

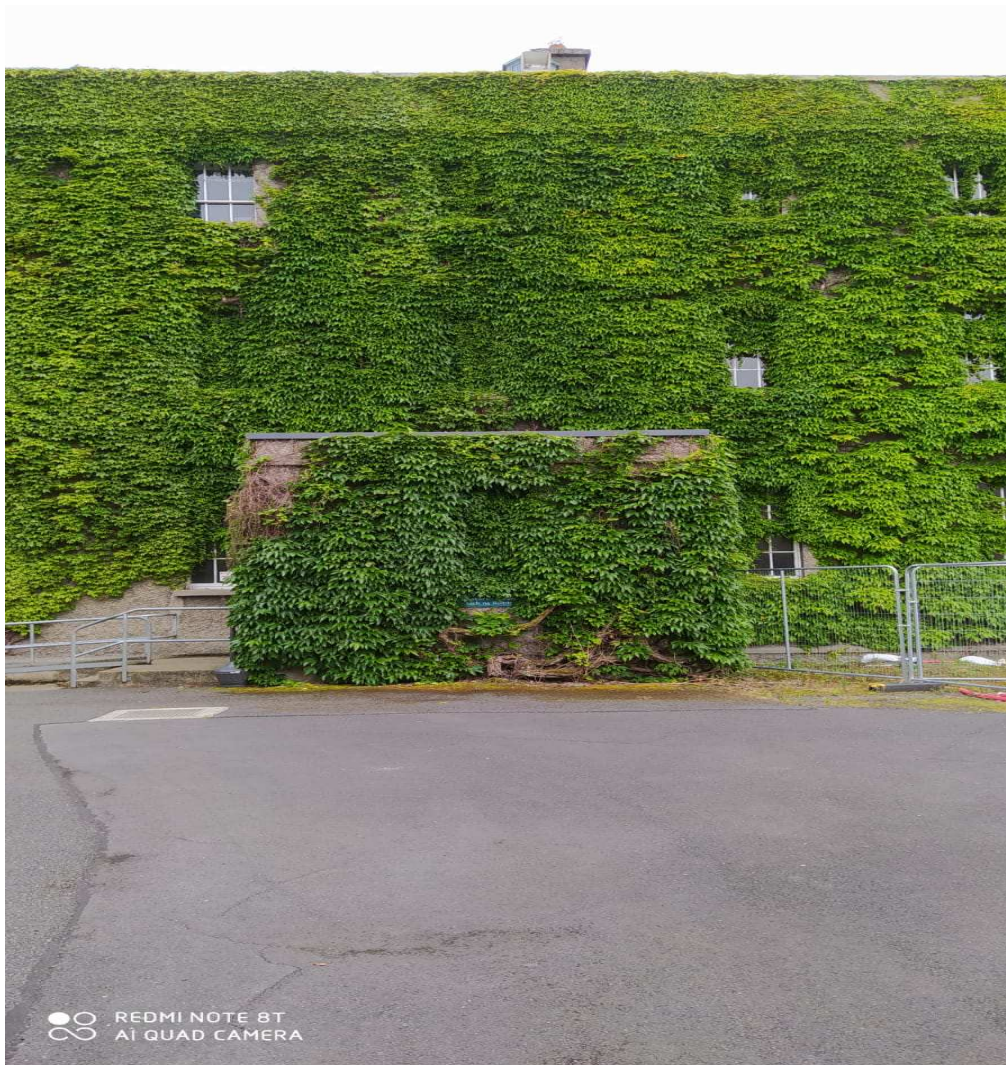


**Maynooth
University**
National University
of Ireland Maynooth

Summer 2021

*Maynooth University and
St Patrick's College Maynooth (RSA)*

*Cumann na mBall Foirne ar Scor, Ollscoil Mhá Nuad
agus Coláiste Phádraig Má Nuad (CBFS)*



Rhetoric House in Lockdown - Photo courtesy of Máire Adderley

Editorial Team: Breda Behan, Séamas Ó Síocháin, Marie-Thérèse Power, Mary Weld

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction: RSA Chairperson, <i>Jim Walsh</i>	1
Note from the Editors, <i>Séamas Ó Siocháin</i>	1
Northern Ireland, historical and beautiful - A trip of mixed emotions, <i>Marie-Thérèse Power</i>	2
P.J. Gannon talks about coming to Maynooth as one of the first lay students (Archive of Memoirs), <i>Peter Denman</i>	5
How I came to Maynooth, <i>Donal McMahon</i>	6
Dianghlasáil agus dúiseacht focal, <i>Siobhán Ní Fhoghlú</i>	8
Walking Tour of Celbridge, <i>Dan O'Shea</i>	9
The College Brewery, <i>Pat Watson</i>	10
Community Garden Rathcoffey, <i>Mary Weld</i>	12
In my Father's Footsteps, <i>Rose Malone</i>	14
Lockdown with Books, <i>Siobhán Ní Fhoghlú</i>	15
The African Sahel after President Deby of Chad, <i>Abdullahi El-Tom</i>	16
Circular from Jacinta Prunty at Solidarity Teacher Training College, Yambio, South Sudan, <i>Jacinta Prunty</i>	17
Roger Casement in Lucan, <i>Séamas Ó Siocháin</i>	19
The Avenue (poem), <i>Peter Denman</i>	21
Cookery Corner: Ice-Cream/Tea-Brack, <i>Marie Therese Power</i>	21
Word Search Old Campus, <i>Peter Denman</i>	22

INTRODUCTION: RSA CHAIRPERSON

I am delighted to welcome the Summer 2021 RSA Newsletter. I expect that by the time you receive this Newsletter you will all have received the vaccines. For those of us who have received only one jab the second is coming soon. We all feel a sense of liberation after all the restrictions of the last 15 months, which we hope we will never again have to experience. There is much to look forward to as more of the restrictions are relaxed over the coming months. I hope that we will be able to get back to in-person meetings again in the autumn when we can look forward to more sociable chats and dining. In the meantime, we have this third newsletter which is packed with a wide range of topics that I look forward to reading. I want to thank all of the contributors, the editorial team for assembling articles, Séamas for editing the contributions, Breeda for arranging the layout, and the Webteam who assisted in placing it on our website.

Jim Walsh,
Chairperson,
Maynooth RSA

NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

Dear Members and Associates,

We are delighted to bring you our third Newsletter of the Covid period, which includes a wide range of topics and authors. We bring you echoes of our pre-Covid activities, such as the pleasant memories from our visit to Northern Ireland in 2018 by Marie Therese Power and reflections on reading by Book Club member Siobhán Ní Fhoghlú. In addition to Máire Adderley's graphic photograph of the lockdown campus, we have a number of articles dealing with the College and its environs, for example, Pat Watson on the College Brewery, P.J. Gannon's and Donal McMahon's personal reminiscences, and Peter Denman's poem and his Word Search. Dan O'Shea takes us on a walking tour of nearby Celbridge, while Mary Weld introduces us to the Rathcoffey Community Garden. And we have Siobhán Ní Fhoghlú's reflective piece *as Gaeilge* on rediscovering nature during lockdown/ *dianghlasáil (bheith cuibhrithe)*. Rose Malone also takes us outdoors, with memories of her father, J.B. Malone. And my own piece recalls Roger Casement's links with Lucan. Further afield, our colleagues Abdullahi El-Tom and Jacinta Prunty give important insights into happenings in Chad and South Sudan. After all of that, perhaps you will want to relax and turn to Marie-Therese's recipe! We are grateful to all our contributors.

Séamas Ó Síocháin for the Editorial Team

**NORTHERN IRELAND,
HISTORICAL AND
BEAUTIFUL-
A Trip of Mixed Emotions**

Marie-Thérèse Power

Photos courtesy of Velma Maher

In May 2018 eighteen members and associate members of the RSA enjoyed four days in Northern Ireland. We based ourselves in Ballycastle, a beautiful coastal town on the most north-easterly tip of Ireland in County Antrim, staying in the Marine Hotel in the centre of Ballycastle with its beautiful seafront position on the Causeway Coastal route. We visited Crumlin Road Jail, Bushmills Distillery, Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, the Giant's Causeway and Derry and Belfast cities.

