

PAVEE PECK

A collection of recipes and stories by Traveller Women

Contributions from:

Brigid Collins Mary Collins Mary Collins Missy Collins Molly Collins Winnie Collins Bernadette McDonagh Maggie McDonagh Mary (Moll) McDonagh Kathleen McDonnell Lisa McDonnell Maggie McDonnell Nancy McDonnell Ellie Mongan Shiela Reilly Mary Tyrell Kathleen Ward

Cover paintings kindly supplied by Traveller women



Welcome

We talked, listened, cooked, and ate together. The food brought back memories. Some talked about the old days and the old ways. Some talked about growing up and their memories of childhood.

We chatted about recipes, traditions, stories and cures with each other and put them in this book - we hope you enjoy reading about our project.

Every Monday morning from September to December 2023 a group of seventeen Traveller women from St. Margaret's Traveller Community Association, TravAct and Pavee Point met in TravAct Coolock. With the help of City of Dublin ETB tutors and plenty of tea they put this book together.

Pavee Peck cookbook and website has been a collaborative project between the City of Dublin ETB, the HSE CHO DNCC Health and Wellbeing and Social Inclusion and Traveller Projects. It was funded by the Adult Literacy for Life (ALL) Collaboration and Innovation Fund.































Who worked on this project?

Primary Healthcare Workers

Travellers are employed as Primary Health Care Workers, they work with their own community, the HSE and other services/agencies to improve the health of the Traveller Community. Primary Health Care workers make weekly visits to Travellers in their area and provide health education and awareness. They also work with the HSE to ensure their services are inclusive of Travellers.

City of Dublin ETB – Adult Education Service

Providing free classes in adult education and community centres in over 150 locations in Dublin. Tutors and learners work together in a supportive, warm, friendly environment. With a wide range of courses, you will find a course to suit you. Find your nearest centre on www.adulteducationcityofdublinetb.ie

Coolock Darndale Adult Education Service

Working to improve the reading, writing, spelling, maths, and digital skills in our area. We offer classes in a range of subjects and welcome adults of all ages. Check out www.coolockals.ie to learn more.

HSE CHO DNCC Health and Wellbeing

HSE CHO DNCC Health and Wellbeing aims to reduce inequalities in health and improve access to mainstream and targeted health services for vulnerable and excluded groups in Ireland.

HSE DHCO DNCC Social Inclusion

Focused on helping people to stay healthy and well, reducing health inequalities and protecting people from threats to their health and wellbeing.

Primary Health Care for Travellers Projects

Primary Health Care for Traveller Projects work in partnership with the HSE. They use a Social Determinants Model of Health – this looks at all things that impact on health such as accommodation, discrimination, employment, and education.



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Meet the cooks



Brigid Collins



Winnie Collins



Mary Collins



Missy Collins



Mary Collins



Molly Collins



Bernadette McDonagh



Maggie McDonagh



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Nancy McDonald



Kathleen McDonnell



Maggie McDonnell



Lisa McDonnell



Ellie Mongan



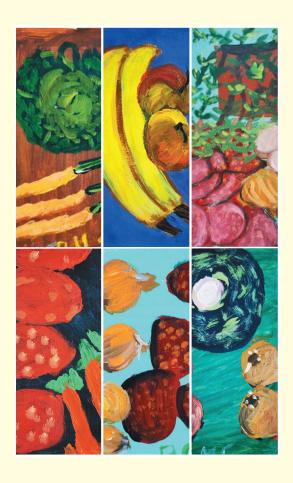
Shiela Reilly



Mary Tyrell



Kathleen Ward



d collection of recipes

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Cake Bread

Ingredients

This recipe makes 1 cake







5 handfuls of self-raising flour





2 cups of buttermilk



1 pinch of salt



½ cup of water





¼ cup of self-raising flour





200°	Preheat the oven to: gas mark 6, 200°C (400°F)
Self Raising flour	Mix the flour and salt in a bowl
Surter Malik	Add the buttermilk and water
	The mixture should look like cooked stir about (porridge)
Self Raising flour	Little by little add about ¼ a cup of flour, this will dry out the mixture, gently fold and slap the flour into the mixture
	Place mixture in a greased cake tin
200°	Bake for 60 - 90 minutes 200°C (400°F)
	The cake should sound hollow when tapped underneath
	Cover with a damp tea towel or dish cloth, this will keep the bread nice and soft



Brown Bread

Ingredients

This recipe makes 1 loaf of bread



4 X



4 handfuls of self-raising flour

2 X



2 handfuls of wholemeal flour

2 X



2 cups of buttermilk

1 x





1 pinch of salt

1 x



.

1/4



¼ cup of self-raising flour

1 cup of water





200°	Preheat the oven to: gas mark 6, 200°C (400°F)
Wholemeal flour flour	Mix the flour and salt in a bowl
Surfeer Mills	Add the buttermilk and water
	The mixture should look like cooked stir about (porridge)
Self Raising flour	Little by little add about ¼ a cup of flour, this will dry out the mixture, gently fold and slap the flour into the mixture
	Place mixture in a greased cake tin
200°	Bake for 60 - 90 minutes 200°C (400°F)
	The cake should sound hollow when tapped underneath
	Cover with a damp tea towel or dish cloth, this will keep the bread nice and soft



Currant Bread

Ingredients

This recipe makes 1 cake







5 handfuls of self-raising flour

1 X



1 handful of currants or raisins soaked in boiling water

2 x





2 cups of buttermilk

1 x





1 teaspoon sugar

 $\frac{1}{2}$





½ cup of water

1/4



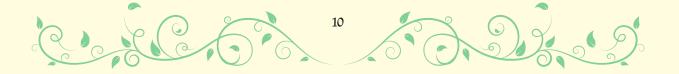
¼ cup of self-raising flour

Method

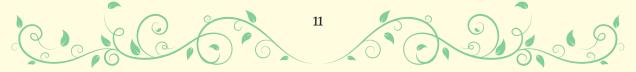




Preheat the oven to: gas mark 6, 200°C (400°F)



Self Raising Flour SUG AR	Mix the flour and sugar in a bowl
	Strain the fruit and add it to the flour
Butter Milk	Add the buttermilk and water
S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S S	The mixture should look like cooked stir about (porridge)
Self Raising flour	Little by little add about ¼ a cup of flour, this will dry out the mixture, gently fold and slap the flour into the mixture
	Place mixture in a greased cake tin
200°	Bake for 60 - 90 minutes 200°C (400°F)
	The cake should sound hollow when tapped underneath
	Cover with a damp tea towel or dish cloth, this will keep the bread nice and soft



Coddle

Ingredients

This recipe feeds 6



1 x



1x lambs heart

2 x



2 packets streaky bacon

2 x



2 packets of sausages

1 x



1 packet bacon pieces

2 x



2 onions

12 x



12 potatoes

1 x



1 pack of oxtail soup

People don't always agree on the ingredients for a coddle.

We all agreed
Our coddle was delicious!

Coddle can be eaten for Breakfast or Dinner.

For breakfast coddle only use two spuds!





