

COMMEMORATIVE BOOKLET



A CENTURY OF EDUCATION AT ST. FEICHÍN'S NATIONAL SCHOOL, ABBEY

1922-2022



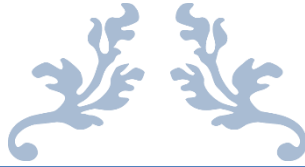
MAY 20, 2022



1923



2022



CHAIRPERSON'S MESSAGE

On behalf of the Board of Management of St. Feichín's N.S., Abbey, I warmly welcome Bishop Michael Duignan, Bishop of Clonfert, Galway and Kilmacduagh and Apostolic administrator of Kilfenora, Fr.Séamus Bohan , Moderator and P.P. of Tynagh/Killeen, Fr. Pat Conroy P.P. Ballinakill/Derrybrien, Fr.Declan McNerney P.P. Eyrecourt/Meelick/Clonfert, Fr. Brendan Kelly Abbey/Duniry and Fr. Kieran Danfulani Diocese of Clogher.

A sincere welcome to all teachers and pupils-past and present, parents, grandparents, people of the community and beyond to the 100th Anniversary Celebration of our parish school. Today, we welcome our special guest Vincent Conroy, now a centenarian who attended St. Feichín's N.S. over ninety years ago.

It is both an honour and privilege to be the Chairperson of the Board of Management as our school celebrates one hundred years of existence. This school is the life blood of the community. We are very proud of our school here in Abbey in the provision of excellence in education to our children. We are grateful to those who have gone before us to have had the vision to build a school on this site.

A 100th Anniversary Celebration is certainly a time for reflection and forward planning. As a former pupil of this school in the late '1950's' and early '1960's', I see many changes over this time span. The school we have here today is the result of extensions and refurbishments on a phased basis. This structural improvement and increased resources ensures compliance with national quality and standards. Furthermore, it

provides state of the art facilities for our pupils and staff. I wish to extend gratitude to all the priests of our parish through the years for maintaining a catholic ethos in our school. Special thanks to all the principals, teachers, and school staff for fostering a love of learning, sport, music and recreational activities among children in our school. I wish to extend a special 'Thank You' to our current principal Maria Burke for her leadership and management of the school.

The Board of Management is truly grateful for all the support to the school from parents, businesses and the wider community in terms of sponsorship for this celebration and indeed at all times. We appreciate the ongoing support from Galway Rural Development and TÚS. I wish to commend the Parents Association and the centenary organising committee for the exemplary partnership with the school in preparing for this event.

Finally, it is my hope that St. Feichín's School will continue to flourish and keep responding to the educational needs of the children in our community. Through its ongoing developments, the school is ready to embrace the challenges of the future.

"Anyone who stopped learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young".

-Margaret Burke Chairperson



PRINCIPAL'S ADDRESS

I, as Principal and proud former pupil of St. Feichín's National School, Abbey, want to take this opportunity to say how privileged I am to be affiliated with the commemorative celebrations of the establishment of our school. The stories and photographs shared with you in this booklet are personal ones providing you with an insight into the recollections of the many children and people who passed through the "big wooden door" over the last century. St. Feichín's was the foundation and starting point for the education and growth of so many people. This is a time to recall memories of the happy times, of the friendships made, of the subjects taught and the learnings earned and of course, to share the occasional story where innocence prevailed and mischief took hold! For all past pupils, these are the tales of our school and a tribute to the many great people who contributed to its history and to those who continue to believe its bright future.

A century is a long time. There have been a lot of changes over the last 100 years in St. Feichín's, not just the curriculum. The blackboards are now white and interactive, the roll book is now computerised, the subjects are broader, the toilets are 'indoors' and the oil heating has replaced the turf fires. However, some things remain the same; homework is still a chore, math tables are still learned, the school jersey still symbolises pride and belonging, hopscotch is still a favourite at lunch-time and the bell for home time still results in a mass dash to the cloak room! Through advancements in resources, students are no longer the passive learner but rather are now active in action and engaged in their own learning success. Whilst our school still integrates well-served

traditions to learning, the school practices are continuously adapting to ensure it welcomes diversity and encourages inclusion. Following an extension in 2008, we are today fortunate to have a modern, well equipped and resourced school to provide education for all students, whatever their wants or needs. We continue to strive to ensure that the children leaving the doors of St. Feichín's, at the end of their national school education, have the required skills, educational, social or otherwise, necessary to deal with the workings of the modern world and cope with life's challenges.

A sincere thank you to all those who have shared stories, sent us photographs and afforded us on the organising committee time to create this Booklet and organise the commemorative celebrations. Our past pupils are located all over the world and hearing their life journeys since leaving St. Feichín's has been both inspiring and fascinating. Your cooperation has been instrumental in the collation of this booklet.

Finally, on a personal level, I would like to say a huge thanks to the current staff and Board of Management of St. Feichín's for your diligent and meticulous work in ensuring that this celebration could happen. I also want to thank the wonderful support we receive from the Parents Association and the wider Abbey Community. Your generosity in time and support and kind assistance not only with the organising of this celebration but also down through the years in supporting the school must be acknowledged and is greatly appreciated. St. Feichín's is an integral part of our great community and our community is intrinsic to our school's existence and prosperity. We look forward to welcoming all past pupils, former staff, the community of Abbey and all friends of St. Feichín's during this celebration and together to share our experiences with each other in remembering and respecting the past whilst looking forward to its promising future.

-Maria Burke, Principal



LIST OF PRINCIPALS

1922-2022

Mr. Seán De Paor R.I.P.

Mr. Paddy Fahy R.I.P.

Mr. Tony Killeen 1973 - 1974

Mr. Frank Burke 1974 - 1979

Mr. Gerry Murphy 1979 - 1997

Ms. Mary Dillon 1997-2003

Ms. Bernadette Stapleton 2003 - 2008

Ms. Rosaline Lynch Kelly R.I.P. 2008-2014

Ms. Maria Burke 2014 - To present date



EARLY EDUCATION IN ABBEY



St Feichín's National School, Abbey.

The National School in Abbey is under the Patronage of St Feichín. A stone plaque on the present-day building proclaims this as Gaelige. St Feichín is also the Patron Saint of Abbey Parish. It was appropriate, then that the National School in the Parish was given his name.

So, who was St Feichín? He was a west of Ireland man. He was born near Ballysodra in Co. Sligo in the year 580 He studied for the priesthood in Achonry Diocese under St Nathy. St Feichín was ordained a priest in the year 610 He founded several churches in Co Sligo. He travelled to Omey Island and High Island in Connemara via Cong, Co Mayo. He is known as the apostle of Connemara.

He was friendly with King Guaire of Connaught who later gave his name to GORT -Gort Inse Guaire. King Guaire saved St Feichín and his monks from starvation in Omey Island when he sent them food Pagans had tried to starve them there. Later he found a church in Kilbeacanty, near Gort.

St Feichín arrived in Wellpark and Lackan in Abbey Parish in the year 620. He established the Holy Well in Wellpark with its cure for sight difficulties. He preached the Gospel in our locality and baptised Christian. In addition to St Feichín's Holy Well in Wellpark there is St. Feichins Cemetery, Lackan. The road signs into Abbey Village carried his name "Mainistir Chineil Feichín" as did the Post Stamp in Abbey Post Office. His biggest monastery was in Fore Co. Westmeath where he had 300 monks. St Feichín died of the Bubonic Plague in 664 aged 84 years. His mother is also a Saint. She is St. Lasair. The family surname is O'Hara.

It is 1402 years since St. Feichín arrived in Abbey Parish since as a young priest. For just over fourteen centuries the parishioners of Abbey parish have revered our Patron Saint. For a full century so many students have been educated in Abbey National School under the Patronage of St. Feichín. I am grateful for the education I received in St Feichín's National School.

By Francis Donohue

Hedge Schools in the Abbey Parish

- Mairtín Ó Fathaigh

The origin of the hedge school goes back to the beginning of the 18th century with the total collapse of the Irish way of life after the Treaty of Limerick. Many of the filí lost the security of their patrons and so went on the road as teachers in the hedge schools. A Williamite statute of 1695 entitles "An act to restrain foreign education" states in its provisions - "No person of the Popish religious shall publicly teach school or instruct youth" Special precautions were taken to prevent catholic students from travelling to colleges on the continent. Happily, this penal code was too evil to last forever and small compromising measures were passed in the early 1770's and in 1782.

At first, school was conducted on the sunny side of a fence mostly in summer with the teacher sitting on a stone with his young charges around him. One pupil was always left on guard to warn against the approach of strangers. Should the

approach of the military be detected school was abandoned for the day only to meet “on the morrow” in some place still more distant and remote. Hedge School locations were such a well-kept secret that little evidence as to their whereabouts exists.

Cappacon had its’ own hedge school. The Head Master was Micheál Ó Mainnin, grandfather of Henry Manning former teacher in Ballinakill. English was the chief language even though there were then native speakers in the area. The threat of having to emigrate along with the probability of a civil service position decided for the student the range of subjects studied. As an Dochtuír Mac Eíl said, “Coinnigí and Ghaeilge mar sé bhur n-oidhreacht é, ach foghlaim Bearla freisin.

The principal hedge school in the Abbey region was in the centre of the parish called Knockawanna. It is difficult to find the exact location of this hedge school since there was no building used. When the Penal laws eased somewhat, school was held indoors in a barn or unused dwelling house or the local church. The term hedge school remained right up to 1886.

St Feichín’s National School celebrates 100 years

Frances Holohan

St Feichin’s National School was built in 1922 and opened its doors in September of that year, marking a new era in Primary School education in Abbey.

The former school was known as Abbey of Kilnalahan National School and was located in the centre of the village of Abbey on a two acre site opposite the Church. Records show that the first school in Abbey was opened on 1st July 1863. The Roll No was 9197 and the school was situated in the townland of Garrynaclogh, in the parish of Ballinakill. The school manager was Rev P Egan, PP Duniry, under an arrangement with the diocese of Clonfert. There were two school rooms in this building, measuring 23 feet by 16.4 feet and 10 feet by 16.4 feet.

The early records listed all pupils' information in English and their names were recorded in an Index in Alphabetical order making it easy to check names and years of attendance. In addition to pupil details e.g. date of entry, age and their address of residence – i.e. Coolfin, Kylemore or whatever – the Parents' occupation or means of living was recorded.

School registers were signed when there was a visit from an inspector, the school manager, the local curate or other visitor and they recorded the number of students present on the day. On 17th July 1906 the records show 71 students present following such a visit. On 9th January 1907 there were 70 students present. However, on 6th November 1907 an inspection recorded 94 names on the roll but only 36 students present. The inspector's comment was "these figures call for a very strenuous effort to improve attendance". On 2nd February 1915 there were 60 students present so numbers attending school from the area were high in these years.

In 1916 and prior years, teacher salaries were paid every quarter – the Principal's salary being £16.15.3 per quarter and the Assistant's salary being £12.2.9 per quarter. Grants made by the Commissioners of National Education for Heating and Cleaning for the years 1914-1915 and paid in 1916 amounted to £2. In 1917 salaries were recorded monthly and a small war bonus was also paid to the teaching staff.

School holidays were different too. In 1916, Abbey of Kilnalahan National School closed for summer holidays on Friday 28th July and re-opened on Monday 18th September. In December of that year the school was closed on Christmas day, 25th December, and on 26th December, a public holiday, but was open on 27th and 28th December before official Christmas holidays started. School re-opened after Christmas on 8th January 1917.

Interestingly in 1922, the school closed on Friday 30th June "in consequence of all teachers being away at Irish Classes for 8 weeks". Summer holidays were then recorded for 4 weeks and school resumed on 25th September 1922. From September 1922 onwards all students' details were recorded 'as Gaeilge' and the school became known as 'Scoil Naomh Fhéichín'. The Principal teacher was Seán De Paor.

Saint Feichín

Saint Feichín also known as Mo-Ecca was a 7th century Irish saint. He was born in Ballysadare Co. Sligo. After becoming a priest, he founded Ballysadare church and several other churches in his native place. He retired to Fore in Co. Westmeath where he gathered round him a community of 300 monks. He is chiefly remembered as the founder of the monastery at Fore, Co. Westmeath where there are still considerable ruins. In later life he moved to the West where he is associated with foundations in Cong, Co. Mayo- later a famous Abbey and in high Island in west Galway. He also spent some time in the parish of Abbey, (where I am from). He set up a small wooden chapel in Lacken. The holy well beside it became a place for pilgrims for many years. Today St. Feichín is honoured as the patron saint of Abbey and we celebrate mass annually for him. I attended St. Feichín's N.S. which was named after this saint.

Aaron Pierce Forde



MEMORIES

Abbey School (Late 50s/60s) Musings by Mary Conroy, Wellpark, Abbey

Hinges on the heavy gates groaned, as little hands lifted the well painted latch
(wonder if it's still there!!) opening to an encounter with the varied world of
schooling : what may now be listed as "Orientation"
the "misses' es and & masters tiled hallways & classrooms [one each] the door
in the "partition", the fireplace, the blackboard, my desk no ink in the inkwell 'till
later when I got a pen with a nib to dip!

The art of handwriting
the art of sewing
the art of knowing. Knowing:-

Tables, map of Ireland-rivers, towns, mountains,

Songs with the harmonium – National Anthem, Roddy Mc Corley

Pretty pictures for my imagination:-

"I like the town on rainy nights

When everything is wet

When all the town has magic lights

And sheets of shining jet" [Irene Thompson].

