

# Roundwood & District

Historical & Folklore Journal

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## Table of Contents

From the Chair	2
Roundwood Historical Society Outing 2012 <i>Margaret Bolger</i>	3
A Mystery in the Mountain <i>Denis Gill</i>	5
Louis le Brocquy <i>Hilary Pyle</i>	9
Family History Tips: How to get a birth certificate without tears <i>Derek Neilson</i>	13
Letter to the Editor	15
Our local heroes! Wicklow Olympians and Paralympians <i>Ethni Seymour</i>	16
St Patrick's Day 1935 <i>WJ Duffy (contributed by Joe Timmons)</i>	20
Healing stone <i>Joe Timmons</i>	21
Patrick Tuohy, Artist <i>Monica Farrell</i>	22
Wicklow Views in the Saleroom <i>Mary Davies</i>	25
George Victor Du Noyer Recorder of the Past <i>Petra Coffey</i>	29
Garech a Brin, Luggala and Roundwood. <i>Monica Farrell and John Medlycott</i>	34
Luggala <i>John Montague</i>	43
First Communion <i>Pat D'Arcy</i>	45
Rabbits Gone, Bunnies Alive <i>Dairine Coffey</i>	46
Memories of Home in Shillelagh <i>Pat D'Arcy</i>	51
Colonel Fiach 'Luke' O'Toole, The Eleven Years' War & All That! <i>Cathal Mac Oirvachtaigh</i>	52
Book Review - <i>Luggala Days</i> <i>Mary Davies</i>	61
Our Patrons	63

***Roundwood and District  
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*Father Breen, Sean Kavanagh, Joe Timmons*

It is 25 years since the Society was founded. A selection of photographs has been included in the Journal to reflect this history. However there are gaps in the Society's photographic archive. If you are able to fill in any of these we would be delighted.

## ***From the Chair***

**Monica Farrell**

It is a great pleasure to introduce our 23rd Roundwood and District Historical and Folklore Journal and hope you will enjoy this year's edition.

Twenty five years ago a small group interested in collecting and recording history of the area got together, organised meetings and so our Society was founded. This year has been momentous as Cathal brought us into the 21st century with the development of the Society website ([www.roundwoodhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.roundwoodhistoricalsociety.com)), well worth a look as all our events are listed!

History continues to be made. At this year's Olympic Games in London, Katie Taylor from Bray, became the first woman to win a gold medal in boxing. Katie was to the forefront in having women's boxing introduced into the Olympic Games.

Through the year we have had excellent lectures, covering a broad spectrum of topics from Art to Decisions that shaped the Irish Economy and combined with visits to areas of interest, including Ballymurrin Quaker Homestead, Kildare, Kilruddery and a walk along the old road from Annamoe to the village! The highlight of the year was Wicklow Warriors Re-enactment part of Heritage week.

The Society continues to expand its archive of documents, maps, books relating to Roundwood and district and we are happy to accept and store articles, photographs, poems, etc which people may have at home and may be included in future journals

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the contributors for their research and time with their articles, which you are about to enjoy. A special thank you to our Editorial Board for all their hard work.

Finally, many thanks to our Patrons for their generosity down through the years. Their support has been vital in the publication of our Journals. We welcome new readers to our Journal and invite anyone with an interest in local history to come to our meetings held on the last Monday of each month in the Old School, Roundwood. Enjoy the read.

## ***Roundwood Historical Society Outing 2012***

**Margaret Bolger**

This year's outing which was held on 14th July proved to be a very varied and enjoyable trip. Members of the society met in Roundwood and departed westwards in a bus over the Wicklow Gap. Having travelled through Kildare the first stop was Donnelly's Hollow in the Curragh of Kildare.

Here the group disembarked to view the memorial to the famous 19th century boxer Dan Donnelly. Dan was born in the docks of Dublin in 1788 and was the first Irish-born heavyweight champion. Here Dan fought and beat Tom Hall a prominent English fighter who was touring Ireland at the time. A memorial now stands on the spot and leading up the hill from the memorial are the supposed footprints of Dan Donnelly. Visitors all try and walk in the footprints but his stride was so long it is virtually impossible to follow in them.

Next it was back to Kildare town and after some much needed refreshments the group paid a visit to the St Brigid's Cathedral. In the grounds of this cathedral stands a round tower which is open to visitors and those who were feeling fit tackled the steps and climbed up to the top of the tower from where you can see several counties.

Also in the grounds was a very interesting enclosure a Firehouse where the nuns kept a fire which burned day and night and if attacked they would gather in the enclosure. If any man dared enter he would pay the price by losing the function of a very important part of the male anatomy! So to this day, the fire is kept alight and no man will enter this enclosure to see if the story is true or not!

Then we moved on to Pollardstown Fen, which is a peaceful sanctuary for all sorts of wildlife. A boardwalk circles the fen and makes for a very pleasant stroll. The habitat is ideal for rare plants, including several types of orchids and the undisturbed peace makes it a haven for wild birds to breed and thrive.

Onwards then to Robertstown where a trip on a barge on the Grand Canal had been arranged. Once on board the barge we gently made our way up

the canal taking in the sights. Several of the group had a go at steering the barge. Frank Nuttall seemed to be a natural and was happily steering us along. Lunch was provided on the barge and finally we meandered our way back to where we started and disembarked relaxed and refreshed.

Our final stop was Bodenstown Graveyard. Here Wolfe Tone the leading Irish Revolutionary is buried. Tone was born on 20th June 1763 and died on 19th November 1798. He was a leading Irish revolutionary figure, one of the founding members of the United Irishmen and is regarded as the father of Irish Republicanism. Colm Galligan placed a wreath on his grave and recalled the life of Tone and his role in Irish History.

We travelled homewards with a final stop for dinner in the Hollywood Inn. A fantastic meal and craic was enjoyed by all and after a very interesting day we made the last lap back to Roundwood over the Wicklow Gap.



*Frank at the helm*



*Colm at Bodenstown*

## ***A Mystery in the Mountain***

**Denis Gill**

It was in mid 80s while hiking in the Wicklow Mountains that I first stumbled upon the wreckage of a small aircraft which I had never previously observed!

I had been trekking above Glenmalure from Table Track across trackless heather in search of Three Lakes, of which incidentally there are only two, the third lake having long disappeared (I have a pet theory as to where the third lake might have been, but that's another story) when I chanced upon the debris of an aircraft scattered among the peat hags on the lower slopes of Table Mountain. I resolved to investigate the wreckage on the return journey from the lakes but alas the mist closed in and I failed to locate the remains of the ill-fated plane.

On my return to Dublin, I asked among my walking pals if they knew anything of the history of the crashed plane, none had. In fact anyone I asked had never seen the wreckage of a plane in this area...Had my imagination been playing tricks on me?

Over the following years whenever I was in the area I tried and failed to locate the plane until in the early 90s while descending from the moonscape-like plateau of Conavalla Mountain, I paused to admire the wonderful views westward to the Blessington Lakes when across the small glen below Table Mountain, the sunlight reflected off something metallic! From a distance I studied the area and picked out what could be the pale grey of a few scattered granite boulders or dare I hope it might be the pieces of the tangled aluminium fuselage of the elusive crashed aircraft!

The weather was about to change, as low cloud rolled off the Lugnaquilla Massif across the Black Banks onto Table Mountain. Were my hopes of finding the mysterious wreckage about to be dashed once again! I took a compass bearing on what might or might not have been a scattering of boulders and quickly descended across rough terrain of heather and sedge to cross Lough Brook on the valley floor and climb among the heather shrouded peat hags on Table Mountain in an attempt to locate the wreckage before the mist closed in on the mountain.

From atop the peat hags I could spot nothing of interest and instead took the more difficult route of weaving my way within the gullies among the hags. It did not take long to find the first section of twisted metal that left me in no doubt I had finally relocated the aircraft crash site. I quickly came upon more fragments of the fuselage and then the nine cylinder engine block. On one of the shards of fuselage I could detect the Irish tricolour in a circle. Was this an Irish Air Corp plane, I wondered?

Over the following weeks, all enquiries for information on the crashed aircraft to the Air Corps in Baldonnel brought no response and it was not until years later, on a bright sunny day in June of 2011 as I was once again trekking towards Three Lakes and had the idea of gathering the scattered remnants of the fuselage around the engine block when I discovered a newly erected memorial plaque.

*'In Loving Memory of Lieutenant Patrick Leo O'Connor.'*

The plaque also gave some brief details of the circumstances of the crash and the pilot who died here on 7th March 1957.

At last, after twenty five years, firm information on this crashed aircraft had emerged and additional research revealed a news item in the Irish Times of 8th March 1957 bringing the full tragic story to light.

#### *Air Corp Pilot Dies in Plane Crash*

*A 21-year-old Army Air Corps lieutenant was killed yesterday, when his Provost training plane crashed into a mountain eight miles west of Rathdrum, Co Wicklow. He was Patrick L O'Connor, whose home address was at Cordane, Clooneyquin, Castlereagh, Co Roscommon. This was the third Air Corps aircraft to crash since the beginning of the year and Lieut. O'Connor was the third member of the force killed since January...*



*The collected wreckage at the memorial site*

*Co Roscommon. This was the third Air Corps aircraft to crash since the beginning of the year and Lieut. O'Connor was the third member of the force killed since January...*

N.B. Three casualties in little more than two months! One wonders is this why the Air Corps was not more forthcoming with information on the crashed aircraft?

*The news paper report continues ...*

*The plane left Baldonnel aerodrome at 11.15am for a training flight over the counties of Offaly and Wicklow. It is believed to have lost contact with the control tower at the airport shortly after its departure, but it was not until they received a telephone message from the Civic Guards at Rathdrum that the authorities at Baldonnel learned there had been an accident.*



*'A lonely impulse of delight,  
Drove to this tumult in the clouds.'  
William Butler Yeats*

*Between 12.30 and 12.45, a forestry worker Mr Michael Nolan, who, with other employees of the Department of Lands, was working on Conavalla mountain, about 2000 feet above sea level and three miles west of the head of Glenmalure valley, heard the sound of an aircraft. A fairly thick fog covered the area at the time. Suddenly there was a loud explosion. The men left their work and searched the area. After some time they located the plane about 500 yards away on the opposite side of the valley on the slopes of Table Mountain. The pilot had been thrown clear from the cockpit. When they reached him, he tried to speak but his words were incoherent. He had received severe head injuries. Mr Matthew Doyle of Ballinabarney, Glenmalure, immediately went to Rathdrum, 15 miles away to summon help.*

*Within a short time the Rev Hugh Daly CC, Dr J P Cunniffe and Sergeant Peter Daly arrived on the scene of the crash. Lieut O'Connor was placed on an improvised stretcher and the foresters carried him more than three miles to the head of the glen. He was dead on admission to St Coleman's Hospital in Rathdrum.*

*Parts of the plane were scattered over an area of 80 yards. An Army rescue party arrived under the command of Commandant Sean O'Shea, Baldonnel.*

*Lieut O'Connor was the son of Mr and Mrs Peter O'Connor of Cordane, Clooneyquin, Castlereva, Co Roscommon. He was educated at the Irish Christian Brothers at Roscommon and later at Summerhill College.*

*Sligo. In 1954 he was accepted as a cadet in the Military College at the Curragh. Last September he was given his wings at a ceremony at Baldonnell.*

*The Provost aircraft, a British design, is the most advanced of piston engine primary trainers. It is used as a basic trainer by the RAF and other air forces. It is stated to be a pleasant aircraft to fly, with a side-by-side seating for the instructor and student pilot. It has a 550 hp piston engine which gives a maximum speed of nearly 200 mph.*

Although many walkers knew the location of the crash site, none knew of its history and for over fifty years the wreckage lay hidden among the peat hags on Table Mountain until in 2010, relatives of the twenty one year old pilot trekked to this lonely mountainside to erect a plaque in memory of Lieutenant Patrick O'Connor. Should you perchance be on a ramble in this remote and desolate area of the Wicklow Mountains, please spare a thought and perhaps say a prayer for this young airman.



