The Coming of Spring

Wild wicked winter your harsh face I hate,
The North wind blows in trembling, tormented, tough
Without growth or goodness, loveliness or love,
Till the white feast of Brigid, and the resurrection of Joy.
Then comes the South wind, promise of heat for my limbs,
Life leaping in me, awakening of the blood.
Winter, you wastrel, old age is your season.
Welcome and a thousand more to you, O Spring of my youth.

(Brendan Behan 1923-1964 translated from the Irish)

We welcome the “Jubilee Year of Mercy” proclaimed by Pope Francis, a man no longer in the spring of his youth and a contemporary of many of us in age. This courageous move is a powerful manifestation of the unity in the Church, and in the world, that Francis so urgently yearns for, and invites all of us to seek. Even one year of less agitation, less fear, less conflict, less rancour, less racism, would be a blessing. *Every beginning is a promise, born in light and dying in dark, Daily deception and exultation of Springtime flowering the way to work*, Brendan Kennelly

In our communities, we continue to search for and find new life, and new energy within ourselves, and with others with whom we share life and ministry, with positivity and hope. Sometimes as we look at our extended families, and the children and grandchildren of our own brothers and sisters, we are so reminded of new life, of the continuity of the generations, of the joy and excitement of their arrival, of the awe, wonder and newness in the eyes of the young and tiny, and the fresh energy it gives to their parents, and especially to their grandparents! How much we miss out on, in this reality of generativity, and how easily we can fall into fears of diminishment, and anxiety around ageing and dying. Maureen Gaffney in her book, *Flourishing*, reminds us that if we are not flourishing, then perhaps we are languishing?.. Just a thought …

We give thanks for the lives of the Sisters who have recently gone to their eternal reward, and pray that now they are with God in the fullness of life. As John O’Donohue wrote on the day before his death in January 2008…. *At the deepest level, this adventure of growth is in fact a transfigurative conversation with your own death. And when the time comes for you to leave, the view from your death bed will show a life of growth, that gladdens the heart and takes away all fear…for these lives gone before us, we give thanks.*

We rejoice in the opening of St Genevieve’s. We give thanks for this new venture in the life of the Region, thanks for all who have worked, and continue to work, consistently over the years to bring this to fruition, and pray that the God of kindness and mercy may be with all who come to live here, nourishing them with good health, peace of mind, and caring friends, over the coming years. *Barbara, Enda, + Méabh*
“Room” is a great literary classic which will surprise, horrify, sadden, and ultimately delight the reader, a novel rife with moments of hope and beauty, a novel which is addictive from the start, you will not want to put it down! As I write, the film of this novel has been nominated for an Oscar ... and deserves no less.

Published in 2010 in the US, it is a unique and intriguing novel about a five year old boy, Jack, who is trapped in an eleven by eleven foot square, windowless garden shed, and this becomes his whole world. “Room” is where he was born, where he has eaten, slept, lived, played, and shared with his mother Ma, who has been held captive there for seven years.

The story narrated from the young lad’s perspective, explores the life of a child who has never felt sunlight, never knew the smell of fresh air, and of course has never met other people, except his mother and her abuser, whom the child calls “Old Nick”, the man responsible for abducting his mother, and continually treating her abusively. Jack does not really know what is going on, but the reader understands the horror of the situation completely.

Through the determination, motherly love, and ingenuity of his Ma, who creates a life for both of them, it has become his entire Universe. As night falls, he is shut into a wardrobe to avoid seeing the captor, who comes in to assault his mother, a consistent and unrelenting drama for a young boy. Jack has an innate curiosity about where he lives, and about whether or not there is another world outside the shed? His Ma realising that sooner or later, they will need to escape the imprisonment to which they have been confined, speaks to Jack of an outside world, which he cannot believe and the idea of escaping shatters his small world into pieces.

“Room” is a chilling, but ultimately satisfying book about love between a mother and her child, regardless of circumstances, one that finds beauty and pathos in the most difficult of situations, and readers who enter “Room” leave staggered, as though like Jack, they are seeing the world for the first time. A worthwhile read and probably a great film to enjoy as well, if you can get the chance to see it.  

