

Angela Begley

Female

0:00:00 – 0:04:00

FAMILY –

Angela was born 8th March 1930 at home in Lemenagh, Kilnaboy. Her parents were George Pilkington from Lower Commons and her mother was Annie Keane from High Commons, Kilnaboy. They lived on the top of the hill near the CÃºinne Cam (the hairpin bend) Her father got a land divide from the Land Commission. His parents were Johnny Pilkington and Annie Flynn. Angela does not remember them. Her maternal grandparents were John Keane and Winifred Brody who came from Ruan. She lived with them for about ten years from the age of 7 years.

0:04:00 – 0:10:38

LIVING WITH HER GRANDPARENTS –

Angela recalls her time spend living with her grandparents and her uncle and aunt John and Eileen Keane. She loved living with them. Her grandfather was a very quiet man who went quietly about his duties while her grandmother was very active and talkative. She travelled to Corofin every Friday in her donkey and car to do her shopping. They kept cows, calves and goats. She helped on the farm. She remembers herding the goats out among the creggs. She brought them home and helped to milk them. She relates the story of a kid (goat) who had been missing for a few days. Angela heard a sound like that of a kid when she was visiting her aunt. She searched and found it down in a scailp (a large hole). She lay down flat and pulled him out. She was delighted to bring it home. They always had a kid for Easter Sunday. Tommy Power from Corofin and Skerritt from Ennistymon, both butchers, bought kids from them.

They used the goats' milk for the household and sold the rest. Angela brought a

bottle of kids' milk to school. They had to leave the milk bottles outside under a rose bush near the gate for safety reasons.

0:10:38 - 0:14:58

SIBLINGS -

There were 9 in her family - 5 brothers and 3 sisters. All her brothers, Michael, Seán, George, Tom and Vincent are dead. Her sisters Mary, Bridie and Ella are alive. May is 88, she goes to a day centre 3 times a week and she goes to England for Christmas. Her grandmother Keane was almost 103 when she died. Angela's father was 91 and her mother was 88.

0:14: 58 - 0:21:56

EARLY MEMORIES/ FIRST HOLY COMMUNION/ CONFIRMATION -

She made her First Holy Communion in Kilnaboy when she was 7. It was a simple event. She wore a white dress. She was confirmed in Corofin by Bishop Browne. There were no parties in those days Angela relates a story about a time she was late for school. The time had changed but Angela went by the old time so she was late for school. She got 2 slaps from the teacher and was never told why. She used to bring a bottle of goats' milk to the teacher's house every morning so he didn't get milk for 2 weeks. She recalls another occasion when she was slapped because she wasn't allowed to attend school one day of a heavy snowfall in the first week of May. The sun shone later in the day. The following day she got 2 slaps.

0:21:56 - 0:26:10

THE FAMILY HOME -

Angela describes her home as a slated house with 3 bedrooms, a sitting-room and a fine big kitchen. It has an open fire with a crane. The bread was baked in a 3 legged oven beside a red hot fire. The hot coals were placed on top of the oven. The 3 legged pot was hung by a crook on the crane to boil potatoes. The height

could be adjusted by using crooks in holes at different heights. The fire had a grand hob. There was a hole for the ashes at the side of the fire. The fire was raked at night and the coals were used with a few sods of turf to start the fire the following day. Whoever got to the hob first could sit there.

0:26:10 – 0:28:53

CUAIRD/CUAIRT/RAGAIRNE HOUSE –

Angela tells that a few men came to her house regularly on cuaird. She names some of those men – Michael Carkill, Joe Connors, Dick Scales and his son Walter. They often played a round of cards. One neighbour played a tin whistle and the children danced around the house. They danced “The BÃ³thar Á³ Thuaidh” and “The Verse of Vienna” around the kitchen. It helped pass away the night.