Knowing :-

Tears & fears – the stick, visitors stern & formal , "injections" – the welcome
release of playtime, though friends may be "out" with each other & the silent
ones

Musings on school times gone by
early experiences setting the roots of life lived

Memories of my Schooldays

Schooldays are often the making of us and the foundation of many of our most valued memories and friendships. Some of these friendships I still treasure to this day.

Life in the 1950's was very different from today. There were no mod cons. We had a simple lifestyle and never expected much. We were appreciative of everything we received especially the large parcels of clothes which arrived twice yearly from America.

I started at St Feichin's National School Abbey in September 1957. There was no transport and very few had cars so it was customary to walk with family and neighbours. We left home at 8am and walked 3 miles carrying our school bags on our back which contained a few copybooks which were covered with brown paper, a pencil, and a couple of books which were handed down from the older members of the family. Also, inside was lunch usually consisted of brown bread and butter and a small bottle of milk. This had to keep us going until we got home around 4pm. Except for the occasions when we raided orchards for apples or picked a carrot or turnip from the farmers fields! On our way home from school, we would go to Mary McGann for a penny worth of canned sweets. She always gave us good value for our money! The sweets were sticky and often she was plucking a chicken when we arrived. No handwashing before she put her hand in the can for the sweets. We had to pluck the feathers off the sweets before eating them but we didn't mind that! Other times we went to Holohans for a penny worth of broken biscuits. We were delighted as we got a beautiful variety of biscuits that we had never tasted before.

School started at 9am and finished at 3pm. We were always first to arrive at the school gates before the teachers Mr P. Fahy and Miss Fidelma Benson arrived from Loughrea. Miss Benson was my first teacher. She was always very kind and

encouraging. She understood it was an ordeal for us who had never been away from home even for a few hours. She allowed us put our heads down on the desk for a short nap in baby infants. She taught us everything with very few or no resources. We learned how to count using flattened foil milk bottle tops! She taught English, Irish, spelling, writing, reading and arithmetic, sewing and knitting. There were baby infants, high infants, 1st and 2nd class in her room and she managed to teach us all at different stages.

We were taught Catechism which we learned by heart. Fr. John Fahy was a regular visitor to school to check how much we knew. He was always accompanied by his dog an Irish wolfhound called Bran. Bran would walk between the desks and terrify us children that we were hardly able to answer the priests' questions. One day he threatened to tie me to the ceiling by my legs if I didn't answer him!

The classroom had no heating apart from a small open fire. It was freezing in winter. We would often run to school to warm us up and would take a different scenic route. Sometimes past the church and often the more scenic route past the graveyard, Hynes post Office, and Lady well.

The wooden desks which were shared had inkwells in the centre which required filling from a large bottle of ink. We had three breaks for exercise. We went outside in all weathers. A short break in the morning and afternoon, and a longer one for lunch. We were prepared for our First Confession and First Holy Communion. We did a trial run of the first confession at school before we went to the Church for the real thing. Holy communion preparation was also done in school. Ice cream wafers were broken into pieces as this resembled the texture of the host which we were not allowed to touch. It would stick to the roof of the mouth and you had to release it with your tongue.

On the day of First Holy Communion, we all sat in the front seats in Church dressed in our white dresses and veils and the boys in suits. After mass we were all invited back to school for sandwiches, cakes and biscuits. We were each given a small Galtee cheese box filled with sweets to take home.

There were two classrooms the Misses and the Masters. A partition divided the two rooms. We remained in the Misses classroom until 2nd year and then went to the Masters until 6th class when we left for secondary school.

Mr. P. Fahy taught us English, Irish, History, Geography, Maths and singing. The large blackboard in the centre of the room was the main feature where everything was taught from. We were given no encouragement to sing. If you couldn't reach the notes you were sent to the back of the class to listen to those who could sing!

The cane was used frequently and sometimes for no reason. It all depended on the mood of the day. The boys got caned more than the girls though. We were never caned in the Misses classroom.

Other unwelcome visitors to our school were the Dentist and the Doctor. We were all lined up waiting for our turn. I always fainted before I actually went in to either of them. Master Fahy always drove me home in his car... a drastic way of avoiding the long walk home!

Confirmation was another big occasion. It was all about the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit and not monetary gifts like today. The Bishop came to school to examine us. He always put us at ease and managed to ask the questions we knew. I was confirmed by the Bishop of Elphin.

The day we did our primary school exam and left St. Feichín's school was a memorable one. All the class went to Holohans and

we sat on high stools in the bar. We were treated to lemonade and biscuits. We felt so grown up!

Schooldays were indeed happy days in that we were carefree and full of innocence but we didn't appreciate that until we got much older.

Bridie Hickey... (Sr Catherine)



The school shed.

Abbey School 1950



The Hickey Family

Back row: Paddy RIP, Mary RIP.

Front row: Brendan, John RIP, Bridie
(Sr Catherine Hickey).



Mike and Angela Hickey

CONFIRMATION PLEDGE

Name Angela Hickey

Date 29. 5. 66

Confirmed by Most Rev. Dr. Ryan

in the Church of Dunair

29th May, 1966

I resolve, for the glory of God and
with His help, to abstain from all
intoxicating drink until I reach the
age of 25 years.

Memories of Abbey National School

(1961 – 1969).

Gerry Larkin – Tomany.

I attended Abbey National School from 1961 to 1969. Like most students of that era, I would have mixed views of education standards and the treatment of some pupils. Overall, my own experience was more positive than negative. Attending a National School in the 1960's was very different in many ways. I will try to outline some of them in this article.

Most pupils were five years of age or possibly a little older before they started school. Everybody walked to school. Some came across the fields and some came in their bare feet. There were no cars to bring anybody to school, even on a wet or frosty day with a rare exception as we came to the end of the 1960's. Pupils came from all roads, Kylemore, Abbeyville direction, Barnaboy and Tomany. At that time, it was usual enough for the boys in particular to do some work at home prior to going to school. In my case it was to milk a cow and make sure she didn't 'kick the bucket'. Once the cow was milked and the milk in the twelve gallon can, my morning's work was done.

At that time, almost everybody made their First Holy Communion at seven years of age. There were weeks on end of 'Learning the Catechism' off by heart. Confirmation was another major event in the school. It took place every three years for third, fourth and fifth classes. Confirmation alternated between Duniry and Abbey Churches. I was confirmed in Duniry. The Bishop of Clonfert at the time was Dr Thomas Ryan from Kilcommon Co Tipperary. I remember him as a big framed man, but he was very gentle and caring in his examination of pupils. He was well aware from his travels in 'examining' pupils of the varying levels of a pupil's capability and was very quick to make a pupil 'feel at home'.

I remember my First Communion Day from 1963. My mother and father brought me to mass in Abbey. Our teacher brought us for tea and sandwiches to the school afterwards. It was a real treat and a big deal at the time. There were ten of us for First Holy Communion, but only nine of us made it on the day. The first communion class were: Ann Sullivan (RIP) Kylemore, Helen Conroy (Kylemore), Teresa Moloney (Conicare), Ann Minogue (Ballygowan)

and Geraldine Donnelly (Kylemore) who was sick on the day and made her First Communion at a later date. The boys were: Declan Donnelly (Kylemore), Bertie Roche (Kylemore), Pat Burke (Abbeyville), Neil Conroy (Ballygowan) and myself Gerry Larkin (Tomany). I walked home by myself to Tomany afterwards. I remember my mother making a special effort for the dinner on that day as I was the eldest in the house. I am almost certain that we had 'sherry trifle' for dessert. This was a real treat. First Communion was a simple but happy affair in those days.

I remember our school was absolutely freezing in the winter time. It was not unusual to have many weeks of severe frost and snow. To be fair to our teachers they always tried to have a coal or a turf fire on. It was just a pity that eighty percent of the heat went up the chimney. The school had no running water and only 'dry' toilets. One 'treat' I remember was the Annual trip to throw in the curate's turf. He would duly arrive and 'order' the 'master' to send up the fourth, fifth and sixth class boys to throw his turf into the shed. Even in the 1960's there was always a leader in the group and the instructions were that we were 'to make the day' out of the job. The leader would usually be a sixth-class pupil. Sometime during the day, the priest would arrive to inspect our work and would then ask one of the pupils to go up to Mary McGann's shop and get a pound (lb) of Marietta biscuits, and he would pay her later. They were divided equally by whoever went to the shop between all the 'workers' on site. We usually arrived back at school, circa 2.50 pm just in time to collect our school bags before going home.

Most pupils, the boys in particular liked some form of sport. Football was very popular at the time as the Galway Senior Football team won the three in a row in 1964, 1965 and 1966. Regrettably, our teachers had zero interest in sport or extra-curricular activities. I am a great believer in the importance of participating in sports especially team sport as it is a great educator in life. In my view many of our pupils were at a sporting disadvantage when they entered second level education.

There was a high dividing wall at the back of the school. The girls were positioned on one side and the boys on the other side. Integration was strictly forbidden. One simply didn't cross the line, even if the football or hurling ball happened to accidentally cross over the wall.

Despite the harsh conditions in terms of teaching styles and methods, the sub-standard accommodation and little knowledge or understanding of special education needs, the teachers did their best. Many pupils from Abbey National School, went to second and third level schools and colleges and many had successful careers. The introduction of 'Free Education' in 1966 by the then Minister for Education, Mr Donagh O 'Malley opened the door to education for thousands of National school pupils including those who attended Abbey National School.

If we move the clock forward to the current day, schools are generally happy places for pupils, our teachers are better educated and qualified, there are more learning supports, Boards of Management, Parents Councils and much better schools' infrastructures. We are lucky to have all those in Abbey N.S. to day. It is up to each of us in the community to ensure that Abbey National School will still be here in one hundred years from now.

Comhghairdeas ó chroí ar an ócáid speisialta seo,

Gearóid Ó Lorcáin, Iar Dalta, 1961-1969



First Holy Communion 1963 Back row: Neil Conroy, Declan Donnelly RIP, Pat Burke, Gerry Larkin, Bertie Roche.

Front Row: Teresa Moloney, Ann Sullivan RIP, Helen Conroy, Ann Minogue.



Michéal Ó Muircheartaigh, Bertie Roche and Pat Roche.



Visit from Micheál Ó Muircheartaigh to Abbey N.S. arranged by Gerry Larkin prior to the National Feile na Gael competitions being held in Galway. Micheál meeting Teresa Roche

Reeling in The Years ...1977 et al....

1977 was a year for me that I shall always remember... for many reasons but especially since it was the year I qualified as a Primary Teacher from Mary Immaculate Training College Limerick. I was privileged to belong to the class of '77.' We were the first ever Primary Teachers trained to Degree standard in Ireland so in June 1977 I headed away from 'Mary I' full of excitement and notions of heading up to Dublin or Galway city to Teach I didn't know where I was headed next really .

1977 the year that was...

*Cork won the All-Ireland Hurling Final

*Jack Lynch was Taoiseach in the 21st Dáil

*Ireland's first McDonalds opened in Dublin

*Maurice Mulcahy and his Show-band were, in those days a big draw on a Thursday night in the Temperance Hall Loughrea.

Early in June 1977 I heard a rumour that there was a Teaching Position vacant in Abbey as a result of the early retirement of Mrs. Mary Kelly NT.

In the preceding days I had secured a Teaching Post in Skyrne Co Meath and was not too pushed about pursuing the vacancy in Abbey but anyway I applied and the rest is history. In late June I was offered the post of Assistant Teacher in St Feichín's by the Most Reverend Fr. Michael O Reilly PP.

In those days the new school year began on the 1st of July -classes changed on that date and infants began their school life on July 1st also.

So I was officially welcomed to St. Feichín's NS by Mr. Frank Burke, Principal and that began the long association I've had with the parish of Abbey. A very happy chapter in my life that spanned almost two decades. I look back and feel what a great honour it was for me to be entrusted with the early education of so many precious children from this Parish I am sincerely grateful for that role.

As one gets older. Looking back over one's life creates nostalgia - times appeared better, life was simpler the weather was great, people were kind and children much better behaved then than they are today. All this and more were true when I look back over my years spent in St. Feichín's NS.

That was a different era in Education....Resources in Education were sparse and lacked any sophistication. However, in many ways we were ahead of the times, we, as teachers reused, reduced and recycled in the interest of the children and Education..... because we had to ...Underneath my school desk

were bags of egg cartons, toilet roll cores, old newspapers, bottle tops, wooden spools, shoe boxes - all a haven for a family of mice! But these items had a vital role in teaching counting, measuring, matching and developing vital skills

The New Curriculum - 2 Brown Hardback Books

of that time advocated the use of the Concrete and children exploring materials and using their creativity. This was pre-technology and many of today's school generation could not countenance that we had no Whiteboards no IT, Internet or Computers Google hadn't been heard of and the book was our greatest Resource. There were no mobile Phones and St Feichin's had no landline so Nora at the Post Office took urgent important messages and relayed them to the school. Nora provided a wonderful service to the whole Community.

If a child was unwell while in school during the school day in many cases the child was loaded into my car and driven home. An action no longer practiced today. The children wore their own clothes and walked cycled or were driven to school.