Méabh Ní Uallacháin

In an earlier “Seo & Siúd” I shared with you my experience of some little girls from four different families who live close to me on our Belfast street. The gender balance changed over a year ago when two baby boys came among us.

I’ll bring you back to January 2015 when heavy snow fell and the local schools had to close. Cosy in woolly caps, jackets, scarves and gloves, the girls formed a meitheal to build snowmen in their front gardens. One snowman wore a vivid red bucket as a hat! Job completed then the snowballing got underway. The wee boys could only look on wistfully.

Before the snow fell, a tree in my garden was utterly bare and desolate until, clad in snow, it was transformed as the sun sparkled on the “snow-drops” resting like tiny crystals on its branches.

The girls had a wonderful summer in all sorts of ways riding their pink bikes on the footpath, their pink helmets bobbing up and down as they passed my wall. A couple of recently acquired scooters have also made an appearance. All this activity is accompanied by lots of laughter.

There are a few budding entrepreneurs among these lassies. They began making very colourful loom bands as bracelets but then decided to sell them for charity. A yellow box was perched on the wall for the proceeds. None of us passing by could resist dropping in a few coins and were given a bracelet or two. My bracelets were a gift for some delighted grandnieces!

When autumn made its presence felt and the girls responded accordingly. After school they play together wearing snug Teddy Bear hats with scarves and gloves attached to offset the chilly winds. I asked them where the Teddy Bear picnic was being held and one girl said it was in her house!

I await an invite! Watch this space!

Dympna O’Daly
Here in Essex Castle, currently known as St Louis Convent, Carrickmacross, an inebriated encounter with our fine, large statue of The Sacred Heart some months ago left its head badly bashed-in as it stood on its pedestal in our front porch. The parish artist offered to repair it but a sprained ankle led to delayed action. Meantime, another statue, in the whole of its health, became available in Bundoran and it was decided to accept this generous offer.

News came that on a certain Friday night at seven o’clock the new Sacred Heart would arrive from Bundoran and we thought it appropriate to assemble in the porch to mark its arrival.

Sure enough, a four-wheel drive people-carrier arrived at our hall door and we knew this was it. Out jumped four tall, slim, lithe, young ladies who very smartly hauled in a long cardboard box containing the statue which was quickly extracted and put in place, as our camera clicked and clicked.

Who were these Christophers? None other than four delightful nieces of Sr Marie du Rosaire Diver of Bundoran, (now Rathmines) dressed in gear appropriate for a gig – you see they were on their way from Bundoran, Co Donegal to a venue in Slane, Co Louth, to entertain a generation somewhat younger than us. We learned that their group-name is The Screaming Orphans. See their website, thescreamingorphans.com for more information about them.

They were most refreshing and, on graciously turning down our offer of a cup of tea, proceeded to ask us would we like them to play for us. Would we what? In the twinkling of an eye they became the band, fully equipped from their jeep, and regaled us with a modern song about two females in Donegal. We stood around greatly relishing the lively performance. Not only that but they said they would come again.

It was a wonderful encounter of the young with the re-juvenated. The whole experience reminded me of the poem called The Piper by Seamas O'Sullivan, A piper in the streets today Set up, and tuned, and started to play And all the world went gay, went gay, For half an hour in the street today learned in elocation class long ago – in the said Essex Castle.

Mary Jo Hand.

Editor’s Note: A perusal of their website tells us how The Screaming Orphans (Joan, Angela, Gráinne and Marie Thérèse Diver) got the name for their group:

And if you’re wondering about our name... A friend of Joan’s came up with it one night and we loved the name because we were going out on the road on our own and we were leaving behind our Mam who had been our lead singer for years and our Da who was our manager/sound engineer and so we became “orphans.” The “screaming” bit is what usually occurs when surrounded by family and we are known to hit certain high notes that could be interpreted as scream-like. That and our secondary school used to be an orphanage.
Many were the celebrations in Co. Cork to commemorate 1916. The town of Bantry remembered its own local heroes with a day long catalogue of events. Mary O’Donovan, the daughter of one of the five signatories at the formation of the Irish Volunteers in Bantry was invited to officiate at the ceremonies.

