and Dick Burke pictured outside The Bridge Bar. April 1988

drawn once more to this lovely story called 'Footprints'. For within this very story I could picture Andrew's footprints walking alongside so many as they journeyed through life while meeting the many challenges set out before them.

Some of Andrew's many qualities are highlighted in the following instances:

For the many students who sought grinds in order to pass their exams, Andrew never let them down. He emphasised this in a selfless way when one day he pushed his car through a heavy flood rather than let down a young student. That same student went on to pass his exam with honours.

One young girl who reached her true potential and got to the top of

her profession, returned once more as he was laid to rest to thank him for encouraging her and enabling her to believe in herself and her ability.

I recall an old friend of Andrew's requesting one favour of him before he passed away. The request was that Andrew would give grinds to his three grandchildren thereby enabling them to pass their exams. When the time came for each child Andrew duly fulfilled his promise despite been a very sick man himself. If truth be known he had to update himself on a whole new syllabus in order to give the grinds to the last child. Once again, each one went on to pass their exams with honours.

It is important to point out that Andrew's principles and integrity would never allow himself to be

paid for services rendered. Once again happy to state that, "This is a gift from me to you."

It must be said, Andrew, like so many others, you too had your 'cross' to carry through life, you faced the many challenges that came your way with great courage and indeed great dignity at all times. To your great credit and despite your own difficulties, you were always there to help others, if only to lighten the load they were asked to carry. Your life inspired us all to realise that true kindness lies within each one of us and our challenge is to find it and show it to others.

Finally Andrew, you left me another special memory, one which

will remain with me forever. As I sat at your bedside with our nephew Ronan, not knowing what to say and powerless to help you. I could hear you mutter something; what it was I'll never know. As I moved a little closer I whispered to you, "Andrew are you giving out to me again?" Jokingly of course. With that your eyes opened wide and you gave me the biggest smile ever. Once again no words were spoken, none were required.

Thank you Andrew for being a kind, inspiring and special brother. While we miss you, we are happy that your journey will have taken you to a better place, a place where you truly deserve to be. ●

– Your brother, Eddie



Organising committee for a fundraising dance in Fethard Ballroom in aid of Aiséiri Addiction Treatment Centre in Cahir, April 1983. Back L to R: Fr. John Stapleton, Bill O'Sullivan, Aiséiri founder Sr. Eileen Fahey, a psychiatric nurse, who trained in addiction treatment at the Rutland Centre in Dublin, Ann Woodlock, Jim Kenny, Fr. Tony Lambe. Front L to R: Stan Murphy, Kathleen Kenny, Andy Fox and Maureen Whyte.

Senior Citizens Club



Sarah Cashman, Larry Fahey and Nell Mullins at a Senior Citizens' Christmas Party in 1981

Meetings of Fethard Senior Citizen's Club are held on the first Tuesday of the month and members are served tea, sandwiches and cakes followed by an invited guest speaker on relevant subjects such as, 'Safety in the Home' or 'Health Issues', other times we have a game of bingo. On arrival, each member gets a ticket for a raffle for hampers or other gifts, which takes place during the meeting. We are very grateful to Noreen for regularly giving us beautiful cushions for our raffle.

In March we had a great sing-along with Joan O'Brien who brought her accordion. In April we had our Easter Party starting with a trip to Thurles Shopping Centre, then onto Dundrum, Golden, Tipperary

Town and the Glen of Aherlow. The Galtee Mountains were spectacular with the bright sunshine and snow; it was nearly comparable with the Swiss Alps. Aherlow House Hotel was the venue for our meal after which the Easter Bonnets were judged and prizes awarded to the best three.

In May we had our annual Mass in the Tirry Centre celebrated by Fr. Gerry Horan OSA. In June our annual outing was to Ballina with a cruise on Lough Derg which was enjoyed by all as it was a brilliant sunny day. We had our evening meal at the Lakeside Hotel, Ballina. Our mini outing was to Tramore, and Faithlegg was the venue for the evening meal. A great day was had by all.

At our meeting in October, Larry Kenny provided a video showing

club activities and former members from down the years. For November the usual table quiz took place and it is also planned for Mr Joe Burke to give a talk on the importance of taking the 'Flu Jab' for our Senior Citizens.

As we go to press preparations are in hand for our Christmas Party to be held on Sunday, December 1, preceded by Mass in the Augustinian Abbey, Fethard.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank each and every one

who has helped to keep our club going in any way, financially or otherwise.

Officers: Mary Healy (Chairperson), Mary Butler (Secretary), Agnes Evans (Treasurer), Rosemary Purcell (Assistant Treasurer). Members: Annie O'Brien, Eddie O'Brien, Monica Aherne, Phil Wyatt, Kitty Delany, Nora Lawrence, Judy Doyle and Philly Kenny.

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



Noreen Cummins, Killenaule Road, collecting firewood on The Green 1981

Fethard Historical Society

The committee of the Fethard Historical Society as elected at the AGM on Tuesday, April 30, marking our 25th Anniversary, is as follows: Patricia Looby (Chairperson), John Cooney (Vice-Chairperson), Mary Hanrahan (Secretary), Catherine O'Flynn (Treasurer), Terry Cunningham (PRO), Colm McGrath, Jane Grubb, Kitty Delany, Tim Robinson, Marie O'Donnell, Diana Stokes, Gerry Long and Ann Lynch. At the meeting, Kitty Delany, was made a life member.

The original committee was invited and those present were presented with a signed copy of 'Heraldic Memorials in Fethard' by Gerard Crotty. Mary Healy, the one deceased member, was represented by her daughter Catherine on the night. The AGM was followed by a lecture by Cólín Ó Drisceoil on his recent archaeological survey of the Town Hall.

The 2012 'Tipperariana Book of the Year' award went to The Tipperary Historical Journal, this being the 25th anniversary edition. The guest speaker was Dr Martin Mansergh.

On February 10 we held our 18th annual Tipperariana Book Fair which proved our best year ever so perhaps books are recession-proof after all! This year, our medieval festival took place as part of the larger 'Gathering Festival' on June 21-23, organised by the local Business and Tourism Group.

Secondary School Transition Year students completed a scaled model of our 17th century medieval town, initiated by their art teacher, Ms Pat Looby. Michael Costello, a former past pupil and qualified architect's technician, volunteered his expertise to assist. The model was launched on Friday, May 31, along with the new medieval Walled Town Trail brochure. The model is now on permanent display upstairs in Holy Trinity Church of Ireland.

Our outing on September 28, took in New Ross Dunbrody Café, Ros tapestry, Kennedy Homestead in Dunganstown and a tour of Hook Head Lighthouse. Local guide Eileen Covey took us on a tour of Hook peninsula finishing at the 15th century castle in Fethard-on-Sea.

On October 13, delegates visited Fethard to explore our connections with the Butler family and possibilities of joining the Butler Trail. On November 18, Richard O'Brien, archaeologist, gave an illustrated slide show detailing the findings of his excavations at Rathnadrinna Ringfort outside Cashel.

In this year of the Gathering, we would like to send greetings to all, at home and abroad. We wish them every success in their ventures with a reminder that a 'Céad Míle Fáilte' awaits all who return.

Nollaig Shona Dhibh go léir agus Ath-bhliain faoi Mhaise Dhíbh. ●

25 Years of Fethard Historical Society



Pictured at Fethard Historical Society's lecture on 'Education in Fethard' which was given by Prof. Susan Parkes, Trinity College, in the Abymill Theatre, November 1990. L to R : Pakie Heffernan, Neddie Delahunty, Prof. Susan Parkes, John Holohan MCC and Monsignor Christopher Lee. November 1990

The Fethard Historical Society was founded on March 23, 1988, and has been a permanent feature on the community scene since that time. The original committee formed on that night were: Peter Grant (Chairman), Joe Ryan (Vice-Chairman), Mary Hanrahan (Secretary), Denis Burke (Treasurer), Joe Kenny (PRO), Committee Members: Marie O'Donnell, Pat O'Shea, Christy Mullins, Michael O'Donnell, John Joe Keane, Jimmy O'Connor, Vincent Doocey, Diana Stokes and Mary Healy.

Mary Healy, who published her memoirs 'For the Poor & For the Gentry' in the following year (1989) is the one member of the original committee who has died in the

intervening years and she is fondly remembered at this time.

Three of the original committee members of 1988 are still on the current committee; Marie O'Donnell, Diana Stokes and true dedication sees Mary Hanrahan as the secretary of the society again for the present 2013-14 term.

Vision of the Founding Fathers and Mothers:

At its inception the proposed five aims of the Society were as follows:-

1. *To preserve and protect all our remaining historical features.*
2. *To generate a greater awareness and appreciation of our most historical town.*
3. *To actively promote Fethard as a*

significant Tourist Centre.

4. *To gather and catalogue a full historical record of the area, i.e. songs, folklore, stories, photographs, etc.*
5. *To publish and review progress annually.*

It is against this list of the five original aims that the success or otherwise of the society can be gauged over the past 25 years. Any independent judge would have to agree that many of the original aims have been achieved and when the Tholsel/ Town Hall is revamped as a 'Tourism Hub' in 2014, it should mean that the 'number 3 aim' will also be well on the way to being realised in the near future.

Of course, the Historical Society does not claim the credit for all the many and varied good things that have happened over the past twenty-five years but its relentless campaigns at Local Government and National Government level finally drew the attention of officialdom to the fact that Fethard is in fact "the best example of a medieval walled town in Ireland". Great credit goes to the various committees who, over the twenty-five years, have put in so many hours of their time and effort to finally put Fethard firmly on the heritage map of Ireland and gain for it the national respect that it now enjoys.

Milestones

There have been many milestones along the way and also some setbacks, but in general progress has

been made year on year in preserving and enhancing the unique historic heritage of the old walled town. In 1988 the Abymill opened as a wonderful theatre and in the following years The Friends of Fethard Group did amazing work in restoring the Town Wall for its full length along by the Clashawley River. In more recent years, up to one million euro of public money - from the Heritage Council, County Council, LEADER, and Fáilte Ireland - has been spent in Fethard on archaeological reports, Valley Park enhancement, Town Wall conservation and visitor signage and brochures.

Many prestigious publications relating to Fethard have been produced, especially 'The Irish Historic Town Atlas No. 13 Fethard' by the Royal Irish Academy in 2003 and of course 'Fethard 1200 – 2000', a five hundred page history by Michael O'Donnell (one of the 'founding fathers') in 2010.

The hosting of the Medieval Festival over the past seven years in the Valley Park, along by the Town Wall, has really convinced local and visitor alike that Fethard is indeed a very unique and special place. The work of the Historical Society has been financed in a very unique way also, via the holding of The Tipperariana Book Fair in Fethard Ballroom, an ideal venue, on the second Sunday in February for the past 19 years. The fair attracts over seven hundred people to the town every year and it has reached a kind of

'cult status' amongst book lovers and collectors at this stage.

The Future

Now that the medieval, mainly Norman, heritage of the 'walled town' has been safeguarded (hopefully!) and recorded, it is the intention of the Historical Society to concentrate more on the Gaelic heritage of the parish and wider Slievenamon area. After all, it is this Gaelic heritage that ultimately defines our Irishness and differentiates us from all the other nations of the world. Furthermore, as we are entering the 'centenary years'

of Ireland's fight to finally achieve Independence, the society will be looking at and remembering the role that Fethard and Fethard people played during those crucial years one hundred years ago.

When you live in the Fethard area you can be sure of one thing - you will never run out of interesting stories from the past. It will take another twenty-five years, at least, to look into all the interesting material available and by then there will be another fifty years of stories to tell ... our stories ! ●



My Home Place', a history project for schools organised by Fethard Historical Society in June 1995, attracted a large number of excellent entries from the pupils of Fethard and Killusty primary schools. The project was designed to encourage pupils to ask and learn about their own families, home and environs. Pictured above are the Fethard pupils who were presented with certificates by Terry Cunningham, Chairman Fethard Historical Society. Back L to R: Eimear Gahan, Pamela Burke, Fiona Maher, Gillian O'Keeffe, Pamela Daly, Linda Corcoran, Aideen O'Donnell, Lena O'Connell. Middle L to R: Sr. Mary, Terry Cunningham, Mary Costello, Gillian O'Brien, Julianne Smith, Edwina McGrath, Donna Walsh, Noel Meaney, Shane Walsh (for Paddy Cooney), Maureen Maher (teacher), Mary Hanrahan (teacher). Front L to R: Lisa O'Donnell, Elaine Williams, Marissa Roche, Nicola Lonergan, Noelle Leahy, Yvette Walsh, Patrice Tobin and Sr. Maureen, Principal Nano Nagle Primary School.



Joe Keane, Coordinator, pictured with some of the dancers who took part in the 'Be Active - Be Alive' event in Fethard Ballroom on Sunday May 16, 1993. Back L to R: Aisling Nagle, Cabrina Roche, John Ryan, Moira Casey, Joe Keane, Nick Casey, Abigail Brown, Susan McCormack, Aisling O'Riordan, Mary Doyle. Front L to R: Richard O'Donnell, Aoife O'Keeffe, Marie O'Meara, Aine O'Dwyer and Thelma Coen.



Photographed at the Patrician Presentation Past Pupils Union Dinner Dance held in the Hotel Minella on March 16, 1982. Back L to R: Leo Meagher, Jim Kenny, Ann Lonergan, Paddy Lonergan, Mary Meagher, Frank Wyatt. Front L to R: Annie O'Brien, Phil Wyatt, Mossie Hayes, Agnes Evans and Ella Kenny.



Patricia and Jack Maher at the Patrician Presentation Past Pupils Union Dinner Dance March 16, 1982.



Tom and Eileen Purcell photographed with their family in Burke Street 1980s



Performing at the Senior Citizens Christmas Party December 1981. Back L to R: Vera Morrissey, Aine Henahan, Mairead Ward, Anna Morrissey, Mary Burke, Gemma Walsh, Seamus Dillon, Gabrielle Hayes. Front L to R: Deirdre Barrett, Linda Kane, Lydia Newport, Eddie Sheehan and Kay O'Riordan.



Photographed in Killusty 1981 are L to R: Josephine Ryan, Ann Carey and Gemma Walsh



Philip Ryan photographed with his nieces, Roseanne, Susan and Louise O'Meara 1981



Group photographed on a Sponsored Walk 1981



Neddy Wall (The Weather Man) talking to John Lawlor and Teddy Morrissey 1981

Jollys for a coffee



You never know the turns and twists you're going to have to take when embarking on life's journey. Long ago (way back in the mid 1990s) we harboured the notion that we would like to turn our big old house into a bed and breakfast and run a coffee shop cum book shop and hopefully in the process help attract tourists to the town of Fethard.

Around that time, while on a trip to Wexford in connection with Fethard and Killusty Community Council, I met with a man called Pat Nolan from South East Tourism. When he heard I was from Fethard Pat told me that we had the most romantic love story in our little town - worthy of an Andrew Lloyd Webber musical – and he went on to tell me the story of Robert Jolly and Ellen Meagher. It struck a chord with me especially as my

own mother was Eileen Maher (called Ellen by her brothers and sisters, and fondly known by us, her children, as Miss Ellie!).

We meandered along through the years occasionally recalling our old plans in the rough and tumble of rearing a family and earning a crust. Ger was in the food business on and off since the 1980s but through most of the nineties and noughties ran a launderette business in town.

Along came the recession which bit particularly badly in this area with a number of shops closing in the town in the past two years. We found ourselves left with an empty premises and a big mortgage - the luxury of choice was taken away from us, we had to try something new.

On June 21, 2012, with hearts in our mouths and with more than a

little valuable help, encouragement and advice from Jenny Butler, the local and well-respected food expert, we took the plunge and started our own Café – Jollys was born! There was no doubt in my mind about the name, having the connections it did with my own mother and being such a colourful part of the history of Fethard.

The café has, so far, been very well received by the community of Fethard and the outlying areas, with even Roz Purcell and Bressie having visited in the last year. What we particularly enjoy is that it seems to appeal to toddlers and grandparents alike. Our youngest customer to date was only one week old and our old-

est so far was 100 years young!

At first we opened three days a week to see if there was a demand for a coffee shop. We quickly ascertained that there was and gradually increased opening hours until last month when opening was extended to seven days a week.

Ger starts at 6am each morning baking the scones and making the soups for the day ahead so it's a very big commitment – but so far it seems to illustrate that if you have the time to give to it, it is possible to start a viable business in a recession. We hope that our experience would encourage others to take the step and start something in some of the vacant premises in town. Every shop



Jolly's Café staff who helped at the Coffee Morning in aid of the Philippine disaster on November 23, this year. L to R: Gerard Manton, Niamh Crotty, Susanna Manton, Amy Hanrahan, Marie Murphy, Sam Manton and Faye Manton.

window that's filled keeps a visitor in town for a few moments longer and that has to be a good thing. Here's to you Miss Ellie!

In Jolly's we have a pamphlet telling you where we got our name, which is reproduced here.

Where we got our name

It seems that romance was alive and well in Fethard as far back as the 17th century. Just up the street from here is the Holy Trinity Church where you will find the resting place of one Robert Jolly. In 1680, it seems, Robert Jolly was a Private Soldier in a Cavalry Regiment in Fethard where

he fell in love with an orphan girl, called Ellen Meagher.

His regiment was soon ordered abroad and Ellen was left behind, but that's not the end. Clearly a resourceful woman, Ellen went to London where, through a wealthy Jewish gentleman who left her his fortune, she herself became wealthy. Not forgetting her true love, she bought Robert Jolly out of the British Army; they were married and lived happily at Knockelly Castle just outside Fethard.

For more interesting titbits of Fethard's fascinating history be sure to visit the 'Local Information' link on www.fethard.com ●



Below is the inscription on the early 18th century monument to Robert Jolly in Holy Trinity Church of Ireland, set in the south wall of the southern side chapel (now the vestry).

"Here underfoot is interred the Body of Robert Jolly formerly of Theobalds in Hertfordshire in England and late of Knockelly Esquire who died the 20th day of August 1709 and in the 52^d year of his age."

Memorable trip to Lourdes

by Judy Doyle



Group who travelled to Lourdes. Back L to R: Vincent Cummins, Judy Doyle, Eddie O'Brien, Mary Cloonan, Joan Hayes. Front L to R: Margaret Dorney, Chrissie O'Meara, Richard Nevin and Margaret Harriman.

A group from Fethard travelled to Lourdes in June this year and despite the smiling faces we witnessed the worst flooding ever in that area of France in over 60 years. Our first day was absolutely roasting but the heat melted the snow up in the Pyrenees and, coupled with a day of thunder, lightening and torrential rain, the river Gave rose quickly and very soon burst its banks taking away part of the main bridge and flooding hotels and the main Grotto area.

Absolute chaos ensued as hotels were evacuated and with power off for several days it was difficult for everyone. Almost all ceremonies were cancelled and the grotto area was completely closed.

Many of Cashel and Emly pil-

grims, which was our group were evacuated to different hotels and other buildings. We were glad to get home again but the shop-keepers, hoteliers and locals were still trying to do a big clean up as we departed. It was a trip to remember. ●



*Fethard Patrician Presentation Secondary School youth helpers in Lourdes this year
L to R: Tara Horan and Michelle Walsh*

My memories of Community Games



Community Games Group returning to Fethard for a reception in the Town Hall, September 1986: Back L to R: Pat Ryan, Concepta Hurley, Maureen Connors, Mandy Conway, Mary English, Mildred Lawlor, Debbie Coen, Margaret (Quinlan) Hogan, Johnny Sheehan, Fr. John Stapleton. Middle L to R: Fr. Anthony Hourihan OSA, Maura Tynan, Noel Heffernan, Peggy Colville, Martin Coen, Dorothy Keane, Alice Ryan, Liam Cloonan, Tommy Butler. Front L to R: Paddy Ryan, Valerie Colville, P.J. Colville, Bro. Raymond, Michelle Fogarty, Jackie Conway, Kenneth Sheehan and Pauline Coffey.

I first became involved in Community Games through my children, like many other people who were members of the very successful Fethard Judo Club. Valerie, Avril and P.J. returned from a training session one evening in 1985 announcing that their coaches, Johnny Sheehan and Noel Heffernan, were asking all parents to attend a meeting in the ICA Nissan Hut with a view to affiliating Fethard and Killusty area to Community Games and if this happened, the children in the parish would be able to experience, 'the magic place of Mosney'.

It was a very bad night and I was debating if I would attend or not

when my neighbour, Tom Marshall, called asking, "Do you need a lift to the meeting?" There was a very large turn out (I wish I could say the same today) who were convinced by the Community Games Development Officers, Jerry Lyons, from Ballynonty, and the late Mrs Maureen Guiry, Peppardstown, that this was an up-and-coming organisation and we owed it to our children to provide them with as many sporting and cultural opportunities as possible.

The area had been previously registered with Community Games in 1970 by one of the founder members, Tom Butler, Coolanure, who did wonderful work over the years. Conor

Lonergan, The Square, won the U14 long jump and Richard Fallon was a member of the Tipperary U12 boys relay team who won gold medals at the national finals in Santry Stadium, Dublin in 1970. At that early stage there were no team events and competitors in the individual events did not have to come from the same area.

The area lapsed but was revived on that fateful night in 1985 when the following committee was formed: Brother Raymond (Chairman), Peggy Colville (Secretary), Concepta Hurley and Maura Tynan (Joint Treasurers). Committee members: Michael O'Meara, Stephen McCormack, Tom Marshall, Pat O'Donnell, Pat Ryan, Michael Sheehan, Anne Keane, Joe Keane, Liam Cloonan and Joe Corbett.

We got off to a good start taking part in football, rounders, athletics, volleyball and judo with Valerie Colville winning Tipperary's first gold medal in judo at the national finals and silver medals won by the volleyball team of: Mandy Conway, Dorothy Keane, Mildred Lawlor, Pamela Lawlor, Rebecca Conway, Anna Bradshaw, Mairead Croke, Monica Kenny, Margaret Quinlan, Lorraine

McCormack, Kathy O'Donnell and Claire O'Riordan, managed by Ann O'Riordan. Johnny Sheehan and Noel Heffernan were also in attendance and the speed and stamina of Noel Heffernan played a big part in the 'disco' security later on that evening. The girls will know exactly what I mean. Ann O'Riordan and I went

to bed at 12.30am after making sure all competitors were in bed in their chalets but were quickly aroused by the county manager, Breeda Christie, informing us that the procedure was for us to be 'out and about' with our torches on security duty until around 4am each morning. No beauty sleep in Mosney and some of our competitors were among the culprits responsible



Pat and Peggy Colville, Spittlefield, with their baby Valerie c.1973

for keeping us up.

Liam Cloonan was elected as chairperson following Brother Raymond's retirement in 1988 and was succeeded by Joe Keane who has remained chairman to the present day. Joe carried out a tremendous amount of work over the years. I escaped my position of secretary in the late 90s when M.C. Maher took over the role for a few years, followed by Bernard Feery who also

had a big input into the organisation. However, I somehow got reinstated again within the last few years and it is far easier to get out of jail but I am serving notice that I will have 30 years served in the organisation in two years' time and I need a little 'Me' time, so if anyone would like to volunteer for the position at the moment, please feel free.

Helena O'Shea has been a staunch supporter over the years and I would like to express sincere thanks to her, and also to the managers of the various teams I have dealt with – their co-operation has been super.

In the Community Games Millennium Year, 2000, the county athletics finals were held in Clonmel for the second successive year; the Munster finals took place in Listowel; over 6,000 competitors took part in the national finals with 1,000 officials; over 3,200 miles run in athletics, 200 miles swam in a 16 hour period; 11,400 litres of milk and 4,300 litres of soft drinks consumed; and 86,968 meals served from the Mosney kitchen alone. Shane Long, current international soccer star, ran on the Gortnahoe U14 relay team (he also competed in the high jump in 2001); former competitor Tracey Culleton from Rosegreen represented Belgium in the 'Rose of Tralee'; John Leahy, all-star hurler from Mullinahone was a guest at May weekend being the subject of the profile 'My local Hero'. Eoin Kelly won the Nationalist 'Young Hurler of

the Year Award', and these were just some of the many highlights of the Millennium year.

My personal highlights of the earlier years were the success of my own family and more recently, the south final of the U10 football game between Fethard and Powerstown which resulted in a draw at full time and again after extra time. Following an exciting replay, when Fethard were short some players, Powerstown won by a goal.

There were so many good times at finals in Semple Stadium, in University of Limerick, in Mosney and Athlone. Debates and Banquets at numerous AGMs held in top hotels around the country. In the early years a special train went from Cork to Mosney. The Tipperary competitors got on in Thurles and got to know a lot of their opponents on the journey. Some even fell in love and there were tears of joy and disappointment on the way home. However, many lasting friendships came from the games which were the stepping stone for several stars including Sonia O'Sullivan, Niall Quinn, Colin Farrell, Gary Ryan and Shane Long. (see photograph →)

Several members of the County Tipperary hurling and football teams, and jockeys Ruby Walsh and Patrick Mullins also had a go in athletics, in addition to many more too numerous to mention. It is a truly wonderful organisation and long may it last. ●

Peggy Colville



Fethard's Christopher Sheehan and Andrew Walshe tackling a St. Peter and Paul's player in the under nine and half Community Games football match. Fethard, won. May 1999.



A young Shane Long on the Gortnahoe relay team who won the County Community Games U12 Relay Final at Roscrea June 1998. L to R: Keith Dwyer, Orry Ryan, Shane Long, Stephen Barnaville and Nigel O'Gorman.

Sing, sing a song

by Eleanor O’Riordan



Goldie Newport practising her music at Holy Trinity Parish Church, November 2013

For many years now I have obviously been far too young to write an article for the Fethard Newsletter. Last year’s edition of the newsletter, however, included a picture of Canon Tom Breen making a presentation of the papal medal ‘Benemerenti’ to Goldie Newport. This medal was to mark over 100 years of service as a church organist in Fethard Parish Church for Goldie and her late mother Mrs A Newport. I was lucky to be growing up in Fethard in the 1970s and very lucky to be part of Goldie’s choir.

A few years ago my children

were involved in a music festival for primary schools here in Kintyre, Scotland. A suggestion was made that the children might sing one of the songs in English and one in Gaelic. The general consensus was that this would be too difficult. I of course, upped and said, “When I was that age I was singing in three languages on a regular basis, English, Irish and Latin.” As a member of Goldie’s parish choir this was the multilingual standard expected from primary and secondary school girls. I thought everyone was getting this kind of musical experience and edu-

cation!

The Parish choir was mainly composed of girls from the Main Street, The Valley, Kerry Street and Congress Terrace. I remember the Gorey sisters, Angela Dillon, Rita O'Connor and Mary Hayes from the Main Street, and Anne Shortall from the Valley – they were all senior members when I joined. I remember very well Angela, Rita and Anne Shortall singing seconds which was something new for me. It seemed difficult enough to sing the melody but these girls were singing another tune. As if by magic, when Goldie put it together it sounded great. Marion Mulligan also came and sang parts, especially at Christmas. My education was underway.

Goldie had five nieces in Congress Terrace, a wee choir in itself and I was lucky enough to be friendly with Margaret Newport. When Margaret joined the choir, I joined the choir. The Congress Terrace girls in the choir I knew quite well because I was always up at Newport's sitting on the round barrel seat beside the fire. Mary Newport often fed me cups of tea and anything else that was on the go. In fact, my son Donald got his first cup of tea from Mary, but that's another story. The Hurleys, Vicky and Margery, Catherine Newport and Patti Harrison were all senior members of the choir and kept the junior members right. This particularly was the case when we were singing in Latin. I always listened to the senior girls and followed them, *Tantum Ergo*

and *O Salutaris* at Benediction – wonderful music, also *Salve Regina*. There was also for me a certain level of terror that I might suddenly forget the next line in these hymns or even forget midway in a line. I had learned the hymns from listening to the older girls in rote like fashion. My strategy was to keep singing, a bit like when you are learning to cycle, keep peddling at all costs.

We did seem to be very busy singing every Sunday and also lots of Rosaries and Benedictions, especially in the months of May and October. Christmas was very busy and as young kids Goldie took us out carol singing. We were in fact singing outside Derek Wall's pub when the owner and customers invited us in to sing. We got a great reception and several packets of crisps. I remember all the customers telling Goldie how good we were and how they enjoyed the carols. I suspect today you would need to fill out several forms before you could take a wee band of carol singers into a local pub.

Goldie had regular practices and taught us so many things. She taught us to hold the hymn book, stand up straight and to breath at certain points in the hymn. She would play the line of the hymn then we'd sing it, until we got it. She gave us lots of encouragement and told us that children in Fethard had a great ear for music. All belonging to me were Cork people but I assumed that my ears were geographically connected to Fethard, so I'd be okay.

Here in Kintyre I am still lucky enough to be part of a choir. The first year I was part of the choir we had a piece with a chorus which included the words Ave Maria. The conductor at the time gave me a very encouraging smile as she recognised that this was for me something very close to my heart and words I was well able to sing. Thank you, Goldie.

Goldie told me a story once about two tenors in a competition singing the hymn, The Lord is My Shepherd. Both singers technically did a wonderful job but the judge had to select a winner. The judge selected the winning tenor because he said he felt that tenor really knew

the shepherd.

Goldie's music has long been part of Fethard's St. Patrick's Day celebrations, Easter and Christmas services, weddings and funerals and there is something about that music coming from the gallery. My own father loved it when Goldie pulled out all the stops on the organ and the church was full of music. While the technical issues of music and singing are important, Goldie knew about and made the all-important connection between the music and the listening congregation.

Goldie's music touched people's hearts. Goldie really knew the shepherd. ●



Paddy Murphy making a presentation to Goldie Newport on behalf of the Parish Church Choir. Goldie was celebrating her 40th year as organist in the church and the surprise presentation was made after Sunday Mass on December 20, 1992

‘Dush’ . . . my boyhood hero! *by Willie O’Meara*



Fethard senior football team County Champions 1978. Back L to R: Paddy Kenrick, Noel Sharpe, Davy Fitzgerald, Michael Downes, Michael Kenrick, Michael O’Riordan, Pakie Harrington, Joe Allen. Front L to R: Sean Aylward, Pierce Dillon, AB Kennedy, Sean Moloney (captain), Paul Hayes (mascot in front), John Keane, Waltie Maloney and Joe Keane.

On May 14 this year, news reached the Friary town that Joe Keane, the ‘Dush’ as he was affectionately known, had passed away. This news brought a great sadness to the area because Joe was a hugely popular guy in the parish down through the years and his scoring exploits on the playing fields were legendary.

Growing up as a kid in the sporting town of Fethard, like lots of kids, you’d have your sporting heroes. Stevie Coppel of Manchester United was my soccer hero and when it came to football, it was the ‘Dush’. It all started on the October 1, 1978, when Fethard reached the county senior football final against Galtee Rovers from Bansha. The game was played in Cashel and it had been

21 years since they last won the title. This one wasn’t going to be easy either. I went to the game with my great friend, Michael O’Riordan, whose late father Mick was as passionate a man of Fethard football as you could wish to meet. Mick drove us over in his white Volkswagen Variant, with Paddy Heffernan in the front seat.

Now I know a game lasts for one hour but, a lot of the time, they are decided by one incident. In this case it was probably the penalty awarded to Fethard in the first half. Jimmy O’Shea always tells the story about a friend who said, if Fethard got a penalty in the county final, Bansha’s goalie Jimmy Ferris would know where Joe was going to put it!

In anticipation, a gang of us

moved out from the side-line to get a better look at this penalty and happily saw Joe bury the ball in the bottom corner. This game was end-to-end stuff and when the final whistle was blown, Fethard had won by 1-8 to 0-9.

The celebrations that followed were something that an eleven-year-old kid like me had never seen before. When we arrived home to Fethard there was a bonfire alight at the ballroom cross to greet the team and fans coming back from Cashel. The team was then paraded around the town on the back of a truck with what seemed like every man, woman and child of the town on the streets to welcome them back. The following day in Br. James Moran's class in school, there was a knock on the

door and in arrived the players with the cup filled with orange and all the pupils had a sup.

What stood out for me most at that time was how the locals reacted to Fethard winning the county title and what it meant to the people of the town – the excitement of it all – and how people talked for ages about the game, discussing it over and over again, giving everyone a common link.

When the Fethard team trained in the Barrack field, I'd be out there watching them as Jimmy put them through their paces. Jimmy wore his white t-shirt with 'Trainer' printed on the back. I'd also watch Joe as he practised his free-taking long after training finished. I used often stand at the back of the goal and kick the



Fethard supporters carrying Sean Moloney aloft with the cup after the 1978 county final in Cashel. Also included are Tom Kearney, Dick Sheehan, Michael Sheehan, Dick Fitzgerald, Michael O'Riordan, Dennis Hannon, Micedál McCormack, Jackie Aylward, Tony Fitzgerald, Jerry Hannon, Brendan Brett and Willie O'Meara (boy with scarf).



Abe Kennedy with his sister June Ahessy and baby after the County Final in 1978

ball back out to him and remember him asking, "Who was I, who was my father, did I play and in what position, did I follow soccer?"

I couldn't believe it . . . here was the guy that had hit the winning penalty in the county final chatting away to me.

As already said, Joe's scoring ability was unreal and one score in particular that really stood out for me was during a south final in Clonmel against Commercials. Fethard, playing into the ball alley goal, were one point down with time almost up. Joe got the ball, virtually touching the corner flag and a Commercials defender in the way, but Joe did what he did best from an impossible angle and split the posts with what was to me the greatest point ever scored in Clonmel and levelled the game . . . unreal!

In 1985, the year I made the senior football team, my first game was against Moyle Rovers in Kilsheelan. This game was made more special for me as there were players from the 1978 team still playing and one of them was Joe, who gave me great help, advice and encouragement. That same year, Fethard reached the south minor football final which was played on a baking hot summer Sunday in Clonmel against Slievenamon (a combination of Moyle Rovers and Grangemockler). Everything that could go wrong in the first half did exactly that and with four minutes to half time, we were 14 points down. We kicked four points in quick succession to pull it back to 10 at half time.

Things still looked anything but good as we lined up for the second half. Joe, who wasn't a selector with

the team, walked across the field to me and said something to me that I will always remember, "Willie, the first half is over, don't worry about it, it's gone, it's the scores you'll get in this half are the ones that will count!" That was Joe, even as a spectator he always gave great encouragement. The final score was, Fethard 1-12, Slievenamon 3-5.

Over the following years, playing and training with Fethard was a brilliant experience with the great banter and craic in the dressing room and on the field. The late great Liam Connolly used always say when Joe would 'stitch' one in training, "G'boy Dush we're in Europe now!" I imagine 'twas to do with the oul' soccer thing that when you were champions you'd get to play in Europe.