*Mary and Owen Byrne with Saive Coffey in the background*



*Presentation by Joe Timmons and Monica Farrell to Frank McGillick and Michael Larkin*

## **Louis le Brocquy**

**Hilary Pyle**

Louis le Brocquy, who died on 25 April 2012, and was laid to rest in Calary Churchyard, is widely regarded as Ireland's greatest artist of the 20th century. He was born in Dublin on 10 November 1916, and went to school at St Gerard's in Bray, before studying chemistry at Trinity College with the intention of going into the family oil refinery. Quickly he realized that his horizons were elsewhere, and he travelled in Europe to study and paint from former masters of the brush – Rembrandt, Manet, Vermeer and Goya, being among his first loves – 'what was exciting about Rembrandt was the paint itself,' he said. Uccello's 'adventurous perception of space and perspective' was an excitement: and, from then on, he would always think of himself as part of the tradition of European art.

Almost immediately he was chosen to exhibit at the Royal Hibernian Academy, though it was not long before he offended against academic tenets and he associated with more progressive artists in the new Irish Exhibition of Living Art. The continual link between science and visual creativity as an essential aspect of human consciousness (which he discussed with the Austrian physicist, Schroedinger, who was in Dublin in the early forties) is crucial throughout all his work. In fact, in art, as in science – to quote from him – he believed in 'discovery' rather than creation. The simple making of a mark on canvas or paper, for him, initiated an adventure where only the paint (or pencil) itself would reveal the outcome, a 'significant accident'. Then his interest in the emotional effect of colour led him to investigate the relationship of the chromatic scale in music to the twelve subdivisions of primary colours (this is comparable with Messiaen's synaesthesia – whose palpable experience of colour in certain musical chords became fundamental to his music). Le Brocquy wrote articles and lectured to scientific bodies on his own form of synaesthesia, believing that musical chords – major and minor – and their vibrations, might be reconstructed in paint for their emotional resonance, through the use of corresponding pure colours.

After the war he moved to London, to paint with avant garde artists such as Bacon, Scott and Nicholson, in whose company his palette became

more subdued. His career burgeoned when he turned to a well-worn Irish subject, the travelling people, in provocative Picasso inspired images laced with Irish humour – out of which grew his sombre famous series, 'A Family'. He would never become a truly abstract artist like Nicholson, because Man was the core of his theme, humans in all aspects. His success and his curiosity also led him into the area of design. He studied the technique of tapestry with Jean Lurcat, making purely linear cartoon designs. His investigations of 'sound colour' had revealed the colour inversion of retinal memory, and this led him to make 'colour-inverted' versions of tapestries of his 'Travellers' and 'Garlanded Goat', in which, when woven much later, he noted with satisfaction an inverted transformation of mood. The Adam and Eve tapestry, in the same series, picks up his earlier preoccupation with the awakening of human consciousness as 'the birth of the mind'.

Le Brocquy's 'Táin' tapestries, centred on primordial gestural blots, paralleled his illustrations to Thomas Kinsella's translation of the ancient Irish epic. They are a reminder of his 'synaesthetic' relationship with literature. For a time – with various other Irish painters – he was looked on as a mere literary artist, a pejorative criticism, since it was felt strongly then that Ireland's art could never measure the innovations of continental Europe, and that literature in Ireland was supreme. Le Brocquy's writer mother Sybil was active in promoting all of the arts in Ireland: and he can be regarded as a Renaissance style man, accomplished in the sciences and the arts, who could express himself equally elegantly in words, written or spoken, and whose perpetually enquiring explorative mind continued with vigour until the end. His chosen profession was painting, where he recognized a kinship with literature and music. His vision took in the world around him, filling his sketchbook with images, feeding his intellect, and stimulating his ceaseless curiosity.

While working on tapestry designs he was sent to Spain, where he found the Spanish light 'literally turned his life inside out'. He was spellbound by a group of women and children leaning against a whitewashed wall, their bodies absorbed into the brilliance of sunlight, their only substance in their shadows. 'From that moment I never perceived the human presence in quite the same way', he recalled. So the 'Presences' came about, a 'white period'. His lengthy concentration on white in his painting

stemmed from his instinct for white as the wholeness of colour, which it is in scientific terms. At first vivid dabs of startling emotional colour were added. Later quieter paintings were obviously meditations on the state of being. 'The paint watches for the emergence of the image,' as he put it, 'the hand acting independently.'

After a brief blank period, his inspiration was revived by a visit to the Musée de l'Homme in Paris, which resulted in his famous head images. A shock element seems to have been fundamental to his work at all times. Like the Celts, he regarded the head as a magic box containing the spirit, and he decided to paint the head image from the inside out, pursuing his search for the essence of humanity through ancestral heads. 'Invention for me is recognition,' he said. 'For years I had been trying to realise the interiority of lemons and other fruit.' Now through the 'Presences' and the heads he attempted to discover some image of human interior reality. The ancestral heads matured into portrait heads of great recognisable men, whom he knew from their work, or from meeting them. He aimed to discover the Beckettness of Beckett, the Baconness of Bacon, the ghosts of Lorca, Strindberg, Delacroix, even Shakespeare, and many others, including Bono – the most renowned, surely, being his image of W.B. Yeats. He described these paintings as 'an archeology of the spirit' to a seminar on 'corps, Poesie, Peinture', at the University of Nice in 1979. In his view, no individual can be conceived as fixed in a single image, which accounts for his repetitions of head portraits in different poses. He saw the human being as faceted, or kinetic. Seamus Heaney saw these heads as 'quotations from bodies, from lives even... They take hold of the air, they probe it with a deep pure stare.'

Le Brocquy's final paintings attempt to delve into the earlier 'Presences' even further, not working on a white ground, but on opaque grey 'marbled' grounds – similar to monuments or tombstones, the surfaces composed of minute particles or fractured pigment. The opacity hints at ultimate negativity. Le Brocquy had been struck by Lucio Fontana's surfaces; but the brief images of fragments of human activity emerging from the grey – navel, eye, open mouth like a scream, evoke Beckett (or maybe Bacon), without the colour, and connect with Le Brocquy's ceaseless pursuit of the spirit of man. 'The area in which I have been digging to discover an

interior human reality is so narrow, and the realisation in paint of that reality so difficult, that the question in my mind always is whether it is at all possible to paint such an intangible thing.'

He had no defined religious views, but called himself 'a good agnostic, who tries to keep his window on to reality as widely open as possible.' Schroedinger, he said, believed that the spirit, or consciousness, was indestructible. 'I must say I was impressed by that thought....'

And so it is appropriate that he lies in Calary's garden of souls.



*Back row L TO R: Syl Lynch, Joan Hatton, Monica Farrell, Mike Kenna, Derek Neilsen; Second row: Frank McGillick, Lily Rice, Ned Hatton, Pat Doyle, May Costello, Third row: Dr Kent, Ken Ellis, Betty Flynn; Next Row Alice Kent, Michael Larkin, Sean Kavanagh; Fourth row: Leo Boles, Joe Timmons, Martin Timmons, Front: Imelda Duffy*

## ***Family History Tips: How to get a birth certificate without tears***

**Derek Neilsen**

Those of you who have viewed the RTE series 'Dead Money' will have seen Kit Smyrl, in trying to identify someone in a family tree, go into an empty General Register Office (GRO) and come out with a dozen birth certificates. Oh how I wish it were true ! Firstly, the GRO is always busy, sometimes having to close because there are too many people trying to get certificates. Secondly, the normal mortal can only get five certificates a day and, thirdly, Kit will certainly have done his preparations before he went to the GRO and this is what I intend to tell you about.

The GRO, which is located in Irish Life Mall on Abbey Street, is the place that you can go to get copies of certificates of birth, marriage and deaths since Civil Registration started in 1864. Church of Ireland marriage certificates from 1845 can also be obtained from the GRO. However, certificates prior to those dates are obtained from parish registers, which are held on microfilm at the National Library on Kildare Street.

To obtain a copy of a certificate from the GRO you need certain information and this comes from index books held in the GRO. To view an index book currently costs €2 to view 5 consecutive years' books (or €20 if you want to stay for a day and look up a number of index books). Once you have the relevant information, you complete a form and hand it in so that the GRO staff can copy the relevant certificate that you're looking for, the cost of which is €4.

So is there a problem ? Well, there is only one copy of the register for each year. So, if someone else is looking at the same register of births that you are looking for, you're just going to have to wait till they've finished. However, there is a faster, easier and cheaper way to get the information that you need and all before you even go to the GRO.

The information that you need to get a certificate from the GRO is:

The name of the individual.

The type of certificate.

The relevant year and the quarter that the birth, marriage or death occurred (for the early years, the quarter is not needed).

The registration district.

The volume and page numbers.

So where else can you get this information? Well there is a website, Family Search, that can help you locate the information that you require. Type in <https://familysearch.org/>, tab down to the list of locations on the left hand side of the page and click on 'United Kingdom and Ireland'. On the next page, click on 'Ireland, Civil Registration Indexes, 1845-1958', fill in the information that you have and see what entries come up. If you then click on the relevant entry, it will give you the year of registration, quarter, registration district, volume and page numbers.

Note that the Registration District that you will require is what was called the Poor Law Union and, for the Roundwood area, this would be Rathdrum. A full list of Poor Law Unions is available from [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_Irish\\_Poor\\_Law\\_Unions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Irish_Poor_Law_Unions)

If you find that there are too many entries, try refining the information and remembers that if you can't find the entry you're looking for, don't lose heart. While you may always have been told that your grandfather's name was James, it's quite possible that he was christened Patrick James, also you should remember that the entry may have been recorded incorrectly so that the spelling of, say Byrne, may appear as Burn. Dates can also be incorrect in that people may only be guessing at a particular year of birth or may have been told an incorrect age.

The same principle for finding birth certificates can be used for obtaining both marriage and death certificates. But it can happen that, especially with deaths, the event may not have been registered, especially if there was no estate to pass on.

Also, if you want to ensure that you have the correct marriage registration, remember that the volume and page numbers for the bride and groom will be the same.

Once you have the relevant information, you can go to the GRO, fill in the form to get the certificate and bypass the queue for the index books. Good luck in your investigations.

## **Letter to the Editors**

Dear Editors,

A year ago I came across a printed, anonymous pamphlet with seven songs about Killiskey, published in 1847. I have not met anyone yet who is familiar with this pamphlet and, therefore, I would like to publish them sometime soon. The songs are about road building, the Board of works, the soup kitchen, Peel, and the local committee during the famine around Killiskey and Ashford. Many local people are mentioned in the songs such as Tottenham, Truell, Crofton, and Vickers [Vicars?]. I have identified most of them but am at a loss to find information on the following:

Col. Jones or Jamie Jones;	Leonard; Ottley;	Darby Flynn;
Dixon;	Old M'Keon;	Moran.

I would love to get information about the above names.

Also, if anyone has information about the (anonymous) author, or anything about the circumstances surrounding this pamphlet, please contact me.

It would be great to be able to identify the author of the pamphlet. Do you have any suggestions of individuals who were writing satirical songs around Ashford in 1847?

One peculiarity of the songs is that they are written in 'blackface English', ie, English used by minstrel troupes where white people blackened their faces and imitated the language used by blacks. Minstrel troupes came to Ireland in the early 1840s. The tunes of the songs are also American but there is no reference in the songs to America.

I am looking forward to hearing from anyone with any information that might shed light on this pamphlet.

Magda Loeber  
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Pittsburgh, PA 15206  
USA  
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September 9, 2012

## ***Our local heroes! Wicklow Olympians and Paralympians***

**Ethni Seymour**

This was the year of the London Olympics and Paralympics. Locally it created a great buzz it was the first time as women's boxing was included, with much of the credit for the recognition of it as an Olympic sport due to the work of the Bray born World Champion woman boxer Katie Taylor. Our hopes were high for her when we saw her as flag bearer at the spectacular Opening Ceremony. She did us proud returning with a Gold medal in the 60kg boxing category, having shown such sportsmanship and dignity in victory. In the Paralympics, West Wicklow's Helen Kearney returned with a Silver and two Bronze medals for Dressage.

There were five others representing Wicklow in London. At the Olympics, there was another Bray boxer, Garda Adam Nolan, the equestrian eventer Mark Kyle from Newcastle whose team came fifth and two long-distance runners Kilcoole's Fionnuala Britton in the 10,000m and Stephanie Reilly from Brittas Bay in the 3km steeplechase. It was Bray based Padraic Moran's second Paralympics in Boccia.