In December 1913, when the Company of the Irish Volunteers was formed in Bantry, Mary’s father, Michael O’Donovan, still in his 20’s, was one of the five signatories. Fifty men in all joined that December. No officers of military rank were ever appointed or elected, so the five signatories were the organisers of all training and drilling. An ex-British Soldier, living locally, was their first Drill Instructor. They drilled on Seskin Hill overlooking the town.

Over the next year or so their numbers increased peaking at 150 members, but slowly interest waned until by March 1916 the Bantry company numbered only 16. In the early months of 1916, Terence McSweeney was travelling through the towns and villages of West Cork encouraging people to join the Volunteers but without too much success. He came to Bantry the day before Easter Sunday and addressed the members assembled at a parade in the Town Hall. The Bantry Company was instructed to parade after first Mass the next day, Easter Sunday, and proceed to Kealkil - a village about 6 miles away. All available arms (eight .32 revolvers) were to be carried with them and also one day’s rations. They were to join up with the Ballingeary Company at Kealkil and a member of the Cork County Volunteer Executive would be there to take charge. Terence McSweeney didn’t give any indication that this was to be anything other than an ordinary parade. There was no suggestion of a rising or a landing of arms, but nevertheless the Volunteers were left with the impression that something serious might happen.

On Easter Sunday the Bantry Volunteers met the Ballingeary Company at Kealkil. The Ballingeary men were armed with shotguns. Both Companies paraded in a local field. After some hours they were dismissed and ordered to return to their respective areas. En route, the Bantry men were held up by an RIC Sergeant and Constable, armed with revolvers. After some negotiation they were allowed to pass. They discovered later that the RIC officers had been instructed to get the names of as many men as possible but by the time that message was received by the Sergeant, all the Bantry men were safely home.

These were the events that were commemorated in Bantry on Easter Sunday 2016. A full day of celebrations was planned by the Bantry Historical Society and the Tourism and Development Association, and announced as follows in the Cork County 2016 Centenary Programme:

A commemorative plaque will be unveiled at Bridge Street at 10 a.m followed by a reception at Aras Bheanntrai. Later that day those gathered will retrace the journey made by members of the Bantry Company to Kealkil on Easter Sunday 1916 and will join a group from Ballingeary there.

The Bantry Historical Society will team up with the Ballingeary Historical Society to stage a re-enactment of the Easter 1916 Volunteer March to Kealkill.

At 13.30, a community commemorative event will take place in Bantry on Easter Sunday 2016. The day will feature traditional Irish Music and Dancing as well as the Raising of the Flag and a Reading of the Proclamation by students from Coláiste Phobail, Bheanntrain.

A Photographic Exhibition, entitled ‘1910 to 1920’ will be on display in the Bantry Tourist Office.

Mary as the daughter of one of the 5 signatories at the founding of the Bantry Company of the Irish Volunteers was invited to unveil the Commemorative Plaque along with Mark Sullivan whose father was also one of the five.
There was a huge attendance with many people coming from abroad to honour their grandparents who had been born in Bantry. After the opening ceremonies the piper lead a parade of all gathered down through the town to Aras Beanntrai, the local courthouse. Tea, coffee and wonderful home baking had been provided by the Bantry Tourism Association and was most welcome because it was a very wet and cold day.

Transport to Kealkil was provided for those who had travelled from abroad. My sister-in-law, Kathleen, and my eldest nephew - also Michael O’Donovan - went by car.

The Kealkil celebration was marvellous. All assembled were led in to the village by the full complement of the Ballingeary Pipe Band.

The school children were involved at every step. The school band played all the songs of 1916, and four of the older children read the proclamation. A plaque was unveiled and a tree planted. The ceremony ended with the youngest child in the school raising the flag (not a dry eye in the house!) while the National Anthem was sung. All in all it was a very moving and emotional occasion and I was so proud and privileged to have been there.