Fethard won the title in 1988 with what they say was the youngest team ever to win. You'd have to ask

someone more qualified than me to confirm that but one thing I know for sure is, it wouldn't have been won without the older experienced players like Michael O'Riordan, Paddy Kenrick, Michael Downes, 'Whack' Healy and of course Joe Keane. These were players that ten years earlier when I was a kid, had brought the title to Fethard and whose help and encouragement to the younger players was immeasurable. To line out and win a county title with these players did made it all the more special.

These are only a few memories as to why the 'Dush' was my footballing hero while growing up in Fethard, in particular to have watched him training and then to eventually have the honour of playing on the same team as him.

"G'boy Dush . . . we're in Europe now!" "Up The Blues!" ●



Fethard Senior Football team, South and County Champions 1988. Back L to R: John Hurley, Tommy Sheehan, Kevin Burke, Liam Connolly, Jim Butler, Michael Healy, Paddy Kenrick, Michael Downes, Shay Ryan, Michael Ryan, Tom McCarthy, Liam Ryan, Miceál Broderick, Jimmy O'Shea (trainer). Front L to R: Paddy Ryan, Michael O'Riordan (Kerry St.), John Hackett, Owen Cummins, Willie O'Meara, Willie Morrissey, Brian Burke (captain), Michael Fitzgerald, Michael O'Riordan, Gerry Murphy and Joe Keane.

Rathcoole connection with Nano Nagle

The recent announcement by Pope Francis that Nano Nagle, foundress of the Presentation Sisters, is to be known as 'Venerable Nano Nagle', in recognition of her saintly life and work, brought to mind a telephone call I got way back about 1960. At the time I was serving as curate in a city parish in Brisbane named Yeronga. The telephone call was from Dr Patrick M. O'Donnell, then coadjutor archbishop of Brisbane. His opening words were something like this: "Willie, I am reading just now a new book on Nano Nagle by a man named T.J. Walsh, and your old home, Rathcoole, gets honourable mention." Excitedly he went on to tell me that there were marriage connections between her Nagle family and the O'Kearneys who were occupying Rathcoole in the latter part of the 17th century.

Fethard was the native place of the archbishop. The town where he grew up, its people, and its countryside were favourite topics for him whenever we met on relaxed occasions. The fact that by that time the

Presentation nuns were part of the town's life for almost a hundred years added to his interest in reading the book just then published, entitled Nano Nagle and the Presentation Sisters. I remember thumbing through that book soon after, mainly to see what it said about Rathcoole House, my native home. Then after the recent papal announcement I borrowed the book from the library to read it once again, this time with more care.

The connection between Rathcoole House and the branch of the Nagle family that Nano belonged to occurred in the 1670s and '80s, long before Nano was born. From

at least 1652 Rathcoole was occupied by James and Ellen Kearney (sometimes spelled O'Kearney). It appears they were among the head tenants or estate managers of the Clutterbucks, who were Cromwellian adventurers (financial supporters) who got possession of the confiscated lands of Rathcoole, Derryluskin and Bannixtown.

It was unusual at the time for Catholics like Kearneys to become



Honora "Nano" Nagle, 1718-1784, foundress of the Presentation Order of nuns. This depiction by Charles Turner is perhaps the earliest. Charles was born about 10 years before Nano's death.



Rathcoole House in early 1970. The two-storey section is the oldest part and probably incorporates the 'thatched house' recorded in the Civil Survey of 1654. The three-storey addition was built partly on the site of the 16th century castle.

head tenants on newly Protestant-held land so quickly after the Cromwellian confiscations. One record mentions that James Kearney belonged to a notable family from Cork, and the fact that he had “gent” after his name in the records indicates that he belonged to the minor gentry class. His own lands in Cork may have been confiscated but his “gent” status probably boosted his chances of becoming head tenant for one of the new Cromwellian owners. The records also indicate that James Kearney was also head tenant of Clonbrogan.

Both Rathcoole and Clonbrogan then had castles of the tower house type as their principal buildings. The one in Rathcoole was in repair despite the destruction caused to many tower houses in the rebellion of the 1640s, but the one in Clonbrogan was described in the Civil Survey 1654 as “a small old castle, wanting repaire”. Rathcoole

tower house would have been habitable, and probably provided the main living quarters for the Kearneys and their family. According to the Civil Survey there was also a thatched house in association with the castle, which the Kearneys would have used as well, and a garden with several small cottages, and “an old orchard”.

Soon after settling in Rathcoole, the Kearneys had their first child, a daughter named Jane (or Joan). They were to have another daughter, named Mary, and at least two sons, John and Michael. In 1669 Jane married Richard Nagle, and in 1675 Mary married Richard’s brother Pierce. They would have known the Kearny family as they too were prominent Cork people. Richard and Pierce Nagle were granduncles of Nano Nagle.

The Nagles were descended from high-ranking Anglo-Norman stock, one branch of which was long established in the Blackwater valley in

Co. Cork. The father of Richard and Pierce was James Nagle, whose residence was Annastissey, close to the Blackwater and about five miles from Mallow. Branches of the Nagle family in Co. Cork had much of their lands confiscated in the Cromwellian invasion because of their involvement in the rebellion of the 1640s, but following the restoration of Charles II to the throne in England the Nagles, being staunch Stuart royalists, were restored to their lands.

Like a number of leading Catholics Richard Nagle, married to Mary Kearney of Rathcoole, came to great prominence when Catholic King James II succeeded to the English throne in 1685. Catholics became appointed to public offices again in Ireland. Richard Nagle became Sir Richard, and was elected speaker in the Irish Parliament of 1689, and attorney general. However, with the defeat of King James and his forces at the Battle of the Boyne, Sir Richard was detained and his lands declared forfeit. By then he had a numerous family, and he, his wife Mary, and all his children with one exception followed James II into exile in France. There he acted as secretary of state in the court of James II at St Germain-en-Laye.

Pierce Nagle and his wife Joan Kearney of Rathcoole had only one child, a son James. She died soon after childbirth. Pierce became high sheriff of Cork County, and took part, like his brothers, in the Williamite war of 1689-91. His lands were also

forfeited.

David Nagle, a brother of Richard and Pierce, was the grandfather of Nano. He became MP for Mallow in the parliament of James II. Like his brothers he was a staunch supporter of James II, and served as captain in the Williamite war. He was, however, allowed to keep his property in Ballygriffin near Mallow following the Treaty of Limerick. About 1717 his son Garret of Ballygriffin married Ann Mathew, of Anfield, near Inch, a grand-daughter of Elizabeth Mathew nee Poyntz, Lady Thurles. Nano, their eldest daughter, was born in 1718. She founded the Presentation Sisters on Christmas Eve 1775. Although born into a wealthy family and sent to France for her education, Nano asserted early on in her life that the special object of her life was going to be the founding of schools for the education of poor children. In that dark period of the penal times she pioneered Catholic education through her cabin schools. The Presentation order was to spread to 27 countries.

James and Ellen Kearney of Rathcoole later lived in Clonbrogan, where the small castle was probably again made habitable. They later moved to Fethard. Clonbrogan was purchased by the Watson family of Clonmel, and they built Clonbrogan House, a very pleasant and well-designed farmhouse on the castle site in the beginning of the 1700s. ●

– Willie Hayes

A Ramble Down Memory Lane *by Tony O'Donnell*

Having read the article submitted by William Slattery (I know him as Willie), to the 2012 newsletter it stirred up memories for me. I sat beside Willie for a time in second class, it was probably 1946, and we were taught by Brother Damian. I remember Willie's friends Tod Keating and Dick Power. Dick had the neatest written sum copy you could wish to see.

If I go back a couple of years earlier to 1944 for my first day at school, I recall being brought to the boys' primary school when I was six and handed over to Brother Christopher. He showed me to a desk where two boys were already sitting. The two boys were Gus Danagher and Jimmy Ryan. I was with that class for only a couple of weeks until they moved into first class

and the infant class arrived to the school from the convent. Included in that infant class were John Whyte, Peter O'Flynn, Jimmy Kenny, Michael Cummins, Christy Matthews and Brendan Fergus.

Jimmy Ryan didn't continue his schooling in Fethard. It is poignant indeed that Gus Danagher and Jimmy Ryan should pass away within two days of each other in October 2004.

The following year, 1947, we had very harsh weather with heavy snow-falls. When the snow melted there was flooding everywhere and our house in Crampscastle became a victim. The Shine family took in my brother Paddy and me for the afternoon until the floods had subsided. Mrs Shine was baking soda fruit bread in an oven pot on an open fire. The fruit used were dates and when



Old school friends, Michael Cummins and Tony O'Donnell photographed as they renewed acquaintances in Fethard on July 24, 2004, when both met for the first time in many years. Michael, a son of 'Cautious' Cummins, formerly from Kerry Street, Fethard, now lives in Yorkshire, England. Tony is originally from Crampscastle and now lives in Dublin.

the bread had baked and cooled a little she sliced it up, buttered it and gave some to us all with a mug of hot sweet tea. I know Alice, Peg and Dinny Shine were there and maybe other members of the family too. I still remember it to this day as one of the nicest meals I've had and also the thoughtfulness and generosity of a good neighbour.

By 1949 hurling was on the crest of a wave in Tipperary. Sean 'Glamour' Walsh was on the Tipp minor team and the 'three in a row' beckoned for the senior team.

To return to Willie Slattery's article, I didn't know his family but I remember well his other friend Perry Napier. During the summer holidays of circa 1950, I and others including Perry spent our leisure time in the Barrack field playing hurling. It was during this time that the St Patrick's Place group led by Perry Napier and The Green group led by Joe Kenny decided to play a hurling challenge match. I was not eligible to play since I didn't live in either area but I was given the dubious role of referee. A day and time was set for the match and for a few days it was like the build up for the All-Ireland. The appointed day came and both teams turned up with such a variety of bits of hurleys and strange looking sticks that it looked dangerous even before it started. There were a couple of children who were too young to play so we appointed them as umpires. I threw in the ball to start the game and there was a stampede of every

player to get the ball. That set the theme for the whole game. It was all ground hurling with much pulling, prodding and poking, also a lot of huffing and puffing. The crescendo of noise from the shouting and arguing over perceived fouls grew by the minute. Then there was a stoppage over a disputed goal. The 'umpire' had abandoned his post and gone off to play with some other children. The match came to a finish when everyone felt tired and anyway it was time to go home for our tea. I declared the match a draw – everyone was happy and agreed it was a great game and that we would have a replay. We never did.

I played my first official hurling match in 1950 with St Patrick's National School against Abbeyleix. I don't remember all our team but it would have included Sean Connolly, Sean Moloney and John Slattery. I was in goal and Liam Connolly was fullback. Liam protected me well that day and Abbeyleix scored only one goal while Fethard scored about ten. Fr. Lambe brought the team to Billy O'Flynn's shop and filled the cup with a variety of minerals. It was a great day for us.

In the following years I enjoyed hurling and could be found each evening in the Barrack field after school instead of studying for my Inter. Brother Albert got wind of my activities and advised me that it would be better to study. I have other little stories about Brother Albert such as the day we were in third



Fethard Minor Football team c.1955 Back L to R: Joe Kenny, Dick Fitzgerald, Tony O'Donnell, Matt O'Gara, Gus Neville, Joe Barrett, Liam Connolly, Peter O'Flynn, John Condon, Austin O'Flynn, Joe Dalton, Perry Napier, Percy O'Flynn, Vincent Allen, Timmy O'Riordan. Front L to R: Pat Woodlock, Gus Danagher, Kevin O'Donnell, Seamus Hackett, Joe Danagher, Tom Leahy, Sean Connolly, Sean Moloney and Bro. Albert.

year and I shouted an answer to a question at him – he jumped about six inches but took it with a laugh. Also the day he asked Peter O'Flynn to sing 'Oft in the Stilly Night' - Peter obliged and I could see the emotion in Brother Albert's eyes as he then left the classroom. I always thought of Brother Albert as a friend and we all showed him respect. He certainly was a class act.

Studying didn't sit lightly on my shoulders at that time but when I came to Dublin and was working as a draughtsman I completed an evening course of study at the College of Architecture. I was then more than capable of dealing with architects, engineers, etc. With my wife Jean we were able to provide a good standard of living for our seven children and our children in turn availed of the very good educational system and achieved professional qualifications in their chosen careers.

To return to 1954 when Tom McCormack and Liam Connolly brought honour to Fethard in winning All-Ireland minor medals and Liam repeated it the following year. It was great to be in Croke Park on All-Ireland final days in the late fifties and early sixties cheering on Liam Connolly, Matt O'Gara and Tom Ryan.

In the late fifties I joined New Irelands hurling club and we won two Dublin senior championships as well as a number of leagues. It was a great thrill for me to actually play in Croke Park on so many occasions.

I didn't mean to ramble on so much but there is still a lot can be written about those far off times and people we have almost forgotten. We didn't have much and we didn't ask for much.

I am glad to see Willie Slattery made the trip back to Fethard and I hope he was successful in collecting further history of his family. ●

Greengage Summer

by Marian Mulligan-Gilpin

The title hints of a misnomer, I do not recall greengages at Villa Therese, 'though ironically David Curran arrived with delicious greengages to the local Country Market this August . . . my illusion became reality! The genesis of the title is a film I had seen in the Capital Cinema many moons ago, starring a 'heart-throb' of the time, Troy Donahue. Film 'buffs' feel free to correct me.

To me that long summer of the early sixties had the mysteriousness, excitement and appeal of a greengage – my idyllic summer which seemed to linger forever and even though us 'Valleyites' were outside the walled stronghold of Fiodh Ard, colourful and entertaining characters

'invaded' our territory.

I lived in a parallel universe, the 'Wild West' of the Valley and the non-consequential existence of everyday life in a small Irish town. That summer I assumed the self-confessed title of 'Chief Scout', and would perch myself on the North pillar of the gate, eagerly awaiting the arrival of Tadhg O'Donnell, the visiting 'Sheriff' from the far frontier of Dublin city.

Tadhg was Austie and Percy O'Flynn's first cousin – indeed cousin to all the O'Flynn family – and his arrival in town was preluded by the visit to our house of his lovely mother and father, Maura and Tim, laden with fresh cakes from O'Donnell's Bakery in Artane.

Tadhg stayed with Nanny O'Flynn



Fethard Carnival 1960s L to R: Nora Gough as 'The Ranee', Marian Mulligan as 'Tokyo Rose' and Cinda O'Flynn as 'Off to Ascot'.

in Burke Street, and would commence his tour of duty at one-thirty each day, after 'the dinner' and when he had 'washed behind his neck and ears', as Nanny O'Flynn was most particular about good nutrition and fastidious about hygiene.

My cousin Nora Gough would also have decamped here from yet another 'outlaw' territory. Kildare. Daughter of Dan and Margo Gough, she enjoyed the 'bandit territory' of the Valley and promptly took on the role of 'saloon keeper'. The saloon being none other than the old boiling house that my grandmother, Nora Gough, had used to boil offal for pigs long before its 'Wild West' days.

Nora insisted on calling Tadhg 'Tiger', a name which oddly enough suited his savvy and adventurous nature. Tiger would summon his loyal deputies Tommy Sayers, Aileen Madigan and the reserves, Marie Shortall, Tony Sayers and Billy Tracey. Nora would close the saloon and we would all head to 'Camp' in Derek Wall's sandpit, where our 'Council of War' would take place. A foray to the Furry Hill, a skirmish in the Valley Field when confronted by 'The Green' raiders, a 'surprise' attack on Shortall's to 'borrow' John as a hostage for a few hours.



Marian Mulligan with her little red car, a gift from her Uncle Dick. Also included are her faithful friends Brandy and Rastus.

My uncle, Dick Gough, had bought me a pony from Mrs La Terriere in Kiltinan, misappropriately named 'Lovebird. Flighty and far from loving she was. I would 'Scout' the trail through Joe Coffey's field, and summon the sheriff and his deputies to follow. A rendezvous with Gerry Fogarty would take place, and we would muster the forces of whatever Fogarty brothers were not on a mission of their own.

Tired, and very often drenched to the skin, after surviving a July thunderstorm, we would retire for the evening to 'Base Camp' – our orchard in the shady environs of the Valley. Not one for allowing his 'Foot Soldiers' to go hungry, Tadhg would feed us 'Beauty of Bath' from the tree 'Beauty Bats' our colloquialism – delicious, juicy.

One particular summer's evening the 'Beauty Bats' were hiding high up on the branches, so Tadhg got the brainwave that he would use my brother Declan's pole-vault to knock down the juicy beauties. Declan was very much into the high jump at Rockwell College at the time, and had put black insulating tape around the centre of the steel pole for grip, luckily!

Screaming with laughter and all holding hands, Tadhg initiated



Playing in the garden in the early 1960s are Marian Mulligan, Aileen Madigan, and Meg and Ann-Marie Gough who were on holiday from California.

the procedure. ‘Hiss! Crackle! a cascade of sparks lit the twilight sky as the two ESB wires coming into the house had touched and crossed!

‘Fireworks’, cried Tadhg, and proceeded to have another go at this exciting event. Just at that moment my father, Bill Mulligan, drove up the driveway and my mother Mary appeared at the door (alerted by the fact that the electricity had gone off). Aghast, they shouted at us to drop the pole, our guardian angel was keeping watch.

My parallel universe shattered, reality took a very long bite, a gaping hole burned through the steel at the top of the pole. Luckily the pole had been held where Declan had applied the insulating tape. My mother drew my attention to that

hole for years – a grim reminder of what might have been!

Jimmy O’Flynn and Joe Messenger from the ESB in Clonmel, lined us up on the couch in our living room and told us that we were the luckiest children to be alive. We had succeeded in putting half the town out of electricity!

A stark reality check, consequently I have never forgotten Joe Messenger’s name. Having long since passed on, I hope he has found his just reward, as indeed is my hope for all the others I have mentioned who have gone from us.

My Greengage Summer memories, some almost ‘BitterSweet’, vivid and powerful, of a time, and precious people who have now grown older. ●

The Gambler

by Marie O'Donnell (Grangebeg)

John Burke, 'The Gambler', lived in Grove House Fethard. His father was the famous Richard Burke, Master of the Tipperary Foxhounds who leased Grove and built up a pack of hounds. Richard resided in California for a period. He visited the home of the Donahue family as he wanted to meet his former nanny who worked there. He also met one of the Donahue girls, fell in love and subsequently married her. Her father was a distinguished Californian pioneer.

During his residence in California Richard combined the occupations of practising law and hunting coyotes, hares and deer with a scratch pack of hounds he managed to get together there. When he came back to Ireland he built up a pack of

hounds. It is said that as a horseman no one could beat him over his own country (Tipp) and proof of which he was always placed in the Red Coat Race, which he established. He also re-established the Tipperary Hunt Steeple chases at Fethard.

Now back to John who picked up his first pack of cards when he was only six and by the age of eighteen was a brilliant bridge player who'd developed an obsession with mathematical sequences and winning streaks. He is described as tall, elegant and a charmer. He studied engineering at Trinity but found it boring compared to the excitement of cards. By 1953 he had represented his country at a bridge championships in Finland. On the way home



Photographed at Grove House L to R: Richard Burke, ?, and John Burke.

he stopped over in London for a night and had a drink at the Star pub in Belgravia where villains mixed with toffs. Burke played 'spoof' at the bar with painter Lucien Freud, bumped into a gangster named Billy Hill and took a shine to the city. It turned into a fifty-year holiday, she said later.

Soon Burke was part of a set that included the reckless gambler Lord Derby, who owned much of Lancashire and didn't flinch even when he once lost £300,000 in a single night - the equivalent of \$7 million today. At a time when gambling was still illegal in Britain, Burke ran a notorious gaming venture with John Aspinall. Another founder member was Chancellor George Osborne's spirited grandmother Mary.

The arrest of Burke and Aspinall, as well as Osborne's grandmother for illegal gaming in 1958 led to a landmark court case which changed the law and led to the founding of London's famous Clermont Club, meeting place of the rich. There the pair made millions, hood-winking high society with an extraordinary scam they learned from a leading underworld villain at the time.

Many of the aristocrats they socialised with had been to Eton together but the man who co-ordinated their leisure activities, Aspinall, had a chip on his shoulder because he wasn't one of them. It left him determined to become leader of the pack, especially after he realised that compared to the circle in which he moved, he was cursed with a woe-ful lack of funds. Someone describ-



John Burke 1958

ing John Burke and John Aspinall once said, "Two different men you couldn't meet. John Burke is a kind person. The worst man I ever met was John Aspinall. He was a rotten man. His twin ambitions were to make money and to move up the social ladder."

Aspinall's first bid to popularise himself with the high-rolling in-crowd was to

host a floating game of Chemin De Fer, 'Chemmy' as it was known, a card game popular on the continent, introduced to London by a foul-mouthed underworld character known as 'The Vicar'.

Aspinall met his future partner-in-crime, Burke, through The Vicar with whom Burke used to play poker. The Irishman was never allowed in the Chemmy games because he was too



L to R: John Aspinall, John Burke, and Aspinall's mother, Lady Osborne, arrive for a court hearing, all charged with gaming offences, February 15, 1958.

canny a player and crucially not rich enough. Burke and Aspinall established their own gaming empire.

Burke later recalled that the atmosphere was one of luxury and amusement. "There was laughter, joking and drinking. At the same time it was big money. We had games where the standard bet was \$1,000 which would be \$25,000 today."

In 1958, it looked like the game was up for the pair when the police raided one of their infamous Chemmy parties at a flat leased specially for the purpose by George Osborne's grandmother. The accused turned up for the ensuing court case in Rolls Royces at the same time as some prostitutes. Nerves were so strained at the prospect of jail sentences that a scuffle broke out between tarts and toffs. The case pro-

voked a dramatic change: within two years, gambling had become legal.

Four years after the court case collapsed, Aspinall founded the Clermont Club in Berkeley Square with Burke as his operations manager. Though gambling was now legal, the law said they could charge only a 'table fee' and no longer take a 5 per cent cut.

That's when they started using a scam they'd learned from gangster Billy Hill. Known as the 'Big Edge', it involved bending cards almost imperceptibly so that an expert player planted at the table could tell whether they had a high or low value just from the angle of the crease and could guide the game accordingly.

"It was psychologically and mathematically brilliant", explained

Burke. "Einstein would have been proud of it." A clever player would be able to keep a mental record of how many cards of high and low value had been dealt and would thus have a better idea of what cards remained in the deck.

Burke was now living in the Mayfair house that once belonged to the Aga Khan with his Italian wife Liliana and their daughter Daniela. The marriage ended in divorce and he later married his Swedish model girlfriend, Birgitte Forsberg.

Burke's long-standing partnership with Aspinall was to come to a dramatic end. The split came after Burke was tipped off by a lawyer, who was a Clermont member, that the club was being investigated. While he wanted to stop the 'Big Edge' scam, Aspinall was determined to carry on with it. At that point Burke decided to call it a day. His conscience was troubling him.

Aspinall never spoke to him again and up until his death in 2000 accused him of ruining the club by introducing the wrong kind of people. Burke had moved on.

Having outlived all the scoundrels he was finally free to give his version of his wild younger days. 'Aspers', he explained in his 2007 memoir 'The Hustlers', "thought he was entitled to rob the rich, the decadent, the weak and useless people in order that he had the funds to do what was important in the world."

And many people from the old days agreed with him about Aspers including Mark Birley (son of society's

portrait painter). He became so suspicious of the scam that he had long ago closed off the private staircase that linked the Clermont and his night-club Annabels downstairs. But he never fell out with the charming Burke and before he died he summed up their youth together saying: "It was fun to be with 'Burkie' and the crowd when it all began. The world will never see such people again."

During the last two decades of his life he never set foot in a casino. After divorce from his second wife he set up home with Caroline Gray, the daughter of Vice-Admiral Sir John Gray OBE. He had been living with her for more than 20 years but married her three months before he died in 2011, aged 87.

Just recently I had a visitor who spotted the book 'The Hustlers' by Douglas Thompson on my kitchen table. He told me that he had met John Burke a few times and that he had given him a copy of the book. At that time Burke would have been visiting his sister in Clonmel. Another sister was Eve Goodbody, Lakefield. A third sister was married to Clement Carroll, Rocklow, who owned 'Arctic Storm' that won the Champion stakes at Newmarket in 1962. My visitor added that he thought he was buried in England and also that John was not a rich man when he died. His parents' grave is beside the Catholic Church in Cahir. For more information read 'The Hustlers' by Douglas Thompson. First published in England in 2007. ●

An Ornate Double-Arched Bridge



Tinsley Bridge on Grove Estate, built c.1840 by renowned Victorian architect William Tinsley. The bridge is photographed here c.1900 before being partially demolished by the huge flood of 1947.

In the Fethard Newsletter of 1999 a sharp, clear and pleasing photograph (reproduced above) of what was called The Tinsley Bridge was published. Though the photographer's name was not made available it was without doubt that of Fethardman Patrick Kenrick who in that image displayed to perfection the elegant design of the double-span bridge. But is the life of the architect, William Tinsley who designed the bridge, still remembered locally?

William Tinsley was born in Clonmel on February 7, 1804. His father was Thomas Tinsley who had a building business in that town as did his grandfather Sylvester. The family were Protestant in religion, and were reputed to have come to south Tipperary in Cromwell's army. William also claimed a relationship with the old Anglo/Norman Catholic

family, the Mocklers of Mocklerstown, Clerihan. But no hard evidence can be found to prove (or disprove) Tinsley's assertions on his ancestry.

Young William joined his father's building firm and began by acquiring some basic training in the trade of carpentry and brick building. He also learned to produce simple architectural drawings. In those years a builder of a class above the run-of-the-mill level was expected by those employing him to produce drawings of a house and its exterior that would answer the requirements of the employer. Young William, nevertheless, still lacked a working knowledge of mathematics and so he enrolled in a night school in Clonmel while still working by day. In short, he was self-trained as an architect, but he did gain practical experience in the building trade while working with

his father. In the account of his life that he compiled in old age he tells that he learned much on architecture by copying designs from architectural books and as he grew older he went on trips abroad to study the form of old buildings and monuments and to make detailed notes. At every opportunity he made himself familiar with the current trends in house design. To help his further improvement he left his father's business for a time to work under the architect James Pain junior, who had trained under the famous English architect John Nash. But Tinsley, for all of that, was never a mere copyist in his plans, even if he did occasionally borrow decorative detail. And it has been noted that, though by no means an original genius, Tinsley's

performance was on a high level as he flitted through a number of styles (even in his Fethard work) – Italian renaissance at Lakefield, castellated medievalism at Tullamaine, and Ionic at Grove House.

Tinsley was no more than nineteen years old when, in 1823, his father passed full control to him for overseeing a large building project at Knockeevan, Clerihan, for Baron Richard Pennefather who was a member of a south Tipperary landed family and a Circuit Court judge. The work to enlarge the house at Knockeevan for Pennefather gave Tinsley the confidence to develop his talents and when the task was completed the Baron, being duly impressed, offered further work for which Tinsley made a set of sketches.



*Four years' restoration work nearing completion at Tinsley Bridge, Grove, July 2008
L to R: John Sheehan, Willie MacClara and Rosemary Ponsonby.*

All this later work was undertaken in 1826. When Tinsley had finished the earlier work at Knockeevan he received an offer of work from Sir Hugh Gough to renovate a house at Rathronan, Clonmel. For whatever reason the building and renovation was never undertaken, but Tinsley did design and build an entrance lodge to Rathronan House for Gough. Unfortunately, this was burned down during the Civil War of 1922/23.

On November 28, 1825, Tinsley's elder brother John died and as his father was now aging the weight of the Tinsley construction business fell on William's shoulders and the parents were still much dependent on its survival for their livelihood. On assuming the management William set himself the task of enlarging the business and clearing all outstanding debts. At this period, however, William wished to marry his childhood girlfriend, Ellen MacCarthy, who lived next door to the family home in Clonmel.

He summoned up enough courage to propose marriage to Ellen on April 13, 1826, and she accepted him. For a number of reasons William's parents were not keen on the match. As it then stood the Tinsley construction firm could little more than support the parents and young William, never mind a wife and possible young children. Also, the MacCarthys had once been most comfortably situated, but by 1826 the family were in straitened circumstances and so there was little chance of a helpful

dowry with the bride. Despite all William and Ellen were married in Clonmel on June 5, 1827. They went to live with her parents.

But for the young couple happiness was a short-lived commodity. In May 1828 Ellen gave birth to a daughter who lived for only a few months. And then to add to the woe Ellen herself contracted tuberculosis, possibly from her mother who had died from it in April 1828. Poor Ellen died on June 3, 1829, and was buried two days later on the second anniversary of her marriage.

Though deeply shaken and crushed by the double tragedy Tinsley did not long remain a widower. Even as late as the first half of the nineteenth century women died in child-birth and consequently men re-married twice or thrice in their lifetime. A little over a year after his wife's death, in October 1829, William proposed marriage to Ellen's cousin, Lucy MacCarthy who lived at Dunmore East. In this instance the girl's parents had misgivings, but, nevertheless, the wedding took place on New Year's Day, 1830. As Tinsley wrote in later life, he and Lucy had 'twenty-seven years of happy married life in which thirteen children were born'.

Following his marriage to Lucy, Tinsley's first project was the Protestant Church on the Clonmel side of Lisronagh. The overall architect of this was James Pain, who represented the Munster branch of the Established Church, but the church itself was designed by Tinsley and



Lakefield House, Fethard, from 'Victorian Architect', a book depicting the life and work of William Tinsley

his building firm were given the task of construction. But for reasons that are not known the Protestant Bishop of Waterford, Richard Bourke, refused to pay for the work and, despite a court case, the Bishop would not and did not pay. That church stands today as a roofless monument to an angry Tinsley. Up even to his final days at Cincinnati, William bitterly recalled his treatment at the hands of the bishop and the losses sustained at Lisronagh. But William's friendship with James Pain continued and the latter was greatly to influence the young architect in the years that followed. Tinsley's next project was more successful.

This was the design and building of a house at Lakefield on the road between Fethard and Lisronagh and formerly the property of the Hackett family. William Pennefather was the employer and the agreement was signed on August 25, 1831. The house,

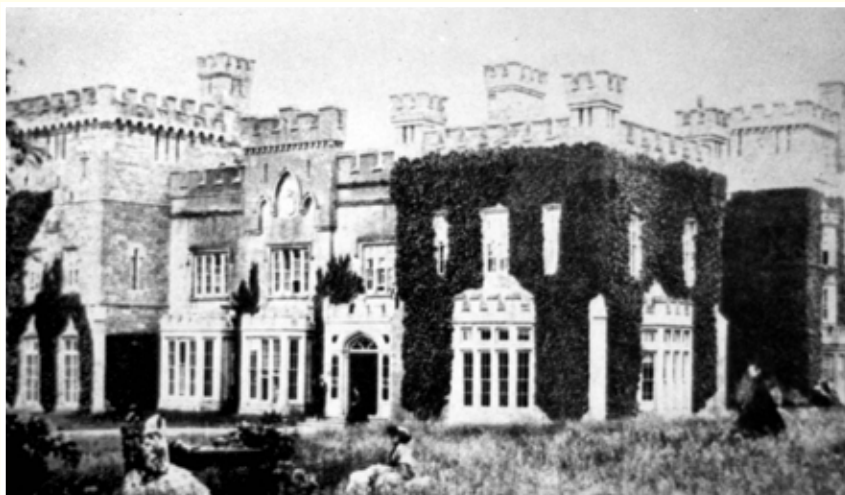
which was designed in the Italian Renaissance style, stands today as it was constructed. It is a two-storied block with a low-pitched roof and overhanging eaves. It has an entrance portico supported by four columns in the Doric style. Otherwise it is a plain house and does not have the elaborate styles which Tinsley used in his later American buildings. The importance of Lakefield, which was sold by the Pennefather family in 1907, is that for Tinsley it was his first effort as an independent architect. Despite this, it has to be said that it was an attempt to plant an Italian villa, more suited to Tuscany, on the cold and damp landscape of Ireland.

When Tinsley was finished at Lakefield, he was engaged by William Roe (afterwards murdered by one of his tenants) to enlarge and re-model Rockwell House (today Rockwell College). In the blueprint the Gothic style was used, but all

that now remains are the entrance hall and stairway. While working at Rockwell Tinsley was asked by John Palliser to submit a design for re-modelling Palliser's house at Derryluskan and for his other house at Kilmacthomas, Co. Waterford. Nothing, however, came of Palliser's request, but Tinsley's reputation as an architect and builder of quality was spreading among the gentry of south Tipperary.

While he was working on Rockwell House the owner William Roe introduced Tinsley to John Maher of Tullamaine Castle. Maher's house was then a late medieval building which he [Maher] desired to have rebuilt. In his journal Tinsley described Maher as 'hardly more than a nominal Catholic with a young and beautiful wife, a

Protestant'. The work at Tullamaine was, for William, the most ambitious venture he had yet embarked on. It was designed and built in the Tudor Gothic style and dominated by a square battlement, but, unfortunately, the building was extensively damaged during the Civil War of 1922-23. The house as originally built was not unlike that designed by the great English architect John Nash for the Lords Lismore at Shanbally, Clogheen, or Mitchelstown Castle which had been designed by James Pain. Maher was so pleased with the work at Tullamaine that he recommended Tinsley to his brother Valentine Maher at Turtulla House (today part of the Thurles Golf Club) near Thurles. Originally Valentine Maher had employed an English architect, Anthony Salvin who was



Tullamaine Castle before its partial destruction and recent restoration taken from a book depicting the life and work of William Tinsley written by J. D. Forbes. Indiana University Press 1953.

a pupil of John Nash, but for some unknown reason Maher was not happy with Salvin's work. The Gothic Revival design which Tinsley submitted was accepted and the delightful house can still be seen.

During the time this work was in progress William, his wife Lucy, and their children, moved home from Bolton Street to Mary Street in Clonmel. They lived for four years in Mary Street where more children were born. William had his workshop in nearby Peter Street and it was here, while playing among the lumber, that his four-year-old daughter, Mollie, was crushed to death. In 1836 William designed and built Adelaide Cottage in Irishtown to accommodate himself, his wife, and his growing family. Incidentally, while he was living in Mary Street Tinsley suffered a nervous breakdown. In 1837 the family moved into Adelaide Cottage and here they were to live for fourteen years until they moved to the United States.

While working on his own house Tinsley accepted a commission from William Barton of Grove House. He designed and re-built the wings of the house and added a portico to the entrance in an un-fluted Ionic style. Overall he gave the house a Greek Revival and restrained villa style which for him was a new departure and one that he seems not to have again attempted. During his time at Grove he designed and built two delightful bridges, one of which (and the one I'm familiar with and

which leads to the old Kilmaclugh cemetery) was damaged during the dreadful flooding in the spring of 1947. I have not seen the second one. As noted, one was illustrated in the Newsletter of 1999 at page 35, while the other can be seen in an illustration in the Dictionary of Irish Architects' website where it is described as an ornate feature of the Grove House demesne and as a fine example of technical skill and aesthetic design.

