

# FOLK MUSEUM FUTURE ASSURED

THE year 1977 has been a good year in Muckross. At the beginning of the year agreement, which had been reached with the Commissioners of Public Works and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance, was approved by the Minister for Finance. This agreement deals with the future management and utilisation of Muckross House. It ensures continuation of the activities of the Trustees in Muckross House and ensures the continuation of the Folk Museum there.

The negotiations leading up to this agreement have taken a considerable length of time but now the Trustees are happy that that matter has been resolved, and while there are some technical matters of staffing to be sorted out, they regard the matter as being satisfactorily concluded. Secondly, with a view to the future and having felt, for some time, that the organisation should be extended widely to give representation to various parts of the county and to various bodies in the county, the Trustees have set in motion a re-

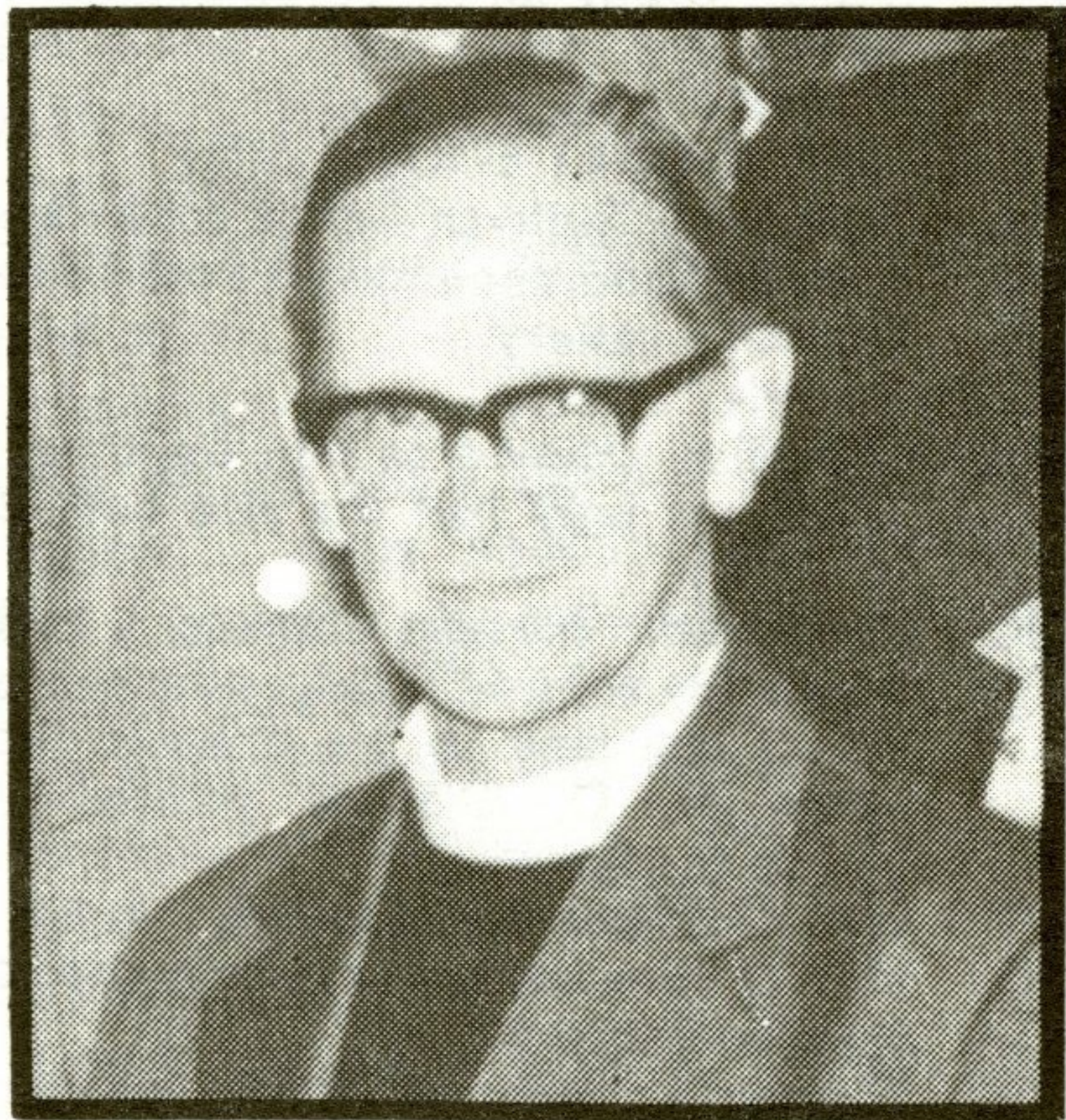
structuring of the organisation. With both of these matters being processed, the Trustees can now think much more clearly about their future activities and one of the very first jobs they took in hand was the re-organisation of our folk-life journal ROS. They appointed a special editorial sub-committee and this edition is the first evidence of their work. It is hoped that ROS will continue to be a lively journal containing (admittedly fairly cryptic) notes on different aspects of the Trustees' work and of Kerry folk-life.

## Our Chairman Canon D. K. L. Earl

I feel very honoured that I have been asked to be Chairman of Muckross House Folk Museum, and like every other Chairman, I have hopes and dreams for my time in office—to reach that mystical figure of 100,000 visitors to the House in one year. We have passed 90,000 this year and who knows what next year will bring! But my hopes for this Kerry Folk Museum are deeper and more important than that.