Mary O’Donovan

Deirdre O’Connor searched the community annals for Seo & Siud for any mention of the 1916 Rising. Her explorations revealed scant awareness of what was happening. To quote Deirdre “The 1916 Rising might never have happened as regard St Louis.” The Monaghan annals cite "political excitement all over" and give a few mentions of people arriving later than expected due to disturbance in Dublin. Kiltimagh tells us that the Inagh and Maura Connolly, daughters of James Connolly “who was executed on the orders of the Government after the rising” came as boarders to Kiltimagh in Sept 1916 and also that his widow stayed overnight in the Convent on 8th Nov that year.

Deirdre also found a newspaper cutting of an interview with Colmcille Stephen’s mother about her memories and involvement in the events of 1916 and the years following. Susan O’Daly, as she was then, was a first year student at UCD and on Easter holiday in her native Clonturk, Co Monaghan, when the Rising began. She describes the smouldering buildings and destruction she found on her return to Dublin.

The city was practically deserted and only a couple of small groups were in Grafton Street whispering fearfully with white faces. There was nobody then till we came to O’Connell Bridge. There was smoke rising from the broken glass and rubble that had fallen all round the G.P.O. and across the road and more smoke and rubble about Capel Street and in the Liberty Hall area. I don’t think we could have got through the heat and smoke and very likely the Dublin Metropolitan Police would not have allowed us through”

1916 Poem by Margaret Anne Agnew

We were brought up on stories
Daring deeds - the templates for our souls
And once upon a time we sat and heard
The sad narration of a pain-filled tale:
Young men whose gallant hearts bore deep inside
The anguished imprints of a holy past
Like shards and fragments of a precious wax
Gathered and moulded with a mindful faith
Into a candle burning brief but bright.
We listened, in our turn, with anxious hope
To hear those ‘happy ever after’ words.
They never came. We clung on bereft.
Telling again the story, sad but true
Without the blessing of its great ‘Great Amen’.
### Our Recently Deceased Sisters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sister</th>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Died</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sr Ide Woulfe</td>
<td>3 Dec 1915</td>
<td>4 July 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Benedict McKenna</td>
<td>26 Apr 1926</td>
<td>15 Aug 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Vivian Ni Dhuibne</td>
<td>23 Sept 1927</td>
<td>4 Oct 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Majella Langan</td>
<td>23 Sept 1940</td>
<td>16 Oct 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Nuala Doherty</td>
<td>18 Aug 1922</td>
<td>13 Nov 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Edith O’Doherty</td>
<td>5 Nov 1921</td>
<td>6 Dec 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Kathleen Foley</td>
<td>2 Mar 1934</td>
<td>15 Jan 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Aine O’Connor</td>
<td>26 Jul 1923</td>
<td>26 Jan 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Mairead McNally</td>
<td>19 Dec 1925</td>
<td>2 Feb 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Concepta O’Keeffe</td>
<td>9 July 1921</td>
<td>17 Feb 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Carmel Dodd</td>
<td>18 May 1930</td>
<td>27 Feb 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr Cecily Dolan</td>
<td>4 Apr 1925</td>
<td>18 Mar 2016</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The mood was very upbeat as we all arrived, Sisters and Associates, as Wynn’s hotel in time for tea, biscuits and badges. Special mention must be made of those from the West who travelled the long journey to join with us for a day of celebration and community. A number of Associates were “volunteered” for various tasks, lunch was selected and we were good to go.

For members of the Associates Leadership Team it was their first National Associates Day but they hid the stress well and got the formal part of the day underway on schedule.

This began with a ritual and prayer service based on the elements, Air, Earth, Fire and Water. Through this prayer service we united with our Creator God, with everyone, everything, everywhere, past, present and future in keeping with our charism SINT UNUM.

It was also a time to remember those who have sadly departed this life and I’m sure were with us in spirit, Sister Theodore, Sister Kathleen, facilitators, and Eileen Martin, an Associate from Belfast (RIP). Also remembered were those who could not be there due to illness and those who had commitments which prevented them from attending.

