



Muckross Mail

HAPPY 100th *Birthday!* to Past Pupils Union

Newsletter of the Muckross Past Pupils' Union

February 2012

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Vice President:

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Claire Johns (Doyle)

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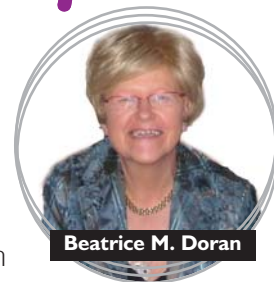
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HAPPY
Birthday!

From the Union President



Beatrice M. Doran

Greetings to all of our Muckross Past Pupils in this our Centenary Year.

This edition of *Muckross Mail* coincides with the start of the celebration of the Union's Centenary. Celebrations this year include our **Centenary Dinner** on **27th April 2012**, where we plan to launch a book – **A Century of Memories** edited by Valerie Cox. Our **Centenary Open Day** will be held in Muckross Park on **7th October 2012** (by kind permission of the Principal Mrs. Caroline Lundy) – you can read more about this event later in this issue. We look forward to welcoming as many past pupils as possible to all of our events.

The Union's website (www.muckrossparkppu.com) plays an important part in our communication with our members and is one of the ways you can keep up to date with our ongoing activities. We are also to be found on Facebook.

The Annual Dinner is a popular venue for classes celebrating significant anniversaries; each year we have classes celebrating, 20, 30, 40 and 50 years out of school. So do get a group of your friends together, and come to our Centenary Dinner.

During the year I have been very proud to represent our Past Pupils' Union at the dinners and lunches of other Dominican Unions, where I received excellent hospitality and friendship.

Muckross has always been more than just a school. There is a Muckross 'spirit' which is very evident whenever past pupils meet and continues in the school today. My own friends, who were not at school in Muckross, tell me they envy the network of friends I have from my school days.

I am very proud to be a Muckross girl, and to be the President of the Past Pupils' Union.

Dr. Beatrice M. Doran,
President

Order your copy
of the
A Century of Memories
now and meet
Deirdre Purcell and Patricia
O'Reilly at the Writers
Workshop.



Past Pupils Union Monthly Mass

The monthly PPU Mass (see Forthcoming Events for times and dates) is not restricted to past pupils as some of you may think; bring along your husband, children, boyfriend, anyone! Mass in the chapel is followed by tea/coffee and biscuits and hopefully some news and gossip.

The Mass on the 1st Sunday in November is dedicated to all deceased past pupils. If there is anyone whose name you would like to be read out do let us know. Please do not blame the committee if a name is omitted – we don't know unless we are advised.

The **Combined Dominican Schools Unions' Mass** will take place in Muckross Park on **Sunday 7th October 2012** at 11.15am. If you have friends who went to Ballyfermot, Cabra, Dun Laoghaire, Eccles Street & Griffith Avenue, Falls Road, Fortwilliam, Portstewart, Santa Sabina, Sion Hill, Taylor's Hill or Wicklow or any other Dominican school tell them about it and bring them along too. We were delighted to see so many Dominican past pupils at the 2011 Mass and look forward to welcoming you all again in 2012.



Thérèse Considine, Falls Road, Carmel O'Connor Eccles Steet and Ann Killeen, President Eccles Street PPU, at the CDU Mass in Muckross last October.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

AGM on Union Day

Sunday 4th March 2012 in Muckross Park
11.15 am Mass followed by AGM & refreshments

Writers Workshop

Saturday 24th March 2012 from 2pm – 5.30pm
in Muckross Park (new school)
With authors Deirdre Purcell and Patricia O'Reilly
Cost: PPU Members €10 & non-members €15 (incl. refreshments).
Bookings: Contact Valerie Cox 087-685 8406

Easter Egg Hunt (members only)

Sunday 1st April 2012 in Muckross Park
from 12 – 1 pm. Advance booking essential

Annual Dinner

Friday 27th April 2012 at 7.30pm
In Stillorgan Park Hotel, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin
Advance booking essential

Wine Tasting (Members only)

17th May 2012 6.30-8.30pm
Full details inside this issue

Combined Dominican Golf Society

Monday 9th July 2012, in Naas Golf Club
Contact Mary Ryan on 087-678 9078

Muckross Golf Society

Thursday 13th September 2012
Edmondstown Golf Club, Rathfarnham.
Book with Susan FitzGerald at 086 833 1208
or susanfitz1@gmail.com before 6th September.

Combined Dominican Unions' Mass

Sunday 7th October 2012 at 11.15am in Muckross Park

Centenary Celebrations – Open Day

Sunday 7th October 2012
Full details inside this issue

Santa Party (members only)

Sunday 2nd December 2012 in Muckross Park
At 12 noon – 1pm. Advance booking essential.

PPU Mass in Muckross

1st Sunday of February, March, April, September, October, November and December
at 11.15am in Muckross Park.

