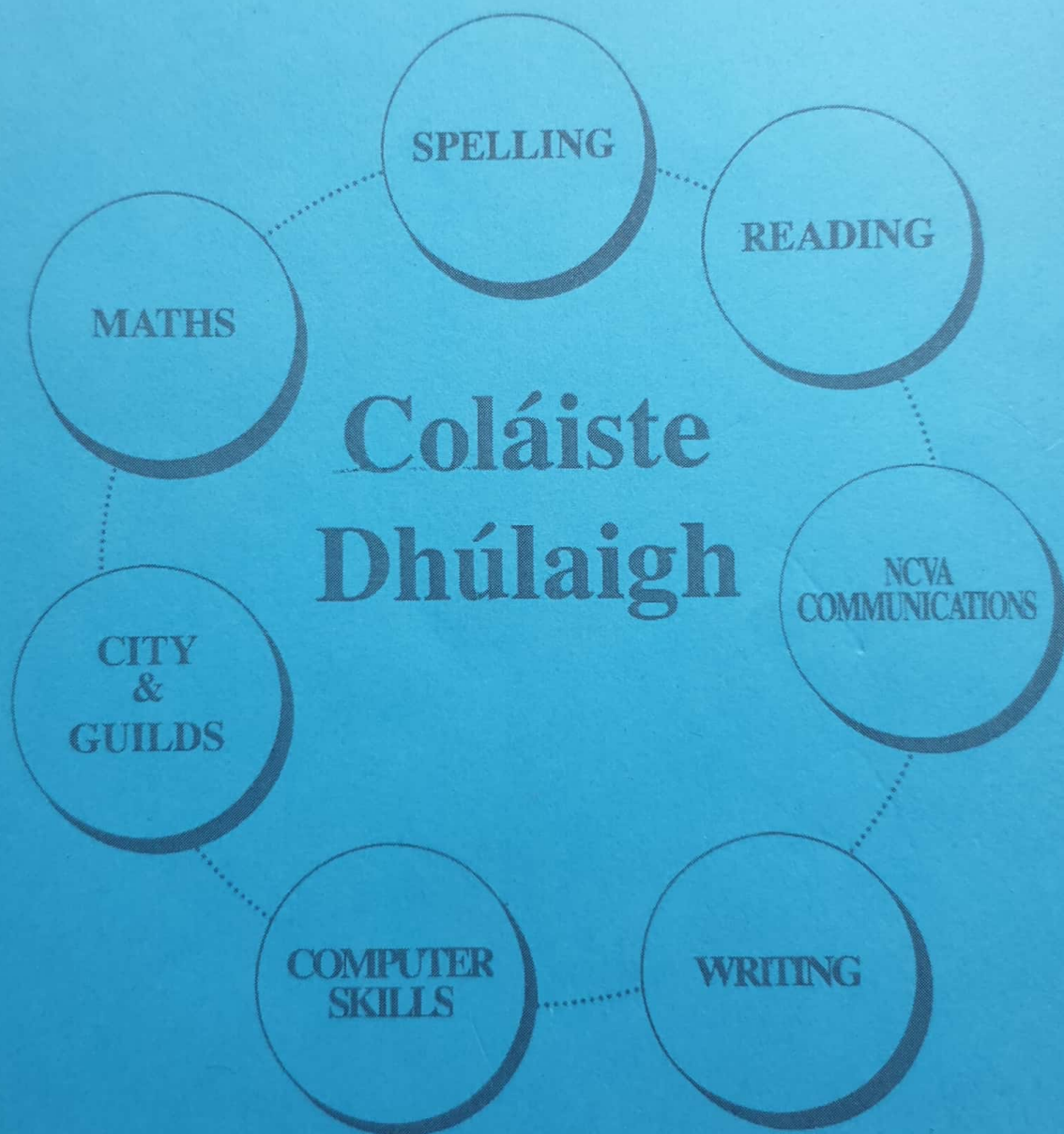


DUBLIN LIVES 2001



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INTRODUCTION

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to Dublin Lives 2001. This year we include writings from groups working in Darndale, Edenmore, Kilmore West, Priorswood, Rosary College and Coláiste Dhúlaigh. I would like to thank all of the students and tutors who contributed to the book. I know that a lot of thought and hard work went into each piece of writing.

I hope you enjoyed the year with the **Northside Reading & Writing Centre** and I look forward to seeing you in September. It has been both a pleasure and a privilege to work with you all and I thank you.

This book will be used as reading material within the reading and writing schemes.

Pat Ayton
Adult Literacy Organiser

A DAY AT THE SEASIDE

Dad loved to take us to the seaside. It was our annual outing and we looked forward to it very much. There were my two brothers, three sisters and myself. Mam stayed at home to take care of the younger members of the family. Mam prepared the sandwiches, the goodies, cups, milk, sugar – the lot.

We headed for the train station, so excited because we were going on the train. All holding hands, we waited for the train to arrive. When it came and we were all seated it headed for Killiney. Why Dad took us there, I don't know for the beach was very stony. We paddled our feet, played with the sand until it was time to eat.

The little tea-shop on the beach supplied us with pots of tea, so we all sat down and enjoyed our lunch. After that Dad took us on a boat up and down the seashore for about ten minutes. It was about 3 pence per person for that. Then we watched Dad having his swim and waited for his return. Then everything was packed ready for the homeward journey and when we arrived home we told Mam about the lovely day we had. It was time for bed, we climbed the stairs, tired and sleepy after our great days outing, looking forward to the next time when we would have a day at the seaside.

Carmel McG.

Worksheet
Worksheet – A Day at the Seaside

A Read the piece and answer the following questions.

1. Who did Dad take on the annual outing?
2. Why did Mam not go along?
3. Where did they travel to on the train?
4. How did they spend the day?

B Dictionary Work

What do the following words mean? Use your dictionary, if necessary.

annual _____
prepared _____
supplied _____

C Add 'ing' to the following words:

excite _____
have _____
arrive _____
enjoy _____
swim _____
play _____

A DAY OUT AT TERMONFECKIN

We all met at the Darndale Church at 9a.m. waiting for the bus but the bus was late so we had a cup of tea. The bus soon arrived and off we went. We were all excited, the bus journey took one hour but we had to stop at a pass machine so the bus stopped at the top of the hill. We had no idea where we were so we trekked down one hill then another hill and we ended up at a famous church where Blessed Oliver Plunkett's head is in Drogheda.

Still lost and no money and anxious that the bus driver was getting worried as to where we were. Eventually we found the pass machine. We ran back laughing all the way. I left Linda behind. It was a good start to the day.

We arrived at Termonfeckin and had lovely hot scones jam and tea to warm us up. Sister Nuala was with us and in the group there were both young and old. There were three sessions available, cookery, fashion and classes on stress management. I chose to go to the fashion class, which was run by Grace O'Shaughnessy.

While the class was very good and Grace explained what fashion was really about, clothes and posture and general appearance, we felt uncomfortable as the rest of the group was fashionably dressed and as we were not advised on what to wear beforehand we were in casual clothes. Although this made no difference to the way we were treated overall we felt out of place. The fashion show was excellent Grace explained how to use makeup to the best advantage to harmonise with our outfits.

We then broke for lunch. We had a very enjoyable meal consisting of mushroom soup, roast beef and vegetables followed by an enjoyable dessert and coffee. We then were free to visit the beautiful gardens or the beach but as the weather was bad and cold we decided to stay in the gardens where we took some group photographs. We had tremendous fun. It was good to get the break from the hustle and bustle of everyday chores.

After the lunch we returned to the class Grace then assessed each person and explained them how to maximise their own personal features and told the class the importance of body language in your personality. After a general discussion among the class I took the opportunity to thank Grace for the advice she gave us and I had a photograph taken with her. She is a lovely lady.

It was time for afternoon tea and we had very little time to spend as the bus was arriving to take us home at 5p.m. We had a great sing along on the bus and after making a presentation to Sister Nuala and organising a collection for the bus driver to thank him for concern we arrived home safely. It was a marvellous day out thanks to Sister Nuala.

Maria Bernadette Dunne

A Day Out

Myself and my father went to Wexford Town for a day out. We got the early morning bus from the Central Bus Station in Dublin. It was only potluck that we caught the bus at nine thirty. We had intended to catch a later one. The journey was three hours, but it went quickly as there was lovely scenery to look out at. We arrived just in time for lunch. I fancied a sandwich and a couple of pints. My father agreed. The town has plenty of pubs so there was no problem in finding one that suited us. Also we were able to look at the match between Manchester United and Manchester City while we ate.

I wanted to have a walk around the town before the journey home. We wandered around for a little over an hour and then headed for the train station. For a change of scene we got the train home. Although we were tired when we got home we had a nice day out.

Derek

A GROUP'S REFLECTIONS

By ANNE MULHALL

One of my morning classes, who are all members of the travelling community decided to put their heads together to submit a group effort piece to Dublin Lives.

Most of the student's were to relate why they could not read and write properly. At their school, children from the travelling community were separated from the children from the settled community. As a matter of fact, the room, which was occupied by the traveller children, contained a pool table and boxes of games. This was the extent of their education.

