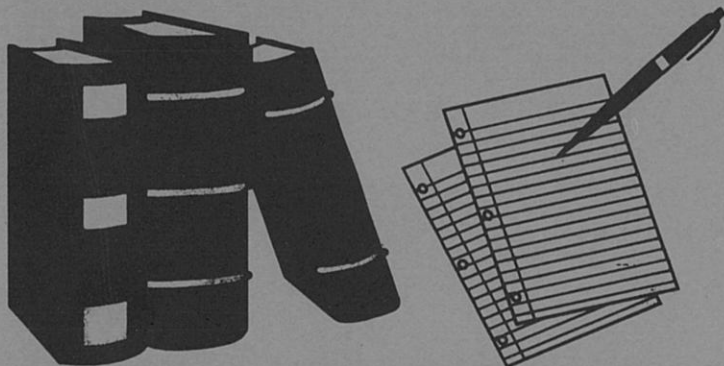
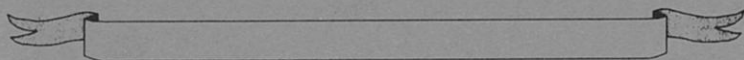


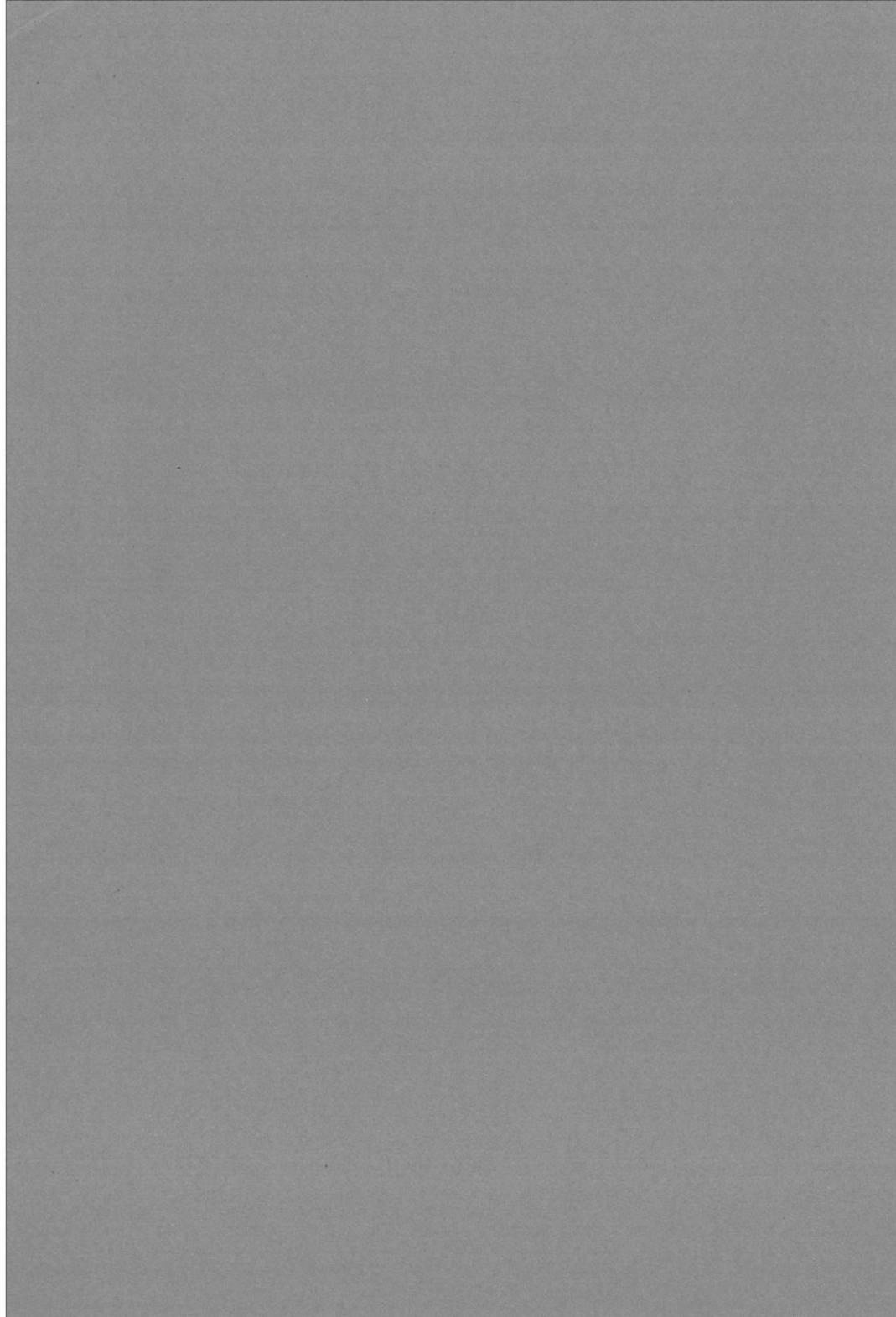
Simply Said '98

10th Anniversary



Co. Clare Reading & Writing
Scheme





FOREWORD

The students, tutors and staff of the Clare Reading & Writing Scheme are very pleased to present the tenth issue of Simply Said, our annual student magazine.

The magazine has grown steadily over the years and this growth reflects the continued development and expansion of the scheme itself. Almost seventy students have contributed to this issue with writings on work, family, sports, travel and reflections on life in general. In addition, in honour of this special anniversary, we have included a selection of articles from each of the previous nine issues.

