

Basic Detail Report



As I was walking down the main street the other day I met "Griff." I had not seen him for some time although he still lived close by. The Griffiths were a renowned family in the area, a tough bunch, always prepared to stand up for themselves. They had a reputation to keep, they were hard men, even the sisters could hold their own. Fulfilling a demanding pastime using a comprehensive variety of household colours, felt tip pens and aerosol spray paints, for such a small group they left their mark all over town. "GRIFF WAS HERE."

Mark or "Griff" as he liked to be known was a short stocky fella with a presence larger than life. Impaired with small scars to his forehead and chin, souvenirs he had picked up over the years as a result of heated disagreements. Himself and a few lads were a familiar sight hanging around Borzo's chipper. To relieve the boredom they would stroll down to another corner to pass some time and a short while later walk back again.

Late one evening one of the group rode into the already crowded chipper on a horse and ordered his take-away of fish and chips. To pacify the situation at hand the proprietor served the horseman quickly. To make an exit he had to turn the horse around, this caused terror among some middle aged men and women making a brief stop over returning home from Bingo. Achieving this awkward manoeuvre with great skill in a space little bigger than a passage-way the horse and rider rode into the night cheered on by whistles and cowboy shouts RIDE'M TONTO.

Renewing contact which had been lost for a few years I asked Griff how he was? He replied, Great! "would you believe it my mot just had a baby this morning. You wouldn't have any odds, I'd like to go up and see them tonight."

Griff Was Here (A Special Place)

Date

1989

Primary Maker

O'Kelly, Mick

Medium

Photograph

Description

"My memories of childhood and adulthood are nostalgically carefree and happy ones, playing games and curiously awaiting what the future held in store. This is a subjective work about my growing up in a community on the outskirts of Dublin. It is a typical corporation housing estate with a population larger than the city of Limerick. In its conception it was an awesome bringing together of families from Dublin's inner city and rural regions. It must

have been very difficult on all new settlers beginning a new life separated from family and friends in this alien environment. Through a sharing in a common struggle of everyday life, to overcome inadequate health care, transport, shopping and recreational facilities, indignant of living in a hermetic concrete urban landscape. Over a period of twenty years of harassing councillors and government authorities, through organised resistance the tenants have collaboratively obtained some of what was rightfully theirs. The majority of folks who live in this community are ordinary people building a satisfactory quality of life for themselves. The work force is predominantly men of the industrial tradition where hard work was the etiquette of the day. In time of high unemployment 'Strategies for Economic Growth' seem like a very abstract notion for a people who face the reality of de-industrialisation in a system which regards their lives as disposable. For this exhibition I offer one of my many memories of living and growing up in Ballyfermot." Mick O'Kelly

Dimensions

Object: 74 × 53 cm