

# Tom Talty

Male

0:00:00 – 0:00:21

## PERSONAL INFORMATION –

Tom was born in 1924 in Derula, between Kilnamona and Dysart; he was baptised in Kilnamona, his parish by Fr Marrinan.

0:00:21 – 0:04:17

## FAMILY –

Tom's father came from Willbrook but moved to Derula, home of the Taltys before 1900; his mother was O'Leary from Ballymacravan, Kilshanny; 5 boys born at Derula; 2 boys died at a young age & buried at Dysart; 2 brothers alive – John lives in Calgary, Alberta, Canada & worked in the packing plant; his niece is married in Canada; his nephew was promoted to sergeant major in the army in Calgary after service in Bosnia; Tom's brother Matt, 4 years younger than Tom got a farm & house in Rineen, between Miltown and Lahinch from his uncle (Mickey Talty's mother came from Rineen); Matt in Ennistymon hospital for 1.5 years; Marrinans now run the farm; Oliver Keane's son now living in Talty home place.

Tom's people buried in Dysart; his 2 siblings who died young buried there; story – Dysart tombstone with shamrock worked into it & stone pointed; taken over by a cousin; inscription read "Michael Talty, Derula, RIP July 24, 1847, aged 77, erected by son Tom" in famine years; his aunts in Willbrook lived to their 80s/90s though they had arthritis; Tom's mother died in 1957 & his father in 1963; both buried in Kilnamona; he has relatives in Ennistymon & North Clare; Tom refers to the co-incidence that the Talty family postal address was Fountain and his brother John now lives in Fountain Road in Alberta.

0:04:17 - 0:05:46

#### TALTY CONNECTIONS -

Tom's family tells how they were connected by marriage to the large Talty family in Drumbane; he recalls Bridie Talty's comment about the 23 to feed; Tom was in same class in Kilnamona with Flan, youngest of the Drumbane family; talks about Flan buying pub in Ennis.

0:05:46 - 0:08:47

#### INFORMATION ABOUT THE GREENES & OTHER NEIGHBOURS -

Tom says that George Greene was bright & eloquent, highly educated, used 'big words' & spoke Irish; Tom was great friends with him, tried to learn/pick up from him but George didn't 'give much away'; Tom says that George Greene's sister was married to Barry in Drumcliff but the marriage didn't work out; Tom met Greene at the bog every day; he recalls an argument between Lyons the carpenter and Barry - Greene tried to settle it; Tom recalls Greene's as described by Mick Lyons (the carpenter who lived at Loughville and was married to Mary McNerney, Kilnamona); Tom talks about Frank Greene, George's brother who got a 'big job' in Northern Ireland & Johnny Greene who worked in the goldmines in Alaska; he talks about Tom Monahan who had lived at Henry Greene's (Geraldine's grandfather), the 3 Monahan families, Big Thomas and John Monahan were cousins of Tom Thady; mentions knowing Henry Greene, Kilnamona (Geraldine's grandfathers); Tom was never at Henry Greene's house; Tom Thady Monahan, Lil's husband (Lil also recorded by Geraldine for Cuimhneamh an Chláir) was related to Fred Hegarty.

0:08:47 - 0:09:37

#### NEIGHBOURS & TOWNLANDS IN DERULA -

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0:08:47 – 0:09:37

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0:09:37 – 0:13:24

SCHOOL DAYS –

Tom went to school in Gortown, Kilshanny parish; he stayed with his O'Leary grandparents & walked 100 yards to school; 1 classroom; Tom comments 'the print of the stick is still in his legs'; teachers were Pat Lenihan, Kilfenora & his wife (grandparents of Brian Lenihan, a government minister in Ireland); he says he didn't like school; but says he would have gone to secondary school, to the Brothers in Ennistymon if he had stayed in Gortown school & would have liked to study Geology; Tom hasn't been to Gortown for years; says he wouldn't know people in the area now but they would know him; Tom did his final year at school in Kilnamona but had no interest in it; says it was not as good as Gortown; teacher was Mr. Kelleher from Kilnaboy; Joe Keatinge had retired; Mrs Julia Keatinge, Mrs Hegarty 2 schools – boys & girls; Tom finished school at 14; 'thought he'd had enough'; Tom's 2 brothers went to Kilnamona school; Tom was baptised in Kilnamona, Holy Communion in Kilshanny & Confirmation in Kilfenora; he left school 'as soon as he could'.

0:13:24 – 0:14:00

SPORT AT SCHOOL –

Sport – football at Gortown; place too small – knocked walls; he played hurling at home with his neighbours not at Kilnamona school; he never played with a team.

0:14:00 – 0:16:00

#### ANIMALS –

The cows liked music & singing while being milked; stood quiet; horses like whistling; when tackling or ploughing; easier horses more sober and when lads â€œcursingâ€ vexed horses.

