



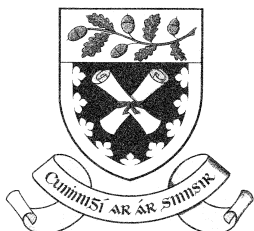
## Ireland's Genealogical Gazette

(incorporating "The Genie Gazette")

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GENEALOGY

HERALDRY

VEXILLOLOGY

SOCIAL HISTORY

Heritage Matters

Book Reviews

Open Meetings

News &amp; Events



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## Accessing Our Genealogical Heritage

Promoting an awareness, appreciation and knowledge of our genealogical heritage has been the prime objective of this Society since its foundation in October 1990. Over nearly twenty-five years of service to Irish genealogy the Society has gained a worldwide reputation for innovation and for championing the interests of family history researchers at home and overseas. The Society's 'Principle of Public Ownership and Right of Access to a Genealogical Heritage', which was adopted by the members in 1997, has become the bedrock of public access policies of progressive organisations and repositories throughout Ireland. This fundamental principle was not supported by the commercial genealogy sector in Ireland at the time, nor indeed, since then. However, advances in technology and the huge international popularity of numerous on-line genealogical research resources, has demonstrated, without a shadow of a doubt, that the public too cherish and support this principle. A greater accessibility to Irish genealogical records on-line creates a sustainable affinity with Ireland for our huge diaspora and this encourages more

and more people with Irish ancestry to actually visit Ireland. Indeed, it also has enormous potential for the promotion of Irish produce, goods and services amongst our diaspora. Ministers Humphreys and Burton are to be congratulated for their commitment to making more and more genealogical resources available free of charge at IrishGenealogy.ie and through the National Library of Ireland and the National Archives of Ireland. This is a realisation that the expectations of the public in a digital age with near universal internet access have changed radically over the past ten years or so. Accessibility to a genealogical heritage is the key and free accessibility is, by far, the most successful way of growing and sustaining connections with Ireland for our diaspora. In opening up access to the microfilm copies of the Roman Catholic parish registers held by the National Library of Ireland and the uploading of the civil registration records, with certain restrictions, to the government's genealogy portal, the Ministers are acting in the common good. Certain vested interests have voiced opposition to these pending developments citing, amongst other issues, loss of revenue to the commercial

genealogical sector. Business and marketing environments are always changing with the most innovative and adaptable surviving and thriving in constantly challenging circumstances. The commercial genealogy sector is no different and therefore, it cannot reasonably expect special treatment at the expense of free public access to our genealogical heritage. The raising of spurious issues of copyright in respect of the microfilms held by the National Library or fanciful data protection issues regarding the uploading of the civil registration records under the terms of the new *Civil Registration (Amendment) Act, 2014*, is simply scaremongering and mischievous. The legal ownership of the NLI microfilms and whether any copyright subsists in parish registers is no longer in any doubt. However, unfortunately questions still arise over the legal title, if any, to the computerised records held by the Heritage Centres and sold on-line on a pay-per-view basis. The provision of commercial genealogical services in Ireland must move with the times and fully accept the global trend towards free or affordable on-line access to our genealogical heritage.

## GSI Stand, King's Hall, Belfast



The Society's very popular and seemingly indefatigable, **Eddie Gahan, MGS**, (left), Director of the GSI Outreach Programme, is on the road north again. This time Eddie will bring the GSI to Belfast for the **Belfast Telegraph's 50+ Show**. The event will take place in the King's Hall Pavilion, Balmoral, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> January 2015. The opening hours will be 13:00hrs - 21:00hrs (Friday) and 11:00hrs -17:30hrs (Saturday and Sunday). This is a wonderful opportunity to promote Irish genealogy and

to showcase our Society in its 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year. **But we need your help to take advantage of it.** If you can help out on the stand on any (or all!) of the three days please contact Eddie Gahan as soon as possible at 087-248 6878, or by e-mail on eddie.gahan\_snr@hotmail.com Don't forget that you can use the DSP's Free Travel Pass, in combination with its Northern equivalent (the ROI Senior Smartpass). Eddie has brought the Society's Exhibition Stand to all corners of the country over the past three years and he has many exciting venues on his extensive list for 2015. Without a shadow of doubt, it is Eddie's energy and commitment that is a great source of encouragement to his wonderfully dedicated team of volunteers.