I would like to thank the students, tutors, staff members and other supporters who have helped in the organisation and production of this year's magazine, and in other ways throughout the year.

Most especially, congratulations to the many students whose work is represented here. Well done and best wishes for continued success!

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THE VISITOR

Last year we had mice in the house. We were just after getting in a new fitted kitchen, we were very pleased with it. One night I felt thirsty so I went to the kitchen to get a drink, and, as I opened the door of the fridge a noise started coming from the bin. Next out comes this mouse and runs under the dishwasher. My heart skipped a few beats I can tell you. Next morning we set a few traps for the mouse and we discovered he was getting in through a hole in the wall that was made for the dishwasher.

There were three mice altogether, one in the hot press, one in the fire and one in the kitchen. When we caught the first mouse my daughter was very upset. She cried and cried and got very mad at us for killing the mouse. My husband told her that it didn't hurt the mouse

getting caught in the trap. But Christine said "Daddy how do you know? You were never a mouse." So when we caught the other two we couldn't tell her.

By Patricia

A FAMILY CELEBRATION

A family celebration could be an engagement party, a new born baby, a wedding, or a christening.

If you go into a new house, or if you get a new car, it is a happy event.

Holy Communion is a family event, or a confirmation, or if you have a birthday, or if you are opening a farm.

When I get engaged it will be a good day. There will be wine, cake and presents. There will be a new house and a new car. I will hold a stag party for my friends.

By Daire

NEW LIFE

(Simply Said 1994)

Day is breaking
The dawn chorus begins.
A milk float rattles
Down the street
Full of creamy
Topped bottles
With shiny caps.

Men whistle
As they start
Their clean up
Of city streets.

Baby cries.
My first child
Is born.

By Marion

GOT A NEW JOB

I was offered a job in Fitzpatrick's Supermarket out the Tulla Road. I was thrilled to hear it. I couldn't wait until I told my parents and the Dulick Centre about it. Down in Fitzpatrick's, they are very nice people to work for. Every Monday we always do the stock take on sweets and Taytos. On Thursday and Friday a lot of stock comes in, to be checked in.

Grainne and I always set in to do it, and we get it finished by the end of the evening. I start work at 8 am in the morning until 5 pm in the evening. There is one thing I hate doing and that is thinking of all the sweet prices. That really drives me mad.

At the weekends I can relax at home because I don't work on Saturdays and Sundays.

I had to come back to the Dulick Centre to say goodbye to them. They were all so thrilled for me.

By Roisin

WORKING ON THE SITE

I am working on a building site out on the Gort Road in Ennis. I like working there. I pass up blocks on the scaffolding, drive the dumper and mix the mortar.

I like working on the building site because the lads are fun and I like working outdoors. The only thing I don't like is getting up early in the morning.

By Daniel

MY JUNIOR CERT

I left school at sixteen in Kilrush Community school. I was in third year when I left and didn't do any exams. That's why I'm doing them now that I'm eighteen. When I first started here I met a very nice man from Ballynacally called Joseph Hestor. I come here from the Dulick Centre on Tuesdays and Thursdays with my friends.

Joe gives me a lot to do for the Junior Cert. I don't know what my results were for the mocks. I hope I pass and if I do I hope to go on and do my Leaving Cert. Joe says I'm a good worker.

By Caroline

STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

Mary McAleese was born in Belfast, and later went to live in Rostrevor Co. Down. Mary was educated at Queens University Belfast where she became a professor. Mary is now a married lady with a family.

In the election there were four candidates but Mary was the one to be picked for President. Mary went canvassing all around Ireland, but in the square of Ennis I gave her a good luck hug.

My family and I are delighted that we have a president from the North. I wish her the best of luck. She is the star of County Down.

By Paddy

MY DAY

I work at the Brothers of Charity in the pottery section. I work with clay. We make all different things, like mugs, vases, teapots, jugs, cups, plates and many other things.

We have new classes helping us with our reading and writing. I like going to them. I would like to be able to read. I like working in the farm in the evening.

By Seamus

NOT SMART ENOUGH

(Simply Said 1990)

When I was at primary school I was slower at reading and writing than the others. And when I went to secondary school I was put in the "D" class, the lowest of all.

Some of the teachers just passed the day. One in particular played games with us. Of course at thirteen this was great. I also had a lot from the woodwork Master and this got me out of a particular class. Woodwork and art was what I loved. When it came time to leave, the youth employment officer came to my school. He asked had I any job in mind. I told him I would like to be a carpenter.

He told me I could not be a carpenter because I was not smart enough. Since then I taught myself carpentry and have

worked at it for the last twenty five years. I have worked with many good tradesmen. I could do anything they could. I have worked in joinery shops, buildings sites and I have done maintenance work. Now I am going to classes in the Clare Reading and Writing scheme. I intend to do well.

By Tim

BASKETBALL

I enjoy playing basketball. I am on the Banner basketball team. We have won all our games this year. There are five of us on the team. We train on the basketball courts in the Colaiste Mhuire. We train every week. I am training for the All Ireland Special Olympics team.

By Tommy

GOLF

I love playing golf. I play golf every weekend. I have my own caddie car, golf sticks, golf balls and tee. I have the special rain clothes and golf shoes for the wet days. I won a clock in a golf competition in 1984. I have a golf umbrella. I would love to play golf every day.