Two students told the group that they had been educated in England and were never aware of any discrimination. They felt this was because England is a multi-cultural nation anyway, so everybody got the same chances.

Another student told the class how at break time, the traveller children were not allowed into the schoolyard to play until all the settled children had returned to their respective classes.

Listening and recording these stories, I can only assume that this discrimination was intentional.

To summarise: How can non-nationals coming into this country expect to be socially integrated and culturally accepted when we treat a section of our own Irish people in this fashion?

This is a compilation of experiences and opinions of:

Kathleen Collins

Teresa Ward

Bridget Purcell

Helen McDonagh

Nancy Collins

Bridgy Collins

POEMS

By Teresa McAuliffe

A Mother's Love

A mother from the very first time
Her baby is born
Protects it and guides it
And keeps it from harm
The love that pours from within
And shines a light on her infant.

LAUGHING

Laughing is good for you
It's like a tonic
Take it and you'll be
Supersonic
Bursting all over
Until you fall over
Go on laugh
Laugh and the world
Laughs with you.

WATER

Water is a gift of life
Flowing from within
Pure and simple
Clean and clear
Like a mirror to be seen.

A NIGHT OUT

I have had many good nights out with my sisters but one in particular stands out in my mind. My four sisters and I went to a Karaoke bar, and we all had a wonderful time. Afterwards we went to the Takeaway to buy some supper. I collected the order and the cash to purchase the food. While waiting for me, my sisters decided to get a taxi. When I returned they were all sitting inside. I distributed the food.

To this day I do not know what upset the taxi driver but he suddenly decided that there were too many in the car, so he told us to get out. The others obliged and I was the last one. As I was getting out of the car I fell and was left sitting on the ground, surrounded by my fish and chip supper as the taxi man drove off at high speed without even checking to see if I was hurt. I was not hurt – only my pride.

My sisters got a great laugh as they saw me sitting on the ground looking foolish. After a few minutes, even I saw the funny side of the situation.

K.C.

A VISIT FROM MY AUNT

My aunt came to visit my mother. It was on a Sunday afternoon a good few years ago. My mother went to make the tea and when she went to the press to get the biscuits, they were all gone only the paper was left.

I was called to go to the shops for ½ lb. of broken biscuits and to ask the man in the shop for a few whole ones. My aunt was posh and my mother did not want my aunt to know we did not have a lot.

We had lots of love from Mam and Dad and that was better than all the biscuits in the shop. I love telling my family about years ago, when we had nothing. They just laugh.

A. O'C.

A VISIT TO THE THEATRE

A few months ago my friends and I went to see a play at the Abbey Theatre. The name of the play was "Big Maggie" and it was very good. The play took place in rural Ireland and was about a widow and her family. She was a tough domineering woman and she ruled the house with an iron fist. Her family never got on well with her. The son in the family wanted to marry a local girl but the mother did not want it, as the girl had no money. The play was very well acted and very funny in parts. We had a great night and really enjoyed our visit to the theatre

Patricia Buckley

Birthdays

It was Philip's birthday on Friday. He is my boyfriend. We went out for a meal and some drinks. We had a good time.

My Mam minded Lisa (my oldest girl) and his Mam minded the baby Pamela.

The mobile phone I gave him got stolen. It was a pity.

The good thing was he wrote me a lovely poem

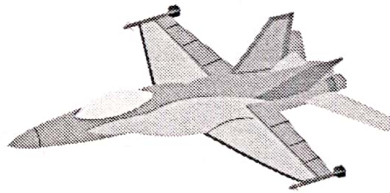
Christina J.

Come fly with me

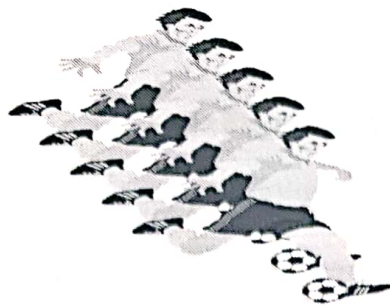
I have such a fear of flying. For so long I had to go to the doctor for something to calm me down. I had to make a trip to Los Angeles for my daughter's wedding on the 20th March. So down to the doctor I took myself. She gave me a prescription for tablets. She said, "You will fly the plane yourself". Some chance with my nerves!

The tablets worked ok. I could not believe how calm I was. The flight was great. I asked the air hostess if my son could visit the cockpit as he has a great interest in flying. She asked the Pilot, he said ok. So off we went. Boys o Boys was it something else! I will never forget it. We were over Greenland at the time. It was so white, snow everywhere.

I don't have the same fear anymore. Little did I think when the doctor said I would fly the plane myself, that I would be in the cockpit with the pilot.



Shirley Shanahan



Manchester United

It was Saturday 30 October 1999 and I was off to see Manchester United play in Old Trafford.

The day at 6:30 am I had to be in Dublin airport at 7:30 for my flight to Manchester. As I was going through the tunnel for my flight I noticed something different about the plane, it was a jaguar design like the formula one racing car. When we got to Manchester we got a taxi to our hotel, from there my brother and I had a look around Manchester city centre and we headed down to Old Trafford.

Before we took our seat in Old Trafford we had a look around the museum and superstore, we took our seat in the Northstand, the stadium was pretty empty. The team came out at 2 o'clock to kick the ball around, when I looked around at 2:50 pm there was not a seat to be seen instead there was 60,000 screaming united fans. At 3 o'clock the teams came out through the tunnel, Man. United in their usual red and white strip and Aston Villa in their away strip of dark blue.

The atmosphere was just great and there would have been nowhere else I would have liked to be. The game got off to a speedy start in the first 30 minutes Paul Scholes put his first goal past David James. United's second goal came just at half time by Andy Cole. Come the second half Aston Villa did not get a look in United scored again in the 65th minute by the Irishman, Roy Keane. United won the game by 3 goals to nil. Aston Villa manager John Gregory was not happy with his teams performance. As a United fan I was delighted with the result. It was money well spent.

David Phelan

BOXING THE FOX

When I was about twelve years old, my friends Rita, her sister Esther and I with a few more girls thought we would go down the forty steps which was near where we lived. Just across the road at the bottom of the steps was a river and on the other side of the river was an orchard and that was where we headed. We took our shoes and socks off to cross over, it took us a long time wading through the water, we were frightened because there was broken glass, which we were trying to avoid. We were crying and laughing both at the same time, saying that if our mothers could see us they would kill us.

At last we got over to the far side and into the orchard but then we heard voices and we had to hide thinking it was the man who owned it but we saw five or six boys who lived near us, one of them was my big brother. When he saw me, he was up one of the trees but he got such a shock he lost his balance and fell down. I think he hurt his back. He warned me that if I told my ma. He would tell that I had robbed the orchard too.

By this time taking the apples was the last thing on my mind, all I wanted to do just then was to be in my nice safe home and the thought of crossing the river terrified me but there was no other way out.

Rita, Esther and I were the first to make our way back across the river and my brother was still lying on the ground crying. Crossing the river this time, we were not so careful as we just wanted to get out of there fast. Both Rita and Esther cut their feet on glass and when they got home they ran the water in the bath and stood in it. Just then their mother came home from shopping and when she saw them, that was the end of any future secret trips to box the fox.

Masie McM.

Worksheet

Worksheet – Boxing the Fox

A Read the piece and answer the following questions

1. Where were the forty steps?
2. Where was the orchard?
3. Why were the children frightened?
4. What happened when the author's brother saw her in the orchard?
5. How did Rita and Esther cut their feet?

B Working on words

1. List the words in the piece that have double letters –example: **across**
2. How many are there?

Can you unscramble the following words taken from the piece?

dochrar _____

syob _____

reects _____

ifrrtedei _____

nedwra _____

Caring for Animals

I wish I could have worked in an Animal Hospital. I find animals loving and more trusting than humans, they give so much love, and it is real.

I know because I have two dogs and a cat. My dog's names are Sukie, Sally and the cat is called Tommy Felix. He thinks he is a dog because he was reared with the dogs. He is really lovely.

I have my dog Sukie, for 16 years. One New Year when I was in the house, suddenly and unexpectantly she collapsed in the hall. I was frantic not knowing what to do. Sudden panic set in, I had to think fast as she was depending on me to care for her. With it being New Years Eve, I would not be able to call a Vet. I kept her warm with a blanket, and sat by her side for most of the night. I found a Vets number in my notebook. I dialled him and luckily he said he would call even though it was very late.

He arrived within an hour, I was so happy because she was holding her own. When he examined her he said she had a mild stroke. I cried because she is all I have and I look forward to seeing her when I come home from work. The thoughts of not having her around me made me cry more. I asked him what would I do. He examined her for heart trouble and said she must be on medication for a long period. It cost me £40 but I did not care, it was worth it to make her healthy. Her sad eyes looking at me as much as to say thank you. It made me realise that life is so special even for the Animal Kingdom World.

So now every morning I have to give her tablets, she is very good even though she is sick she goes out to the toilet and I am so afraid it will happen when she is out and I will not be able to find her. I miss the walks we had together when she was so full of life.

