

Cumann Genealais na hÉireann

# Ireland's Genealogical Gazette

(incorporating "The Genie Gazette")

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**GENEALOGY**  
**HERALDRY**  
**VEXILLOLOGY**  
**SOCIAL HISTORY**  
**Heritage Matters**  
**Book Reviews**  
**Open Meetings**  
**News & Queries**

## CONTENTS

<i>The Vikings in Ireland</i>	2
<i>Notice of the Annual General Meeting</i>	2
<i>New Publications on CD</i>	2
<i>James Scannell Reports...</i>	3
<i>Précis of the January Lecture</i>	3
<i>Diary Dates &amp; Tanker Tragedy Remembered</i>	4
<i>Heraldic Badge versus Corporate Logo</i>	4

## Amalgamation of Institutions Meaningful Public Consultation Required

On Wednesday January 28, 2009, Mr. Seán Sherlock, TD (Labour) asked the Minister his views on the requirements for storage space in respect of the National Archives and what progress there was on a new storage site. In a written reply, the Minister for Arts, Sport & Tourism, Mr. Martin Cullen, TD, informed Deputy Sherlock that, "the question of storage space for the National Archives is being examined afresh in the context of the proposed amalgamation of the National Library, the National Archives and the Irish Manuscripts Commission, the expected relocation of the Land Commission staff and records from the National Archives building, and the availability of the necessary financial resources." The amalgamation of these institutions was proposed as part of the government's budgetary cutbacks and savings. However, it is very unclear as to where or how significant savings can be achieved. Indeed, the Minister was challenged on this issue on November 19, 2008 by Deputy Olivia Mitchell (Fine Gael) and he said, "there may not be any savings. Even if there are not, the question is whether those cultural institutions are getting the most

out of the money being invested in them. For example, the National Archives is a wonderful body and has an extraordinary treasure of history, but only 18,000 people a year visit it. Some of the national archives in other countries have hundreds of thousands of people visiting them. They run major public programmes in a variety of areas. I should like to see our National Archives institute being put in a position to do that." During these exchanges in Dáil Éireann the Minister confirmed that a new site for the National Archives had been identified which "met with all the standards required." The Minister confirmed that legislation would be required for any amalgamation of the National Archives, National Library and the Irish Manuscripts Commission and that his officials were working on the new Bill. Whether it is the Minister's intention or not, there are several mixed messages being conveyed by the manner in which he is approaching this issue. By not identifying the areas in which significant savings can be achieved and how, other than reducing the numbers of board members, the Minister is presenting a far from convincing case for his proposed amalgamation of

these institutions. The failure to produce a coherent vision for the future of these institutions beyond the current recession is an alarmingly short-sighted approach to this important issue. The Minister could avail of the opportunity to proactively engage with all the stakeholders and the general public in a meaningful consultation process aimed at producing a comprehensive development plan for these institutions. This consultation should also involve the proposed legislation required for any amalgamation and particularly, the governance of the new institution. The legislation must provide for a structure of governance which is open and transparent. It should include two Advisory Committees, one academic, elected by the universities and institutes of technology and one for the users of the institution to be elected by heritage organisations and professional bodies whose members frequently use the services of the current institutions. The Minister has an opportunity to bring all the various stakeholders with him on this proposed amalgamation, however, without a clearly stated vision for the future of these institutions, unfortunately confrontation seems more likely.

## Fire at the College of Arms

On Thursday February 5<sup>th</sup> 2009, the BBC on-line news service reported that London Fire Brigade was tackling a fire at the College of Arms in Queen Victoria Street, London. According to the report, thirty-five people were evacuated from the building which houses the heraldic records and pedigrees of English, Welsh, Northern Irish and Commonwealth families. It also houses copies of the files of

Ulster King of Arms (1552-1943), the originals of which, are in the custody of the Chief Herald of Ireland in Dublin. Thankfully, there are no reports of any injuries and so far no historical documents have been reported lost or damaged in the fire which had broken out on the third and fourth floors. According to the BBC, the curator of the College of Arms was working "closely with fire crews to

preserve historical manuscripts held in the building". The current building dates from the 1670s and has been the home of the College of Arms since then. The College of Arms is overseen by the Earl Marshal, a hereditary office which has been held by the Dukes of Norfolk. Once again, we get a shockingly stark reminder about the urgent need to digitise all historical documents and records.

