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The Old Courthouse News**

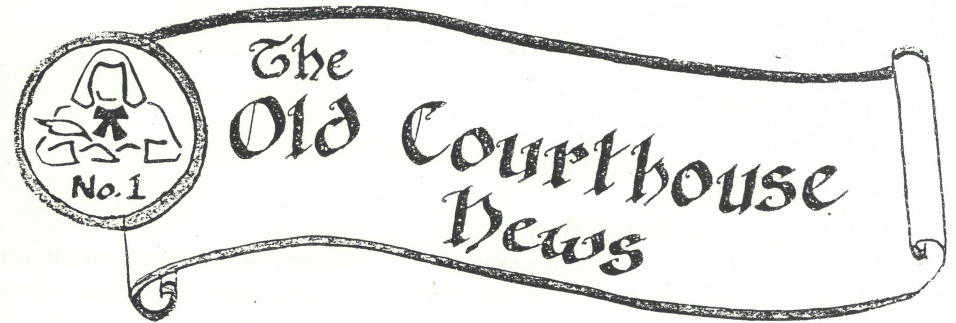
Monthly	
Quarter Page	€15
Half Page	€25
Full Page	€40
For 6 Months	
Quarter Page	€80
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Full Page	€220
For 12 Months	
Quarter Page	€150
Half Page	€250
Full Page	€400

The Old Courthouse News
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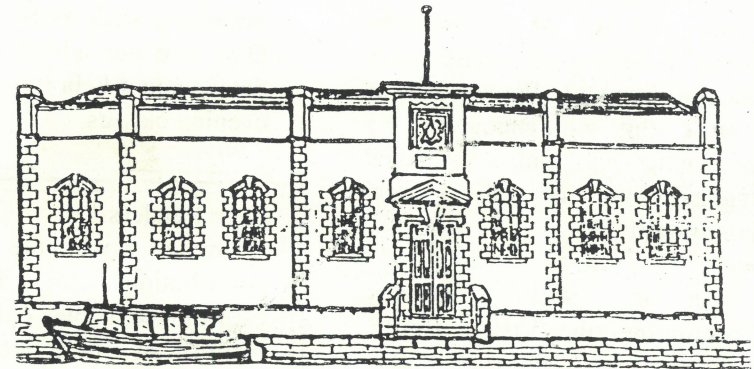
Strabane	Letterkenny
Donegal Town	Ballybofey
Stranorlar	Raphoe
Castlefin	Killygordon
Convoy	St Johnston
Carrigans	Lifford
Through various outlets including:	
Hotels	Newsagents
Shops	Hairdressers
Tourist Information	

Austin Daly Senior

The Lifford & surrounding area
was shocked to hear of the recent
and sudden death of Austin Daly,
one of the towns most respected
residents. Sincere sympathy is
extended to all of his family,
relatives & friends



TO SHORTEN THE WINTER



**Free
Issue**

Changes at the Courthouse

Since the Community Employment Scheme concluded at the end of November 2001, the LATCH operation at the Old Courthouse is now running under the FAS Social Economy Programme. This offers up to 3 years grant support to provide employment opportunities for other disadvantaged persons. In time, with the development of Social Economy enterprises such as the Seat of Power Visitor Centre, this will encourage the economic and social regeneration of the local community.

Under the Social Economy Programme, the Visitor Centre now employs 8 full-time and 4 part-time staff. These are fairly evenly divided between the excellent catering side of the business and the Centre as a Cultural Heritage attraction. In addition we have 3 LATCH posts, 2 of which are management/supervisory positions.

As part of this new initiative the Visitor centre intends to promote and host a whole range of exciting events throughout the year. These range from theme-banquets, Wedding Fairs, Flower shows, Antique Fairs to evening classes in dancing, music and painting. In addition to these developments we will, of course, be celebrating the usual special occasions such as St Valentines Day. See our advert for further details about February 14th & our evening classes.

