John Queally 2

Male

0:00:00 – 0:05:53
EARLY LIFE –

John was born in the School residence in Tullabrack Cooraclare. He speaks of where his parents were from, his Father was from Clare but his mother was born in Fermoy. Her father was the manager of the hospital there but her mother was actually from Stonehall, Newmarket on Fergus and was related to the Coffey family and also there were connections to the Halpins and Guinnane's.

John's father was a schoolteacher who on finishing college got a job in Newmarket and subsequently the principals' position in Stonehall.

Johns maternal Grandfather married for a second time and moved to Stonehall with his daughters and that is how his parents met.

His mother died from TB in 1930 and John himself had contracted Polio at the age of two so it was very hard on his father losing his wife and his son with a serious illness.

0:05:54 – 0:18:40
SCHOOL DAYS –

His brother Brendan was adopted by his aunt who had a shop in Doonaha across from the church and the Mullins family across from the school adopted John himself and reared him. John describes his school days as Idyllic

John recites an adage in Irish and translates it to English. His father remarried in 1935 and the family was reunited and after a few more years there were two more additions. The house was a very happy one.

John speaks of playing football in the schoolyard and mentions and mentions a couple of men who became stalwarts of the county football game. Other games included tig among others.

John says he tried to avoid too much work around the house but would sometimes milk their two cows or weed the garden that held the veg.

At thirteen John went to the Christian Brothers and he recalls a couple of men who actually was at school with him.

John speaks of having had a decent education and speaks at length of the issue regarding the vilification of the order. He defends the order as a whole but does not condone the wrongdoing meted out to some, and said it was in a minority. He speaks of one brother in particular and cites the amount of work he would do that would bring him to the point of exhaustion near terms end.

John didn't have a particularly outstanding leaving cert career having to sit it three times but he wasn't the only one to fail. He speaks of some of the subjects that he did, especially those he liked and his teachers who taught them. He did quite well when he did pass the leaving but just failed getting into 'Pats'.

John wanted to go into the brothers but was two marks short to get in. For many at the time there were limited choices for a career it was either army or church and John was more limited with a bad leg due to the polio.

He went substitute teaching for three or four months and then the brothers came to him and asked him to do sub. After that the head teacher urged him to try and get into St Pats again. They also provided assistance with a botany teacher and John got honours in it and at twenty he got into Pats and was finished after two years.

0:18:42 – 0:32:05
TOWNLAND OF TULLABRACK –

John in his writing refers the townland as Tullabrack among the bushes. He makes reference to the plentiful trees and foliage around his area and compares it to the general lack of trees in West Clare.

Small farming was the mainstay of community at the time in the fifties and john says that a Kerryman named Mick Lane was the saviour of West Clare by giving farmers an outlet to sell milk at a creamery that was opened. It was one of many opened in the county and gave people a cheque at the end of the month. John says that beef was not possible to develop so the milk was a godsend.

Turf was another source of income, it would be cut by the farmer and sold on and much sent on by boat to limerick.

Almost every home would rear a pig. He would be fed with slops and dandelion roots cut from the side of the roads and this gave the pig a flavour.

John speaks of the method of killing the pig and how black pudding was made and shared with their neighbours. Some of the cuts would also be shared.

Many Council cottages had a pair of nanny goats; coupled together, and they grazed often at the side of the road and kept people in milk. John said that winter time could be a hungry time for some.

Shopping for clothes etc. was done in Kilrush on Saturday; for the most part. People might get a pound of tea in the local shop.

John speaks of market day in Kilrush of a Thursday. It was held in the market square and the sops would be busy.

Kilrush has not physically changed much, John speaks of a number of pubs and shops and Lizzy Markham playing the concertina.

John talks about getting butter on tick and having to pay at the end of the month. Johns father would get a paper each day and he would give one of the 'piker men'

as they were called a penny; they would go to town every day with piker of turf, and they would deliver one to him.

0:32:06 – 0:43:32
COMMUNICATION AND TRANSPORT –

John's family had a radio called a Philco and this would keep them informed. John recalls the newsreaders on the BBC and would be kept up to date with war news.

Then there was Irish news and programmes and John speaks of Seán O' Siacháin who sang 'The Boys of Barr na Sráide', among other songs and would have old style programmes.

