

# Gingélas Newsletter

*Irish Genealogical Society International*



Volume 19 Issue 4 – August-September 2025

## The Co-Presidents' Corner

Donna Jones

### Thank you, Charlotte O'Connell

IGSI is so fortunate to have long-time member Char O'Connell, who joined the society in 2012. In 2014, Char was asked if she would be the administrator of our Facebook group and she has been posting the society's news and content on the site since then.

Char was on the Board of Directions from 2013 to 2017. She was co-chair of the membership committee for several years. She also was on the Celtic Connection Conference committee for a number of years, has written articles for our newsletter, and has volunteered for the Irish Fair. We greatly appreciate all that Char has done to help the society grow.

Last July, Char indicated that she would continue to be the Facebook group administrator for one more year. Char has done a fantastic job, increasing our followers to more than 3,400. I am pleased to announce that Janelle Asselin, our Instagram administrator and marketing committee chair has volunteered to assume the administrator's role for our Facebook group at the end of July. Una Nation has volunteered to backup Janelle. Thanks to both of you.

### Board Positions Open in 2026

#### Training and partnership will be provided

We have two board members who are at term limits at the end of this year. These are executive positions. Meetings are monthly on Zoom and generally last around an hour and a half.

We will transition to a new Treasurer in the coming months, and (you may have heard) it will take a team to replace him! The various roles for this position are being redefined so that the individual does not need to live in MN.

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We need a volunteer to become Secretary of the board. Meetings are recorded, and the AI Zoom functionality is used. This position is responsible for overseeing board actions, including documenting the minutes, managing the society's calendar, and distribution of information to the board.

We have decided to add a vice president position, which is an officer position. The vice president would work with the co-presidents in planning and helping the society continue to grow and thrive. Ideally the vice president would subsequently move into the co-president role as individual's term limits are met.

If you are interested in learning more, please let us know. The board is a wonderful group of people that work collaboratively. If you would like more information, please email [volunteers@irishgenealogical.org](mailto:volunteers@irishgenealogical.org). Walt and I would appreciate the opportunity to meet with you



Kinlough Castle, County Mayo. (Photo: Pat Sheehan)

## The Co-Presidents' Corner (Continued)

Walt Rothwell

It seems that most of us have experienced unusual weather so far in 2025. In saying that, I surely hope that none of yours has been threatening or tragic... simply unusual.

The Irish Fair of Minnesota will be held on August 8-10 in the Twin Cities on Harriet Island. Last year we had picture-perfect weather and a wonderful time in the IGSI booth. So far this year, we have a full slate of volunteers to help on Friday and Sunday but need volunteers to spend a few hours in the booth on Saturday between 9:30am and 6pm, when the festivities there kick into high gear. Could you help us this year? Since it's also Irish Saturday at the library in Mendota Heights, you could start or finish your day there with the Irish Collection. Please visit our sign-up page below to see which volunteer slots remain open. If you're at the fair but can't join us in the booth, please stop by and say hello to the IGSI volunteers. Maybe even offer them a much-appreciated chance for a snack break.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C084DA5AC22A4F9C16-56613436-igsi#/>

Our latest webinar was July 19 and our next is scheduled for August 23 when Dr. William Roulston will present to us from the Ulster Historical Foundation in Belfast: *Researching Presbyterian Ancestors in Ireland*. An outstanding speaker and author, Dr. Roulston will give a virtual presentation on Zoom. Please join us for the program or register now to have access to the recording.

<https://www.irishgenealogical.org/eventListings.php?nm=34>

The Education Committee just welcomed two new members and we'd love to add a few more. Whether you are an "old hand" in family history research or just learning the ropes, how about joining our welcoming and fun team? We focus on all experience levels in our webinar and event planning and would like to have diverse perspectives in our decisions. Please send a message to [education@irishgenealogical.org](mailto:education@irishgenealogical.org) so we can contact you with more information. We look forward to hearing from you!

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## Free IGSI Membership!



Each of us has interesting, unique stories about our Irish ancestors. Please consider sharing one of yours with us in our *Ginealas* eNewsletter. For example, tell us how you discovered a new ancestor, met an Irish cousin or discovered the family farm on a visit to Ireland, or broke through a brick wall in your Irish research. We would love to publish your story and are available to assist with editing as well.

If it's your first time submitting an article for publication in *Ginealas*, your name will be entered into a drawing for a **free one-year IGSI membership**. This offer is open to any current member who submits an article for the first time during 2025. The drawing will be held at the end of the year. Submit your article by email to: [enewsletter@irishgenealogical.org](mailto:enewsletter@irishgenealogical.org). We look forward to hearing from you!



[irishgenealogical.org](http://irishgenealogical.org)



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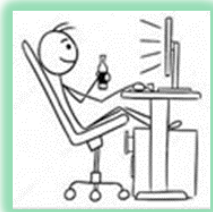
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The *Ginealas* eNewsletter is published bi-monthly: February, April, June, August, October, and December. It is a benefit of membership in IGSI. General membership: \$40. Electronic: \$35 (U.S. or International). General International or Dual: \$50. Electronic Dual: \$45. Contributions and article ideas are welcome.

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## Internet Notes

Kathy Kelley



### News from the Genealogy Giants

#### FindMyPast



[Britain and Ireland, Incoming Passenger Lists 1878-1960](#) contain more than 16 million passenger lists held by The National Archives.



More than 400,000 new records in the [Britain and Ireland, Naturalisations, 1844-1990](#) collection give details of who became citizens of the UK and Ireland.

### RootsIreland.ie



[New Tipperary Records!](#) Almost 9000 Roman Catholic baptism and marriage records from South Tipperary.



More than 69,000 new records added to [Counties Antrim and Down](#) databases. Collection examples include Electors of the Borough of Belfast 1832 and 1835, Index to 1796 Flaxgrowers Bounty list, 1740 Census of Protestant householders, and Ulster Directory 1900. In total, 12 new collections were added.



