

- Family History Month
- Tourism & the Heritage Centres
- Congress proves need for Bill

ISSN 1393-3183

Editor: E-mail: GenSocIreland@iol.ie

The Gene Gazette

The Newsletter of
the Genealogical
Society of Ireland
Volume 7 • Issue 10
October 2002



OCTOBER – FAMILY HISTORY MONTH IN USA

Americans Celebrate their Genealogical Heritage Each Year in October

Once again, our American cousins have declared the month of October “Family History Month” with each of the genealogical and family history societies across the United States organising events to mark this important celebration of our shared genealogical heritage. This type of focused celebration offers many advantages for the promotion of a greater awareness, appreciation and understanding of genealogy, history and our common heritage.

Genealogical Heritage

With advances in the study of genetics, including the wider public understanding of DNA, our shared genealogical heritage in an ancient, though ever shrinking world, is reinforced scientifically. So why, you may ask, is there a reluctance to emulate the “Family History Month” initiative here in the European Union? Would not a celebration of our shared genealogical heritage highlight the union of our peoples within the European Family and yet, offer a unique recognition of our cultural diversity?

“Melting Pot”

Many who see the Americas as the great “melting pot” of peoples from the four corners of the globe, fail to appreciate that Europe too is and was for centuries a “melting pot” of the European, African and Asian peoples. Our often very troubled and tragic history created mass movements of peoples in and out of Europe and amongst the political entities on the continent. All this history blends with the more recent influx of immigrants from the far flung former colonial lands

around the world creating a new and diverse Europe, in which, to celebrate our shared genealogical heritage.

Invasions, Plantations and Immigrations

We here too, have been immersed in this “melting pot” with the various waves of invasions, plantations and immigrations all giving us the Ireland we share today. Whilst, many Irish people may rightly claim that their genealogy is mostly Gaelic Irish, none of us can deny that DNA studies would most likely confirm that other strains of ancestry exist in varying amounts throughout the island of Ireland. Studies currently undertaken by geneticists in Ireland point to a people on the rim of the great European “melting pot” with some very interesting and ancient genetic characteristics. New immigrants to Ireland in recent decades and the return to Ireland of the families of Irish emigrants from Great Britain and further afield, all will in time, create yet another fascinating chapter in the evolving story of Ireland’s genealogical heritage.

“Our Fellow Europeans”

Our genealogical heritage is important as it defines us as a people, however, it also links us, not only with our friends on the island of Great Britain, but with our fellow Europeans on the mainland of our own continent of Europe and with our cousins across the world. A shared heritage to celebrate, at least once a year as they do in the States in October, during “Family History Month”. *So why not in Europe??*

MARTELLO TOWER PROJECT

Support the Society’s project to restore and refurbish the Martello Tower at Seapoint. Please give generously to the Building Fund.

THE TOURISM SLUMP

A Threat to the Heritage Centres?

As the country has just experienced its worst year for tourism in living memory many in the industry are casting a nervous eye at events unfolding in the North and in the Gulf and pondering on the possibilities of another disastrous year to come. The fall-out of 9/11 has seen the tourism figures from North America plummet and without a compensating increase in the visitors from the mainland of Europe things have gone from bad to worse in a shrinking season.

September 11th

The crippling of our tourism industry cannot be blamed solely on September 11th and in many ways, we’ve only ourselves to blame as we are slowly but surely pricing our visitors away. The inflation in the hospitality sector far outpaced that in other sectors with prices in our pubs and restaurants now ranking as the highest in Europe. Ignoring anti-competitive practices in the hospitality sector where frequently the consumer is left with little or no choice on the issue of price is not a luxury that Ireland can afford. This perilous and foolhardy practice may deliver short term gains for some in the industry but in the long run the whole industry will suffer with job losses, businesses folding and leaving communities facing a bleak midwinter.