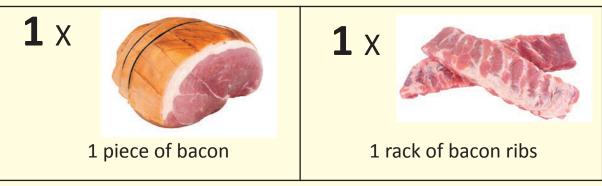


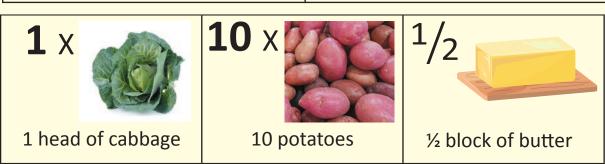
Chop the lamb's heart and the rashers
Chop the onions
Peel and chop 1 - 2 potatoes these will thicken the coddle
Leave the sausages whole
Bacon pieces
Place all the ingredients in a large burner (pot)
Cover the ingredients with water, place a lid on top
Bring to the boil - simmer for 1 – 2 hours
Peel the spuds (potatoes). Add to the coddle 40 minutes before serving

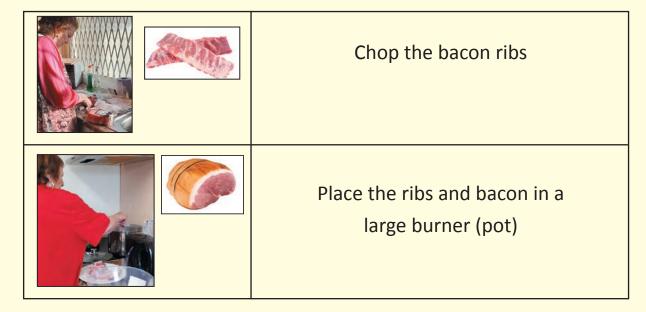
Bacon, Bacon Ribs, Cabbage and Spuds

Ingredients

This recipe feeds 6









Boil Simmer	Cover the ribs and bacon with water, place a lid on top
	bring to the boil - simmer for 2 – 3 hours
	Chop and wash the cabbage
	Peel and chop the potatoes
111911	Place the spuds in a large pot cover
Boil P Simmer	with water bring to the boil
	simmer for 30 minutes
	Test with a knife
	to make sure they are soft
	30 minutes before the meats are cooked add the cabbage
	Remove the cooked meat from the pot, drain the cabbage
	Strain the potatoes add butter to taste
	Dish up and enjoy



Spud Bread

Ingredients

This recipe feeds 6 people



10 x



10 potatoes

2 X





2 handfuls of self-raising flour

1/4 lb



¼ of a pound of butter

 $1/_{2}$





½ a cup of milk

1 X



SALT

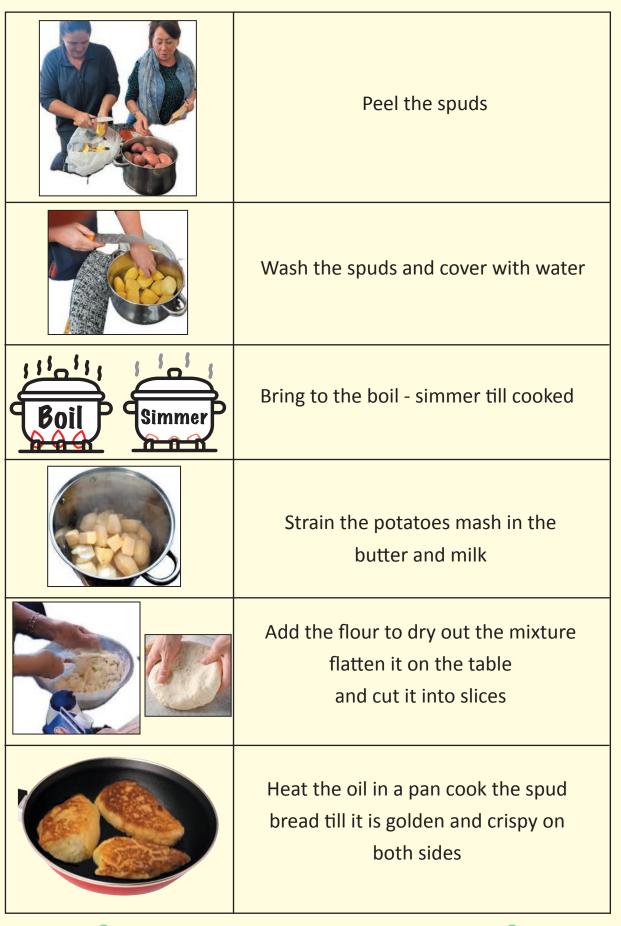
1 pinch of salt

Cooking oil for cooking











Pizza

Ingredients

This recipe makes 2 pizzas





2 packets of pizza base with sauce

2 x



2 packets grated cheese



1 packet of ham

1 x



1 packet salami

3 x



3 peppers

12 x



12 mushrooms



1 tin of pineapple

1 x

1 tin of sweetcorn Corn

1 X



Cooking oil or butter













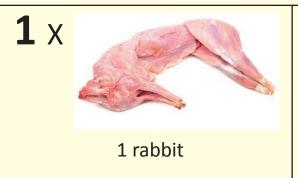
Rabbit Stew

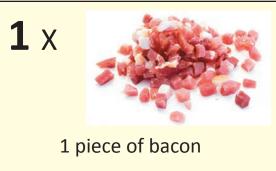
Rabbits were snared and eaten before the sickness came. It is a healthy lean meat. The men often sold rabbits.

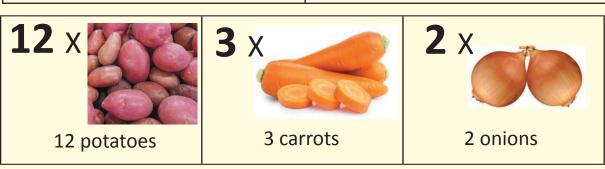
Ingredients

This recipe feeds 6



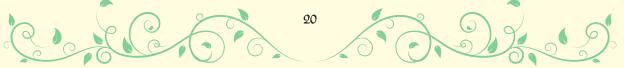




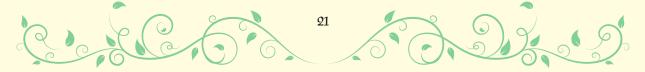








	Chop the rabbit
	Chop the bacon
	Put the rabbit and bacon in a pot and cover with water
Boil	Slowly bring to the boil simmer for 2 – 3 hours
	Peel wash and chop the vegetables add them to the pot
Self Raising flour	Before serving thicken the soup with a little flour
	Wash the spuds and cook them in their jackets
	Rabbit stew is ready to serve

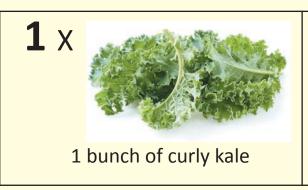


Colcannon

Ingredients

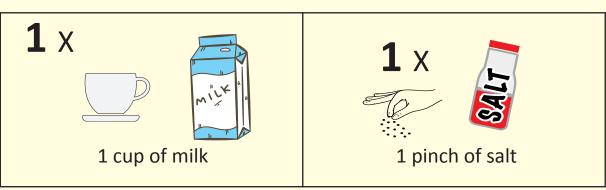
This recipe feeds 6













	Wash and chop the curly kale
	Chop the onions
	Peel and chop potatoes
Boil	Boil curly kale for 20 minutes
Boil	Place the spuds in a large burner (pot) Bring to the boil and cook for 30 minutes
	Drain the spuds
MILY	Cook the chopped onions in a cup of milk until they are soft
	Add the cooked onion and the milk to the spuds, add the curly kale mix together add a spoon of butter and a pinch of salt and pepper to taste