Craft workers have a special place in the life of the House. I would like to see more crafts, with workers and apprentices displaying skills and workmanship of the highest order. There is little that attracts interest like a well-trained and skilled practitioner at work.

At a different level, I would like to see a Resources Centre in Muckross giving a composite picture of the life of Kerry, drawing on all its varied elements. So much needs to be preserved—there are manuscripts, sound recordings, photographs, etc. The least we can do is catalogue them and make them available for the interested, whether a person doing research or a seeker after knowledge. As one drives around Kerry it is obvious that much that is valuable in our man-made heritage is disappearing. I would love to see the houses people used to live in, and still do in some cases, the places where people worked, the stiles and gateways and a hundred other features of our heritage preserved. People have done much research into



the life of Kerry. It is a shame to have this research work shut in cupboards still in its manuscript pages. I would like to see the Museum of Kerry Folk-life enter the field of publishing, producing periodicals and booklets on aspects of the life of the county, past and present.

It is very important for each one of us to understand fully and to make proper use of the experiences of the past. The Educational Programme has done much to foster this in Primary Schools of the county. The aim should be to extend this into Post-Primary Education.

Are these merely hopes and dreams? I believe that they will be realities in the near future, and whoever may be Chairman when these dreams come true, I am proud that I have been associated, however slightly, with the development of the Kerry Folklife Museum at Muckross House, since I came to Killarney.

# ROS

Journal of Kerry Folk Life

Vol. 7. Christmas 1977

## Crafts at Muckross

### Forge

We are sorry to announce that Martin Cussen of Killila, Broadford, Co. Limerick, who has been the blacksmith at Muckross House since 1972 has retired. We wish Martin the very best of luck and we thank him for enlivening and improving the facilities at Muckross House during the years when he was with us. The forge is continuing with Jerry Cronin from Spa, who has learned all the tricks of the trade from Martin over the past six years. Jerry makes wrought-iron railings, garden furniture, gates, fire-iron sets, fire-grates and is willing to take on any special commission in metal work.

### Weaving

Our congratulations to John Joe Murphy, the weaver at Muckross, on obtaining the Full Technological Certificate of the City & Guilds, London, with distinction during the year. His apprentice, John Cahill, is proving to be a very apt pupil and is making a name for his stoles. John Joe and John can produce a variety of

colours and patterns on floor rugs, wallhangings, dressmaterials, scarves, etc. John Joe's produce got a great boost at the Horse Show in the RDS in August when garments made from his tweed by Caitriona Cahill (née O'Connor) and Annie Hildesley, were shown in a fashion show twice daily at the RDS. These garments indicate how Muckross tweed can be used in a very dignified way.

### Pottery

The pottery of Lyn Stace is continuing to grow in popularity. Her apprentice, Mary Murphy (John Joe's sister), is also proving to be a dedicated pupil and in addition to the practical instruction which she gets from Lyn, she is doing off-the-job training in design and chemistry in the Limerick Technical College. Lyn and Mary produce dinner and tea sets, jugs, mugs, casseroles, goblets in a variety of colours and they also produce quite a number of very spectacular special commissions.

The craftworkers in Muckross House operate between Monday and Saturday from 9.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. You are welcome to come and see them at work and purchase their produce

in our craft shop. Get in touch with us if you are interested in anything special.

## Old Killarney

A postcard showing the Old Market Lane, Killarney, at the turn of the century. John Joe Murphy, weaver at Muckross, has done a research project on this and adjoining lanes—See page 2.



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# OLD KILLARNEY

JOHN JOE MURPHY, the weaver at Muckcross House, wondered who lived in his house in Glebe Place, Killarney, before his parents came to live there. As his curiosity grew, he enlisted the help of former residents of the area, Mrs. Kelly and Nora Casey, and decided to record as much information as possible on the inter-linking laneways to the east of Main Street and High Street and to the north of Plunkett Street (formerly Henn Straet).

In the text we give the names of the lanes as they are now known, but the Ordnance Survey maps surveyed in 1894, and revised in 1938, record Bohercaol as Bohereencael, and Glebe Place as Glebe Bohereencael in the case of the 1894 version and Bohereencael Glebe in the revised edition.

John Joe's information covers the last sixty years or so, and does not specify dates, does not trace all the people or identify ownership, occupancy, etc. It simply names people at present or formerly associated with the houses. It is the type of project which we hope will stimulate people and contribute further information. We hope, too, that it might induce others to do similar projects throughout the county. If they do we will try to publish them in ROS and we will give any other help possible.

The numbers are used only for convenience in relation to the text, and are not the actual numbers of the houses. We have added, in brackets, to John Joe's text, only in so far as we relate to the OS maps mentioned above.

