

# Peggy Cullinane (née Barrett)

Female

0:00:00 – 0:00:57

STORY OF PEGGY'S BAPTISM –

Peggy recalls her Confirmation in Inagh & hearing how her father & uncle danced a set in Leyden's pub after her baptism; christenings took place on the day after baptisms then.

0:00:57 – 0:07:31

FAMILY –

Peggy was born in Ballyduffmore, Kilnamona in 1925 (in the house where her brother's wife Susan now lives (also recorded by Geraldine Greene, July 2012); christened Margaret Josephine; her parents both from locality; her mother was Fitzgibbon from Ballyduffmore; big family of Fitzgibbons & 4 sisters emigrated to America; her mother was the youngest & married her neighbour down the road; her father got sick and died soon after was born; she was minded at neighbours Mrs Guinane (their unclce's wife) until her father died; she taken back home then & the family had 'œto manage away'œ; her mother died in 1957 from cancer – only 35 years when Peggy's father died; Peggy & her sisters nursed their mother at home (helped by neighbours); she doesn't know if her parents' marriage was a match; there were 8 in Peggy's family – 4 brothers and 3 sisters; 2 died young; Peggy youngest and only one alive now; she names her brothers & sisters and gives more details; tough times; she knows little family history as her parents died young & her grandparents had passed away before she was born so no-one to ask; siblings lived locally; her brother Joe Barrett, a tradesman took over the family farm in Kilnamona. Her brother Pakie (a twin) was considered a good trademan too.

She recalls her cousins, Sylvie Barrett's family whose father died when his family were young - one boy came to Kilnamona school as he lived with his aunt in Derula; 2 girls "joined the nuns"; Peggy "too cracked" to join.

Barrett connection to Greenes: Peggy says that one of her grandparents came from Greene family home in Lickaune (Geraldine's grandfather's & granduncle's home) so Barretts and Greenes related; she recalls Henry & Frank being great friends as well as brothers.

0:02:08 - 0:15:15

SCHOOL DAYS -

Peggy walked to school nearly 2 miles; accompanied by Lyons girls; they often walked with Mrs Mescall (Geraldine's grandmother) to mass; her teachers - Julia Keating & Mrs Hegarty; she enjoyed school but they had to learn lessons off by heart & have their work done; story about Peggy & schoolmate Mae Hegarty singing for the Inspector; boys & girls separate classrooms & lunch times; she says the boys & girls not allowed mix & teachers didn't get on well; she tells a story about this; v. little Irish, sewing & knitting in national school; sport & games: Peggy recalls they did hurling & running at lunchtime in Cahirs field near the school; she loved hurling; families bringing turf or money to school - easier bring in turf; her neighbours or lad working with them brought it in after her father dying; she was asked to stay on for a while more in school & do sewing classes to make up numbers; Peggy left Kilnamona school at 14 & cycled to secondary school in the Tech in Ennis for approx 2 years; recalls doing Irish there & her teacher was Tadhg O' Sé; she recalls being asked to stay on longer at the Tech but she left to work in dress-making.

Folklore Commission Bealoideas project:

Peggy recalls herself & Mae Hegarty sitting at high desks in school & spending days transcribing stories collected by the girls at school into a big thick book; she loved doing it rather than the usual lessons with Mrs Hegarty.

Kilnamona book - 1930s photos: Peggy recalls names of school mates & talks

more about them; many have passed away; names some who are alive; a few emigrated.

Mae Hegarty, athlete & cyclist:

Peggy & Mae were classmates & friends; Peggy tells story of how Mae wanted her to join her for a cycle but Peggy didn't; Mae broke her arm that day; Mae held a national title for cycling; she could pass out her father's car as he drove to Ennis! Peg tells story of Mae Hegarty getting slapped by her mother & teacher when being examined on the Bible for Confirmation.