The teacher had to be resourceful with many hours spent preparing homemade resources to illustrate a lesson teach a poem or highlight important facts that had to be memorized. Of course, children were easier engage and hold their attention! They were not on a diet of early morning T V. PlayStation, Minecraft or gaming and like all young children they were eager to learn. Conditions in the school were as good as they could be in the mid-70s in those years there was a constant campaign for more resources and better conditions in education settings. In the previous 50 years I don't think things had changed much the dusty wooden floors were traditionally swept on a Friday evening by the older children. Desks were heavy and set in rows and not easy for children to move about the windows were sash and rarely needed to be opened for air as they were draughty. The entrance hall had many functions it held the cloakroom and was a place to meet with parents. Toilets were 'out the back' a relic to times past. I'll never forget my first day teaching when children regularly requested if they 'could go out the back' when requesting to go to the toilet. Money was tight and there were no Summer-works Grants in those days. School maintenance costs fell to the Parish and School Management Boards were in their early days and the culture was not as proactive as Boards of Management today. For heating of the classroom, a Potez oil heater was positioned at the large stone fireplace -it had to be lit every morning as the

children filed in ...it's likely it was preceded by a big turf fire in the grate years before that. These heaters had become standard in many rural schools they were not very efficient as they were poor to distribute the heat .I remember a more efficient system of Central heating being introduced in the early 80s with a Boiler installed at my end of the school This was a welcome development for all.

We were never challenged by large class sizes in St.Feichin's NS however there were 4 classes in the Junior Room and likewise in the Senior Room .This setup presented its own challenges and advantages and opportunities for the children. Some younger children settled easily into the school regime when older siblings were close at hand sitting at the other end of the room. Younger children also learned from the older children who often helped to reinforce some new learning skills .

I have many happy memories of events and happy occasions during my time in St Feichin's NS The Annual First Communion Day in May or June was always memorable and intimate -The Children shone in their innocence and did themselves and their families proud .

There were entertaining Christmas concerts where the children entertained the audience with their singing, dancing and acting on the big stage in the hall. Santa Claus never failed to show up at the end of the night.

I remember well School Tours where parents Grannies and Grandads joined us to make up the numbers for the bus. Those were great days out with trips to the Zoo, The Seaside, The Bog Train at Blackwater Co Offaly, a trip to the Aquarium in Salthill all come to mind. The school Hurling and Camogie teams all brought pride and joy to the school on their many outings. I remember well filling my car up with most of the team and heading over to Killeen, Gortanumera, Leitrim or Ballinakill with great hopes and expectations. There was always a star player who kept our hopes flying. We didn't always win but the essence of the exercise was in the taking part we needed all children to play as numbers were small and every pair of hands that could hold a Hurley were toggling out to play.

The boys got into a final or two which filled us with great pride and hope for the future. The visit in 1981 of a few key members of the winning Galway All-Ireland Team along with the McCarthy Cup was an occasion that didn't happen too often.

The occasional visits from a Travelling Show Troop brought live entertainment into the Classroom enthralling the children with magic, mystery and fun

opening them up to another world.

Mary Fraughan provided Irish Dancing classes in the school on a Friday afternoon when the desks were moved back and it was heartening seeing children quickly progress under Mary's guidance.

Other visitors, like An Cigire arriving early on a cold winters morning kept us all on our toes but the children were always amazing- bright and well behaved and did themselves proud once we got over the initial shock! A visit from the Bishop or the Diocesan Examiner Fr Sean Neylon always left us with a feel-good feeling - all the learning off of Catechism questions was successful we were all rewarded with a half day. The school was festooned with May flowers and no garden in the Parish was safe that week as children always outdid each other with bunches of flowers. I was always amazed by the faith of the people of the Parish and their loyalty to the Christian traditions They supported the missions at home and away by their support of religious publications. In those days there were over 50 supporters of The Irish Messenger many of those people supported The Africa, The Far East, The Word and the SMA. This great effort was due to the Children of the school who cycled the highways and byways to distribute the books. It is a testimony to the people of the Abbey Community that these 2 Class-roomed simple vernacular schoolhouses have withstood many changes and challenges in a century. It is a fact that between 1966 and 1973 the number of 1 and 2 Teacher schools in Ireland reduced by 1,100. Seeing St Feichin's survive and flourish in 2022 is an indication of how the people of this Community have viewed and valued Education over the last 100 years. This school and all those who passed through are very much part of the rich heritage of this place -its heart is still beating and long may it continue to flourish and grow in the Parish of Abbey /Duniry

Mary McEvoy Donnelly



To: The Board of Management of St. Feichín's N.S. and to all the people of Abbey:

Congratulations on this wonderful occasion – the Centenary of St. Feichín's N.S. Thank you for the lovely invitation to join with you in the celebration. Unfortunately, I cannot be present, but I am with you spirit!

It was my great privilege to have served as Principal of St. Feichín's N.S., and to be a part of the proud history of your school. My years in St. Feichín's were very happy ones. All your children, (now young adults!), were very dear to me always, and it was my great joy to teach them and to get to know them.

I always had steadfast, loyal support and friendship from Boards of Management, and from parents, and indeed, from the wider Abbey Community. I am so very grateful to you all. You will always have a special place in my heart.

May God bless you all, and may St. Feichín's N.S. continue to thrive, nurturing and educating your precious children, in the years to come.

With my love, my gratitude,
and my very best wishes,

Mary Dillion

Bóithrín na Smaointe (Memory Lane)

Bernadette Stapleton nee Connors

Ba mhaith liom buíochas a ghabháil le Máire de Búrca, an príomhoide, as ucht cuireadh a thabhairt dom alt a chur leis an leabhrán seo ag comóradh céad bliain Scoil Náisiúnta na Mainistreach. Ba mhór an onóir é freastal ar an scoil mar pháiste agus ansin a bheith ceaptha blianta ina dhiaidh sin mar phríomhoide na scoile.

My association as principal teacher, with Abbey N.S differs to many of my predecessors because it began when I was enrolled as a pupil in the school. It gave me perhaps a different perspective as principal of the school, a role begun in 2003.

To contextualise my entry into the wider world of school life, I will note that it co-incided with some important world events. Pope John XXIII had just died, and there followed the accession, Pope Paul VI. John. F. Kennedy had become 35th President of the United States of America, its first ever Catholic President and one with distinct Irish roots. Ireland was preparing for his state visit on June 26th, of that year. So honoured were the Irish by his inauguration that many homes at the time displayed three important images, that of the Pope, The Sacred Heart and John F Kennedy. On the music front, the Beatles had taken the world by storm and would play a concert in Ireland at the end of that year.

Meanwhile, things were quieter in St Fechlin's National School, Abbey. Our teachers Mrs. Fidelma McDonnell and Mr. Paddy Fahy were getting on with the task of educating the next generation, a task they set about with care and diligence. My memories of my time in school are predominantly happy ones. There was a comforting routine to the day. Mornings in the junior room began with hands-on tasks for infants and oral Irish for 1st and 2nd Class. I can still remember the smell of the márla or the sound of chalk gliding over smooth black slate. Preparation for First Holy Communion was a serious affair and our kind and patient teacher made sure that we were well prepared.

There was the usual anxiety on the prospect of departing the junior classroom to transition to the 'master's room' but I needn't have worried. We were treated like neighbour's children. The girls returned to the junior room for needle work, on a couple of evenings a week and those lessons in knitting and sewing have stood to me, to this day.

The work in the senior room became more challenging giving us the best possible grounding in mathematical tables and Irish, not to mention a lasting command of tonic solfa. The month of September began with an Irish lesson on 'Ag Píacadh Sméara Dubha' - picking blackberries. This I could relate to, as jam making from all kind of berries was part of life back then. Mr. Fahy was often to be seen strolling in front of the school in the morning and he would bring in a sample of leaves, nuts and berries which were displayed using their Irish names, on the partition wall. 'Ag dul go dtí an portach' - going to the bog, and ag baint mona- cutting turf, were activities of which I had no experience and I felt a little 'at sea' because I couldn't recount in English never mind in Irish, the mysteries of what happened in a bog, although I noted that my classmates all seemed equipped with a keen knowledge of the practice. The reason for my shortcoming was that my father had a dearth of available time due to the dual occupation of postman and farmer, and more importantly, an abiding dislike for bad turf, so my only knowledge of its origins consisted of seeing a large lorry of Bord na Mona turf arriving into our yard. It was not allowed to be tipped until my father had taken various samples of sods, broken them and inspected the centre to see if was dense and black.

Mr. Fahy approached the intricate work of teaching us about tackling a donkey, as Gaeilge. This was a much easier task than that of the bog because I had practical experience, and we learned off the different pieces of equipment –ceanrach agus srian, brádach agus ama, dromán agus slabhra.

Moving across the room to 5th and 6th class gained us the title of 'seniors. We learned history and geography and I can visualise the picture of the globe, showing the different climatic regions of the world. We were always assured that we were lucky to be living in a temperate climate. The Penal Laws 1695-1829, were learned by heart and Daniel O'Connell was hailed as the hero who delivered Catholic Emancipation in 1829. Mr. Fahy had a wonderful way of teaching history using mostly story format to bring the characters to life, and he used repetition, an essential element in enabling children to commit

knowledge to long term memory. He also knew the value of basing new learning on that with which we were already familiar. We had a resident mouse (I now realise he wasn't alone), who would on quiet occasions skirt around the four walls of the classroom. This, our teacher used to help us to understand the concept of perimeter.

The visit of the Bishop was an exciting occasion and we were always well prepared. Children perceive height in a way that most adults do not, and I will always remember the height difference between Dr. Thomas Ryan and our teachers, who up to then we perceived as being tall. I had never seen such a tall man, fear ard agus é tógtha dá réir. Fr. Michael O'Reilly PP was a tall man also, but did not have the imposing stature of Dr Ryan.

I remember the doctor's and dentist's visits as a test of courage and resilience. Vaccines were administered and teeth extracted without the comforting presence of a parent. An extraction meant that one could go home early, and we trudged bravely on with the gauze wedged between our teeth.

In a less litigious era, teachers were not required to supervise the yard at break-time. Two or three of us were allowed to bring the white enamel bucket to Lady Well for drinking water. Mrs McDonnell also entrusted us to go to Mrs. Ryan for eggs and we felt very important carrying her fancy blue plastic egg box, but we always got a warning from Mrs. Ryan to be careful to deliver the delicate produce intact. We were also trusted to wash the China after the teacher's lunch, affording us a few more minutes out of class. On one such occasion while taking out the teapot, I accidentally spilled tea on Mr. Fahy's chair. The chair was wooden with a dip in the centre, so the tea was going nowhere. I agonised outside as I washed up as to what would happen to me if he had already sat on the chair. On returning to the class, I was more than relieved to see that he was standing at the board. I took courage and whispered to him that I had done and waited for whatever response might come. His response I will never forget. He put his hand into his pocket and pulled out a handful of change, opened my hand and put it into it, all the while thanking me for telling him - a clear demonstration of the kindness and understanding of the man.

As my years in school were coming to a close Ireland's entry to the EEC and the onset of decimalisation were two topics which occupied the country and it

is fair to say that the school led the way in providing us with a sound knowledge of conversions from old money to new so that we could bring home the correct facts to elderly relatives or neighbours. On transferring to secondary school, the pupils of Abbey held our own against any of the other feeder schools from the catchment area.

*** Fast forward to November 3rd 2003 and this time I enter Abbey NS in my role as principal teacher. It was enormously emotional to be walking in the footsteps of the teachers who I held in such high esteem. In my childhood memory, large rooms and lofty ceilings were now perceived by my adult eye as very much smaller. I had no idea who many of the parents were but I could identify some other children due to their likeness to their parents who had been in school with me. As we settled into that first morning, it came as a surprise to me that some of the children were amazed when I told them that I went to this school as a child. I think some of them were expecting a stranger. Going onto the yard at break on that first morning I wondered where the rest of the children were only to realise that what I was looking at, was all that there was. I had had classes in the past which were larger than the total enrolment. That was a big change. I was very lucky to inherit a well-equipped school. There was plenty of teaching resources and the children were ready and eager to learn.

A lone computer, familiar in all schools at the time, was the first hint that technology was to change education in a way never experienced before. I immediately set about identifying the strengths and challenges which lay before me setting up a three-year plan for where I wanted the school to be and what I wanted to achieve. I set about securing the services of a hurling coach to provide tuition on a whole school level, to support the great work being done after school, by a dedicated parent. The sight of Junior Infants arriving in the morning with their hurling gear was a sight to behold. They played every game as if it was an All-Ireland Final and I sometimes awarded laoch a chluiche – man/hero of the match - to the littlest of them to encourage them even more. Lack of numbers meant that we didn't have hurling success in the way in which success is usually measured, but for me the success was the pride they showed and the effort they expended. I firmly believe in providing the children with as wide an experience as possible while still maintaining valuable teaching time. To this end I began to prepare the children for the Credit Union Quiz which I felt would enhance their wider knowledge and support their core

school-work. This would put us in contention with many other schools of all sizes. We practised as a whole class and a senior and junior team was eventually formed as the due date approached. During the quiz, I stepped out of the hall for a minute but when I returned someone said to me, "You better sit down before I tell you who is in the lead". The senior team from our little school were in top position. I wasn't a bit surprised because I knew the calibre of the children on that team. I had quality if not quantity. Our junior team acquitted themselves well also. That was a joyous day taking home the cup and I have to say that it was a great confidence builder for the children of the school. To win the same competition the following year was even better and proved that we were more than a flash-in the pan.

We decided that we would hold a Christmas Concert. I tentatively sent out a note to see if this was something that the wider community might like to support us in. The response was overwhelmingly positive. We again, tried to incorporate material from the various strands of the curriculum so that time spent was educational for all. From the dance strand of the PE curriculum, I taught some traditional Irish dances. The process was tremendously enjoyable and the final product wasn't too bad either, though we'd hardly have pulled off the 'Glitter ball Trophy' We prepared a mummer sketch which incorporated the whole class and it allowed the children to use their instrumental music, dance, singing and acting skills. Our Nativity play ensured that the central message of Christmas was consolidated in the minds of the children. We even took an excerpt from 'The Field' by John B Keane, and the manner in which small children set about learning lines without a complaint in the world confirmed what I already knew; that these children could handle anything. It was also a very important occasion for the children to see that adult musicians from the parish, their relations or neighbours, took part in their concert also. Many of the senior citizens of the parish expressed to me their appreciation for what they said was a great night out.