Impact on Heritage Centres

The health of our tourism industry impacts directly on the various Heritage Centres throughout the country providing genealogical services for a fee. These centres were already badly hit by a

staffing shortage with some either closing or offering a very much reduced service to the public. However, with the downturn in the tourism industry, which was the mainstay of their business, these Heritage Centres are in danger of closing altogether with the possible loss of their records in the process. These records were compiled with public money as part of a training programme for the unemployed during the late 1980s and the early 1990s and involved the computerisation of the Parish Records in each county area. Unfortunately, the completeness of this exercise has never been fully examined as the staffing of these centres was directly linked to the available data input work in each centre, therefore, leaving little or no incentive to complete the computerisation programme.

Government Cutbacks

With the crisis in the tourism industry and the severe cutbacks announced by the Government since the General Election the outlook is bleak for most of these Heritage Centres, as presently structured. Questions as to the commercial viability of the Heritage Centres and their controlling body, Irish Genealogy Limited, have been asked many times before, however, now is the time for action. The importance to Irish genealogy of these records cannot be overstated. The records must be protected from dispersal or sale by the operators of any of the Heritage Centres as one of the few assets available to them to offset any costs incurred by the Centres. The assertion that these records belong to each individual centre and not the public who paid for the computerisation programme is simply untenable.

Public Library Service

This Society has long held the view that each of the Heritage Centres should be placed under the direct control of the County Librarian in each county and that the records should be made available through the Public Library Service free of charge to the public. This transfer of responsibility would ensure the maintenance of these valuable records, resolve the staffing problems and bring the computerisation programme to a successful conclusion under the direction of trained personnel in the Library Service. The Library Service may well be in a position to have these records accessible on the Internet or indeed, published on CD Rom for purchase by the public in Ireland and overseas. Buildings

or parts thereof provided especially for the housing of the Irish Genealogical Project in each county could then be reallocated to more productive and sustainable purposes by the various local authorities.

Irish Genealogy Limited

The marketing function presently performed by Irish Genealogy Limited could be transferred to or absorbed by Tourism Ireland as it is important to continue to promote and develop "roots tourism" as a significant element in Irish tourism. The expertise available within Irish Genealogy Limited could enhance any new promotions undertaken by Tourism Ireland to rekindle the huge potential in this area of tourism. These promotions could be based on the exploitation of an affinity with Ireland felt by the Irish Diaspora rather than the narrower marketing focus adopted by Irish Genealogy Limited based on the sale of a "product" available in each Heritage Centre.

Minister Must Act

With the market for each of the Heritage Centres either drying up or already gone, the expending of any more public money on the Irish Genealogical Project must be strenuously resisted by the Minister in the present economic climate. Therefore, the Society calls on the Minister for Arts, Sports & Tourism, Mr. John O'Donoghue, TD, to act now to save these records by transferring them to Local Authority control and to finally bring the long overdue closure to the Irish Genealogical Project.

MARTELLO TOWER APPEAL

Members and friends of the Society are encouraged to participate in the Martello Tower Project by becoming patrons of the Daonchartlann. Along with the names received in the previous campaign, patrons will have their own names or that of a loved one or ancestor inscribed on a commemorative scroll to be placed in the Tower for donations of €100 (US\$100). The names of each patron will be published in a commemorative booklet to accompany the official opening of the **Daonchartlann** (Ir. Gaelic "peoples' archive") in 2004 two hundred years after the Tower was originally built to repel a possible attack on Ireland by Napoleon. Following the granting of Planning Permission by An Bord Pleanála (Planning Appeals Board) in August the Society and Dún Laoghaire Rathdown

County Council are anxious to commence the work of restoring and refurbishing this Martello Tower for the Society's growing Archive. Donations should be forwarded to the DAONCHARTLANN FUND, c/o Michael Merrigan, Hon. Secretary, Genealogical Society of Ireland, 11, Desmond Avenue, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland. Please include details of the name to be entered on the commemorative scroll and published in the commemorative booklet.