Also during his years at Adelaide Cottage Tinsley's firm built a number of Church of Ireland churches throughout Co. Tipperary. They were designed by his friend James Pain. One of them was the little church at Kilvemnon near Mullinahone. And in 1841 the new Protestant Bishop of Waterford, Robert Day, appointed Tinsley as the diocesan architect; this post he was to retain until he left for America ten years later. Though raised in the Church of Ireland Tinsley had become a Nonconformist in his later religious beliefs. For him, then, the conceiving and building of the old Methodist Chapel at Clonmel, in the Greek Temple style, was a labour of love. Strict adherence to Protestantism formed the core of his religious creed. He held strong anti-Catholic views throughout his life: 'pleasure seekers and Sabbath breakers'.

But the most important project that occupied the last ten years of his time in Ireland was the re-modelling of the town of Cahir for its then

owner the Earl of Glengall. His work here consisted of 'erecting sundry ranges of street houses, and in the country on his tenants' farms, residence, various single houses also'. He may also have undertaken some restoration work on Cahir Castle. He records in his journal that he surveyed the roof of the castle in April 1846. A fine example, however, of his work at Cahir is the streetscape running from the railway bridge into the town (the old Cashel Road). And the planned design of Cahir is very apparent to anyone who stands at the front of Cahir House hotel and looks towards the castle and the river. The Tudor

moulding over the upper-storey windows is still noticeable. Incidentally, one of the houses in Cahir has a stone tablet set into its front which bears Tinsley's monogram: 'W.T'. Tinsley seems to have carried out a considerable amount of work in that town and he was lucky to have been fully paid for it because Glengall's affairs finally ended in bankruptcy; the Great Famine of 1847-51 having seriously affected the latter's income.

From the mid 1840s onwards Tinsley discontinued the build-

ing side of his business and concentrated on the architectural. He was influenced to this change by the loss of money incurred on the building of the Protestant Church at Clogheen and a stone bridge at Kilcoran near Cahir. In his new role he designed the large grain store on Suir Island, Clonmel, for the Hughes family, which store can still be seen. He sketched various buildings for

the Marquis of Waterford around Curraghmore and Portlaw; the old police barracks in the latter place, though heavy in appearance, is a good example of his work. He drew up the plans for a new home for Joseph Malcomson, the

factory owner, at Mayfield, Portlaw. Today this is a convalescent home.

And before leaving Ireland he made one more visit to Fethard. In the spring of 1847 Robert Harvey hired him to design a mill in the town. This was the Abbey Mill which today is the Abymill Theatre and one of the few of Tinsley's buildings open to the general public. Tinsley supervised the work at Fethard until November 1847 when Harvey died and his widow discontinued the building.



The Methodist Chapel (former), Clonmel, taken from a book depicting the life and work of William Tinsley

By 1848 money was becoming scarce among the gentry due to the Great Famine. Consequently, building commissions were falling off, but it was not poverty that drove Tinsley to America. For whatever reason, on about September 18, 1851, he, his wife Lucy MacCarthy, and their nine un-married children, sailed from Waterford to Liverpool. The departure was not a happy one, and the voyage across a storm-tossed Atlantic was frightening and unpleasant. Indeed, the ship was close to being lost at sea at one point. And so in the fall of 1851 they landed in New York to begin a new life.

Initially Tinsley thought of becoming a farmer in the New World, but eventually he settled on what he knew, architecture. Various Methodist friends in New York recommended Cincinnati in Ohio to him and gave him letters of introduction to people there. Business was slow in coming, but come it did and in time Tinsley became a notable and successful architect in both Ohio and Indiana where he designed various state institutions and colleges in the classical manner.

In 1854 his wife, Lucy's, health began to fail; she suffered from an intestinal complaint. She died at Indianapolis on November 3, 1857. As Tinsley had to work, the task of rearing the young family fell on his teenage daughter Jenny. But young Jenny found being a foster-mother too much for her and so Tinsley married for the third time on January 30,

1859. His new wife was Mary Eliza Nixon, but the marriage was a disaster though he had three children with her. Mary Eliza had a violent temper and on several occasions threatened to drown herself in the deep waters of the Ohio river.

In the fall of 1860 Tinsley became a U.S. citizen, but he did not forget the old country. As his health was not good he decided to make a visit to Europe. On July 11, 1865, without his third wife or his children, he left for Quebec in Canada and from there he sailed to the city of Derry. He came south to Clonmel where he stayed for two weeks with his married daughter. Later he visited London and Paris. He returned to Liverpool and sailed from there on September 22, 1865, to the U.S. He never again visited Ireland.

From about 1870 his health began to decline; he seems to have suffered another nervous breakdown. His final years were unhappy as family troubles and financial problems crowded in upon him. He composed his will on March 11, 1879, and died on June 14, 1885. He was buried with his second wife Lucy in Crown Hill Cemetery at Indianapolis.

For those who have an interest in such things a complete listing of the works of Tinsley in Ireland can be found on the Dictionary of Irish Architects' website. The site also contains an account of his life. ●

—Michael O'Donnell (Owning)

From Market to Mill - 100 Years



One of many old Fethard Players' photographs that we would love to identify the play, year and players

This year the Fethard Players celebrate 100 years of amateur drama in our lovely town, and their present 'home', Abymill, celebrates its 25th anniversary.

As secretary of Abymill, and a member of the Fethard Players for over 40 years, I feel it incumbent upon me to take a trip down memory lane, albeit my lane, and recall my memories and moments of an iconic group of players, and a wonderful historic building.

The present Fethard Players had their roots in the Fethard Dramatic Society, which was formed in 1913, thenceforth continuing as The Sodality Players, the Tirry Players, and since 1940 the Fethard Players.

My earliest memories of the

'Players' I learned from my grandmother, Nora Gough, who was involved in the pantomimes, and subsequently from my mother, Mary Gough-Mulligan. My early childhood was filled with anecdotes of the 'market house', as my mother called it, now the Town Hall. The stories were colourful and entertaining, and wafting through the avenues of my mind are as fond remembered names, Liz Brett, Paddy and Babe Anne McLellan, Tom Barrett, Louis O'Donnell, Jim Sullivan, Billy O'Flynn and Betty Holohan.

As a child I remember many fascinating nights in the Town Hall watching, in awe, Mary Goldsborough, Percy O'Flynn, Goldie Newport, Austie O'Flynn, Ann

O'Neill, and Carmel Brett with Hal Goldsborough on lights, bring to us wonderful nights of entertainment. Eddie O'Neill, Anne Connolly's father, was producer supremo in those days, and his son, Hugh, produced in later years. And of course that extra member of the cast each year, Nell Mullins, who formally introduced each one of the cast by name from her front-row seat and by the end of the run gave a running commentary on the storyline of the play. Two young teachers, Paddy Broderick and Eddie O'Sullivan, had joined by then with the young Danny Ryan.

The 1972 play was a comedy 'When we are Married', by J.B. Priestly, produced by Austin O'Flynn. They played to packed houses for five nights in Fethard and then went on to enter for the Waterford Open

Drama Festival, in which they won out their section and also the overall award for the Best Play of the Festival, thereby taking back two beautiful trophies plus three individual awards for outstanding acting ability. New members introduced that year were: Geraldine Arnold (O'Sullivan's Chemist), Pat Barrett, Danny Ryan, Michael Woodlock and Joe Hanly. They also had 'on-loan' two schoolgirls, Frances Hayes and Angela Dillon.

I joined the players in 1967, whilst still in school and returned in 1973 after my sojourn in UCC for the production of 'See How They Run' and joined Phyllis O'Connell on continuity. In this production John Shortall made his debut on stage and Joe Kenny was introduced as our new sound effects man. This was



The second old Fethard Players photograph that we would love to identify the play and the cast.

the first play produced by Danny Kane, and following their successful run in Fethard went 'on tour' to the Waterford Open drama Festival in Dungarvan, where we came second in the face of very serious competition. I remember Joe Hanly and Michael Woodlock having to drive back from near Dungarvan to their respective homes to collect their forgotten black shoes, whilst the rest of the cast waited in trepidation, minutes before curtain call.

We had a very enjoyable outing in Dublin that year. We went by special bus, had a meal in the Clarence Hotel and then went to see the much talked of play, *Sleuth*, in the Olympia Theatre. It was a great treat for all to see T.P. McKenna and Donal Donnelly give superb performances.

Donal O'Sullivan, Jimmy's father, was assigned as my 'minder' by my mother. It was Donal who first introduced me to the magical world of Leichner stage make-up and 'lake', which could transform a person in minutes.

At this time I met many of the talented group that I would share the stage with in years to come, Anne Connolly, Carmel Rice, Danny Kane, Goldie Newport, Paddy Kenrick, and Mary Goldsborough. I had the great privilege of being on stage with Mary Goldsborough in her last play, with Donal O'Sullivan working his artistry on her stage persona in the commissioners' room, which was also the venue for many social cups of tea, games of cards, and where many

tunes were played and songs sung after performances. Percy O'Flynn was 'tea-maker supreme' and to this day no one would be short of 'a cuppa' when Percy is around.

Austie was back as producer for our next production in January 1974, 'Ten Little Niggers', staged in the Convent Hall. This challenging play was very well received and the murder story was so intense that we asked people every night, not to reveal the ending.

My first appearance was the following year, 1975, in 'Rebecca'. Goldie Newport gave an awe-inspiring performance as Mrs Danvers, and of course Gerry Skehan, who sadly passed away when Abymill was under reconstruction. Carmel Rice (Mrs de Winter) and Danny Kane (Maxim de Winter) played the leads. The players also put on a short one-act play as part of the concert for the Fethard Festival in July and which they repeated in Killenaule at the request of Canon Hogan, who was long associated with the Fethard Players. A new member of the players took part in this play - Mary O'Connor.

In a recent conversation with Goldie Newport she recalled two memorable plays, 'Michaelmas Eve' (1967), where she vied for the attention of a young man, Gerry Skehan, with Chrissie Sayers, and 'Autumn Fires' which was another favourite of hers. She also spoke of the great passion plays performed in the Town Hall, where producer, Eddie O'Neill,



One of the earliest Fethard Players productions with Joe Coffey as judge, May Grady, Ciss Kenrick and again we would like further information.

created the most amazing manual sound effects. Goldie also recalled winning the Feis in Clonmel with a one-act play, which was deemed to be the winner by the famous Tomás MacAnna.

In 1976 we staged 'Brush with a Body' and the cast were rewarded for their months of rehearsal by the marvellous response from the audiences, which packed every performance and never missed a joke. The following year 1977 we only managed a one-act play for Trocaire and also lost two of our stalwarts, Liz Brett and Mary Goldsborough, who both passed to their eternal reward.

In 1978 we were back on the boards reviving the 1958 production of 'Drama at Inish' and introducing many new faces to the stage. This was followed in 1979 by 'Murder at the Vicarage' which introduced

newcomers Billy Kenny as Dr. John Haydock, Billy McLellan as Inspector Slack, and Geraldine Hayes as Lettice Protheroe.

1980 saw a new diversion when the Fethard Players provided a range of entertainment at a variety concert in the Country Club Ballroom as part of the Fethard & Killusty Community Council's annual festival; Anne Connolly, Carmel Rice and Betty Holohan performed a sketch 'Baby Chick' followed by a festival fancy production of 'Tavern in the Town' which in years to follow inspired the formation of the Players' sister group, the Hogan Musical Society.

Following our production of 'The Late Christopher Bean' in 1980, the Fethard Players revived the traditional pantomime in January 1981, 'Gone with the Fairies', written by Billy McLellan and produced by Michael

O'Donoghue with Don Byard as musical director. In April that same year Fethard Players also performed 'The Heiress' play in the Town Hall.

My next two plays acting in were 'The Whole Town's Talking' in 1982 and 'I'll Get My Man' in 1983. The following year's play in 1984 was 'A Letter from the General', with Carmel Rice, Billy McLellan, Rita Kenny, Angela Dillon-Whyte, Mary Keane, Ann O'Riordan, Joe Walsh, Jimmy O'Sullivan and myself. Most of us were nuns and one amusing memory is that Rita and I were both expecting our first babies . . . the Reverend Mother and the seventy something year-old nun!

The Hogan Musical Society was formed at the beginning of September 1981 at a well-attended meeting held in the newly renovated Tirry Community Centre where the following officers were elected: Michael McCarthy (chairman); Gemma Kenny (secretary); and Catherine Newport (treasurer). Their first official production was another pantomime 'Goody Two Shoes' in 1982, produced by Michael O'Donoghue, assisted by

Billy McLellan. Sunday matinees in the 'Ballroom of Romance', as I fondly call it, comedy and laughs with Billy McLellan. None could forget the humour Billy injected into such moments.

In the following years all interested in stage productions, back or front, music or drama, funny or serious, were well catered for with

so many memorable shows such as, 'Oklahoma' (1983), 'Are You Right There Michael' (1984), 'Fiddler on the Roof' (1985), 'Old King Cole' (1986), 'The Homecoming - Songs of 50s and 60s' (1987), 'Opening of the Abymill - Concert' (1988), 'The Sound of Music' (1989), 'Olde Tyme Music Hall' (1990), 'The Heart's a Wonder' (1991), 'South Pacific' (1992), 'Thanks for the Memories' (1993),

'Oklahoma' (1994), 'Hello Dolly' (1995), 'Farewell to the Valley' (1996), 'Magic Moments' (1998), 'Fiddler on the Roof' (1999), and the many stage plays also performed.

On May 26, 1988 Abymill was officially opened by Catherine O'Shea who did the honours. Catherine was elected as the 'Mayor of Fethard' that



Fethard Players Mary Goldsborough and Eddie O'Neill on stage in the 1950s

year as part of our Abymill's Fethard Festival fundraising drive. Sadly Catherine is no longer with us.

Since 1988 I have many engaging memories of the Abymill stage – great plays and great people – mother to Lisa Rice-Laaksonen on at least three occasions; married to Percy O'Flynn at least twice; the "Lughnatic Women" as Mary O'Connell christened us, in Friel's 'Dancing At Lughnasa' with Mary, myself, Anne Connolly, Carmel Rice and Geraldine McCarthy.

As the years go by I have fond memories of Seamus Hayes, Ciarán Mullally, Pat Brophy, Liam O'Connor, Roger Mehta and Eoin Powell. I introduced Austie to young, school-going players Deirdre Lawlor and Deirdre Dwyer, and of course Conor McCarthy, Tommy Gahan, and Belinda McCormack, at a young and tender age.

Memorable moments with Mia Treacy and Vincent (Jasper) Murphy. I will always remember Mia playing the tragic Mary in O'Casey's 'The Plough and the Stars' (2003), with Robert O'Keefe as her young, patriotic husband. My own son Tom made his debut with the Fethard Players, along with Ciarán Treacy, in the 2012 production of 'The Shadow of a Gunman'.

By the time we staged Hugh Leonard's 'A Life' (2010), Colm McGrath had become an established player, and has just finished the 2013 run of 'Miss Rose White', this year's very powerful and moving play. Niamh Hayes and Ann Walsh played

the displaced Jewish sisters, with Jimmy O'Sullivan and Geraldine McCarthy playing Papa and Mama. Colm McGrath played husband to Ann Walsh, and Maeve Moclair her childhood friend. Austie made a wonderful job of the production, and as usual the set was amazing and the lightning and music highly effective.

As our years in Abymill rolled by I also produced sixteen school shows, which gave the local secondary school students a wonderful, confidence-building opportunity of being on stage.

My stalwart support came, as it still does, from Christy Mullins, who loves nothing more than being involved backstage, Johnny O'Connor on lights, who was joined in this year's production by Michael Walsh and the 'Meet and Greet' team of Josie Fitzgerald, Trish Ryan with Maura Gorey, Veronica Fogarty and Paul O'Meara always willing to lend a hand.

I'm sure there are many more stories and memories out there. These are but a few... But I dedicate them to the memory of all the players, past and present, who have 'trod the boards' in Fethard town, and whose dedicated performances have brought a smile to the face, a tear to the eye, to many, and to those to come.

"All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players!" ●

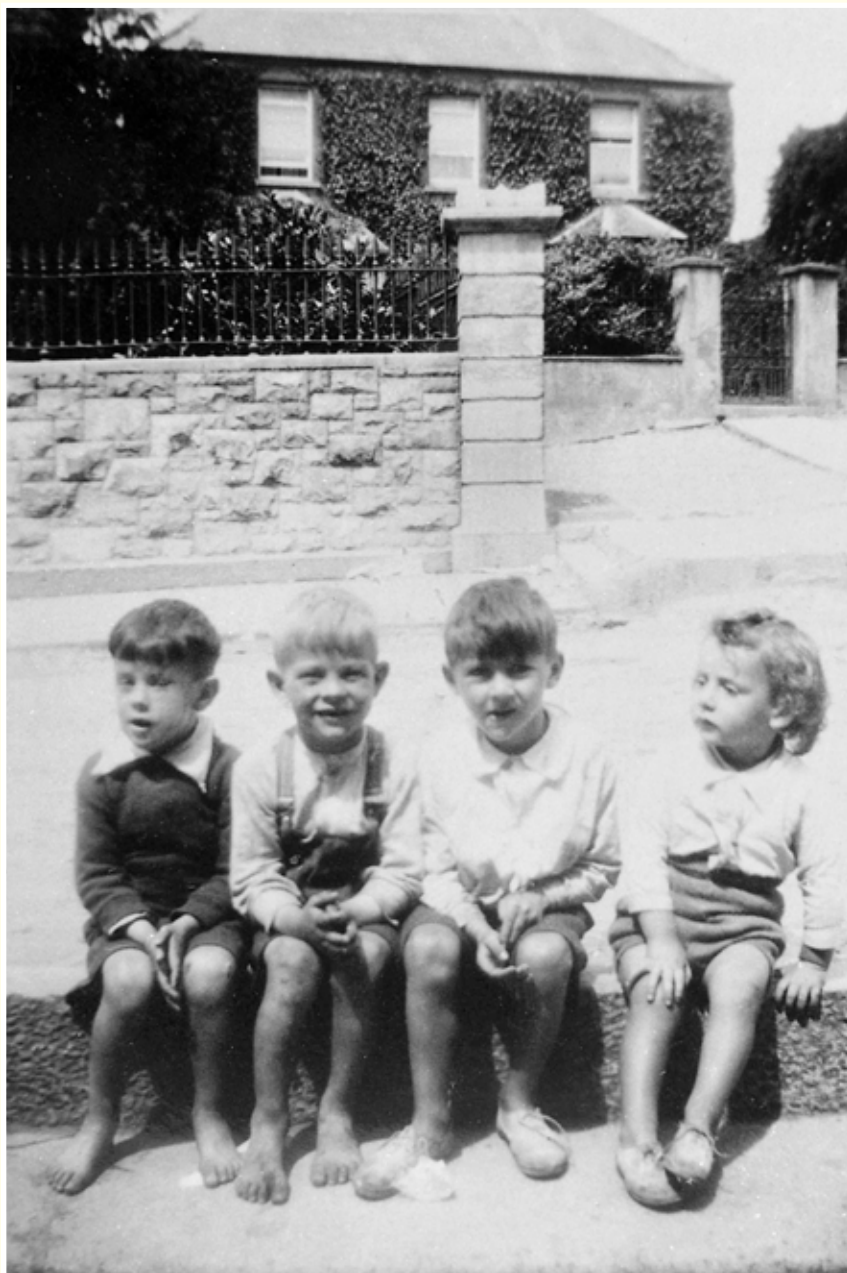
L'cheim – Marian Mulligan-Gilpin.



Fethard Players get together in Aherlow House c.1980 L to R: Billy McLellan (guitar), Austie O'Flynn, Pa Joe Holohan and Fr. O'Gorman.



Fethard Players get-together c.1980 L to R: Mary Ward, Philip Ward, Betty Holohan, Johnny O'Flynn, Kate O'Flynn, Cinta O'Flynn, Sean Ward and Margaret Ward.



Anyone know these four children sitting on footpath outside the parish church and Perryville House?

Fethard & Killusty Community Games

We had another busy and exciting year on the Community Games Calendar in 2013. Competitors took part in Art, Athletics, U10 Mixed Football, Gymnastics, U12 Girls' Football, U11 Hurling, Handwriting, and Swimming where they enjoyed considerable success. Three competitors had the honour of representing their county at the National Finals in Athlone – Cassandra Needham, Slievenamon Close, in Art; Keenan Aherne, Prospect, in Handwriting; and Jack Dolan, Coolmore Stud, in Athletics – where they all did very well in extremely competitive events. Jack, aged 14, competed in the U16 1500m where he reached the final.

Our teams gave their mentors and supporters hours of tension and delight as their bandwagon went through the various stages of competition. The hurling team gave a great performance losing by only one goal to Powerstown/Lisronagh. The team consisted of: Seán Moroney, Thomas Donegan, Keenan Aherne, Josh Nevin, Shane Neville, Robert Wall, Darragh Spillane, Michael James Phelan, Shane Lawrence, Ryan Walshe, Jack Quinlan, Conor Neville, Micheál Quinlan, Cathal Ryan, Kieran O'Donnell, Luke Allen and Cáin Hall. Team Managers were Michael Moroney and Michael O'Mahoney.

The football team reached the



Fethard Girls U12 football team who made history being the first ever Community Games team to win a South Final. Back L to R: Mark Prout (coach), Kaylin O'Donnell, Lucy Spillane, Hannah Dolan, Emma Geoghegan, Ava Hickey, Rachel Prout, Miceál Spillane (coach), Caoimhe O'Meara, Laura Kiely, Ava Ward, Annette Connolly (coach). Front L to R: Ellie Devaney, Aoife Morrissey, Alison Connolly, Leah Coen, Emma Lyons, Carrie Davey, Ciara Connolly, Laura Harrington, Aine Ryan and Nell Spillane.

South Final where they played the game of the century against Powerstown/Lisronagh. This game was a draw at full time and the teams still could not be separated after extra time. In the replay, when Fethard were short a couple of players, they

lost by a narrow margin. Team members: Shane Lawrence, Seán Moroney, Conor Neville, Michael Flanagan, Lily O'Mahoney, Hannah Sheehy, Abbie Tillyer, Áine Ryan, Heather Spillane, Darragh O'Meara,

Michael James Phelan, Luke Allen, Darragh Spillane, Ciara Spillane, Aoife Morrissey, Luke Dolan, Keenan Aherne, Toby Collier, Cáin Hall, Kelly Ryan and Jack Quinlan. Team Manager was Michael Moroney.

The girls' football team were super stars; they won the south final beating Cashel/Rosegreen, then defeated Moycarkey-Borris in the county final in Semple Stadium and proceeded to compete in the Munster Finals in Tralee where they were beaten by a very strong Cork side but lost nothing in defeat.

Team members were: Ellie Devaney, Aoife Morrissey, Alison

Connolly, Leah Coen, Emma Lyons, Carrie Davey, Ciara Connolly, Laura Harrington, Áine Ryan, Nell Spillane, Kaylin O'Donnell, Lucy Spillane (captain), Hannah Dolan, Emma Geoghegan, Ava Hickey, Rachel Prout, Caoimhe O'Meara, Laura Kiely

and Ava Ward. They were a credit to their manager Miceál Spillane and his selectors Annette Connolly, Jackie O'Flynn and Mark Prout. There are many sons and daughters of well-known GAA



L to R: Leah Coen, Ben Coen and Alison Connolly all won silver medals at the Community Games County Athletic Finals in Templemore

people on these teams.

The following is a list of all those who won medals in the various individual events.

The winner of each category then represented Fethard/Killusty at the county finals where some lucky and talented children achieved their goal of competing at national finals. We salute all the participants, managers, parents and supporters who turned out in such big numbers at all the competitions. We also wish to thank all those who supported us in any way especially those who contribute to our annual collection. Well done to all.



Athletes from Fethard at the Community Games County Athletics Finals in Templemore

Community Games Area Art results

*Girls Under 6 Tots Non Qualifiers:
1st Katelyn O'Brien, 2nd Jasmine
Brennan, 3rd Maria Brett.*

*Boys Under 6 Tots Non Qualifiers:
1st Criostoir Sheehy, 2nd Charlie
Walsh, 3rd Richard Murphy.*

*Girls Under 8: 1st Jenna Lou Coen,
2nd Ciara Donald Besso, 3rd
Shakira Bradshaw.*

*Boys Under 8: 1st Jack Davey, 2nd
Joseph O'Flynn, 3rd David
O'Brien.*

*Girls Under 10: 1st Eimear O'Sullivan,
2nd Hannah Connorton, Joint
3rd Kelly Ryan, Heather Spillane
and Emma Lyons.*

*Boys Under 10: 1st Cianan McGuire,
2nd Dara O'Meara, 3rd Conor
Neville.*

Girls Under 12: 1st Sinead Regan,

*2nd Holly Broomfield, 3rd Jessica
Gainford.*

*Boys Under 12: 1st Ben Coen, 2nd
Matthew Burke, 3rd Michael
Quinlan.*

*Girls Under 14: 1st Holly Keating,
2nd Sarah Carroll, 3rd Laura
O'Donnell.*

*Boys Under 14: 1st Conor Harrington,
2nd Gavin Mullally, 3rd Stephen
Crotty.*

*Girls Under 16 1st Cassie Needham.
Joseph O'Flynn, Ciaran Maguire and
Matthew Burke all went on to
win bronze medals at the County
Finals*

Community Games Area athletics results

*U8 Girls 60m: 1st Áine Connolly,
Tullamaine, 2nd Kaycie Aherne,
Prospect, 3rd Olivia Ward, Redcity.*

U8 Boys 60m: 1st Jake Coen, Killusty, 2nd Matt Coen, The Green, 3rd Oisín Ryan, Killusty.

U8 Girls 80m: 1st Emily Davey, Farranshea, 2nd Aoife Harrington, Kerry Street, 3rd Nicola Moloney, Abbey View.

U8 Boys 80m: 1st Andrew Connorton, Killusty, 2nd Oisín Ryan, Killusty, 3rd Joseph O'Flynn, Knockelly.

U10 Girls 100m: 1st Ciara Spillane, Tullamaine, 2nd Kelly Ryan, Cedar Grove, 3rd Eabha Ryan, Killusty.

U10 Boys 100m: 1st Michael James Phelan, Jossestown, 2nd Keenan Aherne, Prospect, 3rd Shane Lawrence, Woodvale Walk.

U10 Girls 200m: 1st Hannah Connorton, Killusty, 2nd Eabha Ryan, Killusty.

U10 Boys 200m: 1st Dara O'Meara, Killusty, 2nd Conor Neville, Kilnockin.

U12 Girls 100m: 1st Alison Connolly, Tullamaine, 2nd Lucy Spillane, Tullamaine.

U12 Boys 100m: 1st Ben Coen, Killusty, 2nd Cian O'Brien, Slievenamon Close, 3rd Robert Hackett, Cashel Road.

U12 Girls 600m: 1st Leah Coen, The Green, 2nd Carrie Davey, Farranshea, Joint 3rd Kaylin O'Donnell, Kilconnell, Laura Harrington, Kerry Street.

U12 Boys 600m: 1st Robert Hackett, Cashel Road, 2nd Richard Robinson, Watergate.

U14 Girls 100m: 1st Casey Hall, Slievenamon Close, 2nd Megan

Earl, Slievenamon Close.

U14 Boys 100m: 1st Mark Heffernan, Ballyvaden.

U16 Boys 1500: 1st Jack Dolan, Coolmore Stud.

U14 Girls Long Puck: 1st Katie Ryan, Tullamaine, 2nd Lucy Spillane, Tullamaine, 3rd Amy Brophy, Kilnockin View.

U14 Boys Long Puck: 1st Ben Coen, Killusty, 2nd Robert Hackett, Cashel Road, 3rd Keenan Aherne, Prospect.

U6 Non-Qualifying Girls Tots Races: 1st Sarah Moore, 2nd Grace Coen.

U6 Non-Qualifying Boys Tots Races: 1st Noah O'Flynn, 2nd Gavin Neville, 3rd Zac Smyth.

U4 Non-Qualifying Tots Races: Girls 1st Lauren Connolly, Boys 1st Joe Purcell. Boys U10 Handwriting: 1st Keenan Aherne, 2nd Mark Neville, 3rd Conor Neville

Girls U10 Handwriting: 1st Hannah Sheehy, 2nd Gillian Burke, Joint 3rd Anna Collier, Aine Ryan and Kayleigh Nevin

Katie Allen, Woodvale Walk competed in the County Final of gymnastics. In swimming Abigail Maher, Tinakelly, Fethard, won a silver medal U14; Zoë Stokes, Ballybough a bronze medal U14 and Isobel Maher, Tinakelly, a bronze medal U10. Cathal Ryan, Killusty, reached the semifinal stage.

We wish everybody at home and abroad a very Holy and Happy Christmas and a Peaceful and Prosperous New Year. ●

Fethard Tidy Towns



Members of Coolmore gardening department helping with tree planting and landscaping at the new Fethard Playground site L to R: Joseph Looney, Christy Fitzgerald (Head Gardener Coolmore), Joe Keane (Fethard Tidy Towns), Tom Cummins, Tony Dolan and Ed Coman.

Fethard Tidy Towns committee is as follows: Joe Keane (Chairman), Thelma Griffith (Hon. Secretary), Brian Sheehy (Treasurer), Committee members – Eamonn Kennedy, Sister Marie Fletcher, Tom Tobin, Patrick Burke, Jimmy O'Shea, Johnny Burke, Mary Connors, Vincent Doocey, Nicholas Casey, Rory Walsh and Noreen Sheehy.

This is the time of year we look back on different projects that we have carried out during the past year. The new project area at Cashel Road when started, was overgrown with bushes, briars, weeds (Japanese knot weed and giant hog weed). We still have some on the riverbank area which we are treating with Roundup and this treatment will go on for the foreseeable future. The trees planted in the new tree park are all Irish grown in Coolmore Stud, three

miles from Fethard. These trees have matured over 25 years; the tree types are as follows, Golden Ash, Blue Cedar, Oriental Pear, Silver Birch, Copper Beech, Norway Maple and Red Maple (each tree will display an identity tag for easy recognition in both English and Latin). On the planting of trees we went for a sequence of trees rather than a compass of trees as the area is too small, and this provides you with a full view of the playground and river area. A 1.2 meter chain link fence will be put up for the safety of children in the playground. When we started this project there was no footpath on the public road so this was included as part of the park project; this has been a great benefit to pedestrians. Coolmore Stud provided and planted all the trees for this project and prepared the groundwork, while the

County Council constructed the footpath. This new footpath joins up with the old boreen running beside the river which exits at the Rocklow Road. We are currently in the process of developing the Convent Hall side of the river. A footpath has already been constructed and wild flowers, fruit trees and shrubs have been planted. An existing entrance has been reopened for public access. We hope to construct a footbridge at a later stage over the river, to join both the playground and tree park. Later this year we intend to plant a total of 28 oak trees inside the current concrete railing along the Cashel road, and plant a beech hedge with whitethorn. Further work will be taking place in the car park area, the existing wall will be taken down and a copper beech hedge will be planted in its place.

The second project involved hedge cutting and clearing on the Clonmel road at Garrinch. The old hedge was cut back to provide both pedestrians and motorists with clearer visibility of the very busy Fethard/Clonmel road. We hope that in time the County Council will be able to construct a footpath at this location to join up with the Harrington walkway.

The third project involved the area situated at the Grove road. This area was completely overgrown on both sides of the entrance to the sewage treatment plant. With the help of the County Council we cleared away all old briars and bushes and ivy along the wall. The ditch was cut back as well and new top soil was added. Many thanks to Coolmore Stud for their assistance with this



*To mark National Tree Week in Fethard, CountryLife Garden Centre presented two fruit trees to Fethard Tidy Towns. The trees will be used to enhance the current landscaping project in Fethard.
L to R: Linda Kelly, Joe Keane (Fethard Tidy Towns) and Freda Hayes.*

project. Wild flowers were sown at the bottom of the wall on both sides and grass seeds on the remainder. We have sown daffodils and narcissi along the road curve. Coming in from the Kilsheelan road there is a lovely new scenic view and pleasant surroundings. More development will be carried out at a later stage, for example, miniature trees and shrubs and stone curving for the wall.

Wildlife and Natural amenities

We would like to thank Kevin Collins for his great interest in wildlife in the Fethard area, and for putting up bird boxes and completing a Biodiversity Survey. This survey has identified the various habitats of wildlife in our community. This

information will be very useful for the local schools, educating the pupils about the flora and fauna in Fethard. We hope in the near future we can put up a panel to tell us all about the flora and fauna.

The Tidy Towns committee have started work on plans and projects for the next three years. Finally we would like to thank everyone for assisting with litter control in the town. Also we would like to thank anyone who helped with the upkeep of the town and the local schools, and a special thanks to Coolmore Stud, South Tipperary County Council, Micheál Maher Building Contractors, Mark Tynan Building Contractors, and Brodeen Knitters. ●



Fethard Tidy Towns photographed with Marie Phelan, Environmental Section South Tipperary County Council, at a working meeting to commence with a Water Harvesting Programme in Fethard which will help conserve the use of water from the main supply which will be metered in the near future. Back L to R: Andrew Fox, Martin Shelly, Eamon Kennedy, Joseph Looney. Front L to R: Thelma Griffith (secretary), Joe Keane (chairman) and Marie Phelan (South Tipperary County Council).

Bulfin and the Fethard connection

The first thing you might say about the name Bulfin is that in Irish name terms it is rare and unusual. Its origins are pretty unknown, speculation is that it is a variation of 'Bullfinch', but that is just what this is – pure conjecture! Certainly it is not an Irish name in the pure sense such as Murphy or Ryan and some consider it arose around the south east of medieval England. Equally certain is that it has been around in Ireland for 300 years or more.

As I have mentioned in previous Fethard Newsletter contributions, my connection to the Bulfin name and family is through my mother Bridgid Bulfin (1910-1974) from The Valley, Fethard. From this stemmed my fairly widespread research arising mainly from responding to many overseas Bulfins seeking information, such queries originally passed on to me by my cousin, Tommy Bulfin of The Valley. Of course the very unusual and scarce occurrence of the name made research somewhat easier.

The name Bulfin occurs and is historically confined to two areas of Ireland, that is in Derrinlough and a surrounding area in Co. Offaly and secondly in the area roughly between Ballinure and Fethard in Co. Tipperary. That these two branches were originally one extended family is, for practical purposes, a certainty. It is anyhow a scientific and genetic fact that 80 percent of people of any given name have common ancestors.

This is even truer for those of uncommon names such as Bulfin. That said there is, to date, no traceable direct link between the two groupings of family name.

