

Cumann Genealaíais na hÉireann

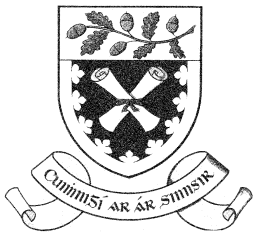
# Ireland's Genealogical Gazette

(incorporating "The Genie Gazette")

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**GENEALOGY**  
**HERALDRY**  
**VEXILLOLOGY**  
**SOCIAL HISTORY**  
**Heritage Matters**  
**Book Reviews**  
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## SARAJEVO'S LIBRARY

This month Irish people and those of Irish descent will celebrate Ireland's cultural heritage with parades, pageants and festivals. The huge week-long St. Patrick's Festival in Dublin has become a celebration of the diversity of 'Irishness' in the 21st century. This inclusivity embraces all sections of the community in a celebration of the many strands of our cultural heritage. This type of inclusivity and diversity is at the heart of the European project as well. However, this was wrought from the shared experience of the horror and destruction of successive European wars, the last of which, is yet to be fully resolved in the Balkans. The bitter conflict that engulfed the former Yugoslavia brought us the term 'ethnic cleansing' and, in July 1995, the Srebrenica genocide with the deliberate murder of more than 8000 Bosnian men and boys. The heavy human cost of this conflict will be with us for generations. 'Ethnic cleansing' uprooted populations and attempted to obliterate any vestige of their cultural and religious heritage. The renowned British journalist, broadcaster and political scientist, Dr. Robert Fisk, writing in *The Independent* (London) on June 20th 1994 described the systematic destruction of the architectural and cultural heritage of Bosnia and Herzegovina as 'a cultural catastrophe for

Europe'. He quoted Professor Branka Sulc of the Croatian Museum in Zagreb who used the term 'culturecide' to describe what happened in this part of the former Yugoslavia. Churches, mosques, monasteries and libraries were razed to the ground during the bitter civil war that followed the break-up of Yugoslavia. These included the Oriental Institute with its priceless collection of Jewish and Islamic manuscripts and the National and University Library of Sarajevo. In late August 1992 Serbian forces targeted the National Library building which housed collections brought together in 1945 from a number of older institutions. The sight of the burning of the National & University Library in Sarajevo horrified the civilised world and indeed, it was reminiscent of the Nazi public book burnings of the 1930s. Brave staff at the Library

and ordinary citizens under the direction of Kemal Bakarsic, Chief Librarian, only managed to save circa 10% of the collection. This is not just an enormous loss to Bosnia and Herzegovina, it is undoubtedly a war crime under the Hague Convention of 1954 which states that the deliberate destruction of cultural monuments is a war crime. On January 18th 1996, this Society wrote to the Irish Minister of Culture proposing a European Union initiative to establish an International Heritage Fund for Bosnia to rebuild and restock the National and University Library in Sarajevo. Under this initiative the National Library at Sarajevo would have emerged as a 'hub' for European Islamic Studies and West/East Cultural Studies. But as events in the Balkans deteriorated into seemingly endless intractability this proposal came to nothing. However, an international appeal has been launched by a group of Bosnian students and academics seeking to re-stock their University Library which was burned out during the Bosnian War. Appreciating the loss of our own Public Records Office in 1922 at the start of our Civil War, Irish genealogists, historians and other researchers are encouraged to support this appeal. **BOOKS 4 VIJECNICA** is seeking the donation of volumes in a range of disciplines—a list is available on-line [www.books4vijecnica.com](http://www.books4vijecnica.com)