More than 20,000 Roman Catholic parish of Killorglin baptisms: 1789-1911 were added to the [Kerry Records Collection](#).



**Cá bhfuil tú i  
do chónaí?**





More than 175,000 new [historical records](#) and three new portals were introduced:  
[Age of Conquest Portal](#): Anglo-Norman Irish history (1170-1500);  
[Age of Revolution Portal](#): 1789 Rebellion and Ireland's link to the American Revolution;  
[Population Portal](#): includes 50,000 names from the destroyed 19<sup>th</sup> Century Census.



### In other News...



**Townlands: The Local Heroes of Genealogy** is now available to [watch on YouTube](#). Andrew Kane, researcher and author of the *Townland Atlas of Ulster*, talks about the significance and genealogical importance of townlands.

[The Irish at Gettysburg](#) is featured on Transatlantic: An Irish-American History Podcast. Fin Dwyer and Damian Sheils are joined by historian Harry Smeltzer to uncover the pivotal roles played by Irish soldiers and what life was like on a Civil War battlefield. Listen on your favorite podcast app.

### Blogs

FamilySearch.org **Full-Text Search** is now also available through the [all-collections search](#) on the FamilySearch home page (when signed in) and in the [FamilySearch catalog](#). Read the full blog with all the details [here](#).

John Dunlap, an Ulster-born printer and American Patriot, was the first to publish the Declaration of Independence. Read his story in this new [IrelandXO.com](#) blog post written by Brian Mitchell.

[IrishHeritageNews.ie](#) Genealogy News Round-up is jam-packed with new sources for historical records. Here are just a few examples:

- Ireland Genealogy Projects newly [digitized church records](#) for Tyrone.
- Irish Military Archives released new [Service Pension Files](#) (1916-1923).
- [Registry of Deeds](#) Index project has more than 630,000 records from 64,721 memorials.



[Irish Distillers](#) partnered with the Digital Repository of Ireland to make 22,000 historical records freely available online. These are legal agreements between Irish Publicans and the firm John Jameson & Son.

Claire Bradley, professional genealogist, gives an update on the **Digitization of Church records in Ireland**. She reported that almost all parish records have been scanned, with digital images available on computers in the library's reading room. There is no timeframe to transcribe the records. Read the full blog post [here](#).

The **Cork Graveyard database** project added nearly 100,000 new burial register records as reported in the blog post by [IrishHeritageNews.ie](#). This is the largest release of records by the Skibbereen Heritage Centre. Search the page directly [here](#).

An article by [bbc.com](#) news reports that the unmarked graves of thousands who died in the Irish famine in Belfast are to be officially marked. At least 10,000 bodies are buried at the cemetery on Donegall Road.

## Surname Interests What's Your Ainn?

### Flynn

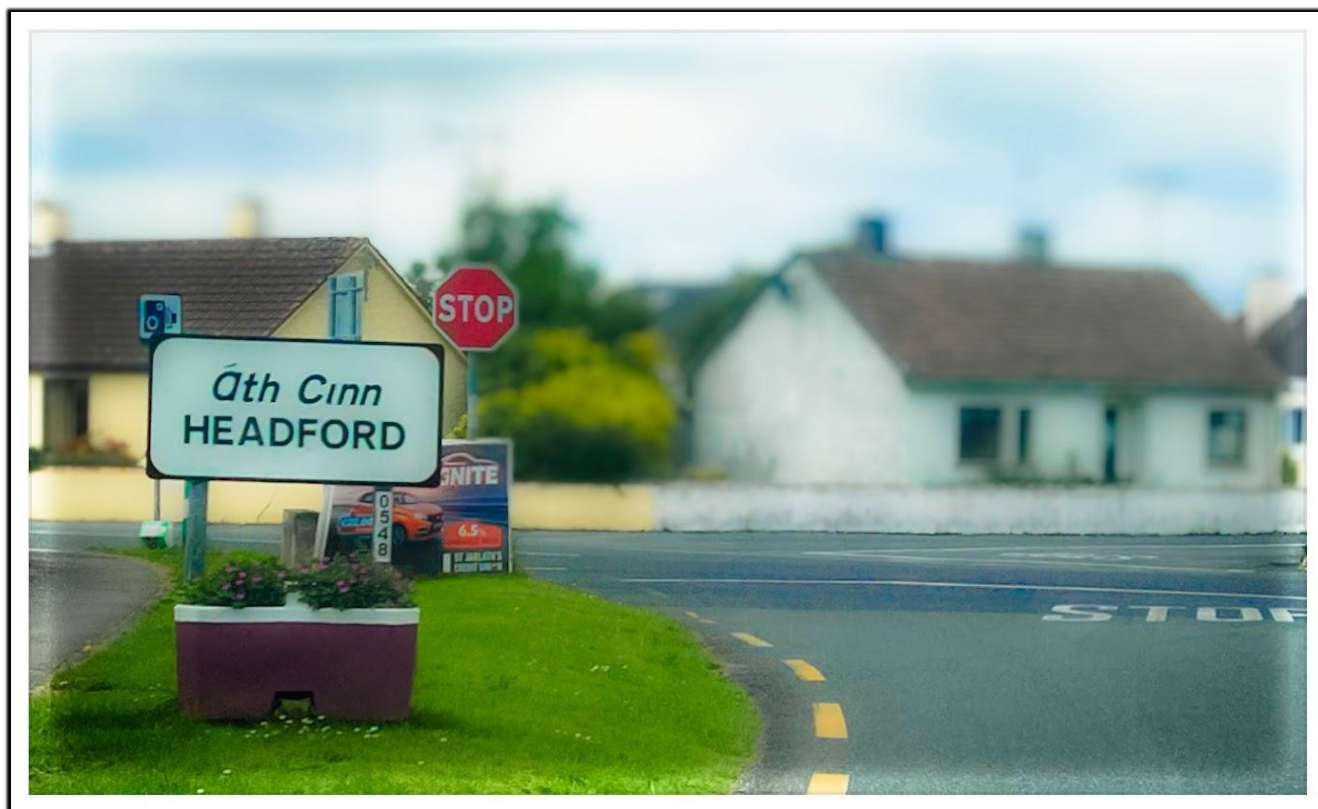
Sandra Mc Laughlin



**Flynn** is an Irish surname derived from 'Ó Floinn' or descendent of Flann, and/or 'Mac Floinn' meaning son of Flann, with Flann referring to someone with a red or ruddy complexion. It is one of the most common names in the Republic but less common in Ulster where the name is more commonly 'Lynn'.

