



**Maynooth
University**
National University
of Ireland Maynooth

Winter 2020

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

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



Photo courtesy of Velma Maher.

Editorial Team: Breedá Behan, Séamas Ó Síocháin, Marie-Thérèse Power, Rod Walsh, Mary Weld.

FOREWORD

I am delighted to welcome the first edition of this Newsletter for the members of the Maynooth University and St Patrick's College Retired Staff Association. It has been a very unusual year that most of us will want to forget. This time last year nobody had heard of COVID 19, now it dominates our lives. Since March so much has changed as we have had to get used to being cut off or being very restricted in our engagements with family members and friends. For many the gap since we were last able to hug our grandchildren has been excessively long. While we are only a small association we have been very aware and conscious of the trojan efforts made by so many frontline workers in so many different occupations. It has been so heartening to witness the generous patriotic responses of so many and through their efforts we have been able to maintain our own individual resilience. We were not able to travel as a group to Munich but instead we provided financial support to seven charities and we entertained each other through the Hands of Friendship WhatsApp. A very special 'thank you' for those initiatives is due to Marie-Thérèse Power and Mary Weld. As I write this Foreword we are about to re-enter an almost full-scale lock-down in the hope that the situation will improve sufficiently to enable us all to enjoy at least some of the rituals of Christmas. This Newsletter provides an opportunity for members to reconnect by sharing stories and reflections on what many have been doing in these unprecedented times. I want to thank everybody who has helped to compile the Newsletter, in particular Mary for suggesting the idea in the first place, Séamas for taking on the editorial role and Breeda and Rod for their technical expertise. While the short term is likely to be tough and bleak, not least because we are moving into the depths of winter, we have come this far and collectively we can draw upon our mutual support and the collegiality of our former workplace to remain resilient and confident that a new dawn will come - the sun will continue to rise.

Jim Walsh,
RSA Chairman.

BRUGES – A Trip to Remember

Marie-Thérèse Power

Photos courtesy of Velma Maher.

From April 29th to May 3rd 2019 twenty-one members and associate members of the RSA of Maynooth University and St Patrick's College Maynooth travelled to Brussels and Bruges for a four-night stay with our accommodation in the lovely Academie Hotel in the heart of Bruges city.

Spirits were high as we left Maynooth for Dublin Airport with our friendly and efficient transport provider Brendan Holton in the early hours of the morning. On arrival at Brussels airport we were greeted by Peter Denman and Siobhán Ní Fhoghlú who had travelled out a day earlier. Peter and Siobhán welcomed us with a banner in the colours of the Irish flag. We travelled into Brussels City Centre by private coach for our visit to the European Parliament where we had a private tour of the Parliament arranged through the offices of MEP Mairead McGuinness. Two staff members of Mairead's team talked us through the history and day-to-day functions of the EU and how it impacts on the lives of EU member states. Time was allowed for a Q&A session. Before leaving, we spent some time in the auditorium where the debates take place; unfortunately, as it was the Easter holiday period, debates were not taking place during our visit. As it was a lovely warm day, we had an outdoor lunch in one of the many restaurants Brussels has to offer. Following lunch, we spent the afternoon visiting the Irish Permanent Representatives Offices where we were welcomed by Brig. General Philip Brennan and Comm. Joseph Freeley. Brig. General Brennan spoke passionately about the Irish Defence Forces and the importance of the forces being adequately funded by the Irish Government. In typical Irish fashion we had a tea break in the kitchen and then enjoyed a talk from Comm. Joseph Freeley who spoke about the role of the Defence forces both home and abroad.



We took a private coach from Brussels to Bruges, arriving at our hotel well rested and ready for our first night of dining in Bruges where we were not disappointed. We finished off the night with a few drinks and plenty of laughter and chat in the hotel bar.