Happy St. Patrick's  
Dag



TO ALL our Members,  
Readers & Friends

## Four Courts Press supports Bosnian Appeal

Ireland's leading academic publisher, Four Courts Press, has become the first Irish publishing house to send books to the Library of the University of Sarajevo. The appeal by Bosnian students and academics is being spearheaded by 23 year old Jasmin Hasic and his student colleagues. Their aim is to restock the Library at the University of Sarajevo which had its collection destroyed in the fire at the National Library in 1992. The campaign 'Books 4 Vijecnica' has already received pledges

of support from around the world. This Society has agreed to promote their initiative in Ireland—see the link on [www.familyhistory.ie](http://www.familyhistory.ie) Amongst the campaign's objectives is to have universities around Europe, for example, sponsor or donate volumes from a list prepared by the campaign group and then possibly donate volumes written by academics attached to each university. They are asking publishing houses and universities to encourage their academic authors to donate a signed copy of the work on publica-

tion to the Library of the University of Sarajevo. This would build up a contemporary collection of volumes in a range of disciplines appropriate to a modern European university. Ordinary individuals too are encouraged to either donate a volume from the list or make a donation for the purchase of a book. The very welcome support given by Four Courts Press for this initiative will hopefully encourage other publishing houses in Ireland and overseas to send a box or two of books to Sarajevo.

# Annual Report of the Board of Directors

The following is the Annual Report of the Board of Directors of the Genealogical Society of Ireland Limited adopted by the Board at its meeting of March 3, 2011. As usual the Annual Report covers the period from AGM to AGM, however, the Annual Financial Report is for the period ending December 31, 2010. The Board of the Society met twelve times during the year to deal with the day-to-day business of the Society. In addition to attending these meetings each of the directors undertook duties associated with their various portfolios including organising eleven Morning Open Meetings and eleven Evening Open Meetings, the latter with guest speakers arranged by the Cathaoirleach. Normally there would have been twelve Evening Meetings but unfortunately the January 2011 meeting had to be cancelled because of the snowy conditions and the closure of the venue. The Society published twelve issues of its newsletter 'Ireland's Genealogical Gazette' and its readership figures continued to be very strong throughout the year especially on-line where it was available in pdf format. The newsletter has been central to all the Society's campaigns including those aimed at having the 1926 census returns released as Senator Lábhras Ó Murchú published the Society's *Statistics (Heritage Amendment) Bill, 2010*. In addition to the

monthly newsletter, the Society's publication programme for the year also included the Society's Annual Journal. The Society moved from its temporary home provided by Office of Public Works at Lower George's Street, Dún Laoghaire to our new premises provided at the Carlisle Pier by the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Company. The Society's growing collections are being catalogued and hopefully, the catalogue will be available on-line. The new facility at the Carlisle Pier is now fully operational with broadband and thus enabling members to access on-line resources. The Board undertook to implement the three substantial policy documents adopted by the previous Board and was especially successful with its Outreach Policy which involved the Society's participation in a number of exhibitions, including the Over 50s Show and community festivals. In addition to the Society's website, a Facebook page was launched with greater than expected results. In recognition of his contribution to the promotion of genealogy John Grenham, MA, MAPGI, was appointed to the College of Fellows of the Society at the reception held at the Harbour Lodge to mark the official opening of the new premises at the Carlisle Pier in November 2010. The Society was also delighted to support the Books 4 Vijecnica initiative by Bosnian students aimed at

stocking their University Library which was destroyed in the fire at the National Library in Sarajevo during the Bosnian civil war. The Board has appointed the General Secretary as the coordinator of the Bosnian initiative for the Society. In accordance with its function as a Nominating Body for Seanad Éireann, the Society elected by proportional representation Cllr. Victor Boyhan of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council as a candidate to contest the Seanad General Election. There were originally four candidates competing for the Society's nomination, however, with the withdrawal of one, three names were on the Ballot Paper. Cllr. Victor Boyhan was declared elected on the first count. In addition to the above, the outgoing Board dealt with matters relating to the Society's membership of the Federation of Family History Societies; The Wheel; Integrating Ireland and such matters relating to the Society's Sectoral Representation on the Strategic Policy Committee on Culture, Community Development and Amenities of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council. The Board also complied with its statutory obligations in respect of the Companies Acts 1963-2009, its position as a Registered Charity and as a Nominating Body for Seanad Éireann. **General Secretary**

