



# Roscommon people

## Summer Living

Special 12-page pull-out!

### SUNNY DAZE

# It's just like the good old days!

■ **Seamus Duke**  
This summer we are enjoying the best weather that we have had in a number of years. And as we all know, any time that we have good weather the older people always say that every summer used to be like this in years gone by.  
Mind you, if you talk to the experts at the Met Office they will say that there is no evidence that the weather was any better 30, 40 or 50 years ago! It doesn't stop people reminiscing about the old days and how it used to be.  
Society has changed so much in recent years that kids today have everything organised for them. There are summer camps, foreign

holidays, computer games, hundreds of TV channels and several other ways to keep them occupied during the summer.

Years ago it was different. I remember going off with three or four friends to local rivers armed with empty jam jars and a box of worms as bait, and we'd spent hours luring small fish into the jars with the bait before yanking the jar out of the water. We came home later in the evening with jars full of little fish!

Sunny summer days were also spent at the Shannon in Portrun or at the Suck in Athleague. They were great places to go for a swim. It is a pity that you never see



The ISA held their first ever Powerboat Race in Ballyleague last weekend. Pic: Andrew Fox.

kids swimming there now. In Athleague you could swim across to the mill side of the river and dive in. We had hours of great fun there over many years.

On a special day or even for the summer holidays, many people from this neck of the woods would head for Galway. There were sunny days when the beach at Salthill was absolutely packed. There was always an alternative out at the Silver Strand, which was a great beach to go for a swim to. Many a kid learned how to swim in the Atlantic Ocean in Salthill and at the Silver Strand! If you were very good you got an ice cream cone on the way home. If you were very, very good you might even get a 99!!

There were also endless games of football punctuated only by breaks for drinks of water out of the empty glass milk bottles which were left outside the door of the house awaiting replacement by

the milkman the following morning. Then there were all those sweltering summer Sundays at football matches in Hyde Park, McHale Park, Pearse Stadium, Carrick-on-Shannon and Sligo. The memory banks never seem to remember the days when we were totally soaked to the skin!

Then there was the tar on the roads. You knew it was a great summer's day when the tar on the roads started to melt and by mid-day there would be little black pools on the road which made a funny sound when cars and lorries went across it.

I wasn't from a farming family but we helped some of our neighbours who had hay to save. There were the big wooden rakes when the hay was gathered when it was dry and golden brown in colour. We learned to pike the hay and the cocks were capped awaiting the tractor which would bring it home.

Ah yes – the good old days.

But were they really that good? We like to think they were anyway. The weather is always better when you look

back. Maybe in 30 years' time the kids of today will fondly reminisce about the summer of 2010!



Rachel Frain and Seán Doyle pictured at the ISA Powerboat Race in Ballyleague recently. Pic: Andrew Fox.



Tom Ruane, Aoife Ruane, Aidan Ruane and Emma Ruane at Ballinlough Festival. Pic: Mick McCormack.