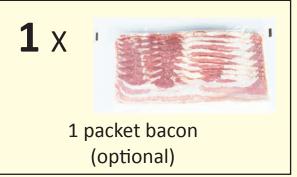
Christmas Goose

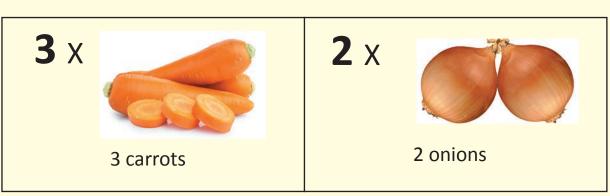


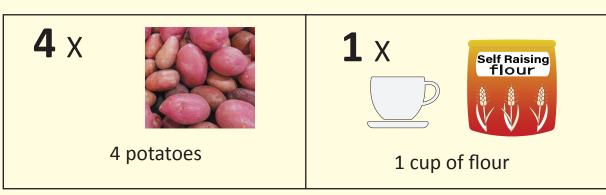
Ingredients

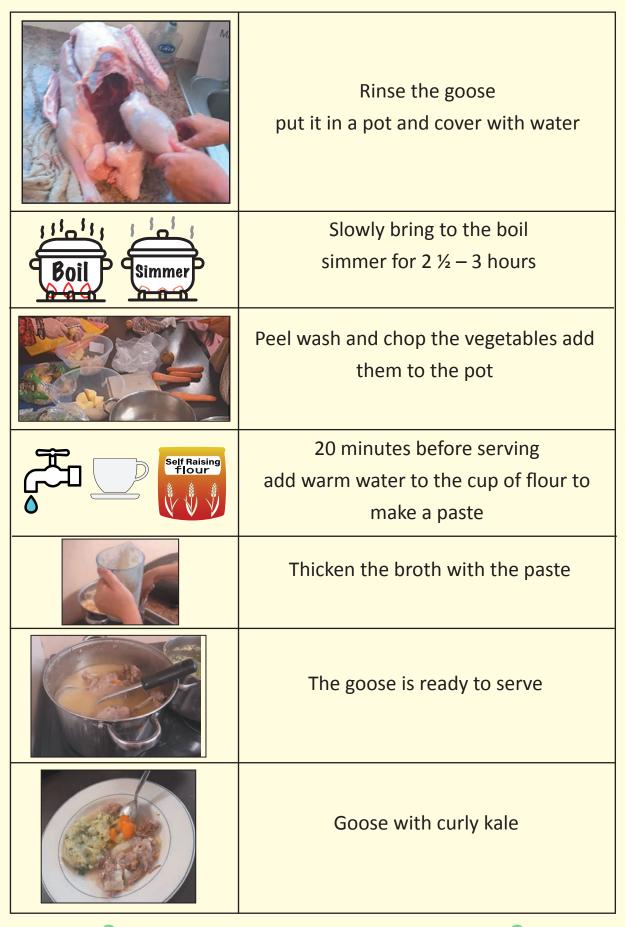
This recipe feeds 6













Christmas Cake

Ingredients

This recipe makes 1 cake







5 handfuls of self-raising flour **2** X



2 handfuls of currants or raisins soaked in boiling water





2 cups of buttermilk

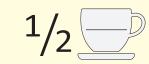




1 teaspoon of cinnamon



½ cup of water and a dash of whiskey





½ cup of self-raising flour

1 x



1 handful of cherries

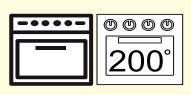


½ handful of chopped almonds

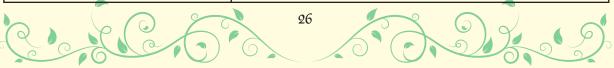


½ handful of orange peel grated

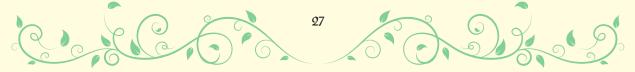
Method



Preheat the oven to: gas mark 6, 200°C (400°F)



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Self Raising flour	Mix the flour and cinnamon in a bowl
	Strain the fruit and add it to the
	flour and cinnamon
	Add the cherries, nuts and grated orange
Registroff A	Add the buttermilk and water
ō	and a dash of whiskey
	The mixture should look like cooked
	stir about (porridge)
	Little by little add about ½ a cup of flour,
Self Raising flour	this will dry out the mixture, gently fold
Ů Ů Ů	and slap the flour into the mixture
	Place mixture in a greased cake tin
200°	Bake for 60 - 90 minutes 200°C (400°F)
	The cake should sound hollow when
	tapped underneath
	Cover with a damp tea towel or dish cloth,
	this will keep the bread nice and soft



Stories

We did not have cookers in olden days, we would cook food outdoors. The men would light the fires. If the men did not light the fires, there would be nothing to eat. They used stump of tree. If it was raining, tar bars which is like a diesel bar would be cut and the men would make a stove out of it and put a chimney in. We would gather around the fire, telling stories and singing. It is not done these days



around open fire, that all stopped when we moved into the houses. We still tell stories. The food was much nicer when we cooked outdoors, for example, baked bread on the outdoor fire was nicer than using the cookers.

Camps

We would not stay long in the camps, we would only stay for about two to three weeks as we were on the side of roads. The men would have to find work as there was no social welfare. They would make their money by picking spuds, turf, making buckets, working in the bogs. We had no beds and would use golden straw as a bed. Missy's mam would say don't bring the maggot hay, which were known as a hairy molly (caterpillar) which would grow into butterflies.







Cant Language

Cant language is not spoken by the younger generation today, but the older generation still speak some cant. We think it is a crying shame that our language is not used any more. It is something that should have never been stopped. There are books in library about the cant language.

The following are examples of cant words:



Grichin = onions



Cullens = potatoes



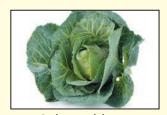
Durra = bread



Alamock = milk



Rumogs = eggs



Cob = cabbage



Mews nuck = Pigs head



Boys = Subla Girls = Lackeen (sister and brother)



Galya = child



Lorup = Flour



Gruca = Sugar



Traveller Traditions

Religion and Travel

is a huge part of our culture. We have travelled to many countries such as Lourdes in France, Medjugorje in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rome in Italy.

Missy has stones, when you look at them you can see a face, everyone sees a different face. She got these stones from Medjugorje from where Our Lady appeared.



Halloween Traditions

On Halloween we leave presents out for the fairies to bring good luck to our home. We would also play a ducking game for money and coins in water. Barnbrack - the person who got the ring would next be married.



Babies Birth

In the old days, all the women of the community would pass by to help the mother and child in the first few weeks, drop food and help with existing children. It would mostly be family members.



A lucky stocking- when a child was born in a placental sack. This was good luck to a special child.

We also have a tradition to cross the newborn baby's hand with silver.



and Stories

Throwing Stones

We have many stories about the forts and fairies especially in Tuberclare in Co. Westmeath. One of the stories happened when the priest did the stations of the cross in a settled persons house.