Dear Readers

If anyone would like to make a contribution to The Old Courthouse News either in the form of an article, local news, a short story, a poem or even a joke, you are more than welcome. Please send your contribution to:
The Old Courthouse News
The Courthouse
Lifford
Co Donegal Tel: 41733

They were conveyed as prisoners, and presented at Dungloe Before a bunch of magistrates, who let old Anna go.

O'Donnell he was sentenced three months to Lifford Jail, A petition in his favour was fated not to fail;

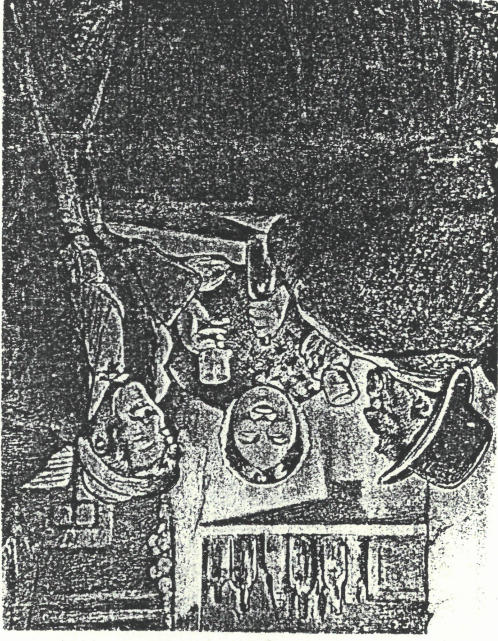
The meek old piper soon came back To be welcomed by his family in Rosses and Gweedore.

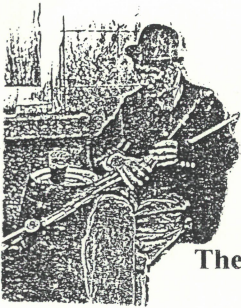
This mild and modest piper was greeted far and near, A hundred hearts rejoiced his music for to hear

To meet the peoples fancies he always did his best, But never to a still house did he go again to rest.

Without doubt the 'drink' Shane had at Anna Herrighys house was poteen. Illicit distillation, as the authorities called it, was one of the most prevalent offences in Donegal. In 1813, for example, 141 Donegal people were indicted for making poteen. Sometimes the sentence could be as short as two weeks. On other occasions, however, even

withholding evidence could lead to longer stretches as one elderly St Johnston man recalled in an interview several years ago: "My grandfather's cousin, a Protestant farmer from Glenswilly, spent three months in Lifford Gaol because he would not tell the authorities the name of a Catholic neighbour whose still had been discovered by the police on his farm."





The Piper From the Rosses

The song given below comes from a collection published by the Derry Journal (no date) and was found among the Rupert Coughlan papers held at the Old Courthouse, Lifford. I wonder if any of our readers have heard the song before and could let us know what melody it was sung to? Perhaps you might even have more information about Shane O'Donnell the piper.

We are also looking for any other songs about Lifford especially the Courthouse and Jail. If you think you might be able to help please get in touch with Angela or Billy at the Old Courthouse, 074 41733.

Shane O'Donnell, the popular musician of the Lower Rosses was returning home from a dance when he came upon a still house where he often took refuge. There he met up with some old friends and a session soon developed, amply fuelled by the 'refreshments' which the woman of the house, Anna

Herrightly, supplied. Then something happened to ruin the party.....

One night in bleak December,
the air been keen and chill,
The piper he decided they all had
danced their fill;
When the dance it was concluded
O'Donnell felt inclined
To push his way across the moor
and leave the youths behind.

He was not far upon his way when a
light he did espy,
Towards it went the piper himself
for to enjoy.
It was an old sod cabin perched by
the mountain road,
Where oftimes Shane O'Donnell has
made it his abode.

There he got a welcome, as he often
got before,
From Rogers and his comrades, and
drink he had galore.
The night was passed in merriment,
with songs and peasant lore,
When to their sad amazement
A "peeler" barred the door.

The "comrades" cleared in safety,
And the "bobbies" did defy,
But Shane and frail old Anna could
not vanish if they'd try



When you've gotta go...

