

THE BEAUMONT NEWS

Official Newsletter of the Beaumont Residents Association

Volume 3, Issue 4

**Delivered Free to All Homes, Schools, Hospitals and
Commercial Premises in the greater Beaumont Area**

DECEMBER 2005



The History of Christmas

In the Western world, the birthday of Jesus Christ has been celebrated on December 25th since AD 354, replacing an earlier date of January 6th. The Christians had by then appropriated many pagan festivals and traditions of the season, that were practiced in many parts of the Middle East and Europe, as a means of stamping them out.

There were mid-winter festivals in ancient Babylon and Egypt, and Germanic fertility festivals also took place at this time. The birth of the ancient sun-god Attis in Phrygia was celebrated on December 25th, as was the birth of the Persian sun-god, Mithras. The Romans celebrated Saturnalia, a festival dedicated to Saturn, the god of peace and plenty, that ran from the 17th to 24th of December. Public gathering places were decorated with flowers, gifts and candles were exchanged and the population, slaves and masters alike, celebrated the occasion with great enthusiasm.

In Scandinavia, a period of festivities known as Yule contributed another impetus to celebration, as opposed to spirituality. As Winter ended the growing season, the opportunity of enjoying the Summer's bounty encouraged much feasting and merriment.

The Celtic culture of the British Isles revered all green plants, but particularly mistletoe and holly. These were important symbols of fertility and were used for decorating their homes and altars.

New Christmas customs appeared in the Middle Ages. The most

prominent contribution was the carol, which by the 14th century had become associated with the religious observance of the birth of Christ.

In Italy, a tradition developed for re-enacting the birth of Christ and the construction of scenes of the nativity. This is said to have been introduced by Saint Francis as part of his efforts to bring spiritual knowledge to the laity.

Saints Days have also contributed to our Christmas celebrations. A prominent figure in today's Christmas is Saint Nicholas who for centuries has been honoured on December 6th. He was one of the forerunners of Santa Claus.

Another popular ritual was the burning of the Yule Log, which is strongly embedded in the pagan worship of vegetation and fire, as well as being associated with magical and spiritual powers.

Celebrating Christmas has been controversial since its inception. Since numerous festivities found their roots in pagan practices, they were greatly frowned upon by conservatives within the Church. The feasting, gift-giving and frequent excesses presented a drastic contrast with the simplicity of the Nativity, and many people throughout the centuries and into the present, condemn such practices as being contrary to the true spirit of Christmas.

The earliest English reference to December 25th as Christmas Day did not come until 1043.



SANTA'S VISIT

**Santa will visit the Children of Beaumont Residents Association Members on
Sunday, 18th December, 2pm to 4pm in Lorcan Community Hall**

(Lorcan Villas, opposite SuperValu)

Children under 10 years of age only. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Entertainment Includes: Disco ★ Clown ★ Drinks ★ Sweets ★ Face Painting

*If you would like your child to visit Santa and receive a Christmas Parcel please post names and ages
into our Post Boxes in the Shell Shop and Post office or to any Committee Member
before Wednesday, 14th December*

PLEASE NOTE: THIS EVENT IS FOR BRA MEMBER'S CHILDREN ONLY.



CHAIRMAN'S COLUMN

On behalf of the Committee, I wish all our readers and particularly all our Members, a Merry Christmas and the best of Health and Happiness throughout the New Year.

Another year draws to a close and we are all anxiously looking forward to a New Year starting, bringing with it many new, exciting and good things for all of us. But that's a long way off yet – particularly for the younger people amongst us who are eagerly awaiting the arrival of Santa Clause on Christmas morning. I do hope Santa remembers all the good children and I hope none will be disappointed – even though Santa sometimes forgets batteries for toys. I would advise Mams and Dads to buy in a few extra batteries in the unlikely event of Santa forgetting to bring the correct batteries – it can make such a difference and can even transform Christmas morning.

Like the year itself, this Committee comes to the end of its term also. Our AGM is scheduled for 17th January 2006. You might note this in your new diary and if you feel we are representing you and the community effectively and generally doing a good job, come along to the AGM and tell us. If you don't like what we are doing, and are unhappy with our performance, come along to the AGM and tell us. We are looking for new people with new energy, fresh thinking and ideas, to join the Committee. We are particularly eager for immigrants to join us. We know there are a substantial number of non-nationals living in Beaumont and we would like very much if some of them would join us. I know we could learn a lot from them and I know we may be able to assist them also. Beaumont is now a multi-national, multi-cultural and multi-religious society, it would be fantastic to have a



Des Maguire, Chairman

Committee that reflect this. A big challenge for this Association going forward, is to make itself relevant to and representative of the rapidly changing demographics, and new emerging cultures in Beaumont. We all live in the community of Beaumont and share the same facilities, if we are to live in reasonable harmony, we must make every effort to not only understand our new neighbours – but we must be proactive in welcoming them into our neighbourhood. James Chen, from the Chinese community is a regular contributor to "The Beaumont News" and while this is only a very small step, it does help us to better understand the Chinese culture. I hope James will continue writing articles for us next year.