## WEEKEND GENEALOGY COURSES

The next round of weekend courses in genealogy will commence on April 2nd 2011 at the Society's Archive or *An Daonchartlann* at the Carlisle Pier, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. The class duration is 2.5 hours and each programme will run for eight weeks. The aim of the course is to provide an introduction to the theory and practice of genealogy and family history research. Topics to be covered include principles of genealogy, internet research, and how to draw up a family tree. Key records such as church parish records, civil registrations (births, marriages, and deaths), census returns, and land records will be explored in detail. Other sources discussed will include burial records and inscriptions, newspapers, wills, trade directories and new developments in DNA testing. Class size will be restricted to six students to

allow for individualised training and guidance on how to conduct and write your own family history. An Daonchartlann provides broadband access to conduct on-line research as part of the programme. The cost of the course is €300 which includes one year's free student membership of the Genealogical Society of Ireland. The course will be taught by John Hamrock of Ancestor Network Limited. John is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists and the Genealogical Society of Ireland. He holds a Certificate and a Diploma in Genealogy from University College Dublin (first class honours) and is the author of *Tracing Your Roscommon Ancestors*. For more information on these unique Weekend Courses please contact John Hamrock by phone at 087 0505296 or by e-mail at john.hamrock@ancestor.ie

## ON-LINE LIBRARY & ARCHIVE

The Society is currently developing an on-line digital library and archive to assist members and others with their research. This facility will be a unique resource containing publications, articles, reports and studies prepared, presented or published by the Society over the past twenty years. It is hoped that copies of correspondence and other documents relating to the Society's various legislative and public policy campaigns will be included. This rich resource will further enable researchers to study documents which chart the development of genealogy, heraldry and related heritage matters in Ireland over the past two decades.

## MEDAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

GSI Members researching ancestors or relatives who served in the Irish or other armed forces or in the mercantile marine will find the publications and meetings of the Medal Society of Ireland of interest. For further information please visit the Medal Society's website at: [www.msos.ie](http://www.msos.ie)

## FAMILY HISTORY DAY

On Saturday March 12th 2011 the Dublin City Library and Archive, 138-144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2 will hold a **Family History Day** admission is free but booking is essential. You can either book your place by phone on 01-674 4806 or 01.674 4873 or by e-mail to: [cityarchives@dublincity.ie](mailto:cityarchives@dublincity.ie) The programme is as follows: 09.30hrs – **Registration**; 09.50hrs – **Welcome Address**; 10.00hrs – **'Genealogy and the Easter Rising 1916'** by Ray Bateson; 10.45hrs - Tea/Coffee; 11.15hrs – **'Using newspapers for family research'** by Séamas Ó Maitiú; 12.00hrs – **'Landed estates court rentals'** by Fiona Fitzsimons, Eneclann; 12.45hrs - Lunch (not provided); 14.00hrs – **'Researching**

**members of the Irish labour movement'** by Charles Callan, MGSI; 14.45hrs – **'A new home for the Genealogical Society of Ireland'** by Fiona Tipple, MGSI, Director of Education & Social Inclusion, Genealogical Society of Ireland; 15.30hrs - **Finish**. Also on Saturday April 2nd 2010, the Dublin City Library and Archive will hold its **Seventh Local History Society Day** at which a number of presentations will be made on a range of subjects. These events are very popular and provide a great opportunity to meet others with similar interests. The details of the April 2nd programme will be announced as soon as these are finalized by the organisers. **James Scannell**

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Dún Laoghaire Harbour Company is hosting **'Maritime Jumble Sale'** on the Carlisle Pier, Dún Laoghaire Harbour on Sunday, March 27th 2011. The Society will be represented at the Guild of One Name Studies AGM to be held in Warrington, England from April 15th to 17th 2011 and will have a stand at the hugely popular **Over 50s Show** at the RDS, Dublin to be held between Oct. 21st and 23rd 2011. Meanwhile the Society's Archive at the Carlisle Pier, Dún Laoghaire, continues to provide a family history information service on Wednesdays between 10.30hrs & 16.30hrs. Members wishing to volunteer for archive duties are asked to contact Séamus O'Reilly, FGSI by e-mail on [seamus.oreilly@gmail.com](mailto:seamus.oreilly@gmail.com)

