Christy O’Donoghue

Male

FILE 1 0:00:00 – 0:01:49
BACKGROUND –

Christy was born on the 26th May 1930 in the railway cottages just outside Lahinch. His father was a ganger on the railway. His grandfather, Rodger O'Donoghue, came from Rathmore in Co. Kerry and was offered a job as inspector on the West Clare Railway. He had thirteen children.

FILE 2 0:00:00 – 0:04:02
FAMILY –

Christy says his father could drive a train but he took a job as a ganger as he wanted to be near home. He remembers going to school in frosty weather barefoot. He says he and his sister would share the same pair of boots. They lived in a cottage owned by the railway. The train would pass a few feet from the cottage. He remembers putting pennies and even a needle on the rails before a train went by. He speaks of the old pennies. He would get one for his birthday.
His grandmother and grandfather would go to a pub called Combers and they would drink a couple of pints each. He says there were gatekeeper's cottages all along the railway.

0:04:03 – 0:06:47
WEST CLARE RAILWAY –

Outside their own cottage there were railway gates and they would have to open and close them. His uncle Mickey used to drive the trains. He recalls one time when one of his sister's forgot to open the gates and his uncle drove straight through the gates. Another day he recalls a child about to run across the tracks

when the train was coming but Christy shouted at him and stopped him. Christy would get some work with the railway sometimes but he would have to work with the Ennistymon gang instead of his father's gang.

0:06:48 – 0:08:23
SCHOOL –

Christy went to the Lahinch school next door to his cottage. There were four teachers. Dan Riordan was one teacher. Miss Clare was another teacher and every year she would buy blue jumpers for the boys out of her own money.

0:08:24 – 0:18:00
SPORTS/ENTERTAINMENT –

Christy played football. He recalls an Irish army camp in Lahinch with 12 huts. There was a hall there called the Slua Hall and they would play basketball there. In the night-time they had bands there including Jimmy Shandon from Scotland. He recalls caddying for the golfers at the golf club. He speaks of them bringing the Irish Close to Lahinch in the '40s and he mentions some golfers; John Burke and Johnny Fitzsimons. Christy was caddying for John Burke. John won the competition and Christy describes how he won it and how he helped him. His says local people would be playing golf all through the winter. He tells a story of him and his friends playing on the golf course when they shouldn't have been

0:18:01 – 0:19:44
SLABHCÃN –

Christy begins talking about 'slabhcán', [sea algae] and this conversation continues on File 3.

FILE 3 0:00:00 – 0:04:34
SLABHCÃN –

Christy describes what 'slabhcán' is and how to cook it. He then talks about carrageen and how they would pick and dry it. They would sell it to companies. A man would wait at the station in Lahinch and buy it from them. Christy describes sea-grass. He said Tom Dorgan in Lahinch would sell all these foods from the sea. Christy says there was a river coming down into Creek Strand which is about a half mile from Lahinch and that's where some of the old men would fish for trout. They would tease the men by throwing stones into the river.

0:04:35 – 0:14:44
BOAT FROM ARAN ISLANDS –

Christy recalls working for Jimmy Henchy, an undertaker, in Ennistymon. He was working with two men, Mickey Shannon and John Griffin and the two of them were married to two sisters. The sisters' father's name was the 'Cuckoo O'Brien'. Christy says he played the accordion and Mickey brought him and John in a small boat to Aran to play. He says he was often out in a boat fishing for mackerel with Frank Lenane in Cree. Mickey had too much to drink and the island men tried to persuade them to stay as they thought it would be dangerous to go out in the boat but Mickey insisted on taking the boat home. He describes the journey back. They followed the wrong light back to the mainland. Mickey fell asleep in the boat and they found out at the end that he had plugged a leak in the boat while asleep! Christy describes seeing all the stars reflecting on the water. When they got to the mainland they went to the mens' cottage and they found they were busy dancing set inside!

0:14:45 – 0:34:33
BOBBY GARDINER –

Christy says Bobby Gardiner is one of the greatest players or all. He remembers him in taking part in competitions when he was young in Miltown. He recalls helping Bobby with a tune before a competition. Bobby won the competition.