Golden Moments

Sun-soaked Morning

Seeing Listening Being

Ross Grant



DRUMCONDRA TRIANGLE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION POETRY GINKO WITH ANNE TANNAM

DCU Ollscoil Chathair Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City University

INTRODUCTION



“As part of the wonderful Bookmarked Initiative run by DCU and funded by DCC, a Poetry Ginko through the Drumcondra Triangle was organised for Saturday, May 10th 2025. Everyone was invited: locals, staff and students. Chris Moran from the Drumcondra Triangle Residents Association (DTRA), a man a bit obsessed with local history, shared with us marvellous historical tidbits, inspiring a flurry of haikus and poems at each of our stops along the way. We ordered glorious sunshine, which arrived early, and the Triangle basked in its golden glow. We had the best time ever, sauntering between stops, waving at neighbours, sitting on kerbs to scribble furiously in our notebooks, and sharing the haikus and poems that poured forth from our pens. We all agreed we were creative geniuses. And exceptionally good-looking too. And if that wasn’t enough, when the time for poetry and local history came to an end, we were invited into Claire McAdam’s home, chairperson of the DTRA, and were plied with drinks and all manner of goodies. And we got to meet her gorgeous daughter, Astrid, too. The perfect end to the loveliest of mornings.

There were many beautiful words written over the course of our Ginko, and this Ginklet (which is not a made-up word, promise) is a celebration of those words, accompanied by photos taken during our walk”

Anne Tannam, 2025

POETRY GINKO

Originating in Japan, a Poetry Ginko refers to a meditative walk or stroll, typically in nature, that inspires the writing of haiku poetry.

The walk took in 5 stops over a short distance between Home Farm Road and Griffith Park. At each stop, we enjoyed some local history to help prompt discussion and poetic inspiration.

There was chatting, there was writing, there were fascinating tidbits about the history of the area, and there were tea and biscuits and other lovely goodies!

Poets:

Angela Boyle Shafer (ABS)

Ross Grant (RG)

Jonathan Saint (JS)

Shona Keeshan (SK)

Chris Moran (CM)

Gayle Ralph (GR)

Conn Flynn (CF)

Dominic Gallagher (DG)

Jennifer Curran (JC)

Anne Tannam (AT)

CORPUS CHRISTI PARISH HALL

MADELEINE DWYER

At the explicit bequest of an ailing Madeline Dwyer, 43 Rathgar Road, the Corpus Christi Parish Hall was built in 1968 from significant monies left *'towards the cost of erecting a Parochial Hall for the benefit of [it's] parishioners'* [the last Will and Testament of Madeleine Dwyer, 1962]. The following note accompanied her Will.

"*The Testatrix was in bed .. and had difficulty in writing owing to physical disability. The small mark near the Signature was caused by her pen slipping*"

The grocer's daughter from Rathmines, sister of two Reverends and a Mother Superior, Madeleine gifted to the community of Drumcondra a space where *'anything from a revolution to a Sale-of-Work could be plotted and planned'* [Evening Herald 9th Jan 1969].
At the opening of the Hall on Wednesday 8th January 1969, the then parish priest Canon Gallen proclaimed that the hall was 'for the use of EVERYBODY in this parish. Nobody is excluded' he declared, echoing the spirit of Madeleine's bequest just days ahead of the 7th anniversary of her passing.

The Parish Hall closed its doors in 2021 after 53 years of active community use, enjoyed by a huge variety of local groups and our local primary school Corpus Christi. Following planned renovation works and a lengthy community campaign, the Hall is due to reopen in 2025/26 restoring Madeleine Dwyer's legacy.