Lifford



Menu

- GARLIC MUSSELS
- EGG MAYONNAISE
- CHICKEN AND LIVER PATE
- PRAWN COCKTAIL
- GARLIC MUSHROOMS
- CREAM of POTATO SOUP
- SIRLOIN STEAK
- MEDALLIONS of BEEF
- CHICKEN CURRY
- STUFFED TROUT
- BUTTERFLY of CHICKEN
- (WITH CHOICE OF SAUCE)
- SELECTION OF DESSERTS
- TEA OR COFFEE

ONLY €25

Take two

THURS FEB 14TH
7PM ~ 10PM [LIVE VIOLIN MUSIC]
7:30 ~ 9:30
FOR BOOKINGS RING GILLIAN (074) 41733

St Valentine's Day

Events at the Old Courthouse

It's all happening down at the old Courthouse these days where 2002 has really started with a bang. Evening classes are now up and running with Tuesday night sessions on Irish Dancing, tin whistle, guitar & painting, plus line dancing for beginners every Thursday. Enrolment is still being taken for these and other courses such as Spanish, Irish, Ceili dancing, singing & sewing. So, if you're bored at home & want to give yourself a fresh challenge for 2002 why don't you come & join us down at the Courthouse. For further details & contact number see our advert in this newsletter.

Old Courthouse Restaurant

For all of the above evening classes our restaurant will be open before & after each class. So if you're a bit peckish or just fancy a coffee & a chat with your mates just pop downstairs & get your feet under the table.

We are also planning some special events over the next few weeks. The first of these is St Valentines Day with a very reasonably priced gastronomic experience in store for sweethearts young & old. And while you're looking into one another's eyes Billy, our in-house violinist will be playing little romantic melodies in the background. (see advert for details)

Two further special days come along the following month – Mother's Day (10th March) & St Patrick's Day (17th March). We're working on these at the moment but rest assured the old Courthouse will mark the occasion big time. Keep an eye out for our next newsletter – it'll make your mouth water!

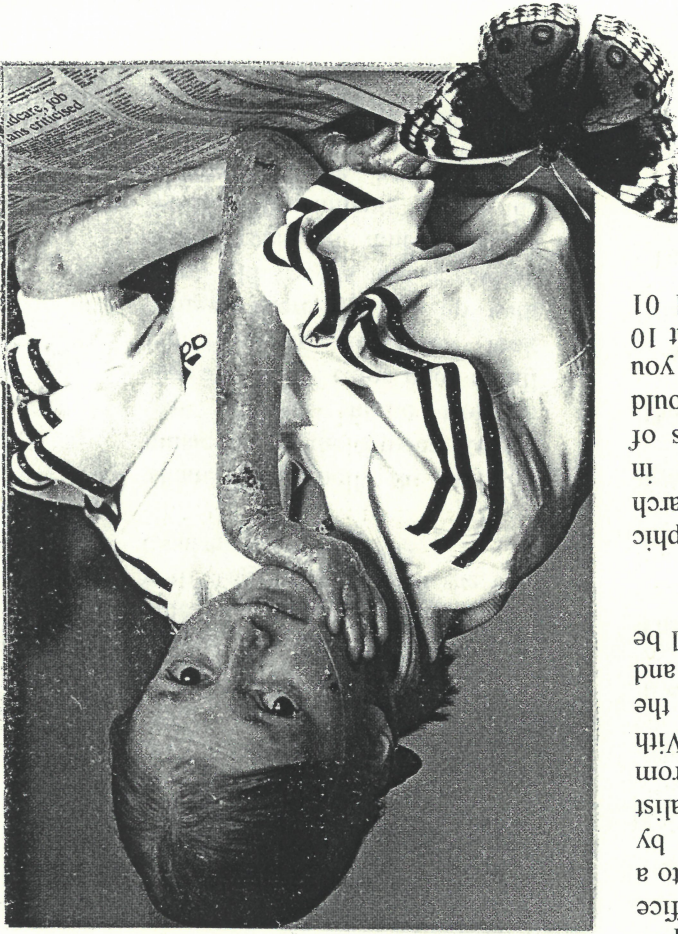
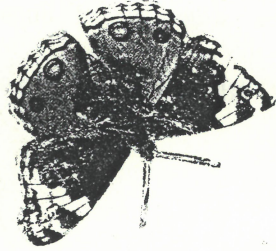
Old Courthouse Restaurant

