

# Weddings and Christenings at Star of the Sea



Grace and Orlaith Carey – parents Richard and Ria



Saoirse O'Reilly – parents Kieran And Louise



Maggie and Grace Trolan – parents Patrick And Brenda



Aoibhinn McCandless – parents Nigel and Donna ( and Brothers DJ and Joe)



Carl Patrick Brennan-Hough – parents Peter Hough and Sarah Brennan



Grace Dillon and Andrew McGlen (Grandmother Maura Clancy) 28th February

Cover Photo by: Aaron Doherty



**Inside this issue**  
**Suffer Little Children**  
**Camino de Santiago**  
**Synod of Bishops**  
**Fairways of Delight**

# Happy Easter



Just over two years ago, Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio had handed in his notice, picked out his retirement home and prepared to face the late autumn of his life. Then Pope Benedict surprised us all with his resignation. Cardinal Bergoglio entered the Consistory as Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Argentina and emerged, on 13th March, as Pope Francis. What we anticipated as a wind of change in the church has become a typhoon of energy and creativity. On his first Sunday as Pope his sermon was on the boundless mercy of God and how we could do well to be merciful. On his first Holy Thursday he washed the feet of young men and women (God bless you Cassie!) Christians and Muslims, in Rome's Casal del Marmo Juvenile detention centre. His first papal visit was to the tiny Italian island of Lampedusa, stopping off point for African migrant workers seeking a new life in Europe. "They are the flesh of Christ" he said strikingly. "God is rich in mercy" was the theme he picked for the 24 hours of prayer he asked for on the anniversary of his election this year. What happened to the man, when he had the landing gear deployed for a soft retirement? Pope Francis describes that on the night of his election he was blessed with such a powerful sense of the presence of God that he is not afraid and ready for any action. That sense has remained with him. Our God is a living God who makes his presence felt; sometimes gently in tender mercies, sometimes powerfully in surprisingly life-changing moments. He touches us so that we can change - and change often.

Father Austin

# Peace and Joy at Easter

Aaron's photograph of a blazing sky over the herring pond reminded me of Martin Luther King Jr's 'I have a Dream' speech where he refers to the red hills of Georgia. Fifty years after The Reverend King's historic "I Have a Dream" speech, his stirring words and writings remain as relevant and inspiring today as they were when he lived. His faith was strongly based in Jesus' commandment of loving your neighbour as yourself, loving your enemies, praying for them and blessing them. Truly taking to heart Jesus words from the Cross on Good Friday, "Forgive them father, for they know not what they do".

The team, Eugene, Adrian, Aaron and I thank our contributors and wish all parishioners a peaceful and happy Easter. We can be reached through Eugene, Outside the Chapel Gates, and the parish office, e.mail: portstewartparish.co.uk, telephone 70832534. Or contact me direct 70833042, e.mail: farren@myway.com.

Patricia Farren  
Editor

## I HAVE A DREAM

**Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968)**  
(delivered August 28, 1963)

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends. And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" — one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

# Holy Week in Portstewart

## PALM SUNDAY

Blessing of palms in lower Marian Hall followed by procession into church at all Masses.

**Monday**  
Morning Mass at 9.30am

**Tuesday**  
Morning Mass at 9.30am

**Wednesday**  
Morning Mass at 9.30am

## THE EASTER TRIDUUM

**Holy Thursday**  
Morning Prayer at 9.30am

Parishioners are invited to the Mass of the Oils at 11am in the Cathedral

Mass of the Lord's Supper 7.30pm

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament until 10.30pm

**Good Friday**  
Morning Prayer at 9.30am

Walk of Witness (inter-church) 2.00pm at the Harbour Hill

Liturgy (including Reading of the Passion, Veneration of the Cross and distribution of Holy Communion) at 3.00pm

Stations of the Cross at 7.00pm

**Holy Saturday**  
Morning Prayer at 9.30am

Easter Vigil at 9.00pm

**Easter Sunday**  
Masses at 9.00am and 11.00am

# The Synod of Bishops

The 10th of October last year saw an important moment in the Church's life when the Synod of Bishops opened in Rome. There are frequent gatherings of Bishops called by Rome but since the end of the 2nd Vatican Council in 1969, only two 'extraordinary' meetings have been called. This one was given a specific theme – marriage and the family. There seemed to some Bishops and theologians a worrying gap opening up between the lived experience of laity and church teaching on issues such as marriage and annulment, artificial methods of contraception, the Christian attitude towards homosexuality, or the pastoral care of divorced and remarried couples.

