

# Muckross Mail

Newsletter of the Muckross Past Pupils' Union

March 2015



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# From the Union President

## Dear Muckross Park Past Pupils

It's been another busy year. I'm delighted to share some of what we have accomplished over the last 12 months.

At our Annual Dinner last April we asked for your support to help us grow our network of past pupils. We are very keen to increase our connections and help each other in business and also to support our future members. Using social media we are growing. It would be great to see our membership grow in the same way. In late spring we plan to launch our networking programme of events, via our LinkedIn group. We have reached over 1000 followers on our Facebook page, where we love to share photos and updates on our activities. Also we recently joined Twitter – why not share a Tweet with us!

Last May I attended the Sixth Year Graduation Ceremony and was delighted to present Rebecca Byrne with the *Spirit of Muckross Award* which is sponsored by Muckross PPU. Rebecca is now pursuing a Commerce Degree in UCD and we wish her well.

Dominican College Eccles Street & Griffith Avenue Union held their centenary celebrations in 2014. Their president, Pauline Coakley, and her committee held a number of very successful events, which I was invited to, including a lunch and an historical exhibition of photos & memorabilia. It was fantastic to see some of photos of Muckross Park past pupils included. I attended the Sion Hill Annual Dinner hosted by their President, Anita O'Keeffe, and Rita Finan, President of Dominican College, Dun Laoghaire, invited me to their Annual Luncheon. It was wonderful to see the strong links between the Unions continue.



Helena O'Dowd

Our Annual Dinner will take place on **Saturday 25th April** in Elm Park Golf Club. The feedback from last year's dinner was very positive. Over 100 attended and we hope to see you again in April; it's a major event in our calendar. This year we have introduced an online payment option, which will allow you pay using credit / debit cards. As cheques are being phased out and it's not safe to send cash in the post, we are encouraging everyone to pay online. There may be some teething problems so please bear with us.

We have also set-up a PayPal account which will give you the option to pay your membership fees online too. The link can be accessed on our website. All these changes will make it much easier for you and us to manage payments. We would like to hear from

you about how your experience was using our new approach.

With the AGM taking place in early March, I would like to remind you that the PPU would not exist without the members and the committee. All our events, emails, and other communications etc. would not happen without the hard work and commitment of the committee throughout the year. I would like to thank them for all their support.

I hope you enjoy reading this year's Muckross Mail – thank you to all the contributors, and thank you to our editor Gay Rodgers for her time and creativity in pulling together a very enjoyable read every year.

I look forward to welcoming you to our various activities during the year.

**Helena O'Dowd,  
PPU President.**



Rebecca Byrne receiving the 2014 *Spirit of Muckross Award* from PPU President, Helena O'Dowd.



## From the Editor

Creating the Muckross Mail every year is a combined effort. The main contributors are you, the past pupils. Without you we would just send out a list of events and raffle results, informative but boring!



Gay Rodgers

In the 10 years I have been editor, past pupils have sent in articles and photos covering a vast array of subjects from all corners of the globe. Muckross girls are everywhere - Ireland, Moscow, Canada, USA, Cayman Islands, Australia and New Zealand to name a few.

The Muckross Mail was first published in 1971. It started out typed and run off on a Gestetner and now has progressed to the colourful publication it is today. Over the 10 years, any time I approached a past pupil for an article they always responded generously. Once it was the only communication from the PPU but now we have Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. However we know from feedback that past pupils still look forward to receiving the Muckross Mail in the post.

One of the unsung heroes in the process is Mark Daniel of CRM Design & Print who every year does a fabulous job on the design for us. Mark has close ties with Muckross as his wife, Catherine Sheldrick and his two daughters are past-pupils.

Now that this issue has been 'put to bed' I will start thinking of the 2016 issue. So if you would like to submit a photo or an article for the next issue please contact me at [muckrossppu@gmail.com](mailto:muckrossppu@gmail.com)

Gay Rodgers

### PPU Committee:

**President:**  
Helena O'Dowd

**Vice-President:**  
Ann Harper

**Hon. Secretary:**  
Mary Buckley (Deane)

**Hon. Treasurer:**  
Claire Johns (Doyle)

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Felicity Coll (O'Brien)  
Valerie Cox (Fitzpatrick)  
Claire Gately  
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Gay Rodgers  
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[@muckrossppu](https://twitter.com/muckrossppu)



## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### AGM on Union Day

**Sunday 1st March 2015** in Muckross Park  
11.15am Mass followed by AGM & refreshments.

### Easter Egg Hunt (members only)

**Sunday 29th March 2015** in Muckross Park  
At 12 noon. Advance booking essential.

### Annual Dinner

**Friday 25th April 2015** at 8pm  
In Elm Park Golf Club, Donnybrook  
Advance booking essential.

### Hockey Match - Past Pupils v School Team

Date to be finalised for Spring/Summer 2015.

### Combined Dominican Golf Society

**Monday 6th July 2015** in Naas Golf Club  
Book with Miriam Mc Guinness at 086-385 7715.

### Muckross Golf Society

**Thursday 3rd September 2015** in  
Edmondstown Golf Club, Rathfarnham, Dublin.

### Combined Dominican Unions' Mass

**Sunday 4th October 2015** in Muckross Park at  
11.15am.

### Santa Party (members only)

**Sunday 6th December 2015** 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.

## WIN A Great Escape to Monart in our Annual Draw



Take a peek at what you can look forward to on [www.monart.ie](http://www.monart.ie)

Escape to the award winning 5-star Monart destination spa in County Wexford. You and your guest can escape for a mid-week retreat; enjoy a one night deluxe accommodation for two, with breakfast and a magical dining experience in Monart's renowned restaurant. Relax at the Thermal Spa facilities and be pampered with a spa treatment each. Simply relax and de-stress.



