

# O'Reilly's Treasured Times

Publisher: Linda Kauffeldt

Volume: IV

Issue: 1

Date: December 2008

Greetings and blessings to all,

'Tis lovely to be back and I hope this edition of the newsletter finds you happy, healthy and contented. This newsletter has been a long time coming. So many times I have sat down with the honourable intention of writing my newsletter and just as many times I have stopped. My excuse for not being able to finish each time was 'writer's block'.

The real reason for my writer's block is that I have been dealing or rather not dealing with a complicated grief, a grief following the death of me da, James O'Reilly, on March 24, 2007 exactly one month to day after my father-in-law passed on. I say complicated grief because me da's and my relationship was a complex one – he was a square peg trying to fit into the cultural and social round hole that defines what a father should be. And I was the daughter who desperately wanted her da to fit in that round hole.



Further complicating my grief was my inability to write a tribute to him – a tribute I wanted to be the main focus of a newsletter. Previously, whenever someone I loved deeply had passed on I would immediately turn to the comfort of my pen and paper and write a tribute as my way of saying goodbye. Every time I tried to write his tribute, I would simply shut down. I just wasn't ready to say goodbye.

I realize now that by being passive in my grief and by delaying dealing with it, my grief has only grown larger and deeper. Writing his tribute would mean that his death was real and that, for the first time in my life, I would finally know where he was. You see I've spent a great deal of my life never knowing where he was. Was he safe? Is he warm? Has he eaten? Is someone taking care of him?



Ironically, as I write this, today is me da's birthday. He would have turned 76 and I can think of no better birthday present than to reconcile my grief. What would his response be? Simple. "Well, by geeze, Lynn, it's about time." So pour yourself a cuppa tea, curl up in your favourite comfy chair (perhaps grab a tissue or two), and join me in my tribute to me da, James Edward O'Reilly. It is my hope that this tribute will inspire you to think about your relationship with

your father.

## James Edward O'Reilly



Were it not for his birth certificate stating he was born in Canada, me da could easily be mistaken for an Irishman of the Emerald Isle. The type of Irishman that is characterized as always having a story or joke at hand, is charming, possesses great wit, is calm and easy going, is extremely proud of his heritage, enjoys music with passion, enjoys a good smoke, and who likes the odd drink or two. That was me da to a tee.

James Edward O'Reilly was born on December 5, 1932 to Daniel and Teresa O'Reilly (nee Kennedy) in Osceola, Ontario. He was raised in a family of 6 sisters and 4 brothers. The family eventually settled in Eganville after losing the homestead farm during the depression years to back taxes.



The call 'west' was always within him. At the age of 17 he moved to Edmonton where he lived with his sister, Odessa, and her husband, Joe Thibeau. It was during this time that me da played hockey and, as the story has been told, he could have made a career out of it had he not contracted tuberculosis when he was 22. Da was hospitalized for 16 months in the Charles Camsell Sanatorium in Edmonton. It was during this period that me da did all his reading and discovered his passion for

poetry, Shakespeare, and scientific equations. As me ma says, "He turned in to Shakespeare when he was there."

Upon his recovery, me da moved to Alert Bay, BC where he went into the taxi business with his brother, Mel. The business didn't turn out quite as expected and me da moved back to Sudbury, ON where he worked for the Department of Highways. In 1959 he moved back to Eganville, where he met me ma, Magdalene Holly of Cormac, ON. Again the call west came and me da moved to Castlegar, BC to join his brother, Mel, in a well drilling operation. Unfortunately, this venture failed and back to Edmonton he went.



Me da and ma were married September 10, 1960 in St. John's Catholic Church, Edmonton, AB. Ma got a job as a teller with the Bank of Montreal and me da held the odd job here and there. I came along June 1, 1963 and, since there was no maternity leave at the time, me ma had to leave her job. With da not being able to hold down a job, we moved back home when I was only a few months old. For one year we lived with my maternal grandparents, Alphonse and Anna Holly, in Cormac. When me ma was rehired with the Bank of Montreal in Eganville, we set off down Highway 512 and back to Eganville we went.



You are probably wondering why me da wasn't able to hold down a job for very long. There were two reasons. Me da had been diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia in his 20s and, in an attempt to quell the voices, he turned to drink. One quite often precipitated the other.

Schizophrenia greatly alters how a person thinks and perceives the world. The illness is characterized by delusions, hallucinations, disturbances in thinking and withdrawal from social activity making it difficult for me da to maintain employment for any sustained period of time.



