

Cumann Geinealais na hÉireann

## Ireland's Genealogical Gazette

*(incorporating "The Genie Gazette")*

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**GENEALOGY**  
**HERALDRY**  
**VEXILLOLOGY**  
**SOCIAL HISTORY**  
**Heritage Matters**  
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## “Clear Blue Water” between the NLI Board and the “Shambles of the Past”

In another serious blow to the reputation of both the National Library of Ireland and Irish heraldry, documents released under the *Freedom of Information Act, 1997* indicate that the current Board of the National Library of Ireland sought to put “clear blue water” between itself and what was described as the “shambles of the past”. This NLI Board was appointed in May 2005 following the implementation of the *National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997* by the then Minister **Mr. John O’Donoghue, TD**. Under its Chairperson, the eminent barrister **Mr. Gerard Danaher, SC**, the Board has sought to distance itself from the various controversies surrounding the Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland dating back to the “bogus Chiefs” affair and possibly, earlier. Clearly in the documents released under the FOI, the Chairperson is determined that it will be the government and in particular, the current Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, **Mr. Séamus Brennan, TD**, that will be responsible for sorting out the mess created by the total lack of any statutory basis for the State’s delivery of heraldic services from 1943 to 2005. Hundreds of grantees of coats-of-arms

from the Chief Herald of Ireland were basically advised in a Media Statement issued by the Chairperson of the National Library on October 24th 2007 that if they had a problem with legality of their grants don’t contact the National Library as it was the Minister’s problem. The following day in Dáil Éireann Minister Brennan conceded that the State had “probably no power to grant arms” until 2005. Whether, this total abdication by the National Library (*including the Chief Herald of Ireland*) of any responsibility whatsoever to its former clients would withstand a challenge under Irish or EU consumer law is debatable. Understandably, many will view the use of the word “shambles” by the Chairperson as unfortunate. Indeed, as this Society has rightly praised Mr. Gerard Danaher for his decisive action in the past, we now urge him to proactively seek an early resolution to the problem now facing all pre-May 2005 grantees. But given the complexities of the situation and the desire by all that a suitable regulatory regime would be put in place to prevent another heraldic “shambles” emerging, maybe it is time now for all to support this Society’s legislative proposals.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on **March 11th 2008**. This AGM, our 18th, will coincide, as usual, with the March Open Meeting. However, this occasion is tinged with some sadness as two prominent long-serving members of the Board, Cathaoirleach, **Rory Stanley, FGSI** and **Liam Mac Alasdair, FGSI** have announced their intentions not to seek reelection at this AGM. Rory has been at the helm of the Society for 12 years since joining the Executive in January 1996. He was elected Cathaoirleach at the AGM in Oct. 1996. Liam has been a member of the governing body of the Society since 1991 and was the first Editor of the Journal and centrally involved with many other publications. He directed the restoration of the Martello Tower and most recently, he was responsible for building the on-line shop. With a combined 29 years service to the Society, both Rory and Liam have contributed immensely to the success of this Society and will be greatly missed by all. We wish them both all the very best.

## Irish-Welsh Link Celebrations

The member organisations of the Holyhead-Dún Laoghaire Link will celebrate its tenth anniversary at a function to be held on March 15th 2008 in the Trearddur Bay Hotel outside Holyhead, north Wales. This unique international organisation promotes cooperation and friendship between the communities in Ynys Mon (Anglesey) and the Dublin region through regular meetings, workshops and

other events. This Society has been an active member of the Link since 1998 and has greatly valued this type of international cooperation. The Society has presented a number of important discussion documents to the plenary sessions of the Link over the years. Currently the Society is involved in formulating a proposal for INTERREG funding for the Link’s activities and to en-

courage innovation, development and enterprise. Our shared cultural heritage is a central theme running through the Link’s activities and objectives. Individual members of the participating organisations, like this Society, are invited to attend the 10th anniversary celebrations. For further info. contact **Paul Durkan**, Link Secretary, E-mail: durkanjp@gmail.com for costs, reservations etc.