Dealing first with the Derrinlough and Co. Offaly Bulfins. As well as being well established and prominent in this general area they have also contributed the more well-known Bulfin names. Alderman Patrick Bulfin – Tea and Wine Merchant, Thomas St., Dublin was Lord Mayor of Dublin 1870-71. He was joint proprietor of Bulfin and Fay Wholesale Grocers, Merchants and Seedsmen with premises in Thomas St, King St. North and City Quay. He died during his term of office as mayor and was given the equivalent of a state funeral. He is interred in a vault in Glasnevin Cemetery. His son Lt General Sir Edward Bulfin (1862-1939) took a prominent part in the First World War (1914-18). His forces took part in the capture of Palestine – part of the Turkish Campaign. Patrick's brother William Bulfin (1864 – 1910) left Derrinlough for Argentina - very much a midlands/Co Offaly custom at that time. He achieved considerable prominence there owning and editing a leading Argentinean newspaper, The Southern Cross. He wrote Rambles in Eireann, an account of a journey by bicycle around Ireland. His son Eamon (1892-1968), as a republican volunteer in the 1916 Rising, raised

the tricolour over the GPO. He was a member of the first Dail and his sister Catalina 'Kid' Bulfin married Sean McBride. Bulfin Road in Inchicore Dublin (terminus of the No 19 bus - sadly now discontinued!) - was named after him. In more recent times several of that family - Michael Bulfin and Siobhán Bulfin - are well known sculptors

The Bulfins of Ballinure and Fethard generally speaking did not achieve the same measure of national prominence. In Ballinure there are today several families of that name one of which, Michael Bulfin of Ballinure House, is directly related to the Fethard Bulfins, the main subject of my article. There is much evidence of a long Bulfin connection with Fethard. John and William Bulfin are several times listed in the 1700s as being freemen of the Borough of Fethard. To be a freeman of the town you had to be of a family of some note and prosperity. Michael O'Donnell - the Fethard historian - in an article 'Life in Fethard in the 1700s' (1988 Tipperary Historical Journal) notes that in 1709 the d'Oyer Court commissioned a John Bulfin to repair the town's pound wall but in December 1710 the minutes complained that he had still not finished the work. He was ordered to finish the work or be fined \$5! I, myself, found reference to John and William Bulfin being jurors in a law case of May 1721. In the 1773 minutes we find the vote of a John Bulfin being objected to as

he was 'not sworn' - this may be for religious or other technical reason - this body of worthies seemed to be good at disputation! This John was probably the son of either John or William of earlier years. Presumably he is also the same John who is listed in the 1766 Religious Census of the Fethard Union as 'Protestant'. A third Bulfin is also mentioned as being a freeman but it was not possible to make out the Christian name. Trying to decipher these historic Fethard minutes is not for the faint hearted!

In the wonderful indexing of Cloneen (Ballyhomuc) Cemetery, done by Gerry Hogan, Thomas O'Connor and others, record No 161 lists headstones for - Thomas Bulfin d.1791 55 yrs; Mary Bulfin nee Hickey d.1811; her daughter Margaret 13 years d.1790; and Catherine Bulfin nee Bryan 32 years d.1810, erected by Patrick Bulfin. Thomas Bulfin, Noan, is among those listed in the 1879 Tipperary Free Press (by Ml. Kyle, Drangan) as having burial rights in Cloneen cemetery.

In the 1850 Griffiths Valuation Mary Bulfin occupies a dwelling in Main Street, Fethard, while a John Bulfin occupies a dwelling and 34 acres, this being the largest holding listed in Ballyvadin, Magorban near Fethard

Finally turning to the immediate family of my mother. Thomas Bulfin (1857-1927) was born in Ballinure - son of Thomas (1829-1895) and Johanna (1825-1885) nee



Fethard team at School Sports in Clonmel 1955 L to R: Johnny Shea, Bro. Kieran Lawlor, Vincent Allen, Fr. Hogan, Tom Leahy, Bro. Bonaventure Crowley, Tommy Bulfin and Sean Hogan.

Ryan. On February 5, 1891 he married Catherine Walsh (1869-1941) of Fethard. Thomas moved to Fethard at some stage in the late 1800s and he and his family are recorded in the 1901 census as living in Main Street, Fethard. It is not clear if this is the same house that Mary Bulfin was living in 1850. At some point between then and 1911 he built the present Bulfin house and the adjoining single story houses in The Valley. While he had land just outside Fethard on the Rocklow Road his main occupation was cattle dealing. By all accounts he carried on a substantial trade and travelled frequently to Birkenhead near Liverpool, which was, at that time, the main centre for the Irish live cattle trade into

England.

There were eleven children that I know of although my mother spoke of twelve.

Patrick (1892-1911) joined his father in the cattle trading business and in August 1911 was tragically drowned while bathing at a place called The Green on the Suir at Clonmel. He and a companion had been coming from a fair in Dungarvan. In an earlier (1999) Fethard & Killusty Newsletter I reprinted the graphic newspaper account of this sad happening and also the account of his funeral. Among other things the paper said that 'Patrick had been of considerable help to his father in his extensive business' and from what I have



Fethard Main Street c1900 . . . are they geese in the middle of the road?

gathered the event had a long lasting traumatic effect on the whole family.

Josephine (Jo) (1893-c1962) spent all her life in the Irish post office. She initially did relief work in various Irish towns particularly Kilmacthomas Co Waterford before becoming the postmistress of Ballybay Co Monaghan. Ballybay is a kind of 'Fethard of the north' similar in population and size and with the same strong sense of community. There was to be a strong Bulfin connection. Jo never married and was a lady of strong religious conviction.

Margaret (1895-c1970) worked with the catering section of Great Southern Railways latterly CIE. Most of this was spent as manageress of the railway restaurant in Athlone

Station. Railway catering in those days was a serious matter, none of the take it or leave it stuff you have to endure nowadays. Real tablecloths, hotel ware teapots, good quality tableware and proper cutlery – all embossed tastefully with the GSR insignia. During the war Margaret used to send us parcels with scarce unobtainables – tea, Cadbury's chocolate and GSR tea towels. This station is on the Galway-Dublin rail line and I pass through it frequently. It is closed now – Athlone station is now on the Leinster side of the Shannon. The old station has an abandoned air and as my train passes slowly through it before crossing the huge Shannon river rail bridge I always impart a silent tribute to Margaret

and past times. On her retirement she bought a house on the Grove Road near Ned and lived out the rest of her life there.

Thomas (1897-1954) succeeded his father in the cattle dealing business and at one stage was also an insurance agent. In about 1935 he married Johanna Power (d 1999) from Callan. He and his family lived in the family home in The Valley presently occupied by Tommy. He died suddenly of a heart attack on August 17, 1954.

Mary (1899-1930). Sadly I have no account of her 31 years before she died at early age of 31 - of TB I believe.

Michael (1901-1977). I seem to recall that he was with the Royal Air Force as an aircraft rigger in the 1920s. After that he worked in the London area until the mid 1950s at which point he returned to Fethard where, with Jim, he was part of the triumvirate that made up Ned's milk enterprise. In 1951 a Clonmel aunt brought my sister and me to London to see the Festival of Britain. We met Michael there and he brought us to see Westminster Cathedral, still one of my favourite places to go to when in London.

Edmund (Ned) (1902-1978). Ned spent some years in Dublin; I think he had a milk round or some related activity. In the late 1930s he returned to Fethard and set up his milk delivery business. In the 2006 edition of the Fethard & Killusty Newsletter I contributed an article

on his milk business so will not repeat the detail here. However, hardly an edition of this publication goes by without some photo or reference to Ned and his contribution to the town's life and community. For a generation of a certain age he and his milk business seemed to epitomise all that was good and proper about an era now past. One of my memories of the Grove Road house was a bone-handled meat carving knife with the blade worn thin from carving endless roast beef joints – those were the days before cholesterol and such like came between a person and a good old fashioned dinner! Rather late in life he married Veronica Linden from Ballbay. Veronica settled well in Fethard and became popular and well liked despite reorganising Ned's chaotic milk accounts and drastically cutting back on the far too generous credit payment terms!

John (Jack) (1905-1964). From his earliest years he had a keen sense of humour – my mother related that in the early days of electricity in Fethard he would loosen the fuses in the house and then say to his father that he could restore the light. A grateful father would then cough up six pence or a shilling! He lived in England, Clonmel and Carrick-on-Suir at different times but eventually settled in Abbeyside, Dungarvan where he ran a grocery business. He married Pearl Terry of Abbeyside who came from a musical family. Shortly before he died I recall visit-

ing him in Dungarvan hospital. What has remained with me was the sheer basic bareness of the place – people complaining about the HSE nowadays would want to see how things were then! His son Jonathan Bulfin lectures on music in the Waterford Institute of Technology and is an expert on brass music and instruments. He is also a keen birdwatcher, as I am. Rose Regan (nee Bulfin) is a long serving member of the prestigious Guinness Choir in Dublin. Several other members of the family are active in and around Dungarvan.

James (Jim) (1907-1982). In many respects Jim led a quiet life. All of it was spent in Fethard. He lived first in the original family home in The Valley and then with Ned and Michael on the Grove Road. He helped with the milk business and dealt in calves. In 1975 he spent a long spell in Merlin Park Hospital in Galway. I was able to visit him there and we used to have long conversations in the evenings of that very fine

summer. He was the last of the family to die.

Catherine (Cathleen) (1908-1978). Cathleen married Frank Carragher when he was working for the ESB in Limerick- Shannon area. From the Louth/Monaghan area they eventually settled in Ballybay where Frank ran an electrical contracting business. Their family still live in and around Ballybay where they are active in community affairs. The local post office originally held by Jo Bulfin, is still run by a family member.

Brigid (Bridie) (1910-1974) Youngest in the family she married John Sharkey in 1934. His family had a watchmaking and jewellery business at 44 Gladstone Street, Clonmel. She lived all her life in that town but she retained a lifelong regard and love for Fethard, something which she passed on to my late sister Helen and me. Therefore this short Bulfin note is dedicated to her. ●

Neil Sharkey, Headford (August 2013)



Children playing on the banks of the Clashawley in Fethard c1900



John Ward, John O'Shea and May Goode standing beside car. c1950



*Senior Citizens Christmas Party 1981 Back L to R: Alice Ryan, John Halpin, Kathleen Walsh.
Front L to R: Agnes Allen and Josie Kenny.*

The many lives of Stevie O'Connor



Sean Hanrahan welcoming Stevie O'Connor and his steed 'Murphy' to Fethard on June 18, 2004, one of his stops in his 'Four Corners' Pilgrimage' trek around Ireland on horseback. The trek which started in Rosslare on Saturday, June 11, 2004, took him to the four corners of Ireland on horseback while raising awareness of mental health. Stevie, originally from Kiltinan, was also met by his sisters, Patricia Clear and Elma Khareghani, along with many of his old friends who wished him well on his journey.

In 2006, Stevie O'Connor had a short article about his bipolar condition published in a book entitled, 'You Don't Have To Be Famous To Have Manic Depression'. This book was written by Jeremy Thomas and Dr. Tony Hughes and published by Penguin. It was a follow up to a BBC documentary on bipolar and Stevie was very proud to have his story published in this 'A-Z Guide to Good Mental Health'.

The book is a very interesting read and summed up well in the book's forward by Stephen Fry in his opening sentence, "Whether you are cheerfully anonymous, gloomily

famous or unhappily infamous, there are pages in this book that have something for you."

And so it had for me . . . this is Stevie's story . . .

Steve – The Horseman

My name is Steve. I was born the youngest of five on a farm in South Tipperary in 1953. From a young age I tended to be moody and withdrawn at times. I remember one day as I sat under a tree, my dad asked me, 'Why are you moping about on your own?' I was unable to answer the question.

As the years passed, and I grew into my late teens, I became very restless. I came over to England at the age of seventeen to work. Over the following seven or eight years, I moved from place to place, and job to job, until I ended up in North Devon. There I met and married my first wife, and I settled for the first time in years. I went to work in a local factory as a welder, and later as a cell facilitator. We had two lovely daughters in the six years our marriage lasted.

Shortly after we separated I became very unwell; at the time I was suffering with a prolonged back problem which caused me to have many sleepless nights. What with the lack of sleep, the stress of looking after two young children, etc., I was admitted as a voluntary patient to the psychiatric wing of the North Devon District Hospital. It would take pages to explain the delusory thoughts that were swirling about my mind at this time.

I spent two weeks in hospital heavily sedated; the diagnosis was a break-down due to stress. I was released and given a concoction of sedatives, but as soon as I got home I flushed them down the toilet. I have always had a fear of taking addictive medication. It might be because I saw the effect they had on my mother when I was growing up; she had a severe breakdown after the birth of one of my sisters, and took medication for many years.

I returned to work three months

later, I was in a new relationship, which led to my second marriage, and life looked rosier!

Over the following sixteen years I lived with bouts of depression and mania, but went undiagnosed. I used various herbal remedies including St John's Wort to help me though. Sometimes I would be at work and feel so panicky I would make up an excuse that I was physically unwell, and take a few days off. I would spend hours walking our dogs, as I just wanted to be on my own; it must have been very difficult for my wife and children.

In the late 1990s the strain on my family became too much, I separated from my wife, and with my youngest daughter from my first marriage moved into rented accommodation. The next couple of years were very unsettling and we moved home several times. Then my daughter finished school and started work, I managed to buy a house, and things settled down for a while.

On a visit to my sister in Penzance I met and later married my third wife, and we lived in North Devon for a while. When I was sacked from my job of twenty years in 1999, we moved to Penzance. I was becoming seriously unwell once more. I registered with a doctor in Penzance, who prescribed Prozac. It was probably the worst thing he could have done!

Over the following months I went through the worst time of my life. I was so manic I was borrowing and spending money on ludicrous

schemes; at one time I was trying to buy three properties.

But then came the slide from mania into the deepest depression of my life. I was hanging on a tread.

Then on October 30, 2000, I was admitted to hospital once more as a voluntary patient, where I made a vain attempt on my life. A cry for help, perhaps.

I was put on twenty-four-hour surveillance, until the staff were happy I was no longer a threat to myself. The next few days were a fight within myself to stop unravelling completely; I was not sure what was happening to me, which in itself was very frightening.

After a few days I met Dr Hunter, and became his patient (I still am). Over the next week or so we talked, and he took some blood tests. I was not really aware of what was going on all the time. Then in the second week I went to see him, and he told me I was suffering from bipolar affective disorder. 'What in hell is that?' I asked, and he explained that it is a form of manic depression. 'Good, does that mean I'm not going 'mad'?' He said the illness is caused by an imbalance of the chemical in the brain that maintains normal mood swings. He said he wanted to put me on a course of lithium. Looking back, maybe those were the most significant words ever spoken to me!

Having a diagnosis really helped in my recovery. With the help of the psychiatric team, my family and friends, I made a steady recovery

to some sort of normality, so much so that I was able to move into a flat on my own in March 2001. The cost of this breakdown was my third marriage.

Over the next few months I learned about bipolar, its effects and treatment, and tried to find a way forward. I was brought up with horses, but although there were horses available to ride when I was young, I never had one of my own. Ever since I came to live in England I dreamed of putting that right, but because of other commitments was never able to do so. Over the years I often dreamed of trekking with a horse, either with a wagon or a pack. Maybe I had seen too many westerns, or possibly I have itinerant blood, I'm not sure. Anyway, an idea started to grow in my mind: why not make the dream come true?

A few years previously I had been on holiday with my brother in Spain, where we stayed with friends of his in a village in the foothills of Sierra Nevada near Granada. We did some riding whilst there. I fell in love with the Spanish way of riding; their saddles are so comfortable!

One of the friends was a veterinarian with the endurance riding circuit. The idea of riding between thirty and one-hundred miles as a race did not particularly interest me, but the thought of riding over long distances did. I asked her how far she thought it was possible to ride a horse if you took your time. She said you could ride a horse as far as phys-

ical or political borders will allow you to; as long as you look after your horse, he will take you as far as you want to go. That answer was to prove the spark that, three years later, was to lead to the realisation of a dream.

The idea of going to Spain to buy a horse, then trek back to Cornwall, to raise awareness of the effects of mental ill health, became an obsession. At first I was afraid to tell anyone about my dream, in case they sent for the men in white coats!

To cut a long story short, on April 27, 2002, I left Penzance for Spain, I had just over £3,000 in my pocket, and with the help of a friend in

Spain I got my horse. He was called 'Colina'. We set off from Seville on May 14, trekking some 2,000 miles along ancient pilgrim trails through western Andalusia, Portugal, northern Spain and France, finally arriving in Penzance on September 10.

'Colina' became a big part of my life: we did two more treks over the next three years, until he died suddenly of colic on December 27, 2005. He helped me live a dream, and opened many doors for me, for which I am eternally grateful. 'Rest in peace, dear friend.'

Don't be afraid to dream, everything is possible. ●



Stevie O'Connor on his new horse 'Jess' in Fethard 2012

A fitting Fethard farewell

Family, relatives and friends gave the late Stevie O'Connor, formerly from Kiltinan, Fethard, a fitting send off following his unexpected death on March 20, at his rented home near Cloneen. The news of Stevie's passing came as a great shock to the community who in the past few years had come to know this colourful character again after he moved back from England to his native Fethard.

A lover of animals and nature, Stevie was happiest when walking or trekking over hills, byways, valleys and it was very understandable why he later joined 'The Long Riders

Guild' – the world's first international association of equestrian explorers – an invitation-only organisation that was formed in 1994 to represent men and women of all nations who have ridden more than 1,000 continuous miles on a single equestrian journey. In 2002 Stevie rode his pony 'Colina' on the 3,000 kilometres trek from Seville in Spain, via Santiago de Compostela and back to his home in Cornwall where he lived at that time. This mammoth journey was recorded in Stevie's book 'Dare to Dream' published in 2006 as an eBook on www.chipmunkapublishing.co.uk

On May 14, 2012, Stevie, after eight years planning, started his 'Around



Stevie O'Connor, home on holiday from England, is photographed with friends at McCarthy's Hotel. L to R: Joe Kenny, Stevie O'Connor, Frankie Napier and John Shortall on May 14, 2010.



Stevie O'Connor's final resting place at Kiltinan Graveyard overlooking his original family home.

Ireland Spring Trek' with his new steed 'Jess' which was supplied by his friend Don O'Connell, Fethard. Stevie dedicated this trek to the memory of his daughter Jessica who tragically died through suicide on December 2, 2010.

Stevie and 'Jess' completed the trek on October 17, finishing where he started in Dungarvan. Steve was the first Irishman to be awarded Fellowship of the Royal Geographic Society in the sphere of Equestrian Exploration and Membership of 'The Long Riders Guild' and the first Equestrian Explorer to ride around the Four Provinces of Ireland. Steve was promoting well-being and the IINM Suicide Prevention.

Stevie, who celebrated his 60th birthday on February 18, 2013, regularly attended the music sessions

on Friday nights in McCarthy's Hotel, Fethard, where he sang songs from his vast repertoire gathered on his travels.

On Friday, March 22, as a tribute to Stevie's friendship and life, musicians, family and friends gathered in McCarthy's to give Stevie a 'wake' he would be proud of. On Saturday Stevie was removed to Kiltinan Graveyard for a very memorable and intimate burial overlooking his original home and the valley of Slievenamon.

Stevie will always be remembered for the unique person he was and his untimely passing is deeply mourned by his daughter Sabina, his family Elma, Jimmy, Catherine, Patricia and Conor, relatives and his many friends befriended on his travels. May he rest in peace. ●

Demise of Main Street Shops *by Carmel Rice*

Little did I think, or imagine, growing up in the Main Street that I would ever see the day when all the shops would be closed for business, save the post office, the bank and the pharmacy.

In my years growing up during the late forties and fifties I lived plonk in the middle of the street, Brett's Pub to be precise. Moving downwards there was Newport's, Scully's, Newport's again, Mrs Murphy's, Pa Green's, Tierney's and on the opposite side going upwards you had O'Flynn's, Dot O'Shea's, O'Connell's, While-U-Wait, Nell McCarthy's, O'Mahoney's, Gorey's, Mrs Ahearn's, Dillon's Chemist, Josie Stapleton's, Whyte's, Bride O'Flynn's, O'Sullivan's, Mrs O'Briens, Henehan's, Din Flynn's (where we got the bullseyes and acid drops in the twist of paper), Mai Goode's, McDonnell's, Mai Walsh's (for homemade cakes and buns). Isn't that amazing, and I've left out all the pubs!

It's a different world I suppose with all the big chain stores in Clonmel now, travel so easily and readily available, and of course online shopping.

Just to take the shops on either side of my own house, Newport's Newsagents to one side and Kay McGrath's on the other. Bert Newport's where the chat was mighty – the wise men of the town and surrounding areas gathering of a morning, in addition to purchasing their paper, to discuss the affairs

of the country, if not the world. I remember as a child being sent out by my father, Jack Brett, with two old pennies to purchase the Irish Independent and being barely able to reach the counter, it being high and I being small. I wouldn't be seen until one of the 'wise men' would eventually tell Mr Newport I was there. One could also get cigarettes and chocolate there, I would sometimes be treated to a 3d Cadburys bar. In recent years I have taken my young grandsons to Edwina's, Tony Newport's daughter, for their Sunday treats. Edwina always had something nice for them too. So it was the end of an era and very sad when the premises closed its doors.

Then there was Kay's, where the ladies kept up with the latest fashions and also had the chat, maybe to discuss the last ICA meeting or the next one, farming issues or whatever. Kay had a great sense of humour and there was always a laugh to be had. She carried a good and varied stock. I bought my first stylish coat from her. I remember it vividly, a brown wool A line, Monique brand with a neat mink collar. It was the 'real thing' and the first of many I bought from her.

Kay carried everything from coats to shoes, socks, underwear, sweaters, needles, thread, wool, bits and bobs of every kind. If you needed something, Kay had it! She also ran a very successful boutique in Clonmel in

the 'narrow street' or Mitchell Street. Boutiques were all the rage, the small stylish up-market shop, and Kay competed with the best of them.

Kay had another life as a farmer's wife. She married Dennis McGrath who farmed in Rathkenny, where Kay reared her chickens and loved her home-baking. She came to Fethard to her aunt, Miss Doyle, who worked in Lonergan's on The Square (which burned down afterwards), but never lost her Carlow accent. She was proud of her roots. She met Denis

and thus began the story.

So now both of these business premises have closed their doors and I can remember the happy occasions spent in both. Maybe another time we can delve into a few more business premises of the past and revive old memories.

To end on a high note, we have a lovely stylish new café called Jollys at the corner of Main Street on The Square – a new meeting place for a chat and to solve the mysteries of the world. ●



Bert and Ciss Newport photographed outside their Newsagency shop in Main Street in the 1930s

Fethard & District Rugby Club



Some members of the Under 10 rugby team who played a blitz in Fethard on October 6, 2013. Back L to R: Michael O'Meara, Stuart Luke, Ben Ruttle, and Michael Long. Front L to R: John Smullen (coach), Jack Cleere, Daniel Boland, Conor Neville, and Willie Ruttle (coach).

Fethard & District Rugby Club had another successful year in 2013. Our first game of the year with the Under 6 to Under 11 teams began with a chill wind blowing across the Community Field as we welcomed both Mitchelstown and Kilfeacle rugby clubs to see in the New Year. Fortunately the rugby was warm enough for all. A very shaky start by Fethard U11s saw Kilfeacle put two early scores on the board and a bit of unseasonal advice from the coaches left no doubt in anyone's mind that Christmas was over and the time for giving was past! But great play was soon restored by Eabha Fitzgerald, Ethan Coen, Eoin Walsh, Angus MacDonald, Mathew Burke, Mathew Gleeson, Sam Quigley, Jack Hassett and Richard Robinson.

As the final whistle sounded, Fethard were back on top with a score line of 5-4 to Fethard! A great start for 2013!

The Fethard Under 8s performed really well on their first outing with fantastic tackling throughout from David McCormack, Robbie Noonan, Miceál Blake and consistent tackling with great gusto from Pdraig O'Dwyer, Tomás Ryan and Louis Ryan. Great teamwork from Jack Quinlan, Mark Neville and William Noonan also contributed with fine tackling from Andrew Connorton, Paraic Heffernan and Ana Quigley-O'Dwyer.

In March, Fethard U10s hosted a pan-Munster Blitz. Killarney RFC came all the way up from Kerry, Clanwilliam came from Tipp Town and volunteers from each of the

three clubs made up a fourth team called the Barbarians. Fethard once again proved they are a formidable U10 team, too strong for Clan and the first game went to the home side. Fethard were pinned back by the Barbarians for a large part of their game, but Fethard powered in several tries to gain their second victory. Killarney gave Fethard their sternest test of the day in a hard fought contest that had individual flair alongside practised team moves and skills. All the teams came away having enjoyed the day, the competition and the hospitality.

The club's first big achievement of the year came at the end of March when the Under 15 team won a hard fought victory over a much bigger Nenagh side played to secure a place in the East Munster Final. Fethard scored a fine try when Killian O'Dwyer split the Nenagh defence,

which was subsequently converted by Gary Kavanagh. Nenagh were quick to respond and within five minutes scored a breakaway in the corner. Fethard piled on the pressure and some great forward play by Griffin Ivors, Ross McCormack, Tim Daly and Bill Phelan saw Fethard camped on the Nenagh line, but a strong Nenagh defence held Fethard out. The second half was a real test, but the Fethard lads put their heart and soul into the final fifteen minutes and continually took the ball until deep in the Nenagh 22. Nenagh rushed up to cover the Fethard centres, Connie Coen and Joey Noonan, who had posed threats all day but the elusive Killian O'Dwyer cut inside to score under the posts. He kicked the conversion himself. In the closing minutes Thomas Murphy, Richie Holohan, Michael Gaynor and Mark Collins tackled everything



Alan Kelly TD, Minister of State at the Department of Transport Tourism & Sport, enjoyed rugby training with committee members at rugby training on Friday night, February 22. Pictured are Alasdair MacDonald, Polly Murphy, Minister Alan Kelly TD, Valerie Connolly, Paul Kavanagh, and Liam Hayes.

that came at them and the backs Mark Heffernan, Gearóid Fahey and Jack Dolan were rock solid to secure the win. In the Final however, a massive Dungarvan team proved just too difficult to beat. To be fair to this Fethard team, they played their hearts out and if it was not for so many refereeing decisions going against them, it could have been a very different story.

In April, it was the turn of our Under 14 team to contest another East Munster Final, this time against Waterford City. The morning certainly wasn't ideal for rugby and a gale blowing into the face of the Fethard side for the first half soon left us trailing by five points. In the second half Fethard started well using the wind to their advantage and keeping the City team in their own 22.

With play breaking down at the half way line Ross McCormack took the ball in hand and charged for the line shrugging off several tackles on the way. This score really got Fethard into gear with every player upping their performance. Mark Heffernan attacked City's line only to be stopped just short, great support play from Harry Butler and the forwards saw Jack O'Rourke crashing over for another try. The tackling from Fethard was relentless from all around the field. Darragh Lynch put in great tackles at full back and in the centre Mark Heffernan and Jack Kealy tackled everything that moved. City's indiscipline cost them another three points that Josef O'Connor slotted over. This was a hard fought victory and truly deserved, well done to the whole



Fethard's Under 14 rugby team. captained by Ross McCormack, who won the East Munster Cup Final on Sunday, April 28. Back L to R: John Smullen, Shane Ivors, Richard Holohan, Jack Kealy, Tim Daly, Mark Heffernan, Ross McCormack, Harry Butler, Jack O'Rourke, Barry McGrath, Lorcan Ivors, Ned Grogan, Paul Kavanagh and Hugh O'Connor. Front L to R: Oisín Smullen, Andrew O'Connell, Pádraig Harrington, Darragh Lynch, Matthew Lynch, Josef O'Connor, David McCormack, Aaron Smullen, and Iain Harrington.



Players taking a short break between games during their tournament at Treviso in Italy on May 11, 2013. Pictured L to R: are Bill Phelan, Richard Holohan, Gary Kavanagh, Mark Collins and Jack Dolan.

panel of players involved.

On the same day, our Under 17 team also contested an East Munster Final, but just came up short against a very strong Nenagh side. Our adult team in the Junior 2 Leagues were also very competitive throughout the season, but suffered from a lack of game time which made it difficult to build a momentum and establish consistency. This is improving for the 2013/2014 season, with a much more regular schedule of matches lined up across the Munster area.

Fethard Girls Rugby enjoyed numerous wonderful games in Thurles, Mallow and Cashel. The squad has progressed well with a front row of Molly O'Dwyer, Aisling Kelly and Aoife Delaney working well together and rucking over with

great strength. Second row newcomers Lisa Norton and Amy Kirby have proved a great asset to the team with their rucking support and ball recycling. Kora Delaney at scrum half keeps the pressure on with fine tackling throughout and quick ball constantly from rucks. Fly half Áine Phelan has on a number of occasions put herself in great positions to take great scores for the team. Aobh O'Shea with Amy Thompson and Leah Fox are great centres who put in the tackles and recycle the ball providing great support to the team. Katie Ryan has a great catch and backs this up well with her ball carrying and recycling. Niamh Holohan with Leah Scott are great backs with fine ball carrying and showing support in the rucks when it counts.



Padraig Collins, Mary Lynch, Kevin Gaynor, Ena Collins, Ned Grogan and Liam O'Dwyer enjoying the tournament in Italy during May.

Training for the girls is on Friday evenings at Fethard Community Field from 8pm to 9.15pm. New members from the age of 13 years and up are always welcome and supported.

As always, we want to extend our sincere thanks to the players, parents and patrons who are at the very heart of Fethard & District Rugby Club. A special word of thanks to the

coaches too, who selflessly give of their time at training and at matches to help their teams achieve their full potential. We also enjoy great support and co-operation from many other clubs and organisations in the Fethard area who help to provide the wonderful facilities at the Community Sportsfield, and for this we are very grateful. ●



Fethard & District Rugby Club welcomed a group of six Munster players to a training session on August 1, 2013. After being treated to a tasty meal at McCarthy's Hotel by Club President, Liam Hayes, the Munster stars took time for autographs and pictures with our own players. Pictured are Johnny Holland, Eabha Fitzgerald, Eoghan Fitzgerald, and Luke O'Dea.

Coolmoynes & Moyglass Vintage Club



Coolmoynes & Moyglass Vintage Club Tractor Run, with a total of thirty-eight tractors, parked at Fethard's scenic old Town Wall on July 27, 2013.

This year we were incorporated into the Ned Kelly Festival for our 6th Annual Event – a two-day event using Moyglass Community Hall grounds. On Saturday, July 27, we had our Tractor Run with a total of thirty-eight tractors, and a slight change in route. The half way stop was outside the scenic Old Town Wall in Fethard. We headed to the Tirry Centre for refreshments, which were kindly provided by the Fethard & District Day Care Committee. The lovely food and hospitality were appreciated by all the drivers. We then proceeded to drive on to Coolmoynes and eventually returned to Moyglass where The Village Inn was hosting the

Old Moyglass National School Past Pupils' Reunion. Later in the evening sunshine we were served a barbecue by the Moyglass Hall Committee. That night 'The Fureys' put on a great show in the hall.

On Sunday, July 28, we had our static show. Included in the car line up were Sean Ward's splendid 1930s Citroen, Marc O'Connell's Marlin sports car, and Denis Brennan's 1956 A 35 van. Included in the tractor line up were the Ryan Brothers diverse range of MF tractors plus their 1943 Allis Chamlers and 1954 Lanz Bulldog. Also included were Jimmy Egan's magnificent 1984 M B Trac 1000 and Liam Maher's splendid 1957 Ferguson 35 'Goldbelly' TVO



Conor O'Donnell playing his active role in the Bank Robbery re-enactment at the Ned Kelly Festival

c/w reaper and binder. Richard A. Slattery's magnificent 1978 Bedford army truck was a welcome visitor again this year.

Staged side by side was The Ned Kelly re-enactment which included the robbing of the bank and featured some characters on horse-back! With a host of other characters and extras this proved most popular with the crowd.

There was also plenty there for the children with amusements and bouncy castles. The festival con-

cluded with an old style wake in The Village Inn to a packed house. Matty Tynan and The Ned Kelly Festival Committee did Trojan work to ensure the weekend was a great success.

Once again we would like to thank everyone involved in the overall weekend for making it a tremendous success. Our designated charity this year was The Fethard & District Day Care Centre and the total amount donated was in excess of €2,000. ●

Fethard & Killusty Community Council

Fethard & Killusty Community Council held their annual general meeting on April 23, 2013, after which the board appointed the following officers for the coming year.

Joe Kenny (Chairman) proposed by Brian Sheehy and seconded by Joe Keane; Brian Sheehy (Vice Chairman) proposed by Eileen Coady and seconded by Di Stokes; Deirdre Brady (Secretary) proposed by Edwina Newport and seconded by Pamela Sweeney; Eileen Coady (Treasurer) proposed by Deirdre Brady and seconded by Joe Keane; Edwina Newport (PRO) proposed by Joe Kenny, and seconded by Eileen Coady. Members of the board are: Joe Keane, Maurice Moloney, Pamela Sweeney, Carmel Kiely, Jimmy Smyth, Peter Grant, Marie

Murphy, Diana Stokes, Tom McGrath, Jimmy Connolly, Fr. Tom Breen and Geraldine Cahill.

What a great year it has been for the Fethard & Killusty Community Council shifting to an administrative roll and enabling the implementation of more focused sub-committees for individual community projects.

The Business and Tourism Group, operating as a sub-committee of the Fethard & Killusty Community Council since July 2012, registered as a limited company in February 2013. Their main project is the refurbishment and management of Fethard Town Hall. This project is a huge undertaking, but is very exciting for the local community and the Business & Tourism Group. An application was made to Tipperary



Mr. Jimmy Deenihan, T.D. Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, speaking to members of Fethard Business and Tourism Group, when he visited the current Town Hall Development Project.. L to R: Cllr. John Fahey, Bill O'Sullivan, Conor Ryan (STDC), Minister Jimmy Deenihan, Deputy Tom Hayes, Tim Robinson, Maurice Moloney, Anthony Fitzgerald (Business Development Executive), Catherine Corcoran (chairperson), Peter Grant, Terry Cunningham and Tadhg Gleeson.



Photographed at the Fethard Playground 'Night at The Dogs' fundraiser at Clonmel Track are L to R: Edwina Newport, Carmel Butler, Dee Brady, Jimmy Smyth, Niamh Hayes and in front is Zach Smyth

Leader for sizable funding for the project. Maurice Maloney represents the group at the Community Council meetings. A donation of €5,000 was agreed by the board to go towards the architectural plans that were needed to kick-start and support this historical project, which in time will hugely benefit the local community.

The Business and Tourism Group also ran the very successful Gathering Festival which was held this year from Friday, June 21, to Sunday, June 23. There was great teamwork demonstrated by all the community involvement, including the Convent Hall Committee, Tidy Towns, ICA, Country Markets and local businesses helping out and giving their time. What a great success!