This trip had a special meaning for me as my mother was born in Derry; she later moved to Skerries and in time to Monkstown, Co. Dublin. Unfortunately, due to the 'Troubles', I had never visited Derry and was surprised and delighted at how relaxed I felt during our visit to Northern Ireland.

When it was decided to take a trip to Northern Ireland, I contacted the tourist office in Derry City as my grandfather (my mother's father) had a shirt factory in Derry City in the glory days of shirt making. It turned out that the building still stands proud on the Foyle Road with its name (Star Shirt Factory) intact as it is a listed building; however, today it provides apartment living. Our tour guide for the day arranged for the coach driver to stop off at the building where Velma, our roving photographer, took some photos. I felt quite proud that this beautiful building was part of my family history.

Our first day started with our journey to Belfast taking the train from Connolly Station, and once again Mary Weld and I organised lunch for everyone. The lively conversation shortened the train miles. On arriving in Belfast Central we

were collected by private coach and made our journey to Crumlin Road Jail, a 19th century grade A listed building. The Gaol as it is known first opened its gates to prisoners in 1846. Over the years it housed murderers, suffragettes, and loyalist and republican prisoners, before the heavy air-lock gates slammed shut for the final time on March 31st 1996. The tour covered all aspects of the jail from the tunnel linking the Courthouse on the other side of the Crumlin Road to the prison cells with their single bed and writing desk, the Governor's office, hospital, hanging cell and finally the graveyard. To stand in the hanging cell and think of the prisoners who had their final moments of life within its walls was very chilling. In fact, you will see from the photo taken by Velma just how chilling it must have been to walk through the prison gates, knowing you might never walk back out to your family again.



Star Shirt Factory



Crumlin Road Jail

When I started planning our northern trip I was asked by some members if we could take in a Belfast mural wall in the Shankill area. Despite some hesitation, our coach driver agreed to

take us. When we reached the Shankill area, I immediately understood his caution. We drove past the mural wall, with its many murals capturing some aspects of the politics and life of Northern Ireland, before turning into a housing estate where the open area was already piled high with timber pallets and car tyres in readiness for July 12th (this was only May 21st). I think we all breathed easier when we drove out of the estate and headed for Ballycastle, taking in some of the sights of the Glens of Antrim; unfortunately, the weather was unsettled so we did not get to see the Glens at their best. After a long but eventful day we were looking forward to our first night in the Marine Hotel where we enjoyed a lovely meal and plenty of chat later that evening.



Belfast Mural Wall

Next morning, we headed off with our coach driver and tour guide for a day taking in Bushmills Distillery, Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge and the Giant's Causeway. My only concern for the day was not making a fool of myself while trying to gather up the courage to walk the rope bridge; heights are not my thing and just to be at a cliff or water's edge sends my knees to jelly. Maybe it was the whiskey-tasting earlier in the day at Bushmills, Ireland's oldest working distillery, or knowing that I was not the only one in the group who had reservations – Teresa Bennett was also feeling a little hesitant – but Teresa and I took our courage in our hands, walked the bridge, and lived to tell the tale. The rope bridge, which is suspended almost 100ft (30m) above sea level, was first erected by

salmon fishermen more than 350 years ago.



Carrick-A-Rede Rope Bridge



Giant's Causeway

Our final stop for the day was to the Giant's Causeway, the Jewel in the Crown of the fabulous Antrim coast; a World Heritage site, ranked alongside Mount Everest and the Giant Redwoods of California for its importance to humankind. Our knowledgeable guide spoke to us of the history of the Causeway with its 40,000 interlocking basalt stone columns left by volcanic eruptions 60 million years ago, and of the award-winning visitor centre which unlocks the mystery of this amazing landscape and the major part it played in the earth's development. To stand in an area that is more than 60 million years old with its pillars having approximately five to seven irregular sides which jut out of the cliff faces, giving an appearance of steps creeping into the sea, is almost too enormous to take in. We arrived back at our hotel ready for our evening meal after

which we enjoyed an evening of singing and joke telling. Bridi Mitten and Mary Weld have the gift of joke telling and kept us laughing throughout the night.



Derry Peace Bridge

Day three saw us head for Derry City, starting with a visit to the Guild Hall where I had arranged for us to have a private tour. The Guild Hall, just minutes from the Peace Bridge, had a major restoration which started in 2011 and was completed in June 2013 at a cost of £9.5m. It has been awarded at least ten accolades from a variety of professional bodies including learned professional societies, heritage groups and construction organisations. Our guide had a very engaging personality and brought us through the history of the Guild Hall in a very informal way, almost acting out some events that had taken place within its historic walls; it was like having a history lesson with a male version of Maeve Binchy. Before leaving we got to sit in the Council Chamber where our guide spoke to us of the politics of today and the progress Derry City has seen in recent years.

After a very enjoyable lunch in Brown's Restaurant, we headed out to the Museum of Free Derry and Free Derry Corner with our guide for the afternoon, taking in a quick stop at the location of the Star Shirt Factory. Our guide had lost family members in the Bloody Sunday march and brought us to the exact location where so many lives were lost before moving on to the Museum of Free Derry just minutes from Free Derry Corner. The

museum was opened in 2007 and tells the story of what happened in the city during the period 1968–1972. It takes in the civil rights era, Battle of the Bogside, Internment, Bloody Sunday, and Operation Motorman. The story is told from the point of view of those who were most involved in and affected by the events, The Free Derry Community, with the museum situated in the heart of where the events took place. Unfortunately, the day did not allow for us to take in the Walls of Derry; with this city having so much to offer it was impossible to take in everything.



You are now entering FREE DERRY



Bloody Sunday 30th January 1972

Our final day took us to Stormont Castle, Belfast City Hall, and Belfast Castle. The morning was spent in Stormont Castle. Built in the 1830s by the Cleland family in the Scottish Baronial style, it sits on 235 acres of parkland. Our

guide took us through its history, from its first owners, the Cleland family, to 1921 when it was acquired for the erection of the New Parliament Building and official residence of the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. From 1972 to 1999 it became the residence of the Secretary of State; today it is home to the Northern Ireland Executive and offices of the First and Deputy First Ministers. We got to walk some of the grounds, take photos on the grand staircase in the entrance hall, sit in the assembly chambers where the political debates of the day take place (although not while we were there due to the Cash for Ash scandal) and lunch in the main Stormont Castle restaurant, an experience I think everyone enjoyed.



Stormont Castle

The afternoon took us to Belfast City Hall and once again we had a private tour and got to appreciate this magnificent building, which opened its doors on August 1st. 1906 to celebrate Belfast's new city status. It was designed by Alfred Brumwell Thomas in the Baroque revival style and constructed in Portland stone at a cost of £369,000. Today, this Grade A listed building is the civic building of Belfast City Council. It houses dozens of paintings, busts, statues, and stained-glass windows to commemorate aspects of Northern Ireland's history. Before leaving Belfast City behind us we spent a relaxing 90 minutes in the grounds of Belfast Castle and enjoyed some 'well deserved' down-time in its lovely grounds.



Belfast Castle Grounds

We arrived back in Connolly Station later that evening where we were collected by Brendan our friendly coach provider. We had certainly packed a lot into our time in Northern Ireland.

P.J. GANNON TALKS ABOUT COMING TO MAYNOOTH AS ONE OF THE FIRST LAY STUDENTS

The following is based on a recorded interview by Maurice O'Keeffe for the "Maynooth Collection" held in the library. The interview was conducted in 2007.

I grew up in Summerhill and went to school in Kilcock. I came from a farming background, quite a small farm of twenty-five acres producing milk for the Dublin market. I was the eldest of ten children. My parents were very good providers; while they weren't wealthy, they did their best to provide us with what they regarded as essentials. The 1950s were tough times; I wasn't conscious of them being excessively tough in our case, but when I look back now at photographs taken in primary school I can see that the clothes we wore had seen better days. Lots of stuff was handed down, and relatives in America would send things – but their idea of what was suitable was not quite the same as ours! Times were tough, and help from America was always welcomed by families. Pocket money was scarce.

