

MEATH ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION

CATALOGUE OF 50 RECORDINGS

IRISH LIFE AND LORE SERIES

Irish Life and Lore Series

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Recordings duplicated by : Midland Duplication, Birr

Printed by : Midland Duplication, Birr

Privately published by : Maurice and Jane O’Keeffe, Tralee

These recordings were made between October and December 2009

This series of recordings was solely funded by Meath County Council



comhairle chontae na mí
meath county council

NAME: MARK BRADY, NAVAN, BORN 1941
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 1
Subject: An emigrant's story
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 60:49

Mark Brady was recorded while home on holiday in Navan from his work in Mexico. He was born and raised in Flowerhill, Navan, where his parents ran a general grocery business. He describes his initial decision to study for the priesthood and his later decision, after four years study, to follow another path. He worked with his father at the business known as *The Golden Goose*, and also taught in England for three years. In the 1980s Mark decided to leave Ireland, travel for a while and, when he arrived at Tarahumara in Mexico, enthralled with the place and the people, he decided to stay and do his best to help the people, who were almost destitute. He has devoted twenty-six years to this work, helping to raise funds for the building of schools and infrastructure there.



NAME: LIAM MCCARTHY, LISMULLEN, NAVAN, BORN 1936

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 2

Subject: A Life in the postal service

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 51:24

Mallow in Co. Cork is the birthplace of Liam McCarthy, and it was here that he began his career as a post office clerk in 1954. Shortly afterwards he was transferred to Wexford where he spent two years, and then to Navan in 1958. While in Wexford he worked in the telephone exchange, and he describes the early days of the system and the advancements which came about at that time. Navan in 1958 is detailed in the recording, its people, the workplace and the class order which prevailed in the postal service. Liam is retired since 1996 from An Post and has taken a different path, working in accountancy in the private sector. He discusses his impressions of the differences between employees in the public and private sectors in Ireland.



NAME: JACKIE BUTTERLY, FRENCH LANE, STACKALLEN, BORN 1936

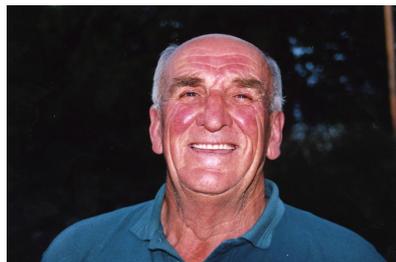
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 3

Subject: The Big House

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 71:17

Jackie Butterly has spent all his working life at Stackallen House. At the beginning of this recording Jackie fondly recalls John Woods, a neighbour who was well-known for his local knowledge and skills. Jackie's father worked at the Glebe Estate, and Jackie details the history of this fine place. As a young man he himself began work at Stackallen where his uncle was also employed. He discusses the previous owners, firstly the Downers and then the Burkes for whom he worked. Major Burke died in 1964 and his wife ran the estate until her retirement in 1992. Jackie celebrated a half century of employment at Stackallen during his working days there. He describes his work, the changes, the staff at the house and the farm.



NAME: STEPHEN MARKEY, NAVAN, BORN 1943
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 4
Subject: Recollections of a miner
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 47:17

Ardmulchan Estate is the place where Stephen Markey spent his childhood, and where his father was employed as a herdsman and dairyman. The family moved to Navan in 1950, and Stephen recalls the reasons for the move. In 1961 Stephen emigrated to Birmingham, where he worked for an engineering company but returned to work in Navan after a short time. In 1974 when mining began at Navan he was employed as a jumbo driller. He recalls his training and gives a great account of the conditions and challenges of the workplace. Shifts were from 8.00am to 4.00pm, 4.00pm to 12.00am and 12.00am to 8.00am. His occupation as a miner gave him great satisfaction, and he says that he cannot imagine any better employment.



NAME: MARGARET MARKEY (*née* CREIGHTON),
NAVAN, BORN 1918
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 5
Subject: A long and interesting life
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 60:30

Margaret Markey is a native of North Leitrim, where she grew up on a hill farm. She recalls the difficult times there and her move to take up a position on the Lambert Estate at Beuparc where she worked as a domestic. After her marriage to Stephen Markey, she moved to live and work with him at the Fletcher's Estate at Ardmulchan. Margaret has some interesting photographs of the house, the owners and staff. In 1961 she decided to open a small grocery business at Windtown Old on the outskirts of Navan, where she also provided lodgings for foreign miners. In 1987, she changed direction again, sold her business and moved to New York where she became a lady's companion to a Mrs. Newman. She has now returned and lives in Navan.



NAME: PAT TRAVERS, NAVAN, BORN 1939
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 6
Subject: Navan Carpets
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 49:52

Pat Travers recalls his background and schooling, and his employment with Navan Carpets in 1963. He was to spend his entire working life of forty years with the company. He describes Navan town in the 1950s, the shops and the workplaces. He also recalls his first taste of work in his teenage years in the landmark Woods' clothing shop in Navan. At Navan Carpets he spent the first four and a half years on night shifts as he trained in weaving, and he later progressed from small looms to 12 foot looms. He talks about the rules and regulations, the wages and work practices, and remembers colleagues and management. The customers, the different orders and the types of carpets made are all recalled as are the Unions and the challenges that the workers faced. Pat retired in 2002 and declares that if he had his working life to live again he wouldn't change a thing.