# The Vikings in Ireland

## *Settlement, trade and urbanization*

The impact and history of Scandinavian or 'Viking' settlement in early medieval Ireland is very often misunderstood or indeed, trivialised for questionable heritage enterprises. Sometimes a 'Viking heritage' is claimed for places in Ireland where little or anything remains of a former 'Viking' presence save a few artefacts. The Viking peoples that made Ireland their home have long been absorbed into the native population as they adopted the religion and later the language of Gaelic Ireland. Similar assimilation happened in western Scotland and the Isle of Man, whilst, migrations from the former created Galloway or 'Gall-Góidil' - the land of the 'foreign Gaels' or gaelicised Norse in south-western Scotland. Fully appreciating the significance of the 'Viking age' in Ireland presents difficulties for family and surname historians through the dearth of suitable records and the adoption by the Vikings of Gaelic names. Arguably the most important Viking contribution to Irish society was the introduction of urbanization to an otherwise pastoral society where the only permanent settlements of any significance were centred on the monastic establishments. A recent publication from **Four Courts Press** "*The Viking in Ireland—Settlement, trade and urbanization*" (ISBN 978-1-84682-093-9 224pp ills. h/bk Price: €45.00) by **Mary A. Valente** is a new study that balances archaeological and historical evidence, uses geographical and anthropological methods, and assesses primary written sources from the Irish, Scandi-

navians, Welsh, Anglo-Saxons (English) and the Anglo-Normans. The latter were to hasten the demise of what remained of Viking Ireland with the capture of their settlements in the late twelfth century. But by that time these settlements, like Dublin, were almost completely assimilated into the native culture and politics, indeed, Ireland's last High King (Ard Rí) Ruaidhrí Ó Conchobair was crowned in Dublin rather than at the traditional site of Tara. Valente examines the enormous economic impact that the Scandinavian settlements had on Ireland. With the expansion of trade, both nationally and internationally, the estuarial settlements of the Vikings quickly grew from the small 'longphort' to sizeable towns and cities. Over eight chapters Valente methodically explores aspects of the Viking age - a period roughly dating from the late seventh to late twelfth centuries. Chapter 1 deals with the early Irish economies; manufacturing and trade in the seventh and eighth centuries. The provision of a historiography in this chapter is very useful for the reader as it explains the contexts of the sources and the archaeological evidence. Quoting Max Weber's definition of a 'city' as 'a settlement whose inhabitants live primarily from commerce and the trades rather than agriculture' the position of Irish monastic settlements as 'urban' or not is discussed as are the various types of households. Chapter 2 explores the archaeological evidence for the original or temporary Viking raiding encampments or 'longphort' (pl. longphoir) from the

Gaelic meaning 'ship-camp'. This was the era before permanent settlement and the development of 'gateway communities' around the coast like Dublin. Chapter 3 develops the theme from the 'gateway communities' of the early settlers and the interaction between Viking Ireland and the wider Scandinavian sphere around the Irish Sea, Scotland and Scandinavia itself in the ninth century. Chapter 4 examines the impact of Viking settlement in the ninth century when, quoting Dáibhí Ó Cróinín, the Vikings 'had lost most of their independent political power .... Becoming, in effect, just another factor in the tangled web of native Irish political alliances' Chapter 5 explores the effect of this entanglement on the various Viking settlements in Ireland and the 'turf wars' between these settlements. The expansion of international trade in the tenth century is examined in Chapter 6 where the Viking towns become trade centres for the entire island of Ireland. By this time, Valente uses the term 'Hiberno-Scandinavian' instead of 'Viking' for these settlements and in Chapter 7, she explores the local economy in Ireland—the hinterland or 'crích gall' (territory of the foreigners) of these trading towns. An intriguing reference to the term 'Greek foreigners' referring to Scandinavians in a poem about a fair near Wexford emphasises the extent of the Viking trading world. Chapter 8 deals with the eleventh and twelfth centuries and the demise of the Hiberno-Scandinavian world and its legacy, urbanisation and trade. **MM**

## Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting of the Genealogical Society of Ireland will take place on Tuesday **March 10, 2009** at 20.00hrs in the Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education, Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. The Annual Report of the Board of the Directors of the Society and the Annual Financial Report will be presented to the AGM. The meeting will also elect the members of the Board of the Society for 2009/2010, including the Cathaoirleach (Chairperson), Leas Chathaoirleach (Vice-Chair), General Secretary, Director of Finance and up to six other directors who will receive their portfolios at the first meeting of the new Board. Only members with a current Membership Card are entitled to vote at the AGM and currently there is no facility for postal or proxy votes. In order to facilitate our

Overseas Members and to save time on the night, the Annual Report of the Board of Directors will be published in the March issue of this newsletter. The current members of the Board are as follows: **Séamus Moriarty, Cathaoirleach; Gerry Hayden, Leas Chathaoirleach; Michael Merrigan, General Secretary; Denis Ryan, Finance; Séamus O'Reilly, Archivist; Pádraic Ingoldsby, National Projects; Sharon Bofin, Membership Services; Iris O'Connor, Web Services; Margaret Conroy, Publications; and Barry O'Connor, Cemetery Projects.** Iris O'Connor advised the Board that she wishes to step down at the AGM. The Board extends its sincere thanks and best wishes to Iris. As the meeting of the Board had to be postponed because of the snowy conditions on February 5, 2009, on going to print, there were no policy matters or rule changes to be presented to the AGM. *Michael Merrigan, General Secretary*

## GSI ANNUAL JOURNAL

Articles are sought for the GSI Annual Journal. Subjects could include family histories, biographies, military or social histories, resource information, heraldry or vexillology etc. The publication of your own family history is the best way to ensure that future generations will have the benefit of your research. It also allows for the recording of family lore, special events and, where appropriate, family tragedies such as losses in war or natural disasters. Biographies of family members who may have contributed to their community, country or field of endeavour, should be published in order to record their stories. Black and white photographs or drawings are also most welcome. Ideally articles for publication should be of between 1000 and 2500 words in length and must not have been published elsewhere and, of course, they must be original works by the author. Therefore, the Board reserves the right to seek assurances on the source, ownership and originality of any article submitted. If you would like to submit an article for publication, please do not hesitate to drop the Editor, Margaret Conroy, an e-mail at [Gazette@familyhistory.ie](mailto:Gazette@familyhistory.ie)

## New Publications on CD

The ever increasing costs of printing and postage both here in Ireland and in Great Britain has forced many family history societies to review their publication policies and programmes. Some have exited the publication arena completed which is regrettable though, nevertheless completely understandable as costs mount. Therefore, Board of this Society had some hard decisions to make on our own publication programme and it decided to make many of our publications available on CD. Thanks to the hard work of Barry O'Connor and Liam Mac Alasdair, the Society's first publication on CD was launched last month. This new CD contains all three volumes of the **Memorial Inscriptions of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown, Co.**

