

# Francis Scanlon

Male

0:00:00 - 0:29:07

BUILDING TRADE -

Francis began his trade at eighteen years of age with a relative of his mother by the name of Halpin. Francis speaks of some of his forbears and the works that they were involved in. His Brother PJ was coming up behind him so he could take over the farm work.

To be in a trade you gave three years of your life for free to learn and Francis speaks of some of the places he worked on in Dunlicky road.

Francis goes through the process of his education in the trade and its methods and says all work was done by hand. The contractor's hours would go from nine until six or seven. The Boss might give him six or seven shillings some weeks.

The work was very physical but they would have the cup of tea and his mother would have the dinner ready when he came home. The method of learning was to work as you go and that way you would pick it up.

Francis speaks of some of the tradesmen in the area and talks of the probability of his own house being built in the early 1860's. It was refurbished and slated in 1937 and Francis redid it totally in the 1970's.

He also worked on the church in Doonaha in 1953 and says that it was a community effort by decree of the priest for the heavy work.

Francis has a discussion on the Queally's from Doonaha.

They worked on the church in Bealaha for nearly a year in 1954 also with help

from the local farming community.

Francis speaks then of working in 1955 on Powers in Dunmore near Doonbeg: the year they beat Faughs from Ennis in the County final, and they were there about ten months.

The supplies were sourced in Shaughnessy's in kilkee and said Mrs Shaughnessy could get anything. Alternatively Doherty's in Kilrush would be used also. Most of the stuff ordered would be delivered to the site by the suppliers.

Francis makes the comparison of the times referring to the use of the mobile phone and wondered how would they do without it.

They started in 1956 near Doonbeg to Gerry Boland a local lorry driver and built a new Bungalow for him. Halpin had a good head on him and built well and says he was related to Liddanes from the west who were said to have brains to burn.

The next place to be built was a place for a daughter of Chardo Clancy in 1957 who married Sean Shea and she got the place from an aunt.

1958 was another house build and that was the last year Francis worked for Halpin. His brother PJ wanted to put up a barn for their father and wanted to go to England.

0:29:08 - 0:31:48

FARM WORK -

During this time period Francis began a few jobs of his own particularly for the Bohannons, and speaks of roofing the house using Asbestos and the method employed.

He also worked the farm at home. They would work at the hay using forks to turn it. His father was born in 1892 and was hale and hearty until he passed away at eighty six.

In wintertime Francis would do work around the area and would work sometimes for James Lillis who would do a lot of partitions and indoor painting. Lillis was also the undertaker.

0:31:50 - 0:45:55

#### KILKEE IN THE FIFTIES -

Francis speaks of Kilkee as still being a resort town and the limerick people coming in the summer.

He mentions a number of business premises in the town; Williams for example and talks about where they were sited and some are still in existence. Many of these gave much local employment and Francis knows much of the history of the people that owned them.

He outlines extensively where they came from and who they were married to and how their children got along.

Francis says that the mobile home business probably began in the early eighties, prior to that people rent a house for their holiday or do B&B.

Kilkee was always a quiet town.

0:45:56 - 0:53:44

#### ENTERTAINMENT IN KILKEE -

Francis speaks of the Olympia hall that was in business from the 20's. It was mostly dedicated to Irish music and Dance unlike the Hydro which was focused on more modern music.

Local musicians played in the Olympia and often more famous acts that Francis named. It cost around two shillings or a half crown to enter and it would be open from ten o'clock until around one o'clock. You would cycle to town if you were living outside and there was no alcohol.

Francis speaks about the kilfenora céile band and Tulla céile band and he recalls their relatives and where they came from.

Fitzpatricks was another venue; it was sited in a house near Kilkee church. Francis speaks of the type of activity involved of an average night and mentions the Russell's from Doolin coming one night.

Francis speaks of the day trippers coming and says the numbers have dropped possibly due to climatic changes.

0:53:45 - 1:04:22

BLACKSMITHS -

Francis speaks of two blacksmiths in the town of Kilkee named Bernard Costello and Gerry McGrath. Both did odd jobs for him such as his fireplace etc. but Gerry would shoe the pony or horse.