NAME: BOB DIER, NAVAN, BORN 1942
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 7
Subject: A career in Navan Carpets.
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 51:06

In 1963 Bob Dier began his long career at Navan Carpets, a career which ended in 2004. He recalls the Navan Carpets premises as it was in his early career, the staff and the management. Life began for him in Wexford in a farming background and he recalls working at Goodbody's Jute Factory in Clara, Co. Offaly. After four years he moved to Navan Carpets. For a short time, he was sent to learn his trade in Scotland. He discusses the history of Navan Carpets, and the wool factory at Celbridge. He also discusses the production of carpets, their patterns and designs. The changes within management and the takeover by Youghal Carpets are recalled, as is its effect on the local workers. He remembers fondly the social scene at Navan Carpets which had its own amateur dramatic society and football team, and he describes in detail the great disappointment at the closure of the factory.



NAME: BRIDIE McENTEE (*née* McGUINNESS), NOBBER, BORN 1918,

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 8

Subject: Nobber in earlier times

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 78:11

Bridie McEntee was born into a family in Nobber who were merchants, publicans and post office officials. She traces her family back several generations and describes her early days, her education, and the beginning of her career in the family business in 1943. She worked in Nobber Post Office for 65 years. She recalls the first factory in Nobber, Gypsum Industries, established in the early 1900s which created great employment. She talks of the big houses and the class order in earlier times, the years of The Emergency, the influx of migrants due to the work of the Land Commission, the people of the village and their occupations and Fair days on the third Tuesday of each month. She discusses local folk cures and the medicines supplied by certain individuals.



NAME: JOAN DEMPSEY, ATHBOY, BORN 1927

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 9

Subject: Love of theatre and performance

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 57:52

Joan Dempsey lives in the original family home where her mother ran a boarding house in former days, and which Joan continued to run for some time. She recalls her father who drove a hackney car and the struggle to make ends meet. Her mother worked long hours at her boarding house, and Joan recalls some of the people who stayed at the house, amongst them the writer John McGahern. In the 1950s Joan became involved in the local theatre group, and remembers the cast members and the producers. She was to win a national gold medal and also a national silver medal for her outstanding performances in *Shadow and Substance*. In addition to the boarding house, Joan also ran a restaurant successfully in the family home for many years.



NAME: MAUREEN PHELAN (*née* LAMBE), ATHBOY, BORN 1934 (Part I)

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 10

Subject: Athboy through the years

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 54:00

Lambe's grocery business in the Main Street in Athboy is the home place of Maureen Phelan. Her family has owned



the business since her father had purchased it ninety years ago. This recording is replete with banter and humour as Maureen describes her early days growing up in Athboy and her days serving behind the counter from a very young age. She recalls the people who arrived on Fair days, the hawkers who sold their wares and the hauliers who delivered goods from the trains to town. She recalls the entertainments and pastimes, the local cinema and the dancehall.

NAME: MAUREEN PHELAN (*née* LAMBE), ATHBOY, BORN 1934 (Part II)

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 11

Subject: Athboy through the years

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 38:41

The Emergency in Ireland is vivid in Maureen Phelan's memory. She clearly recalls the burning of sawdust as a substitute fuel, the people coming to the shop with ration coupons, and the care people took with their purchases. The business was famous for its delicious ice-cream, which was made on the premises. The house in which the family lived had been originally built on the site of an old castle, and many years ago, a cellar was discovered under the house which was subsequently to prove very useful, due to its very low temperature, for the storage of foodstuffs. During the recording Maureen discusses the local people featured in some old family photographs.



NAME: MALACHY HAND, OLDCASTLE, BORN 1952

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 12

Subject: Farming and heritage

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 57:11

On a tour of his farm at Bellaney Malachy Hand explains the meaning of the name of the townland, which was once part of the Loughcrew Estate. He provides a brief narrative of his own family's arrival in the 1830s. The old farm buildings and their uses are described, as are the farming practices employed in his father's time. He discusses the many changes he has seen in farming over his life. Local fieldnames and their meanings are recorded, as are Malachy's memories of walking the cattle to the fair on the



first Friday of each month. The local games played from the early 1920s are discussed, as is Malachy's own work as a heritage guide.

NAME: ANNE HAMILTON (*née* SPICER), DUNBOYNE, BORN 1927

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 13

Subject: The Big House

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 41:53

Anne Hamilton was born in Wiltshire in England, and as a young girl, would visit her aunt at Castlesize near Sallins, beside the Liffey. She discusses her ancestry and her husband's family tree. She married Charles Hamilton in 1958 and moved to Hamwood House in Dunboyne in 1963, following the death of her father-in-law. She speaks frankly about the Land Commission and its work, and the breaking up of the large estates. She discusses her own parents and their reasons for settling in Ireland in her youth, and she recalls her late husband's service in India with the Lancashire Fusiliers during the Second World War.



