

“Bless me Father”

Richard Maxwell

FATHER O'REILLY was 25 years in the parish and the Parish Council decided to mark the occasion with a night out in his honour. Since his arrival a new school was built, and a Community Centre. A huge crowd turned out on the night. Father O'Reilly thanked everyone for their kindness, “it's seems like such a short twenty five years”, he said, “and I'll always remember the first week here, and the first Saturday I had Confessions. I thought this was an awful place altogether. The first man that knelt before me was a terrible case, unfaithful to his wife, embezzling money, asking and pleading for forgiveness. Thankfully, it was an isolated case and I often wondered how the poor man finished up”.

Johnny Casey, the chief organiser of the night, arrived late. The priest had finished speaking. Johnny was just in time to make a small presentation. He excused himself for being late. Always wanting to have the last word, Johnny thanked Father O'Reilly for all he did for the parish since his arrival. “It seems like only yesterday since he came here and I am proud to say that I was the first man in the Parish to shake his hand, and on that Saturday night, I had the privilege to be the first man to kneel before him in the Confessional Box”.

MISSING CLOONTYPRUCKLISH

Mick Geelan

*On a misty Melbourne morning
I am so lonesome here because
I am missing dear old Ireland here in OZ
On a misty Melbourne morning
As I gaze out on the bay
Oh I am missing Cloontyprucklish here today*

*I was working in construction when the building bubble burst
And my brother Ted was working in the bank
We googled jobs down under and they wanted lads like us
So we said we'd have to give ourselves a chance
So we tended bar in Mornington, we fished Port Philip bay
We picked oranges up in Queensland for a week
But there were spiders big as rabbits there and Ted he wouldn't stay
Now he's living with a girl in Primbee creek
On a misty Melbourne morning
I am so lonesome here because
I am missing dear old Ireland here in OZ*

*I hitched the Barkley Highway where the trucks are big as trains
Got a lift with an old farmer in his Jeep
I got a job out on his farm on the dusty dried up range
With his little herd of twenty thousand sheep
There is an Abbo called Malongy here and a Maori we call Sam
And they've taught me loads of stuff I never knew
That you stop when you get hungry, what to gather for the pan
And there's no need to marinade bush tucker stew
On a misty Melbourne morning
I am so lonesome here because
I am missing Cloontyprucklish here in OZ*

*I've learned how to shear a jumbuck and to mark his back with raddle
And I've learned that the dingo's never sleep
I know the value of a sheep dog when you're riding in the saddle
And a snake can kill a man or dog or sheep
Now the farmer has a daughter and her name is Mary Jane
And although she is only twenty she looks old
Her skin is tanned like leather and her face is kind of plain
But inside her heart is made from purest gold
On a misty Melbourne morning
I am happy here because
I love a farmer's daughter here in OZ
On a misty Melbourne morning
As the sun shines on the plain
I am lying in the arms of Mary Jane*