The name Flynn originated in many areas of Ireland. There were O'Flynn septs in counties Clare and Kerry, two septs in Cork and one in northern Connacht. In Ulster the name Flynn is found in Cavan.

Variations include, Lynn, Linn, Fleyynn, Flyne, McFyinn, Offling, O'Loinn. In the IGSI Surname Database we have 5 Flynn's listed, 2 say they originate from Clare, 2 in Cork or Kerry and 1 in Tipperary. According to John Grenham, in the 1850's there were 527 Flynn heads of households in Cork, 391 in Waterford and 226 in Roscommon. By 1911 there were 353 in Cork, 242 in Waterford, 195 in Roscommon and Dublin. Flynn is also a common first name.



The Tuam Road to Headford, Galway. (Photo: Pat Sheehan)

## Tidy and Tiny: Top Towns of Coastal Ireland

Rick Steves



When someone asks me about visiting [Ireland](#), I tell them not to miss the southwest coast. This is the place to experience the wonders of the Gaelic language and old Irish civilization, as well as the country's contemporary charms. It's the most mystical, Celtic, spiritual, and rugged region of Ireland — and the towns along the way are just plain cute. There's even a competition for the best-kept town.

Every year, the Irish government holds a Tidy Town contest — and competition is fierce. Dozens of villages are judged for their beauty, charm, and, yes, tidiness. My own top contenders for the title of tidiest town hug the southwest coast, where each town is more endearing than the last. Beyond their pastel facades and prim potted flowers, [Kinsale](#), Kenmare, and [Dingle](#) offer rich history, natural beauty, and warm Irish hospitality.



**Ireland's legendary green countryside is the backdrop for the coastal town of Kinsale, a winner in the annual "Tidy Towns" contest. (Photo: Pat O'Connor)**

About a half hour south of Cork, Kinsale is a pint-sized Tidy Town winner, with 5,000 people, 25 pubs, and a super-sized history. In its day, this town was home to one of the most strategic forts in the British Empire. It had Ireland's best natural harbor and offered a gateway to both [Spain](#) and [France](#) — providing a potential base for either of these two powers to cut off English shipping. In what became 17th-century Britain's version of the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Spanish nearly took over Kinsale, almost gaining naval advantage over England. But England won and eventually built two huge, star-shaped fortresses to ensure control of Kinsale's narrow waterway. The town's long and skinny old center is part modern marina (attracting wealthy yachters) and part pedestrian-friendly medieval town (winning the affection of scalawags like me). On

my last visit, my local guide showed me a clever "Tumbler Cart" parked in the center of town. In the 18th century, this service vehicle made the rounds picking up the townsfolk's sewage, then dumping it in nearby fields. Today, it's just a delightful ornamental decoration filled with flowers — one of Kinsale's many quirky surprises.

Northwest of Kinsale is Kenmare, another recent Tidy Town winner that hooks visitors right away with rows of vividly painted shop fronts and a go-for-a-stroll atmosphere. And it keeps visitors around with the town square's traditional fairs and markets, as well as an ancient stone circle, opportunities for horseback riding and golfing, and the Kenmare Lace and Design Centre, which highlights the trade that put Kenmare on the map. (The town's knack for making exceptionally delicate lace helped it survive the devastating Irish famine of the mid-1800s.)

Quaint Kenmare is the perfect base for tackling the dramatic [Ring of Kerry](#), the road that loops around the deservedly famous western peninsula. Along the way, treat yourself to a stop at the [Kissane Sheep Farm](#) to enjoy an up-close look at sheep farming and the expertise of Ireland's competent sheepdogs. Meeting the farmer, his family, and their well-trained dogs is one of the best hours Ireland offers. (While they mostly do demonstrations for tour groups, if you call ahead it's easy to join one of their scheduled demos.)

In the evening, I like to stir up a little serendipity just wandering the town. The pub scene changes every couple of years, but locals with the gift of gab are always up for a pint and a good time.





**On the colorful streets of Dingle, you'll hear a steady beat of Irish folk music ringing out through vibrant pubs. (Photo: Pat O'Connor)**

Farther north along the coast, colorful little [Dingle](#) — my favorite town in all of Ireland — perches on Ireland's westernmost point. The dramatic scenery of the remote Dingle Peninsula is enough to draw anyone, but the prehistoric wonders that dot this region make it particularly intriguing. Dingle hasn't won a Tidy Town award yet, but it's only a matter of time. Its few streets, lined with ramshackle but gaily painted shops and pubs, run up from a rain-stung harbor always sheltering fishing boats and leisure sailboats. For an English-speaking traveler, the best "sights" in this town are its people. You may not find the proverbial pot of gold, but you'll treasure your encounters with the engaging, feisty people who live here. Most transactions come with an ample side-helping of friendly banter. As an Irishman once joked to

me, "How can I know what I think until I hear what I say?"

Dingle feels so traditionally Irish because it's part of the Gaeltacht, a region where the government subsidizes the survival of the Irish language and culture. Despite growing more touristy, Dingle's traditional charms are resilient. As the older generation slows down and fades away, a new generation of entrepreneurs is giving Dingle fresh vitality.

