

Cumann Genealais na hÉireann

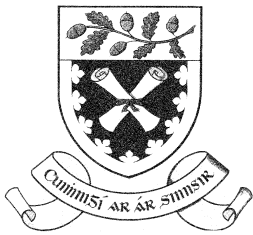
Ireland's Genealogical Gazette

(incorporating "The Genie Gazette")

Vol. 4. No. 3.

www.familyhistory.ie

March : Márta 2009



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

*A Very Happy
 St. Patrick's
 Day to All
 Our Readers*



CONTENTS

Annual Report of the Board of Directors	2
No Records Damaged in Fire	2
New Publications on CD	2
James Scannell Reports...	3
Précis of the February Lecture	3
Diary Dates & Society's Website	4
Glasnevin Cemetery Records	4

Merger—Another Costly Fiasco? No Comprehensive Plan—No Public Consultation

Concern is mounting over the Government's proposal to merge the National Archives, National Library and the Irish Manuscripts Commission as the Minister responsible has not published any rationale for this proposal. In Dáil Éireann on February 24, 2009 Deputy Caoimhghín Ó Caoláin (Sinn Féin) informed the Taoiseach (*Prime Minister*) that concern has been expressed at the merger and he asked whether this merger would result in shared boards and directorships and a unified management structure and whether an assessment had been done on what savings, if any, would arise as a result of the merger. The Taoiseach in his reply did not address the specific questions raised by the deputy. The matter was raised again on March 3, 2009 by Deputy Joe McHugh (Fine Gael) when he asked the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, Mr. Martin Cullen, TD, whether he intends to continue with the merger. In a written reply, the Minister said that the amalgamation is proceeding and that 'an implementation group comprising officials of my Department and the Directors and Chair of the three bodies involved has been formed and has met to

plan the way forward." Whilst, it could be argued that in the current recessionary times that proceeding with this merger is a foolhardy waste of scarce resources, plans to up-date the legislation should continue in conjunction with a meaningful public consultation process. The prospect of a new legislative framework for the management, custody and provision of public access to our nation's archival and literary collections is welcomed, however, not as a part of any short-term fiscal adjustment. The new Bill should include the measures provided for by the *National Cultural Institutions (Amendment) Bill, 2008* introduced by Senator Alex White (Labour) to clear-up the legal doubts surrounding the State's heraldic services. Furthermore, if Minister was to signal his intention to agree to this Society's call for the new legislation to include two Advisory Committees he would be recognizing the special interest that the users of the current services and academics have in these institutions. Whilst, the structure of an 'Academic Advisory Committee' would be a matter for the Irish universities and institutes of technology, the structure of a 'Users' Advisory

Committee' requires careful consideration to ensure adequate and equitable representation. In this respect, professional and heritage bodies with a substantial number of their members frequently using the services of the current institutions could be invited to register an interest in participating in the election of a 'Users' Advisory Committee'. However, in order to ensure that an adequate level of popular representation is achieved, certain criteria on what constitutes a 'body' must be established, for example, a minimum membership of not less than fifty persons and have been in existence for not less than five years with such membership numbers. These measures, if accepted by the Minister, would help democratize the governance of the merged institution by also permitting each of the proposed 'Advisory Committees' to nominate two persons to the board and thereby, substantially depoliticizing the appointments to this statutory body. However, unless the Minister acts quickly to address serious concerns raised about this merger, he risks damaging staff morale and fuelling public disquiet over what may be viewed as another costly fiasco.

Reduction in 30-Year Rule?

In Dáil Éireann on February 24, 2009 the Leader of the Opposition, Deputy Enda Kenny (Fine Gael) informed the Taoiseach that Mr. Jack Straw, the British Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice, 'recently accepted the case for a substantial cut, from 30 years to 15 years, in the release time for archival government papers. Similar adjustments have been made in other countries such

as South Africa, the Netherlands and France. In Ireland, the time limit remains at 30 years' and he said that a 'UK report into the time limit stated the UK's freedom of information legislation effectively scuppered the 30-year rule' and that 'the [Irish] Freedom of Information Act, 2003 ensures Cabinet minutes must be released no later than ten years after their adoption'. In reply, An Taoiseach,

Mr. Brian Cowan, TD, told the House that 'a case would have to be made as to why the limit should be reduced' and he outlined the purpose of the *National Archives Act, 1986*. Surely, Minister Cullen's proposed new legislation on the merger of the institutions could facilitate a reduction in the 30-year rule as part of a general reappraisal of the role and functions of these institutions?