I hope I am not being selfish by keeping her alive with all the tablets she is depending on. I know it is all the love and care that is keeping her alive. She wants to stay with me so please God I will have her a little longer. I will take it day by day

Maria

THE NEXT STEP

For many years I wanted to go back to school and I took the courage in October 1998. Now I can write birthday cards to my children. I have more confidence. I look forward to reading a novel.



Dolores M.

Confirmation Memories

I specially remember my Confirmation Day. I had my eye on a beautiful pink dress with a rose on the bottom in a shop window in Meath Street. I passed by and looked at it every day. The dummy in the window was dressed in the pink dress; pink cardigan pink socks and cream shoes with a big cream bow. She also had a pink bag and a cream hat with a big pink ribbon.

I didn't think we could ever afford the rig out but I said nothing. However my mother didn't let me down. She had been visiting the shop and paying 5 shillings a week off the rig out for a while.

We couldn't afford the coat so she asked the St. Vincent de Paul people in Meath Street for one of the free coats they used to give out but they wouldn't give one.

Once again this 11 year old got a big surprise. Our neighbour calmed my mother down "Quiet down now, Nellie, I've got a coat for Mary". She brought me into her flat. She put an adult coat on me that fell to the floorboards and said, "Stand still Mary". My hands and most of me had vanished. She worked hard on the coat two nights before my Confirmation and cut it down and shaped it to fit me perfectly.

I felt so proud. I stood out in the Church because nearly everyone had grey coats and mine was classier. I had a special day with my parents at the Church and my Mam's very good friend was there to agree on how well I looked.

My rig-out was carefully wrapped up in brown paper that night. Next day I went off to school with my brothers and sisters and the head teacher said how lovely I looked.

I thought my clothes were hanging carefully in the wardrobe but I later learned that my mother had taken them to the pawnshop because she needed the money to put food on the table as she used to say "you can't eat clothes". They were got out at the weekends again so I could wear them to Mass. They went in and out of the pawnshop a few more times until eventually the ticket got lost.

Mary T.

Worksheet

Worksheet – Confirmation Memories

Verbs

*A verb is an **action** word or a **doing** word.*

Extract

'I passed by and looked at it every day.'

The underlined words in the extract are verbs. Underline the verbs in the following sentences:

1. I felt so proud.
2. I thought my clothes were carefully hanging in the wardrobe.
3. I had a special day with my parents at the Church.

Nouns

*A noun is **the name of a person, place or thing**.*

Extract

'I had my eye on a beautiful pink dress with a rose at the bottom, in the shop window in Meath Street.'

The underlined words in the extract are nouns. Can you find the nouns in the following sentences?

1. She brought me into her flat.
2. My hands and most of me had vanished.
3. My rig-out was carefully wrapped up in brown paper that night.

DOWNS SYNDROME

"Downs Syndrome" in my young days was known as Mongol. What causes Downs Syndrome? Some doctors say it is an extra chromosome that splits. Others say they are born to parents who are too old or heavy alcohol drinkers. I know one or two very young couples with a Downs Syndrome child. Whatever the cause there are lots of them out there.

Like all handicapped people physical or mental it's a full time job for the carers twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, never ending.

Nowadays, there are a lot of amenities for the handicapped but there is a lot more work to be done. Since respite came into operation it gives parents a little break.

In 1979 my sister gave birth to a baby boy. He was her fourth child. He is Downs Syndrome. To say the least she was shocked. Brian is now 22 years of age but it was hard going for her and her husband especially her.

Brian attended St. Pauls School on the Navan Road until he was eighteen. He loved it there. Then he was transferred into a workshop, still in St. Pauls. He didn't like that at all. Then the problems started, Brian has very little speech but when he is not pleased he lets everyone know.

My sister worries a lot about what is going to happen to him when she and her husband pass away. Her two daughters or her son might want to take him, but will their husbands or wife want to take on the responsibility?

I told her to go to a good solicitor. He will help her work out her affairs and then leave it in the hand's of God, for no one knows what is going to happen from day to day.

Sheila

Worksheet

WORD SEARCH						DOWNS SYNDROME						
H	O	S	P	I	T	A	L	U	K	D	G	H
A	E	P	E	M	W	L	Y	O	U	N	G	E
N	S	E	O	L	A	C	I	S	Y	H	P	G
D	P	E	P	P	R	O	B	L	E	M	S	G
I	E	C	L	T	W	H	E	F	D	O	I	J
C	C	H	E	C	O	O	M	B	E	R	S	Y
A	I	B	F	H	D	L	B	G	D	E	T	J
P	A	K	B	R	I	A	N	G	D	E	E	P
P	L	K	H	O	G	T	Y	Y	Y	R	R	P
E	L	R	L	M	M	H	A	X	J	Y	I	U
D	Y	E	K	O	R	E	S	P	I	T	E	U
V	T	C	N	S	Y	M	D	R	O	M	E	E
W	O	R	K	O	P	E	R	A	T	I	O	N
D	T	Y	J	M	E	N	T	A	L	J	G	V
E	E	A	M	E	N	I	T	I	E	S	M	Y

SEE CAN YOU FIND THESE WORDS

WORK
MORE
SPEECH
RESPITE
PEOPLE

SISTER
BRIAN
ESPECIALLY
OPERATION
COOMBE

HOSTITAL
PROBLEMS
HANDICAPPED
YOUNG
ALCOHOL

CHROMOSOME
SYNDROME
MENTAL
AMENITIES
PHYSICAL

MY FAVOURITE PLACE

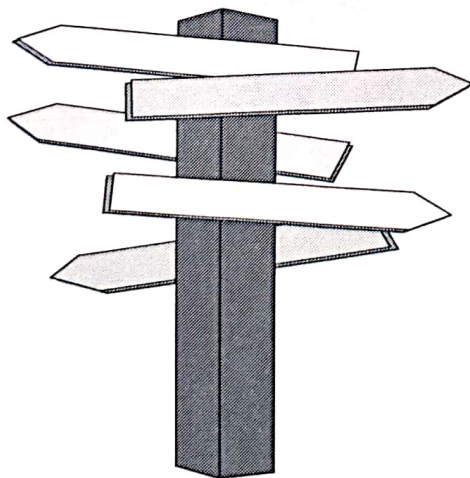
My favourite place is Cong in Co. Mayo. It was my father's favourite place too because it's where the film "The Quiet Man" was made. He loved John Wayne and Co. Mayo. I was down there last August for a week with my mother, my brother and my youngest child. It was lovely down there. We went to visit the cottage, the chapel and the castle that were in the film itself. We also saw the river where the fight was. I love down there because I know that's where Daddy loved and I feel he is close to me down there. I miss Daddy so much that life is not the same since he has gone. I will be going down again in August, please God.

KATHLEEN WARD

SECOND CHANCE

I left school at fourteen unable to read and write. Life was very difficult because of this. Going for jobs and interviews and not being able to fill in forms was a nightmare. It stopped me from getting a decent job. My first job was as a messenger boy in a builder's yard and I found it very hard when I had to deliver letters. After that I went on to have dead-end jobs. Last year I made the decision to come back to school. During the summer I did a three-week "taster" course in Rosary College. This broke the ice for me, so when I started in September I didn't feel too nervous. I am now studying for my Junior Cert. and having extra classes to help me with my reading and writing. It has been a bit of a struggle but with the help of the extra classes my reading and writing has started to improve. Having been out of school for nearly thirty years it has taken me a while to get my confidence back, but I am getting there. I am glad I came back. It has given me a second chance. Maybe someday I will do my Leaving Cert.

TOMMY BOYLAN



Cong County Mayo

Seeds and How to Grow them

This is some information on how to grow seeds. First, you wash the seed tray well and then you over-fill the tray with special seed compost. Using a piece of wood remove the excess compost from the tray. Then use some wood to gently press down the compost. Then you remove the seeds from the packet; it is a good idea to bang the packet against your hand so that all the seeds are released. Sprinkle the seeds evenly over the compost. Using a sieve, sprinkle more compost covering all the seeds. Now water with a fine rose, which is the type of nozzle head on the watering can. It is a good idea to add some chestnut compound to the water before watering. This helps protect the seeds. Then place polythene over the tray, to keep the moisture in. Plenty of sun is needed for germination and water when dry

Roystan L.

DICTIONARY WORK

Look up the following words in the dictionary and write down their meaning.

Compost

Excess

Released

Sieve

Nozzle

Polythene

MY FIRST HOLIDAY WITH THE LADS

My friends Fran and Gareth are joining me on a holiday in Cypress in a place called Ayia Napa. I have been on holiday before to America, Holland, Spain, England, and around Ireland.

This will be my first holiday with no other adults. On the first of July in two months time we will be off. We are getting ready now. We are saving as much money as we can. We are buying clothes to have with us. Gareth has got a visa card in case of an emergency. We are staying in a studio apartment near the town of Ayia Napa.

I hope I will like the food and that the sun is not too hot for me. I have heard a lot about it. I heard they have the best Water Park in Europe and that the nightlife is very good.

I am really looking forward to it. Roll on July. Ayia Napa here we come.