One of last year's priorities was the management and sustainability of the Youth Centre which demands

an annual budget of over €15,000 to cover running costs. After much debate and analysis of how to make the best use of the hall and make it self-sufficient, a steering committee from the board were elected to take over the management and broaden the use to a wider age group while still catering for youth needs. After three months and a hugely successful effort to increase income, another sub-committee was born in June, the Fethard Convent Community Hall Committee. This sub-committee is headed by Pamela Sweeney and Carmel Kiely, who are ably assisted by a great crew of helpers who have taken full responsibility of the day-to-day running of the hall. The hall is looking wonderful and has become a very popular venue for birthday parties, meetings, courses, etc.

The Christmas Fair was a great

success and of course, we can't forget Santa, who dropped by to meet up with all the boys and girls. Santa will be returning this year, on December 8, as part of the Fethard Christmas Festival. This year there will be a children's disco, with D.J. Brown in the Convent Hall, where there will be music, fun and refreshments for all. Children will be called in to Santa in an ordered way, ensuring everyone stays safe and warm!

The committee also opened a local community library in the hall on Tuesday, October 29, and already this is proving to be a great success.

An application made to South Tipperary County Council back in July 2012, for funding for the Fethard Playground project was successful and began a lengthy process of bringing the project to fruition by a very dedicated team of members. This playground sub-committee organised a very successful fundraiser – 'A Night At The Dogs' which was

held in Clonmel Greyhound Track on May 23, this year to make up the funding shortfall. A total of €17,000 was made on the night, which also turned out to be a great family night of entertainment.

Everyone is now looking forward to bringing their kids to their very own playground which is due to open this December and let's hope it will bring lots of joy to the children of Fethard and surrounding areas.

The Fethard Tidy Towns sub-committee under the direction of Joe Keane also had a great year and Fethard has moved up five points in the National Tidy Towns Competition. This year our Christmas Tree planted on The Square on December 2, 2002, unfortunately died for one reason or other. This was a very attractive feature, particularly at Christmas time, for locals and people passing through our town. We are very appreciative of the support from Coolmore Stud and their ground staff who



*Photographed at the Fethard Playground 'Night at The Dogs' fundraiser at Clonmel Track are
L to R: Valerie Horan, Anne Butler, Orla Carroll and Colette Geoghegan*



Photographed at the launch of Fethard Business and Tourism Group's 'Bring Them Home' fundraiser and 'Gathering' Festival 2013. Back L to R: Phil Wyatt, Peter Grant, Frances Ryan, Conor McGuire, Bernadette Stocksborough, Joe Keane, Mary Healy, Kieran Butler, Mary O'Mahoney, Johnny Neville, David Curran, Mary Hanrahan, Seamus Barry holding daughter Fiona, Pat Looby. Front L to R: Diana Stokes, Maurice Moloney, Catherine Corcoran, Bill O'Sullivan, Tadhg Gleeson and Leo Darcy.

replaced the tree on November 26 and we hope it's allowed to survive and grow strong and healthy for years to come. Coolmore also supplied a splendid range of mature trees for the playground park on the Cashel Road for which we are also most grateful.

The Community Lotto is still going strong and we would like to thank everyone for supporting our local lotto. The proceeds of the lotto help out with so many local groups, initiatives and events. It has also enabled the committee to undertake new projects in Fethard and move forward with confidence.

The Fethard & District Day Care Centre is thriving and offers such a valuable and necessary service to the elderly in our community. The

staff do an amazing job and the centre is a beacon of light to so many. In these recessionary times our HSE funding is continually cut back but the hard working volunteers continue to organise various fundraisers throughout the year to help meet the shortfall. Up to now we have managed without cutting back our service and long may it continue.

Meals-on-Wheels is another invaluable service that complements the Day Care Centre, providing not only a warm meal, but also a lifeline to many of our elderly in our town.

Well done to everyone who helped to make 2013 a great year in our community. Let's hope we can build on what has been achieved this year, on to next year and into the future. A good community always

needs people volunteering their time. If we all give a little of our time, ours will be an even better place to live and for our children to grow up in. So commit to doing something this year to help out – in the local schools, in sports, local clubs or in

the Day Care Centre. Or join us in the Community Council – we'd love to have you aboard!

Wishing you all a happy, healthy and prosperous 2014. ●

Deirdre Brady (Secretary)

Fethard & District Day Care Centre

The Day Centre Committee meet once a month and the members are as follows: Liam Hayes (chairman), Fionnuala O'Sullivan (treasurer), Bobbi Holohan (secretary), Carmel Rice, Molly Standbridge, Tom McGrath, Breda Nolan, Desmond Martin, Marie Murphy, Jimmy Connolly, Geraldine

McCarthy (supervisor) and Michael Cleere (mini-bus driver).

How quickly the year has flown by. All is well at the Day Care Centre. It has been another challenging year for all of us with the recession still hitting hard and money being very tight. We are working very hard trying to maintain our funds. At present we



Liam Hayes (right), chairperson Fethard & District Day Care Centre, making a presentation to Jimmy Connolly, outgoing chairperson, who retired after many years service on the Day Care Centre committee.

are getting ready for our Christmas Bazaar and everyone's working away making Christmas cards, birthday and Easter cards, as well as knitting tea cosies and slippers. On Wednesday mornings we have a sewing circle made up from our clients. The most beautiful hand-made cushions are being produced. The centre wants to thank Noreen Allen for coming on board as a volunteer and bringing her expertise with her. With help from Noreen and Thelma the sewing has become very popular again. Our tea cosies and slippers are still very popular and in demand.

We continue with our exercise classes every day. Our exercise programme includes yoga, aerobics and Tai-chi. We all feel the benefit of doing exercises keeping our joints supple. We had a full programme throughout the year. The Bealtaine Festival held in May is a great showcase for our older citizens showing their many skills.

We held various other fundraising events throughout the year, including table quizzes, 'Fun Run', Vintage

Tractor Run and a Ladbrokes Races event. We cannot thank enough all who helped us and supported us throughout the year and who continue to help us.

In May we spent a week in Kinsale and we were very lucky with the weather. We were able to travel out to Ballinspittle, Fota Island, Blarney and Cork city.

We still continue to provide our 'Senior Day', where our elderly neighbours who do not attend the centre can avail of a chiropody service. The district nurse also attends and a hot meal is served.

Thank you to staff, volunteers, transition year students, and committee members who continue to try and provide the best service possible for our clients. We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our sponsors who continually help in our fundraising efforts.

We wish you all at home, our readers and especially our new emigrants who have had to leave home during the year, a very happy and peaceful Christmas. ●

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Convent Community Centre



Convent Community Centre used as the venue for this year's 'Bring Them Home Gathering Dance' and Barbecue which proved a very successful weekend of community activities.

Following the recommendations at a Community Council meeting during the year where it was highlighted that the Convent Hall / Youth Centre needed a steering committee to reorganise the management and help the centre to become self-sufficient, a few of us were given the task to see what we could come up with. We later agreed to form a sub-committee under the Community Council and discussed how to implement what we thought was needed to move the hall forward. One of the ideas we felt would bring in much needed income was to rent it out for parties and thankfully this really took off for us. During 2013 we have had parties most weekends and they have ranged from one-year-old birthday parties to our two 100th birthday parties for Mrs Josie Casey and Mrs Nellie Shortall.

We also started Zumba classes,

pilates, bodhrán lessons, Irish dance classes, hip hop dance classes, cookery courses and computer classes. All classes have been very well supported and most are now run weekly. We were very lucky to be given two places from the TUS community work placement scheme and so Janice Carroll and Norman Bradshaw joined us and made running all these classes possible and much easier for us. We also started a parent/minder toddler group in the hall every Thursday morning and this has proved to be a big success, the toddlers love it.

In November we opened a community library in the internet room in the hall and although membership is small at the moment we hope it will grow in the coming months. The hall was very much part of this year's summer festival program and hosted the barbecue and 'Gathering'

dance on Saturday night, June 22, which was sold out.

In December 2012, we had Santa visit the hall where he met almost 300 children in his grotto. This was a huge success and, as we write, we are in the middle of preparing his grotto for this year and hope it will be as big a success. Also in December we invited the local transition year pupils to get involved with our 'Red Ribbon Weekend' when we sold the red ribbons to people who wrote the name of a deceased loved one they wanted to remember over Christmas. The ribbons were hung on the railing around the Christmas tree on The Square. It was a lovely idea and the ribbons looked lovely over the festive season. Again, as we write, plans are being made to do the same this year.

As we now look back over our first year in the hall we feel we did achieve our goal and managed to keep the hall open and most importantly, it now meets the bills.

It would be impossible for us to individually name and thank all the people who have helped us out during the year and who have been very good to us in doing jobs for the centre - their pay was a cup of tea, the odd time we stretched to a bun, but thanks guys for everything.

If you would like to keep up to date with what's happening in the hall keep an eye on our Facebook page 'Fethard Convent Community Hall'.

We would like to wish everybody a happy and peaceful Christmas and look forward to your continued support in the coming year. ●



Fethard Patrician Presentation Leaving Cert Class of 1991 and Intermediate Cert Class of 1989 photographed at their Class Reunion held during the Fethard Gathering Festival in the Convent Community Hall

Moulson Family honoured in Clogheen

Former Irish internationals Con and George Moulson were remembered as FAI Chief Executive Officer John Delaney unveiled a plaque to honour the brothers during the village's Gathering event held on August 25, this year. Con Moulson was captain of the Ireland soccer team in 1936 and 1937, while George was a goalkeeper and had three caps in 1948. George also played in the FA Cup semi final in 1939 in Old Trafford. Many of Con and George's relatives are currently living in Grimsby in North England.

For the 'Clogheen Gathering', a team from Grimsby played against a local team and a Vee Rovers U14 team won the inaugural Moulson Cup against a Fethard team. To mark the Fethard Moulson connection, teams from Killusty and Moyglass were involved in the weekend celebrations. Killusty (taking the part of the winners Wolverhampton) and a team made up of visitors (taking the part of Grimsby) played out the 1939 cup semi-final that George Moulson played in.

FAI Chief Executive Officer, John Delaney, said it was fitting to remember the contribution made to Irish soccer by the two Moulson brothers who played for their country at a difficult time. At the gathering, the international caps of George were on display while the FAI leader promised the Moulson family that the caps lost by his brother Con would be replaced.

According to his birth certificate George was born on August 6, 1914, to Charles Moulson and Bridget Moulson nee Dahill from Fethard.

Michael O'Donnell (Clonmel), while researching Fethard Soldiers from The Green, came up with the following interesting piece of information:

"There is a report of a conversion ceremony that took place in Kildare in 1897 where Charles Moulson was stationed at the time in which he converted to Catholicism. He married Bridget Dahill – a sister of Mary Dahill - in Fethard in 1899.

Moulson was a big man, six feet four, by all accounts, and like Harry Dobson he also got a job in the post office. It seems that the post office and the railway companies had a preference for ex-servicemen when recruiting staff. Some time after his marriage, he came to mass in Fethard wearing a military rosette or emblem of some kind. This incurred the displeasure of the priest, who castigated Moulson from the altar. Moulson walked out of the church, and out of Fethard also. He moved to Clogheen with his family, where he worked as a postman. While some of his younger children were born there, he never returned to Fethard. He seems to have gone one step further too. In the 1911 census, he gives his religion as Church of Ireland. Not only that, but his children are listed as Church of Ireland also, with only Bridget given as Catholic."



John Moulson, a son of George Moulson, photographed with some of his Fethard relatives at the unveiling of a plaque in Clogheen to honour Con and George Moulson, Ireland Soccer Internationals (1939-1948). Back L to R: Louis Coen, Ann (Hurley) Corrigan, Breda (Hurley) O'Reilly, Janey and John Moulson, Vicky (Hurley) Fitzpatrick. Front L to R: Madge Hurley and John Delaney, CEO FAI. Madge's mother was a sister of Bridget (Dahill) Moulson, who was the mother of Con and George Moulson.

The 1911 Census of Ireland also shows Charles E. Moulson and Bridget Moulson living at Barrack Hill, Clogheen with their children – seven-year-old Charles, six-year-old Mabel, four-and-a-half-year old Cornelius (Connie), and two-year-old William. Connie and his older brother and sister are listed as scholars. George Moulson was born in Clogheen some years after the census - in August 1914.

Charles Edmund Moulson, born at North Road, Wolverhampton in July 1876, was a soldier in the British Army towards the end of the nineteenth century. He was initially sta-

tioned in Kildare; a church record shows him to be there in 1897. Then, in 1899, while still in the army, he married Bridget Dahill, daughter of Cornelius Dahill of Sparagoleith, Fethard. The marriage certificate shows that they married at the Roman Catholic Church of the Most Holy Trinity in Fethard on November 11, 1899. It also states that Charles's father's occupation was fireman and that Bridget was a servant and her father, Cornelius was a labourer.

Within a few years, Charles had left the army and he and Bridget were living in Clogheen where he had obtained a position as postman.

The post-office at the time was in the building which now forms part of Tom Sullivan's house next to Pat Callaghan's in Clogheen. The postmaster was Edmund Riordan, but the post office was run by his son, Dan.

It was in Clogheen that the first Moulson child, a son named Charles, was born in 1903. A sister for Charles Junior was born the following year and named Mabel - after Charles Senior's sister. The next two children, Cornelius and William, were born in Fethard, presumably at the Dahill home. It was not an uncommon practice at the time that a woman would move in with her mother for a few weeks before her baby was to be born. Charles would have stayed at the Moulson home in Clogheen continuing on in his job as postman and looking after the younger children.

For over ten years, Charles Moulson and his family lived in Clogheen. Charles would have been well known to the residents of the village and the outlying areas where he delivered the post each day. Then, in 1914, came the war that was to engulf the world, and Charles E. Moulson, former soldier and now postman, wasted no time in re-entering the army. He went to Cahir to re-enlist. He was soon on active service in France with the 11th Hussars and the Life Guards, leaving his wife and five children back home in Clogheen. The terrible news that every soldier's family dreads came a few weeks before Christmas of that same year, Sergeant Charles Moulson had been killed in

action in France. Two weeks earlier he had been involved in an action for which he was decorated for bravery. He received the Distinguished Conduct Medal for leading his men 'with great resolution and gallantry' after their officer had been killed. This medal has been likened to the Victoria Cross.

His name is recorded on the 'Menin Gate' Ypres memorial in Belgium. (The Tipperary War Dead, Tom Burnell, 2008.) His great sacrifice is also recorded on the World War I memorial in Cahir. It is possible that Charles Moulson never had the pleasure of holding his baby son George in his arms.

The Ypres memorial book states:

"In Memory of Sergeant Charles Edmund Moulson D C M 13128, 11th (Prince Albert's Own) Hussars who died on 19 November 1914 Age 38 Husband of Mrs B. Moulson, of 216, Convamore Rd., Grimsby. Remembered with Honour."

Upon Charles' death Bridget returned to her family in Fethard with her young family Charles, Mabel, Connie and William.

Her older sister Mary Dahill was born on May 2, 1889 and lived in Main Street, Fethard. Her first marriage was to Arthur Brownley born June 22, 1883. The address on his birth certificate says 44, Clumber Street, Mansfield. They married at the Most Holy Trinity Church, Fethard, on April 26, 1910. Arthur was a Gunner with 55th Battery R.F.A. (also a coal miner). He died on March 13, 1920

and his address at the time of his death was 281, Convamore Road, Grimsby. He is buried in Scartho Road Cemetery, Grimsby [section 76, row N, grave 4]. Mary was the obvious link to Grimsby and it was to her that Bridget went when she came to England. Mary married again in 1925 in Grimsby, to Leonard Wiseman born 13 April, 1885, Grimsby. He died July 30, 1955. The address at the time of death was 281, Convamore Road, Grimsby. Mary died at the same address on September 22, 1963.

Bridget's other sister, Margaret Dahill, was born on June 27, 1886 in Fethard. She was married on November 19, 1902 at St. Mary's, Clonmel, Tipperary, to Bertram Noah Gough who was born in 1879 at St. Lukes Hospital, London. He was also a Gunner in the RFA and his address at the time of marriage was Artillery Barrack, Clonmel (he was also a coal miner). Margaret's address was Duckett St., Clonmel.

The 1911 census shows Bertram and Margaret living at 71, Maiden Street, Cwmfilin, Bridgend, Middle Llangynydd, Glamorgan, South

Wales. Bertram was a coal miner and they had six children. By 1918 there were nine children (one died in infancy) and the family lived at 31A, Khartoum Road, Tooting, Wandsworth.

Bertram and Margaret came to Grimsby at some point in the 1920s because Margaret died in 1927 in



Maggie Dahill who married Bertram Gough

Grimsby. Bertram Noah Gough died September 17, 1951 and his address at that time was 32, Clarendon Road, Grimsby. He is buried in Scartho Road Cemetery, Grimsby (section 139, row H, grave 10). Margaret died on December 13, 1927 and her address at that time was Back of 46, King Edward St, Grimsby. She is buried in Scartho

Road Cemetery, Grimsby, (section 93, row B, grave 18). — (*Thanks to Brenda Wollington for the research*).

Speaking to John Moulson (son of George Moulson) at the Clogheen Gathering, John said he and members of his family would be more than willing to visit Fethard in the future and explore their Fethard connection. Maybe it's time to organise another 'Fethard Gathering'. ●

St. Rita's Camogie Club



St Rita's Camogie Club U10 team photographed at the Rosegreen festival in August where they took part in the 'Lou O'Grady Cup'. The late Lou O'Grady was formerly Lou O'Meara from Knockbrack, Fethard, and a former player with our club.

Our Juvenile teams had a very busy 2013. We fielded teams in the in U8, U10, U12 and U13, with players from Fethard and surrounding parishes.

Our U8s participated in many blitzes and challenge games throughout the year and during the season showed great improvement. At this age level the emphasis continues to be about fun while introducing the skills of camogie. A special thanks to our coaches and mentors for their time and

dedication to the girls, including Mary O'Mahony, Mark Moloney and Jarleth Connolly. Thanks also to the parents who were on hand to help out throughout the year.

Our U10 training commenced on Tuesday, April 9, and was well attended each week. The girls took part in a series of challenge matches and played blitz matches in The Ragg, Goatenbridge, Boherlahan and Ballylooby, with each player playing with great heart and never giving up. The girls took part in two



Pictured above is St Rita's Camogie Club U8 team with their mentors at a blitz the club hosted in September 2013.

festivals, New Inn and Rosegreen, and on August 17, we took part in the Moira Cahill cup, playing very well. We finished the year off at a blitz in Ballylooby. We would like to thank our coaches and mentors: Sandra Spillane, Margaret Hogan and Willie Morrissey, also all parents who travelled to matches and training throughout the year.

Our U12s and U13s fielded teams for the county league and championship. Our U12s played four league matches and three championship games, competing very well in both, reaching the semifinal of the league. Our U13s competed in the county league putting up great displays against Cahir and Moyle Rovers. With a lot of fine players in

the team, the future looks bright for this group of girls. We would like to thank Michael Ryan, Miceál Spillane and Sean Kiely for all the work they put into these groups and the parents who gave a helping hand throughout the year.

Our Junior team started the year by competing in the county league but unfortunately did not make the final stages. It was with regret that we couldn't field a Junior team for the championship due to lack of players availability. We sincerely hope in 2014 to compete at Junior level again.

We wish all our players, mentors and parents a very happy Christmas and look forward to seeing you all in 2014. ●

Fethard Bridge Club

Fethard Bridge Club is now in its 37th year. At our President's Prize dinner held in the Minella Hotel on Friday, May 17, 2013 our president Anne Connolly presented the following prizes: President's Prize, Ellen Rochford and Sean O'Dea; Committee Prize, Rita Kane and Kay St. John; Club Championship (Hayes Trophy), Berney Myles and Kathleen Kenny; Player of the Year (O'Flynn Trophy), Carmel Condon; Individual Champion (Dick Gorey Trophy); Rita Kane; and the Lucey Trophy to Betty Walsh and Monica Anglim.

We played for the free sub for the coming year on September 26 and October 3 and the winners of the gross free sub were Monica Anglim

and Betty Walsh, and the nett free sub was won by Nell Broderick and David O'Meara. Our Christmas party was held at the Cashel Palace Hotel at which our Christmas prizes were presented.

We note the death this year of three former club members, John Lucey, Joan Kelly and Kitty McCarthy. John was one of the founders of the bridge club and an active member for many years. Always a popular member of the club, after he retired from bridge John continued to take a keen interest in the club. He and his wife Anne were made honorary life members and both continued to attend all the club prize-giving functions as welcome guests. Joan Kelly



Anne Connolly (centre), President Fethard Bridge Club, presenting this year's President's Prize to winners, Sean O'Dea and Ellen Rochford.

was a long-time and well-liked member of the club. She travelled from Killenaule every Wednesday along with our other loyal Killenaule members. Although Joan had been ill, her death was unexpected. She was always good-humoured and an asset to our club. Kitty McCarthy played bridge during her visits home from New York. She continued to play when she retired back to Fethard although by this time her eyesight wasn't good which made playing difficult. Although not a member in recent years, it was always a pleasure to see her at our weekly game. All will be fondly remembered by the club members.

At our AGM on Wednesday, May 22, the following officers and committee were elected: President: Eileen Frewen. Vice-President: David O'Meara. Secretary: Marie Delaney. Treasurer: Anna Cooke. Assistant Treasurer: Rita Kane. Tournament Directors: Alice Quinn, Betty Walsh, Frances Burke and Gemma Burke. Committee: Anne Connolly, Monica Anglim, and Ann O'Dea. Partner Facilitator: Berney Myles.

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. 🕒



Regular marathon runners William and James Lee competing in the Cork City Marathon over the June weekend 2013. On this occasion the two brothers were running on behalf of the Breakthrough Cancer Research Charity. William and James Lee are grandsons of Bridie Lee, Loughcoppole, Fethard.

Burges, William (1806–1876)

by M. Tamblyn

This article was published in Australian Dictionary of Biography, Volume 1, (MUP), 1966

William Burges (1806-1876), settler and resident magistrate, was born at Fethard, County Tipperary, Ireland, the second son of Lockier Burges, medical practitioner, and his wife Isabella.

In October 1829, together with his two younger brothers, he sailed in the *Warrior* for the new colony in Western Australia, where in 1830 his property qualification entitled him to a grant of 8053 acres (3259 ha) of land. Settling first at the Upper Swan, the three brothers in 1837 moved to the York district, where with William as their leader they established Tipperary; it became one of the finest properties of the Avon valley and by 1840 carried more than a thousand sheep.

Although he visited Ireland in 1841-44, William Burges was consistently interested in community affairs. He was active in forming the York Agricultural Society which became mouthpiece of the Avon valley settlers; in 1847 he was its secretary when it drew up a petition for the transportation of convicts to Western Australia. He was appointed an officer of the Roads Trust for the York district and in 1846 a local magistrate.

In 1850, with his brother Lockier, he applied for land in the newly discovered Champion Bay district. Leaving Tipperary to his brother Samuel, he moved north 350 miles

(563 km) to establish the Bowes station, where by 1857 he was grazing sheep on 93,000 acres (37,636 ha). As a big pastoralist he was intensely interested in stock-breeding, importing stud merino rams from England and thoroughbred horses from Ireland.

In 1851 Burges was appointed first resident magistrate of the Champion Bay district, a difficult position that he held until December 1859. White penetration of an Aboriginal area had produced conflicts which he strove continually to prevent. With the establishment of a convict depot at Port Gregory and with his further appointment as sub-collector of customs in 1853, his duties increased. Care of his large district required constant travel: in 1853 he rode 905 miles (1456 km) in five weeks, holding court at the various centres, inquiring into causes of shipwreck and mutiny, supervising the hiring of ticket-of-leave men and everywhere trying to control the illegal sale of liquor in a socially unstable community.

In 1860 Burges returned to Ireland, only visiting Western Australia again in 1868 and in 1875-76. On the second visit he was appointed a nominee member of the Legislative Council but held the position only two months, his main contribution being a vain bid to reform electoral abuses and to intro-

duce voting by ballot. Unmarried, he died in Ireland on 16 October 1876 and was buried at Fethard.

Although his letters and reports do not reveal a man of great imagination or of powerful intellect, William Burges made valuable contribution to the development of early Western Australia. As a wealthy pastoralist he was open to attack by less successful settlers who resented the domination of the great landowners. Yet his vigour, initiative and tenacity were the qualities most needed in the foundation years and especially in the establishment of the pastoral industry. As a faithful public servant, his stability of character was clearly reflected in his tireless work in a remote district at a difficult period.

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Group of young soccer supporters in Killusty 1981

The Summer of '59

by Tommy Healy (October 2013)



L to R: Jim Healy, Monica (Owens) Healy, Ned Healy holding baby Michael (Wacky), Catherine, Tommy, Ann and Concepta Healy: c.1959

After several years of wet summers, 2013 surprised us all by being unusually dry and warm. In some parts of these islands the temperature reached the mid 30 degrees Celsius and we were warned not to risk over-exposure to the sun's rays for melanoma is now recognised as a serious health hazard and its incidence is increasing. This has more to do, I would imagine, with exposure to the sun on foreign holidays than in day-to-day activity here. Yes, we are generally better off materially than we were in 1959 and a feature of this year's warmth was a rise in demand for barbecue equipment and portable air-conditioning units as well as a surge in demand for sea-side holidays. Here in Devon, hotel

bookings at resorts like Torquay and Ilfracombe rose sharply and sports like surfing enjoyed a huge surge in popularity.

Growing up in the 1950s was different. Holidays away from home were rare events for most of us unless we had relatives who lived by the sea and who could accommodate us for a week or two during July and August. Going to stay with relatives was the only opportunity most of us had by way of holiday and going to the seaside was often reserved for a day trip to Tramore organised by the school and looked forward to with great anticipation. I remember one such in 1953, I believe, when we boarded a bus and headed for Tramore. We stopped

briefly in Waterford and this was my first sight of an ocean-going ship for the bus negotiated the harbour front very slowly and we saw, most of us for the first time, such leviathans of the deep and were highly impressed. Tramore itself, I seem to remember, left little impression on me and my main memory of it was losing a shilling's worth of pennies on the slot machines in the amusement arcade. It put me off gambling for life.

The summer of 1959 has sharp memories for me. The previous year I had taken up trout fishing and was to remain forever a hopeless addict to the sport. That summer was extremely wet. The Clashawley and Anner were often in high flood

and fly fishing was unproductive. Instead we fished with worms in the muddy brown swirling water and often secured some prize specimen. However, the one to hit the jackpot was Ned O'Shea who hooked and landed a five pound salmon on the Clashawley where the Abbey stretch meets Phelan's. I can still see the look on his face of total amazement. It was a great season and we looked forward to the next.

The summer of '59 started rather like '58 had finished, heavy rain and wind and the rivers in frequent flood. At the end of June it all changed. Warm sunny day followed warm sunny day and it did not rain until well into October. That is apart from



School trip to Dublin Zoo c.1962 L to R: Hal O'Neill, Tadhg O'Connor, Seamus Hayes, ?, ?, Michael McCarthy, ?, ?, Michael Smyth, Jim Ryan and John Delahunty.

one Sunday night in August when we had a thunderstorm lasting for over three hours during which as many inches of rain fell. It kept us all awake except for the local curate Fr Cooke who, when he awoke to see the Main Street where he lived awash with rainwater, realised he had slept through the event.

By mid-July the Clashawley had dried up almost completely from above the town until the Mullinbawn. Here the large springs, which ensured that the stretch through Grove always ran freely, exerted their benign influence and at Kiltinan more spring water cascaded into the river from under a rock just upriver from the castle. This stretch has reminded me of the chalk streams of Hampshire, spring fed with much gently swaying water- weed and some fine trout, especially during the Mayfly hatch in late May and early June.

Upriver from the Mullinbawn was a scene of stinking desolation. In the deeper areas of the river pools of stagnant water formed and soon all aquatic life was dead. Trout died by the hundred and stocks did not recover for several seasons. It was fortunate that the local council had built a sewage disposal works by the river at Phelan's some years before for the low level of the river then would certainly have created a health hazard.

August arrived with no prospect of steady rainfall and now the parlous state of Fethard's public water supply became evident. The springs

at Walshbog on Sliabh Na Mban began to run low and, for the first time in living memory, the prospect of water rationing arose. By mid-August it was a reality and I remember clearly John Sayers, who was the council's local agent in such matters walking around the town each evening and shutting off the stop cocks in order to stop the flow. Before he set out there was frantic activity as people filled every available container to ensure they had sufficient until he switched on the supply the following morning. It was also a time when not every household enjoyed running water. Many obtained their supply from the several pumps which were positioned around the town. There was one on The Green opposite Kenny's shop, another was in Burke Street near the Abbey Church and there was one at the junction of Barrack Street and The Square. At these queues formed each evening as people filled up before the supply ran out. However, a long term benefit of this local crisis was the incentive it gave the council to tackle the underlying problem and, by 1961, the spring at the Mullinbawn had been tapped, new water mains had been laid and we have not had a shortage since.

Despite the presence of numerous springs from the Mullinbawn onwards the river level began to fall and by mid-September many of us wondered if the supply would run out completely. On the Anner the situation was no different. This river

is fed by many springs also but its level tumbled alarmingly. Where it met the Clashawley a mile below Loughcoppie Bridge the water was too deep to wade in normal times. Here it would be above waist level but by September it had fallen to knee height and we speculated on how long it would be before it shared the fate of the Clashawley. A prime factor here, which did not assist the situation, was the fact that a few years previously there had been a scheme of arterial drainage carried out on the river. To relieve flooding it had been widened and deepened and several sharp bends had been removed in order to speed the flow. In drought conditions this was to prove almost disastrous for it simply exacerbated the problem since the water just ran away. I have had an unprintably low opinion of arterial drainage since.

We returned to school in September with the weather still warmer than any could recall. In winter we had shivered for the heat- ing left much to be desired. Now we sweated and relief did not come until well into October. When at last the rain came it did so with a vengeance. Soon the Clashawley was in high flood and torrents of muddy water flowed over the weir by Coffey's Mill, the Abymil to those of tender years. By then the fishing season was drawing to a close, not that any of us wished to return to the pastime for we realised all too clearly that much damage to fish

stocks had been done and we did not wish to make matters worse. 1960 would afford another opportunity. However, the return of the rains after so much dry weather had an unexpected effect. The ground, which had been baked hard, held much latent heat. Mushroom spores, which had remained dormant throughout the drought, were activated by the rain and sprang into abundant life. The result was a profusion of wild mushrooms almost everywhere. Crops of wheat, oats and barley enjoyed record yields but potatoes and turnips were not so abundant. One parish priest who kept a hive of bees in his garden and had moved them to the edge of the bog for them to work the heather saw these industrious creatures produce almost three hundred pounds of honey. The previous year had seen record growth of grass and equally large output of milk. Now grass was short and brown and milk yields were disastrously low. I suppose no set of conditions is either all bad or all good, we live in a complex world.

That autumn saw me embark on the last year of my school career. By the following summer the friends I had made during five years at what is now the Patrician Presentation School had parted. A few of us met up in October 2010 and reminisced. We recalled events of what now seems another age and revelled in nostalgia. We agreed to keep in touch and have by and large managed to do so. ●

September '72

by Anne O'Donnell (nee Kelly)



Anne O'Donnell photographed with family, colleagues and friends on the occasion of her retirement after 40 years of teaching in Patrician/Presentation Secondary School Fethard, 2012. Included in the photo are: Canon Tom Breen P.P., Sr. Carmel Daly, Sr. Fidelis Purcell, Sr. Ailish, Sr. Julianna Purcell. Family members: Patrick O'Donnell, Anne Marie, Robert and Eilis, Sheila and Justin, Padraic, Kaylin and Dessie. Retired staff: Paddy and Nell Broderick, Mary Lysaght, Mary O'Sullivan, Marian Gilpin, Dick and Margaret Prendergast, Denis Burke, Michael O'Gorman. Former colleagues: Liam O'Brian, Joan Walsh and Billy O'Farrell. Current staff: Mary Anne Fogarty, Michael Leonard, Justin McGree, Marie Maher, Noel Maher, Caitriona McKeogh, Bernie O'Connor, John Cummins, Majella Whelan, Orla Barrett, Deirdre Mulhall, Margaret O'Neill, Sinead Burke, Michael McCarthy, Gwen Cronin, Nuala Aherne and Edel Vaughan. Family friends: John and Breda O'Dwyer, Dan and Anne Ryan.

It was September 1972 when I paused at the top of Market Hill to survey, for the first time, the town of Fethard. I had arrived to take up my first teaching post. I say I paused, but rather my sister, the driver, did. I had no car and no notion how to drive one if I had. So different from today when a number of senior students can drive themselves to school! My aunt's comment, "I always liked Tipperary people," had encouraged me to apply for this job!

At first glance I was amazed at the antiquity of the town. The strong-

ly built stone wall, the square tower of Holy Trinity Church dominating the landscape, and the gentle movements of the Clashawley River as it ran under the old bridges.

We drove along slowly, making enquires about the location of the Presentation Secondary School. We were directed to the convent and, en route, passed under the North Gate at Sparagoleith, a fine, well-preserved gate into the town. I wonder how many times I have passed under that gate since? I had been interviewed by Mother Alphonsus in the car park

in U.C.D. – life was far less formal in those days! From the convent, we walked to the three prefabs which were the classrooms. The interior and exterior of these were brightly painted but, in sharp contrast, the roof was held down by sandbags!

I was employed by the Presentation Sisters. The Patrician Brothers had their own management structure under the then principal, Brother Stephen. The teachers taught in both schools travelling along a narrow path by the old Boys National School. The 'toing and froing' was lovely in spring and autumn but not so attractive in winter rain and snow! During that time, a number of dedicated Presentation Sisters and Patrician Brothers were on the staff, namely, Sr. Annunciata, Sr. Carmel, Sr. Fidelis, and Sr. Breda, along with Brother John and Brother Virgil. From the beginning I was impressed by the students politeness and good

manners.

For the first few months I lived with a friend, a district nurse, in Urlingford. She had to drive me every morning to Mary Willies pub to get transport to Fethard. Neither of us were good timekeepers, so many mornings saw us hurtling along country roads trying to catch the school bus. The driver used to watch for us in the mirror and would say, 'I waited as long as I could'.

During that first year, another new teacher and I took the Leaving Cert Class to see the film 'Wuthering Heights' in Clonmel and one student disappeared! Panic. I had to dash around Clonmel to find a kiosk with a working phone and ring Brother Stephen with the news that we had 'lost a Leaving Cert.' - no mobile in those days! I remember how he listened calmly. I am sure his years on the missions in India had prepared him to cope with any situation! In



Staff members pictured at the official opening of Fethard Secondary School's new extension on October 22, 1993, with Mrs. Mary Dowling-Maher, President of the ASTI. L to R: Mrs Marian Gilpin; Mrs Mary Dowling-Maher (President of the ASTI); Mrs Margaret Prendergast and Mrs Anne O'Donnell.

fact, as the student explained the following day, he had met a neighbour and taken a lift home.

