

January
2009



Muckross Mail

Newsletter of the Muckross Past Pupils' Union



Muckross PPU president Gay Rodgers (centre) with 4 other Dominican PPU presidents (l-r) Dervila Keane, Sion Hill, Carmel O'Connor, Eccles Street, Rita Finan, Dun Laoghaire and Teresa Lowth, Cabra, who were guests at the Muckross Annual Dinner in April 2008.

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FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Writers Workshop

Saturday 21st February 2009 From 2pm – 5.30pm
in the National Yacht Club Dun Laoghaire
With guest speaker Paul Howard (aka Ross O'Carroll Kelly)
Cost €20
Bookings: Contact Valerie Cox 087-216 6669

Union Day & AGM

Sunday 1st March 2009 in Muckross Park
11.15am Mass, AGM & refreshments

Easter Egg Hunt

Sunday 5th April 2009 in Muckross Park
from 12 – 1 pm approx
Booking essential

Annual Dinner

Friday 24th April 2009 at 8pm
In Stillorgan Park Hotel
Stillorgan, Co. Dublin
Booking essential

Combined Dominican Golf Society

Monday 13th July 2009 in Roganstown Golf Club
Contact Mary Breen 087-619 2303

Muckross Golf Society

Thursday 10th September 2009
Edmondstown Golf Club, Rathfarnham.
Contact Annette Quigley (Soraghan) by 14th August
At quigleyjas@eircom.net or 087-686 7376

Combined Dominican Unions' Mass

Sunday 4th October 2009 at 11.15am at Muckross Park

Santa Party

Sunday 6th December 2009 in Muckross Park
At 12 noon - 1pm. Booking essential.

PPU Mass in Muckross:

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



FROM THE PRESIDENT

I was delighted to take over as President of the Past Pupils' Union from Valerie Cox at our AGM in April 2008. I would like to thank Valerie for all she did during her tenure as president. She was responsible for introducing a new annual event, our Writers Workshop in 2007, which has proved very popular. We look forward to seeing some of you at the next one in February.

Our Annual Dinner last April had the highest attendance ever! We were delighted to welcome 4 other Dominican presidents to the dinner from Cabra, Dun Laoghaire, Eccles Street and Sion Hill. It's not often that the 5 of us get the chance to meet to compare notes.

The draw for the annual raffle took place at the dinner and I would like to thank all our members for their fantastic support yet again. We raised €3,000 and as a result were able to continue our support of the Playgroup Projects in Capetown and provide assistance to past pupils and other causes. I hope you will like the selection of prizes available in this year's raffle.

We also gave our website a new look so visit www.muckrossparkppu.com and tell us what you think.

During the year I attended the Eccles Street annual lunch and the Dun Laoghaire dinner, so you see there are perks to being president. Another event I was happy to attend was the 2008k Muckross Run which took place in Irishtown Stadium on 5th October. The purpose was to raise funds for a new theatre/concert hall for the school. The present pupils ran 2008 kilometres in relays around the track and finished in an incredible five and a half hours! If any past pupil feels like making a donation I am sure the Parents Association would be delighted to hear from you. One event I missed due to flu was our Santa Party. We had 38 children colouring pictures and having fun telling Santa what they wanted. I would like to thank Dan Maloney for helping us again – he looks good in red!

On a sad note, I recently attended the funeral of my old teacher Patricia (Patsy) Kinsella who died on 4th January. Patsy achieved much in her long life not the least of which was being the first lay vice principal of Muckross. During the last year Marjorie Courtney, Nuala Hughes and Imelda Fitzpatrick (mother of Valerie Cox) also passed away. I wish to extend condolences on behalf of the PPU to their families.

On a very happy note, I became engaged during the year. Tony and I are planning to get married somewhere between the annual dinner and the golf outing!

I would like to thank all who contributed articles etc for this edition of Muckross Mail, all our sponsors, Anne Brady who audits our accounts, and the nuns for their support. Finally, I would like to thank our enthusiastic and dedicated committee for all we achieved during 2008.

GAY RODGERS

President

ANNUAL BUFFET DINNER

24th APRIL 2009 at STILLORGAN PARK HOTEL

The 2009 Annual Muckross Past Pupils' Dinner will be held in Stillorgan Park Hotel on Friday 24th April 2009 at 8pm at a cost of €40 per head. We invite those who are 10, 20, 30, 40, 50 and 60+ years out of Muckross to gather a group of your classmates to celebrate at the Annual Dinner.

To book for the Annual Dinner please send a cheque for €40 each (payable to Muckross Park PPU) to the address on the Booking Form and you will be issued with a Dinner Ticket to be brought along on the night. If you are planning a class reunion at the dinner could ONE person of that class be responsible to collect ALL names and cheques and forward them in bulk. This will help greatly with bookings and avoid confusion. Large groups will be accommodated at adjoining tables.

