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’ and, in July 1995, the Srebrenica genocide brought together in 1945 from a 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 Library of Bosnia. Under this initiative the National Library at Sarajevo would have emerged as a ‘hub’ for European 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.

Four Courts Press is seeking the donation of volumes in a range of disciplines—a list is available on-line www.books4vijecnica.com. 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 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

Incorporating “The Genie Gazette”

GSI Lectures 2011
Diary Dates & A.G.M.
New Irish Government—Genealogy & Heraldry

Happy St. Patrick’s Day

to all our Members, Readers & Friends

www.familyhistory.ie

Monthly Newsletter of the Genealogical Society of Ireland
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 Cathaolrach. 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 Labhras Ó Murchú published the Society’s Statistics (Heritage Amendment) Bill, 2010. In addition to the monthly newsletter, the Society’s publication programme has 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 restocking 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 Dáonchartlann 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 Dáonchartlann 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 body of material will 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.mosi.eu

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: cityarchivels@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 Tippett, MGSI, Director of Education & Social Inclusion, Genealogical Society of Ireland; 15.30hrs - Finish. Also on Saturday April 2nd 2011, 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 finalised by the organisers. James Scannell

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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: cityarchivels@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 Tippett, MGSI, Director of Education & Social Inclusion, Genealogical Society of Ireland; 15.30hrs - Finish. Also on Saturday April 2nd 2011, 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 finalised by the organisers. James Scannell

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 stall 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

Monthly Newsletter of the Genealogical Society of Ireland
James Scannell Reports...

1641 MASSACRES EXAGGERATED

A new detailed examination of the 1641 Deposi-
tions now on view in Trinity College Library by the University of Aberdeen and computer
experts has revealed that the reports that thou-
sands of settlers were massacred during the
1641 Rebellion were based on hearsay. The wit-
ness statements known as the 1641 Deposi-
tions were used by Oliver Cromwell as justifi-
cation for taking severe reprisals against the rest
of thy country. The Aberdeen University re-
searchers uncovered doubts about the accuracy
about 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
very rarely in the first person. The statements
Club, School or Institutions assumed Arms or em-
blems the right to register your own assumed Arms or emblems
of thy country. The Aberdeen University re-
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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 command-
ing officer Frank Curthy in one of the most
celebrated jailbreaks of this era. Sligo County
Council acquired the prison after it closed in 1919
and as part of a master plan for the development of Sligo, historians hope will see the former
gaoil 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 sta-
tion 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 Re-
turn; A Hero if I Fall” which told the stories of
Irishmen in WWI. This was based on the recol-
lections of soldiers’ families, medical records,
documents, diaries and letters. He is now plan-
ing to write a similar book on Irishmen in the
Second World War and he is appealing to sur-
viving 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:
neilrichardson66@yahoo.ie.

CLONIFFE HARRIERS

Dominic Branigan, Killester, Dublin 5, is cur-
cently writing a detailed history of Cloniffe Harriers to mark its 125th anniversary. Mr.
Branigan is currently seeking contributions for
material and period photographs, oldorna-
courts, letters, press clippings and photos of the Harriers to mark its 125th anniversary. Mr.
Branigan is currently seeking contributions for
current and past members, their families and
or any one who has had a connection with this
club. In particular Mr. Branigan is looking for
old photographs, medals, and any other memo-
rabilia 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

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: 10/01/788 to keep the cost of the Annual Subscrip-
tion for 2011 for Irish and Overseas Members at €40.00.
The Membership Package for 2011 includes the fol-
lowing: Member voting rights; optional second house-
hold 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 meeting notices; 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 em-
blems 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 as part to subject 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 re-
newal 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 or if you prefer, simply
download the form, complete it and send it to Mr. Tom
Conlon, MGS, Director of Finance, 24, Carrickbreen-
nan 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 infor-
mentation—it’s of great value. Books, photographs, charts;
interview notes, copy certificates, parish registers— 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?
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 250th 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 from Ireland in 1785. The Royal Barracks in Dublin - one from the grounds what is the Museum of Clontarf. Crosbie made several further flights, two from Ranelagh Gardens in Dublin. He then 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 different 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 the 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 Best. 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, 2000 which sought to place the State’s heritage 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 interest 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.

DIARY DATES
Tuesday Mar. 8th & April 12th 2011
Evening Open Meeting
Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education
Cumberlend Street, Dún Laoghaire
20.00hrs—22.00hrs

Wednesday Mar. 23rd & 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)

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AGENDA
1. Minutes of the 2010 AGM
2. Matters Arising
3. Directors’ Report (see page 2)
5. Election of the Board for 2011/12
6. Installation of incoming Cathaoirleach
7. Guest Speaker
8. Close of AGM

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!!