0:17:04 – 0:20:27

#### FAIRS –

Tom's father had land near the village of Kilfenora; he talks about Morgan's forge; taking 2 year old horses to the forge to get them shod for the fair in Spancilhill in June; Ennis fair on 9th May; story of wild horses hard to catch; no bargains from North Clare men; he demonstrated the â€œcabhaisinâ€, a halter with 3 rings used on noses of cattle; 12 cattle, sheep at winter; farmers walked from Kilfenora to Kilnamona; Tom recalls other fairs dates: Kilfenora on 9th October & 4th November; fairs gone now; he knew many farmers through the fairs; he recall farmers coming the previous evenings of fairs & having fun at the pubs; he recalls listening to arguments over prices & judgements; he remembers 2 Aran Island men argueing in Irish; he repeats some phrases in Irish; he talks about their own dress – bainins & caps; they came by boat to Doolin.

0:20:27 – 0:24:51

#### FARMING CUSTOMS & CURES –

Tom talks about Owen Hegarty, Kilnamona who had cures; tells story of another Hegarty brother, Patsy who had a hole burnt in his hat; Tom had no sign of ringworm left after the cure! Owen Hegarty had been to South America; story of Hegarty fighting with the priest in Kilnamona & being called a â€œquackâ€; Tom didn't think people weren't charged by Hegarty in case cures wouldn't work out; Hegarty got his herbs at Inchiquin Woods and at Toonagh; Owen passed on skills to Mick Hegarty, Crowhill, Newmarket but he â€œcouldn't work themâ€; Owen was related to John Joe Sexton's brother, a bone-setter in Miltown Malbay;

recalls calves' ears being split during the Economic war to prevent export; bleeding animals to help them thrive; use of herbs in Kilshanny; man blessing himself before ploughing.

0:24:51 - 0:25:51

#### ACTIVITIES IN HIS YOUNG DAYS -

Tom often walked in the Burren; he recalls climbing Smithstown Castle barefooted & 1 friend falling & nearby being killed; he climbed to top of Lemenagh castle; story of how he fell off his bicycle (aged 20) following a collision with a donkey on the road in the dark at Maurices Mills.

0:25:51 - 0:26:48

#### FARMING IN DERULA -

Tommy worked at home on the farm in the evenings after school; they kept pigs; he helped take animals to fairs; recalls butter-making - he names 7 families at Derula who did firkins in partnership; took the butter to Ennis and Cork; his mother did the butter; he didn't help - stayed clear away; he did farm work at home after leaving school.

0:26:48 - 0:28:35

#### WORK LIFE IN CANADA -

Tom spent 4 years in Canada from 1959-1963; his 1 brother John also went to Canada; Tom says he was too old when he went; he worked on a huge beef & dairy farm;

the owner was Sandeman, a Scotsman & connected to the Duke of Hamilton;

Tom recalls German plane story: Hesse's plane which was not functioning correctly & he tried to contact the Duke who handed him over to the police who were searching overhead by plane at night on Duke of Hamilton's estate; Hesse got imprisoned in Scotland - he was the last survivor of German government during World War 11).

Tom worked every day of the week; 6am start; milked 80 cows before breakfast; good fry; didn't get to Mass; he lived in a hut on his own at the house & had his food with the family; Tom was the only worker; tractors at Canadian farm machinery combine-harvester barley wheat 600 acres divided into 2 sections  $\hat{A}^{1/4}$  160 acres in grain; Scotsman had  $\hat{A}^{1/2}$  300 acres in dairy; he learned to drive the tractor in Canada.

Tom travelled to the Calgary Stampede which was on for 7 days in the summer; describes the wild cows & horses; day & night scenes; Tom went by day; he got a few days off work; he travelled to other provinces in Canada; he also worked on a farm in Northern Alberta; he went to the oil wells in Canada; he had to come home as "there was trouble at home".

0:28:35 - 0:36:06

WORK LIFE ON FARM IN DROMOLAND ESTATE & CULLIGAN'S FARM IN ENNIS -

He worked at the Dromoland estate for 6 months; recalls getting drunk at the opening of the Clare Inn hotel near Dromoland; Tom worked & lived at Culligan's farm in Clonroad, Ennis for 24 years until he retired; he gives information about the Culligan families who had land in Ruan & Spancilhill; Tom talks about working with horses & tractors.

0:36:06 - 0:37:42

BLACKSMITHS -

Tom recalls Morgan at Jig's Forge & Tom Griffin (nicknamed "Stickler"), blacksmiths & talks about machinery when he was young; making the reek of hay.