The man who lived in the house went up to a fort and brought down stones to the yard, as he was preparing for the priest to do the stations of the cross. After the priest did the stations of the cross, each time the man and woman sat down at the table, stones were getting thrown into the house from the yard. They called the priest back asking what was going on, saying that they have no peace. The priest asked where they got the stones from and they told him from the fort. The fairies would not let them rest. The priest told them to collect every stone and not to leave a pebble behind and to bring them all back up to the fort.

Deaf Man

Another story was about a deaf man who took a bundle of sticks from a fort. The man had a dream about the fort and was told to bring the sticks back and he would get his hearing back. The man never brought them back as the sticks were burned in the fire, so he did not get his hearing back.

Warning

There are also stories about houses been built on the forts and people getting no rest when they moved in.

Travellers Cures

Long ago we did not have access to doctors as we were travelling. We used cures, we believed in them.

These cures are not a substitute for medical advice, please consult your doctor or nurse for medical advice:



Barley Water

was given and recommended for urinary tract infection and even diabetes.



Chicken Broth

was used for general health, especially urinary tract or bladder infection.



Onion in a Stocking

An onion was put in a silk stocking and then wrapped around your throat, this would clear up a sore throat.



Moss was used to treat cuts.



Dandelions were used as a medicine.

A family from Limerick used to harvest the roots and sell them as a medicine to other families in the travelling community.



Goose Grease

was used for burns, cuts and skin conditions.



Dock Leaf

took away stings of nettles.

We used to sing a rhyme 'dock leaf, dock leaf take away the sting of nettle.' You would just place the dock leaf directly on the sting.



Headaches

We used to tie a cloth tight around the head.

This would get rid of headaches.



and Treatments



Our Hair

Our hair used to be thick and healthy. There were no posh products or chemicals used. We used to wash our hair in the bog water, no shampoo or conditioner was used. It was the juice of the bog water along with sterilised water.



Skin

We never had skin conditions because we ate fresh fruit and berries from the land.



White of Egg:

This was used to treat nappy rashes.

Medicine for Horses



Alexander Leaves were used as a healing bandage to heal wounds.



Mugwort was used for parasitic worms in the horses gut.



Tissue Thorns (sticky grass)

Cleavers were used to treat horsesanimals always eat this to clear
their intestinal tract.



Pig Manure was used to stop a wound bleeding on a horse, the only cure to save a severe injury.



Brigid Collins



My name is Brigid Collins. I live in Finglas. I was born in Co Meath. I travelled all around Offaly. We left Meath and travelled around all Offaly. I had seven sisters and six brothers. We would go out in the country with my mother, she sold tinware. My father was a tin smith and a wagon builder. He would make the cans and the buckets and the saucepans. We would go out into the country with my mother. My mother would sell them or trade them for spuds and cabbage and bacon in the farmers houses and butter

because the farmers would not have much money either. They would give us a bale of straw for our tent and a bale of hay for our pony.

My mother would come back to the campfire, and she'd put on a big pot of spuds and cabbage. Then she would take down her oven and bake five or six big cakes of bread. She kept us well fed and warm. My brothers would go off fishing, they'd go hunting, they'd catch a rabbit or a hare and my mother would cook that next day. We'd have plenty of firewood and we'd sit around the campfire eating. We would shake up the straw in the tent. Every one of the girls had their own job to do, wash up, clean around the fire. We'd look at my mother baking the bread, putting on the bacon and cabbage. That is how we learned, we watched everything she done around the campfire.

It was hard in the wintertime but absolutely beautiful in the summertime. We would have two tents, we would have a sheltered tent. My father and mother would have a caravan.

The girls slept in one tent and the boys in another. We were nice and warm. We had a nice lamp hanging in the sheltered tent to show us light. We always had sticks in the corner to get up and start the fire early in the morning. My mother would get up early in the morning and we would get up early in the morning. We get breakfast and head off out in the country and we'd do the same thing over and over every day. In the summertime as I said it was beautiful, my mother wouldn't bake her bread till eight or nine in the evening. My father and my brothers and my sisters would go down cutting the turf in the bog. My mother would go out in the country and we'd go with her. She'd be back early to boil the dinner. She always made sure that we had enough of food.



The farmers were very good to us. We would pull the beet for the farmers and pick the spuds for the farmers in the wintertime. They were very good to us. They trusted us and we trusted them. You'd go in, the door was always wide open. She'd bring you in and if she had potatoes boiled in a big skillet she'd give you some as well.

That is how life went. We enjoyed it. My eldest sisters and brothers grew up and got married and went their own way. We all got married at the end of it. I got married and came to Dublin. I had three children on the road. I came to Dublin, to Finglas. I'm fifty years in Finglas. I never left.

All my family is married. I've grandchildren and great grandchildren. We never left anymore.



Winnie Collins



My name is Winnie Collins. I'm thirty-two years old and I live at home. I was born in Finglas. And there's seven of us. I come fifth. There are four older and two younger.

Food, so when I was growing up, I wouldn't have been that interested in food like you just eat whatever. But as you start to get older, you kind of get more interest in food and you see your mother making the food and you want to start making the food yourself and you want to get involved more.

Mary Collins



My name is Mary Collins and I live in Avila Park. I am the eldest of eight children. My mother had nine children but one passed away at nine months old. I got married myself and had four children. I had a few miscarriages at the beginning but I ended up having four children. I have three boys and one girl and they all have children now thank God, only two and three children each.

So, I remember my mother cooking years ago, mostly we'd always get a boiled potato in their skin, a boiled spud in them days. Everybody got them no matter what you got with them. If you had a boiled spud you weren't going to go hungry. She always had flour to bake the bread and pancakes and brown bread, if she had fruit she'd make currant bread or just plain white cake bread. Tea was a very popular drink, like you had tea with nearly everything, we had a sweet can to make the tea in or a cup of tae as we called it. Years ago when you'd be out travelling you used to get the sweet cans in the shops, when the sweet can would be emptied we used to get them and they reckoned the sweet can made the nicest tea.

I remember me mother cooking at the fire, the campfire, she had an oven. She used to go to the butchers and buy bacon, belly bacon they called it and dripping. She used to slice it and fry it in the oven with the dripping and the cake bread.

I also remember my uncle, lord have mercy on him. He used to go collecting the eels and we'd run away screaming. He'd have four or five eels. My granny used to chop them, dip them in flour and fry them in the pan. We didn't know what we were eating. They were gorgeous. If we knew what we were eating, we'd have been screaming. They were very nice.

Pancakes would be very big recipe for her. They were quick. I would probably do cooking every day for the grandchildren. I do stews and spuds and cabbage. I'd do a lot of the old recipes boiling and stuff like that.

I haven't done the Goose till now. I've heard my mother talking about it. I might give it a go now this Christmas. The nicest thing of all was in the morning for breakfast or dinner. My mother would mash the potatoes and cabbage together



and fry them with a bit of bacon. That was very filling with the cake bread. That was a very traditional dinner.

You'd rarely get a sausage fried, we mostly ate bacon like cured bacon, no sausages. They would be like a treat if they were doing a coddle or something you wouldn't have them everyday

It would be mostly spuds and spud bread and pancakes and cake bread. Onions thrown in with the dripping and bread, you'd see a lot of Travellers eating. A boiled spud cut in half with a bit of country butter or cooked meat, was popular in my house when I was younger.