With the current financial uncertainty, the committee have been looking at ways to keep the cost of the dinner as low as possible for our members and we have decided on a buffet style dinner for 2009. Therefore we can reduce the ticket price to €40 which is a reduction on the 2008 cost. We hope you will enjoy the event.

Please Note: Telephone bookings will not be accepted and all tickets must be paid in advance no later than 17th April.

DOMINICAN RETREAT IN TALLAGHT

The annual retreat organised by Dominican College Eccles Street Past Pupils' Union will take place in the Dominican Retreat and Pastoral Centre in Tallaght on Sunday 11th October 2009. Their president, Carmel O'Connor, has extended an invitation to the past pupils of Muckross, Sion Hill and Dun Laoghaire to join them this year. The subscription (€30 approx) includes refreshments and mid-day meal. Please contact Madeleine Clarke at 086-600 3342 for enquiries and bookings.



PPU Committee

President:

Gay Rodgers

Vice-President:

Valerie Cox (Fitzpatrick)

Hon. Secretary:

Claire Johns (Doyle)

Hon. Treasurer:

Margot Doyle

Committee:

Sr. Barnabas

Mary Buckley (Deane)

Philo Butler (Fisher)

Elaine Cogavin (Bastable)

Felicity Coll (O'Brien)

Iris Condon (Fitzpatrick)

Claire Coonan

Beatrice Doran

Katherine Duffy (Fox)

Carla Sload (Mugan)

THE COMBINED DOMINICAN UNIONS' MASS

takes place
on Sunday
4th October
in Muckross
at 11.15am.



Celebrating 30 years at the 2008 Annual Dinner

UNION NEWS

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Your 2009 subscription is now due. In an effort to cut down on administration 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.

Your subscriptions help towards the Benevolent Fund, the Playgroup Projects in Capetown and the costs involved in the production of the Muckross Mail and your support is greatly appreciated. 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.

UNION DAY

This year Union Day will take place on Sunday 1st March 2009. 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 at Union Day.

STAY IN TOUCH BY EMAIL

The PPU has an email address, muckrossppu@ireland.com and we would love to hear from you. Email us now 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. 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 Muckross Mail we will be delighted to hear from you.

AGM AND NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2009/2010 COMMITTEE

The AGM will take place on Union Day on Sunday 1st March 2009. As a number of the present Committee will be stepping down at the AGM we are looking for nominations or 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 approx 4 or 5 times a year. So as you see it will not eat into much of your time! If you are interested please contact Claire Johns (Doyle), Hon Secretary at 087-2218602 or Gay Rodgers, President on 087-638 3683 prior to the AGM or email us at muckrossppu@ireland.com

PPU 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 **Combined Dominican Unions' Mass** takes place in Muckross on Sunday 4th October at 11.15am. If you have friends who went to Cabra, Dun Laoghaire, Eccles Street, Sion Hill, Sutton or Wicklow or any other Dominican school tell them about it and bring them along too. Please note the new date for this Mass as it has previously been held in May each year.

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.

2008 RAFFLE RESULTS

The Raffle took place at the Muckross PPU Annual Dinner on 25th April 2008 in O'Connell's Restaurant in Bewley's Hotel, Ballsbridge. The value of the prizes was over €1,000. Congratulations to the following winners:

1st Prize	Two nights BB+1 Dinner for 2 at any of the Brennan Group Hotels <i>Winner: Beatrice Doran</i>
2nd Prize	Sunday Lunch for 4 in O'Connell's Restaurant, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 <i>Winner: Joan Priestman</i>
3rd Prize	Meal for 2 in Bistro One, Foxrock, Dublin 18 <i>Winner: Teresa Lowth</i>
4th Prize	One year's subscription to 'The Irish Garden' magazine <i>Winner: Carmel Keogh</i>
5th Prize	Lunch for 2 in Roly's Bistro, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 <i>Winner: Evelyn O'Rourke</i>

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

Visit our new look website www.muckrossparkppu.com
for all information and events



ANNUAL DINNER

Book a table for your classmates at the
Muckross PPU Annual Dinner
to be held on
Friday 24th April 2009
in the
Stillorgan Park Hotel

Dinner 8.00pm

Tickets €40 each

Bookings by 17th April

All tickets must be paid for in advance

Payment is not possible on the night

See Booking Form on back page

Don't forget to renew your subscription for 2009.

Only €15 or £10 stg. (or over 60's €10)

See Membership Form in this issue

Muckross Mail



SCHOOL NEWS

LIBRARY NEWS

I arrived at school before 8am on the first Tuesday after mid-term break, to find many of my keen 2nd Year Book Club members waiting at the library door. Over 20 girls arrived shortly afterwards and we enjoyed a lively and enthusiastic discussion on the books we had read over the past three weeks. I think it takes more than just the hot chocolate and biscuits to get our girls into school an hour earlier than necessary. These girls have a genuine love of books and reading and as a bonus they meet other students in their Year who share a similar interest. I know the 'club aspect' is very important. Book Clubs have continued to thrive at all levels. We started the year with a Muckross past pupil, Judy May Murphy, as our guest author and Paul Howard (Ross O'Carroll-Kelly) attended a combined December meeting.