By Robert

MY GIRLFRIEND

Anna is my girlfriend's name. I buy her a lot of presents, bracelets, watches and other things. She lost her watch a few weeks ago. I am buying a new one as a surprise for her. I will give it to her the next time I see her. We like to go shopping in the town centre and go for chips after.

By Gerard

A DAY I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER

Sunday when I got up I turned on the teletext to see if we were missing anyone. All day long I was saying to myself will they or won't they stay up. If they go down they will be playing against Oxford next season, but I hope not. When the time was coming up to 4.00 pm I was getting excited. Six minutes into the game Farrelly scored a goal and I said to myself we have a chance if Bolton don't score. Then in the second half Chelsea scored two goals and I was jumping for joy. I never thought Nick Barmby would miss the penalty but we were safe because Bolton lost and we had a better goal difference.

By Daniel

THINGS I LIKE DOING

I work in the garden at the Brothers of Charity. My job is to check the plants. I stay in a house and go home at weekends. I love going swimming. I go swimming on Wednesday & Thursday nights. I love to go bowling on Tuesdays. I have good friends at the Brothers of Charity.

By David

WHEN I LEARNED TO SWIM

(*Simply Said* 1993)

I was in my late forties when I learned to swim. I often thought I would like to learn to swim but never got around to it. About two years ago twelve mature women from Miltown came in to Ennis once a week to learn to swim. We had ten lessons. That gave us great confidence in ourselves.

We had lots of fun learning. We all swallowed lots of water. We had hard times learning to keep our heads under water and then to pop up our heads and take a breath. I really enjoy going to the pool now. I find it very relaxing and also very good exercise. I am very glad that I took the plunge and it is something I will always enjoy.

By Bridget

FRIENDS

I come in each morning on the bus to work in the Brothers of Charity. I work in the kitchens. I have great friends at work and each Wednesday night my friend & I go to the Derrynane for tea.

I have a dog, her name is Mindy. I take her for walks. We go on holidays from work. I have been in Kilkee this year. We had a great time. I played a soccer match in Bandon earlier this year. We won - it was great.

I have started new classes in reading and writing, and I love going to them. I would love to be able to read a book by myself.

By Teresa

HAPPINESS

Happiness is a beautiful word and a sad word. Yet it is hard to find. Most people go through life seeking it. Unfortunately most people never seem to find it. Some people don't realise how lucky they are when they find it. And when they find it they are never lonely or sad again.

By Kathleen

IMMIGRANT EXPERIENCE

I have been living in Ireland for over twenty-three years. At the beginning, it was very difficult because I didn't speak any English and I had to learn the language.

Then I started working in a factory where I was sewing ladies clothes with about eight hundred other people. It was hard but at the same time it was very funny. I was worried because it was difficult to express myself the way I wanted to. Some people helped me by saying words in the right way but other people were not very helpful.

I came here with my husband and one daughter, now we have three lovely daughters. We are now used to everything in Ireland, the rain and the wild weather. My husband even speaks a

bit of Irish. I love going home to Chile on holidays to see my family and the natural beauty of my native country, but when I'm there I feel my home is in Ireland.

By Nancy

MY JOB

I sew for Shannon aerospace. I work in the sewing department. It is a difficult job. Sometimes the thread comes out of the needle and I have to start off again. Mary Lou is my supervisor and she helps me when things go wrong. Sometimes I work in the office. I do the Lotto for Geraldine. I like working in the sewing area because it is easy for me.

By Martina

CHORES

When I come back at night I set the table, and I do hoovering in the morning.

By Mary

WEEKENDS AWAY

I have organised weekends away. I've had funny weekends too. When I went out with friends on that Friday and Saturday evening we went to a concert and all we wanted to do was dance all night. I work in the sewing area three days a week and I like doing pottery twice a week. When all of us went away for a weekend it looked like we were going to bring a Miltown Malbay bachelor home with us.

By Anne

MY TRIP TO DUBLIN

I travelled by bus to Dublin with my daughter Mary. When we arrived I met my other daughter Catherine and my grand-daughter, Orla. I then went to visit my son John and his wife. Mary and I went to the pictures and we saw a western. The following day I went to the market and bought cigars and groceries. I went to Mass on Sunday morning and found the service disappointing. After Mass I went to Mary's for lunch. We had roast chicken, roast potatoes and vegetables. Afterwards we had jelly and ice-cream. My next trip will be to California in America. I will be going the end of June and I am looking forward to seeing my sister, Janie, and her family.

By Kathleen

A TRIP TO THE DENTIST

(Simply Said 1997)

Two years ago I had my lower teeth extracted. My natural front teeth were badly decayed. I thought false dentures would help me to chew my food better. I made an appointment with the dentist. He took all my teeth out. He took an impression for a new set of teeth. I had two fittings and then got my new teeth.

I thought I'd have great comfort. But it did not turn out like that. The new teeth hurt me a lot and I could not wear them. That was two years ago and I'm still suffering agony every time I try to wear the damn teeth. Anyone who has even middling teeth, take my advice and keep your own teeth.

By Rita

SAINT PATRICK'S DAY

The 17th of March is St Patrick's day. I went to the parade in the square. There were three big Mercedes in the parade. There were tractors pulling trailers with children on them. There were two big fire brigades. After the parade we went to the Haven for coffee and a snack. I had a good time.