So if you're free to lend a hand at this event in Belfast or at any of the other venues planned for 2015, please get in touch with Eddie. These events promote the study of genealogy, heraldry and vexillology as open access educational leisure pursuits available to all in our community. Special attention will be paid to the promotion of the **Irish DNA Atlas Project** at these events as Séamus O'Reilly, FGSI, coordinator of the genealogical information for the Project, is seeking to fill some gaps in the geographic spread of the research data. Please help us get this message out about the event in Belfast and the Irish DNA Atlas by sharing this information with family and friends.

## Dublin 1930-1950—The Emergence of the Modern City

'*Dublin 1930-1950: the emergence of the modern city*' by Joseph Brady and published by Four Courts Press (ISBN: 978-1-84682-520-0 : 408 pp : illustrations : p/bk : Price €29.95 : Price on-line €26.95) is essential reading for all with an interest in the development of Dublin City and its suburbs, not only from a historical perspective, but including the social and spatial narratives also. Following the destruction of the heart of the City during the Easter Rising of 1916, the War of Independence 1919-1921 and especially, during the Civil War of 1922-1923, the city centre and many of the main public buildings were in ruinous condition in an independent State with little or no money. The task facing the City Council and the government of the Irish Free State in the wake of those calamitous years was simply enormous – rebuild the economy, its capital city and house its people. A daunting task for both central and local government, however, Brady paints a picture of the city as few would now expect in the years following the Eucharistic Congress in 1932 and on up through 'The Emergency' (World War 2 to everybody else) and beyond. He sets the scene by stating that Dublin was fortunate to have an early agreement on need for city planning as Dublin had been one of the first cities to adopt enthusiastically the ideas of Ebenezer Howard on 'town planning'. He begins with a profile of the city in the 1930 using maps, census returns and especially, from the perspective of a geographer, housing and population density, demographics and even religious affiliations. The latter point is interestingly illustrated with tables covering the census returns for 1926, 1936 and 1946, a period where only the Jewish population increased amongst the non-Catholic communities in the city where the general population declined over that period also. Already by the mid-1930s the city was experiencing the 'doughnut effect' as the emerging middle classes moved out of the inner city to the newly built suburbs, leaving dereliction and neglect amongst the poorer sections which needed social housing to

escape the notorious tenements of Dublin. Managing this growth and providing for the housing needs of the people is explored with reference to national policies and legislation, fractious local politics and an almost impossible balancing act of town planning. Nevertheless, much was delivered and to a surprisingly high standard for the time. The author explains that in the 1944 edition of the 'Lord Mayor's Handbook', a much slimmer edition to that published in 1942, contains the 'City Manager's Post-War Plans' outlining the various schemes that the Corporation intended to bring to fruition for the city and the county. The plan included amenity schemes such as 'baths' and provisions for shops, churches, schools and, of course, housing. Surprisingly, Brady states that Dún Laoghaire was actually a head of Dublin City in the adoption of the powers afforded by the 1934 legislation and it was a 'matter of pride' for the town as it appointed Manning Roberson as a town planning expert to prepare a scheme for 'the borough'. His chapter on 'civic improvement' presents a fascinating mixture of worthy aspiration, questionable and memorable achievements, and, of course, controversies such as the proposal to build a new Catholic Cathedral for the city in Merrion Square. He has a wonderful account of a 'very small scale civic improvement' at Leinster House lawns with the removal of the statue of Queen Victoria, latter donated to the people of Australia for the country's bicentenary, and the ignominious relocation of her husband's statue to a corner of the area. The author provides a very comprehensive exploration of the improvement and provision of the transportation infrastructure of the city, the port, the railways, bridges and roadways. Spatial planning, traffic management, orbital routes, traffic signals and parking problems are hardly issues one associates with 1930s Dublin, however, Brady's chapter on 'keeping the city moving' in the 1930s and 1940s is a strangely familiar narrative for anyone grappling with Dublin City's traffic today. The development and growth of suburbia around

