

Cumann Genealais na hÉireann

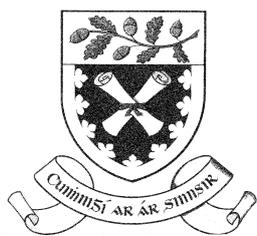
Ireland's Genealogical Gazette

(incorporating "The Genie Gazette")

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



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October—Family History Month

At the very successful launch on Tuesday 4th October by the Minister for Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, **Jimmy Deenihan, TD**, of the enhanced and expanded website www.irishgenealogy.ie the Minister spoke of "Family History Month". In October each year genealogical organisations and family history societies all across the United States celebrate 'Family History Month' with special events, lectures and publications. This is an excellent nationwide initiative that seeks to promote an awareness, appreciation and knowledge of the 'roots' of the United States as a largely immigrant nation. The motto of the US which appears on the Great Seal and on its currency '*E pluribus unum*' - (out of many, one), which was agreed in 1776, commemorates and celebrates the diverse origins of its people. Looking to our own nation and its diaspora we can certainly be proud to acknowledge that out of one, now there are many around the globe in every continent. Nevertheless, it is clear that emigration is still a controversial and painful aspect of our nation's narrative especially, since its dramatic return in the wake of the Celtic Tiger's demise. However, in his opening address to the **Global Irish Forum** held in Dublin Castle (Oct. 7th & 8th), An Tánaiste and Minister for Foreign Affairs & Trade, **Éamon Gilmore**

BACK TO OUR PAST

The Irish Genealogy & Family / Social History Experience

Industries Hall

RDS, DUBLIN

Oct. 21st, 22nd & 23rd, 2011

Meet the GSI at Stand 52A

TD, told delegates from around the world that "once, the size of the Irish Diaspora was regarded as a failure: a symptom of a country that could not provide a decent life, a decent future, for its own people. Now, the talent, the expertise, the influence of the global Irish is one of our biggest strengths: the envy of other nations. Our influence stretches further, our opportunities are wider, than any other small country in the world". The long overdue official recognition of the role and importance of our diaspora was finally given tangible expression two weeks ago in New York, when An Tánaiste presented the first *Certificate of Irish Heritage* to the mother of Joseph Hunter, a New York fire fighter who lost his life in the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre. This new certificate will provide

official recognition by the State to those who have a strong ancestral connection with the island of Ireland. The programme is now fully operational through the website www.heritagecertificate.ie however, An Tánaiste also confirmed "that the Government will shortly introduce a new system of recognition for sustained and distinguished service to Ireland or Irish communities abroad by individual members of the Diaspora. This will not be an honours system, but rather will involve the formal recognition every year of individuals from a range of sectors at a ceremony in Ireland". This Society proposed something very similar in its *Genealogy & Heraldry Bill, 2006* and therefore, applauds the government on this announcement. Two other important initiatives were launched at the Global Irish Forum—the new website www.worldirish.com and '*The Gathering*' which is a year long global Irish homecoming festival is planned for 2013. It aims to attract over 350,000 visitors to Ireland to celebrate all things Irish. Unlike a similar event held in Scotland in 2009, it will not be based on set piece events but rather on many local communities and organisations organising their own events. Finally, Ireland's own Family History Month will close with the '*Back to Our Past*' genealogy show at the RDS in Dublin.

BACK TO OUR PAST

'*Back to Our Past*' is billed as the largest Irish genealogy and family / social history experience. With all the exhibitors this year, it is certainly going to be a very exciting event for Irish genealogy. This Society is looking forward to welcoming visitors to Stand 52A at the show. If you're visiting the Society for the first time, you may like to know something about its history, activities and what it provides for its members. The Society was founded in 1990 to promote the study of genealogy, heraldry, vexillology and social history as educational leisure pursuits available to all irrespective of age, background, prior-learning or

socio-economic circumstances. Membership is open to all with an interest in these subjects. As Ireland's most active genealogical organisation, the Society hosts **12 monthly lectures** and **11 monthly discussion groups** each year; publishes an Annual Journal and monthly newsletter; and organises group projects, including the *Irish DNA Atlas* project which is in collaboration with the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. The Society advocates the *Principle of Public Ownership & Right of Access* to our genealogical heritage. It's a registered educational charity incorporated in Ireland; a Nominating Body for Seanad Éireann and has a grant of arms from the Chief Herald of Ireland.