DR. ELIZABETH RYAN, MGSÍ

The sad news of the death of Betty Ryan has just reached the Board. Betty was a longstanding Member of the Society and a very regular attendee at the Society's monthly morning meeting held in The Port View Hotel. Betty was ill for sometime before her death and she was greatly missed at the meetings where she was always ready to advise Members on genealogical sources for Counties Tipperary and Limerick. As a very accomplished academic, Betty's contribution to the general discussions at the morning meetings was always thorough and very informative, even at times, steely critical on matters of public policy regarding access to records. Betty participated in many of the Society's projects notably, the Census Transcription Project, where her attention to detail was exemplary. The Society sends its sincere condolences to Betty's family and friends.

DIARY DATES

Tuesday October 8th 2002

Evening Open Meeting, 20.00hrs
Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education,
Cumberland St., Dún Laoghaire
Bus: 7, 7A, 46A, and 75.

DART Monkstown/Salthill Station.

Speaker: Mr. Séamus Ó Cléirigh
Topic: "Civil Registration in Ireland"

Tuesday November 12th 2002

Venue as above

Speaker: Mr. James McGuire
Topic: "Dictionary of Irish Biographies"

Tuesday December 10th 2002

Venue as above

Speaker: Dr. Susan Hood
Topic: "The Survival of the Office of Arms"

Weds. Oct. 23rd & Nov. 27th 2002

Morning Open Meeting 10.30hrs

The Port View Hotel
Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire
Discussion Group on Family History

CONGRESS PROVES NEED FOR BILL

With the *XXV International Congress of Genealogical & Heraldic Sciences* over for another two years participants are reviewing the many papers presented at Dublin Castle last month. The arguments over the issues raised at the Congress are now aired on Internet newsgroups and, no doubt, in time many will be published giving an opportunity for public debate on Irish heraldic matters. Interestingly as the participants were overwhelmed from overseas the perceptions of some on the issue of Ireland's heraldic authority and practice were somewhat rooted in the past. Little or no appreciation of the independence of Ireland's heraldic authority or indeed, the position of heraldry in a republic was evident in the questions to **Dr. Susan Hood** who lectured on her recent publication "*Royal Roots Republican Inheritance – The Survival of the Office of Arms*". The audience appeared to be uncertain as to the role of the Chief Herald of Ireland and the position of titles of nobility in the Republic. Dr. Hood's attempt at clarifying the situation for one questioner after another would have been greatly assisted by a bold assertion that should the People of Ireland, as the sovereign entity, wish to have heraldry in their Republic then they can do so. In short, it could be explained as simply, we don't need a monarchy to have heraldry and we don't derive the authority to have heraldry from any monarch. Another questioner raised the issue of the Arms of Ireland appearing on Britain's Royal Arms. He asked whether there has been a request from the Government of Ireland to have this removed and replaced with the Arms of Northern Ireland as confirmed by the Ulster King of Arms on August 2nd 1924. Perhaps such a change should have accompanied the passing by Westminster of the *Republic of Ireland Act, 1949* or at the very least, on the accession to the British throne of the present monarch in 1952. Indeed, there is a precedent in that the present British Royal Arms, designed for Queen Victoria, had earlier dropped the Arms of France in 1801 in deference to the French, so why not for the Irish now? To be fair to all involved or interested in Irish heraldic matters, the lack of a clear legislative basis for Irish heraldry has left the issue of the granting of Arms in the Republic and their protection, use or otherwise in a very grey area indeed. The issue of "supporters" and the entitlement to such in a Grant of Arms has also been raised due to certain inconsistencies in the past. Whether people with titles of nobility or those in positions of note should be afforded a grant of "supporters" when ordinary citizens, who have the right to apply for a Grant of Arms, are not normally given such embellishments. Indeed, it's hard to equate this practice with our constitutional position as a Republic that recognises no titles of nobility and declares the

equality of citizenship. Maybe it is opportune to reiterate the details of this Society's long standing campaign for an Irish Genealogy & Heraldry Bill to provide a clear and unambiguous legislative basis for heraldry in the Republic.

