



In this Issue

Kathleen Lynch, Minister of State for Mental Health, Primary Care and Social Care (Disabilities and Older People) visit	1
Garden Fete	3
Veterans Support Group	4
Remembrance Service, November 2015	4
Frankie Hennel	4
A Visit to Ypres	5
Christmas comes to Leopardstown Park Hospital	6
Army No. 1 band recital	7
Limericks from John Crisp	7
Christmas in the Clevis	8
Angela Doyle, Day Care Client	10
The Leopardstown Park Hospital Golf Society	11
Pain	11
An Irishman's Diary about four-legged piano players	13
The Cat Flap and me	14
Remembrances	15
Condolences	16
Smartie	17
An Irishman's Diary on the Dublin to Kingstown rail line. World's first dedicated commuter railway line	18
Congratulations to LPH volunteer Alan Harrisson BEM	19
Welcome to Fergus O'Reilly, IT Manager, who introduces himself to our readers	20
Veteran's outing to the National Yacht Club	21
McEvoy family concert	22
Gallery	23



On Thursday November 26th Kathleen Lynch, Minister of State for Mental Health, Primary Care and Social Care (Disabilities and Older People) visited our hospital and viewed our facilities. Minister Lynch was welcomed by our CEO, Ann Marie O'Grady and Chairman of the Board, Eugene Magee members of the Hospital Board and Jackie O'Shea CNMII.

Following some discussions in the Boardroom the Minister, accompanied by the Chairman, CEO and CNMII, Jackie O'Shea, toured the Hospital, meeting and greeting some of our residents, patients and clients.

After her tour the Minister joined heads of departments for refreshments in the Sitting Room and was informally addressed by Ann Marie. Ann Marie laid stress to various points not the least of which were the range of integrated services provided by Leopardstown Park Hospital and the importance of them to older persons and the community and acute sectors. She particularly noted older people's rights to compassionate care and staff going that extra mile, which were very much present in Leopardstown Park Hospital and was looking forward to a very modern health service delivering even more in the future.



Leopardstown Park Hospital Board,
Foxrock, Dublin 18 XH70.
Tel: 01 295 5055 Fax: 01 295 5957
ISDN: 01 2160500
Email: liananeewsletter@gmail.com
Website: www.lph.ie



Minister Lynch responded in a friendly and informal manner. She mentioned members of her family who were veterans of the Battle of the Somme and the Dunkirk evacuation, thus relating to our veterans. Since then institutions have moved into a different space, but cater to the past. She felt that attitude and language must change in order to enhance the world. Her comment that history was written by men and always covered big events, that women's voices are now heard and that the smaller important things are more appreciated. She mentioned reading the book "Immortal" by Atul Gwanda and a line from it rang so true. Minister Lynch pointed out that it was important that it was about living rather than getting old.

The Minister discussed two years of negotiation with HIQA around environmental factors. There was an understanding that we cannot afford to

lose any beds but still are required to create a space for privacy and dignity. She pointed out that we need to listen to our residents – Can we assume that we know what's best for them? Listen to them, hear their choices and meet what they need. We must remain open to all possibilities and retain a holistic approach. She noted, from her tour, that staff in LPH clearly have strong interaction with residents with whom they are very engaged. She acknowledged the value of the model of care that LPH provides, where people can move between various services, supporting them in their homes, their return home from acute sector and, if required, residential care. Minister Lynch spoke about people she meets saying "but we are not there yet" but she queried whether we are ever "there". She felt that the journey was more important as things change over time and we have to keep looking at improving.

Garden Fete

By Rita Conroy

Our Garden Fete took place on September 13th.

The weather forecast was for rain with sun breaking through at 3.p.m. It was absolutely correct. Mind you they did not say that the rain would come down "in buckets". However, it did not dampen the spirits of the stall holders or the organisers. It definitely did not keep the crowds away. It was a wonderful afternoon.

The kids loved the Bouncy Castle, Thomas the Tank Engine rides and the face painting (mainly the girls).

The adults thronged to the Bric-a-Brac, Book Stall, Cake Stall, Bottle Stall, Plant Stall, Handbag Stall, Clothes Stall, Chocolate Stall, Tarot Card Reading Stall and Nearly New Stall. The Bumper Raffle ticket queues were eagerly joined.

The Volunteers served teas, coffees and scones (freshly baked by our wonderful Catering staff) to the multitudes.

Our thanks to staff, volunteers and of course everybody who braved the elements to attend



this annual and well supported event. A special thanks to everyone who contributed books, bric-a-brac etc. What would we do without you ?

Well done Elaine Flanagan and Mary O'Reilly for their excellent organisation.

A hearty €14,000 was our profit on the day, all going directly to enhance patient and resident comforts.

Here's to next year !!



Veterans Support Group

By Frances Mooney, Veterans Support Group

Many happy afternoon outings were enjoyed by our Veterans. Evening entertainment included Frank and Maeve singing well loved songs from yesteryear on September 22nd. On the 5th of November a planned traditional

Irish session turned into a singsong with Clevis residents Ciaran and Paddy leading the impromptu crew. Song sheets were kindly provided by Liz Cusack (Clevis Manager). On December 17th the Veterans' Party was held with present giving and musical entertainment.



Remembrance Service, November 2015

By Lorraine McWilliams



At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918, an armistice was signed between the Allies and Germany. The armistice signalled the cessation of hostilities and brought an end to years of carnage and destruction.

We gather each year on 11 November to remember all those who perished during WWI and in conflicts since then. For the veterans of



LPH and their families, it is a time to remember the comrades who are no longer with us.

On Armistice Day 2015, Rev. John Tanner and Fr. Gerry Moore concelebrated a very moving remembrance service in the chapel. WW2 veteran, John Crisp, laid a wreath and recited the exhortation from Robert Laurence Binyon's poem "For the Fallen".