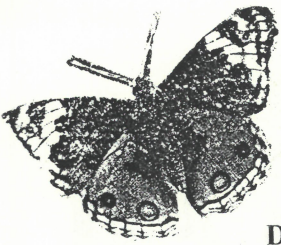
Now taking bookings for Confirmations & First Holy Communions.
To Book ring: (074) 41733

today. Vital research can only be done if there is money to pay for it. But this is expensive. For instance, it costs €256 to fund a highly skilled researcher for one day.

Debra Ireland does get some help from the government but this is limited to some respite care and grants for office equipment. As for research into a cure, this is paid for solely by debra. In February a specialist full-time nurse will operate from St James Hospital, Dublin. With part-time help she will cover the country helping sufferers and their families. Her wages will be paid completely by Debra.

Debra Ireland (the Dystrophic Epidermolysis Bullosa Research Association) was founded in 1988 by a group of parents of children with EB. If you would like more information on EB you can write to Debra Ireland, at 10 Burgh Quay, Dublin 2. Tel 01 6776855.
Email: info@debraireland.org





**Debra Ireland
(The Butterfly Children)**

On the 16th February 2002, I'll be at a 60th birthday bash in Birmingham but the birthday girl has requested that there be "no presents please, donations only to 'The Butterfly Children.'" Who are they I hear you say? Well I didn't know very much either, so I asked their Dublin office for more information and what I received and read greatly touched me.

Epidermolysis Bullosa (as it is medically known) is a distressing and painful genetic skin disorder, causing skin layers and internal body linings to separate and blister at the slightest touch. Children born with EB have skin as delicate as the wings of a butterfly and just as easily damaged. Pain becomes part of daily life. But that's not all. In early childhood its most severe form can be fatal.

About 1 in 18,000 newborn children in Ireland are affected by one of the forms of the

condition and there are on average 200-300 sufferers in the country. It's worth stressing that you can't catch EB. However, it is genetic and can run in the family and appears in all populations, race groups and sexes.

As there is no cure – yet – EB is a life sentence for the sufferers and their families who care for them. Imagine seeing your child in pain and not being able to give him/her a cuddle for fear that your cuddle will cause more painful blisters to occur.

IS THERE HOPE OF A CURE? YES – is the exciting answer. Recent developments in debra funded research have led to a greater understanding of the genetics of EB. Co-ordinated national research, including the work of the department of genetics at Trinity College, have now isolated the genes responsible.

These breakthroughs are fantastic but now they need to be translated into treatments. This is the challenge facing EB researchers

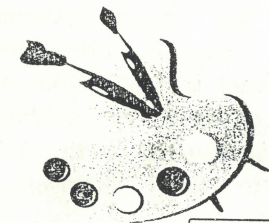
Evening
Classes



**Evening
Classes**

Lifford

*Beginning on
Tuesday 29th January 2002
For 10 weeks*



Irish Dancing	6.30pm – 7.30pm
Tin Whistle	7.30pm – 8pm
Guitar	8pm – 8.45pm
Painting	8.15pm – 9.15pm

PLUS

*Beginners Line Dancing
Every Thursday night
8.30pm – 10.30pm*

Enrolments still being taken for these and other courses such as:
Spanish, Irish, Ceili Dancing, Singing & Sewing.
Contact: Gillian (074) 41733

**The Courthouse Restaurant will remain
open on Tuesday nights to 9.30pm
And will open on Thursday nights from
8pm – 11pm**

Too! Takes All Bookmakers

Lifford

(074) 41847

LUXURY NEW OFFICE OPENING FEBRUARY

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ALL BETS PLACED BEFORE FEB 14TH
WE RETURN 5% OF YOUR STAKE MONEY JUST TO
PROVE TOOT LOVES YAA!

Fortunately one book escaped this wanton destruction and we have traced the only survivor, "The Turnkeys Report 1829-1831" to Tipperary County library, who have kindly agreed to send us a copy.