Our facilitator for the day was Fr Donal Dorr and he provided us with a guide through the Ecology Encyclical of Pope Francis, Laudato Si, which he described as an inspiring call to contemplation and action. He spoke movingly on the Web of Life and the Web of the Cosmos which again linked seamlessly with Sint Unum. His presentation was interlaced with pictures of nature, quotes from Laudato Si, time to reflect and a powerful meditation during which he urged us, in the words of Pope Francis, to become “painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering.” To emphasise this point his meditation finished with the wail of the banshee. The impact in the room was shocking and stunning as it captured the devastating impact of the destruction of our planet in a way no image or words could describe.

Lunch was a joyful and enjoyable experience as we discussed the day and renewed acquaintances. The afternoon offered us a way forward on what we could each do to respond to Laudato Si and make a difference from adopting a simpler lifestyle to getting politically involved.

The day ended with a poem, entitled “What Did you do Once you Knew?” and a Celtic Blessing. We all headed back to our respective modes of transport motivated and challenged by another National Associates Day. Thanks to all involved in the organization of the Day. Freda Carville
The Bronte Outing

From the very first instant that we boarded the Bus at Dún Lughaidh, there was magic. Eamonn O’hUallacháin weaved stories from the beginning of the day to the end. Eamonn made great fun for us. He knows his native Co Louth and the adjoining counties so well that there is hardly a field whose history he hasn’t researched and woven a story around it.

I hadn’t expected to find the ancestry of the Bronte sisters interesting. But I was to be surprised. Their father Patrick had a very colourful life before going, accompanied by his wife, to Oxford to study theology.

The journey through the Mourne Mountains is beautiful at any time of the year but on that April day, in Eastertide, it was absolutely exquisite.

Eamonn’s wife, Deirdre, enriched our day with excerpts from the writings of the Bronte sisters, especially from Wuthering Heights. There was always food for thoughts from Eamonn and Deirdre, but we had periods of quiet and silence when we could simply drink in the beauty of this county. Eamonn sang ‘All of an April Evening’ the moving poem by Padraig Pearse: little lambs in a field at evening... I thought on the Lamb of God

We read together ‘The Man from God knows Where’: Meabh had given each of us a copy. At Downpatrick we visited the grave of St Patrick and sang hymns there to St Patrick and to St Brigid, our national patrons saints.

We visited the gaol in Downpatrick, now a history museum. I have to say I felt great sadness there. Our history is sad, but on this wonderful day we had many other feelings too. We were together as sisters, and we were very happy and conscious of how blessed we were to have such enriching experiences on that Tuesday, April 5th 2016. A huge thank you to the Animation and Spirituality Group who planned the day and who got our wonderful guides. Mary O’Connor

On April 5 at 10 am sharp all 21 SSL passengers, accompanied by Eamon and Deirdre O’hUallacháin travelled first to Ballymascanlon, the site of an ancient lime kiln industry in the grounds of Mount Oliver. We stopped here to be get our first introduction to the rich romantic saga that would bring us face to face with Hugh Prunty a native of Drogheda and Alice McClory from the picturesque Drumballyroney district of Co Down. Hugh had come to work in the lime kiln industry in the grounds of Mount Oliver. Alice met the McGrory brothers who ‘lured’ him to their home in the Mourne Country where she met Alice, their sister. She was the love of Hugh’s life.

Patrick, the Brontës’ father was the first of 10 children born to Alice and Hugh in a tiny house whose ruins still stand at Emdale.

We listened, spell bound, as Eamon Ó’hUallacháin and his wife Deirdre, both totally dedicated and passionate in their role as tour guides, untiringly...
fleshed out the Bronte story, painting a picture of the young man Patrick, born into poverty, mentored by the local Presbyterian minister, who found work as a teacher at Glascar schoolhouse, and finally accepted as a sizar scholar at Cambridge University. He ended up as a minister of the Anglican Church in England and married Maria Branwell. Sadly the 6 children, issue of their marriage and his wife too, died before they were 40; TB was rampant at the time. Patrick outlived his family and died at the age of 84. Favourite excerpts from *Wuthering Heights* were read to us by Deirdre.

Guided further on our travels we arrived at Downpatrick Gaol with the words of ‘The Man from God-knows-where’ ringing in our ears. Our brilliant tour guide of Down County Museum made the most of our now dwindling time. We sampled the cells and followed the history of the United Irishmen. We were aiming at visiting St Patrick’s grave before the end of our tour and spending time on this holy ground. This we did with time to spare as we gathered round his grave to sing as many St Patrick anthems as we could remember. ‘Hail Glorious St Patrick’ rang out loud and clear over the Downpatrick landscape.