There were many more enjoyable adventures during my time in Abbey school. There were masses, school tours, swimming lessons and other outings, one of which was a trip to Dublin to receive the Green Flag. The children always represented their school admirably, wearing their new school uniform with pride. I could not end this piece without extending my heartfelt thanks to the members of the Board of Management of that era, two of whom are sadly now deceased; Very Rev. Sean Lyons and Eddie Finnegan. Fr. Sean Lyons was a

supremely supportive and generous chairperson who valued education highly, and we had many long chats over the years. Eddie Finnegan worked tirelessly in support of the school and was a very valued member of the board. Each and every member of the Board of Management in their own way, together with an active Parent Association supported the school, and for that I was always grateful. My thanks also to our caretaker who was always most accommodating and who ensured that we had a clean and pleasant environment in which to work. Nelson Mandela once said 'Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world'. I would like to think that in the course of the past century, the teachers who taught in Abbey National School have contributed in some small way, towards the betterment of the world. Guím gach rath ar gach duine a chuidigh le heagrú imeachtaí an lae inniu agus tréaslaím libh as bhur gcuid imeachtaí.

School Memories Through the Years.....

The following are a collection of memories shared by the pupils of St. Feichín's National School. From our most senior past pupil, Vincent Conroy (100 years young!) to our youngest pupil now in the Senior Room, Amy Pierce, (9 years of age) we invited all past pupils and pupils currently in the Senior Room to share a treasured memory with us from their school days.

Thank you to everyone who made a contribution!

.....one day I told Master Power that the curate, Fr. Heagney was looking for him. In those days all priests were given huge respect so immediately Master Power left me in charge of the senior classroom and hurried up to Fr. Heagney in the village to see what he wanted.....In a short time he came back to the school. I was afraid that I would now be in trouble. But Master Power came into the classroom and simply said, "Vincent Conroy sits down. Fold your arms girls and boys and pay attention to a story I'm going to tell you. Fado, fado there was once a bright and intelligent boy in St Feichin's National School who out foxed his teacher!" Master Power then told the class how he was coddled into going up to the priest who wasn't looking for him at all! And there was no more said about the matter!

(Vincent Conroy, Wellpark, 1928 - 1936)

...my parents walked me to school when I started first until Lucy Felle started....we then walked together...I had a bike for my last few years.....Teresa Holohan RIP, Annie Joynt RIP and Peggy Kelly RIP were in my class....school days were happy days....Fr. Reid & Fr. Heagney were the priests in Abbey at that time....Dr. Duignan was the Bishop...he was very strict...you needed to know your catechism.....before becoming a Bishop...Fr Duignan often stayed in our house in Kylemore for safety during the Civil War...later my parents travelled on a pony & trap to his residence in Coorheen to play

cards.....I delivered the Far East magazine and The Messenger, which came through the school to neighbouring houses in Kylemore, Muldoons, Janey Kelly, Sullivans, Pierces, Conroys where I was always well looked ... getting lots of treats!... you'd be terrified of the school inspector calling...the nurse would come and give us an injection for The Pox!....when the dentist came he often pulled a tooth if needed there and then....Master and Mrs Power were lovely....if you forgot your lunch Mrs. Power would give you some...she taught us to knit & sew....I remember she taught us how to turn the heel of a sock in sewing...a row of socks would hang on a line in her room!...Mr. Power kept you in after school if you were bold.... on Election Day Polling took place in the school...we had the day off...my father William Roche was the Returning Officer...he collected the polling box in Portumna that morning in the pony & trap....and returned it to the Courthouse that night when a guard would cycle alongside the pony & trap for security.... I would wait up for the pencils left over after polling day! I went to boarding school in Cabra after the Primary Cert ...my grandfather John Roche was an M.P. for East Galway from 1890 – 1914...he was jailed 3 times...

(Gay Roche Royston, Kylemore, 1931 - 1939)

...I joined Abbey School in 3rd class when I was 9 Nellie Hynes RIP, Justina Houlihan RIP, Ellen Joynt RIP and Bridie Burke were in my class...I cannot remember the boys but I think Neil Conroy RIP was one.....my teacher was Mr. Power...his wife Mrs Power was the second teacher in the school....I went in to her for sewing class once a week.....Mr. Power used to cycle to and from the school from where he lived in Cappagh and when he caught up with her on the bike, he would get off and walk with her....every Monday morning when they were back in school, Mr. Power would say "Come on now everyone, we are all rusty after the weekend"...I remember a time when I arrived late for school and I could see through the window that everyone was sitting and that the first class had started....no-one saw me so I went home.....and said that "I was sent home because I was late"I didn't want to go in because class had started....I also remember one day when

they completed sums in class - myself and Vincent Hodgins RIP.....I think he was in a class behind me.. we were the only two to get them all right... I walked to school around by the Post Office and Lady Well....often on the way home when there was a group of us, we would come back the other way - by the Church...lunch was brown bread with sugar if there was no butter or jam.... the games we played were rounders and hide and seek....

(Nancy Madden Killeen, 1935- 1939)

.....Master & Mrs. Power used to give us a cup of tea every day, every time I brought my cup back to Master Power, he always counted my ringlets...there could be 14 one day & 16 the next day!...

(Patricia Lynch- Holloway, Abbey, 1937 - 1945)

.....in preparation for the religious examination, one lad preparing for Confirmation couldn't get it into his head the right answer to one of the questions from the catechism ...Master Fahy wasn't pleased! the Bishop arrived to the school and as it happened asked the lad the exact question, he kept getting wrong.... but this time he got it right...we were delighted for him!

....one hot day in 1947 I remember been in the boy's yard at lunch time and watching planes go by with Dick Joynt RIP....Shannon Airport wasn't long opened at the time...

(Naoise Larkin, Barnaboy, 1939 – 1947)

.....we walked to school from Eaglehill but would hide our shoes at Christy's Corner and walked bare footed for the remainder of the journey...

.... we brought brown bread.... a couple of apples when in season for our lunch....

.... Fr. Reid was the Curate in Abbey a boy was sent each morning from school to serve at 10 o'clock Mass but before Mass he would have to collect a small can of milk from John Joe Donohue for the priest.... May Reid (Fr.'s sister) was housekeeper and she would often give a slice of current cake and a glass of milk to the server after Mass.....

(Stanny Burke, Eagle Hill, 1940 – 1948)

...I started school at 4 and a half!...the following were in my class, J.J. Craughwell, Bernadette Burke, Lily Larkin, Rose Pierce & Teresa Dervan...the teachers were Paddy Fahy & Miss Conheany.....everybody walked to school....for lunch we had two cuts of brown bread and maybe jam with a little bottle of milk (Milk of Magnesia bottle!)...the boys played hurling at lunch time....there was serious preparation for both First Communion and Confirmation.....the priest would call to the school before First Communion...the Bishop called and examined us for Confirmation.....we had homework every night...the School Inspector's visit was taken very seriously.....parents brought an ass load of turf each year...parents who didn't have turf made a contribution....there were no scholarship exams in St. Feichin's....there were two yards, one for the boys, one for the girls.....there was a knitting class for girls every week....every two years we had the hated dentist's visit!....

(John Holohan, Abbey, 1942 -1950)

....my late father Denis Burke & his brother Michael from Coolfin attended St.

Feichin's National School in the 1940's & into the 1950's. they had great memories of those days & all the friends they made..... ...the previous generation of Burkes also attended the school including their

father Thomas & their uncles & aunt.....it's great to see the contribution of the school to the Abbey community being commemorated and those who passed through the doors being remembered....

(Carmel Rooney (nee Burke), Graigagowan, Portumna)

.....I remember walking to school every day with the Pierces next door.... To make homework easier, we would go next door to Pierces and do our homework together....

(Phyllis Pierce O'Dwyer, Kylemore, 1942-1950)

*.....Mary Callinan, Cepta Holohan and Julie Collins were in my class. For lunch, I remember everybody having 2 slices of bread and butter and that's what they had to eat for the day....
I remember on the playground boys played on one side and girls on the other. The games we played were tag and hide and seek....*

(Mona Pierce Boyle, Kylemore, 1944- 1952)

.....I remember one Wednesday we went out to sewing class in the Miss's room as it was then called.....Rose Pierce, Phyllis Pierce, Bernadette Burke and myself were in the same class and we were sitting together for sewing with Ms Lynch.....Rose realised that she had mislaid her needle and went up to Ms Lynch for a spare needle but Ms Lynch would not give her one and reprimanded her for losing her own!...Rose came back to her seat very annoyed and whispered something under her breath to us...a comment which was not very favourable to Ms Lynch!!...we started to giggle ...Ms Lynch asked us what we were laughing about and asked us individually what was the comment that Rose made...none of us would repeat it.....in particular Ms Lynch put me under scrutiny about the incident but out of loyalty to my friend I would not divulge...my punishment was to be left standing in the hall for the remainder of the class.....

(Lily Hayes nee Larkin, Barnaboy, 1944 - 1952)

.... I remember we had to walk to school a lot of days but I often got a lift on the back of my mother's bike.... We wrote with ink in school.... My teachers at the time were Ms Lynch and Master Fahy.

(Padraig Pierce, Kylemore, 1945 - 1953)

..... Teresa Craughwell, Mary Fahy, Paddy Hickey, Liam Collins, Paddy Fahy and Ulick Burke were all in my class... we would often go out to Mrs. Slattery's house which is beside the school and at lunch time she would cook us boxty (like potato cakes).....where Smokie Joes pub is now, a man named Tom Joe Hanrahan owned the placean odd time after school we would go up there and a lady named Mrs. McGann worked there....she would roll up a piece of paper in a cone shape and fill it with sweets for a few pence...she was a really kind lady....the first day Ms Benson started in our school, she got a lift on the back of Master Fahy's motorbike!

(Ita Pierce Dervan, Kylemore, 1949 - 1957)

.... I loved school and found it no trouble to learn.... I walked to school with my brother John Joe RIP through the fields.... In February 1947, my first year in school there was a heavy fall of snow which stayed on the ground for 6 weeks...we still walked during that spell. There were 40 children in the school...Cepta Holohan RIP & Junie Collins RIP were in my class... We played football, hurling, rounders, hide-and-go-seek....

Paddy Ward or his brother Silkie cleaned out the dry toilet for 2 shillings... In preparation for First Confession, our teacher Ms Judy Davoran brought us to the church and went into the Confessional box herself where the priest went for us to practice the format for confession.

Bishop Duignan was the bishop, Fr. Glennon was the P.P. & Fr. Reid was the curate.... on my Communion Day my hair caught fire as I was holding the candle too close to my head! Mr. Doyle and Mr Galvin

were the school inspectors. Mr. Doyle enjoyed the banter with Tom Fallon RIP and used to sit on the bench beside Tom when he visited the school. After Tom had left and Mr. Doyle came to the school he asked, "Where is my friend today?" I remember on the 23rd June 1951 we came 3rd in a relay race at a Diocesan Sports Day in Kilrickle. Our team were, Pat McDonagh, RIP Sean Broderick (Duniry), Tom Fallon & myself. Fr. Reid drove us that Sunday. We collected Master Fahy on the way.... we were so disappointed that there was no prize for coming 3rd!...

(Tommy Goonan, Coolfin, 1946 - 1954)

...the following were in my class Mary Larkin, Abbeyville, Mary Hickey, Easterfield, Jackie Fallon, Lackan, Gerard Kane, Barnaboy and myself. There was a roll call every morning ...everyone walked to school.... I was taught by Ms Lynch and Master Fahy. Master Fahy, originally from Carrickmacross was married to my father's first cousin Ms King from Loughrea. There were approximately 60 pupils in the school...There were 2 open fires, one in each classroom, divided by a partition. Ms Larkin taught the Junior room while Master Fahy taught the senior room.

Most pupils brought an ass-load of turf to the school each year. When we brought our turf, I would borrow an ass and cart from grandfather Donohue's and the process would take the full day....

I was often sent to Packie Sullivan in Kylemore for milk for Fr Reid and I would collect the milk bottle from the priest's house first. If there was no milk available at Mr Sullivan house it was collected from Farmer Larkins in Barnaboy. On delivering milk to the priest's house Ms Reid, the housekeeper would invite me in and I would be given a cup of tea and two slices of homemade brown bread with butter and marmalade! Each day when the church bell rang at midday, the Angelus was said by teachers and pupils...We played hurling during break and as the field was so small, we often had to search for our sliotar in neighbouring fields....