# James Scannell Reports...

## 1641 MASSACRES EXAGGERATED

A new detailed examination of the 1641 Depositions now on view in Trinity College Library by the University of Aberdeen and computer experts has revealed that the reports that thousands of settlers were massacred during the 1641 Rebellion were based on hearsay. The witness statements known as the 1641 Depositions were used by Oliver Cromwell as justification for taking severe reprisals against the rest of thy country. The Aberdeen University researchers uncovered doubts about the accuracy about the many of the statements discovering that many or the most atrocity incidents were reported on a second or third hand basis and very rarely in the first person. The statements were originally used to convince public opinion in London that the (Irish) rebels were primitive and barbaric. Bishop John Stearne gifted the 8000 depositions running to some 19,000 pages in thirty one volumes to Trinity College library in 1841.

## CLONLIFFE HARRIERS

Dominic Branigan, Killester, Dublin 5, is currently writing a detailed history of Clonliffe Harriers to mark its 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Mr.

Branigan is currently seeking contributions for current and past club members or their families or any one who has had a connection with this club. In particular Mr. Branigan is looking for old photographs, medals, and any other memorabilia that have an association with the club. Mr. Branigan can be contacted at 086-602 8058 (Intl. +353 86) or e-mail: dombran@eircom.net

## SLIGO GAOL CONSERVATION

Sligo County Council has adopted an ambitious conservation plan for Sligo Gaol, originally opened in 1818, built to a polygonal plan with the governor's house at the centre. Hangings were originally held in front of the prison but later on in the prison yard. In 1879 Michael Davitt generated international news headlines for the National Land League from the prison where he was held, with the help of Charles Stuart Parnell, when he turned his trial in Sligo courthouse into a legal farce. In 1918 detainee Michael Collins complained that he could not sleep due to the hardness of his mattress during a short period of detention there while in 1920 over one hundred IRA members broke into the prison to successfully release local commanding officer Frank Carthy in one of the most celebrated jailbreaks of this era. Sligo County

Council acquired the prison after it closed in 1956 and as part of a master plan for that area of Sligo, historians hope will see the former gaol retained as a living museum. The plan regrets that almost half of the prison complex has been lost as after closure in 1956, the female wing, treadmill, portions of the cell-blocks, the infirmary and part of the front boundary wall to facilitate building a fire station by the county council. Buildings that have survived include cell blocks, the debtors' prison, the three-story lunatics' asylum and the two-storey governor's residence.

## SECOND WORLD WAR VETERANS

Neil Richardson, author of 'A Coward if I Return; A Hero if I Fall' which told the stories of Irishmen in WW1. This was based on the recollections of soldiers' families, medical records, documents, diaries and letters. He is now planning to write a similar book on Irishmen in the Second World War and he is appealing to surviving veterans to contact him with stories of ordinary soldiers, sailors and airmen from all over Ireland who participated in this conflict. Neil Richardson can be contacted after 6 p.m. on 086-0735297 or 0449223932 or by e-mail: neilrichardson6@yahoo.ie.

## Précis of the February Lecture

On **Tuesday 8th February** members and visitors heard a lively and fascinating lecture by **Garda Jim Herlihy, FGSI** on the '*RIC and Related Police Forces*'. Garda Herlihy is a renowned expert on the history of policing in Ireland having published several authoritative works on the subject. These include 'The Royal Irish Constabulary: A Short History and Genealogical Guide with a select list of medal awards and casualties' (1997); 'The Royal Irish Constabulary: a complete alphabetical list of officers and men, 1816-1922' (1999); 'The Dublin Metropolitan Police: a complete alphabetical list of officers and men, 1836-1925' (2001); 'The Dublin Metropolitan Police: A Short History and Genealogical Guide with notes on medal awards and casualties, and lists of members connected with the London Metropolitan