Meet the Authors at the Writers Workshop

Our popular Writers Workshop will take place on Saturday 24th March from 2-5pm in Muckross in the new school. We are delighted to say that best selling author **Deirdre Purcell** will be our guest speaker; and author and past pupil **Patricia O'Reilly** will run a workshop giving you an insight into how to get started or improve your writing. Tickets €10 for PPU members and €15 for non-members (refreshments included). To book please send a cheque (payable to Muckross PPU) to Muckross PPU, 33 Hazel Avenue, Blackrock, Co. Dublin or ring Valerie Cox on 087 685 8406



AGM on Union Day

Union Day will take place on Sunday 4th March 2012 in Muckross Park. The format will be Mass at 11.15am followed by the AGM after which refreshments will be served. It is only by attending the AGM that we can hear your views on how you feel the PPU is performing and hear any new ideas for events and objectives for the coming year.

Please support your PPU committee and we look forward to seeing lots of you on Union Day.

Nominations for the 2012 Committee

As a number of the present Committee will be stepping down at the AGM we are looking for nominations or for PPU members to volunteer to join the new Committee. We have had quite a few of the more recent past pupils join the Union in the last few years and we would like to see them represented on the Committee to bring new ideas to the PPU.

The Committee only meet about 7 times a year. So as you see it will not eat into much of your time. If you are interested please contact Claire Johns at 087-221 8602 prior to the AGM or email us at muckrossppu@ireland.com

This is your PPU and we need you to keep it going for another 100 years.

2011 RAFFLE RESULTS

The Raffle took place at the Muckross PPU Annual Dinner on 15th April 2011 in the Stillorgan Park Hotel. The value of the prizes was almost €1,500. Congratulations to the following winners:

- 1st Prize: 2 nights BB+1D mid-week break for 2 in Westport Plaza Hotel, Westport, Co. Mayo.
Winner: Katherine Duffy (Fox)
- 2nd Prize: 2 nights B&B mid-week break in Meyrick Hotel, Eyre Square, Galway.
Winner: Anne Conroy
- 3rd Prize: 1 year's drama class for one child from Emer Halpenny School of Drama.
Winner: Joy Riordan
- 4th Prize: €200 Voucher for Brown Thomas.
Winner: Rachel Brown (Egar)
- 5th Prize: Dinner for 2 in Purple Sage Restaurant at the Stillorgan Park Hotel.
Winner: Caroline Grane (Bruce)
- 6th Prize: €50 Voucher for the National Concert Hall.
Winner: Seamus O'Dunlaing

Sincere thanks to our sponsors for their generosity in supplying the above prizes.

Wine Tasting Evening

For our Centenary year we have a once off event – a tutored wine tasting on **Thursday 17th May** from 6.30 – 8.30pm. Tickets: €20. This event is open to PPU members only and places are limited to 30 so early booking is advisable.

The venue will be the tasting room of wine importers Febvre & Co. Ltd., Burton Hall Road, Sandyford Industrial Estate, Dublin 18.

We look forward to seeing you for an entertaining and informative evening of wine and cheese. It will be possible to purchase any of the wines you like at the end of the evening.

To book please email muckrossppu@ireland.com or call Gay Rodgers on 087 638 3683



Membership Subscriptions

Please remember to renew your 2012 subscription. We would greatly appreciate if those who pay by cheque each year could switch to a Standing Order. This would remove the necessity of sending out reminders. Please complete the Membership form at the back of this issue.

The Annual Subscription is €15 with a reduced rate of €10 for over 60s. *If renewing, please amend your existing Standing Order in line with the current amounts if necessary.*

Your subscriptions help towards various projects including the Benevolent Fund, the Playgroup Projects in Cape Town and the costs involved in the production of the Muckcross Mail, and your support is greatly appreciated.

EASTER EGG HUNT



Past Pupils – Bring Your Children or Grandchildren to our Easter Egg Hunt

**Sunday 1st April 2012
12 Noon in Muckross Park.**

For Bookings contact:
Grainne Cryan at 087 926 4003 or
Email: grainne@springael.info



Centenary Open Day

Our Open Day, in co-operation with the school, takes place on 7th October 2012.

The day will begin with Mass in the convent chapel at 11.15am, after which entertainment will be provided in the new school building by the current pupils involved in the School Orchestra, the School Choir, the Glee Club and the Traditional Music Club. Refreshments will also be available.

Our SHOWCASE will contain an exhibition of Muckross memorabilia in addition to display stands where Past Pupils can showcase their businesses. This is a great opportunity advertise and network to both present and past pupils. Please contact muckrossppu@ireland.com to book a stand (free of charge).

Guided tours of the school will be provided by the school Hospitality Committee.

The day will conclude with a Hockey match – Past Pupils v Present Pupils.

A big Thank You to all the Sponsors of our 2012 Centenary Raffle

This year's Centenary raffle has some really fantastic prizes which we hope will generate a bumper fundraising.

- 1st Prize:** Two night BB+1D Midweek Break for two in any of the Brennan Group Hotels
- 2nd Prize:** Two night BB+1D Midweek Break for two in Grand Hotel, Wicklow.
- 3rd Prize:** Car Service to the value of €139 from Windsor Motors
- 4th Prize:** Family ticket for Dublin Zoo
- 5th Prize:** Two tickets for the Irish 2000 Guineas at the Curragh
- 6th Prize:** One Year's Subscription to *The Irish Garden* magazine
- 7th Prize:** Dinner for two at Purple Sage Restaurant in Stillorgan Park Hotel, Dublin
- 8th Prize:** Voucher for the National Concert Hall, Dublin
- 9th Prize:** Family ticket to Wicklow Gaol, including lunch
- 10th Prize:** A Babog Irish-speaking Bear

Tickets are €5 each or book of 5 for €20. If you did not receive you tickets with the *Muckross Mail* or you would like extra tickets please **Email:** muckrossppu@ireland.com or **Telephone 087 638 3683.**

CENTENARY DINNER Friday 27th April 2012

The Centenary Dinner will be held in Stillorgan Park Hotel on Friday 27th April 2012 at 7.30pm.

