

- E-Government & the future archives
- The Great Book of Irish Genealogies
- News & Views from the World of Genealogy

ISSN 1393-3183

Editor E-mail: GenSocIreland@iol.ie Tel: +353.1.284 2711

The Gene Gazette

The Newsletter of
the Genealogical
Society of Ireland
Volume 7 • Issue 12
December 2002



E-GOVERNMENT TO DELIVER AN ARCHIVAL DESERT

Future researchers may have little or no paper records to study

The much heralded e-Government is now steadily taking hold throughout departments, state agencies and local authorities in Ireland. Many aspects of the new computerised systems are very beneficial to the general public offering instant access to information on line and permitting the filing of tax returns and making applications for various services much easier. This side of the e-Government revolution is widely applauded and justifiably so, however, has the widespread computerisation of government services the potential to deliver a future archival desert?

Poorer Quality Records

Already many researchers are concerned at the negative effect the Freedom of Information Act is having on the quality of records being generated by government departments at national and local level. Civil and public servants fearful of this greater public accessibility to files in their possession are reportedly creating fewer records or, in some cases, poorer quality records. Persons opting to view their files held by government bodies are shocked to find that little information other than say their original application form and copies of their own letters appear in the file.

Freedom of Information Act

There is no denying that the Freedom of Information Act has been very beneficial to both individuals and the wider community by facilitating access to what is sometimes sensitive information.

Journalists in Ireland have shown the positive side of the FOI Act by bringing public interest matters to the fore by using the Act to access files. Sometimes exposing government or state bodies to the ire of the public when the full story is told through information obtained by investigative journalists in Ireland. However, what does the future hold for investigative journalism in Ireland if more



NOLLAIG SHONA AGUS
ÁTHBHLIAIN FÉ MHAISE

and more files are being created and held solely in an electronic format?

Technological Advances

The proponents of this universal computerisation of records say that adequate safeguards are in place to ensure that records are held securely for the required timeframe and that lawful accessibility is accordingly assured. But what does this mean when technology marches on relentlessly providing faster, smaller, more efficient and very portable systems for the creation and storage of information? How many of us where caught with information held on old

floppies that we forgot to transfer on to our new 3.5 floppy discs or CDs before we got rid of our old PC? It is very doubtful that government files held in one format are systematically transferred to the more modern format after each new piece of hardware is obtained.

Vinyl v. DVD

These problems associated with the advance of technology are well appreciated by music lovers the world over where their collections of Elvis, Deep Purple or whatever, lovingly gathered over many years, are locked away on vinyl overtaken firstly by cassettes, then by CDs and now by DVD – what next? Each household would have to keep a virtual museum of home entertainment devices in order to cater for each format should the upgrading of technology continue a pace.

Systematic Transfer of Data

Nobody could seriously expect each government department, agency or public body to keep a section or “museum” of computer equipment, all in perfect working order, to facilitate access to records held in different formats. So how is public access to records held on various electronic formats to be guaranteed in the future? The systematic transfer of data to an upgraded format is both costly and time consuming and, more worryingly, it could facilitate the filtering or “cleansing” of the original records for whatever purpose. This situation has the potential of rendering the Freedom of Information Act worthless except for paper records created before computerisation.

An Archival Desert

Future students of history or politics and of Irish life generally will be faced with an impossible task because important information will be held in files locked away on ancient computerised storage systems. Indeed, along the road these files could be officially and mindlessly destroyed because of their inaccessibility through current technology. Unless this aspect of the e-government revolution is tackled now the creation of an archival desert will be the devastating legacy of computerisation and the obsolescence generated by the relentless march of technology. Can we afford to lose this archival heritage?