In Bruges we enjoyed a walking tour of this beautiful historical city where our private guide Bridget, born and reared in Bruges brought the history of the city to life. Bridget, much to our amazement was very knowledgeable on our own St Bridget and hoped to visit Kildare some time in the future. We visited the Groeninge Museum, The Belfry Tower, The Basilica of the Holy Blood, the Beguinage (UNESCO World Heritage Site) and the Hospital of St John where some of us enjoyed a wonderful musical recital “Harps of the World” (free of charge) in its grounds.

We had a good choice of restaurant to relax in while enjoying great food, drink and chat in the evenings just minutes from our hotel. Our hotel, the Academia had a good selection of whiskeys to choose from, having said that, you needed to know your whiskey or you could be floored with the price, ask Mary Weld about this!! It was not unusual to find Champagne on the breakfast menu.

We set aside a day to visit Ypres and the Flanders Museum. The Flanders Museum is a striking interactive museum using historical documents, film footage, poetry, song and sound effects to evoke the brutal experiences of trench warfare in Ypres.

The afternoon was spent with a private guide visiting -

- The Irish Peace Park;
- The Pool of Peace crater near the Messines Ridge where the Irish fought in 1917;
- Lone Tree Cemetery near the crater where mostly Irish lie buried. Siobhán Ní Fhoghlú recited *Marbhna ar Chéile Comhraic* (Elegy for a Combatant), an old Irish poem from the Táin which laments the death of Cuchulainn’s friend Ferdia whom he slew;
- The graves of Francis Ledwidge, and John Conlon, thought to be the youngest Irish soldier to die in the 1st World War. Peter Denman talked to us about Francis Ledwidge and recited his famous poem, *Lament for Thomas McDonagh*.
- Our last visit of the day was to the Menin Gate where we laid a wreath in the colours of the Irish flag to show our respect and thanks to those who gave their lives so others could live, the biggest gift anyone can give or receive.

I hope the above brings back fond memories of our trip to Brussels and Bruges and for those who were not with us a desire to join us on our next trip either at home or abroad.

We **WILL** travel again, don't know where, don't know when but I know we'll travel again some day.





Mapping the World

Jim Walsh

My interest in maps began in primary school where I became fascinated by the large wall maps of Ireland, Europe and the World. I produced my first 'atlas' of the counties of Ireland when I was about ten but unfortunately it did not survive the annual spring cleaning. Immediately after completing my first year in secondary school I produced a very large free-hand map of Ireland and Britain on a home produced parchment which has survived. In the later years of my career as a geographer I became interested in the history of map-making and began to compile a small library on the topic, but regrettably I didn't have sufficient time then to delve deeply into the topic.

Earlier this year I commenced a systematic study of how the world was mapped over the centuries. It became an ideal project to provide distraction from the various restrictions imposed by COVID 19. The project is on-going and thus far I have compiled a collection of images of maps from the classical period up to the 17th century. I am also writing a text to provide some information on why, how and for whom individual maps were produced. It has become clear that maps have been used for many purposes that include imposing geographical order on the evolving level of societal knowledge and understanding about the earth and its component physical and social landscapes; military planning and related control of conquered territories; navigation overland and across the oceans to new places; political administration; promotion of belief systems and expressions of international power and influence; major gifts intended to win favours from kings and other influential rulers; and on occasions as instruments of propaganda. There continues to be a fascination with 'old maps' as evidenced by a large variety of consumer products that include calendars, place mats, wrapping paper and books of decorative maps.

The earliest known map of the whole world is recorded on a very small clay tablet (c.5 x 3 inches) that dates from c.600 BC that was discovered in southern Iraq in 1882 and is now held in the British Museum in London. Its size is an indication of just how limited was the awareness of the geographical extent of the known world which was mostly limited to the city of Babylon on the Euphrates river. A 'Guide to drawing the Earth' was produced by the Egyptian/Greek scholar Ptolemy in the second century AD. It addressed the fundamental question of how to represent a spherical shaped earth on a flat two-dimensional surface. His solution was a network of vertical and horizontal lines representing longitude and latitude which he used to map approximately 8,000 known locations in Europe and parts of Africa and Asia. Among his table of coordinates were 31 locations in Ireland and while it is not known if Ptolemy produced any maps, his coordinates were used much later to produce a world map that included the first map of the island of Ireland. That map was extremely influential for about two hundred years in the Renaissance period.