This got us thinking of former Olympians who may have been born here in Wicklow or with Wicklow connections. Dorothy 'Tommy' Dermody went to the 1948 London Olympic Games. The Olympic Council of Ireland awarded her a Medal of Honour for her participation in those Games. This was just before her death in April 2012. She lived in Kilmacanogue for nigh on 30 years with her partner Count Cyril McCormack. She died a few weeks before her 103rd birthday. She had had the distinction of being the oldest surviving Olympic fencer and possibly the oldest Olympian in the world, possibly continuing to hold the record of Olympian longevity. She was a remarkable lady and one of the first women to represent Ireland at the Olympics. The trials and tribulations that women suffered to take part in Irish sport, let alone representing their country, at that time was so extraordinary that it cannot be covered in this Journal but is worthy of a heavy tome in its own right.

Another fencer who went to both the 1952 and 1960 Games but not the 1956 Melbourne Games was the well known RTÉ broadcaster Harry

Thuillier from Delgany who died in 2011. The reason for missing the 1956 Melbourne Games was probably the expense, as those who went had to raise about £200 themselves. This was a very large amount in those days when the weekly wage was about £8.

However, Arklow born runner, Ronnie Delany did go. He won the Olympic 1500m Gold for Ireland in the hotly contested final. The radio commentators of the day almost had him written off as an 'also-ran'. Listening to the commentaries now is amusing as they considered him an 'unknown' despite that six months earlier, he had become the seventh and youngest of the elite sub-four minute milers, in a time of 3 minutes 59 seconds. The partisan Australians were cheering on their hero and the race favourite John Landy. He also competed at the Rome Games in 1960, but without the same success. He remains the only Irish athlete to win a Gold in track events.

The only other medallist that we know of is the Paralympian, Ronan Tynan, who won 3 Gold medals for shotput, discus and long jump and a Silver for the high jump at the 1984 Games, returning for the 1988 Paralympic Games to win a further three Golds in Seoul for shotput, discus and javelin while studying medicine. He lived for sometime in West Wicklow and enjoyed horse riding whilst practising as an orthopaedic surgeon. However he is now known more for his prowess as a tenor, having initially been one of The Irish Tenors.

Curiously, Wicklow has not produced many Olympic track and field athletes over the years. The most notable would have been Len Horan of Tomriland, the Irish champion discus and shot putt champion in the late 1930s. His international career was halted by the Second World War.

Water sports have also provided 3 further Olympians. Sean Joseph Drea, now living in Glendarragh, competed in the single sculls at the memorable 1972 Munich games coming seventh. In Montreal, 1976, he broke the world record in the semifinals, with a time of 6:52.46 but he finished fourth in the final after a problem in the third quarter of the race.

Swimmer Gary O'Toole, while also studying medicine, competed in both the 1988 Seoul Olympics and the 1992 Barcelona Olympics with his best events being 200m breaststroke.

Timothy Goodbody from Delgany represented us in the Finn class in Beijing in 2008. He had only been a full time sailor a short time. It is believed he developed sealegs very young as his parents brought him sailing allegedly strapped to the mast at 2 months old.

Cycling has been the sport that has had most Wicklow involvement and controversy. Peter Doyle competed in the road races in both the Mexico and Munich Games in 1968 and 1972. More recently there have been 3 other cyclists. The most successful has been Robin Seymour who has lived in Kilmacanogue since 1993. He started mountain biking in 1990 when it was a relatively new sport. Though he qualified for the Atlanta games in 1996 he was not selected. However he qualified as of right by his ranking of top 50 in the world for Sydney 2000 and subsequently qualified for Athens in 2004 and Beijing 2008. He finished twenty-ninth in Sydney out of 50 competitors, was thirtieth in Athens and failed to finish in Beijing due to a virus although he had won a race in Canada en route to China. He organises races and competes regularly here and in the UK and he was invited to take part in the 'test event' on the Olympic course held in July 2011.



*Robin Seymour*

Tarja Owens, now living in Ballinastoe, had a late call up for the Cross Country Mountain bike event in Sydney Olympics in 2000. She originally hails from Greystones and is related to Peter Doyle (cyclist in Olympics 1968 and 1972).

Jenny McCauley (Brennan) who qualified for Athens 2004. Jenny also comes from a cycling family in Greystones and began cycling while still at school and still continues as a road cyclist.

The most controversial cyclist is Pat McQuaid, a true amateur in the 1970s, studying at university and working as a teacher at the same time. He lived in Roundwood for some of this time and was constantly seen cycling into Dublin frequently making faster progress than those driving.

He and Sean Kelly were more or less selected to go to the 1976 Olympic Games but both were banned for a sanctions-busting in Apartheid-era South Africa.

There were two reasons why he went, his genuine interest in South African politics and also the opportunity to have a long stage race in the winter before the Olympic Games, so shortening the winter. It was a risk, but other European teams had minimal sanctions imposed when caught by their federation racing in South Africa. They were caught because of huge publicity around the second honeymoon of Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton at one of the stage finishes! They were recognised in some of the photographs and thus suspended. However, Pat had a high profile at London 2012. This time he had Gold, Silver and Bronze medals but was presenting them to the winners in his official capacity as the president of the UCI (Union Cycliste Internationale / Union International Cycling).

Ireland's involvement in the Olympics has not always been easy. There have been numerous problems, such as recognition as a nation in its own right, internal squabbling as to who was being the representative body and how much of the island was being represented. Most of these problems are now resolved, but it has meant that some Irish have competed under other flags.

#### Olympic Creed

'The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but to take part, just as the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle. The essential thing is not to have conquered but to have fought well.'

The Olympic Creed was adopted in 1908 by Baron de Coubertin, having been inspired by the Bishop of Pennsylvania's sermon at a service for Olympic Athletes in 1908. It has appeared on the scoreboard during Opening Ceremony at every modern Olympic Games. This is certainly what has been done by all our Wicklow Olympians. We can be proud of them and live in their reflected glory. We must also remember that this recognition does not come out of the blue. This is the result of hard work and dedication not just of the athlete but also of their entire support network. Congratulations to the entire teams over the years.

## ***St Patrick's Day 1935***

**WJ Duffy (contributed by Joe Timmons)**

Despite the blizzard, storm and snow,  
The triple leaf still proudly grows  
'Mid mud and mire in grand array  
To greet another St Patrick's Day.

We pluck it deftly from the sod  
Where patriots and saints have trod,  
In Glendalough and by the Vartry's spray  
This blessed feast - St Patrick's Day.

Proud emblem of an ancient isle,  
We pluck and greet thee with a smile –  
A smile of welcome, whilst we pray,  
'God save our land this St Patrick's Day'

Across the swelling ocean's tide  
We send this emblem far and wide  
To exiled kindred far, away –  
God guard them all this St Patrick's Day.

Emblem of faith and unity,  
One God alone in persons three  
Explained at once in the shamrock spray  
All Christians wear on St Patrick's Day.

## ***The Healing Stone***

**Joe Timmons**



This Healing Stone was unveiled during the Eucharistic Congress Opening Ceremony at the Royal Dublin Society on Sunday 10 June 2012 in acknowledgement of the abuse of children.

It is a large piece of Wicklow granite supplied by Seamus Kinlan of Lough Dan. It was inscribed by Eugene and Tony Brennan of Rathdrum with the words of a prayer composed by a survivor of clerical abuse.

After the Congress, the Healing Stone was given a more permanent home at the ancient sanctuary of St Patrick's Purgatory at Lough Derg in Co Donegal.

## ***Patrick Tuohy, Artist***

**Monica Farrell**

Patrick J Murphy, the author of the book on the artist, Patrick Tuohy, visited Roundwood and spoke about his life.

Patrick Tuohy was born on the 27th of February 1894 at 15 North Frederick Street, Dublin. His parents were Dr John Tuohy of Mayo and Mary J Tuohy (née Murphy) of Roundwood. Dr and Mrs Tuohy married in January 1886 and for some time they lived in Cornwall, returning to Dublin in 1890. He had two older sisters Maura and Bride.

The artist was born with a deformed left hand and although he wore a glove in his later life to disguise his disability it did not deter him from starting to draw at an early age. He attended the Sisters of the Holy Faith in Lower Dominick Street at the age of 4 and subsequently attended Pdraig Pearse's school St Enda's, a progressive school founded in Cullenswood House, Ranelagh.

He spent summers with his mother's parents on a farm near Lough Dan, Roundwood. He painted the landscape in the area. In 1907, he was using oil paints very skilfully for a 12 year old. One now called 'Hayfield near Lough Dan' was praised by the young poet Austin Clarke who also spent his holidays in Roundwood. Of special interest is the oil painting 'The Forge, Roundwood'. This is now in Farmleigh in the Phoenix Park. It is probably Darcy's forge as Mary Cullen thought the blacksmith looked very like her grandfather.

Pearse encouraged Dr Tuohy to allow the young Patrick to attend the Metropolitan School of Art in addition to his daytime education and Tuohy commenced study at the School of Art in 1909. In 1910 when Pearse moved his school from Ranelagh to The Hermitage near Marlay Park, Tuohy enrolled as a full time student in the Metropolitan School of Art as the distance was too far to travel daily.

One of his teachers was the celebrated William Orpen, a contemporary student was Sean Keating from Limerick. Although very competent in painting landscapes, he excelled at portrait painting. By the time he was 18, Tuohy was an accomplished portrait painter as his watercolour

'Mayo Peasant Boy' portrays. Examples from 1914 are the 'The Wicklow Labourer' and 'The Little Seamstress', a watercolour for which he won the Royal Dublin Society Taylor award. The painting 'Supper Time' also a watercolour is a wonderful exercise in light and shade.

In 1916 though his parents were ardent nationalists there is no evidence that he was involved in the Easter Rising. It would appear that he went to study in Spain in 1916 for about a year on the money he received for the Taylor Scholarship. To eke out his money, he taught art in the Collegio de Las Madres Irlandes. Influenced by the great artists such as Velasquez and El Greco, he painted religious compositions for the Loreto nuns. These were later destroyed in the Spanish Civil War.

He also continued painting religious subjects with distinction, again on commission. In 1922 'The Baptism of Christ' was a large canvas in which he incorporated likenesses of his friends, Sean Keating, Sean O Sullivan and Phyllis Moss. The painting received special praise in the Sunday Times review on the 3rd of May 1925.

The year 1918 marked the start of Tuohy's professional career. He was appointed a part-time teacher at the Metropolitan School of Art, as well as exhibiting at the Royal Hibernian Academy. The life of the artist was not easy but such was his talent that he got commissions to paint portraits, including General Richard Mulcahy, Commander in Chief of the Free State Army and Minister for Defence. He refused to finish it as Mrs Mulcahy interrupted the sittings, but he was persuaded to do a monochrome study. His most notable coup was after an introduction to James Joyce on a Parisian visit, Joyce asked him to paint his father, John Stanislaus Joyce. This was exhibited at the RHA in 1924 to much acclaim. He returned to Paris in 1925 to paint James Joyce accompanied by Phyllis Moss. This portrait, painted at 2 Square Robiac, took twenty eight sittings. Phyllis Moss recalled 'They got on each other's nerves during the sittings.....', but Joyce also enjoyed the news from the Dublin scene. Up to 1926, Tuohy also portrayed Irish theatre notables including the actress Ria Mooney and the playwrights Padraic Colum and Sean O'Casey.

The year 1927 saw Tuohy emigrating to America. He had been unable to make a sustainable living from his art in Ireland. Through his contact with Padraic Colum, he secured some commissions including that of the American actress Claudette Colbert (unfinished). He visited Ireland briefly in 1929 but returned to the States. His health deteriorated, his depression deepened and he died in August at the age of thirty six. His body was returned to Ireland and after Mass in the Pro Cathedral he was buried in Glasnevin Cemetery on the 16th of September 1930.



*The Forge, Roundwood*

Patrick J Murphy, (2004) *Patrick Tuohy From Conversations with his friends*, Townhouse Dublin, 206 pages ISBN 1-86059-228-7.