Monthly Meetings: 2nd Tuesday 20.00hrs, Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education, Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire and 4th Wednesday (except December) 10.30hrs, Weir's, Lower George's Street, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. The Society's **Archive and Research Centre, An Daonchartlann**, Carlisle Pier, Dún Laoghaire Harbour, provides a Free Family History Advisory Service. Currently the facility is open on Wednesdays and Fridays from 10.30hrs to 16.30hrs (except 4th Weds. open at 13.00hrs), so just drop by to discuss your own research. For further information see: www.familyhistory.ie or visit the Society's Facebook page.

Maynooth Studies in Local History

As this is Family History Month and to assist those attending the *Back to Our Past* exhibition in the RDS as they embark on the quest to discover their ancestry, we look at an excellent series of publications that many will find of particular interest. Most genealogists want to go beyond the creation of a simple family tree to open up an understanding, appreciation and knowledge of the lives and times of our ancestors. Inevitably this brings us to the study of local and social histories concerning the places of origin and occupations of our families in times past. This aspect of our genealogical research is essential in the creation of our family narrative and especially so, when we hope to provide a unique family resource and treasure for future generations. Unfortunately accessing a huge range of locally produced publications is fraught with difficulty due to short print runs of privately published local or parish histories, many of which, for whatever reasons, are not found on the shelves of national or regional repositories. Though, a lot of work by County Librarians throughout Ireland is slowly addressing this major gap in our collections. Understanding their importance, the National Library of Ireland has also sought to obtain copies of these privately produced 'gems' of local community knowledge, history and lore. However,

over the years genealogists and local historians throughout Ireland have benefited greatly from the enormous amount of research undertaken by the staff and students at the History Department of NUI, Maynooth. This research is published as the 'Maynooth Studies in Local History' series edited by **Professor Raymond Gillespie**. Most of the research is based on the work of students undertaking the MA in Local History. Describing the publications in this series, Prof. Gillespie stresses that they are not 'a simple chronicling of events relating to an area within administrative or geographically determined boundaries since understanding the local world presents much more complex challenges for the historian. It is a reconstruction of the socially diverse worlds of poor and rich as well as those who took different positions on the political issues that preoccupied the local societies in Ireland'. This type of research is of exceptional importance to the family historian who seeks a greater understanding of the conditions and events that impacted on the lives of our ancestors and their communities. Prof. Gillespie puts it very succinctly in his foreword to each of the publications that this type of research relies on an 'understanding of what the people of the different communities that made up the localities of Ireland had in common and what drove them

apart. Understanding the assumptions, often unspoken, around which these local societies operated is the key to recreating the world of the Irish past and reconstructing the way in which those who inhabited those worlds lived their daily lives'. Without doubt, Prof. Gillespie's words will resonate with genealogists the world over who seek to understand the 'bigger picture' in which their own family narrative was forged. Besides the information in these publications, it is important to note the format in which the research is presented and hopefully, this will become the standard for the publication of local history. There are currently 93 titles listed in the series. For full details see: <http://history.nuim.ie/publications/localhistory> Another series of exceptional interest to the genealogist is the Maynooth Research Guides, edited by **Dr Marian Lyons**. There are currently 17 titles listed in this particular series. For further details see the following website: <http://history.nuim.ie/publications/maynoothresearchguides> However, to obtain copies of the local history publications and research guides by the History Department of the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, please check out the website of Ireland's premier publisher of academic works, Four Courts Press at www.fourcourtspress.ie **MM**

'Wicklow Villages—A Historic Guide'

'*Wicklow Villages – A Historic Guide*' by **Pat Dargan**, published by Wicklow County Council Heritage Office (Price: €5.50—see below for overseas prices : 48pp : Ills : ISBN 978-0-9569126-0-2.) Each village in County Wicklow has its own distinct identity and uniqueness which has evolved over time in response to the landscape and the unique historical backgrounds and events that evolved it so that no two villages are the same. The architecture, layout, building materials used, open spaces created or provided, trees and the natural landscape all combine to the visual appearance and attractiveness that defines the character of each of them, and it is this unique character that provides the individual County Wicklow villages with their strong sense of identity and place that appeals to both the local residents and visitors alike. This excellent Guide to the villages of County Wicklow, which has over 125 superb colour illustrations and maps, charts the historic developments of County Wicklow's villages down through the centuries, highlighting the various special aspects of both the natural and built environment that