The main points for inclusion in such a Bill are as follows:-

- Clear definition of genealogy and genealogical records / material / heritage
- Clear definition of heraldry and the nature of armorial bearings
- Designation of place of deposit for genealogical and heraldic records
- Establishment of the Office of Chief Genealogical Officer, based at the National Library of Ireland, to oversee the formulation, planning and execution of policy in respect of genealogy and associated records, especially, the public accessibility to such
- Establishment of a supervisory / advisory role for the Chief Genealogical Officer in respect of government departments, local government or State agencies holding such records
- Establishment of a National Inventory of Genealogical Records held by the State or by private institutions and the publication of such
- Establishment of a mechanism to underpin best practice in the storage and public accessibility to genealogical records in liaison with the Heritage Council
- Establishment of the "Principle of Public Ownership & Right of Access" to our genealogical heritage for persons in Ireland and the Irish Diaspora
- Recognition of the importance of records of Baptisms, Marriages and Burials held and maintained by ecclesiastic institutions in Ireland as part of the Nation's genealogical heritage
- Establishment of a Standing Advisory Committee on Genealogy to assist and advise the Chief Genealogical Officer with members from the commercial and voluntary genealogical organisations in the State
- Establishment of a State acquisitions policy in respect of genealogical records in private hands whether at risk or not
- Prevention of the export of original material whether in State or private ownership
- Application of functions to the Office of the Chief Genealogical Officer in respect to the provision of educational and promotional material / programmes for genealogy
- Legislative establishment of the prerogative rights of the Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland
- Legislative protection for armorial bearings in the Republic

- Legislative regulation in the application for and granting of Arms and Letters Patent
- Legislative framework for fees charged by the Chief Herald of Ireland
- Protection of copyright in respect of armorial bearings
- Legislative regulation and requirements in respect of heraldic records
- Protection of rights to inheritance in respect of armorial bearings in the Republic
- Definition of types of grantee, i.e. corporation, individual, local authority etc
- Assure access to Arms for a greater number of our citizens by providing for the introduction of a "Certificate of a Grant of Arms" describing the details of the Arms granted, this would be a less expensive alternative to the existing Letters Patent presented on beautifully hand painted vellum.
- Rights of grantees to the free use of armorial bearings and protection of such
- Protection and defined use of the Arms of Ireland
- Establishment of a Standing Advisory Committee on Heraldry and Vexillology to assist and advise the Chief Herald of Ireland on such matters
- Legislative establishment of Office of the Chief Herald as the vexillological authority for Ireland
- Clear definition of vexillology and vexillological records / material
- Establishment of a "Vexillological Register" for Ireland and a mechanism for the granting of Letters Patent in respect of flags and emblems by the Chief Herald for State, local authority or corporate bodies
- Legislative protection for flags and emblems in the Republic, especially, the National Flag and the Presidential Standard
- Legislative regulation on the maintenance by the Chief Herald of a register of Irish Hereditary Chieftains as "national treasures" and as an embodiment of our ancient genealogical heritage, including, the requirement for the strict scrutiny by independent genealogical researchers of all applications for courtesy recognition of "hereditary chieftains"
- Provision for the awarding by Government of a Special Grant of Arms to individuals in recognition for services to the State, community, business, arts, sports or education, including Letters Patent outlining the reasons for the award

REMINDER
MEMBERSHIP SUBS OF €15.00
FOR IRISH BASED MEMBERS
FALL DUE IN DECEMBER

QUERIES RECEIVED

ALAN WYNNE JONES, 21, The Nook, Hoylandswaine, Nr. Sheffield, South Yorkshire, S36 7JY, England. Wrote: Could any member assist with any information on Thomas Jones listed on the Roll of Honour as being at the General Post Office, O'Connell Street in 1916. He is not listed as being interned at Frongoch. I don't know what sources to try. Any information most appreciated.