My principal teacher from fourth to sixth class was Martin McDonnell. I was hugely influenced by him; he played soccer with us out in the yard, a genial and

kind man. Before him, Mrs Giles – Ann Giles – taught second and third classes. She was a very good teacher, strict but very very fair. In junior infants to first class Nan Austin was my teacher, a very kind lady. So my primary school experience was for me wonderful.

Curious thing: on the day I did the Leaving Certificate, walking out the gate with a good friend, Pat Doyle, I turned to him and said, “I won’t be here again” – meaning I wouldn’t be involved in education, wouldn’t be back in school. I had decided I wouldn’t be going to university. Then, over the summer I became aware that St Patrick’s College Maynooth was open to lay students and at some stage I decided to go. I think I must only have phoned up two or three days in advance and then I arrived in. Monsignor Newman was outside with a clipboard taking details of late applicants like myself. So there was no CAO form in those days! There was, I think, some entry requirement, but anyway it was easier to get in.

Two years earlier, in 1966, the first lay students were admitted – maybe to postgraduate courses or the Higher Diploma in Education. My year was one of the first of undergraduate lay students. I wasn’t a great mixer. In lectures you were sitting in a sea of black – all the clerical students wore their soutanes, and there might be six lay students (including at least one girl). So we lay students were a minority. We were treated very well, but there was understandably – and I’m not being critical – a feeling among clerical students that this was their base, the place that their life was centred on, while we went our separate ways. The clerical students were friendly enough. Any difficulties in mixing must have been for reasons of my own. But they were conscious that they had a different calling, had a different need to prepare, and a different regime when lectures were over.

In the way of sports, gaelic football was available and I played that. Everyone

was very inviting and supportive. I’m not so sure what other sports there were – there was soccer. There was a good gaelic team, including Mel Hannigan from Roscommon and some other inter-county players, but I wasn’t good enough for that level.

Living at home and coming here to Maynooth, I enjoyed it. There was a good atmosphere. The lecturers were very friendly, very approachable. In history the late Cardinal Ó Fiaich was a lecturer – maybe professor. Mrs Cullen also. In English the late Professor Connolly, from the Meath diocese, and Dr Macken. I did Latin, with the late Fr Watson and Fr Finan. I was particularly impressed with Fr Watson. I thought he was a brilliant lecturer, a man of compassion and understanding. He highly motivated me and inspired me. I took Irish in First Arts, it was quite strong. An tAthair Ó Fiannachta was a dominant presence; he was a legend here for his knowledge. I lost touch with Irish after First Arts, so I’m not sure who else was involved.

As a college for me, and for friends I’m still in touch with, Maynooth was good. We enjoyed it – a seat of learning, a place of inspiration – and we are grateful for it. I took my BA in 1971 and was back the following year for the HDipEd in 1978. I’ve been a teacher since. I started in the Christian Brothers’ Boys School which amalgamated with the girls’ school to form Scoil Dara (Kilcock).

(Transcription by Peter Denman)

HOW I CAME TO MAYNOOTH

Donal McMahon

Isn’t it fascinating how a door can suddenly open for someone when it is really needed? First there is, and has to be, the long period of waiting and preparation, of keeping an increasingly anxious eye out all the time and then, finally and seemingly out of nowhere, a door opens, an opportunity comes the way. We all have

stories of how doors opened up for us like this. Let me tell you now about the one whose timely opening led to a teaching (and learning) life of almost forty years in Maynooth College.

Quick summary: usual primary and secondary schools, 'corporation scholarship' to UCD, B.A. in English and French, M.A. in French and, finally, H.Dip. Education in 1973-'74, with teaching hours back in my old school, O'Connell's. Pressure all the time on me, the eldest, to get qualified and earn my living and so ease the pressure on my widowed mother looking after the four of us. As I listened to the Education lecturer describing the characteristics and skills of the effective teacher, I wondered deep down how well I matched that description. And where was I going to end up with my not very marketable subjects of English and French? Was I destined for secondary-school teaching somewhere in Ireland? Could I try going to France? I had been to the Careers Office in Belfield, had listened to talks on vacancies in the civil service for Administrative Officer, Third Secretary ... It was all a dense fog I was trying to find my way out of.

And then, light on the horizon! While I was engrossed in my course work (the notes for my own classes by day, the history, psychology, and philosophy of education etc. in the late afternoon and evening), my mother, no doubt driven by the same quiet desperation as myself, was keeping an eye out all the time for any sign of a likely job. On 5 March 1974 she saw this ad in the *Irish Times* and pointed it out to me:

Classified Ad 45 - No Title
The Irish Times (1921-Current File); Mar 5, 1974;
ProQuest Historical Newspapers: The Irish Times and The Weekly Irish Times
pg. 16

EDUCATION, TUITION

**St. Patrick's College,
Maynooth**

**TEACHER OF ENGLISH
AND FRENCH
REQUIRED**

In Seminarist Course
For September, 1974.
Salary £1,800—£2,800.

Details from:
Reverend Secretary,
Board for Seminary Studies

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.

Reproduced with permission

'English and French', my very subjects! But St Patrick's College, Maynooth? Eleven years before, on Sunday, 8 September 1963, in the autograph-hunting days of my early teens, I had taken the bus to Maynooth for the first time, hoping to get Prince Rainier's or Princess Grace's autographs as they went into or came out of Mass in the College. The car just swept by me as I waited at the gate. James J. Carey, the author of many secondary-school Latin and English textbooks and a teacher in O'Connell's (but not of the A class) as well as 'Supervisor of Schools' in the Maynooth Education Department, was sorry but he couldn't tell me anything about the Seminarist Course of the ad.

Fr Gerard McGinnity, Secretary of the Board, phoned the school on Wednesday, 24th April, when I was teaching a French class, to say that an interview had been arranged for 6 p.m. that day. To make sure I would arrive on time, I borrowed my twin brother's Honda 50 (for which I had no licence or insurance) and headed west via Chapelizod, Lucan and Leixlip (only to see the bus arrive in Maynooth at the same time as I did). Fr McGinnity met me at the Lodge and accompanied me to Riverstown House – only later did I come to know these names. It was there that I went in to meet the interview board in the President's Office on the ground floor.

The scene will remain forever etched in my memory, four priests in a small room, each of them evaluating me. I came to know them later as Kevin McNamara (Vice-President), Ronan Drury (Faculty of Theology), Flannan Markham (teacher of Philosophy, Seminarist Course) and Gerard McGinnity (Secretary of Board). Everything was very polite and courteous. On being asked why I would like to teach in Maynooth, I said how it was a very historical institution, far older than UCD. I had read Camus and Sartre, which would be useful for the Philosophy part of the course. And so I played whatever cards I had in my hand, only too well aware the whole time of my complete lack of teaching experience. Dr McNamara noted that Clontarf, where I lived, was quite far from Maynooth and I replied that I would be very happy to move nearer to the College. I saw no-one before or after me waiting to be interviewed. This was the first interview I had done for a full-time job. I never dreamt that it would be in such an imposing setting. It all seemed unreal, unbelievable.

As it does to this day. ‘I am happy to inform you,’ Fr McGinnity wrote on the 29th April, ‘that you have been offered the position of Teacher of English and French in the Seminarist Course’. Hoping I was doing the best for everyone concerned, I accepted.

How did this happen – I asked then and have kept on asking since – my coming to Maynooth, of all places, neither as a specialist academic or a future priest? Yes, you prepare for a job as best you can, with whatever skills and interests you have. After that, is it good luck, pure chance or something to do with ‘the lap of the gods’? Hamlet spoke of a ‘divinity that shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will’. The theologian Yves Congar wrote, ‘Je suis convaincu que nos vies sont guidées’ (‘I am convinced that our lives are guided’). Of course, as well as good things, there are also terrible things that happen out of the blue. In either case, it

seems that we cannot fully understand their nature and can only accept them as being part of some overall meaning still in the making, which includes the making of us.

Coming to the seminary of Maynooth, then, the way I did, as a result of what I can only call ‘a miracle of timing’, gave me the opportunity – in the wholly unexpected and privileged company of future priests – to focus more and more on this, the most specialised (as a kind of metaphysics) and, at the same time, the most down-to-earth subject of all, that dealing with the (providential?) timing of things to do with ‘the mystery of our condition on earth’ (Flannery O’Connor).

