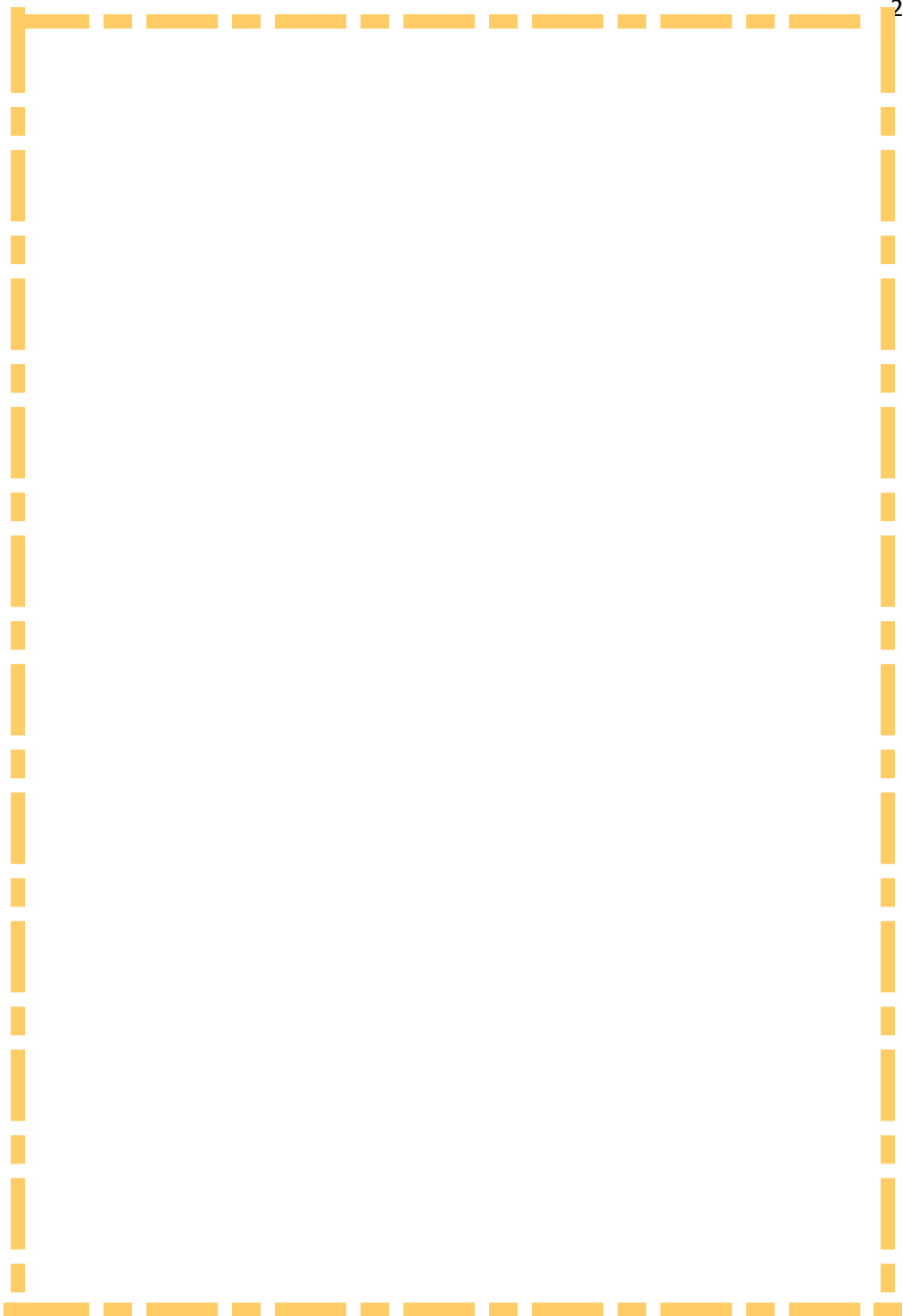


Our Best Days:
A Collection of Stories
written by
Traveller Women in Donegal





You can listen to the audio of this book by opening your camera on your smart phone and holding it in front of the QR code below. It will give you the option to open the link, which will take you to the recording of these stories.



Acknowledgements

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This project would not have been possible without the collective hard work, creativity and dedication of the Traveller women who wrote these stories.

First Day at School **by Caroline Mongan**

Today I got my son ready for school.

It was his first day.

He was very good going in.

He loved it.

He loved playing with other kids.

I was the opposite.

I was very anxious.

I am not used to being without him.

However,

as I watched him play

with the other kids,

I was so happy for him.

I felt joy

that he was mixing

with other kids.



Daisy Chains and Marbles by Geraldine McDonagh

When we were small,
we went to mass
every Sunday.

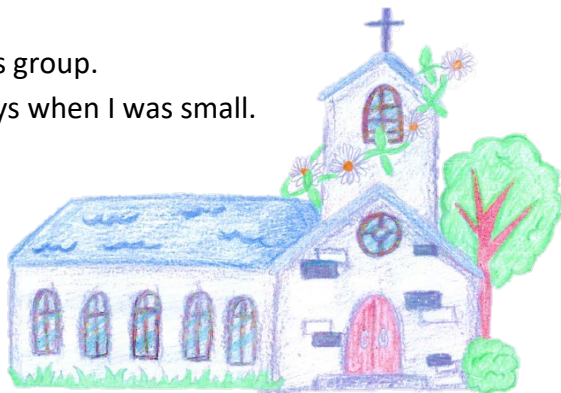
After,
the girls would make daisy chains,
the boys would play marbles.