Ciarán Doyle

THE MILLENNIUM

It was New Year's Eve, my sister had invited all the family to her house to celebrate the New Year. As most of them had to drive to her house she said they could all sleep over. They just had to bring their sleeping bags with them. I arrived at about nine-o'clock. I was in great form and delighted that my Mam and Dad were there. My Mam had a brain operation recently and had recovered very well. I was determined to enjoy myself as it was a special night, you never know when all the family would be together again. I started on the gin and tonic, it was lovely. At twelve-o'clock we all went out into the back garden. Michael lit the fireworks, the children's faces lit up. Everyone was singing and blowing their horns. Then it was back into the house for more drink and dancing. One by one they started to go up to bed until there was about eight of us left. We had a sing along and more drink. At seven in the morning Shay decided it was time to bring me home. It was the best night I had in a long time.

ANNA



OPEN YOUR MIND

It's Friday night and I am going out on the town. Me and my best friend, Lisa, had gone shopping at lunchtime and bought new outfits and shoes. We also treated ourselves to new make-up. So, we were set to have a good time. We got a taxi into Temple Bar and went to the first pub with good music. We went in and got ourselves a drink. We were starting to have a good time and we got chatting to a group of people. They seemed nice. They only lived down the road. My friend lives in a house, I am a Traveller and I live on a site. I told them where I lived and that I was a Traveller. They sat there in shock for a minute. Then they said to me "You don't look like a Traveller", which hurt my feelings. I asked them what a Traveller looked like. They said that the women wore big gold earrings, had dirty shoes and didn't wear make-up. I felt very insulted, as I am very proud to be a Traveller. I told them "You probably meet Travellers every day and don't know it and some of them can dress and look as good as everyone else." Settled people need to have a more open mind as, sometimes, they are wrong about us.

MARY WARD

AN EASTER VISIT

At Easter our son, Paul, and daughter, Deirdre, came on a three-day visit. We were looking forward to it because it was five years, through various circumstances, since the whole family had been together. The enjoyment before they came was great, the usual cleaning, getting extra beds and food in. On the day they were to arrive the excitement was great, looking at the Teletext to see if the plane had arrived. Their arrival at the house was great. After having breakfast we went into town. They wanted to see some places and things in town that had changed. In the evening we had something to eat and then went for a drink. On the Saturday it was our Wedding Anniversary so that night we went out for a lovely meal. The next day was Sunday so we had a special meal at home. Our grandchild came and he loved it. After that we went to Howth for a trip to the seaside. We had a great time. The next day they had to go back to England. We hope to plan more visits like that.

MARIE BURKE

A TRIP TO THE PUB

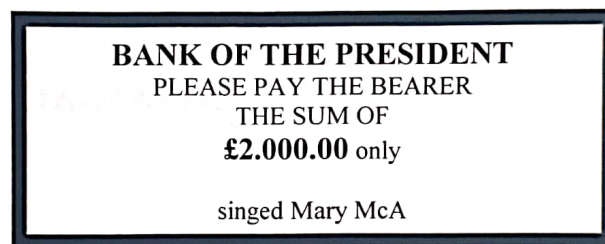
One night my sisters, my friend and myself said we would go out to the pub for a drink. We decided to go to a local pub. When we got to the bar myself and two of my sisters got served and one sister and my friend were left to be served. The manager came out and said "Sorry, we can't serve you tonight." We asked him why and he said "Regulars only." I said to him that this is a public house and you can't do that. "I am sorry" he said, "you'll have to go." My sister said she was not leaving and asked them to call the police. I said this was discrimination and took all the details, such as names, date, and time, so I could do something about this. Then the manager said we could stay. The bouncers said they were very embarrassed and said it was not them that wanted us out. I was very embarrassed at that moment and would have loved to crawl into a hole. Everybody was looking at us but I knew we had to handle this in a very calm way. I would have loved to wring his neck but I knew that was not a good idea. We still had a good night and did not let him spoil it.

SAVANNAH

THE PARTY

Last Monday the President of Ireland, Mary McAleese, came to Raheny House. Raheny House is a home for retired people. Two of the ladies were one hundred years old and she came to give them a cheque for £2,000. There was great excitement on the day. The ladies were getting their hair done and they all looked lovely, so did the men. The President was introduced to all the residents and staff and when she came to me she admired the top that I was wearing. She said it was hand knitted because she used to knit herself. I got my photo taken with her and it turned out lovely. It is a lovely keepsake of a special day.

LILLIAN



DRIVING

I took driving lessons a year ago. It was hard at first but it got easier and easier. I bought a car. It is a blue Ford Fiesta.

I can now drive anywhere and I drive to work every day. I do deliveries sometimes. At weekends I use the car for shopping and driving people around. The car is dear to run but I like it. It gives me great freedom.

Ron S.



ST VALENTINE'S DAY 1979

I remember one Valentine's day, it was about twenty years ago. I remember it well as my husband was over in the Lebanon with the Irish Army on a tour of duty. The post came that morning and there was a big red envelope. When I opened it I got the fright of my life as a big rabbit and lots of petals fell all over the floor. They fell from the middle of the Valentine card. I didn't know what they were at first, but then I realised they were only flower petals. After I got over my fright I laughed to myself. He put a lot of thought into it. He told me afterwards, he did it as a joke to cheer me up, as I was missing him so much. The flower petals had a lovely smell. To this day I still don't know the name of the flowers they came from. He said he would have loved to see my face when I opened the card. But my biggest surprise was when he sent me over a ticket for a trip to the Middle East, as it was my twenty first birthday. I was delighted. We had four wonderful weeks together, it was like our second honeymoon.

S.J.

Worksheet
Worksheet – St. Valentine's Day 1979.

A Read the piece and answer the following questions.

1. Why was the author's husband in the Lebanon?
2. What arrived in the big red envelope?
3. What big surprise did the author receive for her twenty-first birthday?
4. How does the author describe their trip?

B Working on words.

The following words sound the same but have different meanings.

Write sentences to show that you know the meaning of each word.

one	won
know	no
there	their
would	wood
flower	flour
sent	scent
thought	taught
our	hour

OH HAPPY DAYS

I GAZE ACROSS THE HORIZON
I SEE THE FRIENDLY STARS
MY MIND JUST KEEPS ON THINKING
AND WONDERING WHERE YOU ARE
IT SEEMS SO VERY LONG AGO
BUT THEN PERHAPS IT'S NOT
WHEN YOU PRESENTED ME WITH
THOSE SWEET FORGET-ME-NOTS
OH THE JOY WE KNEW
WHEN WE WERE YOUNG
BUT LITTLE DID WE KNOW
HOW MUCH MORE WAS TO COME
OH JOYOUS YOUTH
AND HAPPY HOURS
TO TELL THE TRUTH
TRUE LOVE WAS OURS
WE DIDN'T THINK
ALONG THE WAY
OH JOY, OH YOUTH
OH HAPPY DAY
WE SPENT THEM ALL
IN SWEET ACCLAIM
YOU TOOK MY HAND
I TOOK YOUR NAME
OH THE JOY WE KNEW
WHEN WE WERE YOUNG AND GAY
IN HAPPY, HAPPY, HAPPY DAYS

MARTHA

MY SECOND YEAR

This is my second year attending English classes. When I joined I didn't think I would stay so long. I was one of those people who thought, because I could read and write I would not find it very interesting and would not learn much more. I was badly mistaken. I found that there was so much more to learn. I am now also doing computers, something I thought was impossible to achieve. The people in the class are great and our tutor, Val, is one of the best. More important, I am enjoying myself. I look forward to the rest of the year and, perhaps, go even further. Thank you Val and Rosaleen.

FRANCES C.

W.E.D.G.E.

I belong to a women's group in Edenmore called WEDGE. This stands for Women's Educational and Development Group Edenmore. It is a very active group. We go to English on Monday, computers on Tuesday, Arts and Crafts on Wednesday, Cookery on Thursday and Art on Friday. One day one of the women, called Joan, came in with a pattern of little ducks. She asked me would I like to knit a few. I said, "Yes". Her father had got it up in St. Francis Hospice where he used to go every Tuesday. We decided to get the pattern photocopied and give it out to the women. They all said they would knit some. I also took the pattern up to the Ladies Club, so we all got knitting. We knit 500 and bought small cream eggs and put them inside the ducks and sold them for £1 each. We made £500. That was five years ago and each year we knit more and more. This year we really have expanded. Friends and neighbours have joined in the knitting and selling of them and the response is brilliant. This year we raised £3,400.

PEGGY PRESTON

FOOT AND MOUTH

Well we remember foot and mouth
And the dreaded case in County Louth
The shamrock had all disappeared
Our patron saint finds it weird
To celebrate March in May
But it's great to keep disease at bay

Anthony Doherty

Ellis Island

This is a story about Ellis Island. On St. Patrick's night I was watching the Three Irish Tenors on R.T.E. perform on Ellis Island in America. This was a special performance to remember the people who came to Ellis Island.

The story began years ago when people travelled on packed ships, men, women and children fleeing from their own countries. Some died along the way before they reached America and others were very lucky to survive the journey. This was their gateway to a better life. Full of hope and promise the people had to go through a lot of health checks and red tape before they were allowed into America. They lined up in groups with the little possessions they had, some with just the clothes on their backs. They were tired from the journey but happy to reach this place of freedom to start a better life for themselves and their children.