**Dublin, Ireland - Vol. 1** includes the following graveyards:- Barrington's Burial Ground; Blackrock College; Dominican Convent, Dún Laoghaire; Old Glencullen; Kiltiernan Church of Ireland; Loughlinstown; Old Connaught; Rathmichael (Old Church); St. Brigid's Church of Ireland and Tully Graveyard. **Vol. 2** is a special publication on the Friends Burial Ground, Temple Hill, Blackrock and **Vol. 3** contains the following graveyards: Carmelite Monastery; Carrickbrennan Cemetery; Kill of the Grange Cemetery and Sion Hill Cemetery. This CD is fully searchable and easy to use. Normally these three volumes would cost €7.00 each plus postage, however, this new CD has been launched at a *special introductory price* of

just €15.00 including postage. Another new publication of immense assistance to those tracing ancestors in the British forces in Ireland up to 1922 "**Memorial Inscriptions of Military Personnel and Their Families**" is now available at €10.00 including postage. It has been painstakingly researched by Barry O'Connor and his team. To obtain a copy of either publication please send a cheque for the amount required (*made payable to the Society*) to the address (Director of Finance) on the bottom of page 3 of this newsletter. For a full listing of the Society's publications of memorial inscriptions, including other military cemeteries, please see the Society's on-line shop on the website [www.familyhistory.ie/shop](http://www.familyhistory.ie/shop)

# James Scannell Reports...

## PALLOTTINE ORDER

February 2009 marks the centenary of the arrival of the Pallottine Order—*The Society of the Catholic Apostolate* (SCA) in Ireland and over the coming twelve months there will be a series of events throughout Ireland to mark this centenary. The Order was founded by St. Vincent Pallotti in Rome in 1835 and in 1909 came to Ireland through the contacts with **Mgr. James Ryan** of the Archdiocese of Cashel and the permission of the Archbishop, **Dr. Thomas Fennelly** (1844-1927). This welcome enabled the Order to build a college in Thurles, Co. Tipperary, and for candidates to attend the nearby St. Patrick's diocesan seminary for their priestly studies. These efforts bore fruit and the first students ordained in Thurles were **John Boyle** (1915) and **Patrick Canning** (1921). In 1939 the Pallottines acquired a property at Cabra near Thurles where they eventually located their novitiate. Priests acquired such skills that would eventually enable them to preach and teach in Africa, Argentina, the United States and Great Britain.

## LOCAL ELECTIONS EXHIBITION

On January 14, 2009 **Cllr. Brian Bermingham**, Lord Mayor of Cork and **Cllr. Noel Harrington**, Mayor of Cork County, jointly opened an exhibition at the Cork City Archives in the Seamus Murphy Building in Blackpool, Cork, to mark 110 years of local elections. The exhibition consists of printed material and photographs which have been assembled by the Local Authority Archivist Group with the support of the Heritage Council of Ireland. The exhibition was on view in Cork until after January after which it goes on tour around Ireland in the run up to the 2009 local elections which will take place in June 2009.

## VENACULAR ARCHITECTURE

On January 20, 2009 The Heritage Office of Wicklow County Council, administered by **Ms. Deirdre Burns**, launched an exhibition - *Vernacular Buildings of County Wicklow* in Blessington Library with an introductory talk by **Richard McLoughlin** on the survey of the

vernacular buildings carried out by Lotts Architecture and Urbanism Ltd. on behalf of the Heritage Office of Wicklow County Council. The survey and exhibition are part of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan and supported the Heritage Council of Ireland. The exhibition is on view in Blessington Library during its normal opening hours until February 15, 2009. A 2009 calendar on this subject is also available for further information contact ms. Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer, Wicklow County Council, E-mail [dbruns@wicklowcoco.ie](mailto:dbruns@wicklowcoco.ie).

## LOCAL HISTORIAN HONOURED

At the January 2009 meeting of the Dún Laoghaire Borough Historical Society, **Mr. Brian Smith** was conferred with Honorary Life Membership for his long and dedicated service to the Society and for his work on the local history of Dún Laoghaire. Brian Smith is the author of *The Historical Street Directory of Kingstown: Dún Laoghaire* and *The Streets of Glasthule* both of which were published by the Historical Society.