The library still opens at 8 a.m. every morning and is available for quiet study, book borrowing/returning, reading and research. Tuesdays and Thursdays are Book Club mornings while on Mondays and Wednesdays I endeavour to concentrate on the computer cataloguing.

On Friday mornings, at the request of some 3rd Year students, we started a Chess Club. We have three chess boards set up at present but if anyone has a chess set that is not being used at home, Muckross Library Chess Club would be most appreciative of your gift/loan. The same might apply for scrabble sets. Both games develop strategic skills and can become a life-long interest. My plan is to organise some inter-school chess and scrabble competitions through the librarians in other local secondary schools.

Using these same contacts, Muckross successfully hosted an Inter-School Library Quiz just before mid-term break. This year we invited 14 schools (84 students taking part) and with a restricted number of supporters they filled the upper assembly area to capacity. Ryan Tubridy graciously accepted our invitation to be the compere/host, while we asked the local businesses to sponsor the snacks, drinks and numerous spot prizes. Judging from the lively participation and electric atmosphere, it was certainly a huge success. I was very proud of my library prefects who helped and supported me in so many ways. Muckross didn't win this year but our 5th Year Book Club Team did us proud. School libraries/librarians even got a couple of mentions on the Tubridy Chat Show the next morning!

The next exciting development in our School Library will be the introduction of an electronic circulation system. All the staff and students in Muckross will be issued with their own personalised library card. This will have a unique ID and barcode for the borrower to have their books issued, returned or renewed. Students will be able to place reserves while overdue books will be monitored more regularly. I am confident this is another step towards making our library at Muckross more efficient and introducing our girls to the library systems they will encounter outside of the school environment.

Thank you for this opportunity to share our library news with part of the wider School Family.

ANN LUCAS – School Librarian

MUCKROSS PUPILS GO TO LOURDES

We were apprehensive before going to Lourdes last September, but once we were there, the welcoming atmosphere and friendly, enthusiastic pilgrims settled our nerves. We were thrown right into the deep end but we soon found our feet with the help of our teacher Ms. Lyons, Muckross past pupils and all the other helpers.

We woke at 7.30am to start our busy day. We were on ward duty so our job was to talk to the pilgrims and get them ready for the day, which we all agreed was the most rewarding and enjoyable part of our pilgrimage.

We appreciated all the Masses we had and found the youth Mass particularly enjoyable because of the lovely music and effort put into it. The candlelit ceremony was one of the most moving experiences of the pilgrimage. We all felt that what really made the pilgrimage memorable were the people we met, the stories we shared and the friendships we made.

ALI HANRATTY 6th YEAR – 2008 Lourdes Group

MUCKROSS ARCHIVES

At present the school is compiling its archives to protect the legacy of Muckross Park College.

We would like to appeal to any past pupil, teacher or parent that may have any items of interest to contact us. Suggested items may include photographs, letters, certificates, correspondence, awards, drawings, artifacts etc. (the list is endless!). If you feel that you have something that may be of interest to us please contact:

Ms. Deirdre Mac Mathuna, Muckross Park College, Donnybrook, Dublin 4.
Tel (01) 4914033 or email deirdre.macmathuna@dublin.ie

Don't forget
the AGM
on

UNION DAY

Sunday 1st
March 2009

After
11.15am
Mass

If you would
like a
back issue
of the
**MUCKROSS
MAIL**
please contact
the editor

Muckross Mail

MUCKROSS GOLF SOCIETY

The Muckross Park Past Pupils' Golf Society had their 6th annual golf outing to Edmonstown Golf Club in Rathfarnham on Thursday 11th September 2008. Our captain for 2008 was Mary Whooley who proved to be a wonderful captain for the year. We had just short of 50 golfers on the day which made for a great afternoon of golf. Afterwards we retired to the club house for some food, a short AGM and prize giving. The overall winner on the day was Anne Keane (McIntyre). Congratulations to all prize winners.

The incoming captain for 2009 is Annette Quigley (Soraghan). Our next outing takes place on the 10th September 2009 again in Edmonstown Golf Club in Rathfarnham. Details of the event can be obtained from our captain Annette Quigley at Tel 087 6867376 or quigleyjas@eircom.net

We look forward to seeing you all there.

BERNADETTE FEENEY (LACY)

COMBINED DOMINICAN SCHOOLS' GOLF OUTING

The first golf outing of the Combined Dominican Schools was held in Edmonstown Golf Club on the 27th June 1964, and it has continued ever since. Past pupils from all the Dominican schools take part 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. The name and year of the winning school is engraved on this.