Nestled in the leafy green
shuttered hall lies in the shadow
a woman's will must prevail (ABS)

Paying homage
55 Years later
Madeliene Dwyer
standing in the space
you bequeathed to us (RG)

A dozen walking
in blue skies and history
poetry in us (JS)

Metronome chirping, hovering car
comfortable shade in the park
the school stands quiet
and the playground draws breath
birch and chestnut settled and soft
a new Pope wakes for Day Two (JS)

The small mark was done
"Cross my heart and hope to die"
by her pen slipping (CM)

Lane to the home farm
a shadow under tarmac
hidden history (SK)

The fields lie fallow
layered in time, urban sprawl.
church grounds grassy green (SK)

Madeline Dwyer
what a lady
to inspire (DG)

**Arc of Dome, mint green
chestnut candles light, dark church
chaffinch pews, Irish yew** (**CF**)

**Forget-me-nots grow
and Autumn waits patiently
for twirls and laughter** (**JC**)

**Chris woos with his words
Madeline Dwyer remembered
acknowledged at last** (**AT**)

129 FERGUSON ROAD

GERTRUDE COLLEY MURPHY

On Easter Monday 1916, Jane Colley took her daughter into her arms, kissed her and told her to go and do her duty for her country. 22 year old Gertie Colley, was a member of the Fairview Branch of Cumann na mBan and was mobilised with instructions to report to the G.P.O. Within the garrison Gertie recalled '*men of all walks in life, unshaven, unwashed and all so serious*' turning to prayer with the '*girls with rosary beads hanging around their necks all of the time*'. In peril they prayed:

"O queen of paradise, mother and maiden,
mirror of graces, of angels and saints,
I place the custody of my soul in your hands.
O Mary don't refuse me and I'll be safe"

On Friday, a column of smoke rose from the GPO after the roof caught fire and the Volunteers abandoned their efforts to stop the flames taking hold, burning downwards, floor after floor. Under direct orders from Patrick Pearse, Gertie led the first group to evacuate out of the burning GPO, carrying a flag with a Red Cross insignia up Henry Street from where they were placed under a military escort and marched to the Broadstone Railway station. They were given tea and biscuits and interviewed about events in the GPO before being given a signed pass allowing Gertie to return home to her mother Jane.
Gertie went on to marry Jack Murphy and have eight children, living at 129 Ferguson Road from the 1930s until the 1970s. She was involved in the anti- conscription and Anti-Treaty movements and fought successfully to have her 1916 military service recognised.

G.P.O, tea and biscuits
bullets fly, walls fall
Gertrude's dream a nation born (CF)

Brave bloodied bodies
I wince on shattered glass
bring me the red flag (JC)

Poor Gertie stumbles
across a shattered pale head
decapitated (AT)

This is where we walk
through one hundred years of scéil
little do we know (JS)

Standing on the hill
birds cheeping, lone dog barking
while the park waits (JS)

Saturday walkers
both alone and together
striding in rhythm (JS)

Ascend Ferguson
pause —city panorama
raise flag in salute (SK)

That girl with the flag!
mirror of graces, angels and saints
O Mary don't refuse her (CM)

129 Ferguson
house stands quiet—
she hid dreams and rebel notes
since 1916, she waits
Gertrude in the walls (GR)

129 Ferguson
Gertrude watched flames rise
from this porch, hope and gunfire
Dublin in her bones (GR)

Standing in the Shadows
where you once lived
trees whisper sorrows
of bygone days
facing grave danger
obeying Pearse's order
you marched on
in defiant defence
for dear Ireland's freedom (RG)

Atop quiet road
hidden revolution starts
girl with a flag roars (ABS)

42 O'DALY ROAD

HARRY BRAINE

In 1929 Harry Braine, the engineer, photographer, inventor, radio personality and sometime magician became the first resident of 42 O'Daly Road. Harry Junior, the owner of Braine and Sons Garages on Binns Bridge was a senior member of the National Photographic Society of Ireland and entertained their members with his lectures including the exhibit *'With A Camera on the Continent'* showcasing his time in pre-war Holland, Belgium and Germany.

In the 1940s he founded the Dublin Amateur Camera Club, *'to fill a vacancy in Irish artistic life'* and *'for the benefit of all amateur photographers'* and his 1940s *'Behind the Scenes'* show, captured the off-moments of leading stage celebrities from pantomime, variety and grand opera.
'Look at the girls' said Harry of one of his photographs to visitors of the exhibit. '*They have got so used to me that I had to ask them to put some more clothes on to let me take that picture!'*
Hundreds of Harrys photographs were donated to the National Folklore Collection at University College Dublin which captured the rapid and fundamental cultural changes Ireland was experiencing between 1935 and 1970. *"So well-timed are certain shots, that you feel as if you've simply walked into the frame of a moment in motion"* describes UCD Cultural and Heritage Collection.