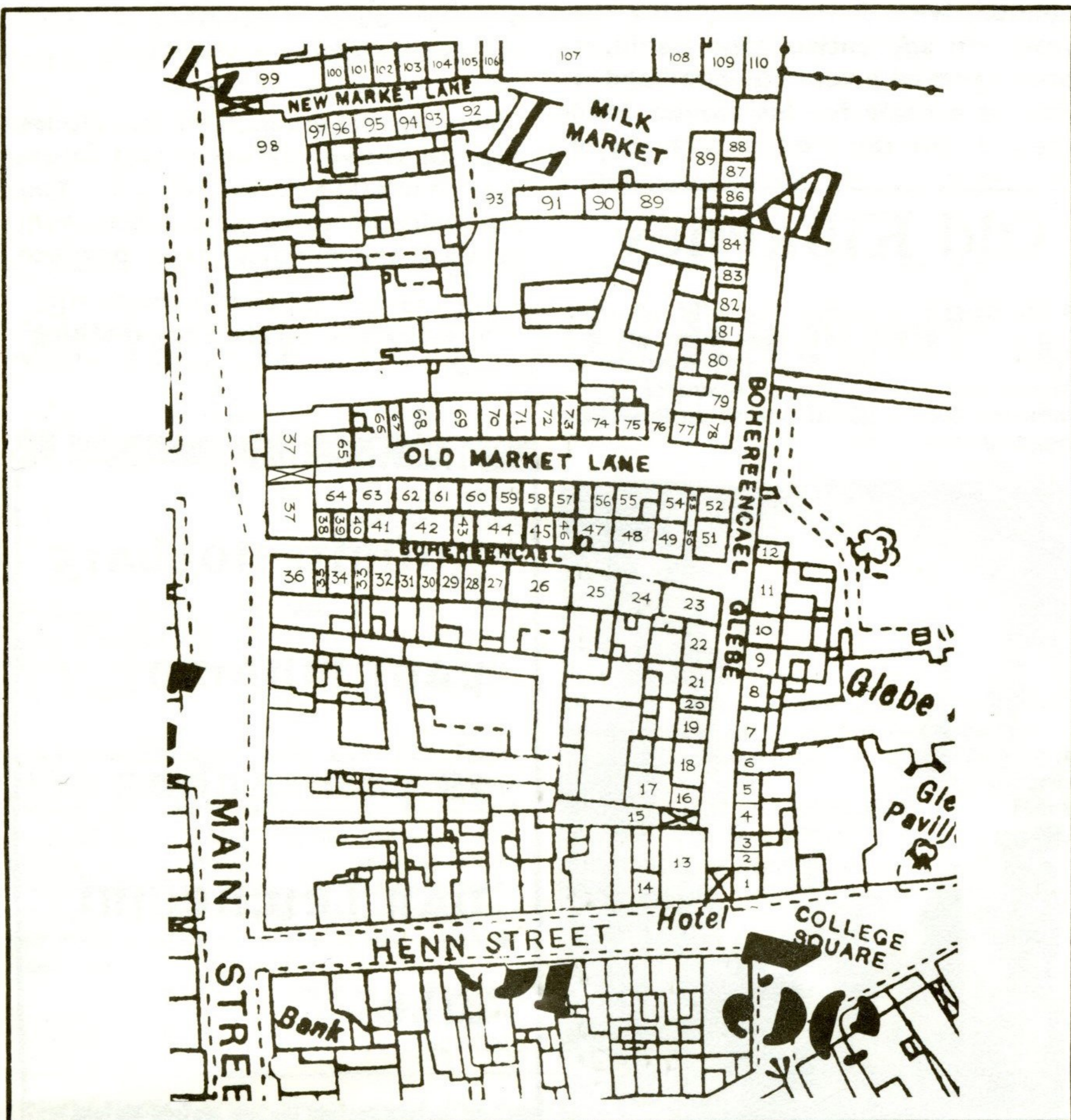
## GLEBE PLACE: EAST SIDE.

1. Counihan's shop.
- 2/3. Mrs. Malley. Always a three-storey building. (In 1894 two houses shown.)
4. Continental Cafe—once a thatched cottage. Also belonged to Con Lyne and Moriartys.
5. Continental Cafe kitchen—Mossie Malley's old house. (4/5 shown as one house in 1938—as two houses in 1894.)
6. Entrance to Glebe Boutique—former-

- ly Mossie Malley's cooperage. (Site not built on in 1894.)
7. Donie O'Leary. Once owned by Mary Ann Dunne — and probably an O'Donoghue owner at one time also.
  8. Cathy Farrell.
  9. Lanigan Store — Dohertys had a restaurant here at one time—and the name Mrs. Lyne also linked with it. First cook-shop.
  10. Billy Doyle's motor-cycle shop. Was formerly owned by Pat O'Sullivan. O'Sheas lived in the house before the O'Sullivans. Con Kelly, tailor, worked there.
  11. Twomeys—this is the original structure. Cook-shop.
  12. ESB transformer—(on the 1938 map but not on the 1894 map.)

## GLEBE PLACE: WEST SIDE

13. Dunloe Hotel—original structure.
14. Donie O'Leary's electrical shop on Plunkett Street.
15. Healy's Arch or lane—back entrances from 13 and 14 lead on to it. Healys apparently owned the Dunloe Hotel at one time.
16. Shed belonging to hotel.
17. Donie O'Leary's shed—belonged to Flahertys.
18. Mossie Malley's brother—coopers. Latterly John Cronin.
- 19/20. Vincent Malley. Mahers of Main Street owned the shed first. M. D. O'Shea bought out Mahers and Malleys bought the shed and converted it to house owned by Vincent Malley (shown as two houses in both maps.)
21. Murphys—once a thatched cottage and once owned by Crowleys.
22. Jack O'Sullivan, harness maker. House built by the O'Sullivans. Possibly prior to this there was a house owned by McCarthys.
23. Louis McGillicuddy. Dave Gleeson, cart maker, former owner. When Dave Gleeson died, Denny Cremin took over but he eventually moved to Ballaugh.