## PPU ANNUAL DINNER Saturday 25th April 2015

We are delighted to announce that we are returning to Elm Park Golf Club, Donnybrook on Saturday 25th April 2015 at 8pm sharp

### Tickets:

PPU members €35 & non-members €40.

If you left Muckross 10, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 50 or 60+ years ago organise a group of your classmates to celebrate your anniversary at the dinner – that includes Muckross 'old boys' too!

All bookings for this year's dinner can be booked through Eventbrite by following this link

<http://muckross-ppu-annual-dinner-2015.eventbrite.ie>

This is a new online booking system which gives you the option to pay by credit or debit card.

For those who don't have a credit or debit card, for this year only we will still accept cheque payments (*payable to Muckross PPU*) – send them to the address on the Booking Form in this issue. You will be sent a Ticket to be brought along on the night.

Please contact us if you require a Group Booking Form for a class reunion. Large groups will be accommodated at adjoining tables.

All bookings must be made no later than  
**Friday 17th April**

## Membership Subscriptions

As cheque books are in the process of being phased out by the banks we would greatly appreciate it if those who pay their annual subscription by cheque each year could switch to a Standing Order or visit our website to pay by **PayPal**. This would remove the necessity of sending out reminders. Please complete the Membership Form at the back of this issue.

The Annual Subscription is only €15. We have not increased the subscription for over 10 years which I'm sure you will agree is very reasonable.

If you already pay by Standing Order please check that the amount of your Standing Order is in line with the current amount and if not, complete a new Standing Order and send it to us to process. A number of old Standing Orders set up pre Euro are not for the correct amount so the Treasurer will be writing to the relevant members in due course to arrange amendments.

Your subscriptions help towards the **Benevolent Fund** for our various charitable projects including past pupils in need, the Playgroup Projects in Cape Town and the costs involved in the production of the Muckross Mail. Your support is greatly appreciated.

# EASTER EGG HUNT



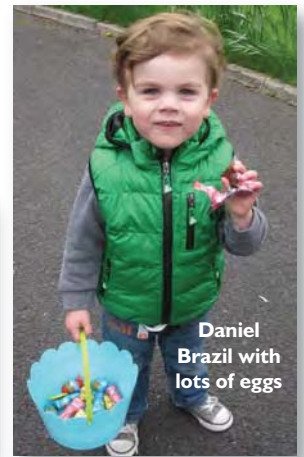
We are delighted once again to invite the children or grandchildren of past pupils to our Easter Egg Hunt.

**Sunday 29th March  
2015**

**12 Noon in  
Muckross Park.**



After the hunt



Daniel  
Brazil with  
lots of eggs

Book online with Eventbrite:  
[www.easter-egg-hunt-2015.eventbrite.ie](http://www.easter-egg-hunt-2015.eventbrite.ie)



Please note this is a **FREE** event for PPU members only.

## AGM on Union Day

Union Day will take place on **Sunday 1st March 2015** in Muckross Park. The format will be Mass at 11.15am followed by the AGM after which refreshments will be served. By attending the AGM 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. We look forward to seeing lots of you on Union Day.

# NEW BEGINNINGS

In last year's issue we reported on the demolition of the Concert Hall and old junior school. The space where it once stood has been developed into a lovely garden for the community with benches and tables in quiet corners. One of the items salvaged from the old building was the mosaic from the floor inside the entrance of the junior school and this has pride of place in the new garden.



## Only Two Degrees of Separation



Marie Morris, Seattle Police Chief Kathleen O'Toole and Mary Hatch

One day last June, I travelled more than 200 Km to lunch, from my home near Vancouver, Canada to Seattle. The occasion was a visit to Seattle by Ireland's Ambassador to the USA, Anne Anderson (a very impressive woman with an easy, down-to-earth manner), and I was guest of the publisher of the Celtic Connection newspaper, for which I occasionally write articles.

It was a joyous event with an entertaining

speech of welcome by Seattle's Irish American Mayor, Ed Murray. He told us that the Ambassador had attended the swearing-in of Seattle's new Chief of Police, Kathleen O'Toole, who had been the first Chief Inspector of the Garda Inspectorate in Dublin. Later, as photographs were taken of the Ambassador, I found myself standing beside the Police Chief. Our exchange of chat included the fact that she had lived in Donnybrook.

"Oh", said I, "I went to school in Donnybrook—Muckross."

"Did you know Valerie Barry?" she enquired, explaining that they had been neighbours. Did I know Valerie Barry? Didn't everyone in Muckross know Valerie Barry back then?!

"She played hockey", I recalled (vastly understating Valerie's contribution to Irish hockey). Without further ado, the Chief of Police in Seattle rooted in her handbag, pulled out her mobile, dialled a number, and handed it to me for a chat with Valerie Barry. Flummoxed though she most certainly must have been, Valerie was most gracious and we had a very pleasant conversation.

So, Valerie, if you're reading this, it was great to talk to you. Sorry if you were put on the spot; of course you wouldn't remember someone 4/5 years younger at school. I look forward to seeing you at the PPU dinner next April when the class of 1965 will be celebrating a significant anniversary.