contribute very positively to their character. The Guide is a very concise and precise one, divided into a series of chapters covering the following headings - Wicklow Villages; Monastic Settlements; Estate Villages; The Picturesque; Chapel Villages; Continuity; Catalogue of Villages and finally, Protection and Enhancement. This is a very well thought out and presented publication, an essential acquisition for any interested in County Wicklow or local history. The Heritage Office of Wicklow County Council is to be congratulated and complimented for publishing this Guide as there is no comparable book on this aspect of the county's history and architecture available from any other publisher at the present time. This A4 sized Guide to County Wicklow Villages is available at the extremely modest post paid price of €5.50 (ROI), €7 (UK), €8.50 (Rest of the World) from Ms. Deirdre Burns, Heritage Officer, Wicklow County Council Buildings, Wicklow Town, County Wicklow, Ireland. So don't delay in ordering your copy of '*Wicklow Villages – A Historic Guide*'. **James Scannell**

GSI NEWS IN BRIEF

At the 7th International Colloquium on Genealogy and the congress of the International Academy of Genealogy held in Bologna, Italy, between September 26th and 29th 2011, the Society was represented by Cathaoirleach (*Chairperson*), Pádraic Ingoldsby, MGSI, at which the Society's international contacts were strengthened. This month the GSI President, Rory Stanley, FGSI and Cathaoirleach, Pádraic Ingoldsby, MGSI, represented the Society at the official launch of the expanded website www.irishgenealogy.ie by the Minister for Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht, Jimmy Deenihan, TD, at the National Library on Tuesday October 4th 2011. The President and the Cathaoirleach will be at the *Back to Our Past* show at the RDS.

EDITOR: Due to the pressures on space in this issue, the review of the monumental work '*A New History of the Royal Hibernian Military School, Phoenix Park, Dublin—1765-1921*' by Howard Clarke, BSc. (Econ), M.Sc.(Oxon), FRSA, has been held over for publication in the November issue.

GSI Archive & Projects

The Society's Director of Archival Services, Séamus O'Reilly, FGSI, and Dr. Gianpiero Cavalleri of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) will officially launch the Society's new group project 'Irish DNA Atlas' at the RDS this month. The first issue of the '*Irish DNA Atlas Project Newsletter*' will be available at the Society's stand at the RDS and will be circulated to GSI members via e-mail. A link will be posted on the Society's website and Facebook page. The aims of this important project are twofold (1) to further our knowledge of the population history of Ireland and (2) to help us understand how genes influence health in Ireland. Participants may opt to take part in the medical or historical research or both. The project seeks participants with all eight great grandparents from the same general area, say a radius of 30-40kms, to present a Birth Brief and to provide a DNA sample (kit provided) for analysis. For further informa-

tion on the project, please contact Séamus O'Reilly by e-mail at Irish.DNA@familyhistory.ie The Director of Cemetery Projects, Barry O'Connor, FGSI, has confirmed that a new collection of Memorial Inscriptions is due out shortly on CD. In the meantime, members have been extremely busy with *An Daonchartlann* now open two days a week offering a Free Family History Advisory Service. This services has proven to be very popular with the numbers of visitors increasing each day. The Society offers this service each Wednesday and Friday from 10.30hrs to 16.30hrs (except 4th Weds. open at 13.00hrs). The Society's Archive & Research Centre or *An Daonchartlann* is located at the Carlisle Pier (Old Mail-Boat Pier), Dún Laoghaire. There is full internet access allowing for visitors to be introduced to the myriad of on-line resources for genealogy as well as learning of the many resources available in our national repositories.

GSI LECTURES 2011

The lecture programme this years has been excellent with a very wide range of very interesting topics covered since January. This high standard continues with the following lectures for the remainder of 2011. On **Tuesday 11th October** - Court and Prison Records - Brian Donovan. On **Tuesday 8th November** - Barrack Obama's Benn and Donovan ancestors - Fiona Fitzsimons. On **Tuesday 13th December** - National Library of Ireland - Recent Developments & Future Plans - Katherine McSharry. The lectures for the first few months of the new year will be published hopefully in the December issue of the *Gazette*. All lectures are held at the Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education, Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. Directions to the venue have been posted to the Society's website www.familyhistory.ie Please send any suggestions for lectures to **Séamus Moriarty** at e-mail: Gazette@familyhistory.ie

James Scannell Reports...