A Happy New Year
to all staff, residents
and their families and friends
from
Frankie Hennel



A Visit to Ypres

By Lorraine McWilliams



On Saturday, 12 September 2015, three members of RAFA (Republic of Ireland Branch) were honoured to lay a wreath at the Menin Gate in Ypres. President Jim Kelly, Chairman Pete McWilliams and WW2 veteran Ted Jones found it a sombre and deeply moving experience, particularly when the Last Post was played and the standards lowered.

RBL (Ypres Branch) provided two standard bearers and our party was greeted and supported by Ypres Branch members:

André Santy, President
 Roger Steward, Chairman
 Lizzie Brawley, Secretary
 Fr. Brian Llewellyn, Chaplain



We were warmly greeted wherever we went and we took every opportunity to explore our surroundings, including a visit to the Battlefields and to the In Flanders Fields Museum. For all of us, it was a first-ever visit to Ypres, but it will certainly not be our last.



Christmas comes to Leopardstown Park Hospital

By Rita Conroy



Clevis resident Eva Sutton switching on lights

On Thursday December 3rd Santa and his team (Mrs Claus, elves and a magnificent sleigh) arrived at the Hospital. Through the wind and rain, with bells ringing and choir singing Santa made a spectacular entry. Residents, their families and friends assembled in the reception area and the Concert Hall for the official switching on of the lights and the party to welcome Christmas. The outside lights were switched on by Eva Sutton and those in the Concert Hall by Michael Gillan.

The bright, warm and seasonally lit Concert Hall was where Santa distributed gifts to all the children who attended and listened to their requests for “what Santa will bring” for Christmas. The atmosphere was wonderful.

It was a magical event enjoyed by everyone. (Talking about magic I am sure I caught sight of an elf – an escapee from Santa’s magic kingdom no doubt.)

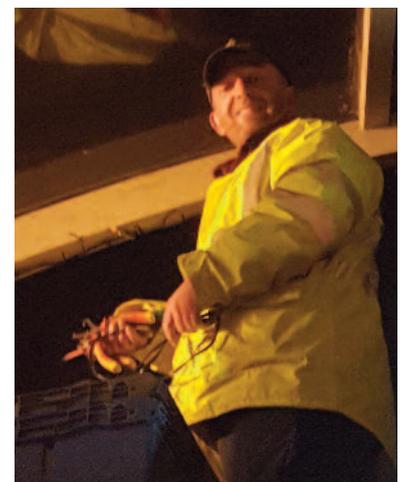
A big thank you to our Catering Department

who came into their own by providing delicious mince pies and spicy warm drinks. Thanks also to Mary O’Grady, Paula Carragher (whose son Patrick provided all the children with balloons in the shape of swords, animals etc.). Thank you our staff and volunteers in helping to make this a truly memorable event.

Our CEO Ann Marie O’Grady rounded off the afternoon with a welcoming address and she expressed her deep appreciation for all the hard work involved.

A final thank you – Sean Keating, you are a star.

Picture of Sean on the roof checking the illuminations (taken at 5.30 a.m. on the day).



Army No. 1 band recital

By Rita Conroy



Army No. 1 Band

On December 16th we were again privileged to have the Army No. 1 Band perform under the baton of Captain Fergal Carroll, Director of Music. As you are aware the Band perform on two occasions each year, Summer and Winter.

A varied programme included The Belle of Chicago, Christmas Pipes, Do you hear what I hear, Happy Christmas – War is over, Fairytale of New York and lots more. We welcomed Captain Tom Kelly who conducted Malagueña (his very first time to conduct as he is newly qualified to the post).

A huge audience of residents, their families, staff and friends were handed sheet music when they arrived, listing the words of the two “Sing-Along” numbers. They sang Away in a Manger and White Christmas with gusto and

great enjoyment. A lovely thoughtful gesture by Captain Carroll to allow the audience to be part of the performance.



Colonel Peter Marron representing Vice Admiral Mark Mellett, His Excellency Dominick Chilcott, British Ambassador, Major General O'Morchoe, Major Ed Hillan, Veteran Support Group, Ann Marie O'Grady, CEO Leopardsown Park Hospital, Brigadier General Beary, Col. Max Walker, recently appointed Defence Attaché, Fergal Carroll, Director of Music, Army No. 1 Band.

Limericks from John Crisp, The Clevis

Now Christmas is over, the
New Year is here
But festive over indulgence I
fear
Make resolutions abound
Alas I have found
That they're too late for the
bulges that spoil the party gear

With Santa our Christmas was
fun
The Army Band proved its still
No. 1
Jomac was back and the
McEvoy Pack
We had choirs and dancers
and singers,



Christmas in the Clevis

By Liz Cusack

A house is a building; it's the people who share the house that make it home. Sometimes we forget that Christmas can be a difficult for many people, we remember those we have lost, and the years gone by but we also know that it is a special time of year and that everyone deserves to feel special and happy.

Christmas preparations start early in the Clevis, Santa shopping lists are written in November! On December 1st the decorating begins, Bill Metcalfe transforms the house into a grotto! Christmas music, from Bing Crosby to Michael Buble, show bands, and the classics sound from early morning! By the time the lights go on on December 3rd, there are five Christmas trees sparkling in the house! Reindeers and snowmen, angels and Santa bears all over the place! This year the traditions continued, a Clevis resident is given the honour of turning on the Christmas outdoor lights. Eva Sutton was nominated by staff in the Clevis and LPH, gladly accepted

the invitation to do the deed, despite the lashing winter rain!

Throughout the month the festive cheer spreads. The first Christmas dinner was served on the 12th December when most of the residents were home, turkey and ham, roast vegetables, trifle, pudding and custard, mince pies, were enjoyed by all! Our favourite musician Marion McEvoy (Richard Mc Evoy's daughter) called that afternoon and entertained us with Christmas carols and songs from the Clevis favourite songs book!

