

Plan B

for Bealtaine at Cork City Libraries

Sean Ó Sé singing 'An Puc ar Buile' at Cork's Favourite Song in The City Library earlier this year.

Issue 1 - Friday 8th May 2020

A message from our City Librarian...

You hold in your hands a special publication – a **Libraries Bealtaine** publication that we did not plan on publishing. Like everyone else, we have had to adjust our services and our means of communications because of Covid-19. Last year we faced what we thought was a once-off challenge, welcoming 85,000 people and three new libraries to the new, expanded city when the city's boundaries were extended.

This is proving a much harder challenge, but thanks to the enthusiasm, commitment and boundless imaginations of the City Council Libraries staff, we are facing up to this as well, in an equally positive way.

We hope you enjoy this newsletter, and that you make use of the resources and opportunities we can offer in these unusual times. We can't wait to see you again . . . in person.

Liam Ronayne



Memories of Cork with Michael Lenihan

Cash & Co Mr. Todd opened a retail shop in Saint Patrick's Street in 1830. The store prospered and expanded and over the years was known variously as Todd's, Carmichael & Company and J Carmichael & Company. In 1877 the firm became a private company with the title Cash and Company Ltd. The company name C for Carmichael A for Arnott and SH for McOstrich comprised of its 3 main directors.

To Corkonians it was always known as Cash's. The store was destroyed by fire during the burning of Cork on 11 December 1920. A new store was built on the same site with an elegant facade of Little -Island limestone. The design by Henry H Hill was completed at the enormous cost of £74,200 in 1925. Cash & Company joined the Switzer group in 1962. After various changes of ownership during the 1970s and 1980s, the company was sold to Brown Thomas in April 1991. After extensive refurbishment and expansion of the store, it was officially renamed Brown Thomas on 27 March 1998. Another major revamp of Brown Thomas was undertaken in 2002. Through its various changes of ownership the store has retained its reputation as one of the most stylish and exclusive shops in Cork.

Cash's is mentioned in an old and largely forgotten Cork lullaby.



Image courtesy of Michael Lenihan

*I'll buy my baby stockings, I'll buy my baby shoes
I'll buy my baby stockings, And I'll send her off to school
She was the doll in Cash's window,
She was the doll in Cash's oh, She was the doll in Cash's window,
No one knows my own babóg*

Michael Lenihan is a member of our Glanmire Library staff



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Comhairle Cathrach Chorcaí
Cork City Council

Short Story Writing with Sorcha Fogarty

Over the next few weeks Sorcha Fogarty, a member of our Bishopstown Library staff will be going through how to begin writing. Let's get started!

A Short Story Should Include:

- Setting details woven into the text.
- Development of at least one character through the character's words, thoughts, and actions, and through the words of other characters and/or the writer.
- A problem/conflict which is developed as the plot progresses.
- A resolution of that problem/conflict (climax).
- A conclusion (what happens after climax).
- Snapshots (things for the reader to visualize)
- Thoughtshots (character's thoughts)
- Dialogue (optional)

Getting Started

Make sure you're passionate about what you're writing: if you aren't fascinated with the subject you're writing about, it will show in your writing.

Outline the basics of what you're trying to get done: the most monotonous example of this is the five-paragraph essay most of us learn about in school. Structure can help, quickly jotting out a draft.

Stop everything else and concentrate on writing: try to set aside an hour a day, even half an hour, at first, to focus entirely on your writing, without disruption. All writers need to stick to a schedule, even on those days when you feel "blocked". If you are at least sitting at your desk, trying to jot down ideas and thoughts, you have some chance of producing something. Don't give in to the feeling that "today I just can't write!"

Lower your standards: don't expect too much from yourself, writer's block really originates from high standards – often, you will sit down to write but not like what you're producing, thinking it is "not good enough". The trick to eliminating this? Stop worrying so much over whether every little bit you write is as good as it can be. You are going to return to your draft many times in order to revise it: don't attempt to revise every line as you write it. The draft is just your chance to get your ideas down on paper and establish the foundations of your piece.

...more tips next issue

An Dubh

Cuachta anseo im' silo
I gclutharchlúid aimléise,
Sceacha is driseacha,
Gach sceach gan a lon,
Gach driseach gan a sméar.

Ná corraigh mé,
A chódhuine,
Ní cás liom tú -
Do chómhrá ná do chibeal.
Coimeád uaim
An frídín solais -
Gráin liom an solas
A sheargann mogall mo shul.
Ná sín chugam lámh,
Ná teilg chugam tarrtháil.
Leor liom an dubh-aigéan.

