original name of Ballyronan was Salterstown A family the name of Gaussen came from France to Ballyronan and set up the Quay there. They built a boat and named it THE LADY OF THE LOUGH. They used it to transport coal and grain from Ballyronan Quay to Lurgan and back again. They set up a distillery and a blacksmiths shop. They also set up a school for girls only.
One of the Gaussen boys played soccer for Ireland.
It was known that a ticket for the Titanic was bought in Ballyronan but there was no further information on it.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story: Seamus Devlin

Pupil Name & class: Joe Hamilton P.7

School & Town: Ballyclifford Primary School

When granny was a little girl She lived on a farm With her grandparents and parents. They lived on a farm on the loughshore. Her grandfather and father fished on the lough too. Her grand mother also had a little shop. She had a busy life as a child she helped in the shop stacking shelves and bagging Potatoes She also helped on the farm feeding cattle in the barns in the winter also in the Potatoe fields and hay hay fields. There was always plenty to do it was a hard but a good healthy life plenty exeercise and fresh air and good healthy food. There was no running water it had to be taken from a well.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:

Granny Mallon

Pupil Name & class: Luke - P7, Thomas - P4 Michael - P2

School & Town: Bally lifford PS - Ballinderry

My granny Lives about two miles from the Lough. In the summen time She wowld walk to the Lough to Paddle in the water near the edge where it wasnt to deep. She loved that.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
granny Loughran

Pupil Name & class: Leah Loughran

School & Town: BALLYLIFFORD P2

My first experience with the Laugh is when we went Sailing with my father and he threw us into the water with life jackets on to help teach us to swim. It gave me a great interest for Sailing and water sports. I was 15 when I started to teach Sailing and Kayaking to Children in the Summer youth Camps in Ballyronan. I have been a member of LNR (Laugh Neagh Rescue) for 10 years as an active Lifeboat Crew member, where we are on Call 24 hours a day all year round. Even on Christmas Day if Santa needs rescued we will be there to help!

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
Martin McGuckin

Pupil Name & class: Shauna McGuckin - P3

School & Town: Ballylifford PS - Ballinderry

In the summer time my friends and I always went to the Lough to my daddy's boat quay to bathe in the water. We used to spend hours there. One really hot day we all headed off on our bikes for our usual dip and anyone who lives near the Lough will know how bad the clouds of flies can be, as we turned a corner we cycled straight into huge cloud of flies. We couldn't see they were in our eyes, our hair, our mouths, our ears...everywhere! The high pitched humming noise was deafening. We had to try to get off our bikes and run through it. Our clothes were filthy where the flies had got squashed into the creases of our clothing but it didn't stop us cycling on to the water!

Name & telephone number of person who told the story: Dolores Muldoon

Pupil Name & class: Oonagh Muldoon P7

School & Town: Ballyfford PS

My Grandad Malachy was a fisherman on Lough Neagh for forty years and so was his father and grandfather before him. They fished for eels and perch. I like eels and perch. My grandad said fishing is a hard job, you have to get up in the middle of the night and could be on the lough for a long time.

My Uncle Stephen is a member of Lough Neagh Rescue. If someone gets into trouble on the lough, like their boat breaks down or they fall in they try to save them. My grandad was a founding member of Lough Neagh rescue to.

Our family is very proud of them both

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
Malachy 02886736816 Stephen

Pupil Name & class: Aimee Egan P5

School & Town: Ballyleeard DC

In the Winter of 2009 before I was born, the weather was so cold that edges of Lough Neagh froze. mum and dad went to see it and people were even walking and skating on it.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:

Pupil Name & class: Cara McKernan P.3

School & Town: Ballyliffard Primary

I Remember actually going bathing in Lough Neagh. I was the oldest of a group of children at about 10 or 11 years old. Our uncle's farm was along the lough. There were 11 of us. We took a picnic (Sandwiches and juice) and walked down the lane and across the shore to a point where it was shallow enough to play about in the water. None of us could swim but thankfully where we went it was only about 30cms deep. We ate the picnic, splashed about for ages and really enjoyed ourselves. We instinctively knew not to go any further into the water than we did. The weather always seemed to be good and we loved every bit of it.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
Elaine Devlin

Pupil Name & class: Sophie Devlin P2

School & Town: Ballylifford P.S. Ballinderry

Growing up a few fields away from Lough Neagh was a fantastic childhood. You Always had Something to do, and you always knew Someone who could find you something to do!. As most of us had family or neighbours who fished the Lough for both EELS and fish, there was alway a 'wee job' to do. Sometimes we even went out on the fishing boats.

Many years ago my Grandfather worked on the Sand Boats and back then he cycled from Ballinderry to Lurgan to work. He was classed as a very lucky man, as he once fell overboard and another crew member Spotted his cap Spinning around in the water, and thankfully rescued him from the Swirling Sand hole.