Tickets: PPU members €45 & non-members €50.

If you left Muckross 10, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 50 and 60+ years ago why not organise a group of your classmates to celebrate at the dinner.

To book for the Centenary Dinner please send a cheque (payable to Muckross PPU) to the address on the Booking Form in this issue and you will be sent a Ticket to be brought along on the night. If you are planning a class reunion at the dinner we request that ONE person of that class be responsible to collect ALL names and cheques and forward them in bulk. Please contact us if you require a Group Booking Form. This will help greatly with bookings and avoid confusion. Large groups will be accommodated at adjoining tables.

Please Note: Telephone bookings will **not** be accepted and all tickets **must** be paid in advance no later than 20th April 2012.



Muckross is not just about girls. Past Pupil Seamus O'Dunlaing receiving his prize of a voucher for the National Concert Hall from Gay Rodgers at the 2011 Annual Dinner.

STAY IN TOUCH BY FACEBOOK AND EMAIL



Check out our Facebook page, Muckross Park College Past Pupils Union; we have over 500 friends at the moment so why not join us there.

Send your email address to us at muckrossppu@ireland.com so we can add you to our address book. If you are in touch with other Muckross girls perhaps you would be good enough to let us have their email address also. Remember to let us know if you have changed your email address or postal address recently. That way you won't miss out on Union news or the *Muckross Mail*. Likewise if you have news for us that we can put in the next issue of *Muckross Mail* we will be delighted to hear from you.



So what does the Muckross Past Pupils' Union actually do?

The Muckross Past Pupils Union (MPPU) was started by the first group of girls to graduate in 1912. So this year MPPU celebrates its 100th birthday. A phenomenal achievement which is thanks entirely to the support of all its members over the last century.

Which is all very fine – but if you are not (yet) a member or maybe even if you are a member you may still wonder what MPPU actually does. Well, it helps past pupils to get together socially, helps them to help others and provides an opportunity to network with one another.

Social Events

The tradition of getting together for an annual dinner in April is possibly as old as the Union itself. Last year over 150 attended, some flying in from abroad for class reunions. It is always a great night, an opportunity to meet up with friends from years gone by as well as the nuns and be amazed at how they remember us all.



Coimhe Long, left and her sister Beibhinn with Santa.

At Easter and Christmas there are events for the children of past pupils – the future Muckross girls. An Easter egg hunt is held to find all the chocolate hidden around the gardens and in December Santa comes to see us.

If you are a keen golfer there is an annual golf outing – followed by a dinner which is open to all past pupils, even if you can't play golf.

In spring we stretch our creative muscles at the annual Writers Workshop and this year we are delighted to welcome one of Ireland's best known writers to speak at the workshop – Deirdre Purcell. With excellent speakers and writers there is ample opportunity and practical tips for us all to learn something.



Susan FitzGerald (Levins) who won the 2011 PPU Golf Outing.

We had really good weather on the day with twenty eight past pupils participating and enjoying the event. Susan is the 2012 Golf Society Secretary, and this year's Captain is Eadaoin Maher (O'Connor).



(L to r): Brigid Bruce (Sherry), Sr Rose Elizabeth and Joan Priestman at the Combined Dominican Unions Mass in October 2011.

There are other social events planned for the Centenary Year such as a Wine Tasting (for members only) and Centenary Open Day on 7th October 2012 – which will be packed with events.

Regular emails will be sent out to keep you all updated on what is happening. Make sure that your membership details are up to date so that you don't miss out.

Benevolence

Apart from the all the socialising MPPU also has a benevolent fund which has been supporting past pupils in need and the Dominican playgroup projects in Cape Town for many years. Other individual causes have been supported.

Opportunities

The MPPU also offers an opportunity to all members to develop their leadership and organisational skills either by joining the committee for a couple of years (or longer!) or just by getting involved and helping out at some of the events throughout the year. Every member is eligible to go forward for the committee and we welcome all new ideas.