Mr. R. Burke, EEC Commissioner for Taxation, Consumer Affairs and Relations with Parliament, while on a visit to Kerry on November 3, spent a long time in Muckcross and had the opportunity to meet the Trustees. Mr. Burke was accompanied by two of his EEC Cabinet, Messrs. Alan Dukes and Donal Kerr.

51. O'Brien—original structure. Formerly Lynchs.
52. Jack Looney's. Probably belonged to Moriartys at one time.
78. Willie Fitzgerald, engine driver. Jerry Kelliher, harness maker, worked here. Other names involved with this house are: Mag Ryan, Mrs. Daly and John O'Connor, present owner.
79. Miss Fitzgerald.
80. Christy O'Sullivan. Once a thatched house. Formerly owned by Mrs. O'Connor—O'Sullivan married one of the O'Connors.
81. Mrs. O'Connor—also a Miss O'Shea
82. Mike 'Scotch' O'Sullivan. Once a thatched cottage, now a two-storey house owned by Maggie Daly.
83. Green area—space always there—sort of 'no man's land'.
84. Timmy O'Connor.
85. Sylvie O'Donoghue — blacksmith. Resident only in area. Workshop in High Street.
86. Hugh Kelliher—harness maker.
- 87/88. There were two houses where Hilliards' shed now is. Both were owned by Ellie McCarthy. (Built on in 1894, but not in 1938.)
- 89/90/91. Animal pens for slaughter-house.
110. This was built by Farrells as piggery. Before that a clearway to Mangerton View. (Built on in 1938, but not in 1894.)
49. Sheila O'Connor's — was formerly Gleesons.
50. (Shown as narrow site without a building in 1938.)

## OLD MARKET LANE: SOUTH SIDE

53. (Shown as narrow site without a building in 1938.)
54. Gleesons. Had it running into No. 49.
55. No information. (No building in either map.)
56. Gleesons. Coopers ran through from No. 47 on Bothar Caol. (No building 1894—small 'shed' 1938.)
57. Mimi Doherty formerly lived in No. 9 Glebe Place. Left Killarney for Water-ville where Mr. Doherty worked in Butler Arms Hotel. Before the Dohertys, the house was occupied by Johnnie 'Mocka' Lynch.
58. Nellie Cronin, but it was owned by the Mahonys.
59. Maggie 'Hardy' Sullivan.
60. Same Mahonys as 58.
61. Roger McCarthy — later Mrs. McMahon.
62. Phil Doyle.
63. Captain O'Leary—much later owned by Mickie Cooper.
64. Nora Cooper.

## MARKET LANE: NORTH SIDE

37. Jack Scully's shop—section of Old Town Hall.
65. Tom Keogh—formerly Jacko Murphy's —his daughter, Eilis, married Tom Keogh.
66. Laurel's singing lounge—was formerly Jacko Murphy's piggery.
67. (No building in either map.)
68. Scully's workshop—formerly Danny Wren's. He was a baker.
69. John O'Connor—a chef.
70. Mary Ann Barr.
71. Mr. Ryan.
- 72/73. John O'Leary—a baker. (Two houses in 1894, one in 1938.)
74. Nora Casey—formerly owned by Dan Casey, a stone mason.
75. John Gleeson's—Doody. (Building shown in 1938, but not in 1894.)
76. Open way.
111. Morrissey's bakery.

## NEW MARKET LANE: SOUTH SIDE

92. Mrs. Warren.
93. (Built on in 1894 but not in 1938.)
94. Danno Jack Doona, carpenter.
95. Miss O'Sullivan.
96. Foley's butcher shop.
97. Hannifan's.
98. D. F. O'Sullivan's (96/97/98 appear as one building in 1938, as three in 1894.)

## NEW MARKET LANE: NORTH SIDE

- 99/100. Teddy O'Connor—two houses there. Madge Foley, later Mrs. O'Donoghue, converted these into one larger house (after 1938). Formerly Cahills.
- 101/102. Janie Flynn (shown as two houses in 1938, as one in 1894).
103. Caseys. Now credit union office. Mixie Hurley was born there. Also Joe Smith?
104. Matthew Horgan.
105. Nan Foley. Grandmother of late Jim Foley of Woodlawn. Owned by George McGee. Dan O'Connor married one of the Foleys and lived here up to recently.
106. Bob Slattery—Teddy O'Connor's now.
- 107/108. Former marine stores. Slaughter-house, Fire Brigade.