There's something delightful about small-town Ireland, where the people's connection to their culture and to their town is so vivid. These tidy little hubs offer a healthy dose of Irish culture, and their locations make them the perfect springboards for experiencing the plush beauty of the Emerald Isle. When the next Tidy Town competition rolls around, I'll be rooting for these three.

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**Glantane East Stone Circle, Musherabeg Mountain, County Cork. (Photo: Pat Sheehan)**

# How the Irish Lost Ireland to the British

Sandra Mc Laughlin



In 1167, Ruaidrí mac Tairrdelbach Ua Conchobair (Rory O'Connor), the King of Connacht, deposed Diarmait Mac Murchada (Dermot Mac Murphy), the King of Leinster, and became the High King of Ireland. There would never be another. Within two years Ireland would be forever changed. The Anglo-Norman Invasion of the country had begun.

Between 1167, when he was usurped, and 1169, Diarmait Mac Murchada sought to regain his kingdom. No longer able to raise an army in Connacht, Diarmait petitioned for help from King Henry II of England.

When Henry was not willing to become actively involved, Diarmait sought the support of Richard de Clare, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Pembroke, and his army of Anglo-Norman mercenaries. De Clare was more famously known as "Strongbow" and had the support of Henry II. In return for this support, Mac Murchada swore fealty to Henry and promised his daughter Aoife in marriage to de Clare, with the assurance that de Clare would have the right to succeed as King of Leinster upon Diarmait's death. The Norman mercenaries were also promised land. By 1170, Strongbow's forces had conquered Waterford, Dublin, eastern and southern Ireland and parts of Leinster.

King Henry, fearing that the Normans might remain in Ireland, invaded the country himself and in 1171 became the first British monarch to set foot in Ireland. Pope Alexander III granted papal approval for the invasion, approving the annexation of Ireland to England in the hopes that the English would help bring reform to the Irish church and allow the church to collect taxes. Henry declared himself 'Lord of Ireland' making Ireland a lordship and therefore under the rule of the English king. Henry's son John, later king himself, was subsequently made Lord of Ireland and in 1199 the Pope gave King John the right to make Ireland a Kingdom and John it's King.

Diarmait Mac Murchada remains a hated figure in Irish history. He is known as 'Diarmait na nGall' which translates to 'Dermot of the Foreigners.' By bringing de Clare's Anglo-Norman forces to Ireland he initiated over 800 years of oppression and forever altered the course of Irish history.



**Dúirt bean liom go ndúirt bean léi.**

**A woman told me that a woman told her.**

*Patrick O'Donovan, Minister for Arts, Culture,  
Communications, Media and Sport*



# The Connemara Pony

Patricia M Jenkins



THE CONNEMARA is a powerful all-purpose pony. The breed takes their name from Connemara in Galway on Ireland's wild, west Atlantic coast. A wind and rain swept place of bogs, boulders and magnificent mountains.

This makes for a terrain that is rough, rocky and uneven. It is here that these hardy ponies have long eked out an existence. Such an environment has undoubtedly contributed to the Connemara pony's much admired qualities of strength, stamina and resilience.

One story tells of a wild Connemara named Windy Day swimming three and a half miles through five foot waves.

They were originally employed as pack ponies carrying corn, seaweed, peat and potatoes along Connaught's craggy country roads. Their calm temperament and forbearance allowed them to stand for hours on bumpy bog land.

Along with their great capacity for hard work and their ability to endure sparse grazing solely on grass and gorse. In this way they maintained control of the vegetation by using their forefeet to break down the prickles thus making them edible.

The ponies are intelligent too with a great aptitude for jumping, even into old age. At a horse show in London in 1935 a twenty-two year old Connemara named 'The Nugget' jumped a seven feet hurdle.

Such versatility derives directly from their conformation. Standing at thirteen to fourteen hands high with a well proportioned head, big kindly eyes and slanting shoulders, coupled with strong muscular hindquarters, big boned legs and hardy hooves.

These power their driving force thus enabling them to cover ground well with their clear and natural paces. This makes them ideal for a variety of equestrian disciplines including carriage driving, dressage, hunting and show jumping.

Their patient nature and their medium size qualifies them for work as riding horses for both adults and children, even those with special needs.

The breed's status as great allrounders possibly derives from their diverse origins which date back to the 6th century BC. The Celts had achieved dominance over Europe, thanks to their superior horses, most probably acquired from Asia. These cross bred with native Irish equines.

In those ancient times the west coast of Ireland traded extensively with Spain. This trade brought in high quality horses from Andalusia and Barbs from North Africa. Both these added to the gene pool. Later cross breeding with Arab horses led to greater refinement of conformation.

Despite this ancient history the breed only came to public prominence in the late nineteenth century thanks to the Second Boer War then taking place in South Africa between 1899 and 1902.

The British Army's horses found the terrain tough going. They couldn't cope with long marches so much so that the army was losing 336 horses a day. Over the course of the war the British eventually lost 326,000 horses.

This tragedy led to the setting up of a Parliamentary Commission to find a hardier horse for cavalry troopers. In 1900 Professor Ewart of Edinburgh University visited Galway to study "the conditions and the possibilities" of the Connemara pony.

He found that a cavalier attitude to breeding prevailed. One of diverse mares and a lack of interest in the pedigree of stallions. He therefore recommended that the best stallions should be acquired for breeding and that a stud book should be opened. In 1923 this came to pass with the establishment of the Connemara Pony Breeders Society which is still going strong today.



The society's main aim is the maintenance of the stud book. It accomplishes this by encouraging the breeding of ponies of similar size and shape to produce a pony "suitable for general utility purposes."

In the first volume, published in 1926, seventy-five mares and six stallions were selected for breeding, including the famous Dun Lorenzo sire known for the hardiness and versatility of his offspring.