Anyone who grew up on the Lough Shore was very lucky, we had our very own 'Beach' and loved every day Spent on it. It really was a wonderful Childhood.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
BERNIE DEVLIN

Pupil Name & class: CHARLIE O'CONNOR P4

School & Town: BALLYLIFFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Over one hundred years ago my great, great, great granda made a flat bottom boat which he turned black. He rowed out to the middle of the lough and fished for many fish. He caught eels, Sallmon, Pollans, and brown trout. This carried on for many many years and the My great granda was the last of the men to carry out the tradition in my family. My granny told me some stories about a superstition all of the fishermen... They wouldn't allow women with ginger hair on the boats which included my Granny because she had ginger hair. Most of the Fishermen didn't know how to swim and legend has it that the lough claimed a life every year because of this.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
Marie Canavan

Pupil Name & class: Lucy Canavan P5

School & Town: Ballyfifford Primary School

My dad has a Shooting Hide at the point where the Ballinderry River joins Lough Neagh. On the 1st September every year daddy and his friends take their guns and dogs and board their boat and sail out to the hide. They shoot ducks then send out the dogs to collect the birds.

They have been shooting and hunting around the shores of Lough Neagh for many years. I hope that when I am older I will be able to do the same as my dad.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story: Oliver Bell

Pupil Name & class: Odhran Bell P7

School & Town: Ballyclifford Primary School

Years ago lighters (boats) brought coal and Meal to Ballyronan to McCleans Mill. There was a distillary at Donnellys house, this is were they made whiskey. They floated barrels down a drain under the road to a man called the 'Gadger' at the Lough. The Whiskey was then put onto boats and taken to Belfast. Sandmerchants pumped Sand from the Lough for years and still pumping today. You can see them working from My School. My Great Granda and My Granda and uncles Fished on Lough Neagh.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
Frank Bigmore

Pupil Name & class: Jane Devlin P5

School & Town: Ballylifford primary school

In December 2009 the lough was all froze over for a few days so lots and lots of people decided to walk over the frozen ice. My daddy took us down to Ballyronan Marina and showed us how frozen the lough was. They said that it was the coldest winter on record..

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
Tony Maynes

Pupil Name & class: Shannon Maynes P5

School & Town: Ballyliffard primary School

My Granda Paddy was born on the Shores of Lough Neagh. He was brought up in the town of Kilygmack & Granda fished on Lough Neagh almost half of his life, as a boy and then as a man. In later years granda would fish along side friends and neighbours and this was their only income. Granda fished mainly pullens, a small fish that was plenty full. There now is less fishermen on Lough Neagh and eels are the main catch. Granda is 76 now and still talks about the Lough.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:

Pupil Name & class: Orla Oconnor P.6.

School & Town: Ballylifford PS, Ballyronan

My old neighbour Jack always loved to go fishing at Lough Neagh, he always wore a sun hat and sun glasses to keep the flies out of his face. Most of the time Jack would never get lucky fishing sometimes he would do good but most of the time anything he caught was average. But one time the day before Jack went fishing he bought a lucky charm and used it the next day and the next day he got his best fish ever and some eels.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
Jack neeSon

Pupil Name & class: Dylan McAtamney P.7

School & Town: Ballyliffatz P.S Ballinderry

My family have lived beside Lough Neagh for over 100 years. My granda and his brothers were all fishermen who fished on the Lough. My grandas name was Peter Paul Hagan but he died before I was born. He was a fisherman on the Lough since he was fourteen years old. He even built his own boat to fish in. He would fish at night and then in the mornings he would drive an eel lorry. The eel lorry had lots of tanks to hold the eels and he would drive around all the fishermen and collect their eels and deliver them to Toome fisheries. The eels were then boxed and sent to Germany on a plane.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
LIAM MCCRACKEN

Pupil Name & class: Liam mccracken P5

School & Town: BallyLifford PS

My Granny grew up about three miles from Lough Neagh. She went to Ballylifford School and often the Master would take them out to look at the Lough. He would tell them about the hard work of the fishermen who had to get up very early to lay their lines to catch the fish, the most popular were eels. A fisherman would bring the eels and granny would watch her mummy put sand on the eels skin to help peel it off before cooking the fish. She once went out on a boat with fishermen and it was very scary. In the summer time she would walk to the lough with her friends and they would paddle in the shadow parts. There was a Lamas Fair in a field beside the Lough in Ardboe and there was a wishing tree in the old grave yard you hammered a penny into it and made a wish.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
Marian Loughran

Pupil Name & class: p.4 Conan Bell.

School & Town: Ballylifford P.S Ballinderry.