MARY L. CASEY, 863 Eastover Drive, Bloomfield Hills, MI 48304. E-Mail: MCCasey863@aol.com Wrote: Seeking details on **Gilmartin / Kilmartin**, Dominick, born about 1829, possibly County Mayo, emigrated to Hartlepool, County Durham, England, 1850, married Ann Judge, also born Ireland, in St. Mary's R. C. Church in Hartlepool, 1853. He was a Puddler. Many Irish settled there. Anyone with ancestors who also went to Hartlepool? In 1863, Dominick and family immigrated to Scranton, PA. Need to know where in Ireland they originated. Vital & church records in England and US don't reveal that. Any info. please would be appreciated.

ANGIE TUNKIN, 7 Doggetts Close, Rochford, Essex SS4 1ED, England. E-mail: angela@tunkin.freereserve.co.uk Wrote:- I am looking for a **Ashley Rankilor** he was born in 1870 and was a "Clerk in Holy Orders" I think he may have been Roman Catholic but I am not sure. I know he spent some time in Ireland and he is not on the 1901 Census for England. However his son Basil was born in Oct 1901. Any information would be useful.

MAJOR STEPHEN PRESTON, Embassy of the United States, US Defense Attache Office, 27 Regentlaan 1000 - Bruxelles, Belgium. Wrote:- I am searching for information about a **John Preston**, born about 1743/1745 (we don't know the exact year). According to our family legend he is supposed to have been born in County Meath. He came to Virginia, unknown date, with either seven brothers or several brothers. At this time we know that kids of 14 and fifteen were making their own way to the new world so we don't know how old he would have been when he got here. He may have been older and married. We do know that the one child we know of his son Gilson was born about 1765 in Virginia, but we don't know for sure where. We don't think he was well educated, because he only made his mark when he signed a deed selling his land with his son Gilson in Pulaski Co in 1804. We also don't know if he bought this land originally or if it was a land grant. Don't get our John confused with the other John Preston who was in Virginia about the same time in Botecourt County. He married Elizabeth Patton, sister to John Patton. According to another family legend Gilson, John's son, always said he couldn't speak English very well. We have wondered if this is evidence that he was born in Ireland as well and spoke Gaelic. We do not think that he is the John Preston, who was born

in 1726 in County Derry, Ireland and came to America on the ship *George*. He died 1 Sep 1796 after settling in Washington Co. VA. His father was Jenico Preston (born in 1707). The only other Preston, born in Ireland, that we are aware of is the son of Jenico Preston, 10th Viscount Gormanston, b.1707 d.10-31-1757 who married on 2-9-1729 Thomasine **Barnewall** b.xxxx d.1-10-1788, eldest daughter of 11th Baron Trimlestown. This John Preston was born in 1742.

DAPHNE BIRKBY (nee Colston) 23, Bolle Road, Alton GU34 1PW, England 01420 83806. E-mail: daphnebirkby@aol.com Wrote:- My father Charles Colston was 12 when the *Lusitania* was sunk. He was one of four brothers. Their mother, my grandma, Harriet Mathilda **Colston (nee Matthews)** was widowed in 1913. Grandma's brother a Mr Matthews (no initials) was coming to England from Canada, where he had emigrated, to pick up two of his nephews, Charles (my father) and Harry, the eldest son, and take them back to Canada, presumably for a new life and to relieve Grandma. However, the *Lusitania* was sunk but Great Uncle Matthews was one of the lucky survivors rescued and taken to Ireland (Cobh ?) for nursing or recuperation. The story goes that Great Uncle fell in love with the young Irish girl who nursed him and he married her and took her back to Canada, minus the two boys! Any other information would be most welcome.

MELINDA BLACK, 501 Eland Village, PMB #312, Phoenixville, PA 19460, USA E-mail: emilysnanna@comcast.net Wrote:- Seeking info. on my great-great-grandfather his name was Laughlin **Clarke** and he was born sometime between 1800-1825 somewhere in County Louth. August 2001, the County Louth librarian was kind enough to do a county wide search and she only found one match for a **Thomas Clerk** and his wife was a **Rose Reilly**. They had 5 sons. Their middle son was baptised around the beginning of April 1815. They came from the Darver Civil Parish. So can you all direct me to somebody that help me sort out which Townland in Darver Civil Parish this Clerk family lived in back in 1815?