The week before Christmas was, as is every house in the country before the 25th, BUSY! Santa made an early and unexpected visit (Malachy Kearns) much to the surprise of his mother Babs Kearns. He dutifully and merrily posed for a photo shoot with many of the residents and was rewarded with his tea! The crib was installed, more decorations! Lights checked again by Sean, meals ordered, plans for each and every resident made and lists prepared. Phone calls to and visits from old friends and families, Laundry overload! Our postman was delighted to be remembered with a box of chocolates and a hand written





note! More presents wrapped and cards from friends and families displayed. Visitors, old friends, new friends, young and old spreading more Christmas cheer, more teas and coffees, fun and laughter and Christmas wishes throughout the home.

The film chosen by the residents for the evening of Christmas Eve was 'Its a wonderful Life' and many watched in the cosy sitting room, with the lights on the tree twinkling in the corner.

Paddy O'Rourke was 'the keeper' this year and minded a very special treasure carefully and with utmost responsibility. He carefully placed baby Jesus in the crib on Christmas



morning, another Clevis tradition!

Then... The bell rings for breakfast and the residents take to their places, greeted with Christmas wishes from the cheerful and dedicated staff. The dining room was beautifully decorated - from poinsettia plants, twinkling lights on the tree, to Christmas table linen (inherited from the Nuns - another tradition of the home) Then...More bells! Mr. and Mrs. Claus arrive! Every resident received an individual present, chosen especially for them, carefully wrapped with tags, ribbons, tissue paper and Santa bags! The laughter and fun continues, more photo memories created and a genuine home celebrates Christmas! The photos speak for themselves!

Christmas is a time to reflect and say thank you. Thank you to EVERYONE who was involved: from Santa's bookkeeper in November, to Philip the Porter delivering milk in a Christmas suit on the 25th!, to the chefs, the chaplains, the hairdresser, the carers, nurses and doctors, the grounds men, the

carol singers, for all involved in residents services, the musicians, the concert performers, to Santa and his wife, the list is endless to each and everyone of you who contributed in some way to our Christmas, THANK YOU for making Christmas special!

A house is a building; it's the people (residents, staff, families and friends) who make it a home.



Angela Doyle, Day Care Client

By Rita and Noirin

To say we enjoyed chatting to Angela is somewhat of an understatement. She is a warm, funny lady with a great personality and an even greater sense of humour and we could have stayed talking all day but unfortunately lunchtime beckoned and we had to go.

Angela, born in 1937 was brought up in Carrickmines, South County Dublin, she went to school in Ballycorus and then attended Mount Anville for secondary education. On leaving school she worked for some years in Kelso Laundry in Milltown. Then needing a change she and her friend Nora decided to go to the U.K. to work. Once Angela was successful in getting employment she resumed her relationship with her boyfriend and they got married and settled in Birmingham. Following the birth of their first child, they returned to Ireland to live in the lovely village of Enniskerry where their four children were born.

Times in the early nineteen sixties were not easy with five mouths to feed and money certainly not plentiful. However Angela could turn her hand to anything and if someone needed a room painted, she was on hand wielding a paintbrush, or perhaps someone needed help running a hairdressing salon, there was Angela equally at home as a stylist. Versatility was her middle name!

While out with a friend who was a member of a local drama group, it was suggested that Angela should join the group and, undaunted, that was just what she did. To her surprise she

thoroughly enjoyed the experience and took part in many productions. She recalled many performances among them "The Merry Widow" "Sive" and "Viva Mejico". Angela has a beautiful



singing voice. The productions were staged in the school hall of St Tiernan's School in Ballaly.

Angela recalled the time she was on the committee of the Marino Clinic in Bray which raised funds for cerebral palsy. This entailed knocking on doors seeking donations and this was very hard work particularly when the weather was bad. She remembered the time they arranged a sponsored climb of the Sugar Loaf mountain and Angela was on hand half way up the mountain, dispensing refreshments from the Landrover.

Now Angela lives in Carrickmines with one of her daughters and has been attending Leopardstown Park Hospital as a Day Care Client once a week for the last three years. She very much enjoys her time in the unit and has made friends with both clients and staff.

As we have already stated, Angela has five children, three boys and two girls, she has twenty one grandchildren and is the proud great grandmother of sixteen great grandchildren.

Talking to Angela it is very obvious that she appreciates life and we wish her many more years and the good health to enjoy herself.

The Leopardstown Park Hospital Golf Society

These are the results of our two final outings for 2015.

Weekend away in Dromoland in August.

Winner Ann Morgan	H/C 28 58 pts			
Cat 1	1st	Bob Hamilton	2nd	Oonagh Ennis
Cat 2	1st	Ada Bradbury	2nd	Johnny Morgan
Combined 2 days	Front 9	Ann Morgan	Back 9	Fran Kehoe
Combined 2 days	LD	Johnny Morgan		Fran Kehoe
Secret Team	Day 1	Jacinta Hamilton	Ed Bradbury and Liam Kehoe	
	Day 2	Oonagh Ennis	Bob Bradbury and Bill Ennis	

Captain's Prize

Courtown Golf Club 25th September

Winner	Ed Bradbury	H/C 20	34 pts	
Runner up	Ada Bradbury	H/C 26	31 pts	
Gross	Pat Smyth	H/C 13	17 Gross pts.	
3rd	Johnny Morgan	H/C 22	29 pts	
Cat 1	1st	Oonagh Ennis	2nd	Jacinta Hamilton
Cat 2	1st	Ann Morgan	2nd	Liam Kehoe
NP		Bob Hamilton	LD	Frank Kehoe
Visitors	1st	Donal O'Keeffe	2nd	Angela Carrick
Special Prize		Katriona O'Keeffe		Bill Ennis

We welcome new, returning members and visitors.

Please contact me on 086 857 1100

Ann (Morgan) Captain 2015



Pain (Continued from the last issue)

By Noirin Scully

In the previous issue of Liana I said I'd let you know how I progressed so here we go. At the time of writing the article I was more or less pain free due to the steroids I was taking and this lasted for just a month and then the pain started to sneak back which was what I had expected but it was disappointing.