NAME: MICHAEL TOBIN, OLDCASTLE, BORN 1918

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 14

Subject: A man of many parts

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 76:08

Michael Tobin has lived an interesting life. In his early youth he thinned turnips for local farmers for 6d a day. In 1924 his father was allocated land on the Loughcrew Estate by the Land Commission, in the same year which saw the building of Summerbank Road. He describes the prehistoric sites at Loughcrew and recalls the local people in earlier days, their customs and beliefs. He recalls the gypsies with their tents as they travelled around the locality. In the year Matt Talbot died in 1924, he remembers the snow reaching the height of the telegraph poles. He clearly recalls the animosity felt locally at the arrival of the migrants to take over the land at the behest of the Land Commission. The Economic War and the very low prices which prevailed for farm animals and land are recalled, and also his days in



England in the 1950s.

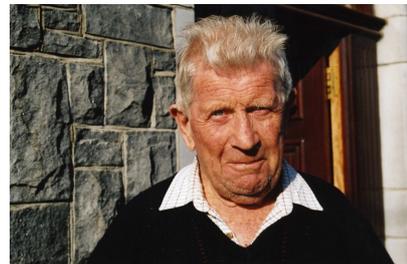
NAME: PADDY MEEGAN, HOWTHSTOWN, BORN 1922
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 15
Subject: Football and farming
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 58:53

Paddy Meegan was a wonderful athlete in his youth and captained winning Meath All-Ireland football team in the 1952 final against Cavan. He was on the 1949 team which won the Sam Maguire Cup for the first time and was on the winning team in the All-Ireland final against Kerry in 1954. He comes from a farming background and farms the same land as his grandfather did in the 1870s. He talks about his schooldays, boarding at St. Finians college in Mullingar, and he recalls his father's difficult financial circumstances during the Economic War. Following his father's death in 1943 he inherited the farm which he expanded over time from 100 acres to 250 acres. He discusses his football career and he concludes the recording with a poem about Meath's 1954 All-Ireland win, taken from his own book of poetry *From the Life Around Me*.



NAME: M. J. McGEARTY, BALLIVOR, BORN 1929
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 16
Subject: A lifetime in teaching
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 51:25

J. McGearty was recorded at the Credit Union in Ballivor of which he is a founding member. He recalls his family background and the fact that both his uncle and his father were members of the RIC. His father was a native of Leitrim and his uncle John was stationed at Ballivor. After the barracks was burnt during the Troubles, John restored the building and used it as a dwelling, and suggested to M. J.'s father and his family that they come to Ballivor to live and work. The family bought a small farm in the town and m. J., the eldest of eight children, grew up there. He discusses the town in earlier times, his schooling at St. Finian's in Mullingar and later his time at St. Patrick's College in Dublin where he trained as a primary teacher. He taught in several rural schools around the country and, in September 1950, he was appointed principal of Kildalkey National School (St. Dympna's), a rural school in county Meath. He discusses the curriculum, the teaching methods and the pastimes. He also recalls his uncle John's involvement in the Battle of Ashbourne during Easter Week, 1916.



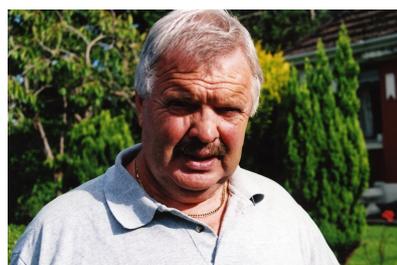
NAME: HUGH SMYTH, NAVAN, BORN 1928
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 17
Subject: A craftsman's long memories
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 49:08

At the age of 14 years, Hugh Smyth left his school days behind and began his apprenticeship with John Hogg and Company, Furniture Makers at Sandymount, beside Navan Town Hall. He recalls the time when the factory changed ownership and moved premises to the Dublin Road, and began to trade as Crannac Furniture. He remembers the suppliers of timbers and fabrics, and his early working days, qualifying initially as a chair-maker and later as a cabinet-maker. In the 1960s, having spent a year in London, he returned to Navan and opened his own cabinet-making business with Tommy and George Foster. He discusses the challenges of business, and his own strengths and skills as a craftsman rather than as a businessman.



NAME: PADDY BRENNAN, NAVAN, BORN 1939
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 18
Subject: A furniture craftsman
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 58:46

Paddy Brennan was born in Navan and grew up on the Boyne Road. Having finished school at 14 years of age, he worked with local farmers for two years before he began his apprenticeship as a chair-maker with Paddy Brown and Michael Mahon. He later began work with John Hogg and Co. He discusses the takeover of the company by Gael Linn and the turbulent times which ensued. A co-operative group was subsequently formed. He names the managers, the salesmen and the designers, and discusses the materials used and the suppliers. Paddy spent some time as a salesman until the group decided to sell directly to the public from new showrooms. He describes the logistics of the winding down of the group as the business came to an end.