GREAT BOOK OF IRISH GENEALOGIES

One of the most important genealogical publications ever to come out of Ireland is due for publication next year. This publication is eagerly awaited by all with an interest in Irish genealogy and history as it brings to the public for the first time the life's work of the last traditionally trained Gaelic genealogist and scholar Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh (c 1600-1671) from Lacken in Co. Sligo. Mac Fhirbhisigh's "Leabhar Genealach" or "Book of Genealogies" is edited and translated by Nollaig Ó Muraíle and will be published in five volumes by De Búrca Rare Books in Dublin. This magnum opus was compiled in Galway at the time of the Cromwellian Wars in Ireland when much of the country was in complete turmoil as the last devastating blow to Gaelic and Catholic Ireland was wrought by Oliver Cromwell in both war and transplantation. This work has long been recognised as the most important source for the study of Irish genealogy up to the seventeenth century and therefore, it will be much sought after by genealogist and historian alike. No genealogical or Irish Studies library worth its salt would be without these volumes on its shelves as the ancestry of many important Irish families and figures is provided including, Brian Boru (d. 1014), Ulick Burke (d. 1657), James Butler (d. 1688), Sorley Boy MacDonnell (d. 1589), Randal MacDonnell (d. 1683), Garret Óg Fitzgerald (d. 1536), Dermot MacMurrough (d. 1171), Myler Magrath (d. 1622), Murrough O'Brien (d. 1674), Feagh MacHugh O'Byrne (d. 1597), Rory O'Connor (d. 1198), Red Hugh O'Donnell (d. 1602), Hugh O'Neill (d. 1616) and

Owen Roe O'Neill who died in 1649 leaving Ireland to the mercy of Cromwell, and many many more genealogies of families and personages are detailed in these five volumes. The entire text of Mac Fhirbhisigh's work amounts to 320,000 words and it is written in Middle and Early Modern Irish with some pages in Latin – all translated in to English by Ó Muraíle who is Reader in Celtic Studies at Queen's University, Belfast. This publication is the culmination of thirty years work by Ó Muraíle on the genealogies compiled by Mac Fhirbhisigh and in that alone, it represents a very significant contribution to our genealogical heritage worthy of national and international acclaim. In 1996 as a precursor to this magnum opus he published "*The Celebrated Antiquary: Dubhaltach Mac Fhirbhisigh (c. 1600-1671), His Lineage, Life and Learning*" (available now in paperback edition published by An Sagart, Maynooth, Co. Kildare, 2002, ISBN 1-903896-05-3 – price €20.00). This publication opened the door on this fascinating figure, Mac Fhirbhisigh, for the first time for many Irish genealogists. De Búrca is offering the "*Great Book of Irish Genealogies*" at a pre-publication price of €475.00 which will rise to €635.00 when it is published in June 2003. Orders may be placed with Éamonn de Búrca, De Búrca Rare Books, "Cloonagashel", 27, Priory Drive, Blackrock, Co. Dublin, Ireland. Tel: +353.1.288 2159 or E-mail: deburca@indigo.ie Website: www.deburcararebooks.com

MARTELLO TOWER APPEAL

With work on the restoration of the Martello Tower at Seapoint due to commence early in the New Year after a protracted and exhaustive planning appeals process, 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. 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. **Mr. Liam Mac Alasdair**, FGSI, Project Chairperson, (E-mail: lmac@dna.ie) wishes to thank all those members and friends of the Society who have already generously donated to the fund, without such help, the project would be impossible for the Society to undertake.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Irish based Members are reminded that their Membership Subscription falls due **THIS MONTH** for 2003. The membership year for Irish based Members runs from January to December in each year, whilst, Overseas Members have their Membership Subscriptions falling due each year on the anniversary of their joining date. Queries regarding membership any renewals should be addressed to the Membership Officer, Annette McDonnell, MGSI, 4, Kippure Avenue, Green Park, Dublin 12, Ireland. E-mail: mcdonnellannette@hotmail.com The Membership Subscription is €15.00 which should be forwarded to Annette or if you wish, you may renew your Membership Subscription on-line at www.gensocireland.org using your Credit Card - MasterCard or VISA.