Harry Braine's photographs appear in the National Photographic Archive, Dublin City Archive and the UCD Folklore Collection. Many were donated after his death in 1949 at the age of 54, their creator misattributed.

An early adapter, steeped in creating
capturing moments in motion
a thousand words couldn't
leaving a legacy time capsule
captured forever (RG)

Braine and Sons, bright sparks
cocktails, cameras for all
captured worlds, timeless (ABS)

Harry
Spanner in one hand
lens in the other he caught
light beneath the grease (GR)

Harry Braine
with brains to burn
his photos shine a light
into the soul (DG)

Harry Braine took the photographs
Maurice Curtin took the fame.
Let posterity ring it clear
that both should own the claim.
Harry Braine the modernist
of bikes and motorcars
photographs and radiograms
in his attic below the stars.
The camera was still developing
the bicycle only new
but Harry took them in this stride
he led the chosen few.
Here we stand a century later
on O'Daly Road
hearing of this man at last
exactly where he strode. (JS)

Boundless energy, bright mind
ideas travel
wolves fleece, narrow aperture (CF)

A bright shining sun
we gather to capture home
sweet spring smiles - in time (JC)

Snapshot of a man
brains to burn, an artist's eye
name hidden from view (AT)

Lily and Harry
slurp oysters at Clogherhead
lazy summer days (AT)

Inspiration calls
reaching into the future
stories uncovered (SK)

35 FLEMING ROAD

JACK MAGUIRE

Of the writing of songs and the making of music there is no end, but it is not given to everyone to be able to write a song and compose appropriate accompanying music.
A young Dubliner out-of-work, however, appears to be the happy possessor of this providential gift. He is Jack Maguire, aged 22 years of 35 Fleming Road, Drumcondra, Dublin. He has composed a song entitled 'That Little Blue-Eyed Baby of Mine' [Dublin Evening Mail 6th October 1932]

So wrote the Dublin Evening Mail ahead of that night's performance in the Theatre Royal, a venue which in its many incarnations had hosted international stars including a young Charlie Chaplin, Judy Garland, Nat King Cole, Bob Hope and Bill Haley and the Comets and in 1932, Fleming Road's own Jack Maguire.

Supported by Hal Swain and his jazz ensemble, the Irish Press reported that *'Mr Maguire took nine curtains and sang four encores and it was several minutes after his final box before the audience ceased calling for him'*
When the curtain fell fame must have seemed within touching distance for young Jack. Sadly, it appears it was not to be.

Sympathizing with a plea for advice from a budding composer published in the Evening Mail in 1943, Jack, now 11 years on since that fateful night, dashed the 'Songsters' creative hopes and dreams with the brutal words:
'The best thing to do is to forget all about songwriting. Except for the favoured few, it is a waste of time'
Both the singer and the song remain elusive to this day and so the search continues for Fleming Road's own 'Little Blue-Eyed Baby of Mine'.

James Maguire died in 1962, the same year that the Theatre Royal which held such promise for him, was demolished.

Blue-eyed baby
floating in the womb
waiting to be discovered (RG)

Jack Maguire, forsook the choir
wrote a song he hoped would shine
at Theatre Royale, he performed it in style
to encores and ovations nine
yet his dream would fade, a career in shade
Jack's stars would not align
and at such cost, for the song is lost
now all that's left is a line
the title we know, but it's all we can show
That Blue-eyed Baby of Mine (JS)

Songbirds serenade in sunshine
a blue-eyed baby lost in time
Poems sing new life and joy
a soul stirs, awakened by rhyme (SK)

Please play it again
Little Blue-Eyed Baby of Mine
reminds us of you (CM)