## Theft of the Irish Crown Jewels

One hundred years ago on 25 January 1908, a Vice-regal Commission of investigation into the theft of the Irish Crown Jewels released its report. The Jewels were the regalia of the Order of St Patrick which were found to have been stolen from Ulster's Office in Dublin Castle in July 1907. While the actual theft did not receive much press coverage, details of the Commission's report filled the newspapers a century ago, with the Irish Times publishing the full text of the report in its issue of 1 February 1908 (now retrievable online from <http://www.ireland.com/search>). The Commission found that Ulster King of Arms Sir Arthur Vicars had not exercised due care as custodian of the Jewels, and while not displaying much interest in establishing who had stolen them, the report contained a surprising section stating that there was no evidence that Francis Shackleton, brother of Sir Ernest Shackleton, was the thief. Vicars was dismissed as Ulster, and there was widespread belief that the Commission's report was a whitewash designed to cover up a scandal at the heart of British government in Ireland. To mark the centenary of the Vice-regal Commis-

sion's report, Sean Murphy, a Wicklow-based genealogist, lecturer and author, has issued his own report on the theft of the Irish Crown Jewels. The full text may be read at [http://homepage.eircom.net/~seanmurphy/jewel\\_sreport08.pdf](http://homepage.eircom.net/~seanmurphy/jewel_sreport08.pdf) (1.06MB file, Adobe Reader required to view). The report concludes firstly that certain key official records relating to the theft of the Irish Crown Jewels were destroyed, secondly that the Vice-regal Commission report scapegoated Vicars and was in essence a whitewash, and thirdly that the prime suspect for the crime remains Francis Shackleton, with Francis Bennett Goldney a strong suspect number two. The name of Goldney is not as well-known as Shackleton's, and the new report draws attention to his compulsive theft of property while Mayor of Canterbury, which only emerged after his death in 1918. In addition, details of an account alleging (repeat alleging) that the Irish Crown Jewels may have been sold by Goldney to the wealthy art collector John Pierpont Morgan is published for the first time. However, the case against Shackleton remains the strongest, although not proven, and particular attention is

drawn to his association with the disreputable Richard Gorges, who later effectively confessed to Bulmer Hobson that he and Shackleton had stolen the Jewels, inspired by a prank carried out by Lord Haddo, son of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Lord Aberdeen. Other interesting points in the report include views of the scene of the crime in Dublin Castle, a picture of the Ratner safe in which the Jewels were held (returned to the Castle only last month), continuing difficulties accessing surviving records relating to the affair, the belief that the Jewels are buried somewhere and efforts to dig them up, hoaxers and forgers active in the ruins of Arthur Vicars's old home in Kilmorna, County Kerry (where he was shot by the IRA in 1921), Ernest Shackleton's efforts to bail out his ne'er-dowell brother, and Vicars's sensational will in which he named his former friend Francis Shackleton as the thief, released only in 1976. The story, as they say, reads like a novel, and the final chapter has still to be written.  
**EDITOR:** *the above is taken from a Media Release issued by Mr. Seán Murphy, MA on January 25th 2008*

## Elections to the Board of the Society

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held next month and, as usual, the AGM will hear the Annual Report of the Board and the Annual Financial Report for the period up to 31st December 2007. Another major function of the AGM is the election of the officers and other Board members for the coming year. All positions on the Board are up for election at the AGM including An Cathaoirleach (Chair), Leas-Chathaoirleach (Vice-Chair), Hon. Secretary, Hon. Treasurer and Public Relations Officer and up to six other Board members who receive their portfolios at the first Board Meeting following the AGM. The Board of the Society meets every month on the 1st Thursday

with the exception of January when it meets on the 2nd Thursday and these meetings are each of two hours duration. The business conducted includes all aspects of the Society's operations, policy formulation, reports and, of course, financial matters. All members of the Society who attend in person at the AGM are entitled to vote for candidates nominated from the floor at the AGM. There is no provision for voting by proxy or by mail under the Society's Standing Orders. Ordinary members of the Society have always been encouraged by the Board to consider volunteering for election to the Board. As with any organisation, this Society too can and does benefit greatly from the new ideas, vitality