NAME: MAY SEERY (*née* DOGGETT), NAVAN, BORN 1932
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 19
Subject: A country life
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 47:15

May Seery grew up on a small farm on the outskirts of Slane, and in this recording she discusses the thrifty family life in those days. Following her education she studied shorthand and typing in a technical college in Ardee and



began her career at Magee's Stores Ltd. in Ardee. She recalls the merchandise on sale there, the working conditions and remembers the company as very good employers. In the early 1950s she made the decision to train as a nurse in England and, when she graduated, returned to work in Drogheda Maternity hospital where she spent four years. She recalls her happy days at the hospital, and, in the late 1950s, her marriage to Michael Seery who farmed in Trim. She is the author of *Ploughing the Headland* and she reads a passage from this fascinating memoir.

NAME: BILL LYONS, NAVAN, BORN 1926

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 20

Subject: Life as a veterinary surgeon

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 61:45

Bill Lyons is a veterinary surgeon who has led an interesting life. He grew up in Navan and he begins this recording by discussing his family background. His great grandfather was a baker in the town and his father was a veterinary surgeon, also in Navan. Bill gives accounts of traditional methods of caring for animals, the Land Commission's work in the Gibbstown area, and the farmers there. He recalls his brief spell in England after he qualified, Fair days and creameries in Navan town, the huge changes over the decades in farming. He also speaks about farming organisations, associations, and institutions in a wide ranging recording.



NAME: FRED McELROY, NAVAN, BORN 1923

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 21

Subject: A rural schoolteacher

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 47:22

Fred McElroy is a native of Dundalk who was reared by his grandmother, a strict disciplinarian, very much of her time. After completing his schooling he trained as a primary teacher in Marino, and he recalls the various schools in which he taught. In 1951 he was appointed principal at Boyerstown, where he spent twenty-one happy years as teacher and principal. He was later principal of Bohermeen National School in the same parish. He discusses the primitive conditions in schools in the early days and the improvements as time went by. He recalls the school inspectors, his own teaching methods and says he misses teaching very much in his retirement.



NAME: WILLIAM CAREY, ENFIELD, BORN 1934
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 22
Subject: A farmer and auctioneer
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 57:15

The history of Enfield and the meaning of the name are discussed initially in this recording of William Carey. The buildings in the town, the occupants and their work, the farming people in the outlying farms are all recalled. William farmed near Enfield for thirty-five years. He remembers the war years, and the tillage contracting business he ran during that time. Also recalled are the migrants to the midlands, the Land Commission and the positive influence of dairying in farming in later times. An active interest in local and national politics is evident too. In the 1970s William began his business in auctioneering, which his son now runs. Using his in-depth local knowledge he gives an excellent account of deeply-rooted local family and place-names.



NAME: MARY (CISSY) HERWARD (*née* MCCORMACK), ALLENSTOWN, BORN 1921 (Part I)
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 23
Subject: A long and interesting life
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 48:34

Cissy Herward is a native of Allenstown, near Kells. In her 90th year the clarity of dates, times and occurrences is extraordinary. She speaks of her family background and the family members who all worked on the Allenstown estate. Cissy's father worked on the estate and reared his family there. She has fond memories of the working people there, the domestic and farm staff, and of the bell used for timekeeping. At the age of 18 she began work as a weaver at Navan Carpets where she remained for fourteen years. She married a farmer and, due to his ill health, she returned to work with Navan Carpets until 1956.



NAME: MARY (CISSY) HERWARD (*née* MCCORMACK), ALLENSTOWN, BORN 1921 (Part II)

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 24

Subject: A long and interesting life

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 54:02

In this second recording with Cissy Herward, she describes in detail the interior of the Craig Waller house, owners of the Allenstown estate. She remembers by name all the staff in the house and she discusses her father's twelve siblings, and names them and their occupations. The seasons, the customs, beliefs and traditions of each season are recounted. Local folk cures and their distribution are discussed, as is the work for each specific day in her home, and the use and recycling of everything, resulting in little or no waste. The Land Commission and the division of the large local estate and the resultant small holdings are also discussed in this recording.



NAME: SEAN McCABE, OLDCASTLE, BORN 1944

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 25

Subject: A well rooted family

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 58:40

Eight generations of McCabes precede Sean McCabe in farming the land at Ballinacree. The place is steeped in history and, on a walking tour on his land, he recounts his family history and relates the story of the Crossdrum chalice discovered on the land in 1750. Sean emigrated to America in 1963 where he remained for five years and where he became involved in the Civil Rights Movement. He is proud to have had the opportunity to shake the hand of Martin Luther King. He talks of the Loughcrew estate which covered hundred of acres, the aftermath of the Famine, landgrabbing, Land Annuity purchases in the years 1903-1909, and his own family's purchase of their farm from the Naper family.



