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# Bray Arts Journal

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Issue 5

January/February 2008

Volume 13



**EDITORIAL**

**NOTHING'S NEW**

*Bray Arts* was founded in 1996 and was then called *The Bray Arts Club*. Recently while browsing through some old books (not everything is on the Internet) I came across a very famous Dublin club called *The Arts Club* which was founded in 1906 by a Mr. and Mrs James Duncan who decided there was room for a club which would bring together



Constance Markievicz



W. B. Yeats

those interested in Art. That club attracted some very famous people, like W. B. Yeats, The Markieviczs, the Orpens and George Russell.

What amused me about this club was a song composed by Frank Sparrow - an architect by trade but also a writer of comic verse. This song was sung at a dinner celebrating *The Arts Club's* move to its new St. Stephen's Green premises about four years after it was founded. It is an invitation to join *The Arts Club* and would not be too wide of the mark as an invitation to all and sundry to join *Bray Arts*.

*The Arts Club Circular*  
by Frank Sparrow 1910

*If you long for things artistic,  
If you revel in the nebulous and mystic'  
If your hair's too long  
And your tie's all wrong  
And your speech is symbolistic;  
If your tastes are democratic  
And your mode of life's essentially erratic;  
If you seek success  
From no fixed address,  
But you sleep in someone's attic*

*Join the Arts Club, join the Arts Club,  
Where the souls do congregate,  
Where observance of convention  
Arouses fierce dissension:  
In the Arts Club, in the Arts Club,*

*If your talents are not patent,  
But your taste for domesticity is latent;*

*If you think aloud  
In the presence of a crowd  
And your voice is fairly blatant;  
If you're moved to thoughts symbolical  
By proximity to liquids alcoholical,  
If pints of beer  
Makes you a seer  
Of visions apostolical;*

*Join the Arts Club, etc.*

*If for Art you've no utility,  
If your mind is somewhat lacking in agility'  
You can still have tea,  
For a tiny fee,  
In complete respectability;  
Don't imagine that you need be boisterous-  
Theres a regular department for the roisterous-  
They pursue their horrid revels  
On stools at higer levels  
By the bartop damp and moisturious.*

*Join the Arts Club, etc.*

While reading the above I got the strangest feeling that I was reading a Rack by our own brilliant Racker aka Peter Donnelly. Nothing's New!

**Front Cover : Smithfield Market 2007 Photographer Ben Lynch.**  
Part of LEAP 2008 Calendar Project - see below.

**LEAP 2008 CALENDAR**

**BEN LYNCH** a participant in the Bray LEAP Project (Local Education Adult Progression for Traveller Men) conceived the idea of a Calendar based on some aspects of Traveller culture. The result is a unique calendar for 2008 depicting scenes from the **Ballinasloe Horse Fair, Smithfield Market** and some local scenes. All of the photographs are the work of Ben himself and Bray Arts would like to congratulate him on some very fine photography. We



particularly like the January Picture below :



## **A PRINT OF A PAINTING : “IRISH FISHERMAN”**

by Sig Purwin ; Artist and Sculptor

Artist Sig Purwin made many visits to Ireland from 1966 to 1978. His daughter Zan O’Loughlin, a long time and well-known resident of Bray, donated a framed print of his “Irish Fisherman” to Bray Arts. It was raffled at the Christmas Arts



evening to raise funds to help with publishing the monthly journal.

Sig loved Ireland and he painted many rural scenes, seascapes and townscapes. He had a particular liking for the sea and fishermen. The “Irish Fisherman” was painted with a brayer (printer’s gelatine roller) and when the paint was wet Sig drew the details with a cocktail stick.

Vinny O’Driscoll of Absolute Graphics (see panel) produced a very accurate and true copy of the original picture. Vinny prides himself on the accuracy of the colour reproduction achieved by Absolute Graphics and it certainly looked indistinguishable from the original.

Greg Williamson (Art of Framing) framed the print to his usual impeccable standard and did it free as his donation to Bray Arts.

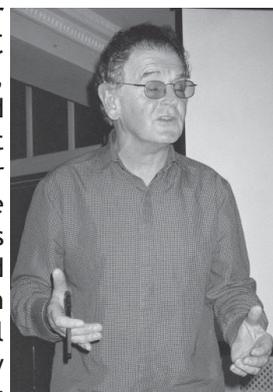
The framed print was raffled at the December Bray Arts Evening. Everyone of the audience was included in the raffle. Aoife Monroe was the lucky winner. Between door admissions and extra donations 400Euros was raised. Bray Arts would like to thank all those who contributed so generously.