Life was not easy. The responsibility for his care fell mostly to me ma and me. Normal family activities were disrupted and, while we went through some periods of stability, the unpredictability of his illness, the side effects of his medication, and his alcoholism made it difficult for us to lead a normal family life.

That said, I do have some wonderful memories of my childhood. There was the sparkle in his eye when he told yet another joke. He could quote Shakespeare at the drop of a hat. He stood up to Sister Sheila when she was picking on my 'poor' speech in grade 4. "For God's sake," he said. "She has a mouth full of plastic (top and bottom appliances). No wonder she can't talk right." He taught me the importance of reading, writing and education. He never raised his voice at me and the only time I can ever remember him being angry with me was when I was about six years old and he caught me sticking me tongue out at me ma behind her back. And no matter what, I was always his little girl.



At the age of 21, I assumed responsibility for me da's care. From then until his passing were some of my most challenging times. Trying to juggle a young family and manage his care was especially difficult. But, as always, the call west came and over the past 20 years he lived in many towns and villages in Western Canada. A few times he returned home to Eganville but his heart always took him back out west.

When me da passed on, I wanted to give him a send off befitting him. Never one for organized religion, I knew that he would never have wanted a funeral nor would he have wanted a memorial service. I decided the only way to honour him was to hold an Irish wake. On April 7, 2007, family and friends gathered at Mac's Steak House and Tavern, Mink Lake, ON. Me da always loved a good party and his Irish wake was an occasion to share food and drink, recollect his life through photos, retell a few humorous stories, and listen to the music he was fond of – exactly as he would have wanted it.



## Did You Know?

- The Reillys are descendants of the O Conor kings of Connacht and are primarily from Cavan, Cork, Longford, and Meath.
- The O in O'Reilly is a word all by itself, signifying "grandson" when attached to a grandfather's name or trade. The apostrophe that usually follows the O actually comes from a misunderstanding by English-speaking clerks in Elizabethan time, who interpreted it as a form of the word "of."
- My grandfather, Daniel O'Reilly, was born at Bromley Township on October 23, 1895
- My grandmother, Bridget Teresa Kennedy, was born at Leitchfield, Quebec on June 12, 1895
- To them were born six girls and five boys named as follows: Muriel (1917), Madeline (1918), Odessa (1920), Garry (1922), Allan (1923), Melvin (1925), Grace (1927), Phyllis (1930), James (1932), Jack (1934), and Marie (1937). Me da is survived by his sisters Grace Mousseau (Campbell River, BC) and Phyllis Thomson (Edmonton, AB).
- In addition to playing musical instruments, me da enjoyed playing checkers, chess, copper tooling, punch embroidery and wood burning art.
- Schizophrenia is a chronic and serious disease of the brain. It is a psychotic disorder, which involves a loss of contact with reality, making it very hard for a person to distinguish between what is real and what is not.
- Schizophrenia affects 1% of the Canadian population.
- Up to 80% of individuals with schizophrenia will abuse substances during their lifetime.



## Treasured Recipe

Me da loved a good onion sandwich. I remember feeling appalled that there was something as dreadful as an onion sandwich. Da would lather the butter on two slices of white bread followed by an equally thick lather of mayonnaise. Next followed the dreaded but thickly sliced onions. No



sandwich was ever complete without a generous dousing of black pepper. I still shudder at the sight of what seemed to me clouds of black pepper dust encircling him. While me da didn't follow any 'official' recipe when making his onion sandwich, I am including a recipe for those of you brave enough to want to try making your own!

**Ingredients:** 8 slices firm-textured white bread, cut into quarters; 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, room temperature; 1 large sweet onion, peeled

and sliced into paper-thin slices, coarse or sea salt; 2 tablespoons mayonnaise; 4 tablespoons of finely minced chives or parsley. **Directions:** 1) Arrange the bread slices next to one another on a flat work surface. Using a glass or a 1-inch round cookie cutter, cut out two small rounds from each sandwich; discard trimmings. 2) Spread each bread circle with 1 tablespoon butter. Place a thin layer of sliced onions over the butter. Season lightly with salt. 3) Assemble the sandwiches with remaining bread slices, pressing lightly to make them adhere. 4) Spread some of the mayonnaise around the outside rim of each sandwich round. Roll the rim of each sandwich in the chives or parsley to coat completely. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerator for a few hours.