THE HISTORY OF GLASNEVIN

Retired chartered engineer Tony Doherty has published a history of the old village of Glasnevin, Co. Dublin, called '*A History of Glasnevin: Its village, lands and people*' which covers the history of the area, beginning back as far as the 6th century when St. Mobhí founded a monastery there. In 1178 AD following the arrival of the Normans, the lands of Glasnevin were granted to the priory of the Holy Trinity attached to Christ Church Dublin and a papal decree the following year confirmed this arrangement and defined the area's boundaries. In the 18th century, Glasnevin became a fashionable area for the prosperous classes of Dunlin's literary circle followed by the establishment of many famous educational institutions in the area including the Botanic Gardens. In 1901 Glasnevin was incorporated into the Dublin Corporation municipal area and over the next 30 years evolved into an elegant red brick suburb, but the post Emergency saw the gradual decline of the old village. Fintan O'Toole, *Irish Times* columnist, broadcaster and resident of Glasnevin formally launched this book, published by Original Writing Ltd, based in the Spade Enterprise Centre, Smithfield, at a reception in the Botanic Gardens.

FAMILY TO VISIT CONGO

The Government has indicated that it is prepared to provide assistance to the family of Trooper. Patrick Mullins, who was killed in the Congo in September 1961, and officially recorded as 'missing in action', to visit the location where it is believed that he met his death. Trooper Mullins, who was from Kilbehenny, Co. Limerick, was 18 when he left on United Nations service for the Congo in June 1961, as a member of the Armoured Car Group, 35th Bn. ONUC. In September 1961 the armoured car in which he was member off, was ambushed while on patrol in Elizabethville but his body was never recovered and currently Trooper Mullins remains one of Ireland's two soldiers still classified as 'missing in action'.

WW2 BULLION LOCATED

At the end of September American marine exploration company Odyssey Marine Exploration announced that it had discovered the WW2 wreck of British registered cargo steamer SS *Gairsoppa*, torpedoed on 17 February 1941 by a German submarine, some 300 miles off the Irish coast in 4700 metres of water. At the time of its sinking the SS *Gairsoppa* was carrying

7000 tonnes of mixed cargo including pig iron, tea, and a large quantity of silver bullion estimated to be in the region of 200 tonne. She sailed from Calcutta for Liverpool in convoy until North Atlantic high seas and a heavy swell forced it to reduce speed and running low on coal on 14 February 1941 she had to sail independently. Three days later it was torpedoed by a German submarine commanded by Ernest Mengersen which then surfaced and opened fire on the vessel's lifeboats as they were being lowered into the water. Eight European and twenty-seven Asian crew members survived in one of the lifeboats but most subsequently died of exposure and seven were lost when the lifeboat overturned within sight of the southwest coast of Britain. Prior to undertaking the search for the SS *Gairsoppa*, Odyssey Marine Exploration (OME) secured a salvage contract from the British Government under which it would retain 80% of the cargo with the balance going to [British] HM Treasury if located. It expected that the recovery of the bullion will commence during 2012 and if successful will be the largest known precious metal cargo recovered from the sea. OME has also been reported to be conducting side scan sonar sea bed searches off the Irish coast outside Irish territorial waters but has refused to divulge details of this operation.

Précis of the September Lecture

On Tuesday 13th Sept. 2011, **Rosemary Raughter** delivered an excellent lecture with the intriguing title '*Unbounded Charity and Unfortunate Females: Lady Arbella Denny and the early years of the Leeson Street Magdalen Asylum*'. In her research, academic publications and lectures, Rosemary Raughter, has opened up the fascinating and largely untold stories of women and, sometimes religious women, in Irish history. This particular historical narrative is often forgotten or shamefully treated as mere footnotes in our published histories. The women at the heart of this lecture, Lady Arbella Denny, was significantly important in her day to have been elected as a honorary member of the Royal Dublin Society for her charitable works. It is worth remembering that the RDS at the time was a staunchly male preserve. Rosemary Raughter has also brought to the fore Denny's association with the Dublin Foundling Hospital writing "In the decades following the establishment of the Dublin Foundling Hospital, a succession of parliamentary committees reported unacceptably high mortality rates, abuse and

neglect of the children in the institution, and corruption in its management. An exception to the almost universal disregard of such reports was Denny's intervention in the Hospital's affairs, an initiative which she justified by the argument that "the wants of young children the negligence of nurses, and the general management of such an institution" fell decisively within the conventional female "sphere of observation". For twenty years, beginning in 1758, Denny supervised the day-to-day running of the institution and introduced a range of reforms which according to a contemporary "put a stop to barbarity and murder and saved the life of thousands". But it was Denny's role in another institution that Rosemary Raughter outlined in her lecture. The Leeson Street Magdalen Asylum, founded in 1767 by Lady Arbella Denny, was the first institution of its kind in Ireland. Its surviving records are an invaluable source of information on rescue work and women's philanthropic action at this period. Her work at Leeson Street was, it seems, highly valued in society as it was very conspicuously