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Bray Co Wicklow  
Contact : Vinny O’Driscoll 086 819 5388

**Art of Framing**  
28 Albert Avenue  
Bray  
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## **REVIEW OF DECEMBER ARTS EVENING**

It was really great to have Peter Donnelly (The Racker) as our MC for the night. Unfortunately for us, Peter and his wife Maggie spend most of their time in London, but this Christmas, they joined us for a really pleasant evening in the Heather House. Of course it was Peter’s natural exuberance and brilliant rucks that helped so much to create such a convivial atmosphere. Peter does not simply arrive with some preset performance; he adapts to the occasion and the other performers and guests.



Cheryl Frances-Hoad who won the Wicklow Per Cent Music Commission gave a brief talk on her work and in particular her approach to the commission. She played a sample of her very atmospheric work (CD) and then introduced Bobby Chen who will perform the commission with the Greystones Orchestra in 2009 at three venues in Co. Wicklow. We also heard a sample of Bobby’s very accomplished performance on the piano. You can find out more about Cheryl on her website. There is a link to it on the Bray Arts website : [www.brayarts.net](http://www.brayarts.net)

### **Give Them That Old Razzle-Dazzle.**



Barbara Donnelly and her slinky, high-kicking ladies were just great. This was good old fashioned show-biz; they just socked it to the audience and the audience absolutely loved it.

You could not help, but get into the swing of things and there were smiles and laughter all round as Barbara enticed a very willing audience to get up, dance and high-kick their way into Christmas 2007. Brilliant.

## A STROLL IN SANTIAGO

By Breandan O’Brion

**If ever you feel like a break from the routine of home, why not rely on the 12<sup>th</sup> Century Calextine Codex for out-of-the ordinary travel advice?**

“To this place (Santiago de Compostela) go people from all climates of the known world, nationals and foreign: franks, normans, scots, goths, irish, freemen of wales, teutons, iberians, gascons, those of provence, of



warsac, lotharingians, catos, angles, bretons, cornish, flemish and friesians, those from the delphinat of savoy, pullesians, armenians, dacians and nubians; travellers from ponto, from bitinia, those of jerusalem, antioquines, gallileans, sards, efesians, egyptians, medians, slavs and persians, alexandrians and collosians, moors and ethiopians; from every tribe and nation to Santiago do they go”

Who were we to disagree? The Codex, an early form of Lonely Planet, clearly indicates that of all Spanish cities, Santiago de Compostela is good at putting on a multi-cultural face on things. Our trip was only for a weekend, so we hadn’t the time or the legs to manage more than a fraction of the 1000 kilometre Camino de San Jacques, first outlined by Pilgrim Aimeri Picaud in his *Liber Perigrinatio* over 900 years ago.

Ours would be but a stroll but a pilgrimage nonetheless. By sad coincidence, it turned out to be a mirror-image of a previous visit to The Field of the Stars where the body of Saint James the Apostle reputedly lies in repose. Then, as we staggered uphill towards Pilgrim’s Gate, over in London they were burying one who to some also shared the status of a Saint - Diana, Princess of Wales. This time, as we took a taxi into Santiago, Diana’s one-time husband and children were commemorating her 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

In 1997, back in the last century, Santiago was not so easy to get to. We had approached from the South, via the Pelegrino Portugese, having first earned our spurs by climbing the vertiginous steps of the church of Bom Jesu, just outside Braga. If you had the misfortune to bury an unbaptised babe, Bom Jesu might not be the place to go seeking succour and consolation. The iconography of Limbo predominates - that mythic space inhabited for eternity - in strikingly grotesque images of carved infants, floating as if in a nebulae, outside the gaze of their supposedly loving Saviour. The contemporary Church appears to have revised its pontifical view of this never-land, but the imagery remains haunting; praying for the lost souls of Limbo was pointless, but perhaps that was the point of it.



BOM JESU

There was more grotesquery to come. ‘You must’, we were advised, ‘take the deviation to the hilltop shrine devoted to the Saint who is the Patron of Ears’. A burning day later, we gasped our way through a ring-road hell to come upon a small white chapel on the crest of a hill. The chapel was closed, but we could peer through a hole in the thick white walls. Have you ever imagined a catacomb of a thousand severed ears? Inside the darkened interior, lit only by shafts of strong sunlight, ears carved in wax act as replicas of the damaged ears of believers. Withered ears, double ears, scarred ears, slivers of ears, each one representing the wearying defect of its owner, left there in remembrance of a visit and hope of a cure.

