George Casey

Male

0:00:00 – 0:04:24
SCHOOL –

George was born on 27th July 1924 in Gortnahaha, Kildysart. He thinks the name of his townland may have come from the field of a fort. He went to school in Coolmeen National School. He says that the children were usually barefoot between April and November. He speaks of his teacher Master Jeremiah Ã“ MurchÃº (Murphy) from Cork. George left school at 14.

0:04:25 – 0:10:28
WORK –

George says there he had 4 brothers and 3 sisters.
He says the local roads needed to be gravelled as they weren't tarred until 1954. He mentions Richard Dowling, a council overseer in Ballynacally and Amy (James) Griffin who was an overseer for the roads. He says that he got 3/6p a yard for breaking stones into gravel for the roads. In 1939 Richard Dowling let him have 300 yards of stone to break which he worked on at home with a 9oz and a 3lb hammer. He then got a shilling a yard to car the gravel for a mile.
In the 1940s he started working on the 5 acres of bog his father bought for Â£150, along with his brothers Tom and Jimmy and his sisters. He recalls that they could get about Â£5 for a lorry of turf.

0:10:29 – 0:13:40
WWII / 1940s –

George speaks about rationing during WWII. He says some people had relations in America who would send home tea. He recalls how they cooked dinner in the

bog.
George speaks of when DeValera introduced the children's allowance and sings a verse of the 'Half Crown Song'.

0:13:41 – 0:18:19
FAMILY –

George says his wife Mary O' Brien came from a family of 12.
She emigrated to America (New York) in 1939. There was a torpedo alarm on the ship she was travelling on. She came back and married George in 1951. George speaks of when his baby son died of pneumonia and how he was tended to by Dr McGrath.

0:18:20 – 0:24:27
ECONOMIC WAR/RATIONING –

George says that during the Economic War of the1930s calves were worthless so they had to be killed. He recalls when he was 9 his mother asking him and his brother to kill 2 calves. Kellys from Kilrush bought the skins.
George mentions that the price of calves was also very low in the 1970s.
He says they had 4.5 acres of tillage under the Compulsory Tillage Order. He recalls that during the war years black flour was mixed with ordinary flour which he believes sickened people.
He tells a funny story of Tomas Keane and two others counting out tea rations.

0:24:28 – 0:29:37
CHANGES IN HIS LIFETIME/OLDEST PERSON

George thinks that three things have gone in his lifetime – love, nature & fear. He believes that children today don't have the same respect for their elders.
He says the oldest person he knew as a child was his grandfather, Harry Casey who died in 1939 aged 90. He says that at that time people made themselves old at 70. He recalls that his grandfather would reminisce about famine times.

George recalls his grandfather having a fight with a man called the Bully Reidy. He also recalls his grandfather tearing his hand while harrowing in the garden and making no fuss of it.

0:29:38 – 0:44:13
MUSIC –

George says his father, Henry Casey was 80 when he died. His mother Bridget Normoyle died aged 84. His remembers his mother didling for the house dances.
He recalls the Baccocks? (Strawboys) coming to his house after his honeymoon.
He says that Jack Cleary, a 1st cousin of his father was a great fiddler.
George remembers going to the Fleadh Cheoil in Kilrush in 1962. He says he met Peader Keating and they danced a set in Moody's.
He describes how Peader Keating hammered 2 pennies into his shoes and battered a set. He then recalls playing the tambourine on stage with Mrs Crotty.
He says that she came and played during a play in Kildysart.
He says if you keep laughing you will never have a wrinkle.
He mentions Tomas Larkin from Crovraghan working on the road.
He recalls a time he needed help with hay and how he met Pat Joe Connors the smith in Dories pub and he offered to send 2 of his sons to help him.
He speaks of going on Cuaird and that people would only stay until 10pm.
He speaks another musician Thomas Qualy and that John Maolachán would dance a set with a concertina on his head. George's grandaunt, Biddy Bran from Cranny once travelled to Lisdoonvarna at 90 years of age and learnt 'On Top of Old Smokey' on the concertina. He believes she had a song composed about her.

0:44:14 – 0:48:04
HOLIDAYS IN LISDOONVARNA –

George says his father and mother would holiday on separate weeks in Lisdoonvarna in a house in Tivoli Terrace which was a Â£1 for the week. He recalls staying there for eleven days and speaks about the cost of the sulphur

water. He has stayed there over the years with Peter and Meena Griffin in Chapel View.