For desserts it was custard and jelly and there'd be rice or a bit of sago. There would be a lot of porridge for children going to school in the mornings and if there wasn't much else and you were hungry, there would always be porridge. Toast bread, it was a treat, if you did have sliced bread, you'd hold it up to the fire on a fork to toast it. My father would have fruit apples, oranges and bananas. If he came back with them, it was a real treat. You wouldn't have sweets or ice cream or fizzy drinks or anything like that. You would never ever see biscuits or anything like that.

At Christmas you would have custard and jelly and my mother would make the Christmas cake herself.





Missy Collins



My name is Missy. I was born in the Co. Westmeath in Mullingar I'm one of twelve. There were six boys and six girls. There is three of the boys dead and the two of the girls dead. That does be very sad for me because with me being the oldest girl, I nearly reared them, in the hard times we say.

We're talking about the cake bread, some people call it the soda bread, we call it cake bread. I was only eleven years of age when I had to bake cake bread. I

never forget it even when we were stopping at Athlone and me mother went in to have one of my brothers at the time. Me father told me what to do. Me daddy was in the army for a while and he was a good cook. This man and woman came along that we knew, they would be cousins of me mammy's. They said Mick 'who will bake the cake bread if Dolly (me mammy was Bridget, but she got Dolly) is in the hospital?' He said, Missy there and fair play to her he said. At a very young age, I had to do that. I had to put down spuds and cabbage, other bits and bobs, make the bottles for the childer, make the goodie (baby food). At that time there wasn't much. There was a lot of childer. I'd boil the white bread and strain the water off and I'd get a fork and I'd blend it up and then I'd put the milk in, so that was that bottle of goodie.

We didn't have all of those grander foods what they have today. You ate what you got; you did not say you were not eating it cause you would be dam glad to get it and ate it. It was really and truthfully the farmers that fed us, we would have been lost only for the farmers. Me brothers would help out and pay them back that way. But you got the fresh vegetables, spuds and their bacon and stuff like that. I was very used to hand washing the clothes, no other choice, and then a scrubbing board came out and of course they got me one of them as well.

My mother and father and grandparents were very good people. My mammy's father was an awl horse dealer and would love the pieballs. He would go on to the fairs and me grandmother would say don't get rid of my white pony on me, but he would. He'd send up to Dublin for the sphag (butter dishes, mugs all sorts of stuff you could sell, blessed pictures and everything). They would come back down to the station. The boxes would be very high. He'd go to the farmers houses selling them but the people had that much trust in them, that he could have a big square basket with stuff in it and he could leave that on top of the table if



that woman was three sheds down outside. I remember that as I was with my grandparents a lot.

Daddy's people were Co Longford and Leitrim. Me mammy and daddy were married in Athlone, they would go into Athlone and go over the bridge to the Connaught side, Roscommon, and that. They'd venture out there in the summertime. It was different places for different things, you knew the county that was the best for tin smithing. I always remember one thing, with my parents and me grandfathers and grannies, me father told me, he said 'Missy, if you have respect for people, he said, then them people he said should have respect for you' and I always remember them words. We learned, it was put into our heads not to touch anything, you will get enough off the people by asking or doing something in return for them.

Me father would be gone in the morning, he would go on a bike, he would have horses. He would always come back by a drapery shop, and he'd bring back red wellington boots for the girls and black ones for the boys and shirts and cord trousers. He was a great man.

My children never experienced that cause they never travelled and to me they missed out on life with things we done. When my father and mother would go, I would know what to make the tae from and to share around the bread or put out the spuds. We wouldn't go hungry, but the childers today, sure they won't hardly eat that food, they want chips, something else. We didn't know what chips was at that time and they were only a spud. I used to go to the farmers, they'd know ya but the woman could be churning the butter and I said, misses your arm must be tired, let me have a go and I'd have a go at churning because I'd be waiting for me pound of butter and me buttermilk. I would get a lovely pound or two of lovely country butter and cans of buttermilk, it was lovely.

I went into a shop beside the church where I made my confirmation. The dress I wore for my confirmation was made by the woman in the cottage, she had a machine and she made me a pinkie cap. Now, when I went into that shop, the girl behind the counter knew me father off course. Awh come in she said, til I see ya, I'll give you what you want for your confirmation. She said 'what would you like, ' what do you think I done? I want food for my brothers and sisters, she got a cardboard box, she put the bread into it, she put the butter into it, she put tea and sugar into it and she said 'what about yourself', I said miss so and so, you can put me in a packet of biscuits. I will put you in more than one she said, she gave me three or four. I always put my brothers and sisters in front of me.



Mary Collins



My name is Mary Collins and I come from a family of nine. I have five brothers and three sisters along with myself. My mother and father are originally from Ireland but I would have lived my life in England.

I am a twin myself and my mother was expecting us when she came back to a funeral in Ireland. She actually had us then in the Drogheda hospital and we stayed back in Ireland for a year. We went back to Manchester and I would have lived the rest of my

life in Manchester until I got married myself in 86.

I went to school in Manchester in the primary school as well. I had two sisters that was older than me.

My mother was a fantastic cook, and my sisters would have cooked too. I would have been one of the youngest. They would have done a lot of the cooking themselves. But what I used to love was my mother doing was the bread especially with the currants in it. It was a real treat to get the jam on top of it.

Soon I will be fifty-four. When I was a child, it would have been very hard because there wouldn't be much money in the family. My father, when he was growing up, he would have been in a big large family of eleven. My mother actually had a family of eleven. My mother's mother actually died giving birth, my mother was only fourteen, she would have taken on the mother role.

My mother was a great begger, they would have been looking after the horses and they would have provided the food. So again, like all the Travellers at that time, they would have had to go begging the houses to eat, to find food, so what they would get off the farmers, the spuds, the bread, and whatever they would have that evening, they would try to provide for the rest of the children. But in Manchester, myself and my brothers and sister wouldn't have experienced any of that because we would have gone to school a very young age and I would have only doing primary school. Travellers in my mother's time would have gotten no education at all.



My mother is eighty-three and my father is eighty-seven and thank God are still alive but they would never have seen the importance of education. It's only now at my age and that we do see the importance of education, so I make sure that my own children, my grandchildren stays in school. But I would have just left then at about eleven, twelve and helped my mother with different stuff.

But my mother always liked to do her own cooking and things. But I learned how to just watch her doing the bacon and cabbage is one of our favourites. We used to have the coddle, the coddle was a great thing because she'd say no matter who come in for a chat in the morning, she'd throw everything in. There was always plenty for everybody. My mother always used to love putting large amounts on because as she always used to say to us, "Always show respect, have the heat and the kettle on and if someone comes in, always offer them a bit of food, and if you have to share it, no matter who was in, share it." You would always have the bit of bread on the side. She'd always make sure she's baked the bread and that's just the way it was. I think for myself I carried on because I do always make sure there is plenty of food. If I have it at all and the people comes in, I always give it to them as well. I just think it's very welcoming for people to sit down at the table and to hand over whatever you have, I got that from me mother.