Jack Maguire
nice to know
he did a show
in Theatre Royal
torn down
for Hawkins House
a monstrosity!! (DG)

Theatre Royal
ornate, stately edifice
demolished dream (CF)

Poor blue-eyed baby
you know the hand will hold you
please don't lose the light (JC)

Nothing is wasted
we transform your sad story
into a new song (AT)

10 FERGUSON ROAD

THE STANIFORTHS

How strange is must have felt for Teresa Staniforth, the first resident of number 10 Ferguson Road to settle in one place for the rest of her days. She, like her father, her sister Emily, her husband and three of her sons, having travelled the length and breadth of Ireland as lighthouse keepers.

Born in County Antrim in 1871 to the Lighthouse Keepers James Williams and Margaret Williams, Teresa's youth was spent along the coastlines of Mayo, Kerry and Cork frequently moving between lighthouses in her parent's service to Irish Lights.

On the 3rd March 1887 Teresa followed the tradition of Irish lighthouse keepers and married a Coast Guard's son, Samuel Staniforth, the lighthouse keeper of the Bailey Lighthouse in Howth, a responsibility he shared with his sister Alice a lighthouse keeper, who was married that same day and in that same church to Henry Kelly, another lighthouse keeper of Rockabill in Skerries!
The newlyweds followed their maritime vocation around the country serving lighthouses including: District Shores, Rockabill, Baily, St. John's Point, Carlingford, Bull Rock, Mew Island, Slyne Head South, Aran Islands South, Blackhead, Hook Tower, Broadhaven, Dunmore East & Youghal.

Teresa's son Samuel entered service in 1918, stationed at Rathlin Island where he arrived for the first lighting of Rathlin West Lighthouse in 1919. Samuel died in 1922 at the age of 26. Her eldest son, Henry (Harry) Staniforth, entered into service in 1915, serving with his wife Margaret and their two daughters and were the last residents of Valentia Island lighthouse up until 1947 after which it was automated.

And it was to his mother in Drumcondra that Teresa's son Patrick, born on the isle of Inisheer, a lighthouse keeper from 1925 to 1944, returned as she was dying in 1949.

Sinking lighthouse glow
we will find our way no doubt
to greener pastures (**JC**)

Midday sun, spotlight
we cast nets, catch darting words
light beams, shadows dance (**SK**)

Looking out to sea
a house subsiding inwards
longing for firm land (**AT**)

In isolation
rays of light shine
a safe harbour beams (RG)

Your home place of refuge
neglected sinking slowly
golden buttercups grow wild
reaching out to savour
to celebrate the moment (RG)

Braced against oceans
crushed by streams of life and time
yellow poppies dance (CF)

Baily. Youghal. Blackhead
a Corpo promontory
stands forth calling home (CM)

Ferguson Road falls
to the river
it sinks and does not stop.
Yet it holds up its end
as the east wall
of The Triangle that binds
a community tight.
The house at 10
is propped with steel
but once kept
the sturdy Staniforths
Lighthouse Keepers
from Rockabill to Youghal
Carlingford to Hook Head.
Ferguson Road
falls to the river
where the Tolka flows
on and on. (JS)








Home Farm Rd
The Original Will
of
Society of the
Sacred Heart
O'Daly Rd
Hardiman Rd
Fergusson Rd
Home Farm
The Triangle
Driveways By Design
Fleming Rd
EasyGo Charg
O'Neachtain Rd
Fergusson Rd
ents







POETRY GINKO

Thank you to Marcella Bannon and Emma O'Brien from the Cultural Arts Office for all their support in planning, promoting and participating in our Ginko. Thanks to DCC for funding the Bookmarked Initiative.

A huge thanks to Chris Moran for inspiring us with his passion for local history, and thanks to Claire McAdam and Astrid for refreshments.

And to the Drumcondra Triangle Residents Association and every neighbour who stopped to say hello or came out of their house for a chat, you restored our faith in the power of community. Learn more about the DTRA and its events at www.drumcondratriangle.com.

And finally, thank you to everyone who came along and shared their words with each other. What a privilege to spend time in your poetic company.