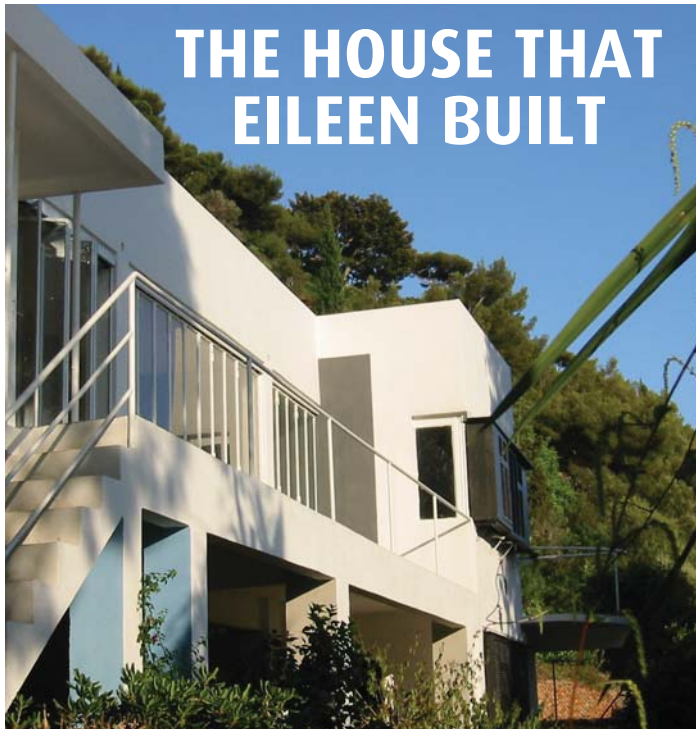
Networking

All the events held are opportunities to network with your former classmates who now hold positions in all areas of life – business, education and politics.

We think there really is something for everyone. And if not – tell us what you want – we welcome all suggestions. So for current and potential members I hope this gives you some idea of what MPPU does.

With your support by attending events, supporting fundraising and helping out, the Muckross Past Pupils' Union will still be going strong in another 100 years.

Niamh Gourlay (Halpenny)
Vice-President



THE HOUSE THAT EILEEN BUILT

My fascination with Irish designer Eileen Gray is all consuming. Two years ago I was able to visit E.1027. This is the villa conceived, designed and constructed to her specification, and regarded as one of the most iconic houses of the 20th century.

As I walk in her footsteps, I have no trouble imagining her and her reaction to finding the site.

It's the summer of 1926. A roadster drives into the railway station at Roquebrune. A woman with sharply bobbed hair reaches into the back and takes out a towel and bathing suit. Having spent weeks searching up and down the Cote d'Azur for a site on which to build the house of her dreams, she is taking the day off, making time for a swim.

She crosses the railway tracks and walks a few hundred yards. The pathway fizzles out but intrigued by the beauty of the place, she clammers over crumbling walls, through scattered pines and bushes of wild rosemary before coming on a small natural terrace cut into the honey-coloured limestone. Below is the ever-changing turquoise of the Mediterranean. The swim is forgotten. She has found the perfect site on which to build her perfect house.

On a balmy winter morning 82 years later accompanied by the mayor of Roquebrune and other dignitaries, I cross those same railway tracks and walk the same path.

Finally I am getting to view the inside of E.1027, as Miss Gray called her dream home which she gifted to her then-lover, Jean Badovici, a Romanian architect. (The letter E stands for Eileen, 10 – the 10th letter of the alphabet for Jean, 2 for Badovici and 7 for Gray).

A few years previously when researching her life for a commissioned piece for Image magazine, which developed into a radio play and then a novel, I had come this way hoping to see over the house but was refused permission. Like a child pressing its nose to the glass window of a sweet shop, I could only look in from the outside.

But I'd been giving a talk on Eileen Gray at the Princess Grace Irish Library in Monaco and the organisers asked if there was anything in particular I'd like to do while in the area. I wanted nothing but to see over Eileen Gray's villa. Visitors weren't welcome, I was told. I knew that from my previous attempts, but it was arranged.

Over the past five years, the villa has undergone a €800,000 facelift. Its boundary was enclosed in a shell of metal protection, cranes, pulleys, scaffolding, and a high metal ramp running along its side brings to the site the raw materials required for the refurbishment. The architect overseeing the project is Pierre-Antoine Gattier, who is in charge of historical monuments in France and is the author of several works on the subject. He is not happy to have visitors on site.

On site hard-hatted workmen are busy. The outside plasterwork has been renovated and re-painted; damaged concrete repaired; and on completion of the project the solarium, outside shower and secret gardens will be re-instated.

Eileen Gray believed 'a house should be a man's shell, his extension, his growth, his spiritual glow'. While the refurbishment is true to her original design, it incorporates best modern building practices, with new damp-coursing, cavity bricks, re-wiring and re-plumbing. Her creative spirit still lingers in the original grey 'cube' tiled floor, washbasins and chunky taps; the claw-legged bath; window openers which she designed and patented, and curved shelving as well as the built-in furniture.

E.1027 is now in the care of Conservatoire du Litteral, a French organization dedicated to the protection of valuable resources. But in this case it is Le Corbusier's murals more than Gray's design that are being protected. And pride of architectural care goes to those eight murals. They are shielded in frames of timber with clear plastic coverings. Arguably the greatest architect of the 20th century, he was reputedly obsessed by E-1027.

When staying as a house guest, he painted a series of eight sexual murals on the walls. Eileen Gray called it an 'act of vandalism' and demanded they be removed. He retaliated by publishing photographs, claiming his murals 'burst out from dull, sad walls where nothing is happening' to provide 'an immense transformation, a spiritual value introduced throughout'.

With the break-up of her relationship with Badovici, Eileen Gray left E.1027, never to return. Although, reputedly, she was amused to learn that the German soldiers who occupied the place during World War II used the murals for target practice.