However, in the earlier medieval period the scientific rigour introduced by Ptolemy was abandoned by the majority of European scholars following the demise of the Roman empire. From the sixth century onwards a new approach to understanding the world and mapping emerged and was vigorously promoted as part of the spread of Christianity throughout much of Europe. The Bible became the principal source of knowledge for generations of map makers that included many highly skilled monks. The main purpose of the majority of medieval maps was to promote a sacred geography devoid of scientific analysis and that was instead replete with images related to the Creation, Salvation by Christ and the Last Judgement. This phase of mapping or representing the world lasted until the 14th century after which an entirely new phase emerged that was guided by the enlightenment thinking of the Renaissance period. Advances in maritime technology, sponsored long-distance expeditions by the rulers of Spain and Portugal, innovations in engraving and print technologies, and influences by contemporary artists combined to support a flourishing of map-making that resulted in significant improvements in the accuracy and level of detail of new maps that also included mapping the New World of the American continent. By the middle of the sixteenth century there was a rapidly increasing demand for maps which led to the preparation of map collections using a standardised format. These collections of hundreds of maps formed the first Atlases – I have acquired facsimile copies of three of the earliest atlases.

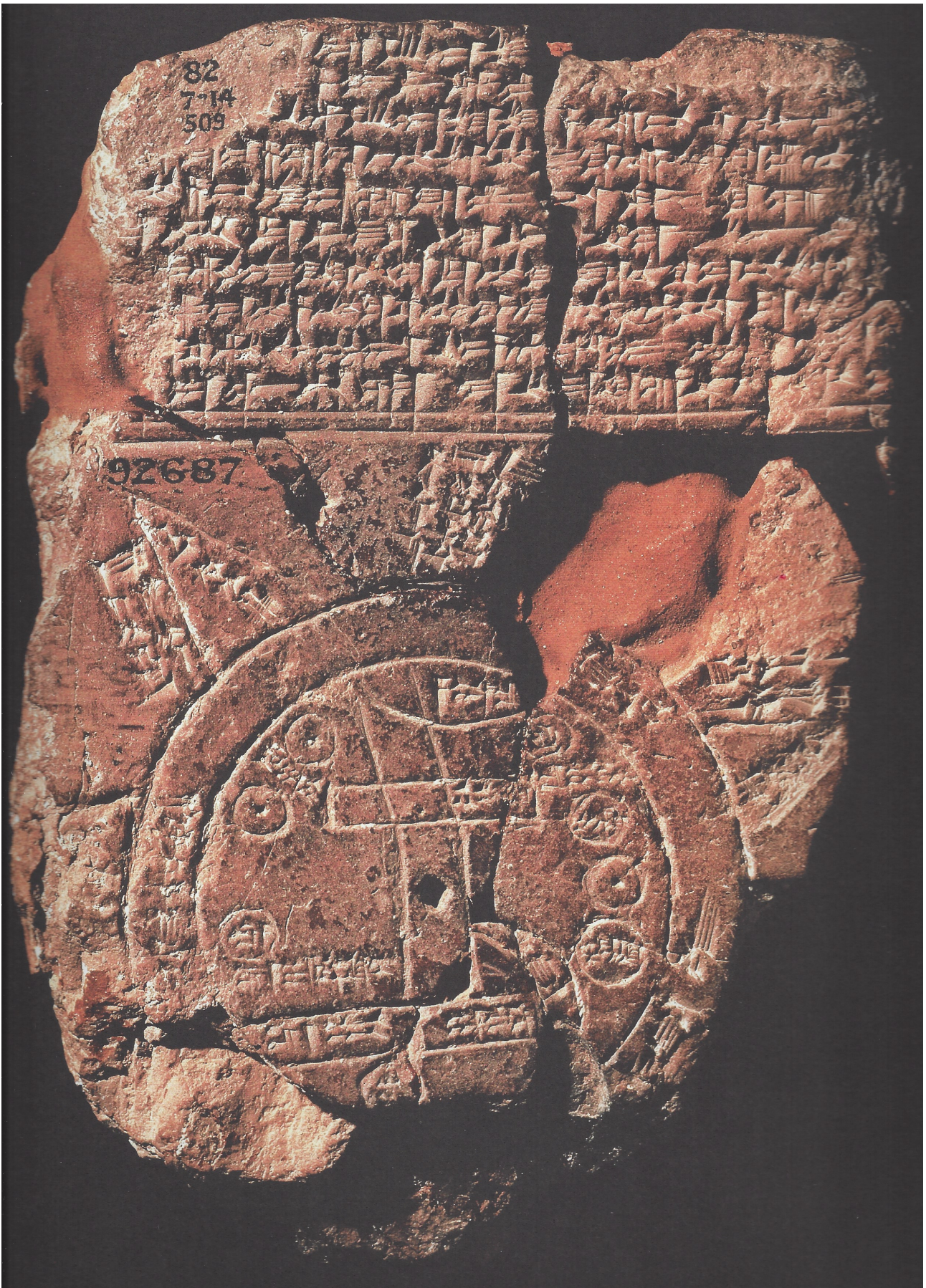
There is much more to discover in relation to mapping the world over the last 300 years. I am also looking in more depth at the mapping of Ireland as part of this project. It is a large project that will take a lot more time to complete. In the interim, I will be happy to provide an illustrated presentation to the RSA whenever it becomes safe to do so.