DIARY DATES

Tuesday December 10th 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: Dr. Susan Hood
Topic: "*The Survival of the Office of Arms*"

Tuesday January 14th 2003
Venue as above
Members' Night – Research Q&A

Weds. Jan. 22nd & Feb. 26th 2003
Morning Open Meeting 10.30hrs
The Port View Hotel
Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire
Discussion Group on Family History

*Contribution of €3.00 at each meeting
Coffee/Tea served at Morning Meetings*

YOUR DECEMBER GENIE UPDATES

MICHAEL COLLINS In the current issue of the Society's Quarterly Journal an article written by Sighle L'Estrange of Dún Laoghaire and formerly, South Africa, has been opened up a new chapter for further research on the fascinating life of General Michael Collins, TD. "*Michael Collins International Fund Raiser*" provides previously unpublished information on the fund raising endeavours of the first Dáil Éireann (Irish Parliament) during the Irish War of Independence 1919-21. Letters between Sighle's Dublin born father in South Africa and General Collins in Dublin detail the extent of the collection of funds for the war effort in the mining rich town of Kimberly in South Africa. Copies of the Journal are available via the Website or the address below price €5.00 plus p+p.

VOLUNTEERS SOUGHT Barry O'Connor, FGSI, the co-ordinator of the cemetery projects is urgently seeking volunteers to input the data collected in Carrickbrennan Cemetery on to computer discs for publication. Contact Barry O'Connor on E-mail: btoc@esatclear.ie or by phone on (01) 285 4386.

ONE-NAME STUDIES The Guild of One-Name Studies will hold its Annual General Meeting and conference in Liverpool, England, between the 25th and 27th April 2003. The theme of the conference will be Civil Registration in the United Kingdom and Ireland. Liverpool University is the fine venue chosen for this important conference as civil registration is a central resource for genealogists around the world. Proposed new developments in the legislation governing civil registration on both sides of the Irish Sea could leave the One-Namers out in the cold as access to information will be restricted. Irish One-Namers should avail of the opportunity afforded by the proximity of Liverpool to attend this conference. Fuller details available on the Guild's Website: www.one-name.org or by writing to the Guild of One Name Studies, Box G, 14, Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Road, London, EC1M 7BA, England.

ARCHIVE CLOSED The Archive closed on Saturday November 16th 2002 until the New Year to allow for stock taking and for alterations as space has become a serious problem. This problem cannot be resolved in short-term and must

await the opening of the Archive at the Martello Tower at Seapoint, Co. Dublin. The Archivist, Frieda Carroll, FGSI, apologises for any inconvenience caused by the earlier Christmas closure this year, however, unfortunately this could not have been avoided due to the lack of space. The Archive will re-open on Saturday 26th January 2003 for fully paid-up Members only.

CONVICT LINKS Barbara Hall of 8/35, Byron Street, Coogee, New South Wales, 2034, Australia E-mail: beehall@hotlinks.net.au has just published an account of the Irish sent as convicts to Botany Bay in 1793. "*A Nimble Fingered Tribe - The Convicts of the Sugar Cane, Ireland to Botany Bay, 1793*" ISBN 0 95814990 9 tells the story of the third ship to depart Ireland for the penal colony at Botany Bay, Australia, arriving there in September 1793 with 164 prisoners on board. Barbara Hall details the lives of these people described as "mainly urban criminals and sturdy beggars" from their convictions in Ireland to their last days in Sydney, Australia. At a price of AUD60.00 for overseas deliveries, this publication is a valuable contribution to the history of the Irish Diaspora. Further info. on the Website: <http://members.optusnet.com.au/~ehook>

JGSI Vol. 3 No. 4 The Winter 2002 issue of the Society's quarterly Journal is now available price €5.00 (Members €4.50). Articles in this issue: **Who Was Daniel Byrne?** by Róisín Lafferty; **Letters to Roseanne Reynolds, 1901-9** by Richard Lewis; **Some County Assizes, 1799** by Brendan Hall; **An Eviction in Co. Louth in 1884 and...** by Gerry McDonnell; **Names, Trades and Occupations List for Arklow 1870-9** by Pat Power; **The Proposed Cork to Passage Railway 1837** by Brendan Hall; **The Royal Hibernian Military School** by G.H. O'Reilly; **Callery Research - A Work in Progress!** By Patrick P. Callery; **The Gaelic Genealogies of the Irish** by Seán MacBrádaigh; **Noda, the Scribally Contracted Forms Used in Irish Manuscripts** by Seán MacBrádaigh; **Golden-Ball** by M. O'Reilly; **Sligo Co. Council & Chief Officials 1922**; **Patrick Joseph Collins (1908-1992)** by Annette McDonnell; **The Leitrim-Roscommon Genealogy Web Site** by Ed Finn; **Michael Collins International Fund Raiser** by Sighle L'Estrange; **Arriving in Galway 1794**; **GSI Journal: Index of Articles by Author, Volume 3.**