## **What's New**

### **Sale of Work Draws Near....**

Once more the annual parochial Sale of Work approaches and already the Committee have got down to the work of preparing for this now annual event. All who wish to help are welcome to offer their talents and gifts to the Committee as soon as possible.

*Roundwood News Monthly*, Nov 1970, Vol III No 7, price 1s or 5 np

## ***Wicklow views in the saleroom***

**Mary Davies**

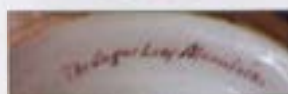
Images of Wicklow come up quite often, not surprisingly, in Dublin's antique auctions and exhibitions. But one of the more unusual lots of a James Adam's sale last March was an Irish dessert service dating from the 1800s, with Irish views on each piece, some of them from Wicklow. Each dish had gilded decoration framing the central picture. Fifteen plates have survived of what would once have been a larger set, but these are mainly decorated with views of Killarney. It was the seven surviving comports (dessert dishes on a stem) that caught the eye, for five of the seven have paintings of well-known Wicklow beauty spots. Each is captioned on the base: Glendalough, The Sugar Loaf Mountain, The Dargle, Luggielaw, The Devil's Glen. These were overglazed transfer prints of paintings, a technique reputedly invented in the late 1740s by the Dublin-born engraver John Brooks working in London. It was rapidly embraced by the English potteries especially around Staffordshire, so that by the 1820s large quantities of ware with transfer printed views of Europe and America were produced and exported. These were early impressive souvenirs, much cheaper than the hand-painted Spode and Wedgwood equivalents. Remember postcards did not come into existence for another few decades!



*Comports*



*'Early Morning at Glendalough' by Patrick Vincent Duffy*



*Sugarloaf comport*

The pictures are intended to be eye-catching, rather than accurate, and the hills and mountains are considerably exaggerated: the artist may well have never visited Wicklow. Glendalough with the monastic buildings is recognisable in the familiar view towards the site; the round tower has not yet had its capping reinstated, which was done in the 1870s. Glendalough's cliffs are glorified, and so is the Great Sugar Loaf on the second dish, with its head in the clouds and what looks like the Powerscourt waterfall flowing down its flank. The Sugar Loaf appears

again in the background of the Dargle Glen painting. Luggala's cliffs are wildly exaggerated, but the house is in roughly the right position across Lough Tay. The Devil's Glen painting, on a comport with a large crack, is probably the most exaggerated of all, with stupendous cliffs on both sides of the river.

In May two very different Wicklow views, both of Glendalough, surfaced in a Gorry Gallery exhibition. The first, a very large (90 x 152 cm) painting by Patrick Vincent Duffy 'Early morning at Glendalough' shows the Lower Lake with the Upper Lake just visible in the distance. It is a calm, peaceful scene, with sunlight just catching the mountains and spilling across the foreground where sheep are grazing. The lake is very still, and a small cottage has smoke rising straight up from its chimney into the early morning air under a delicate blue sky. The monastic ruins are out of sight behind the viewer.

Duffy was born in 1832 in Nassau Street, Dublin, where his father was a silversmith and jeweller. He was Keeper of the Royal Hibernian Academy for nearly forty years before his death in 1909. He specialised in painting landscapes, and this is a fine example. It was exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy in 1858.



*Dargle*



*Luggala*



*'Glendalough, Co Wicklow' by Henry G Gastineau*

The second view is a small pencil and wash picture 'Glendalough, Co Wicklow', centred on the monastic ruins. This is by Henry G Gastineau an English painter born in 1791, who lived in Camberwell, London; he was still painting and exhibiting in his eighties, right up to his death in 1876.



*Glendalough*

In Gastineau's picture, the roadway in the foreground is humped and rutted, a reminder of what travelling was like centuries ago.

The distinctive shape of the north end of Camaderry Mountain comes out well. As in the view on the comport, the round tower is not capped. Both appear to be viewed from the same road, but slightly different positions. Some of the buildings and ruins are similar, with the more realistic Gastineau view showing just how over-dramatised the landscape is on the comport.

Many thanks to James Adam and Sons Ltd and to the Gorry Gallery for use of their images, and to Gillian Buckley for supplying the Glendalough images.

## ***George Victor Du Noyer, Recorder of the Past***

**Petra Coffey**

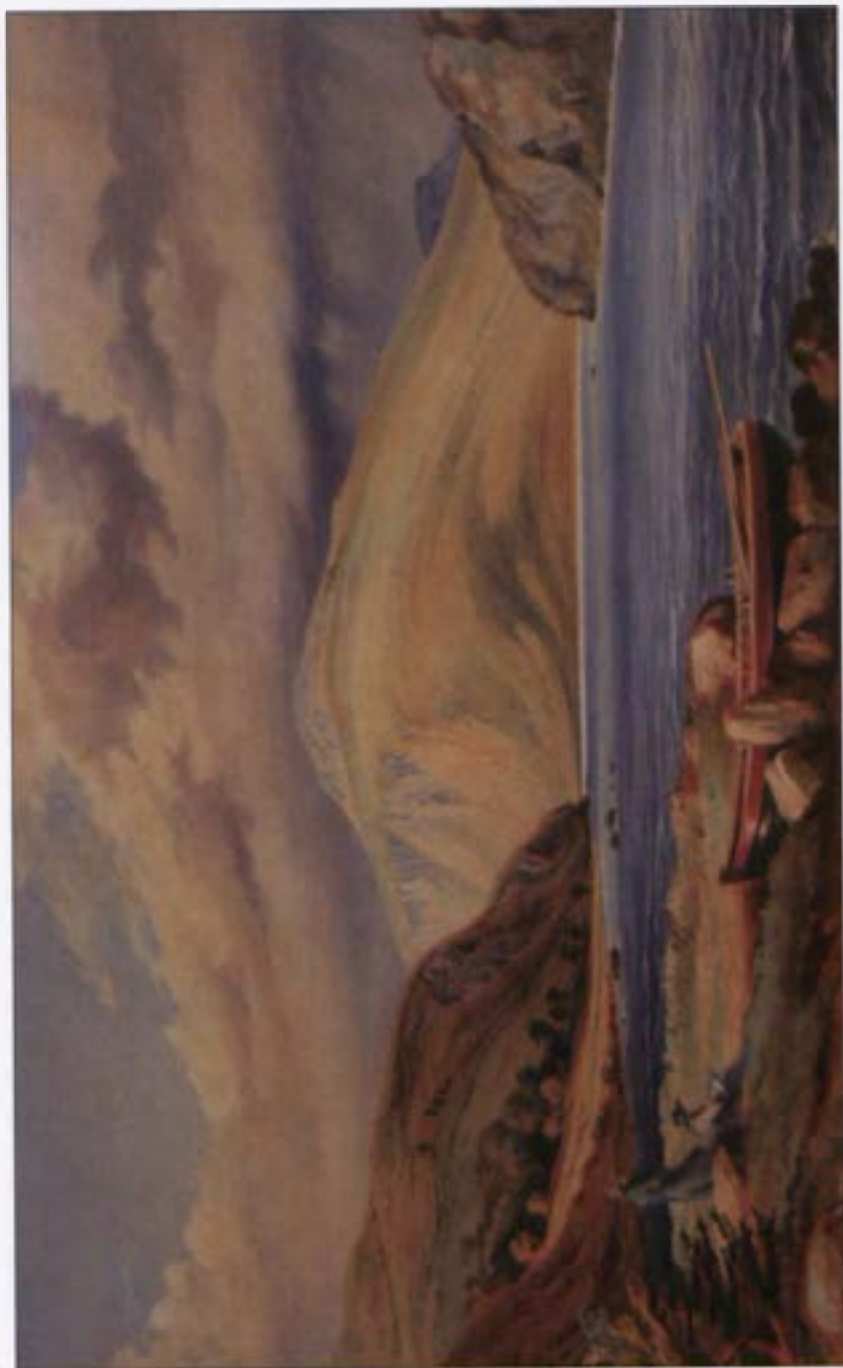
George Victor Du Noyer may not be regarded as an artist in the top rank, since in his day his mapping and many thousands of sketches and paintings were mostly overlooked. However, his maps are still in use today and his sketches and other works are reproduced endlessly, often without any accreditation. As a topographical artist his work has been called 'superb'.

He was a happy, cheerful and outgoing character, with an excellent sense of the ridiculous, and able to move easily amongst all types of people. He had an enquiring and open mind, interested in everything around him, which were extensively recorded in the thirteen small commonplace books he left. These are a wonderful legacy of endless drawings of vanished archaeological sites, buildings and social life in mid nineteenth century Ireland.

Du Noyer was born in 1817, probably in Dublin to parents of Huguenot descent. He was very young when his drawing was noticed. This gift was recognized and he was given lessons by George Petrie (1790-1866), the artist and renowned archaeologist, who instilled in him the need to always note accurately whatever he was recording, be it a tumbledown castle or a flower. This early training led him into the burgeoning scientific world, and his skills as a topographical draughtsman and enquiring mind led him into many fields.

In 1835, he was employed by the Ordnance Survey of Ireland as an artist, to record any artefacts found, together with the scenery and cuttings exposed by the building of the railways. He also painted a series of watercolours of the flora and fauna found in the rivers, the nearby coast and inland in counties Antrim and Londonderry. By 1840, the civilian Topographical Section was reduced to four, of which Du Noyer was not one. He had to keep body and soul together by the products of his paintbrush, pen, engraving tools and skills at architectural drawings.

His interest in geology had started when he was very young. His earliest watercolour of a Silurian orthocone is dated 1830, when he was thirteen years old. His interest in geology had been fostered when he was in the



*Du Noyer's Water colour of Lough Dan*

Ordnance Survey and had been encouraged and supported by Captain J E Portlock, Royal Engineer, who honoured Du Noyer by naming two fossils after him. All thirty eight plates in Portlock's publication 'Report of the Geology of the County of Londonderry and parts of Tyrone and Fermanagh' of 1843 were by him. He had joined the Geological Society of Dublin in 1843, and was a member of several natural history and archaeological societies. He gave his first paper to the Geological Society of Dublin on 13th December 1843 entitled 'On geology as applicable to the delineation of Nature by the Artist' recording in one of his pocket notebooks how to conquer nerves, 'think of the audience as so many tables and chairs'. He remained so enthusiastic about geology that after a lecture in the RIA on the 8th January 1866, 'On the fossil remains of some large Batrachian Reptiles from the Irish coal measures' given by Dr EP Wright and Professor Thomas Huxley, FRS, Du Noyer said he would like to provide plates for the proposed publication of the paper '*gratis*'. Although he was fully employed by the Geological Survey of Ireland he could always find time for more painting.

Between 1840 and 1844 he accepted all types of artwork that came his way. He travelled and mapped, often with other geologists from the Survey, most of the other counties, visiting Roundwood on the 18th July 1840, perhaps making a sketch of Lough Dan, noting the tints which he was to use when he made the finished watercolour of the lough, very much later. The large watercolour of Lough Dan (55.5cm wide by 40 cm high) depicts a glowing romanticised view of Lough Dan, viewed from the southern end of the lough, in a style very typical of the time. It is signed George Victor Du Noyer and dated 1846. It is one of his series of large finished paintings, probably intended for exhibition and hopefully sold. This was his usual habit. The undated miniature of Lough Dan (9.2cm wide by 6cm high), is similar but more from a south westerly angle, and in an entirely different style. Both include two figures in the foreground for scale. He exhibited forty-eight paintings at the Royal Hibernian Academy between 1841 and 1863. These were mostly watercolours and were priced in pounds, shillings and pence. Watercolours, although much harder to work in, were regarded as of lower status than oil paintings, which were listed in guineas.



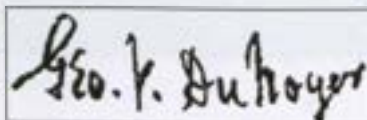
*Du Noyer's Sketch of Lough Dan*

His versatility knew no bounds as he was competent in many media. He illustrated many types of books, from palaeontological to the conformation of the horse. He produced the plates to accompany a French publication about potato blight, and later on, painted very large wall hangings to accompany public lectures. He also accepted commissions to paint gentlemen's seats, and curio cabinets. He continued to accept all types of art work up to the end of his life. In March 1844 he was appointed Fellow and Tutor in Fine Art at the College of St Columba, which was founded at Stackallan House near Navan in the same year. He declined the request to teach French, even though he was bilingual, but he did accept the position of Bursar. A visitor, the Rev RC Singleton, a Fellow of Exeter College Oxford, noted 'the progress they had made in drawing, -- ---- is a good teacher; he has written a little address for them, which is to be delivered to them the beginning of next Term' and that 'the standard of art had improved greatly while he was there,' and 'that from the taste and skill which he has shewn, that we shall have no need of applying to architects for designs' [for seats and desks for the chapel]. He left St Columba's in December 1845.