The dispute with Le Corbusier continued until Badovici's death in 1956 after which Le Corbusier built an elevated 2-storey hostel over looking E.1027 – he had already built his famous Cabanon in 1952 – and dedicated himself to the preservation of his murals. When he died of a heart attack after his morning swim, the footpath serving the area was designated Promenade Le Corbusier as Gray's reputation was yet to be resurrected.

In November 1972 Bruce Chatwin came to Eileen Gray's Parisian apartment to interview her for the Sunday Times Magazine. Why the interview was never published is the kernel of the fact-led novel I'm currently working on.

**Patricia O'Reilly (Dain) patricia@patriciaoreilly.net
Leaving Cert. 1959**

Ed: If you Google E.1027 you will see plenty of photos of the house.



An Interlude in St Mullins

Muckross Park PPU Dinner 2010. It's raffle time but as I never ever win a raffle I am across the room chatting. Suddenly Margot comes running over – 'You've just won first prize!' In June 2011 I availed of my prize – a week's self catering for two in St Mullins, Co. Carlow.

The Old Grainstore in St Mullins is situated on the banks of the river Barrow in Co. Carlow. Past pupil Emer O'Brien (nee Flanagan) and her husband Martin have done a wonderful job in restoring the centuries old building that was once a storehouse for goods coming and going on the river. It now comprises their own dwelling, the Mullichain café and three restored cottages.

St Mullins is a quiet unspoilt hamlet with nothing more than a pub and the Old Grainstore, but one gets this immense sense of history permeating the place. It has had so many glorious episodes in its past starting with the arrival of St Moling to set up a monastery in the 7th century – St Moling's well and monastic remains still survive. The Book of Moling, along with its jewelled shrine, is on display in Trinity College Dublin. Located beside the monastic site are the remains of a Norman Motte and Bailey dating from the latter part of the 12th century. In the graveyard is the burial place of several generations of the McMurragh Kavanagh family, Kings of Leinster, and also several graves of those who died in the 1798 rising.

But what to me is the most fascinating episode in its history is it's heyday in the days of canal transport. Odlums had a mill there on the banks of the river and the remains of the mill and Robert Odlum's house survive. Ships were moored in New Ross, and between 1760 and 1922 goods were transported from there to St Mullins and onwards via the Barrow Navigation and Grand Canal to Dublin and the West.

The heritage centre in the old church was recently revamped as a fourth year project by the architecture students from UCD. There is a wealth of information here both for the casual visitor and those who seek genealogical information.

For those of an active frame of mind, there are great opportunities for walking, canoeing and fishing, and for the more lazy there are the lovely villages of Graiguenamanagh, Inistioge, Borris and Thomastown to visit. Also there are some magnificent gardens within reach, and the towns of New Ross, Wexford, Waterford, Kilkenny and Carlow are easily accessible.

But it was the tranquillity of St Mullins that stayed with me. Thank you Emer and Martin for a wonderful week. The words of WB Yeats still echo in my mind...

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping slow,

Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket sings.'

**Madeleine Gaughan (nee O'Sullivan)
Leaving Cert. 1959**

MUCKROSS PPU CENTENARY BOOK

To celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Past Pupils' Union, it was decided to produce a book – A Century of Memories. So... for about a year now I've been chasing, cajoling, threatening, bribing and hand-holding our budding writers! Actually, we've been very lucky because the organizing committee for the project includes several well known authors who are also past pupils. We've got Patricia O'Reilly, Helen Litton, Brenda Moore-McCann, Nollaig Rowan, Annette Quigley, Mary Buckley, Gay Rodgers, Beatrice Doran and Catherine de Courcy. And, even if they weren't already writing, believe me, they are now!

The Centenary Book will be launched at the Centenary Dinner in April but you can get ahead of the posse by getting your order to us NOW! €12 each plus €4 postage & packing. And there's a discount for bulk orders of 3 books or more, 3 for €30 plus P&P.

Furthermore, if you would like to have yourself or a loved one 'inscribed inside' then it will cost just €25, what a gift for a birthday or other special occasion! And remember, you'll have to wait for another one hundred years if you miss this one.

We are also taking orders for the last of the advertising which is very reasonable indeed and really helping us to get this book out there in very stringent times. Please telephone me on 087 685 8406 if you are interested.

I look forward to your support.

Valerie Cox



Committee members Gay Rodgers, Helena O'Dowd and Claire Johns, on the estate of Sandeman Port in Portugal last year with their wine club.



Some Things Never Change!

Have you ever found your adult self suddenly transported back to your 14-year old self – a third year in your uniform on a task that you had been asked to carry out by Sr. Barnabas? A few months ago, that very scenario happened to me and in a circuitous way has led to writing this short article.

As a wonderful visit to Barnie concluded, she told me that Anne Marie Mee had been appointed Deputy Principal. Ms Mee was one of the teachers who inspired me as a student and Barnie knows this so she insisted that I walk over to the school to say 'hello'. I maintained that I could not call unannounced but that notion was dismissed summarily and five minutes later, on my way over to the school, I wondered at how I simply went back to my early relationship and became a teenager again doing what I was asked.

Overall, like many who write in this newsletter, I remember my years in Muckross – all 14 of them – with great fondness. I made close friendships that remain today although we could probably see more of one another. I was one of the few of my class of 1986 to go to Trinity College - many more went to UCD – and I chose to study physiotherapy. After a few years of work in the health service, I returned to Trinity to take up a position on the faculty. Along the way I have worked with the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists, the professional organisation of physiotherapists in Ireland.