Members are encouraged to avail of the Journal to publish their family histories or biographies and thereby, creating a permanent record for generations to come. Articles are always most welcome and presently items for the Spring 2003 issue of the Journal are eagerly sought. Contact: Brendan Hall, MGSI, E-mail: jbhall@indigo.ie

"WOMEN OF FAITH" The "Nuns Register" project welcomes information on the Irish women who entered Religious Orders during the 19th and 20th centuries in Ireland and overseas. The type of information sought is:- Name, DOB, Place of Birth, Parents Names, Order, Religious Name, Date of Entry, Date & Place of Death/Burial. A brief biographical piece would be of great assistance to the project. This project is proving to be a great genealogical source with many details on the families being provided. If you wish to have some information included in the register please contact Clare Malone, MGSI, 90, Parnell Road, Dublin 12, Ireland.

SHERIDAN STREET Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council, one of the four local authorities in the Dublin region, has formally agreed to rename Sussex Street in honour of the Very Rev. Bartholomew Canon Sheridan, PP of St. Michael's, Kingstown (now Dún Laoghaire). The Office of the Cathaoirleach (Chairperson) of the County Council is currently drawing up plans for the erection of the new street signs and the formal unveiling of these signs in the early New Year. No other memorial exists to the man who was the father of Catholic education in south county Dublin. Any look at the history of the institutions in the area - the Dominican Convent, St. Michael's Hospital, St. Joseph's Orphanage - his name keeps cropping up. Bartholomew Sheridan was born in County Cavan in 1787 and entered the National Seminary of St. Patrick at Maynooth, Co. Kildare in 1809. He was ordained in 1814 and was appointed curate to Fr. Doyle in Kingstown in 1822. On the death of Fr. Doyle he became the first parish priest of the newly created Kingstown parish - a mini-diocese that stretched from Kingstown to Little Bray. He built St. Michael's Church in Dún Laoghaire, the Church of the Assumption, Dalkey, St. Alphonsus & St. Columbas, Ballybrack, St. Brigid's, Cabinteely, and St. Peter's, Little Bray. He had a keen interest in education and brought in

various teaching orders. He died on May 12th 1862 and is buried in St. Michael's Church, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. This proposal was supported by the Society and members of the Clan Sheridan Association in Ireland.

ARCHIVE FUND Archivist, Mrs. Frieda Carroll, FGSI, is always mindful of the need to obtain various publications for the Archive as and when they become available. Therefore, in order to be in a position to purchase CDs, microform publications or books a fund was established. The fund receives donations from members and friends of the Society who value the importance of maintaining the Society's Archive and providing for additions to its collections. Frieda also welcomes donations of books, CDs or microfilm / microfiche records for the Archive. Donations may be forwarded directly to the Archivist at 14, Rochestown Park, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland or to the Hon. Secretary at the address below.

BACK ISSUES 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

QUERIES RECEIVED

SHIRLEY M. IRELAND, 43, Princess Road, Eastbourne, Sussex, BN23 6HS, England. E-mail: shirleycobie@supanet.com Wrote: Looking for information on Michael Patrick Coffey, born in the Parish of St. Finbarr's, Cork City. He was in the Militia in 1859 and in the same year joined the India Royal Artillery, eventually arriving in Madras, South India, some months

later. Seeking information on his birth, parents and siblings. Is there a register for the militia? Any information much appreciated.

MICHAEL CLARK, 6, Blacksmith's Field, Crowhurst, East Sussex, TN 33 9AX, England. E-mail: magmike@tiscali.co.uk Wrote: Seeking information on my great-great-uncle Peter O'Brien (1842-1914). He was a barrister in Co. Clare and became Lord Chief Justice in 1888. He eventually became Lord O'Brien of Kilfanora. Any information please on Peter and/or his descendants or lineage much appreciated.