Cúbaim, cúlaím,
San íochtar dobhogtha.
Dá bhféadfainn
An tíochtar a phléascadh,
A scaipeadh ina smidiríní,
Rachainn tríd síos isteach
San aduantas,
Bheinn scaoilte.

Och! dá bhféadfainn!

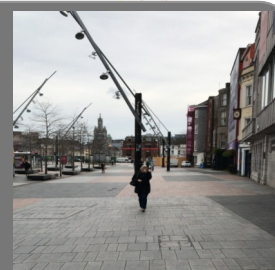
Máirín Lankford

Redeployed Library Staff Conor McHale



Since mid-March the library and many other public places were asked by the Government to close. Very soon after that there were requests from the HSE for

Cork City Council Staff to be redeployed to work in the area of contact tracing. I was redeployed up to Kinvara House in Dublin Hill where the Cork Drugs and Alcohol Counselling Services are housed. However, during this time, this unit is functioning as a Self-Isolation Management Team. What this means is the overseeing and co-ordination of housing the most vulnerable people in society, be they from the travelling community, homeless and Direct Provision who may be at risk of contracting or have suspected to have Covid-19 and putting them into self-isolation units. My main task here is to do administration work. Every day there is a daily spread sheet of people in the Cork and Kerry region who are getting tested for Covid and may have to be put into a self-isolation unit. My job is to keep a record to the open cases and input details into individual forms and monitoring the progression of the cases daily. Fortunately, numbers are not as high as anticipated; meaning people are doing a good job with socially distancing. Another daily responsibility I have is to make an inventory of the Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) that arrives and to put together orders for the various charity groups who need items like face mask, gloves, gowns, protective goggles and the like. I've made a few deliveries so far to places like Finbarr's Hospital and Cork Simon. Overall, this has been a terrific experience, working with great people and contributing in a positive way while waiting, (hopefully soon), for this pandemic to come to an end.



Peann agus Pár Irish language creative writing group meets monthly in The City Library

The Cork and Covid-19 creative writing initiative invites you to write a poem or short story (max 1000 words) giving us a snapshot of your life in these strange times. Poetry and stories are welcome and Cork City Libraries will compile and keep your work for our social history archives. A piece will also be chosen for the Bealtaine newsletter each week, this week's poem is by James McKeon

CORONA

Will Corona kill us all
 So they tell us in the Dail
 But my next door neighbour know-all Fred
 Laughed at them, they're fools he said
 I'll go in or out, do as I please
 Ignoring this made-up disease
 I stayed in bed scared of my life
 All alone, no dog, no wife
 No betting shop no Paddy Powers
 To while away the lonely hours
 No pint, no chat, six feet apart
 No cough no sneeze, no tiny fart
 No handshake, hugs or stolen kisses
 Avoided by my nervous missus
 No cinema, no chips and peas
 All because of this disease
 No library books, no theatre seats
 Or grandkids' secret chocolate treats
 Around the Lough with my new kite
 I plan my television night
 I cry when I see what I choose
 Judge Judy twice and then the news
 I didn't know just what to say
 No snooker or Match of the Day
 Two Our Fathers one Hail Mary

It's Little House on the Prairie
 Hi-De-Hi and then Dads' Army
 More Judge Judy to drive me balmy
 I'll stick it out what's to lose
 There's Kojak, Minder, Hill Street Blues
 Every night is this my fate
 Murder She Wrote from noon till eight
 I had enough, two months more
 Before we can mingle as before
 I flipped the channel, said a prayer
 Get Smart, F Troop and Yogi Bear
 I cried, 'enough, enough,' I said
 And switched again to Mister Ed
 I flicked the knob just once more
 And quickly saw Car 54
 I turned and twisted, still no sport
 Quick Silver was my last resort
 In my heart I'd gone too far
 Oh no, please God, not Bunnie Carr
 Then Bosco laughed and smiled at me
 I screamed and kicked the old TV
 And ran in fear straight up the stairs
 I knelt down to say my prayers
 Warm and safe wrapped up in bed
 And pondered what my neighbour said

James McKeon



A selection of magic lanterns and coloured glass slides, against a backdrop of an original poster for Disney's Snow White (poster on loan from Mr. Pat Mulcahy)

from 'Movie Memories' Exhibition, Dept of Film & Screen Media, UCC **Before Cinema: Magic Lanterns, Phantasmagorias and Zoetropes**

From the early 1840s, Cork audiences had access to spectacular inventions, including W.G Horner's zoetrope (the "wheel of life"), which consisted of a slitted drum, into which a strip of still images was inserted, then mounted on to a fixed pillar stand. Once the drum revolved, the still images became animated. Zoetropes for home entertainment found their way into Cork's premier department store (London House) around the 1860s.