Dublin was phenomenal during the 1930s and 1940s and here the author explores housing strategies and the provision of social housing and flats around the city, in many cases, listing streets, numbers of units and the dates of construction. He also examines the burgeoning private developments in the more leafy suburbs. The development of Dublin's central business and shopping district is explored which will evoke many fond memories of the stores, products and services that were features of Dublin life up to the late 1970s. Finally the author deals with 'visiting and enjoying' our capital city for both the tourist and the locals alike. Tourists, he explained, were frequently 'shocked' by evidences of poverty in the midst of a great city' and the contrasts between the rich and poor areas were stark. He concludes with the provision of copious tables on the population changes in the city wards and with an excellent bibliography. Undoubtedly an essential read for all with an interest in Dublin City, its suburban towns and its County. **MM**

### IN MEMORIAM

Our sincerest condolences to our member, Clare Tuohy, on the death of her sister, Joan Tuohy (Leopardstown and formerly Thurles) who died on Jan. 3rd 2015. Joan was laid to rest in Dean's Cemetery on Jan. 6th 2015. RIP

Members of the Society were deeply saddened by the death on Jan. 6th 2015 of Vera Breslin (née Shortall). Vera was featured on the cover of the Society's Journal in 1999 (Vol. 8 No. 2). Vera was the last of the traditional roadside fishmongers in Dún Laoghaire. Our sincere condolences to her family, friends and loyal customers. Vera was laid to rest in Dean's Grange Cemetery on Jan. 10th 2015. RIP

## Representing Ireland in Sydney, Australia



The Society's Director of Vexillological & Heraldic Services, Stanislav Zamyatin (left) outlines the plans he has for Vexillology Ireland over the coming year. The first objective of the year is to release 'Flagging Ireland' - an official Vexillology

Ireland guide to flag design in Ireland. This publication will aim to promote the design and use of flags in schools, colleges, sporting clubs, local communities and many more. As there has only ever been one definitive book published on Irish flags - 'A History of Irish Flags from Earliest Times' by Gerard A. Hayes-McCoy, the Society hopes to publish the second and most up-to-date book on Irish flags in the summer. At the start of autumn we will be called

upon, once again, to represent Ireland on the international stage at the '26<sup>th</sup> International Congress of Vexillology' in Sydney, Australia, from the 31<sup>st</sup> August - 4<sup>th</sup> September 2015. This will be the first time the Society will attend as a full FIAV member of this prestigious international body following our election at the 25<sup>th</sup> Congress in Rotterdam in 2013. Funding is currently being sought to cover the costs of the Society's participation at Sydney and it is hoped to raise circa €3,000 for flights, accommodation, registration fees etc. This will be another wonderful international opportunity for the Society to showcase not only *Vexillology Ireland* but our Irish vexillological, heraldic and, of course, genealogical heritage. The Society also aims to promote Ireland as a unique heritage holiday destination by highlighting our many excellent cultural institutions, including the brand new *dIr Lexicon* just across the road from *An Daonchartlann*, the Society's Archives & Research

Centre in Dún Laoghaire. The close proximity of the National Maritime Museum and our own Archives & Research Centre to the new *dIr Lexicon* has created a very unique 'cultural quarter' in Dún Laoghaire. Finally, in the coming year *Vexillology Ireland* will be organising a meeting in Dublin for Irish flag lovers and 'vexillophiles'. Suggestions and comments on vexillology in Ireland most welcome. See: [www.facebook.com/Flags.Ireland](http://www.facebook.com/Flags.Ireland)

### CARE FOR YOUR RECORDS

In the course of our research we amass a huge amount of paper and computer records. We love these records, we've worked hard to collect them. Books, photographs, charts, notes, certificates, parish register and census transcripts. Have you made provision for the preservation of your records after you die? Don't let your hard work end up as landfill or your books to be sold off. PLEASE make provision in your Will to have them donated to the care of the Society's Archives for future generations of researchers. *Please Will Your Society Well—add that codicil today. Thanks!*