## Précis of the January Lecture

On Tuesday January 13, 2009, the members heard details of Eneclann's plans for the coming year from **Mr. Brian Donovan**, Director and CEO of the company. **Eneclann** is a company based in Dublin which is to the forefront in the digitisation and publication of archival sources, rare books and manuscripts. Founded in 1998 by Trinity College history graduate Brian O'Donovan and Fiona Fitzsimons, the company employs professional genealogists, historians, researchers and archivists in a range of activities including historical research, E-publishing and digitisation, and archive management. Besides already having an impressive catalogue of electronic publications, Eneclann, in conjunction with partners, Irish Origins and Archive CD Books Ireland, have ambitious plans to expand their services and publications. Brian Donovan outlined some of the areas currently being developed

by his company. Greater accessibility to records and rare publications will be afforded to genealogists through a much expanded range of electronic publications. For further info see: [www.eneclann.ie](http://www.eneclann.ie)

## GSI LECTURE PROGRAMME

**Tues. 10 Feb.**—The Parker Families of north Munster and Kingstown. Paddy Waldron. **Tues. Mar. 10**—The new Freeman and Trade Guilds Database. John Grenham. **Tues. Apr. 14**—The Irish Historic Towns Atlas as a support for the family history researcher. Jennifer Moore, Royal Irish Academy. **Tues. May 12**—Church of Ireland records in the RCB library, Mr. Raymond Refausee, Librarian and Archivist, Representative Church Body Library (Church of Ireland). **Tues. June 9**—The Student Records of Dublin University.

Alumni Office, TCD. Any comments on the lecture programme to: Séamus Moriarty at e-mail:- [Gazette@familyhistory.ie](mailto:Gazette@familyhistory.ie)

## GRIFFITH PORTRAIT

Recently a portrait in oils of Sir Richard John Griffith was purchased by the National Gallery of Ireland. Griffith is well-known to genealogists as the organizer of various valuation surveys in Ireland and these remain a primary resource for genealogical studies. Patrick Wyse Jackson of Trinity College, Dublin has written a paper published by the Royal Irish Academy that describes the portrait. The paper, which contains a colour reproduction of the portrait, may be freely downloaded from <http://www.ria.ie/cgi-bin/ria/papers/100809.pdf>

## Membership of the Genealogical Society

Membership fee **renewals fall due in January** each year. The Board of the Society at its November 2008 meeting conducted the normal annual review of the **Membership Fee** structure and under **Res: 08/11/632** the Board adopted the following equalised Membership Package for 2009:- **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. Therefore, despite tighter economic conditions, there was no increase in the Membership Fee this year. Unlike many other similar organisations faced with the problem of rising costs of printing and postage etc., 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. Another new feature introduced was the offer of one year free membership to persons undertaking accredited genealogy courses on the condition that they supply a suitable article for the Society's journal. Also persons under twenty-five years can avail of 50% reduction on the membership fee. Membership can be renewed on-line or, if you prefer, simply download the form and forward it with your remittance to the Society's Director of Finance, **Mr. Denis Ryan, MGSI**, 6, St. Thomas Mead, Mount Merrion, County Dublin, Ireland.

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**DIARY DATES**

Tuesday Feb. 10th & Mar. 10th 2009

**Evening Open Meeting**

Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education  
 Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire  
 20.00hrs—22.00hrs

Wednesday Feb. 25th & Mar. 25th 2009

**Morning Open Meeting**

Weir's, Lower George's Street, Dún Laoghaire  
 10.30hrs—12.30hrs

Contribution €3.00 p.p.

(Coffee / Tea included at Morning Meetings)