I began to think seriously about pain and how

to define it so I fished around on the internet, (what did we do without it?) I came up with the following:

Definition of Pain: An unpleasant sensation that can range from mild, localized discomfort to agony.

Now I found this interesting. To suffer pain does not mean you are rolling around in agony. You are in pain if you have an unpleasant sensation and this clears up something that I always find difficult. When I

am at the doctors and complain that I have a pain the question then is – on a scale of one to ten how would you describe your pain taking one as mild pain and ten as agony. I can think of mild pain as an unpleasant sensation and that means that I can truly describe my pain as severe and I would put it at around nine. I would always have been hesitant to do that saying that I would put the level of my pain at around six or seven. Getting the level of pain right must make a difference when the doctor is prescribing pain relief.

While digging for this information I accidentally came across the definition of chronic pain, which is:

Chronic pain: is defined as pain that persists for a period of 6 months or longer, and is the result of a medical condition or damage to the body.

I always thought chronic pain meant that I should have been suffering pain for many years. How stupid could I be!

The point of this long preamble is that for everyone suffering from chronic, severe pain, the fact that you don't have a spectacular swelling, a bloody looking wound or a black eye, you can suffer severe, chronic pain with no visible sign whatsoever.

Then I got a phone call to say a place for two weeks was available in the Rheumatology and Musculoskeletal Unit at Our Lady's Hospice in Harold's Cross and was I free to come in the following Monday. Well, if necessary I would have cancelled a holiday in the Bahamas or a date with George Clooney in order to be able to take up the offer.

I had to be there at 9.30 a.m. and was shown immediately to my room on the first floor and after seeing the house doctor and ward nurse the treatment started right away. The physiotherapist took painstaking details of my history and started the exercises and in the afternoon I had an hour of hydrotherapy which was heaven in a pool that was really warm. I could have stayed all day if that was possible.

The routine each day was the same – an hour's physiotherapy and an hour in the pool.

Meals were served in my room and once the therapy was over I could do what I like. I had TV and had brought books and crosswords with me but I could go for a walk in the garden but the weather wasn't great during the two weeks I was there so I stayed put. On Friday afternoon I could go home provided I was back again on Monday morning.

Within the unit there is a lovely, bright café and a shop selling newspapers, magazines, chocolates and sweets. The staff are very pleasant and friendly. Tea, coffee or soup is served mid-morning by volunteers.

I also had an appointment with the occupational therapist which was really helpful. She went through all the walking aids available and how to do certain modifications to my house to make life easier. Much emphasis was placed on living with pain and trying to find ways around doing the things you want to do by doing them in a different way. For example, I enjoy my bath and am not a shower person. Getting in is manageable but getting out is very difficult but there is a shelf available that goes across the bath and this is very helpful to lever yourself up. Also the occupational therapist said that I was making a mistake in trying to work through pain rather than stopping and resting from time to time.

I left after the two weeks with dire warnings from the physio to keep up the exercises otherwise I'll be back where I started I'm usually very bad at keeping up exercising but this time I persevered and for about a month the pain reduced considerably but slowly it returned.

Nevertheless I enjoyed the two weeks in the unit immensely and I know the experience was invaluable. One of the things that struck me during my time in the unit was the fact that there were many people much younger and much worse than I am. I can tell you that made me think.

An Irishman's Diary about four-legged piano players

By Frank McNally

One night some weeks ago, at about 4am, I was woken by the sound of piano music in the living room below. Luckily, we do have a piano, so this wasn't quite as chilling as it might have been.

On the other hand, I was fairly sure there was nobody in the living room at the time. And anyway the random notes filtering up through the floorboards suggested this was a musician of no human kind.

Sinister

Of course, even a well-played piano piece can sound sinister in the wrong place or time. Remember how the cheerful tinkling of Mike Oldfield's Tubular Bells became transformed when used as the soundtrack for The Exorcist?

So tip-toeing down the stairs that night, I didn't know whether I should be brandishing a hurley or a crucifix. But brandishing neither, I nudged the living room door open. And there, at the keyboard, was a giant black cat, with hideous red eyes and an expression of pure evil.

Smug

Well, no, actually. It was just our regular black cat, Pete Briquette, who has green eyes, and was walking on the keys. If he had any expression, it was pure smugness.

"I knew that would get you up," he seemed to say, skipping off the piano and heading for the hallway: "Now let me out of here. It's 4am – I have things to do."

There are moments, and this was one, when I regret narrowly missing Pete with the front wheel of my car on a wet bog road in Tipperary 3½ years ago.

He was an abandoned kitten at the time, but doing a good impression of being a scrap of turf fallen off a trailer. At the very least, I could have looked the other way.



Photograph: Thinkstock

Cat-flap

But I didn't, and since then, Pete has grown to adulthood in the city, in the process forcing many modifications on our life and home, although not – so far – cat-flaps.

There was a time he didn't seem to need them. He would happily spend the night outside, or inside depending on the weather. That was a good time.

More recently, however, he prefers to spend about half the night in and the other half out, in no particular order. And ideally, we would have a cat flap to facilitate this.

But we don't want a flap in our front door, and the back door is all glass. So for a while we tried to force a choice on him. He could be out – there are perfectly comfortable cat accommodations provided, front and back – or he could be in. Not both.

Then he realised that, when he was out, he could get back in at any time by miaowing pathetically at the bedroom window of the household's lightest sleeper (he would try them in turn until one worked). So that became his in-bound flap.

Getting out was more complicated. Even before he discovered the piano trick, he did occasionally manage to make downstairs noises loud enough to wake the house, usually by attacking the (permanently in) old cat.

Hobbies

But I can't say that was a deliberate stratagem, because attacking the old cat is just one of his hobbies. He does it every few hours, and the victim's only defence these days (and nights) is a snarl

that either repels the attack or brings humanitarian intervention, even at 4am.

My regrets at not looking the other way three years ago would, I suspect, pale alongside the regrets of the older cat, if only he could express them. In his feline dreams, it's probably him driving the car that day, and swerving deliberately to squash every piece of turf he sees.