In May 1847 he was appointed a Temporary Survey Officer in the Geological Survey of Ireland. He remained within the Geological Survey of Ireland for the rest of his life.

Being promoted on the 3rd April 1849, when he was finally made a Permanent Assistant Geologist. Until then he had always called himself 'an artist'. From then on he was regarded as a trained geologist, even though he had had no formal training. He spent the rest of his life travelling around Ireland, and mapping the geology of the counties of Wicklow, Waterford, Wexford, Cork and Kerry in their entirety, using the newly published six inch to the mile maps produced by the Ordnance Survey. Most mapping of County Wicklow was done in the 1860s. An exhibition of his work was held in the National Gallery of Ireland in 1995 as part of the 150th anniversary of the Geological Survey of Ireland.

As he spent so much time alone in the hills when he was mapping, he craved company so at Christmas 1850 he acquired a puppy, an Irish water spaniel, who he named Mr Buff. A dog of independent character, his occupation was to be used as a scale in many of Du Noyer's paintings and there is also a series of drawings devoted to himself.

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Geo. J. Du Noyer".

Du Noyer was elected to membership of the Royal Irish Academy in August 1857, and was made an honorary life member in 1863, having presented them with a large collection of his drawings and paintings, covering many subjects.

He was promoted to District Surveyor in 1867 and moved to the northern counties of Ireland, where he and his youngest daughter contracted scarlet fever. She died on the 2nd January and her father the following day. They were both buried in the parish church in Antrim town on 4th January 1869. It would have been his eleventh wedding anniversary as he had married his cousin Fanny du Bédât on the 4th January 1858.

## ***Garech a Brún, Luggala and Roundwood.***

**An Dochtúir Garech Onórach a Brún in conversation with Monica Farrell and John Medlycott 2012**



*Luggala*

Friday, the 17th June: down the avenue on a very wet morning, the trees heavy with rain, the deer roaming freely, foxgloves in early bloom, we overlook the Green Valley (once called the Bolden Valley) and get a glimpse of the Cloghoge Valley. We drive by 'The Good Shepherd', Edward Delaney's bronze statue situated amongst the ferns. Luggala Lodge, or in its original Irish *Lug a' Lágha* (the hollow in the ridge), comes into view. The house was started by Peter La Touche, of the Huguenot banking family, in the 1790s as a hunting lodge and a wedding present to his wife, Elizabeth Vicars. La Touche also owned the Bellevue estate near Delgany.

We are welcomed by the elegant and erudite Garech a Brún at Luggala and we learn of his love for Luggala, going back over his life spent in this beautiful valley; a place he always knew was magical from his earliest years. The Honourable Arthur Ernest Guinness, the second son of the first Earl of Iveagh, in the early twentieth century rented Luggala Lodge and Lough Bray Cottage from Viscount Powerscourt. He and his wife lived at Lough Bray while their daughters stayed at Luggala. He subsequently bought Luggala and gave it as a wedding present to his daughter Oonagh, on her marriage to Dominick Browne, Lord Oranmore and Browne of

Castle Mac Garrett, County Mayo. Lady Oranmore and Browne was one of three Guinness sisters, Aileen, Maureen and Oonagh, whose first marriage was to Phillip Kindersley. Aileen was very keen that they should jointly share the estate but Oonagh managed to persuade her father to give the place to her instead.



*Arthur Ernest Guinness*

Garech's father, lived to be a hundred, and died in August 2002. For 72 years he had a seat in the House of Lords without participating in any debate. He was a keen sportsman and enjoyed the shoots at Luggala; Wicklow being an ideal county for deerstalking, and grouse shoots. In the early 1900s the most successful grouse shoot in Ireland took place here. For a long time his grandfather Ernest's gamekeeper was McClaren who Garech remembers living at Lough Bray.

Garech was born in 1939 in Chapelizod, and his brother Tara in 1943 in Dublin. When their parents divorced in 1950, Oonagh, Lady Oranmore and Browne, continued to reside at Luggala with Garech and his brother Tara. Tara died in a car accident on the 18th December 1966 and is commemorated in the Beatles song '*A Day in the Life*'. Seán Ó Riada's setting of Hans Arp's poem '*Sekundenzeiger*' was dedicated also to Tara's memory. His half-brother Gay Kindersley was a frequent visitor. His half-sister Tessa died at 13 and is buried at Luggala, as is Tara.

Oonagh, Lady Oranmore and Browne had offered Luggala to her first-born son Gay Kindersley who refused the offer as Luggala was unsuitable for training horses, which was his passion. Garech, with a keen interest in gardening (and not sport), loved Luggala and has kept the place in its timeless magnificence. The house was badly damaged by fire in 1956 but was successfully rebuilt.

Recently a great deal of restoration has taken place on the house and many rare and interesting trees have been planted; the many paintings, etchings and sketches of the house being of benefit in this. Garech has



*Garech on right, baby Tara,  
Gay and Tessa Kindersley*

been advised on the decoration of the house by David Mlinaric the famous interior designer who says that the 'battlemented Gothic lodge beside the lough holds the beauty and melancholy of Ireland, its poetry, its music and its art, as much as the mountains around it'.

In 1980, Garech married Princess Harshad Purna Devi Jadeja of Morvi, known as Princess Purna.

She is one of the four daughters of HH Maharajah Mahendra Sinhji and HH Maharani Vijaykuberba. He was an all round sportsman, and in particular a keen equestrian and owner of numerous racehorses in England and India. His widow the Maharani is passionately patriotic and a popular figure in Morvi. She is involved in much charitable work and has set up her own foundation for the treatment of cancer, tuberculosis, heart disease and cataracts. She has worked tirelessly to help the needy in society. A few years ago Princess Purna spoke on RTÉ about the earthquake in Morvi and raised Ir£30,000 from the broadcast and Ir£100,000 in total which enabled a village, Tarapur, to be built for homeless villagers. Tony Boylan who lives near Enniskerry assisted with a phase of the project.

Our conversation covered many aspects of Garech's life and one short article would not be enough for such an interesting life. One of his earliest memories is being brought as a young child to Doyle's (now the Roundwood Inn) looking up at what would have been to him 'a large wooden counter'. He also remembered the late Pat Doyle of the St Kevin's Bus Service taking his mother to the races during the war and of Maude Gonne (the well known Republican and mother of Seán McBride) arriving by bus.



*Tara*



*Portrait of Oonagh by Philip de Laszlo*

When Garech was 7, he was given a wireless and was immediately enthralled to hear traditional music to which he listened avidly. Garech is well known for his love, revival and preservation of Irish culture, music, literature and Irish clothes. We spoke about the production of linen and Irish poplin, which was invented by the Huguenots and at one time was largely produced in Dublin. The last manufacturer of poplin in Ireland is a firm called Atkinson, now in Belfast. Each manufacturer's work could be recognised by its moiré pattern in the poplin.



*Princess Purna on the occasion of her marriage to Garech, 1980*

Garech explained that his father saw himself as Irish and British at the same time. It may be that because of his heritage Garech did not have a problem with dual nationality. 'My loyalty is to the Republic. I am an old fashioned Republican and in England I am a Monarchist'. Garech was asked in Luggala to join Clann na Poblactha by the late Seán MacBride when he was 16 but he never did become a member.

We spoke also about people who spent time at Luggala and they included Liam O'Flaherty, Patrick Kavanagh, Brendan Behan, Seamus Ennis, Seán Ó Riada, Liam O'Flynn, Edward Delaney, Edward Maguire, Mick and Bianca Jagger, Marianne Faithfull, Bono, Lucian Freud, Robert Lowell, John Montague, Hugh MacDiarmid, John and Angelica Huston, Barrie Cooke, Louis le Brocquy, Anne Madden, John Boorman, who lives in Annamoe and Robert Kee, the historian who wrote *The Green Flag*, dedicated to 'The woman in the mountains' (Garech's mother). Éamon de Buítléar knows Luggala well and filmed here extensively for his splendid wildlife films. Many of Garech's relatives regularly visited including Desmond and the late Mariga Guinness, his father's eldest son Dominick Browne, now Lord Mereworth and his cousin, the late Knight of Glin.

The poem '*Luggala*', published in 1988 by John Montague, is included in his collection *Mount Eagle* and is also featured in this Journal. The arrangement of the lovely air of *Luggelaw* by Frederick May has been recorded recently by Veronica McSwiney and Paddy Moloney in the splendid CD '*The Wild Dog Rose*' released this year by Claddagh Records which also features John Montague reading his poems.

Garech explained that his interest in traditional music was encouraged when Ned Curley, who ran a grocery/provisions shop in Roundwood, spoke about his son taking Uilleann pipe lessons from Leo Rowsome, the well known piper. Curley's shop would have been the main supplier of provisions to Luggala during the war years and after. Garech explained 'I was introduced to Leo Rowsome, and I met Ivor Browne, Leo's pupil, who persuaded me to record Leo because no one else would do so.'

Claddagh records was formed by Garech when a young man in 1959. His cousin Lady Caroline Blackwood assisted with the formation of the record company. 'I chose the name because it has a good sound to it and also as it is symbolically significant'. The contribution of Claddagh Records to Irish culture is of great national importance. Its first recording was the LP of Leo Rowsome, '*Ri na bPíobairí*' (King of the Pipers) and this sold out! Another early LP was the only recording of Patrick Kavanagh '*Almost Everything*'. It was the first spoken recording undertaken by



Garech

Claddagh. When asked was Patrick Kavanagh as garrulous and rank as he is reported to have been, Garech said 'He could be!' Poets and musicians - Seamus Heaney, Matt Molloy, Derek Bell, Máire Áine Ní Dhonnchadha, Robert Graves and many, many more have been recorded by Claddagh.

He also spoke about Seán Ó Riada's talent and short life and how Ó Riada made his last recording '*Ó Riada's Farewell*' on the Irish upright harpiscord at Luggala

before his last illness and death in 1971 at the age of 40. 'Seán was the most delightful, charming, knowledgeable man that I've ever met. He had a huge interest in what is now called World Music, and he wanted to see a fusion of the arts, and in particular, of music and poetry. Seán Ó Riada's film score for George Morrison's *Mise Éire* a film about the 1916 Rising and the War of Independence, had a formative influence on a generation. At that time Seán was breaking new ground. Many in Ireland were not interested in traditional music, yet everyone reacted positively to his innovative score. At that time it was so ingrained in Irish people that fiddle players, for example were old fashioned people with string tying up their trousers. They couldn't see it as part of a modern Ireland. There was only one pipe maker then, Leo Rowsome and perhaps four or five exceptional pipers. How many are there now? Really his influence was enormous.'

Garech transformed an old building at Luggala into a traditional cottage. It was modelled on Fanny Brady's home at Sleamaine and the dresser came from Stephen Kennedy's cottage at Kennedy's Corner. The late Seán Kavanagh had introduced Garech to Fanny who was one of the oldest residents in the locality 'with a wonderful cackle.' Seán of Vartry House, was an Insurance Agent and cycled regularly to Luggala to see staff regarding their insurance policies. He shared many hours in Garech's company 'both in and out of his pub'. 'Seán really knew everything about the fittings and implements that would be in a traditional cottage. We became great friends, and when Tara died I went straight to him.' The cottage was regularly used for parties. These were attended by many locals especially Fanny Brady, renowned for her singing posture, her face tilted resting on her left hand. Seán himself, Willie and Annie Gilbert,



*Fanny Brady*



*A night in the cottage. Revellers included Sean Kavanagh (with bowtie), Patsy Sheridan, Sue Kenna, Liam McAllister, Garech, Mrs Timmons, Mrs Williams, sisters Bridie Hayes and Lil Fitzpatrick, Noel Hamilton, Ned and Mrs Curley, Máire Aine Ni Dhonnchadha, Maura Byrne, Brigid Jordan and Peadar Mercer*

John Keenan and his sister Brid, Andy Mulligan (who lived near the holy well at Glasnamullen, known as the 'Wicklow piper'), several Enniskerry fiddlers, Paddy Moloney, who lives when in Ireland, in Annamoe, Tom Mulligan, Dr. Galligan, Chairman of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann, and many more were all regular guests. Garech remembers with delight these friends coming to their sessions in traditional dress especially 'Ned and Mrs Maura Curley, in her beautiful blue Kerry cloak, arriving down by ass and cart!' This was driven by the 10 year old Christy Plunkett. Garech's mother, in her black Munster cloak was also driven through the arch at midnight by Christy. Christy was only given permission by his mother to do this if accompanied by a responsible person, the 12 year old Kit Murphy! They finally got home around 2 am.