**Tanker Tragedy Remembered**

On January 8, 2009, Irish and French relatives of those who lost their lives in the early hours of January 8, 1979 when the French oil tanker *Betelgeuse* exploded at the off-shore jetty of Whiddy Oil Terminal, gathered in the Abbey Cemetery outside Bantry, Co. Cork for a special commemorative ceremony. The ceremony was held around the giant granite memorial on which the names of all those who died are engraved. Arthur Ravalau, grandson of the *Betelgeuse's* captain, read of the names of the French victim's while Michael Kingston from Goleen, Co. Cork, whose father was killed in this accident, read out the names of the Irish victims. Forty-two crew members of the *Betelgeuse* were killed along with Irish victims Charlie Brennan, Tim Kingston, Denis O'Leary, Neilly O'Shea, Jimmy O'Sullivan, Liam Shanahan, David Warner, Englishman Mike Harris and Dutch diving supervisor, Jaap Pols. The Irish naval vessel, L.E. *Emer* and the French navy mine hunter *Cassiopee* lay at anchor in Bantry Bay while piper Dónal Cronin played a lament. Wreaths were laid by Cork County Mayor, Cllr. Noel Harrington and Cllr. Vivian O'Callaghan, Mayor of Bantry. The attendance included H.E. Mr. Yvon Roe D'Albert, French Ambassador to Ireland and Mr. Peter Power, TD, Minister for State for Foreign Affairs. The Bishop of Cork and Ross Dr. John Buckley led the relatives in prayers while Seán Ó Sé closed the proceeding by singing a lament "*Bantry Bay.*"

James Scannell

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## Heraldic Badge *versus* Corporate Logo

*Simply a matter of Taste, Tradition or mere Commercialism?*

The December 2008 issue of the newsletter of the College of Arms (COA) in London reported on the new heraldic badge for the Supreme Court of the United Kingdom (left). According to the UK *Constitutional Reform Act 2005* a new Supreme Court as the final court of appeal in the UK was established and from October 2009 it will assume the judicial

functions of the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords and some of those of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The COA reported that the Badge had been approved by the UK's Queen Elizabeth II. The design, which was produced in Scotland, makes floral reference to the countries of the UK, a leek for Wales, flax for Northern Ireland, a thistle for Scotland, and a Tudor rose for England. Though, simple in design it has an elegance befitting its intended purpose. The newsletter also includes an illustration of the new heraldic badge for the Welsh Assembly which also features the plants signifying the constituent parts of the UK, however, here the shamrock rather than flax represents Northern Ireland. The COA newsletter is available online at [www.college-of-arms.gov.uk](http://www.college-of-arms.gov.uk) Whilst



the retention of the use of Arms and Heraldic Badges is general in the UK, here in Ireland, over the last decade or so, many government departments and state agencies have dropped the use of the Arms of Ireland in favour of corporate logos. Some will argue that the UK because of its constitutional status is naturally more traditional in heraldic matters, however, there is a strong heraldic tradition in Ireland too.

So is it just a matter of taste that we've chosen logos over heraldic symbols? Well, in contrast to the UK courts, the Irish Courts Service has employed the logo (left) whilst still utilising the Arms of Ireland inside each court chamber. Besides the unfortunate and somewhat ironic secondary position afforded to the first official language, without the wording, few would readily identify this logo with the Courts Service or a state body. Indeed, the ambiguity of its design (*a bird sitting on a fence, maybe?*) could render it almost useless in the commercial world also. Isn't it time that government departments and state agencies availed of the heraldic services of the State and ditched this type of logoism as crass commercialism and wholly unbecoming the dignity of our State offices and national institutions?

**MEMBERS' INTERESTS**

An editorial decision has been taken to cease publishing general research queries in the Gazette and to replace that section with one dealing with Members' Interests. Only new entries will be published and then "banked" on a database on the website. The type of information will include, **Surname, Forename, Dates, Occupation, Location** and the name, address and E-mail address of the Member concerned. The facility will be restricted to Members who may place as many entries as they wish on this database. The Gazette will "flag" new entries or any alterations to the database as soon as sufficient entries are received for publication. Whilst, in future general research queries will not be published, consideration will be given to exceptional or topical research queries received. This may include queries regarding special historical or biographical research been undertaken for possible publication in the Society's Journal or elsewhere. Items for inclusion on the Members' Interest database should be sent to [GAZETTE@familyhistory.ie](mailto:GAZETTE@familyhistory.ie) and include the details outlined above.

**NOTA BENE:-** Members' Interests are only published or placed on the database at the discretion of the editor and only where a mailing address and E-mail address are provided.