These days, getting to Santiago is as easy as EI. Aer Lingus flies direct from Dublin in two hours and a 15 euro taxi ride gets you to the heart of the ancient city in less time than it takes for a foot pilgrim to race from Monte de Gozo, his Mount of Joy, from where he first glimpses the towering spires of his destination. It’s not easy to put into words the emotion one feels at the end of a journey. Why did I once cry on completing a ten-day hike through the Sahara? Why did I openly weep when I first witnessed the flying smoke bomb known as the botafumiera whiz like a fairground ferris wheel in front of the high altar, propelled by ancient men in shiny suits and frayed purple sashes?

Why do I again find myself blubbing as countless clerics wend their way to celebrate the noonday Pilgrim’s Mass and the chief celebrant stumbles his way through linguistically-challenged greetings including a mention of the very few ‘Pelegrinos Irlandese’. Has this to do with belief, or an instinctual desire to believe? Or is it dumb suspicion? More to the point, is it perhaps a way of taking refuge from the irrefutable demands of a modern world? In the uncertainties of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, it is hard to say ‘Credo’. It’s obviously time for a good confession and I take care to pick upon the most elderly of the elderly confessors sleepily slumped in semi-open confessionals, their very beings weighed down by the burden of the world’s sins upon their shoulders. My confessor couldn’t possibly be interested in my pathetic failings. Oh yes, he could. Spiritedly, he produces a multilingual Carte des Peches - a pick-and-point menu of all sins great and small. In stupefied panic, I try sin speed-reading but can’t find much by way of specific crimes or misdemeanours. It is all too generalised, philosophic in a poorly worded way. I fear I got it wrong and pointed at the stuff I hadn’t been committed instead of the other way around. The priest looked at me strangely, I gabble an almost-forgotten Act of Contrition

as he places hands sadly upon my bowed head and utters an absolution. Finally, he points at my penance. On a scale of one-to-ten Our Fathers, Hail Mary's and Glory B's, it was on the high side. He gives a sly smile of benediction, another small victory for God over man.

What of the City itself? The spirit of Santiago is encapsulated in the beatifically happy smile of the Prophet Daniel, carved by the Master Mateo on the Portico de la Gloria at the entrance to the Cathedral. Daniel seems to be in perpetual heavenly good humour and so does the city itself. The mainly young pilgrims hoot and holler in happiness now that their long hard journey is ended. The university students play their Galician pipes and dance their Galician dances, busking from dawn to dusk. The tourists with a few euros to spare sit on the terrace of the Hospital do Los Reys



Galician Piper

Catholicas, sip their café dobles and watch the setting sun burnish the mellow walls of the Plaza del Obradorio. From down the way, on the edge of the Old Town, the mournful single bell peal of the Convent of the Poor Clares commands its cloistered celibates once more to worship. They pray in silence these poor nuns, cut off from the world, prostrate in submission above the gloomy vaulted space that holds the remains of their long dead Sisters. Once, there were over one hundred of them at a time

in this dank place, a long time ago now, today they are seven and counting down.

It was of places like this that the poet Jose Zorilla wrote:

Of the feudal splendour, only the bare remains  
Without carpets, without mural decoration, without  
arms.

Today there are no roofs, but speechless walls,  
Sad silence, solitude and shade.

But sadness, silence or solitude does not last long here. For there is yet another tapas bar around the corner, brimming with dark red wine, cigarette smoke, slinky octopus and nipple cheese which the locals invented when a stern Cardinal ordered a much loved statue of a 16<sup>th</sup> century equivalent of a Madonna with the Big Boobies to undergo sculptural mammary reduction. Everywhere he went from that edict onwards, the sight of soft bulbous breast-shaped cheeses with enormously erect nipples stared back at him in proud defiance. You discover another winding street called Rua Franco. Wrongly, you attribute



Nipple Cheese

it to the memory of the unlamented Generalissimo, but it turns out to be the Street of the Francos, those French artisans who were billeted here as they built the cathedral city. And to this day, the locals proudly tell of the time when they prevented another Cardinal from building his palace slap-bang in the centre of the magnificent main square. Church and State may well have held sway, but the Santiagoans cherished their independence.

On our final night in Santiago, we stroll the city. The streetlights are softened by a mist creeping up from the fields of Finisterre and the Atlantic, only 30 miles away. The Saint and his pilgrim followers are sleeping now and the footfall of centuries is silent. In speaking of Santiago, Dutch author and poet Cees Nooteboom describes how the traveller 'finds sustenance in equivocation, the anywhere he finds himself in is lacking in some particular, he is the eternal pilgrim of absence, of loss looking for something beyond the grave of the Apostle, something that beckons but remains invisible; forever seeking the impossible'

Sharing such sentiments, we walk down the Paseo de la Letras Gallegas as the dawn signals its early intent and we come by the statue of **Rosalia de Castro**, poetess of Galicia. Like Nooteboom himself, we sit with Rosalia awhile and listen to the dawn chorus whistling the song Eugenio d'Ors composed in her honour:



En la Ria  
un astro  
se ponía  
Rosalía  
de Castro  
de Murquía

In the Ria  
a star  
arose  
Rosalía  
de Castro  
de Murquía

This stroll has many a step in it, yet.