*Christy and Kit watching*

'I used to cross the stepping stones from Inchavore House with my mother to visit the Misses Archer for tea. Miss Meta discovered a pretty double flowered ling heather on the mountain overlooking Lough Dan in 1933. To her disappointment it was not named after her but *Calluna vulgaris* 'County Wicklow'. At that time a descendant of an Irish Huguenot silversmith, Mr Le Bas, the Assay Master, rented Inchavore House.'

Garech also spoke of the people who worked at Luggala. He fondly remembered Sam Hamilton, who originally came from Glaslough, County Monaghan. Sam was the gamekeeper during Lord Oranmore and Browne's time. 'He kept the place together, did everything and even had a good vegetable garden.' Sam's son Noel was a childhood playmate and is remembered very fondly. He died a couple of years ago and his ashes were scattered on the lake at Luggala.

Seán Byrne of Carrigeenshinnagh's first job was at Luggala where he assisted the temperamental chef, Edward MacNamara, this was 'a taste of hell for Sean'! Patrick Cummins was the loyal butler for many years and was an inveterate card player in the locality. Maurice Browne was a great odd job man. He kept the turbine going, developed a deep knowledge of the estate, 'he knew every stone and rabbit and frequented Keenan's on his day off!' Nicholas Myers from Kilcullen was also butler here until recently and like Maurice knew where the otters lived. Alfred Williams had been head gardener at Castle Mac Garrett before he came to Luggala; 'He was a wonderful teacher and he taught me everything I know about gardening, trees and plants.'

Gore Taylor of Fortwilliam was the local excellent mechanic and one time postman. He looked after Tara's cars and was invited to move to England with Tara who was a keen sports car enthusiast but Gore stayed in Roundwood. He also spoke about Willie and Annie Gilbert who ran the post office in Roundwood. Willie had the job of delivering telegrams by bicycle to the residents of Luggala and had to cycle sometimes more than once a day to deliver telegrams, often of little consequence! Many people have worked on the estate and in the house over the years and Luggala has made a very significant contribution to the local economy. Amongst those who worked in the house were Gretta Fanning, who was greatly admired by the artist Lucian Freud. May Manley was housekeeper for quite a while and Noeleen Webster was also housekeeper for several years.

We were privileged to be shown around the house, with its many treasures and a fine collection of paintings of Luggala going back to the eighteenth century. Like John Hunt, Professor of the History and Theory of Landscape at the University of Pennsylvania we also find 'The situation of Luggala stunning, with the scree and the mountains around but it is the wonderful contrast between the gothick building, the ample richness of the treescape and that wilder scenery that really captured us. We know Strawberry Hill but - in contrast to Luggala - it looks so suburban!'

## ***Luggala by John Montague***

**for Garech Browne**

I

Again and again in dream, I return to that shore. There is a wind rising, a gull is trying to skim over the pines, and the waves whisper and strike along the bright sickle of the little strand. Shoving through reeds and rushes, leaping over a bogbrown stream, I approach the temple by the water's edge, death's shrine, cornerstone of your sadness. I stand inside, by one of the pillars of the mausoleum, and watch the water in the stone basin. As the wind ruffles cease, a calm surface appears, like a mirror or crystal. And into it your face rises, sad beyond speech, sad with an acceptance of blind, implacable process. For by this gray temple are three tombs, a baby brother, a half-sister and a grown brother, killed at twenty-one. Their monuments of Wicklow granite are as natural here as the scattered rocks, but there is no promise of resurrection, only the ultimate silence of the place, the shale littered face of the scree, the dark, dark waters of the glacial lake .

## II

The road leading from the white wedding cake of the hunting lodge is lined with late blooming daffodils. As you leave, it fades back into its mountain setting, a folly nestling under boulder-strewn granite cliffs, with a stream rushing down by its side. Under the trunk of each tree, flowers shelter, and there is a path leading down to the lake. You push open a wooden gate and a herd of deer starts away, ears pricked, eyes alert, nimble-legged. Then they halt at a distance, tensely shy, but curious. The path twists and turns, following bends of the bogbrown stream. In the wooden hollow of the boathouse you pull and tug ropes until the boat descends with a splash into dark, lapping waters. Oar blades rise and fall and soon you are at the heart of the lake with the hills forming a circle, you the centre.

## III

But you are not alone: a noise disturbs you, rhythmic as the beat of oars. A mother swan is teaching her young to fly: round and round in that protecting silence they turn, necks timidly outstretched, wings slowly beating. Now and again one falls, breaking its reflection in the lake, then struggling upwards to join its fellows. And then you realise there is another, still greater presence. Motionless and gray, the huge cliffhangs upsidedown in the mirror of the lake; water, mountain and forest held in lasting embrace.

By John Montague and included with his kind permission.

John Montague, (1988) *Mount Eagle*, originally published, Dublin: Gallery P, subsequently (1989), Wake Forest Univ Press ISBN-10: 0916390330, 75 pages

See a review of *Laggala days: the story of a Guinness house*, by Robert O'Byrne on page 61

## FIRST COMMUNION

Pat D'Arcy

I made me first communion in a suit me mother made  
And Walked down from the altar like a soldier on parade  
The boots were bought the day before in Tinahealy Fair  
And polished bright and shiny like the Brillcreme on me hair  
We were all excited doing the houses in the town  
The tanners and the bobs were flying and sometimes haff-er-crown  
A day I will remember till I'm ninety if I'm let  
Is me holy first communion is a day I can't forget



### To Boyl Rabbits.

Truss them for boyling and lard them w<sup>th</sup>  
bacon, then boyl them quick and white: for y<sup>e</sup> sauce  
take the boyld liver Shroud it with fat bacon, tye  
these up together in strong broth, whitewine &  
vincager, mace, Salt and nutmeg minced, Sell  
parsley, Barberries & drann butter  
then lay your Rabbits in a dish, pour y<sup>e</sup> lear  
all over them and garnish it with Slic'd le-  
mon and barberrie.

From a family recipe book circa 1780

## **Rabbits Gone, Bunnies Alive**

**Dairine Coffey**

### **Rabbit!**

**You see a lettuce and you grab it.**

**It really is a shocking habit,  
Rabbit.**

It is nearly sixty years since rabbits were destroyed by myxomatosis in the summer of 1954. In most places nearly a hundred per cent of them were affected, bringing many

changes to the countryside – to plant life, animal life including predators (stoats, mink, foxes, raptors, etc), farming, forestry, horticulture, golf courses. Also affected were the people involved in trapping and shooting simply for sport or as food for their daily needs, as income, as good cheap food for the poor and for hospitals, in the meat trade, the culinary business and the export trade including the fur trade, hatters and felters. Poachers and young lads needing excitement and pocket money also suffered. The myxomatosis was of a particularly virulent strain from South America – Brazil in particular. It was introduced deliberately to Ireland and Europe to tackle the damage to crops by the rabbit. My mother sowed a band of mustard around a field of newly sown grass with the intention of deterring rabbits. It worked perfectly until sheep broke in and ate the mustard in one corner. The rabbits moved in through the small gap and we watched across the valley as they ate their way across the field! There are still mild strains of the disease around, which results in more rabbits surviving and there may now be a resurgence of them, so the skills of the trapper may need reviving shortly to prevent another plague. It is a shame that such a sweet, harmless, cosy animal, much loved by children, should have become such a pest.

Rabbits appear to have originated in the Iberian Peninsula, southern France<sup>2</sup> and north-west Africa. They were domesticated by the Romans who bred them selectively from the strongest and most prolific and who helped to spread them throughout much of Europe. The first known mention of rabbits in Ireland is in a 9th century poem, which records the kinds of birds and mammals to be found in the country, with a reference to two rabbits in *dá choinín a Dhumha duinn*<sup>3</sup>. However it seems there is no evidence of them before this in Ireland or Britain, or until the late 12th Century when they were introduced by the Anglo-Normans or Normans.

One of the Ormond deeds of *circa* 1185 reads: 'John, son of the King of England .... granted Alard son of William.... near Waterford, the land of Carreckenard [etc.].... He also granted him.... the hunting of stag, doe, pig, hare, wolf and rabbit.'<sup>2</sup> In the following centuries there were a numerous such grants for keeping managed warrens, and it became common to lease warrens, often in return for the landlord getting a specified number of rabbits. By 1191 there were managed warrens on Lambay Island, and in Connacht by 1204<sup>3</sup>.

In the 13th Century with the slow spread of managed warrens, the prices given for rabbits and their hides were high suggesting that they were still prized and rare, and food for the rich<sup>2</sup>. In the following periods legal transfers of lands frequently mentioned warrens, and the expansion continued with rabbit skins and meat being exported to Britain: 1436 '...conyes grete plente', and in 1588, 45,000 skins went to London alone<sup>5</sup>. Hides were used for clothing, much later for imitating Chinchilla, and the fur alone was often used for felt, while glue (size) could also be made with the skins. In the late 1700s, Dublin was the major centre for manufacturing hats made from rabbit<sup>2</sup>. A curious local aside: in Ballynahinch, now under trees, there was a lane called Hatter's Row where lived the local rabbit catcher! This is within living memory. Ballynahinch, Upper and Lower were part of the Mountkenedy estate.



*Oryctolagus cuniculus*  
(Linnaeus 1758)  
Coinin (Irish)  
Cony (old English),  
originally only adults,  
rabbit only young

Sir Richard Kennedy of the Manor of Mount Kennedy was given a Royal Grant of the Manor by Charles II in March 1671 'In the twenty-third year [*nota bene!*] of Our Reign....', signed by Arlington by 'His Majesty's Command.....' The Grant stated '.... and may have [dovehouses], conyburroughs or warrons in and upon [those] premoissos and on such parts thereof that he...shall think fit...' Much flowery language, much of it illegible. The estate included the land as far west as the Vartry River. This is one example of many such grants of the time.



House Sign near Mount Kennedy

Belfield in Kilpedder and Ballyronan were also part of the estate and to this day there is a rabbit warren there, complete with rabbits, poached by local youth and local cats, probably domestic and feral. In the 20th century, for a few years in the 1930s, Mountkennedy House was owned by Mr Cooney (appropriate name), said to have made a fortune out of rabbits and know as the Rabbit King of Dublin.

The Royal Grant helps show how important and valuable the rabbit industry had become. But the main expansion of the industry was at the time of the agricultural revolution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries when the rabbit trade with Britain was huge, mainly valued for the skins. At times over two million rabbits a year were exported. In the 1870s most of the rabbits sold in the Manchester meat market were from Ireland. During the Great Famine there was probably a decline in rabbit numbers followed by speedy recovery.

In 1780 Arthur Young refers to a warren at Magilligan, Co Derry, a stretch of land with sea on both sides at the mouth of Lough Foyle, perhaps the largest, most productive area for rabbit warrens covering about 53 square kilometres. The warren '.....which yields on average 3000 dozen per annum last year and 5000 have been known. The bodies are sold at 2d the couple, but the skins are sent to Dublin at 5s 7d to 6s [30p] a dozen, selling from [£]1500 to [£]1800 a year<sup>2</sup>. Sand dunes were favoured for warrens, protected on one side by the sea or estuaries, on the other often by rivers or man-made channels, and could be very productive with little or no competition from sheep or cattle. Rabbits are poor swimmers and they particularly like sloping, dry sandy soil for their borrows. There are many islands around the coast and in lakes with thriving populations, and often free from myxomatosis, where sometimes the rabbits have



*Charlie Elliott with a gift of two rabbits at Glendarragh 1952*

Bye, baby bunting,  
Daddy's gone a-hunting,  
Gone to get a rabbit skin  
To wrap the baby bunting in.

