

Poetry

After the presentation of prizes and a short interval, while the oarsmen celebrated the end of the Irish rowing season, Carrick's streets were transformed into a carnival setting. Led by the Kiltubrid Pipe Band, the crews fell in behind, soon to be joined by locals and visitors as they paraded up Bridge Street. The Northern contingent, Bann and Portadown were the most enthusiastic marchers and turned our procession into a Mardi Gras celebration. One of their leaders would 'borrow' a long handled broom from outside Campbells or Lowes and would hurl it into the air in good old Orange style and field it unerringly as it descended from a great height. One brush launching expert would shout 'Youse call it Portadown but I call it Porty Up' as he launched it skywards to be applauded by all as he retrieved it. We marched past the town clock, up Main street to the Gallows Hall where we turned back down to disband at the bridge. For us the day was ending, but the oarsmen in their club blazers set out to attract the Carrick girls in the Regatta marquee in The Shambles, where the Frankie Murray Band played quicksteps, slow waltzes, foxtrots, tangos and all the hits of the day.

Once the Regatta festivities were over, Carrick settled down to days of recovery and tranquility. But the pessimists, of whom our town had more of its share, came up with the lament we heard year after year. Even though August had barely begun, you could hear several solid citizens remark that 'once the Regatta is over the winter is in'!

MARY GUCKIAN MARY GUCKIAN COLM FLYNN

SEAN MACDIARMADA COFFEE KIOSK

Leaving Leitrim for Belfast you developed an interest in politics. In photographs you look fragile, delicate, yet we are told you had abundant energy. When the other signatories met they were happy to have you spread the word, rally the troops.

Working tirelessly, you became ill, resulting in polio, and then a limp. Meeting Tom Clarke, now older, his body worn down from his many years suffering in prison, he knew you were the man to trust. Your actions helping to start the revolution where we gained our independence.

One hundred years later we celebrate your life and will continue to keep your memory alive while we wait for our politicians to take your vision among all of society, getting rid of poverty, homelessness, with health for everyone and a fair wage for all of our citizens.

I order black coffee and an oatmeal biscuit full of chocolate chips and sit on silver chairs and beside silver tables where a bluish glow comes from a sky that looks as delicate as the Child of Mary cloaks we wore at processions while we marched around the town for Corpus Christi. Accents from around the globe humming here, taking me to cities in other countries where visits to galleries and new experiences help enrich lives with coffee boosting memories on the Boardwalk today.

THE WONDERFUL WINDFALL

The happiest county in our Emerald Isle Is Leitrim according to a recent poll And it's an impossibility to rile The population who are on a roll. Its picture-postcard territory stretches From Carrigallen to Tullaghan in the west And paintings as well as preliminary sketches Have been executed to show how it impressed. It has a mountain where they used to mine For coal until it ran its natural course And in the past it was a Palestine For those retreating from malevolent force. A wonderful windfall of many millions was won By a Leitrim person who could be anyone.

SHOVELLING GRAVEL IN AUGHAVAS

It is the penultimate afternoon of July When we're shovelling tons of gravel in Aughavas Resulting in our pretending to be spry As stratocumuli are inclined to mass. There's the indispensability of the box For transportation from the sizeable heap And life is full of psychological shocks It is of great importance to overleap. The sycamore is scrutinizing the job We're doing in the yard of Breffni House And acclamation from the fickle mob Is no solution for anyone with nous. A building in South Leitrim has its stones From when the famine affected us in our bones.

COLM FLYNN

AFTER BEING IN A PEW

The Erne is choppy on a blowy day
 In Enniskillen where the cruisers are moored
 And it is going to be the month of May
 Before the majority of flus are cured.
 The iridescence of a rainbow arches
 Across the eastern end of an ominous sky
 And a total solitudinarian marches
 About the spectacular place as if awry.
 A shower tending to transform to sleet
 Is sweeping across the agitated view
 And it's of fundamental importance to meet
 A companion after being in a pew.
 The serenity of a comfortable pub
 Is in contrast to the riparian hubbub.

OSTENSIBLE NORMALITY

It is the final morning of July
 When everything is quiet in Aughavas
 And the moisture of the overarching sky
 Is getting ready to encourage the grass.
 A tree uprooted by a tremendous wind
 Is at an angle of forty-five degrees
 And happiness on Earth is underpinned
 By focusing on existential keys.
 The rumble of a transatlantic jet
 Is ominous in the remoteness of the spot
 And not a single person ought to let
 An array of tribulations affect their lot.
 Anybody would make a great mistake by scorning
 The ostensible normality of the morning.

COLM FLYNN

LEITRIM IS AT THE LIMIT OF THE STATE

A pair of pigeons go their separate ways
 To startle a person passing by a gate
 And the mountains are sequestered in their haze
 Where Leitrim is at the limit of the state.
 Stratocumuli like the prodigious thoughts of God
 Have sufficient courtesy to permit the sun
 Shine on the undulations of the sod
 Where the search for happiness is overdone.
 A swallow is luxuriating in
 A superfluity of nutritious flies
 And life on the circling planet puts us to the pin
 Of our collar when vicissitudes arise.
 The gaze is drawn towards a distant hill
 Where Leitrim is far from being run-of-the-mill.

PARSIMONIOUS SPOONS

An exhilarating afternoon could be spent
 Scrutinizing the cruisers on the River Erne
 It is an impossibility to rent
 For a lubber who doesn't know the prow from the stern.
 A stratocumulus in the shape of a ship
 Is making its way across the azure sky
 As if it has been launched from a heavenly slip
 So it can journey to where there is no sigh.
 A multiplicity of vermilion buoys
 Bear a powerful resemblance to balloons
 And life on planet Earth has ephemeral joys
 Distributed with parsimonious spoons.
 A cruiser is flying a green flag with a harp
 To demonstrate there is no reason to carp.