A door opening for someone is good news indeed. But the best news would be a door opening for each and every one of us. Things can’t work out for me unless they do so for us all.

DIANGHLASÁIL AGUS DÚISEACHT FOCAL

Siobhán Ní Fhoghlú

Dála go leor, bhí de thoradh ar an dianghlasáil gur thugas i bhfad níos mó faoi ndeara mar le héin, crainn agus plandaí i gcoitinne. Agus an saol mór cosctha orainn cuid mhaith, bhíomar gar do bhaile i ngach slí – agus ár n-aire ar an mion seachas ar an mór. Sa mhéid sin, is fearr liom go mór ‘cuibhrithé’ mar Ghaeilge ar *lockdown*. Pé acu ar fhearann Choláiste Phádraig, ag siúl fad na canálach, nó sa ghéirdín agam féin a bhíos, bhí ‘blátha an bhóithrín’ agus ‘troscán na mbánta’ níos mó ar mo shúile ná mar a bhíodh.

Ag tús an earraigh i mbliana, bhraitheas tógáil chroí nuair a bhláthaigh na chéad phlandaí. Chuireas pictiúir díobh chuig cairde, agus bhreacas fúthu na hainmneacha Gaeilge: plúiríní sneachta, lus an chromchinn, samhaircíní agus coinnle corra. B’iontach liom chomh sásta agus a bhí mo chairde, nach cuid den saol

laethúil acu an Ghaeilge, ainmneacha gur ar scoil a chualadar iad don uair dheireannach a fheiceáil arís. Tuigim dóibh, mar is mó focal a thagann ar ais chugam féin – cinn a bhíodh ar bharr mo theangan tráth, ach nach raibh feidhm agam leo le blianta fada. Gné den aois é sin, ach is minic gur toisc go mbím ag plé le garpháistí ar chomhrá fíorúil agus go bpreabann focal nó téarma ar ais im aigne. Luaigh mé ‘brosna’ leo mar fhocal ar mhion-chraobhóga agus cipíní – agus isteach i m’aigne leis an aithis a chaithní leat nuair a dhearmadfa rud éigin – ‘ceann cipín’.

Maidir le teanga an linbh, díol suntais é an t-athrú a deineadh ar an *Oxford Junior Dictionary*. Meastar nach mbaineann focail áirithe le saol an linbh a thuilleadh, agus fágadh as an áireamh iad in eagrán nua. Ar na focail sin tá: *bluebell*, *buttercup*, *cowslip*, *dandelion*, agus fiú *conker* i dteannta ainmneacha crann agus éan. Is sa leabhar iontach, ‘*Landmarks*’ le Robert McFarlane, a fuair an t-eolas san. Leabhar é a chuimsíonn eolas ar fhocail a bhaineann le litríocht, tírdhreach is dúlra: focail i mbaol a ndearmadta i dteangacha agus i gcanúintí i Sasana, in Albain, sa Bhreatain Bhig agus in Éirinn.

Más sa bhaile agus i gcóngar a bhí ár n-aird i ré seo na paindéime, níl aon dul as againn ach a admháil gur gá aghaidh a thabhairt ar an domhan mór le bail a chur ar an saol. Fiú dóibh siúd nach fuirist dóibh teacht ar an nádúr le bliain, tá tuiscint anois gur gá don duine daonna aird a thabhairt ar an timpeallacht, ar an éiceolaíocht. Cuid tábhachtach de litríocht na Gaeilge an Dindsheanchas – seanchas áiteanna. Cuid dílis den dearbhú ar an gceannaire ceart a bheith i gcomhacht ba ea an tír a bheith torthúil, bláthmhar. Do léigh mé dhá shár-alt a phléann an Ghaeilge agus an tír ó tharla an chéad dúnadh síos: ceann le Máirín Nic Eoin, ar an Ghaeilge agus an phaindéim agus ceann le Michael Cronin, ar an ngá atá le ‘smaointeoireacht lasmuigh’. Is fada á áiteamh aige gur gá dúinn an tsuíocht atá i

dtuaisce i bhfocail na teanga lenár dtimpeallacht a thabhairt slán. D’fhoilsigh sé *Irish and ecology/An Ghaeilge agus an éiceolaíocht* sa bhliain 2019.

A WALKING TOUR OF CELBRIDGE

Dan O’Shea



Looking down the main street from Castletown gates

An abbreviated history of Celbridge, the following article has a disjointed look about it, due to restrictions on the size of the article. I am excluding references to the ‘Big Houses’, e.g. Donaghcomper, Pickering Forest, Killadoon, Castletown, Celbridge Abbey and Oakley Park. These ‘Big Houses’ may feature in a later article.

Celbridge was first described as a town in 1314 when Henry de Walleys was charged with breaking the doors and stealing hens/geese/Beer. The original name of Celbridge, *Cill Droichid*, was anglicized in 1714. Dean Swift, a regular visitor to Celbridge used to refer to it as ‘Kildrohod’ but in a letter sent back to Swift, Vanessa always referred to it as Celbridge. Swift was a regular visitor to Celbridge when in relationship with Vanessa.

If you entered the town via the Maynooth road you would pass the following as you travel down the main street.

Workhouse: Opened in 1841; at its peak it would have had 811 inmates. A burial site

adjoins it; this would have contained mass graves with no identification of those interred.

At the bend on the road you have three adjoining lodges associated with Castletown House, including the Round House; these were built in 1730.

At the top of the town comes the Parish House which benefited from the sale of a painting by Jan Provost, an artist who died in 1539, dedicated to St. Eustace. This painting had been donated by a local to the parish; it was sold and can now be seen in the National Gallery.

Shortly afterwards you pass Kildrought House, set back from the main street; this is the oldest residential house on the street, built in 1719. It was built for Baillie, a weaver, whose tapestries can be seen in the House of Lords, College Green, now the Bank of Ireland.

You now pass the house where the Guinness family lived, opposite the Catholic church, designed by J.J. McCarthy, the same individual who designed the Church in Maynooth College.

A toll house stands before the Mill Manager's House; travellers were charged to cross the Bridge.

The Mill: The earliest reference comes from 1217. Built by the Norman Lord Thomas de Hereford. Powered by water from the 16th century. The mill is currently powered by an electric generator; surplus power is fed into the national grid. At its base was a well dedicated to St Mochua. His sculptured head, now raised some metres above the footpath, shows a depression on his forehead where pilgrims would touch after blessing.

Arthur Guinness was born across the road from the mill where the 'Mucky Duck' and the 'Village Inn' now stand. Pubs were

given these odd names because their clients were often illiterate and would only be able to recognize a sign. The mucky duck may have originated as a black swan and is a relatively common nomenclature.

Shortly after the mill you have Tea Lane, probably a corruption of the Irish *Teach*. At the top of the lane lie the ruins of the monastery of St Mochua with an adjoining graveyard. The Connolly mausoleum resided here but was eventually moved to Castletown House. The graveyard contains the tomb of the Grattan family (Henry Grattan is interred in Westminster Abbey). A plaque was dedicated to Col Thomas Dongan (1634–1715) and unveiled by Jean Kennedy Smith. Dongan was colonial governor of New York State and was responsible for significant legislation. A monument was erected to him on Staten Island and some of the street names make reference to 'Castlton', i.e. Castletown. The Dongans controlled the lands around Celbridge but lost them to Connolly after they fought on the losing side at the Battle of the Boyne (Walter Dongan was killed at the battle).

My thanks to local historians Tony Doohan and Lucy Monaghan.

THE COLLEGE BREWERY

Pat Watson

The Georgian part of the College was completed in the 1830s. Over 500 students and 16 staff were in full-time residence by then. From the beginning, dinner each day was accompanied for all by a choice of beer or water, the former regarded by many as safer and pleasanter to drink. As student numbers rose, and with economy in mind, the decision was made by the Trustees in 1834 to build a domestic brewery in the College grounds. The Ordnance Survey map of 1838 shows the location of this brewery on a site along the perimeter wall at the back of Logic House and the ball alleys. The provision of beer

for the needs of staff and students was now secure and life proceeded as ever in the seminary until the arrival in June 1840 of a Fr Theobald Mathew to the College.