## BOTHAR CAOL: SOUTH SIDE

24. Howard O'Sullivan—once cook-shop.
25. Mick Spillane, shoemaker. Post Office.
26. Curran's bakery.
27. Lucey's.
- 28/29. O'Reillys (shown as one building in 1894, but only half the site built on in 1938.)
30. Moynihan, harness maker. Later owned by John O'Grady, who moved across the lane to his present shop when M. D. O'Sheas wanted to knock the house.
31. Mrs. O'Shea—did laundry.
32. Mrs. O'Shea—this was later owned by Maggie Fitzgerald.
33. Sheahan's chemists—Miss Bowler's house. Johnny Clifford's before Bowlers.
34. Jack O'Shea. Tad Donnell. Interpreter for the Courts. Daughter married Falvey. Emigrated to US.
35. Careys—rear of Red Shadow (built after 1938).
36. Jack Hurley.

## BOTHAR CAOL: NORTH SIDE

37. Old Town Hall.
38. Johnnie McCarthy, shoemaker—now a store.
39. Backyard of Nora Cooper's. There was a house here at one time but can not trace it. (Built on in both maps.)
40. Callaghans had a house here.
41. J. O'Grady workshop. A part of an old bakehouse.
42. Store—also belonged to bakery.
43. The shed and this house belonged to Curran's bakery. (Part of the site only built on in both maps.)
44. Bridie Sugrue—formerly McCarthys.
45. Nellie Cronin.
46. Mimi Doherty (45 and 46 may have been backyards—only partly built on in 1938. No building in 1894.)
47. Gleeson's coopers shop. (Not built on in either map.)
48. House owned now by Donie Sheahan. Was a thatched cottage and owned by Tad Connor.



# THE WREN IN DINGLE

THE 'Wren' tradition (colloquially 'Wran'), is alive and well, in of all places, a town—the town of Dingle. Every Wren's Day (or the 27th if St. Stephen's Day falls on a Sunday!—and, please, do not call it the Englishman's 'Boxing Day'). Wrenboy groups turn out in big numbers on the streets of Dingle, to 'do' the town, door-to-door, in systematic manner.

First come the small children in little groups of two to four, seeking lollipop-money, and then, after twelve noon, the 'grown-ups' take to the trail in huge 'buions', up to forty and fifty in each, with banners and dancing and cavortings and prancing, to, usually, fife and drum accompaniment. The old timers, of course, as usual, say 'they're not what they used to be'; but you still have banners proclaiming 'Sráid na nGabhar', 'Dreóilín Sráid Eoin', 'The Green and Gold Wren', and 'The Quay Wren'. It is a gala day, looked forward to for months before, when 'rigs' (costumes) are being planned and music practised,—a mini *Mardi Gras* to brighten up the winter months.

## COSTUME

What sort of costume do the Dingle wrenboys (many of them now wren-girls) wear? Traditionally, its bits of this and bits of that, as colourful as possible—the latter usually indicating female or curtain material. There are some who, not so traditionally, wear regular fancy dress costumes. There is a cloth-mask hanging over the face with little holes bored for eyes and mouth (from behind which a little falsetto voice emerges). The Sráid Eoin or John Street Wren is unique in that it uses 'straws'—the type worn in other areas by 'Strawboys' at home wedding celebrations: skirt, vest and high hood. Among the skilled makers of these suits is Frank O'Carroll, now living in Green Street. John Street also depart musically from the others in that they use warpipes.

## MONEY

What happens to the money collected, now usually reaching three figures? There is the traditional Ball Night, when some premises is taken over and a good time is had by all. In recent times a healthy and laudable trend is noticed, in that some groups give part or all of the takings to some charity. (The wee ones, needless to say, practical ever, buy their lollipops!

## SPECIAL TRADITIONS

In the surrounding rural areas where the Dreóilín custom is also strong, as well as in Dingle to a lesser extent now, certain very old traditions—whose origins are lost in antiquity, as they say—are kept by some to the present day. One of these was described to me by the late Liam O'Flaherty's wife whom I happened to find myself next to at a banquet affair some ten years ago. She was quite an old lady then and I do not know whether she is still living. She told

me that she had spent her childhood in Dingle and that, being the D.I's daughter, she lived in a mansion in Lower Green Street (later the Munster & Leinster Bank, has now changed ownership again). Her parents strictly forbade her, as a little girl, to go on the street to see the 'Wran', but a kind maid or nanny used to slip her out the back gate on to Gray's Lane where she stood in childish awe watching the colourful parade. She described, in detail, one character who was a part of every group: white clothes, red-raddled face, tómhaisín-hat and pig's bladder on stick; no doubt the 'Amadán'—that Arlequino/Pierrot figure of European tradition. Dingle had then, and has still, a fugitive from the mummer-tradition, the Hobby-Horse (known elsewhere as the 'Láir Bhán'). Mrs. O'Flaherty referred to a period before the turn of the century.

## AN TRADISIUN

Beidh sé suimiúil do dhaoine áirithe a thúirt fé ndeara go bhfuil tagairt don charactaer so, agus do charactaerí nach é, i 'Jimín Mháire Thaidhg'. Seo cúpla sliocht as:

"Bíodh Dreóilín amáireach againn," arsa mise.

"hAnaman Diúcs, bíodh!" arsa Micilín, agus an dá shúil ag dul amach as a cheann. "Agus beadsa im amadán." (Sin é an fear go mbíonn an lomhnán gaoithe aige sa Dreóilín, tá's agat, agus é ag bualadh gach éine leis). . . .

"Beadsa im' Chaptaen," arsa mise.

"Agus cé bheidh ina óinsigh?" arsan fear eile. . . .