Here the women came together, and I thought was lovely. They came from Ballymun and they came from Pavee Point and I am related to some of them as well. As I grew up living in Manchester, I wouldn't of havin a real close relationship with some of them. I know of them but since I got married myself, I got to know them very well and listening to some of the stories is just great.



Molly Collins



My mother was Mary McDonagh she was married to Davey Joyce, she had fifteen children. Two died, two little boys so she had the girls and three boys. I'm Molly Collins. I had fifteen children. Seven boys and they were all living, and eight daughters, and the eight daughters are all good and well thank God.

I was born in Longford Hospital in Co. Longford and I travelled around most of everywhere. Limerick,

Longford, Westmeath and Co. Meath. We are really from the midlands and that is where we travelled mostly. We were in England for ten years; I came back in 1968. We are pure Irish.

The farmers were very good in them times they used to kill their own pigs and have their own sack of flour in the corner. You'd get loads of milk off the creamery men. Skimmed milk there was loads of froth in it. We loved getting the milk with the froth in it, it was very good for you.

My father was a tinsmith, he used to make ponters we'd call them. Pint ponters, ¾ cans, the big cans, and the can with the hoop with the lid on it could be 5 shillings. In them days, the money was small, but it was good. You would get a lot for it. We didn't buy food.

There was very close connections with the settled woman and the Travelling woman and the settled man and the Travelling man. The settled man invited the travelling man into the yard and if there was anything that he could mend at the time of the war or anytime he would mend kettles, pans, pots, buckets, and everything. That helped the farmer feed calves and pigs. The Traveller woman was invited into the house; she got a mug of tea first of all. The Co. Cavan and Co. Longford had words for us. In Co. Cavan would call us gafga they'd say come in gafga and in Co. Longford would say come in ducky. So ducky was invited in as well as your mother and you were barefooted going to the houses with her. She made a bargain with the ponders and the tin cans and you got the food through that. She wouldn't have to ask for food it was given. The auld bacon that was there before the pig was killed, they gave that to the Traveller, home cured bacon. They made their own butter and had their own eggs and they had this, that and the other but you got it. They were



very good to us. You would get the making of a big cake of bread in a paper bag that is the way we lived - that was a good way of living. My mother mostly boiled food, boiling spuds and cabbage, spuds and turnips - mostly spuds. You got them and peeled them and were glad to get them. I was a bad cook the worse cook in the world but I managed.



Maggie McDonagh



My name is Maggie McDonagh. I have twelve kids and I was born in Galway. I was born in 1965 and my mother had ten children.

My mother made something like what the women is doing in the book. She'd make her homebread, she'd make current cakes, she'd make apple tarts. She'd boil potatoes, she'd ate rabbits, hares, chickens, and pheasants. My father got a baby goat one time. I wanted him for a pet, he was all white. At night he

went to cook the goat, I don't think he ever got over it. Years ago, we didn't really have anything. I used to go with my father and go to houses, he would ask for a hen or sometimes in the fields, the farmers would give him cabbage, potatoes and he used to make buckets and saucepans and whistles and things like that, he would sell them and swap for food.

We travelled, when I was about seven when I came to Dublin.

I enjoyed travelling. My father could be in Cork or could be down around the North, they were always in a different place. And when you get to know new friends, you would be always crying cause he would say 'we were leaving now.' That kinda used to hurt you as well. See my father was good because I suppose tinning was in the family. He'd always find a school for us no matter what county you went to he would find a school. I remember been in school in Clifton. Years after we were coming near Dublin then I went to school in Maynooth for a while and then in Dublin and then the inner city. I made my Communion here in Dublin with the nuns in William Street and then I made me Confirmation in Gardiner Street.

Moll Mary McDonagh



My name is Moll. My father and mother had thirteen children. My father was a tinsmith he made cans and buckets my mother would go off and sell them. She'd get good money for them, she would go to the houses begging what they needed, food and that. That's what kept them going.

They would make soda bread when they came home bacon and cabbage from the country would be lovely. They would throw the potatoes into a big dustbin lid

and everyone had a feed out of it. Anyone who was passing could have them it didn't matter who it was Travellers or settled people it was there for everyone. There would be pots of this and big open fires it was lovely.

Soda bread was baked on a lid in a stand on the fire and then my mother used to bake boxty loaves she'd boil the spuds and grate the raw spuds and put them all into a basin and put the flour into it and mix them all up together and leave them for 3 hours cooking. That is what we used to live on.

We lived a good life as Travellers. We had no schooling we were moving every other day from one county to another. No education but we got our holy communion and conformation so that was the main thing in our family. They brought us up well. My mother would put a big can over the fire and boil the can and put the real tea, the loose tea, and the sugar and the milk - it all went in and everyone had a cup of that tea. It didn't matter who it was, it was there for everyone and when they were finished, they left it beside the fire, it was lovely.



Kathleen McDonnell



I was born in County Westmeath in Ireland Mullingar. I have five sisters and seven brothers, so there was a family of twelve.

As a child growing up my mother got the food in the farmer's houses. She used to call door-to-door, she used to go on call backs. She called to the houses with a basket she would sell pegs and nail brushes to provide food. She would build a relationship with the women, finding out stories about their lives. She

would tell them what was going on in her life they shared experiences. It was a great storytelling thing.

My father would go out and pick potatoes to provide food for the family. That died away because of machinery. The farmers didn't want the Travellers anymore because they got machinery. The tinsmithing that the Traveller men did - making buckets, cups and saucepans, mending stuff to feed cows - that all died away. Plastic buckets came into the supermarkets and did away with the tinware the Traveller men used to supply. That done away with that. That was my early years as a child growing up, they were my own memories.

My children, I have six children myself. I have five daughters and one son. It's very different today for my children. I try to keep some of my mother's traditions alive with the food that she made. I still cook things she made. I try to give it to my children but to be honest there is that much new stuff out there now they're gone away with the fairies altogether.

I give the food that my mother made, the bacon and cabbage I used to see her baking bread. If I provide spuds and cabbage they turn their nose up at it. There was no saying "what do you want?," you ate what you were given whether you liked it or not. It was very nutritious. There's lots of fizzy drinks now - I never saw anything like that in my day.

You drank milk or water or buttermilk it was very nutritious. My children would not drink buttermilk. Looking at all the different food that is out there I try to tell them that it's not good because the younger ones coming up are looking at it. I have grandchildren. I have three granddaughters and I have nine grandsons, there's two more on the way one I think is a boy the other girl doesn't know. I'm happy once the children are well and healthy that is all that matters in life.



Nancy McDonald



My name is Nancy McDonald. I was brought up in Manchester, born in Longford, in 1958. When I was about three or four my father and mother moved over to England. I was reared up in England until I was sixteen and well I was over sixteen when they came back. They came back in June 75 and I was married in the October 75. I was never used to a trailer. I might as well be honest, I didn't know anything about it because I was too young when me mam and dad went to Manchester. When we came

back in 75, they were living in wagons. Me grandfather and granny had a wagon. A couple of the people had tents. I was definitely in total shock because I didn't, I wasn't used to it. I was looking for a toilet and they were telling me to go down and find the first you know that you can find. But to make a long story short, that was a holiday we came back for. We went back over to England and about three months later. Me and my husband got married, so I moved into the caravan. I had no other choice, just get used to the caravan, and I got used to it. I settled into it like a duck to water to be honest with ya. Grand little caravan, I had, me husband had it bought, that was me then.