Who went to the Synod? In all, there were 253 participants. These included Bishops,

13 married couples who addressed the Bishops at the start of each of the sessions, theologians and experts, and observers. Of the 293, only 23 were women. Only 192 Bishops out of the total had voting rights and there were no votes for either lay or female attendees. Given the themes to be discussed, since women cannot become bishops or priests or deacons, yet surely have something to say, this could be considered as an opportunity lost!

Previous synods had been characterised by a lack of open dialogue between the Pope and the Curia, on the one hand, and the Bishops on the other. Benedict XVI had permitted only one hour of "free discussion" at the last Synod. Pope Francis had gone back to one of the key notions of Vatican 2 – that Pope and Bishops are collegial partners and that collegiality and openness should be evident. He insisted that discussion on these issues should be conducted "without fear". His question to the synod was "How can we propose with credibility the Good News on the family?" All the comment coming from the synod is unanimous that the discussion has indeed been open, frank and fraternal, and that bishops are speaking from their pastoral experience rather than their academic studies.

So what has emerged about the deliberations of the bishops? One striking shift has emerged in the image of the Church. Some bishops have argued that, rather than see the Church as a shining beacon of truth, attracting the faithful, it is better to see it as a torch accompanying the faithful on their faith journey – a shift that has made some bishops uneasy.

On marriage itself, there has been discussion of the differing contexts facing the integrity of Christian marriage.

There was a lengthy discussion about the timely access of married couples to annulment processes – hugely

problematic in the light of the Pope's claim last year that half of marriages are invalid because of poor understanding of the reality of Christian marriage. On the vexed question of communion for divorced or remarried couples, it was the German and Austrian bishops who were more forceful in demanding that mercy rather than law should prevail. Communion, it was claimed, is not a reward for the perfect but a support for those in imperfect marriages or on their faith journey.

What caused considerable interest even in the secular press was the change of tone and content in discussing church attitudes towards homosexuality. Gay couples were seen as having "gifts and qualities to offer to the Christian community" and should be able to hope to experience in our churches "a welcome home" – so said the interim report of the discussions half-way through the synod.

What of the final report of the synod? The report condensed the discussions into 62 paragraphs. Each paragraph was voted upon and required a two-thirds majority for endorsement. Pope Francis insisted that the voting figures for each paragraph should be published. Let me give two examples. On the giving of communion to divorced and remarried couples, a majority of the bishops – 104 – voted for it, with 74 against it, short of the two-thirds voting requirement. On the text on homosexuality reproduced above 118 bishops voted for it, with 62 against it – close but not quite the required support. Cardinal Vincent Nichols indicated that he thought some of the No votes were from bishops who thought the text did not go far enough!

Previous synods had been heavily scripted in advance; this extraordinary synod began with no script at all. It has however created a rich one for October 2015 when the bishops return to these issues. It is too simple to think that the battle is between progressives and traditionalists. The Pope gave a final address to the synod on 18 October. He preferred to speak of those in the church who refuse to be "surprised by God" as against those who are still open to the need to learn. He welcomed that competing views expressed in the synod on difficult issues on marriage and the family will engage the church over the next year. It is thus very much a work in progress for next October.

He closed with the following words: "Dear brothers and sisters, now we still have one year to mature, with true spiritual discernment, the proposed ideas and to find concrete solutions to so many difficulties and innumerable challenges that families must confront". Pope Francis is clearly allowing the same Spirit which blew through the Second Vatican Council to blow afresh on all in the church over the next year.



Terry O'Keefe

# Fairways Of Delight

In the summer of 1951 a large slice of golfing history was made in Portrush. It had been chosen as the venue for the Open Championship, the oldest and most prestigious fixture in world golf. It was the first, and still is today, the only time the Championship has been played on a links course outside the British mainland. The good news is that the R and A, the Open's governing body, has confirmed that it will be staged again in Portrush, probably in 2019.

In 1951 I was a young teenager keenly interested in golf so I was really looking forward to seeing some of the world's top players in action over the famous Dunluce championship links. Top of my list, of course, was local hero Fred Daly who had won the Open at Hoylake in 1947 and would be bidding to win it again in his home town.