Annual Report of the Board of Directors

(March 2008—March 2009)

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 5, 2009. As usual the Annual Report covers the period from AGM to AGM, however, the Annual Financial Report is for the period ending December 31, 2008. 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 twelve Evening Open Meetings, the latter with guest speakers arranged by the Cathaoirleach. 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 and rectifying the legal problem surrounding the Grants of Arms issued between 1943 and May 2005. To assist with the latter issue Senator Alex White published the *National Cultural Institutions (Amendment) Bill, 2008* in December and Senator Lábhras Ó Murchú is progressing with a short Bill on the 1926 census. The Society's publication programme for the year was largely confined to the newsletter as, once again, difficulties in obtaining suitable articles for publication in the Soci-

ety's Annual Journal persisted throughout the year despite many attempts to remedy this unsatisfactory situation. However, the Society embarked on a new electronic publication programme with two CDs issued during the year. A major problem facing the Board during the year was the unstable atmospheric conditions in the Martello Tower at Seapoint and its possible impact on the Society's archival collections stored in the building. After many disappointments and with the help of the Office of Public Works a temporary new home for the archive was secured at Lower George's Street, Dún Laoghaire and the collections were removed from the Martello Tower in September. The collections, which continue to grow, are now being sorted and catalogued to facilitate research by members and others. Discussions on the future of the Martello Tower at Seapoint are on-going with the County Council and are due to be completed by the incoming Board. In addition to the above the outgoing Board members dealt with matters relating to the Society's membership of the Holyhead-Dún Laoghaire Link; 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 Society produced a number of discussion documents during the year including a Placenames Policy for consideration by the County

Council and a new constitution for the Holyhead-Dún Laoghaire Link. The nomenclature employed for each of the officeholders was modernised in April 2008 to reflect the incorporated status of the Society. The Cathaoirleach occasionally represented the Society at functions. Two members of the Board resigned during the year, Hilary Byrne and Iris O'Connor and two were co-opted, Sharon Bofin and Bartosz Kozlowski.

Michael Merrigan FGSI, General Secretary

In order to reduce the printing costs associated with the Annual General Meeting, the Agenda is produced below.

1. Minutes of the 2008 AGM
2. Matters Arising
3. Directors' Annual Report
4. Annual Financial Report
5. Election of the Board 2009/2010
6. Installation of in-coming Cathaoirleach
7. Guest Speaker—John Grenham
8. Close of Meeting

No Records Damaged in Fire

As reported last month, on Thursday February 5, 2009, fire broke out at the College of Arms in London. According to a BBC News on-line report, thirty-five people were evacuated from the building which houses the heraldic records and pedigrees of English, Welsh, Northern Irish and Commonwealth families. Following the publication of the report in this newsletter the Society received a comprehensive report on the fire from a well placed source in London. The report outlined an impressive list of measures that were already in place at the College of Arms to prevent damage to any of its valuable manuscript collections and which were ultimately successful in that no damage to the collections occurred. Staff fire-drill coupled with the prompt response from the London Fire Brigade ensured that there no injuries and that

that the fire was contained relatively quickly. We in Ireland are all too aware of the terrific loss of our own archival collections in the fire at the Irish Public Records Office at the start of the Civil War in 1922. There was no danger of a similar loss at the College of Arms due to the sophisticated monitoring systems that are in place throughout the building, the source advised the Gazette. The current building dates from the 1670s and has been the home of the College of Arms since then. The College of Arms is overseen by the Earl Marshal, a hereditary office which has been held by the Dukes of Norfolk. However, as fires in any repository are a cause of extreme concern, thankfully, on this occasion the management of the College of Arms apparently took all the precautionary measures possible to safeguard the collections.

GSI ANNUAL JOURNAL

Articles are sought for the GSI Annual Journal. Subjects could include family histories, biographies, military or social histories, resource information, heraldry or vexillology etc. The publication of your own family history is the best way to ensure that future generations will have the benefit of your research. It also allows for the recording of family lore, special events and, where appropriate, family tragedies such as losses in war or natural disasters. Biographies of family members who may have contributed to their community, country or field of endeavour, should be published in order to record their stories. Black and white photographs or drawings are also most welcome. Ideally articles for publication should be of between 1000 and 2500 words in length and must not have been published elsewhere and, of course, they must be original works by the author. Therefore, the Board reserves the right to seek assurances on the source, ownership and originality of any article submitted. If you would like to submit an article for publication, please do not hesitate to drop the Editor, Margaret Conroy, an e-mail at Gazette@familyhistory.ie