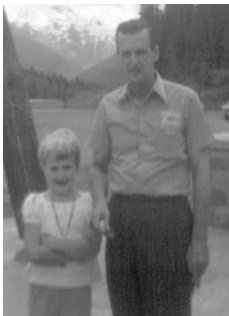
## Treasured Irish Lessons

1. **Word:** Father **Irish:** Athair **Pronunciation:** ah-hir
2. **Word:** Musician **Irish:** ceoilteoir (plural: ceoilteoiri) **Pronunciation:** keohl-thoh-ir (plural: kee-ohl-thoh-ree)
3. **Phrase:** He is the best fiddler in the county **Irish:** is é an fídléir is fearr sa chontae **Pronunciation:** shay ('is é as one word) on fidlayr iss fahrr sah khun dhay

4. **Phrase:** There will be good traditional music at the pub tonight **Irish:** Beidh ceol traidisiúnta maith ag an óstáin anocht **Pronunciation:** bye kee-ohl thrad-ish-oon-tha my egg on oh-sth-law-een ah-nucht
5. **Phrase:** I'd like a pint of beer **Irish:** Ba mhaith liompiontae beoir **Pronunciation:** bah wah ly-um pee-yun-thah bee-oh-ir
6. **Phrase:** My favourite Irish song is..... **Irish:** Is an t-amhrán is breá liom **Pronunciation:** iss on thow-rawn iss brah li-um

## Treasured Quotes

- It doesn't matter who my father was; it matters who I remember he was. ~ Anne Sexton
  - Old as she was, she still missed her daddy sometimes. ~ Gloria Naylor
  - A daughter may outgrow your lap, but she will never outgrow your heart. ~ Unknown
  - An Irishman's heart is nothing but his imagination.~ George Bernard Shaw
  - If you cannot get rid of the family skeleton, you may as well make it dance. ~ George Bernard Shaw
  - Humour to a man is like a feather pillow. It is filled with what is easy to get but gives great comfort. ~Irish Proverb
  - The older the fiddle the sweeter the tune. ~ Irish Proverb
- I look upon you as a gem of the old rock. ~ Sir Thomas Browne
- How true Daddy's words were when he said: "All children must look after their own upbringing. Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person's character lies in their own hands." ~ Anne Frank



## A Bit O' Wit

- A mother (Tessie) was preparing pancakes for her sons, Jim, 5, and Jack, 3. The boys began to squabble over who would get the first pancake. Their mother saw the opportunity for a moral lesson. "If Jesus were sitting here, He would say, 'Let my brother have the first pancake, I can wait.'" Jim turned to his younger brother and said, "Jack, you be Jesus!"
- I couldn't resist including this one as me da was certainly gifted with eloquent speech. What is Irish Diplomacy? Irish diplomacy is the ability to tell a man to go to hell in such a way that he looks forward to the trip.



## Trivia Questions

Be the first to correctly answer this month's trivia questions and you will receive a shamrock tea cup and saucer (retail value \$19.95) for your efforts (me da enjoyed a good cuppa tea). Email your answers to [oreillystreasures@bellnet.ca](mailto:oreillystreasures@bellnet.ca).

1. This English poet and playwright is widely regarded as the greatest writer in the English language and was me da's favourite writer. Who is it?
2. This Canadian city is known as Canada's Festival City. It was home to me da on several occasions.
3. Me da played several instruments--fiddle, harmonica and spoons. Another instrument he played is thought to be one of the oldest musical instruments in the world. A musician apparently playing it can be seen in a Chinese drawing from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC and, in the movie *A Boy Named Charlie Brown*, Snoopy plays one. What is it?
4. This Canadian Ale was the undisputed favourite of me da. Its rich, golden colour, distinct malt notes and subtle touch of spicy hops makes it a most refreshing ale. What is it?