Police, the Irish Revenue Police, the (Royal) Irish Constabulary and the British Army' (2001) and 'The Royal Irish Constabulary Officers: A Biographical and Genealogical Guide, 1816-1922' (2005). All of the above were published by Ireland's leading academic publisher, Four Courts Press. Clearly with such a wealth of information already published on the subject, Garda Herlihy's lecture was both wide ranging and, where appropriate, detailed in a manner suited for genealogy. With the aid of a Power-Point presentation Garda Herlihy traced the development of policing in Ireland and the role of the policeman in the turbulent years of the 19th and early 20th centuries. During this time the politics of rebellion and civil disobedience in the cause of independence and land reform took its toll on the police. The musical talents of

the various police bands were also mentioned by Garda Herlihy who advised the meeting of a special anniversary concert to be held in May at the National Concert Hall in Dublin. Garda Herlihy had some medals awarded to the RIC which he showed around. An excellent lecture!!

## GSI LECTURES 2011

On **Tuesday 8th March** '*Researching the Irish Revolution*' by **Dáithí Ó Corráin**. On **Tuesday 12th April** '*The 1641 Depositions as an aid to the genealogist*' by **Jane Ohlmeyer**. On **Tuesday 10th May** '*Tracing Ancestry through DNA*' by **Gianpiero Cavalleri** and finally, on **Tuesday 14th June** '*Irish Online Sources*' by **Mary Beglan, MAPGI**. Please send any suggestions for possible lectures to the Director of the GSI Lecture Programme, **Séamus Moriarty, FGSI** at e-mail: Gazette@familyhistory.ie

## 2011 Membership Package

The Annual Review of the Membership Package was undertaken by the Board of Directors at its meeting on Thursday November 4, 2010. It was agreed under **Res: 10/11/798** to keep the cost of the Annual Subscription for 2011 for Irish and Overseas Members at €40.00. The Membership Package for 2011 includes the following: Member voting rights; optional second household member with voting rights; Membership Card(s); right to use GSI post-nominal; copy of the Annual Journal; monthly newsletter by e-mail; use of the Society's Archive; monthly meetings/lectures; special prices of up to 50% off selected Society publications; right to register your own assumed Arms or emblems with the Society free of charge; right to have your Club, School or Institutions assumed Arms or emblems registered with the Society free of charge to a maximum of ten registrations; occasional group pro-

jects; Members' internet forum; genealogical, heraldic and vexillological advice; and the facility to publish your research in the GSI Journal. Special Membership concessions on products and services obtained, from time to time, by the Society. The Board also agreed to provide a number of concessionary rates at €20.00 for persons under 25 years of age and persons attending recognised genealogy courses etc. This Membership Package shall be applied as and from January 1st 2011 and be subject to annual review, however, existing Membership Packages shall be honored until their annual renewal date. **NOTE:** In accordance with **Res: 10/09/785** all Membership Packages fall due for renewal on the anniversary of joining—please check your Membership Card for details. Membership can be obtained or renewed via the Society's website [www.familyhistory.ie/shop](http://www.familyhistory.ie/shop) or if you prefer, simply

download the form, complete it and send it to **Mr. Tom Conlon, MGSi**, Director of Finance, 24, Carrickbrennan Lawn, Monkstown, Co. Dublin, Ireland. *New Members always welcome!*

## WILL YOUR RECORDS WELL

As genealogists, heraldists and local historians we naturally amass a huge amount of paper and computer records during our many years of research. We love these records, we've worked hard to collect the information—it's of great value. Books, photographs, charts, interview notes, copy certificates, parish register and census transcripts—all lovingly collected over many years. But how many of us have made provision for the preservation of our own records, files and notes after we die? Don't let your hard work end up as landfill or your genealogy, heraldry & local history books be sold off piece meal after you've gone. Why not make provision in your Will to donate them to the Society's Archive for future generations?