Over the three days of that historic Championship I remember seeing not only Fred Daly in action but also players like Bobby Locke, endeavouring to claim his third Open title in a row; Henry Cotton, Dai Rees and a youthful Peter Alliss, making his debut as a professional and, of course, the winner, Max Faulkner.

I was somewhere in the crowd gathered around the last green at Royal Portrush – there was no tiered seating then – when the stylish and flamboyant Faulkner rolled in his last putt to win that historic

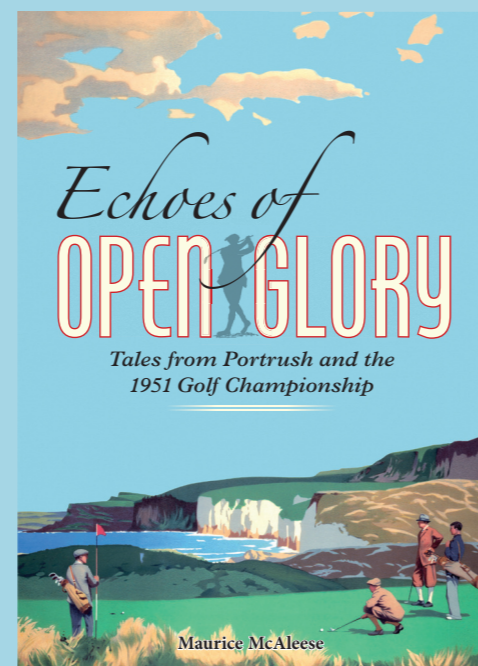
Championship. I don't remember if, in his moment of triumph, he threw the ball into the crowd as often happens on such occasions, providing a coveted souvenir for some lucky spectator. The ball was a Dunlop 65 with the number 2 stamped on it. I know this because along with a multi-autographed copy of the official programme, it now forms part of a unique private collection not only of golfing memorabilia but also many other items of local history interest.

Niall O'Boyle is a member of Portstewart Golf Club, where the Open's qualifying rounds were played, and believe it or not, the prized exhibit in that collection of his is the very shoes that Max Faulkner was wearing when he strode so majestically over the Dunluce links and into the history books that day in 1951. It's a fascinating story and thanks to Niall I have been able to include it in the book.

I am very pleased also that I managed to obtain an "exclusive" little input from Peter Alliss, one of the competitors in that 1951 Open. As a commentator, he is very much regarded today as the "golden voice of golf" and he responded positively to my request for some of his memories when, as a 21-year-old, he was just setting out on his distinguished career as a professional. He remembers Max Faulkner as "a very flamboyant character who brought a touch of colour to our very dull lives."

As well as having a focus on what happened on and off the course in that celebrated Championship, "Echoes of Open Glory" touches on some of the not so well known aspects of the Royal and Ancient game in this small corner of the world. When not weaving in and out of some of those old fairways, I have endeavoured to give what I hope is an illuminating glimpse of life in Portrush, where I was born and grew up, in that exciting mid-twentieth century period.

Maurice McAleese



# Saint Colum's Bowling Club



You just need two bowls to play! So why not come along and have a go! And don't worry the Club bowls are available for use. Our Club started 45 years ago in Saint Colum's school hall, then moved to the Town Hall, and in 2001 we finally took up residence in the Parish Centre. 'Rinks Nights' on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 7 to 10 pm, are for general practise and fun (along with a cup of tea). We have 22 members consisting of men and women of all ages (you are never too old or too young). Four of our members are juniors, two of whom are moving on to University next year – two very good players we are sorry to lose. We wish them both every success in their careers. We belong to the Coleraine and District League and play matches against seven local clubs – usually once a week – this year we won the League, so we will celebrate the occasion at the end of the season. Do come and bowl away the winter nights, it's a good way to keep fit.

Peggie Mestrusty

# A short walk on the Camino de Santiago, or "The Way of Saint James"

Ever since we saw the Martin Sheen film "The Way" it has been one of our "must do" items to explore "The Way". The opportunity to do so arose when our family arranged a long weekend for us in Santiago de Compostella as part of our fiftieth wedding anniversary celebrations. A research of "The Way" or "the Camino de Santiago", as it is called, told us that it began with the belief that the Apostle, Saint James, who is the patron Saint of Spain, was buried in the land of Galicia, in the North West of Spain and his relics are now venerated in the Cathedral in Santiago.