## Mother and Baby Homes Inquiry

On January 9th 2015, the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr James Reilly, published the Terms of Reference for the Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes and Certain Related Matters. The Commission will have three commissioners led by the chair, Judge Yvonne Murphy. She will be assisted by international legal expert on child protection and adoption Dr. William Duncan and historian Professor Mary Daly of University College Dublin. At the press conference the Minister said "I believe that this Commission will be critically important in coming to terms with our own history. Some of what we learn will be painful but the Commission will finally allow the experience of individuals to be understood, not only as stories, but as part of a social, cultural system of how we, as a society, organised

our response to single women and their children who needed support and assistance and not judgement." The Commission will examine the files of fourteen named institutions and some County Homes in operation between the foundation of the State in 1922 and as late as 1998. Its investigations will include the high mortality rates recorded in certain homes, the living conditions experienced by residents and the arrangements made by these institutions for the single women and children when they were leaving, including the issue of illegal adoptions. The burial arrangements for the infants who died in these institutions will be examined, however, this may be difficult as many of the County Homes were former Workhouses during the famine period. For further information on the Commission please checkout <http://www.dcy.gov.ie/>

### IRISH LIVES REMEMBERED



Ireland's FREE digital e-Magazine 'Irish Lives Remembered Genealogy e-Magazine' dedicated to helping people trace their Irish Ancestry globally will now be published 'bi-monthly' going forward. The current information packed edition is available to read or to download completely FREE OF CHARGE at [www.irishlivesremembered.com](http://www.irishlivesremembered.com) Click on [Back Editions](#) to read, free of charge, many hundreds of excellent articles on researching your Irish ancestors. Download them now to your own PC.

### IRELAND'S GENEALOGICAL GAZETTE

All the past issues of this newsletter and its predecessor are available in pdf format to read or to download or to read *free of charge* on the Society's website [www.familyhistory.ie](http://www.familyhistory.ie)



# James Scannell Reports...

## YOUNGEST WW1 FATALITY?

Currently Pte. John Conlon who lies buried at Poelcapelle military cemetery, age 14 according to his headstone, killed during a gas attack on the Royal Irish Regiment during the Second Battle of Ypres in May 1915 is recognised by the Commonwealth War Graves as the youngest allied soldier to die in World War One. But this claim has been challenged by some researchers who claim that there is no evidence that Conlon was 14 at the time of death and cite the civil registration of births, marriages and deaths which states that John Conlon was born in Waterford in 1896, making him 18 when he was killed. Even at that age he was young to be serving on the frontline as the minimum age for overseas service was 19. According to Hollycross, Co. Tipperary, local historian and researcher Tom Burnell, a new Irish fatality has emerged who was aged least 14 and certainly not more than 15 at the time of his death - Pre. Edward Francis Hawe, from Mullinahone, Co. Tipperary, who died on September 20<sup>th</sup> 1916 in Tanzania while serving with the 4<sup>th</sup> South Africa Horse. Tom Burnell has been working for the past six years on correcting errors in the Irish war memorial records which contain the names of 49,000 who died in World War One and is trying to establish the exact number of Irishmen who died in this conflict. Pte. Hawe came to light when Tom Burnell found a notice in a Irish newspaper and similar one in a U.K.

regional newspaper recording his death. Pre. Hawe is recorded in the 1911 Census as aged 9 but not in the 1901 Census so on this basis must have been born after April 1901. The South African War Graves Project records Pte. Hawe's date of birth as 20<sup>th</sup> November 1901 making him aged 14/15 at the time of his death. Tom Burnell is the author of *'Irishmen in the Great War - Reports from the Front 1914'* which was launched in September 2014 and the more recent *'Kilkenny's War Dead'* which was launched in November 2014.