CYNTHIA MOORE LEBRE, 5358, West State Road, Madison, Indiana, 47250, USA. E-mail: cglebre@juno.com Wrote: Seeking information on Sylvester Keough, born poss. Co. Wexford in 1775, a fisherman who emigrated to Newfoundland, Canada. He emigrated from Dublin to Newfoundland and received a grant of land there in 1841. A family photograph mentions St. Stephen's on the Green, Dublin. Any hints please. Also, seeking connections with any of the following. Thomas Gleeson/Gleason (1795-) and Margaret Spain. Gleeson/Gleason family from Cullenwaine, Co. Offaly went to USA. James Mackey (1775-) and Mary Maher of Loughmore Parish, Co. Tipperary – children also born in Clonmore Parish in the Diocese of Cashel & Emlly. Their son Denis was from Kylemore, Ireland. Michael Kennedy & Mary Burke & daughters – Bridget (1811-), Mary and Margaret all born in Drom Parish, Co. Tipperary. Bridget Kennedy married Dennis Mackey who was a native of Templemore, Co. Tipperary. Mary Donohue, daughter of Frank Donahue, who married Martin Welch in Tipperary. Also, seeking information on James Hamilton, tobacco grower, married Margaret Harrison of Brandon (Bandon ??), both were born mid 1700s and lived in Natchez Territory (Mississippi). Any info. please.

EUGENE MOONEY, 208, South Limestone Street, Lexington, Kentucky 40508, USA. E-mail: eugenemooney@mooney3.com Wrote: Seeking information on Jacob Mooney who came to America in 1750 aboard the ship "Phoenix" out of Rotterdam and Cowes. He is thought to have come from an area called "South Shore" somewhere near present day Dún Laoghaire, Co.

Dublin, Ireland. Any guidance on this issue much appreciated.

J. P. CRATE (MRS.), 63, Littlepark Avenue, Bedhampton, Havant, Hampshire, PO9 3QU, England. Wrote: Seeking information on my great great grandfather Thomas Connolly who married Blanche Augusta Shacklock in 1871 at West Hackney, Middlesex, England, his father's name was given as Thomas (deceased) and his occupation was "labourer". I think Thomas was born in Ireland in 1837, his wife "Hanna" was born in Ireland in 1832. Any information on this family most appreciated.

MARY CONNAUGHTON, (née Talbot), 83, Conor Clune Road, Navan Road, Dublin 7, Ireland. Wrote: Seeking information on my aunt Mary Talbot who was born at Gornahoe, Co. Tipperary in 1887. She had one sister Margaret and a brother James. She went to America in 1913. Her father was James Talbot and her mother was Mary Bartley. In 1997 I heard that she was alive and living in Boston, MA, USA, however, I had no success in making contact. Any help much appreciated.

JIM PITTS, 6462, Woodstock Road, Fort Worth, Texas, 76116, USA. E-mail: jpitts@swbell.net Wrote: I need passenger ship fares for steerage class, second class and first class from Queenstown (Cobh), Co. Cork to New York City in the years 1900, 1916 and 1919 for a book that I am writing regarding Irish emigration. I would be very grateful if anyone can point me to a reliable source.

JOINING THE GSI

Wishing to join the Genealogical Society of Ireland? Just log on to the Website or write to **Annette McDonnell** MGSI, Membership Officer, Genealogical Society of Ireland, 4, Kippure Avenue, Green Park, Dublin 12, Ireland enclosing the Membership Subscription of €15.00 or US\$15.00. Membership is open to all with an interest in genealogy or heraldry. A laminated Membership Card featuring the Society's heraldic badge "*the Mungovan Badge*" will be forwarded to you in due course. *Welcome to the Genealogical Society of Ireland.*

MEMBERSHIP SUBS FOR ALL IRISH BASED MEMBERS ARE NOW DUE.

*Have you paid your subscription
of €15.00 yet?*