Francis goes through the process of shoeing the animals and said it would have to be done every couple of months or so.

The Blacksmiths were highly reputed and would do any job to a high standard. They had to be good with animals also. They were sited in the town and were very busy men.

All work was done with horse or pony that time and the Horses were mostly bought in Kilrush at the fair or les so in the Spancill Hill fair.

Francis speaks of the Kilkee races going ahead at the time. They would normally go ahead in September when most of the farming work would be done. He describes what would go on for the day and mentions that the first day would be ladies day.

Francis speaks of a local man Tommo Keane who was big into the racing getting killed from a kick of a horse at the races in Cross, Francis describes the incident

which occurred forty five years ago.

Many would eat out at the local hotels and restaurants and travelled by horse and car. There was often a drink taken but not much. There would be race dances on as well and Francis speaks of Johnny McMahons Orchestra who would play in the town.

1:34:01 – 1:40:00

#### CHARACTERS/HOUSE PARTIES/CHANGING ATTITUDES –

Francis recalls some people who were characters in the area one of who was named Cobey Murrihy who was well able to tell a story and he was very funny, Francis says where he used to frequent and says that he was born with a talent.

There was a fella by the name of Keane who was very good also but there were never women entertainers.

Francis mentions a couple of houses where people would come to and play music including his own over eighty years ago.

Francis feels that the day of the cuaird is over and that people now don't have the time to even talk to each other now. He says gone is the day of the meitheal where neighbours would help each other out.

1:40:01 – 1:49:50

#### ALL-IRELANDS –

Francis never really had the time to travel abroad and would never move from Kilfeeragh. He ran the place and looked after his mother but recall going to the all- Ireland in Dublin.

Francis speaks of a local hackney driver named Jimmy Kelly; who was from Cree and played football for Cooraclare in his youth in the twenties and thirties and was a great footballer.

In 1958 Francis went to see the All Ireland Dublin V Derry with Jimmy and three others, Johnny Doherty (the tailor), Joe Lucey (in charge of the water in Kilkee) and Harry Claghán (a schoolteacher). Francis left his bike at his uncle's place at ten o'clock and off they drove.

It took about five or six hours and Francis was dropped at his aunt's door in Glasnevin and he walked in the following day to Croke park.

Derry was narrowly beaten on the day by Dublin and Francis had never seen crowds like it.

Francis went again in 1960 and 61 and again in 1968 and spoke of the great Down team of the time.

1:04:23 – 1:14:13

KILKEE FAIR –

They would be held twice a year in March and October and people from Kilbaha and cross would leave at three or four in the morning and drive the cattle in to Kilkee.

Francis says it would be a very big fair and buyers would come in to purchase.

Donkeys and ponies were often sold there too and Francis outlines the uses that donkeys' could be put to.

Francis still keeps two donkeys' as a side interest and he describes how he handles them.

Sometimes fowl would also be sold at the fair but there would be very little children's' activities.

Kilrush horse fair was a very big affair and Francis' father had purchased there. He mentions one in particular that they had for eighteen years but he got the

‘staggers in the finish’.

Francis speaks of vets looking after animal sickness and says that if it was not too serious there were local people who would handle it, but it was mostly vets.

1:14:15 – 1:23:41

CARRIGAHOLT –

Francis speaks of Carrigaholt as being a small town but used not go back much and the people there would have céilÃs in the long dock pub.

Back toward Cross there was Foley’s pub and he used to go in there whilst on a job.

He doesn’t really recall much from farther back than Kilkee but speaks of the people as ‘back from the west’.

1:28:27 – 1:34:00

JOHN ‘CULLY’ MARRINAN FISHING AND POLITICS –

Francis speaks of John ‘Cully’ Marrinan, Who was born in Cusheen, Francis shows on a map where he came from.

Marrinan was a very talented man who made cars and carts and was also notes as a currach builder.

Francis speaks at length of the fishing that went on in the area near to Kilkee but thinks much of it was a side line to bolster income.

Many went out from Kilkee to catch fish. Francis speaks of another man named Bill Haugh who was alleged to have taken part in the War of Independence.

Francis thinks there were some districts involved in the War but others had no interest in it. They didn’t want anything to do with trouble.