*Gammer Gurton's Garland (1784)*

become so numerous they can starve<sup>2</sup>. Fairley lists over seventy such off-shore islands. But the rabbits do well in a wide variety of habitats throughout the country. The early rabbits were well kept and cared for within warrens, and expansion of the feral population was minor until the agricultural revolution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when there was a better supply of winter food, such as turnips.

### **Jack Pegman remembers.**

Jack Pegman's family has lived at Cooladoyle, the townland between Mountkenedy and Glendarragh, for longer than anyone else in the area. Jack himself, still in the family home, has strong and happy memories of hunting rabbits, as a tiny child, as a schoolchild and until the myxomatosis struck. *Most of the chaps I was at school with [and] nearly every house [in the village] someone would be out hunting.*

He first went hunting rabbits with his father Pat, when he was aged about four. Their territory was Conor's (Ballyhorse today, where Roadstone has a sand quarry, and including the boggy part of the Altidore river ), Brady's (now the riding school, part of Cooladoyle) and The Brow (the southern hill of Glendarragh valley).

*If another lad snared a rabbit in the area he would take it (and the snare?) as a warning to him, to teach him a lesson. Hunting rabbits: it was something to look forward to at night times... It was wonderful... We used to hunt with the dogs and the ferrets... You wouldn't get dogs to follow rabbits now... The dogs today won't chase them anymore. Like the sheepdog trains [a young one] the mother dog used to train the pups them years, and they could run with the old dog to learn the game. I used to go shootin' with a Dublin man. He used to go shootin' for Vincents Hospital. He'd be out here twice a week, maybe a Tuesday and a Friday. I used to go with him after school like. He'd take as many as he could shoot. He used to donate them to Vincents hospital. The rabbit was the same as chicken, easy to digest... great for the patients that's going through operations like.*

*'Grasers' they are rabbits about four or five months old. Young rabbits. You might find a graser [sleeping] in a bed of nettles, you'd [just] pick it up. People used to love the meat of them... We used to sell some of the rabbits to the butcher's in Newtownmountkenedy, Jamesie Synott. I*

*think they were about a half a crown at the time, per rabbit. Reared on them we were... The poor man's dinner... The best of dinners... There was nobody didn't eat rabbit in those days.*

*We used to hunt with the dogs and the ferrets... If you had good dogs they'd better hearing than we had... hear the thumping under the ground where you'd dig down to get the rabbit... If you didn't hear the rabbit you wouldn't know where to dig... You'd bring a spade and a special bar. There'd be a crook on the top of the bar. You used to cut a slit above the feet and put one foot through the other and sling it over the bar, put them on your shoulder and go home with it... You could lose a ferret in the burrow... A ferret would have a bell on him... there were nets... with pegs... [to catch the rabbits] at the openings of the burrows.*



*Jack Pegman and his dog at his half-door*

*The best place for snares was Brady's bog... come night time we'd set a few snares ... They'd all have their runs. That's the place you'd put your snares... Rabbits don't make runs anymore. For lamping we'd use a twelve volt torch, a powerful spotlight... you'd blind them with the light... I got fourteen rabbits one evening... I remember a special dog I had. He used to hit them with the back of his head, toss the rabbit up. It would be dead before it hit the ground...*

At harvest time with the reapers and binders, Jack would be there with his dogs for the rabbits running out.

*Myxomatosis was hard for anyone interested in hunting. It was a crime to see that happening. I wouldn't chance eating them now.*

Just imagine the effect the death of the rabbits must have had on the poor of the country, and the youth.

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Thanks for help from many but especially AB Hull, Elinor Medleycott and the staff of Greystones Library.

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## ***Memories of Home in Shillelagh***

**Pat D'Arcy**

Do ya ever think about the times when we were very small,  
and the great crack that we used to have down at the 'Hopyard Wall'.

Going in the bare-ones, kicking football on the green,  
playin' handball down at Bendimere, the likes you've never seen.

Handgroopin trout on Thursday was a weekly thing to do  
'cause Friday was a Fast Day then, sure the fish were lovely too.  
'Course the grub, "well you could taste it" then, no tins or frozen meat,  
We'd have stirrabout, caul-kannon, and sure the buttermilk was a treat.

You'd get an ice-cream down at Austin's for a 'tanner' t'was that thick,  
that when you'd hit the school yard, you'd be pestered for a lick.

Poor ould Tommy Corry kept us all supplied with stuff;  
but he'd ate ya on a Sunday if you ever knocked him up.

Sometimes on a Sunday after Mass we'd all set off to walk up Ballanulta  
and never cost a thought. .. we'd set some snares along the track,  
and with a bit of luck maybe have a rabbit caught when we were coming back.

'Course rabbits, ya could ate them then, and God, they tasted grand,  
and the way the Mammy cooked them, sure ya could ate them from your hand.

We'd have a concert in the courthouse and dancin' in the hall,  
Duffy's circus on the fairgreen and our own pipe-band an' all.

There'd be a fair in Tinahealy and another in Carnew,  
and if we were ever brought along, we'd be sure of something new.

They say today, 'We had it bad', I think that that's unfair,  
for sitting watching TV is a thing you can't compare with all the things we had;  
Now I'll bid ya all adieu but I wish that I could go back, just for a little while ...  
don't you?

## ***Colonel Fiach 'Luke' O'Toole, The Eleven Years' War and All That!***

**By Cathal Mac Oireachtaigh**

In October 1641 the start of a violent rebellion broke out in Ireland when a plot to seize Dublin Castle was exposed and foiled. Ulster rebels led by Sir Phelim O'Neale seized Charlemont Fort in County Armagh. By the end of the year the rebellion had pushed southwards and military pressure forced the Catholic Old English of the Pale to reluctantly join the Catholic gentry at war. As the conflict spread nationwide the Catholic gentry laid siege to many fortified towns in an attempt to seize control of the English administration that ruled Ireland and began to reverse the plantations of the 1620s/30s that had left many of the Wicklow's Catholic clans in financial ruin and in many cases dispossessed. While sectarian division festered between the new Protestant settlers and the native Catholic Irish of Wicklow, events like the Civil War in England (1642-1651) were equally shaping the state of affairs in the wider Irish political landscape. Fearing expropriation and religious persecution, the Catholic gentry and Old English supported King Charles I and the Royalists against the Parliamentarian New English Puritans and Scottish Covenanters. Law and order broke down and scores of civilians lost their lives in atrocious circumstances. In 1642 the Irish Catholic gentry along with the Catholic clergy assembled in Kilkenny Castle and drew up the Confederation of Kilkenny, which would serve as a de facto government of most of Ireland throughout the Confederate War (1642-48).

### **Upland Rebellion**

The vicinity of Roundwood was then known as Leitrim (from the Irish Liath Droim meaning Grey Ridge), and lay in the territory of Firtir (Vártry). The O'Tooles, of Castlekevin, for some one hundred years previous had controlled much of the land in the territory of Firtir as well as Fircuallan, which encompassed the Glencree Valley, Powerscourt etc. The O'Toole clan, along with the O'Byrne and Kavanagh clans, would be to the forefront of the Eleven Years War in the county. Indeed, by 1647 one hundred and forty-six O'Byrnes, twenty-four O'Tooles and many others had been officially outlawed and stripped of their title to

land by the Grand Jury. Local figures like 'Caher Mc Phealim of Laragh gent, Barnaby Toole of Castlekevin gent, Brian Mc Callogh Berne of Knockadreight gent, Felim mc Art Berne of Ballinastoy gent, Mullmurey mc Walter Doyle of Ballinrush gent' all played a role in the rebellion, the subsequent Confederate War and guerrilla war carried out against Cromwell. Perhaps one of the most prominent rebel leaders during the Confederate war years in Wicklow was Fiach 'Luke' O'Toole of Castlekevin (1584-1653).

With the outbreak of rebellion, Luke and his sons, some who were officers of rank, along with his cousin Brian McPhelim O'Byrne and others joined forces and went to war. As a result, they were successful in reversing much of the plantations within their territories. Perhaps Luke's intentions are somewhat evident from the statement of a Wexford farmer, Richard Cleybrook who swore he heard Luke O'Toole say 'that he intended soon after to march to Killrothery (Kilruddery), and take it, and afterwards to come to Dublin and take the castle there, and that he would not leave an English man, nor an English woman in the Kingdom, but they should be banished, and that he would not leave any English beast alive nor any of the breed of them. He said also that he would have his own religion settled in this Kingdom, and that he would pull the Lord Parson's hat from his head.'

The O'Byrnes and O'Tooles of Wicklow revolted in November with a series of attacks on Protestant settler's houses. 'At the beginning of the rebellion Luke O'Toole was summoned by Hugh McPhelim Byrne, Lieutenant General of the running army for the Irish, to be at Ballingarny and join with others to give opposition to Sir Charles Coote.' Baile Ó gCearnaigh was a historic town land that is known in modern times as Newtown Mount Kennedy. The house at Ballingarny was the residence of Sir Robert Kennedy, MP for Kildare. Kennedy testified in 1643 that the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles had burned and demolished his home as well as other stately houses like Kilruderry and castles throughout Wicklow. His son Thomas Kennedy also testified that in 1641 Barnaby O'Toole, Brian Mc Callogh Byrne of Knockadreet and some 200 warlike men took possession of the Kennedy house at Newtown and that they had with them a field piece (artillery). When Luke arrived he told Kennedy that 'the cause of his coming was to fight in the Catholique cause telling

them that if he and his father would turn Catholics that then he would depart'. However, Kennedy would not be proselytised. His house was subsequently destroyed and the hanging of one, Nathaniel Schnapp, Kennedy's servant, and John Leeson, a shepherd of Lord Meath, took place at Ballynamy.

As the war progressed the rebels besieged important local strongholds such as Knockrath Castle in the Clara Vale (1641) and laid waste to the Black Castle in Wicklow (1641 and 1646). Colonel Luke O'Toole was commanding officer. In turn, the English administration responded and the first scorched earth policies were initiated in January 1642 when Sir William Parsons (MP for Wicklow and Lord Justice) and others entered Wicklow with an order 'to tarry in that country as long as possibly



*Flag bearing Irish Confederate Soldiers on the lookout during the Eleven Years War. (Re-enacted by Claiombh)*

you can gain provision for your men. You are in journey to kill, slay and destroy all the rebels you can there find. You are in that country to destroy by fire and sword all the rebels' goods, houses and come, and to take all their cattle. You are to this purpose to do any other thing for his Majesties service that you in your judgement shall find fit.' Similarly, Sir Charles Coote and his troops on arriving at Wicklow Town and finding that rebels had fled the Black Castle came upon a church filled with civilians seeking sanctuary. His soldiers set the church alight and while it burned to the ground those who tried to escape were shot. So began a war that would lay waste to much of Wicklow and Ireland over the following eleven years and what became known as the Confederate Wars. During the war period of 1641-51 victims of the rebellion began to make compensation claims for losses they incurred and gave evidence against rebels. Remarkably a compilation of these claims and eyewitness testimonies survived the passing of time in what are known as Books of Depositions. This invaluable collection provides us with a window into the local politics and warfare of which Luke O'Toole was central during that period. Indeed, many of the depositions would be used as evidence against Colonel Luke O'Toole during his trial many years later.