Teresa McA.

POEMS

By Teresa McAuliffe

Foot and Mouth

I watched the lambs play in a meadow
Full of green
But sadness has come and darkness has been
No more happiness
Silence had come upon the land
And life beats no more.

Life

Life is a gift to treasure
Hold it in the palms of your hands
And never let it go
Oh! But what am I
A life full of splendour
And of wonder.

Flower

A flower of potion
A flower of seed
A flower of devotion
Will you belong to me?

GERRARD HOULLIER

Gerrard Houllier is the Liverpool F.C. head coach since 1997. Himself and Roy Evans (an ex boot boy of Joe Fagan Bob Paisley and Kenny Dalglish), were joint managers of Liverpool for twelve months in 1997. This was terminated in the mid part of 1998 when Houllier took over as Head Coach of the French National Side.

Since Houllier came to Liverpool in 1997 he has restored a lot of pride in the club. He had rebuilt the fans pride from the '70's and '80's and is bringing Kop glory back again.

The only players remaining from Roy Evans time are Stephen Gerrard, Jamie Carragher, Danny Murphy, Jamie Rednapp, Michael Owen, and Robbie Fowler. The new players Houllier brought through were Stephan Henchio (Switzerland), Sammy Hyppia (Finland), Sander Westerland (Dutch goalkeeper). Christian Zige (Germany), Dietmar Hamann (Germany) and Jari Litamann (Finland).

This season alone, Liverpool, with Houllier as coach, have won the Worthington Cup. They are in the final of the English F.A. Cup and in the final of the U.E.F.A.Cup. Also they are fighting it out for the third spot in the Premiership with Leeds and Ipswich. If they get the third spot they will be in the Champions League in Europe next season. Lets hope they're not

Mark D.

Going Back to School

Going back to school was something I always wanted to do but never had the courage to do anything about. Until I went on a Fas course and was asked if I would like to go back to school for one day a week.

On my way down to meet Pat, my nerves were gone but I was soon put at ease. I started the next week in a one to one class. Everyone in the class is very nice. I feel so at home with them. In the four months I am here I have learned a lot. I love to read now and my family call me a bookworm. My wish would be to have the confidence to write to my friends in England and Australia and I have taken the first step.

Marie Power

UNSCRAMBLE THE FOLLOWING WORDS FROM THE PIECE

verens

tonmsh

olhsco

sae

kwomboro

ofru

Honesty

I went to the cinema last week to see Man of Honour, Robert de Niro was in it, he was brilliant. I really enjoyed it but when I got home I realised I had left my bag in the cinema. I said to myself "it's gone", but to my surprise I got a phone call to say my bag was handed in. I just thought there are some honest people out there, Thank God

Marie Power

IF I WON THE LOTTO

I would first of all pay off my family's mortgage. I would then buy a villa in Spain and spend the winters there. Next on the list I would like a new car. I would then redecorate my home. I am fond of Newry so I would buy a small house there for the odd weekend. I would also like to visit a lot of countries like the U.S.A. and Canada. I would open a restaurant and let my son-in-law run it, as he is a chef.

Kathleen L.

Learning to Drive

This year I decided to learn to drive. One day I said here goes, so I rang a driving school and booked some lessons. A few days later my driving instructor arrived for my first lesson at ten o'clock.

I wasn't nervous at first but as I got into the traffic I became very frightened because there were so many cars on the road.

After each lesson Paddy puts me at ease and gives me confidence to carry on driving. Even though I'm still a bit nervous I'm determined to keep trying and to succeed. With a bit of luck this time next year I hope everyone will be able to say here comes Eileen in her Jag.

Eileen D.

Israel 2000

It was June the start of the holidays. We were going to Israel to play bowling. There were about twenty of us. We left Dublin at one o'clock for London. After three hours in London we flew to Israel, arriving at one in the morning. The first thing was trouble with the hotel they made it all right on the Sunday.

On Monday we went to Jerusalem for the day. It was a great place. I would like to have been there for three more days to see everything. The next day we went to Masada. We went up in the cable car to the tip of the mountains. Then we went to the Dead Sea.

The next day we started our bowling. We meet with the friends we made the year before. It lasted until Sunday when we had a banquet for all the countries. It was the hottest place I have ever been in.

The fun started on the way home when the plane stopped off in Greece for fuel. We were there for two hours. So when we got back to London we had missed the plane home. They had to put us up in a hotel for the night. The next day when we arrived at the airport they got us onto a plane. When we got to Dublin our cases were in London we did not get them back till the next day. All in all it was a great holiday.

Olive

Worksheet
WORDSEARCH

ISRAEL 2000

T	H	R	E	E	E	F
D	R	P	O	N	R	Y
U	X	O	A	E	P	E
B	P	L	U	E	H	L
L	P	C	A	B	L	E
I	H	O	T	E	L	D
N	I	G	H	T	O	E

Find these words

TROUBLE

HOTEL

PLANE

BEEN

THREE

FUEL

CABLE

DUBLIN

NIGHT

LEARNING TO SWIM

Some years ago my son announced to me that that particular year was the Year of the Child. By this time he was all of twenty years old but he was expecting me to lavish a lot of attention on him.

Needless to say I saw red, because for his entire life, he had got all of my attention. There and then I made a decision to forget about him and look out for myself. I thought hard about something I would dearly like to do, so I decided to learn how to swim.

I plucked up courage and went off down to the CRC pool in Clontarf. Fortunately I was introduced to a very good teacher because I was so scared at the thought of getting into the pool. After a bit of persuasion I took the plunge but stayed in the shallow end for the first couple of weeks. The teacher decided that it was time for me to really get started so she took me in hand and got my legs kicking. Of course, I was holding on to the bar all the time. So the following week I was instructed to blow out bubbles into the water. Having done that successfully, I was then told to put my head into the water and blow bubbles at the same time. I was scared out of my wits. However this task did not prove to be too difficult.

All was going well with my lessons until the teacher announced that we were all to go down to the deep end and line up. Well! That scared the daylights out of me, I kept going back to the end of the line each time. After long persuasion, I decided to try this exercise with the teacher holding a net and assuring me that everything would be all right. I was so petrified that my feet got cramped and I had to have them massaged. After that episode I went from strength to strength. Before long I was an accomplished swimmer.

I must add that I was all of fifty-eight years old by then. It goes to show that we are never too old to learn.

Angela N.

Worksheet
DICTIONARY WORK

Learning to Swim

Look up the following words in the dictionary and explain their meaning.

Lavish decision persuasion shallow task episode

Fill in the missing words.

1. The _____ was too difficult.
2. What was tonight's _____ of Eastenders about.
3. I made a _____ to learn to knit.
4. With a little _____ you can do it.

Life Is For Living

I retired after 29 years in my place of work. I travelled to Australia. God was with me as I travelled on my own. My family of seven left our home to make their own way in life. The house was too big for me to live there. I moved to a smaller dwelling. I am very happy, but there was something missing in my life. I could not read or write very well so I did a course in C laiste Dhulaigh. It has made a big difference in my life. I never get lonely thank God as I say I have God in one pocket and my money in the other.

Clare

LEAVING THE FOLD

I remember the day my sister and her husband came around to my house to tell me they were moving to Co. Mayo. I was totally shocked learning this news. I have four brothers but only one sister to whom I'm very close. That day was in April '99. Two years down the road and my sister her husband and family have settled in very well. I have visited her new home on many occasions and it is a beautiful house and very idyllic.

The area is called Louisburg. It is two years since my sister moved away but I still miss her very much. We talk on the phone quite a lot. I'm also close to my four brothers, so it was an even bigger shock last week when one of my younger brothers told me that he and his wife were moving to Portlannington.

Once again I was shocked to hear this news. I would like to add that while I am saddened by this news I was as happy for them as I was for my sister and her family. Family is very important to me and while parts of the family are moving on, I know we will always be in each other's hearts.

Pat B.

MY CHILDHOOD

My childhood was a very happy one. I was one of fourteen children, six boys and eight girls. Being the second eldest, I had to look after the smaller ones. My mother and father were very strict and we had great respect for both of them. Every morning we got up and went to school walked two miles every day there and back, no matter what the weather was like. We loved school. When we came home we had a lot of work to do, carrying water, bringing in turf, feeding the chickens, and getting the cow in to be milked.

After tea we did our homework, then it was time for prayers. We knelt down and said the Rosary. My Dad worked so hard for a farmer, hail, rain or shine, with little food, he never complained. Mam never went out, always washing at the washing board and baking bread, as times were hard. We had very little, but we were very happy, we made our own entertainment. We made a ball out of newspapers, to play ball, made dolls out of newspapers and dressed them with daisies and grass.

I loved my Granny, she was very old with long white hair, and I would sit for hours combing it. I cried a lot when she died. She always gave me 3d. and I would hide it under a stone, so Mam would not get it. I had a lot saved under the big stone behind the shed. One day my mother had no money and she was crying. I told her that I had lots of money. "Where"? she said. So I told her that I had put it under a stone behind the shed. She started to laugh because she didn't believe me, so out I went and got it. All of £1 in 3d pieces. She was very happy and we got lots of food with the money. She often talked about that money when she got older.