The piano incident was replicated a few times afterwards. Then it stopped, or if it didn't, I learned to sleep through it, as you can almost anything. In fact, even the serenading from the bedroom window lost some of its waking power (I can't speak for the neighbours).

Keyboard

But after a period of nocturnal peace, the piano again woke me one night recently, sounding somehow different than before. When I investigated, this time, it was the old cat on the keyboard, raising the alarm (in G Minor) while Pete looked on innocently, apart from a tuft of white fur in his mouth.

The day I'm forced to call in an engineer to devise a system of cat flaps, secret tunnels, and safe rooms edges closer. In the meantime, my bedtime routine has been expanded yet again. It now reads: plug out television; check cooker; ensure access to cat litter; switch all lights off; close piano lid.

By kind permission of Frank McNally, *The Irish Times*

The Cat Flap and me

By Noirin Scully

It all seemed so straightforward. Two young cats, an owner, (me), who is getting on in years with stiff knees and a sore back and who was finding it difficult acting as doorman (or doorwoman,) to two active cats and the cat flap seemed the obvious solution. For those unacquainted with cat flaps the flap swings loosely so cats can come in and out but it can also be locked closed.

Cat flap was installed but cats would have none of it. I demonstrated how it worked by pushing the flap back and forth. Then I got some cat food and put it outside and showed them that but to no avail. Finally, I had to prop the flap open and the penny dropped and then I gradually lowered it down until problem was solved. I know, I know, I have cats that are not over burdened with brains.

Now cats are awkward yokes. Well mine are anyway. They don't regard night-time the way we humans do. In other words cats will either go to bed early, then wake up about three in the morning and just must go out for the rest of the night. Some reverse the process by staying out the first part of the night and coming in around three so that means that the



cat flap has to be able to swing back and forth otherwise ear-splitting yowls will start.

Well OK. Anything for a quiet life! Cat flap will remain unlocked. Then one lunchtime I was enjoying a cup of tea and a sandwich and the cat flap sounded and in arrived a large, striped cat with a surly expression and an ear that had a bit missing. Ignoring me he strolled across the kitchen to the cat dining area and helped himself to some cat food. I rose to my feet and shouted at him to get out. He spat at me, growled and strolled back across the kitchen and off he went. However he was nothing if not persistent and I got fed up shouting and throwing things at him and now he comes and goes as he pleases.

Another morning I went upstairs to collect the

washing and reposing on a bed in our spare room was a lovely black and white cat fast asleep. That was about two years ago and he is still with us much to the annoyance of our resident cats. However they eventually settled down to a state of an uneasy truce.

There followed a very disturbing time. I came down one morning and the cat flap door was missing and I found it out in the back garden. I could hook it back again but every so often it happened again. Then the cat flap was removed altogether and bits of it were in the kitchen and some outside. Now this was no mean feat as the frame of the cat flap had been screwed on to the door. I wondered uneasily what kind of animal was this that had the strength to be able to demolish a sturdy cat flap so new cat flap was purchased.

Then worst of all. We were greeted one morning by a large puddle of what looked like tomato sauce on the floor beside the cat flap.

Yikes, blood! There was no sign of a body. All three resident cats looked fine and not traumatised. What had happened? We never found out. The final act of destruction was the removal of the metal strip from the bottom of the kitchen door. This strip had been nailed on to the door but proved no problem to this Beast of Blackrock. But following that, things settled down and the cat flap has remained in place since.

So the fact is that our cat flap is directly responsible for doubling the number of our cat residents from two to four. To be honest I must confess that I like cats so I don't mind this increase in their numbers but it wouldn't be everyone's choice. Frank McNally (See the article "Cat melodeon – An Irishman's Diary about four-legged piano players") has the right idea about contacting someone to install a system of cat flaps, secret tunnels, safe rooms etc., otherwise he might find his cat population on the increase!

Remembrances

By Tom Harmon

We all like to look back in time – it is called nostalgia in the words of the prophet. Now, here are some things to jog your memory. For instance "The Bisto Kids" and their ragged attire and Bisto Rich Gravy was a great advertisement and Bisto was very successful with it. School kids attire however did change from long stockings for boys to long trousers and for girls skirts.



From Gravy to Custard Powder. Birds famous brand with the sketch of a bird on the packaging (which was named after Alfred Bird). But not to be outdone we had Monk & Glass, very apt, and it too was very popular. Chivers Jellies (still popular today) with all their different flavours. Jelly made a lovely sweet for after Sunday lunch and all the directions are on the package.

Not forgetting the babies of that time "Cow & Gate", another great advertisement to catch the eye – and all the babies were "happy in their nappies".

Now to the washing, with Reckitts Blue Bag – out of the blue comes the white of the wash. Also this was used as a great cure for wasp stings and most shops stocked blue bags for that reason.

Rinso – one of the famous washing powders (and not forgetting that if it were not successful the Brothers would give you your money back). There were lots of brands of washing powders, so it was "cleaner than clean".

Now to the smokes, Wills and Players, Woodbines (five in an open pack). Originally they cost one penny. Then there was the bigger packet of ten, and this was called the Double Woodbine. Not to be outdone Players had a more up-market brand called Players Weights of five cigarettes, of better quality, and the big packet of 20. We must not forget the cigarette cards which to schoolboys were

a currency in itself. They were very colourful as they covered national flags, birds and Irish industry. Swapping was done to make up the sets. When the company became Players/Wills they stopped issuing the cards. Sadly, it put an end to a schoolboy hobby.

Bottles of Guinness with 'SE' embossed on the bottle. Every month the Irish Glass Bottle Company sent a lorry to Belfast to collect the empties and bring them back to Dublin. Corks were used as stoppers and Corkscrews were used to open them to let us sample the contents. All pub labels had printed "who sold the other brown stout", so Uncle Arthur had the monopoly. The passing of time has changed all that. The Guinness posters were great. The saying "it would make a horse laugh" Anyone who saw the Guinness poster with the horse laughing and his driver pulling the cart. A good one also was the one with the Toucan with the two pints on his bill. Then came the famous Sedylitz Powders for the morning after the night before when all the corks were popped.