I love my work in Trinity – working with university students is exciting and in physiotherapy we have a great group of students who have worked incredibly hard to get into the course and who really want to be there. My research has both a focus on clinical questions and professional practice issues.

In recent years, I have had the opportunity to take up two very interesting positions. From 2005-2010, I served as the Junior Dean in Trinity; this is the Dean responsible for student discipline and I was the first woman to be appointed to the position. It was one of the most professionally fulfilling work experiences I had because of the great team work involving other staff members from across the College.

In October 2010, I was honoured to be nominated by the Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists for election to the position of Vice-President of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy – the global physiotherapy organization, representing over 350,000 physiotherapists worldwide. Ireland is one of 106 members. There followed eight months of campaigning, interviews over skype, hundreds of e-mails and an election in June 2010 when I was elected - a first for Ireland. I will serve in that role until June 2015.



Some of the class of 1986 (25 years left) and 1991 (20 years left) celebrating at the 2011 Annual Dinner.

My Dominican education gave me the confidence to take on new challenges and opportunities, to consider making a contribution. I reflect on the chances we were given to develop the skills that, I believe, have stood to me in later years and have enabled me to take on many of the interesting opportunities that have presented themselves to me.

My time at Muckross also allowed me to indulge in my love of singing. Time is not on my side these days to be in a choir and I am sure the late Ann Maguire, another significant influence on me, would not be one bit pleased – ah the 14 year old returns again!

Emma Stokes
Leaving Cert. 1986

Update from Cape Town

The Masizame Playgroup has spent the last few years in a structure in the backyard of a neighbour's house. The owner of the house asked the group to leave her yard as it was needed by her family. The local community became involved in the dilemma of searching for an alternative place. Finally they agreed that a dumping ground, flanked on either side by houses, could be a suitable site.



Happy children in the playgroup

At this stage, the Masizame group approached the Dominican Sisters for our help. Using DOSCEP (Dominican Sisters Community Education Project) funds we managed to set up a fence, and get the shipping containers transferred from the backyard to the dumping site. They were then reconstructed to form one classroom. By the time this was done most of the children had been directed to other crèches. But a small group has returned and is happily functioning here.

Our immediate plan is to put up posters for a Parents' Meeting inviting them to enrol their children for 2012 and to give suggestions on how the site can be used for the benefit of the children.

A wonderful young man from the neighbourhood has cleared the site of rubbish. With great energy and enthusiasm he has dug down into the earth to remove all the plastics blocking the soil. One section of the site is ready to plant veggies.

We are really very grateful for your generous donation towards the Masizame Playgroup which gives education to children between the ages of two and six. Please convey our appreciation to the Muckross Past Pupils who have made their presence felt in this part of South Africa where people battle with unemployment and poverty.

Greetings to all in Muckross PPU in this your centenary year, from all in the Masizame Playgroup

With love and thanks from **Sr Áine OP and Sr Caitriona OP**



Destination Vancouver



One of the few nice things about living far from home is the immediate sense of connection you have with anyone from Ireland. Friendships can occur as easily as they did in kindergarten, when one child

approaches another and asks "will you be my friend?" This is particularly so when encountering your fellow countrymen is a rare event.

In the last few years, however, there have been increasing numbers of Irish voices to be heard here in Vancouver; on the street, in offices and shops, on the train. So much so, in fact, that you stop trying to manoeuvre conversations with anyone who has an Irish accent. Still, when you do, despite the numbers, regardless of generation or gender, the bond is there.

I had lunch recently with two young women, Brenda from Dublin and Kathy from Louth. I met Brenda in February 2011 when I got out on the wrong floor in the Guinness office block where we both work, and Kathy turned up at an Irish Women's Network (IWN) event to help newcomers to find jobs. Like a good Celtic Tiger Cub, she was distressed because she didn't have a job after two whole weeks in the city.

When I started the IWN in 1998, it was with the purpose of providing Irish women, myself included, with opportunities for conversation, companionship and mutual support, and to be a resource for new immigrants. We never envisaged the large wave of Irish that would wash up in Vancouver on the sinking of the Irish economy.

This is not an easy city to get a handle on, particularly when it comes to finding employment. Irish groups here have done what they could to make our newcomers welcome. IWN held a couple of networking events, but something more practical was needed.

With the encouragement of Ireland's Ambassador to Canada, Ray Bassett, we applied for and received a small grant and, on November 5th 2011, held another networking event, this one focused on finding jobs.

That we had correctly gauged the need was evident when, promoting the event entirely through Facebook, we quickly had almost 80 people registered. Even more gratifying, and moving, was the response from longer-settled members of the Irish community who unhesitatingly agreed to come and give advice and support to our newcomers. For among these "elders" there is deep concern for Ireland's latest castaways — together with anger at the waste this represents and the squandered opportunities of the years of prosperity.

If there is anything to be gained from these recent events, it is the drawing together of the Irish community in Vancouver to care for our newcomers. That and the knowledge that there is such great kindness in people. As Michael D. Higgins said in his inaugural speech, just six days after that networking event, "We Irish are a ... warm people".