"Is mór an náire dibh é!" arsa Cáit, "an Dreóilín bocht a mharú agus bheith ag siúl pludaigh na dúthaí ag lorg airigid 'á chionn." . . .

Dheineas aghaidh feidil as bib le Cáit agus thógas a raibh de ribíní sa bhoiscín aici agus chuireas ar an hata iad. Fuaireas píce agus cheanglaíós tor cuilinn ar a barra agus nead istigh 'na lár, de chaonach. . . . Chuireas orm mo chulaith Dreóilín, na bróga leaistic agus an chasóg eirbaill agus an hata Caroline agus ribíní Cháit ar sileadh leis. Bhuaileas orm an aghaidh feidil ansan agus mo chrios agus mo chlaidheamh, agus deirimse leat, a dhrithéáir, go raibh cuma captaen Dreóilín orm má bhí sé ar éinne riamh! . . .

Bhí málaí ar chuid acu agus léinte fear ar a thuille agus seanasciorta le na mháthair ar fothduine! . . .

Sea agus bíonn go fóill, go háirithe fan dtuaidh: —an 'Óinseach, fear gléasta mar mhnaoi; agus, uaireanta, an 'Bodach'—fear mór groi 'saidhbir' le hata árd; agus, i gcónaí gcónaí, an 'Captaen', an fear i gceannas ortha uilig.

# Extracts from SCHOOL NOTEBOOKS

Being Material collected through the Schools in 1937/38, for the Irish Folklore Commission. The Originals are held now by the Department of Folklore, UCD. Microfilm copies at Muckcross House and Kerry Co. Library.

**New Year's Eve. S449. Lth. 28.** Never draw water New Year's Eve. The water is supposed to turn to wine at twelve o'clock New Year's night. Anybody who remains up to watch it will disappear. People who do not eat enough on New Year's Eve will not eat enough for the year. The first drink on New Year's morning is the drink that will cure for the year. (Faha.)

**New Year's Night. S468. Lth. 55.** On New Year's night at twelve o'clock, people go out to see from what direction the wind is blowing. If it is from the west the Catholics will be prosperous, and if it is from the east the Protestants will be prosperous. People have a great feast on that night as it is said that if people do not eat enough New Year's night, they will not have enough for the coming year. (Sneem.)

**S457. Lth. 895. No. 48.** It is unlucky for a red-haired man or woman to be the first to enter your house New Year's day. (Glenflesk.)

**S458. Lth. 35. No. 22.** Whatever kind of sport a person would be joined in New Year's day, that is the sport he would be joined in during the year. (Faha.)

**S461. Lth. 351-352.** On St. Stephen's Day the wren celebrations were known as the Láir Bhán. A wooden frame representing the back of a horse with a neck and head

(resembling those of a giraffe), attached was covered with a white sheet. This arrangement was laid on the broad shoulders of Tom Kelliher, a tailor who lived at Tullig and who for many years presided over the destiny of the wren. Tom's head enveloped in an aghaidh fidil protruding from the centre of the horse's back. With him was an array of dancers, boys dressed in straw with false faces, a wren bush carrier, a drummer and a flute player. They danced from village to village and collected money while the Láir Bhán opened and shut its mouth—often lifting a shawl or a man's hat. At the end of the day the whole company retired to a publichouse, and at night all adjourned to Kelliher's house where they danced and feasted until the following morning. (Kenmare.)

**Nósanna um Nodlaig. S461. Lth. 399.** Soláthruightear bloc breágh adhmaid i gcóir na teine agus roimh dul a codladh dóibh an oidhce sin baintear amach an rumpa di a bíonn fágtha agus cuirtear i dtuaisge é i gcúinne éigin sa tigh go ceann bliadhna. Creidtear nách baoghal dóibh ón dteine—sa tigh féin no san iothlann fhaid is bíonn bloc na Nodlag slán acu. Dóightear an seana-cheann nuair a bhíonn ceann na h-aithbhliana i dtuaisge acu. (Kenmare)

**An Coinneal.** Coimeádar giota de'n coinneal sa tig agus nuair a bheireann bó laogh usáidtear lasair an coinneal sin chun na ribgruaige do dhogadh dá ciobaigh sar a dtosnuightear ar i a chrudadh arís. (Kenmare)

**Oiche Nodhlag. S461. Lth. 379.** Deineadh na sean daoine troscadh ana cruaidh an lá roimh lae Nodhlag. Bhíodh braon té acu ar maidin agus arán. Ní bhíodh aon dinnéar acu lón eadtrom. Tuitim na h-oidhce a bhíodh an dinnéar acu, prataí agus iasc. (Kenmare.)

**La Coille. S420. Lth. 387.** Tá sé de nós acu an maidean san go mbíonn said ag beannughaidh dá chéile agus deireann said: *Móra thoir agus móra thiar duit, Móra gach mhaidean sa bhliadhain duit, Ní le chomhradh baciaigh do thana ia iarraidh, Ach fé bhrigh na h-Eaglaise fograim iarsma ort.*

Máire Ní Chatháin, Bailemhinúrach, Baile na nGall, Daingean.