Fr Mathew, a Capuchin priest and temperance preacher, came to Maynooth to give a talk on the evils of drink, which he saw as the cause of most of the miseries of the poor. Having taken the pledge himself, he had committed to give the Movement all the help he could by travelling around the country calling for abstinence from alcohol for the good of society. His influence was huge, many flocked to hear him and his earnestness and charm won many supporters. Public Houses were closed in some places to be replaced by Temperance Halls and even numbers sent to gaol were falling. These benefits appeared so great that many more signed up.

His first talk in Maynooth was to the students of Senior House who crammed into the hall, eager to hear him speak, so great was his fame. They listened with rapt attention, it is reported, and greeted his appeals with thunderous applause. His second talk was to Junior House students, where he also won over many converts. The result was that almost overnight nearly half the staff (about 8) and half of the 500 students took the abstinence pledge.

No longer happy to be paying for unwanted beer, the students struck a deal with the College Authorities. The quantity of beer was halved at dinner in 1856 and, in return, the teetotallers were given tea for breakfast every day instead. In 1864 beer was completely abolished and students were compensated with a daily supply of butter at breakfast and at supper all year round. The brewery closed in 1864 after just 30 years.

Fr Mathew's visit had another, and perhaps more welcome, benefit for the seminarians. Following the brewery's closure, the site was deemed ideal for the building of a gas works; something included in Pugin's original plans in 1840

but never built. This remote and therefore reasonably safe site, close to the canal, was now developed by William Daniel of Mary Street, Dublin and is recorded in the Ordnance Survey map of 1872. It provided students, for the first time, the luxury of electric lighting in their rooms replacing the need for the many wax candles for which they had had to pay.

Unknown to many, however, this visit of 1840 was not Fr Mathew's first to Maynooth College. Some 30 years previously, in 1807, a Mr Theobald Mathew had entered the seminary, as an eighteen-year-old student, intent on becoming a priest. The rules of the College were very strict. Misdemeanours were treated swiftly and harshly. In what can only be regarded as a great lapse of judgement brought about by the folly of youth, Mr Mathew violated the rules in a rather spectacular manner!

The rules stated, quite clearly, that one student was not permitted to visit the room of another and, more importantly, at the risk of expulsion, students could not assemble in one room for the purpose of eating. Ignoring all such rules, the young Mr Mathew took upon himself the task of organising a party in his room for a few select friends. Heavy drinking and card playing ensued with much enjoyment and abandonment until the revelry attracted the attention of the authorities and the party host was apprehended. With expulsion pending, the young Theobald left the College voluntarily in 1808 hoping to avoid the scandal and inevitable slur on his moral character.

He moved to Dublin to continue his studies and was ordained a Capuchin in 1814. In April 1838 Fr Mathew signed the total abstinence pledge at a public meeting in Cork, just two years before his influential visit to Maynooth College in June 1840.

COMMUNITY GARDEN RATHCOFFEY

Mary Weld

Rathcoffey is a small rural village with a rich history in the parish of Clane, situated on the road between Clane and Maynooth (via Ladychapel). Rathcoffey Castle was built circa 1417 by the Wogan family, some of which was incorporated into a mansion built by Archibald Hamilton Rowan in the 1790s. It stands proudly, though in a ruinous state, on Rathcoffey hill. The small country church was built by Lady Tyrconnell in 1710 and is still used as a place of worship. The National School, dedicated to St Mochua, currently has 223 pupils. Rathcoffey GAA, founded in 1888, has served as a catalyst in the community ever since. Glanbia now trades on the space where the Farrington Brothers started a grain business in the 1950s.

Rathcoffey Village has a population of 271 (Census 2016); its oldest resident turned 105 years old in November 2020. Mooretown Drive, built about twenty years ago, has 34 families living there. Three of those families approached the County Council in 2018 and asked if they could cultivate a vegetable plot each on a green area of approximately 1.5 acres at the rear of the estate. With the consent of the Council, the first three sods were turned in April 2018. Amazingly, three plots turned into twenty-six in the intervening years. Men, women, and children relished the idea of growing their own vegetables. A Gardeners' Association was formed, and, with the blessing and support of Kildare County Council, many great things have happened in Mooretown Drive over the last three years. People power, hard work and the realization of 'what can be achieved with nothing' has earned the Mooretown residents the title of Zero Waste Community Garden Rathcoffey, and all for good reason.

Water is an essential commodity when growing vegetables, especially in dry weather. It has to be seen to be

believed – the water irrigation system that has been installed to harvest water. And when you think it cannot get better, it does, because the water is electrically pumped from the tanks, using the power generated from solar panels installed on the site. An innovatively-designed wormery allows food waste to be turned into a very efficient feed for the growers. Kildare County Council provided a massive tunnel which is used for the propagation of vegetables, fruits, herbs and so on. The Enrich Company is currently carrying out trials in the tunnel to create organic compost. Using coir and mulched hedge cuttings, they have created a hotbox by fuelling it with horse manure and, if successful, it could replace peat-based compost.



The Hub, Where Everything is Planned

Upcycling and recycling are the big buzz words in this zero-waste community garden. For instance, a container has been turned into a much-needed tool shed, and a wooden machinery-case has been adapted to store the equipment for their cottage market. Enveloped in a full layer of roofing felt, it is fully water-tight. Pride of place is the second-hand porta-cabin that has been converted into an amazing hub. Adorned on the outside with beautiful artwork by a local artist, this is where the important planning and decisions are made. It is fitted out with beautiful kitchen units, table, chairs and display cabinet, all donated by business people and others in

the local community. The walls are adorned with framed certificates of awards won to date: 1st Place, Energia Growing Competition 2019; 2nd Place, All-Ireland IPB Pride of Place Award 2019; and 2020/21 brought the An Taisce Green Flag. Due recognition for this zero-waste garden has been given by RTÉ, with features on *Nationwide* in January 2020, and on *Today* with Maura and Dáithí in January 2019.

Maintenance, insurance, upcycling and replenishing stocks all come at a cost, so thankfully the Energia and IPB Awards came with a monetary reward of €5,500 in total. The Parish of Clane and Rathcoffey donated €1,000. They also received grants from Kildare County Council and Leader, DHL and ASLI. The income is used wisely. The Leader grant is used to engage horticulturist Lucy Bell to provide expertise, and with the expansion of activity, two men on employment schemes provide 19.5 hours each per week working on the community garden. One is a member of a Syrian Refugee Family that recently settled in Clane. Khalil has a degree in Agriculture from Cairo University, and he is looking forward to bringing some new and interesting ideas to Rathcoffey.



Founder Member Pat Pender feeding the Hens

Another fascinating aspect of this Community Garden is the presence of 34 hens and 7 ducks, some being rescued battery hens. Home for the hens and ducks are two magnificent runs that can best be described as five-star accommodation. A

local businessman donated high-quality wooden fencing, a couple donated a wooden shed that serves brilliantly as a coup, and the sawdust and wood shavings for bedding also comes with the generosity of the community. No fox could ever shimmy the locks on the doors in search of its dinner. The hens and ducks provide an ample supply of eggs for the residents of Mooretown Drive, and more. A lovely wild-life pond completes the picture, and fruit trees are dotted throughout the site.

Their fortnightly Cottage Market, usually held on Saturdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., on the grounds of Rathcoffey GAA, has been suspended due to Covid. This gives a platform to sell their vegetables, potatoes, eggs and plants, while local producers sell jams, marmalades, fudge, chocolate, dried herbs, cakes, bread and more. An interesting commodity offered for sale is Bio Char, both in dust and liquid form. Organically produced locally, it is a feed for plants.

But, of course, nothing stands still in Mooretown Drive. As I entered the Zero Waste Community Garden in early April, it was immediately clear there were new plans afoot. Kildare County Council were installing raised beds, which I'm delighted to say are now complete (photo below).



The new Raised Beds

Two new, exciting projects are planned. A School of Gardening with Lucy Bell, which is a Leader-funded Programme, will cater for three groups from the community. One is from Rathcoffey National School,

one from Transition Year, Scoil Mhuire Clane, and an adult group from the community. The three groups were fully subscribed almost instantly. On my second visit to the community garden, the Transition Year group were fully involved in a Forest School and Gardening programme (photo below). They are being taught about biodiversity, growing your own food, foraging and ancestral skills. It is envisaged that this Gardening School will be used as a model for future projects.