(Pat Craughwell, Lackan, 1947 - 1954)

.....I remember coconut cream biscuits we got with lemonade at a party in the school after making our First Holy Communion.....that was the only party we had for our Communion Day!.....
(Mary Dervan, Cuilleen 1950 -1958)

.... I remember the time of the first marquee in Abbey back in the fifties.... where all the dancing took place.... back then it was erected on the grounds of the school.... the men in the village had set it up and went home for the afternoon to get ready... myself and 4/5 other fellas went in for a look after school. We snook in under the back of it and under the stage we found where all the soft drinks were stored.... there was soda pop and orange and all sorts...well, we drank ourselves silly and I remember one of them lying down on the road as he felt so sick with tummy ache.... when I went home to my mother, she gave me a clip across the ear. ...she gave me a half crown to bring down to Willie Lynch, as he was one of the people on the organising committee. Willie didn't mind and wouldn't take the half-crown! ...
(Michael Larkin, Abbeyville, 1950 - 1958)

.....one of my fondest memories of when I attended Abbey National School was when Mr. Fahy left Watsons House to live in Loughrea. The same time as this Ms Benson was newly appointed. They both lived in Loughrea and would travel out together on a motorbike Mr. Fahy the driver and Ms Benson the passenger. When winter time came, we would all pray for bad weather the more ice and snow that fell the better. This also meant they would be running very late for school. The old motorbike was not great on the icy roads. When they eventually arrived, there would be no fire onthis again delighted us all as no schoolwork would be done until the fire was on. Our prayers were answered!!!!!!
(Ulick Burke, Eagle Hill, 1950 1958)

After I made communion we came back to the school, Ms Benson was our teacher and she had made all of us tea and egg sandwiches. It was a real treat. For practice for us getting communion, they would break up a wafer biscuit and pretend it was holy communion....

We owned an orchard at home, I would bring in Ms Benson cooking apples and the following day she would have chocolate bars for me. She was a very kind person...Lena Callinan, Larry Donnelly, RIP, Mary Hynes Smith and Francis Craughwell RIP were in my class....

(Una Pierce Kelly, Kylemore, 1953 - 1961)

.... I remember my 7th birthday and running in the playground and running into

John Donnelly and badly cutting my knees! The principal at the time was Paddy Fahy and the other teacher was Ms Benson. Master Fahy would use a cane to reprimand.... if often went missing!!...we were often sent out to the bushes beside the school to bring in a new cane. The people in my class were Paddy Moloney, Kevin Minogue, Teresa Connors, Billy Sullivan, RIP Ita Kelly and Tom McNamara RIP....there were no flush toilets.... there was only a big hole.... both boys and girls used it as a toilet. A couple of times a year, Paddy Ward would come and clean out the hole.....Master Fahy the principal at the time, sent me out to find some young lad missing from the classroom and thought he might be outside. When I went out, I met Bob Callanan on the bike. As I went inside to the school, I met Mick Slattery who lived next door to the school. At that same moment, Bob Callanan beside the bike, collapsed and died there and then RIP.....Ms Donohue used to come after school and teach all the children music. I learned the fiddle, while Paddy Moloney learned the piano accordion....

(John Hynes, Abbey, 1956 - 1964)

....when Miss Benson started first she travelled from Loughrea on the back of a motorbike with Master Fahy...on a wet morning she would hang her oil skins on the back of the classroom door to drylater Miss Benson stayed with the Dolan family, Ballygowan and Paddy Fahy

stayed with the Watson family in Eagle Hill.....Ms. Mary Donohue held a music class after school once a week in the school for anyone who wanted to learn music....at one time there were 25 fiddles, 2 piano accordions and 3 button accordions in the group.....about half of the pupils came from Ballinakill.....the Ryan family alone had 5 fiddle players.....the cost of lessons was £ 2.50 a quarter....boys played rounders, hurling, football, rough & tumble at break time....there was singing twice a week...remember the Bells of the Angelus & Ave Maria...we learnt the Latin Mass responses.....we wore short pants on Communion Day and Confirmation Day.....Confirmation was held every two years alternating between Abbey & Duniry Church.....we would hire a car from Gerry Dolan or Jay Kelly to go to Duniry for Confirmation.....at that time we had to kiss the ring of the bishop.....I remember two bishops, Dr. Philbin and Tom Ryan.....at one time 3rd, 4th 5th & 6th got their Confirmation together...then it was only 5th & 6ththe Kilfenora & Tully Ceili Bands played in the marqueesome Show Bands also played.....in later years Frank Burke , Principal was the first to introduce hurling coaching in Abbey School in 1974....in 1979 Abbey won the county school's 7 a-side....

(Joe Connors, Knockaunbaun, 1956 - 1963)

...we all walked to school...ourselves and the McNamara family were the first to arrive to school each morning before Master Fahy or Ms Benson arrived.....Master Fahy's first car was a green Anglia....the fire was lit in each classroom when the teachers arrived....when I was in the senior room, I borrowed Marian Roche's bike every day at 12 to go to Lynch's shop for the paper and often someone in the class might have a penny and ask me to get a penny's worth of sweets from Mary McGann who would often wrap them in old ice lolly wrappers....then I would be sent to Lady Well for water for the kettle for the teacher's tea.....I nearly fell into the well one day!...I missed religion class every day going to the shop and the well!.....there was a girls and boys play yard each...we never mixed...we played rounders, tag and ring-a-ring-a-rosy at lunch time....the one dry toilet was used by both boys and girls.....Ms Benson cut up squares of newspaper for toilet paper....lunch break was at 1 o'clock outside in the open shed.....we brought bread and jam &

milk...maybe a plain scone or slice of spotted dick...we did knitting and sewing every Monday & Wednesday with Ms Benson...we had a small sewing book which demonstrated all the sewing stitches...we used gingham material to practice sewing on a straight line....I remember Verna & Eileen Murphy brought in a big doll one day....when the carnival marquee was in Lynch's field we would put our hand down the side of the marquee when walking to school the morning after a dance ..we might find a sixpence! and from the fridge we might take minerals and ice cream!!...we would be fasting from midnight before our First Holy Communion Mass which would be at 8a.m....we would then go to the school where Ms Benson would have egg sandwiches, biscuits, an empty Calvita cheese box filled with sweets for each of us and she would take a photograph of us in our white communion dresses....we loved when someone called to the school to speak with the teacher...they used to go outside to talk ...we had free time!...we were the last class to do the Primary Cert exam....It was a supervised state exam...we got lemonade and ice cream in Holohans after the exam!...

(Angela Hickey Sellars, Easterfield, 1959 - 1967)

....I remember both classrooms as being very packed...there were 72 pupils in the school!...when the babies finished at 2 p.m. there was a small section in the room for them to put down their heads to take a nap until 3 p.m. when they would go home with older brothers and sisters.....I had two jobs every day...dusting in the morning and taking out the roll book to the other classroom...I would have to ask Master Fahy in Irish, “ An bhfuil cead agam tog amach an leabhair rolai, mas e do thoil?Master Fahy was a good teacher.... Abbey past pupils held their own in Secondary Schools! his style of teaching was more lecturing. chalk & talk...we had little homework...the inspector could call at any time.... Miss Benson was a good teacher too.... she would get the babies and junior pupils to make shapes with and learn using marla while she would start Scealta stories in Irish with 1st & 2nd classes.... she would teach counting using tops of milk bottles!Miss Benson was kind I remember we had a May altar each year....Fr. O'Reilly would call to the school when preparing for First Holy Communion...we would

gather in a circle and he would ask us questions....we would go once a month to confessions to Abbey Church....we considered it an outing!....Master Fahy played the harmonica....a wind instrument with two pedals....at that time all teachers had to be able to sing and play an instrument if hoping to become a teacher....I remember learning the song, 'Roddy McCorley goes to die on the Bridge of Toome today'we had old sums copies where we practised for tests.....our new sums copy was for the real test!...if you got top of the class you got half a crown!....the Salesian Order of nuns would come to the school to give a talk on vocations.....if interested and in 5th class we could sign up!.....if going on to secondary school we mostly went to Portumna and cycled either to the Maria Regina College or Molasses Vocational School...I had happy days in school....

(Margaret Burke, Abbeyville, 1959 - 1967)

.....one day Ms Benson sent me up to my mother who had the shop and Post Office for 4 /5 wafers. We were preparing for First Holy Communion & Ms Benson taught us to receive the host most reverently using the wafers...we were forbidden to touch the host with our hands, chew it or let our teeth touch it.....Ms Benson RIP was a most kind teacher...

.... when walking home from school one day with my brother Pat and my sister Teresa, we were stopped by a guard on a bike (stationed in Tynagh) who reprimanded us for walking on the wrong side of the road.... I ran home terrified....

(Noel Hynes, Abbey, 1961-1966)

.....at lunch time we made mud slides in the field beside the school, near the drain ...we were a right mess going back to the classroom.....

.....we often raided apples at Joe Callanan and Frank Hynes's when walking home from school!...

(Joe Minogue, Ballygowan, 1963 – 1971)

.... there was no water in the school at the time. One day I remember two lads were sent to lady well with a white enamel bucket for water for drinking. The boys were in bare feet. As they were walking, the chippings and stones from the road were getting stuck to their feet. When the boys got back to the school gate, one of them dipped his feet into the bucket of water to wash off the chippings that was stuck to his foot. His imprint of his foot was on the bottom of the bucket. The same water was used in the school. When the Master seen the imprint at the bottom of the bucket, the boy got reprimanded by the teacher....

(Pat Finnegan, Conicare, 1965 - 1973)

.....today Abbey national school is a fine modern building with all its facilities. In my day it was very grey no mod cons. At the start there was an open fire but later 2 stoves were fitted. Bathroom facilities were very basic. There was no flushing involved!!!.....Mrs. Mc Donnell was my first teacher. I remember her as very pleasant and kind.... when I moved into the senior room, I had Master Fahy....he was stricter....

...in the Master's room there were 4 rows of wooden benches...inside the door were third class and up near the stove were sixth class.....each bench had an ink well....we had a special pen that we dipped into the ink and wrote on our copy book....we used blotting paper to dry the ink....if you weren't careful it could get very messy!....at least I now know where the saying "Don't blot your copy book" came from!...there were wooden rulers and pencil cases....no plastic at that time....

I remember Master Fahy teaching us to do mental arithmetic.... he would start with a number and then add subtract multiply and divide different numbers....it was hard to keep up with him but we tried to have the same number as he had at the finish! One day Master Fahy lined up all the senior boys in the yard...he wanted to know who was stealing apples from Joe Callanan....it was like a scene from The Shawshank Redemption! I don't think anyone squealed on that occasion...

Father O'Reilly who was a very tall man used to call to the school to ask us questions on our catechism.... the Cigire also called at different times.... we had to have the right answers for him too! During a hurling

match in the field, I saw Pat Burke who was a defender take a wild swing and score an own goal! I don't think I have seen one since...Some families brought tea to school in glass bottles.... some other families had flasks but it was hard to mind them.... if they dropped at all, they would break easily.....

(Tony Abberton, Eagle Hill, 1965 - 1973)

....my memory of my school days in Abbey School was the sewing class....in this class I learnt to sew, knit and crochet...

(Ann Lyons, Coolfin, 1970 - 1978)

.... Frank Burke and Rose Benson were the teachers when I was in school..... I remember the play sheds playing 'crushing'... Two teams would put their backs against the wall and push – it was great fun. We also played a lot of rounders but hurling was the big sport with Frank Burke and in 1979 Abbey NS won the East Galway 7 – aside final.... I remember the travelling movies/slides which were a great novelty back then – when we would get to watch a film for the whole afternoon. We also went to Westport house on a school tour which was long distance and a great day out back then.... Irish dancing was always done in school too but I didn't last long as myself and John Lynch got thrown out for laughing so much.... There was no central heating when going to school in the seventies – we had an oil burner and it was so cold in winter time....

(Gerard Abberton, Abbey, 1971 - 1979)

...there were five pupils in my class, Teresa Geraghty, Abbeyville, Majella Hodgins, Barnaboy, Pat Kelly, Easterfield and Martin McDonagh, Coolfin...I remember walking and cycling to school. We played rounders mostly at lunchtime. In school I learned to play the tin whistle and I especially loved our school concerts which took place in Abbey Community Hall, which was always packed to capacity. I had the honour of playing Little Red Riding

Hood one year! I remember too that many of the girls worked on a large handmade rug in the classroom and often wonder what ever became of it...

(Eileen Craughwell O'Reilly, Lackan, 1976 - 1983)

.....Mrs. McEvoy had to learn how to knit as a left-handed person to teach me to knit!

(Maeve Lynch, Abbeyville, 1979 - 1987)

.....I had a short walk from my house in the village to school every day. I brought sandwiches for my lunch.... boys and girls played rounders, hurling and tug of war in the school yard...we went down to the river and around the village on nature walks...we didn't wear a school uniform...Father Nilan & Bishop Kirby visited the school...I won first prize for knitting a hat and scarf....my prize from Ms. McEvoy was a pair of butterfly earrings.....

(Sarah Lynch, Abbeyville, 1981 -1989)

.... I remember Ms Mary McEvoy who was so kind and brought us to school every day. I remember her teaching us crochet and sewing skills we have never forgotten...there was only Aishling Donnelly and I in the same class.... we were also the best rounders team in Ireland...if there was a competition for playing rounders, we would have won it outright!...

(Caroline Pierce, Kylemore, 1981 - 1989)

...one of my fondest memories is walking to and from school in all weathers with our neighbours from Abbeyville, Coolfin and Ballygowan...a stop in the shop on the way home, the sharing of ten pence pieces so we could all buy a ten-penny bar or an ice lolly.... the fun and the banter were always good....