The Waldseemüller map from 1507 is the first map to include a very limited outline of the New World of the America as it was known in the early years of the Age of Discovery. It is most famous for being the first to include the word AMERICA in the lower left panel. Ireland and Britain are included near the top of the second panel from the left in the second row. The shapes are based on data provided by Ptolemy in the early second century AD. (Source: Brotton, J. *Great Maps – the world's masterpieces explored and explained*, Dorling Kindersley. 2014)



*The Hereford Map of the World was produced around 1300 and is the largest to have survived from the Middle Ages. It contains many illustrations linked to the bible. Ireland is represented in the lower left corner as a sausage shaped island on the perimeter of the world. (Source: Scafi, A. *Maps of Paradise*, The British Library, 2013*



*The Babylonian World Map was made on a clay tablet between 750 and 500 BC and is the earliest known map of world (Source: *The Times History of the World in Maps*, Harper Collins, 2014)*

Vincent's Arrival in Maynooth

Peter Denman

What follows is an extract from a CD recording made in 2008 by Vincent Murphy with Maurice O'Keeffe for the Maynooth Life History Archive and deposited in the JP2 library. After describing family and childhood on a farm in Co. Fermanagh, and the later shooting of his brother in a reprisal killing, he tells of his arrival at Maynooth in March 1956 at the age of 16 to work at the College.

In those times, in the fifties, jobs were difficult to get. There was a technical school in Belturbet and I cycled there every day, eight or nine miles in all weathers. The headmaster there, Mr Eamon McDonald, said that St Patrick's College was looking for someone to work in the powerhouse. Someone – the school inspector – brought word to the headmaster, and he mentioned it in class and I said I'd be interested. So I applied, by writing, to the Bursar. I have the letters still – the language used is very different. He said that if I came by bus a college van would pick me up at Dunboyne. In fact, we drove down. I'd never been here or in Dublin before that – in 1956 it was a big step. The family rosary was said the night before I left, so we knelt there, my mother was crying because I was leaving, the first to leave. As a parent now you can appreciate that – no communication, long distance. So with my brother and father we headed off in the car for Maynooth, through Navan, Kells and Dunshaughlin. I remember going through Dunshaughlin we got a puncture and had to have it repaired. At Maynooth we enquired at the gate lodge, and there was a chap there, "Tommy the Lodge", and he rang up to Mr John Baxter, the head steward at the time. We met him and had a walk around the College. Then I was shown to a room for myself. That room has changed many times since. It was the Salaries Office for years, then part of the Personnel Office. I was left to forage for myself.