0:00:00 – 0:13:39 File 2
CURES –

George recalls the bad winter of 1946/47 and how the cows were falling down with hunger.
He says they would mix liquid paraffin and turpentine to
cure hoose. He also says the black heather off the land would be boiled and the water used to cure animals with fluke. He says veterinary medicines kept changing.
George speaks of the cures his mother had. He says for pleurisy or pneumonia she would put hot bran and iodine in a stocking and tie it across the chest. George describes how he nearly died of pneumonia when he was 7 and his mother put the poultice on his chest and he was cured. He also describes the time he broke his arm. George says that the man who he bought his present house from, Mick Hurley, was a bonesetter and he describes how he treated him. He then went to another bonesetter, Tom Burke in Miltown. George said his uncle, Sonny Normoyle would bathe his hand in an ointment made with the root of a fern and glycerine.

0:26:56 – 0:31:23
SPORT –

George says he was a good long distance runner. He describes how he was once caught by the master at school with the blackboard on his back. He says they would weight throw the stub of an axle of a car. He tells some stories about how they tricked people to jump into drains for a joke.

0:31:24 – 0:33:43
THE GAVIN FAMILY, BALLYNACALLY –

George says his mother was reared at her uncle's house in Lavalla, Ballynacally, as there was too many in her family and he remembers going to Bill Gavin's house, (an uncle of John Gavin) house for dances. He says Michael Gavin was a great dancer. He says Bill Gavin was a great mouth organ player.

0:33:44 – 0:37:26
TYRE SHORTAGE IN 1940S –

George recalls that it was hard to get bicycle tyres in 1946/47. His brother Tom was learning the carpentry trade at John McMahon's (where O'Grady's shop is now). He says Tom would tie two tyres together but this resulted in him having an accident.
Tom and Mickey Mac helped Tossie Kenny to take up a floor in the cinema and Tossie said Tom could always get tyres from Kenny's shop in the village.

0:37:27 – 0:40:24
BUILDING IN LIMERICK –

Tom then went to Limerick to do the timber work on houses for Michael Fitzgerald. He got Â£13 a week and 3/10 for digs. Tom started out on his own with Paddy Carr (father to Dr Carr, Kilrush) and George said they built many houses in Limerick in the '50s under the name Casey & Carr.

0:40:25 – 0:47:29
HORSES –

George speaks of horses and some incidences he had with them.

0:00:00 – 0:01:30 File 3
NICEST THING IN LIFE/KILDYSART HORSE SHOW –

George believes that looking forward to something is better than the event itself. He says the Kildysart Horse Show started in 1942.

0:00:00 – 0:11:00 FIle 4
KILDYSART HORSE SHOW –

George always has a horse in the show. He remembers when they rode the horses to show them. He says in 1943 he rode a mare belonging to Marty Kenny and the judge scared her with his whip. Tom Cusack's horse won the competition. He speaks about how he thinks the judging has changed. He recalls some of the horses he has entered over the years. He says the horses would be walked to Kildysart but if they were going to Kilrush they would lead them behind a pony & trap. He mentions the prize money he got at one time. He mentions Bert Casey, the Cusacks and Packie Wall, a few of the local characters who showed horses.

0:00:00 – 0:10:31 File 5
WAR OF INDEPENDENCE/BLACK AND TANS –

George recalls his father telling him that if the road was cut to stop the Black & Tans travelling on it they would make anyone they met on the road fill it in. He describes how one local man escaped from them. He says the Tans kept taking a wheelbarrow from his father and so George's grandfather hid it but they found it. He also says his father kept the inside of a stack of oats empty which he would hide in from the Tans. He said they would take people from their homes if they thought they were volunteers.
George speaks of Peader Clancy and how he learnt his trade at Moloney's in Kildysart. He recalls recently visiting Pádraig Pearse's cottage. He says Ireland is 'mighty' for good people. He speaks of a Micko Keane being shot by the Black & Tans during an ambush. He believes his parents lived through tougher times. He speaks of a neighbour who was a captain in the Irish army who contracted a disease of the bones but never got a pension.

0:10:32 – 0:23:29
FERGUS ESTUARY ISLANDS –

George recalls going to a dance on Low Island. Jimmo McInerney charged 2 shillings each for the boat trip. He recalls with amusement how Jimmo told them to change position in the boat and how there was a storm that night and Jimmo had difficulty finding the pier.
George says that the man who owned his house before him, Mick Hurley, had stacks of books on all subjects and he told Micko McMahon from the islands he had a book on the islands. George gave Micko the book after Mick died but they found out it was a book on the history of the British Isles.
He speaks of Mick Hurley rubbing a quill dipped in whiskey across a neighbour's nose. He says Mick then gave a prescription to the neighbour for his cow. He tells an amusing story about the two brothers, Mick & Peter Hurley and the rumour of hidden money.

0:23:30 – 0:26:16
GREATEST CHANGE –

George says he believes the greatest change is that people in the past were more welcoming and that you always had company.