Joan Priestman (nee Horne) a past pupil of Muckross and Wicklow, was the president of Wicklow PPU in 1964. Joan had the idea of forming a golf society for Dominican girls as she was mad jealous of her Loreto friends who had their school society! 71 Ladies played in the first outing. The Green fee was ten shillings and the cost of the supper (as it was referred to in the minutes!) was four shillings.

Thanks to all the hard working committees down the years the society is still going. By times it seems to struggle a little but in true Dominican spirit we soldier on! This year will be our 46th annual outing. There are lots of prizes to be played for on the day and apart from the winning school team there is the much sought after Lady Captain's prize.

The 2008 outing was most successful. A total of 65 ladies played on the day. 24 from Eccles St., 11 from Cabra, 11 from Dun Laoghaire, 9 from Muckross, 8 from Sion Hill, and 1 each from Santa Sabina and Wicklow. (There were 23 apologies). This was the biggest turnout since 1973. So let's keep it up.

It had been quite a while since Muckross won the Schools' Trophy so why not make an all out effort to bring the trophy back to Muckross this year. The more that partake the better the chance you have of doing that.

This year's outing will be in Roganstown Golf & Country Club on the 13th July. Ann Quinlan (Dun Laoghaire) is the Lady Captain for 2009. You can reserve a tee time by calling the Secretary Mary Breen (Cabra) on 087 6192303 or email aidanjbreen@eircom.net

Well done to Joan Priestman who started the society all those years ago.

MARY BREEN, Cabra PPU

Ed: Muckross last won the cup in 1993.

THANK YOU TO ALL OUR SPONSORS

Thank you to Massey Brothers Funerals Ltd (129 Thomas Street, Dublin 8) who have agreed to sponsor the postal charges for the Muckross Mail.

This year's Raffle has really fantastic prizes sponsored by the Brennan Hotel Group, *The Irish Garden* magazine and Jean Condron of 'Hats by Jean'.

We are particularly grateful to past pupil Pam O'Connell (Dain), a widely exhibited artist who has generously donated this year's top prize – one of her paintings which has a gallery value of €1,400.

We do hope this generosity will be rewarded with a bumper fundraising.



CLASS OF '69 – 40 YEAR REUNION

**SATURDAY 25th
APRIL 2009**

Contact
MARY BUCKLEY at
mcbuckley1@gmail.com

or
VALERIE COX at
valacox@eircom.net

**We would love to see
you there...**

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

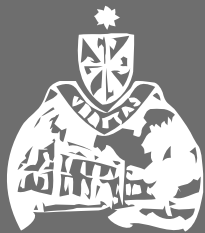
**Have you renewed
your subscription
for 2009?**

**Only €15
or £10 stg.**

(or over 60's €10)

**See Membership
Form in this issue**

Muckross Mail



THE PLAYGROUP PROJECTS IN CAPETOWN

The following is an extract from a letter from Sr. Caitriona to the PPU president in September 2008 giving the PPU an update on the progress of the projects.

Dear Gay

Since we were last in contact with you two things have happened. The Etafeni Playgroup Project is running its own project independently of us, and the Playgroups in Philippi are well on their way to independence.

Sr Áine and I are still involved in Playgroup Projects as there is a great need for early childhood education centres in the very poor squatter areas in Nyanga and the adjoining areas. The Playgroup in most need at the moment is the **Izimvozethu Playgroup.**

The women running this Playgroup have called it Izimvozethu (Pronounced Izim-vo-ze-thu) which means in the Xhosa language 'Our ideas'. They want to plan together, use their own ideas and the ideas of the surrounding community to develop their centre of early learning for the children and their parents.

In the Mkonto area of Nyanga where the Izimvozethu Playgroup is situated, unemployment is at 70%. There is a high prevalence of HIV/Aids among the young adults and some of the children. South Africa has no social benefits for the unemployed. The parents in these young families cannot find jobs but they want to give their children the best that education can offer. This Playgroup is situated in among the shacks in the heart of the squatter area. The children, aged two to six, are within walking distance to get to their Playgroup. And we all want it to be the best!

The aim of the Izimvozethu Playgroup is to become registered by the government as a centre for early childhood education, supported by the parents and by the government. With this objective in mind, the women running the Izimvozethu Playgroup asked Sr Áine and me to help them in going forward with their project. When we went to visit the Playgroup last week, the women running it were sending the children home early because there was no food for their lunch. There was no food for them at home either. Most of the parents are sending their children to the Playgroup because of the morning breakfast and midday meal. The education they get as well is so important for their overall development. But we all know what malnutrition can do to young bodies and developing minds.

Our greatest and most urgent need at the moment for the Izimvozethu Playgroup is nourishing food for the children.

Already the Muckross Past Pupils' Union has been very generous in the past with helping the other Playgroups in providing the means to enable the women to run their projects and in supplying them with educational equipment.

