

Name: **Frank Glynn**

Address: **Milltown, Tuam, Co Galway**

Date: **10th July 2017**

Location: **Milltown Community Centre**

Interviewed by: **Marie Mannion, Heritage Officer, Galway County Council**

Transcription by: **Pauline Connolly**

Marie Mannion: Hello, we're speaking to Frank Glynn, resident of Milltown. Hello Frank

Frank Glynn: Morning, midday I suppose

Marie Mannion: You have been involved in business, in the shop business, both as a publican, an undertaker and general shop business for a long number of years. Could you tell us about your early years growing up in a shop and about then coming to Milltown and the changes you've seen in your years as a shopkeeper from Kilkerrin all the way to Milltown?

Frank Glynn: The changes were vast. When we'd come home from school during the war, the first thing we'd have to do is go out and open the parcels.....collect the twine off them and roll it up and put it in what we'd call the twine drawer, gently fold up the paper and preserve it so that it would be used again because it was all recycled.

Then we would do our lessons or whatever it was. Every week, there was something different. There was filling tea one week, it might be filling sugar another week. We had our own printed bags for the tea. The sugar was in brown paper bags. There were at least 3 different qualities of tea. They would all be denoted by the colours of the bag, generally the cheapest one was white and the dearer ones would be red and green and that type of thing, filled in quarter pounds, half pounds. I think, very seldom, there'd be a pound during the war because of the rationing books.

After that, if there was a funeral on, we'd be helping in the bar, maybe washing glasses because everything was kept to a minimum. Washing the bottles for bottling the stout and the beer in Summer time only. There'd be no beer that time all the year around. There'd be just beer in the Summer time. The Guinness, you'd wash the bottles and every week or every second week at least, they'd be a keg of stout to be bottled, you'd put them from the washing tub into a rinsing tub, take off the old labels off them, put on the new labels and then on the day of bottling we'd have to be bottling tap for the keg.

We had what we'd call a siphon, leave a dozen bottles on the tray and press the bit of handmade timber into the bottles, that was the siphon, gave the correct measurement, half way up the snout of the bottle and then we would have to cork them, usually the corks would be steeped in boiling water in a bucket for maybe 15 / 20 minutes before we'd start corking them when they'd be softer, punch them with a corker onto the bottles. The bottles would be labelled and back on the shelves again and after they were ready for sale in three or four days when they mature again.

When you'd come to Milltown 1955, started to change at that time. We were still packing the tea from the tea chest, that you'd get in for a few years after and eventually it came prepacked. Eventually then the little tea bags came, and there doesn't seem to be only two qualities now – Gold label and a simple straight one. Whereas the olden days people were much precise, they'd be smelling it. You'd have to give them at least the special one for when they'd be having the stations in the house and they'd have to be poured out for the priest in a china cup to make sure that a flavour was retained and that he'd got the best cup in the house and all that type of thing maybe for something like that be the only time the china be taken down until Christmas again if there was a wedding again or something like that.