0:37:42 - 0:43:58

MUSIC, DANCING & SOCIAL ENTERTAINMENT -

Tom remembers the house dances; he remembers his mother & old Willie Hehir, Cloontohill (native of Inagh) played the concertina in his house; Tom and his

brothers didn't play but danced; Tom's uncle also played the concertina at Kilfenora; remembers his grandfather & the O'Learys at Lickeen when the sons came home on holidays;

Tom recalls music & dancing at sports days & arguments about the best set-dancer; he recalls Barry man a great dancer (his wife Lil Greene was Geraldine's grand-aunt); he tells story of Barry coming home from a dance & meeting the priest who was coming in the morning for the station mass;

Tom names some musicians & recalls Big Mike McTigue's big pair of hands playing the concertina; he recalls hearing the Tullassa Pipe Band practising; he describes a fight at school; he recalls Mickey Talty taking a break from work to play for a set;

Tom recalls Tom Stack, a Kerryman, the dancing master at Gortown but Tom had no interest; he remembers Veronica O'Looney attending classes (a classmate & Geraldine's father's first cousin); Stack taught step-dancing not set-dancing in the evenings after school; it was compulsory; they learned the set at home; Tom liked this but said he was 'not good at it'; he remembers Mick & John Lyons, Maurice's Mills were good singers; they were musical & their father played the concertina; old Jack worked at Willie Hehirs & he often came 'on cuairt' to Talty's house; he tells about turning on music on radio (Jackie Hearse trio) & the men put ashes all over the place while dancing sitting down.

0:43:58 – 0:47:56

GOING 'ON CUAIRD'/STORIES/PISEOGS/WAKES/ HOUSE STATIONS & PLAYING CARDS –

Tom recalls listening to stories when he was young; story about Lemenagh: land owned by Lord Inchiquin & divided among 9 families; McMahons (his aunt) got 1 homestead; haunted with 'live ghosts'; Maire Rua tired of her husbands; she was coddled! story of how she cut a notch in a man but she couldn't identify prisoners in line-up; he quoted Maire Rua's comments; he talks about ghost stories & piseogs, the banshee, wakes & house stations; card-playing not allowed at Tom's house but at his grandparents house in Kilshanny.



0:47:56 - 0:49:20

SPORTS -

Tom recalls sports near Pat Keanes & at Mickey Taltys in Kilnamona; Tom liked sports & did the long & high jump; his uncle could jump his own height; tug-of-war team in Kilnamona.

0:49:20 - 0:51:42

DE VALERA -

Tom recalls seeing de Valera in Ennistymon in 1932; describes bonfires & crowds.

0:51:42 - 0:53:11

ELECTRICITY/TRANSPORT & WEST CLARE RAILWAY -

Tom remembers electricity coming; tells a story which happened one night when he was about 20 & cycling at Maurices Mills; he had no light on his bike and got a huge fright when he was knocked down by a donkey on the road; "œdevil mend you" he said to the donkey!

Tom talks about the West Clare Railway; his father was a linesman with the company for 11 years; the line passed through his father's homeplace in Willbrook; he had meat for his dinner on Good Friday!; Tom recites a verse of "œAre You Right There Michael" .

0:53:11 - 0:53:42

WORLD WAR II YEARS -

Tom talks about the Taltys from Kilnamona men in the British army.

0:53:42 - 0:54:33

FOWLING IN DYSART -

Tom talks about Frank Keane who shot & sold rabbits & grouse & got upset when



nests burnt.

0:54:33 – 0:55:02

MARRIAGE & MATCHES –

Tom didn't get married; Mrs McKey's (Kilnamona Post Office) marriage was a match; she first cousin to both Tom's mother & Geraldine's grandmother.

0:55:02 – 0:55:27

POLITICS –

Tom had some interest in politics, supported Fianna Fail; Culligans supported Fine Gael.

0:55:27 – 0:56:00

LIFE IN ENNIS –

Tom enjoyed the cinema, music & pints in Considine's pub & reading.

0:56:00 – 0:57:28

SPECIAL DAY IN KILSHANNY & HORSE RACES –

Tom recalls the special day/holiday in Kilshanny on 28th August – Mass, St. Augustine's well & horse races; he also recalls races at Lahinch & Miltown Malbay.

0:57:28 – 1:00:04

TRAVEL & CLARE ARCHAEOLOGY SOCIETY –

Tom enjoys travel; he has been to England, Scotland, Straits of Dover, France & Aran Islands with CAS; life-long member & attends CAS meetings; Lahinch with the Senior Citizens groups; says he knows every "hole & corner" in the Burren; has an interest in history, reading & geology – he got his interest from seeing the Canadian the oil wells.

1:00:04 - 1:00:42

PRESENT DAY LIFE -

He will be 88 in April 2012. He enjoys reading & attends Ennis Community Centre every day for his dinner except one day when he cooks at home.