People come from every corner of the world to walk the Camino with the most popular way being the French Wa. It starts from Saint Jean Pied-du-Pont on the French side of the Pyrennes, and finishes in Santiago de Compostella in Northern Spain, a distance of about 800 km or nearly 500 miles. Most pilgrims, as the walkers and cyclists are called, have neither the time nor the energy to complete this long walk in one "go" but they can select a stage of about 100 km and walk this as part of an organised and guided tour, completion of which entitles you to your "Compostella Certificate". Others like ourselves who may only have a few days to explore and experience "The Way" select a few short walks where you can meet up with other pilgrims who are on the last stage of their walk and share a little of what they have experienced, endured or enjoyed as the case may be.

We left Dublin on Saturday 4th October, 2014 and flew to Santiago with Aer Lingus and checked into our hotel. We stayed in the Parador, in Obradoiro Square. The hotel has its own unique history. Santiago's royal hospital, as it was known, in days gone by was ordered to be built by the catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella to give aid and provide shelter to pilgrims who triumphed over the last stage of the way of St. James to the tomb of the Apostle. Since its founding the monument has assumed many other functions; acting as a hostel, a hospital for the poor, and an orphanage for foundling children. Over the century's, generations of physicians trained in its rooms, others in the art of pharmacy and chemistry, always with the aim of providing greater wellbeing for the sick.

Our first full day was Sunday and early that morning we mingled with the pilgrims who had finished their walk and gathered in Obradoiro Square which is overlooked by the Cathedral. They had come from all over the world and each had a different story to tell when asked what brought them here. Some had previously felt spiritually fatigued, while others wanted to try something different that might re- kindle their desire to be near God, but all agreed it had been worthwhile and fulfilling and they had no hesitation in recommending everyone to do some part of the walk, no matter how short. We met some friends from Sligo, including a past pupil of St. Colum's primary school, Frank Doherty, now living in Belfast, who sends his regards to Donal Henry, a class mate of many years ago.

Mass for the pilgrims is at 12 noon in the Cathedral every day and one of the features after mass is the swinging of the giant thurible through the air inches above the heads of the congregation with incense pouring out of it, a real test of faith for those who sat under it.

A popular last stage of "the way" is from Rua to Santiago via Lavacolla and Monte del Gozo a distance of 19 km, so after mass on Sunday we made our way to Monte del Gozo with the sun shining on our back. From "the mount of joy" you can see your final destination - the Cathedral of Santiago - ,

and after a descent to this UNESCO World Heritage Site you can only but marvel at the architecture and enjoy the atmosphere in this cultural and spiritual mecca. The walk was memorable for meeting up with other pilgrims and sharing all the trials and tribulations that they endured and enjoyed on their travels. This shorted the journey and whetted our appetite for a longer walk the following day. The next day, Monday, we made our way to Lavacolla by public transport and walked back through woodlands, farmlands, sleepy villages following tracks and paths lined by stone walls and eucalyptus trees lining quiet country roads, only this time it rained the whole day. Again meeting others pilgrims and seeing how unaware and unconcerned they were about the weather had a contagious effect on us and we seemed to be oblivious of the rain for nearly 5 hours.

"The Way" is very well sign posted right through the countryside and the city with the oyster shell, which is peculiar to the area and has become the symbol of the Camino de Santiago, is on the sign posts and embedded in the foot paths all the way. The local people are also very familiar with the pilgrims and are very helpful with directions, if required.

Next day, Tuesday, we packed up and flew back to Dublin and yes it was raining but there was no feel good factor this time, so we knew we were home.

Colette and Hugh Mullan.



# Outside the Chapel Gates

With Eugene Kelly

## Friends of Loreto

Loreto College Coleraine

85th Anniversary Ball

14<sup>th</sup> March 2015

Tullyglass House Hotel  
Ballymena



To celebrate the 85th anniversary of Loreto College The Friends of Loreto Committee was set up to help raise funds for the upgrading and integration of the original beautiful Convent and Chapel into the fabric of the school. This process commenced with a very successful fund raising gala dinner held in Tullyglass Hotel in Ballymena. The gala was attended by over 500 patrons including many past pupils, staff and supporters of the school. The Friends of Loreto look forward to the continued support to improve the facilities in the school for our children and future generations. We wish then every success in their efforts to maintain the values promoted by the current and future guardians of Loreto College. (Picture of programme for Gala Night)

**Oops!**  
Science Exam answers:  
Q: Name the four seasons  
A: Salt, pepper, mustard and vinegar

Q: How do you delay milk turning sour?  
A: Keep it in the cow  
Mothers are right eleven times out of ten.