At that time there was a lot of what we called "indoor staff". The catering staff lived in – the kitchen and serving staff, and those who cleaned the professors' rooms, brought up the turf. Thirty or forty, so plenty of young people around my own age there. I was supposed to be an electrician, but my work was less defined. The first man I met was Tom Waldron – he was the grandfather of Elaine Bean; and Willy Lacey, and the man in charge was a Mr McDonald. We generated our own electricity at that time in the College. We had steam boilers and two steam generators. I had a mix of work; repairing lights, plumbing, toilets, and the heating plant in the Power House had to be maintained – you wouldn't think there was so much work in it looking from the outside. Boilers, pumps, clarifiers, switchboards, engines, standby generator – all this equipment, and an oil house where we kept the crude oil for burning in the steam boilers. It was a power station on its own which had to be maintained.

And then at that time the College had two farms – one of them out beyond Kilcock, called Killick. There were houses on both farms, and dairy equipment to be maintained. The Bursar like myself was from a farming background and he had a great interest in the farms. One of the professors joked "Is this a farm with a college attached, or a college with a farm attached?" If anything happened up there, say the drinking bowls for the cattle or the pumps taking water from the canal, we would get a call. So we had a range of activities.

It was more primitive then. We had up to 600 clerical students. The College heating system had been upgraded, but there was only cold water for washing. No showers! There was little cross-over with the students. There was a Junior and a Senior House – Juniors in the Rhetoric, Logic and Humanity buildings, and the Seniors in St Mary's and St Patrick's, New House and Long Corridor. The Junior students had their own refectory, and the Seniors in what is now Pugin Hall. Before the meal the students would go to the Junior Chapel – now the Registrar's Office – then file back to the refectory, then afterwards back to the chapel to say grace after meals. We observed all this. Juniors and Seniors did not mix – even two brothers in different houses couldn't communicate, nor could they go outside the College.

Thus far, the story of Vincent's arrival at Maynooth. This is just the early section of nearly an hour of reminiscences. More to follow in subsequent Newsletters.....



Vincent and Mona on their first date crossing O'Connell Bridge, Dublin

DR JACINTA PRUNTY SETS OFF FOR SOUTH SUDAN

Jackie Hill

During 2019, Dr Jacinta Prunty of the History Department in the College spent several months of her leave of absence (following three years as head of department) in South Sudan. It seems extraordinary that anyone would voluntarily spend time in this war-torn country, which only succeeded in gaining independence from Sudan within the last ten years, and which – until even more recently – witnessed bitter civil conflict between rival ethnic groups. (To picture South Sudan on a map, think of Ethiopia and go immediately west). But Jacinta had very positive reasons for her visit. Her time there was spent as a volunteer at one of South Sudan's only functioning teacher-training colleges, in what is one of the poorest countries in the whole African continent. This was the Solidarity Teacher Training College at Yambio, a town of over 40,000 people west of the capital, Juba. The college, which is run by Catholic nuns, offers four-year in-service programmes to several thousand teachers from across the country. (Whereas most of the (North) Sudanese population would be Muslim in religion, in South Sudan the majority are Christians, mostly Catholic or Anglican).

Jacinta greatly enjoyed her time at the training college in 2019. She found the student teachers to be highly motivated, and full of hope for their newly independent country. On her return she shared dozens of photographs with her colleagues, and was clearly very eager to return.

Accordingly, she has taken early retirement, with the intention of going out again, ideally for a period of three years.

To show its support, the History Department, with the assistance of Ann Donoghue from the Arts and Humanities Institute, put on a fund-raising event to help towards long-term projects in South Sudan, such as upgrading classrooms and providing teaching materials. Jacinta's plan was to depart in September/early October of this year, but her plans were delayed by the death of her father Joe (well into his 90s) on 2 October and his funeral on 5 October. Accordingly, she didn't actually get away until 14 October, and is currently coming to the end of a quarantining period in the country.