NAME: MICHAEL MULLEN, OLDCASTLE, BORN 1933

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 26

Subject: An auctioneer of note

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 59:49

On a historic date in Irish history – 25th April 1916 – Michael Mullen's father opened the doors of his new business in Oldcastle for the first time. Michael recalls his father's drapery shop, and discusses the business, the involvement of seamstresses and tailors, fabrics, and the general running of a business at that time. He provides details of life during the Emergency, his schooldays at St. Finian's and his return to Oldcastle in the 1950's following his father's death to take over the business. Oldcastle in the 1950s is recalled, with its Fair days, market days and pig fairs. He married in 1961, and in 1962 he established a furniture auctioneering business. He provides some fine anecdotes about buying and selling furniture down through the years.



NAME: ALFRED WOODS, DULEEK, BORN 1934

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 27

Subject: A blacksmith's memories

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 56:42

Blacksmithing has been the trade of the Woods' family who have lived in the townland of Bolies in the parish of Duleek, on the Ashbourne Road, for nine generations. Until the end of the Second World War Alfred worked at the forge and he shares his expert knowledge about the workplace, the tools and the language of the blacksmith. The Woods' forge was renowned in the old days for corrective shoeing. He discusses his ancestral background and the fact that the family ran two forges at one time – one in Bolies and the other in nearby Stamullen. In the 19th century, the Moore Estate provided ample business for local forges. Alfred discusses the travellers' horses, typical injuries suffered by blacksmiths and the transition from horse to tractor in more recent times.



NAME: MICHAEL CONNOLLY, BORN 1943 AND LOU CONNOLLY, DUNBOYNE, BORN 1945

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 28

Subject: Life at the crossroads and *The Riordans* recalled

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 56:28

The Connolly farm at Piercetown, Dunboyne was the setting for *The Riordans* television series in the 1970s and 1980s. Michael Connolly recalls his introduction to RTE in 1965, working as a technician, with the Outside Broadcasting Unit, which travelled around the countryside, working on such programmes as *Quicksilver*, *The School Around the Corner*, and *The Sunday Game*. Lou Connolly discusses her employment in the Bush factory in Dublin, assembling television sets. They recall the characters, the actors (particularly Tom Cowley, a native of Ardraccan) and crew who worked on the set of *The Riordans*, and the huge disappointment which was widely felt at the sudden axing of the series.



NAME: ANN REILLY (*née* GILLICK), NAVAN, BORN 1942

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 29

Subject: Navan Long Ago

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 43:54

Ann Reilly and her late husband Seamus Reilly ran an architectural fittings business at Academy Street, Navan. Ann grew up in Navan and, following her schooling, she began her career at John Hogg & Co. and was there at the transition to Crannac Furniture. She describes the workplace and the staff, the work practices and the management. Following her marriage, she helped her husband run his architectural fittings business. Ann gives an excellent account of a number of changes Navan has experienced. She remembers the old shops and shopkeepers, the advent of supermarkets in the 1980s, and she has fond memories of the original library on Church Hill the town to which she was a frequent visitor.



NAME: NELL (ELEANOR) SMYTH, NAVAN

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 30

Subject: A Navan native

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 60:14

Nell Smyth was recorded at Navan Library, where she has been a life-long visitor. She recalls her background and her young years in Navan where her family ran a grocery business on Ludlow Street. She traces her family back to the 19th century in Navan, and talks of the great friendship which existed between her grandfather and Fr. Eugene O'Reilly. Her uncle was a sign writer whose work may still be seen in the town. She discusses her schooldays, old Navan family businesses, the townspeople and some of their occupations, and places such as the Forresters Hall, the CYMS and performances there, some of the plays written by her father, street names, and old cures.



NAME: TOMMY MURRAY, TRIM, BORN 1931

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 31

Subject: Old memories of Trim

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 69:53

Local history is a passion for Tommy Murray of Trim. He recalls his father's involvement in the Army Pipe Band, his own days growing up in Trim, and long summer days swimming in the Boyne. He describes the frugal lives people lived during the war years and the rationing which existed then. He contributes some fascinating anecdotes about the interesting characters of the hawkers who visited Trim, the sporting pastimes, local Easter customs, place names, and great footballing years for county Meath between 1949 and 1954. Among his many publications is a book entitled *Stella's Cottage* which visits the home of Dean Swift's dear companion and explores Swift's links with Trim. He describes his own work at Spicer's Bakery which ended with Tommy's early return to education. His knowledge on local street-names, religious practices and entertainments are also recorded.



NAME: DES WHITE, ATHBOY, BORN 1943
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 32
Subject: The town of Athboy
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 56:35

Des White has a lifelong interest in the history of his native town and, during this recording, he produced a scale map, drawn by himself and his father in the winter of 1974, of the town of Athboy in 1900, showing the houses, their occupants and occupations. He speaks about his own house which was a boarding house during his childhood, and he recalls many of the people who lodged there. He discusses the Athboy branch of the Gaelic League, and the strength of the League in the town in earlier times. Des worked initially in the furniture trade, but decided on a change of career in 1966 when he began his training as a psychiatric nurse, a career he pursued for forty years. He discusses the major changes which occurred in his workplace at Mullingar Hospital over that time, and also discusses the strong tradition of Irish music in the town of Athboy, and his own days playing in a traditional Irish music group.