## OLD DUBLIN SOCIETY

On Weds Feb 4<sup>th</sup> Dr. Raymond Refaussé will present his lecture *'Gone but not Forgotten - the Church of Ireland Graveyards of the City of Dublin'* at 6.30 p.m. to the Old Dublin Society in the Dublin City & Archive Conference Room, 138 - 144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2. This is the opening lecture in the Society's Spring 2015 programme of lecture and will be followed on Weds Feb. 11<sup>th</sup> with a lecture by Rob Goodbody on *'Dublin Schools Prior to 1831'* at 6.30p.m. at the same venue. All welcome to both talks - admission free.

## THE ULSTER DIVISION

Terry Moylan, 71 Bluebell Road, Dublin 12, Ireland, is currently seeking information of the life of Belfast man W. Hamilton Burns, whom he believes set to music Samuel K. Cowan's

poem 'The Charge of the Ulster Division at Theipval' published in sheet music form in 1916 by the publishing firm of Burns of Belfast. Any information will be appreciated which can be mailed to Terry Moylan at his Dublin address or by email to [terry@pipers.ie](mailto:terry@pipers.ie).

## IRISH CHAPLAINS IN WW2

Ristead de Burca is a doctoral research student at University of Roehampton with an area of interest in Irish Catholic chaplains in the British Army during WW2. Of approximately 680 chaplains in the army, over 160 were Irish, and he would like to contact family members who may have letters, stories, reminiscences and artefacts which recount the WW2 experiences of their chaplain relatives. All communications will be gratefully acknowledged. Ristead de Burca, Department of Humanities, Grove House, University of Roehampton, Roehampton Lane, London SW15 5PJ.

## TALK BY GSI MEMBER

On Weds 21<sup>st</sup> Jan. 2014, Tom Conlon, MSc, MGSi, will present his lecture *'Newly Rediscovered Images of Kingstown and South East Dublin'* at 8 p.m. to the Dún Laoghaire Borough Historical Society in the Kingston Hotel, Adelaide Street, Dún Laoghaire. Tom is renowned for his expertise in this aspect of the local history of Dún Laoghaire. All welcome. Admission. Visitors: €3.50 - Retired: €2.00

## Précis of the Dec. Lecture

**Eithne Massey** of Dublin City Public Libraries & Archive delivered the monthly lecture at the open meeting on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2014. The speaker, emphasising that she was not a family historian as such, gave a good introduction to the resources on family businesses in Dublin City Library of which she has first-hand experience. She emphasised the importance of their collection of street directories as being an important source but also reminded listeners that the National Archives remains the primary depository of family business records. Giving some statistics on family businesses, she explained that while 70% of family businesses transfer to the second generation, only 15% do so to the third. Because Dublin with its bigger population allowing for the development of a variety of specialised businesses the success of intergenerational transfers was greater in the capital. Succession was by no means exclusive to the male line and the Allens of culinary fame

are a modern example of where women tended to the 'makers and shakers'. In earlier years the Cuala Press was also run by two sisters. Auction catalogues are also a good source but of course auctions by their nature may also indicate the end of the family business line. Only indirectly related to these businesses, are the considerable collection of photographs of Dublin which collected by Dublin City Council and its predecessor Dublin Corporation over many years. This source came as a bit of a surprise to many in the audience and particularly so when we were told that 200,000 of these have been digitised. The ILAC library keeps copies of company reports but only since 1969. Eithne's talk was followed by a question and answer session with the audience. **Séamus Moriarty, FGSI**

**EDITOR:** Checkout *'Business Archival Sources for the Local Historian'* by **Ciarán Ó hÓgartaigh** and **Margaret Ó hÓgartaigh** published by Four Courts Press, 2010. Price: 14.95. p/bk. Our sincere condolences to the family of Margaret Ó hÓgartaigh who died on Dec. 17th 2014 at the age of 47 years. RIP