I had came expecting my first daughter then, she was born in December of the following year December 76. She was born, Catriona, she is the eldest girl of mine. And I went on to have six, well seven children. One little girl, I lost so that's what I have now. They're all reared up now. I have three daughters, three sons, my youngest son is thirty-four, me eldest daughter is forty-eight, well she will be forty-eight in December.

I travelled, I moved to Longford when I was having my eldest daughter to be beside my mam. I didn't mind where I was because too young to understand. But I moved down there to have my daughter in Mullingar hospital. Then we came back up after about two or three months and me after her, we came back up in March. And me and my husband moved around, we moved up to Cork, we moved to Portlaoise, we moved to Kells, we moved every place just hook your caravan on and go on your way. There wouldn't be just us on our own, they'd be other Travellers, older, moving as well. That's what we done.

The cooking part of it is, my mam started to learn me how to cook when I was about ten / eleven, that was the thing. The Travellers had to do it, she had to do it herself, so when I was grown up in Manchester, she used to call me into the small little scullery, we used to call it. A house in Manchester and she'd be learning me how to boil spuds and cabbage and everything like that. She learned me how to bake cake so that's where I got me cooking experience from, my mam. So, me with three daughters, my eldest girl was about eleven, I started to get her into the kitchen, you start them off by a little bit of tidying up. You don't have them at this cleaning thing that you hear off, they're scrubbing this and they're scrubbing, that's a load of bull. But you just learn them the basic needs of what they know, to keep the house clean and caravan clean, whatever they end up in when they are married. But I learned my daughter the exact same thing that my mam learned me, I got her in my kitchen. We went back to England after I had my third daughter, we moved to Cork then, and me daughter Lina was born in Finbars hospital in Cork in 1982. We left there, she was only coming about on three months and we moved to Dunsink in Finglas. And we packed up three weeks before the Christmas 84 and we moved to England. We were seven and a half year in England and I had my two last boys, they were born in Milton Quays hospital in England, me two last sons.

I was in school until I was sixteen. Me mam had me in school from when I was about four, I think, when you started at that time, and I went right through until I was about sixteen. I left secondary school and I went with me mam, she was working in a handbag factory, God be good to her, she had a job lined up for me, so I was working.

Even though, I was brought up there in a house in Manchester, it didn't take be hard to settle into the Travellers' way of life because I think it's in ye. I think it's in ye, once it's in it, you'll get on. I got married in October, two weeks me dad, God be good to him, me mam, they were packing up. They were packing up cause they were moving. Me dad was originally from Longford; they were going and I remember saying where are you going dad? I was in shock because they were there with you your whole life and I was only two weeks married and I just went down and said where are you going and he said Nancy I'm leaving now you're married get on with your life.

I'm forty-eight year getting on with my life now married with my husband.



Maggie McDonnell



My name is Maggie McDonnell and there was thirteen in my family - ten girls and three boys that was thirteen.

I was born in Westmeath in the Midlands. We travelled around everywhere from Westmeath down to Leitrim all around begging and selling. Me father and family would get work off farmers pulling beets and picking spuds, all that kind of thing.

We'd go around the houses, get up in the morning, get yourself ready, and go off begging. What you got; you made it when you came back in an open fire on the ground outside. Hanging the pot on the bar and putting the lid and oven in the stand at the fire for the baking bread. My mother and my sisters would have to do all of that.

Sometimes I would help, more times I wouldn't but there was enough of them there. There was very little work, in them times was little or nothing, so you made do with what you got.

My own children, I have ten, three girls, seven boys. They're all married now and have their own children some of them are grannies.





Kathleen Ward



My name is Kathleen Ward I live in Coolock Northern Cross Belcamp Lane. I have three boys myself and three girls. In my mother and father's family I have eight brothers and six sisters along with myself.

The sort of food we got was bacon, cabbage, potatoes in the skin, and corned beef, turnip, lovely stews, and eggs. She'd do eggs in the morning for our breakfast. That's what I learned. I did it for my own kids the three boys and three girls.

The grandkids are different they want takeaways they wouldn't settle for that food but I still make that food for myself I live alone. If my daughters are coming up they're used to it. They'll say hold me a bit of bacon and cabbage and stew. They'll say are you doing bacon and cabbage and I'd say I wasn't going to but I will. They love the cabbage and bacon and the turnip and the spuds all boiled together in the one pot. I'd have to make sure the girls were coming up before I'd put it on because I'd only take a plate.

My father was from Galway he lived a lot in Belfast during the time of the troubles he moved to Dublin, to Finglas, St Helena's. We were there for a while and then moved to Coolock. I don't remember travelling around, my older brothers and sisters would they travelled around Galway a lot. I don't remember my granny. I'm not the youngest my sister Teresa is.

We travelled everywhere



Ellie Mongan



My name is Ellie Mongan. I was born in Galway many years ago. I was born in the hospital which was unusual at the time. I was one of eighteen children, nine boys and nine girls and we were at the side of the road for a good while. Me mother had about ten children when we got a house and we settled there and she put us to school, some of us got a bit of schooling. She had the other eight childer after that, they were all born into houses.

But I got married then when I was seventeen, I was back onto the side of the road then again. I went travelling around most of the country, up and down. We were in Scotland for a while, we went all over Ireland, travelled all over Ireland, went here and there. We settled around Dublin then and our childers started going to school. We waited around Dublin we were in the halting site for years. We ended up getting a house and the kids went to school. They all settled down and got married and then the grandchildren, all the grandchildren, there all in school now. So, it's a lot different now than when I was younger.

I had seven children; I didn't go for the eighteen. I have seven and I lost a son three years ago. I have about twenty or thirty grandchildren here.

I have one great grandchild about two months old now. There are all in houses none of the grandchildren now travel. Me own children they are all settled in houses. They are all going to school like they have grandchildren in school, so that's the way things have changed, no travelling around.

I enjoyed travelling, but not in the wintertime, it was tough. You had no electricity or anything, you had no facilities basically when you were travelling around. I said to him when we got into the halting sites, there would be electricity and running water. That was one good thing about the halting sites. On the side of the road, you would have nothing; you would just be going from camp to camp. At the time that was just the way it was, you accepted that way. You would get your water from a tap or some of the houses would give you a bucket of water. You would have candles or the oil lamps, you got a log or sticks and light a campfire. You would wash your clothes and did all of your cooking on the fire.



I would be mostly eating boiled food then, and you would get your food from the farmers, they were very good. They would give you vegetables, sometimes they'd do their own meat. They'd give you a bit of bacon and they'd give you flour and eggs and things like that and they made you do a bit of work for the farmers in exchange for things. That's how we lived years ago.



Lisa McDonnell



My name is Lisa McDonnell I'm forty-four years old. I work for Primary Health Care in TravAct. I have two brothers and four sisters. Growing up we were used to traditional foods, nothing fancy, whatever we were given we had to eat it. My mother cooked it.

Today it is a completely different situation with the young people. It's all the different foods you try your best to keep up with the traditions but as the years are going on it is getting harder.

Although you do try to make the kids eat the traditional foods sometimes, you are fighting a losing battle, they won't eat it, you just have to try your best.

This cookery book here is a great thing it shows the old school cooking and there's a few new bits thrown it as well to show what the young people eat today.