0:15:15 – 0:21:10

FARMING, BOG, BUTTER, FARM-HANDS & NEIGHBOURS –

Farming was hard when Peggy was young; no machinery; hay done by fork & rake; local bog; she left home early so didn't do much farming; her family milked cows & fed calves; describes making butter, taking it to Ennis by bike & selling it; their butter renowned for its sweetness; some farmers wanted the local creamery in the centre of the parish; people often had live-in farm hands; girls expected to do a man's work then; neighbours helped one another; keeping pigs & making puddings; Peg names some neighbours & talks about Mikey O'Neill.

0:21:10 – 0:30:31

SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT – MUSIC & DANCING IN KILNAMONA –

Peggy recalls a set danced at her Baptism at the sacristy in Inagh; she loved music & house dances, looked forward to them & never missed one; she didn't travel far to them; dances held at neighbours' houses when family members left or returned on holidays from England or America – held at Taltys & McTigues, not her house as none of her siblings emigrated; she recalls the fiddle & flute most common; she & her brother Pakie played fiddles; her brother Sean could play tin-whistle & bodhran; others had no time; she tells story of learning a tune by herself when her older brother Pakie was at a funeral; she learned from listening to the music; her 2 aunts played concertinas & her uncle the flute (she

didn't know them as they passed away before she was born/young); she says she got the music from the Barrett side; she often played with Frank Custy & other musicians in Toonagh & at the senior citizens outings to Lahinch; she played fiddle until a year ago - arthritis in her fingers now; she loved the sets & waltzes; she recalls her first time seeing a set danced; she learned to dance from watching others; tells story of her playing at the tea-break at the dances & her mother's comments; she describes the Wren dances; she heard of but never met the dancing masters who taught step-dancing in Kilnamona; she names some good dancers such as Lizzie Pilk, James & Paddy Neylon, Jim Mescall (Geraldine's grandfather); she lirts a tune; she says their house was a "œrambling house"; a different group of 4 or 5 older men called nightly on cuairt for stories, yarns & music; she recalls cards played at McTigues; she names some musicians - McTigues, Tom Eustace, Kilmaley, Tom Hegarty, Kilfenora who worked & lived at Hegartys farm - she says he was a lovely fiddle player & that houses would be full when he was there; Pakie was 5 or 6 years older than her & they never played fiddle together; she recalls Joe Ryan, Inagh fiddler who played at Pakie's house; she didn't see crossroads dancing; she met her husbank James at a marquee dance at Fountain Cross; bands played all types of music.

0:30:31 - 0:32:39

SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT - MUSIC & DANCING IN ENNIS -

She says few houses dances in Ennis; she enjoyed dances at the Queens & Paddy Cons; she never missed the Tulla & Kilfenora Ceili Bands; she recalls jiving & waltzes at dances; she recalls the Fleadh in Ennis & the song about it (Robbie McMahon's song); she mentions a great fiddler, John Joe Cullinan who lived in the Cornmarket area of Ennis - he was a "œflyer"; she played with him a few times; she thinks the pubs do not compare well with the house dances of her time.

0:32:39 - 0:37:20

SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT -

She says houses dances not as plentiful in Ballygriffey as in Kilnamona; he loved music & dancing – he ‘œsang and danced til the cows came home’; she played music after moving to Ballygriffey though few neighbours played except Mickey Meere on the tinwhistle; she never missed a Friday night in Toonagh at the music & dancing; the Tulla & Kilfenora Ceili Bands; she was delighted when Frank Custy moved to Toonagh & music & dancing became more widespread; she tells story of younger neighbour who took her to Toonagh a few years ago & got her to play the fiddle; she lilts a tune for her grandson & me; James recites an Irish rhyme for us; Peggy still loves music but her arthritis prevents her from playing the fiddle now.

