

Can you help woman find her long-lost Clare father?

By Andrew Hamilton

A 60-YEAR-OLD English woman is appealing to the people of Clare to help her track down her long-lost father, who has no idea that she even exists.

Born in London in 1958, Sue Zacharias was given up for adoption after her birth and has only been able to piece together her family history in recent months after taking a DNA test.

She has located the family of her birth mother Angela Kranvis, now deceased, and has obtained from them information about her father, who she believes is an Ennis man named Michael 'Mickey' O'Connell. The



Adoption: Angela Kranvis pair met in London in the 1950s but Mickey was forced to leave London because Angela's family did not approve of their relationship.

After he left, however, Angela

realised that she was pregnant and was forced to give baby Sue up for adoption.

'He moved to London with some of his siblings at a young age and met my mother Angela, a Greek-Cypriot, in Islington in the mid-1950s when he was a lodger in her home, as she rented out rooms to make ends meet,' she said.

Sue believes her father was born in the 1920s or 1930s and had sisters named May and Kitty. She also understands that Mickey's parents worked as a tailor and a seamstress in Ennis.

Anyone with information is asked to email Sue at aspasiazacharias@outlook.com

Dr Mark Dooley



MORAL MATTERS

Had your coffee fix? Well, there is always tea and sympathy

ISN'T it wonderful what many of you are doing right now? No, not reading me – although that has, I hope, some small merit. I am referring to the ritual of sipping something hot and soothing as you read.

It is almost something instinctive that we do: we make or purchase a fresh brew, settle down and begin to read or ponder. And the staple delight is usually tea or coffee. Whether it is herbal or traditional, cappuccino or Americano, its purpose is to revive, refresh and relax.

Now you might say that the contents of your cup have no further significance. You are sipping and reading to take time out from an otherwise hectic schedule. Alternatively, your daily routine is punctuated with little moments of calm aided by your tea or coffee.

When I was growing up, we all knew the meaning of tea. Coffee was primarily of the instant variety, and certainly did not have the cosmopolitan complexion it has today. But tea was not only an aid to relaxation, but a drink that symbolised home, family and friendship.

Almost everything we did revolved around tea. No matter what the occasion, putting on the kettle was the first thing people did.

Somewhat, that little cup of tea made everything seem all right. But that was then, and this is now. We still reach for the kettle in times of joy or crisis, but the manner of our caffeine consumption has radically evolved. Now we must say: 'Tea or coffee?'

On the tables of every bar, restaurant or café, you will find a full menu of exotic-sounding teas, herbal infusions and every class of coffee. If you say to a waiter: 'I'll just have tea please', he will invariably respond by reaming off a list as long as your arm. The days of ordering a simple cup of tea are well and truly over.

This, of course, is not to take away from the glory of coffee and the marvellous variety now available. It is highly likely that you are currently sipping something frothy and milky, blended, perhaps, with a shot of caramel or vanilla. You might even be drinking a powerful tincture of espresso – something

that vanishes in a second, but which fuels you for hours.

As it happens, I have consumed nothing but coffee for the past three years.

It is not that I went off tea, but that I grew tired of it. After 40 years, it was time for a break.

Coffee – and I like it strong – is also something to sip as you read, chat or people-watch. But there is a distinct difference between it and tea: coffee fires you up in a way that tea would consider slightly offensive. In my morning coffee, I feel as though I am working out with Mr Motivator; in my cup of tea, I am experiencing meditation followed by some gentle aerobics.

Both have proven health benefits and are good for all manner of ailments.

However, there is no doubt that coffee is fuel for a fast-paced world. It clears the mind, sharpens the senses and enables you to hit the road running.

It could even be said that suburban Ireland has become an espresso culture. With little time to sip, think and take stock, we simply stand, gulp and run. Such are the demands of modern life that people rarely find time for what you are doing now.

That is why, in recent days, I have rediscovered my love of tea. No, I am not taking a stand against coffee, but simply reacquainting myself with an old and trusted friend. What I have realised is that both must have their place in a world that is off balance.

TEA is gentle, quiet and unhurried. When it smiles up from the cup, you want to take your time with it. No rush or hurry, just that soothing calm which allows us to sit, chat and put the world to rights.

It is also a reminder of how we once were, when we had time to put on the kettle, brew tea in a pot and let it stew on the stove. We sipped, we laughed, and we wept, but we never felt alone. In its own humble way, the cup of tea brought us together in a way that few other things could.

Oh look, I've reached the end of my cup, and, sadly, the end of this column.

Whatever will we do now? Go on then, boil up the kettle!

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