By Annette

ST PAT'S SOCCER TEAM

St Pat's soccer team is based in Kilmihil in west Clare. The club was formed in 1982. Based in Cahermurphy originally players from the Crosses of Annagh and Cahermurphy joined together and became St Pat's. Also for the first time in 1982 a youth team was formed with great success under the management of Pat Daly. Even though I don't play myself, I support and video all the games. I am very proud of the club and plan to write a book with all their victories recorded later this year.

By James

THINGS I LIKE TO DO

When I am not working, I like to do jigsaws and play Nintendo. I am learning to play the guitar but it takes a long time to learn. I like to be outdoors and I am good at gardening. At the moment I am doing a 1500 piece jigsaw. I hope to finish it in a month.

By John

MY JOB

I like working at the Brothers of Charity.
I work in the Altar Bread section. I have
great friends at the Brothers of Charity. I
love to go for walks. I like Country and
Western music. My favourite singer is
Olive Bann. I also go bowling on Tues-
day.

By Dorothy

PUERTO RICO

(Simply Said 1995)

I was in Puerto Rico in 1977. I swam in a very big pool twice a day. A week later the competition began. It was a fine day with sunshine. Most Cubans were very nervous because there was a big audience. They started to shout at us, "Down Fidel! Down all Fidel's people! Go back to your country...we don't want Cuban people here!" All that was very sad for us. Immediately the police came and put everything in order. Two hours later it was my turn to swim. My times were very bad and my coach was unhappy.

By Vicki

SUMMER IN KILKEE

There will be people around. There will be children playing on the beach. The caravan park will be packed. The Waterworld will be open every day. The children will be off school for their holidays. I am on work experience for 6 weeks and I will be working in Kilkee.

By Adrienne

MY TRIP TO THE ARAN ISLANDS

On Saturday morning we got a bus from Kilmaley church. My brother, my mother and I went. The bus was full with people from Kilmaley who work with the FAS scheme and their families and friends.

We left the church at half past ten in the morning. The bus driver drove into Ennis and onto the Gort Road. We went through Barefield, Crusheen and Gort. In Galway we went on the ship called "Aran Flyer." We crossed the bay to Innis Mor. There was a shop in the basement of the ship.

When we arrived on the island, we went to the house where we stayed for a night. We went to a restaurant and had a nice meal. Then we had music, dancing and some drinks in a pub. It was very late when we came home. Next

morning we got up at half past nine. We had our breakfast of Rice Krispies, orange juice, a fry, tea and toast. We went to Mass, it was in Irish and there was a lot of people there. We drove around the island in a bus. We left the island at half past four on the Galway ship. We came through Salthill, then to Spiddal and Tuam. The bus driver drove back to Galway, we saw Dunnes Stores. We left Galway and made our way home. We were tired after our weekend, but we didn't mind. We had enjoyed every minute of it. We are making plans for our next weekend.

By Edward

BINGO

I am going to bingo in the Stella on Friday night. I am going on the bus with my friends. I won £50 in Bingo a year ago. The jackpot on Friday is £2000. It would be great to win it. My brother came home from London for Christmas. He brought me a Jewellery box. I keep my rings and watch in the box. It has a leaded glass door and 4 drawers. He went back to London in January. He will be home again next Christmas.

By Irene

THE HARDWARE SHOP

I work down in Bredin's hardware. I started last year. Gerry Bredin is the manager. He is a nice man. We sell timber and tools and manufacture doors. I start at half nine and I finish at half four. The day is busy because we get a lot of work to do. I enjoy working in Bredin's because I am interested in carpentry.

By Patrick

MY STORY

(Simply Said 1996)

My name is Tom and I was born visually impaired due to the fact that my mother had rubella or German measles when she was expecting me.

As I was partially sighted, I had to go away to a special school for the blind in Dublin, and as a result I missed out on a lot of time with my family. Time which can not be given back to me under any circumstances.

Now while the staff at the school did their best to make it seem like a home away from home for me, this attention could never replace my family life.

Since the age of eighteen years, I was placed by the NRB in various training centres throughout the country. These were just general training centres with

no resources for people with specific special needs, such as the visually impaired. Now, while one of the training centres I attended did purchase a computer with speech technology attached for me, I was further hampered in my training by the fact that the supervisor in the office did not know anything about its use. This meant that I could not use the speech technology provided with my computer and so could not use it to its full potential.

By Thomas

WHAT I DO

I like working at home. I do the ironing and the hoovering and hang out the washing. I go to the pictures, and I love shopping. I work in the Brothers of Charity in the sewing section. It is a great place to work.

We have started new classes in helping us with reading and writing. I love going to them.

By Teresa

MY JOB

I work in the garden. I mix compost. We put in fertiliser and lime and mix it up with our hands.

By Willie

WHAT LITERACY MEANS TO ME

Every week I look forward to my hour of literacy as I know I am learning a lot. I now feel comfortable picking up a newspaper or magazine knowing that I can read the words and sentences and not just look at the pictures.

The centre itself is bright, clean, warm, friendly and busy and I feel a part of it, as if I belong there. I often have a laugh with the tutors and enjoy meeting them.

During the year I also learned to use a computer which is very important as I live in Ennis which is now the Information Age Town.

By Breda

THE FARM

I live on a farm. We have cows and calves on the farm. I have a dog and her name is Queenie and she helps me round up the cattle. For milking we feed the cows silage and the calves nuts.

In the Summertime we get up early, making the silage and cutting the turf. I'm glad when September comes, all the hard work is done. I like living on the farm.