Transition Year Students, The Forest Garden Programme

The second project is the establishment of a Women's Shed, which will promote equality for women, as well as a forum to meet up and be creative. What a perfect setting. This may only be the second one in Kildare.

Well done to Zero Waste Community Garden Rathcoffey. It is amazing what can be achieved with community spirit, good ideas, hard work, and the support of the wider community in 36 months. Best of luck with your future endeavours.

IN MY FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS

Rose Malone

An important part of active retirement for me has been walking – in parks and on minor roads during lockdown, and on the Dublin and Wicklow Ways as restrictions are eased. My father, J.B. Malone (1913–1989), had a cherished dream of planning, mapping and sign-posting a walking route

through the Wicklow hills, starting from south Dublin and finishing on the Wicklow/Carlow border. He was to realise this dream after he had retired at 65 from the Civil Service. He worked with COSPÓIR to produce the Wicklow Way, a 127 km waymarked trail, starting in Marlay Park and finishing in the village of Clonegal. Developing the Way involved negotiating way-leave where the route crosses private lands, locating points for signposts (to avoid doubt where roads fork), providing crossing places over rivers and producing maps and guidebooks. The first stage, Marlay Park to Luggala, was opened in 1988. A large granite memorial, carved by Billy Cannon from Glencullen, was placed on the hillside above Luggala after my father died.



Rose Malone at the J.B. Malone Memorial 2021

The Wicklow Way traverses a variety of landscapes on its 127 km journey. Quite a lot of it is on Coillte lands and passes through conifer forests. Coillte has recently changed its policy to include more broad-leaved deciduous trees, such as ash, beech and oak. This encourages a much greater diversity of other plants and

animals as these trees allow light to penetrate so that multiple layers of vegetation can grow underneath the trees. Ferns, grasses and spring-flowering plants like celandines, violets and primroses add to the tapestry. This in turn provides homes for more species of birds, insects and mammals. Other parts of the Way go through moorland and mountain bog where heather and sphagnum moss predominate. The deep valleys of Glencullen, Glencree, Glendalough and Glenmalure all contain historical traces of earlier settlements and add a further dimension to the journey. The Way tends to avoid the mountain summits but provides access to these climbs for keen hikers. The southern end of the trail goes through farmland, on boreens and minor roads.

The existence of the Way, together with maps and guidebooks, has opened up opportunities for people to access a beautiful and remote area. This has had an impact on the environment and, to prevent erosion, boardwalk has been built on some stretches of the Way. In the original guidebook that he wrote for the way, J.B. remarked on the remoteness of parts of Wicklow accessed by the Way and suggested that you would be unlikely to meet another walker in places like Glencullen or Glenmalure. This is no longer true and people from all over the world now walk the route. Dublin and Wicklow County Councils maintain the Way and protect the wildlife around it. Skylarks can still be heard and seen on Fairy Castle, just a short distance from Dublin City and many more threatened species of birds and insects frequent the remoter areas.

New guidebooks to the Wicklow Way have been written by, among others, Michael Fewer and Barry Dalby. Michael Fewer has written J.B.'s biography, titled *J.B. Malone: The Life and Times of a Walking Pioneer and an Explorer of the Nearby*, to be published shortly by South Dublin libraries.

LOCKDOWN WITH BOOKS

Siobhán Ní Fhoghlú

Although the lockdowns have been good for reading, I am sure we shall be glad to browse bookshops and regroup our book clubs. From a long list of works read over the past year or so, I have chosen three novels that are straightforward in narrative and style, and a quartet which is quite the opposite.

Marianne Lee's first novel, '*A Quiet Tide*', published a year ago, is that rare thing – an easy read which is of undoubted literary value. Based on the life of Ellen Hutchins, Ireland's first female botanist, it wears the author's research lightly. Hutchins (1785–1815) was born in Ballylickey House, Co Cork. Constrained by her gender and class and suffering ill-health, she achieved a great deal in her short life, being recognised by the age of 25 in Ireland and Britain as a major contributor to her science. Her fieldwork was done in the Bantry area, a 'terra incognita' to botanists until then. I would have gladly read a factual account of this woman's life: to discover it in an enjoyable novel is a bonus.

Donal Ryan is an acclaimed author. From the very first sentences of any of his books, one feels in the hands of a writer of great ability. I had already enjoyed '*The Spinning Heart*' '*From a Low and Quiet Sea*'. His latest, '*Strange Flowers*', is set in rural Tipperary in the early seventies. Kit and Paddy have a cosy, loving home, now rudely thrown into confusion and distress by the disappearance of their only child, Molly. She returns after five years, bringing in her trail a warm-hearted, devoted husband and a little son. That Alexander, the husband, is black and their son, Joshua, is the strange flower of the title, with his 'perfect unblemished whiteness' makes for an extra layer of complication. The many ways of not fitting in, of dealing with one's nature and identity are explored through the unusual circumstances.

Isabel Allende's *A Long Petal of the Sea* is a novel of migration, exile, and the business of making a life where fate, war and necessity lead one. The novel follows four generations from fleeing the Spanish Civil War to life in Chile from 1939 to 1994. Individuals live out their lives and loves under the pressures of fascism and a powerful Catholic church, but she creates characters who are resilient and enduring. This is a novel informed by the author's own experience of exile and questions of belonging, and by thorough research. Repression, and displacement are in no way confined to historical saga, and Allende's portrayal of human hope, kindness and survival is masterful.

My favourite lockdown reading was Ali Smith's Seasonal Quartet: *Autumn, Winter, Spring, and Summer*. Published from 2016 to 2020, these four novels cover life in Britain from the result of the Brexit referendum to Covid. The narrative is far from straightforward, dealing as it does with time, dreams, memory, art, literature, politics, the environment. Playfulness in style, language and tone combine with highly intelligent and serious consideration of [our] time, lives, interconnection, and interaction with each other and with the world we live in. The books are interconnected, but they can stand alone. They are rich in allusion to and echoes from art, cinema, and literature, and while I'm happy to have read them once, I want to go back and reread with an eye, ear and attention to the rich layers that constitute the best writing I have come across over the past year.

THE AFRICAN SAHEL AFTER PRESIDENT DEBY OF CHAD

Abdullahi El-Tom

We are delighted to bring this piece from our colleague and RSA member Abdullahi El-Tom, originally from Darfur in Sudan, on the implications of the recent death of President Deby of Chad.

On April 17th, an army belonging to a group opposed to President Deby of Chad crossed the Libyan border in a hostile advance towards N'Djamena, the capital of Chad. Their advance was halted over 300 miles away and rumours had it that President Deby took charge in the intervention. Why not, for he was quoted saying, some years back: 'a commander-in-chief must be prepared to smell gunfire in the battlefield'.

On April 20, the Chadian people received arresting news, coming in small doses. Firstly, government media announced that the rebels had been summarily defeated and their top leaders annihilated. Then, shortly after, government media surprised its supporters with another good message: that President Deby had won his presidential election by a landslide of over 80% and secured a sixth term in office. But the celebration was cut short. Hours later, on the same day, top commanders of the national army appeared in the media in full regalia with a sombre message: President Deby had suffered fatal wounds in the battlefield and been martyred as a hero defending the nation. His son, Mohammat Deby, has been appointed to lead a Transitional Government for a period of 18 months, after which power will be handed over to a democratically elected government. The legislative assembly and the cabinet were disbanded; the constitutional code that passes the presidency to the Speaker of the Parliament was simply set aside.

The departure of Deby has left a vacuum that is difficult to fill, both in Chad as well as in the entire Sahel of Africa. His poor democratic credentials did not diminish his legacy, at least in the eyes of his supporters at home or abroad. Internally, and despite endemic ethnic disharmony in Chad, President Deby was able to keep the country united. He did that through skilful diplomacy but not without extra-judicial violence and blatant breach of human rights. He also succeeded in cementing his support with many ethnic

groups through marriage alliances. His numerous wives included a close relative of the General Hemaidti, the second most influential man in the current Sudanese government. He was also married to a daughter of the Musa Hilal, a tribal leader in Sudan as well. Both Hemaiti and Hilal belong to the so-called Arabs of Darfur and had played an unsavoury role in Darfur conflicts.

