

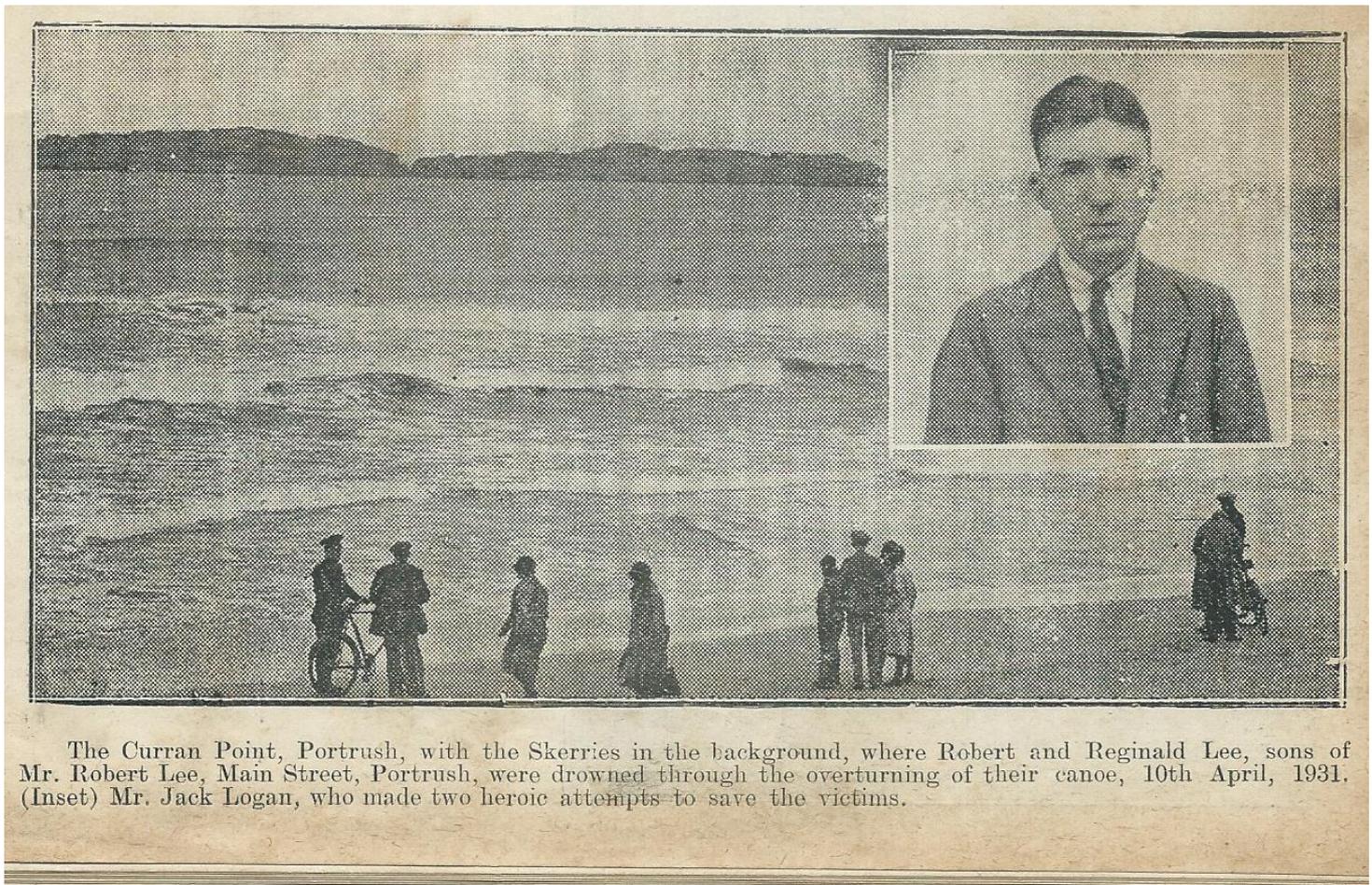
Portrush: Princess Street and beyond...

By John Logan

"There's a big shore running," would often be my Grandfather's advice as I left the Back House of 15 Princess Street, "So mind yourself on those rocks," would be my Grandmother's additional warning.

Both Johnny and Emily Logan were well aware of the dangers which could be presented when a seemingly placid sea, influenced by forces unseen, could throw large, rolling waves on to the shore. They would have in their minds, also, events in which some of the next generation Logans had been involved.