New Publications on CD

The ever increasing costs of printing and postage both here in Ireland and in Great Britain has forced many family history societies to review their publication policies and programmes. Some have exited the publication arena completed which is regrettable though, nevertheless completely understandable as costs mount. Therefore, Board of this Society had some hard decisions to make on our own publication programme and it decided to make many of our publications available on CD. Thanks to the hard work of Barry O'Connor and Liam Mac Alasdair, the Society's first publication on CD was launched last month. This new CD contains all three volumes of the **Memorial Inscriptions of Dún Laoghaire Rathdown, Co.**

Dublin, Ireland – Vol. 1 includes the following graveyards:- Barrington's Burial Ground; Blackrock College; Dominican Convent, Dún Laoghaire; Old Glencullen; Kiltiernan Church of Ireland; Loughlinstown; Old Connaught; Rathmichael (Old Church); St. Brigid's Church of Ireland and Tully Graveyard. **Vol. 2** is a special publication on the Friends Burial Ground, Temple Hill, Blackrock and **Vol. 3** contains the following graveyards: Carmelite Monastery; Carrickbrennan Cemetery; Kill of the Grange Cemetery and Sion Hill Cemetery. This CD is fully searchable and easy to use. Normally these three volumes would cost €7.00 each plus postage, however, this new CD has been launched at a *special introductory price* of

just €15.00 including postage. Another new publication of immense assistance to those tracing ancestors in the British forces in Ireland up to 1922 "**Memorial Inscriptions of Military Personnel and Their Families**" is now available at €10.00 including postage. It has been painstakingly researched by Barry O'Connor and his team. To obtain a copy of either publication please send a cheque for the amount required (*made payable to the Society*) to the address (Director of Finance) on the bottom of page 3 of this newsletter. For a full listing of the Society's publications of memorial inscriptions, including other military cemeteries, please see the Society's on-line shop on the website www.familyhistory.ie/shop

James Scannell Reports...

ANNE'S GROVE ESTATE

The Irish Heritage Trust has terminated negotiations on the acquisition of the Anne's Grove Estate in north Cork due to current Government cutbacks. While the reduction will not impact on its involvement in other activities, the funding and tax credits which had been allocated for this project were withdrawn early in February. Anne's Grove at Castletownroche is the home of the Grove Annesley family where a famous riverside garden is the centre piece of a 500 acre estate which has a house, home farm, double stable yard, riverbank and woodlands. Located in the Blackwater Valley near to Spenser's home at Doneraile which was also the home of Canon Sheehan, to the home of the Hennessy's of cognac fame at Kilavullen, and the birthplace of Edmund Burke. The Grove Annesleys settled in Castletownroche in 1628 but the present house was not constructed until the early 18th century on a plateau above the Awbeg River. At the present time the estate is run by a family trust managed by Patrick Annesley and his wife Jane.

GREAT BLASKET ISLAND

In early February John Gormley TD, Minister for the Environment and Dr. Martin Mansergh TD, Minister of State responsible for the Office of Public Works

(OPW), jointly confirmed that the majority of the land on the Great Blasket Island off the County Kerry coast has been acquired by the State. A number of the other landowners may wish to sell their holdings to the State and it's believed that discussions with them will take place in the coming weeks. Building conservation officers from the OPW have surveyed the old village with a view to ensuring the stabilization and preservation of the buildings there. Survey leader is Dr. Grellan Rourke, chief conservation architect of the OPW. During an oral hearing last year concerning a planning application for a services and café building on the island, it emerged that the buildings were in an extremely poor condition and that a severe winter could see them collapse completely. The Great Blasket Island was abandoned in 1953 and many of the islanders' descendants live around Dún Chaoin and Dingle on the mainland. The island management committee consisting of ferry operators, conservationists, and descendants of islanders which was originally established in the 1980's to preserve the island's heritage, along with other stakeholders, has been re-constituted and will be chaired by the OPW.

IRISH ARCHITECTURAL ARCHIVE

The Irish Architectural Archive has received the King's Inns collection of architectural drawings of

James Gandon including some relating to the Four Courts and the King's Inns itself. The move follows a decision by the benchers of King's Inns to loan its valuable collection of drawings to the Archive so that it can be accessed by architects, historians and members of the public. For many years the benchers of King's Inns had considered the best way to display its collection of drawings and by loaning it to the Irish Architectural Archive, it will now be more widely accessible. The collection includes James Gandon's drawings of Dublin's 4 greatest buildings – King's Inns, the Four Courts, the Customs House and the Irish Parliament House at College Green which is now used by the Bank of Ireland.