**St. Stephen's Day. S400. Page 77.** There are certain customs associated with this day in this district. Early in the morning, the grown boys and young men assemble and disguise themselves in coloured garments. Then they go in procession from house to house with decorated bushes and singing the wren's song:

*The wren, the wren,  
The king of all birds.  
St. Stephen's Day  
It was caught in the furze.  
Although he is little  
His family is great  
Come down here, our landlady,  
And give us a treat.  
If the treat be of the best  
I hope in heaven, your soul will rest,  
If the treat be of the very small  
It will not do those boys at all.  
Up with the kettle and down with the pan,  
A shilling or two to bury the wren.*

Two or three of the party step dance and they receive money and go away very

## LORD VENTRY

There is one tradition of the Dingle Town Wren which is worth recalling. By history's dictation it is no longer with us. In the days of Lord Ventry at Burnham (still remembered by many), the first Wren from Dingle to reach the house on Stephen's Day got one pound, the second ten shillings, the third five shillings, and the rest—nothing! Needless to say, early pre-light starts were made to get the Big Prize and many epic stories are told of the 'race' that morning—sometimes involving salt-sea wettings when taking the shortcut over the old Broken Bridge. Nowadays, the big Wrens appear at noon at the earliest, do one round of the town on parade, while everybody (particularly the musicians!) are still fresh, then do another slow round collecting and entertaining, and being entertained. Finally, nominally at least, all Wrens finish up together at nightfall with another 'round of the town', the final parade. Country Wrens have made their appearance increasingly in the town in recent years and, especially musically, are of a high standard. It is gratifying to hear of one town where Kojak, and what he represents, has not totally conquered!

T.C.O'H.

(continued on page 4)



# MUSEUM DIARY

The full-day organised programme for pupils in National Schools is under way again and will continue up to St. Patrick's Day. This is available Tuesday to Friday by advance appointment and if any teachers haven't got our recent circular, then, perhaps, they would like to get in touch with us.

An additional attraction this year is that Mrs. Gwen Hilliard, who wishes to honour the fifth anniversary of the death of her husband, Dr. Frank, first Chairman and Founder of the Trustees of Muckross House, has offered a prize—the comprehensive book on Kerry, *Discovering Kerry*, by T. J. Barrington. This prize will go to the group which submits the best project on their visit to Muckross and it will be an annual award from here onwards.

We do not put out a programme for post-primary schools, but we will be delighted to hear from any teachers who may wish to utilise the materials and the services in Muckross for their classes.

## NEW AT MUCKROSS

During the year an exhibition on the films made in Kerry between 1910 and 1938 was opened. This is a very comprehensive collection of stills from Kalem films, made in Beaufort between 1910 and 1914, of the 'Dawn' and of the 'Island Man'. There is also some of the homemade equipment which was used to make the 'Dawn'. The microfilms of the schools notebooks mentioned in the last edition of ROS, as well as a school by school index to them, are now available in Muckross. Some of the extracts you see in this edition on 'Christmas Customs', are taken from these notebooks through the courtesy of the Folklore Department, UCD.

Published works on Kerry folk-life, which are in the County Library, have been indexed by a student employed by us this year. We are grateful to the County Librarian and the staff, and to

the County Library Committee for this facility.

We have a student at present working on Local Government in Co. Kerry in the nineteenth century. The results will be available after Christmas and we hope that they will show how government influenced the life of the ordinary people at that time.

During the summer the Office of Public Works employed guides to take people on a guided walk around the gardens and to Muckross Abbey on a regular timed basis.

The GAA Room continues to attract visitors and information. We were delighted to receive, on loan, a very comprehensive scrapbook compiled by the late Mr. Frank Doran from Mr. Dermot McCarthy, Bath, England. It included a couple of team sheets, which we had not had previously—1923 and 1926 All-Ireland finals.

## THE FUTURE

The agreement between the Trustees and the Commissioners of Public Works will ensure the continuation of the Folk Museum at Muckross and ensure the involvement of the Trustees in running the Museum and in deciding the content of the work to be done and the content of the exhibitions. In addition, the Trustees will continue to be responsible for the tearoom, the craft shop and the craft workshops. The Office of Public Works will have exhibitions dealing with their work on National Parks and Monuments, and in this connection, we look forward to an exhibition of unified and high standard. The Trustees are grateful to Mr. Michael Begley, TD, who was Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and who guided the final stages of the negotiations, together with Commissioner McCarthy and Mr. Scanlan. We look forward to the co-operation of Mr. Wyse, the new Parliamentary Secretary or to his successor. The Trustees now feel that they are entering into the second and ongoing

stage of the development of the Kerry Folk Museum, and realise that it is necessary to have a much wider involvement by Kerry people and by organisations in the county. With this in mind, they invited representatives from twentyseven bodies to a meeting in February and were delighted when representatives from twentythree of the bodies actually attended and the other four responded encouragingly. There is still some tidying up to be done—but a new Constitution is in the process of being prepared and as soon as this is ready and some further information on the nitty-gritty aspects of the agreement with the Office of Public Works, it is hoped a new body of representatives of the whole county will perform the functions of the Trustees.

## POSITIONS VACANT

We would like to hear from traditional craftworkers who would like to

work in Muckross House and keep the traditional skills of Kerry alive. We have vacancies for a basket-maker, a wood-carver, harness maker, and a cooper. If you are interested get in touch with us at Muckross, or indeed if you are interested in accepting apprentices, who would be paid by us, to train in these crafts.

