

# Frank Sheedy

Male

File 1 0:00:01 - 0:05:59

HOME & SCHOOL -

Frank lived in the family hotel in Lisdoonvarna in the early 1930's. He had but one sister along with his parents living there. He describes the early memories he had of the old school with the outside dry-toilets. The head teacher was Mr. Lynch. An episode where ink was thrown on his copybook by another pupil led to Frank receiving corporal punishment. But revenge was swift as the offender was promptly dealt with by Frank at 3pm in the school yard. The cleaning of the school was on a rota basis by three pupils each week. One such week led to another incident where Frank again received corporal punishment even though he had gone home, leaving the other two boys to finish the work. They cut new window cords with a small hatchet on the teacher's new desk to use for spinning tops. Having received the punishment unjustly the truth of the matter was revealed when Canon Lydon was sent for to be informed of the offence. The other boys didn't exonerate Frank and it wasn't until one of them was about 80 years old that he confessed the truth to Frank.

0:06:00 - 0:09:40

SERVING MASS -

His grandfather, Michael Griffin, a retired national teacher from near Nenagh, came to live with them in Lisdoonvarna. He taught the Mass servers the Latin responses to the Mass which Frank served often. Before Michael came to Lisdoonvarna he had spent some time after retiring with his daughter who was married in Kansas City, USA. While he was teaching in Kilkeary N.S. outside Nenagh he helped the farmers there with their accounts. One night after having had a few drinks in Nenagh he returned with a revolver with which he intended

shooting the landlord or so he told his wife. She hid the revolver under a loose floorboard. Many years later the revolver was discovered when renovations were taking place. Frank offered to buy it for historic reasons but the owner refused. Michael Griffin is buried in Doolin cemetery.

0:09:41 - 0:12:22

SPA WELLS -

Frank's other grandfather, John Sheedy, was a member of the Lisdoonvarna Spa Wells Committee. Another member, also an hotelier, had taken possession of the Wells for his own gain. He controlled the monies and held the keys. This was not deemed correct by the committee. John Sheedy forced the door to the buildings for the committee to take control. Court proceedings followed which resulted in the control being returned to the committee.

0:12:23 - 0:21:50

SCHOOL DAYS -

Before Frank talks about his secondary school days he mentions Mr. Lynch, his primary school principal again in a lighter vein. When the class couldn't work out a maths problem he would say, 'By the powers of Murrough (Fanore), ye're a parcel of bacachs, (beggar-men) I'll send for Patsy Costelloe and he'll do it for ye, ye parcel of bacachs.' [Patsy Costelloe was an old man who lived across the street from the school and was regarded as being very clever] Frank attended three secondary school, Ennistymon CBS, Terenure College and Mount St. Joseph, Roscrea. His attendance at Ennistymon didn't last because he got many wettings cycling to and from the school. Eamon Burke and Michael Brennan cycled with him from Lisdoonvarna and they were joined in Kilshanny by Dan Considine of the pub. The superior was very severe who used the leather quite a lot. One morning they got punished for being late. They had lingered for some time in Paddy O Neill's shop on the way up to the school drinking 'Bees Wine'. Mr. Michael Mulqueeney from Kilfenora he liked and remembers a pupil named Barry from

outside Ennistymon always looking at the clock to which Mr. Mulqueeney would say, 'de Barra, ná bÃ ag féachaint ar an gclog', several times during each class. He had to walk home late one evening as his bicycle was missing having played a football game against the West Clare boys who were waiting for the train. His mother decided then to send him to Terenure college, Dublin as she was a relative of the Sub-Prior. There he took to rugby which he enjoyed. When his mother's relative died Frank refused to go back as he told her he was lonesome after him. His last school was in Roscrea where he got on much better and played lots of rugby. Fr. Ailbe the Prior was 'a gentleman' and treated the students very well. But the rugby team got the best treatment of all; their table in the refectory was christened 'Cannibal Island', where they got the best of grub. The episode of jumping over the college wall into the Brosna River with another student Gallaher from Achill Island who was a top class swimmer, Frank recalls. He himself was a poor swimmer but Gallaher pulled him out onto the bank. Frank also describes playing rugby against St. Columbas, Wicklow and Blackrock College.

0:21:51 - 0:34:54

RETURNING TO LISDOONVARNA/GAELIC FOOTBALL -

Frank returned to Lisdoonvarna and resumed his life working in the hotel, farming and playing football. In 1943 during the war when there was a scarcity of petrol he tells about the team from Lisdoonvarna travelling to Miltown in Seamus Moloney's long-car pulled by a team of horses. He explains how rugby ruined him for football as he got into too many rows. Again he talks about rugby in Dublin and getting his nose broken. He gives his opinion on the present Irish rugby team. He once played a hurling match in Tipperary, was put off and never played again. Next he describes playing for Doolin and latterly Lisdoonvarna. Some of these games were of the rough variety with many rows especially against Ennistymon, Kilfenora and Quilty. 1947 stands out for him as Lisdoonvarna won the Intermediate Final.