**The Road to Santiago by Cees Nooteboom is published by The Harvill Press, London, 1992.**

**The Pilgrim's Practical Guide by Jose Maria Jaen is published by Editorial Everest SA, Leon**

## THE DALES (EXTRACT)

by Martha Woodcock

Joey hated school. Hated the teachers especially. Made their lives hell he did, especially the ones just out of college.

“Sure you’d know them a mile off” he’d brag to anyone who would listen.

“I’m just tryin to help em out like, if they don’t know how to handle me, how will they survive in any other school? At least they could go back to college and do something else - or hey - become a nurse. Now that Miss Trait would have been much better off to be a nurse, sure she hasn’t a clue, I’m definitely doing them a favour.”

The twins cringed when Joey bragged. Jimmy and Hugh O Brien were no goody goodies but they didn’t want to end up in trouble, not with their birthday coming up in a few weeks time. The bicycles they got for Christmas four years ago were in bits and this was the chance to get two new ones for cruising around The Dales. Mam had said ‘maybe’ with more of a yes than a no feel to it, so the twins were taking no chances. At least they weren’t looking for computer games. They seemed to be a non-runner altogether these days with constant reference to surveys in the newspapers saying that they were ruining children’s lives. A little far-fetched but if they could keep their noses out of trouble and push the ‘fresh air on the bikes’ campaign, surely there was a chance.

Everybody in school knew Joey. Even Timmy the caretaker who came in at night and had never met him knew him. Mostly because his jackets and jumpers would end up in some unusual place like the boiler house. How they got in there was a mystery. If Timmy hadn’t seen his grey jacket in the corner of the field, it would never have been found once John Doran’s cows went in there for the winter.

The jacket was much too big for him. Mostly because he seemed to have so much ‘stuff’ hidden in it. Toffee sweets, crisps, game boy, mobile phone and a small but deadly water pistol. His school was the first school in Leinster to be awarded the ‘Green school’ award and had the flag to prove it. This didn’t put Joey off. All that healthy eating and fruit would make a fella soft. The ban on mobile phones and game boys didn’t frighten him either. He was above worrying about all that sort of stuff. He was tough. A hard man. A fella that the others were jealous of, wanted to hang around with. Or so he thought.

“What are you going to do? Expel me? Suspend me? For what exactly? Ok, I know the white mouse in Miss Bergin’s bag gave her a bit of a fright but I was only messing. Sure the lads thought it was great. Just a laugh.”

Only nobody really thought it was that funny. And Joey wasn’t all bravado. He didn’t like it when, after exasperation set in with the teachers, his father, Mr McGrath was called into the office. He was handed the behaviour

sheet that he couldn’t read and then it was read to him.

“Just concentrating on last week alone:

Monday, refused to sit down for Miss Bergin, insisted that he had piles and wasn’t able to. The rest of the class erupted with laughter and could not be controlled afterwards.

Tuesday, no homework done, said that the goat in the back garden had eaten it just as he had finished his Maths. Wednesday, told the teacher that the piles were more or less gone now as his mother, a psychiatrist specialising in piles had special tablets for them. Thursday, Joey told us that he took the wrong tablets, that his mother was not really a psychiatrist and that he had forgotten everybody’s name and interrupted every few minutes asking ‘Who am I?’ and ‘where the hell am I?’

On Friday morning after swimming, he said he was starving and had to eat his lunch. When he was asked to wait ten minutes until break time he said he was going home, that he was on medication and that he JUST COULD NOT WAIT.”

Tommy McGrath’s steely blue eyes sunk towards his lap and didn’t look up until Mr Moloney stopped talking. They both knew this was a useless exercise. Joey lived with his mother and she refused to come in. Said she wasn’t good in the mornings. So as a result, Joey’s father appeared at the office when summoned.

“Look, I know there’s not much you can do, but you’re going to have to talk to your wife about this.”

“Ex-wife” he corrected.

“Well ex-wife then,” Mr Moloney added in a less than sympathetic tone.

“I only see him now and then, whenever I’m around.”

“I’m afraid Mr McGrath, that is not my problem. We are trying our best but it isn’t fair on the rest of the class. He is causing havoc. He just doesn’t care. So unless you can get a handle on him, you’re going to have to find somewhere else for him, we can’t take anymore.”

“Ah Jaysus he can’t be that bad. He’s only eleven for God’s sake.”