This Newsletter is an excellent means of communicating with our Members and the wider residents of Beaumont and beyond. I know we have many thousands of readers and they look forward to receiving the local news a few times a year. Many readers retain the Newsletters for long periods and I know some people post copies to their loved ones overseas. We would not be able to produce "The Beaumont News" in its current format without the considerable generosity of the Beaumont House, who is our main sponsor. At the start of 2005 we had a serious dilemma and the future of the Newsletter was in serious doubt. Dermot Carew became aware of our situation, he stepped in and offered Sponsorship for the year. Our sincere thanks to him.

A special thanks to the shops and 'service providers' who support and value our Members. These 'service providers' offer special discount to our Members and they should be supported. Support the business's which value your custom and support you. A list of the business's offering special discounts to our Members are listed in this Newsletter.

Until the next time, keep safe and have a Happy Christmas.

*Des Maguire
Chairman*



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Sunday 25th	Closed
Monday 26th	Closed
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Wednesday 28th	9am-8pm
Thursday 29th	9am-8pm
Friday 30th	9am-8pm
Saturday 31st	9am-8pm
Sunday 1st	Closed
Monday 2nd	Closed
Tuesday 3rd	9am-8pm



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Christmas Traditions



Decorating the Christmas Tree

Where did the tradition of decorating the Christmas tree begin and how did it become such an integral part of the holiday festivities?

Like a lot of the practices associated with Christmas, the tradition arose from the intermingling of ancient Roman beliefs and the spreading Christian religion. Early Christians believed certain trees flowered unseasonably on Christmas Eve as homage to Jesus' birth. This belief combined with the Roman practice of decorating their homes with greenery for the New Year formed the basis of our modern fascination with icicles and fancy angel tree toppers.

The decorating of various structures and trees has been recorded in Europe from the 17th century on, but the first written account of a "Christmas tree" did not appear until 1605. According to John Matthew's *The Winter Solstice*, an anonymous German citizen that year recorded trees being decorated with "roses cut out of many colored paper, apples, wafers, gold-foil, [and] sweets". What about chaser lights and oodles of wrapped gifts? It was more than 100 years later when Professor Karl Gottfried Kissling of the University of Wittenburg wrote of people adding candles for decorations and placing children's wrapped branches around the bottom of the small indoor trees.

Even though the practice was initially condemned by religious leaders, it spread from Germany to Finland through Norway and Denmark. In 1840, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert of England endorsed the tradition by displaying their own ornately decorated tree at their palace. By the early 1900s, decorating the tree was as much a part of Christmas as Santa Claus and opening presents.

Of course, the early trees were decorated differently than today's evergreens. Early ornaments were usually hand-crafted or edible. Nuts, candies, fruits, and pieces of coloured paper were the most common. The average modern tree is decorated with a combination of store-bought ornaments and family memorabilia with several strings of lights strewn over the branches instead of candles, but no matter how the tree is decorated it still symbolizes a timeless Christmas tradition of families gathered together exchanging presents and love.

Nollaig Shona Duit (Happy Christmas in Irish)

Irish Christmas traditions are similar to those found in many western countries: the basic Christmas rituals, such as gift-giving, attending Mass, and decorating trees, are shared by most nations where Christmas is celebrated. But Ireland does have its unique Christmas rituals, as we'll discover below.



Twelve Days of Christmas



Because it is still quite a religious country - Catholicism being the most prevalent - Irish traditions reflect this more than the increasingly secular customs of North America. The popular Christmas carol, *Twelve Days of Christmas* is a remnant from the time when Catholicism was illegal and the gifts listed in the song are hidden references to Catholic dogma. It was used as a memory exercise for those who were secret adherents to Catholicism.



Lighting Candles

The lighting of candles in Ireland also has a religious significance. Some people would light candles (or one large candle) to signify symbolic hospitality for Mary and Joseph. The candle was a way of saying there was room for Jesus' parents in these homes even if there was none in Bethlehem. Some people even set extra places at their tables as a preparation for unexpected visitors.