By Michael

MY FAMILY

My mother and father used to own a butcher stall in Parnell Street where Hocus Pocus is now. I used to live over the shop with my brothers and sisters.

My brothers, Sean and Noel, used to help out in the shop. They used to work very long hours. Noel used to deliver parcels of meat to customers around town.

My parents are buried in Drumcliffe. I hope to visit the grave sometime soon.

By Marie

ASHLING AND THE ALL IRELAND

My brother and I went to Dublin to see the All Ireland. We went up very early and had a walk around the city. We saw all the shops and we saw many Clare supporters. We thought about bringing my niece Ashling but she is only three and we were afraid she might get hurt so she stayed at home that night.

Ashling told us she had seen us on the TV. She asked her Mum to put on the video so that we could see ourselves. She was very excited about it. Ashling pointed us out on the video. We all enjoyed a good laugh. We hope to take Ashling with us this year to Croke Park.

By Paddy

PARENTS AND THE GAA

(Simply Said 1990)

The GAA was founded over 100 years ago. Since its foundation the GAA has grown from strength to strength. In Clare alone there are sixteen senior clubs. Hurling is played in every village around the county now. From the age of ten up boys are being coached in the skills of the game by people who give of their time freely. Some of them haven't any children of their own. However, they are interested in promoting hurling and football and looking after the youth. Unfortunately some of the parents that have children playing hurling and football hardly ever come to the field. They take no interest in the youth of the Parish. If they are asked to drive their cars and bring the boys to the matches they always have an excuse of having to go somewhere else. Oh, but,

if their boys are not on the team or are taken off during the match they are the first to complain. We hear all about how we should have placed the team and who we should have taken off.

Parents, if you want your boys to play the game of hurling and football then it is up to you, to come along and be prepared to drive to the matches or help out in some other way in the club.

By James

MY BROTHER'S WEDDING

Last year I went to my brother's wedding. His name is Brendan. He got married to Sandra. The ceremony was in St Peter & Paul's Church in Shannon. The weather was warm for their wedding day. The reception was in the Clare Inn. All my family and friends were there.

My Uncle Sonny and Auntie May came over from Cardiff to the wedding. We all had a great day. There was a band from Limerick playing at the wedding. They came at nine o'clock and they finished playing around twelve o'clock. When the band finished, the disco started. I enjoyed the disco.

By Gerard

SPORTS

I work in the Altar Bread section in the Brothers of Charity. I love sports - I go running. I train in the Fairgreen. I have the Special Olympics coming up in June.

I love going swimming on Wednesday and Thursday nights. I also do PE on Wednesday. I have good friends at work.

By Kevin

MY BEST DAY

The best day that I had at work was when I was a security porter at Dublin Airport. I was told to meet a man in the luggage hall, and when I found him he asked me to wait with him.

He was a Limo driver and he was waiting for someone. The man arrived. To my surprise it was the actor, Paul Newman. I was in a state of shock; he is my favourite actor in the movies. He was wearing a black overcoat, a black beret hat and a pair of black glasses. He gave me a £10.00 tip.

By Stephen

HOBBIES

Every Wednesday evening I go to PE with my friends from the hostel. When we get home we watch Coronation Street. I love going to Plays.

By Gerard

I LOVE WHERE I WORK

I come to work everyday at the Brothers of Charity. I stay in a house during the week and go home at weekends. I have worked in the kitchen, the Altar Bread section, the sewing area and also done some typing.

I like going to town with my friend. She had her birthday yesterday. I gave her a card and also went to her house. She is a great friend. We go swimming on Thursdays. I went to the dentist today and had a filling done on one tooth and I have to go again next week. I love where I work.

By Mairead

MYSELF

I go to the Brothers of Charity every day. I stay in a house in Ennis during the week. I go home every weekend. I work in the kitchen. I love going swimming. I like singing.

By Dymphna

FISHING

Last June 1997, we went fishing at Doolin Pier. It was a bright sunny day. The fish were slow to bite. I caught four of them together at the one time, two big white pollock and two fine mackerel. Once the shoal of mackerel were passing by, they took the bait straight away. I gave them to the Oyster Pub and they made chowder out of them.

By David

WHERE I LIVE

I have lived in Ennis for 9 years. The house has three bedrooms. There is no garden. I share the house with 6 others. I work in O'Connor's Bakers full time. I have a television in my room which I like to watch. Saturday night is my night for going out. I go to the Greengrove. Sometimes I like to cook. Then after dinner I do the washing up.

By Martin

MOUNT SHANNON

I grew up in Mountshannon, and went to school there. We lived half-mile outside. I worked on our farm. We had a horse, donkey, cows, hens and a dog. We grew potatoes and cabbage, and we saved the hay. One year we lost all the hay because of the rain. The same year we couldn't get the turf from the bog because of the rain. I finished school in 1954.

By John

NORWAY

(*Simply Said 1989*)

I went on a working holiday in Norway. I left Ennis on the 29th of April. I travelled by bus to Limerick. Then I got the train to Dublin at 7 o'clock, and later that evening the boat to Liverpool, I had to get a train to Newcastle. When I got to Newcastle I had to get my ticket for the boat, so off I went to buy my ticket in the travel agency. "I want to buy my ticket for the boat to Norway", and she said, "you have just missed it, it went two hours ago". "When is the next one going?" "In four days time". I stayed in Newcastle overnight. Next day I got the plane to Bergen in Norway. It was my first time on an aeroplane. At last I had got to Norway, now I had to get to the farm. First I had to get a bus to Norheimsund, then a ferry up the Hardanger fjord to Na. The family I stayed with were very good to me. They had two children,

a boy and a girl. The first month I was planting trees; the next month two girls came from Holland and one from America; for the next three months we were picking strawberries and cherries.