“Look, I’ve a substitute teacher that left after an hour because of him, the next one lasted a half day. I can’t put up with it anymore. He had a teacher crying last week - told her she was a fucking idiot. Is that clear enough for you?”

Joey’s dad stood up, head down and walked out the door without looking around, without seeing the look on Moloney’s face. He couldn’t remember the last time he’d cried but as he stormed towards his clapped out white van, he felt the salt on his lips and wiped the tears away with his right hand. If anyone saw him, the hard man who had left the missus with all those children, sure she was a mess. Four boys waited outside the office door waiting to be dealt with for more minor matters. A bit of name-calling, a sto-

len football, no homework done. These lads had seen Mr McGrath come in and out lots of times but had never seen him leave like this.

No handshake with Moloney, the oul bollocks, what the fuck would he know about trying to bring up ten children. Feeding and clothing them was an ordeal. School and all the other stuff were only extras. It was a game of survival. He accelerated out of the yard. Tommy McGrath drove straight to the council house that they got two years ago. He lasted six months in it. Joey's mother was tired of the trailer and nagged until he agreed to try for a house. It all happened a bit quicker than he thought it would and he didn't really think it through. That was the excuse he used the day he left.

"Sure t'was all a bit sudden you know, I'll head off for a while, I won't be too far away."

He couldn't stand the restriction of being in one place. It left him numb. He could hardly breathe in the house. If Mary couldn't handle the road then he was going without her. He wasn't even that happy on the road but it was better than being stuck forever in 13A Limekiln Road for the rest of his life. Three-bed roomed terraced house, grand and all that, just not for him. It had been a big mistake and once he moved out, she hit the bottle. Big time. He didn't know where she got the money, not from him that's for sure. But whatever else suffered, she always had enough for the drop of booze.

She didn't look drunk when she answered the door, but she wasn't entirely sober either. Sometimes it was hard to tell.

"Just been to that bloody school again."  
She nodded

"Yeah and I'm pretty sick of it."

"Ah sure God help you. And do you think I'm not sick of looking after your children and you fluting around the country."

"Now hold on a minute here."

"No, you hold on. If you think I'm going to sit and listen to a lecture from you about whatever bollicky Moloney had to say THIS time, well then get outta here now before I lose my temper. And I hope you didn't tell him I'd go in. Cos I told him I don't do mornings and the afternoons don't suit me all that well either, doing me bits and pieces.

"Oh Jaysus, would you sit down and stop rambling. I'm not here to lecture you at all."

Her face was flushed. She was used to him being away now and his letting himself in and out of the house with his key was something that irritated her, though he was perfectly entitled of course. It was his house. They were his children. And in a way, she was glad that he dealt with the school stuff. She didn't want them snotty teachers looking down on her. She frowned when she thought of Moloney.

However bad the teachers were, she hated Moloney.

"You're settled now, isn't that right?" She knew exactly what he meant but was going to make him spell it out.

"Ah yeah, Joey's settled grand into school now hasn't he?"

"He hasn't settled all that well at all Mrs McGrath and it wasn't him I was referring to."

"Referring to! Well what exactly are you referring to?"

"Well...that you were, well you know, living in a caravan and now...you're living in a house."

"Look here boy, I'm not going to sit here and have you insult me. I lived in a trailer - do you get it? I lived in a trailer all my life up to now. And yeah, I wanted a better life for me kids, is that so bad? So keep your pointy nose out of my business d'ya hear, cos that's what it is. Mine."

## My Mind to Me a Kingdom is

My mind to me a kingdom is;  
Such perfect joy therein I find  
As far exceeds all earthly bliss  
That God or Nature hath assigned;  
Though much I want that most would have,  
Yet still my mind forbids to crave.

Content I live; this is my stay:  
I seek no more than may suffice,  
I press to bear no haughty sway;  
Look, what I lack my mind supplies,  
Lo! thus I triumph like a king,  
Content with that my mind doth bring.

Some have too much, yet still they crave;  
I have little, yet seek no more.  
They are but poor, though much they have;  
And I am rich with little store.  
They poor, I rich; they beg, I give;  
They lack, I lend; they pine, I live.

I wish but what I have at will;  
I wander not to seek for more;  
I like the plain, I climb no hill;  
In greatest storms I sit on shore,  
And laugh at them that toil in vain  
To get what must be lost again.

My wealth is health and perfect ease;  
My conscience clear my chief defence;  
I never speak by bribes to please,  
Nor by desert to give offence.  
Thus do I live, thus will I die;  
Would all did so as well as I!

Sir Edward Dyer (1543 - 1607)

## Homeward Bound

by Cecila McGovern

Built-up order behind me, here and there fence-posts askew; to my left, a swan in full-breasted ease on the canal-bank; past white crosses for journeys cut short, towns by-passed for speed, their streets a memory and soon, up ahead, an immensity of sky that made a child I loved cry for the city's protection.