We are very grateful for your help in supporting these.

Greetings to you and to all the Muckross Past Pupils! May you be blessed in all your undertakings this year as a Past Pupils' Association. May the Lord reward you and pass on to others the fruits of your own education as Dominican pupils.

Yours sincerely

SR CAITRÍONA, OP



The women running the Playgroup with some of the children, outside the shack which is used as a classroom.



Sr Áine and the women in the classroom.

Book now
for the
**WRITERS
WORKSHOP**
on
Saturday 21st
February 2009
by ringing
Valerie
on
087-216 6669

Muckross Mail

MEMORIAL MASS FOR NUALA HUGHES, RIP

As many of you will know, last August Nuala Hughes finally lost her long battle with cancer. She will be sadly missed by her many friends. She and my sister, Janet McGloughlin were close friends during their schooldays together at Muckross, and kept in regular contact all through the years. They sat their Leaving Cert in 1956, the year I was just forsaking the royal-blue gymslip of the junior school for the emerald green of the seniors. But I had my own special link with Nuala, as she was the mid-wife in Holles Street Hospital who delivered my eldest child James in 1970. I know from first-hand experience what a skilled and caring nurse she was, and how devastated she was when she contracted hepatitis, and could no longer work around new mothers and newborn babies. It is typical of her giving nature that Nuala opted to leave her body for medical science.

As soon as Janet passed on the sad news of Nuala's death, knowing how upset she was about it, I volunteered to accompany her to the Memorial Mass held in the newly renovated chapel at our old Alma Mater. I had visited the nuns a few times over the years, and attended the Jubilee Garden Party some years ago, but Janet had never managed to make it back.

But both of us were in for a wonderful surprise, when we saw the transformation that has recently been wrought on the chapel. Our father, Stephen McGloughlin, of J. & C. McGloughlin Ltd., had been the engineer who supervised both the steelwork of the structure, and the art metalwork of the tabernacle. So, even as pupils, we had always felt a kind of proprietary pride in the chapel. Imagine our joy to see how beautiful it is looking with the new renovations. The rather stark cream interior that we remember so well has gained new warmth and definition from the bold use of deep wine and golden beige – perhaps evoking unconsciously the symbols of bread and wine. Magnificent!

Magnificent too, was the liturgy, simple but warm, with just the right words said, and the occasion embellished by the music led by another old friend, June Croker playing the organ. Memories of Mother Cecilia playing the same instrument flooded back, and the many, many times we sang the Missa des Angeles under her guidance. I think we all left the chapel feeling Nuala could not have been remembered in more fitting circumstances.

FLORENCE SHIELDS (NÉE MCGLOUGHLIN)

Class of 1962

STUART MANGAN

On Saturday April 5th last, a simple tackle in a club rugby game in London left Stuart Mangan, a graduate of Rockwell College and UCC aged just 24, with a devastating spinal injury.

Stuart is the son of Una Mangan (nee Harper) and Brian. Una sat her Leaving cert in Muckross in 1969. This is an extract from Stuart's website which you can access on www.stuarmangan.org.

In global terms, Stuart's injury is the most catastrophic rugby injury seen in recent years. Categorized as C1 Complete, he is completely paralyzed from the neck down and unable to breathe without a ventilator. Stuart will require 24-hour medical care for the rest of his life. Tragically, medical experts have described his spinal injury as the worst to occur in sport.

Stuart's life and that of his parents and brothers changed utterly on that fateful day. Physically, Stuart is now dependant for his every basic need, in sharp contrast to how he lived his life before the accident. A talented sportsman with an exciting career ahead in banking, Stuart loved to travel and speaks five languages.

In coming to terms with his horrific injury, Stuart has managed to show incredible courage. He is determined to deal positively with his drastically altered circumstances. Stuart's care will cost millions and quite simply his future is in all our hands. He and his family have been inundated with messages of good will, many wondering just how they can help Stuart deal with the days and years ahead. A fundraising campaign- the Stuart Mangan Appeal - has been launched and each contribution, no matter the size, will help enormously in ensuring Stuart enjoys the best possible quality of life.

Making Friends with Santa at the PPU Santa Party last December



**THE
COMBINED
DOMINICAN
UNION MASS**
takes place
on **Sunday**
4th October
in **Muckross**
at
11.15am.

SANTA PARTY – Colouring Competition Winners

Congratulations to Darragh McLachlan age 5, the winner of the under 6 section and Freya Merriman age 10 (daughter of Annelies Coghlan) winner of the over 6 section – both did a wonderful job colouring in lovely pictures of Santa and his Snowman friend.