It was a memorable day for all. Our trip back along the seashore through Annalong and Kilkeel brought memories of great St Louis sisters who once graced these parts and left behind them a legacy of faith and Christian education.

Words of praise fail to capture the rich contribution of our thoroughly dedicated guides and the knowledge and inspiration they offered us from beginning to end. Go méadaigh Dia bhur stór!

*Una Agnew*
After lunch in Newcastle, we went further north to Downpatrick, where we toured the excellent museum. On the way we read ‘The Man from God Knows where’ and later saw the gateway, where this brave man was executed.

In Downpatrick, our focus moved to St. Patrick. We visited the beautiful Down Cathedral, and in the graveyard gathered around the tomb of St. Patrick in the late afternoon sunshine, singing all our favourite hymns to our patron saint.

The journey homewards took us along the beautiful coast road skirting the Mournes, down through Annalong and Kilkeel, where we spent a few minutes ‘in homage’ at the entrance to St Louis Grammar School. Then on we went to Rostrevor and Warrenpoint and finally back to Dundalk, happy to have spent a very interesting and enjoyable day together.  

Nuala Cole

Going on the trip to the Bronte County was like contemplating the beauty and mysteries that surround this Universe of ours that we call home. It was love, peace and creativity at the Heart of the Universe, and this is pure joy!

Thanks to all who made the trip possible, and the O’Uallacháins who made it such a memorable and fun day by sharing their wealth of information and knowledge. And of course, what could have been more exciting than a day with the famous and literary Bronte family?  

Patricia Ojo

I found the day trip through the ‘Bronte Country’ a stimulating, memorable experience. It was excellently planned, the various sites interesting, the commentary by Eamonn and Deirdre O h-Uallacháin fascinating, and then, of course, the bonus of the beautiful Mourne countryside. The three Bronte sisters have achieved literary renown with their novels, Wuthering Heights (Charlotte), Jane Eyre (Emily) and The Tenant of Wildfell Hall (Anne)

One might have thought “Oh, a long line of literary ancestors”. But, in fact, the literary line was very short. Their father Patrick Prunty, one of twelve born to an agricultural labourer in Co Down, showed an early passion for reading. Encouraged by local clergy, he won a place in Cambridge, graduating with a degree in theology. He settled with his wife in a vicarage in Haworth, Yorkshire.

They had six children when tragedy struck. His wife died as did the two eldest, leaving the grief-stricken Patrick with four young children – three girls and a boy, Bramwell. Their aunt came and cared for them. Patrick was a conscientious if remote parent (he always dined alone). The children, a close knit group, inherited his love of reading and they had the freedom to develop their imagination and literary talents. Interacting with each other, sharing stories, their talents burgeoned. Sadly, all of them had health problems, dying before they were forty. But in their short lives they have charmed, mystified and inspired readers the world over.

The lush green sheep speckled fields ‘behind’ the mountains were unexpected. And the lambs! Suddenly we were singing “All in an April evening.....”

There were high, narrow, winding roads. Kudos to the bus driver who negotiated all the turns and even found hidden width to accommodate the occasional oncoming vehicle. The same driver had another claim to our appreciation when he occasionally enhanced Eamonn’s commentary. In his business, he met and looked after tourists, regaling them with local legends.
This dark, sophisticated novel is a work of fiction, where the last surviving Bronte falls in love with a brooding older man. Like generations of young girls, I read Charlotte Bronte’s “Jane Eyre” and sister Emily’s “Wuthering Heights”... and even fell in love with Mr Rochester and Heathcliff!! So with great anticipation, and the recent group trip to the Bronte Country in Co Down ringing in my ears, I began to read Catherine Lowell’s The Madwoman Upstairs whose title refers to Bertha Mason, the crazed wife whom Mr Rochester kept hidden in his attic. Lowell delivers a smart, clever and properly Gothic novel about Samantha Whipple, who at 20 is the only surviving relative of Patrick Bronte, the father of Charlotte, Emily, Anne and of course, their bad boy brother Branwell!