The stop, the fake English shop-fronts lining the walkway to the rear of the hotel. Over the Shannon at Tarmonbarry, the legendary coming-down in the world, king to beggar, hell or Connaught; the bridge lifts for a queue of boats going down or upriver; the pilot turns the lever that can raise tons of concrete, drop them back without a space.

My rearview mirror shows the tense face of the next stalled driver. He drums the knuckles of his right hand on the car-roof. This is how we accommodate, when there's no way forward, sometimes have to construct a makeshift, test it against our weight. Fearful of scuttling everything, gather up the pieces you can bear, fit them into as coherent a picture as you can, to a pattern of scarcely, about workable; forge ahead, blinkered to the periphery.

What happened where I'm going besides birth, the ache that wants a re-run, a second chance; flat plains behind, first sight of the mountains, beyond them the ocean, endless, cold, needing summer light.

### Two Poems by Jack Cuddihy:

#### Harry, In Extremis

Harry, I would you not go  
toward death be reticent:  
the motherfucker means  
to stopper you in earth,  
not hold his haul of us.  
You in your Sam Browne's  
a foot for Sterling, down-pit  
where no birds sing.  
Was it on your knees  
in the seams of Scotland  
the tubercle took up house  
In you; hosted in the heart's  
core of you, with such care  
laid down a luxury of  
lesions where you draw breath?  
Just so, Harry my brother,  
do not go. Hold with me in the  
here and now. There is no other.

#### Penny For The Child

Ease through pig snout her  
penny tariff to the Tuesday Child,  
for respite on Wednesday from  
saccharined tea in a jam jar,  
cod liver oil coiled on a spoon.  
Beat with a stick on rust-rims,  
hurry hoop past scholastics  
cast in stone. See to my mother's  
tender of candle flame. Mind how  
it dwindles in the blind eyes.

### Private Lessons

for Anne Fitzgerald by Shirley Farrar

Swimmers in the fast lane  
stroke anti-clockwise.  
Slow lane swimmers by the clock.  
Water thrashes- physics teachers,  
poets, breast surgeons,  
anaesthetists.

Heart beats time  
against the stopwatch.  
Taught limbs push  
faultless tumbleturns-  
timing lengths  
from end to end.

Breaststroking women  
in the slow lane,  
nonchalantly keep their heads  
above the water,  
just to check  
on their direction.

Fast-laners, goggles straining,  
make a desperate  
hundred metre dash  
through water,  
crashing to a standstill  
in the shallow end.

I prefer anticlockwise  
swimming.  
Not because  
of conversation-  
naturally,  
the perfect stroke.

SEPARATION

by Mervyn Doran

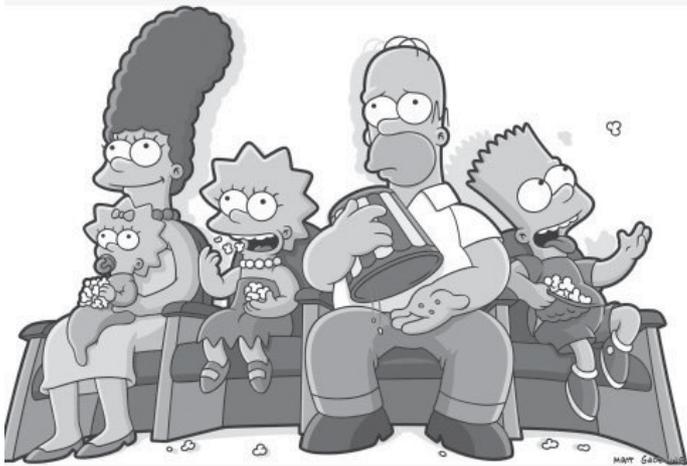
How's it go'in on your own,  
Not bad I think, month's washing up in the sink,  
carpet of dust on the floor, plenty of cobwebs, cobwebs galore.  
I can see through a clean patch in the window,  
well, just enough to see bill collectors go.  
The birds re-seeded the lawn with weeds,  
the mice left, I couldn't even meet their needs,  
listened to ads about get rich schemes,  
spent rest of the day counting out beans, squeezed last year's flattened tube of Macleans,  
a change of clothes is last month's jeans, I still have the phone but it doesn't ring,  
accounts problem, same with electricity thing,  
good news is I still have a shower,  
bad news it's heated by electric power;  
the cooker still looks brand new, with one hour's cooking a week, so would you.  
My new transport's from recycled old bicycles.  
Fridge is packed full of icicles, kitchen presses also look brand new, nothing in them, original view.  
If your wondering where the dinning room suite's gone,  
well, last year's winter was cold and long, still I saved one chair from the fire,  
just burned the legs, concrete blocks make it higher.  
Most nights were minus fours, a few degrees up after burning the doors,  
didn't really need the wardrobes either, burned great, must have been oak or cedar.  
Green I believe in the green theme, and if you need any more proof,  
just look at the new swimming pool in the sitting room, supplied from the hole in the roof.  
You will notice the difference without wardrobes and doors,  
And did I mention, the burning of the wooden floors,  
There's much more head room standing on clay floors.