(Ester Larkin Cunningham, Abbeyville, 1982 - 1990)

.....during my time in school, a lot of Irish dancing was done in school.....whether it was the easy reel and East Galway set, Shoe the Donkey, The Stack of Barley or an Eight hand reel, we all had to do a bit along the way.....I remember when Rose and Brid O'Brien, from Carna, were the dancing teachers, we headed off on a school tour to Inis Óirr but part of the tour was to take part in a féis... we had practised an eight hand reel for weeks....from memory there was Michelle Roche, Breda Burke, Declan Donnelly, Bernadette Burke, Ester Larkin, Fiona Pierce, Eamon Kelly and myself... the excitement of going on a boat at the time was super in my mind

I was expecting to be travelling in style abroad a fancy ship so got quite a surprise when we all boarded, what I recall something like a fishing trawler... the weather and Island were beautiful that day....

we got to the hall where the feis was on – I just remember doing the dance and wanting to get out the door as quick as we could.... when the results were announced – to our great surprise, we had come first.... there was a great search for the dancers to collect the trophy but only half of us could be found as the others had headed off to the beach! In my last year of primary school, Fr TJ O'Connell was curate in the parish...this was the first year Abbey was to have girls serving mass. . we all got duly trained and put into mixed groups.... I was in a group with Pat Geraghty, Bernadette Burke, Alida Finnegan and Ronan Holohan....I remember serving morning mass during the week followed by a trip to Holohans shop before we would enjoy a leisurely stroll to school John Fahy, who was also in my class, had bought a yellow mountain bike around that time too and very loyally waited for us on those mornings.... needless to say, we enjoyed the early morning bars and crisps but more so enjoyed the later start time for school those weeks.....

(Joan Larkin McGreal, Abbeyville, 1984 - 1992)

How lucky we were to be taught by Mary McEvoy! She was a wonderful teacher. She was very kind and had an endless supply of patience. She used to have a little pot of something that we called “magic cream” that cured all our cuts and scrapes. Mary was one of the main reasons I wanted to be a teacher. Now that I am one, I can’t help but wonder how she taught four classes in that small room and still managed to create such a happy learning environment for us all. I consider myself privileged to have had such a good start in school and I have very fond memories of my time in Mary McEvoy’s classroom.

Maria Conroy, Kylemore

*.....I remember the day I fell at school and broke my arm!.....Pat Geraghty was cutting silage in Donnelly’s field...when I heard the mower spinning I just had to see the tractors working...I knew he had a Deutz, Case and New Holland tractor.....I climbed up on 2 chairs to look over the wall separating the school and Donnelly’s field...I took a tumble! Mrs Felle brought me in her yellow escort to Kilrickle where my father met me and brought me to Portiuncula Hospital....
(David Conroy, Ballygowan, 1996 - 2004)*

.....one of my best memories in school was one hot day, Ms Burke called us to one of the school windows after break and asked us to get in line and passed each one of us a wafer ice cream out the window!.....

*.....sports day each year with Moyglass was great fun.....I scored a goal one day against John Madden in hurling when I was in 2nd Class and John was in 5th. and he was a great hurler.....
(Liam Hynes, Abbey, 2006 – 2014)*

...I remember Ms Burke took us on a school tour to Tayto Park...it was only for the senior room...it was the best school tour we ever had...

(Aaron Pierce Forde, Kylemore, 2011 – 2019)

.... I always remember the days when Mrs Madden or Ms Burke would train us for school hurling...we really enjoyed playing in school

tournaments...we used to love going to Moyglass and taking part in the boat race...

(Jack Pierce Forde, Kylemore, 2011-2018)

...now to current pupils from St. Feichín's N.S. for their present day memories!

.....I go to school by car...I bring a rice cake, an apple and a ham roll for lunch...I like to chat with friends at break time and play hurling on Tuesday and Thursday.....my First Holy Communion day was special because I got to say one of the readings at Mass and we had a lovely party with all my family afterwards....on my Confirmation Day we went out for dinner and went to visit my grandparents in Moate...I like playing camogie and shopping with my mother after school...my favourite memory was when I was in 3rd class and we were gone on our school tour to UL, Killaloe Co. Clare.....there were lots of water activities there and one was going out on the Shannon on a boat....you held onto a rope that was attached to the boat and then got in the water....they would pull you around with the boat for a while and then you would get back in....when it was my turn I grabbed the rope and they started pulling me, then the rope slipped out of my hand....it was very funny and they had to turn around and come back for me.....

(Avril Kelly, Coolfin, 2014-2022 6th class)

...I travel to school by car. I have bread and fruit for my lunch...I play soccer and hurling at lunchtime...all my cousins came on my First Holy Communion Day and the cake was really nice...after school I play with my dog and hurling....my favourite things about school is PE, playing hurling and seeing my friends...I don't like doing homework...my favourite memory was when I was 4 years old and started school.... I

was excited and nervous.... I saw lots of new friends.... we were playing with toys sand and having fun.... we also went outside and ran around the school.... we saw our parents; they were there to collect us.... that was my favourite memory....

(Eoghan Lynch, Abbeyville, 2014-2022 6th class)

.....I travel to school by car.... I bring a sandwich & fruit for lunch.....I play tag, rounders and hurling on Tuesday & Thursday....I sang a lovely song at my First Holy Communion Mass and my aunt made me a beautiful cake...I had a great party on my Confirmation Day with my friends...my cousin came back from Canada that day to see me.... art, PE and seeing my friends are my favourite things about school...maths is my least favourite thing.... my favourite memory I have from school was when I brought my pony in to school ...And all my class mates had a go on her and even Mrs Burke had a go on her! It was so funny.... And surprisingly some of the people in my class were really good.

(Maeve Connolly, Barnaboy, 2014-2022 6th class)

...I usually cycle to school but sometimes I go by car. I bring fruit, crackers and bread for lunch...what made my First Holy Communion day and Confirmation days special was that all my family came to see me including family from Northern Ireland...I enjoy reading, drawing, watching TV talking with my family and playing with my pets after school...I enjoy chatting with friends at school....my favourite memory is of when I first came to this school....when I arrived, I remember being so happy and excited to be here....I was put beside Maeve Connolly, we talked for a bit and became friends.....and still to this day we are best friends.....

(Olivia Maguire, Cinéal Feichín 2014-2022 6th class)

...I travel to school by carI bring brown bread and fruit for lunch...I usually play camogie and rounders at break time...getting to play with my cousins who I don't see very often made my First Holy Communion

day very special....playing on the bouncy castle made my Confirmation day special...I enjoy playing camogie and horse riding after school...I don't enjoy doing written work at school...playing camogie with my friends on Tuesday and Thursday is my favourite thing about school...my favourite memory from Abbey National School is when I was in 2nd class and we went to a pet farm in Moycullen called Loughwell Farm...the best parts were when we got to go on the go-carts around the farmwe got to feed the animals and see the rooster with lots of different coloured feathers

(Carrie Pierce, Kylemore, 2014 – 2022 6th class)

...I walk to school every day...I bring a salad and fruit for lunch...I play rounders and camogie at break time...on my First Holy Communion Day and Confirmation Day we got a bouncy castle and met up with all my cousins. It was great fun when we threw water on the bouncy castle... I enjoy playing camogie and music after school...I like maths but my least favourite thing about school s Irish because it is difficult to learn...my favourite memory in St Feichin's National School was one ordinary Friday when I was in 5th class.... Ms Burke said I would be the teacher from after lunch until the end of the school day.... when we came in from lunch, I told the class we were going to write a story and they all groaned.... then I laughed and said it was a joke and I took them back outside because it was a wonderful day.... we played soccer for the rest of the day, it was fun and I was the referee....

(Emily Behan, Abbey, 2014-2022 6th class)

.....I travel to school by car...I bring fruit and sandwiches for lunch....the cake made my First Holy Communion day special...my least favourite thing about school is homework!...I play soccer at break time....I enjoy playing hurling with the rebounder after school...my favourite memory was going on a school tour to Killaloe....we went on boats, canoes and even got to jump off the pier....the water was freezing so I had to put on a wetsuit....I went there when I was in fourth class and I really enjoyed it....

(Daniel Keane, Eagle Hill, 2014-2022 6th class)

...I travel to school by car. I bring sandwiches and fruit for lunch. I play soccer and hurling at break time...I had my First Holy Communion day with my cousin Carrie...all my family were there...we had a lovely cake...half Tynagh – Abbey- Duniry friends and half Davitt's friends were there...we had a bouncy castle with a slide on my Confirmation day...I like to play hurling against a wall after school...my least favourite thing about school is homework... my favourite school memory was on our school tour when we visited Loughwell Pet Farm....My favourite part was going on the tractor train and feeding the animals there and playing in the sand pit and going on the go karts with my friends....

(Callum Pierce Forde, Kylemore, 2014-2022 6th class)

...I cycle to school or car pool with Daniel...I bring sandwiches and fruit for lunch...I play all sports at break time...soccer, hurling, basketball, Gaelic football....what made my First Holy Communion special was my Godfather came down from Dublin and we had a bouncy castle...what made my Confirmation day special was getting air pods and my family were there.....I enjoy watching TV and playing hurling on my rebounder after school...the nicest thing for me about school is lunchtime...my favourite memory is this...it was the middle of Spring..... we were doing our work and it started to snow....we all went outside with smiles on our faces....we were having so much fun....we were having a snowball fight and then we pelted Ms Burke with snowballs....she was not happy.....

(Cormac Forde, Abbey, 2014-2022 6th class)

....my favourite memory was when we went to Moyglass for the Boat Race....there were a lot of parents and children gathered on the bank of the river.... I felt very excited when the Boat Race was about to begin.... My boat was very fast and I won the first round easily.... I won the semi-finals and Mr. Donnelly was very proud of me.... he gave me some sweets from a jar to celebrate the fact that I had reached the final.... taking part in the final was nerve wrecking but I was delighted when my boat crossed the finish line in first place.... Mr Donnelly presented me with a marvellous trophy. Mrs Burke was very proud and congratulated

me on my wonderful achievement..... I felt very proud of myself on that wonderful day.....

(Liam Hyland, Cinéal Feichín, 6th Class 2022)

..I normally walk to school but sometimes I go by car...I bring, fruit, sandwiches and a snack for my lunch...we play hurling, rounders, soccer or just talk at break time...on my First Holy Communion day I got a bouncy castle, had coffee and chocolate biscuit cake.....I had lasagne for dinner and I played with my cousins all day....I play hurling after school and I also play with my dog....I don't like science or Irish...seeing my friends and playing at break time are my favourite things about school....my favourite memory from school was our school tour when I was in senior infants....we went to NUI Galway....there was a hall filled with bouncy castles....when we got there we had to line up....juniors, seniors and first went in a group together....we went on a few different bouncy castles...after break we went upstairs and we played games with cups....after lunch we went on a disco bouncy castle and a bouncy castle with a big ladder....it was great fun....

(Grace Killeen, Ballygowan, 5th class 2022)

...most days I walk to school.....I bring a roll, fruit and a yogurt for my lunch.....at lunch time we play rounders, hurling or just talk!.....what made my First Holy Communion day special was that I got a bouncy castle...a sponge cake was made for me and my cousins came from England....I enjoy playing with my dog, playing hurling and going for a walk after school.....my least favourite thing about school is the homework and Irish because it is boring...my favourite memory in school was when I was in 1st class...little chicks came to school and one of them had an accident on the yoga mat!...we named them all...they were really cute....

(Kaitlin Craughwell, Abbeyville, 5th class 2022)

.....my favourite memory was when I first started school.... I made lots of new friends but Kayla was my best friend.... that day I was sitting across from her and we kept swapping pencil cases.... the teacher

caught us and she took our pencil cases and all our stuff were in them.... then she told us to do our work but we had no pencils or pens....

(Eleanor Lynch, Abbeyville, 5th class 2022)

...my favourite memory was when the circus came to our school and we did juggle, we got to walk on the tight rope and we played with hoola-hoops.... then after that we got pizza and chips...we had a great day....

(Kayla Hyland, Cinéal Feichín, 5th class 2022)

...I travel to school by car pool...I normally bring a banana and a yogurt for lunch...I play soccer and hurling at break time....we went to the Meadow Court hotel on my First Holy Communion day...my favourite memory in school was when we went to the Hurling Blitz in Portumna....we all arrived early that morning at the school....everyone looked happy and excited....before we left we did some Maths work like any other ordinary day....we were thrilled to hear that the bus had just pulled up outside the school....finally we were all seated and we were ready to go...luckily I was sitting beside Callum....the drive to Portumna felt really long but we eventually arrived at our destination....the first thing that we did was to eat our lunch and then it was time for our first match which was against Portumna.... Liam was in backs and I was in forwards.... we made a great combination together.... we won comfortably in the end.....we continued our winning streak in the rest of the matches.... we won all six of our matches and we celebrated on the way home with some treats...the journey home flew by.... Ms Burke was really proud of us for winning all of our matches.... the best part was we got no homework that night....

(Michael Hughes, Kylemore, 5th Class 2022)

...I go to school by car...I bring a sandwich for lunch....we play 'freeze tag' or just talk at break time....all my family were there for my First Holy Communion and we took pictures ...that's what made the day special for me...I enjoy drawing pictures after school....art is my favourite thing about school....my best school day was in first class....we went on a school tour to a play place....we played games and there was

also a pet farm there...we saw rabbits and chickens...I really enjoyed the play house with the play food....

(Lauren Kiely, Eagle Hill, 4th class 2022)

...I travel to school by car...I have oranges, apples and crackers for lunch...I play soccer at break time....my aunt came down from Dublin for my First Holy Communion and we went to Garrykennedy for the day.... meeting & playing with my friends is my favourite thing about school...maths is my least favourite...my favourite memory was when the circus came to the school and we did juggling.... after the circus we got pizza and it was delicious...I had a great day....

(Adam Archbold Abberton, Abbey, 3rd class 2022)

...I travel to school by car...I have fruit and sandwiches for lunch. I do gymnastics with friends at break time...my memory of my First Holy Communion is that it was raining and we got soaked on the bouncy castle...my least favourite about school is English...my favourite memory at Saint Feichins National School was when the circus came.... I was in 2nd class and we got to walk on the balance ball and on the tight rope.... They brought juggling balls and hoola-hoops.... after that we had pizza and chips.... it was a great day....