and a fresh outlook that comes to the Board with the election of new members to the various positions. The decision making process is usually by consensus and the working atmosphere is always very cooperative and supportive of each other. There is no doubt that this coming year will be both an exciting and a challenging one for the GSI Board as new initiatives, fund raising opportunities, electronic membership services, archival re-organisation, group projects and publications are on the Agenda. As members of this Society we all share an equal responsibility for the efficient operation and good governance of the Society, so why not consider volunteering for election this year?

## CIGO Award for Pearse Street

The Board and Members of this Society warmly congratulates the staff and management of Dublin City Public Libraries & Archive, Pearse Street, Dublin on its receipt of "**The 2007 Award for Excellence in Genealogy**". This newly constituted award was made on January 23rd 2008 by the Council of Irish Genealogical Organisations (CIGO). The citation accompanying the award reads "*In recognition of its commitment and contribution to the study of Irish genealogy through the on-going development of the manuscript and printed collections*

*held at its library and archive in Pearse Street, Dublin*". The granting of this award to this institution will be fully supported by all the users of this wonderful facility in Dublin city centre. Its staff consistently provide an efficient, friendly, professional and very helpful service to the public. The expansion of its genealogical resources has made this facility one of the most popularly used repositories in the capital. Though, this Society is not a member of CIGO, it fully supports and endorses the decision of CIGO to both create this award and in its choice

of Dublin City Public Libraries & Archive as the first recipient of the award. The facility at Pearse Street is a fine example of what accessibility to our genealogical heritage can be achieved through the Public Library Service. It has long been the policy of this Society to have, for example, the records of each of the heritage centres transferred to the Public Library Service in each county and to have access to such records available free of charge to the public.  
**EDITOR:** *many thanks to Steven ffearry-Smyrl of CIGO for the information on this award.*

# James Scannell Reports...

## POET HONORED

Fingal County Council has decided to erect a memorial in honour of Tom Kettle (1880-1916) who was killed at Givenchy on the Somme in September 1916 and who was one of several poets killed during World War I while on active service. Kettle was born in north County Dublin in 1880 and educated at O'Connell's CBS School, North Richmond Street, Dublin, Clongowes Wood and University College, Dublin. Although called to the bar he never practiced. He was M.P. for East Tyrone (1906 – 1910), supported Home Rule and became an authority on the economic implications of self government for Ireland. In 1908 he became the first professor of economics at University College Dublin and supported the Irish Volunteers, formed in 1913, for whom he purchased weapons in Belgium in 1914. Following the outbreak of World War I he acted as war correspondent for The Daily News and in November that year joined the British Army and toured Ireland as a recruiting officer. In April 1916 he volunteered for active service and was posted to the Western Front where he was killed at Givenchy

during the Battle of the Somme. His writings include 'The Open Secret of Ireland' (1912), 'Poems and Parodies' (1916), and two posthumous publications 'The Ways of War' (1917) and 'The Day's Burden' (1918). Kettle was an emerging poet of some stature whose memorial in St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, includes part of a poem he wrote to this daughter prior to his death. Fingal County Council's decision to honour Kettle was in response to a motion from Cllr. Tom Kelleher calling on the County Council to recognize Kettle's achievements by commissioning a work of art display in or near Fingal County Hall. County council officials have indicated that it is appropriate that Kettle be specifically honored in his native place.