As Brenda and I bade farewell to Kathy on a Vancouver street corner, there was a spontaneous group hug. Yes, a warm people.

Mary Monks Hatch Leaving Cert. 1965

COLOURING COMPETITION



Winners of the Colouring Competition at the 2011 Santa Party were (Left to right): Jennifer Fitzgerald, Kerry Farrell and Alice Kate Coyle.

2011 FUN RUN



Teachers Bridín Ní Bhraonáin, Dan Moloney and Anne Marie Mee on the track at the 2011 Fun Run at Irishtown Stadium last October. Almost €25,000 was raised for school projects.



Que Sera, Syrah!

Living and working in the South of France with my husband Laurent Miquel, Muckross and the days of hockey sticks in the back field seem a world away.

I met my husband Laurent while working as an au pair with a family here – a summer job that was organised by Sister Barnabas. Laurent came to my debs that autumn at the Shelbourne. It was his first introduction to Ireland; needless to say he was a little bemused.

Knowing that vine growing in south County Dublin was doomed to failure I decided to make the move to the Languedoc in 2001. I have lived and worked with Laurent here ever since. We had our first baby in April 2011, our son Sean; he will be the 9th generation winemaker to work the land here, but the first with Irish blood which makes me very proud.

Besides tourism, there is no other industry in this part of France; it's a very rural, wild place where traditions are important. It takes 5 years for a newly planted vine to start producing good fruit so everything is done at a slower pace. We are still very dependent on nature as a wet harvest can totally change the nature of a vintage.

It was a steep learning curve when I first arrived here, having a very basic knowledge of wine but I quickly learnt that the best way to understand wine is to open a bottle and taste it. The

more you taste the easier to distinguish the characteristics of different grapes and different wine origins. French wines speak for themselves and tell the story of the place they come from and the people who made it.

For our wines, that means lots of rich ripe fruit due to the 300 days of sun a year, but also more subtle notes like the garrigue. This is the effect of the wild rosemary and thyme bushes that are dotted around the hillside plots which give a delicious herbs and spices character to the reds that we produce.

We run two vineyards, Casal Viel in the Saint Chinian appellation, just north of Beziers and Les Auzines, an organic chateau, located about 30 minutes from Carcassone near the village of Lagrasse. I divide my time between the vineyards and international travel. We sell our wine in 33 countries worldwide from Canada to Brazil and even Australia so a major part of my time is spent on international travel to attend tastings and winemaker events. Wine is not just a career, it's a way of life for the whole family. The hours are endless and you do need to be passionate about what you are doing. Luckily I caught the wine bug when I arrived here and today it feels like it was always my destiny.

We would like to develop the wine tourism side of things here and with more and more low cost flights to nearby airports there is a huge opportunity to welcome tourists and groups at the vineyard.

Any Muckross past pupils who are in the area and would like to visit are very welcome to contact me for a visit and a cold glass of rosé!

**Neasa Corish-Miquel,
Leaving Cert. 1995**



Neasa & Sean



Neasa & Laurent in the wine cellar

Greetings from our other Dominican Unions

Congratulations to Muckross PPU from Sion Hill past pupils. We hope you have a wonderful year celebrating your Centenary. Best wishes, Jenny Keating, President Sion Hill PPU

Congratulations and best wishes to Muckross Park College Past Pupils' Union on reaching their 100th Birthday. Looking forward to a successful future. From Rita Finan President, Dun Laoghaire PPU.

The pace of change in the past century has been fast. Before the time of mobile phones, emails and facebook the only way for past pupils to keep in touch was through their union. We appreciate the opportunity to join with you each year at the Combined Dominican Unions' Mass – this is a fine tradition. I wish on behalf of myself and all our past pupils to send congratulations to you for your Centenary year. From Ann Killeen, President, Dominican College PPU Eccles Street.

At the CDU Mass last October were Rita Finan, President, Dun Laoghaire PPU on the right, with Deirdre McConnell, Catherine Kearns and ex Muckross teacher May Moroney.





WINNING ENTRY FROM 2011 SHORT STORY COMPETITION

Last year we ran a competition in conjunction with the Writers Workshop. We gave the first line from *A week in December*, by Sebastian Faulks' – 'five o'clock and freezing' and asked you to complete a short story in a maximum of 500 words. Entries for the competition were wonderfully varied and we hope you enjoy reading the following winning entry from Deirdre Davys.

Five o'clock and freezing. The cold hovers expectantly. It is only a matter of time.

At twelve o'clock the Council turned the heating off. Within minutes the cold was released. It emerged slowly, steadily from the concrete floor, seeped in through the walls from the unheated corridor, pushed against the large single glazed window and finding no resistance spread itself across the room. Growing in confidence as the radiator cooled, it settled in the air. Outside it was minus ten.

She'd manage she thought. More clothes – a hat, gloves, two pairs of socks. She'd go out, walk around the shops, come back and get into bed. She'd get her money on Thursday and pay the bill. Damn them! She never thought they'd actually do it. She'd survive. A bit of cold never did anyone any harm.

Five o'clock and freezing. With nightfall the temperature has dropped again. The cold now a thick blanket weighs heavily on the room. Everything is icy to the touch. The freezing air pushing through the frail curtains meets metal surfaces - the radiator, the fridge, the microwave and they in turn transmit more cold.