(Sarah Geraghty, Ballygowan, 3rd class 2022)

...I walk to school most days but sometimes my Mum drives me...I bring sandwiches and fruit for my lunch...I play soccer or hurling at break time...we had a lovely cake and played with my cousins on my First Holy Communion Day...after school I enjoy playing hurling with my Mum and going on my tablet favourite memory so far was the hurling blitz in Autumn 2021.... I was in third class and the senior room got to go to the blitz.... there were lots of other schools there.... we played four matches, we won two and lost two.... we got lots of treats....

(James Killeen, Ballygowan, 3rd Class 2022)

...I walk to school every day...for lunch I bring sandwiches, fruit and a scone.... we play hurling on Tuesday & Thursday....on my First Holy Communion Day I met up with my cousins, aunts and uncles. We had great fun.... I like PE and art at school...my least favourite thing is Irish....my favourite memory in Abbey school was sports day when I was in second class.... we did not have to wear any school uniform.... I was very excited.... we did an egg and spoon race and I came third...next we did a wheel-barrow race, I was with Amy Pierce and we came first! after this we did a three-legged race, I was with Norah Lynch....we got mud all over our clothes it was so funny....it was a fantastic day and it is my favourite memory....

(Jane Behan, Abbey, 3rd Class 2022)

...I travel to school by car...I bring a roll and a snack bar for lunch....I play soccer and hurling at break time....I like to go farming after school with my Dad...homework is my least favourite thing about school...we went to a restaurant on my First Holy Communion day...the nicest thing about school is that I meet and play with my friends.....my favourite school memory was the boat racing at Moyglass N.S....we would have a lot of fun down by the river....my boat had a yellow rubber duck on it....my boat was made out of coke bottles and a plastic box/tray....we got crisps and chocolate at Moyglass school after the boat race.....

(Evan Kelly, Coolfin, 3rd class 2022)

....I go to school by car...I bring fruit and brown bread for lunch...I play soccer and hurling at break time...the bouncy castle and all my family there made my First Holy Communion day special....my least favourite thing about school is Irish because it is hard...playing sport with my friends is the best part of school....my favourite memory in Abbey school was the sports day when I was in second class....I won the running race and the wheelbarrow race....I came third in the sack race and fifth in the egg and spoon race....that is my favourite memory so far....

(Jack Pierce, Kylemore, 3rd class 2022)

...I go to school by car...I bring fruit and brown bread for lunch...I play gymnastics at break time...we went to the Meadow Court for a special day on my First Holy Communion Day...after school I like playing outside with my brother and sister. Irish is my least favourite thing about school because it is hard to learn....my favourite memory in Abbey school was when the circus came and they showed us cool tricks.... I really liked the tightrope and the juggling balls.

(Amy Pierce, Kylemore, 3rd class 2022)

....my favourite memory was my school tour to Moycullen....we had fun on the big slide in Loughwell Pet Farm and saw lots of animals there.... I loved my visit to Loughwell....

(Rose Craughwell, Lackan, 3rd class 2022)

...I travel to school in a car.... I bring bread and fruit for my lunch...I like doing gymnastics at break time...on my First Holy Communion we went to the Meadow Court for a meal.... I play hurling after school....my least favourite thing about school is Irish and English...they are boring and there is so much writing.... school is great for meeting and playing with my friends.... My best memory is when we were in the Junior Room and we made chocolate biscuit cake.... I loved it because it had lots of chocolate and it was very nice....

(Norah Lynch, Abbeyville, 3rd class 20



TRIBUTES

Vincent Conroy- Special Guest of Honour of St. Feichín's National School Centenary Celebration Event.

It is a privilege and honour to have Vincent Conroy, a centenarian among us as we celebrate 100 years of St. Feichín's N.S. Vincent celebrated his 100th birthday on the 6th of March 2022 with family and friends.

Vincent was born in Wellpark, Abbey on the 6th of March, 1922. He was the second youngest child in a family of fourteen children. His parents were William Conroy a native of Abbey and Mary Kate Fahy from Ballinakill. Vincent attended St. Feichín's N.S. in Abbey. Following his schooling, he went to work repairing bicycles in Sheehy's shop in Portumna. Later he qualified as an accomplished motor mechanic.

Similar to many people of this era, Vincent emigrated to England in 1956. A number of his older siblings had already settled in England, this is where he met his wife Anne Kearns, a native of Ennis, Co.Clare. The couple married and had a son, Patrick. Patrick is now the parish priest of Ballinakill/Derrybrien. Sadly, Anne developed a life-threatening illness and died young. Vincent later met a German woman, Edith Willis whom he married. The couple spent a while in England and subsequently established a garage, shop and service station in Mullingar, Co.Westmeath.

Vincent a gifted motor mechanic, successful business man, talented singer is blessed with a magnetic and lively personality. He has a laser sharp mind and is an independent thinker. Vincent has entertained many people through his special singing voice. His favourite songs appear to be 'Shall my soul pass through old Ireland' and 'Here's a toast to you Claddagh '.

Vincent, we are proud of you as an Abbey man for the life you are living, in terms of longevity and your many achievements. As you have now entered a new century in your life, we wish you continued good health and contentment. May God continue to gift you with his chosen graces and blessings. I know that you will continue to inspire us through your determined and courageous spirit.

Vincent has recounted some of his school memories in the 'Memoirs' section of the booklet.

-Margaret Burke, Chairperson BOM



Very Rev. Fr. Séan Lyons PP

1934-2020

Ordained 19th June 1960

P.P. Abbey -Duniry 1984-2012

Fr. Séan was associated with St. Feichín's N.S. for a period of over forty years. His involvement started in 1971 when he was appointed as curate of Abbey. Following his appointment as Parish Priest of Abbey Duniry he continued to provide pastoral support to pupils and school staff. He also served as Chairperson of the Board of Management at different intervals.

Fr. Séan oversaw major developments in terms of extensions and refurbishments. He worked very closely with school principals and liaised with the Department of Education and Science. In his role as Chairperson of the BOM he was highly skilled and effective. He always strived to ensure that St. Feichín's N.S. was a safe and happy place to maximise learning for pupils and fulfilment for staff.

Fr. Séan had an in-depth knowledge of recruitment procedures and relevant Dept. of Education circulars. His command of the English language was truly impressive. He was a secondary school teacher at Mercy College Woodford. In addition to this busy role, he had major involvement in the two primary schools of the parish and worked diligently in his priestly ministry and administration of the parish.

Despite his heavy workload, he found the time to be involved with the youth of the parish. In the 1970's, Fr. Séan was an excellent coach to Public Speaking teams under the auspices of Muintir na Tire.

It was a privilege for us in the school community to be associated with Fr. Séan. He was a dedicated visionary, collaborative, erudite and above all a kind person. He loved life and all that it offered. Through his priestly ministry and scholarship, he made an enormous contribution to the school community and beyond to the entire parish community.

Fr. Séan, a beloved priest, teacher, scholar, coach, mentor and friend -missed by many but never forgotten by those who were fortunate enough to have known him.

Fr. Séan may you rest in everlasting peace.

-Margaret Burke Chairperson BOM



(Photo courtesy of Marie Craughwell)



Tribute to Rosaline Lynch Kelly

**Principal, St. Feichín's National School
2008 - 2014**

We can all recall exactly where we were on April 11th 2014 upon hearing the devastating news of the passing of our school Principal, Rosaline Lynch Kelly. The Board of Management members and parents have often commented, since her death that we can each recall where we were when this sad news filtered through the parish of Abbey that Friday afternoon. Rosaline had been with us in St. Feichíns National School for nine years and had made a tremendous impact as a teacher, principal and a woman of vision for both her pupils and our school. Sadly, her battle against cancer, which she bravely fought, had caught up with her.

Rosaline began her teaching career as a secondary school teacher. She transferred to national school teaching in 2001. With extensive substitute teaching experience in Raheen, Clonfert and Lusmagh National Schools, Rosaline was now ready to take on the challenge of a full-time principal's post. It was our good fortune that Rosaline took up this challenge as principal in St. Feichíns in September 2005. Her family recall that such was her enthusiasm in taking on this role, that Abbey National School soon became her 6th child! Within a short time Rosaline earned a reputation for being a "brilliant" teacher, as many of her past pupils recall. Never one to "beat around the bush" – if Mrs. Kelly had something to say – you heard it straight up! It was a characteristic, both pupils and parents learned to respect.

Lifetime learning and skills development were fundamentals to Rosaline. Becoming the best you can be, was something she instilled in her own family and she laid the roots for her pupils in St. Feichíns to also adopt this as an important fundamental for them. Rosaline had a sharp and brilliant mind

particularly in the area of science and maths. She was extremely proud of the school's achievement in Science award in 2008

St Feichín's National School was in need of repair and expansion when Rosaline arrived. Work had begun by Rosaline's predecessor, Ms Bernadette Stapleton, Principal of St Feichín's .

There were 28 pupils on the roll book at the time, but the demographics suggested that

bigger numbers would be attending in a few years. It is to Rosaline's credit that she

worked tirelessly with the Board of Management under the Chairperson of Fr. Sean Lyons PP as the building of the school's extension was undertaken. It was said on many an occasion during the building phase that Rosaline was as good as any engineer in her involvement in the planning stages of the extension. It was also said that Rosaline was as good as any Accountant for her financial management of grant monies and expenditure of same! How fortunate we were to have at our helm a woman with such diverse and capable abilities. On June 14th 2008 the school extension of St. Feichíns was officially opened. A proud day for Rosaline and all involved. Sadly, since that day, two other members of that Board of Management team, Fr. Sean Lyons PP and Eddie Finnegan have since gone to their eternal reward.

Rosaline had a huge passion for sport and she was a great source of encouragement in this area to all of the pupils she taught. The development of computer literacy in the school was an important element of Rosaline's teaching career here in St. Feichín's N.S. The annual Boat Race and Sports Day with Moyglass National School became legendary

as a fun day for the pupils of St Feichín's but also a day of keen rivalry for supremacy in track and field racing for pupils and teachers!

Rosaline came to St. Feichíns having achieved huge accolades personally

in sporting achievements. Rosaline captained the UCG camogie team to victory in the College's Ashborne Cup in 1979 and was one of the founding members of Kiltormer Camogie Club. She also excelled in rugby, soccer and even ice hockey!

Aside from sport, Rosaline was an animal lover and in particular had a great affection for dogs and horses. Over the years she developed a keen interest in painting and has left a fine art collection to her family and friends. Throughout her life, Rosaline had an interest in medicine and Joe, her husband of 30 years, recalls that if her career path had not taken her in the direction of education, she would have studied medicine. It came as no surprise to her family that Rosaline, made the decision to donate her body to medical research upon her death - demonstrating how Rosaline in her death, as in her life showed her dedication to teaching and learning.

Rosaline's last teaching day was Friday, September 30th 2013. We mourned her passing for a long time and missed her sky-blue Focus from the school car park for many a day. She has left a legacy that will never be forgotten. Our fine school today in Abbey is the fruit of the foresight and excellent planning of a woman with a vision for the school. The extension now includes two spacious classrooms, a hallway and the old classrooms were also renovated and refurbished.

We will be forever grateful to Rosaline having taught, shaped and moulded many of our sons and daughters to become fine upstanding young adults. The Kelly family will kindly donate a beautiful bench to the school and this will be a loving reminder to all of us, of this special and talented woman.

To Joe and family, we will forever remember Rosaline, your dear wife, mother and grandmother with great affection and respect for her legacy as a caring and kind teacher, a most efficient principal, a good colleague and friend.

Ar Dheis De go raibh a hAinm Dilis

(Board of Management 2022)

Anne McKeigue (SNA), Margaret Madden, Rosaline Lynch Kelly



Rosaline (Principal), teachers and children of St Feichin's N.S. 2008



The official opening of the school extension 14/6/2008. In picture Margaret Madden, Ulick Burke, Rosaline Lynch Kelly (RIP), John Minogue (RIP), Bishop Kirby, Fr. Séan Lyons (RIP) and Noel Treacy (RIP)

Front: Ciara Maguire and Róisín Donohue



Board of Management at time of opening of the extension



Fr. Abe Kennedy RIP

Parish Priest Abbey-Duniry 2012 – 2019

Fr Abe Kennedy died following a short illness on the 23rd of April 2019. When news of his death reached our parish, a dark cloud hung over the area and beyond. There was an enormous outpouring of shock and grief on hearing that Fr Abe had gone home to God.

A native of Fethard Co. Tipperary, Fr Abe was a truly remarkable human being. His deeply caring and kind nature set him apart. He was a dual qualified nurse and was registered on the Psychiatric and General Divisions of the Nursing Register, it was during his nursing career that Abe responded to the call to Priesthood. Following his ordination to Priesthood, Fr Abe served in Parishes in diocese of Clonfert.

In 2012 he was appointed as Parish Priest of Abbey-Duniry during his tenure as chaplain and teacher in Portumna Community School. In addition to the foregoing commitments, he quickly embraced Parish life and mixed freely and at ease with all Parishioners. He had a very special connection with children, he was known in St. Feichín's N.S. as Abe. The children looked forward to his visits to the school. He communicated with them in a child-centred way and engaged in fun activities. His last visit to the school was on the 8th of April 2019, he gave a little talk to the children on "there is no tomorrow".

Fr. Abe was an active member of St. Feichín's Board of Management. He always saw the big picture and was conscious of ensuring that the school was a happy place for both pupils and staff. By interacting with Fr. Abe, it was obvious that he was an active listener, non-judgemental, empathetic and gentle. Having those human qualities enabled him to be a skilled communicator. Through his exceptional human qualities and skills, Fr Abe enabled people to tap into their own internal resources to overcome barriers to reach their true potential. Fr Abe we are grateful for having you as our Parish Priest and above all a friend to everyone. In your lifetime, you touched many hearts. Your death has left a huge void in the Parish and most of all in St Feichín's school. We are somewhat consoled by the by the truly beautiful memories that you left behind.