Christmas Dinner

Christmas dinners in Ireland usually consist of the standard fare; turkey, a ham, stuffing, cranberry sauce, etc. Among the more traditional Irish elements are spiced beef (spiced over several days, cooked, and then pressed) which can be served either hot or cold. The traditional dessert is usually composed of mince pies, Christmas pudding, and brandy or rum sauce.



Gift Giving and St. Stephen's Day

Before Christmas it's customary to give small gifts, usually of the cash variety, to the milkman and mailman. Long ago, this was done on St. Stephen's day, also known as Boxing Day (the day after Christmas). Traditionally, pantomime plays are performed on St. Stephen's day, in which women play the men's roles and vice-versa. In Dublin there are usually several plays going on with subjects including *Cinderella*, *Sleeping Beauty*, *Puss in Boots*, and *Babes in the Wood*.

The Wren Boys

Christmas in Ireland cannot be discussed without reference to the Wren Boys on St. Stephen's Day. This practice of antiquity predates St. Patrick. In ancient times, a wren was beaten out of the bushes and its body hung on a holly bush. The killing of a bird is no longer tolerated but the door to door visits continue. Participants dress up in homemade costumes reminiscent of North American Halloween. The song they yell from house to house is called:

*The wren, the wren,
the king of all birds*



Most people treat the Wren Boys to porter and pudding. Any young people in the house are cajoled to continue on with the gang until there is a decent assembly of young folk being followed by most of the children in the neighbourhood. They will end up in some neighbour's house and if someone produces a fiddle the party begins.

Little Christmas

The official end of the Christmas season in Ireland occurs on January 6th, the Feast of Epiphany (also known as "Little Christmas"). As the name suggests, there is a feast on that day and it's also that day that the Christmas decorations are taken down.



Noreen's News



THE WEEPING WILLOW TREE

Following the first step in upgrading Coolgreena Close Park, we lost the oldest weeping willow tree in Beaumont. The neighbours nearby were alerted to the smell of smoke in the area. It was a Sunday morning and eventually we phoned the Gardai to ask if there was any report of a fire in the area but the answer was no. About two hours later I got a phone call from a neighbour to inform me that there was fire coming from the bottom of the Big Weeping Willow Tree in the Park. We phoned the Fire Brigade who arrived with the Gardai. The fire had completely destroyed the inside of the bark and it left the tree in a dangerous position. The Dublin City Council made arrangements on the Sunday night, for a Tree Surgeon and his team to cut down the tree. So the next morning at 7.15am we heard very loud noises. When I looked out of my bedroom window there was a team of men using heavy equipment cutting down the tree. They told us that the tree was around 160 years old and it was even a nicer shaped weeping willow tree, than the tree in the Botanic Gardens. It was sad to see such a beautiful old tree destroyed in this fashion.

The photographs below (by Michael Maher) speak for themselves.



SYMPATHY

We sympathised with all Beaumont Residents who have lost someone dear to them.

THANKS

Connie Butler wishes to thank all her friends, neighbours and people around Beaumont who subscribed to the Shoe Boxes for the poor children in Eastern countries etc. Connie received a total of 68 Shoe Boxes Also Connie wishes to thank all those who supported the Hospice Coffee Morning on 17th September 2005. Connie received the sum of one thousand euros for this worthy cause.

ST. FIACHRA'S SENIOR SCHOOL

I wish to thank Mr. Carey and his class, for their wonderful stories on the Senior Citizens. It was a difficult task to judge the best three stories, as the standard was so high.

Most of the stories we read were highly commended. Congratulations to the following, who are our Winners. 1st Arabelle Cassidy, 2nd Jake Curran, 3rd Aoife Seery

MERCY COLLEGE MUSICAL REVIEW

Thank you Ciara for your review on the musical "Hot Mikado".



NEW NEIGHBOURS

All new Neighbours are very welcome to Beaumont. Please phone Des or Noreen if you wish to join the Residents Association.

THE HATCH

Thank you Stuart for all your generosity and support for the Beaumont Residents both young and old.

OBITUARY NOTICE

We offer our deepest sympathy to Denis Begley and Family of Dromawling Road, on the death of his wife Lucy.

Sympathy also to Theresa O'Donnell of Dromnanane Park, on the death of her husband Joe.

GET WELL

Wishing Sergeant John O'Driscoll, (Santry Garda Station) a very speedy recovery. Hope all goes well for his operation. You are in our prayers.