I loved my Mam, who passed away five years ago. My Dad loved her so much. He misses her and is waiting to join her. He says that his life ended when she died. We were one big family, with nothing but love from our parents who lived a long time to rear us, thank God. I will end this, thanking God for a wonderful childhood, 61 years ago.

Nancy P.

Worksheet

My Childhood

QUESTIONS

1. How many children were in the family? (Paragraph 1)
2. What work had the children to do after school? (Paragraph 2)
3. What prayers did the family say after tea? (Paragraph 2)
4. What was Granny like? (Paragraph 3)
5. Where was the stone that the money was hidden under? (Paragraph 3)
6. How much money was saved? (Paragraph 3)

MY HOLIDAY IN SPAIN

My Aunt and Uncle invited me and my girlfriend, to stay with them in Spain. They own their own apartment in Alacante.

We flew to Spain that Tuesday and we stayed for nine days. My Aunt and Uncle were delighted that we went to visit them in Spain.

We all had a great time over there. Every morning we ate our breakfast at the English Bar. Then we would spend the day walking around Alacante and seeing the sights. There were some really lovely sights to see. When we got back we would sit by the pool. Later on in the evening we would go out to dinner. Then on to the pub for the night.

We arrived back into Dublin Airport on the Thursday. The plane nearly crashed as it landed it is good to be home safe and sound.

Wayne.

My Holidays

I remember in the 80's when the family used to go down to Arklow for two weeks every August. We all had a great time fishing at the beach. The kids loved going to the disco in the evening while we had a game of Pitch and Putt. We would pick up the kids at 8 o' clock when the disco was over. The sun was always shining. We stayed in a caravan near the beach.

We had singsongs in the pub. At midnight we would go down to the beach and light bon-fires and sing more songs.

We always hated leaving Arklow when the holiday was over and having to go back to work.

D Kelly

MY ITALIAN HOLIDAY

My best holiday was spent in Italy about nine years ago. Our first week was in a small seaside town called Calabria where the Italians themselves spend their holidays. The front of our hotel was on a main road and the back was on the beach. You entered from the main road and took the left downwards to your room instead of going upwards. The waiters were young students working for the summer and learning English. They were learning from us and we had to try to speak as much Italian as we could manage.

It was a great experience because even in shops and restaurants there was very little English spoken. It was a lovely town and everyone was very friendly and helpful. By the time we left we knew everyone in the place.

The second week we travelled by coach to Sorrento. It took eight hours and we saw a lot of the countryside, we would not normally see. Coming into Sorrento on the coach was breathtaking. It was built on the cliffs and the hotels seemed to be hanging from the side of the cliffs.

It is a beautiful place. We went on trips to Rome, Naples, Isle of Capri and Pompeii, which were wonderful to see. It rained on Capri, but it didn't dampen our enjoyment. I would love to go back someday

Sylvia K.

MY HOUSE

My name is Bridget. I live in a caravan with my five kids, three girls and two boys. I can't wait to move into my new house because my children will have their own garden and their own bedrooms. Our caravan is nice to live in, in the summer but in the winter it is not. It is too cold. I'm living in a caravan for almost thirteen years and before that I lived in a house. My children have never lived in a house. It will be something new to them and they are all excited. I will have four bedrooms, a sitting room and a kitchen in my new house. We hope to move in, during the summer so I will be spending no more winters in a caravan. And please believe me, if I can help it, neither will my kids. Trust me!!!!!!

BRIDGET COLLINS

My Literacy Class

I enjoy my literacy class. When I started I felt very low, no confidence or self-esteem. I like working with my class. They are very helpful. My tutor puts no pressure on me.

I hope to learn how to read a book or a magazine.

Kathleen K.

MY NEPHEW'S CONFIRMATION

My sister and her family collected me and we got to the Church in good time for the confirmation at 11 a.m.

My godson Martin and my other nephew Jonathon were being confirmed. My mother was sponsor for Jonathon and I for Martin,

I had to put my hand on Martin's shoulder as he knelt before the Bishop and he blessed Martin on the forehead. Afterwards the Bishop shook Martin's hand and mine. Then the confirmation group received Holy Communion first and we followed on later. It was a lovely ceremony and the weather on that day was also wonderful.

Christina

Paintings

I enjoy painting with Pat and arts and crafts with Pauline. We are making a patchwork quilt. My square is about water coming from the mountain.

I painted a nice picture and I will frame it for my new house. I also enjoy my English classes with Rita.

Eileen McD.

My Son in Australia

Derek went to Australia on October the thirteenth (lucky for some). He went for a year. He got a round the world ticket. First stop was Bali. He stayed there for two weeks. Then he went to Perth. He rented a house with his friend and two girls. They stayed there for Christmas. The girls made the Christmas dinner. Derek said that it was really delicious, but not as good as Mammy's-Ha Ha!

When Derek was going to Australia, Natalie said to me "Mam when fellows go away they don't write or ring very often". But that is not so, Derek rings every two weeks and also e mails Natalie at work. When he rings we all get very excited to hear from him. He seems very happy there.

Christmas was different without him this year; we missed him a lot. He gives every one of us a present. He also gives us a funny surprise present. Last year he gave me a watering can and a Ricky Martin calendar. He gave Denise a book on how to stop smoking, just to annoy her. He filled two stockings with fruit and empty boxes and put them at the end of Natalie and Siobhan's beds. He gave Anthony a tape.

He stayed in Perth for five and a half months. He then flew to Sydney. When they arrived in Sydney they stayed with girls that they met in Bali just till they got a place of their own. They are now in a hostel. They are looking for work. He will be another few months in Australia. On the way home he is visiting New Zealand, Hawaii and Los Angeles. It is a holiday of a lifetime!

Harriet

MY STORY

Discrimination is very much in the news nowadays, since large amounts of people from other countries started applying for asylum and refugee status in Ireland. I have lived with discrimination all my life as a member of the Travelling Community.

The saddest incident I experienced was when I was granted a house, by the Corporation. I moved in with my family and was delighted with it. Sometime later I found out that a signed petition had been sent to the Corporation trying to stop me receiving the house. It had been signed by most of my “**Christian**” neighbours. Anyway I am now well settled in my home and I love it. My neighbours have finally accepted me as a person (born and bred in Ireland with the right to vote etc.) and not just as a member of a particular ethnic group.

Margaret E.

MY LIFE STORY

My name is John. I am 49 years of age. I have been attending school for the last two years. When I started coming I thought I was going to be the only person with a writing problem. I really look forward to going to the reading and writing classes to see that I am not the only one with the problem. In a way I was glad to see other people there like myself. That is not to say I am being disrespectful to the other people in the classroom.

My hobbies are walking and watching football. I used to go over to Liverpool to watch the football and I spent a lot of time walking around, mainly Liverpool. I found there was not much to see in Liverpool besides the football. My other hobby believe it or not is reading newspapers and football magazines.

At the moment I am searching everywhere to try and get a cup final ticket for the F.A. Cup final in Cardiff, so far I am not being to successful but I will keep wishing and hoping.

My other interest is reading the National Papers and doing the crosswords in them but I never seem to be able to finish them off. For my reading I mainly buy Liverpool or Celtic magazines. I am not heavily into reading. I have been told my writing has improved a lot, which I agree to a certain point, but I often feel it could be a lot better. I will just keep practising as often as I can.

John.

MY GARDEN

My name is Margaret. I live in a caravan. I used to live in a house. I made a garden. It was my pride and joy, so colourful and bright. My kids would not touch my flowers because they knew it meant a lot to me. They would buy me plants for my birthday and Mother's Day. My friends would get me bulbs when they would go away. Now I live in a halting site and I plant my flowers in pots. Please God I will have a new garden someday.

MARGARET GAVIN

MY TEAM

There is a team from Merseyside,
Who once again fill our hearts with pride
The team is LIVERPOOL their home is ANFIELD,
A full trophy cabinet we hope they will yield.
In the past we thought the glory years would never end,
But Mr Houllier knew we would have to spend.
£11 million went on Heskey, £6million more on Barmby,
And even an underrated 35 year old on a free.
A Dutch goalkeeper as big as they come,
At the end of most games it's goals conceded none.
A back four from all over Europe,
Don't bother to try go past them you might as well give up.
In the engine room we have a choice of old and new,
British or foreign any four will do.
If it's goals you want you know we can,
Whether its Owen, Fowler, Heskey or Litmanen.
Cardiff twice and Dortmund once,
Three cup finals in a few months.
A marvellous season is coming to an end,
An even better (hopefully) one is just around the bend.
Lets not get carried away were not there yet,
But the Championship next year, I'd fancy a bet.
So come on the mighty reds for the poor years let us atone,
And always remember that YOU'LL NEVER WALK ALONE.

Brendan W.

PICTURE THIS!

MAYBE TODAY,
I'LL BUY A CAR,
ONE OF THOSE SPORTY JOBS!
RED WITH SILVER WHEELS.
PICTURE THIS.

