

Bridie (Morgan) & Mary (Casey) Meaney

Female

File 1 0:00:00 - 0:17:54

HURLING -

Bridie says their four brothers hurled - Christy, Jazzer, (Joe), Patsie & Tony. Jimmy Smyth started up the training in Port Field. That was around the early '40s. They became senior in 1948. Jimmy was going to Flannan's. Jazzer & Jimmy played centre field. Jazzer & Tony played for Clare. Ruan were in the county final in 1948. Their brother Joe and Jimmy Smyth played in the Railway Cup and the Munster. They speak of the junior All-Ireland where London beat them by a point. They had no televisions so hurling was all they had apart from hunting with ferrets. They speak of the hurling song they sing which they say was written Jimmy Ward from the Kilfenora Band. They'd picked up the songs from the people they would have visiting the house, playing cards etc. The title of the song is 'The County Final of 1948' or 'The Long Final'. They recall decorating the pony and trap. When they won three people had to go to house to collect money to give the team dinner and they borrowed the shirts from Clooney. They were always asked to sing the song. The final was a draw with a replay. The teams marched up Parnell St to Cusack park. They were playing Clarecastle, (the Magpies). They sing the song.

There was a big sing-song on the pubs after the match. Joe played up until the mid '50's. Their father & uncles played as well.

0:17:55 - 0:25:30

ENTERTAINMENT/SINGING -

They say that in the winter time then men would be hunting with their ferrets. Joe

Cooley, (accordion player), would call to their house. They were dances in different house once a week or so. They had a gramophone in their house. They mention Joe Cooley again. They speak of playing pitch and toss. They got the song, 'Our Hands Are Clasped', from Larry Hayes in Tulla. He was a traveller that would come to their house. He said he used to play with the old band in Tulla. They were only five or six when they got the words to the song. They would make a collection for him from the hurlers. They used to collect jam jars and sell them at the time of WWII. They sing the song.

0:25:31 - 0:27:48

WWII -

They had most of their own food except tea and sugar. Their father would go in on Wednesdays with his coupons to get the tea, sugar and soap etc. They speak of getting tea and cigarettes on the black market. An aunt from America would send them tea bags and a machine and tobacco to roll cigarettes.

0:27:49 - 0:30:49

FAIR DAYS -

There was a fair in Ruan on the 17th June. Farmers including their father would have to head off for Tulla at 1 in the morning. They say a Crowe family would walk 500 head of cattle to Ballinasloe. They speak of Spancill Hill fair.

0:30:50 - 0:31:25

LACE MAKING -

Lace making was done in Ballyalla. Their mother trained there, in embroidery.

0:31:26 - 0:43:02

WAR OF INDEPENDENCE -

They say the barracks in Ruan was taken over by volunteers. Neighbours of theirs

were involved. Their uncle was a sergeant in the IRA. Their father, Paddy Meaney and their uncle Tommy would run dispatches when they were young. They speak of the Black & Tans putting their mother's brother, (Michael Hayes), against the wall to shoot him. They quizzed their father and said he was very well dressed for a farmer's son. Their mother would have messages in the folds of her skirt. They speak again of the barracks. They recall visiting Michael Collin's house and Béal na Bláth. They say that the volunteers trained in Ballygriffey. She recalls someone calling at the door coming to join the volunteers. They recall guns being found in the reeks of hay. They say there was still IRA activity in the '40s and '50s.

0:43:03 – 0:55:11

FEAST DAYS –

They would go to the well in Liscannor on St Brigid's Day. They speak of the branches up on the doors on May Eve. You couldn't give a bottle of milk to anyone without shaking salt on it for fear they'd take away your milk. They speak of the Corpus Christi parade. They mention the hymn, 'Glorious St Patrick'. They recall fasting before Easter. They mention hymns for holy week. They recall Easter bonnets and eating the hen/duck eggs. They remember a woman taking them to the woods and cooking the eggs. They would have a young goat for the dinner.

They describe the Christmas candle in the turnip. They recall getting a wind up man and woman and the old people would come to have a look at them. They recall the church lit up with the candles at the 8.30 am mass. They speak of the Christmas dinner. The kitchen would have to be white-washed for Christmas. They were afraid to miss the choir. They recall skating on the lake. They remember people going on the wren and then having a dance afterwards. They say the Kelly's, Cassidy's and the Hayes would have dances in their house. There would be cards played at Johnny Connor's.

0:55:12 – 1:00:00

JIMMY SMYTH/MICKEY KELLY SONGWRITERS –

They speak of Jimmy Smyth, who wrote songs and played the piano. He worked in the courthouse but then moved to the GAA headquarters in Dublin. He then did a doctorate on hurling songs. Mickey Kelly wrote and composed songs. They read out a song about the barracks in Ruan, which he wrote and they also mention the 'Lovely Back Roads of Dromore'. Mickey Kelly wrote a song about the hurlers as well. They sing another song about the game won by Ruan in 1948.