It is a very expensive country. Some farmers make their own wine and cider so you can buy it from the farm. You start work at about 8 o'clock to 5 o'clock and you have the week-end off. I did a lot of hiking in Norway and met a lot of interesting people. I went to Oslo to see the Viking ships and I did a lot of walking in the mountains. It is a very beautiful country and they get good summers. I made a lot of good friends there.

By Anon

PICKING THINGS

I love picking things. In February I pick rushes. It is nice to make Saint Bridget's crosses with them. Then in March I start picking shamrock for Saint Patrick's Day. During the year I would pick stones in meadows and fields to leave room for the grass to grow.

Blackberries grow on briars and I often get scratched picking them. You have to make sure they are ripe so you can make jam and tarts with them. Hazelnuts are ready to pick in the late Autumn. Squirrels love gathering them, too. All through the year I pick wild flowers, primroses, bluebells and lots of other flowers for the house.

By Noel

THE NEW INFORMATION AGE TOWN

Last September Ennis was awarded £50 million for the Information Age Town. It is hoped that every home in Ennis will get a computer at a contributory price of £260. I am looking forward to getting a computer at home. I am learning how to use it.

By Jamie

MY BOYFRIEND

My boyfriend's name is Gerard. He comes from Limerick. He is very good to me. I usually meet him every Thursday outside the hostel. He plays a lot of snooker. Sometimes I go with him and watch him play. I go swimming some Tuesday nights and he comes down to meet me afterwards.

By Anna

MY STORY

The hostel is nice. I like living there. There are 8 women and 8 men living in the hostel. We all have jobs to do after dinner. My favourite job is to Hoover. Mrs. Browne is a very nice boss. I share the bedroom with Anne Maire. We are good friends.

By Phil

JUDGEMENTS

Don't judge people from their looks,
Judge from their personality,
Ignore the physical,
Bring out the best,
And take the charitable view.

See what is true,
And ignore the faults,
I hope that God does the same for us,
And sees the virtue,
Not the vice.
If he remembered only the faults
Who'd ever get to Paradise?

By Daisy

SLEEPLESS NIGHTS

(Simply Said 1991)

I think that was my trouble, I went to the Christian Brothers. Their teaching method was to bash the learning into you. But I was stubborn. If they were going to beat it into me I was going to beat them by not learning. Of course in the end I got hurt doubly. I was beaten in school for not reading and writing and then when I came out of school, I wasn't able to read or write.

At first it didn't matter to me that I couldn't read or write because I went into construction work and all I needed to use was a shovel. The first time I found it troublesome that I couldn't read or write was when I went into the bookies to make a bet. It was embarrassing trying to copy the name of the horse with people around. I could read enough to read the form of the horse

but I couldn't read its name so I could never tell anybody which horse I thought was going to win.

When I was eighteen, I started learning to read by myself with the newspapers but I never learnt to write because I had no necessity to.

Now I'm thirty. A year ago I got a job with a security company which entails driving around premises all night and checking there is nothing wrong. When an alarm goes off I have to fill them in. As I work from 8.00 in the evening to 8.30 in the morning, five or six alarms could go off in the middle of the night and I have to phone my wife to spell what I write. She doesn't get much sleep. So I decided to learn to write and went to the Clare Reading and Writing Scheme. They gave me a test on reading and writing and found it incredible that I had taught myself to read to the standard which I can but I could not spell.

So I am being helped by a lady from Feakle and I am getting on very well. My first novel should be in the shops early next year.

By M. Fittz Scott

NIGHT OUT AT THE RACE NIGHT

Last Saturday night I went to the race night. It was on at the One Mile Inn. I was with my mother and my brother. It started at 10 o'clock. There were about ten races. It was shown on the big screen. You paid £1.00 bet on the horse. It was great crack. I had two glasses of orange. There was a nice crowd there. I had a lucky night because my mother won £2.00. It was over at quarter to one. I was home at five past one. And I went to bed at quarter past one.

By Elizabeth

OUR DAY TRIP

We will be going to Killarney. Everyone from the factory will be going. We will be having our dinner in Killarney. During the day we will go walking, bowling and shopping. We will have our tea in a hotel on our way home. We will be travelling by bus. I am looking forward to the day out with all my friends.

By Marion

MOLDOVA

(Simply Said 1993)

I lived in Moldova for 26 years. This is a very green and fertile Republic. Moldova is situated near Romania in the south-west of ex-USSR. Kishenev is the capital of Moldova.

Through the territory of Moldova there is a river called the Dnestr. Moldova specialises in growing grapes for wine. Queen Victoria of England bought wine which was made in Moldova. Usually in Moldova it is very warm. In the summer it is hot and many people go to the Black Sea, or rest in the suburbs beside a river. But the most wonderful time in Moldova is autumn. It is very nice and warm. The famous Russian poet, Pushkin, who lived in the last century, dedicated many works to Moldova.

The people in Moldova are very

hospitable. If you meet strangers, you will be given food and home made wine. I like this Republic.

By Albina

LOOKING FORWARD

My sister and brother made their communion in Cloughleigh last week. I have a sister getting married in September - I am looking forward to it. I'll be getting new clothes for the wedding. I will be getting my hair permed for the wedding. It will be on at Bunratty Castle.