## A Bloody Conflict Ends

It is estimated that between three and eight thousand civilians were killed during the 1641-42 Rebellion in Ireland. However, as news of atrocities committed during the rebellion filtered back to England the death toll figures were exaggerated to beyond 100,000 people killed. Propaganda and misinformation in the form of gruesome illustrations of massacres etc became rife in England and struck fear into the English public. Such representations, as well as the ongoing Confederate War, fuelled Oliver Cromwell's desire to avenge the massacres with an invasion of Ireland. By the mid 1640s, the Confederate army held control of two thirds of Ireland, but it was not

until the arrival of Cromwell in September 1649 that the tides began to turn. Apparently, before proceeding on his way to Wexford, Cromwell ordered his troops to level the old fortress of Castlekevin. They positioned their cannon on the road opposite, and using their artillery almost levelled the old castle. Cromwell spent only three days in County Wicklow but ultimately his military success across the country would put an end to the Confederate Army and the Eleven Years war in 1652. Christopher O'Toole, Luke's son, stands out in this period for a daring act of bravado that would see one of 'Old Ironsides' prized war horses stolen while his New Model Army camped overnight at Killincarrig Castle on the 27th September 1649. Although a peace agreement was signed on 12th May 1652, the rebels once again took to the hills as 'tories' (a roving band of soldiers) and fighting continued against the Cromwellians in Wicklow beyond the summer of 1652. The following letter commissioning Luke O'Toole to gather and organise his army was used during his trial partly as a justification for his continued resistance.



*An Irish Confederate Soldier  
equipped for rebellion in the Winter of 1641.  
(Re-enacted by Clalombh)*

*'To Colonel Luke alias Pheagh O Tohill greeting in our Lord God everlasting,*

*Sir, The pressing Calamities of this kingdom (wherewith the holy Catholique apostolique and Roman religion, his sacred Majesties Right, and the just liberties of us his loyal subjects are like to be trod under foot by a company of profane and mechanical Rebels made instruments of God's wrath to punish our sins) together with the confidence we have in your zeal, worth and wisdom to rescue those so dear pledges, invites us to call to your assistance, Giving you hereby full power and authority to levy lead and command a Regiment of foot and a Troop of horse praying you to contain the said Regiment and Troop as much as may be, from incurring Gods just anger, especially from oppressing the poor, swearing and stealing, Giving you to understand we are hereunto authorised by his Marquesse of Ormond, as appeareth by his letter Dated at Loghriagh the first of last April; We also pray you with the consent of the Gentry there to choose among your selves in those parts a Commander in Chief, and that each Colonel may choose his own officers. We will not cease to pray his divine Majesty to encourage you to fight in his quarrel and bless your designes farewell. Given at Cavan the second of May 1650.*

*Signed; H Ardmuch, Fr Thomas Dublin, Eug Killmoren, Fr Edwardus Laghlenensis Episcopus, Fr Antonius Clonmacnonsensis Episcopus, Walter B Clunfert, James Dempsievic appo of Kildare'*

### **The Trial of Luke O'Toole**

After surrendering many leaders of the Confederate army were not granted the same terms as ordinary confederate soldiers. In an attempt to gain more favourable terms for his surrender, Luke O'Toole offered a horse and saddle to Lieutenant General Ludlow who was uninterested in bargaining and declined the offer but ensured that Luke would receive a trial. Upon surrendering in late 1652, Luke O'Toole 'aged three score and fifteen years of thereabouts' was taken a number of times before a committee composed of members of the High Court (Commissioners for Administration) of Justice. He was prosecuted in relation to the Siege of Knockrath and for 'murders and massacres committed within the counties of Dublin & Wicklow since October 1641'. Amongst the charges of prosecution were the murders of one Cahill Cullen and Ann Byrne, a

Vicar's wife from Deansgrange, that occurred sometime earlier in 1651. Concerning the Siege of Joab Wards Castle at Knockrath in 1641, Luke O'Toole denied any involvement in an affair whereby a thousand armed men with a field piece and led by a party of O'Byrnes, including two of his sons, Donogh and Christopher, besieged the Castle and executed three English men. Something of a blame game then ensued whereby all those being prosecuted shrugged responsibility onto the long dead Phelim Mc Redmond O'Byrne for leading the siege. Luke refuted the testimonies given by deponents and also denied any knowledge of or involvement in the taking of a Vicar's wife from Deansgrange to Powerscourt (O'Toole also resided there) to be hanged.

### **Spies in the Ranks**

The details of one particular incident can be drawn together from a number of eye witness testimonies given during O'Toole's trial. Seemingly, a Catholic named Cahill Cullen was apprehended at the English quarters in Connogh (Old Connagh, Bray) and brought to Castlekevin by 'men who were a party of Luke O'Tooles Regiment of which Cahill had formerly been a Spy and had been a means to cause several prayes (cattle) and goods taken from him by the English forces in the times of Colonel Crawford, Colonel Monke & Colonel Longs'. A Council of War was called by a section of the Wicklow Confederate force at the churchyard of Killdallagh in Seven Churches (Glendalough) in 1651. Two of Luke's sons, Lieutenant Colonel Donogh O'Toole and Major Christopher O'Toole, were present along with 'some petty officers in all to the number of about seven'. These included Major Thomas Birn and Captain Robert Birn of Drummin. Before this Marshalls Court, Cahill Cullen was prosecuted and 'condemned for a Spy and for being a means of Robbing of the Country'. Cullen stood accused of stealing cows from Barnaby O'Toole's land near Rathfarnam. A private conversation took place between Luke and the Vicar General Edmond Reilly. The priest expressed that he nothing to say against Cullen and pleaded that Luke do him no harm. Luke offered to spare Cahill's life if he agreed to take an oath to no longer spy against him and to do no more harm to him or his sons. But Cahill refused and was thus sentenced by the Marshalls Court to be hanged.

### Execution at Castlekevin

The condemned was taken back to Castlekevin and kept prisoner for the space of one night. The following morning a messenger was sent to Shane O'Cullen, a ploughman and servant to Luke, and he was called upon to serve as executioner to which he refused stating 'Cahill was his kinsman and that he would never hang any of his kindred'. The messenger rode back to Luke O'Toole and related to him O'Cullens reply, whereupon Luke sent him back a second time with an order to comply or he himself would be hanged! Fearing death, the

servant O'Cullen unwillingly came with the messenger to his master's house. Meanwhile, the condemned Cahill Cullen was guarded by three soldiers in a house nearby in Castlekevin. Luke commanded his soldiers to take the prisoner a mile distant from Castlekevin to the 'Lands of James Walsh of Shanganagh' (also noted as 'the lands of Mooney') within a mile of Castlekevin to where a great hawthorn bush stood. This they did, and Luke followed close after them on horseback but he rode a little beyond the main party and within a musket shot from the hawthorn bush, where he could observe the execution. In his company was a friar, Didactis Byrne.

Cahill seeing there was no hope requested Shane O'Cullen ask Luke O'Toole, being of his own religion, to send him a priest and so give him two hours respite to confer with him for the good of his soul. Didacus Byrne was sent over to Cahill who conversed with him for a while but Luke O'Toole grew impatient with the execution being so long delayed, put spurs to his horse and came to the place of execution. Cahill cried out loud and 'desired for God's sake that he might have space to live until he might see his wife and children who were not far off and that he might



*An Irish Confederate Musketeer and Pikeman stand at arms with Morion Helmets, Musket, Halberd, Basket Hilted Swords and sciams, all weapons which were typically used by Clans such as O'Tooles & O'Byrnes during the Eleven Years War.  
(Re-enacted by Claiombh)*

be permitted to speak with them before his death'. Luke refused his pleas and in a great rage threatened Shane O'Cullen that he would be hanged if he did not immediately hang Cahill Cullen. Shane O'Cullen tied the rope around Cahill's neck and fastened the rope to the hawthorn bush. And so, Cahill was 'thereupon hanged upon a bush on the high way' until he was dead. Luke ordered that he should hang there for a month and commanded that O'Cullen then notify wife and children of Cahill. Before his death, Cahill asked that his clothes (except for his breeches) be taken and given to the 'Priest's boy' (servant), in response to which the boy's master, Luke O'Toole, apparently stopped him one year's wages.

### Letter to the Vicar General

Reverend Edmund Reilly's testimony touches also on the hanging of one Anne Byrne at Glencree. A servant of the Vicar General claimed that he was at Glencree and had seen Anne Byrne who was under a tree with a withy (a long flexible willow twig) about her neck ready to be hanged. She asked his servant what was the cause she was hanged and he answered that 'Luke O'Toole said she was one Wilson a butchers whore and was a spy that gave Intelligence to the said butcher'. Luke O'Toole denied any knowledge of or part in the murder of Anne Byrne. Father Reilly, some months after hearing the murders apparently wrote a fairly damning letter to Luke O'Toole regarding the inconsiderate murders of Cullen and Byrne. Luke wrote a letter back in response...

The signature of  
Colonel Fiach 'Luke' O'Toole  
(from 1641 Depositions)

*'Reverend Father, I received your invective letter wherein I am accused by your Reverence for the death of Nan Byrne and Cahill Cullen to give your Reverence satisfaction I found out by several Intelligences that the said Nan Byrne directed the way for Walshon whereby he took away Edmond mc Teiges Cows the way that the said Walshon came with a party in night time unto Tirlagh Ultaghs quarter where William Walsh was killed Hugh mc Brackes wife was wounded, and found out that she was betraying my lodging unto the Enemy and whereas you accuse me of hanging Cahill Cullen inconsiderately. I tell you I hanged him by a verdict of a Counsel of War and upon his own Confession wherein he confessed before my face that as long as he lived I will do my uttermost endeavours for to destroy*

*me and my children and therefore I pray that your Reverence may be pleased not to blame me for cutting of such branches that would tend to our destruction and that would deliver us unto the hands of our Enemy...*

*Your humble servant Luke O'Toole, Glancree this 7th of March 1651'*

Reverend Reilly was himself put to trial for his involvement in the attack on the Black Castle in 1645 when someone recognised him as he gave evidence against O'Toole. He subsequently spent almost two years in prison and was banished from Ireland. However, by the time the dust settled in 1657, Reilly would go on to become the Primate Archbishop of Ireland. Overall, there is no doubt that the specifics of what did actually happen during those turbulent years and who was responsible for what will be the subject of speculation and interpretation by historians for many years to come. Nonetheless, as Cromwell carved up newly confiscated lands amongst his soldiers, many Catholic rebels would either swing from the gallows, be sent to Connaught or flee to France and Spain. Luke O'Toole's heir Barnaby would flee to France and the testimonies relating to incidents that occurred during the early years of the rebellion would partly lead to Luke and his son Christopher being half hung and decapitated in 1653. As a warning statement to other rebels their severed heads were spiked upon St. Nicholas' Gate in Dublin. Colonel Fiach 'Luke' O'Toole would inevitably be 'the last of his clan to ride at the head of a rebellious army'.

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## Book Review

Mary Davies

*Luggala days: the story of a Guinness house, by Robert O'Byrne with photography by James Fennell. Published by CICO Books, London & New York. Pp 256. ISBN 10987654321. Price £35.00, about 43 euro.*

The combination of rugged cliffs, the inky waters of Lough Tay, and the exotic Gothic house make Luggala one of the most extraordinary places in Wicklow — as Angelica Huston is quoted on the dust jacket of this impressively detailed book by Robert O'Byrne: 'Luggala is a sort of dream of peace. It's an enchanted place.' Once a shooting lodge for the wealthy banker Peter La Touche, it has been first rented, and later owned by Guinnesses for the past hundred years. In his introduction, the Hon. Garech Browne, the present 'custodian', explains that he was first taken there by his father when two weeks old and as a child visited every summer. And through his mother Oonagh Guinness and his aunts, he feels that he has been there over two generations.

Oonagh Guinness is one of the outstanding characters in *Luggala days*: she was given Luggala by her father Ernest in 1937 at the time of her first marriage, and cherished it until her death in 1995, although management passed to Garech Browne well before that. Her lively house parties were famous for over half a century; the connection with music and the arts has continued to the present day. The story of the house and grounds is intermingled with a vivid account of the family and their hospitality towards guests, ranging over the years from Hollywood actor Douglas Fairbanks, Brendan and Beatrice Behan, poet John Montague and singer Marianne Faithfull to notable 'locals' like John Hurt, Paddy Moloney and John Boorman.

The main block was badly damaged in a fire during the snowy January of 1956 — getting fire brigades down the drive involved shovels and a carpet of branches, and then the firemen's ladders became treacherous with ice. But the house was quickly restored. Today, after decades in Garech Browne's meticulous care, the interior is as exotic as the outside.

Robert O'Byrne has written a fascinating history, lavishly illustrated, of a remarkable house and its equally remarkable family. And this story is set, not in fashionable Paris or London, but just up the winding road from the village of Roundwood.



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