## IRISH DNA ATLAS PROJECT

The Irish DNA Atlas is a collaborative academic research project undertaken by **Dr. Gianpiero Cavalleri** of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) and the Society. The main objectives are (1) to further our knowledge of the population history of Ireland and (2) to help us understand how genes influence health in Ireland. Whilst the scientific data is provided by Dr. Cavalleri's team at the RCSI, the project also has an academic historian, **Dr. Daren McGettigan**, who specialises in Irish medieval history. This academic collaboration ensures that the scientific data provided by the RCSI is interpreted in a manner that properly places it in a historical context based on extant sources and in relation to historical or archaeological published research. Participants are sought from across the island of Ireland and from overseas who can trace each of their eight great-grandparents to the same general area of Ireland. Participants are requested to present a Birth Brief (Pedigree Chart) and to provide a DNA sample (kit provided) for analysis. Participants may be male or female with ancestry from any part of Ireland. If you are interested in participating or have a query about participating, please contact **Séamus O'Reilly, FGSI** by e-mail on [Irish.dna@familyhistory.ie](mailto:Irish.dna@familyhistory.ie) Also, check-out the project newsletter on the GSI website.

## GSI MEMBERSHIP

The Annual Review of the Membership Package was undertaken by the Board of Directors at its meeting on Thursday November 6th 2014. It was agreed under **Res: 14/11/126** to keep the cost of the Annual Subscription for 2015 for Irish and Overseas Members at €40.00. The Membership Package for 2014 includes the following: Member voting rights; optional second household adult member (18 years or over); 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 (under construction); 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. For mature students evidence of enrolment on such courses may be required, at any stage, by the Director of Membership Services, **Mr. Barry O'Connor, FGSI**. This Membership Package shall be applied as and from January 1st 2015 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. Apply for membership on-line at [www.familyhistory.ie](http://www.familyhistory.ie) or if you prefer, download the membership application form and forward it with the required remittance to:

**Mr. Billy Saunderson, MGSi**, Director of Finance, 'Suzkar', Killiney Avenue, Killiney, Co. Dublin, Ireland. **New Members are always very welcome!**

## MEMBERSHIP OF GSI BRANCHES

The Board of Directors has set the Annual Subscription rates for membership (associate) of either *Heraldry Ireland* or *Vexillology Ireland* is €20.00 per annum to include a biannual electronic newsletter and the free registration of Arms in respect of *Heraldry Ireland* and of flags or emblems in respect of *Vexillology Ireland*. Members of the following organisations shall be entitled to a 50% reduction in the Annual Subscription to each (i) Genealogical Society of Ireland; (ii) National Maritime Institute of Ireland and (iii) individual members of Clan/Sept Associations registered with Clans of Ireland and, in the case of *Vexillology Ireland*, individual members of the registered member organisations of FIAV—the International Federation of Vexillological Associations which represents fifty similar organisations in around thirty countries.

For further details on these new GSI branches see the following websites: [www.heraldryireland.com](http://www.heraldryireland.com) or for *Vexillology Ireland* checkout the following website: [www.flagsireland.wordpress.com](http://www.flagsireland.wordpress.com)

**GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF IRELAND****Board of Directors 2014-2015**

**John Hamrock** (Cathaoirleach : Chairperson); **Maura Flood** (Leas-Chathaoirleach : Vice-Chair & Education Services); **Michael Merrigan** (General Secretary, Company Secretary, & pro tem Archival Services); **Billy Saunderson** (Finance); **Pádraic Ingoldsby** (An Daonchartlann Foundation & Philanthropy); **Gerry Hayden** (Building & Utilities, Health & Safety Officer); **Tom Conlon** (Internet Services); **Bary O'Connor** (Cemetery Projects & Membership Services); **Séamus Moriarty** (Lecture Programme); **Ingrid McIlwaine** (Social Inclusion & GSI Social Club); **Eddie Gahan** (Outreach Programme & GSI Exhibitions); **Caitlín Ní Chonghaile** (Publications & Oifigeach na Gaeilge—Irish Language Officer); **Stanislav Zamyatin** (Vexillological & Heraldic Services) and **Tony O'Hara** (Sales & Marketing).

