Madeline Killeen

Female

0:00:00 – 0:08:47
EARLY DAYS –

Madeline was born in no.18 O Connell Street Ennis. Her brother miles was born in 1934 and a sister Emer died from Spina Bifida a few days after birth and another brother John (Chucks) was six years younger than Madeline.
Minnie Touhy was left the house by her Aunts and Uncles and Eoin Touhy married in there.

Eoin Touhy was the editor of a newspaper The Record and it was sited off O'Connell street in Considine's Lane; who had a restaurant and Bar, there (now Brogans). Madeline speaks of where it was sited.

The shop was a two storey building opened by Minnie and sold stationary.

Madeline's Mother, Eileen and her two sisters went to the Coláiste and then on to Loretta school in Dublin. On completion of her education she got a civil servant job in Kensington, London due to the troubles in Dublin She later went to work in the GPO in Dublin until her mother Minnie took ill. The shop was left to her because one sister became a nun and the other got married. This is where she met Madeline's father Jack Sullivan who would come in to the shop for the paper.

In 1932 Jack borrowed a car to go to the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin but Minnie died soon after.

Jack and Eileen got married in November at Six O Clock in the morning in the Cathedral and had a breakfast in the Old Ground Hotel. Jack borrowed a car and they hit off to Dublin stopping in Roscrea to visit Eileen's sister at her convent at the order of the sacred heart, and the nuns provided them with a beautiful meal.

0:08:48 – 0:16:51
FATHER'S FAMILY –

Jack's father was a baker named Martin O Sullivan and ran the bakery with his brother Joe. Martin married a Catherine Wall and her relative is named on the Maid of Eireann monument dedicated to the Manchester Martyrs. Catherine died at 27 due to TB.

Madeline tells of the tragic circumstance's arising after the death of Catherine.

Jack went to school in the boys national. Madeline speaks of the cottages on the Kilrush road where they lived and raised by the aunts.

Times were very poor and not many had money.

Madeline speaks of other relatives and who they married. Her father joined the British army at sixteen not telling anyone. He ended up in Belfast training and was sent to the Somme where he was wounded. He later went back after recovery and used to drive supplies to the front.

Madeline speaks of the animosity shown to men who had joined the British army. Jack returned home to his aunt's in Carmody Street after the army.

0:16:52 – 0:30:17
SCHOOL AND GAMES –

Madeline's father got a job in the old Gaiety Cinema on O Connell street; where the entrance of Dunne's stores is now. She recalls there was an older cinema on that same site named 'The Rink' but it had burned down. Madeline didn't know whether it was the Gaiety or the Rink he was employed as a projectionist. Touhy's shop was still on the go as well.

Madeline recounts a story of her mother employing someone that would not be normally considered but it was probably the best choice. Her mother died in 1967

and father died in 1975 and always kept the shop going.

Madeline went to school in the mercy convent and does not speak well of the experience. She speaks also of an industrial school on the go as well and she says she spent a lot of time there playing and had her tea with them.

Madeline recalls swimming in Ballyalla and recalls the boys swimming in the terrace beside the Bishops residence, and also speaks of an issue that rose over girls not allowed to swim there and asking the Bishops permission.

Madeline explains the location of the terrace and says the diving board had been removed. She also speaks of the rocky road where they could pick nuts and picnic.

Madeline talks about the type of games that were played and utilising what was available. There was lots of climbing done

0:30:18 – 0:41:37
COMMUNION CHOIR AND DRAMA –

Madeline speaks of her communion and the question of the nuns speaking of her not being 'fit' to make her communion because she was deemed too wild. Her mother sorted this by saying that she would make it instead in the protestant church.

There was no more about it and Madeline speaks of the day itself and receiving from Fr Cahill. Bishop Fogarty was in his nineties and a Dr Rogers was chosen to assist him when Madeline was twelve.

She recounts also her experiences with the cathedral choir and the director Mr De Rig; a Belgian. Madeline also recalls a trip to the seaside and being covered in dust. She recalls the bit to eat offered on the day out.