Fr Abe wonderful human being, charismatic personality, amazing sportsman, abundance of skills, devoid of ego, professional nurse and a wonderful priest. It was our joy and privilege that you walked and served among us.

Ar dhéis Dé go raibh a anam dílis

Margaret Burke, Chairperson BOM

Photograph:

Permission and courtesy of June Kennedy



Fidelma McDonnell (Née Benson)

St Feichín's N.S. 1955 – 1972.

The late Fidelma McDonnell commenced a seventeen-year period of teaching at St Feichín's NS, Abbey from 1955-1972 following her graduation from the teacher training college, she commenced her teaching career in Spiddal, Co. Galway prior to coming to Abbey. She was known as Miss Benson for the first few years. Following her marriage to Ted McDonnell, she was known as Mrs McDonnell thereafter.

Fidelma has left a lasting impression in the minds and hearts of the many children she taught in St Feichín's N.S. When interviewing people as I prepared to write this tribute, I heard glowing tributes to this wonderful woman. It was said that Fidelma was a modest and discreet lady who never raised her voice and was never condescending to any pupil in her care.

Fidelma's kindness, sincerity and gentleness was impressive. She was a truly gifted teacher, who through her effective teaching strategies enabled pupils to reach their potential. Apart from teaching the core subjects of Maths (known as sums in the 1950s and 1960s) English Irish and religion, Fidelma was most proficient in teaching us the crafts of knitting and sewing. Furthermore, she encouraged and prepared us to enter competitions.

When we cast our minds back to the late 1950s and early 1960s, the classroom was packed to overflowing with children. In this tightly packed environment, Fidelma successfully taught four large classes. We recall that she would set up the junior pupils with activities and then concentrate on the first and second classes. Her preparation for the sacraments of First Confession and Holy Communion was meticulous and she instilled in us a reverence for the sacraments. Reflecting back now as an adult to that era, it is clearly evident that Fidelma had excellent organisational and time management skills and had a very calming presence among us pupils.

Fidelma, thanks for the beautiful memories that we hold of our formative memories in St Feichín's N.S. You were the epitome of professionalism, diligence and a credit to the teaching profession. Fidelma combined

excellence in teaching methods interwoven with kindness, gentleness and sincerity. Fidelma was held in very high esteem within the wider Abbey Community and beyond. Her deep faith was always evident in her work and her life.

Sadly, Fidelma departed from this life on the 21st January 2022 surrounded by her loving family. May Fidelma's beautiful soul rest in the serenity and light of her heavenly home for evermore.

-Margaret Burke, Chairperson BOM

-Former pupil 1959-1967

Photograph- permission and courtesy of Davnet McDonnell

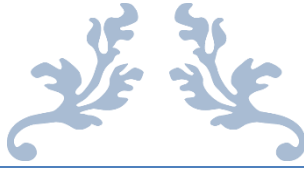




BOARD OF MANAGEMENT 2019-2023



Mary Keegan Hynes, Colin Killeen, Maria Burke Principal, Margaret Burke Chairperson, Helen Behan, Margaret Madden, Tony Abberton.



GALLERY

Due to the volume of photos received it was not possible to have all included in this booklet. However, they will be displayed in albums and exhibited at various stations throughout the school on the day of celebration.



Back: Vincent McDonagh, Noel Burke, Paddy Canallan, Kieran Fahy, Denis Burke, Joe Dervan,

Middle: Brigid Donohue, Teresa Dervan, Margaret Goonan, Phyllis Pierce, Rose Craughwell, Kitty McDonagh, Dorothy Keane

Front: Tom Hynes, Mary Callanan, Cepta Holohan, Maggie Larkin, Birdie McDonagh, Mona Pierce, Julie Collins, Francis Madden



Abbey NS 1973

Back row: Frank Conroy, Mary Hodgins, Margaret Donohue, Ann Conroy, Marie Lyons (RIP), Tony Abberton. Front row: Joe Fahy, Joe Dwyer.



Mary Slattery



1. Denis Lyons, Marie Lyons & JJ Lyons 2. Marie Lyons, Mike Lyons, Ann Lyons, JJ Lyons



1961 – Fr. John Fahy, Josephine Donnelly, Angela Hickey, Marian Fahy, Marian Roche, Margaret Burke.



Back: Fr. John Fahy, Fidelma Benson teacher Bernard Hodgins, Bernadette Larkin, Bernadette Connors, Mary Dwyer, Pat Fahy. **Front:** Bernadette Conroy, Anne Donoghue, Joe Minogue, Mike Hickey, Noel Hynes



St. Feichín's N.S. Hurling 1979:

Back row: Joe McDonagh, John Lynch, Hal Hodgins, Gerard Abberton, Mike Lyons, Kevin Larkin.

Front row: John Dolan, Bernard Sullivan, Brendan Kelly, John Conroy, Eamon Hynes.



St. Feichín's N.S. - 1979:

Back Row: Thomas Geraghty, Brian Donnelly, Ciaran Dervan, Noel Pierce, Barry Donnelly, John Craughwell, Noel Craughwell, Mark Dervan, Oisin Forde, Ms Mary McEvoy (teacher)

Middle row: Maeve Lynch, Deidre Abberton, Celia Dolan, Anne Pierce, Lisa Mannion, Caroline Pierce, Sarah Lynch, Irene Pierce

Front row: Paul McClernan, John Pierce, Micheal Geraghty, Oliver Dolan, Iomar McClernan

Missing from photo: Ann Larkin, Aisling Donnelly, John Kelly



School band 1989

Back row: Joan Larkin, Micheal Geraghty, Neil Pierce, Sara Roche, Fiona Pierce, Declan Donnelly, Sarah Lynch, Michelle Roche, Lorraine Fahy, Pat Geraghty.

Front row: Bernadette Burke, Ester Larkin, Eamon Kelly, Caroline Pierce, Raymond Roche, Breda Burke, Sean Dolan
Missing from photo: Aisling Donnelly



Back Row: Michéal Geraghty, Michelle Roche, Declan Donnelly, Sarah Lynch, Neil Pierce, Ester Larkin, Donnacha Forde, Mary McEvoy Teacher.

Middle: Lorraine Fahy, Fiona Pierce, Sarah Roche, Bernadette Burke, Teresa Roche, Aisling Collins, Joan Larkin, Alida Finnegan.

Front: Breda Burke, Pat Geraghty, Raymond Roche, Paul Craughwell, John Fahy, Seán Dolan, Alan Fahy, Eleanor Roche.



Back row: Gerry Murphy Principal, Michael Hynes, Colm Pierce, Francis Collins, Micheál Kelly, Cathal Roche. **Front:** Maria Conroy, Orla Collins, Niamh Pierce, Maria Burke



1996 – Winners of Mini 7's Camogie Trainer: Margaret Madden



1988 Front: Alan Connors, Michael Hynes, Edel Pierce, Laura Roche, Aidan Hynes, Cathal Roche, Andrew Burke. **Middle:** Francis Collins, Carmel Donnelly, Marie Conroy, Niamh Pierce, Orla Collins, Maria Burke, Brian Roche. **Back:** Gerard Dervan, Micheál Kelly, Marie Donnelly, Lorraine Donnelly, Colm Pierce, Stan Burke, Daniel Conroy, Mary McEvoy Teacher



Junior Infants – 6th class 1998-1999

Back Row: Mary Moroney teacher, Kevin Burke, Therese Murphy, Michael Donnelly, David Pierce, Fiona Hynes, Kevin Murphy, Patricia Roche, Miriam Hynes, Louisa Burke.

Middle: Eamon Finnegan, Shaun Conroy, Claire Conroy, Aoife Fahy, Cathy Abberton, Marian Dolon, David Burke, Fiona Fahy, Bernadette Felle teacher.

Front Row: Niall Finnegan, Annette Burke, Eimear Finnegan, Kevin Conroy, Paul Abberton, Brian Conroy, Celine Conroy, David Conroy, Aoife Dillon



Back Row: Rosaline Lynch Kelly Principal, Dylan Connolly, Ciara Maguire, Gráinne Donohue, Caitlín Murphy, Brogan Downes, Liam Hynes, Aidan Donnelly, Kelsey Downes, Alannah O'Reilly, Margaret Madden teacher

Middle Row: Aidan Kiely, Eve McClearn, Sinéad Donohue, Anna Behan, Eoin McClearn, Harrison Downes, Caylum Keon, Róisín Donohue, Ryan Donnelly, Rachel Donnelly, Emma Geraghty, Melissa McDonagh

Front Row: Cathal Campbell McDonagh, Conor Craughwell, Joe Bows, Dylan Hughes, Jack Pierce Forde, Aaron Pierce Forde, Emma Connolly, Leah Behan, Katelyn Keane, William Lynch



Green School's Committee 2015 Back Row: Kelsey Downes, Ciara Maguire, Liam Hynes, Dylan Connolly, Harrison Downes

Front Row: Rachel Donnelly, Ryan Donnelly, Eoin McClearn, Róisín Donohue, Ryan Loughrey



Confirmation 2019 Back Row: Hannah McCarthy, Leah Brogan , Katelyn Keane, Bishop John Kirby, Emma Geraghty,Eve McClearn ,Emma Connolly, Maria Burke Principal
Front Row: Conor Craughwell,William Lynch,Aaron Pierce Forde,Aaron McDonagh , Cathal Campbell McDonagh ,Eoghan Kiely



Local Galway Hurlers visiting St. Feichín's N.S. with the Liam McCarthy cup in 2017.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS & SPONSORS

<u>Sponsors</u>	Holohan's Shop
Tynagh Abbey Duniry Hurling Club	Declan Burke Motors
Davitt's Camogie Club	Peggie Dolan, Tomany
St. Feichín's Parent's Association	Margaret Burke, Abbeyville
St Feichín's N.S. Parent's Association	Michael and Bridget Geraghty, Abbeyville
Brian Roche Engineering	Teresa and Noel Pierce
Eimear and Gerard Abberton	Walsh's, Woodford
Micheal and Siobhan Geraghty, Abbey	Noel and Johnny Conroy, Wellpark
Joan and Michael McGreal, Abbeyville	Tracey Bane and Davey Craughwell
Tom Burke, Abbeyville	Teresa Roche, Kylemore Farmhouse Cheese
Bernadette and Paul Craughwell	Breda and Brian Clancy
Maria Burke and Derek McDonnell	Stanny and Olive Burke, Eagle Hill
Stan Burke, Eagle Hill	Ulick and Maeve Burke, Eagle Hill
Marion Forde	James Lyons, Killeen
Holly's Pharmacy, Ballinasloe	Chanelle Pharmaceutical, Loughrea
O Meara's Supervalu, Portumna	McInerney's Supervalu, Loughrea
Occasions Boutique	Pearse's Barber Shop
Frank Forde Dry Cleaners	Duffy's Clothes Shop
Killian's Pharmacy	Billy's Discount Shop
Brogan's Pharmacy	Aryella Beautican
Hope's Bakery, Loughrea	Eternal Beauty, Portumna
Leahy's Pharmacy, Loughrea	Beatty's, Loughrea
Slieve Aughty Riding Centre, Kylebrack	O'Donnell's Shop
Harney's Tynagh	Keon's Nurseries, Woodford
Bill Madden Nurseries	Seymour's, Loughrea
Martin Keary, Loughrea	Loughnane's Butchers, Loughrea

McEntees Butchers, Portumna	Lynch's Portumna
Corrib Oil, Loughrea	Loughrea Mart
Portumna Mart	Irish Drilling Ltd
Rose Café	Cllr Ivan Canning-Curley's Pub
The Hill Bar, Kylebrack	Martin Fahy's, Loughrea
Graces Eurospar, Loughrea	Dervan's Shop, Loughrea,
Martin Dolan's, Loughrea	Supermacs Loughrea and Portumna
Declan Power Sports, Loughrea	Gúna Deas, Loughrea
Loughrea Hotel	Leahy's Pharmacy
Clarinbridge Nurseries	O Donnell's Shop
Ladies Day Boutique, Portumna	Weaver's Pharmacy

Acknowledgements	Bishop Michael Duignan
Centenary Celebrations Committee	St.Feichín's N.S. Board of Management
St. Feichín's N.S. Parent's Association	
Margaret Burke- Chairperson B.O.M.	Maria Burke- Principal
Vincent Conroy – Special Guest of Honour	Ulick Burke - Guest Speaker
Joe Connors- M.C. and Sound	Yvonne Barret- Music
Caroline Gantly, Secretary - Booklet	Mary Keegan Hynes – Memories Section of Booklet
Ann Hodgins- Abbey Heritage	Frances Holohan – Newsletter
Norman Morgan Printing, Loughrea	Gerard Abberton – Car Park
Frances Donohue/Kevin Larkin /T.A.D. Scouts- Marquees	Kieran Keane, Caretaker
Mary Hickey	Maeve Lynch – Garden and flowers
Claire Hyland-Cake	Noel Pierce – Maintenance
Davey Craughwell- Maintenance	Paul Craughwell – Maintenance
Jim Hynes- Photographer	TÚS Scheme
Galway Rural Development	

Our **Morning Prayer** that is prayed every day at the beginning of the school day:

Thank you, God, for this new day in our school to work and play. Please be with me all day long in every story, game and song. May all the happy things we do make you our father happy too.

Amen