

“My Ginger Girl” Song Celebrates Traditional Tinker Life On The Road

Krunchie Killeen's Song, “My Ginger Girl,” Celebrates a Traditional Tinker's Life On the Roads of Ireland

DUBLIN 11, DUBLIN, IRELAND, April 24, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Krunchie Killeen's song, “My Ginger Girl,” which goes live on Spotify (and other streaming services), on 29 April, celebrates a tinker's traditional-style life in a horse-drawn caravan on the roads of Ireland.

The theme is taken from an original song, “An Cailin Rua,” in the Irish Language (presented on YouTube by several artists, including Scara Brae, Caitlin Nic Gabhann, The High Seas and Aoife Ni Fhearaigh). The Irish version has the tinker losing his red-head to a butcher boy, but Krunchie changes the story to give the couple a happy life travelling around the roads of Ireland in their caravan (and moving to a “tígeen,” i.e., a small house, in their old age).



Krunchie Killeen at a stock-car festival in Darwin, 2007

“

I took her with me from
County to County,
Her hair in ringlets, her
teeth like pearl.”

Krunchie Killeen

In 2017, the Irish Travellers were legally recognised as a separate ethnic group. This followed DNA research, which showed that the travellers have a significant genetic inheritance from the original hunter-gatherer, middle Stone Age, population of Ireland, as distinct from the succeeding agricultural settlers. Historically, as the agricultural settlement of the land of Ireland progressed, reducing the wild land, the hunter-gatherers became travelling trades-people. Trades engaged by them included

Buying and Selling, Stone-masonry, Carpentry, Craft Work, Music, Singing, Song-writing, Story-telling, News Mongering, Animal Medicine, Herbs and Potions, Horse and Dog Training, Animal Skinning, Tanning and Leather-Work, Shoe-Making, Fortune Telling, Mercenary Soldiering, Debt-collecting and Law Enforcement.

The Irish word “saor” for “free” also means “trades-person.” This is because, while peasants were tied to the land, trades-people were “free” to travel around the country.

Ireland, in ancient times, was divided into about 350 kingdoms. Traditionally, it was considered inappropriate for kings or their households to engage in manual work. Sons of kings, who found themselves at a loose end, often joined groups of “free” or “wild” mercenaries, called “Fianna” or “Fenians.”

Documents of the 12th Century, when folk-tales of Finn McCool and the Fenians were given structure by the scribes, also recount a tension between the Church and the then current Fenians, who were often branded as bandits and extortionists.

Over the centuries, the trades of the travellers lost out to competition from shops and factories. In the first half of the 20th century, the surviving crafts of the traveller were tin-smith, musician, animal medicine and training, fortune telling and buying and selling. Principal among these was tin-smithing, so the travellers were known as "tinkers." By the 1950s, tin-smithing was losing out to shop goods, and the horse was being driven off the road by motor vehicles. Traveller's often gave fanciful names to their horses, often calling them after famous race-horses.

A picture of an Irish tinker's caravan can be seen at:
<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/f4/75/66/f47566d573326d197dbdf38a185a3d2b.jpg>

The subject of Krunchie's song courts and marries his red-head, and they spend their life travelling round in their caravan, in an era where demand for the products of his trade as tin-smith was fading.

The words of Krunchie's song are:

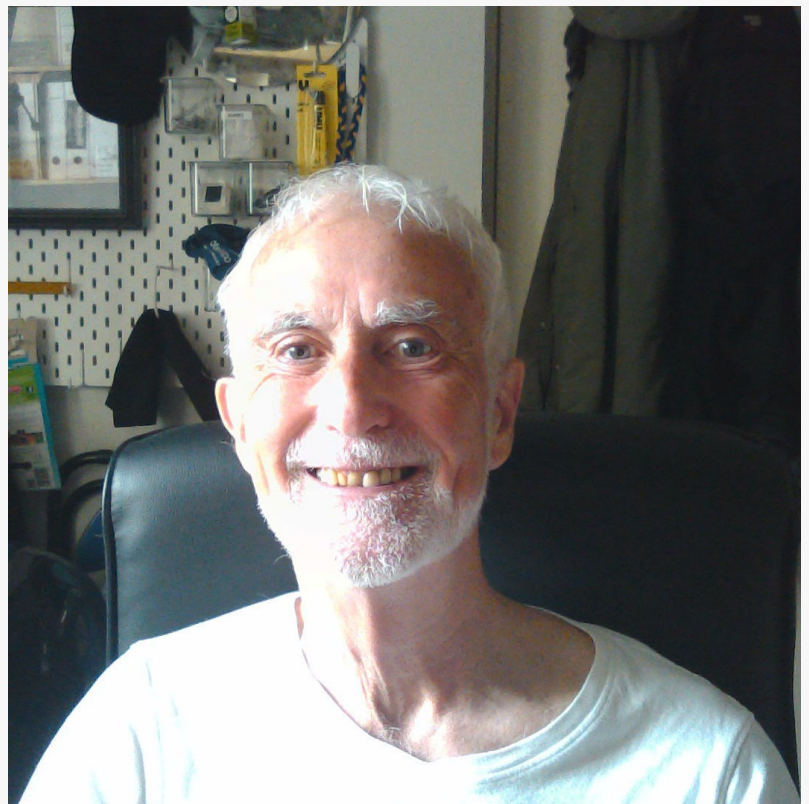
I took her with me from County to County,
Her hair in ringlets, her teeth like pearl.
Now, there isn't any town in the whole of the country
Where I didn't drink a noggin with my ginger girl.

I'll fix your pots and I'll fix your kettle;
I'll fix a handle to your frying pan.
But, if there's no utensil that is needing my mending,
Then I'll beg and I'll borrow for my ginger girl.

We travelled together from County to County.



My Ginger Girl



White-bearded pensioner, Krunchie Killeen

We travelled the country in our caravan.
Hup there, Nijinsky, we'll soon reach your tether
And we'll have a little noggin in a village inn.

She gave me a child; soon she gave me six childer;
We all lived together in the caravan.
I swear to God that they were never hungry,
For I begged and I borrowed for my ginger girl.

Well, she grew old, and I grew older,
And Nijinsky died by the caravan.
In a little tigeen, we now live together,
And we talk about our life in the caravan.

I took her with me from County to County,
Her hair in ringlets, her teeth like pearl.
Now, there isn't any town in the whole of the country
Where I didn't drink a noggin with my ginger girl.

A selection of [photos of Krunchie](https://p-ocillin.tkhcloudstorage.com/item/c3e7ed8999a2452a8cce961491f421cf) can be viewed and downloaded from:
<https://p-ocillin.tkhcloudstorage.com/item/c3e7ed8999a2452a8cce961491f421cf>

Krunchie uses "Glossneen" as his record label. The range of recordings so far issued under the "Glosneen" label can be found here: <https://Glossneen.blogspot.com/>

Krunchie Killeen is a retired Civil Servant who lives in Glasnevin, Dublin, Ireland. He has been playing and singing with the Invincibles (of Dublin) for about 17 years and would now be performing a weekly lunch-hour concert in Clareville Day Centre, were it not for the Corona virus.

[Krunchie's biography](https://krunchiekilleen.blogspot.com/2020/02/krunchie-killeen.html) can be viewed on: <https://krunchiekilleen.blogspot.com/2020/02/krunchie-killeen.html>

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