A few years later I married Patrick O'Donnell and our four children were educated in this school. We were devastated by the tragic death of our youngest daughter Aileen in 2010. Thankfully her daughter Kaylin is a great joy to us.

As the school year of 2011-2012 came to an end, so did my teaching career. The years have flown. I am left with many happy memories of the management, staff, students and parents. I would like to wish 'all the

best' to the people involved in the Patrician Presentation Secondary School.

In September 1972 I had to search for Fethard on the map – in 2012 I can certainly say that Fethard and its people have formed a centre point on the map of my life and the life of my family.

Finally, I'd like to share a poem with you. The poem is *The Layers* by Stanley Kunitz, one of the great American poets of the twentieth century. Kunitz once said, that the layers suggested to him all the changes that we go through in life. ●

The Layers

by Stanley Kunitz

*I have walked through many lives,
some of them my own,
and I am not who I was,
though some principle of being
abides, from which I struggle
not to stray.*

*When I look behind,
as I am compelled to look
before I can gather strength
to proceed on my journey,
I see the milestones dwindling
toward the horizon
and the slow fires trailing
From the abandoned campsites,
over which scavenger angels
wheel on heavy wings.*

*Oh, I have made myself a tribe
out of my true affections,
and my tribe is scattered!
How shall the heart be reconciled
to its feast of losses?*

*In a rising wind
the manic dust of my friends,
those who fell along the way,
bitterly stings my face.*

*Yet I turn, I turn,
exulting somewhat,
with my will intact to go
wherever I need to go,
and every stone on the road
precious to me.*

*In my darkest night,
when the moon was covered
and I roamed through wreckage,
a nimbus-clouded voice
directed me:*

*"Live in the layers,
not on the litter."*

*Though I lack the art
to decipher it,
no doubt the next chapter
in my book of transformations
is already written.
I am not done with my changes.*

My time in West Africa

by Johnny Sheehan

In February 1978 the company I worked for in Ireland for nearly nineteen years sent me to Nigeria, to oversee their earthmoving contract with Wimpey's Ltd, as our company was experiencing financial problems there. A company colleague of mine, Kevin, and I took an Aer Lingus flight to Amsterdam, holed up in the Schiphol Hotel overnight and boarded a KLM flight next day for Kano. It was late that evening when we arrived in Kano and our plane was not allowed to land straight away as the runway was in the process of being cleared. Eventually when we did land we learned that a civil aircraft was coming in to land and an Air Force fighter plane had tried to beat it to the runway but landed on top of it and everybody in both planes were burned to death. If coming to Nigeria wasn't daunting enough that put the tin hat on it, perhaps an indication of things to come!

We had, as part of our luggage, a bucket link (a heavy piece of metal about 2 stone weight) which joins the lower hydraulic ram to the excavator bucket. It was wrapped in a canvas bag and all customs fees, import documentation, etc. were in order. As we came through customs it fell off the trolley and being metal it gave a ringing sound, immediately a customs officer pounced on the bag and said, "What be this, what be this?" As Kevin had been to Nigeria a

number of times he knew the ropes; he told the customs guy what it was and showed him the documentation, but he said, "I be sorry to tell you your papers no be in order." Kevin then asked him what was wrong with the papers and again in broken English he said, "I be customs officer, I say they no be in order." Kevin knew that a 'backhand' would sort everything so he said how much will it cost to put the papers right and the reply was 30 Naira, the Naira was then worth about 14/= Irish and was the equivalent of their pound. Underhand or backhand payment in Nigeria is rife and is known as 'dash' and I suppose it is fair to say that Ireland isn't too far behind Nigeria in the 'dash' stakes. Anyway, after the money was handed over it was as if some sort of miracle had occurred and the documentation righted itself.

Unfortunately for us, a senior customs officer arrived and told us that we were under arrest for bribery and the man who took the bribe would be in jail for many years – time to get back on the plane I think! Kevin had arranged accommodation for us, on the outskirts of Kano, with a friend of his who was working for another Irish company. The senior customs officer commandeered our car and came to our accommodation with us so he would know where to collect us the next day for our court appearance. Our driver, Paul, an Ebo, was told by Kevin that night to col-

lect us the following morning at 4am and as the customs were not aware that our final destination was 500kms further north in Jos we were long gone before they were any the wiser and avoided a court appearance which most likely would not have gone well.

We arrived in Ringin Gani 22kms outside Jos in Plateau State to start work on a road, which was originally built in 1942 but had so many potholes that the average speed was only 10–15km p.h. The road stretched from Port Harcourt in the south, up through Chad to the Mediterranean in the north.

Our company had 48 operators for 24 machines, one lot worked until lunchtime and the second from lunchtime to evening, no wonder the company was losing money. My first job was to interview all existing staff, as I couldn't understand why we had two operators for one machine. Eventually I kept 24 operators, four mechanics, one auto sparks, one bus driver, one car driver, two artic drivers, one interpreter, and four watchmen known as 'watch-nights'. Our operators (that's what

machine drivers like to be called, drivers are only for cars) used to earn around N4.50 Kobo a day, about 32 Naira a week and as these lads loved a radio it would nearly cost a month's salary to buy a radio which a lot of them carried on their shoulder.



Johnny Sheehan, photographed with 'Sally' the cook in Nigeria 1978

My next meeting was with Wimpey's rep, a Mayo man, his first name was John, fraternally known as 'Blondie' and we became instant friends. He told me he left school at 13 years and like myself had only national school education, no Leaving Cert or degree, but when Wimpey's were losing money in Nigeria they took Blondie off the job in Oman and brought him to Nigeria to salvage the company. It goes to show that you don't have to be a

B.E. to be a top contracts manager but that ability and experience can also create opportunities which bring success – life itself can be a wonderful teacher. When Blondie was leaving Oman the Sultan presented him with two gold Rolex watches, one for him and one for his wife.

When I arrived in Nigeria there was 54 Naira in our company bank



A tanned Johnny Sheehan in West Africa

account, when I left we had 1.6m Naira. I got up at 5am every morning and worked seven days a week. Every four weeks the natives were paid and we had that Saturday and Sunday off to rest. All the machines had to be fuelled and oiled in the morning, if this was done in the evening they could be emptied during the night and even paying 'watch-nights' was not a guaranteed prevention as they usually slept on the job. I visited our parked machines once at 1.30am with my interpreter Michael. I parked my jeep a long way back and we walked to the area and found all four 'watchnights' asleep. They had some kind of incense burning and were covered in blankets to protect them from the mosquitoes. It was just as well they didn't understand what I was saying but they knew I

was annoyed with them and one of them said to Michael, "It be bad he come by leg". We lost a number of 24v batteries, alternators, and quite a lot of diesel and lube oil. None of our machines had tropical radiators as they came from Ireland and were not made for the tropics so water was a problem to watch. Each operator was responsible for his machine, – machine down through negligence, job gone.

Wimpey's had a camp built for the duration of the contract in Nigeria, it consisted of five blocks A, B, C, D and E. I lived in my own room in Block D. I had a wardrobe and bed, chest of drawers, and mosquito netting on my window. I remember on Christmas day in 1979 I was putting some mosquito netting on my windows and my houseboy

James said, "Maybe you put some on my window". I asked him why he wanted netting on his window and he said, "Mosquito no agree to stay outside".

Each block had a corridor down the centre and about ten rooms each side, and had two house boys whose job it was to make the beds, wash out the showers and in particular the 'duck boards' in the showers. One evening when a 'Dub' named Hughie, who worked for Wimpey's and me came in there were two snakes dead outside our block and I asked our house boy how they came to be there, he said, "Today me take out duck boards to clean under and there be one black mamba and one green mamba underneath boards so we kill both." We wouldn't have known about these, that they like to sleep during the day (even the snakes sleep) in the cool and when the water from the shower would annoy them at night they could strike between the boards at the soles of your feet and that would have been your lot. Ever after I always lifted the boards prior to taking a shower as there were no doctors or hospital locally, only first aid. Fr. Mick Sexton OSA had one of his seminarians up in Yola bitten by a snake and with no hospital in the area he died without getting help and Fr. Mick gave a sermon condemning the authorities' inaction. He told me each one of the remaining seminarians had to throw a stone at the snake which they had killed.

On our weekend off I never left the camp, had a good rest and maybe a check up on the 'watch-nights'. There was nothing to see in Ringin, a small local village, a few mud huts, plenty of vultures watching to see if you would drop down, baboons which would cross the dirt tracks without stopping even in traffic, and scorpions black and brown. We had our own swimming pool and table tennis and snooker tables and I didn't have to pay for my soft drinks in the bar. Free weekends were appreciated, you met a lot of Wimpey's Paddies and some great characters amongst them. One great friend of mine, Denis from Achill, worked for Wimpey on a road that was going through a village named Toro which at one time was out of bounds because of it being a rabid area. Our side of Toro had a sacred area and the local headman would not allow the road to be made through the area unless Wimpey's purchased a cow from him which he would sacrifice and offer up to the spirits (this is a true story). The local head government men came out from Jos to get his permission to have the road go through but to no avail. A final meeting was arranged, say for today, so at tea time I met Denis and asked if they had sorted the problem and Denis said, "No, he wouldn't agree to the road," but said Denis, "I jumped up on a D9 (which is a huge Bulldozer) and I drove spirits into the clouds, I dozed right through the sacred area and still

didn't buy the cow"

Our food was European, very well cooked, canteen spotless, and rooms and beds spotless. Wimpey's really looked after their workers and paid N500 a month to the local police chief so they never experienced any problems. One day I took the cook to the meat market which was a wooden framed hut covered on the sides with very fine mesh but the mesh was badly damaged and the area full of blue bottles walking all over the meat. As the blue bottle flies lay the worms directly, I was visibly sick and never ate beef there again. As I was going home one evening (I had started to drive myself), a policeman stopped me and said, "Take me to my house, I direct you." (now you don't argue with these guys). As we were driving along he asked what part of England I was from. I said, "I not be English, I be Irish." He said, "Very good, very good. I read in paper you give hell to English over there." That was the time of the troubles up North.

I have picked and eaten bananas, and cassava fruits; I was always careful of what I ate and drank. Your water had to be filtered which was a long process and you couldn't always be sure that it was filtered. The sketch on their milk carton turned me off milk. It showed a cow on the package but the cow was a Zebu Hereford cross with a huge hump over the shoulders.

The most popular car was the Peugeot 505 and all the taxis had

green 505s. The road carnage there was unbelievable as no native drivers would give way or stay behind inhaling your dust - they had to overtake you even though the roads were merely dirt tracks.

There were no phones in our area. Wimpey's had their own aerial and radio and that was the only means of communication.

We found out that Mass on Sunday was in the University of Jos. Kevin and I went along the first Sunday and as the church was full we stood by the door. Mass there was a wonderful experience, guitar playing, singing and stones in jars like homemade castanets. After Mass we were met outside by the priest, Fr. Dinny Mason OSA from Dungarvan, and as we were the only other white people there that Sunday, Fr. Dinny said, "I can always tell when the white people come to Mass by looking at the door". Fr. Dinny told us, "My door is always open". I regularly went to hear him say Mass and visited him often. He was a most wonderful priest and friend, unfortunately he has since gone to his eternal rest.

Fr. Dinny once told me of an incident in which a native was murdered but they didn't know who did it so the local ju-ju man was brought in to 'throw the bone'. All the villagers were made to attend the throwing of the bone, including two nuns. They all sat round in a huge circle, the ju-ju man threw the bone and whoever the bone pointed to was taken away and probably executed.

Fr. Bebe Jago was a Dominican priest who used to come and say Mass in the camp in Ringin Gani. His mother was from Cork and his father from Spain. He would have dinner with us afterwards in the canteen and every other week I would sign for his meal, fill his pick-up with petrol and give him a five gallon drum of petrol. The next week Blondie would do the same thing. I suppose, it was our way of saying thanks for the spiritual support and the friendship which was very welcome in the environment in which we were living.

Every long weekend a salesperson came in to camp on Saturday and set up all his wares, with Blondie's permission, under the long veranda of the canteen. He sold everything from a needle to an anchor and his only word other than Naira was "cheap, cheap", so we called him Cheap, Cheap. One Saturday evening we had Fr Bebe Jago with us and, as usual, we would look to see what he was selling. This evening he had a pair of men's leather sandals among other things, and Fr Bebe bent down and picked up the sandals and said in Cheap, Cheap's language, "These sandals have been worn." Cheap cheap was busy arranging his wares so he answered Bebe in the Hausa language saying, "The white man won't know the difference". He thought he was talking to one of his own Hausa tribe but when he looked up and saw Bebe was white he nearly had a stroke. All his wares, shirts etc., all bore the St.

Bernard, St. Michael, etc., labels. They were obviously second hand clothes that had been sent to the poor in Africa, who hardly ever got any of them.

One morning while driving to the site, a policeman stopped me and said, "I commandeer your vehicle, one man be killed during the night". When we arrived on site, sure enough there was a guy under the wheel of the dump truck. More police came and arrested two of our drivers even though they weren't driving the trucks when the accident happened. All of our plant was parked up for the night and Wimpey's were working night shift so they borrowed one dump truck and when parking in the morning crashed into the back of the front one and drove it up on top of the 'watchnight' who was asleep instead of watching. Before they took him to the morgue in our company bus, our driver Paul put twigs on the bus. I asked him why he did this he said, "Bus not move with dead man inside if no leaves be on bus". I suppose it's like us sprinkling holy water, we all have our beliefs. The two drivers arrested, one a Muslim named Mustafa and one a Christian named Princewell, were brought to jail. I arranged a meeting with the Chief of Police and explained that these drivers were not responsible and gave good character references for the two lads. He thanked me for my concern for his countrymen but said, "I release Mustafa" (a Muslim in Muslim territory), "and I no release

other driver" (a Christian in Muslim territory). As I was coming out of the police shack a policeman said, "If you give me 80 Naira I pay my big boss and him release your driver". I went back to the office of our accountant Muley, got 80 Naira, went back to the police station and met the policeman to whom I had spoken earlier. He said to me, "Wait small, I will bring prisoner back", and sure enough he had Princewell with him. A most bizarre justice system, although in this case the end justified the means - Princewell was innocent.

One of our scraper drivers was absent for two days and when he eventually showed up at 4pm on the second day I stood between him and the ladder to the cab and asked why he was not at work, his eyes were glazed over so I knew he was 'grassed up' (drugged). I refused to let him on the machine and he said he wanted his pay. I got our accountant, Muley, the driver went away and came back with a policeman who accompanied me to meet his big boss. He took me to the local police station, a mud hut covered in corrugated iron with timber seating. There were four policemen in there and every so often I would hear the word Baturi, meaning white man – nobody spoke to me.

When the big boss arrived he asked me what the problem was. I said, "There is no problem. The driver was asking for holiday pay that, as per the laws of your country, he is

not entitled to." He hit the table with his cane and said, "Pay the man, they are not dogs, this is not South Africa." So he broke his own laws, but that wasn't unusual. It seemed that the laws were made up to suit the situation so you never really knew where you stood. I got out of the police station at 8pm and no dinner; a European alone in Nigeria is not the best idea.

Our Cat 245 operator Benjamin once told me he was a Biafran soldier during the war in Nigeria and was taken prisoner. He was able to speak the Hausa language as well as Ebo; the Ebo tribe is from Biafra. He was being escorted through the bush and he knew he was to be executed; he heard them discussing it. At one stage one of the Nigerian soldiers said to his mate, "I go to latrine, I catch up", so Benjamin and the other soldier went ahead until they reached a stream. Benjamin asked for permission to have a drink and as he bent down he could see both their reflections in the stream. With both hands he scooped up a handful of water. As he went to scoop the second handful he noticed his captor wasn't watching him so he scooped up two handfuls of sand and threw it in the soldier's face. The soldier got such a shock he fell backwards and dropped his rifle, giving Benjamin the opportunity to pick it up and shoot him through the head. The other soldier immediately said in Hausa, "What be wrong?" and Benjamin replied in Hausa, "Prisoner

be dead”, so the other soldier continued what he was doing. When he was finished he came along the path where Benjamin was hiding. When he was in range Benjamin put a bullet in him too, “So today I live”, he said.

I once experienced a serious sand storm; the sun was blacked out for days and the sand got in your clothes, hair, ears and eyes. During the monsoon I used have my show-ers off the roof of D block, in lovely warm rain. The ground there is red and the surface is called laterite. When wet and compacted it sets like cement; the natives mix it with water and stamp it barefoot to mix it. The number of huts in a compound showed the number of wives that man had – a wife in each thatched mud hut. These huts had two open-ings so if a fire was lit inside the wind would blow the smoke out either door.

The post was always on a shelf in Wimpey’s canteen, how it got there I’ll never know. They had a pet monkey in the camp and he always wore a pair of small red underpants. When you went to his cage you had to make sure not to stand too near him, he would swipe your pen, pencil or handkerchief as fast as lightening. Sometimes Wimpey’s lads would take him to the bar and give him a few saucers-full of Heineken beer and next day he would have a hangover. He would take off his pants and put them up on his head. When he was out of the cage he

would sometimes swipe a letter from the rack. As they can’t round a bend at speed they have to jump against a wall and onto another wall and kind of zigzag out the door, letter never to be seen again, all torn to pieces.

After my first six months in Plateau State I was allowed to come home for two weeks, however, I was only home five days when the Dublin office asked me to go back immediately and take my holidays later. I went back to Dublin and was told they had to dash 500 Naira to get my visa updated because I had a criminal record in Nigeria, but it disappeared when the 500 Naira was handed over, that was the Nigerian Embassy at the time.

Against my will I boarded a Nigerian Airways plane in Dublin, the only European on board. There were four Nigerians standing in the aisle, it had only two rows of seats and they were all full. The air conditioning was putrid and I asked the Nigerian stewardess for a glass of water, still waiting.

I was told that if you had a car accident in Nigeria not to wait for the police as it could be days before they could be contacted (no phones). In Acasia, a place near Lagos, four British ex pats knocked down a native and killed him and, as they would do at home, they waited for the police to come. A mob gathered in the meantime, some with machetes, and attacked the car. The Brits, locked the doors, but the natives set fire to the car and tragi-

cally all four perished.

It was normal then if somebody from Jos committed a serious crime, say, in Kano he would be tried in a court in Kano and if he was to be executed he would be taken back to Jos where he was known and be executed there. This, they said, had a serious mental effect on his friends in the locality and other local criminals would think twice before offending. Public executions were the norm. One of my machine operators, Joseph, a Christian (all or nearly all Ebos are called after the apostles), had his life threatened every day by another operator named Ashanti, a Muslim. Joseph came to me very distressed so I told him to go to the police station and report it. He said, "Maybe you come with me, Ashanti be Muslim so maybe they put me in prison". I took him to the police and because he was accompanied by a European they took the threat seriously. The police came to our workplace and arrested Ashanti, took him to court and his sentence was that Joseph was put in Ashanti's care for the rest of his life. If anything happened to Joseph, Ashanti would be put in prison for life. The jails themselves were just mud walls about 20 ft high and you weren't even safe from crime in there. One of my car drivers was arrested one evening and the car confiscated because it had only one headlight. One of the other workers came and told me Jeremiah was in prison so I went to see him and was

allowed to talk to him. I gave him 10 Naira to pay the fine, however, he was tried in court next day and got off scot-free. He told me the two prisoners in his cell beat the daylights out of him (he was badly cut up) and took the 10 Naira. He complained to the warders who in turn beat the lard out of the two prisoners and took the money off them, Jeremiah never saw the money again.

Our last port of call was Yola in Gongola State near Cameroon. We were laying a runway and each time a plane was coming in to land, a blue flag was raised, all machines were stopped and all personnel stood still while the plane was landing. One of our dozer drivers, Owdu, forgot about the flag one day, kept on working and was duly arrested. Because he was a Muslim he was allowed out of jail that evening but he had to appear in court the next day. Owdu came to me to say that if I gave him 10 Naira he would go to the magistrate's house that night and pay him to take his name off the case the next day. I gave Owdu two 10 Naira bills and next morning he was at work and gave me back one 10 Naira bill saying his case was scrapped. He could have told me that the judge took the 20 Naira which wouldn't surprise me, so for his honesty I gave him the 10 Naira for himself and he was very happy.

I asked my houseboy James one night to call me at five the following morning. Morning came, I was awake and no sign of James. At 10 o'clock I came back for something to eat

and asked James why he didn't call me and he said, "Master, my watch it confuse me".

I had a charge-hand named Luke, who asked me to loan him one Naira, which I did. The note I gave him was a bit ragged, so he gave it back to me and said, "That be leaking, maybe you have good Naira?"

While in Yola I met some Augustinians, some of whom have gone to their eternal rest, like my great friend, Fr. Mick Sexton, who at the time had, I think, 18 seminarists in his care. In order to help him improve the conditions in which he was working I made a complete new yard around his seminary. This good turn was rewarded at a later date when I became ill and he brought me two bottles of filtered water every morning, a blessing in itself. Another wonderful friend, Fr. Aidan Kennedy was, at one time, in the Abbey here in Fethard, and Fr. Mick O'Sullivan who introduced me to Bishop Eamon Casey and Bishop Russell of Waterford. Like Fr. Dinny Mason, these wonderful priests were always there for us, their door was always open. I will always remember them for their kindness and hospitality and for the wonderful time I had in their company.

On returning home I was taken to Kano by a Yorkshire man, Fred, who was to be Plant Manager and who had many years' experience in Africa. He wired my name to the airport three weeks ahead (no phones) and when we arrived at the

desk, Fred gave the guy my name, but it was not on the manifest. Fred said it should be there as it had been sent in three weeks previously. Just then Fred spotted an official looking gentleman, white shirt, black tie, black stripes on his epaulettes and approached him. I saw Fred put his hand in his pocket and I said to myself, "more dash". Fred came back to me and said this gentleman would look after me and so he did by giving me a pink boarding pass. In the queue for boarding I noticed the other passengers had green boarding passes. Fred was gone back to Yola, the official was nowhere to be seen and I began to panic. On presentation of the boarding pass I was asked to stand aside and I thought, "Well I won't be going home tonight". When everyone else had boarded I was ushered forward, my pass was accepted and I was taken into First Class (so dash does pay) on board a Caledonian flight to London – the only way to travel! From London by Aer Lingus to Dublin and back home with a new contract in Rosslare in April 1979 and a £3,000 rise in salary for services rendered.

Nigeria, like Australia, was a wonderful experience, hard work, but good people more than made up for difficult times there. I didn't know then that it would be my last trip to far flung places and looking back now I suppose I could have taken up other contracts abroad but chose to work at home until I retired, or did I ever really retire? ●

Treasures from the Past

*Kept in a box and tucked away,
are treasures from the past that have seen a better day.*

*They have no value,
that much is true.*

*It only matters what they meant to who.
A beautiful flower pressed in a book,
would crumble to dust if someone took a look.*

*A beautiful lock of wondrous hair from some maiden fair,
head turned grey even if she is still there.*

*A scarf or hankie with a wondrous scent,
faded away without even a hint while reduced to nothing but lint.*

*A broken locket with a photo inside too,
the image so faded can't remember who.
A ticket to some big time show or fancy place,*

*now all gone and turned into a parking space.
Trinkets galore from some carnival passing through town,
the Ferris wheel and merry-go-round ,
just piles of rust in the ground.*

*A golden ring with a shiny sheen,
now all covered in bluish green.*

*Photos of places of long ago,
now covered in sand that the winds now blow
Worthless tokens exchanged for hard earned cash,*

*Still, they remain locked away,
until the day when a person can no longer stay and someone will say,
"Burn the whole damn lot and reduce them to ash."*

— by Thomas J. Crane, Illinois, USA (December, 2013)



L to R: Sheahan Brothers, Pat, T.J. and Michael with their father Tom, working on renovations at Killusty National School 1981



Group of Burke Street children at Killusty Pony Show 1981

A year in Fethard *by John Fogarty meeting Michael Kiely*

Fifty years have passed and still he remembers that morning clearly, as much for the way he'd felt as for the event itself. It was his first morning. He was to travel out to Fethard on the mail car. It was a

huge concession, handed down from the GPO in Dublin. Company rules dictated that he should live in the town that he was serving in. But he was being allowed to travel from Clonmel to Fethard to take up his first appointment as a postman.

Speaking about it now takes him back across the long years that lie between that morning and today. It was a February morning in 1963, he remembers. He was a young lad aged eighteen. Since 1959 he had served as a telegram boy at Clonmel Post Office in Gladstone street. He vividly recalls Saturday mornings when he carried Telegram Money Orders (TMOs) to dozens of women in Clonmel whose husbands were working away in England. The faces of those women live with him still.

But on that morning as he made

his way to Gladstone street to catch the mail car he was leaving all that behind. His days as a telegram boy were over, he was coming of age, moving on. He had passed all three of his oral Irish exams, held in Cork

and Dublin. Then, when he'd reached his eighteenth birthday, he'd become eligible to apply for a position as a postman.

And he has been lucky. A vacancy has come up at Fethard post office, just eight miles out the road from his home. Until then it had seemed that

he was destined to end up in Dublin or distant Donegal.

So, on that first morning as he sits into the van beside driver Kevin Dennehy he has mixed emotions: he is glad to have got an appointment so close to home, and on edge at the prospect of going as an eighteen-year-old rookie to an office where he knows nobody.

As the mail car pulls up outside the post office the postmen are gath-



Michael Kiely photographed when he was Telegram Boy (a position later to be called Junior Postman) c1961

ered in the dense February darkness waiting for the mail to arrive. Immediately the van stops, one of them – Neddie Dineen he later learns – runs up the steps, knocks loudly on the door and calls out: ‘The mail is here Miss Goldsborough.’

His apprehension soon disappears as he gets to know the postmen. There is Jackie Aylward from Killusty, Neddie Dineen from Kerry Street, Joe Danagher from Kilnockin, Joey Fogarty from The Valley, Tom Sheehan from Red City road, Jack Myles from Saucetown and Jack Flynn from Main St., who wears a large soft hat and an armband with P & T written on it.

Later he will get to know Anne O’Neill, Mary Goldsborough’s niece, and Monica Sayers from St. Patrick’s Place, who manage the switchboard that routes incoming and outgoing calls to all phones in the area. He can still hear them singing out ‘Fethard, Fethard’ as they respond to calls. During all of his time at the post office he will know nothing but kindness.

He has been appointed to the Moyglass route and will be given three days’ training by Jack Myles. His first delivery is to the O’Connell sisters on the Rocklow road, a house that he will never miss calling to during his time on the route. As they cycle out under the arch they are filmed by a camera crew from Teilfís Éireann. He never finds out why they are filming there or what becomes of the film.

The three days pass quickly and finally he is cycling out the Rocklow road on his own. On his first morning Canon Lee’s housekeeper treats him to tea and a boiled egg for his breakfast.

Most mornings as he makes his way towards the arch he meets Mikey (The Beckett) Croke, a retired postman, who offers him free, and mostly unrequested, advice on various aspects of the job.

He is young, energetic, it is like an adventure to him cycling through what seems a magical landscape with time to take it all in. He rides along narrow country roads overhung by trees with a deep air of mystery and secrecy about them. It is so quiet, he rarely meets any kind of traffic. He cycles down long laneways to farmhouses hidden from view. He stops at roadside cottages. People know his time and are out at the gate waiting for him. He may be the only person that they’ll meet throughout the day.

He makes his way up a narrow laneway with high stone walls at either side to the house behind Rocklow where Jimmy Heffernan, the bonesetter, lives. He crosses the railwayline as he makes his way up to O’Connell’s of Rathvin. Both gates have to be closed after passing through, on the way up and leaving. There is a long, never-ending avenue leading up to Hayes’s of Rathcoole. Sometimes he stops to admire the thoroughbred horses grazing in the fields at either side of the avenue.

Everywhere he goes people welcome him with kind words, chat, are anxious for news. Few people have cars or phones. Life is lived at a slow pace with nobody rushing to be anywhere, there is always time to talk.

At Farnaleen cross he turns left and freewheels downhill, pedals over the railway bridge and turns into Farnaleen railway station. Five times during the day he crosses bridges that span the railway line at various points on his route. There are only a few buildings at Farnaleen but every morning as he crosses the platform with the mail the Dublin-bound train pulls into the station. Sometimes goods are taken off for one or other of the big houses around Moyglass: Colonel Hallowes of Mobarnane House, Major Kane of Magorban House. He remembers the first time he stepped inside the front door of Mobarnane House to be confronted by what he thought was a snarling tiger crouched and ready to pounce on him, until he noticed the striped hide spread out on the floor behind the open jaws.

He watches as the train departs for Laffansbridge, then Thurles, then on to distant Dublin.

When he arrives in Moyglass village he is brought into Nora Anglim's kitchen and fed. Every day for the duration of his time on the Moyglass post she does this for him.

When he returns to the village in the afternoon he has to wait for the exact time before he can clear the mail from the letterbox. Often as he

waits he is entertained by an eccentric man whom he remembers as Pa Kennedy. Pa recites poetry for him and sings old forgotten ballads.

'Oh, Sliabhnamon with your nightcap on,' he'd say if there was cloud on the mountain.

The box cleared he heads back into Fethard, often bearing gifts from the gardens and orchards of Moyglass: potatoes, beetroot, apples, plums, eggs, and gets a lift back home to Clonmel with Arthur Eustace in the Fethard bakery van.

When summer comes he has made the route a little easier for himself by purchasing an NSU Quickly scooter. He can travel to work independently of the mail car now. Later on he will upgrade to a Honda 50. For four momentous days in June he stops at Molly Cleary's cottage at Magorban to watch President Kennedy's visit being shown on Teilfís Éireann. The visit has caused immense excitement and everywhere he goes people talk about Kennedy.

When sunny weather comes meadows are knocked with mowing bars and everywhere on the route there is talk of saving the hay and how long the sunny weather may last. There are men at work with pitchforks in meadows all along his route. Riding into Moyglass one hay-day morning he stops briefly to watch the Molloy's and a squad of helpers at work in a vast meadow, slowly working their way along leaving golden haystacks in their wake.

When he passes back that evening there are dozens of haycocks in the meadow and the sweet, intoxicating aroma of dry, newly-saved hay fills his nostrils.

One morning he arrives into the yard of Fogarty's who have a farm at Curraghscarteen.

One of the boys is newly-ordained and meets him as he is crossing the yard with the post. He immediately and reverently drops to his knees to receive the first blessing from the newly-ordained priest. Unfortunately he doesn't look where he is kneeling and kneels into a large, freshly-laid cowpat.

Things change when winter comes. He has a huge cape

that keeps the letters dry on wet days. Unfortunately the cape catches the wind and makes progress difficult.

One day during the busy Christmas period Fr. McGrath's housekeeper calls to him and says that Father wants him to come in one day close to Christmas to share a dinner with him. He sits at one end of a long table, the priest at the

other, talking about his greyhounds of which he has many.

Soon after Christmas 1963, in February, almost a year after he'd arrived, he leaves Fethard post office and the Moyglass route when a vacancy arises on the Powerstown

post out of Clonmel. He remains on it for 22 years before moving indoors to work as a postal sorter at Clonmel post office.

Fethard and Moyglass fade into the background as he gets on with his life: marries, rears a family. But it never goes away: his affection for the place and the unfailing kindnesses that he met with every day of the

year that he spent there ensure that Fethard and Moyglass live on in the recesses of his mind.

Until one day, fifty years later, a chance meeting, a casual conversation, and memories clear and pristine come to the surface. And once more he is back in the Fethard of old, the Moyglass of memory ... ●



Michael Kiely in 2013 living in Clonmel



Congratulations to Yvonne (Purcell) Kana who graduated with a masters in Advanced Practice Ophthalmology Nursing



Pat Guiry, St. Johnstown, Professor of Synthetic Organic Chemistry, elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy.



Michelle and Declan Walsh, Coolbawn, Fethard, photographed at Michelle's graduation after being awarded a Bachelor of Arts with distinction in Counselling Skills and Psychotherapy Studies from the Irish College of Humanities and Applied Sciences

Marriages

Marriages in the Parish

Kenneth Byrne, Killusty, to Ann Marie O'Connell, Blarney (Killusty)
Damien Morrissey, Barrack Street, to Nicola Crowe, Drangan (Killusty)
Matthias Euchner, Berlin to Helena McCormack, Kerry St. (Fethard)
Michael Carroll, Coolmore to Avril McGrath, Ballingarry (Killusty)
James P. Stapleton, Cuffsgrange to Siobhán Cleary, Market Hill (Fethard)

Marriages outside the Parish

Noel Martin Sharpe, Fethard, to Rachel Cummins, Cahir (Rockwell)
Paul Barry, Tullamaine, to Fiona O'Brien (Clonmel)
Gerard Walsh, Coolmoyne to Olivia Sheahan, Limerick (Limerick)
Seamus Hayes, Kilconnell, to Maria Costello (Glendine Waterford)
Brian Coen, Killusty, to Vicky O'Gara, Ashford (Wicklow)
Andy Power, Fennor, to Ann Marie Webster, Fethard (Holycross)
Anthony Cawley, Grove Road, to Ellen Sweeney, Clonmel (Clonmel)
Shane Sullivan, Woodvale Walk, to Mary Brunnock, Kilcash (Kilcash)
Caroline Croke, St. Pat's Place, to Jason Nevin, Jesuits Wk (New Zealand)
Joe Lee, Killusty, to Deirdre Kenny, Dublin (Rathfeigh)



Shane Sullivan & Mary Brunnock



Matthias Euchner & Helena McCormack



Deirdre Kenny and Joe Lee

Our Dear Departed 2013 *from available photographs*



Fr. James Hollway



Gus Maher



Tony Tobin



Jimmy Walsh



John Lucy



Phyllis McDonnell



Stevie O'Connor



Paddy Lawrence



Charlie Purcell



Joe Keane



Kitty McCarthy



Margaret Brett



Andy Fox



Paddy Butler



Geraldine Hayes



Biddy O'Donnell



Danny Ryan



Kathleen O'Connell



Martin Phelan



Billy Kenny



Rita Looby



Kit Looby



Bert Van Dommelen



Joe Ahearn



Christy Looby

Andy Fox, Thurles and St Patrick's Place (Calvary)
Austin McDonnell, Fethard (England)
Bert Van Dommelen, Slievenamon (Cremation in Cork)
Biddy O'Donnell (née Butler), Slanestown (Calvary)
Billy Kenny, The Green (Calvary)
Charles Purcell, Balbriggan (Dublin)
Christy Looby, St. Pat's Place (Old Holy Trinity Church)
Danny Ryan, St. Patrick's Place (Calvary)
Geraldine Hayes, Burke Street (Dublin)
Gus Maher, Friarsgrange (Calvary)
Janet O'Keeffe, Kiltinan (England)
Jimmy Walsh, Kilconnell (Cashel)
Joe Aheame, Fethard Arms, Main Street (Calvary)
Joe Keane, Lackaghbeg (Monasterevin)
John Lucey, The Square (Calvary)

John Martin, Coolmoynes (Calvary)
Kathleen O'Connell, Burke Street (Calvary)
Kit Looby, Carriconeen, Clonmel (Grange)
Kitty McCarthy, Main Street (Old Holy Trinity Church)
Margaret Brett, Tullamaine (Calvary)
Martin Phelan, Strylea (Calvary)
Paddy Butler, Saucetown, Fethard (Calvary)
Paddy Lawrence, Fr. Tirry Park (Calvary)
Pat Fitzgerald, Fr. Tirry Park (Calvary)
Phyllis McDonnell, The Square (Calvary)
Rev. Fr. James Holway, Moymore, (Pallasgreen)
Rita Looby, Carriconeen, Clonmel (Grange)
Stevie O'Connor, Kiltinan (Kiltinan)
Thomas F. Tobin of Thiensville, Wisconsin, USA
Tony Tobin, Knockelly (Calvary)



Mamie Morrissey (front), St. Patrick's Place, Fethard, photographed with members of her family on the occasion of her 90th birthday celebrated in the Convent Hall Community Centre in July, 2013.
L to R: Benny, Ann, Sarah, Patricia, Patsy, Philomena, David, Paula, Majella, Declan and Mary.