0:34:55 - 0:39:54

## BOXING -

Frank took up boxing at a young age and often boxed in the ring in the Town hall in Lisdoonvarna. He mentions the names of some of the people who were involved in running the club and the men who were boxing. When he was 9 or ten years old a worker came to their hotel who had 5 cups for boxing. He was Mattie Ferris who worked for the Salesians in Pallaskenry, Limerick. They sent him to Sheedy's to work as Frank's mother supported the priests down there. Mattie was a top class gardener and supplied the hotel with vegetables. Mattie taught Frank how to box and he was able to take on the best of older lads. He mentions The 'Sailor' McNamara and the Gardiners. He doesn't agree with women's boxing even though Katie Taylor is very good.

0:39:55 - 0:45:20

## FARMING & HOTEL -

Frank kept 6 cows on his small holding. They were hand milked and the milk was taken to Carnane Creamery near Doolin. The work in the hotel was hard as he often had to stay up till 6am with visitors who were staying or returning from the other hotels. He pays tribute to the musicians and bands that played in his hotel and singles out Martin Vaughan from Miltown as being a great singer. But he took in lots of money especially in the month of September which was the busiest. He mentions that the place could be rough sometimes, what with stopping rows and taking plenty abuse, he earned his money. In his mother's time the visitors came by bus, she kept a visitors book and knew exactly when the visitors were due. Matchmaking is a new idea introduced by Jim White but matches were made informally in the old days.

0:45:21 - 0:57:00

## DRAMATIC SOCIETY -

Mick Greene who was from Liscannor, a teacher in Lisdoonvarna, was involved. Here he mentions the influence Mick Greene had in the GAA and how he was able

to get outside players to help Lisdoonvarna. He was a fluent Irish speaker and won an objection against Doonbeg because of his ability to put the case in Irish. His influence with the army helped getting top class intercounty players to beat Doonbeg in the replay! He tells of other illegal players and teams. Jim McKeen the local cobbler patched the ball. Mick Greene put on plays in the Townhall, Ballyvaughan and Lebane, to keep the GAA club going.

0:57:01 - 1:07:30

THREAT OF EVICTION -

The landlady, Miss Crough of Quinn, threatened to evict the Sheedy family as a result of his father constructing a hay-shed without permission. His father won the case in the High Court. Before Frank married he built a new house close to the hotel as his father and he didn't agree. His wife, Patsy Linnane from Ennistymon, he met at a dance in the Royal Spa Hotel. Her uncle, P.J. Linnane a young man of 21 years had been shot by the Black & Tans in Ennistymon the night of the Rineen ambush 22th September 1920. He was throwing water on Devitt's shop which had been put on fire by the British Forces.

All the cooking in the hotel was done on/in the black Stanley range in which they burned turf and coal; the killing daily of a sheep to provide mutton for the 65 guests and the work of the 'Boots' are all covered in detail by Frank.

1:18:16 - 1:30:00

LOCAL AREA /RELIGION -

Frank tells that in his father's time there was a golf club in the Gowlauns when Mrs. Bulger owned the Thomond Hotel. The wooden bridge led from the hotel to the Gowlauns. She is buried in Killeany cemetery. In her garden she grew bamboos which when he was young he climbed over the wall to get one for a fishing rod. He mentions the danger of the deep holes on the local Aille river where a local Kilderry boy was drowned when fishing. The body was recovered by men from Doolin The hole is called 'Poll na Scoile' where it is believed a teacher also drown long ago. His own sons loved fishing, both river and sea fishing. Both

are now chefs and trained and have work in hotels in different parts of the world. His other son is an engineer and Frank and his wife showed their religious beliefs by going to pray each day to St. Brigid's Well in Liscannor while their son was doing his final exams. He never missed mass and once in England he walked 7 miles to get to mass. Of course religion was strong in the family as Frank had an uncle on each side a priest.

1:30:01 -1:45:20

WAR TIMES AND LISDOONVARNA -

Tea was Â£1 a pound in John Keane's shop during the war. Frank remembers the electricity coming to the town, the battery wireless and the big number of small shops in the town. He also describes in detail the biggest row that ever took place in the Townhall in Lisdoonvarna but never found out what was the cause!

1:45:21 - 1:58:25

ENGLAND -

Frank spent two winters in London before he got married and worked in a 'Gas House' and in the Regent Palace Hotel. He gives a direct account of how the Irish behaved and how he got on well with his English bosses.

1:58:26 - 2:04:16

GREYHOUNDS & COURSING -

A lifelong interest which brought Frank to all parts of Ireland he describes the trophies and cups his dogs won.

File 2 0:00:01 - 0:15:19

HEALTH ISSUES -

His coursing days came to an end when Frank got a heart attack while attending a football match in Miltown. The local doctor gave him an injection, Bridie Cleary

gave him a glass of Brandy and Fr. Tony Malone RIP drove him to the Ennis hospital where he recovered. [Fr. Malone was administering in Lisdoonvarna at the time].

0:15:20 - 0:18:44

CONCLUSION -

Frank finishes the interview with a look back on his life, the countries he would have liked to visit, the decisions he and his wife made for the better or worse and the prospects for the future of Lisdoonvarna.