Other unique documents including the United Irishmen Rebellion papers 1796-1808 literally went up in smoke as they were used by soldiers stationed in the jail in the 19th Century to keep themselves warm!

So, with that in mind we would like to ask the local community if they have any documents, photos, letters or artefacts relating to the jail or courthouse, or any stories to do with your ancestors and their encounter with the law at Lifford.

We also believe that when the jail was demolished in the 1900's some of the stones were used locally to build houses. The furthest away example of this to date is a house near Crossroads.

What's New

Along with all the other changes at the Courthouse, we now have in our employment two researcher/writers, Billy Patton & Angela Mulreany. Billy & Angela are in the process of preparing a publication which will deal with various aspects of Lifford's history such as the significance of the O'Donnell clan. They will also be looking at what went on in the Courthouse years ago when it was still active & highlight some of the many trials held there - some of them quite famous!

However, putting together a short history of the Courthouse and jail may not be as easy as we first thought. In contrast to other parts of the country most of our Lifford records have been destroyed.

For instance, in 1917 due to a wartime paper shortage, all the jail records that had been deposited in the Courthouse were sent to the pulp mills.

HARTES BAR

Fri 1st THE FLUFFY DUCKS

SAT 2ND NIGHT LIFE

SUN 3RD X-CITED

WED 6TH LIVE SESSION-THE GROWLERS

FRI 8TH ESTELLE

SAT 9TH DAVID WYLDER

SUN 10TH SUMPTUOUS

WED 13TH LIVE SESSION-THE GROWLERS

FRI 15TH ADONIS BLEU

SAT 16TH DYNAMITE

SUN 17TH X-CITED

WED 20TH LIVE SESSION-THE GROWLERS

FRI 22ND FLASH

SAT 23RD FRESH VIBES

SUN 24TH SUMPTUOUS

WED 27TH LIVE SESSION-THE GROWLERS

**F
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B
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A
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Y**

TEL. LIFFORD 41628

Do you know if stones from the jail were used in the construction of your home! We would like to find out how far the stones went. Did they stay in Donegal or did they end up in other counties?

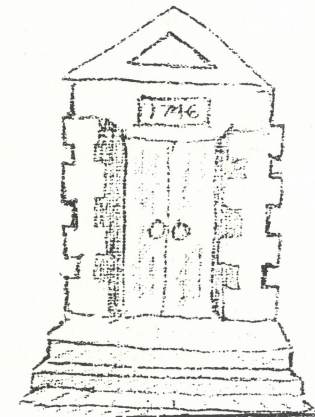
Renovations

Another exciting development spearheaded by LATCH is the proposed renovation of the old Land Registry Offices, which formed part of the original Courthouse building of 1746. The International Fund for Ireland and the Department of Justice, Equality and Law reform have been approached for their support to refurbish this portion of the building which is in a state of external and internal dilapidation. If the application is successful the intention is to renovate the ground and first floors and construct a new custom built extension to the rear. Included in this will be a new kitchen, toilets and extra storage facilities. The issue of disabled access will also be addressed with the installation of

a lift allowing access to all three floors of the centre.

Another problem to be tackled is the lack of adequate childcare facilities in the area. To overcome this an all day custom designed crèche will be included in the renovated building which will offer local people, women especially, the opportunity to enter employment and training.

When completed the enlarged Centre will have the capacity to expand on its existing activities and fully implement its Cultural and Heritage revival Programme attracting and involving the local community as well as tourists.



GATEWAY HOTEL

LIFFORD

074 41737

February

Sat 2nd Fri 8th Sat 9th Fri 15th Sat 16th Fri 22nd Sat 23rd Sun 24th
Sugar House Lane D.A.T. Rockafella Shaky Ground Stage Fright Duplicate Undiscovered Soul Bobby Moore

Lifford Players Reach Half Century

Since last September a small group of dedicated & talented people have given up the comfort of the fireside several nights a week and set off into the cold, dark night to gather in St. Pat's Hall, Strabane. We're referring, of course to the local drama group known as the Lifford Players. Without the need of a secretary, without advertising, they come together once a year to select & perform a play for the annual Drama Festival which culminates at the All Ireland Finals in Athlone. However, this is no ordinary year for the Lifford Players as they are celebrating their 50th Anniversary in amateur dramatics. To find out more we called in for a chat with Production Manager Anne Kelly.