supported by the prestigious Philharmonic Catch Club in the 1760s when they performed 'in aid of the asylum for penitent prostitutes'. Rosemary Raughter's paper, delivered at this meeting, utilized those records to recreate the history of the charity during its first years. Her research focused particularly on the registers of the Asylum, which offer a unique insight into the experience of the inmates themselves, and into the lives of poor women generally in eighteenth-century Dublin. Rosemary Raughter also assessed Denny's various achievements, the factors which may have motivated and her claim to be considered a pioneer, both in the field of child care and in the creation of a public role for women. A fascinating lecture which was greatly appreciated by all in attendance.

MEDAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND

Researching ancestors or relatives who served in the Irish or other armed forces or in the mercantile marine? Checkout the Medal Society of Ireland on www.msoid.ie

GSI 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 Certificate [**Res: 11/09/859**]; 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 projects; 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 Certificate 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. Billy Saunderson, MGSI**, Director of Finance, 'Suzkar', Killiney Avenue, Killiney, 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 2011-2012**

Pádraic Ingoldsby (Cathaoirleach : Chairperson); **Gerry Hayden** (Leas-Chathaoirleach : Vice Chair); **Michael Merrigan** (General Secretary : Company Secretary & Publications); **Billy Saunderson** (Finance); **Tom Conlon** (Sales, Marketing & Membership); **Séamus O'Reilly** (Archive); **Barry O'Connor** (Cemetery Projects); **Séamus Moriarty** (Lecture Programme), **John Hamrock** (Education & Social Inclusion) **Bartosz Kozłowski** (Poland) (Internet Services) and **Eddie Gahan** (Research Info. Services).

JOIN ON-LINE**www.familyhistory.ie/shop**

*Checkout the Society's Facebook Page
for regular up-dates on the
World of Genealogy and Heraldry*

DIARY DATES

Tuesday Oct. 11th & Nov. 8th 2011

Evening Open Meeting

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

Wednesday Oct. 26th & Nov. 23rd 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)

WARNING ON POST-1700 STRUCTURES

The Institute of Archaeologists has expressed grave concerns about proposals by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to exclude all post-1700 archaeological and historic structures from the national record of Monuments and Places which is it felt will leave holy wells, bridges, mile-stones, vernacular buildings and other industrial sites that are post-1700 without any protection. It believed that the Department favours this approach due to lack of uniformity in approach by local authorities as some have very comprehensive records while others have none or very little. The Department maintains that the review that it carried out aimed for the adoption of a standard approach nationally that will ensure that all elements of the built heritage will continue to be adequately protected and that there no question of any change to the current arrangements before it is completed. However the board of the Institute believe that that any delisting would be detrimental to the country's archaeological resource and is now seeking the views of its members with the aim of placing practical proposals before Jimmy Deenihan, T.D., Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht. The Archaeological Survey of Ireland has been recording archaeological monuments for several decades including significant numbers of post-1700 monuments which have been included in the Record of Monuments and Places for Cork, Galway and Dublin. The Institute believes that the ASI proposals to de-list post-1700 monuments is based on the limited resources available to them and a processing backlog of information collected previously. The Institute further maintains that the cut off date 1700 has no basis in law and as according to a 1999 statements issued by Dúchas – the heritage service – which stated that any material remains may have an element of archaeological significance. By way of contrast the ASI plans to de-list post-1700 monuments, the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland notes that the Northern Ireland Environmental Agency already lists 16,000 features and that a second survey of historic buildings is currently under way.

James Scannell

FREE FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH ADVISORY SERVICE available each week at the Society's Archives & Research Centre, *An Daonchartlann*, Carlisle Pier (Old Mail-Boat Pier), Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, every Wednesday and Friday—10.30hrs-16.30hrs (except 4th Wednesday of each month when it opens at 13.00hrs).