A COTTAGE BY THE SEA
WITH ROSES ROUND THE DOOR.
PICTURE THIS.

DESERT ISLAND, SOUTH PACIFIC,
SAND, PALM TREES, AND HAMMOCK.
PICTURE THIS.

LONG COLD DRINK WITH ICE,
SERVED BY TOM CRUISE OF COURSE,
PICTURE THIS

SUNNY GARDEN, SUN CHAIR,
NO IRONING WAITING TO BE DONE,
PICTURE THIS.

RONAN COLLINS CALLING MY NUMBERS,
LOTTO WIN,
PICTURE THIS,
DREAM ON!!!!

Marie C.

Television

My favourite programme from Television is football because football is very entertaining especially when Manchester United is playing you get to know the players and you look forward to a good game.

Eric Cantona was the best player to play for United. He is a Frenchman. Roy Keane is also very good he was born in Cork.

It takes a good team to win in Europe and United have won several times. The only thing I don't like about them is that they keep changing their shirts and their shirts are very expensive. There is talk of building a new stadium for football in Dublin they are going to call it Bertie's Bowl. It is going to cost £20,000,000 so it should be very good.

THE DAY I BECAME A MOTHER

I became pregnant in September and went for my first scan in January. I could not believe it when they told me I was expecting twins. When I got over the shock of the twins my husband and I, were so happy. I was very sick throughout the whole pregnancy. I was so sick I had to go into hospital for two weeks before the twins were born. The night I had my twins I was very sick I was that sick they had to send for my husband. When my husband arrived I was taken down to the delivery room I was very nervous because I had to have a section. The first baby to be born was a girl; I was so happy I cried. Then two minutes later my little boy was born. My husband and I cried it was the best day of my life. I was a mammy now.

Edel Mortimer

The Family Bible

I remember when I was young the "Pot Man" was a regular visitor to our flats. He sold lots of different things such as bedclothes, pots and pans and different household goods. The people would pay by the week. One Friday he came to be paid and my father answered the door. This particular week he had Bibles to sell. They were large wine coloured books in a brown box. The man said it would be £6. 2. 6d down and 1/6d a week. My father said he would take one if he brought it first thing Saturday morning. My mother heard him and ran to the door. She told the "Pot Man" if he gave my father the Bible he was not to ask her for any money for it. Early Saturday morning he brought the book and my mother took it from him and put it on the kitchen table. My brother went to open the box to look at it and we all gathered around to see it. But my father was up and dressed in seconds and shouted at him not to touch it. We saw more of the Bible when the priest carried it to the altar than we saw of our Family Bible. My father brought the Bible to the Pawnshop. He got £4 on it and that was the last we saw of our Family Bible.

P. Hogan.

The Happy Hour

It was a long nine months. When the big day arrived we were all very excited.

My son took his girlfriend to the hospital. It was seven o'clock in the evening. We had a small family get-together. The wait was very long so at 10.30 we all decided to go and celebrate the coming event at Reilly's Pub.

At 12.55 in the morning and still in Reilly's Pub we got the **Big News** by 'phone.

It's a Girl! I shouted the first girl in eight boys. What a celebration! It went on all week. Her name is Baby Laura

Proud Nanny



The Poem

1

The autumn of spirit

The autumn of love

The autumn of God

The autumn of give

2

The spring of hope

The spring of space

The spring of faith

The spring of happy

3

The summer of life

The summer of prayer

The summer of joy

The summer of peace

Susanne H.

THE WEDDING

The wedding invitation arrived early November last year. Mr. and Mrs. Pennington requested our company at the wedding of their daughter Sarah to Michael Barron in Birmingham on March 17th. Our first thought was why pick St. Patrick's Day? We'd never been out of the country before on our National holiday and would miss all the craic at home. Secondly, the price of sterling was a bit off putting, but, despite all, we decided to go because Michael's father, Eugene, was the only nephew who kept in contact with his Irish cousins. We contacted my husband's family in Waterford and his sister Rene and husband Tom said the four of us would go over and we booked our flights.

Everything was fine until the news broke that foot and mouth disease had appeared in England and was spreading rapidly. The Irish government said that people should think twice before travelling to England so that left us with a problem, should we travel or not. Aer Lingus let it be known that people who cancelled flights would be compensated, so financially we'd be o.k. As regards the foot and mouth disease we decided to take all the precautions necessary.

The flight over on the 16th was a doddle and took only forty minutes. We were met at the airport by nephew Eugene who drove us in style to our hotel. Our hotel was first class, very reasonable and called "The Toby Jug".

The day of the wedding dawned bright and clear, too bright in fact. The countryside was covered in six inches of snow and we travelled to the Registry Office in a snow shower. The ceremony was a very solemn affair and lacked the sense of fun we have at our church weddings. One good thing about the weather, the wedding snaps should be very beautiful with the snow-covered trees and shrubs in the background. The day passed very pleasantly and we were delighted we had taken the trouble to travel over to the wedding

Nan B.

QUESTIONS

THE WEDDING

1. On what date did the wedding take place. (Paragraph 1)
2. Why was the date of the wedding special (Paragraph 1)
3. What was the news that broke (Paragraph 1)
4. Would the author have lost money by not travelling. (Paragraph 2)
5. How long did the flight take (Paragraph 3)
6. Describe the weather on the day of the wedding. (Paragraph 4)

WHO AM I

*I wake up in the morning
My hair is in a mess
My eyes are still closed
I just don't want to dress
I don't know how to do it
I don't know how to find it
I know it is lost somewhere
Clean away the cobwebs
Open up the drapes
Tidy up the kitchen
Everyone makes mistakes
Press the button on the radio
Listen to the show
Everyone has problems
Or didn't you want to know
Go back out to the mirror
Hanging on the wall
Clean the dust from the corners
Look you are not small
I need to find myself
I'm there somewhere I'm sure
I just have to clean the mirror
And maybe I'll be there
Have I seen my mother?
In the reflection in the hall
Is it really her image?
Or am I going off the wall
I think she maybe sending me a message from her heart
To let me know I am capable
And pulling my own cart
I'm going to find some class
I'm not just a caretaker
I deserve a brand new start
Now look who is talking?
I can't believe it is so
I'm actually a D.J. on a radio show
I don't know how I got here
I thought I was going mad
My heart was full of sadness
I was feeling very bad
Until I turned the dial on the radio
I still go to that mirror hanging in the hall
It was given to me by my mother
And now I don't feel so small
Linda O'B.*

SISTER ACT

I was thinking about Halloween and wondering what to do to have fun on that day. One morning while looking at TV3 on the telly, a programme about "Down's Syndrome" came on and they were saying that they needed to raise money to buy more equipment to help the patients.

Suddenly I had an idea. I would dress up as a nun and collect for them. My daughter made the nun's habit for me and I wore big frilly bloomers underneath. I went around the houses on my road and everybody had a great laugh when they saw me. We had great fun. I thought my outfit was good, so I made a surprise visit to my local priest Fr. Hennessy, who is 89 years old. He had a great laugh when he saw me and said that I was a very stylish nun.

I went to the local Bingo that night, and before it started and during the interval, I got up on stage in my nun's outfit and did my song and dance act. While I was dancing I showed off my frilly bloomers. The crowd roared with laughter and kept shouting for more. I sang the song "My Lord" and everybody joined in and sang along with me. It was great fun and a night to remember.

It was announced that I was raising money for the "Down's Syndrome" cause and everybody was very generous, As I raise £60 that night. Fr. Peter sent this money off to the organisation for me and they sent me a receipt, which I put up, in the Bingo Hall for all to see. Everybody agreed that we should have singsongs more often.

My "Sister Act" went so well that when the girls' were graduating I surprised them and arrived at the ceremony in "Champions of Balgriffin" in my nun's outfit and sang and danced for them. I also appeared all dressed up, in the class one morning and did a little turn for everyone there. Once I got started they couldn't shut me up, so there was very little work done that morning. There is so much bad news and sadness these days that I always enjoy dressing up and making people happy

T.W

YELLOW BIRD 2 ½

After all the trouble we had looking after my sister's Yellow bird Tweety, I thought it would be too soon if I never saw another yellow bird again in my house. Jordan and Josh had other ideas, because on Jordan's birthday he asked for one of his own, so I had no choice. Just last February in came Twizzels . Twizzels was very tame when we got her; she would walk up and down your arm. So we were advised to keep her used to this as part of her daily exercise. The lad's were thrilled. I on the other hand, was not so pleased as it was I who cleaned the shit after it.

Everything went fine for a few weeks. The alarm rang and I rolled over in my nice warm cosy bed and gave the clock a light bang, off it went, ah! Heaven I thought! Then jumping out of the bed, "shit we're late" I shouted. "Lad's lad's come on get up! Get up now!" Grabbing the uniform's, running down to make lunches and breakfast, the lads were talking to Twizzels , "Don't go near her we don't have the time, don't let her out, come on lads eat, hurry up we will be late for school" I told them. Rushing out slamming the front door, we left for school.