## VIDEO VOYEUR

Harold Chassen

Homer Simpson is the face of America, probably more well-known than George Bush. It was inevitable that the Simpson family, friends and all the residents of Springfield would star in their own animated feature film. It's watery thin on plot and I think it's more of a series of sketches rather than a complete conventional



film. However that doesn't detract from it. It's full of humorous one-liners and like all good modern animated features it has something for the adults as well as children. I look forward to watching it over and over again and perhaps it will ease its way onto the must see Christmas film list. Don't miss this one.

## ATTENTION!!! ATTENTION!!!

### Monday February 4th

There will be no February Journal but of course there will be the usual Arts Evening at the Heather House on Mon. February 4th. It's at 8pm as usual.

The programme for the evening will include:-

**Eamonn Sweeney** on Baroque Guitar with soprano **Roisin O'Grady**. They will perform songs and solo guitar music from 17th century. We know Eamonn's music from a previous performance and we are absolutely delighted that this superb musician is playing for us once more. We also look forward with great anticipation to hearing Roisin for the first time. Eamonn and Roisin will be performing later in the month in the Mermaid Theatre.

**Mary Higgins** will perform one of **Nicola Lindsay's** monologues under the direction of **Frank O'Keefe**. We have seen Mary perform as a rather saucy 'bit of stuff' with the Old Codgers. She's good.

As yet we have not confirmed the final performance/s of the evening but we guarantee it will be good.

## PREVIEW OF MONDAY JAN 14TH BRAY ARTS

**EVENING** : 8pm Heather House Hotel, Seafront  
Everyone Welcome- Admission 5E / 4E conc.

Presenting :-

**Hugh Carr** reading from his own work.

Hugh is a Playwright, novelist, and short story writer. He was born in Donegal but is resident of Bray and strong supporter of Bray Arts. His stories have been read on RTE Radio. His plays include *Heloise and Abelard*, *The Mummings of Reilig* and *Yesterdays Lovers*. These and other plays have been presented at the Abbey and several Dublin Theatre Festivals, London and New York.

Publications:

**Voices From A Far Country**, (Blackstaff Press); **Encounter In The Wilderness**, (Proscenium Press).



**Solo guitar music by Tarrega, Bach, Dowland and Scarlatti**

played by **Paul Mahon** and **Ben Lyons**.

**Paul Mahon** has been closely involved with the Irish classical guitar scene for many years and has served on the board of the Waltons International Guitar Festival and is the founder of the Kiltarnan School of Music

**Ben Lyons** has been avidly pursuing his music studies for a number of years and is currently preparing to sit his Teaching Diploma in classical guitar.

Both guitarists performed in June 2007 in the Mermaid Arts Centre with Irish guitarist, Redmond O'Toole. They study with Eamon Sweeney in the Bray VEC Music Centre.

## Bert & Pat

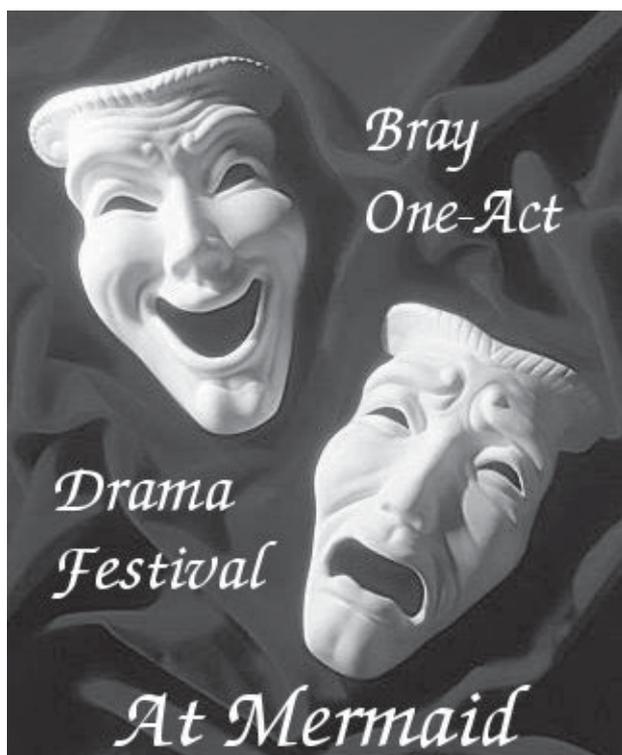
The Bert in question is **Bert Van Embden jnr**. Bert will be singing and playing the Appalachian Dulcimer which was made by his father. He likes all kinds of music from the 50's and 60's but favours traditional Irish, Dutch and Jewish music.