## CHARTER DONATED

Cllr Donal Counihan, Lord Mayor of Cork, has welcomed the presentation to the City Council of a historic charter granted to Cork Corporation in 1900 by Queen Victoria as an important addition to the city's archives. The charter which conferred the title of Lord Mayor on the head of Cork Corporation was formally accepted by Cllr. Counihan from Professor Timo-

thy Counihan and his son Michael Counihan, S.C. at a ceremony in City Hall, Cork. Queen Victoria decided to confer the title of Lord Mayor on the head of Cork Corporation following a visit to the city. The first Lord Mayor of Cork was Sir Daniel Hegarty, son a merchant from Summerhill who had helped greet Queen Victoria on her visit to Ireland in 1900. The manuscript parchment charter is about 70cm square with wax royal seals attached by cords was inherited Prof. Counihan's late wife, Mary Rose Powell, whose aunt was married to Sir Daniel Hegarty's son, Michael. At the presentation ceremony, Cllr Counihan said that there was a very interesting story attached to the charter in that in granting the title of Lord Mayor, it had to be officially recorded in the High Court, Dublin, within 6 months with the legal costs being met by Cork Corporation. However this led to controversy within the Corporation as many of the council members were nationalists resulting in the motion that the Corporation should foot the costs being defeated ending with Sir Daniel Hegarty meeting the costs out of his own pocket.

# Précis of the January Lecture

On Tuesday 8th January members were treated to an excellent lecture by **Mr. Padraic Gallagher** of the Valuation Office. Mr. Gallagher outlined the history of the Valuation Office and its purpose. He explained how the information in the Valuation Records could be of use to the genealogist. Explaining the various terms utilised in the valuation records, including what was actually being assessed and why, Mr. Gallagher, brought the members through the process developed since the introduction of the Irish Poor Law system in 1838. Mr. Gallagher also explained that from a family history point of view, the information contained in these records must be treated with some caution as only the

names of the occupiers are recorded, however, this information can add to that obtained from other primary sources. The most important and most readily available of the valuation records is Griffith's Valuation published between 1847 and 1864 showing the names of occupiers, immediate lessors and the type and size of holding. He also explained the difference between the "field books" and the "house books". He also mentioned other records held such as Tenure Books, Rent Books, Quarto Books, Perambulation Books and Mill Books. Mr. Gallagher also brought with him some of the original material including maps to explain the usefulness of the Valuation Office records to

the genealogist, social and local historian.

## LECTURE PROGRAMME

**Tuesday 12th Feb.** Noelle Dowling, Dublin Diocesan Archives; **Tuesday 11th Mar.** John Colgan, Forensic Genealogy, Origin of Family Names; **Tuesday 8th Apr.** Frank Pelly, Records of the Commissioners for Irish Lights; **Tuesday 15th May.** Patricia Boyd, Registry of Deeds. All meetings are at 20.00hrs at the Dún Laoghaire College for Further Education, Cumberland St., Dún Laoghaire. Buses no. 7, 46A & 75, DART, Salthill & Monkstown Station. Any suggestions or comments on this programme, please contact Séamus Moriarty by e-mail at [Gazette@familyhistory.ie](mailto:Gazette@familyhistory.ie)

# Membership Subscription Renewals Now Due

Membership fee renewals fall due in January each year. The Board of the Society at its November 2007 meeting conducted the normal annual review of the **Membership Fee** structure and under **Res: 07/11/573** the Board adopted the following equalised Membership Package for 2008:- **Ireland & Overseas:** Offering ordinary membership of the Society, Membership Card, voting rights, use of the Society's Archive, monthly newsletter by mail, Annual Journal by mail, and the right to purchase the Society's publications at Special

Members' prices of up to 50% off selected publications. This also includes an optional second Membership Card for a household member, including voting rights, for an all inclusive cost of just €40.00 per annum. The modest increase in the Membership Fee, which hadn't changed since 2004, was unavoidable as costs continued to rise sharply. The production of a biannual Journal became prohibitive when printing and postage costs eroded any savings that were to accrue in the change from a quarterly journal. Unlike many other similar organi-

sations faced with the same problem, the Board decided to keep publishing the Society's journal but as an annual publication only. The Membership Fee is now in line with similar organisations in Ireland. However, in many respects our Membership Package, offers considerably better value for money. You can renew your membership online at [www.familyhistory.ie/shop](http://www.familyhistory.ie/shop) or, if you prefer, simply download the form and forward it with your remittance to the Society's Hon. Treasurer, **Mr. Denis Ryan, MGSI**, 6, St. Thomas Mead, Mount Merrion, County Dublin, Ireland.