NAME: MICHAEL KENNY, DUNSHAUGHLIN, BORN 1926
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 33
Subject: A business in Dunshaughlin
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 60:13

This recording was compiled in the course of a walk through Michael Kenny's garden on the Drumree Road on the outskirts of Dunshaughlin. He started work in a butcher's shop in 1944, eventually bought the business and worked at his trade for 45 years. He retired from the business in 2001. He recalls the late 1940s and 50s when he entered business, and the purchasing and handling of cattle. He says that in an average week during his career he would butcher three cows and 20 sheep. He opened a second butcher shop following the success of the original shop. Michael's recollections of the town of Dunshaughlin and its people, places and pastimes are vivid and fascinating.



NAME: MAEVE FINEGAN (*née* TUOMEY), NOBBER, BORN 1934

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 34

Subject: A rural schoolteacher

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 41:00

Maeve Tuomey was born in Roscommon, where her father, Denis Tuomey, was stationed as a member of the Garda Síochána. He was originally from Abbeydorney, Co. Kerry, where he served in the RIC in his earlier days. Maeve had always had a desire to become a teacher and, following her schooling, she began her study at Carysfort Training College in Dublin. She was then appointed to Clonmellon, outside Kells in 1955. She taught there for two years and then taught in a rural school near Nobber for almost forty years. She speaks about teaching methods, discipline, the curriculum, the staff and the changes in teaching during her long career. She remarks on the enormous changes in the classroom environment where many children can now be less attentive and less eager than previous generations to learn and study. Maeve married John Finegan, a post-primary teacher, and together they raised seven children.



NAME: BILL DALLAS, KELLS, BORN 1929

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 35

Subject: An environment consultant

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 47:06

Bill Dallas lives outside Kells in the townland of Martry. He grew up near Coleraine, and he speaks about his background in environmental consultancy. In 1970, he was headhunted by the mining industry, and he details the circumstances surrounding this. He began his career at Tara Mines in October 1971 as a senior manager. He recalls the management personnel, the difficulties and challenges of his position as he negotiated with the local people on environmental issues, and the initial opposition which he encountered. Having left Tara Mines after many years, he continued to work as an environmental consultant both abroad and around Ireland, and he discusses his many adventures. Also discussed in this recording is Bill's grandfather who was a keen photographer who recorded many images during his travels Northern Ireland.



NAME: COLM MAGUIRE, NOBBER, BORN 1929
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 36
Subject: A passion for farming
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 70:19

Colm Maguire farms at Dunroe and, while walking the land, he recalls his fascinating life. He grew up nearby at Cregg, Nobber, in a small cottage with his parents and six siblings. There was little money, no work and times were difficult. In the early 1950s, Colm and his sister emigrated to London where he worked on the building sites, sending money home to his mother for the purchase of a farm. This land was originally owned by the Sillary family, and as a result of changes in land ownership initiated by the Land Commission, Colm returned to a sizeable farm. He has a genuine love of the land, and in his forty years farming, he has seen vast changes in farming practices. At the brow of the hill on Colm's farm stands a ring fort and there he recalls his father's stories about the customs and beliefs which were prevalent in the area. He also sings a ballad about Cooghan Hill, the site of Lunasa festivities, which he got from his father.



NAME: GERTIE BOLAND (*née* SHEILS), NAVAN, BORN 1939
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 37
Subject: Craftspeople
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 43:25

Gertie Boland was recorded at her home in Teltown, close to the location of the Tailteann Games in antiquity. Gertie and her husband John were weavers, John at Navan Carpets and Gertie at Claytons. She recalls her work there from 1956 to 1962, her colleagues and her work experiences. She grew up on Connolly Avenue in Navan with her seven siblings. She has fond memories of the social occasions relating to the workplace, and she talks about the townspeople at that time. In 1973, she was a founder member of the ICA in her home area, and she is proud to be able to say that the association proved to be of huge benefit to local women. In the final stages of the recording John Boland recalls his thirty-one contented years as a weaver at Navan Carpets where he started work in 1964.



NAME: JOE GOGARTY, KILMAINHAMWOOD, BORN 1943

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 38

Subject: A lifetime in printing

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 57:04

Joe Gogarty lives close to the village of Kilmainhamwood, beside the disused railway tracks, in a restored station master's house. The railway station itself accommodated the family printing business from 1967 until 2009. Following his primary schooling he attended agricultural college for five years as a scholarship student. When he qualified he decided to return to Newtown to develop the printing business, which was moved to Kilmainhamwood in 1967. Joe recalls the old linotype printing and the challenges he overcome in retraining in computerised printing. In the earlier days he printed tickets, bill posters, labels, letterheads and all manner of promotional material. In February 2009 Gogarty's Printers closed its doors for the last time.