Muckross Mail

LIFE ABROAD

My name is Maria Butler (nee Brophy). Does anyone remember the Brophy girls – Maria and Regina (twins) and Avril - with only a year apart we were more like triplets. I left Muckcross in 1986 not knowing what I wanted to do so therefore did a secretarial course the first year and taught at a dance school for the second. Never did I imagine at 22 I would leave, as I will always say, the best city in the world. But a group of us, including Avril, took three months job leave and headed off to the Cayman Islands. At the time I had heard of them but did not know where they were – I now know every inch of this Caribbean island!! That was 17 years ago. Life here is a little like Dublin as it's very social with a huge circle of friends and acquaintances.

Cayman measures only 22 miles long and 7 miles wide with a population of about 50,000, half of which are expats from something like a hundred different countries; it's like a mini United Nations. Being such a small island, instead of a Sunday afternoon drive a lot of us have boats and meet up on a sand bar in the middle of North Sound which is a part of the ocean inside the coral reef which surrounds the Island. Our main problem with the weather is Hurricanes! Fortunately we do get plenty of warning so everyone prepares with storm shutters etc then batten down. Mostly our buildings are like those at home so don't get affected in the same way as the poorer wooden type of buildings on other islands which can suffer badly.

The main industries in Cayman are offshore finance (banks, investment funds and insurance) and tourism, half of which comes from cruise ships. Scuba diving is very popular along with other water sports and the beach, but unfortunately there's not many other tourist attractions and cruise shippers spend a lot in the duty free stores in George Town.

The climate in Cayman is very different to Ireland with winters in the high 70's and low 80's; summers are very hot and humid – the island is like a ghost town in summer. Because of the climate most people are very sporty – we have two golf courses, tennis and squash clubs, football pitches and water sports. Myself and my husband Steve have three children who play various sports and we are lucky to live close to Miami (a one hour flight) where they get to compete in their sports with other Caribbean islands, the US and Canada. Every two years Cayman competes in the Island Games and in 2009 the games will be held in Aland Island off Sweden where we will be with two of my little swimmers.

Education is the British system and if you are an expat your children must go to a private school. These schools have improved and results are very good so the last five years have seen fewer kids go off to boarding school.

Even though I have been away many years I still call Dublin home and we hope the kids will go to university in either Ireland or England so we can have a second home back in Europe. We are also very lucky that both Regina and Avril live here so we have some of the cousins close by.

MARIA BUTLER (BROPHY)

Class of 1986

A 6th YEAR'S VIEW OF THE ANNUAL DINNER

In recent years it has become tradition for the Past Pupils' Union to invite the current Sports Captain and Head Girl of Muckcross Park College to their annual dinner in order to promote the Union amongst the younger past pupils. Last April, whilst attending the dinner, I was amazed at how the Dominican ethos and spirit remains with the people for their entire life, from those who left school ten years ago to those celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of their graduation. The organisation also instils a wonderful sense of community between the various Irish Dominican Schools as well as between women who were never in school together at the same but who have now made lifelong friends through the Union's various events and social occasions, gathering to celebrate a mutual, significant time in their lives which they want to cherish forever.

Having graduated in June 2008 I am now looking forward to participating in the Union's activities and will encourage my classmates to get involved in years to come, having thoroughly enjoyed my sneak preview at the annual dinner.

AOIFE O'REILLY
(Sports Captain
2007/2008)



Teachers Anne Marie Mee, Deirdre MacMathuna, Head Girl Brid O'Doherty and Games Captain Aoife O'Reilly who were guests at the Annual Dinner with Gay Rodgers, PPU president

If you would like a back issue of a MUCKROSS MAIL please contact the editor

WRITERS WORKSHOP REVIEW

Our second Writers Workshop was held on 16 February 2008 in The National Yacht Club in Dun Laoghaire. Thanks are due to Patricia O'Reilly for her help in arranging this wonderful venue.

Marita Conlon McKenna, well known author of *Miracle Woman*, *A Promised Land* and *Under the Hawthorn Tree*, was the guest speaker. Marita told us of the great joy writing has brought to her life. She used words like 'fun' and 'brilliant' and 'crazy' to describe her feelings. She said that 'writing finds you'. I am sure I was not alone in thinking 'I wish it would find me!' She talked of how she would sit still and that ideas would creep up, on how you have to catch them and hold onto them. Marita describes herself as a fast and furious writer. She writes many of her books for children. Marita enthralled us and was a joy to listen to.

Patricia O'Reilly (Dain), past pupil and author of 'Eileen Grey' and a very useful book called 'Writing for Success' led the workshop which followed. Patricia is a professional writer (www.patriciaoreilly.net) and as well as many books, newspaper and radio work, she gives an Extra Mural course in UCD along with many workshops around the country. Patricia told us how she does a massive amount of research for her stories and says this does not slow down the story but makes for a more interesting read. She claims that every Irish person has a book in them and one in three people want to write. She told us statistics like '74% of books in Ireland are purchased by women', and that 'it's 20% easier to get non-fiction published than fiction in the current market'. Patricia gave Poolbeg as an example and said that for every 2,000 manuscripts they receive only 2 would get published.