The true precursors of cinema, though, were the magic lantern shows and "phantasmagorias" that enjoyed popularity from the eighteenth century. The

phantasmagoria was touted as an immersive spectacle of "astonishing mechanical contrivances and illusions, including ghosts, acrobats, magic visions and other novelties" (*Cork Examiner*, Jan. 6, 1871). Magic lanterns could also be used for educational purposes: slides projected by a magic lantern formed part of a talk titled "Development of Form and Pattern making in Ornament", delivered by Mr. Allen S. Cole at the School of Art (later Crawford) to a "large audience, chiefly composed of ladies ...[who] ... listened very attentively throughout" [Oct. 19, 1886]. As late as 1905, the Christian Brothers school in Fermoy hosted a Miss Milligan who presented "a splendid magic lantern exhibition...showing pictures of the old ruins and abbeys of Ireland" (*Cork Examiner* Nov.11). Scaled-down versions of the magic lantern could be purchased for home use from the well-known Varian brothers shop on 105 Patrick Street (which also stocked a variety of fashionable toys, such as "humming tops, kites, magnifying glasses, daggers"). Many a Cork household delighted in amateur shows, in which drab domestic spaces were transformed into captivating theatres of enchantment.



Detail from a magic lantern slide, c. 1900s/1910s



We are Cork.

Roots and Shoots

There are rules to gardening but most gardeners learn from trying things out. Sometimes what you try works, other times not. Don't be put off! Get advice in a book or online, rhs.org.uk is good. If there's one thing sure even the expert gardeners differ on what's the best way to garden. So give it a go and do it your own way. This little slot is less 'what to do this week in the garden' and more about projects to experiment with. In these strange times when we have come to appreciate the importance of food security we can grow some fruit and veg for ourselves. You don't need a garden to grow edibles. Highly nutritious and tasty sprouted seeds such as alfalfa, broccoli and wheatgrass can be grown on the counter top and used in sandwiches, salads and juices. To do this use a jar or sprouting trays. These are usually available from whole-food shops, garden shops and online. Though you could try making your own. Always use organic and food quality seeds as regular packet seeds will be treated with chemicals that are toxic if ingested. Follow instructions regarding quantity of seeds used; most seeds will need soaking before beginning the sprouting process, daily rinsing with fresh water is necessary. To avoid mould developing keep your jar/tray in an airy spot and always drain well. Depending on the seeds used your sprouts will be ready for eating in 4-6 days.



Eleanor Twomey is a member of The City Library staff.

QUIZ TIME!

The City Hall in 1938. When was the City Hall officially opened and by who?



Image courtesy of Michael Lenihan

Email or text answer to patricia_looney@corkcity.ie or 086 6061193. The person who sends the first correct answer will receive a copy of 'The Immortal Deeds of Michael O'Leary' by Cónal Creedon.

Cork City COVID-19 Community Call Helpline



1800-222-226



covidsupport@corkcity.ie

Why not join Cork City Libraries online services while we are closed?

If you are not a library member already, you can now join the library online at www.librariesireland.ie
This will allow you to use our online services.

"It's been Life Changing. Memory is better. I have made nice friends and I am happier and I have more confidence.



I am more than I thought I could ever be at this age"

Maureen Cullinane

Ukulele's at the Library!

Some of us have more time now to try out new things at home. Activities which stimulate us mentally and physically are most beneficial, as well as ones that we can practice and improve upon. **How** we learn and challenge ourselves is very important, gentleness and curiosity go a long way. One project which is a fine example of this spirit is the Cork City Libraries Ukulele Orchestra. In 2018 a group of brave pioneers aged 55 and over volunteered to sign up for free beginners' ukulele classes at Hollyhill library. The ukuleles were provided by the library. No one expected what happened next. The first group called themselves the "Old Ukus" and from the start the group was about fun and "giving it a go" without taking it too seriously. The tutor, Charlie Ward, set the tone from the start, with jokes a plenty. As one group member put it he "coaxed the music into us. We hardly realised how much we were learning". The library staff has been invaluable to the success of this project and have been described as a constant support to the musicians. Research conducted in conjunction with UCC found that on average the first group reported an improvement in their mood and quality of life after the ukulele classes. Two years on and there have been 7 groups in total, with some being run in the City Library in Grand Parade. There have been numerous performances and the various groups have joined up and meet regularly in the library to play together. They have played at local nursing homes and in these difficult times the group practice together via Zoom.

Written by Dr. Rosarie Crowley, Clinical Psychologist, Cork Kerry Community Healthcare, HSE.
The HSE collaborate on many initiatives with Cork City Libraries



We are Cork.



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