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*The Society is a Nominating Body for Seanad Éireann***Board of Directors 2010-2011**

**Pádraic Ingoldsby** (Cathaoirleach : Chairperson); **Gerry Hayden** (Leas-Chathaoirleach : Vice Chair); **Michael Merrigan** (General Secretary : Company Secretary & Publications); **Tom Conlon** (Finance); **Sharon Bofin** (Membership); **Séamus O'Reilly** (Archive); **Barry O'Connor** (Cemetery Projects); **Séamus Moriarty** (Lecture Programme); **Fiona Tipple** (Education & Social Inclusion) **Bartosz Kozłowski** (Poland) (Internet Services); **John Hamrock** (National Projects) and **Pat Feenan** (Sales & Marketing).

**JOIN ON-LINE**

@

**www.familyhistory.ie/shop****DIARY DATES**

Tuesday Mar. 8th &amp; April 12th 2011

**Evening Open Meeting**

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

Wednesday Mar. 23rd &amp; April 27th 2011

**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)

**New Irish Government—Genealogy & Heraldry**

Following the Irish General Election held on Friday 25th February 2011, a new coalition government comprising Fine Gael and the Labour Party has been agreed. The Society is delighted to see that the new programme for government published on Sunday March 6th 2011 includes areas, upon which, it has campaigned for years. The programme states - 'We will promote genealogical tourism by updating the *National Cultural Institutions Act* in relation to the Genealogical office to put it on a proper statutory footing, modernise its operations and to enable publication of the 1926 census to stimulate genealogy tourism. We will also explore philanthropic opportunities for the development of a national archives and genealogy quarter, providing easy access to archives and tapping into an area of cultural tourism which is of huge interest to the vast Irish Diaspora.' The Society was to the forefront in the campaign to have the 'office' of the Chief Herald of Ireland and indeed, the State's delivery of heraldic services, placed on a secure legislative footing. It was back in 2000 that the Society advocated new heraldic legislation and publish the 'heads of a bill' in 2002 which culminated in the publication of the *Genealogy & Heraldry Bill, 2006* which was sponsored by Labour Party Senator Brendan Ryan of Cork. This Bill was not accepted by the Fianna Fáil led government and although it had a two hour Second Stage debate in Seanad Éireann, it was withdrawn by the sponsor at the request of the Minister who promised to examine the matters raised by the Bill. The State's heraldic services were suspended in 2007 for approximately eight months and were only resumed following the admission by the Minister that the State had no legislative authority to grant arms between 1943 and 2005 when the *National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997* was implemented. The Society was instrumental in the publication by Labour Party Senator Alex White of the *National Cultural Institutions (Amendment) Bill, 2008* which sought to place Irish heraldic services on a proper statutory footing and to regularise the pre-2005 grants of Arms. The Society was the only genealogical organisation advocating the reduction of the 100 year closure during the 1993 debate on the *Statistics Act* and after many years of campaigning, the Society's *Statistics (Heritage Amendment) Bill, 2010* was published by Fianna Fáil Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú. Through the pages of this newsletter the Society kept up its campaign on these and other issues and therefore, the Society congratulates and thanks the Teachtaí Dála (MPs) from Fine Gael and the Labour Party for their support. We hope that the legislation providing for the above will be published this year.

**FOUR COURTS PRESS***Irish History, Genealogy, Local History and much more***www.fourcourtpress.ie***Checkout the Sale Items - 10% Reduction On-Line***First Flight by an Irishman**