Patricia went on to say that thrillers are plot lead but that the majority of books are character lead. She said you should have no more than 5 main characters in a novel with approximately 12 subsidiary characters. You need to find 3 or 4 locations for the story and build an emotional landscape around the characters. I quote Patricia who says 'When you write you are never lonely'.

Beatrice Doran, the Vice President of the Muckross Past Pupils' Union acted as MC for the afternoon. Beatrice told us "When I write I write in blocks of two hours. I won't be disturbed and I don't do any thinking in my writing time". Beatrice told us how she puts yellow stickies around the house for her ideas as they come to her. That's a good tip, Beatrice. Finally Patricia took us through some exercises. It's called 'trigger writing'. She gives you a sentence and you complete the paragraph in your own words. **YOU** can take part now. Muckross Mail is running a competition. We will give you the opening sentence from a popular book and you can finish the paragraph in your own words. The Editor, together with the Committee, will pick the winning entry and their decision will be final. The winner will receive a book token to the value of €50.

COMPETITION: Win a €50 book voucher

Here is the first sentence from a recently acclaimed Irish novel. Please complete the paragraph in a maximum of 200 words.

'The world begins anew with every birth, my father used to say.'

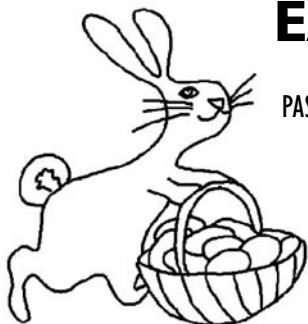
Please return to The Editor, Muckross Mail by email to muckrossppu@ireland.com or by post to 33 Hazel Avenue, Kilmacud, Co. Dublin no later than 16th February 2009. Remember to include your name, address and phone number.

The winning entry will be read out (hopefully by the author) at the Writers Workshop on 21st February and will be published in the next edition of Muckross Mail.

Good luck and enjoy the experience. If you do, please come along to this year's Writers Workshop on Saturday 21st February 2009 at 2pm in the National Yacht Club in Dun Laoghaire. See you there.

MARY BUCKLEY (DEANE)

Class of 1969



EASTER EGG HUNT

**PAST PUPILS BRING YOUR CHILDREN OR GRANDCHILDREN
TO OUR EASTER EGG HUNT
ON SUNDAY 5th APRIL 2009
AT 12 NOON IN MUCKROSS PARK**

For Bookings contact:

Carla Sload at carlasload@yahoo.ie or 086-852 4214
or Claire Coonan at cconan@gmail.com or 086-681 3131



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Muckross Mail



IRISH HOCKEY HALL OF FAME HONOURS A MUCKROSS PAST PUPIL

Muckross can be very proud of Valerie Barry who began playing hockey when she was a student at the school and went on to become an International hockey player with 26 caps which she acquired between 1962 and 1973. She was recently inaugurated into the Irish Hockey Hall of Fame.



Valerie Clancy (nee Barry) Class of 1960
being presented with her award by
Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh

The citation for Valerie at her inauguration into the Irish Hockey Hall of Fame read:

'Valerie had a distinguished International career spanning eleven years. An attacking player, she could perform outstandingly in any forward position. Her exquisite touch and skill made her the torment of defenders and her quick shot in the circle resulted in numerous Irish goals. In 1963 she scored a hat trick in Ireland's 3-2 victory over the Netherlands. She captained Ireland in 1968/1969.'

It is interesting to note that 1963 was the last time Ireland beat the Netherlands – 46 years ago!

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS

Well what do you know – we're 40 years out and don't feel a day older! Most of us who met up at the Class Reunion on Friday, 26 October last in FXBs echoed the same thoughts. Despite our ageing, nobody seemed to have trouble knowing who was who. Pretty good for 40 years on!

A great night was had by all – FXBs who helped us celebrate 21 years out, again came up trumps with the ambience and the food. We kicked off the night with a champagne reception, followed by a four course meal with wine and good old '60s music blasting in the background. Some 25 class members attended from the four corners of Ireland and the UK and good wishes were sent from as far afield as Vancouver. The tables were festooned with green, white and black balloons, individual memento menus and disposable cameras. See the PPU Website for photographs.* Unfortunately, these cameras were not used as much as they should have been. A beautifully dressed 'dummy' school girl stood by in the corner watching over the proceedings. A big thank you goes to Barney (who unfortunately was unable to attend) for dressing this young lady in the '60s garb.

A quiz completed the night's celebrations and despite some people's 'poor memories', Maeve Barrett was the outright winner and answered some 18 out of 20 questions about events surrounding the Class of '68. Well done Maeve.

As the Parents' Association were fundraising at the time for the '2008K Muckross Run' the sponsorship card was passed around and between what was collected on the night and a balance on the night's proceedings, in excess of €300 was donated by the Class of '68 to the PA fundraising efforts. A big thank you to all. The current pupils managed to run the 2008 kilometres between 10am and 3.30pm on Sunday 5th October 2008 and raised in excess of €52,000 in the process. Congratulations girls.