On my return after I had been shopping .I opened the door I went straight over to where my mobile phone sat ringing, it was there I saw it. Twizzels caught in the CD rack. Her wing through one bar, his head squashing through another one, and his tail end caught under a tape. Easing him out I held him for a while in my hands. Poor, poor, Twizzels , "them bloody kids I'll kill them, brats that all they are, little shit's". Holding her with one hand and rooting for a little face clothe with the other. I placed her into her cage she could stand Ok., but she would not climb onto her perch. I wrapped her up and left to collect the two brats' from school. I told them what had happened, and who's fault it was. They were grounded for the day with no TV. Twizzels was just lying there when we got back, and the lads were very upset. I put the heat pad into the microwave. I took Twizzels out and held the heat pad around her while she took her last breath, poor bird.

"Now she is dead. Look at this shit, there, there, and there, and there is feathers and shit in the sitting room as well, she was flying all over the house looking for a way

into her cage, but the cage was shut Who took her out? Who shut the door? She even landed in the bowl of Weetabix that was left here on the counter". I yelled. Dumping the lads into the bath, I made a nice cup of hot tea. When Anto, my husband came in. I told him. He went up into the bathroom calling "bird killers, where are the bird killers? The lads were very hurt and started crying and trying to explain. I didn't realise how this was affecting them, so I put my thinking cap on and ran up to the bathroom and said "Oh Oh my God it was me I was giving Twizzel's some water this morning and I couldn't get the end of the cage back on. I meant to ask one of you to do it, but I forgot too Oh SORRY ". The lad's had stopped crying and shouted together "you're the Bird Killers and you blamed us all day".

When the lad's got dressed we had a funeral but we had to find a coffin first. Rooting in the bin I found one a sweet and sour jar. Anto washed it out and put Twizzels into it. We headed out into our back garden and said our goodbye to poor old Twizzels and buried her keeping our fingers crossed Summer our dog does not sniff her out and dig her up.

Mandy K.

READ THE STORY AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

1. What was the bird called?
2. Whose birthday was it?
3. What sat ringing?
4. Who was a real Bird Killer?
5. Who is Summer?



I WONDER

I wonder where they are today
I've seen them from a bit away
I wonder if they'll come and see
And if they ever think of me

I wonder as they grow tall
Will they keep in touch at all
I wonder if they'll ever know
How very much I love them so
In hail rain and thunder
I can only wonder

Martha

NOBODY BUT ME

Somebody is going to ask me the time

Somebody is going to ask me to read

Somebody is going to ask me to spell

Somebody is going to laugh at me

Somebody is going to say

“You don’t know”

And all my life that somebody is me

But not today.

A.S.

MY MONDAY MORNING BLUES

I just got out of bed
Mam, what time is it?
It is eight o'clock
I'm going to be late for work

Downstairs, out the door
Hope this bloody bus comes
It just came, as I was thinking that

Thank God I just made it
I am glad of that or Lar would have killed me
I start the printing machine
I ink the rollers
The smell of ink and white spirits fill my nose
Another week has begun

CIARAN DOYLE

MY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

The day I started school was in Frances Street on the south side of the city. It was terrifying. I was just three and a half. I was very big for my age. They had black habits and long dresses. Some had big white habits that looked like they were going to take flight. I just could not settle in.

My mother was having a baby, my brother Noel. It was the first time I had been separated from my Mam and the nuns had me terrified, so all I did was cry my eyes out every day until we moved to Raheny where I attended Raheny village school. Then I had a teacher, a lovely lady, till they finished Edenmore School and it was nuns again. I just thought they were out to get me. I never liked any of them. I just had a bad experience.

When I was sent down to Sister Elizabeth's office for something silly and got four of the best, she was a very viscous nun and everyone was afraid of her. That is why I did not like school. Today things are a lot better. The teachers cannot hit anyone. It is not acceptable.

Linda

GOING ON THE WRONG SIDE OF LIFE

Life is tough
Life is rough
Life is full of a lot of scruff
Don't depend on others to help at the end of the day
It's up to yourself
So don't go wrong and be strong
So take it day by day
Think and you won't go wrong
Treat yourself with kindness
And overlook the blindness
So be strong and you won't go wrong

T.W.

SHOPPING

To read is to know that is on the labels
No need to have a picture to match something on the shelf
Not to spoof that I do not know.
I will try to say it out to-day.
I am fifty years old, back to school and enjoying it.
It is not the same as the old school days.
Kind people, a cup of tea and a biscuit, a kind work.
Real people, great teachers.
What do you know?

A.S.

GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AGAIN

"I went back to school to learn to spell and write. I was very nervous when I started out. I feel fine now. I hope to gain confidence. The lack of confidence and not knowing how you would be judged was the worst part", said Betty, a housewife. "But now I've realised that it's never too late to learn", She added. "I'm still learning but I'm not afraid of it".

Betty Noone

PATCH ABOUT THE PAST

I worked with a group of women making a quilt. I made a patch about the past. In my patch there are two caravans and kids playing at the fire, my brothers and sisters.

Me and my sister are going for water with a pram, children playing in the snow. Me mother outside warming herself by the fire. We travelled about one mile to get water and one mile back so it was very hard. We had to walk two miles to a shop to get food and then carry it back. It was very hard times but we were happy because we were together. Father and Mother are dead since. Father died very young and I had to rear three brothers without any help, except my husband. I had four kids of my own.

Mother was very sick at the time and was bedridden and died three years after. We knew she was very sick and was going to die but it was still very hard.

All my brothers and sisters are married and most of them live in England. It is not the same when I see them now it is all changed. We are not as close as we used to be.

I am sorry about that and I feel very sad.

Nell Gavin

HOPE

This is full of love
This is full of peace
This is full of hope
This is full of faith

This is a world of joy
This is a world of charity
This is a world of happiness
This is a world of prayer

This is space of time
This is space of fun
This is space of games
This is space of face

Suzanne Hyland

THE GOOD OLD SCHOOL DAYS???

I was beaten, slapped around, afraid to go to school. Christian Brothers – sick men – some good some bad. I could not play sports. Not bad at Irish and Maths but no good at spelling.

A big B/S with no confidence at all. Loved girl's play liked skipping, beds and ball. Poor me. A club foot. In and out of hospital. I did not like books. No T.V. Loved going to the pictures. Fairview Picture House. Popcorn, Ice-cream

A.S.

PLASTERED BUN

One sunny day my family and myself went for a walk to the beach. The sea was calm, the sand was soft, and the children had a ball. So to end a perfect day, we decided to go back to my house and have tea. We each jumped into our cars and headed to y house, but I stopped to buy some bread rolls, not knowing that my sister was doing the same in a different shop.

When we got to my house the sambos were made and ate very fast. Then it was time for the cakes. Real butter for the scones and needless to say we all dived in. Suddenly my sister Paula began to choke. "Jesus bang her back" Marie shouted. After a few seconds she spat out some chewed up bun. Looking through it she found a plaster. They all looked at me. "What! I didn't put it there. I said." "No, you walley go out and ring the shop" they yelled. OK I rang the shop and I was talking to the manager, he was helpful but not overly helpful if you know that I mean. So I jumped into my car to talk to him face to face. No joy there either so I asked him to make a note that I was complaining and also I asked for the bakery to get in touch with me. I then had to ask for my money to be returned to me before I went home, to report in to the family.

By the time I got home my sisters were dying to know what happened. The very next day I got a call we all had been waiting for it was the baker she was very apologetic, and wanted to see the bun so we arranged to meet. At the meeting she suggested to take the bun with to show her factory line, but I had different ideas so I told her that I would keep the bun but I would allow her to take some photographs to bring to her factory line. By this she knew that I meant business. At this point I got up and headed for the door. When she said, "what would you like". Well I don't often get plasters in my bun" I replied as I left the office.

When I got home there was a phone call yes it was the baker offering a weekend away for my husband and myself. Knowing how my sisters would react I told her that my holidays were booked and paid for.

But I would like some options. Right enough she sent three options, 1) £250 in cash
2) £250 voucher 3) weekend to the value of £250. No thanks I replied to
that letter. Another phone call she told me that she wanted to keep the matter out of
the courts. It was then I said I wanted no less than £1000. She had to get back to me
and when she did she said the cheque was in the post.

Telling my sisters about the cheque we nearly came to blows about who owned the
money. O made the calls. Paula ate the plaster. Linda cut and buttered the scones
and Marie paid for them. So we went to Kerry for a week in February and had a great
time. Thanks to the Bakery. We had a ball

Mandy

DEAR NANNY

Dear Nanny,

Thank you very much for having me for the Christmas holidays. It was great seeing yourself and granddad looking so well.

The journey over was very rough, stormy and was a nightmare. On the way the plane was blown all over the place and we had to wear our seatbelts all the time. When we reached Heathrow Airport our plane touched down on the runway and had to take off again to avoid hitting another plane that was already on the same runway. Because of this near accident we lost our place in the queue to land and we had to circle round the airport for two hours before we were let land.

The party in Aunt Dolores house was very good and it was great meeting Uncle Rob and all the rest of Dad's family. The party went on all night and we finished up sleeping all over the house, with bodies every where.

I am looking forward to seeing you all again in the Summer so until then keep well.

Your fond grandson,

Michael