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

We recently held our Dublin Neighbourhood Watch A.G.M. at the Ashling Hotel on Saturday 5th November. It was very well attended and it was very informative. Representatives came from every part of Dublin. Assistant Commissioner Al McHugh attended and thanked us for our time and commitment to N.W.

N.W. NEWS.

We wish to make you all aware, that we have burglars back in the area. Over the weekend of 19th November they broke into a house on Shanboley Road and another few in an area nearby. It was reported a small black car - KE registration was seen around the area. So all Neighbourhood Watch members are required to be continually aware of what is happening in our community.

Be on the alert for any unusual or suspicious behaviour or activity. Matters coming to notice should be reported immediately to the Gardai. Please write down the description of the persons and registration of the vehicle involved.

INSIDE SECURITY.

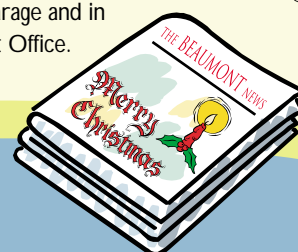
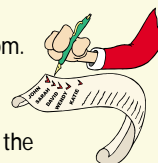
- Do you ask for identification before allowing unknown servicemen in to your home?
- Do you avoid leaving valuables or cash at home?
- Do you have automatic timers on some lights in your house when you are away for the day or on holidays?
- Does your home always look like someone is home?
- Have you recorded serial numbers of your valuables?
- Have you photographed for identification purposes, those items you can't etch, or for which you have no serial numbers such as jewellery, china, crystal?

Be a good neighbour and watch out for the older neighbours especially in the colder weather.

CHILDREN'S ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY

The annual Children's Christmas Party will take place on Sunday 18th December 2005 at the Lorcan Residents Hall, Lorcan Green. Between 2-4pm.

Please give your name to a committee member or drop names into BRA Post Box in the Shell Garage and in the Post Office.



More News in Our Next Newsletter



DEAR EDITOR

As we come into the busiest and one of the most stressful times of the year, we should all try and take some time out of our hectic schedules to appreciate all we have.

None of us know what is around the corner so we should try and live each day to the full. Take joy in the happiness of our children instead of fussing because the sitting room is untidy. Appreciate our partners love and support even on the days they are driving us insane. Be glad if we are lucky enough to still have our parents, and if we are not that lucky, then take a few minutes to remember them. Enjoy the company of our friends, knowing they will be there for us in dark times. Make time to get out in the fresh air and appreciate that we have our health. Mourn the loved ones we have lost but take comfort from the fond memories we will always have of them.

Even though we are living busy lives, we can all benefit from taking a few minutes to take stock of what we have and not stressing ourselves out over things that are not really important. Does it really matter if we don't spend every Sunday from now until Christmas traipsing around the shops for presents for people we haven't seen since this time last year? Better to make a donation to charity and spend the day doing fun things with your partner or kids. Life is too short to waste it. So enjoy the holiday season but enjoy it the way you want to, not the way consumerism dictates you should.

MERRY CHRISTMAS. (Name with Editor)

DUBLIN BUS ROUTE

Dear Editor,
Could you please contact Dublin Bus and enquire into the possibility of changing the route the 20B bus takes to get to its terminus on the Ardlea Road. Instead of turning left at the Artaine Castle roundabout if this bus went straight down to the junction of Kilmore Road and Malahide Road and turned left and then left again off the big Artane roundabout to its terminus on the Ardlea road. When it is leaving the terminus to undertake its journey back to town it would just follow the route it normally follows. This small change would be beneficial to lots of people around the Malahide Road/Ardlea Road area and by leaving the return journey as it is the change would have no adverse impact on the amount of commuters who avail of the service on the Beaumont Road.

Barry Doyle, Cooleen Avenue.



Letters to the Editor

WINNING LETTER

Dear Editor

Situation Vacant. Carer Wanted, no experience necessary. Training will be given as part of the position. Hours 24hrs a day. No holidays, no pension scheme. You will be entitled to a Carer's Allowance of €169.80 per week. You are not allowed two Social Welfare payments so you Husbands money is reduces by €138.00, that's the Adult Dependency Allowance leaving the Carers allowance of roughly €31.80 per week. Would anyone in their right mind take on a job like that? Some good news, you do get €1,000 every June to do as you please with.

Most people in a situation like that are not there by choice but by necessity. They didn't ask to be looking out from the inside at life passing them by. Watching someone doing a simple thing as going for the messages of even taking an afternoon stroll with their family is hard to take.

Emotions run high in caring. Winter emotions with its life and growth gone underground to me, shows the difference between male and female emotions. Males are sometimes encourages to suppress theirs, what utter rubbish, it takes more courage for a male to show emotions then suppress them. But with your winter emotions you do have the glitter and sparkle of Christmas to look forward to, bringing joy with it.



