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# Nephew debunks any story of a lost legacy

■ Askeaton survivor lost her brother and her fiancé in Titanic

**Norma Prendiville**

THERE was no Moran legacy lost in the sinking of the Titanic, a nephew of Dan Moran, one of the Askeaton men who died in the 1912 disaster insisted this week.

But Roger Moran also revealed another tragic twist to the catastrophe which led to the deaths of over 1500 people. Roger Moran's aunt, Bertha who was eventually forced into a lifeboat by her brother Dan, and survived to old age, was engaged to Paddy Ryan, the second Askeaton man who lost his life in the disaster and whose body was never recovered.

"They came home from New York on tickets purchased over there by Dan who was a police sergeant in the mounted city police," Roger Moran, who still lives in Askeaton, explained this week. "He brought with him a ticket for Paddy Ryan who was going directly to the police academy in New York to also join the force, having already completed all documentation for this purpose. Bertha came home merely to convey Paddy Ryan back to New York as they had been courting since their early teens."

A fourth Askeaton person, Maggie Madigan from Church St, boarded the Titanic in Cobh in the company of the two Morans and Paddy Ryan. The two women survived but the two men perished when the ship struck an iceberg and sunk on April 15, 1912.



Roger Moran and Cyril Ryan, Askeaton both lost uncles when the Titanic sank. Roger's aunt Bertha who survived was engaged to Cyril's uncle, Paddy Ryan. Pictured in the inset is Dan Moran, Roger's uncle, who died on the Titanic

But Roger Moran vigorously rejected the suggestion in some reports that Dan Moran was bringing back his father's inheritance to New York.

"The statements re inheritance and vast sums of monies ie \$15,000

obviously emanated from the land of Walt Disney," he declared. "If this carried any shred of reality what were they doing travelling steerage down in the bowels of that accursed boat?"

Dan and Bertha, he explained, were from a

family of 15. One died as a child. A second, Pad (Roger's father) stayed in Askeaton and the remaining 13 emigrated. "My family lived at New Quay in a ramshackle bothan, built with rocks and mud and roofed with screws and ferns," he

said. "When a high tide came in they climbed onto the table from the water as the floor was earthen." His grandfather, Old Pad, was a keeper for Beeves Lighthouse at the time and the pay was just £6 a month. They emigrated because of poverty and hunger, Roger added forcibly.

The money for the fares, he continued, came from the sale by a relative of Greenish Island which fetched £49 along with the sale of some fields at New Quay. In all, he reckoned, the sales raised £75 out of which 13 tickets at £5 each had to be paid.

Roger Moran, who is the author of *Wildfowler* which tells his father's story, also recalled this week how his dad found out about the tragedy and how he reacted. "I felt very lonesome for him over the weekend," Roger said. His father Pad was very close to his brother Dan. "He was heartbroken after him," Roger Moran said.

Roger never met Bertha, his aunt who survived. But he did meet several of her children one of whom told him how Bertha clung to her brother and had to be forced into the lifeboat. Bertha, having lost her fiancé, Paddy Ryan, went on to marry a man called Cooper but he died within a few years in an industrial accident. She later married Richard Sinnot. An exhibition about Askeaton's Titanic passengers runs in the Civic Trust building from this Friday.