Siphons of Soda Water – press the handle and whish – Whiskey and Soda. Liptons Tea and Home & Colonial. The smell of coffee combined with the aroma from the great rounds of cheese that wafted out of the doors was a great customer draw and slab cake and bags of broken biscuits were good value. But, the big food emporium was Alex Findlater. Machie Todd was the name of the company and it must have been the start of the supermarkets, but in the days of £.s.d

hardly a place where you bought one and got one free.

Ice cream, no cones only wafers. Up north they were called sliders and of course Stop Me and Buy One known to a lot of the kids as the Ice cream Man.

Days of bread and dripping, lovely but quite a contrast to todays healthy eating.

Washing and shaving, and carbolic soap and razor blades "Mac Smile" turn Mac upside down clean shaved and smiling", followed by North Light de Luxe. A few barbers still used the cut-throat razor – they said it gave a better shave.

Laundries that collected and delivered. There was one laundry in the city which had the Swastika symbol on their vans. When the last war started it had to be removed, even though it was different from the Nazi one. The era of the washing machine and the opening of laundrettes ended the days of collecting and delivering.

Now we have moved on to Ipods and Iphones and Internet and all this in a short space of time. But what next ? Holidays on Mars ? However at the end of the day Lever Brothers will give you your money back if you are not satisfied with their washing powder.

And Ladies at tea, don't forget one lump or two. I mean sugar lumps – long gone.



Condolences

Our Sympathy goes to the relatives and friends of those recently deceased:

Constance Armstrong

Christopher O'Toole

Josephine Barry

William Brown

Margaret Geary

Marie O'Sullivan

Joan Masterson

Mary Freany

Ivan Vaughan

Alex Watt

Christine Tyndall

Mary Lacey

Isabel Tynan

Dermot Brennan

Aiveen Spillane

Mary/Mae Masterson

Sheila O'Brien

Margaret Lynch

Sarah Sheridan

Francis Lynam

Mary McDowell

Smartie

By Paula Carraher
Resident & Patient Services Manager

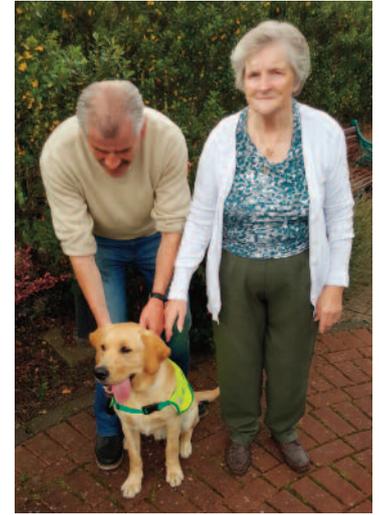
I recently had a conversation with a resident who told me how much he missed his beloved dog and I came to realise that many other residents must also be lonely for their pets.

I knew that somewhere near to my home there lived a couple who trained guide dogs. I had seen them out walking their dog who was wearing the familiar yellow jacket, which meant that he was undergoing training as a Guide Dog. I thought it would be worthwhile contacting the owners to see if there was any possibility they could bring him to Leopardstown Park Hospital to meet with some of the residents.

After much knocking on doors I found them, Josie and Eamon who are guide dog trainers and their lovely trainee Smartie. I introduced myself and explained what I wanted, and they immediately agreed to visit us. As we drove into the hospital on the following Saturday Eamon and Josie were nervous and hoped that Smartie would not misbehave. Smartie was destined to go to Cork to complete his training and would only be with them for another week.

We started our ward visits. Smartie was in heaven as he was surrounded by admiring audiences and he behaved impeccably. The attached photos give an indication of the pleasure he brought to the residents. It was fantastic to see the effect such a friendly and well behaved dog had on everyone and there were smiles all around. Smartie was very professional and was a credit to his trainers.

As we left, Eamon, Josie and myself were nearly in tears at the extraordinary effect this splendid dog had on everyone. We thank them sincerely for their kindness in sharing Smartie with us. and others.