**Mary Monks Hatch  
Class of 1965**



# CAPE TOWN UPDATE



**Ntombizonke buying the education toys for the sophumelela Playgroup**



**Learning how to match shapes**

You will have read in previous issues that the PPU have been giving support, through the Benevolent Fund, to the Dominican Early Learning Playgroup Projects in Cape Town. Sr Caitriona and the late Sr Áine have done tremendous work in setting up Playgroup Centres in various townships around Cape Town. Once they have become established under the guidance of the Dominican sisters, they are then run independently by the local women and mothers.

## **The following is an excerpt from an email we received from Sr Caitriona in August 2014**

*'I am happy to report that the donation of €500 we received from the Muckross Past Pupils' Union has helped to do great things during 2014 in the Sophumelela Playgroup in the township of Philippi, Cape Town. The parents can barely pay the small fee to have their children at the Playgroup. The fees are used to support Ntombizonke and the young women running the Playgroup, as well as providing food for the children and the daily running expenses. It is with great joy that the Playgroup was able to purchase all the educational toys and equipment that they were lacking. The photos show how the Muckross PPU has helped to promote Early Childhood Education for these two to five year old children.*

*The parents and their children deeply appreciate the care and generosity shown to them by Muckross PPU once again.*

*With love and blessings from Ntombizonke and Sr Caitriona.'*

## **WHY NOT JOIN US**

We are looking for nominations or for PPU members to volunteer to join the 2015 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.

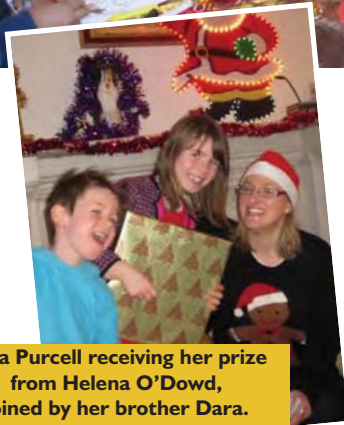
The Committee only meet about 6/7 times a year so it will not eat into much of your time. If you are interested please contact PPU secretary Mary Buckley at 087-678 0646 or email us anytime at [muckrossppu@gmail.com](mailto:muckrossppu@gmail.com)

This is your PPU and we need you to keep it going for another 100 years. If you have attended and enjoyed an event in the past please consider joining the committee for a year and maybe get a friend to join with you. Every committee needs a regular injection of new blood to keep it fresh, so come on, give it a go – we don't bite!



## On The Santa Party

Colouring Pictures at the Santa Party.



Livia Purcell receiving her prize from Helena O'Dowd, joined by her brother Dara.



Simi Shanu receiving her prize from Helena O'Dowd.



Daniel, Dairinn & Rose Burrows.

Once again Santa visited Muckross in December. There is always a festive buzz with everyone there. While waiting for their turn to talk to Santa the children play and colour pictures for the Colouring Competition. Congratulations to our two winners Simi Shanu (daughter of Ruth Butterly class of 1999) and Livia Purcell, (daughter of Emma Long class of 1992).

A big thank you to the community for allowing us to take over their home for the party and all concerned in making this a lovely occasion, particularly Dan Maloney for his wonderful participation.

## Dominican Associates

It's just a year since Muckross began to host a group of Dominican Associates. So, what is an Associate? We are people who support the Dominican ideals and who have the interest and enthusiasm to discuss, to listen and to plough some sort of a spiritual furrow in a sometimes uncaring and increasingly sectarian world.

Under the guidance of Sr Carmel we meet once a month in Muckross; the theme for the evening could be a gospel, a prayer, a slide show. Last November, to celebrate the month of the Holy Souls, we held a 'Death Cafe', all the rage in the UK at the moment but ours may have been a first for Ireland! This is a get-together where we discuss death and, most importantly, our own demise, one of the last great taboos. It was a very lively evening with contributions on all aspects of death, our preconceptions, the loss of loved ones and the spiritual dimension. And of course, as the name implies, there had to be cake!

This is a friendly informative gathering of men and women; there is always a chat and a cuppa and people are free to join in or just listen. Anyone interested in coming along should either phone or drop a note to Sr Carmel.

Valerie Cox (Fitzpatrick)  
Class of 1969

## TRIDENT HOLIDAY HOMES



Win a week's holiday with Trident Holiday Homes in our raffle.

[www.tridentholidayhomes.ie](http://www.tridentholidayhomes.ie)

## STAY IN TOUCH BY FACEBOOK, LINKEDIN, TWITTER AND GMAIL



Check out our Facebook page, Muckross Park College Past Pupils' Union; we have over 1,000 friends at the moment so why not join us there.

Send your Email address to us at [muckrossppu@gmail.com](mailto:muckrossppu@gmail.com) so we can add you to our contacts. If you are in touch with other Muckross girls perhaps you would ask them to let us have their Email address also.

Remember to let us know if you have changed your postal address or Email address recently. *If your Email address was with ireland.com (now closed) please send your new Email to us.* 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.



Sr. Barnabas OP, Mary Deane, Mrs Kathleen Deane, Muckross Park, June 1969.