Today,
my girls make chains,
the boys play football.

Today,
I will go to the women's group.
I will chat about the days when I was small.
I will have a cup of tea.

After,
I will go home.
I will put on the dinner.
I will wait for the kids
to come back from school

Then,
I will help them with their homework and
we will spend family time together.



The Horse Fair by Alanna McGinley

On our best day,
we took our little family
to Ballinasloe Horse Fair.

Daddy and Grandad
then went to the field
and bought our baby girl
a pony.

It was a bright and sunny day.
There were lots of horses
in the field.

The pony
we decided to buy
was brown and white.
It was really small.
My daughter called her pony Fluffy.

We took photos
of my little girl on the pony
with her daddy.
Then we took the pony home
in a horse box.



The next year
we took our little boy
to the horse fair.

He was only small.
He loved looking at all the horses.
He was so excited
when they galloped up past him.

Our little girl
and our little boy
laughed so much
while Mammy looked at the stalls
and bought some lovely bits.

The sound of horses was loud.
The colours on the stalls
were all different.

We go back to Ballinasloe Horse Fair
every year
with our little family.



Frilly White Socks by Eimear McGinley

Mammy,
Daddy
and baby girl
have gone off to walk
the streets of Galway.
The sun was splitting the rocks,
it was a beautiful day.

There were people singing
on the streets of Galway
as we laughed, giggled
and made up stories.

Mammy had bought baby girl
the most stunning dress.
As we walked by the shops,
baby girl loved the dress
Mammy and Daddy had bought her.

As we walked back to our camper,
baby girl laughed and giggled
the whole way there.

Baby girl loved her
big baby pink dress
with her
frilly white socks.



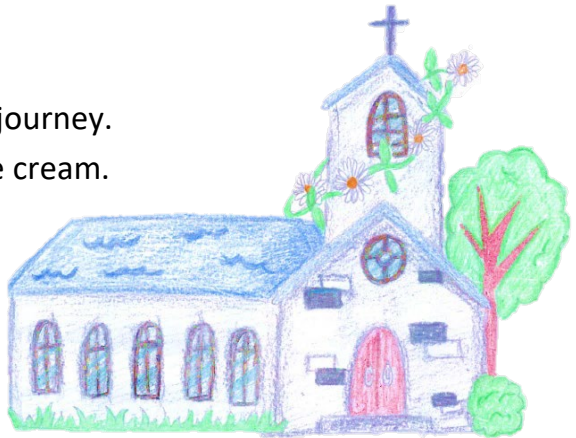
My First Communion Day by Maureen Friel

On my First Communion Day
I felt like a real princess,
wearing a shiny white dress.

My Mammy and Daddy
took me and my sisters
to buy a family pet horse.
I made five punt for my communion.
I felt so rich.

The sun was shining.
Daddy stopped
half-way through the journey.
I bought my sisters ice cream.
We sat on the rocks
listening to the sea
on the shore road.

Afterwards,
we continued our journey.
We arrived at our destination.
We were all so excited.
We saw this beautiful pony
with a white marking on her face
in the field
come running up to us.



We were all so happy.
We called her Lady,
because we just came out of mass.
After me making my communion,
we thought the name would be special.

Lady was too young
to take away from her mother.
Daddy went up a few weeks later
to collect her.

Lady came to be
a massive part of our lives.
Lady is now 30 years old.
We still have her.
She has become
my daddy's best friend.



My Communion Day by Chantelle Ward

On my communion day,
I made it with my brother.
I was excited to be wearing
my white dress.

After we made our communion,
Daddy and Mummy
brought us to KFC for food
and people came in
and gave us money.

When we got home,
we had a party and
all the family was there.
The children were out
on the bouncy castle.



Travelling On the Road by Kaitlin O'Reilly

I came from a family of 21
and I was the youngest girl.
I had 11 sisters
and 10 brothers.

We used wattles to make
our tents to stay in.
We travelled by Barrel Top wagons
to get about all over Tipperary.

We used sally rods to play
and running through the fields
using our imagination.

We used sticks
to light the campfire
and cooked on the outside
of the campfire.



Mum and the older girls
would cook, while the younger ones
and boys would get sticks
or water the pony with dad.

We didn't have much
and we used candles for light.

Granny's House by Maria Boyle

When I was a little girl, our Mammy and Daddy would take us to visit our Granny's house.

I was always happy and excited to see Granny.

She was the kindest and most loving lady.

I was also excited to see our aunties and uncles.

I would especially be happy to see our cousins, because we would all go outside to play together.

There was always at least ten of us cousins.

There was a big green, which we called 'Granny's Green', where we would play lots of different games.

There was hopscotch, tig, kirby, red rover, mummies and daddies, hide and seek and doctors.

We also loved racing on our bikes together.

Hours of fun would pass by quickly.

Then we would all come back in when we saw the streetlights come on in the evening.

It would then be time to go home with Mammy and Daddy for supper time



Illustrations by Pamela Cullotty and Kyle Quill.

DTP



**Comhairle Contae
Dhún na nGall**
Donegal County Council



**Adult
Literacy
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Có-mhaoinithe ag an
Aontas Eorpach

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