Huddled beneath the bed clothes fully dressed, teeth chattering, hands numb, feet numb she clutches the thin duvet around her. The cold grows bolder, intensifies, makes forays under the covers inserting icy fingers checking for signs of life. It is only a matter of time.

An ambulance siren in the distance, going the wrong way.

She can't feel her body anymore. Her thoughts are muddled, confused. She's fallen into an icy pool. She's sinking down. Grab onto something. A bush, a branch. Don't give up. Someone will come by. Just hang on a minute. Her mother. Where is she? She was always there when she needed her. If she could shout someone might hear. A siren. Another ambulance. Maybe someone is coming. The ambulance men will be strong. They'll get her out. Teeth not chattering any more. Maybe the heat's coming back on. Maybe it was only a warning. They wouldn't leave her to die.

It was only a matter of time.

**Deirdre Davys (Magee)
Leaving Cert. 1970**

Life begins walking!

Imagine the scene. An elderly but fit woman decides to climb her first mountain and chooses the highest mountain in Wicklow as her challenge. She rings up the army base in the Glen of Imaal to find out the best place to start and they recommend starting from their base near Fenton's pub. On arrival at the hut she goes inside to make some more enquiries and out comes a soldier who does not appear to be exactly overworked. Realising that the two women about to ascend the mountain might turn out to be a bit of craic he dives back inside saying 'sure I'll go up with ye' and emerges again with a tiny rucksack and none of the usual paraphernalia one now associates with hill walkers.

Some months previously this very good friend of mine had asked me if I would climb Lugnaquilla with her on a particular date in June. Never being one to refuse an offer of a mountain climb I had readily agreed. I hadn't smelled any rats!

Our companion proved to be an easy going chap with plenty to talk about and we arrived at the summit without incident where upon with great ceremony my friend opened her large rucksack and produced a bottle of champagne and a box of very luscious chocolates. Our army escort had just taken out a tiny carton of orange juice as his contribution to lunch and was pretty impressed by this display of ostentation. Then the truth emerged. It was, she announced, her sixtieth birthday and she had never climbed a mountain before and she wanted to celebrate.

The wonderful thing about this story is that she subsequently joined the Ramblers and her life changed forever. Having taken on that first challenge to climb a Munro i.e. a mountain over three thousand feet she then went on to sky dive, ice skate, kayak down rivers, climb up to Macchu Pichu and a whole lot more. What a great way to start the rest of your life.

The thing about mountains is that they are just aching to be climbed and there are so many of them that once you get the bug you will never be at a loss of something to do. The explosion of interest in hill walking and mountain climbing in Ireland in recent years has led to many upland areas being opened up to the public as paths are laid and access is negotiated with land owners.

So if like my friend you get the urge to climb a mountain don't bother the army. Grab your boots and head for the Dublin mountains and if it's your first time why not bring some bubbly to celebrate.

**Deirdre Davys (nee Magee)
Class of 1970**



CENTENARY DINNER – BOOKING FORM

Friday 27th April 2012, Stillorgan Park Hotel, 7.30pm • Tickets: PPU Members €45 & Non Members €50
EARLY BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL - TELEPHONE BOOKINGS WILL NOT BE TAKEN

I wish to book _____ places, and enclose cheque for €_____ (payable to Muckross PPU).
Please supply names of all those attending on a separate page indicating anniversary year if applicable. Large groups will be accommodated at adjoining tables. • Please indicate any special dietary requirements

First Name: Surname:

Year Left: Maiden Name:

Address:

Tel No.: Email:

please print clearly

Bookings must be received **not later than Friday 20th April** and should be sent to:
Muckross Park PPU, c/o Helena O'Dowd, 18 Boden Wood, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14.

MUCKROSS PARK PAST PUPILS UNION – MEMBERSHIP FORM

I wish to join the PPU / renew my membership (*delete as appropriate*). Please complete the Standing Order below
If renewing, please amend your existing standing order in line with the current amounts if necessary.

(Block Letters)

First Name: Last Name: Maiden Name:

Address:

Year Left: Tel. No.: Mobile:

Email:

please print clearly

Occupation: Have you any professional or other skills to offer to the PPU?

**Annual Membership Fee: €15 or Seniors (over 60s) €10 • From non euro zone area please send equivalent amount in your currency.
If you prefer not to pay by Standing Order please send a cheque (payable to Muckross PPU) to the address shown below.**

OFFICE USE ONLY: Cash/Chq lodged or Standing Order sent to Bank - Date: _____

Database noted: Date: _____ Amount €: _____

Subscriptions Received: 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020

STANDING ORDER

Name of Bank										
Address of Bank										
Sort Code (6 digits)										
Account Number (8 digits)										
Account Holder Name										

Pay now and/or on the 1st day of JULY of each year until further notice the sum of € to the credit of:

- Muckross Past Pupils' Union Account Account No: 17107621
 - Bank of Ireland, 2 College Green, Dublin 2 Sort Code: 90-00-17
- and charge the same to my account. *Please cancel all previous standing instructions in favour of Muckross Past Pupils' Union.*

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Return completed form to: Muckross Park PPU, c/o Helena O'Dowd, 18 Boden Wood, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14.