Unremarkable at the time perhaps – the birth of a baby girl in Kilkee in Co. Clare in the year following the Easter Rising. Yet, 98 years later, the death of Sr. M Barnabas O.P. on Sunday 1st February has already affected thousands of her past pupils. Sr. Barnabas had been frail for a number of years but that didn't stop her from keeping in touch, from coming to see the past pupils at the First Sunday Mass or from giving her girls the kind of unconditional encouragement that the soul yearns for. She was enthusiastic, had an incredible memory for names and indeed entire families and she

loved to hear about the projects her past pupils got involved in.

In the PPU Centenary book, Paddy Waldron Junior, a past pupil himself, recalled the Kett family from Kilkee and Margaret Kett's (Barnie's) younger sister Mary Leyden (1919-09) who was a schoolteacher in Kilrush. 'Conversations with Mrs Leyden were never short and always came round to her gammy knee which she first injured in a hockey match at Muckross, and which was still giving her trouble seventy years later'. Barnie, Mary and another sister, Kitty, all attended Muckross as boarders.



PPU committee celebrate the 97th birthday of Sr Barnabas, Sunday 12th January 2014.

## Sister Barnabas RIP



Sr. Barnabas and Sr. Patrick supervising driving lessons in 1965.

On the Friday before she died, Mary Buckley and I visited Barnie in Cappagh hospital and she was as alert as ever although her hearing and her speech had been affected for a few days. So we resorted to writing notes. Can you hear? She shook her head. Can you speak? Again, she shook her head. Can you smile? And we got a big happy smile that said all was well. Barnie's handwriting was as good as ever. What about the Associates? she wrote in a note, any new members? (This was reference to the Dominican Associates Group now active in Muckross – see report elsewhere in the newsletter). Mary reminded her that we were coming up to the first Sunday and there would be a PPU committee meeting; Barnie herself was one of the hardest working committee members over the years. She whispered 'Hail Marys' and we promised to say them. Then she whispered that she loved us all and indeed, that message came through so clearly in the hundreds of messages posted on the PPU Facebook page within hours of the announcement of Barnie's death.

*What a great age and a great woman who influenced so many with her positive energy ...Jakki Moore.*

*A woman before her time, a Tour de Force, still polish my shoes, just in case ...Marie Foley.*

*Sr. Barnabas was a Muckross girl through and through all her life. People may not know that she was a boarder at Muckross before she entered the Dominican Order ...Beatrice Doran.*

*Remember her little office. That lady is invincible. I hope heaven is ready!...Noreen Kelleher.*

*So sad, she was one great woman ...Celine Devoy.*

*Great lady, put the fear of God in me but I knew she cared. I was rooting for you to make it to 100! ...Alice Capell.*

*Ni bheidh a leithead aris ...Shauna Kelly.*

*An example of Faith we were lucky to witness ...Yvonne Flanagan.*

*A strong wonderful lady who stood for no nonsense, always had a glint in her eye. Rest in peace and thank you for your interest and guidance ...Elizabeth Nunan.*

*She was a wonderful powerful woman who taught us so much and made us fit for purpose in an adult world ...Emer Daly.*

Over a cup of tea after the Past Pupils' Mass on the day Barnie died, the memories were flowing. 1965...when Barnie started driving lessons for the 5th



Leesha Gaffney, Valerie Cox, Mary Buckley, Emer Daly & Miriam Hannon with Barnie, last year.

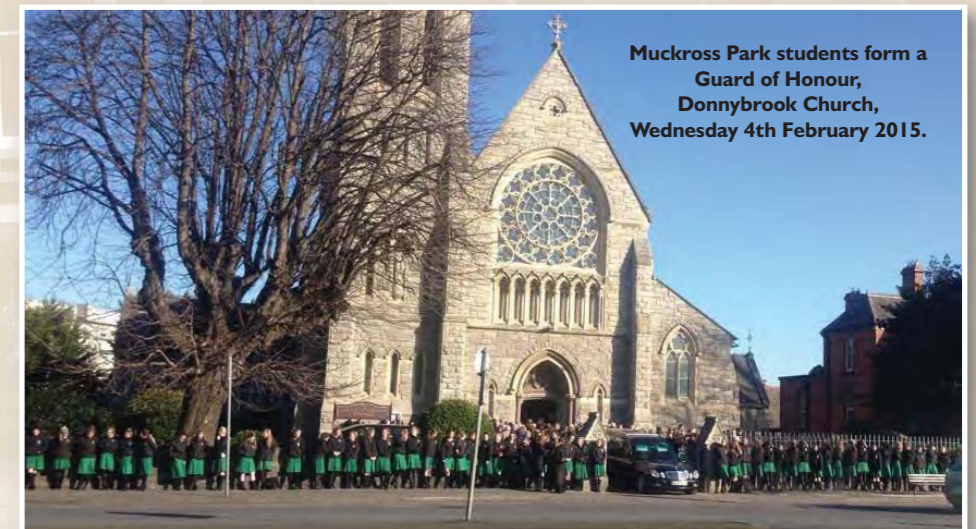
years, tennis lessons, the French Exchange, the educational trips to London and France. Helen Litton recalled the launch of Beatrice Doran's new book on the history of Donnybrook where Barnie held court in Elm Park Golf club and recognised everyone. Valerie Clancy recalled one day when Barnie asked her had she her bicycle with her in school. She did and so Barnie sent her off into town to pick up a message for her, missing class in the process! In later years Barnie always watched for Valerie's involvement in tennis tournaments, knew the results and wrote her letters about them which she still has. Valerie's husband, Fintan, remembers his first meeting with Barnie when she told him 'You're the luckiest man under the sun to have got Valerie!' And, he said, 'she was the oldest nun I ever hugged!'