It's understood that she expects to be returning to Ireland for a few weeks in the spring of 2021. In the meantime, Jacinta promises monthly updates on her time in South Sudan. We all send our very best wishes to her.

DRIVES DURING COVID 19

Mary O'Malley

Fine Weather Essential - Watch The Forecast!!

Fore, Co. Westmeath:

A very nice walk around the Abbey and Village, car park, about a 30 minute walk but interesting.

Cooley Peninsula:

Go to Greenore and take the Carlingford Ferry (every half hour €25). Drive East to the village of Annalong, take the SILENT VALLEY route through the mountains. The Silent Valley is a reservoir supplying water for Belfast area. Interesting history in a little Visitor Centre.

Head for Spelga Dam followed by Hilltown, return to the coast at Rostrevor and onto the Ferry at Greencastle (every hour).

On return journey, if you have time, visit FAUGHART – take exit near the CARRICKDALE HOTEL where you will find a Shrine to St. Bridget, little church and stream with Stations of the Cross.

Lough Allen Drive:

DRUMSHAMBO R207 takes you all around the lake. There are two little harbours/jettys on this side of the lake. Make sure you take the little roads off to the right, where there are good views. Onto the R280 and into Drumshambo.

Wicklow Mountains:

Over the Sally Gap and back by the Wicklow Gap - wonderful views - everyone will know that one, but its still spectacular. Sunday driving in Wicklow not recommended - too busy.

Cavan Burren:

Go to Blacklion and head out the N16, where there is a little sign for the Cavan Burren. Very narrow road, climbing up into the mountains. A nice open air Visitor Centre, car park and toilets. The boardwalks around the area are superb with beautiful views.

Slieve Bloom Mountains:

Travel from Kinnity to Clonaslee and take a right turn onto a little road in the village for BRITAS LAKE where you will find a small wooded area. A lovely path walk around the lake. Return to Clonaslee and drive over the mountains to THE CUT. A lot of forestry in these mountains, which hinders some views. You can also drive around the mountains by taking the Glendine Drive from Kinnity – this route does not bring you through the mountains, but around them and a few little villages on route.

Loughcrew Cairns:

Go to car park for the Cairns. It's approximately a 20 minute easy walk up hill to Cairn T. On a fine day you can see 18 counties from this hilltop. There are many Cairns, but not all open to the public. Loughcrew Gardens are open during summer months, but check winter opening times (if any).

THE BLACK-HEADED GULL – a confusing bird

Rose Malone

The black-headed gull is one of Ireland's most common seagulls but, for a number of reasons, its name can be misleading. For a start, it is often seen inland. I see them at the Liffey Weir in Lucan and, according to Birdwatch Ireland, their largest nesting colonies are inland, on Lough Neagh with smaller inland colonies in Galway, Monaghan and Mayo. It is a native bird, but its numbers are supplemented in winter by visitors from northern and western Europe. Like other seagulls, it is often seen at a distance from the coast. A few weeks ago, they could be seen following the plough in St Edmondsbury, Lucan, as the stubble from this summer's barley crop was ploughed under.

At the Liffey Weir they were in a mixed group of gulls with much bigger, bullying herring gulls. They are a smaller and more graceful bird, with pointed wings, small head and long neck giving the impression of a tern. Their wings are a beautiful soft grey with a white leading edge and a black border. What none of the group on the Liffey had was a black head. The so-called black head (actually chocolate brown) is only seen in summer. In winter, the adult birds have a pure white head, with just a black spot behind the eye. The group in Lucan had already transitioned to winter plumage. Juvenile birds also have a white head, as they transition from their juvenile plumage of mottled brown and grey (which gives them the advantage of camouflage when they are young and vulnerable) to adult winter plumage in their first year. They also have a black border to the tail. The white heads are a clear signal that winter is on its way.