Our Granda Pat Joe Devlin fishes for eles in Lough Neagh during the fishing season. Lough Neagh is the biggest fresh water in the British Isles. In 1989 it was a very very hot summer there was a new fishing bait for catching eles. Granda caught 25 stone of eles the eles were 15 to the stone with the skin and heads off. Granda fishes 1200 hooks a day the lines have to be set everyday and lifted the next morning at 4am. And the ele lorry comes to lift the eles at 6am and leaves to go to Toome ele fishery. My Granda took on fishing from his daddy Brendan. It takes 4 hours to run every line. My Granda runs 1 and a half lines a day. My Granda went through 3 boats in his lifetime.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:

Pat Joe Devlin

Pupil Name & class: Joey + Rosie ferris P5+P7

School & Town: Ballyliffard primary school

Lough Neagh Stories Competition

For Primary Schools

This is a project of Lough Neagh Partnership under the HLF Landscape Scheme

Lough Neagh Partnership are gathering stories from people who have lived and/or worked on and around Lough Neagh. Pupils are asked to seek stories or memories from neighbours or relatives who are willing to share them.

Please write your story in the space below.
Photographs may be attached.
Unfortunately we are unable to return them.

WIN a £100 Gift Voucher for The Jungle

In 1937 they drained the bann to lower the lough because every winter the houses around the lough flooded. When they did this they found items that the normans had stole from the surrounding areas and it all put back into the lough becase it would have brought back luck to keed them.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story: Molly McFlynn

Pupil Name & class: (B) Cadan Scullion P3

School & Town: Ballylifford Primary School Ballinderry

Long time ago when the Laughflooded a man living on the Shore found an eel under his bed

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:

Molly McFlynn

Pupil Name & class: Tiarnan Scullion P1

School & Town: Ballyliffard Primary School Ballyhaderry

A woman went to a well at the lough and there was a gate you had to close but she left it opened. The lough water came in and sank the village to the bottom of the lough and only fishermen out on the lough can see it.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
Molly McFlynn

Pupil Name & class: Tadhg Scullion P4

School & Town: Ballyliffard Primary School
Ballinderry

MY GRANDA, JACKS GREAT GREAT GRANDA, JOE DEVLIN (BUTTY) WORKED ON LOUGH NEAGH ALL HIS LIFE. HE LEFT KILLYMUCK ON A MONDAY MORNING EARLY ON HIS BIKE AND RODE TO DERRYLAUGHLIN AND CROSSED ON THE FERRY TO MAGHERY AND RODE ON TO LURGAN WHERE HIS WORK WAS BASED. HE OPERATED A SAND BOAT FROM KINNEGOE WITH NO CAB ON IT DOWN THE LOUGH TO RIGHT OPPOSITE WHERE HE LIVED TO PUMP SAND AND RETURN TO KINNEGOE WITH EACH LOAD. IN LATER YEARS HE MOVED TO SCOTTS OF TOOME AND PUMPED SAND FOR THEM FOR 50 YEARS. WHEN HE RETIRED HE WAS PRESENTED WITH A WATCH AND AN ARM CHAIR FOR HIS EFFORTS. HE AND HIS FAMILY ALSO FISHED ALL THEIR LIVES ON LOUGH NEAGH AND HE PASSED HIS SKILLS ON TO THE YOUNGER GENERATIONS WITH PRIDE. LONG REMEMBERED.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
PATRICK DEVLIN

Pupil Name & class: JACK DEVLIN P4

School & Town: BALLYLIFFORD P.S. BALLINDERRY

My Granda is a fisherman on Lough Neagh. Every summer he catches eels using nets or a line. One day in 1993 he was trawling for eels using the net he and his helper pulled the net up onto the boat it was very heavy and they thought they had got a big catch. When they pulled the net into the boat they saw what looked like a big lump of wood but then they looked closer they saw that it looked like something someone had made like a piece of a boat. They took it into shore for a closer look and saw that it did seem to be part of a boat. My granda and his brother rang the Department of Environment and they contacted the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum at Cultra. A man came into inspect it. He took it away and studied it. Samples from the three rings that showed that it was from a boat made about 1790 AD and was one of the earliest of this type. The piece of wood now is on display in the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum in Cultra.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
Orla Muldoon

Pupil Name & class: Orla Finnegan P5

School & Town: Ballyclare PS

My story is about my great grandad called Neill campbell. I never met him but my daddy talks about him.

He had a big blue boat and lived down the Crock Road which ends at the Loughshore.

He was a fisherman all his life and he loved the lough so much he went to it every day. My daddy remembers the day he took him on his first boat trip to Coney Island, he felt special.

The lough now has a special place in my family as my daddy now has a boat and takes me out on the Lough. It is a family tradition.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story:
DAMIEN SCOTT.

Pupil Name & class: Emily Scott P.6

School & Town: Ballyliffard P.S, Ballinderry

My granny Loughran lives two miles from the Lough Neagh. When her cousins came to visit from America they would go out on the Lough in a big boat called the Maid of Antrim. A man would point out all the different places, Coney Island, the battery and the old cross of Ardboe. It also went across to Antrim Marina and passed Shanes castle. An Irish myth was when the church was being built at Ardboe old cross the Lough was further away than it is now and it was too far to carry the water to mix the cement. A cow came out of the water every day and gave the milk which the builder used instead of water.

Name & telephone number of person who told the story: Granny Loughran

Pupil Name & class: LJ Loughran P4

School & Town: Ballyliffard/Ballinderry