Spring emotions are coming to terms with your situation. It's accepting what cannot be changes and having the courage to change what needs to be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference. Summer emotions are ones of expectations, the same feelings you experience when watching the tide go out, tranquil, but also sudden storms, the leave me alone feelings, do it yourself for Gods sake one. You can be so angry. You could point out to God, why did you pick me for this job. Platitudes are no help, for example you are one of the chosen ones. I don't want to be one of the chosen ones. I know plenty who would do this job much better than me.

Autumn emotions, the come to terms with yourself time. The falling leaves time, the warm colours of your being, the brown, the gold and the orange, preparing you for the time when you must let go, like the leaves that fall to enable new growth, you must prepare your career to enter the next phase of their life. With every emotion under the sun, you let them take the journey alone, but you and they are never alone, they will be always with you in spirit. You cannot care without love, to love your career you first have to learn to love yourself. Carers are only Human beings, with a difficult task. Trying to do their best in a difficult situation.

Cecilia Connolly, Coolrua Drive.

BOYCOTTING

Dear Sir,

One of the greatest weapons known to man was invented by the Irish people, this is the act of Boycotting. If we are annoyed or upset about the service we receive in a shop or supermarket or restaurant we should utilise this invention. The satisfaction one gets when one is boycotting a place as a matter of principle far outweighs any satisfaction we would receive from shopping there or whatever.

Lest we forget how the word boycott came about see below.

Captain Charles Cunningham Boycott was an Englishman working in Ireland. In the 1870s he was farming at Loughmask in County Mayo and serving as a land agent for an absentee English landlord, Lord Earne. This was the time of the campaign organised by the Irish Land League for reform of the system of landholdings. In September 1880, protesting tenants demanded that Captain Boycott give them a substantial reduction in their rents. He refused. Charles Stuart Parnell, the President of the Land League, suggested in a speech that the way to force Boycott to give way was for everyone in the locality to refuse to have any dealings with him. Labourers would not work for him, local shops stopped serving him (food had to be brought in from elsewhere for him and his



family), and he even had great trouble getting his letters delivered. In the end, his crops were harvested that autumn through the help of fifty volunteers from the north of the country, who worked under the protection of nine hundred soldiers.

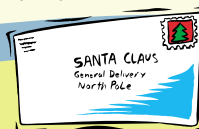
The events aroused so much passion that his name became an instant byword. It was first used—in our modern sense of collective and organised ostracism—in the Times of London in November 1880, even while his crops were still being belatedly harvested; within weeks it was everywhere. It was soon adopted by newspapers throughout Europe, with versions of his name appearing in French, German, Dutch and Russian. By the time of the Captain's death in 1897, it had become a standard part of the English language.

Barry Doyle, Cooleen Avenue.



INVITATION NOTICE

We are delighted to receive your letters and comments of whatever nature. Your thoughts, concerns, comments, news, stories, etc. are welcome. The best letter published will receive a prize of €50. All letters must have an address and name. Name will not be published on request.



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THE 'NEW IRISH'

爱尔兰的中国人



Christmas is coming, what a wonderful time.

I wish you all a great Christmas. I've had two Christmas in Dublin. Each time was fun to invite all the friends to come to the house and cook food, talk about everyone's experience in Dublin. It is like the way we celebrate Chinese New Year. Because we are all young people, we find it easy to get comfortable with new culture. Since China opened its door in 1987 to the world, the western culture came swarming into China. It was from that time the young people started to learn, know and accept the western culture. When I was 9 years old I remember my brother had received Christmas Cards from his friends; I was really lovely, the pictures and the words (later I found it is called English), that time the English words were like drawing to me.

In China today, almost 70% of people in big cities celebrate Christmas.

I remembered once my dad called me and said Merry Christmas to me, I was surprised because the generation of my dad are the most traditional Chinese to us, but since that time I could tell that Christmas is more popular now. Some Chinese people like my brother's generation about 30s to 40s; they even buy Christmas



trees and all the Christmas stuff. Young Chinese people like myself take their girlfriends to a romantic dinner and buy gifts to each other. If you were in China at this time, you would see not just a different celebration of Christmas, but the people's enjoyment of the wonderful time in life.

After Christmas our Chinese new year is coming. This is one of the best parts in the amalgamation of the western and eastern culture. We can have two big celebrations in every year. Among the Chinese community in Dublin, there will be big celebrations and a great time to know the Chinese culture. You are all welcomed.

