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PJ & May Magner

INTERVIEW by Tom Mac Conmara on February 28, 2012

Interviewee	PJ & May Magner
Gender	Male
Birth Date	PJ - 1922 May - 1919
Area-Townland	West Clare - Ross
Parish-Townland	-
Report Date	September 19, 2015

Time	Description
File 1 0:00:00 0:03:42	CARS / ROOFS - PJ speaks about the arrival of cars into the community. Speaks about his fathers pride in his horse and side car. States that Enrights were the main wheelwrights for the area. They were based in Kilrush. Speaks of that the Behans in Rea. John Behan his son George were great roofers for slate roofs. Johnsie Collins in Carrigaholt roofed PJs house. Interview is suspended to deal with background noise.
File 2 0:00:00 0:07:39	THATCHING States that most of the houses were thatched in his townland when he was a child. His father would go to Querrin to get trees that were felled in the bog. Pitch pine trees were raised there and were taken back to Ross. Speaks about the timber that was used to make scollops for the thatching. Speaks about David Walsh from Doonaha who was a great tradesman. He made wheels for the common cart, ladders etc. States that a man from Doonaha Paddy Scanlon who was a noted thatcher. A more local man called Michael Madigan also did sow thatching. PJ states that it was wheat and straw that was used for the thatching. He recalls this being thrashed by flail. He also thrashed by flail himself. PJ describes the flail and how it was used. Speaks about the cuileann which was a part of the flail. Outlines the various parts of the flail including donkey skin to make the god.
0:07:40 0:11:51	BUILDING CUSTOMS When a new house was built, money would be put under the corner stone. Speaks about stone being quarried for houses in Ross. This was called smoorlock (sic). Speaks generally about houses in Ross.
0:11:52 0:20:22	FAIRIES AND GHOSTS - Speaks about the belief in ghosts and recalls a story relating to his father who saw three men standing at a graveyard who were all deceased. The three men were friends with a woman who had just died. PJ speaks about an incident when he was put astray one night. He puts this down to supernatural forces and walked home a long way around the road as opposed to going back through the land. PJ speaks about the banshee who would be heard ag caoineadh before someone would die. He also describes the sgaoithe as a whirling wind. He states that he once saw the sgaoithe and lay down until it passed. States that he saw it taking cocks of hay out of fields. Speaks about the fear gorta and recalls an experience when cycling from a bog in Doonbeg when the hungry grass struck him. He ate raw meat which he had just bought. PJ hadnt heard about the tradtion that someone had died on the spot that the fear gorta might affect you.

<p>0:20:23 0:27:02</p>	<p>THE WAKE - PJ describes the wake. He recalls filling clay pipes as a child. States that the clay pipe was called a did if it was broken. Recalls a man staying that a goubween of tobacco was all he wanted. Speaks about the traditions surrounding death and the preparation for the wake including stopping the clock and preparing the habit. The habit was located at the Post Office. Speaks about a Griffin woman who delivered a lot of babies in the area. States that he only heard a keening woman once at a wake. He was approximately eight years of age (circa 1932) and describes it was frightening.</p>
<p>0:27:03 0:31:48</p>	<p>CALENDAR CUSTOMS - PJ outlines the various traditions of the calendar year including St. Bridgets Day. Speaks about some of the beliefs surrounding holy wells including St. Bridgets Well and St. Senans Well. Speaks about a Holy or Blessed Well at St. Coonans Graveyard. Speaks about Kilcredane, St. Martins Well in Rathanuisce and Dromelihy Well. Speaks about Shrove Tuesday and states that there was no marriage between that and the end of Lent. He remembers people getting married on Shrove Tuesday. Speaks about the change in marriages over the years.</p>
<p>0:31:49 0:37:55</p>	<p>MARRIAGE CUSTOMS - PJ speaks about the picking of the gander, which would take place a week before the wedding. The geese would be plucked beforehand and there would be great joy for the couple who were going to be married. States that it took place in the brides house. Speaks about the dowry and how it worked. Speaks about people walking the land before a dowry would be agreed and how people would try to make their land look better for this. Refers to hauling home which occurred after the first month. States that there was some tradition around the bride bringing her bedding with her at the hauling home. The bride was not allowed to go home for the first month. When PJ married his wife, he married in clear isteach, so May didnt have to go home.</p>
<p>0:37:56 0:48:05</p>	<p>CALENDAR CUSTOMS Chalk Sunday PJ speaks about Chalk Sunday and recalls chalking a spinster. May Eve PJ speaks about May Eve traditions. States that people would bring in the furze bush. Says that his own family didnt have these pisres. Recalls other pisres including taking a turn of the butter when it was being churned. Speaks about churning butter and butter milk which would rise your heart from the dead. Speaks about a policeman who used to drink buttermilk as a cure for a hangover. Speaks about the separator also including washing the skimmers. St. Johns Night Recalls St. Johns Night or bonfire night. Some young boys would have rockets made. He recalled one boy who captured a crow and tied a rocket to it before letting it off. He recalled a big fire which was held in Studderts field in Cross. It was where Naomh Eoins GAA field is now. St. Martins Day Speaks about the traditions of St. Martins Day. People would do the rounds of St. Martins Well for their cattle. The cock was also killed.</p>
<p>0:48:06 0:06:41</p>	<p>REFLECTIONS ON LIFE AND TRADITION - PJ states that he is forward looking and that the past was no good of a time. States that there was a lot of poverty and child slave labour in the past. Speaks briefly about Br Costelloe and Mikey Costelloe. Recalls Michael Costelloe working at Cusacks. They were paid 11 for a girl and 14 for a man in the year. States that the Costelloes were great Irichians. PJ looks at the picture of Br Costelloe and her husband. States that her husband was a great workman and was known as Mickman. Recalls a story about Paddy Nolan the local vet who gave a lift to Maura Costelloe and heard a great story in Irish from her.</p>