*Appalachian Dulcimer*

The Pat in question is **Padruig McFarlane-Barrow**. Pat is a long-standing supporter of Bray Arts and up to now we know him best for his very fine paintings, which he has presented at Bray Arts. Pat is also an architect and, we now discover, a musician. He plays the accordion and harmonica.

**BRAY ONE-ACT DRAMA FESTIVAL**



Remarkably, this is the 31st Festival of the Bray One-Act Drama Festival. It will be held in the Mermaid Theatre, Main St. Bray from January 22nd to Saturday 26th January at 8:00pm each evening except Saturday when the curtain up will be at 7:30

As always the festival supports local charities and this year it is the Bray Old Folks Association and the Irish Guide Dogs, Wicklow Branch. You can become a patron of the festival for 15Euro.

Contact Festival Secretary :  
Joan Gregg at 2862476

**Booking**

Don't leave booking to the last minute because this is a very popular festival.

Tickets are 12 Euro / 10 Euro conc.

You can book:

at Mermaid Box Office

Phone : (01) 2724030 or

Internet Booking : [www.mermaidartscentre.ie](http://www.mermaidartscentre.ie)

**Tuesday 22nd Jan**

Crossing The Bar

The Big Cats

Idols

Comedy

Drama

Drama

Bray Arts

Kilmant Players

Sandyford I.C.A.

**Wednesday 23rd Jan**

Charity Begins

Afterpaly

A Talk in the Park

Comedy

Drama

Trag/Com

Ashford I.C.A.

Crois Dearg Drama Group

Delgany Dramatic Society

**Thursday 24th Jan**

Gaggle of Saints

Audience

Drama

Comedy

Dalkey Players

Take Two Productions

**Friday 25th Jan**

The Food of Love

One for the Road

melody

Comedy

Drama

Comedy

Playtime Theatre Group

Balally Players

St. Patrick's Dramatic Soc.

**Saturday 26th Jan**

Jenny in the Orchard

The Actor's Nightmare

Drama

Comedy

Square One Theatre Group

Martello Productions

**PS**

**THERE IS NO FEBRUARY JOURNAL. THIS IS A SPECIAL JAN/FEB JOURNAL.**

**DETAILS OF FERUARY ARTS EVENING ON PG. 10**

**THE NEW EMAIL OF THE EDITOR OF BRAY ARTS JOURNAL IS : [editor@brayarts.net](mailto:editor@brayarts.net).**

**IF YOU WANT TO HAVE THE JOURNAL POSTED TO YOU EACH MONTH PLEASE FORWARD 10 EURO TO EDITOR.**

## Submission Guidelines

Editor : Dermot McCabe : [editor@brayarts.net](mailto:editor@brayarts.net)

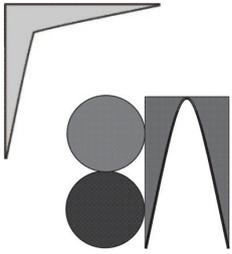
Creative Writing Editor : Anne Fitzgerald : [afitzgerald3@ireland.com](mailto:afitzgerald3@ireland.com)

Email submissions to any of the above or post typed submissions to

The Editor BAJ 'Casino',  
Killarney Rd. Bray,  
Co. Wicklow

Visual material: Photographs by Post. Digital Images by Email or CD in JPEG format.

Deadline 15th of each month.



**Arts Evening Monday 14th January 2008  
at the Heather House Hotel Strand Road 8:00 pm  
5 Euro / 4 Euro Conc. *Everyone is welcome.***

**Hugh Carr: Playwright, Short Story Writer and Novelist  
reading from his work**

**Paul Mahon & Ben Lyons : Classical guitarists playing arrega, Bach,  
Dowland and Scarlatti**

**Bert & Pat : Music and song with Appalacian Dulcimar and Accordion  
from Bert Van Embden jnr. and Padruig  
MacFarlane-Barrow**

Bray Arts is grateful for the support of Bray Council, Wicklow Council, CASC and Heather House Hotel.  
Printed by Central Press

If undelivered please return to :  
Editor, Bray Arts Journal  
'Casino'  
Killarney Rd.  
Bray  
Co. Wicklow