His daughter Drimeen Dun became the foundation mare for the renowned Errislannan Stud, managed by Don and Steph Brooks. They cross bred Connemara mares with an Irish draught stallion to produce a bigger and stronger mount for adult pony trekkers.

In more recent years Connemaras have been cross bred with native ponies overseas. One such example is the Basotho Pony Project at the Thaba Tseka Stud in the land locked African country of Lesotho during the 1980s.

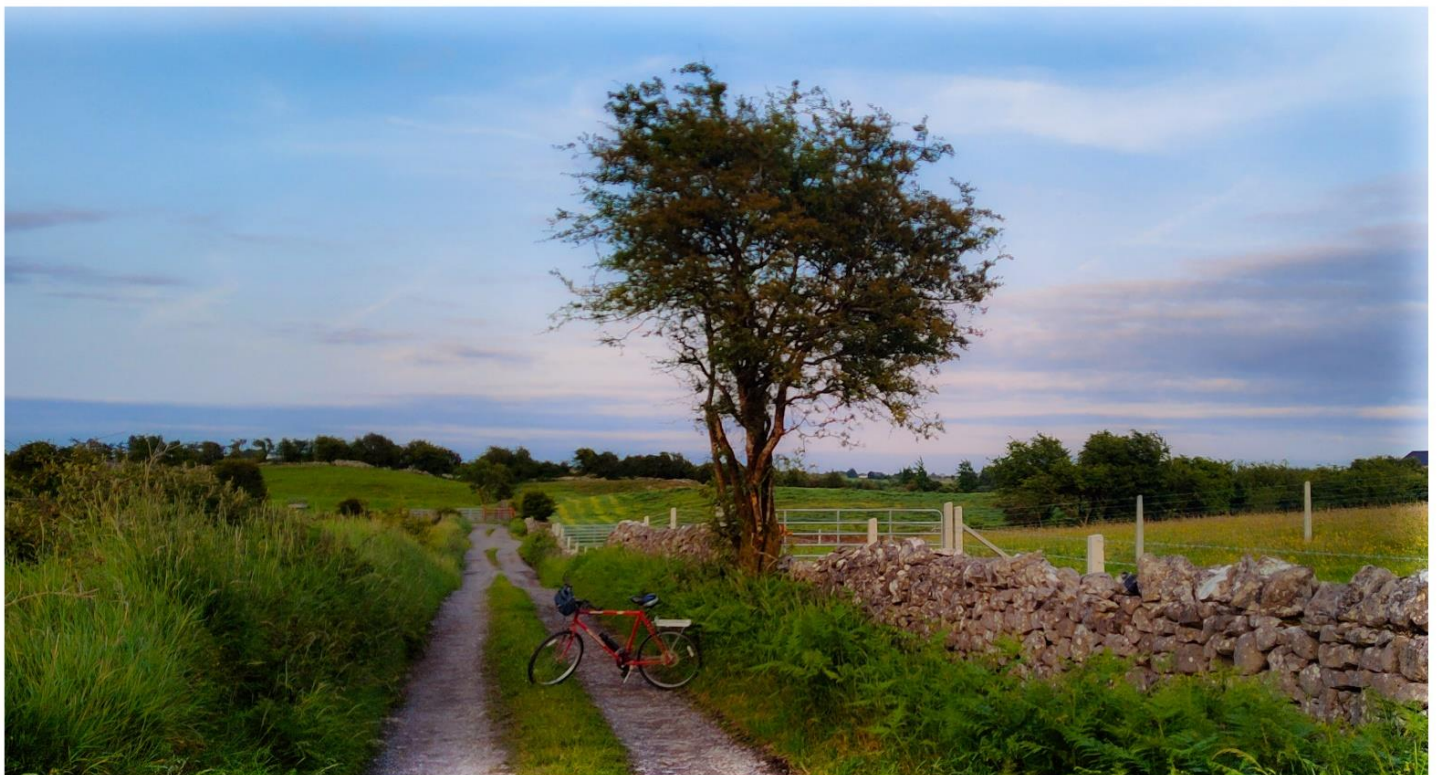
To improve the native Basotho pony stock a stallion named Crockaun Connemara was exported. When the leading breeder and Connemara enthusiast Pat Lyne visited the stud in 1987 Crockaun had adapted well and made himself at home.

Africa isn't the only place that Connemara ponies now call home. The Irish Breeders society has daughter societies in sixteen countries. Their officials travel to Clifden in Galway for the annual Festival Show held in the third week in August. The success of these breeding societies shows that Connemara ponies have truly conquered the world.

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Cycling along an old bóithrín. (Photo: Pat Sheehan)



## The IGSI Visits the New Jersey Irish Festival

Trish Little Taylor



Picture a lovely summer afternoon with Irish music, vendors selling Irish goods, a pipe band competition, and step dancers celebrating just being Irish. Families from grandparents to toddlers arriving for a fun day of watching horse racing and being Irish. This was the fifty-third New Jersey Irish Festival and the second that the Irish Genealogical Society International (IGSI) participated in.

Sandra Mc Laughlin, Mary Stuart, and I staffed the IGSI table. We had a terrific location, which enabled us to talk with many folks. Some signed up for the email lists. Others just wanted to get information on their family name. I brought several books on family names, and our visitors made copies on their cell phones. Mary brought her computer and did quick research for several people. For one patron, Mary found his parents' and grandparents' wedding pictures. He made copies of the photos on his cell phone. The gentleman was delighted. Online research at festivals and fairs might be an activity we should pursue.

Overall, it was a lovely day. This event was an opportunity to expand our name recognition. I hope that the IGSI will be back again next year.