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**www.familyhistory.ie/shop****DIARY DATES***Tuesday Feb. 12th & Mar. 11th 2008***Evening Open Meeting***Dún Laoghaire College of Further  
Education**Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire  
20.00hrs—22.00hrs**Wednesday Feb. 27th & Mar. 26th 2008***Morning Open Meeting***Weir's, Lwr. George's Street, Dún  
Laoghaire**10.30hrs—12.30hrs**Contribution €3.00 p.p.**(Coffee/Tea included at Morning  
Meetings)***QUERIES**

**David John Robb**, 6, Fleming Road, Bishopton, Renfrewshire, PA7 5HW, Scotland E-mail: david.robb1@ntlworld.com Wrote: Seeking info on my maternal great grandfather John **Brannan** b. Paisley, Renfrewshire 11 May 1873 but his parents Edward Brannan and Sarah **Connell** were possibly born in Ireland. Edward's mother was May Flynn. My grandmother was Mary Ellen **Mullaney** and her father, Peter, was born Co. Sligo in 1871 and died in 1939. His parents were James Mullaney and Catherine **Henighan**. Catherine was born in Sligo. He married Margaret **Evans**. Margaret was born in Scotland, but both her parents, Patrick Evans and Ann **Henderson** were born in Co. Donegal. My paternal great great grandfather, Alexander **Robb**, was born on Londonderry in 1804 to Richard Robb and **Sarah Hislop**. Any info. please.

**Phillippa Pagononi**, c/o Lynn Langridge c/o RMB1191 Boolarra Foster Road, Boolarra South, Victoria, Australia, 3870. E-mail:- ppagononi@ozemail.com.au or slegs44@hotmail.com Wrote:- Seeking info on the birth record of Patrick **Kirwin/Kerwin** born c. 1818. He married Margaret **O'Grady** also born c. 1818. He was a shoemaker/shoebinder from Wexford. He emigrated to Australia as a bounty passenger aboard the "*Theresa*" in 1840. There are two arrival records in Australia. 18 July 1840 and 18 August 1840, coming first to Port Phillip, Sydney then on to Melbourne. Patrick Kirwin died 21 June 1861 Thomastown, Victoria. There is mention of James (?) first living son born 1839 Cloughbawn, Wexford who emigrated with Patrick Kirwin and Margaret Kirwin née O'Grady. A source for James Kirwin states RC Parish of Cloughbawn, Co. Wexford. Wexford Heritage and Genealogy Centre Register 01 Page 114 Entry 04. This is our only clue to any starting point for Irish Records. We just need some sort of starting point for the Irish Ancestors.. There is reference to a John Kirwin b.1802 Galway. Lived Kilkea, Castledermot, Co Kildare. Died 1881/1851 with mention of some of his sons going to Australia and New Zealand. It is not known if this is Patrick Kirwin's father or relative.

**Sharon Dyer**, 32 Annette Crescent, St. Albert, Alberta, Canada T8N 2Z7, E-mail ross@telusplanet.net Wrote:- I am looking for information regarding my great, great grandfather Robert Dundas/ss who was born around 1801 in either counties Tipperary or Fermanagh. He married Ellen/Helen **Kerr**. Children of Robert Dundas were Margaret A. Born 1825, William Dundas B 1827, Alice Born 1830, Elizabeth B 1832, Andrew B 1834, Mary Born 1837, William Born 1835, and Ellen Born 1838. Most of these children were born in the Province of Quebec in Canada. The Dundas family also farmed at Turnberry Township, Huron County in Ontario, Canada, some of them also moved to Michigan in the United States. Any info. please

**Valerie Garton**, MGS1 15/45 Phillips Street, Cabarita, NSW, Australia 2137. E-mail:- vbgarton@optusnet.com.au Wrote:- Seeking info on **Culoden** and **Higginson** as part of a One Name Study (*Guild of One-Name Studies No: 4825*). Also researching: **Beddy**, **Culoden**, **Dyas** and **Rowan** in Belfast, Dublin, Wicklow & Wexford

**NOTA BENE:-** Queries are only published at the discretion of the editor and where a mailing address and e-mail address are provided.