She speaks highly of Mr De Rigge and the songs he taught them to sing; some of

which were world renowned, and the different times they would sing. It was a good social outlet.

Madeline speaks too of the Nun's putting on a play the sisters of Fatima and traveling around playing the parts in different venues. She recalls the practices that were required in a place called Philomena's Hall.

Madeline fell sick with a pain in her head and the nun's response was not good. She had this migraine until she was twenty one and working in London before it was diagnosed by a Dr. Leahy who later practised in limerick. She eventually grew out of them.

0:41:38 – 0:53:49
SECOND LEVEL EDUCATION AND WORK –

On leaving primary school Madeline went to boarding school for six years in Roscrea to the Sacred Heart Nun's. She says she loved it; it was the games that appealed to her not the studies.

She went to London for four years as a nurse and came home then. She worked in and around Ennis in a number of Hospitals.

She then met her husband Bernard Killeen from Knockaneen outside Ennis. Bernard was a radio operator at sea and had served in the war.

Madeline recalls getting married at nine o clock one morning and going to Dublin to get dressed for it. She recounts on how she met her husband by looking for a washing machine with a colleague.

She ended up going to the races in Limerick With Bernie and his brother and going to Cruises in Limerick for dinner.

He went back to sea and they got engaged on his return. They subsequently got married and initially had no place to go to but rented a flat. They then bought a

house beside Micky Lynch's yard on the Limerick road.

Whilst at sea Bernard worked with the London and Overseas Co. and was en route to Cuba from Russia during the Cuban missile crisis amongst other voyages. Madeline never worried about him because he was a man who said his prayers. They had four children.

They subsequently moved to her present home after about ten years.

0:53:50 – 1:11:26
HOME PLACE AND ENNIS TOWN –

Madeline describes the shop where she was reared and the rooms were situated. The kitchen had an electric cooker but used to have a big range. There was also a pantry that held pots and pans but had been used as an office.

The bedrooms and living quarters were upstairs. There was a fire in all the rooms. Madeline describes the way her grandfather had installed an indoor toilet.

The sitting room had an iron fireplace with a big mantelpiece painted green. There were bookshelves either side of this that held books of Irish interest for the most part. Her grandfather and father did not have a secondary education but both loved to read and write.

Madeline says that they all liked to write and speaks of her son Andrews's description of the Alps in Germany for the first time.

Her son John married a Japanese girl and she wrote an introductory letter to her to let her know who she was. John now lives in London.

The building was owned by the Gore Estate and was rented for Â£25 per annum; miles later bought it for Â£200.
Madeline talks at length of the buildings around them and who owned them and the business they contained. She speaks of Café Iris as the first of its kind coming

to town.

Madeline speaks of the cinemas in town; she mentions one that was in the old ground where the town hall is now.

She says that this used to be a jail and speaks of the inmates having to be fed by their relatives every day because they would not be fed otherwise.

Madeline speaks of Josie Cronin who ran the sweet shop in the Cinema and said he was a great character who never stopped working.

There was a butcher's shop where Milano's is now, owned by an elderly couple; her grandfather has a photo of a man on a cart forking hay in the top windows of the place.

Madeline speaks of the Fleadh and Irish music in general but said they had no real interest in it. The street used to have two-way traffic at the time, and people would also park there.

Madeline speaks of how the family used to get around visiting people even though they didn't own a car. They would borrow or rent whatever was needed.

1:11:27 – 1:17:15
WEST CLARE RAILWAY AND THE WAR –

Madeline speaks of going to Lahinch twice a week on the railway once summer set in. Her mother would make a last minute decision to go and send them ahead to hold the train for her. The fare at the time was 1s/9c for the children and 3s/6c for an adult.

Madeline speaks of the money system at the time and how her mother would save for a holiday.
Their Father would never go to with them but Madeline tells a funny anecdote of the one time he came with them during the war.

Madeline speaks of the rations of fruit and that they would never have seen these before. She also mentions her mother coming across a large chest of tea during the war when it was difficult to get but on being asked where she got it she would only say, â€œfrom a sailorâ€.