I wish all the people of Beaumont a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

James (Shichun) Chen,
Shantalla Road.



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HOT MIKADO in Mercy College

Review by Ciara Elston, 6th Year 3

East meets West in this year's hilarious rendition of Hot Mikado performed by the students of Mercy College Beaumont. The musical ran from Tuesday 25th – Thursday 27th with each night receiving a reputable audience. Musicals are performed annually in the school.



Nanki Pooh, in his attempts to marry his love Yum Yum. Throughout the show a variety of humorous characters are introduced. This includes Ko Ko who with his unusual appearance is both likeable and amusing. Katisha's entrance was extreme to say the least. The extravagant

Tremendous success has been achieved over the years following each performance. This is a fitting tribute to the hard work, dedication and support provided by teachers, pupils and parents. Sister Carmel started the tradition of the school musical in 1957 alongside the opening of the school.

Auditions for this year's performance took place in May this year and the hard work has continued until mid October. The musical is set in Japan and opens with a unique style of swing dancing. This is followed by the introduction of the Gentleman characters sporting 50's style suits and hats. The play follows the principal character,

attire and remarkable vocal ability of this character highlights the range of talent in the school. Comic relief was provided throughout the show by the characters of "The Three Ladies" and "The Three Little Maids".

The dominant stage presence of The Mikado was quite distinctive as well as the charisma of Nanki Pooh and Pooh Bah. The show was well choreographed and the finale completed what was once again a truly inspirational performance.



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Essay Competition Winners



AS GOOD AS OLD

By Arabelle Cassidy

There are a lot of elderly people who have made a difference in our world. Pope John Paul II brought peace to communist ruled countries. Also Mother Teresa who helped people in India until the day she died. I am only naming a few, there's Gandhi, Nelson Mandela and so on, but they all don't have to be famous. People in our parish do great things. Like Sister Madeline, even though she is elderly she still sometimes drops by the classroom and tells us a story. Many older people volunteer to run clubs around the area. Eamon de Valera was a leader and Taoiseach in Ireland until his sixties. He carried on working as Irish President for fourteen years until he was in his eighties, although he was almost totally blind near the end. Eamon de Valera did not see his age as a barrier nor did his supporters.

I go and see my Grandmothers regularly and I am very close to them. Sometimes they come to my house. We do favours for each other. When we are away on holidays Grandma Margaret minds our dog. When I'm down with them I like to talk to them and they like to talk to me. I help them around the house and in the garden. I vacuum the house and mow the lawn. My Grandma Margaret makes me pancakes, bakes apple pies, scones and fruit cakes. Once when I was sick, Grandma taught me how to knit. Grandma May frequently asks us out to lunch. My Grandmothers are very kind and as they have been around such a long time they are very wise. My neighbours, Mr. and Mrs. Bolster are very kind. When we are away on holidays they keep and eye on the house. They grow tomatoes and give some of them to us to eat. They are very tasty.

There is a common saying "Age is Honourable" which brings about the question do we honour age? In many Mediterranean countries, such as Greece and Italy, older people are valued for their wisdom, experience and understanding. We should give them more company, or volunteer to lend them a hand if they need it. Give them more time, as just because they are a bit slower it doesn't mean that they are any different as people.

We shouldn't get annoyed at them if they don't press down the accelerator as fast as you would like them to. We should respect them and their property and try not to kick a ball into their gardens continuously.

We should enjoy their company as they enjoy ours. But most of all we should cherish them as special people.



GOLDEN ELDERS

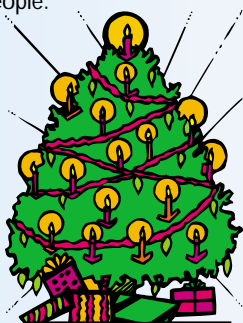
By Jake Curran

In Greece and Italy older people are treated as number one. They are consulted when a younger family member has to make a hard decision. In Ireland that doesn't happen too often. In fact, sometimes the opposite happens. I believe that elderly people should at least be treated exactly the same as younger human beings and if not, they should be treated better.

A lot of elderly people have changed the world. Take Mohandas Gandhi, for instance. Gandhi influenced people around the world with his philosophy of peace and non-violence. Some people saw him as a saint on earth. He was born in Western India on the 2nd October 1861. Gandhi is renowned for freeing India from the British Empire. He died on the afternoon of the 30th January, 1948, after walking into the garden of Birla House to conduct his usual evening prayer meeting. Nathuram Godse, who had been involved in the attempted bomb attack on Gandhi ten days before, sat in the front row of the waiting congregation. He bowed to Gandhi who returned the compliment to Godse and the rest of the congregation and then Godse shot Gandhi three times. Gandhi fell to the ground and his last words were, "Hey Rama" which translates as Oh God.