Marian Jones



Oonagh Kelly



Kate Kavanagh

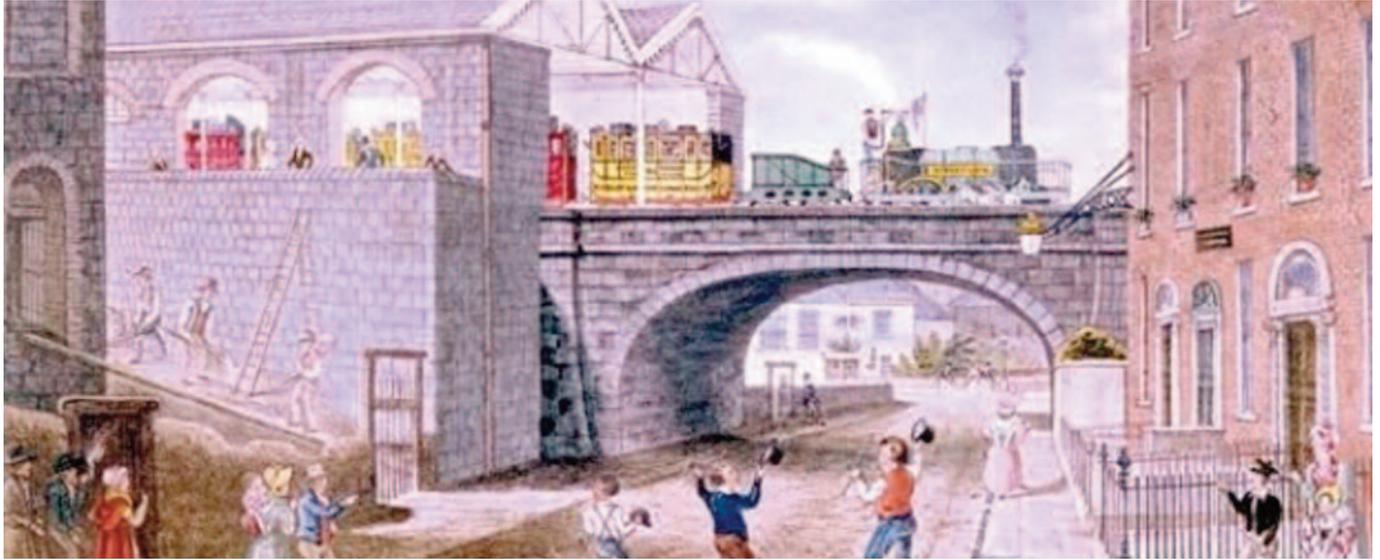


Michael McCoy

An Irishman's Diary on the Dublin to Kingstown rail line

World's first dedicated commuter railway line

By Norman Freeman



The Opening of the Dublin & Kingstown Railway at the Rere of Entrance Westland Row. Illustration: John Harris (1791-1873)

On December 17th, 1834, a train moved slowly out of Westland Row railway station. The carriages were built of iron and wood. They were pulled by a small steam-engine that puffed smoke from its tall narrow chimney. It began the 10km journey to Kingstown, as Dún Laoghaire was then known.

This was Ireland's first train, on its first day open to fare-paying passengers. It was also the world's first dedicated commuter railway line.

Trial runs during the previous weeks had attracted hundreds of curious onlookers. They stood beside the recently constructed stone bridges that carried the newly laid iron rails on raised ground over the little streets at the back of Westland Row station.

Children and adults could see and hear the engine and carriages rumbling past.

Spectators gathered where the line crossed the coast road at Merrion. People in stagecoaches, drays and other vehicles, as well as those on foot, watched this phenomenon moving past. Its speed was about 20 miles an hour, a very impressive momentum at the time.

This was the introduction to this country of a new form of transport. It was a novel experience for people to sit in carriages being pulled

forward by a locomotive that burned coal or wood to produce the steam that drove the wheels. It passed over rails held in place by wooden sleepers set into the ground.

The Dublin and Kingstown Railway company had been formed three years before by businessmen who saw the potential of such an undertaking. They had done a careful study of the route in terms of passengers. They looked at the existing volume of road traffic, horse-drawn carriages, people on horseback and pedestrians.

The directors knew that houses along the coast facing out to Dublin bay, with its wide panorama of sea and sky, had become much desired by the well-off. Some houses in the Booterstown, Blackrock, Salthill and Kingstown areas were second residences, seaside homes for those who lived in the elegant squares in the city.

Shops and supply businesses were beginning to burgeon. Servants were employed. The railway directors thought the time was ripe. A railway would be more comfortable than travelling by horse-drawn vehicles. And it would be faster. The contract was given to William Dargan, son of a tenant farmer from near Carlow, who had already established a reputation as a road and canal builder. Work began in April 1833.

Hundreds of men with picks, shovels and wheelbarrows began work in several places along the designated route of the railway. Skilled stone-cutters chipped away at the granite blocks that had to be fitted in place for bridges, thick parapets and sea walls as well as the embankments between Merrion and Salthill that still protect the railway today. Granite for much of this work came from the quarries at Dalkey.

At one stage 1,800 men were toiling away. Work at the Dublin end went on around the clock. At night the scene was lit by coal and wood fires and blazing tar barrels. Cliffs at Salthill had to be demolished but fortunately a bed of granite discovered nearby helped provide blocks for the workings. From Merrion to Blackrock the line was laid on a raised embankment that ran over the strand. This led to the eventual formation of the salt marsh of Booterstown Nature Reserve.

As with any new or intrusive enterprise, the railway aroused opposition. The most powerful objector was Lord Cloncurry. His land at Blackrock bounded the sea and the railway would pass along its edge. He demanded access to the shore. After tortuous negotiations, Dargan undertook to construct a footbridge over the railway between two impressive stone towers. To further mollify the lord, he built a classic bathing place of granite in the Italian style. These remain one of the features of the line today.

To accommodate deep-rooted class attitudes, there were first, second and third-class categories with fares of one shilling, eight pence and six pence respectively. This railway, with trains running back and forward along the new line from dawn until dusk, was a success. The trains were reliable. They may have been bumpy by today's standards but they were far better than swaying and grinding over poor roads in a horse-drawn carriage.

Over the years since then the line has been improved and developed, new tracks laid, new stations added. It's a busy route, with Dart, commuter and mainline trains passing up and down constantly. Yet near Blackrock there are still traces of the original granite roadbed and the brown rusted remnants of the first iron bolts that held the sleepers in place.

These vestiges of the past are a largely unseen tribute to investors who put their faith in the enterprise but principally to the hundreds of workers, skilled and unskilled who constructed the line. They are also a tribute to those who worked on the railway – train drivers, guards, inspectors, linesmen, station staff. The line remains a testimonial to William Dargan, who introduced a means of travel and transport that transformed the land to the benefit of all.

By kind permission of
Norman Freeman, The Irish Times.

Congratulations to LPH volunteer Alan Harrisson BEM

By Lorraine McWilliams

LPH volunteer Alan Harrisson is well-known to many. He is always on hand to help at social events and is usually either laughing or making people laugh. He is a very entertaining raconteur who can have audiences in stitches at his one-liners. Alan spends most of his time helping others, whether it is at LPH, the Royal British Legion, the Royal Air Forces Association (RAFA), Probus or his local church. He is a master salesman who has recruited members to RAFA in the most unlikely of places.

In January, we were all delighted to learn that

Alan was recognised in the UK's New Year's Honours List by being awarded the British Empire Medal (BEM) for his voluntary work with the Royal British Legion. Reintroduced in 2012, the BEM is a British medal awarded for meritorious civil or military service worthy of recognition by the Crown for a sustained, local contribution. Sustained is the key word here and Alan has certainly demonstrated that in all the organisations in which he has been involved. All of us who know Alan know how selflessly he has worked! Congratulations, Alan, well done and very well deserved!