Philo Butler made a lovely connection with Cappagh hospital where Barnie died. Barnie started the Junior Red Cross in

Muckross and they used to take young patients from Cappagh on a yearly outing. In 1967 they visited the zoo and then it was back to Muckross for 'miles of egg sambos' in the domestic kitchen!

We send our condolences to all those who loved Barnie especially her brother and her extended family from Co Clare as well as her fellow Sisters in Muckross. They have been her immediate family for so many years and they looked after Barnie with great care and love in her latter years. As somebody said on Facebook, it IS the end of an era but Barnie will never be forgotten! But the final word has to go to Margaret Rose who quoted Barnie's doctor, Brian Hurson, who once told her, 'If you get to heaven Barnie, you'll make sure everyone from Muckross will get through!'

**Valerie Cox (Fitzpatrick) Class of 1969**



Muckross Park students form a Guard of Honour, Donnybrook Church, Wednesday 4th February 2015.





# Women with Altitude

The first time you say it you can almost hear people thinking 'probably dyslexic' or 'obviously she means attitude'. Great, you've got their attention.

So who or what are they these women with altitude? Well no, they're not taller than average and it's not a version of O'Casey's 'notions of upperosity'. Women with Altitude is, very loosely, an organisation which gives women the opportunity to get out into the outdoors and acquire new skills.

In a friendly and supportive way women can learn to navigate in the mountains, get into rock climbing and/or bouldering, improve their leadership qualities or merely walk or climb with other women.

Why women and not men you might wonder. Is it some sort of feminist organisation, man haters of some sort? No is the answer. It is nothing like that, but the mere fact of it being just for women, takes away the insecurity which some women feel when they put themselves into situations which are out of their comfort zones.

Anyone who has signed up for a Mountain Leadership course will have come across the uber confident, young twenty something males, gung ho and kitted out from top to toe in the best technical gear. For 'best' read most expensive! As a shy or inexperienced or small or unfit woman it is easy to feel intimidated, which of course leads to lack of confidence, which in turn leads to making silly mistakes and on and on it goes. You end up not feeling too happy and not performing as well as you might.

Put those same women into an all-woman environment and the dynamic changes. Now it's all about co-operation not competition.

It's about people wanting to learn, while having a laugh as well. It is about people with skills who are more than willing to give you a hand, who really want you to learn.

As we all know having to rely on someone else's knowledge is very disempowering, but so many people who go hill walking never get beyond just being led by other people. What Women with Altitude does, is encourage women to take on responsibility, to overcome their fears and in so doing improve their leadership skills. Gaining confidence in the outdoors can of course have a knock on effect in other aspects of one's life.

An all-female team from Mountaineering Ireland organises this initiative and so far there have been three marvelously successful events in Donegal, Wicklow and The Mournes. This year it will take place in Connemara.

Apart from the afore mentioned activities at the weekend events other options included so far have been gorge walking, history and geology walks, digital photography workshops, life coaching workshops and even Nordic walking.

After a day in the outdoors, exhausted but happy it is most pleasant to sit back and listen to some amazingly brave and determined women regale you with stories

of their adventures perhaps on rock faces in or the icy wastes of . Suddenly like a tortoise poking its head from its shell, you can feel yourself looking outwards – could this be me? Yes is the answer.

Deirdre Davys (nee Magee), Class of 1970

**Editor: for more information visit [www.womenwithaltitude.ie](http://www.womenwithaltitude.ie)**



## VIP Trip to Kildare Village

Following a great day out in 2013 we were once again invited to a VIP day in Kildare Village Outlet. On the morning of 20th May a large group set off in a bus provided by Kildare Village. On arrival we were brought to the VIP Lounge where we were given a glass of bubbly and discount vouchers to use in the shops. After much shopping and lunch, we were dropped back to Dublin well laden with shopping bags as can be seen in the photo. We would like to thank all at Kildare Village for arranging the trip.

The Committee have decided to run this event every second year, so start saving now for the big spend in 2016!



The Muckross PPU Group in Kildare Village.





## PPU Golf Society Report

The 12th outing of the ever popular Muckross Golf Society took place on Tuesday 2nd September 2014 in Elm Park Golf Club with over 30 golfers enjoying a good day's play. *Captain*, Annette Burke presented the Campbell perpetual trophy to the winner Bernadette Murphy (nee Gogarty). A number of non-golfing past pupils came along later to join the others for the dinner.

### **Congratulations to the following winners:**

- 1st Place: **Bernadette Murphy**
- 2nd Place: **Jackie Horan**
- 3rd Place: **Elaine Hartigan**
- 4th Place: **Moya Williams**
- Front Nine: **Marie O'Carroll**
- Back Nine: **Darina Marshall**
- Longest Drive: **Jackie Horan**
- Nearest the Pin: **Iris Condon**

The 2015 outing is on **Thursday 3rd September** in **Edmondstown Golf Club, Rathfarnham**. If you and your friends are keen golfers we would be delighted to welcome you to this year's Outing.

We are also looking for golfers to play for the Muckross team in the Combined Dominican Unions' Outing on **6th July in Naas Golf Club**. In recent years this event has been very poorly represented by Muckross so let's get some players out there and win the trophy!