When we arrived Anne was sifting through three large scrapbooks of photos and newspaper cuttings about the Lifford Players down through the years. In fact, using this unique archive Anne eventually hopes to produce a small publication to mark the 50th year in the business. It was actually her father, local man, Terry O'Doherty, who started the collection half a century ago - a job now taken over by Anne. Terry has a remarkable record with the Lifford Players. At 78, not only is he the only founder member still associated with the group but he has been in every production, either as an actor or producer, since its origins in 1952. How many other drama societies can make such a claim? At that time, Terry worked as an engineer with the County Council. Indeed, all of the original Players were drawn from two of the main employers in the Lifford area - the County Council and the Post Office with the County House used as a venue for rehearsals. As an example of how determined this young & enthusiastic group were Anne recalls her father talking about rehearsals till two & three in the morning. One actor, who

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Saturday 10am – 4pm

No Lunch Hour

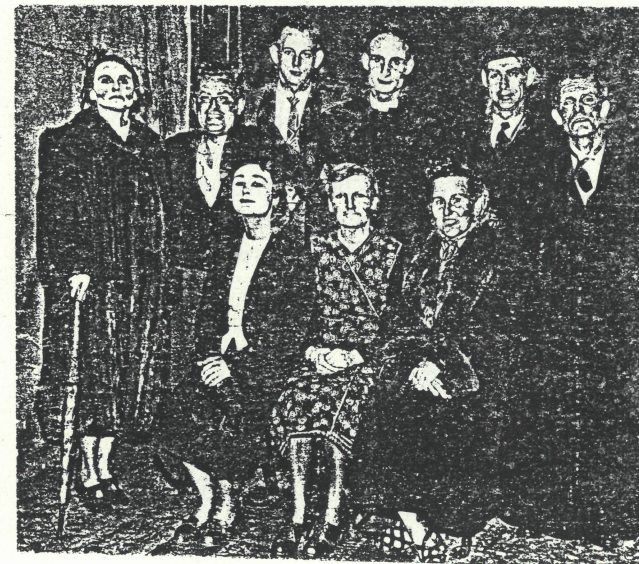
Give us a call where a prompt and friendly service awaits you

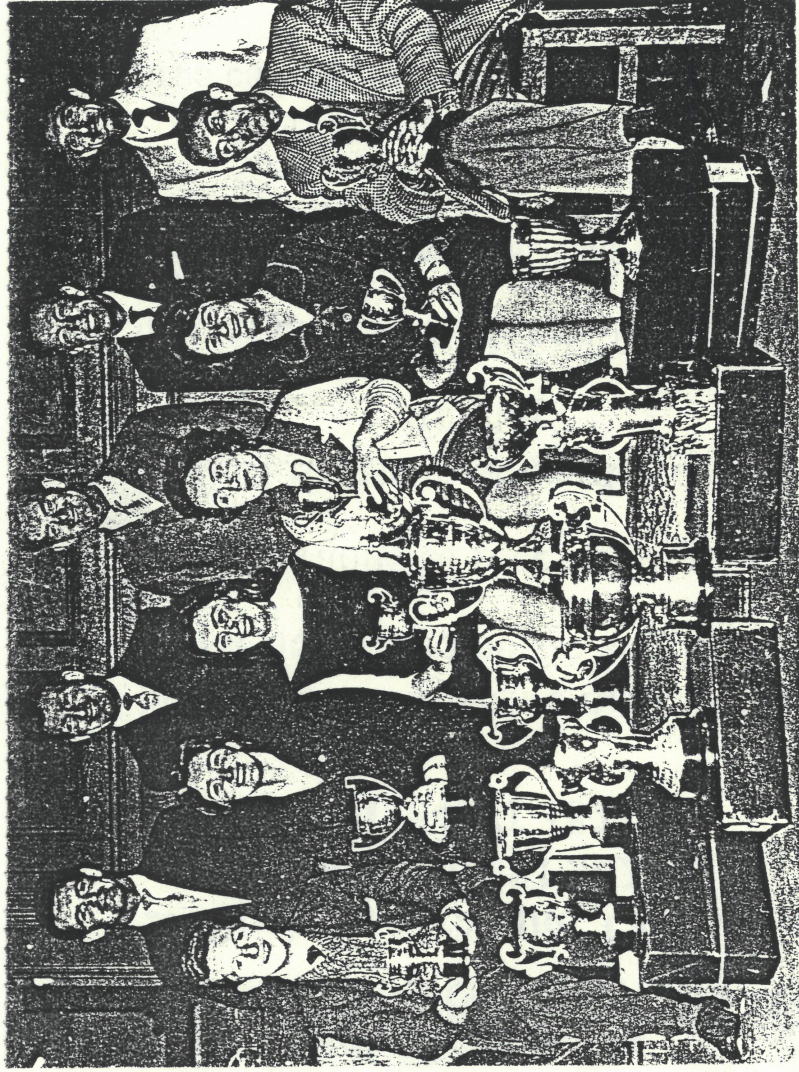
lived in Omagh, used to be picked up by Terry when he finished work. He would then bring him back to the house for his tea. Then, after rehearsals were over, take him back to Omagh before heading home to his own bed. That's commitment for you.