Kitty O'Donnell with her extended family at her 80th birthday party celebrated at Slievenamon Golf Club

Faith in the heart of Tipperary



Aoife Delany with fellow finalists in the 'Lovely Wellie' competition at her very first retreat in Clonmacnoise, 2009

We are always searching. Searching for a job, searching for the remote, searching for love! On August 15, 2013, more than one thousand young people between the ages of 16 and 35 came to the Youth 2000 Summer Festival in Roscrea, all in search of something more than the lifestyle of sex, drugs and rock n' roll on offer today.

Youth 2000 is an international faith movement of young Catholics called to share their experience of faith with other young people. More than forty weekly prayer groups are held around the country in addi-

tion to several weekend retreats. A Valentine's ball is held annually and various other social events are held throughout the year. The summer festival is the highlight of the year. The movement was founded by a young Englishman called Ernest Williams. He was inspired upon hearing a speech by Blessed John Paul II at World Youth Day in Santiago de Compostela in 1989, calling upon young people to spread the good news among their peers.

The summer festival has been held in a number of locations including Knock and the ancient

historic site of Clonmacnoise. This year, Tipperary had the privilege of hosting the festival. We came in our hundreds from the four corners of the country to fill the halls of the Cistercian College of Mount St. Joseph Abbey in Roscrea.

This year marked my fourth visit to the summer festival. My journey with Youth 2000 dates back to my teenage years. These years were marked by the scars left from severe bullying during my secondary education leaving me lost and incredibly unhappy. But it was through prayer that my life began to turn around again, and through prayer that I encountered Youth 2000. As I prepared to head for college in the summer of 2009, it was suggested that I attend the summer festival in Clonmacnoise with other young like-minded people to help me make friends ahead of my arrival in UCC. I had heard many things about the festival, but nothing could have prepared me for what I would find there.

I was rather apprehensive as I had expected a room full of future members of the clergy, but this couldn't be further from the truth! Upon entering the main marquee, I was greeted by a sea of young smiling faces, mostly teenagers like me, all gathered round praising God through song and dance. There were people from every walk of life, from scientists and teachers to the pierced and tattooed. We came from different places, different jobs, different cultures; but together, we were united through

our faith in Christ Jesus. For the first time in a long time I began to feel like I finally fitted in surrounded by these wonderful people who were as welcoming as the smiles lighting up their faces. I had the most amazing weekend chatting to people from all over the country, sharing our experiences of faith, participating in games, attending inspirational talks and workshops, even winding up as a finalist in the Lovely Wellie competition! To top it all off there was a rock concert with the famous Elation Ministries, an evangelical band made up of young musicians from all over Ireland.

It is a truly wonderful weekend which I have thoroughly enjoyed on each return visit. This year's festival in Roscrea was no exception. Rain was forecast for the country, but as I approached Roscrea in my little green Micra, the skies were blue, a playful hint at the good times that were ahead for all attendees.

With the largest turnout in recent years, the summer festival kicked off with songs of praise as everyone gathered round the altar for the opening Mass. As I watched the crowds from my seat, I could see the sceptics awkwardly standing around as we 'happy-clappy' regulars got into our groove. Little did they know that in a few short hours, they too would catch the bug and be dancing harder and singing louder than anyone else in attendance. The atmosphere was so infectious, it was impossible to resist! I have yet to see a sin-

gle person leave the festival without thoroughly enjoying it.

Our main speaker for the weekend was Bishop Frank Caggiano of the diocese of Bridgeport, Connecticut, a truly memorable and inspiring speaker. As Bishop Frank lead us in prayer and discussion, he brought to our attention the need to distinguish between the things that we 'want' in life from the things that we actually 'need', teaching us all that while the things we 'want' may be good, only the love of Jesus can meet our deepest needs and heal our broken hearts; a lesson that we should all bear in mind this Christmas season. He is the reason for the season after all.

Other speakers during the festival included our papal nuncio Archbishop Charles Brown, Senator Ronan Mullen, journalist David Quinn and Bishop Kieran O'Reilly of Killaloe in addition to a number of inspiring testimonies given by various members of Youth 2000 across

the country.

Sadly, this year the Lovely Wellie competition was retired, only to be replaced by the equally comical Summer Shades competition! But thankfully, some things never change, and the rock concert from Elation Ministries was in full swing late into Saturday night as we danced, sang, leaped and 'congaed' our way through the evening.

But before long, the weekend was over all too soon and the closing Mass was upon us, our bags were packed, the buses were lining up, and home beckoned. As the Mass drew to a close, our spirits soaring, everyone in attendance was initiated into this wonderful global community, not unlike our own community here in Fethard and Killusty. At the festival's close, we would disperse far and wide, but we would be forever connected by our faith from that moment on. ●

by Aoife Delany



A lovely photographs of Crampscastle and Slievenamon captured by Larry Kenny

Fethard Piano Exams 2013

The annual piano exams held in Fethard for pupils attending local piano teacher Stuart Clooney were hugely successful again this year. Pupils from beginners to the higher grades who sat the exams in May 2013 were examined by an examiner appointed by the Leinster School of Music and Drama, Griffith College Dublin. All students, as well as their teacher, were delighted with the outstanding results with Honours and First Class Honours

achieved by all. Further credit goes to local students, Laura Harrington and Sadhbh Morrissey for achieving a result of 95 percent and over in their exam, and so were duly awarded the Leinster School of Music and Drama Medal for their result.

This year three of Stuart's students were nominated by the examiner to take part in the annual Excellence Award Competition held in Dublin. The competition, ongoing since

2004, involves all of the top music and drama students who sit the Leinster School of Music and Drama exams in that year. Katie Whyte, Hayley Ryan and Imogen Kavanagh travelled to Dublin to play their chosen piece of music before the examiners in the College. On reaching the finals of the competition, which involved approximately 100 performers out of 10,000 students taking exams this year, the three girls were duly awarded Excellence



Hayley Ryan pictured with local piano teacher Stuart Clooney, Cashel Road, Fethard.

Awards Certificates.

Stuart Clooney would like to thank the students for all of the hard work in preparation for their piano exams. Thanks also to the local National and Secondary level Schools for their support and to John Shortall for ensuring that Stuart's hard working pianos are kept in top condition every year. For further details please contact Stuart or Maura Clooney 052-6132567. ●

Fethard Scouts 27th Tipperary Group



Fethard Scout Group photographed on their hike to the Mass Cross on Slievenamon to recite their Beaver and Cub Scout Promise

Fethard Scouts – if you want to be young, work with them, if you want to feel young, try and keep up with them! We have a membership of eighty-six. It was, yet again, another fantastic year for all in the Fethard Scout Group, with many group, county and national events for all sections. Huge performances from every section, Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Ventures brought each to national level. What a great group of children, you could only be proud of each one of them.

Beaver Section

There were many activities in this section, which included badge-work on backwoods, community and first-aid, to mention a few. They had a

sleepover in our Den and tested their pioneering skills making chariots – racing them was great fun. They took part in orienteering training and went on numerous hikes, one to Glengarr Wood where we did some backwoods cooking by the river. We spent an overnight on Slievenamon in tents, and hiked to the Holy Year Cross where we held an Investiture Ceremony. We took part in all county events, the county quiz, county hike in Kilsheelan wood, and the county sports day.

We also travelled to Scouting Ireland HQ in June and camped overnight for the 'Mad-Hatters on the Hill' – a great weekend. In September we went to Mount Melleray for the

County Fun weekend and great fun it was. We headed to Cahir in October for the county Fancy Dress Party. Ballymacarbry Beavers and Cubs as well as our own Cubs joined us in Grove Wood for our Halloween Night which was a good craic and a great campfire. We are off to Carne, Co. Wexford, for a weekend in November with the rest of the Fethard group. We will also attend the county Christmas Disco in December, a table quiz in February, a hike in March, sports day in April, and are planning a 'Camp' in Parson's Green for June. There will be many more events as we move through the coming year, including trips to the zoo and Fota Island, so a great calendar of activities is lined up, for this, our youngest scout section.

Cub Section

Cubs had another great year, we came second in the county challenge in October. In February, along

with Kilsheelan, we represented the county at national level in Maynooth, which is a great experience. We held numerous Hikes throughout the year incorporating backwood's cooking, orienteering training, route planning and lots of fun. We had a sleepover in the Den in March. We went abseiling in April and in June we were joined by the Beavers for an overnight camp on Slievenamon, and hiked to the Holy Year Cross where we conducted an Investiture Ceremony. We finished our year in early July with Annual Camp in Ruan, Co. Clare for five days. We attended all county events – hike in November, Sixer/Secunder training in January, swimming gala in February, fun weekend in Mount Melleray in April, and the sports day in May which we hosted in Fethard.

We attended the County Sunrise Hike on the Galtees. We have



Photographed at the County Shield Competition are Ruth McDonald, Taylor and Cameron Bailey, David Mockler, Dan Walsh (PL), Eoin O'Donovan (APL), Dylan Ryan, Katie Whyte, with leaders Rachel Hanlon, Brendan Bailey, Bobby Phelan and Cormac Keating.



*Fethard Scouts and leaders photographed after St. Patrick's Day Mass in Holy Trinity Parish Church.
Also included is Canon Tom Breen P.P.*

achieved Stage 2 in sailing adventure skills and we also joined our Beavers for the Halloween night and camp-fire in Grove Wood. We are now just back after a very mucky hike – what fun we had!

Plans for the future; attend the group weekend in Carne, Co. Wexford in November, Acts of Kindness, a sleepover, Hike to Summit of Slievenamon, Sixer/Seconder training, swimming gala, fun weekend in Melleray, sports day in Fethard, Annual Camp (somewhere) and lots more in between.

Scout Section

The first County Event in 2012 was the fun weekend in Mount Melleray. We attempted some Christmas Carol singing which was good fun. We had one scout who completed the Tom Crean Expedition to Iceland for a week (true grit). We completed a lot of badgework throughout the year. We had a weekend in Carne Scout Centre in March. We joined the rest of our group for the annual

parade to 11am Mass on St. Patrick's Day, and also the May and Corpus Christi processions in Fethard. Scouts took part in all county events – orienteering, which we hosted on the Comeraghs in March; County Training Day in April; and the County Shield Challenge weekend, winning the competition for the second year running. A great result!

In June a number of scouts took part in the Munster Pursuit Challenge, in extremely inclement weather, but spirits were high and we weathered the storm, a great experience. July saw us on annual camp for ten days in great weather and with great fun and games. In August, having won the county shield, we had the honour of representing Co. Tipperary at national level at the National Phoenix Challenge (Wednesday to Sunday) and came away with Silver Standard Award, another great result. We received free tickets to Fossetts Circus so we all attended. Our future plans include a weekend in Carne

with the rest of our group, all county events, and some troop events throughout the year, including the main Annual Camp.

Venture Section

Ventures completed a number of hikes, some badgework, height hikes, an overnight on Slievenamon, assisted in running the younger sections, helped at many county events, provided assistance at the Gathering Festival and erected a tower on The Square. We have a busy programme planned for the coming year.

On a sad note our treasurer of twenty-seven years has decided to retire. We would like to say a big thank you to Mary O'Donnell for her long and loyal service to scouting in Fethard. During her reign Mary was awarded the Bronze Meritorious Award, and more recently awarded the Silver Meritorious Award some years ago. This is an indication of her meticulous work and integrity as

treasurer, we shall miss her immensely and wish her health in her retirement.

All in all this was a very busy year, with a great bunch of children making up a great Scout Group. None of this would have been possible without the dedication of an equally great bunch of leaders: Nichola Quigley, Sarah Hanlon, Anna Bailey, Tony Burgess, Michelle Hennebry, Denis Larkin, John Walsh, Brendan Bailey, Rachel Hanlon, Cormac Keating and John Cloonan. A special word of thanks to our chairperson, Mary Healy, and our associate member Theresa Grant. Many many thanks to you all for your great work throughout the year, you are a credit to yourselves and society.

Finally, we wish all the people of the Parish and beyond, a Happy and Holy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year. ●

Robert Phelan (Group Leader)



Fethard Scouts photographed carol singing at The Square, Fethard Christmas week 2012.

An ambush

by John Fogarty

Below is a short extract from my manuscript 'Scenes from an Indian Summer' which was shortlisted for the John Murray/Radio 1/RTE Guide book award. I hope to have it available in print sometime next year.

We had our warpaint on. Our gallivanting in search of distraction had brought us down to the riverbank. To a wide space - adjacent to the road on one side, the river on the other. A stretch of the old town wall ran parallel to the off-bank of the river, forming a barrier between us, the jagged tower-top, and the ancient yews of the Protestant churchyard.

The morning was overcast, close, the air thick and heavy with the sound of bees, flies, grasshoppers, birds, dogs. A horse neighing somewhere. A distant tractor. All blending into a monotonous, deadening drone. The drone of summer. The tedium of happy days. Occasionally a horse and cart clattered by, on its way to the creamery further down The Valley. In the field behind Horse's house men were slowly piking hay onto a horse-drawn hay trolley that rolled along on wide, iron wheels. There were slanted poles at front and rear to hold the hay in place. They were drawing the hay to a yard about half a mile away where it would be trammed. I could hear the voices of the men as they paused to smoke and exchange desultory banter.

It was the first week of July. We were idling around, irritable from the heaviness of it all. Not really doing anything. The river had run low. Lincoln Vail wouldn't get very far

in his airboat on this river. Wouldn't right too many wrongs around here.

Judo and I were prowling through the rushes close to the bank, arrow in bow, hoping to come across a waterhen.

The smell of drying river-moss was strong in my nostrils.

Chasing waterhens was a waste of time. A rustle in the rushes, a brief flash of dark feathers and the hen was gone. That's all you'd see of waterhens. Not even a chance to get off an arrow. Still we prowled, pointlessly.

'This is feckin useless,' Judo said, finally.

Boredom was setting in. We needed a diversion.

I looked to the riverbank.

Some of the braves had been having a contest to see whose bow would shoot an arrow the farthest. I'd heard the endless, repetitive arguing voices echoing off the old walls. Now I could see Jim and Pony, Horse's younger brother, wrestling and shouting on the grass.

Just then Foxy Burke came rattling down The Valley on his father's jennet and cart hauling his one churn of milk to the creamery. The jennet was big and mostly black. He strode along, all raised head, twitching ears and swishing tail. Eyes wild inside the winkers. Wire bit pulled tight in his mouth. He was hard to stop even when only walking. There

was always a feeling that he could take off at any moment, that Foxy, or no-one, would be able to stop him at full tilt.

The big jennet strode purposefully on, pulling hard. Foxy barely managed to wave and call to us.

'The fecker is pulling like a train lads,' he shouted.

When they were out of sight Horse called us together.

'I have a deadly idea,' he said.

'What is it?' Pat asked.

'We'll pretend that Foxy is driving a stage coach and we'll ambush him on the way back,' Horse said.

The prospect of the ambush - hiding, waiting, charging after Foxy's big jennet - lifted the lethargy that had borne down on all our actions like a heavy blanket.

A low wall ran parallel to the road as far as Stoke's old mill. From the spot where wall and mill met we would launch the ambush, Horse and Pat decided.

As usual, Judo and I were sent as scouts to see how long it would take for Foxy to get out of the creamery.

In the creamery yard there was a long queue of farmers waiting to off-load their milk. Horse, pony, and ass-drawn carts, Prefects, Anglias, Cambridges, all with trailers, old Ferguson and Fordson Major tractors, all stretched in a stalled line across the yard and out onto the road. Foxy was about half-way in the queue. We chatted with him.

'It's gonta take me another half an hour to get out of this feckin

place,' he moaned, gazing at two farmers standing with folded arms propped by their arses against the wing of an Anglia.

'Then I have to bring separated milk back for the calves, and a butt of crushed oats, and give the rest of the feckin day turning hay with the aul' fella in the back field,' Foxy said.

'And tish't great hay weather either, sure there's hardly any drying there at all,' he added, sorrowfully, probably echoing his aul' fella, who always wore a long, sorrowful face even when there was good hay weather.

The jennet was restless, shaking his obstinate head, stamping, kicking at flies beneath his belly, twitching muscles when they landed on his body.

'Can I drive the jennet up The Valley?', Judo asked.

'Oh Jaysus no Judo, no-one can drive that jennet only me and the aul' fella, he takes an awful howlt, only for we do have an extra big winkers on him he'd be gone in a minute, all 'twould take is a aul' flying sweet paper and the shagger would be gone like a two-year-auld, sure the father is always saying he'd win a feckin bumper for Larry Keating no bother,' Foxy said.

The jennet shook his entire body as if in agreement with Foxy, giving himself a fright when the draught chains rattled against the shafts.

'Aisy, aisy, stand aisy ya shaggin aul' cripple,' Foxy said, jerking hard on the reins.

We went back onto the road and

into Meagher's shop to buy a pennyworth of broken biscuits. Ned was cutting ham into transparent slices on his smooth-running Avery ham slicer.

'Anything else now, Mrs. Barton?' he asked, wrapping the ham, forcing a wide, false-toothed smile across his face.

He carried her purchases out to her Austin Mini Estate with its wood inserts, thanking her profusely and fussing over her all the time.

'Broken biscuits,' he said, wearily, when we ordered.

We ate our broken Marietta biscuits from a bag before we returned to the gang. Then we waited. Eventually Foxy and the jennet appeared. The cart running smoothly along on its two inflated car wheels. The only sound I could hear was the clink of the draught chains and the rapid click of the jennet's lightly shod hooves.

Judo couldn't resist pinching Pony's arse which was directly in front of him.

'Ah, ouch, ouch,' Pony said, loudly.

'Jaysus, will ye stay quiet,' Horse hissed.

'Go aisy, willya, go aisy ya scourge,' we heard Foxy say to the jennet.

When they drew level with us we leaped from behind the wall screeching our version of the Apache war-cry. The sudden noise shocked Mom Gunn's terrier from his torpor on the roadside. He charged at the jennet, barked, began snapping at his heels. Foxy roared at the dog,

swiped at him with his switch. The arrows that we fired clunked off the churn and the wheels of the cart. Horse, though, had aimed one directly at the jennet's hindquarters. He hit the target. This, combined with the dog's snapping, our screeching and Foxy's shouting, was too much for the jennet. He took off. Foxy leaned back throwing all his weight on the reins. No use. On the jennet ran, ears flattened, head out-stretched, veering from side to side on the road. Skimming past the loaded hay trolley just emerging from the hayfield. Two men on top of the load looked in astonishment at the fleeing jennet.

We followed Foxy, screeching, laughing, delighted with the outcome of our ambush. Excitement sending a surge of energy through us.

On the hill close to our house a pole that carried a streetlight stood about two feet out from the wall. Approaching this pole the jennet veered wildly once more. One wheel hooked on the pole bringing jennet and cart to an abrupt halt, catapulting Foxy and the churn onto the grassy bank on the roadside. The lid flew off the churn. A flat white lake of separated milk spread across the road.

'Oh Jaysus, Jaysus help me, I'll be kilt, the aul' fella'll kill me, what am I gonta do, they'll be ne'er a sup of milk left for the calves,' Foxy roared.

The jennet had come to a standstill, appeared to have been shocked into docility. Horse and Pat straightened the churn.

'There's still a sup in the arse o' the churn Foxy,' Pat said.

'Oh there's only a dreeder left, I'll be kilt, I'll be kilt, an look at me poor knees, they're all tore asunder,' Foxy lamented.

He turned his attention to the jennet and the cart. Miraculously no damage had been done to the cart.

'What class of an aul' mad cripple are you at all,' he roared at the jennet, 'you're only fit for the feckin kennels, the hounds probably wouldn't even ate ya. Or maybe the aul' fella'll sell ya to the tinkers, you'll know all about it then, so ya will, ya big black useless hoor ya.'

A row of heads had appeared over half-doors.

'Lucky the chap wadn't kilt,' Josie Barratt said, from her half-door.

'He'll be all right, 'tis nothing,' Horse said.

Between us we managed to get the churn back onto the cart.

'Let ya pull it over to the Judy Foxy and we'll top the churn back up with water, sure the calves won't know the difference if they have

watery milk for one day,' Judo said.

'The aul' fella will,' Foxy said.

'Sure, Jaysus, yer aul' fella's not gonta be drinking separated milk, is he?' Horse said.

'I dunno, I dunno,' said Foxy.

Eventually he was pacified enough to get back on the cart and head for home.

'I'd say that aul' jennet is shell-shocked, sure there's not a kook outa him now,' Mamie said as we walked back.

For a day or so after I kept expecting to see Foxy's father at the door. Or the sergeant with his notebook. Neither came. The calves mustn't have minded the watery milk.

When the incident of Foxy's jennet was safely in the past it became one of the highlights of the summer. On those evenings when we'd light a fire at the camp and sit around it as darkness gathered and shadows danced, the story of Foxy's jennet would be told and retold, twisted and tweaked until the facts of what had actually happened were lost in the little legend we were creating. ●



Photographed in Butler's Bar L to R: Willie and Mandy Quigley, John and Veronica Fogarty

Donations Received 2013

Acknowledged below are donations (€10 and over) received from readers and organisations up to November 30, 2013. We would also like to thank all those who wished to remain anonymous.

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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.*



5th Year Class Presentation Convent 1969-70. Back L to R: Grace Smith, Marian Teehan, Marian Anglim. Middle L to R: Ann O'Meara, Eleanor O'Callaghan, Mary Meagher, Patricia O'Dwyer, Mary Cunningham, Noreen Tobin, Mary Gorey. Front L to R: Catherine Dargan, Ann Skehan, Patsy O'Meara, Renée Healy, Mary O'Connor, Timmie O'Connor (teacher), Mary O'Connell, Eileen Duggan, Brigid Croke and Gaye O'Shea.

Three Hundred years of life

This year was a very unique one for our community and parish. Three wonderful ladies - Chrissie Byrne, Josie Casey and Nellie Shortall - each celebrated their one hundredth birthday - three hundred years of life.

The achievement of reaching the milestone of one hundred years is certainly worth celebrating and accordingly Fethard & Killusty experienced three such celebrations between June and October.

Chrissie Byrne

Chrissie Byrne (nee Shee) was born on June 19, 1913. She lived all her life in Killusty and will be known to all for her life of service to the village as she ran the grocery shop there until she retired at 84 years of age. Chrissie has many memories lasting from her earliest years as a young child through her school years; to her trips to the dance halls of surrounding areas to hear the likes of Mick Del and the Twilight Serenaders; the Second World War; the advent of television; her contribution as sacristan, caretaker and organist in the Killusty Church; her involvement with the Fethard Carnival and her many exploits with the local ICA Guild.

On her birthday, Mass was celebrated by Canon Breen P.P. and Fr. Anthony McSweeney. Over 150 people attended – family members, relations and friends from far and near – to join in the celebrations

and to reminisce about times past, back at the shop premises. During proceedings Chrissie was presented with a letter and cheque from the president, a bouquet of flowers and a birthday card, and a copper beech tree was planted to mark the occasion. Chrissie thoroughly enjoyed the day and was absolutely delighted with all the people that turned up.

Josie Casey

Josie Casey (nee Holohan) celebrated her special day on September 3. Celebrations commenced with Mass in the Parish Church, celebrated by Canon Breen P.P., Fr. Anthony McSweeney and Fr. John Meagher, OSA with music provided by the combined Parish and Abbey choirs. A large number of Josie's family, neighbours and friends attended and the occasion was indeed memorable. It was particularly pleasant to see Josie joined by Chrissie Byrne and Nellie Shortall. Once the Mass had concluded those in attendance proceeded to the Convent Community Hall for refreshments and to continue the celebrations.

Josie spent her formative years at Boolagh, on the slopes of Slievenamon, and Burke Street, Fethard where the family ran a public house. Josie attended her primary education locally, travelled to England for her secondary education with the French Sisters of

Charity and subsequently obtained a Music Degree. On returning from her time abroad Josie too spent a very happy life in Fethard, again in Burke Street and then in Derryluskin after her marriage. Josie has a life-long interest in horse racing and remembers attending the Grand National at Aintree when only 14 years of age. She has great recollections from her many involvements throughout her life including – playing tennis and competing for the Gibson Cup on many an occasion; seeing Pope John Paul II, twice; holidaying in Tramore and Dungarvan as a child; loving music and dancing, another great fan of the Twilight Serenaders; cycling to Clonmel to the greyhound track; taking part in several carnival parades and being successful in many competitions with the ICA.

Nellie Shortall

Nellie Shortall (nee Fitzpatrick) reached one hundred years on October 24. Family, friends and many, many more joined in the celebrations to wish Nellie a 'Happy Birthday'. Mass was celebrated in the afternoon and the beautiful music provided by Nellie's family was indeed fitting, given their long tradition of being 'music-makers' in the community. It was particularly moving to hear Nellie join in with 'How Great Thou Art' which is her favourite hymn. The celebrations then moved to the Convent Community Hall where connec-

tions were made and many memories shared among those present.

Nellie was born near Clonmel, moved to the border area with her family as a child when her father obtained work there but returned to Fethard soon after he was tragically killed.

On leaving school, having learned the basics of domestic economy, she was adept at baking, butter making, ironing and sewing, making her own dresses and 'Children of Mary' cloak. Nellie secured work initially in Rocklow as a cook and then moved on to Dublin and Clare to work. A health problem brought her to London where she worked until she was entitled to have an operation done and she intended to follow her sister to New York once recovered.

However, a four-week stay at home to recuperate changed all that as she met her husband Larry and remained in Fethard. Larry had a fuel business and then opened a shop, initially to take orders for fuel, but ultimately to fulfil one of Nellie's dreams. Craftwork, cooking and music were Nellie's great love and she spent her life using and developing these skills as much as she could. She too was a life-long member of the ICA and a very proud supporter of the Twilight Serenaders, as her brother was one of the members. ●

Edwina Newport

Thirty-eight years teaching in Killusty

Principal of Killusty National School, Mrs Frances (Hayes) Harrington, recalls her thirty-eight years teaching in Killusty. Frances is retiring in December this year and will be replaced by newly appointed principal, Ms Sarah O'Sullivan.

"I started my teaching career in Killusty National School on July 1, 1975. On that first day Miss Mary Flood, whom I was replacing, presented me with her scissors and thimble, which I used for many years for sewing lessons. Miss Flood visited at Christmas time each year, usually bearing gifts of fruit for the pupils. Danny Kane was principal at that time. He took me under his wing and guided me as I commenced my chosen profession. I continued teaching there until the summer of 1986 when we moved to New York, where I taught in Manhattan for one year. We then came closer to home and I spent two years teaching in Wembley, England, and then in Watford.

In September 1989 I returned to my beloved Killusty. I continued teaching there to the present time. I

became principal in October 2002, when Danny Kane retired. This was a huge change for me but Danny ensured that I was ready for the demands of principalship. He was a guiding light and true friend to me at all times. Thank you.

Cathriona Morrissey started teaching in Killusty in early 2003. We worked together since then in harmony, making a good team. Now I reach my final days in Killusty, days tinged with a deep sadness at those wonderful times coming to an end. I can truly say I have spent my working life doing what I love, helped enormously by a most supportive

board of management with chairperson Canon Tom Breen, beautiful children, excellent parents and support staff including Tracy, many learning-support teachers, secretary Ann, caretakers Joan and Christy Williams and sacristan Ann Kenny. I have been so lucky to have taught in such a lovely community situated in the valley of Slievenamon.

Go raibh míle maith agaibh go leir. ●



Frances Harrington (centre) photographed with Fr. Anthony McSweeney and Ann Kenny.

Irish Walled Towns Network



This year's repair of the breach in the Town Wall at Watergate and reinstatement of missing stonework.

The Irish Walled Towns Network has had a mixed bag of a year. Nationally, funding is at rock bottom and Fethard was lucky to secure one of the very few grants offered. This was offered for the consolidation and repair of the breach in the Town Wall at Watergate and the reinstatement of missing stonework. This part of the Wall is at the back of the famous Jimmy 'Buck' Ryan residence that has been under siege from arsonists since Jimmy's death.

Fortunately for Fethard, this property is now being restored to its former glory by the Hazells of Morbarnane who plan to use it as a residence. Jimmy always maintained

that the house had been one bay wider – towards Watergate Lane – and that it was once a school for the children of the officers of the military barracks. The house is now being faithfully rebuilt by Tynans to its former, more comfortable width, with the original window proportions and saving the great chimney stack on the east gable. Supervised by the same team of professionals who have been overseeing the conservation of the Town Wall, this promises to button up the most derelict corner of the town. A brave move, but a welcome one.

Prior to the commencement of this ambitious restoration, work started on the detailed archaeologi-

cal analysis of the Town Wall that marks the southern boundary of the property. Results revealed that the Town Wall still survives here right across the site to above the height of the 'wall walk' from which the townspeople could defend Fethard. The Wall was originally five feet thick here at the base and just over a foot thick at the parapet (above the wall walk), but most of the inner face of the Wall had been robbed away in antiquity leaving only the outer face – sometimes only a perilous 18 inches in width.

The ever helpful Jonathan Flood of South Tipperary County Council requested National Monuments Consent from the Minister to reinstate the missing inner face stonework right up to the height of the wall walk (about 9 feet from the ground) to consolidate and make safe this section. This is the work that the IWTN had hoped to achieve and here was the perfect opportunity to complete this important restoration. Ivor McElveen & Associates (the conservation engineers) had set aside all the surplus stone from the demolition of the house for re-use in this repair. Reinstatement of stone has been the preferred method in the restoration undertaken by the IWTN to the Wall in Fethard over the past five years. Unfortunately, the minister declined to give permission for this proposal and so, sadly, the repair was limited to the cosmetic infilling of the breach, minor infills and some lime 'flaunching.' We have

also been unable to infill the missing facing stones in the area once hidden by Jimmy's shed. Interestingly, one tiny part of the full thickness of the Wall had survived hidden and protected by an eighteenth century outbuilding that abutted the inside of the Wall. Works were undertaken by Anthony Morris Construction Ltd of Rathronan, Clonmel. Everything was finished in time and the cost was €13,166.53.

The 'mixed bag' of a year was topped by the extraordinary award won by the Irish Walled Towns Network in Athens. This was the prestigious Europa Nostra award given for 'Education, Training and Raising Awareness of Cultural Heritage'. The award was collected from the hands of the opera singer Plácido Domingo on behalf of the Irish Walled Towns Network and the Heritage Council by Grainne Shaffrey, the architect who achieved planning permission for our Town Hall restoration earlier this year. How wonderful that an idea hatched only a few years ago in Derry, by The Heritage Council's own Alison Harvey, has emerged as one of the greatest heritage and conservation successes in Europe.

And let's not forget that Fethard is Ireland's most complete medieval walled town in the IWTN. Well done to everyone who has supported this community initiative from the Wall repairs to the festival and raised awareness of this cultural gem we are so lucky to have. ●

Car Boot Sale - celebrating 30 years

It's Sunday! Bright or dull, sunshine or showers, it's the day I head for the Car Boot Sale.

Expectant, and with an excited anticipation of what wonders the day might reveal, a chance to meet friends and acquaintances, to discuss the major topics of the day, and to share a joke or two. An opportunity to rib some unfortunate stallholder about their dubious claims to the antiquity or origin of their stock and the price they're asking! "You really think it's worth all that?"

Fethard, that medieval gem which modernization and progress forgot, provides the perfect setting fortunately, for this feast of nostalgia and variety every Sunday morning. Stallholders big and small, permanent and transient, compete for your attention with their eclectic mix of goods both old, new, second or third hand, strange, and commonplace, a virtual cornucopia of items suitable for all tastes and pockets.

As I wander from stall to stall a familiar greeting is accorded, as at this stage I have also become part of the gathering. Punters and traders ply their trade on Sunday mornings throughout the year come rain or shine, snow or tempest.

For just over thirty years now this market place has been run by Christy Mullins and his wife Margaret, and provides the entire family and their friends with a gainful and profitable Sunday morning activity. The site,

the former Fethard Railway Station goods yard, which Christy turned into a transport museum initially, has proved both fruitful and successful as a Sunday market venue, and long may it continue so.

The outstanding feature of the Car Boot Sale cum market is that just about anyone can become a stallholder – all you need is the stock and the need or desire to turn it into ready cash. A sense of humour while not essential, is a major aid to sales and happy potential customers! Stallholders come in all shapes and sizes, some, semi-professional others ordinary punters who want to turn their surplus household items into ready cash.

During the boom years traders came from far and wide to Fethard as the market became quite exotic in both goods and traders. Now, while occasionally there are some exotic fellows, the general run is one of ordinary people trying to make some money for Christmas, a holiday, wedding, or special family occasion which comes around unexpectedly and proves expensive. Whatever the reason for taking a stall – personal profit, charity fundraising or a desire to clean out unwanted items – a day at the market can be both fun and profitable. You may feel that the punters are having you on with some of their less impressive offers, but it is worth remembering that there is a customer for almost everything, all



Joe Kavanagh (left) one of the original and longest serving stall holders and Dan Murphy, a great friend of Fethard Car Boot Sale

you are trying to do is find them!

For those who have kids, the playground at the market site provides ample diversion and a little relief from pester power. The tearoom provides a restive break for even the most compulsive bargain hunters. Tea and sweet buns or sandwiches and an occupation for the kids in the playground, what could be better for the stressed parent, then afterwards back to the bargain hunt!