**JOIN ON-LINE**  
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**DIARY DATES**  
**Tuesday Jan. 13th & Feb. 10th 2015**  
**Evening Open Meeting**  
**Dún Laoghaire Further Education Institute**  
**Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire**  
**20.00hrs—22.00hrs**  
[www.dlfei.ie](http://www.dlfei.ie)

**Wednesday Jan 28th & Feb. 25th 2015**  
**Morning Open Meeting**  
**Hardy's Bar, Royal Marine Hotel, Dún Laoghaire**  
**10.30hrs—12.30hrs**  
[www.royalmarine.ie](http://www.royalmarine.ie)

**Contribution €3.00 p.p.**  
**(Coffee/Tea included at Morning Meetings)**

**The GPO –200 Years of History**

*'The GPO – 200 Years of History'* by *Stephen Ferguson*, published by Mercier Press. The General Post Office in Dublin's O'Connell Street is one of the most iconic buildings associated with that street, the foundation stone of which was laid in August 12<sup>th</sup> 1814, was totally destroyed during the Easter 1916 Rising, and then rebuilt in the early years of the Irish Free State. In this excellently illustrated history of this iconic building Stephen Ferguson traces its history and the many people associated with it. Ferguson opens with a history of the Post Office in Ireland, revealing how prior to its establishment in 1657, mail was carried by private couriers on a haphazard basis up to the 1640s when Evan Vaughan, the postmaster, established a staging system along the main roads to Cork, Limerick, Galway, Sligo, Belfast, and Londonderry while twice a week post boys, on horseback and on foot, delivering private and commercial mail. However it was Oliver Cromwell who in 1657 set up the Post Office with a monopoly and outlawing all private mail services. In 1773 a Dublin 'Penny Post' system serving Dublin city and suburbs was established and was very successful with up to four deliveries a day taking place. In 1784 an independent Irish Post Office was established which lasted until 1831 when it returned to the control of the postmaster. In the early years the General Post Office was based in a number of locations up to 1783 when it was located in College Green up to 1814 when it was sold and turned it into a shopping arcade, but still had a sub-post office until the building burned down in 1837. Plans were being made to expand it but ultimately it was decided to go for a new site. The present day site in O'Connell Street, then called Sackville Street, was selected with the design of the building being assigned to Francis Johnson. It was built at cost of £80,000 and opened for business in January 1818. Ferguson provides a fascinating insight in the way the General Post Office was managed and how the postal service operated. The Victorian novelist Anthony Trollope during his spell with the Irish Post Office was responsible for the introduction of pillar boxes and an extension of postal services to rural districts. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the volume of business was such that it was bursting at the seams. Ultimately by March 1916 improvements had just been carried out only to be totally undone by the Easter Rising a month later which saw the building totally destroyed. There is a chapter dealing with the building during the Rising. After the Rising the Rotunda building served as temporary postal sorting office until it was destroyed in 1922 during the Civil War. Various GPO departments were then scattered around the city. In 1925 work on the reconstruction of the GPO began on the Henry Street side by the Office of Public Works led by architect T.J. Byrne and resulted in the GPO Arcade which today still houses a myriad of shops and by 1933 all the construction work had been completed despite many problems and difficulties in the intervening years. The GPO was formally re-opened on July 11<sup>th</sup> 1929 and as various sections were completed, operations became centralized again with new addition being the studios of Radio Eireann which broadcast from there until moving to Donybrook in 1973. The author deals with the transfer of the GPO from a local landmark to a national symbol. This book tells the story of the people who worked in the GPO and includes insights on some of the postmasters who lived in an apartment within the building. Having seen so much in her two hundred year existence – riot and rebellion, romance and state occasions, it's no wonder Stephen Ferguson says that the building deserves the title of 'The Grand Old Lady of O'Connell Street'. Stephen Ferguson, who is the curator of the GPO museum is also the author of *'Business as Usual - GPO Staff in 1916'*, also published by Mercier Press, and *'The Irish Post Box – Silent servant and symbol of the state'*, published by An Post. **James Scannell**