The family had a car and sometimes they would go to Ennis maybe once a month. John's Grandfather would attend the fair at Spancill Hill and would bring yearlings to sell.

Modes of transport would be a number of methods and John speaks of these almost all involving horses and ponies.

Bicycles too were important. The road system in general was not very good, unless you were on the main road.
John speaks at length of the route taken by the West Clare Railway. There were old timber seats on the train and the scenic route compensated for discomfort. John's father was on the committee to have the railway kept on but to no avail with minister Andrews.

John speaks of Gussie Cullinane who was a brilliant student and under different circumstance may have hit the top of his chosen field. Gussie drew a fantastic picture in crayon of the train coming under a bridge and John's father had it kept on the school room wall until he retired but does not know what became of it. Gussie later joined the army and drowned whilst on manoeuvres crossing a river.

0:43:33 – 0:53:37
ENTERTAINMENT –

John together with a number of others would go out hunting the wren. The big organised wren would go ahead on Christmas night and there were fabulous musicians.

People liked to dance; and went on in most houses, but the clergy particularly local were against this, equating it with some kind of sin.

John speaks of different musicians and places where music was played.

Cards were popular in some areas for both men and women. These were often played by the light of the fire because of no electricity. There were different type of lamps and John speaks of the Tilly lamp toward the middle of the forties.

Willy Clancy was not started in those times but John recalls a band in the late thirties in the kilrush locality named the 'old IRA band'. It was aired live from Rádio Ã‰ireann on one occasion and one of the players was baby John Lillis.

John believes that the belief that Clare was the home of Irish music was from the joy of entertaining themselves and young people learning to play from a young age. Most homes would have a dance at some stage and it was taken as a matter of ordinary living,

0:53:38 – 1:05:28
RELIGION –

As a child John felt that religion was a natural act when he was growing up. It was the done thing to go to mass and the learning of the catechism that would be drilled into you.

Bishop Fogarty was the bishop at the time and John was asked a few questions for his confirmation but answered most of them. John also speaks of a Bishop

Malachy Queally a relative from the distant past. The Bishop's visit was considered a serious matter.

St Patrick's day was another important day and john recalls the kitchen at home filling to listen to MÃheál O Hehir broadcasting on Rádio Ã‰ireann the railway cup finals. There would never be any work carried out on a holy day other than to tackle up the horse to go to mass.

The only parade John remembers is the parade into Kilrush on the victory of De Valera in the 1933 general election.

Easter was a time for eggs and fellas bragging on how many they could eat.

Christmas was a special time that began a week beforehand and John explains the work involved including the local shopkeeper giving a Christmas gift.

Holly would be cut if you could get it. John had a friend from Tyrone visiting on one occasion who could not believe the lights on in every house and the preparation involved.

1:05:29 – 01:11:19
GAA –

The GAA was always an important aspect to people in West Clare and John is no different. His daughter sent a picture of Jack Murphy who was representing Dublin in Belfast.

John speaks of Connor McKiernan played senior football for Dublin plus other players who had played for Tipperary.

He goes on to speak of relatives that were chosen to play the Tailteann games but they could not because one was in prison in the Curragh for political reasons and the other was training for the priesthood and neither would be let out.

Football was the big thing always in Cooraclare but John speaks of Johnny McMahon who started a hurling club and even got to a minor football final but were disqualified for fielding overage players.

John also speaks of the importance of the GAA and the church in people's lives but believes the same influences are not there today due to other outlets.

Coursing and drag hunting were other sports people liked in winter. There would be some swimming in Doughmore strand but John didn't like it because of the Atlantic waves. He said they would go back to the ferry in Poulnasherry bay. He recalls the summers being good and going barefoot.

1:11:20 – 1:15:45
CHARACTERS –

John recalls some locals who were a little bit harmless, he remembers in 1937 Douglas Hyde was elected President and a local elderly man that used to cut the turf for them was outraged that a protestant could become president of Ireland.

There was another man who would use very eloquent language. John speaks funnily of another innocent type who got caught short at the side of the road one day.

John speaks of some anecdotes of locals and their sayings especially on the GAA.

1:15:47 – 1:19:18