One of the joys of the market is its variety of people and the level of knowledge they may possess about a most amazing range of topics. Some of the more specialist traders possess a mine of information about the goods they specialize in, and also have some very interesting back-stories about their lives and how

they came to have a stall in Fethard. I have had many an entertaining and enlightening conversation with traders, and these have proved some of the highlights of my day at the market. It isn't always what you can buy that makes the day out so worthwhile, the people are worth it too!

It isn't the human activity and commerce, talk and diversion, fun and the joy of discovery, and of course that bargain that makes my day at the market worthwhile. No, it's the combination of all these things, which makes Sunday in Fethard one of the highlights of my week. Time to close now and I hope you all come along and find your time there as pleasant and profitable as I do every Sunday. ●

by Gerry Long



Coffey family, Mockler's Terrace. Back L to R: Tommy, Kathleen, Mikey, Edie, Jimmy, Maggie. Front L to R: Mary, Margaret and Ned Coffey, Nora. Missing from photo are Joan and Eddie.



Paddy and Edie Murray (nee Coffey) who were married February 10, 1941. Their bridesmaid was Kathleen Nevin and best man, Jack Hally.

Holy Trinity National School



Junior Infants Class at Holy Trinity National School Back L to R: Saoirse Nic Cormaic, Suzie Murphy, Róisín Dargan Purcell, Marks Zorins, Megan Lyons, Róisín Tyrrell, Mrs Margaret Gleeson (teacher). Third Row L to R: Hayley Lawrence, Micheál O'Rahilly, Claire O'Donnell, Cody Bradshaw, Oisín McAndrews, Ella Deegan. Second Row L to R: Joey Daly, Giovanna Aguiar, Kasey Power, Sarah Cuddihy, Thomas Murphy, Kelvin Ryan. Front L to R: Leyla Barlaz, James Sheehan Walsh, Erin Carroll, Jenny Roberts and Kayleigh Rochford Burke. Missing from photo is Meadhbh Collum.

Greeting to all Newsletter Readers at home and abroad from Holy Trinity National School. Our present staff: Ms Patricia Treacy (Principal), Ms Triona Morrisson (Vice-Principal 2nd Class), Ms Margaret Gleeson (Jnr. Infants), Ms Denise Meehan (Snr. Infants), Ms Leonie Loughman (1st class), Ms Rita Kenny (3rd Class), Ms Eileen Fitzgerald (4th Class), Ms Aisling Fanning (5th Class), Ms Sarah O'Sullivan (6th Class). Learning Support: Ms Carmel Lonergan and Ms Sarah Hogan. High Support Unit: Mr Keith MacAmhaidh. Ancillary Staff: Ms Ann-Marie Harty (SNA), Ms

Anne D'Arcy (Secretary) and Mr Willie Ryan (Caretaker).

It has been a good year in the school with highlights such as the school show 'Cinderella'; performing on the Square in the summer sunshine for The Gathering; winning Best Energy Project in the Tidy Schools Competition and taking part in the Muintir funded Digital Recollections Project. The Fethard interviews can be now viewed online at www.digitalrecollections2013.com. Just click on Holy Trinity National School to see the local recordings.

Sportswise, the school participated in U11 boys and U13 girls hurl-



Sixth Class pupils at Holy Trinity National School Back L to R: Megan Earl, Lucy Spillane, Laura Kiely, Andrea Pyke, Aaron Trehy, Anderson Ferrandes Silva, Robert Hackett. Middle L to R: Eric Costin, Sarah Carroll, Bridget McCarthy, Darragh Hurley, Ashley Bradshaw, Emma Jayne Burke, Hollie Broomfield, Richard Anglim, Maggie Fitzgerald, Kateryna Novikova. Front L to R: Emma Geoghegan, Adam O'Sullivan, Sinéad Regan, Megan Hackett, Chloe Nolan and Rachel Prout. Missing from photo is Andrew Phelan.

ing, camogie and football Cumann na mBunscoil competitions. The boys won the preliminary blitzes but lost out in the following rounds. Our first camogie team to represent the school acquitted themselves very well.

We are fortunate to have a dedicated and enthusiastic group of parents who give of their time to coach all pupils in the school. This year a permanent coach, Derry Peters, has joined the team.

In October a team of eighty pupils travelled to Marlfield for the schools' Cross Country Competition. Laura Harrington, Ciara Spillane and Keenan Aherne won individual medals. The school won team gold, silver and bronze medals.

Building on the ground-breaking achievements of the previous year, 2013 brought further spikeball success to Holy Trinity N.S., but this

year it was the girls who went the distance. Our girls A team won the county championship with ease and from there progressed to the Munster competition. Cork was the venue for the event and although victory was not ours on the day, the girls played with heart and pride.

During the year, 6th Class once again participated in the Challenge to Change project, organised by the Presentation Sisters. Our theme this year focussed on the human rights issue of child soldiers in our world today. Our project was titled, 'Soldier Boy, Soldier Why?' and was presented in Kilkenny on April 10, 2013 by Ms Sarah O'Sullivan and 6th Class. The children embraced the topic with keen interest, researched comprehensively and shared their findings with the school community.

'Do This in Memory' is a parish-based programme to prepare in

2nd Class for the Sacraments of First Penance and First Holy Communion. Here in Holy Trinity we were very lucky to be able to avail of Sr. Winnie Kirwan's time and expertise to spearhead the programme during the last school year 2012/2013. She organised the readings, prayers of the faithful, etc. for the Masses. There was a special Mass organised one Sunday every month by Sr. Winnie and a group of parents of the 2nd class children. Her input gave the children a deeper understanding of the Mass. We are very grateful for all her help, time and efforts. We wish her a speedy recovery.

A big thanks also to Sr. Maureen Power and Ms. Agnes Grogan who are so generous with their time. It will be through no fault of Sr. Maureen's if we do not produce a Lainey Keogh or a Phillip Treacy in the near future!

Always conscious of those in need, the school community recently raised awareness of the plight of those in Syria and the Philippines. As usual, our pupils and their families displayed great generosity in response. This generosity of spirit comes as no surprise as the parents are always eager to help in so many ways, those who serve on the board of management and the Parents Association in particular. Thanks also to Fr. Breen and Fr. McSweeney for their support and guidance. We welcome Mr Michael O'Sullivan to Presentation Patrician Secondary school and wish him happiness in Fethard as principal.

2014 will undoubtedly bring changes to our school but we nevertheless look forward with hope, eagerness and excitement to what lies ahead. ●



Holy Trinity National School pupils on The Square as part of The Gathering Festival in Fethard 2013

Fethard Business & Tourism Ltd.

2013 was a very busy but fruitful year for Fethard Business & Tourism Ltd. The main focus of our work was the ongoing project to restore the Town Hall (Tholsel) on Main Street for use as a tourism hub for Fethard and its hinterland. Fethard also marked The Gathering 2013 with a hugely successful mid-summer festival in June. At time of writing, we are awaiting final approval of funding for the Tholsel restoration. Restoration work should commence early in 2014.

An application for planning permission for the Tholsel was submitted to South Tipperary County Council in December 2012 by Shaffrey Associates. As part of the planning process, archaeological testing was required and this took place in January 2013. A number of exciting discoveries were made, including three original 17th century fireplaces on the first floor and evidence that the Tholsel was constructed on the site of an earlier building. Work was carried out by C  il  n    Drisceoil and his team in Kilkenny Archaeology, who produced a detailed report on their findings.

2013 was, of course, the year of The Gathering and Fethard Business & Tourism Ltd. set about doing something special to mark the occasion. Planning began in January for a major festival event. All voluntary, community and sporting groups in Fethard were asked to come on

board and the response was terrific. Fethard Historical Society kindly facilitated us by incorporating their annual Medieval Festival and Pageant into the Gathering Festival. We also used the build-up as an opportunity to hold a fundraising draw to raise revenue for the Tholsel project.

Our efforts culminated in a three-day festival on Midsummer's weekend that had a little bit of everything – music, dancing, sport, street entertainment and a great party atmosphere. Country Markets from around Ireland travelled to the birthplace of the movement on Saturday to set up street stalls. Sunday was a day packed full of entertainment with the Medieval Festival followed by the Highland Games. Garda estimates put the number of visitors to Fethard over the weekend at close to 10,000.

We would sincerely like to thank all the groups, organisations, businesses and individuals who gave their time to make the Gathering Festival a success. Thanks also to those who purchased   50 tickets for the fundraising draw: your support is much appreciated. South Tipperary Development Company provided financial support of   15,500 towards the festival and we acknowledge this vital contribution.

There was good news in April and May when planning permission and ministerial consent for the Tholsel restoration were granted. Following



Photographed at the Business & Tourism Group's presentation on 'Fethard Town Hall' are Back L to R: Marie Murphy, Edwina Newport, Anthony Fitzgerald (Business Advisor-South Tipperary Co Council), Colm McGrath, Cllr John Fahey, Leo Darcy, Peter Grant, Terry Cunningham. Middle L to R: Diana Stokes, Pat Looby, Gerard Manton, Catherine Corcoran, Peter Silke (AIB), Marie Phelan (Tipperary Co Council-Tourism and Public Awareness), Paddy McEvoy, Bill O'Sullivan. Front L to R: Maurice Moloney, Susanna Manton, Michael O'Boyle (B.Arch MUBC MRIA), Jenny Butler, Bernadette Stocksborough and Isobel Cambie (South Tipperary Development Company)

this, Kenneth Hennessy Architects were appointed to complete the detailed design for the project and to manage the public tendering process. Specialist conservation expertise was provided by Michael O'Boyle of Bluett O'Donoghue Architects. The design team showed huge commitment to finalising their work ahead of tight deadlines and we thank them for that.

July saw the departure of our chairperson Catherine Corcoran, who, along with her husband Tim Robinson, has left Fethard for Ethiopia, where Catherine has taken up a position as Country Director with Concern Worldwide. We wish Catherine well in her new role and congratulate Jimmy O'Sullivan on his appointment as chairperson.

All the hurdles for the Tholsel project were cleared by October and South Tipperary Development Company has committed €246,000 funding for the project under the Rural Development Programme. Along with a contribution from South Tipperary County Council and local fundraising, this will provide an overall budget of €350,000 for restoration work. We are currently awaiting final approval for the funding from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government and may even have good news by the time you sit down to read this piece.

We would like to wish all Fethard people, at home and abroad, a happy and peaceful Christmas and a prosperous New Year. ●

The Day it Began – First Day of WWII



*Pat Gough (left) with P.J. Davern (married to Honor Mulligan)
and his sons, Michael, Patrick and Donagh*

Happy 19th Birthday, September 3, 1939. We somehow knew for certain that it would be today. We had been at the ready for weeks now. Blued bulbs had replaced all the bright ones in all Squadron light fixtures, black-out curtains were fitted to all windows and door openings. All aircrews were on stand-by. The place: RAF Station, Ford, Sussex, on the South Coast of England. Not a very formidable adversary for the Hun as we were equipped only with lumbering Supermarine Walrus amphibians and open cockpit biplane Blackburn Sharks. Our job was to patrol the

coastline and spot German submarines, mark the area with Stannic Pots (a kind of smoke bomb) and then radio for a Royal Navy destroyer which would supposedly rush to the area and dispatch the sub with depth charges, assuming that the Hun would stay around long enough to be clobbered.

I was in the flight ready room at 7.45am when a message came in that a German sub was detected off the coast in the vicinity of the Isle of Wight. I was flying as Radio Observer, and my pilot was Flying Officer Mungo-Parkes, later to become an ace in the Battle of Britain (and sub-

sequently getting the 'chop' himself when he was shot down over the French coast.) We took off in the Walrus and headed out over the sea on a heading that would take us just south of the Isle of Wight. Communication in those days was by HF using Morse Code – the more sophisticated VHF voice transmissions were still in limited use with the Fighter Boys. You had to wind out the trailing aerial (antenna) with its leaded weight, and this had to be done cautiously and gently. Many a poor innocent cow or sheep had become the victim of careless RAF peacetime flyers too eager to get the aerial out - and with a sharp jerk the lead balls parted company with the aerial wire and brought swift finish to some poor farmer's livestock.

On this morning of September 3, a few hours even before war had been declared, our thoughts were grim and sad as we flew up and down the coastline scanning the sea for any sign or telltale slick of an enemy submarine. I tested the rear machine gun and scanned the area through binoculars, but nary a sign of the enemy. Finally, the radio crackled its dit dahs, and the message read, 'return to base.' After landing and returning to the flight room we were just in time to gather with the others to hear the voice of Prime Minister Chamberlain announce at 11am that we were now at war with Germany. Having been fed on the Hitler propaganda for almost a year since the Munich Crisis, we were

anticipating Der Fuehrer's 'Blitzkrieg' or Lightning War, where he promised to finish off England in very short order. We stood down from duty to go to lunch, in the middle of which the air raid siren went – wheeee . . . ooooo. This was the first siren heard in England in WWII. There was a mad dash for tin helmets and gas masks, and a brisk run for the air raid shelters; we really thought that Hitler wasn't wasting any time in bringing us to our knees. Talk was quiet and subdued in the shelter, each with his own thoughts of this new experience, this new danger, this new way of life or death, of living from day to day, a new way of life that we would get used to and have with us for more years than we would care to remember. 'All Clear' sounded, and we could breathe again for a little while.

Darkness of the first day of War came to RAF Ford – the dimly lit messes and canteens filled with cigarette smoke and the sound of beer tinged voices raised in mock good spirits to hide the gloom and anxiety as we sang ludicrous songs, the cleanest of them being, 'We're going to hang out our washing on the Siegfried Line.' We never got a look at the Siegfried Line before Hitler belted us out of Europe at Dunkirk. So ended my first day of 'War'.

I would have reason to wish that future days of war would be as uneventful. ●

*Excerpt the diary of Patrick V. Gough
(September 3, 1939)*

A Fethard Pre-Nuptial Agreement

We are inclined to think that pre-nuptial agreements are very much a modern idea with film actors/actresses, etc. being the discoverers of this legal procedure. Pre-nups (as they are commonly called) are older than we imagine. In fact we have a very detailed local pre-nup dating back to 1779 (May 21). The agreement was between the prospective groom Edward Hemphill from Fethard (he seems to have been a doctor), his future bride Frances Despard of Killaghy (Mullinahone) and her father Francis Greene Despard. The executors of the agreement were Thomas Lamphier of Parkstown and William Despard of Fethard.

Terms

1. *The Bride's fortune of six hundred pounds plus securities she owned of three hundred pounds were to be handed over to her future husband.*
2. *Provision was made for Frances should her husband die before her - she would inherit all his property as would he if she died before him.*
3. *Provision was made for any children they might have and that even applied if she was pregnant when Edward died. (Didn't they think of everything)*
4. *Hemphill was entitled (with permission from the Executors) to buy land using her fortune if the Executors deemed it to be to their advantage.*

Conclusion

In the eighteenth century when women had very few legal rights this agreement was necessary to safeguard Miss Despard. We must remember that the sums of money mentioned would be huge in 1779. It would be nice to know how the marriage turned out or if there are any descendants of Hemphills or Despards. Maybe some local geographers know where Parkstown and Springhill are (Hemphill owned substantial amounts of land at Springhill originally called Coolnacuppogue in the document).

If any local historian wishes to borrow my copy of the agreement please contact me. ●

by Dinny Burke

A song for Fethard

The recent TG4 Programme on Fethard (didn't our musicians, Gaeilgeoirí and geographers really do us proud) featured a song about Fethard. As far as I know we haven't got a definitive song as our neigh-

bouring parish Killenaule does, 'The Hills of Killenaule'. Maybe some local composers could bend their efforts to producing a song that we can truly call our own (mind you, the one by John Spillane on the TG4 programme

by Dinny Burke

was excellent).

Mr Jackie White's 'Fethard Song' was really good but I haven't heard it recently. I am presenting this very

poor effort as a starting point to encourage competent composers to come forward. This song is called 'The Walls of Fethard'. ●

The Walls of Fethard

*I have travelled far in this great world, many places I have seen
From the pyramids of Egypt to the cliffs around Dooneen.
The lakes of old Killarney too and Galway Bay I know
but the Walls of Fethard call me back wherever I may go.*

Chorus

*Old Slievenamon smiles gently on the fairest place I know,
Clashawley's lovely waters how peacefully they flow,
From Rocklow down to Fethard Town, Killusty to Monroe,
The Walls of Fethard call me back wherever I may go.*

*Midst the green hills of Tipperary lies this ancient fortress town
Not far from lovely Cashel and its Rock of high renown.
From Market Hill I see it still when evening shadows fall
And if you look north you'll surely see the hills round Killenaule.*

Chorus

*These mighty walls that guard our town were raised by foreign hand,
By Normans to enslave and rule a newly conquered land,
Though they are gone their work lives on, the walls stand proud and high
As a symbol of our country's past and the freedom we enjoy.*

Chorus

John Joe's Corner

by John Joe Keane

Thinning Times

For money and for having a go, no precision, planting them in the row. The single plant, to be left to grow, to a young mind, a garden of interest show. The weeds were scotch, chicken, thistle, tansy, dock. Weather was a factor, sunshine made hard ground, rain, frost was mucky, drill after drill, sometimes the hoe was used in skilful hands. Men, women, whole families, the boss, sometimes grubbed with the tractor and the grubber, monotonous, nearly soul destroying, weary work. Insects were slugs, spiders, ladybirds, cockroaches, earwigs and aphids. Beet and turnips were the crop, after grown they were snagged and transported to market.

Of the Past

Bags made of jute, biscuits called Arrowroot, goose wings for dusting, studs, tips for a boot's sole. Peggy's leg, Geary's biscuit, tobacco to cut and roll, butt of fag in the ear, hat pin like a spear, bicycle rim racing, spinning top, slab toffee, polish tin, hopscotch. A tea-chest for storage, a sleeve for a snot, Zam-Buk, street judys, a mender for a pot, patches for wellingtons, half a comb, stud for a collar, galvanised bath of foam. A sweet gallon of skimmed milk, a chiffon scarf or one made of silk, a shilling, a tanner, half-crown, ten bob note, red-seal on twine, Thurles to Clonmel railway line.

Crampscastle

Standing in farmland, beneath Slievenamon, a symbol of history, battles lost and won, young eyes looking up, at the height of the stone walls, imaginary arrows, guns and cannon balls. A climb to the first floor, now covered with grass, remains of a stone stairs, openings made of class, a shelter for cattle place now, and a rendezvous, inland. Nearby is a disused quarry and lime kiln face, access was from the Cloneen road, now landscaped and land filled, the castle structure stilled.

Back Lane shortcut

Running from Barrack Street to the lower Green, and vice-versa, not tarred, Pa Joe Holohan had out-houses and yard for fodder storage, a horse clinic cum yard there. Sean Henahan owned a house, once used for stabling and out back was a long field to his back door. There was a glass house, where grapes were grown, beside it was a horse and cattle paddock, two stone walls, channelled the lane, off it was a darker lane, with a turn in it called 'slap arse lane'. The rear of Billy Morrissey's and Lory Kenny's was a more open space, there Bainín Ryan resided in a disused cab of a truck after his house burned down. There were some old Prefect cars there, and the shed that still stands, that housed Laurence Kenny's cabinet making industry.

Georgie Matthews

Hailed from Kerry Street, in Fethard's dear old town, he was a driver, musician, collector, soldier and a storyteller of renown. Gifted with brains, charm and presence, reared a fine family and enjoyed life's touch, could recall events of yesteryears, regaled both far and wide, laughter or tears. Lived to a great age, ninety-one, many is the evening he entertained everyone. Ferried Ronald Reagan's 'secret service' serene, during the president's visit to Ballyporeen. Played in the parades in Fethard and Clonmel, worked in England many years ago, did tell. May he rest in peace, always.

Delmege's Field

Behind Trehy's garage where the ball was thrown in, coats and jumpers were the goal posts, there soccer, rugby, Gaelic was played, there was a stile going in to it, the price of a ball was gathered up, two teams were picked. It was about the time of the emergence of Pele, this was during the 'ban', when the ball hit the thorns on the ditch and was punctured, a nick with a blade brought it into shape. Some notable players were Mickey Cummins in the wellies, Abe Kennedy, Waxie Kenny, Don McCarthy, Tony Hanrahan, Barney Kenny, John Keane, John Joe McCormack, Skipper Dillon, a cousin or two from England or Clonmel, and yours truly!

A Popular Ramble

Heading north on the Killenaule Road straight, with minimum refuge from the rushing traffic, past Calvary Cemetery to open country, on the right looms Kilnockin hill, furry with its old world golf clubhouse. On turning left at the 'Ballabuct' tangent, beside the site of the old Fethard racecourse, then navigating Black's Bridge underline, on to the Rocklow Road, left again at Ronan's, over the humped back bridge where once the patent axel of an ass and cart negotiated, noisily. Heading in by the Parochial House after the Kennels, then under the arch at Sparagoleith, down by the dispensary to Main Street with a sense of satisfaction and a clear head.

A smoked experience

Off we took, over by Jesuits' Walk, into the boreen by Mrs McGrath's thatched house, across the fields to the 'Boody Bridge', up the wooden steps, arms resting on the walls, waiting for the steam train to envelope us with smoke. Couldn't see anything, waited for the smoke to evaporate, then down the steps. We went over to the Grove wood gate and into nature along the path, out by Mikey Connors and home by Knockbrack. ●



John Davin, Rathsallagh

by Gerry Long

Last year I wrote an account of the life and times of the Rathsallagh poet John Davin.

The piece entitled 'John Davin the Tipperary Peasant' appeared on page 237, and there was a major error in regard to John's parentage, which I now wish to correct. John Davin was born to Kennedy Davin (D. October 26, 1882) and Margaret Morrissey (D. January 11, 1872) at Rathsallagh, Fethard in 1846, not, as I had stated, to William and Mary Davin. Many of his poems were published in the Nationalist and some American newspapers in the early part of the last century.

The photograph above is one of many that show John Davin during his life in America. They are professional studio photographs typical of their time. Many emigrants would have sent home such photos to their relatives in Ireland

as proof of their success in America. Sometimes they were the only contact between them and home. Up

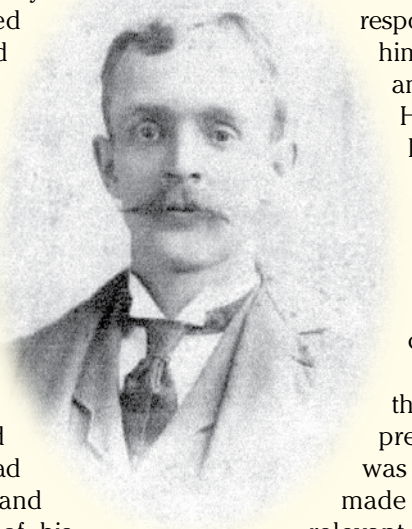
to his death, however, John Davin kept up a lively correspondence between himself and his family and friends at home. He also supplied local newspapers with poems and articles, which kept him up to date with events in Fethard and the county at large.

In writing for the American Irish press this contact was invaluable, and made his opinions very relevant especially during the periods 1919 to 1923. At home, his relatives' interest and

intimate involvement in the freedom struggle lent great weight and a unique source of information for his American readers.

John's poems show his great love for his home place as well as the rhythms of nature

around it. He was also a passionate patriot and typical of his era. ●



John Davin's old homestead, now sadly demolished, and grandly titled Rathsallagh House. The farmhouse was thatched and followed a fairly standard floorplan common for such buildings in this district.

Christmas Memories

by John F. Davin, Philadelphia, and formerly of Fethard.

Comes with the hallowed festive Christmas.

*With its gladness once again,
And an exile spirit wanders
To an Irish rural fane,
Where 'twas his wont in boyhood,
Neath the midnight's starry glow,
To wend his way on Christmas morn,
In the years of long ago.*

*And hoped and worked that Ireland,
Ere another Christmas morn,
Would exult in all the glory
Of liberty new born,
Ah! in those years of boyhood
Were the hopes for freedom bright,
That her sunburst battle banner
Would greet our gladdened sight.*

*Year after year had vanished
With Ireland still in chains,
But the hope for her redemption
In the bosom still remains,
And all those years of exile
The pensive spirit sighs,
As the bygone Christmas morns
'Fore fancy's visions rise.*

*At the brilliant lighted altar,
Stands the vested soggarth old,
As out upon the night air
The Christmas Mass-bell tolled,
Venerable and sainted,
The white-haired soggarth there,
Wishes all a happy Christmas,
Within that house of prayer.*

*Gladsome strains of psalmody,
In choral grandeur rolled
Gloria in Exelsis Deo
On those Christmas morns of old.*

*The sacred rites' influence
On the feelings softly stole,
Whilst served the hand annointed,
The banquet of the soul.*

*O! all the grand old customs,
And scenes of social mirth,
That with loveliness ennobled
The Irish Christmas hearth.
Whilst at window sill and doorstep,
Will the warbling robin come,
With fairy strain enchanting-
Gets the expectant crumb.*

*The itinerant minstrel,
That o'er the land will roam,
He's ever hailed an honour
In the Irish peasant's home.
Where Erin's glorious music,
Pathetic, bold, or gay,
With bursts of song is blended,
In patriotic lay.*

*And the graceful Irish dances,
With nimble heel and toe,
Whilst o'er the snow-clad fields resounds,
The hunstman's tally-ho.
And the cheers and shouts of urchins,
By the hedges in the glen,
Red their cheeks with wild exertion
At the hunting of the wren.*

*Now have twenty winters vanished,
With their winding sheet of snows,
And the white-haired soggarth with them
Has sunk in death's repose.
O! the memory of those days the more
The lapse of times endears,
Whilst here must pensive destiny
Prolong mine exile years.*

Philadelphia, December 21st, 1909.

Great times in Fethard

by Ringo Napier



Johnny 'Spot' Leahy holding pup with Paddy O'Dwyer and Joe O'Dwyer, St. Patrick's Place.

I remember back in the sixties, Fethard was a great place to live. We did not have a lot but we were happy. In the summertime we would go swimming up at the Rectory, over in the kennels on the Rocklow Road, down in the bog, at Newbridge and at Breen's Bridge as well. We used to put pennies on the railway line and when the train came it would roll over them and flatten them to double their size, but not their value, worse luck. On Sundays there used to be great toss schools over by the bike shed across from the cinema for the older men only. We used to play a lot of cards for the few coppers we had. There was a great place to play at the back of the old town wall on the Square. There was a cave in the open space behind the wall and we went there to play the cards.

As we did not have a lot, we had to think for ourselves. We used to

take the spokes out of the wheels of our bikes and have wheel races around the ring in St. Patrick's Place. The ball alley was a great place in the Barrack Field. Everybody from the town played there and it was hard to get a game. Sometimes there were so many it was "winners stay on".

I remember riding a bike on top of the town wall. I was always showing off to the girls as Ringo would do. No hands on the bike, big fool me! I did not see the hole in the middle of the wall and off I came into the Barrack Field. I was sore all over but would not let on as I had to impress the ladies – that was the brave Ringo wrecked for a week.

We had great times picking mushrooms in the fields and getting to see every orchard in Fethard. We would only look at the trees, never take apples as we were all angels as you know too well. Great times! ●

The Capital

by Tom Shine

Over the years I've had numerous requests to write a little article on my involvement with The Capitol cinema. I must first make a detour back in time to 1945-46 when I was a telegraph boy in the post office which was run by the postmistress, Miss Rita Moran, and her sister Nan who were both lovely people. They were very good to me and pointed me in the right direction. I was a country boy and the advice and help they gave me was of great benefit to me in later life. Nan was married to Hal Goldsborough who was an electrical engineer in the British army. During my time in the post office Hal and I became very friendly.

In 1946 they started to build the cinema. Work was slow as materials, especially cement, were scarce after World War II. One of the cinema's directors was Paddy McGrath. He was originally from Carrick-on-Suir but he lived in Dublin, however, during construction he remained in Fethard and became friendly with Hal Goldsborough. Rumour had it that Hal was going to be manager and projectionist at the cinema.

In November 1946 my time was up in the post office so I was out of work. It was back to pulling beet for the farmers, which was a big difference to what I had been doing. As it turned out my friendship with Hal paid dividends. He told Paddy McGrath about me which resulted

in me being called to the cinema in early January 1947. My job was cleaning the rust off the standards – the irons between the plush seats – talk about starting at the bottom!

The cinema at this stage was a big empty building. The only part finished was the balcony steps – seventeen steps from top to bottom. There was great activity – painters, carpenters, electricians and plumbers doing the heating. They were all under terrible pressure. Opening day was running two months late as fitting the seats was a slow job. No electric screwdrivers in those days. Two hundred and twenty seats on the balcony, the same in the parterre. It took a big team of men to do that job. All this time I was doing little jobs around the place and getting a little wage.

Opening night arrived at last. It was the end of February and there was no heating for another month. During the month women used to bring a hot water bottle under their coats. On opening night I was tidying up ready to go home when Mr McGrath, who was very excited, said he had a little job for me that night. "You will be on the front door leaving the people in." I was also excited at this. He said to be there at 7pm. The film shown on the first night was 'A Star Is Born' with Judy Garland. An hour before opening a massive crowd was gathering down the Valley and up the Main Street.

The first night went off great and everyone was satisfied. The staff on the night included Dinny Byrne from Dublin in the projection room. He spent three months showing Hal the run of things. Mary Goldsborough was in the office. Eddie Coffey was the first balcony usher, Paddy McLellan was parterre checker along with Paddy Shine, also there were usherette Peg Sullivan, with Betty Sullivan, Mick Twomey, Jim Walsh and Peter Murphy. Laura Ward, Kathleen Cassells, Peg Shine and Breda Ryan were in the office.

When the show was over Mr McGrath told me to report the next day as a number of seats would need to be fixed, but when I came in he brought me to the projection room to Mr Byrne, the projectionist, and told him to look after me. That was the start of my life at the Capitol. I served my three years and went to Carrick-on-Suir to do a six month course on management. In April 1950 I was appointed Manager/Projectionist and there I remained until c1965 when the cinema closed down due to lack of business.

During my time I trained three boys who served their full time: Michael Butler, Christy Matthews and Noel Slattery. They were nice boys and they all got good jobs. Tommy Sayers didn't get a chance to finish because of the closure.

The years 1949, 1950 and up to the early sixties were great years in the cinema. All the big films drew great crowds. 'The Quiet Man' ran

for two shows a night, and there was 'The Blackboard Jungle' and numerous others. In 1963 television came and that took a certain number of people away from the cinema, then videos came, but the biggest killer of all was bingo. That was the last straw. Cinemas all over Ireland and England closed down and became bingo halls.

In 1967 the Capitol was purchased by Fethard Enterprises and they turned it into a beautiful dance hall and reopened it as 'The Country Club' later that year. It was a success for a number of years then in 1972 it was sold to Danny Doyle, a Wexford man who was a big operator at the time. All the big showbands played in the dance hall until Doyle closed it in the early eighties. It was lying idle for a long time until Fethard Community Council bought in and opened up a dance hall again in 1993 and in 1994 became a limited company, Fethard Ballroom Ltd. Over the years they have made big improvements. I always thought it was a pity they removed the balcony. It would be grand to have the lovely plush seats because the dance floor took up only the parterre area. I note that it is now called The Fethard Ballroom. Surely it should be called the Capitol Ballroom. The people responsible for naming it never heard of the Capitol. That's what the passing of time does. To me and many others it will always be the Capitol. ●

Fethard Sports Achievement Awards

In January 2013, Philip Butler, Butler's Sports Bar, initiated an aspiration that was in his head for many years – to acknowledge local sporting achievement in all fields, be it at participation, administration or coaching level.

Calling a meeting on January 11, he gathered a group to oversee the running of the competition, run on a monthly basis with an overall winner chosen at the end of the year. The steering committee, comprising people with many sporting interests, are: Mary Godfrey, Sandra Maher, M.J. Croke, Dave Maher, Tomás Keane, Ciarán Treacy, Austin Godfrey, Paul Kavanagh, Brian Higgins, and Paraic McCormack.

The competition is confined to Fethard parish but also allows for Fethard people involved in sport elsewhere, as well as people from

outside the parish who live and work in Fethard, to be nominated for an award. To date ninety-seven individuals across twenty-eight different sports have been nominated for awards, which is an indication of the level of sporting activity taking place that people might not necessarily know about.

The ten monthly winners so far have come from such wide-ranging sports as greyhound racing to horse racing with badminton, GAA and rugby thrown in for good measure.

A feature of our prize-giving nights is to honour former sports people and/or administrators and to acknowledge their contribution to sport in the parish. Early in January 2014 the twelve monthly winners will come together and the overall winner for Butler's Sports Achievement Award 2013 will be announced. ●



Special sporting guest, Michael Ryan, Tullamaine, Fethard, manager of the successful 2012 All-Ireland Tipperary Intermediate Hurling Team, presenting the first Butler's Bar Sports Achievement Award for January 2013 to Liz Lalor. Also included are proprietors, Ann Butler and Philip Butler.

Ups and Downs, Ins and Outs

—Anon

During the summer, I met a tourist in Clonmel who said he was going *down* to Portlaoise. I asked him if he meant Portlaw, but no, it was Portlaoise. I wished him a pleasant journey and silently hoped he would be travelling by bus and not navigating with a compass and ending up in Dungarvan.

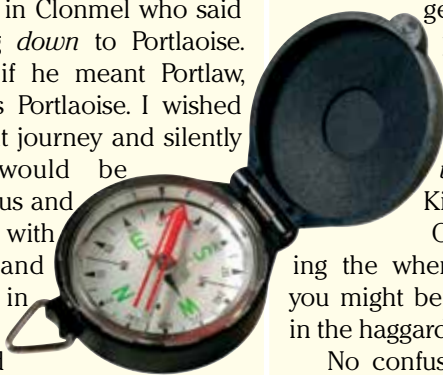
Fethard people know exactly where they are, in what direction

they are going and always use geographically correct prepositions.

They go: *in* to Clonmel, *over* to Cashel, *down* to Cork, *up* to Dublin and *out* to Killusty.

Outside the town, if asking the whereabouts of someone, you might be told that “he’s *abroad* in the haggard.”

No confusion there! And come to think of it ...Clonmel people have nowhere to go *into*. ●



Wrapped up for the cold spell in 1981 are L to R: Peter Napier, Mary Barrett and Johnny Carey.



Discussing the repairs to Holy Trinity Parish Church in June this year were L to R: Joe Costello (Contractor), Canon Tom Breen P.P. and Richie Butler (Engineer)



Tony Reddin (centre) photographed above with Toby Purcell (left) and Michael Keane, Knockelly. After leaving Galway, Tony Reddin joined the Tipperary team during the 1947-48 National Hurling League and went on to play a key part for almost a decade, winning three All-Ireland medals, three Munster medals and five National Hurling League medals.



The Square, Fethard, from a hand coloured postcard in the early 1900s



Burke Street, Fethard, from a hand coloured postcard in the early 1900s