As you can see elderly people have made a lot of differences in history but not only famous people can make a difference. Locally, we have some elderly unsung heroes like Sister Madeline, Fr. Staunton and Fr. O'Gara. Also some people's grandparents might have made a difference in their local area. I don't know if my grandparents ever made a difference in their area, but I'm still very close to them. All my grandparents are alive and I cherish them greatly. Their names are Eileen, Tony, Marie and Frank. My Nana Eileen is great at scrabble and my Nana Marie is great at gardening. My Granddad Tony is a really good golfer and my Granddad Frank is a brilliant mechanic. They are all very talented.

There used to be a man who lived a few doors down from my Nana Eileen and Granddad Tony, who died in his sleep. His body was found a week later. A Dublin fireman, Willie Bermingham, set up an organisation called A.L.O.N.E. It is an organisation that checks up on elderly people who live alone and haven't been seen for a while. A.L.O.N.E. stands for A Little Offering Never Ends. Later, Willie got cancer and just before he died he opened a flat complex for elderly people funded by A.L.O.N.E. the Irish Government should be opening lots of flat complexes like A.L.O.N.E. but the Government waste millions of euros on shops and buildings. What they should be doing with the money is hiring assistants for elderly people. But the thing is senior citizens are being treated wrongly and this should stop.



Essay Competition Winners

AGE IS HONOURABLE

By Aoife Seery

Maria Montessori became Italy's first woman medical student in 1980, at the age of 20. In 1906 at the age of 36, she opened a school for 3 to 6 year-olds on a poor housing estate. She found that they learned to read and write without difficulty. Maria worked very hard to keep up the standards of the many Montessori schools she opened all over the world. She began travelling and lecturing on her methods for forty years until she died ages eighty-one. She did not let old age prevent her from working hard and doing what she loved.

Here in Beaumont, we are very lucky to have the kindness and wisdom of older people like Father O'Gara and Sister Madeline who always make time for us. But there are many unknown older people who work very hard in the church, in sports clubs and many other places. Most of these people are volunteers.

Two of my dearest relatives and friends are my Grandparents, Noel and Nora O'Brien. I really enjoy spending time with them as they are caring, generous, and funny and act quite youthful. They often come to my house on Sundays for dinner. My Granddad sometimes brings my sisters and me swimming and occasionally I go shopping with my Grandmother. I don't really know

my other set of Grandparents that well as my other Grandma died long before I was born and her husband has Alzheimer's so he lived with my Uncle and Aunt over in Luton. Although, before he moved there, he used to come to my house every Sunday, but I was very young so I don't remember it very clearly, yet I did visit him in May this year.

Even though most elderly people have worked hard throughout their lives and deserve respect, sometimes they are abused or looked down upon by people, including younger people. There is a village in Japan where half the people are over eighty and quite a few are over a hundred. There and in countries like Greece and Italy, older people are highly respected for their knowledge and experience. There are many ways to help the aged:

- Be patient with them
- Keep them company
- Offer to do odd jobs for them – but only if they want them done!
- Treat them with respect
- Encourage those in Government to provide more facilities and better healthcare for them
- Most importantly, cherish them because if you don't, you'll only realise how special they are, when they're gone.



CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR COMPETITION WINNERS

1st Place: Arabelle Cassedy * 2nd Place: Jake Curran
* 3rd Place: Aoife Seery.

All students are from 6th Class, St Fiachra's senior school. The winners receive vouchers for Jervis Shopping Centre. To all the students who entered the competition, we say many thanks. The very high standard made the task of choosing a winner most challenging. To Mr Carey (class Teacher) we say a special word of thanks for his encouragement, co-operation and support.

Congratulations to all the girls and boys who celebrated their 'Debs' recently



Above: Debutante Andrew Maher, Coolrua Drive and friend Rosie Carroll.



Left: Debutante Alan Doyle, Cooleen Avenue and his girlfriend Sarah Gleeson.

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REFLECTIONS ON A PILGRIMAGE

(Lourdes Sept 27th – Oct 2nd '05.)