By Julie

MY FIRST TIME ON A PLANE

We got up at 7 am in the morning. We were going to Lourdes. The bags were packed. P.J Dixon arrived at 8.30 am to bring us to the Shannon Airport. When we checked in we went in to the duty free until we were called to board the plane. I was not nervous in the plane. We were told to put on our seat belts, and I didn't take it off until we landed in France. We are going to Lourdes again this year on the 26th June '98 and I am looking forward to going on a plane again.

By Brendan

MY LIFE

I was born in England. I lived with my family in the town of Crewe. We had good neighbours and friends. I went to school by bus. I liked to play snooker in my spare time. There was a park about 2K from my house. It was called Queen's Park. When I was 17 we moved to Ireland and now I live in Scariff Co. Clare. I do a bit of fishing most nights.

By Kevin

SOMETHING SPECIAL

I love working in the Brothers of Charity.
I love working at home - doing the
dishes. I have one special friend at the
Brothers of Charity.

I love going to Hurling matches. The
Clare minors won yesterday. I worked in
farming all my life. I prefer summertime
because we go on day tours and summer
camps.

By Sonny

SOCCER

I like soccer. My favourite team is Manchester United. They are the best team. My favourite player is Ryan Giggs. I like to watch their matches on television. The home strip is red. I would like the Manchester United kit for myself. I would wear it whenever they play.

By Paul

MY NIECE'S WEDDING

My niece got married in Carrigaholt last August. She married a man from New Zealand in the church of Carrigaholt. We went for a meal afterwards in Kilkee. There were lots of guests at the wedding so the meal went on for a few hours. Then we went back to a pub for a few Drinks in Carrigaholt. I was very tired so I went to bed early.

By Charlie

PLEASE DON'T LOOK DOWN ON ME

(*Simply Said* 1993)

People look down on me.
Why should they?

Just because I am a slow learner
does not mean I am without feelings.

Why must they discourage instead of
encourage?

A word of praise strengthens the heart
to carry on and achieve the best I can
with the help of my teacher, Ann.

By Phil

MY FAVOURITE MOVIES

My favourite movies are westerns and vampire films. I have some films on tape. I tape the films from the TV. I have to watch these films on my own in the sitting room. If anyone else wants to see some other films, they would have to go to the back kitchen.

By Paul

I WENT ON A TOUR

I went on a tour. We had a great time. We saw the animals. We went to see all the horses and small birds. We had a nice lunch. We were singing on the bus. It was a lovely day. We went home at eight o'clock.

By Phil

FCA CAMP

(Simply Said 1992)

Every year I go with the FCA to Tralee to camp for a week. It's usually in the middle of July. The camp runs on a very tight schedule and everybody has to tow the line.

The duty commander wakes up the camp at 6.30 am, usually by hitting the ends of the metal beds and making a hell of a racket. There are about 16 to a dormitory and we all clean up the room before breakfast which is at 7.30 am.

Everybody has to be ready for a full dress parade at 9.00 am.

Names for different duties are called out after the parade. The duties are; guard duty, stand to, kitchen duty, and officers mess duty.

Soldiers march as a group with their duty commander to relieve soldiers already on duty at various posts.

There are usually two duty commanders with each group. One for "stand to" and one for "guard duty".

Weapons are drawn after the parade and all soldiers train on arms or foot drill, depending on their service with the FCA.

Lunch is from 12.30 - 2.00 pm. After lunch there is another parade of all the troops to account for all the soldiers. After parade, soldiers return to the same duties as before lunch. 4.30 pm is finishing time. Dinner is at 5.00 pm and after that, the evening is free for the soldiers to do what they want. Most of us go down to the pub, relax and have a few pints.

By Michael

MY DAY IN OFFALY

On Saturday I went to Offaly and Marie Reilly came with me. We went to Mass. We went to confessions and I got blessed on the head. There was a great crowd there. It was raining all day in Offaly. We said the rosary up and down in the bus. We came by bus at half past seven. When we came back to Ennis, it was dry.

By Celia

OH FOR A DRY DAY

(*Simply Said 1994*)

I wish we had a dry day.
Then I wouldn't have a care.
No matter where it comes from
It always lands right here.

Now I'm getting quite dizzy
Trying to mow my lawn,
Running in and out you see
So it won't mess my hair.

My flowers are not too happy
But my weeds are doing fine.
My wellie boots are in cahoots
For I think they're doing a line.

Oh, for a dry day,
But the rain is all around.
Yes, you've guessed I live in the West
And there's not a dry day to be found.

By Kris

THE FLU

Today I have the flu and it is awful. My nose is running and is sore from wiping. My chest is sore and tight and I am coughing all the time. I can't sleep at night and I am tired in the mornings. If I don't get better soon I will have to go to the doctor. I hope the good weather comes soon. It will make me feel better.

By Mary

LISDOONVARNA

Lisdoonvarna is a health resort. It has sulphur, iron and magnesia waters. All the farmers came to Lisdoonvarna long ago when the harvest was saved. They would stay in guest houses for a week and sometimes two weeks, and drink the waters and take baths if they had rheumatism. In the morning they would go to Mass first and then go to the sulphur wells and drink hot sulphur water. They would then go back and have their breakfast. After breakfast they would go to the wells again and be dancing outside all day.

Today, the dancing is inside.