Since her father’s untimely death, she is the presumed heir to a long-rumoured trove of diaries, paintings, letters, and early novel drafts, passed down from the Bronte family... a hidden fortune never revealed.

Employing her vast knowledge of the works of the Bronte sisters and her superb storytelling skills, Lowell creates in Samantha, a woman as lonely and alone in the world as Jane Eyre. As long as Samantha can remember, literary scholars have stirred the pot of rumours about a missing vast “Bronte Estate”, that if it were found, would belong to Samantha!

As if in harmony with Jane Eyre, Samantha falls in love with an older, secretive man, James Timothy Orville 111, her professor of 19th Century British literature... as dark a man as Mr Rochester!

Among the joys of this book... and there are many... are the conversations that Samantha has with herself and with James about the Bronte sisters... and delightfully about the lesser known works of Anne Bronte, “Agnes Grey” and “The Tenant of Wildfell Hall”.

Ultimately it is Lowell’s voice of authenticity in all matters Bronte, that empowers “The Madwoman Upstairs”. She does such a magnificent job evoking the sister’s lives and writings that, like me, you may feel tempted to pluck that dusty copy of “Jane Eyre” off the bookshelf once more, and begin falling in love with Mr Rochester all over again! If only I had the youth, the energy and the time!

The Madwoman upstairs is a moving exploration of what happens when the greatest truth is, in fact, fiction. Méabh Ní Uallacháin

Book Review: The Mad Woman Upstairs by Catherine Lowell

Two Fictionalized Biographies of The Brontes

Many and varied are the books written about the works of the Bronte sisters and also about their lives. Bronte enthusiasts might be interested in two books by Lynne Reid Banks. These are carefully researched historical fiction. Dark Quartet tells the story of the four surviving children of Patrick Bronte growing up in poverty on the edge of the Yorkshire Moors. Path to the Silent Country, the sequel, explores Charlotte’s life after she is left alone following the death of her beloved sisters and brother. It tells the story of her brief experience of literary life in London, and her short but happy marriage with Arthur Bell which ends with her untimely death.
Dear Sisters.

We, Sisters in Louisville, Kiltimagh express our gratitude to all of you for your kind messages of sympathy and your presence at Sr. Kathleen Foley's funeral. Her death was such a shock to all of us but your support helped us greatly at that sad time.

Thank you to all our Sisters for your supportive letters, words and prayer when my brother Mick died. My family appreciated your presence at the funeral and your many kind expressions of sympathy. Mass will be offered for your intentions.

I am also very grateful for your love and care during my own illness and I rely on your prayer as I continue the journey. Eilish Long

Dear Sisters,

I received so many greetings, promise of prayers and good wishes for recovery from my surgery in recent months and I want to take this opportunity to say a collective "Thank You" to you. I am truly happy to be alive and well yet another year. I could feel the power of your prayer and this gave me a powerful feeling of being cared for. Many thanks! Anne (Kavanagh)

SUCCESS IS

TEAMWORK

2016 Jubilarians

Platinum Jubilarians
Agnellus Gibbons
Mícheál Hughes
Frances Leonard (California)
Pauline McGovern
Claudine McEnnis
Eugenia McInerney (California)
Joan Morris
Maureen Redmond

Deceased
Antonia Byrne
Kathryn Dillon
Vivian Dobbyn
Anne Hayes
Gerald Higgins
Theodore Lysaght
Dorothy McCloskey
Benedict Joseph Moloney
Kathleen Rice
Rhona Toolan

Diamond Jubilarians
Una Agnew
Martinian Bergin
Breege Boyle (California)
Mary Clancy
Frances Faul
Marica Foley (England)
Luca Henry
Alice Keenan (California)
Mary O’Donovan

Deceased
Miriam Drumm
Joy Flannery
Itaary McGuane
Eaine Sheridan
Mureen Smyth

Golden Jubilarians
Ann Concannon
Mary Connellan
Bridget Ehlert (California)
Margaret Fitzer (California)
Bridin Moloney
Noreen Shankey