**EXCLUSIVE DISCOUNTS**

Members of the Society are entitled to the following discounts on on-line genealogical products. Whilst access to these resources is free to members at *An Daonchartlann*, it is also recommended that members avail of these discounts to have access from their own homes. **Findmypast Ireland** [www.findmypast.ie](http://www.findmypast.ie) offer a huge 50% discount and the **Irish Newspaper Archives** [www.irishnewspaperarchive.com](http://www.irishnewspaperarchive.com) offer an excellent 25% discount to GSI members. The British based **flatcapsandbonnets.com** provide a 20% discount on their range of DVDs. GSI Members get 40% off the first month's subscription for the **Forces War Records** database, which normally costs UK£8.95 for 28 days, for just UK£5.00. To avail of these discounts please contact Barry O'Connor on [membership@familyhistory.ie](mailto:membership@familyhistory.ie)

**STUDENT MEMBERSHIP**

The Society offers a 50% reduction on the standard membership rate for students and young researchers under 25 years of age. Persons taking adult education courses in genealogy can avail of a similar 50% reduction—that's right, for just €20.00. Evidence of enrolment may be required. Please see the Society's website.



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**LECTURE PROGRAMME**

**Tues 13<sup>th</sup> Jan. 2015** - *'Matchmaking and Marriage Customs in 19<sup>th</sup> Century Ireland'* by Seán Ó Duíll. **Tues. 10<sup>th</sup> Feb. 2015** - *'The Comerfords in Ireland: disentangling myths and legends to find true origins'* by the Rev. Patrick Comerford. **Tues March 10<sup>th</sup> 2015**, *American Records* by Maura Flood. **Tues April 14<sup>th</sup> 2015** – TBA. **Tues May 12<sup>th</sup> 2015** *'Family Crests'* by Tom Mullins. **Tues. June 9<sup>th</sup> 2015** *'Records of the Dublin Metropolitan Police'* by James Scannell. **VENUE: Dún Laoghaire Further Education Institute**, Cumberland St., Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin. Travel directions see: [www.familyhistory.ie](http://www.familyhistory.ie) **Séamus Moriarty**, FGSI, Director, GSI Lecture Programme, welcomes feedback on these lectures.

**PARKING AT THE DLFEI**

Members are advised that car-parking facilities at the Dún Laoghaire Further Education Institute are very limited, especially during the college terms. The most convenient option is to use public transport. Dublin Bus nos. 7, 7A, 46A and 75 all serve the college or streets adjacent to the college—Lower George's Street, York Road, Clarence Street. The DART (suburban rail) services to Salthill & Monkstown. On street car-parking is usually available in the area also. Members—why not 'car pool' for each month's open meeting? Ask at the meeting. For details on the Institute please checkout [www.dlfei.ie](http://www.dlfei.ie)

**TRACING YOUR IRISH ANCESTORS**  
by John Grenham, MA, MAPGI, FIGRS, FGSI

The Society strongly recommends to anyone embarking on their family history quest that one essential piece of kit must be, without doubt, a copy of the latest edition of *'Tracing Your Irish Ancestors'*. Please checkout the website [www.gillmacmillan.com](http://www.gillmacmillan.com) Price €22.99 [RRP].

**FREE RESEARCH ADVICE**

*An Daonchartlann*, the Society's Archives and Research Centre at the historic Carlisle Pier in Dún Laoghaire, is open each Wednesday from 10.30hrs to 16.30hrs (except 4th Weds. open at 13.00hrs) and each Saturday from 14.00hrs to 17.30hrs. Members are on hand to provide **free family history research advice** to visitors. The use of the Society's extensive archival resources is reserved for fully paid-up GSI members, however, day research membership is available for €5.00 and payable on-line at the GSI website. Resources freely available to GSI members include a number of excellent pay-for-view websites including [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com), [Findmypast](http://Findmypast), [Forces War Records](http://Forces War Records), [Newspapers.com](http://Newspapers.com), the [British Newspaper Archives](http://British Newspaper Archives) and the [Irish Newspaper Archives](http://Irish Newspaper Archives). Travelling to the facility is best by public transport as both Dublin Bus (nos. 7, 7A, 8, 46A and 75) and the DART (suburban rail) are nearby. Pay-n-display parking at Dún Laoghaire Harbour area. See: [www.familyhistory.ie](http://www.familyhistory.ie)

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