FOUR COURTS PRESS*Irish History, Genealogy, Local History and much more***www.fourcourtpress.ie***Checkout the Sale Items - 10% Reduction On-Line***A New On-line Atlas**

Much has been written about where immigrants from Ireland went when the Great Famine struck this country in the mid-to-late 1840s. We are familiar with the countries on whose shores they landed, especially the US and Canada, and how these immigrants fared subsequently. Indeed, more and more enquiries about these people come from their descendants living in those countries today. But what has not been well explored until now is the impact that mass immigration had at a local level. We all have commonly accepted perceptions about the impact of the famine here in Ireland, namely, that the West was hit harder than the East and that the spectre of Famine stalked the greater part of the country. The new publication by NUI Maynooth called *The Atlas of Irish Famine Data 1841-1851* enables us to take a detailed look at the local data based on the almost 3,500 Electoral Divisions in the country. We can click on any ED and we can take in at a glance the population changes which took place between the highest ever level of our population and the 1851 snapshot of the country immediately after the Famine. This new Atlas is the work of the National Centre for Geocomputation (NCG) based at NUI Maynooth and is freely available online at www.ncg.nuim.ie/historical-atlas This is the NCG online Atlas Portal with a home page which allows you to select the county you are interested in. When you have selected the county all the EDs appear on the map and can be highlighted by positioning the mouse over them. On the top right corner of the page, there is a complete list of the EDs for the county and, below this, a space for a graphic representation not only of the population in its many different aspects but also of agriculture, population density and housing. The different aspects of the data can be accessed by using a button called Select Indicator just above the map of the county. The map of the EDs can be superimposed on the modern map; and, as these name are not always commonplace, they can be seen in relation to better known areas like those around the principal towns. The Maynooth team headed by Professor Stewart Fothering-

ham has made some interesting observations based on their statistical analysis. Many local areas of the West of Ireland lost between 40% and 60% of their population but north Carlow and south Wicklow also lost higher than average numbers. Some areas of the country where a compassionate landlord lived suffered much less than a neighbouring part of the same county; examples in Mayo were the tenants living on the Moore Estates. And some parts of the West of Ireland, from Donegal to Galway, actually experienced a population growth perhaps due to the continuance of labour-intensive mixed farming rather than pastoral activity. Again, in Mayo, the town of Westport experienced a 15% growth in its population during this period; this was partly due to it being a busy Famine port and partly because it was the location of a large Workhouse. Contrast this with the nearby Electoral District of Killavally which lost 65.3% of its population, the largest decline in the country. And this is not all. The same Portal has another atlas called *Irish Population Change Atlas 1841-2002* which compliments the Famine Atlas as it brings the statistics on population changes right up to the present time. The screen layout is much the same as the Famine Atlas except that above the map of the county there is a Select Time Period button. Out of curiosity, I selected the time period 1951 to 1961 to see what the immigration of that decade was like in percentage terms and on the graph. Many EDs in Co Mayo suffered a population decline of between 20% and 30%. More recent periods can also be examined like from the 1970s to the 1990s when many places saw their populations fall first only to rise later. The publication online of these Atlases and their use free of charge should be welcomed as another resource for communities wishing to understand the population shifts in their own areas. *Aiden Feerick, MGSJ, MAPGI*

TRACING YOUR IRISH ANCESTORS

by John Grenham, MA, MAPGI, FIGRS, FGSI

The Society strongly recommends this very comprehensive guide available at www.gillmacmillan.com

*Doing your Family Tree? You need this book!!***WEEKEND COURSES**

The Saturday Morning Genealogy Course in conjunction with John Hamrock of **Ancestor Network Ltd** commenced on September 17th 2011. The aim of the course is to help beginners unlock the mysteries of their ancestry. The course includes guided tours at the National Library, Dublin City Library, and other important centres of research. You can learn how to be your own researcher. All you need is some curiosity and some expert guidance. Topics to be covered include the principles of genealogy, computers and the internet, place names and surnames, location and use of census, vital, valuation, church and other records. Practical advice will be shared with participants as they embark on the quest to trace their ancestors. Courses are held at the Society's Archive and Research Centre, *An Daonchartlann*, Carlisle Pier (Old Mail-Boat Pier), Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, where computer access ensures that the major online resources will be covered in a 'hands-on' way for best results. For more information on these courses please contact **John Hamrock, MGSJ** by phone 087 050 5296 or by e-mail at john.hamrock@ancestor.ie

SARAJEVO UNIVERSITY

Over two million volumes, including priceless manuscripts, were destroyed in the fire that engulfed the National & University Library in Sarajevo on August 26th 1992 during the Bosnian civil war—just over seventy years after we lost our Public Records Office during our bitter Civil War. Now a group of Bosnian students is seeking donations of contemporary academic works in any discipline to restock their university's library which was totally destroyed. Have you any books that you could donate? Please forward your donated volumes to the University Library by mail to: **Mr. Muris Rahmanovic**, University of Sarajevo—Campus, Zmaj od Bosne bb., 71000 Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Please share this appeal with your friends and colleagues. For further information see: www.books4vjernica.com