0:37:20 – 0:41:08

#### WORKING & LIVING IN ENNIS –

Peggy worked at dress-making in Ennis until she married; she & her sister rented a premises from Miss Hurley in Parnell Street; Miss Hurley lived overhead; she & her sister lived in Ennis for the week & cycled home at weekends; she occasionally went to the cinema & often went to the dances in town; she stayed in the Cornmarket area with her aunt who kept lodgers – girls going to school in Ennis; she learned her dress-making skills from her sister who learned from a woman in town; she describes her work; payment depended on the job; most people had their clothes made as not available to ‘œbuy off the peg’ then; a lot of work involved in making clothes; she often made her own; last thing she made was a suit for herself.

0:41:08 – 0:44:10

#### ELECTRIFICATION –

Tilly lamps used in Ballygriffey before electricity; house work & milking done by hand; she doesn’t recall date the ESB came to the area.

0:44:20 – 0:45:06

## TRANSPORT -

Peggy had a bicycle when at school - handy for getting to school and town; cycled to the Tech in Ennis; recalls the horse and sidecar; cars not common; she didn't recall first time seeing a car; she recalls being accompanied to school with neighbouring children; neighbour, Annie Mescall (Geraldine's grandmother) meeting them at her gate & accompanying them to Mass; she was never on a plane & didn't travel much.

0:45:06 - 0:46:22

## STATIONS & CHURCH RELATED DISCUSSION -

Peggy recalls the stations in Ballygriffey & preparation involved; Mass followed by food, music & dancers; she doesn't remember Stations at her house in Kilnamona or going to them at neighbours' houses; Lent was strict; they hid the sweets until Easter Sunday

0:46:22 - 0:48:29

## FAMILY, EMIGRATION & PARCELS -

None of her siblings emigrated; 4 sisters of her mother, the Fitzgibbons emigrated to America; she recalls the occasional letter home & parcel sent home but they didn't return home; her uncle went to America; she says maybe her mother would have been better off if she had emigrated; she recalls Agnes Rynne, a class mate who emigrated to England; she recalls some neighbours who emigrated or have passed away; she says her aunts didn't encourage her or her siblings to emigrate.

Peggy recalls parcels from abroad; she recalls comments by the priest at Mass; she remembers she & her sister had a sewing machine at home; her mother hadn't time to make clothes as she was busy rearing her family & farming.

0:48:29 - 0:49:00

## SHOPS -

Peggy recalls some small shops in Kilnamona when she was young.

0:49:00 - 0:50:06

## BIRTHS & COMPARING LIFE THEN & NOW FOR WOMEN -

Peggy as born at home but her son was born in hospital; all children were born at home when she was young; story about the Inagh man whose wife died in childbirth; she compares life for women now to her time & mentions the many changes.

0:50:06 - 0:50:39

## GARLAND SUNDAY AT LAHINCH & SWIMMING -

She recalls cycling to Lahinch on her own on Garland Sunday; she learned to swim from watching others.

0:50:39 - 0:51:31

## KILNAMONA BOOK - 1930S PHOTOS -

Peggy recalls names of school mates & talks more about them; many have passed away; names some who are alive & a few emigrated; she recalls her neighbour Mick Lyons & the McTigue family.

0:51:31 - 0:52:31

## THE BARRETT - GREENE CONNECTION -

Peggy knows the Barretts and Greene were connected by marriage but not sure exactly how; she would have known it if her father had lived to tell her; she recalls Henry & Frank Greene (Geraldine's grandfather & granduncle).

0:52:31 - 0:53:50

## HEALTH, LONGEVITY & PRESENT DAY LIFE -

Talking about her longevity, life & health now; she enjoys attending the Clarecastle Day Care Centre weekly; she talks about a woman of 96 who attends CDCC & swims daily and another woman who sings & dances!

Peggy's health is good except for her arthritis; she uses a walking frame/wheelchair occasionally to go places; she can still read & prefers radio to television; she enjoys a laugh & has a positive outlook on life; she is well-looked after by her family; she now lives with her son Gerry, his wife Nora & their son James, aged 5.