## St Colum's Pre-school

Children, staff and parents from St. Colum's Pre-school Centre visited Portstewart Library on the 5th March to celebrate World Book Day. The children dressed up as their favourite character from a book and donated money to raise funds for Book Aid International. They thoroughly enjoyed being read some stories by librarian Bernadette Kennedy.



## Dominican College Saint Vincent de Paul

Congratulations to Dominican College in establishing a youth conference of Saint Vincent de Paul in the school. The College have been very supportive of the local conference here in Portstewart over the past number of years with financial assistance and the provision of toys and hampers at Christmas. Through their efforts many people in the community have been helped when in need. The ethos of giving to those in need is alive and well Dominican through the development of their social justice programme. St Mary's Conference thank you for your continued support.

# Suffer Little Children

Forty years ago I started work with Social Services before moving to work for the NSPCC, so, for most of my working life I was involved in protecting children. The changes in that time have been amazing - the first guidelines published in Northern Ireland about protecting children came out shortly after I started work in 1977. There were sections on physical abuse, emotional abuse and neglect but nothing about sexual abuse because it was not recognised as a significant problem. At the time there was no language available to talk about sexual abuse. Some mothers talked to me about their own abuse and, when they tried to tell, being accused of making up horrendous and disgusting lies. There was also great ambivalence about physical abuse - we once discovered a boy's legs covered with welts from being hit with a stick and a belt and the local police sergeant excused the father to me by noting that the man had only done this because his son had told him lies.

In recent years, we have followed many terrible cases on the TV and in the papers - Ian Huntley in Soham, Madeleine McCann, cases involving priests, celebrities,

allegations of harsh treatment and worse in children's homes, and now paedophile gangs who prey on children. All of these are heinous crimes which need to be pursued, prevented and the children protected. However, I often think that the media highlight these stories because they are the most extreme examples, they represent the worst nightmares for parents and they represent the dangers to our children from people "out there". In a strange way, this makes them "safe" for us to think about because they present child abusers as monsters and people different from us.

We worry about the dangers to children from people outside the family but we do not want to think about the dangers within. We all see the family as the secure, loving setting in which our children can grow up safely and learn. However, we try not to think about the flaws that we also create. Any physical

abuse of a child which occurs will be in that same loving family.

While bullying or negative experiences outside the family can have an impact, most emotional abuse takes place within it. And, because families have the duty to care for children neglect can only be neglected by the family. In our country, that often

happens when one or both parents develops a drink problem or a drug problem. One of the things that we find difficult to understand is that many parents who fail or abuse their children in some way also love them dearly. In some of the families where I was involved in taking the children into care the mother was intensely devoted to them but was so damaged herself from her own childhood treatment that she could not provide consistent, loving care. In those families, removing the child was often an extremely distressing experience for everybody. The great difficulty lay in looking past their good intentions and making a judgement on whether the child's care was acceptable. Partly because we idealise mothers, we can be overly-critical of those who fail to meet all our expectations. And even now, we tend to expect much less of the fathers and not to see child-rearing as equally shared between them.

My main plea after forty years in social work is that we try not to think of the abuse of children as something perpetrated by monsters out there. Instead, let us recognise that we will all fall short as parents and all need help to bring up our children as they deserve to be brought up. Hilary Clinton said that it takes a village to bring up a child - nurses, doctors, teachers, grandparents and so on. We should all be ready to offer help to parents and to be willing to recognise that sometimes, even when a mother or father is doing their best, the care they are able to provide is not good enough and they may need outside support. Usually, that will be provided by family and friends.

Occasionally, they may have to call on Social Services and, if so, the social workers' first aim will be to support and keep the child in the family by helping the parents cope better.

Seamus O'Hara



# Travelling Service

The annual travelling service, when we share our Christian beliefs with other denominations, was once again a very rewarding and uplifting experience. And, it was pleasing to come together afterwards and share greetings over a cup of tea in the Town Hall. We look forward to renewing friendships when we meet again.