### GIVING PRAISE



|                           |                     |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Go hiontach! .....        | Excellent!          |
| Ar fheabhas! .....        | Brilliant           |
| Maith sibh! .....         | Well done everyone! |
| Maith thú, a Liam! .....  | Well done, Liam!    |
| Ar dóigh! .....           | Excellent!          |
| Dochreidte! .....         | Unbelievable!       |
| An-iarracht! .....        | Great effort!       |
| Sáriarracht! .....        | Fantastic effort!   |
| An-mhaith! .....          | Very good!          |
| Tá sé sin thar barr ..... | That is fantastic!  |
| Sin é! .....              | That's it!          |
| Sin é go díreach! .....   | That's it, exactly! |



**Ná déan míol mór de mhíoltóg!**  
Don't make a mountain out of a molehill!



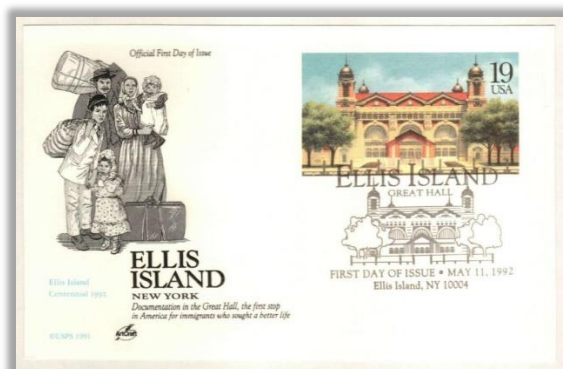
## A Visit to Ellis Island

Trish Little Taylor



The May IGSI webinar featured Liz Gomoll presenting “Unlocking Notation Codes on Alien Passenger Lists.” In her talk, Liz told us that the five major U.S. ports of entry were New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New Orleans. Passenger manifests were created at the port of departure on a form provided by the ship’s company and were written in English. When a ship arrived at the U.S. port, the captain provided the manifests to the immigration clerk. New lists were not created on arrival. These clerks just needed to compare the arriving person’s name to the manifest.

After Liz’s talk I was inspired to visit Ellis Island. My grandfather, William Little, arrived here in May 1901. My adventure began with a trip to Jersey City and Liberty State Park. I had visited Ellis Island many years ago, but since that time there have been many changes. The ticket office is in the railroad station building where immigrants could purchase tickets to points west. Visitors can take either the walkway or the ferry to get to the island. The walkway is about a quarter mile long but I chose the ferry because it gave me the opportunity to arrive at the island like so many of our ancestors did long ago. On the ferry ride, it was interesting to see families ranging from grandparents to toddlers traveling to learn about the immigrant experience. There were tourists speaking a variety of languages and I imagined that my grandfather had experienced that too.



I took the tour offered by the National Park Service. It began in the main room of the processing center called the baggage room. I do not think after crossing the Atlantic Ocean that I could leave my possessions here; I would want to keep them with me. We then walked to the six-second medical exam which occurred at a staircase with two landings. The medical staff would watch the immigrants climb the stairs to see if there was a limp, shortness of breath, or other medical condition. Immigrants with such conditions would be pulled aside for more in-depth examinations. The purpose was to prevent

people who would be a drain on the government’s resources from entering the U.S.

In the processing room, the travelers would line up and would give the agent their name and answer a few questions. If there were no problems, the travelers would be on their way within three to five hours. Single women had to provide assurance that someone in the U.S. would care for them, and might be held until someone came to meet them.

The tour included the processing center’s third floor which was designed as a dormitory. If the passenger was in the VIP section, he shared a room with thirty-five people. After 1924, only passengers with paperwork problems went to Ellis Island. During the Second World War, Ellis Island’s buildings held foreign nationals suspected of being enemy aliens. The immigration center officially closed in 1954.



With the Bicentennial Celebration and then the Centennial Anniversary of the Statue of Liberty, Ellis Island was repurposed and enhanced as the National Immigration Museum. There is a database at the Family History Center there where visitors can search for their immigrant ancestors. Using this tool, I located my grandfather's record as well as those of his sisters, Roseann and Sarah.

I decided that I would take the ferry back to New Jersey. It stopped at the Statue of Liberty, but I decided to just head back to my hotel. The trip was delightful, and I now felt closer to my family who traveled from Ireland.



Castlehackett, Galway. (Photo: Pat Sheehan)



Finvarra, King of the fairies

**Castlehackett** is a 13<sup>th</sup> century tower house that stands at the foot of Knockma Hill in Belclare, County Galway. It is a fascinating example of medieval architecture and history in Galway. It has a rectangular plan with four corners and a vaulted basement.

The castle was also associated with local legends and folklore, such as the fairy King Finvarra, who was said to live under Knockma Hill.

"If you come up with an idea,  
you're left with it."  
Damien Gibbons, Tuam, Galway



## Irish or Gaelic?

Sandra Mc Laughlin



You may think that I am getting picky, but let me try to clarify this annoying misunderstanding...

When people refer to the native language of Ireland, it is appropriately called Irish. This is what native people in Ireland call their native language. I realize that many of you refer to Irish as "Gaelic," which you might get by with in the US, but in Ireland, it will quickly label you as a gringo, (and no, there is no Irish word for "gringo").

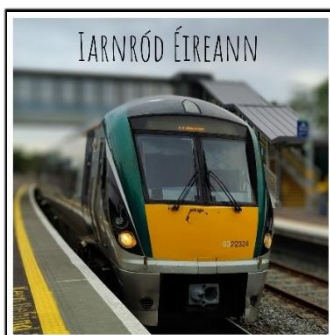
Gaelic is used by the Scots when referring to their native language, which is referred to as "Scottish Gaelic." So, if you use the word Gaelic in Ireland, people may think you're talking about the Scots.

Irish, Scottish Gaelic, and Manx are the three "Goidelic" languages, and they are three closely related, but separate languages: Irish from Ireland, Scottish Gaelic from Scotland, and Manx from the Isle of Man. The British just lumped them all together and called them Gaelic. So, if you want to be on the right side of history, let go of the Gaelic.