We won't wait for another 40 years to arrange the next gathering!

'GANG OF FIVE!' Class of 1968

**Ed: We will arrange to get your photos on the website as soon as possible*



Visit

www.muckrossparkppu.com

for all
information
and photos
of previous
events

SUNSHINE HOME BUILDING CHILDREN'S HOSPICE

I left Muckcross in 1987 followed by my two sisters Ruth in 1992, (I think!) and Emma in 1995. I really enjoyed all 12 years there. Our 20 year reunion was at Christmas 2007 and it was such a testament to Muckcross. Despite not seeing some people for 20 years, it was so refreshing to be able to pick up where we left off, regale with stories and memories forgotten. There were no airs or graces, just a room full of really nice girls with nothing to prove but happy to catch up and have some fun!

For me life is busy, full and happy – I feel very lucky, with four boys under 7. They're great fun and full of energy.

I also really enjoy working for The Children's Sunshine Home 3 days a week and pinch myself every day on how lucky I am. It's a fantastic charity. We provide home-support, respite, residential and palliative care to sick children and their families. While we cannot change a child's diagnosis, we can change the quality of a child's life and that of their families.

We are also building Ireland's First Children's Hospice (39 in UK!) which is desperately needed with over 300 child deaths a year. The fundraising for a hospice commenced in 2001 as a result of an enormous personal tragedy in the lives of Jane and Brendan McKenna which saw them lose both of their precious daughters Laura and Lynn in the space of just two years. The hospice will be called Laura Lynn House and will be built on the grounds of the Children's Sunshine Home in Leopardstown. We're very excited as we hope to start building in March and the project should take 18 months to complete at a cost of €11 million. We are currently fundraising and any support is greatly appreciated from a coffee morning to a donation, for more details contact Jane/Eimear 01-2893151 or check out www.sunshinehome.ie

For parents, the hospice will give that much needed break – often as simple as a decent night's sleep. It will also support healthy siblings, who are very much left out when a sick child needs 24 hour care. It will offer families a choice when the end comes and ongoing support when the child has passed on, for as long as they choose, which is hugely important, as life can never be the same again.

JANE HORKAN (FLYNN)

Class of 1987

MARJORIE COURTNEY – AN APPRECIATION



Marjorie and I met in Babies in Muckcross and remained friends throughout our lives after school. At school Marjorie had a good singing voice and enjoyed drama and played the lead in a number of Gilbert & Sullivan productions. She was also a goalie on the hockey team.

When Marjorie left school she worked in advertising as her day job. She found an outlet for her love of music on a personal level in the Rathmines & Rathgar Musical Society. Later she developed a second string to her bow organising performer's schedules. Her networking skills meant she was always in the know and built up quite an impressive clientele. She was an excellent organiser. She was even involved in arranging Posh and Bec's fairytale wedding!

For a woman of our vintage she achieved a lot. Opportunities for single women when Marjorie started out were much more limited and her independent lifestyle was unusual for a woman in a male dominated world. Marjorie was always larger than life and good fun – you noticed her when she came into a room. She loved her onion sandwiches and was very partial to a bag of chips!

She was ill for the last few years of her life but managed to conduct her affairs from her hospital bed for quite a while. She died on 1st February 2008 after a busy life.

LORIE O'CONNELL (NEE SUTTON)

Class of 1950



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Muckross Mail

ANNUAL BUFFET DINNER – BOOKING FORM

Friday 24th April 2009 in the Stillorgan Park Hotel • Tickets €40 • Dinner 8.00pm

EARLY BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL - TELEPHONE BOOKINGS WILL NOT BE TAKEN



I wish to book _____ places @ €40 each, and enclose cheque for € _____ (payable to Muckross Park 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 17th April and should be sent to:

Muckross Park PPU, 66 Mount Albany, Newtownpark Avenue, Blackrock, Co. Dublin 14.

MUCKROSS PARK PAST PUPILS UNION – RENEWAL / MEMBERSHIP FORM

I wish to join / renew my membership (*delete as appropriate*) and enclose cheque for €..... **OR** complete the Banker's Order Below

(Block Letters)

First Name: Last Name: Maiden Name:

Address:

Year Left: Tel. No: E-mail:
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 Payable by cheque/draft or Banker's Order
From non euro zone area send £10 Sterling

STANDING ORDER									
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Account Holder Name									

Pay now and 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, 34 College Green, Dublin 2 Sort Code: 90-07-89

and charge the same to my account.

Please cancel all previous standing instructions in favour of Muckross Park Past Pupils' Union.

Signature:..... **Date:**

Return to: Muckross Park PPU, 66 Mount Albany, Newtownpark Avenue, Blackrock, Co.Dublin.