NAME: GAYE SHIPP (*née* GRIFFIN), KELLS, BORN 1944

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 39

Subject: A varied life

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 46:43

At the age of 14 years, Gaye Shipp finished her schooling to begin work at a lampshade company in Kells, run by the McNally sisters. She recalls the workplace there and her change of employment when her mother found her work at the local shoe factory. She went on to work in Mosney at Butlins Holiday Camp before emigrating to London in the early 1960s. She married John Shipp in 1964 and the couple returned to Kells when John found employment at Tara Mines in the 1970s, when many emigrants were returning. She has very fond memories of her paternal grandfather who was the local postman, a job which her father later took over.



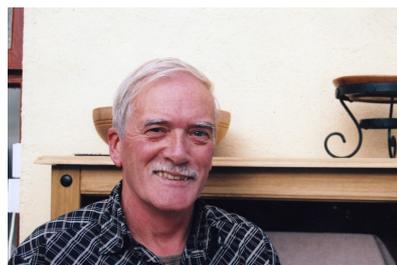
NAME: JIMMY SHERIDAN, KELLS, BORN 1946
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 40
Subject: Navan Carpets recalled
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 34:57

Jimmy Sheridan was one of the final employees at Navan Carpets when it closed in 2003. He started work there in 1967. Jimmy grew up in Moynalty and he recalls the place and its people. In 1965 he emigrated to England for work and remained there for a short time. Jimmy outlines his first job as bank boy and his progression to weaver. He discusses the workers' wages, the change in management when Youghal Carpets took over the business of Navan Carpets and the initial insecurity this engendered among the workforce. He recalls the personalities, the designers and the customers, and explains the benefits to Navan town of the factory down through the decades. He regrets the fact that no plaque or monument exists to indicate where the great enterprise once thrived.



NAME: JIM O'BRIEN, NAVAN, BORN 1945
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 41
Subject: A tradition of furniture makers
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 50:32

Jim O'Brien was born in a thatched cottage on Flowerhill, Navan, into a family of eleven children. A tradition of furniture making exists in the family as his grandfather and his father were furniture makers. Jim joined Crannac Furniture as an apprentice, and he describes his progress and the new types of wood which became available from overseas. He recalls the time when the factory went into voluntary liquidation and the workers response in forming a co-op, of which Jim was chairperson, to continue the business. He discusses the response from Government, the Credit Union and the local business people, and he describes the challenges, successes and the eventual winding down of the co-op.



NAME: JAN MUYLLAERT, ARDBRACCAN, NAVAN, BORN 1947

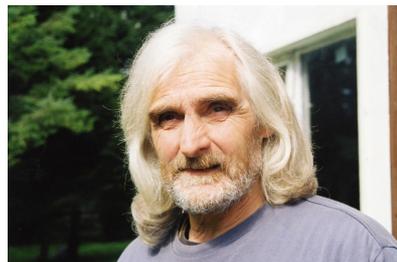
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 42

Subject: A life of musical instruments

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 59:11

Jan Muyllaert, a native of Antwerp, came to live in Ireland in 1972 at the age of 25. He had originally come to Ireland on a working holiday in the late 1960s, and he busked around the country. He had learned his craft of musical instrument making in Antwerp and he had also worked for a short time as a draughtsman with an architectural company there. He recalls his early days in Navan, his marriage to Marie Finegan from *The Silver Tankard* and his immersion in the Irish way of life. He set up a very successful instrument making business in 1976 and, on a tour around his workshop, he discusses the tools of his craft, its techniques, and the growth of his harp-making business.



NAME: OLIVER MARTIN, KELLS, BORN 1944

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 43

Subject: A life in textiles

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 49:28

The Martin family have lived at Martry for generations. Most of Oliver's working life was spent at Claytons Textile Company. He discusses the changes in management over the years, the staff, the work rules and regulations which were very much of the old school. He also recalls the customers and suppliers. When the company had been wound up, he continued to work with Kohn Brannigan, the new owner. He is adamant that the withdrawal of Government contracts for the supply of fabrics for Garda and Army uniforms, for Aer Lingus seat covers, and for upholstery fabrics in general, led to the gradual decline of the Clayton's business.



NAME: MARY MURRAY, KELLS, BORN 1941

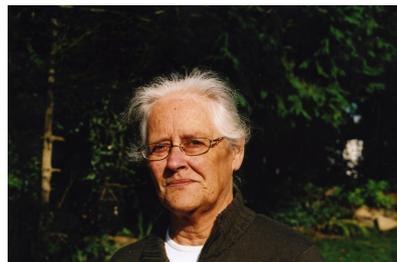
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 44

Subject: Recollections of a librarian

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 42:52

Mary Murray spent all her working life at Navan Library – forty-five years in total until her retirement in 2006. She is a native of Drumbaragh, Kells, where she still lives. She describes her background and her schooldays. She had always had a passion for books and reading and she recalls her satisfaction at being appointed to Navan Library at Church Hill in 1961. She talks about the running of the library, the atmosphere which prevailed, the old operating methods, and the staff down through the years. The library moved to its present location at Railway Street, in 1974. She contrasts the computerised system in the modern building today with the card index system which operated in former days.