To complicate matters, if you really want to be authentically Irish, you call your language "Gaeilge," which is pronounced "Gwale-guh." But Irish is just as good.



The first sign upon entering Ireland, "Welcome to Dublin Airport." (Photo: Pat Sheehan)



Various bilingual signs at all Irish Rail (Iarnród Éireann) stations. (Photos: Pat Sheehan)

## First Ever NFL Game in Ireland

Dave Miller



The Pittsburgh Steelers will host the Minnesota Vikings at Croke Park in Dublin, Ireland on September 28<sup>th</sup>. This will be the first ever NFL regular season game played in Ireland. I'm sure many Vikings and Steelers fans will be in attendance at Croke Park and even more will be watching the game on television back in America.

Wouldn't it be fun to know some Gaeilge (Irish) terms related to football? Would you like to impress your friends and family by spouting off a bit of Gaeilge while watching the game at home on September 28<sup>th</sup> or, if you're lucky enough to be there, to the fans next to you at Croke Park? For sure, you'll be waiting for the first team to score a *talmhú* or touchdown as we know it here in America.

I spoke to Mollie Guidera recently about Gaeilge terms that might apply to American football. Mollie has a website [www.irishwithMollie.com](http://www.irishwithMollie.com) where she teaches Gaeilge courses to students all around the world. Mollie taught me a few words and phrases that you and I might be able to use during the big game. For example, halftime is *leath-am* in Gaeilge and field goal is *cú ón imirt*.

Here are other examples:

|                           |                                                     |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|
| American football         | <b><i>Peil mheiriceánach</i></b>                    |
| Defense                   | <b><i>Cosaint</i></b>                               |
| May the luck rise with ye | <b><i>Go n-éirí an t-ádh libh</i></b>               |
| Go you!                   | <b><i>Lean ort</i></b>                              |
| Come on, we can do it!    | <b><i>Seo linn, is féidir linn é a dhéanamh</i></b> |
| Congratulations!          | <b><i>Comhghairdeas</i></b>                         |



Mollie Guidera

On September 28<sup>th</sup>, you'll be watching from home or sitting with the other fans or *fean* at the game which will be played in Croke Park or *Páirc an Chrócaigh*. The Minnesota Vikings or *Lochlannaigh* and the Pittsburgh Steelers or *Cruachóir* will be facing each other on the field.

And when it's *leath-am* and time for a pint of Guinness, what do you say to the bartender? "*Guinness le do mhian*" or "A pint of Guinness, please!"

Whether you're watching the game at home or at Croke Park, *Ádh mór* or Big Luck!

*Sláinte* to all on September 28<sup>th</sup>. With every good wish! *Le gach dea-ghu!*



## Irish Saturday at the Library

Ann Eccles and Peggy Peters



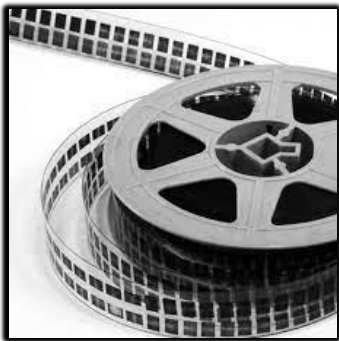
**A Wedding Dance (1848) by Daniel MacDonald.**  
(Photo: Crawford Art Gallery, Cork)

We never quite know what question we will hear when a researcher walks into the library on an Irish Saturday.

It could be someone from out of town looking to research an ancestor who settled in Minnesota. It could be someone looking to learn more about an Irish ancestor's religion – when it's not Catholic. (Our collection includes books about Presbyterians and Quakers (Society of Friends) in Ireland and as early immigrants to the U.S.) It could be someone looking to confirm births or marriages of an ancestor circa 1800.

Two sisters from out of town visited one Irish Saturday to find information on an ancestor who had settled in the western suburbs of the Twin Cities in the mid-1800s. The women would not be in town long enough to check civil (e.g. property) records; they sought to locate the ancestor through online databases and books at the library. Information from a source they brought indicated the general area they had settled. Two of us recognized the ancestor's surname and indicated that a road of that name existed along Lake Minnetonka. We provided directions when they decided in the afternoon to drive and see the area. We also provided contact information for the local historical society.

The Hoffman Library has numerous books on local Minnesota history and geographic areas. There are also materials on all the states and a large collection of Canadian information and records, if ancestors landed there.



Another day, a researcher wanted to find a record of the marriage of an Irish immigrant in Corcoran, Minnesota, in 1880. Using microfilm of archdiocesan records for the parish and year, we found no such record but did find baptismal records for two children with that surname in the mid-1880s. Turning to 1880 census records, we found the bride's name in Hastings, Minnesota. Turning back to the archdiocesan microfilm records, we found a marriage record for her at a Catholic church in Hastings. (In Catholic tradition, marriage is held in the home parish of the bride.) Census records as well as microfilm of local Catholic church records helped resolve this query. Since the groom's family lived in Corcoran, we assume the young couple settled on or near his family's farm.

We like to talk with first time research visitors to understand and help direct their search. We try to reinforce the genealogy research process: to start with the present and move backwards in time. Sometimes a researcher has some piece(s) of family lore related to birth date or county of origin in Ireland. The information may be very trustworthy or perhaps not. If they insist on starting with County Tipperary records "because that's what our family story says", we will offer help but may check back a bit later to see how the search is going.



Occasionally, we need to explain the lack of Irish birth/baptism records for the late 1700s/early 1800s to a researcher - after complimenting their success in finding so much information on their family already. The resources of the IGSI collection in the Hoffman library are numerous but still limited; searching for Irish ancestors in the 1700s is better done with research help in Ireland. What we can do is listen, advise, offer suggestions for further research, and perhaps offer a print book describing life in a particular county when their ancestor may have lived there.

Please stop by on an Irish Saturday. We'd love to meet and talk with you.



IS FEAR GO MALL  
NÁ GO BRÁCH.