Although Anne herself did not take to the stage until 1972, when she hitched from Dungloe for the part, this doesn't mean she didn't have an earlier interest in drama. Even at the tender age of six she used to accompany Terry to rehearsals & even got annoyed if she thought he wasn't taking it seriously enough. And she knew the sort of effort was required when, as a young girl, she remembers the bleary-eyed actors arriving home in their Big Austin Princess just as she was heading off to school.

With this type of dedication it's no wonder that the Lifford Players have proved to be one of the most successful amateur drama groups on the Festival

circuit, winning no fewer than 34 premier awards, including three-in-a-row in the All-Ireland 'confined' section & three in the prestigious All-Ireland 'open' category held in Athlone. These successes have also meant 6-night runs in Dublin's Peacock & Olympia Theatre. Clearly, they've come a long way from their first performance in Murlough school all those years ago. The picture below was taken in 1955 at one of their early productions 'Is the Priest at Home?' Recognise anyone?





Cast of 'The Black Stranger' 1962.

Back Row: left to right Rory Gallagher, Aussie Bryson, Maurice Sweeney, Jim Bradley, Michael McDaid. Front Row: left to right John McDaid, Mary Monaghan, Frances Quigley, Margaret Harte, Nora O'Donnell, Terence O'Doherty.

I'm sure you'll all join us in wishing this remarkable group every success this year & on three performances before Strabane. They then plan to put the play over in St. Pat's Hall, Parochial Hall. The other two February 3rd at Donnyloop 'extra' shows commences on Festival tour. The first of these they embark on the Drama miss at least one of their performances!

Derry	5 th March
Forum Theatre	8-9 th March
Letterkenny	12 th March
An Griannan	14 th March
Strabane	21 st March
St Pat's Hall	
Ballyshanon	
Abbey Centre	
Carrickmore	
Patrician Hall	

What of this year's production? Selecting a play, the 'right' play, is always a difficult decision and this year was no different. Anne herself doesn't like to look back, preferring a fresh challenge each time. However, to mark their 50th anniversary they have decided to tackle one they first performed in 1963 - John B. Keane's ever-popular 'Give'. At the moment, this year's very strong cast are putting the finishing touches to the play over in St. Pat's Hall, Strabane. They then plan to put on three performances before they embark on the Drama Festival tour. The first of these 'extra' shows commences on February 3rd at Donnyloop Parochial Hall. The other two have yet to be finalised although Buncrana is a distinct possibility. Below is a complete list for the Drama Festival.

22 nd Feb	Newtonstewart
28 th Feb	Parochial Hall
	Cookstown
	New Theatre
3 rd March	Killyclogher
	Festival Hall