**Ireland and Wales in the Middle Ages***edited by Karen Jankulak and Jonathan M. Wooding*

A cultural connection between Ireland and Wales which is rooted in a shared "Celtic" past, is often taken for granted even though our languages are not mutually understood. So what is it that binds these two ancient nations, peoples and cultures? Is it only our shared experience of English military expansion and domination or is it something deeper? "*Ireland and Wales in the Middle Ages*" (ISBN 978-1-85182-748-0 HB 296pp €49.50) is a new publication by Four Courts Press which explores many aspects of the connectivity between our nations including, the often overlooked Irish settlements in north and west Wales. Whilst some historians still cling to the notion that the period covered by this book somehow constitutes the "Dark Ages" it is clear from this excellent publication that it was nothing of the sort. Culture and learning flourished and indeed, was shared between both nations to a remarkable extent by monks and by a class of literate laity. The opening essay by the late Proinsias Mac Cana sets the scene by exploring the nature of the relationship between Ireland and Wales by reference to published works based on native manuscript sources—quoting one published source, David Dumville who compared the medieval Irish annals with their Welsh counterparts and speaking of '*an interesting intellectual commerce between southwest Wales and the west midlands of Ireland in the mid-tenth century*'. The post Roman

era Irish settlements in the Cardiganshire area of Wales is explored by Iwan Wmffre with reference to the placename evidence for such. Indeed, Catherine Swift's excellent essay on the Ogham stones found in Wales brings home the actual extent of the Irish settlement, or influence, in Wales during the sixth and seventh centuries AD. There is a fascinating essay by Susan Youngs on the widespread use of an open-ring brooch or cloak fastener which was probably introduced to Ireland from Britain in the 5th century. Youngs explores the exchange of fine-metalwork between the two nations and the absorption of fashion ideas across frontiers both for personal adornment and for common ritual observance. Alex Woolf deals with the expulsion of the Irish from Dyfed in southwest Wales in the ninth century AD. Interestingly, the Irish in this area were from "*Na Déise*" in the region of modern Co. Waterford. Karen Jankulak, co-editor of the volume, contributes a rather interesting account of Carantoc and explores the various "Vitaes" of saints of this name or similar in Ireland, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany. The complexities of the interwoven accounts of the early "Celtic" saints produces similarities that may suggest that saints of different "local" names may be, in fact, the same person. The similarities between the cults of the various saints of the name *Carantoc* either suggests that a single individual saint of that

name existed or that information was drawn from one Vita to enhance another and that this information was shared across the Irish Sea. Colmán Etchingham provides an insight into the extent of the Viking influence on north Wales, mostly emanating from Ireland, in the late 10th and early 11th centuries. Anglesey, in particular, was subjected to raids and indeed, settlement by Hiberno-Vikings in that period. Etchingham compares Irish and Welsh annals to show that Anglesey was very much a part of the internecine wars of the powerful Viking and Hiberno-Viking dynasties. Links with the Dublin region were particularly strong during this period. Morfydd E. Owen evaluates the similarities and contrasts between the law tracts of both nations especially in the area of compensation for injury whether it be merely wounding or homicide each had a value depending on the status of the individual. Jonathan M. Wooding, co-editor, deals with the coastal churches in medieval Wales and Ireland and the connections between such sites for, amongst others, pilgrims. Robert S. Babcock deals with Rhys ap Gruffud and Ruaidrí Ua Conchobair and the nature of their client status with Henry II of England. Finally, Madeline Gray and Salvador Ryan explore the traditions associated with the Virgin Mary and the Last Judgment in prayers, poetry, prose and depictions in architecture. For info. see [www.fourcourtspress.ie](http://www.fourcourtspress.ie) **MM**