By Fr. O'Gara

I never realised how beautifully situated Lourdes is, nestling at the foot of the high and jagged Pyrenees Mountains. The climate is sunny and soft with autumnal colours at this time of year. This was my first visit there and I was looking forward to it. The bus connection to our hotel was speedy and enjoyable. We were served immediately with lunch and our only spiritual input the first evening was a Mass of welcome. As it happened, there was a rock concert in full flight in the adjoining complex which drowned out our best efforts to sing. The poor celebrant battled on heroically. You would wonder how such a clash could take place in such a special place but it did. Maybe the Lord was saying that not everything has to be perfect in life. In fact so few things turn out perfect?



On Wednesday, the first morning, Mass was at the Grotto. This is the place where the Virgin appeared to Bernadette on February 11th 1858. The Grotto has been left just as it was then and is impressive in its simplicity. A little like any other cave in a rock face covered with bush and shrub.

It was there I experienced that special peace that Lourdes offers. It occurred quite simply. I was part of a Concelebrated Mass with some twenty other priests. Most of us had to stand through the ceremony due to seat shortage. I found myself to the left-hand side of the congregation and facing towards the altar which is placed to the left of the cave where the Virgin appeared. My eyes were drawn from cave to altar and then to a young invalid girl in a wheelchair just to my left. My thoughts were of the closeness of Mary to Jesus (cave and altar) and above all to the sick (the girl invalid). Just as Jesus was not alone when suffering neither was the young invalid. My mind was filled with peace and presence.

Two really impressive ceremonies were those of the reconciliation service on the Wednesday and the Mass of anointing of the sick on the Thursday. To see the numbers coming for the sacrament of reconciliation on the first day was wonderful. The second day all of the invalids and the sick received the sacrament of the sick. The choir sang so sweetly and the peace of the occasion was palpable.

There's lots of time of course on such a pilgrimage to be alone and many availed of this time to just sit and pray quietly in any place of their own choosing. I found a lovely quiet Oratory near the hotel which had a lovely sculpture of the pieta behind the altar. There was a real sense of peace and tranquillity there. Another favourite spot was across the river from the Grotto where you could sit and reflect, with the Grotto in sight on the other bank of the river. A pair of duck fed along the banks calling to each other as they did.

The story of Bernadette has always captivated me. You'll remember the film; 'the Song of Bernadette' which still makes its impression on viewers. I was now to have the opportunity of walking where she walked and seeing the sights she saw. You can visit many of the places

where she lived and prayed. She was a young girl from a peasant background who suffered from asthma all her life. Yet it was to Bernadette the 'beautiful lady' appeared with the message of penance and conversion. She showed great strength of character to bring this message the world. When her task was accomplished, she became a nun and eventually at the age of 35 died from an asthmatic attack. Miraculously, her body when exhumed was found intact. It can be viewed in Nevers, a town some distance from Lourdes.

They say that it is common to have special moments in Lourdes. One such moment was personal and happened during the nightly torch lit procession. I had been standing beside a group of teenagers who seemed to be enjoying the evening out; they were acting as any teen group would, laughing and giggling. As the ceremony was concluding we were asked to offer the sign of peace to those near us. I turned to my left and did so to the person standing beside me. When I turned back one of the teenagers, a lovely young girl, had come forward and kissed me without any embarrassment on both cheeks. I was taken aback. She simply walked back to her group and they continued to chat and laugh. My first reaction was surprise but later I began to wonder was Bernadette saying something to me. I felt really happy and at peace.

The days flew in. It was a time of prayer, reflection and fun. The hotels were first class and the food really good and there was entertainment at night for those who wished. So many worked so hard to make it so memorable and they succeeded. The weather man was kind as we had no rain at all. A really lovely and worthwhile experience. I'll be back.

Contact person for Carmelite Pilgrimage in Beaumont, is Marie Balfe and available every Wednesday from six till late. Tel: 847 7740.

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Christmas Jokes

What do monkeys sing at Christmas ?
Jungle Bells, Jungle bells..!

Why are Christmas trees like bad knitters ?
They both drop their needles !

What's Christmas called in England ?
Yule Britannia !

What party games did Jekyll like best ?
Hyde and Seek !

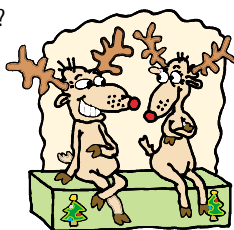
Whats happens to you at Christmas ?
Yule be happy !

What do you give a train driver for Christmas ?
Platform shoes !

What did the big candle say to the little candle ?
I'm going out tonight !

What did the bald man say when he got a comb for Christmas ?
Thanks, I'll never part with it !

What do you get if you cross an apple with a Christmas tree ?
A pineapple !



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Wed 28th to Fri 30th: 9.00am-8.00pm
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