President Macron of France highlighted the important role that the late President Deby had played in the region. He described him as a courageous friend of France. The opposition was quick to turn Macron's words into a testimony that Deby was no more than a puppet of the ex-colonial power. However, the French President was referring to Deby's role in the fight against religious extremists in the Sahel of Africa, and particularly against groups affiliated to Daesh, Boko Haram and ISIS. Deby's forces spearheaded the fight against those groups and his army fought in Cameroon, Central Africa, Nigeria, Mali, Niger and beyond. His departure leaves behind a precarious future in the entire region.

As far as Sudan is concerned, Deby's departure poses a real threat to the situation in Darfur. Chad hosts over 400,000 refugees from Darfur and their protection depends on the will of the new Chadian government. Moreover, Deby was a prime guarantor of the Juba Peace Accord (2020) that brought some semblance of peace to the country and reconciled Darfur armed rebels with their enemies in Khartoum. The new President of Chad now holds the key to stability, not only in Chad but equally in Sudan as well as the entire African Sahel of Africa.

CIRCULAR FROM JACINTA PRUNTY AT SOLIDARITY TEACHER TRAINING COLLEGE, YAMBIO, SOUTH SUDAN

A few snippets of news will have to suffice. The departure of our excellent founding Principal, Margaret Scott from New Zealand (Sisters of Our Lady of the Missions), and the induction of her generous Indian successor, Chris Soosai (De la Salle Brothers), was marked on 9 April 2021. Margaret Scott was a wonderful woman, who spent x13 years of truly heroic service here in S. Sudan. This was right through years of war, including armed raids on the college and farm, savage beating of staff and the rape of one of the sisters while others were unable to intervene, terrified. At one point she slept on a mattress across the threshold of the men's dormitory – to keep our students inside, protecting each other, and to thwart the armed gangs outside looking to pull apart members of other tribes (our student body is from all over S. Sudan and the Nuba Mountains). I'm not sure who was more afraid of disobeying her – our young men and women, or the 'soldiers' outside, but there was no doubting her readiness to be taken before they touched our people!

My job description has been formalised under the new principal but is, as I mentioned before, head of academic affairs. This covers everything from revising the curriculum (Certificate, x2 years) to drawing up the new Diploma (Year 3), for the whole of S. Sudan. In addition, there is training of tutors (lecturers), overseeing the rewriting of associated documents and text-books, managing the assessment process (continuous assessment and end of semester exams), seeing that all is in line with University of Juba requirements, etc. etc. I am also involved in drawing up applications for funding. My main teaching responsibility is in English – my

own classes and team-teach with those who take the other classes in English.

So, these are exciting times, and I have to admit it is a dream job for me, exactly where I can contribute, with others also (including my sister Thérèse, who plans to come out for x3 weeks this spring), all still to be sorted. I recently composed a 'letter of encouragement' to third-level colleagues and experienced teachers. In the wake of Covid 19, if you know someone who might take a chance on volunteering overseas (maybe sabbatical leave?) do let them know about Solidarity with S. Sudan. Obviously, those with experience of teacher education, and with classroom skills (primary, secondary) are the key targets, but it is an open call. I continue to find it most enriching.

In these times of restrictions and online everything, I must mention Riimenze (the Solidarity farm). I was there for the Easter w/e only. But it was like being away for a month, it is all so different. Think of living in the Pets Corner of Dublin Zoo. Except hotter, freer. I had my breakfast under the trees, watched (well, ignored) by dik-diks (small antelopes).

The Easter ceremonies were, as always here, so devotional – but all was in Pazande, not English (though sometimes it is hard to tell). The Solidarity people here are all fluent in the local language. People here pray through their bodies – dancing is part of their makeup, from the womb onwards. I cannot pretend to be a dancer, but I do enjoy it.

And finally, on the Friday of the mid-term break, the college was opened up to the children of the immediate neighbourhood for a games day. Schools here have been closed for the past 14 months (except for sixth class – brought in for a month to do the national exam). If ever small children needed some structured playtime it was now. We thought we could have some 100 children but were on standby for c.150. We had 300+. It was a delightful day – they played

games in groups, and the place was bedlam. They got as much fruit drink as they wanted (from large bins, dipping in the plastic cups), and a packet of biscuits mid-morning. They got a lollipop and mandazi (doughnut) as they were counted out the wicket gate, one by one (the timing was genius – how otherwise could you get them to leave?). The very small ones were not a worry, there was an older sibling somewhere nearby. Many brought their treats home, I was touched by that. This will certainly become a regular feature, if they are able to keep it to the local kids. The playtime was 8 a.m. non-stop to 1 p.m., but well worth it. The fears of spreading Covid 19 are real (the virus is certainly here – but numbers are not reliable). But speaking from my role in the day (gate duty, and under-fives dance troupe) I think the day was worth the risk. There was certainly an awful lot more handwashing done that Friday than seen before – there are metal barrels with water taps, and soap, across the campus, and these were a great attraction, every child got several turns, like at a funfair.

I will leave you with that lovely image of smiling children being allowed into the hallowed grounds of the college, and enjoying the grass underfoot, the ball games, the refreshments, the dancing. Above all, the attention of adults, allowing them to be children themselves. This is the purpose of all our efforts at teacher training, and bringing the children in brought it home.

With all good wishes this Eastertide from Jacinta Prunty, Holy Faith Sisters, Ireland, and Solidarity with South Sudan.

The Editorial Team would like to thank Jackie Hill for her help with Jacinta's article.

ROGER CASEMENT IN LUCAN

Séamas Ó Síocháin

On 5th January 1907, Roger Casement received a letter from the British Foreign Office announcing that he had been appointed as His Majesty's consul to the States of Pará, Amazonas, and Maranhão in Brazil. The letter, dated 2nd December 1906, was received by Casement at the Spa Hotel, Lucan. Casement would then have been 43 years of age and a person of some distinction. He had spent roughly twenty years in Africa, posted in a range of locations – the Niger, Lourenço Marques, Loanda, South Africa and, most importantly, the Congo Free State. In 1903, as British Consul, he had carried out an investigation into reported serious abuses surrounding the wild rubber trade in King Leopold's private colony in the Congo. This work, published by the Foreign Office in early 1904, was a crucial document in unmasking the atrocities of the Congo and, for it, Casement was awarded the C.M.G. (Commander of St. Michael and St. George).

Following his Congo work, he spent a very unsettled period at home, immersing himself with passion in the history and culture of Ireland and having increasing doubts about continuing his career in the British Foreign Service. But in 1906 he accepted what was to turn out to be the first of three postings to Brazil, to Santos, the port for the growing city of São Paulo. Casement was unhappy in Santos, which he made clear to the Foreign Office, and the Pará posting was offered in response while he was on home leave. It was this letter of appointment that he received in the Spa Hotel.

A little earlier, while staying with his friend, Col. Robert Berry, in Richhill Castle, Co. Armagh, Casement let friends know that he intended travelling to Lucan. On 22 November he wrote to Edmond Morel, his fellow Congo campaigner, to tell him that he was in Richhill but that 'then I think I go to Lucan'. To Mary

Hutton, on the 25th, he indicated that he would go to Meath and Dublin: 'At Dublin I mean to stay at the Spa Hotel, Lucan – and I hope there to have the quiet to write out my review of your book'. Mary Hutton (married to a wealthy coachbuilder, Arthur Hutton) was a Celtic scholar, who in 1907 published a well-received edition and translation of the *Táin*. To Bulmer Hobson, Casement enthused: 'I landed in Cooley with the "Táin" in hand! I like the book immensely – Mrs Hutton has done great work in it'.

Casement was certainly in the Spa Hotel by 13 December, when another letter to Morel was addressed from 'The Spa Hotel, Lucan', in which he told his friend: 'I stay here a few days and then go over to England'. He stayed until early January, as evidenced by letters addressed from Lucan and by cheques he cashed. From Lucan, too, he sent Christmas greetings to Morel and New Year greetings to Bulmer Hobson. To his cousin Gertrude he wrote: 'Lucan is very nice in winter – the air is good and the Dublin hills are shining to the South. I like the place.'