As a 17 year old Jack Logan, the eldest of the 6 Logan siblings born and raised in Princess Street, had been on hand and had attempted to save the Lee brothers who drowned in a kayak accident off the Curran Point. Jack's act of bravery was recognised locally and beyond,



The Curran Point, Portrush, with the Skerries in the background, where Robert and Reginald Lee, sons of Mr. Robert Lee, Main Street, Portrush, were drowned through the overturning of their canoe, 10th April, 1931. (Inset) Mr. Jack Logan, who made two heroic attempts to save the victims.

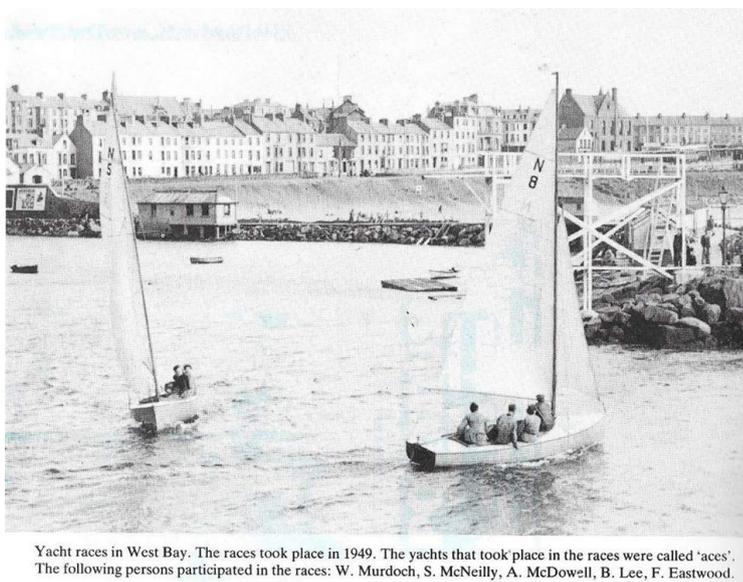


O'Hara Logan and the author at Murty's Mouth (1952)



Daisy Logan (later Moore)

Other Logans, too, have been involved in maritime dramas, O'Hara leaving his sunbathing spot behind the bathing boxes on the South Pier to pull a bather from the dangerous tidal pool at the pier's bend – "the elbow." Daisy had also been involved in a successful rescue, entering the sea fully clothed to pull a bather from the same spot. She was awarded a Royal Humane Society Certificate for her bravery. Just as these interventions were successful so was that of Victor. Victor and O'Hara crewed for rival skippers in the National 18 Dinghy (Portrush) Series, racing being held in the West Bay on Tuesday and Thursday evenings in the season. Possibly the highlight of the sailors' season, however, were the voyages across to Moville and Greencastle for their regattas: westward on Friday evening, eastwards on Sunday evening, quite often the worse for social wear.



Yacht races in West Bay. The races took place in 1949. The yachts that took place in the races were called 'aces'. The following persons participated in the races: W. Murdoch, S. McNeilly, A. McDowell, B. Lee, F. Eastwood.

National 18s

Victor crewed for Sammy Neely and was aboard the dinghy on one particular trip to Donegal. The flotilla of National 18s left Portrush, all going well until they reached the Tuns Bank where Sammy's boat went over, the 90 degree flip meaning that the sails were lying on the surface.

Sammy, unfortunately, had been thrown from the boat and was trapped under the mainsail. Clutching a knife, Victor dived beneath the sail, manoeuvred himself towards Sammy and cut an opening to allow the skipper to get his head above water. Some of the other crews, aware of the drama, altered course and came to the assistance of the stricken dinghy's crew.

The dinghy was righted and the flotilla, including the Neely boat, sailed on to Moville. A show of resilience if ever one there was.



Victor Logan (1942)

My father, being a Portrush man through and through, had long had a desire to own his own boat and so it was, in 1949, that he bought a traditional, square transomed workboat of about 20 feet with a substantial beam. The boat was transported to a garage near Portrush Technical School and work began on installing an engine. I remember that the engine, by some means or other, had been liberated from an Austin Seven car and that much discussion had taken place amongst my father, my uncles Billy and Victor and a mechanic as to how best to set up the cooling system and how to adapt the gearbox to suit the propeller shaft.