Welcome to Fergus O'Reilly, IT Manager who introduces himself to our readers

After returning to Ireland from some country hopping, I was content to return to routine and the wonderful seasonal weather cycles of home.

I worked in the health industry abroad for the first time and immediately became very interested in the 'how to' of utilising technology in healthcare. It really is a professional service sector that can progress exponentially with innovation and additional advances in technology, interaction enablement and medical care. As an advocate of technology, it should be easy for everyone to use but also safe and secure. Maybe technology is the scary word for most people when it comes to ICT departments. We should rename to something more friendly like 'Coolology'

On the topic of adventure, I did visit some wonderful places abroad and met some fascinating individuals. For healthcare it was interesting in some countries where it was the responsibility of the patient to hold safe their medical records and be completely responsible for it – bit of a cushy data protection job in the health department.

Outside of work, for those with specific culinary expertise, I recommend following crazy foods: Balut (Philippines), Fish head soup (Singapore) and some nicely fried spiders (Cambodia)... well not really.

For outdoors, try having a bash at the following: Skydive, bungee off a bridge/cliff, canyon swing, cliff diving and many machines with jet engines. This was mainly in New Zealand, where signing a piece of paper is not even a requirement, just a 'toughen up bro' at the start and 'sweet as' when you hit the ground again.

So after joining LPH, I can see the challenges are similar to larger institutions in certain



respects and how ICT can help in the future plans. One of the key attractions for applying for the role, was to the potential to help drive innovation and lead the way with some initiatives.

So in day to day terms how can this be done you may ask? It can be as simple as enabling technology you may use today already. Mobile applications, smart appliances and access to information that you need. Same applies to the work place. You need to see your electrical bill, you can go online. You need information at work, then the same should apply in terms of key services and access to information and services; in particular self-service. Not only access to information, but trying out new technologies such as virtual reality and cognitive gaming to help elderly keep a high level of activity and entertainment.

Access to entertainment really has changed so greatly over the last few years. Let's hope it does completely dominate and we ensure Einstein's prediction does not come to pass:

'I fear the day technology will surpass our human interaction. The world will have a generation of idiots.'

In the context of LPH, I think really that technology primarily should free up people's time so that more time can be spent on direct care, which the staff here are so dedicated to providing.

Veteran's outing to the National Yacht Club

By Lorraine McWilliams



On Tuesday, 12 January 2016, the Veterans' group enjoyed a marvellous luncheon at the National Yacht Club in Dun Laoghaire.

According to a well-known online encyclopaedia, the present clubhouse was designed by William Sterling and was erected in 1870. At that time it was known as the Kingstown Royal Harbour Boat Club. The relevant entry describes the building as "a hybrid French Chateau and eighteenth century Garden Pavilion". Today it is a Class A listed building and it is a pleasure to see the beautiful high ceilings and highly-decorated fireplaces in the dining rooms. From the windows, the views of the sea, harbour and sailing boats are stunning.

Outside, the sun was shining, but the temperature was low. The veterans were therefore very pleased to warm themselves by the fire in the dining room. The NYC staff was welcoming and they had made huge efforts to make sure that the dining table was well laid-out and beautifully decorated. The menu was varied and everyone enjoyed the meal immensely.

After the meal, Ed Hillan, the Chairman of the Veterans' Support Group, addressed all present. Ed welcomed everyone warmly and thanked everyone for their part in making Leopardstown Park Hospital the great success that it is. He expressed his hopes for the future of the Hospital. He also thanked the staff of the National Yacht Club for the great reception.



McEvoy family concert

By Lorraine McWilliams



On Monday, 4 January 2016, LPH residents were treated to a fabulous concert! On stage, members of the extended McEvoy family – Eleanor, Marion, Patrick, Cathy and Kieran – were joined by their friend Brendan Creagh. Mr Richard McEvoy, father and grandfather, is a resident in the Clevis. He should be extremely proud of his wonderfully talented and generous family and their friend.

The Christmas decorations were still up and that added to the ambiance. Those of us who were lucky enough to be at last year's concert turned up with great expectations of a great night. We were not disappointed! Straight away, the band launched into a jaunty number "Let Him Go, Let Him Tarry" to which everyone started tapping and singing along. Then things took on a slightly more contemplative mood with "Oft in the Stilly Night" and "Just Because" both beautifully sung. After that, Brendan got everyone tapping again with "Folsom Prison Blues". Eleanor then played a wonderful jig on the violin and that was followed by Marion

leading with the traditional number "Courtin' in the Kitchen".

By then we were getting breathless, so Eleanor calmed things down again with "Believe me if all those Endearing Young Charms". We weren't calm for long though. Soon we were off again with "Galway Girl"! Time and again we switched between fast and slow, traditional and more modern. During the latter part of the concert, the band entertained us with: Love Letters in the Sand, Keep on the Sunny Side of life, The Auld Triangle, The Erie Canal, Three lovely lassies from Bannion and Summer Wine.

Eleanor then dedicated one of her most famous songs - "Only a Woman's Heart" - to her father. For all of us, that was a very moving moment. The band wasn't going to leave us in a sombre mood though. Soon we were off again with "Goodnight Irene" and "I'll tell my Ma when I go home". From all of us who were there that night, we say a huge THANK YOU to the extended McEvoy family and Brendan.

**A BIG THANK YOU JOMAC
FOR THEIR SUPERB PERFORMANCE JUST AFTER CHRISTMAS
A GREAT WAY TO BRIGHTEN THE SPIRITS**

Gallery

Christmas 2015



A big "thank you" and a fond farewell to Margaret and Michael who ran "The Shop" for so many years. Wishing you both a very happy retirement.

Ted Jones reads the First Lesson at the Battle of Britain Ceremony held in St. Patrick's Cathedral on September 17th. A very moving event.

Garden Fete



Our gratitude goes to all who helped us with contributions and photographs. A special thanks to Lorraine McWilliams and Stan Conroy.