By Frank

DOWNTOWN

I like walking down town and I like looking in the shop windows. There are a lot of cars and trucks so I have to be careful crossing the road especially at Kelly's Corner. The cars go very fast there. I wish there were traffic lights on the corner.

By Bernadette

SHOPPING

I got a new jacket yesterday in Neylon's in the market. It's a good one for Sundays. It cost £49.50. It's dressy and the bit of beige shows it off. It's not Irish made, it's from Japan.

By Noel

MY BEST FRIEND

My best friend is Nancy. She lives in Shelbourne Park. She lives in a big house. I help her out with the house-keeping. She gives me tea and buns. I help her make the buns. If I'm in bad form she talks to me and cheers me up. I visit her every Saturday.

By Veronica

BARBIE'S

I was out on work experience for six weeks working in Barbie's Restaurant. I was doing waitressing and kitchen work. We were very busy in the Restaurant. I worked Wednesdays and Thursdays. The staff were very nice. We did breakfasts and lunches. I was doing the washing up in the kitchen. Barbie's is in the Market in Ennis and it is open seven days a week. I loved working in Barbie's, I got nice dinners.

By Anne Marie

END OF VIOLENCE IN THE BELFAST I LOVE

(Simply Said 1996)

I got up in the morning for some light breakfast. It was a dark winter's day. I decided to go shopping. I saw soldiers hiding in the doorways, guarding against city crime, dressed in camouflage style, with blackened faces.

There was a burst of gunfire and then the soldiers jumped up and shot back. I was shocked and I thought prayers for peace would be the only answer to the violence in my land.

By Paddy

MY VISIT TO DUBLIN

I got the bus from Shannon to Limerick and the train from Limerick to Dublin. My sister met me at the station. She had my favourite dinner ready for me, it was Shepherd's pie. On Saturday we went to town shopping. I love going to town, it is my favourite hobby.

We went for a drive on Sunday to Ground Blessington. It was a nice place. I had to come home on Sunday so I got the bus at 6.15 from Houston Station. I arrived in Ennis at 10.20. I really enjoyed my weekend in Dublin.

By Christy

MY COUSIN'S WEDDING

My cousin, Eileen, is getting married on the 3rd of September. She is going to marry Michael. I am invited to the wedding. The wedding is on in the Cathedral in Ennis. The reception is on in Jimmy Brohan's in Portumna. Elizabeth and Maggie are going to be her Bridesmaids. Jason and Pat are going to be the best men. The best men will wear white suits. The bridesmaids will wear dresses. All her family are going to the wedding.

By Pat

MY MUSIC

I like writing and tapes. I played a tape, it was rock and roll. I like the Spice Girls, Boyzone and Garth Brooks.

By Catherine

TWO LEGS, FOUR WHEELS

(Simply Said 1995)

I haven't got two heads, just four
wheels under me.

Don't mind the chair, look and be
amazed at what you see I can think.
listen and talk just like you.

Don't look at me or treat me like I
haven't got a clue.

I'm just like every young man I know.

Give me the chance to bloom and
show.

By Derek

MANCHESTER UNITED

My favourite team are Manchester United. They are the best team. They beat Leeds United on Monday night. The score was 3-0. Ryan Giggs scored a goal. Denis Irwin scored a penalty. David Beckham scored the third goal. I hope they win the Premiership next year. They are all good players on the team.

By Brian

READING AND WRITING

I am almost fifty two years of age. When I was twelve and a half I left school just about able to write my name. I did not know then that in time I was going to have problems.

When I was seventeen I went to England working on the building sites. I did not have to know how to read and write in this job. I have had a lot of good jobs in my time and in all of them I never had to read or write. Until one day my boss gave me a form to sign my name to it. I did sign it but I did not know that I had to sign it twice. I did not get time to read the form. I am slow to read so when she called me back to sign it again I did not know where to sign it.

One day I gave my boss a ring and I asked her would she call to see me.

She did call and I told her that I had a problem reading and writing. She said that she could get me help and she did. If you have got this problem you should talk to someone and get some help.

It was not easy telling my boss that I had this problem but I am glad I did. I am getting some help once a week and I look forward to it. I would like to thank my tutor for her time and her patience.

By Mike

MY WEEKEND

I went to the pub on Saturday night with my friends. On Sunday we went to Coole Park. I like to play tapes. I have tapes of Daniel O'Donnell, Brendan Shine and Foster and Allen.

By Ann

MY NEW JOB

I worked a year in the pottery plant. I liked my work. My workmates were great. My supervisor asked me if I would like a change, I said yes. I am now a salesperson in our craft shop in the Gort Road Centre. We sell what we make in our factory, i.e. spice-racks, toolboxes, table lamps, cushions, patch work quilts and all our pottery range.

I like to meet people and help them find what they want in the shop. I also use the cash register. I travel to work on the ET bus which is very reliable.

By Helen

JESSIE

My dog Jessie died five years ago but I still miss her. She was a golden white Labrador and all our family loved her very much. We had her for about fourteen years and we had great fun with her.

We used to throw a ball so she could run and catch it, then she would bring it back and we would have to throw it for her again.

When we went swimming at the beach she would come into the water with us, then shake water all over us when we were trying to get dry. She loved swimming.

One day she robbed a carton of milk from the neighbour's front door and

to be tied up for a while after that. Jessie had pups twice and we gave them away to good homes.

We now have a black Labrador called Daisy, and I love her: but I'm still sad when I remember Jessie.

By Leah



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