0:28:53 – 0:35:34

JOBS –

Each member of Angela’s family had their own jobs to do. She had to polish the shoes for Sunday on Saturday. She didn’t like that job The cutlery and the teapot had to be scoured on Saturday until they shone. A large pot had to be filled with small potatoes. They had to be washed and scrubbed first. 2 pots were boiled on Saturday for the pigs, one was for Sunday. When boiled they were pounded and meal was mixed with them. Certain jobs could not be undertaken on a Sunday. Angela also had to cut the cabbage or turnips with a special knife that her father made from a piece of a blade from a machine. They had hens, ducks and geese. They had a horse and car. Rain water was collected in barrels from the roofs for washing potatoes. Several buckets of water had to be carried from the spring well down across the road for household use. They also helped with haymaking and worked in the bog in Cohey.

0:35:34 – 0:39:22

MASS/ROSARY –

Later they got a side car which they used to go to Mass on Sunday. Her father advised them to be there in time. When he arrived at the church her father filled his pipe before mass and then he smoked it after mass as he chatted to the other men under the trees. Her father always gave out the Rosary in the home. She recalls an occasion when her brother Michael made her laugh when he said Hairy Molly instead of Hail Mary. The Rosary was recited every night at 6 or 7 o'clock. The boys could go out after the Rosary was said. At her grandparents the Rosary was said at 4 o'clock.

0:39:22 - 0:50:00

LIGHTING/WATER -

Their home was lit by a double burner oil lamp and they had a candle in the room. There was no electricity or running water in her home or at her grandparents' home. She worked for 2 seasons in Lisdoonvarna and they had electricity. The she worked at Burkes, Kilfenora for 10 years.

0:49:55 - 0:51:44

THE EMERGENCY/WWII -

She has no memory of the Economic war but she remembers the Emergency well. She recalls the ration books. Tea, sugar and tobacco were rationed. Michael Jones in Carron (now Cassidys) was very good to her father. He often got a quarter lb. of tea and a half-quarter ounce of tobacco there. They drank either milk or cocoa. They had their own potatoes, cabbage, carrots, parsnips, turnips, onions, bacon, milk and butter.

0:51:44 - 0:56:28

BUTTERMAKING -

Angela describes the buttermaking process. The cream was collected for the week. The dash churn had to be washed, scalded and allowed to cool before the cream was put in. Then the dash was used. The skimmer was like a big timber

saucer. Then it was shaped with the spates. Her mother had shamrock butter prints. They would have a cup of fresh buttermilk and some fresh butter with the dinner on Friday. It was lovely.

Her mother sold butter to Johnny Mac in Corofin who was a butter agent. She also sold any surplus eggs. She recalls that any visitor who came to the house while the butter was being made would say "I better put the size of my head in this now". If it wasn't done it could bring bad luck. She says her family were not superstitious.

0:58:28 – 1:03:17

KILLING THE PIG –

Angela recalls the killing of the pig. A big pot of boiling water was put in the big tub. Some cold water was added before the pig was put in. When killed the blood was drawn into a bucket. A washed and scrubbed potato was put into the blood and it was stirred until it was cold. After scalding the pig was put on a big table and scraped. Then it was hung up and opened. The heart, the liver and the puddings were taken out. The following day it would be salted and the puddings were made the next day.

Then the puddings would be washed and put in a basin. The water was changed very often, every day for 3 days with a pinch of salt added to purify the skins. The puddings were filled and boiled until solid and hung on a stick between two chairs to cool. The ingredients included the blood, breadcrumbs, onions, all spice, cinnamon, nutmeg, pepper salt, oatmeal, rice, pepper, salt, a grain of sugar and some grated liver, all mixed with a drop of water. She often filled puddings at home and later with her sister Ella Flanagan in Lisdooney. Ella used to cook her a meal of tender porksteak and puddings before she left for home and Angela loved it. Her aunt also made sausages using pork, breadcrumbs and spices.

0:00:00 – 0:04:37

SAINT MARTIN'S DAY & MICHAELMAS DAY –

Her mother reared chickens and she made sure to keep a cock for Saint Martin's Day on the 11th November. The cock was killed and the blood was sprinkled at the doorstep. Some people soaked up the blood in cotton wool. Then the cock was roasted and eaten. This was done in honour of Saint Martin. It was known as saint Martin's Cock. In her younger days a goose was killed and eaten for Michaelmas day the 29th September. It was known as the Michaelmas Goose. Times have changed and a lot of the old traditions have faded away.