Although black-headed gulls are common, Birdwatch Ireland gives their conservation status as red. Nesting colonies are preyed on by American mink.

Reference: *Birdwatchireland.ie/birds/black-headed-gull/*

Photos courtesy of Rose Malone





EXERCISES FOR STAYING FIT

Bridie Mitten

As you head into the winter months it is more important than ever to take care of yourself both physically and mentally. We all know the physical benefits of exercising daily but daily exercise also has a positive effect on our mental health too. In these uncertain times when stress and anxiety are at an all time high why not give yourself a little time each day for some self care in the form of movement.

Did you know that when you move your joints you allow your energy to flow more freely through your body? Simple movements of the joint will help to stretch and strengthen your muscles, increase your energy and calm your mind!

Start with one (or all) of these gentle classes from my daughter (Paula Mitten) and see how you get on [*Morning Wake Up Stretch*](#) or [*Night-time Wind Down Yoga*](#). If this seems like too much to begin with, simply take 10 minutes to sit in a chair and move your joints! Try this [*Chair Exercise Class*](#).

Whatever you decide to do, know that a little and often (5-10 minutes a day) is better than waiting until you have an hour of free time (which may never happen). Start today, do something you enjoy (maybe you dance around the kitchen!) and feel the benefit straight away.

A GARDENING JOURNEY

By the gardener's assistant
Roddy Walsh

Most recently, September 2020, we planted some wonderfully coloured Sumac, gifted from a relative, and which will add a nice splash of autumn colour to that part of our garden.



While digging the hole to place it in I came across this small piece of farming history



Not the first time this has happened, and it brings me back 20 years to when we moved here and the garden was beginning to take shape. At that time there was a patio-sized chess board some 15ft square and rather the worse for wear and in a nearby shed some life-sized wooden chess pieces. Rather amazing to say the least but not something we were interested in pursuing. Having both grown up close to the sea we wanted a water feature, so up with the slabs and the pond digging began. I don't remember at this stage how long it took but it was during the dig that I came across a clay pipe, another piece of history and if only it could talk.

Pond done and stocked with Water Lilies and Yellow Iris, fish would be added later and so they were and all was good, but then the heron discovered the pond and every so often maybe once a year or so the heron would arrive and perch high on the Leylandii and observe the terrain. It landed again a few weeks ago and so my watch began. Suffice to say I discouraged it, but time is on their side and while we were happy to sit guard over the pond during daylight there's a limit. Sadly, it seemed after three days and nights until it departed the fish had possibly been cleared from the pond and we wondered what, where or if we should re-stock. But low and behold the other day I spotted two fish, so all is not lost.

Anyway back to the garden, there were a lot of plants and trees well established but largely overgrown and in need of a trim when we moved here, Red Robin and Leylandii, Chestnut and Ash spring to mind but there were plenty of others, large and small, and one of the great things about gardening is the "gifting", and so they started to arrive down the years from relatives and friends.

I was noting them down as I was preparing to write this and the list includes Contorted Hazel, an Apple tree (sorry I don't know which type, but the fruit is delicious), Bamboo which interestingly came from my mother-in-law's garden in Sutton and originally from her mother's garden in London, then the amazing large-leafed Gunnera, two types of Clematis climbing up bamboo poles I installed by the patio, Wisteria, also climbing a post on the patio, some Ferns (from an uncle), the one that fascinates me – Acanthus, with lovely lush green leaves, a very tall flower and loves water, a Berberis bush that has fabulous colour, Salvia Hot Lips, and Japanese Anemones, Artichoke, Red Hot Poker from mother-in-law along with some Roses, a favourite of my father-in-law, and lastly some Nerine from my mother's garden.



So there you have it. While not exhaustive by any means I trust it has sparked some interest as it certainly did for me and while assisting the gardener by digging the holes to plant the various plants, I now try to remember the names and even by times look them up so that I can expand my knowledge.