In a letter to Hobson, he wrote that he was in Lucan for a few days with his sister. Agnes Casement, Roger's only sister, was the oldest of four siblings; the other two, Charlie and Tom, had emigrated to Australia. Agnes, known as Nina in the family, and affectionately by Roger as 'Numkins', had a brief marriage and subsequently lived on her own; she seems to have suffered from a degree of ill-health and Roger was assiduous in supporting her. In fact, we know that this was not her first visit to Lucan: in December 1906 Roger commented to Gertrude: 'I've not heard from the Numkins since she went to Lucan – but I'm glad she is there and likes it'. And it is possible that he too stayed there previously, as he wrote to two friends in August 1905 on cancelled Spa Hotel notepaper (he had a habit of collecting hotel notepaper and using it later, crossing out the hotel address and adding his current one).

Why might the Casements have been attracted to the Spa Hotel, Lucan? It is likely to have been its reputation as a fashionable spa destination and its accessibility. Though earlier spas had been discovered in Lucan, the most famous was a sulphur well noticed in 1758 on the banks of the Liffey and developed by Agmondisham Vesey. In 1795 a hotel was built (now the County Bar) as well as the Crescent houses, to provide accommodation for holidaymakers visiting the spa. A century later, in 1891, the *Irish Builder* reported on the building of a new hotel for the Lucan Hydropathic & Spa Hotel Co. Limited. It noted that the company had acquired the old hotel, the Crescent, about 14 acres of land, and exclusive rights to the spa water. ‘The new hotel, which had sleeping accommodation for about 100 guests, also had a separate wing for invalids, in which hot and cold sulphur baths were provided.’

In addition to the new hotel, access to Lucan had improved by the provision of a tram service. The Lucan Tram ran from Parkgate Street to Lucan, the final section, from Chapelizod to Lucan, opening in 1883. ‘In August 1890, at the annual meeting of the tram company, reference was made to a new hotel being built at Lucan. The company decided to operate a non-stop car, during the busy morning and evening hours, between the hotel and Dublin. This was known as the Spa Hotel Express.’ Originally a steam tram, it converted to electricity in 1900.

Nina Casement seems to have been a regular winter visitor. In addition to her visits in 1906 and 1907, she returned in subsequent years. In April 1909, Roger wrote: ‘Poor old N. has been very ill at Lucan’. The following year, 1911, he writes in January: ‘Nina left for Erin today to Lucan again’. And in 1912 he comments that ‘Numkins’ had a ‘fearful voyage across the Irish ocean’ and ‘reached Lucan – about 12 hours later! And is safe and sound’. And her stays were not short: in May 1908, Roger wrote that ‘the Numkins

writes in great feather from Ballycastle again – and is evidently delighted to be back again, after the long winter of Lucan’.

A historical account of the Spa Hotel notes that in the summer there were tennis courts and golf for visitors, but ‘during the winter, there was a more robust class of person at the hotel – the Ward Union Staghoums, and the Meath and Kildare Foxhounds hunted six days a week. We are told that there was “superior accommodation for hunting horses and their attendants”’. Roger Casement was not over-impressed by this pursuit, which he witnessed in 1907: to Hobson he commented: ‘Here the whole world is either hunting or cattle driving. There’s mighty little Nationality in these parts.’

After a stay in Pará de Belem in Brazil, Casement was appointed Consul General, based in Rio de Janeiro. It was here that his second major humanitarian achievement took place, in the Putumayo region of the Upper Amazon. Again, he investigated and documented horrific abuses carried out on indigenous inhabitants, under the auspices of the London-registered Peruvian Amazon Company. In the years following, he suffered increasing poor health, so that it is little surprise that he again thinks of the Spa Hotel in Lucan, his last reference to it. On 16 September 1912, he writes: ‘I’ll skip off to Belfast and on to Lucan’ and, about the same time he writes that he is leaving Cloghaneely in Donegal ‘glad in one way too as I shall go straight to Lucan Spa Hotel and take the rheumatic baths there. I am tired of being so stiff and sore and I won’t go to Wales or Sasana or any other foreign country ...’

Note. The historical details on the Spa Hotel and the Lucan Tram are taken from A History of Lucan, compiled by Mary Mulhall, edited by Joan O’Flynn. n.d. Leinster Leader.

THE AVENUE

Peter Denman

Lime trees either side delineate
a straight and narrow tarmac strip,
the thousand yards that I patrol.
Along this track where once a duke
and all his household lot
processed to church, I make
ambulatory retreats.
At noon, while
clouds unrolled swatches of daylight
across the slot of open sky, I heard
the white noise of children let out
in the school yard. Now it is dusk
with the faded clamour of rooks
roosting on topmost branches.
Out ahead of me the trees run,
tunnelling my vision towards
the sunken sun, the vanishing point.

WHAT'S COOKING IN THE KITCHEN

Marie-Thérèse Power

One of the joys of cooking and baking is
sharing recipes with family and friends.
Below are two favourites from Mary Weld.
Mary has shared her tea brack on train
journeys and at more than one lunch in St.
Joseph's, it has always been a winner.

Tea Brack

Put the following ingredients into a bowl:
300g Mixed Fruit (Sultanas, Raisins,
Currants or from a pre-mixed bag)
1-2 Tablespoons brown sugar (if you want
to add sugar)
Good splash of whiskey (gives the added
zest to taste, buy cheap brand)
300 ml strong hot tea
Mix all together, cover with plate and
leave overnight.

Next Day

Preheat the oven to 150 degrees

Line 2 lb loaf tin with grease-proof paper,
or if you can source suitable tin-liners it is
much handier

Add 1 egg to fruit mixture and blend it in.
Weigh out 275g self-raising flour and add
2gm nutmeg

Mix them together

Sieve flour/nutmeg into fruit mixture,
about a third at a time, until all combined
Turn into the prepared loaf tin and level
the surface.

Bake for 90 minutes

No-Churn Elderflower Ice-Cream

As we are now enjoying Summer days it is
the perfect time to enjoy ice cream. Mary
never purchases shop-bought ice cream
any more as this recipe is so tasty and easy
to make, it is always on standby in Mary's
freezer.

3 medium egg whites

150g (50oz) caster sugar

300ml (half pint) double cream

1tsp. vanilla extract

75ml (3fl oz) elderflower cordial (or
flavour of your choice)

Chill a 18cm x 25.5cm (7in x 10in) tin in
the freezer.

Put the egg whites into a medium bowl
and whisk with handheld electric beaters
until stiff.

Gradually add the sugar, whisking
constantly until the mixture is thick and
glossy. Set aside.

Pour the cream and vanilla into a large
bowl and whisk until the cream just holds
its shape.

Use a large metal spoon to fold egg whites
into the cream, followed by the
elderflower cordial.

Pour the mixture into the chilled container,
cover and freeze until solid (around 5
hours).

Enjoy in the garden with family or friends.

SOUTH CAMPUS PUZZLE

set by Silky Tom

This might look like a Wordsearch puzzle, but we believe it is a set of preliminary notes for a plan of part of the South Campus, showing buildings and other features. Can you find them?

There are over twenty-five campus features to identify, some with more than one word in the name. Each is in approximately the right place on the plan, but the names may run up, down, forwards, backwards or diagonally. The entrance to the campus is marked in black at the bottom row, to help you get started. See how many you can find, using what you know of your way around the college. But if you give up on that, there is a list of the hidden words below.

- ARCH
- ARCH (Another one)
- AULA
- CASTLE
- CHAPEL
- DUNBOYNE
- GARDEN
- GATE
- HUMANITY
- JOSEPHS*
- LIBRARY
- LODGE
- LOFTUS
- LOGIC
- LONG CORRIDOR
- LYREEN HOUSE
- MCCA
- MUSEUM
- NEW HOUSE
- PARKING
- POWER
- PUGIN
- RENEHAN
- RHETORIC
- RIVERSTOWN
- RUSSELL
- SPIRE
- SQUARE*



- ST MARYS
- ST*(Combine the three*)
- STOYTE
- YEWS