**Annette Burke, Captain; with Bernadette Murphy and Phyl Kelleher**

## Combined Dominican Unions' Golf Society



This year's outing is on **Monday 6th July** in **Naas Golf Club**. **Book with Miriam McGuinness at 086-385 7715.**

Past pupils from all the Dominican schools take part each year and the school with the best three scores wins the trophy for their school. The trophy, which was presented by Waterford Glass, stands on a mahogany plinth with silver plates on all sides on which is engraved the names of the winning schools and the years.

The last time Muckross won this trophy was 1993 so let's get a good Muckross team out there for 2015.

## PAST PUPILS' UNION MONTHLY MASS

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

The **Mass for deceased past pupils** is on **Sunday 1st November**. 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 4th October 2015** 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 2014 Mass and look forward to welcoming you all again in 2015 – Dominican 'old boys' are welcome too.



# Changing Rooms



Winter is a great time for taking stock and to begin making plans for spring projects. These long winter nights can be used productively to focus on a particular room that you perhaps don't use to its full potential.

With my work as an Interior Stylist, I get a glimpse of home life all over Ireland and England and a recurring issue I have been dealing with is the redundant sitting room. Life, these days, suits to adding on a large open plan room at the back of the house where we cook, eat, relax & entertain. This is partly to do with making full use of the garden but also acknowledging that old chestnut - that people tend to migrate to the kitchen, where the action is, where it is warm or where you might want to keep an eye on little ones. Suddenly the sitting room becomes neglected; things get thrown in there as they can be out of sight, which immediately makes it a space you would not want to relax in. You stop heating that room, the door is kept shut and the room loses its purpose.

A fine project that could give your home a new dimension is to breathe new life into the room by giving it a new function. It is a luxury to have such a space - so think of it as being a treat.

Wouldn't it be nice to have a space that is a haven, away from the television and the internet? You could create a library or a music room, a peaceful place to take the papers and a pot of coffee or maybe a book you want to escape to. By simply adding wall to wall shelving - either bespoke or from a furniture store, and

painting it and the walls in a rich inky hue, you can address storage issues and give the room a new identity in one fell swoop.

Changing paint colour is the single-most transformative thing you can do to a room. Every room should have its own atmosphere and it helps when you have identified its function. Do you want it to

be a cosy ambient space or a light airy calm room?

Perhaps you want your own grown up reception room to entertain in. You could decorate it in a way that you feel it is a place to be dressed smartly when you are in it. A place to which friends come and have drinks. Create a cocktail bar from an antique buffet or sideboard. Hide a little fridge inside a press. Add a tray with some collected glasses, decanters and an ice bucket and stock up on some party drinks. Paint the walls an elegant colour and add some sconces to house candles. Put some of your favourite artworks on the walls. Re-instate the open fire or if there is none, consider adding a stove to the side of the room that has an outside wall and use it.

Bring back the good room!

**Niamh MacGowan**  
Class of 1992

**Editor: Niamh is an Artist & Interior Stylist and carries out one-off Colour Consultations in your home among other creative services - visit [www.niamhmacgowan.com](http://www.niamhmacgowan.com)**

## Graduation Day - May 2014

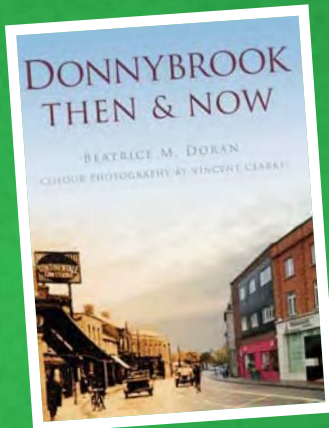


**Former sixth year students pictured on Graduation Day with the cherry blossom tree they planted in memory of their dearly-missed classmate, Aisling Crowe. They picked this tree because it blossoms every march, the time of her anniversary. (Standing) Moya Cassidy, Alaina Maher, Sophie Gavin, Eithne Branagan, Molly Devlin, Ciara Nealon, Jenny O'Mahony. (Kneeling) Niamh Moynagh, Lucy Sheridan & Susan O'Donovan.**



Emily Gibson with her husband Fiachra Sweeney and baby Clara at the CDU Mass last October.

## Another Book



Dr Beatrice Doran a former President of the Muckross Past Pupils' Union (Class of 1959) has published a second book on Donnybrook. This new book, *Donnybrook: Then & Now* was published in December by The History Press. Beatrice's other book *Donnybrook: a History* has sold over 1,000 copies since it was published in 2013.

In this new book Beatrice explores Donnybrook's vibrant past by contrasting forty five archive images with the modern photographs by Vincent Clarke. Accompanied by detailed research, each page tells a story of change looking at different aspects of Donnybrook, its architecture, commerce and transportation and of course remembering some of the local residents who have made Donnybrook what it is today. This book is a welcome addition to the history of Donnybrook, and will be of great interest to all those who know the area or who were at school in Muckross. It will be a vital and lasting record of the ever changing face of Donnybrook.

Both books are available from Hampton Books, (Donnybrook), Easons, Hodges Figgis and Dubray Books in Grafton Street, Blackrock and Stillorgan.

**WIN a fabulous handmade brooch designed by Celtic Roots Studio, Athlone in the Muckross PPU Raffle.**

## 2015 Annual Raffle in aid of our Benevolent Fund

This year's raffle has an eclectic collection of fantastic prizes. We hope it will generate a bumper fundraising for the **Benevolent Fund** which supports our various charitable projects including past pupils in need and the Playgroup Projects in Cape Town.