CLAYTON PORTRAIT

During February the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Micheál Martin TD, was presented with a portrait of Bishop Robert Clayton on behalf of U2's Adam Clayton. Robert Clayton was the original owner of Iveagh House in Dublin which is currently the headquarters of the Department of Foreign Affairs. The portrait is attributed to the artist Charles Philips. Iveagh House, which is located on Dublin's St. Stephen's Green, was commissioned by Bishop Clayton in 1736 from the architect Richard Castle and is considered to be one of Dublin's finest Georgian buildings.

Précis of the February Lecture

On Tuesday February 10, 2009, Paddy Waldron delivered a talk on "*The Parker Families of North Munster and Kingstown*" by first outlining the various sources used during his extensive research. The sources included the various repositories in Ireland and the expanding range of on-line resources produced in Ireland and overseas. With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Mr. Waldron, brought the members through the various generations of the family and, of course, the origins of the family. Estate and vital records, family letters, photographs and details from census returns all were brought together in an almost seamless manner with an intriguing story throughout. Surprisingly Mr. Waldron was unable to locate a photograph of one of his ancestors who served on the Kingstown Urban District Council as the Heritage Officer at Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council

confirmed that no photographs of the Urban District Council members exist in the County Council archives. Given that most politicians crave positive and favourable media exposure one would have thought that a photograph of the entire council would have been taken to publicise its activities and relevance to the daily lives of the inhabitants of the town. A lively question and answer session followed this very informative and enjoyable lecture. Many members commented on the structure of the presentation which could be used as a template for their own research data. Mr. Waldron was prevailed upon to present an article on his subject for publication in the Society's journal. Hopefully, this will be available in the next issue of the Society's journal which should be published later this month. See the article regarding the Journal on page 2 of this newsletter.

GSJ LECTURE PROGRAMME

Tues. Mar. 10—Annual General Meeting of the Society, Annual Reports and the Election of the incoming Board of Directors. The lecture topic is "The new Freeman and Trade Guilds Database" by John Grenham, author of "*Tracing Your Irish Ancestors*" see page 4. **Tues. Apr. 14**— The Irish Historic Towns Atlas as a support for the family history researcher. Jennifer Moore, Royal Irish Academy. **Tues. May 12**—Church of Ireland records in the RCB library, Mr. Raymond Refausee, Librarian and Archivist, Representative Church Body Library (Church of Ireland). **Tues. June 9**— The Student Records of Dublin University. Alumni Office, TCD. Any comments on the lecture programme to: Séamus Moriarty at e-mail: - Gazette@familyhistory.ie

Membership of the Genealogical Society

Membership fee **renewals fall due in January** each year. The Board of the Society at its November 2008 meeting conducted the normal annual review of the **Membership Fee** structure and under **Res: 08/11/632** the Board adopted the following equalised Membership Package for 2009:- **Ireland & Overseas:** Offering ordinary membership of the Society, Membership Card, voting rights, use of the Society's Archive, monthly newsletter by mail, Annual Journal by mail, and the right to purchase the Society's publications at Special

Members' prices of up to 50% off selected publications. This also includes an optional second Membership Card for a household member, including voting rights, for an all inclusive cost of just €40.00 per annum. Therefore, despite tighter economic conditions, there was no increase in the Membership Fee this year. Unlike many other similar organisations faced with the problem of rising costs of printing and postage etc., the Board decided to keep publishing the Society's journal but as an annual publication only. The Membership Fee is now in line

with similar organisations in Ireland. Another new feature introduced was the offer of one year free membership to persons undertaking accredited genealogy courses on the condition that they supply a suitable article for the Society's journal. Also persons under twenty-five years can avail of 50% reduction on the membership fee. Membership can be renewed on-line or, if you prefer, simply download the form and forward it with your remittance to the Society's Director of Finance, **Mr. Denis Ryan, MGSI**, 6, St. Thomas Mead, Mount Merrion, County Dublin, Ireland.