(Left to right)  
 Marion McCauley Church of Ireland  
 Helen Davies Presbyterian  
 Colette Mullen Roman Catholic  
 Kelly McWilliams Methodist



(Left to right)  
 Reverend Fr Austin McGirr St Mary's Star of the Sea  
 The Reverend Terry Laverty Presbyterian Church  
 The Reverend Lee Glennly Methodist Church  
 The Reverend Stephen Fielding Agherton Parish Church

# The Bailout explained in 250 words

It is a slow day in an Irish village. The rain beating down, the place deserted. Times are tough. A rich German tourist stops at the local hotel and lays a €100 note on the desk, telling the owner he wants to inspect the rooms upstairs in order to pick one for the night.

The owner gives him a set of keys and, as soon as the German has walked upstairs, the hotelier grabs the €100 note and runs next door to pay his debt to the butcher. The butcher takes the €100 note jumps into his car and goes to pay his debt to a farmer. The farmer takes the €100 note and heads off to pay his bill with the shopkeeper for food supplies. The shopkeeper takes the €100 note and runs to pay his drinks bill at the pub. The publican slips the money along to a salesman drinking at the bar. The salesman then rushes to the hotel and pays his room bill with the €100 note. The hotel proprietor then places the €100 note back on the counter so the rich German will not suspect anything. The German then comes down the stairs, picks up the €100

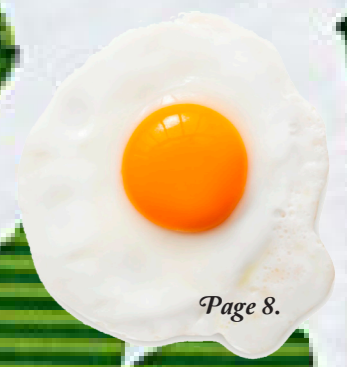
note, states that the rooms are not satisfactory, pockets the money, and leaves town. No one produced anything. No one earned anything. However, the whole village is now out of debt and looking to the future with a lot more optimism.



# The BIG BREAKFAST

Eoghan Rua's 'Big Irish Breakfast' on St Patrick's Day morning in the Star of the Sea Parish Centre was another great success. All morning long they kept coming to enjoy the entertainment and indeed the food. There was a real buzz about the place, the atmosphere was tremendous throughout the morning. The club wishes to thank all for their support of this event. Richard Carey is captured on camera helping out, while Frances McLernon dishes up the hot dogs.

Kevin Mullan



# Congratulations

TO ALL OF US WHO  
Survived being born to mothers who  
smoked and drank while they carried  
US

Lived in houses made of asbestos  
Put us in cots painted with lead paint.  
We had no childproof lids on medicine  
bottles, bleach or weed killer  
We rode bikes without helmets  
Rode in cars without seat belts or air  
bags

Hitched rides on the backs of tractors  
Jumped on and off moving busses  
And survived  
Shops were closed on Sundays  
And we didn't starve

We drank milk straight from the cow  
And water from the garden hose  
Washed our faces with carbolic soap  
And our hair in Rinso

Sunbathed soaked in olive oil  
We ate our fill of white bread and real  
butter and drank tea with two spoons  
of sugar, and we weren't overweight  
because.....

**WE WERE ALWAYS OUTSIDE  
PLAYING!!**

Where we fell out of trees  
And off walls  
Broke our bones and our teeth  
And sued nobody  
Only girls wore earrings  
We slept three-to-a-bed  
Got pellet guns for Christmas presents  
from our parents  
Jumped into rivers  
And out windows  
We had no Playstations

No Nintendo  
Nor DVDs  
No mobile phones  
No personal computers  
**BUT WE HAD FRIENDS**

We knew freedom  
Tasted failure  
Savored success  
Assumed responsibility

**LEARNED HOW TO DEAL WITH IT ALL**  
Our generation has produced some of  
the best risk-takers, problem solvers  
and inventors ever!  
If YOU lived through it all!

**CONGRATULATIONS!**

And while you are at it, forward a copy of this  
to your adult children so they will know just  
how brave their parents were.

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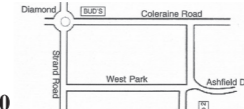
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