Shiela Reilly



My name is Shiela Reilly, and I was born in the County Louth, in Ardee hospital if you ever heard tell of it. It was a little maternity hospital at that time, but it's an old folks home today. I came from a very big family I think it's eleven. I had eight brothers and three sisters. And they're all nearly dead now. One sister is dead, she was the oldest, she would be very old if she were alive now. Five of my brothers are dead - the Lord have Mercy on them all.

My father and mother are dead, they used to camp around Louth, Cavan, Meath, Westmeath, Longford, and they'd take an odd trip down the north as far as Newry and Warrenpoint and they would stay there for a while. That was before the troubles.

My father was a tinsmith, and he would make the cans and buckets and stuff for the cows. Me and my mother would go out into the country and sell it. The other two girls were married and gone; me two sisters were much older than me. I was the youngest of the girls. Me and my mother – I used to help her. We walked to the houses and the people knew us as well as anything. You wouldn't have to ask for a thing. They knew what we wanted, and we knew what they wanted out of the basket of what we were selling. We swapped the things for the food and even if you never swapped the farmers would give you the food anyway. They were very good and if it wasn't for them, we wouldn't be alive. There was no dole there was no money at that time, we were getting no money only the couple of shillings me daddy would get.

And I'd make the flowers. I'd make the flowers around the Christmas and sell bunches of them around the houses. The people of Ireland made little altars in their houses at that time. I'd sell them in the pubs. They'd use them as decorations around Christmas in and out of the bottles and the glass. You know, for the Christmas. You couldn't keep them made. I'd sell them in the shops and pubs. But you'd get tuppence or truppence but tuppence and truppence at that time was grand.

I am talking about, I'm eighty-five and I was about fifteen so seventy years ago. It was very good anyway we'd a great time and the people was very healthy. Thank God.



Then around that time I got married. My husband came from Tuam in the country Galway. We got married in Co Meath in Kells. We were married twelve years and he took a massive heart attack and died. We had six children and one on the way. He was thirty-two years of age. God help him. He was a lovely, lovely man. He was a lovely gentle person he got on with everyone. He died anyway and he's buried in Dundalk in the Co Louth.

I came to live in Dublin where I am now. I knew I wouldn't be leaving Dublin anymore because I was getting a little Tighin there before we got the houses then we got lead. It was very good for me and the likes of me. I had no husband I wouldn't be able to lead ponies down the road and yoke the ponies and bring them in. I stood there and all the Travellers stood there. I'd seven children and I put the children to school and they got confirmation and holy communion, and they are all baptised thanks be to God. They got bits of jobs and went off and got married. My eldest son is dead about ten years. My husband is fifty-three years dead the first of next April. Ten years ago, my son died.

Then I had a grand young girl she was absolutely lovely; God love her and she was as helpful, she'd help anyone who needed help. She was as soft as butter, she died.



Mary Tyrell



Hi, my name is Mary Tyrell, I live in Dublin. I live in the caravan park on the site. I have three brothers and four sisters. And when I was younger, we did a bit of travelling. For eight months - I hated everyday of it, didn't like travelling at all, liked my own comfort.

I have two boys and one girl and when we were younger there was ten of us living at home including my mother and father. And me mother could stretch a bag of spuds for about a week between

us all. The kinda dinners she used to cook which I would cook today was, bacon and cabbage, stews. I don't bake the bread now, she used to bake the bread. I think a lot of things would have changing from the time I was living at home to me having my own children.



Bernadette McDonagh



Hello, my name is Bernadette McDonagh and I was born in Mullingar, County Westmeath. I have five sisters and two brothers, and we were more or less travelling from the time I was a baby, between Dublin, Cork, Limerick. I suppose any camp the Travellers was moving to, we'd kinda go from one camp to another we'd have the Clondalkin area, the Tallaght area. But we'd always make our way back to Dublin, for us to go back to school, when the summertime would be over.

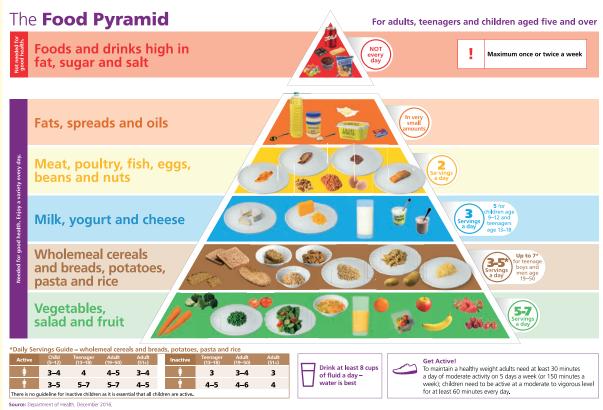
We were more or less reared with my grandmother and my grandfather, he was a tinsmith. Even though my own mother was doing the cooking, my memories would go back to my grandmother. She'd do the pancakes, the rabbit soup, the goose, frying in a skillet when we'd be out camping, the campfire and the skillet on the campfire, baking the bread.

So, even though I remember all the recipes and all the cooking and all the ways of Travellers living. As a young girl growing up, getting married myself, I'd do homemade soups myself and I bake a few scones or a bit of currant bread. But my children, I have four children myself, I'm married myself 33 years, and I have four children and my children wouldn't be into cooking.

Now they can bake, they do their own little bit of baking, but I think a lot of Travellers the younger generation now, it's kind of chip food and delis and takeaways and it's very, very, very little homemade cooking with the younger generation.

I was happy with this group that, I was, with doing this cooking. Mixing with all age groups of the older generation, kind of relearning all over again and bringing back your memories and it was lovely; it was just all lovely.









With many thanks to everyone who helped make this project possible:

Howley's Family Butchers supplied our meats and sourced rabbits, pig tails, and lamb's heart. The rabbit was a firm favourite with the women, who have since ordered a few more from Padraig.

Mary Skipton and Joanne McCabe led out on the project and spent many hours in the classroom, the office, at home and the TravAct kitchen bringing it all together.

Lisa Kelly from HSE CHO DNCC Health and Wellbeing for facilitating the Christmas dinner cookery session in TravAct and helping in many ways behind the scenes with her ongoing support to everyone involved.

The Doghouse in Howth welcomed us to their cozy tea rooms, gave us a great cooked breakfast and kept the tea flowing while the storm blew, and the rain poured.

Nicole Dunne from Howth Foraging who took us to Howth on a rainy September morning and spoke about edible plants, herbs and cures.

Niall Ennis worked on our cover, layout, images, print and web design – we are very happy to have him on board.

Andrew Connelly, the regional literacy co-ordinator from the Adult Literacy for Life office.

All the support staff in the City of Dublin ETB, the HSE CHO DNCC Health and Wellbeing, TravAct, Pavee Point and St. Margaret's Traveller Community Association.

Emily Marshall who worked on the Health and Wellbeing course and helped develop this idea.

And finally, the oversight committee who met regularly to plan this project, keep it on track, and bring it to life. Thank you to Bridget Nevin, Lisa Kelly, Mary Brigid Collins, Winnie Collins, Fran Keyes, Máirín Kenny, and Leah Skipton.



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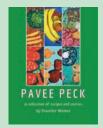
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We hope you enjoy this book as much as we enjoyed making it!



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