IRELAND'S GENEALOGICAL GAZETTE

is published by the
Genealogical Society of Ireland
 11, Desmond Avenue, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland

E-mail: GAZETTE@familyhistory.ie

Charity Reference: CHY10672

The Society is a Nominating Body for Seanad Éireann

JOIN ON-LINE

@

www.familyhistory.ie/shop

DIARY DATES

Tuesday Mar. 10th & Apr. 14th 2009

Evening Open Meeting

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

Wednesday Mar. 25th & Apr. 22nd 2009

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)

Society's Website

On February 19th 2009, Board of the Society appointed **Mr. Bartosz Kozlowski, MGSi** (right) to the position of *Director, Internet Services* and co-opted him as a member of the Board of Directors of the Society. A native of Krakov in Poland, Bartosz has been in Ireland for less than six months and already has a number of Irish websites in development. He intends to completely redesign the Society's website to include new features possibly including a Members' Only Area with a Members' Forum. In this regard, Bartosz, has invited comments and suggestions from members and friends of the Society on the content of the new website. He is currently exploring a number of very interesting suggestions received from members. He will also be managing the Society's On-Line Shop and he hopes to expand the range of products available through the Shop. In the meantime, Bartosz welcomes comments and suggestions on the website, including possible links. Please contact Bartosz at B.K.Webdesigner@gmail.com

**FOUR COURTS PRESS**

Irish History, Genealogy, Local History and much more at..

www.fourcourtspress.ie

10% Reduction On-Line

**History IRELAND**

March/April 2009 issue

now available price: €7.00

www.historyireland.com

Tracing Your Irish Ancestors

by John Grenham

Highly recommended by this Society for ALL researching Irish family history whether at home or overseas.

www.gillmacmillan.ie

Glasnevin Cemetery Records

An article by **Ciara O'Brien** in the *Irish Times* of February 20, 2009 provides an interesting outline of the plans by the cemetery management to modernise their services through computerisation and on-line access to records and services. With an investment of €80,000 in a new computer system and database, funeral directors will be able to make arrangements with the cemetery outside the normal office hours. Care has been taken to design these services in a manner that meets the needs of the families of the recently bereaved according to the customer services manager, Melvyn Colville, reported in the article. The cemetery's website also carries a list of cremation and burial services to be held at each of the group's cemeteries over the next couple of days providing the date of death of the deceased and the time and type of the service. Another aspect of the programme of improvements at Glasnevin is the computerisation of the cemetery's records. A genealogical research service is already open to genealogists on a pay-for-view basis and according to the cemetery website it is intended to extend this service to members of the public from April 8, 2009. From that date you will not require an account to search the cemetery archives. This service will provide access to the extensive database containing more than one million records dating as far back as 1890. A standard Burial or Cremation search provides details on the deceased from the records. An extended burial search also includes details of all others buried in that grave. The cemetery

actually dates from 1832 and a Museum and Heritage Centre is being developed under the government sponsored Glasnevin 2010 Project. For further information contact the Glasnevin Cemetery Group at www.glasnevin-cemetery.ie

Deansgrange Cemetery

According to an article by **Ronald Quinlan** published in the *Sunday Independent* of March 1, 2009, the cost of a burial plot in Deansgrange Cemetery in south Co. Dublin is an astonishing €16,000. According to a spokesperson for Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Council quoted in the article approximately €4.08 million will be raised by the sale of these plots to pay for much needed restoration projects at the cemetery. The County Council plans to renovate the cemetery chapels, the lodge, the 'Angles Plot' and to undertake road-works, tree surgery and planting, rebuild sunken foundations, improve access to toilets and install new and much needed signage. The plan, according to the article, involves freeing up land near the cemetery gate for new plots. Dating from 1865, this cemetery had not been available for new burials since the mid 1990s with only those with rights being buried at this cemetery. Rates are far more reasonable at the Council's other burial ground at Shanganagh with graves priced around €2,600 a plot. This Society has recorded the memorial inscriptions in this cemetery and published them in a number of volumes. See website for details.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will take place on Tuesday **March 10, 2009** at 20.00hrs in the Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education, Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. The usual Annual Reports will be presented to the AGM. The meeting will also elect the members of the Board of the Society for 2009/2010, including the Cathaoirleach (Chairperson), Leas-Chathaoirleach (Vice-Chair), General Secretary, Director of Finance and up to six other directors who will receive their portfolios at the first meeting of the new Board. The current members of the Board are as follows: **Séamus Moriarty, Cathaoirleach; Gerry Hayden, Leas-Chathaoirleach; Michael Merrigan, General Secretary; Denis Ryan, Finance; Séamus O'Reilly, Archivist; Pádraic Ingoldsby, National Projects; Sharon Bofin, Membership Services; Bartosz Kozlowski, Internet Services; Margaret Conroy, Publications; and Barry O'Connor, Cemetery Projects.** Members will be asked to propose and second each of the nominations for positions on the Board of the Society and in the case of a contested position a secret ballot of all paid-up members in attendance at the AGM will be held accordingly.