## SOME PLANS

During the year we have been preparing for an exhibition on the Kerry born sculptor, Jerome Connor. Táimid buíoch do Dhonaill Ó Murchú agus a bhean Máiréad as ucht an cabhair atá 'á thabhairt acu dúinn.

Through the help of Donal and Máiréad we have secured the original plaster-cast of the figure which Connor did to commemorate the Kerry Poets at Fair Hill, Killarney. Unfortunately, as with some other of Connor's works, it wasn't finished and, subsequently, another sculptor was employed.

# REVIEW

by JERRY ALLMAN

KERRY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL JOURNAL

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THE *Kerry Archaeological Journal* for 1976 retains the high standards of its forerunners, and features topics of interest to readers in Kerry, Cork and Limerick.

Michael Ryan of the National Museum contributes two articles, one dealing with a souterrain in Glenbeigh; the other with a Fulacht Fiadh in Rathmore. From the first we learn of the survival after thousands of years of underground passages, apartments, etc., and in the second we are told of how appetising meals were prepared in ancient times with only a fire, heated stones and boiling water as cooking equipment.

Miss Kathleen Walshe, in her article, traces the fortunes of the Franciscan Order at Ardfert, Lislaughtin, and Muckross in pre-Reformation Kerry. From it we deduce that they did not always have harmonious relations with neighbouring monastic foundations, nor, even, with episcopal authority betimes. All three foundations were overrun towards the end of the sixteenth century (1580-90).

In an interesting genealogical article, Gerald J. Lyne recounts the fluctuating fortunes of the Mac Finin Dubh O'Sullivans. Despite their ups and downs, they managed to cling to their stronghold at Dirreen for over four centuries, during which it became a well-established centre of traditional culture, and may we add a centre too for hard drinking and carousing.

A manuscript in Latin, compiled by Doctor Nicholas Madgett, Bishop of Kerry (1753-74), and described here by Fr. Michael Manning, focuses attention on some pastoral problems confronting Catholic Bishops at that

time. In it, reference is made to various superstitious, beliefs, and practices, which the passage of two hundred years has not totally erased from the public mind. We still hear references to the magpie, the cuckoo, the hare, the cock, and, of course, to the inevitable red-headed woman.

Seán Ó Luíng gives us detailed information on road-building in the twenties of the last century. The costs then and now are illuminating. Hopes were then high that Kingwilliams-town (now Ballydesmond) would develop as the country's first experiment in small town planning. But this dream never came to fruition, nor did that other dream for the development of that rugged terrain known as Pobal Uí Chaoimh.

In recent times much has been written about Skellig Mhichíl, but not so prior to 1851 when John Windle visited it. His description of how he landed, of his ascent and descent, and of what he observed, makes absorbing reading. We are indebted to Peter Harbinson, Fr. Kieran O'Shea, and Pádraig de Brún, for their part in having the Windle document published.

Our gratitude goes out, too, to Mrs. Kathleen Browne, efficient secretary of the Society for her continuing interest, and also to an old friend, Sean O'Connor of Fossa, for his artistic cover design, a 'Window at Muckross'.

## School Notebooks cont'd.

satisfied. That night or a few nights after the wren boys give an entertainment to their friends.

Muiris Ó Ceallacháin,  
Leath-Seirneach,  
Baile a' Bhunánaigh.

**Piseóga. S420. Lth. 509. No. 28.** Gach n'ídh a dhéanfaidh tú mí-cheart an chéad lá Bhliain Nua déanfaidh tú mí-cheart i rith na bliana é. (Smerwick.)

**La Fhéile Stiofán. S420. Lth. 385.** Teigh-eann na garsúin móra agus na garsúin beaga amach agus bíonn eadaí daithte ortha agus a n-aghaidh clúdaighthe ag bailiú pingíní. Bíonn ceól a sheimint acu agus spórt an domhan acu. I gcóir na h-oíche bailigheann siad go léir go dtí tig an óil agus ólann siad an meid a bhíonn bailighthe acu i rith an lae.

Siobhán Ní Beaglaóí,  
Baile an Chnocáin,  
Baile na nGall.

**Oíche Shamhna. S420. Lth. 384-385.** Bailigheann na cailíní agus na buachaillí go léir go dtí aon tig amháin. Bíonn poire agus ulla go leor ag gach duine. Pioctar amach cailín agus buachaill agus cuirtear dhá phoire isteach sa teine ag rosta. Má fhanann an dá phoire i n-aice le chéile pósfar an bheirt. Seo ramham a bhíonn acu á rádh:  
*Píosam pósam, lamhna phoire,  
Méisín uisge i lár na teine,  
Is tá mo lamhna pósta.*

Faighitar cré agus uisge agus fáinne annsan, agus cuirtear ar an mbord iad tamaill ón a chéile. Buailtear puicín ar gach duine agus imthigheann gach duine go dtí an mbórd. Má chuireann duine a lámh ins an cré deirtear go mbeadh sé cailte i gceann bliadhna agus má chuireann sé lámh ar an bhfainne go mbeidh sé pósta i gcionn bliadhna agus má chuireann sé lámh san uisge beadh se imthighthe thar sáile i gcionn bliadhna.

Siobhán Ní Beaglaóí,  
Baile an Chnocáin,  
Baile na nGall.