OCTOBER GENIE UPDATES

GSI QUARTERLY JOURNAL

The Autumn issue of the Society's Quarterly Journal is now available. This issue has 68 pages with various articles are as follows: A Missionary of Sterling Worth by James O. Coyle; Canadian Subscriptions to the Building of Armagh RC Cathedral, 1857 by Brendan Hall; The Emigrant Children of the Rev. John Elmes by Margaret Elmes; 'Irish Winners of the Victoria Cross' by James Scannell; The Kynoch Explosives Works, Arklow 1894-1919 by Pat Power; Violent Crime in Ireland 1838-42; People of the Irish Diaspora: Michael J. Dolan (1853-1927) by Mary L. Casey; In praise of the Irish Militia; Names and More Names by G.H. O'Reilly; From the Word,

Spoken and Written by Gerard Hayden; The Summer Assizes, Drogheda, 1856; Occupants of Kill of the Grange, Co. Dublin 1846-95 by Sean MacBrádaigh; The Irish Jewish Genealogical Society by Stuart Rosenblatt P.C.; 'Dun-Garbry Castle, County of Leitrim' by M. O'Reilly; Memorial from Inhabitants of Swords, 1846 by Bernadette Marks; Widows' Asylum, Clarendon Street, Dublin, 1852; Names from a Medieval Inquisition at Clondalkin and Rathcoole by Eamonn Dowling; Affair of Honour. The Journal is available via the Society's Website and from the Genealogy Bookshop, 3, Nassau Street, Dublin 2. Price: €5.00 or €4.50 (Members)

IFHS AUTUMN PROGRAMME

Details of the Autumn programme of the Irish Family History Society have been supplied for publication by **Mr. John Heuston, MGSI**, as follows. October 19th: Saturday Afternoon Meeting at 2.00pm-5.00pm in St Bridgid's Resource Centre, Stillorgan, Dublin. 2.15pm "Mr. John Brett Charleton from Fortland, Easky, Co. Sligo to a Fortune in Australia". Mr John Heuston, Hon. Chairman IFHS. 3.00pm "Use of Newspapers in Irish Genealogy" Mr Denis Ahern, T.I.A.R.A. Boston, USA. Cost €5. November 16th: Saturday All Day Seminar at 10.00am-5.00pm in St Bridgid's Resource Centre, Stillorgan, Co. Dublin. 10.00am Coffee. 10.30am "The Life & Times of our Anglo-Norman Ancestors". Canon Dr Adrian Empey, Mediaeval Historian. 11.30am "Census Substitutes pre 1840". Ms Aileen Ireland, National Archives of Ireland. 12.30pm-2.00pm LUNCH. 2.15pm "The Lawlor Family of the Lyons Estate". Ms Ann Fitzsimons. 3.45pm "Creating a Genogram". Ms Maura Wall-Murphy. Cost €15 (Lunch not included). The Society wishes our friends in the IFHS every success with their Autumn Programme and encourages our Members to attend these seminars as non-members of the IFHS are most welcome. For further details please contact John Heuston on E-mail: heuston@iol.ie

DLGS JOURNALS

The Society has published journals for ten years now and through the pages of the Journal much valuable information and research is now available to a wider readership throughout the world. Stocks of the back issues of the Journal of *Dún Laoghaire Genealogical Society* are now on special offer to clear in order to free-up storage space for other publications. Originally sold for Ir£3.50 (€4.44) each - the Society's Despatch Officer, **Barry O'Connor, FGSI**, has now placed the entire stock of DLGS Journals for just €10.00 for each batch of five journals. Postage rates, unfortunately, cannot be reduced and remain as €2.00 for Ireland & Great Britain; €4.00 (surface) & €8.00 (airmail) for the rest of the world. Contact Barry O'Connor on E-mail: btoc@esatclear.ie or by phone on (01) 285 4386. This is an ideal opportunity for libraries and societies to obtain a selection of the issues of the DLGS Journal published from 1992 to 1999.