NAME: PADDY MURPHY, DROMONE CASTLE, BORN 1930

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 45

Subject: A farm labourer's life

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 49:02

Paddy Murphy was recorded at his local pub at the crossroads. A farm labourer all his working life, he recalls his early days, and the fact that his father came originally from Dungummin (also pronounced 'Dungimmon'), in Co. Cavan, where Paddy grew up. In his late teens, in 1948, he moved to county Meath where he worked with farmers for many years. He recalls walking cattle to Oldcastle Fair, and describes the transition from the fairs to the marts. Paddy remained single but always loved attending the dances in the local area. Subjects discussed in this recording were the making of mud turf by hand, drawing hay, the travellers on the roads and the jargon of the local farming community.



NAME: CATHAL McENTEE, KELLS, BORN 1951
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 46
Subject: A family business
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 39:54

Cathal McEntee was born on New Market Street, Kells. He works from his ancestral home there where the McEntee family has run a bar, grocery and undertaking business since 1899. In this recording Cathal discusses his schooldays, the town of Kells in the 1960s and 70s, the old coffin-making shed at the rear of his family's premises during his father's time. Following his father's death, he returned to Kells to run the family business, having previously spent some time working as a newspaper compositor. He discusses the changes which have come about in the undertaking business and he talks about some of the more memorable burials which took place in the area over the years.



NAME: BRIDGET BRACCAN (*née* SMYTH), ATHBOY, BORN 1919
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 47
Subject: Faughan Hill remembered
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 61:34

Bridget Smyth grew up in a clay-walled, thatched cottage in Bohermeen on the lower slope of Faughan Hill. She has many vivid memories of her youth, which include dancing and the great efforts made to get to dances, and the entertainment and bonfires on Faughan Hill to celebrate the Fianna Fáil election victory in 1932. She recalls the division of the Allenstown estate by the Land Commission, the Economic War of the 1930s, and De Valera being credited with taking the rust from the frying pans of Ireland with the free Government meat distributed at that time. In 1938 she gained employment at Templeton Carpets (later Navan Carpets), where she worked with eight employees and she remembers Seán Lemass officially opening the factory in 1938. She was trained by Scottish women who came to Navan for that purpose.



NAME: GERRY SMYTH, TRIM, BORN 1907
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 48
Subject: A long and memorable life
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 58:36

Gerry Smyth was recorded at St. Elizabeth's Nursing Home, Athboy. He was born and reared in Stackallen, Slane in 1907, and his earliest memories include hearing talk of the sinking of the *Titanic* and the 1916 Rebellion. Gerry qualified as a teacher in 1928 and was appointed principal at Dunshaughlin National School in 1932 where he remained until he retired in 1972. Subjects discussed in this recording are the primary curriculum and the teaching methods, the change in the teaching language for some subjects from English to Irish, his support for Michael Collins and the Blueshirts, the Folklore Commission's Schools Folklore Project in the late 1930s, his membership of the Local Security Force during The Emergency and the major improvements in the lives of the population due to the arrival of electricity, the telephone and tarred roads. He is a founder member of Muintir na Tire and a member of the Knights of Columbanus.



NAME: LARRY REILLY, OLDCASTLE, BORN 1931
Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 49
Subject: A custodian of Church History
Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe
Time: 56:55

Larry Reilly was born in the townland of Dromone where many generations of the Reilly family have lived and served as sacristans in the local church. He recalls the various priests who served there and their contributions to the area and its inhabitants. Larry was also involved in the building trade and worked a small farm. He discusses the local pastimes, entertainments, sports and the wonderful prehistoric area around Loughcrew, and Sliabh na Caillighe. He also provides valuable information on the history of the Parochial House and the parish church.



NAME: DICK BYRNE, CORK, BORN 1938

Title: Irish Life and Lore County Meath Collection CD 50

Subject: A life in carpet sales and management

Recorded by: Maurice O'Keeffe

Time: 54:49

Dick Byrne is a Dublin native who, following a short period of employment at Irish Ropes, joined Navan Carpets in 1965. He was appointed sales manager at Navan Carpets for the southern region, and he was involved in the setting up of the showrooms at Patrick Street, Cork in the 1960s. This recording provides many fascinating anecdotes about factory management and sales at Navan Carpets both in Ireland and England. He discusses his views on the reasons why the Youghal Carpets' takeover came about. Dick was appointed Irish agent for Stoddard Carpets of Scotland in 1971, and progressed to sales manager some years later. In the late 1970s he started his own carpet company named Glenealy and he talks about the challenges that this entailed. He discusses the management team, the designers and general staff at Navan Carpets during his time there.