## Treasured Events

- **17% off on the 17th** -- In eager anticipation of St. Patrick's Day on the 17th of March, O'Reilly's Treasures is offering a 17% discount\* on the 17th day of each month. We look forward to seeing you! \*Discount applies to regular priced and in-stock items only.
- **Christmas Open House:** Join us on **Saturday, December 13, 2008** for our first annual Christmas Open House! Scheduled events include: **Shortbread Baking Contest** – back by popular demand is our shortbread baking contest where the customers do the baking and the judging! Gift certificates of \$25, \$20, \$15 will be awarded to the top three shortbreads. Drop off your shortbread in the morning and throughout the day customers will sample the shortbreads and vote for their favourites. At the end of the day, votes will be tallied and prize-winners awarded. **Story Time with Mrs. Claus** – Bring the wee ones in for a visit with Mrs. Claus! Beginning at 2 p.m., join Mrs. Claus for story time, cookies and juice. With the donation of a non-perishable food item for our local food bank you can have your child's picture taken with Mrs. Claus free of charge. Each child will receive a treat from Mrs. Claus.
- **Christmas Ornament Personalization:** Every Friday between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m., Leprechaun Tanya will be available to personalize your Christmas ornaments. Unable to come in on a Friday? No problem! Leave your ornament(s) with us and Leprechaun Tanya will personalize them for you on her next shift ready for pick up at your convenience. Personalization is available in the colour of your choice and is not limited to ornaments as any ceramic surface can be personalized.
- **Irish Heritage Scramble Squares Challenge** – Take the 5 minute challenge! Unscramble our 4" x 4" square Irish Heritage Scramble Square pieces by perfectly matching the beautiful illustrations on the squares edges in every direction, while forming a 12" x 12" square. Sound easy? It's not! Can you unscramble the squares without scrambling your brain? Free puzzle to anyone who can unscramble the squares in under 5 minutes. Good Luck!
- **Christmas Draw:** Be sure to fill out a ballot for your chance to win a 50ml bottle of Inisfree Perfume and a 250ml bottle of Inisfree Body Lotion set, retail value \$75.95. Draw will take place Saturday, December 20, 2008 at 5 p.m. Good Luck!



## New Arrivals



We're gearing up for a wonderful holiday season here at O'Reilly's Treasures. Some of our newest arrivals include: **Hall of Names** -- collection of history and heraldry products, Coat of Arms, Clan Badges, surname and first name histories, anniversary and family tree Coat of Arms, thousands of names are available. **Bridgets of Erin** and **Burke & Hogan** – Christmas ornaments galore! The trees are beautifully decorated with Irish ornaments and, this year, we are pleased to be able to offer personalization on many of our ornaments. **Aces Giftware** – Shamrock linens, placemats and napkins, baby onesies, musical dolls and fairy jewellery boxes. **Dovetale Collections** – Scottish teas, preserves, jam, marmalades, and biscuits. **Distinctive by Design** – Celtic jewellery, jewellery, and more jewellery! **Augsburg Fortress** --Figurines, prints, and mugs as well as home décor.

## Coming Soon

**A.S.A.P.** – Irish hoodies and waffle weave 'tis himself and herself bathrobes. **Century Irish Items** – Pubs of Ireland t-shirts, ¾ length Irish t-shirts, 'tis himself/herself aprons, and ball caps. **Bridgets of Erin** – himself/herself bath towels, shamrock goblets, and Christmas tree toppers. We are hoping for their arrival by the end of the week but are dependant on how long the shipments take to clear Canada Customs.

## Me Da's Legacy

For as long as I can remember, me da spoke of his legacy. It was something I didn't understand at the time but have since come to realize that what he was concerned about was what the measure of his life would be when all was said and done. He desperately wanted his writings to be published and he truly believed we would be wealthy because of them. Page after page after page he wrote obsessively and compulsively, a characteristic of schizophrenia. While his writings were clear in his mind, no one else could interpret them. His brilliance is forever trapped within his millions of illegible words.



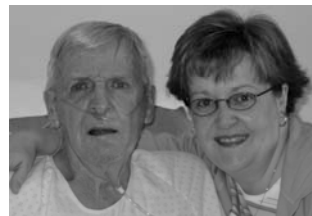
What me da didn't realize was that his legacy wasn't something he could put a price on. His legacy is something far more valuable than that. He lives on in my passion for reading and writing, in O'Reilly's Treasures itself, in my sons' pursuit of their higher



education, in our wit, our smiles, and in our sometimes mischievous ways. Oh, yes, and perhaps in the retelling of an odd story or two.

## Merry Christmas!

The holiday season offers me a special opportunity to extend my personal thanks and my very best wishes to my family, friends and loyal customers. I would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas. May peace, joy, hope and happiness be yours during this holiday season and throughout the New Year. Thank you for joining me in my tribute to me da; it was pleasure sharing it with you, my treasured friends.



Rest in peace, Sweet Prince, and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.

Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, Love leaves a memory no one can steal.

~From a headstone in Ireland

And remember, mind yourself!

The Leprechauns of O'Reilly's Treasures  
Mark & Linda Kauffeldt, Ryan, Dylan & Liam Bradley  
Heather Blair, Tanya Beyer & Amanda Purcell  
16 Pembroke St., P.O. Box 489, Cobden, ON K0J 1K0  
Tel: 613-646-7157 Fax: 866-895-1971  
[www.oreillystreasures.ca](http://www.oreillystreasures.ca) email: [oreillystreasures@bellnet.ca](mailto:oreillystreasures@bellnet.ca)

Store Hours

Monday to Saturday: 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Sunday: 12 p.m. until 4 p.m.