- 1st Prize:** One week holiday in Ireland from Trident Holiday Homes.
- 2nd Prize:** One night mid-week B&B+1D for two people including two treatments in Monart Spa.
- 3rd Prize:** Two green fees for Seapoint Golf Club, Termonfeckin, Co Louth.
- 4th Prize:** One year's rental of a safe deposit box from Merrion Vaults in Dublin.
- 5th Prize:** Lunch for two at Jamie's Italian Restaurant, Dundrum Town Centre.
- 6th Prize:** Family ticket to Wicklow's historic gaol.
- 7th Prize:** Handmade brooch, designed by Celtic Roots Studio, Athlone.
- 8th Prize:** Art Stone Candle Set by Rachel McCann.

**A big thank you to all the above for sponsoring the prizes.**

Tickets are €5 each or a book of 5 for €20. If you did not receive your raffle tickets with the Muckross Mail or you would like extra tickets please  
**Email: muckrossppu@gmail.com**

### Check out the websites of our Raffle Sponsors

[www.tridentholidayhomes.ie](http://www.tridentholidayhomes.ie)

[www.monart.ie](http://www.monart.ie)

[www.seapointgolfinks.com](http://www.seapointgolfinks.com)

[www.merrionvaults.ie](http://www.merrionvaults.ie)

[www.jamiesitalian.ie](http://www.jamiesitalian.ie)

[www.wicklowshistoricgaol.com](http://www.wicklowshistoricgaol.com)

[www.celticroots.ie](http://www.celticroots.ie)



# Déjà Vu?



They don't do recessions like they used to. When I was growing up in Ireland in the seventies, we knew how to do a proper recession. It was relentlessly grim, and no one pretended they were enjoying it. There was no cheery talk of recessionstays or staycations – no one expected you to look stylish on a budget, and a rain-sodden fortnight in Connemara huddled around a turf fire was known as a 'holiday'. Ireland was a pretty drab and dreary place to live, and if you wanted to have a good time, you left. I packed my bags and got out of Dodge.

When I returned to Ireland at the beginning of the nineties, it had changed dramatically. Dublin had earned an international reputation as a thriving, vibrant city – there were cool and glamorous places to go, fun to be had, and lots of money to be made.

And now here we are again, back at square one. Only not quite. In the boom years, we got used to having good times and money to spend, and somewhere along the way we lost the knack of being miserable. Now there's no going back – no undoing all that confidence and sense of fun. The idea that we're here to enjoy ourselves has taken hold. But ever adaptable, we've learned to mould this recession to meet our Celtic Tiger expectations.

Take those dinner parties you used to go to. You know the ones – the food was organic, artisanal and sourced locally at farmers' markets and small speciality shops. As the wine flowed, guests would swap hilarious anecdotes about how much their houses had increased in value since they'd arrived, and moan about banks pestering them to take loans that they didn't need or want. Someone would wax lyrical about the ten-course tasting menu



they'd had at a famous Michelin-starred restaurant that cost as much as your first car.

Nowadays the food is three-for-two, and has been sourced under one roof at Aldi or Lidl. Guests swap hair-raising, one-upping anecdotes about their negative equity, and moan about banks refusing loans that they desperately need and want. Someone will wax lyrical about the all-you-can-eat-for-a-fiver buffet at his local Chinese.

Expensive nights out have been replaced by quiet nights in rooting through your jewellery box for gold that can be converted to cash. Gone too is the obsession with designer clothes, replaced by a salt-of-the-earth devotion to Penneys and charity shops.

But we haven't had to give up all our luxuries, thanks to the daily deals – that constant stream of cheap weekend breaks, discount facials, dentistry and hairdressing, and all sorts of other weird and wonderful offers that drop into your email every morning. We may be broke, but we're going to be the best looking beggars in Europe with our laser-whitened teeth, bootcamp-toned bodies and highlighted hair, buffed up to the nines with massages, nail polishing, and spa treatments.

Recessions were never like this in my day.

**Clodagh Murphy**  
Class of 1979

**Editor:**  
Clodagh is an author of romantic comedy novels.  
Check out [www.clodaghmurphy.com](http://www.clodaghmurphy.com)



## My Mother – Maureen Kavanagh

For my mother, the late Maureen Kavanagh, her time spent in Muckross Park was an integral part of her identity.

She was born Maureen Patricia Talbot on St Patrick's Day in 1924. She grew up in Hollybank Avenue in Ranelagh the eldest of three sisters who all attended Muckross.

She married Gerald Kavanagh in 1946 and had five children, naturally choosing Muckross for her two daughters, Gay (1970) and me Elaine (1975).

She had a fundamental belief in anything that would help women to achieve their potential and give them educational ballast. She had wanted to go to college, but it was not possible. Even so, she was proud that Muckross Park had given her the opportunity to achieve a very high standard of education. Recently, I found her Leaving and Matriculation certificates, plus numerous letters from former teachers and nuns commending her academic achievements. These were important endorsements for her all through her life.

She was an unbelievably good cook and a bon vivant, influenced by her family's tradition of appreciating good food and the dining experiences she had attending formal functions and dinners in the home of her employer (a prominent solicitor) before she got married. So we were raised at a wonderful table and she gave us many amazing food memories.