Eventually all the work was accomplished and the boat was pushed down Kerr Street on a trailer, through the Lifeboat House gates and down the basalt-cobbled slipway to the Wee Harbour Strand. The launch was a success and it wasn't long until three Logans had rounded Ramore Head and entered Port an Dhu harbour. The return journey also went well and all seemed to be in order until, some weeks later, the boat was brought into the Wee Strand so that some work could be done. Daddy Two and I watched proceedings for a while then wandered off across the sand dunes towards Castle Erin. At one point I turned round and saw smoke rising from the area of the little beach. I ran across to the wall, peered over and saw flames shooting up from my father's boat. Running over to where Daddy Two was now sitting, I shouted, "Daddy Two, daddy's boat's on fire!"

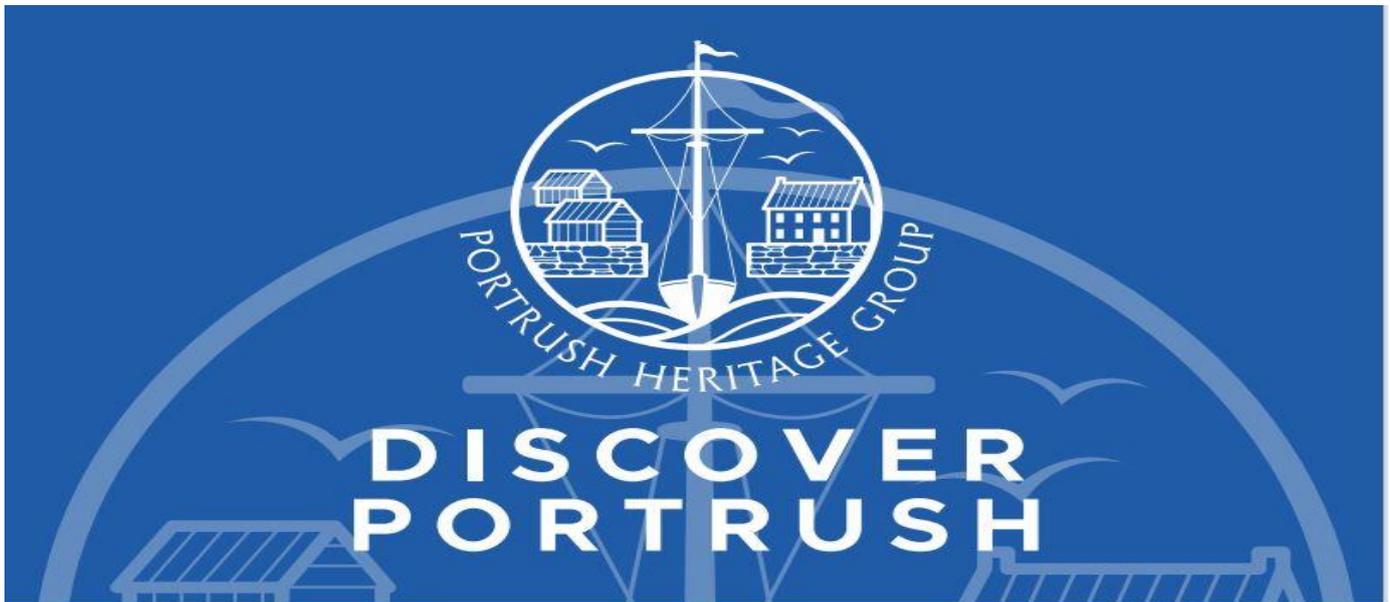
"It can't be", was his response but as he got up he too saw the smoke. Together we ran to the black wall from where we could look down upon what was happening. We arrived just in time to see Uncle Billy use the butt end of an oar to hole the boat. Water rushed in and, of course, the boat went down albeit in about 3 feet of water. The fire was extinguished, whether or not through



Uncle Billy's intervention which, at the time was considered by some as being possibly over extreme.

My father's boat was later salvaged with some difficulty and the hole stopped temporarily. With considerable sadness all round, the vessel was towed out into the West Bay and the repaired section holed once again. Somewhere on the seabed, about 200 metres north-west of the harbour mouth, lie the shattered, sunken remains of a dream.

Our thanks to John for this most interesting account from his memories of growing up in Princess Street 8th January 2022



Explore, experience and celebrate the heritage of Portrush.

Contact us at chairman.portrushheritage@gmail.com if you would like to include a friend in our weekly circulation of Heritage Newsletters. Back issues of the Newsletters can be found in the 'About Us' section on our website at DiscoverPortrush.com