

Nora McMahan

Female

1:12:05 - 1:14:21

Marriage Ban -

Nora talks about meeting Jimmy McMahan who she ended up marrying. She met him at a surgery in Miltown Malbay. She worked in the Hospital for another year and a half because she was due some holiday. She then gave notice because the marriage ban was in. They had plans to go back to England to her old job and there was no marriage ban in England.

Note: Break in the interview at this point.

1:14:21 - 1:19:16

Marriage and The Marriage Ban -

Nora talks about meeting her husband in the day clinic in Miltown Malbay. Nora talks about the choice between marriage and being a nurse. Nora goes on to talk about some of her husband's family. They were known as the Bridge McMahan as they lived near the bridge. There were about twenty families of McMahons in the area.

They got married in Lahinch Church and after 25 of them went into the Queens in Ennis for breakfast. Their honeymoon consisted of a week in Dublin.

1:08:04 - 1:12:05

Folklore and Death -

Nora didn't hear of the Banshee while she was working in Ennistymon hospitals.

Nora learned how to lay out a corpse as part of her nursing training. She talks

about the time she attended the funeral of the hospital maintenance man.

0:57:56 - 1:08:04

Nursing in Ireland -

After the war, she planned to go army nursing with another nurse. However, her mother got sick and she was given twelve months leave to go home and take care of her. She got a job as a nurse in Ennistymon. She talks about the work schedule and wages at the time. She then talks about getting a bike to use to get to and from work.

There was a surgical room located in Ennistymon hospital but all the surgeries would take place during the day and Nora used to only work the night shift.

0:22:43 - 0:29:40

Lahinch -

Nora talks about Lahinch and how quiet it was in those days. She says there used to be a Lahinch Band which would play for celebrations. Tom Dorgan was the Bell Ringer in Lahinch. He would announce events such as dances and when they were on.

Nora didn't associate much with the holiday makers in Lahinch at that time. She talks about Hotels in Lahinch. The Golf Links Hotel was located on the top of the hill but it burned down. Vaughan's Hotel was also located there which was run by a teacher in Liscannor. The guesthouses and B&Bs that existed at that time generally had the same guests every year. Frances O' Donnell had a guesthouse there and Nora mentions a few more guesthouses in Lahinch.

0:29:40 - 0:38:46

Traditions and Religion -

Nora talks about Garland Sunday celebrations in Lahinch. There use to be a lot of

music going on. The Main Street of Lahinch was full of stalls which would only happen on Garland Sunday and not any other Sunday.

Nora says there was only one car on the road during her school days.

Nora says when she first left school she wanted to be a nun. She talks about the time her mother was dying from rheumatic the priest was asked if she was going to die he replied by saying that you will save her with you prayers. Her mother ending up surviving the fever and that strengthened Nora's her faith. She went to a Hospital in Cork that was run by the Mercy nuns. She talks about a bit about her experiences there while she was training to be a nurse and mentions a few sicknesses she got.

0:38:46 - 0:57:56

Immigration and WWII -

Nora talks about the time she emigrated to England. She sailed to England from Dublin. Her first night in England was Guy Fawkes night. She talks about her training as a Nurse in London.

She worked in the wards during World War II and one night the wards were hit during a bomb raid. She talks about her duties as a nurse when the air raid siren went off. She talks about a time when a bomb exploded near the ward she was working in. Nobody was killed during this air raid.

She used to communicate with her parents at home by phone at substations.

When they were off duty nurses would be sent outside of the city for a night off. While she was in London she didn't have much of a social life because of the blitz and never went anywhere on your own.

She was still in London when the war ended. She says there was no joy when it ended because of all the deaths.

1:19:16 - 1:23:55

Family -

Nora talks about her two sons and her daughter who worked for De Valera's office and how they used to speak Irish all day. When the common market came in she travelled all over Europe while working for the EEC.

1:23:55 - 1:30:42

Traditions and changes in Ireland -

Nora believes that we are no longer Irish. The support system of neighbours no longer exists. She believes it was the television that ruined it.

Nora talks about people coming to her house on Cuairt when she was younger.

Nora tells a story about the introduction of electricity and running water. Nora advises people to learn to use equipment around the house. She regrets that people no longer have time for each other.

0:16:55 - 0:22:43

Childhood Friends, Neighbours and Games played -

Nora spends some time talking about friends from her earlier years. Nora lists a few games she used to play as a child, which were marbles winning pennies and hide and go seek. They didn't have many toys in those times because according to her everything was so scarce.

0:00:00 - 0:05:59

Family Background -

Nora explains that she is originally from Cregg, Lahinch. She talks about her parents who were matched. Her mother, Bridget Darcy, had a farm which she worked on her own. A match was made with Micky Touhy from Bodyke.

Nora talks about her seven brothers and two sisters. Today she is the last one alive.

She talks about one of her sisters who went to America and lived with her three aunts. She started off working in house work but went on to train and qualified as a nurse.

0:05:59 – 0:16:55

Childhood and School –

Nora talks about the house she grew up in. The toilet was located outside. The house itself included an attic where two beds could be located. A parlour where another two beds could be located. A fairly big kitchen and an open fire.

Nora explains they used turf in the fire and when they were younger they would work on the bog. She goes on to talk about the bog and how a day in the bog was ‘soul stirring’.

Nora talks about going to school in Lahinch. She was taught by a Master O’ Riordan. She talks about some of the subjects she used to study at that time which were algebra, geometry, poetry and spelling.

Her mother got rheumatic fever when she was pregnant. There were no hospitals at the time so Nora had to go home and take care of the mother. After the year she returned to school in Ennistymon where she stayed until she did her Leaving Cert. She talks about some of her teachers and fellow students in that school.