'*Ascend or Die – Richard Crosbie, Pioneer of Balloon Flight*' by Bryan MacMahon, published by History Press Ireland. This year marks the 75th anniversary of Aer Lingus and this book is the biography of Richard Crosbie who has the distinction of being Ireland's first aviator as the result of making the first hydrogen balloon ascent in Ireland from Ranelagh Gardens, Dublin, in January 1785. Crosbie was a remarkable individual, a scientist and showman, in addition to being a balloonist. Born in Co. Wicklow, during his childhood he demonstrated an interest in engineering and mechanics and after receiving his early schooling at the Diocesan School, Trim, Co. Meath, later entered Trinity College Dublin in 1773 where he neglected his studies in favour of college life and failed to graduate. While in Trinity it appears he was a bit of wild character and hung out with like minded individuals who were boisterous and rowdy in public. Crosbie always had an interest in aviation and having being impressed with various events in Europe, in August 1784 resolved to undertake a hydrogen balloon flight from Ireland to Wales and after a series of delays he set autumn 1784 as the proposed flight date, a date which passed with the next one being January 4th 1785 after which a further three dates passed until finally on 19 January 1785, Crosbie made his ascent from Ranelagh Gardens in Dublin before 20,000 people, who had paid in to see him ascend. He landed near Clontarf. Crosbie made several further flights, two in Dublin - one from the grounds what is the Museum of Decorative Arts and History, Collins Barracks, Benburb Street, which was then known as the Royal Barracks and the other from Leinster Lawn in front of what is now the Dáil and one final flight from Limerick. But the one particular achievement that evaded him was making the first successful crossing of the Irish Sea which was accomplished by others. Bryan MacMahon includes as part of this fascinating and engrossing book, a vast amount of coverage on these flights as recorded

in the newspapers of the day and in other periodicals as well as information on Crosbie himself who financed these flights through a combination of sponsorship and fundraising. Also including information on how he was perceived by various contemporaries who recorded their impressions of him at that time in their journals and diaries. Crosbie's efforts are also placed in context with what others were trying to achieve/attempt in the ballooning field in Great Britain and Europe. Suddenly after all this public adulation and success Crosbie dropped from sight and in the final part of this excellent and engrossing book Bryan MacMahon reveals that Crosbie went to America where he pursued a new career as an actor but never lost his interest in ballooning as in 1800 he arranged a balloon spectacle in New York and spent his final years there in difficult circumstances until he returned home to Ireland, dying in Dublin in 1824. This is all new information previously unknown and not found in any of his biographies or references to him. This is a superb biography of this pioneering Irish balloonist, excellently written and illustrated, recalling a remarkable scientist and pioneering balloonist whose 1785 pioneering flight from Ranelagh Gardens is commemorated there with a statue to him executed by sculptor Rory Breslin. An Post also commemorated the 200th anniversary of Crosbie's Ranelagh Gardens ascent in 1985 by issuing a 44c stamp designed by Robert Ballagh showing this event which carried the narration 'First Flight by an Irishman'. All in all excellent biography of this unique and talented individual.

*James Scannell***Tracing Your Irish Ancestors***by John Grenham*

The Society strongly recommends that anybody wishing to trace their Irish ancestry should, as a first step, get a copy of this very comprehensive guide book.

**www.gillmacmillan.ie***Doing your Family Tree? You need this book!!***ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on **Tuesday March 8th 2011** at 20.00hrs in the Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education, Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. The meeting will receive the Annual Report of the Board of Directors; Annual Financial Report and, of course, elect the members to serve on the Board of the Society until March 2012. The election will include the offices of Cathaoirleach, Leas-Chathaoirleach, General Secretary, Director of Finance and up eight others elected without portfolio. The members elected without portfolio will receive their various portfolios at the April meeting of the Board of Directors. Members must be fully paid-up for the current year in order to vote or stand for election at the AGM. In order to reduce the printing costs associated with the AGM, the Agenda is produced below

**AGENDA**

1. Minutes of the 2010 AGM
2. Matters Arising
3. Directors' Report (see page 2)
4. Annual Financial Report (P.E. 31.12.2010)
5. Election of the Board for 2011/12
6. Installation of incoming Cathaoirleach
7. Guest Speaker
8. Close of AGM

The Society is an incorporated body under Irish law and therefore, it is required to submit annual returns to the Companies Register Office in Carlow. The Society is also a registered charity in Ireland (CHY 10672). All returns submitted to the CRO since incorporation are available on-line at [www.cro.ie](http://www.cro.ie) **General Secretary**