But she also had a strict code of table etiquette. How you held your knife was a serious measure of your upbringing and many an unsuspecting friend or boyfriend came a cropper at our table!

Mum was definitely ahead of her time. In the early 60's she opened her own business in Leeson Street Lower, called Kavanagh's Newsagents and Post office. It became an institution, strategically situated beside Hartigan's pub, UCD on Earlsfort Terrace and the old St Vincent's hospital.

'Ma Kavanagh' as she was known, was a natural businesswoman and well respected in the community. Woe-betide any greeting card salesman who fell short of the mark, or anyone pilfering sweets from the front counter.

She could list off many characters that frequented her shop. They included Brendan Behan, Patrick Kavanagh, and Peter O'Toole who made her climb high up a ladder to fetch the biggest box of chocolates late one Christmas Eve, eyeing up the candy as always!

And of course, throughout her life she maintained her links to the school, attending Past Pupils events and marking a big red X on her calendar for the annual Past Pupils dinner.

Her ability to recall the names and birthdays of her classmates was fantastic. But she also had an aversion to those with 'notions of grandeur' as she called it, and would gleefully bring them down to earth, via some revealing childhood memory.

When the new school opened in 2007 she was 83 but she still went and checked it out and was enthralled by the state of the art facilities.

She achieved her aim to live to be ninety, dying peacefully in 2014 on 21st June which was ironically her least favourite day of the year. She would lament the passing of summer every year on that day, always sad that the evenings were shortening and that winter was on the way.

She was an amazing woman and so very proud of her Alma Mater. We shall never know another like her. Rest in peace Mum.

Elaine Kavanagh, Class of 1975

**Editor: Congratulations to Elaine who was one of the final 12 contestants chosen for the programme *The Great Irish Bake Off* on TV3 last summer.**

## 2014 RAFFLE RESULTS

The Annual Raffle for the Benevolent Fund took place at the Annual Dinner on 5th April 2014 in Elm Park Golf Club. Congratulations to the following winners:

### 1st Prize:

Mid-week break for two in Monart Destination Spa, Co Wexford with 2 nights bed & breakfast +1 dinner & 1 treatment

**Winner: Sr Carmel Heavey**

### 2nd Prize:

Hamper from The Elms, Lifestyle Store, Punchestown, worth €150.

**Winner: Valerie Cox**

### 3rd Prize:

Income Tax Consultation from Anne Brady McQuillans DFK

**Winner: Maureen O'Toole**

### 4th Prize:

Hamper of Brooke & shoals fragrances & candles worth €100

**Winner: Noelle Cotter**

### 5th Prize:

€100 voucher for Kildare Village Shopping Outlet

**Winner: Mary Fitzpatrick**

### 6th Prize:

Ceramic figurine from Rachel Quinn Ceramics.ie

**Winner: Carmel Devenney**

### 7th Prize:

Handmade brooch of 5,000 year old bogwood, designed by Celtic Roots Studio, Athlone.

**Winner: Mary Morrissey**

### 8th Prize:

iPad /tablet bag handmade from 100% wool felt by Core Crafted Design, Athlone.

**Winner: Darina O'Hanlon**

### 9th Prize:

Hamper of Books

**Winner: Anne Whealans**

### 10th Prize:

Hamper of soap & moisturisers from Supernatural Seaweed Soaps

**Winner: Anne Marie Mee**

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

**EARLY  
BOOKING  
IS  
ESSENTIAL**

# ANNUAL DINNER – BOOKING FORM

Saturday 25th April 2015 in Elm Park Golf Club, Donnybrook  
Tickets: PPU Members €35 & Non Members €40

Bookings can be made online at [www.muckross-ppu-annual-dinner-2015.eventbrite.ie](http://www.muckross-ppu-annual-dinner-2015.eventbrite.ie)

For cheque payment bookings please complete the following

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 you left Muckross:  Maiden Name:

Address:

Tel No.:  Email:

*please print clearly*

Bookings must be received **not later than Friday 17th April 2015** and should be sent to:  
**Muckross Park PPU, c/o Claire Gately, 119 Strand Road, Sandymount, Dublin 4.**

## MUCKROSS PARK PAST PUPILS' UNION – MEMBERSHIP FORM

**Annual  
Membership  
€15**

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

Visit  
[www.muckrossparkppu.com](http://www.muckrossparkppu.com)  
to pay by PayPal.

Payment sent by  or please complete the Standing Order form below.

(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?

**OFFICE USE ONLY:** Standing Order sent to Bank - Date: \_\_\_\_\_ PayPal Payment Received Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Database noted: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount €: \_\_\_\_\_

Subscriptions Received:  2015  2016  2017  2018  2019  2020  2021  2022

## STANDING ORDER

Name of Bank: \_\_\_\_\_

Branch Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Account Holder: \_\_\_\_\_

IBAN No: \_\_\_\_\_

BIC No: \_\_\_\_\_

I/we hereby authorise you to pay now and subsequently on the 1st day of JULY of each year until further notice the sum of €15 to the credit of:

**Muckross Past Pupils' Union Account**  
**Bank of Ireland, 2 College Green, Dublin 2.**  
and charge the same to my account.

**IBAN No: IE42 BOFI 9000 1717 1076 21**  
**BIC No: BOFIE2D**

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return completed form to: Muckross Park PPU, c/o Claire Gately, 119 Strand Road, Sandymount, Dublin 4.**