Take care and until next time “Happy Gardening”.

Books

Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys*. Notice by *Rose Malone*

Colson Whitehead is perhaps better known for his earlier novel *The Underground Railroad*, about a fictional escape route for slaves in the US. His more recent novel *The Nickel Boys* tells the story of Elwood Curtis, a black boy growing up in 1960s Florida, whose plans to attend black college and “make something of himself” are derailed by a trivial and innocent mistake and this results in his incarceration in a “reform school” of shocking and devastating cruelty.

Racism underlies and heightens every injustice described in this story. Elwood is brought up by his grandmother whose Christmas gift is a record of speeches by Dr Martin Luther King Jr. This raises his consciousness so that his legitimate anger at the constant microaggressions of “racism as usual” are channelled into an understanding of the source of the problem. Thanks to an inspiring teacher, he realises his ambition of obtaining a place in black college. However, on the way to college, he takes a lift in what may be a stolen car (or a racist assumption on the part of the police?) and is sent to the Nickel Academy.

This institution takes racism to new heights. The white and Negro inmates are segregated, with the latter bearing the brunt of cruel and abusive practices. Some of the physical abuse is so extreme that it makes for painful reading. Most shocking of all is the secret graveyard where those who don’t survive are buried. At the same time, the public face of the school is one of a benign and charitable institution which turns around the lives of the boys.

The writing conveys the appalling suffering of the boys in simple, matter-of-fact language which makes it all the more shocking. Elwood’s political awareness allows him to interpret incidents as “another gear in the machine that kept black folks down”. There is also a grim humour and wit which is a part of the boys’ survival mechanism.

The final chapter contains a twist which took my breath away. While I didn’t see it coming, it explained, in retrospect, some slight unease created by the chapters which jumped into the future. It makes it necessary to go back and read the prologue again with a different mindset.

COOKERY CORNER: Recipe for Tunisian Orange Cake

Marie-Thérèse Power

Darina Allen, 2001. *Darina Allen's Ballymaloe Cookery Course*. Dublin: Gill & MacMillan.
I have made it several times and it never fails. It is lovely and moist and keeps for weeks.

Preparation time: Once you have the ingredients together you will mix this cake within minutes.

Cooking time: 45–60 minutes

Tin size: 20cm/8in in diameter

Oven: 180C/350F/gas4

Ingredients:

50g (2oz) slightly stale white breadcrumbs

200g (7oz) caster sugar

100g (3.5oz) ground almonds

1.5 level teaspoons of baking powder

200ml (7fl.oz) sunflower oil

4 organic eggs

Zest of 1 large unwaxed orange, finely grated

Zest of half unwaxed lemon, finely grated

Citrus Syrup

Juice of 1 unwaxed orange

Juice of half an unwaxed lemon

75g (3oz) sugar

2 cloves

1 cinnamon stick

Line the base of the tin with a round of greaseproof or parchment paper. Lightly grease and flour the tin.

Mix the breadcrumbs with the sugar, almonds and baking powder. Whisk the oil with the eggs, pour into the dry ingredients and mix well.

Add the orange and lemon zest. Pour the mixture into the prepared tin. Put into a **cold** oven and turn on with the heat set to 180C/350F/gas4.

Bake for 45–60 minutes or until the cake is brown. A skewer inserted into the centre should come out clean. Allow to cool for **five** minutes before turning out onto a plate.

Meanwhile, make the citrus syrup. Put all the ingredients into a stainless-steel saucepan and bring gently to the boil, stirring until the sugar has dissolved completely. Simmer for 3 minutes. While the cake is still warm, pierce it with a skewer. Spoon the hot syrup over the cake. Leave to cool. Spoon excess syrup back over the cake every now and again until it is all soaked up.

The cloves and cinnamon can be left on the cake or discarded.

Serve on its own or one of the following – Cream, Greek Yogurt or Crème fraîche.

This cake makes a lovely dessert, it can also be sliced whenever you want to be kind to yourself and others. (ENJOY)