Better late than  
never.

## Thousands are Sailing to America

Ye sons and fair daughters of Erin's green isle,  
I pray stand attention and listen awhile  
Our sons and fair daughters they are all going away,  
In thousands they're leaving for America.

Their friends all do gather and the neighbours also,  
Their trunks are all packed up just ready to go  
And the tears from their eyes, they fall down like the rain  
When the horses are leaving going off for the train.

When they reach the station, you can hear their last cry,  
Their handkerchiefs waving and bidding goodbye.  
Their parents will tell them to be sure for to write  
And they all watch the train till it goes out of sight.

When they reach the steamer after leaving the strand  
They give one last look round at their own native land  
Saying, 'Our hearts they are breaking at leaving the shore  
And goodbye to old Ireland – shall I ever see you more.'

So good luck to those people and safe may they land  
They are leaving their country for a far distant strand  
They are leaving old Ireland, no longer can stay  
And thousands are sailing to America.



Author unknown, "Thousands are Sailing to America," Treoir 2025 Iml 58 Uimhir 1 2025 1SS No 790 004X Pg 90.  
Treoir is published thrice annually by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

## Finding An Immigrant's Place of Origin (Reprinted from Vol. 4 Issue 3 – September 2011)

Tom Rice

If you wish to learn more about an immigrant ancestor, you need to look at them from both ends of the emigration – immigration experience. If you know where they came from in the Old Country, then this is relatively easy in many ways. However, if as is more often the case, you do not know the immigrant's place of origin, then the task is somewhat more difficult.

In the latter situation, the rule is to focus on the person in their new land, because here you know you have the correct person in the right place. With this in hand, the search can easily be defined as looking at every record regarding the immigrant, and if that fails, looking at the records of his/her family, associates, and neighbors. This is where the two most important bits of information are to be found: where the immigrant came from and when and how they traveled to their new home.

Once the birth place of the immigrant has been discovered, or at least their port and time of departure has been uncovered, you can then turn your attention to records of those places and time.

Looking at the immigrant from the perspective of their new home, the genealogist should focus on at least the following types of records for clues to their place of origin: census records, church records, vital records, obituaries, newspaper accounts, local histories, tombstones, naturalization records, ship manifests, alien registrations, passport applications, family bible records, social security and railroad retirement records, military records (including draft registrations), and organizational membership records. Before such an in depth search, the researcher should spend some time learning about any record types they are unfamiliar with in order to get full value from them.

If a thorough search of records in the immigrant's new home fails to reveal his place of origin, then the researcher should turn his/her attention to the immigrant's native land. With no clues as to place of origin two types of surname searches are in order. First, would be a surname distribution study. (This, of course will be helpful in direct relationship to the scarcity of the surname.) If the name is, say, Ryan or Murphy, such a study is useless.

If the immigrant married and perhaps even had children prior to leaving the homeland, then a search of both spouses' surnames may be in order to find places where the two surnames occur in nearby locations. If the immigrant left Ireland during the time civil registration was in effect, a search for either a birth or marriage may be helpful.

Again, the rarer the name, the greater the chances for success.

With an ever increasing number of birth, marriage, and death records being listed on the Internet, searching these online databases should be a part of any research of this kind. If the researcher knows only a general area in Ireland, then it may not be too much of a task to search in records, such as relevant estate papers, poor law records, tombstone inscription lists, census fragments, etc.

Because many immigrants traveled via an indirect route, if the stopping-off points are known, the records of these places should be studied. Depending upon where and when the immigrant was in a way-point (such as Liverpool or Canada) on their way to the U.S., look at census records, church records, poor law records, civil vital records, and ship lists.

Finding an immigrant's place of origin is often a difficult job, but once known, it opens the avenue to the generations proceeding the immigrant and allows the researcher to gain much understanding of the immigrant and his family prior to emigration.



## Know Your Society

Janelle Asselin



My name is Janelle Asselin, and I am IGSI's marketing committee chair. I joined IGSI in the fall of 2023 and started volunteering with The Society almost immediately. Besides the marketing committee, I am also a member of the education committee, a proofreader for The Septs, run the IGSI Instagram account, and wear a few other hats as needed too!

I grew up outside of Omaha in both Nebraska and Iowa but have lived all over the United States for work. I currently live in Madison, Wisconsin with my spouse and our four cats in an old house filled with books. I've worked in the publishing industry as an editor for the past couple decades, which is also how long I've been interested in genealogy. Living in New York City, far from my family, the growth of genealogy websites allowed me to connect to my family in a different way. I have the US version of the show *Who Do You Think You Are?* to thank for inspiring me to get started.

I have a BA in English Language and Literature and an MS in Publishing, both of which I found immensely rewarding. In recent years, as I looked towards the future of my career, I began developing the skills needed to become a professional genealogist. I am almost done with the NGS Advanced Skills in Genealogy course, recently attended GRIP, and attend a lot of webinars whenever I find free time in between work and life obligations. Although I am eternally busy with all of this, one of the things I really love about volunteering with IGSI is the way it brings me in contact with other people who are passionate about genealogy, since so often this is a solitary interest. I hope to begin pursuing certification later this year, schedule allowing.

My DNA ethnicity estimates (for however much those are worth) tell me I'm mostly Irish, but really, I'm descended from many French Canadians and Irish Canadians, plus some scattered English, Scottish, German, and Lithuanian ancestors. Thanks to my paternal grandmother, Eileen O'Rourke Asselin, and my father, I grew up with a strong sense of connection to my Irish roots, which is why IGSI was one of the first genealogy societies I joined.

Through my research, I've discovered that my Irish ancestry through my grandma was actually even more complex than we realized. Her mother, my great grandmother Mary Dubuque, had a French-Canadian maiden surname before she married a very Irish O'Rourke, but she was descended from the Scottish and Irish Canadian Henrietta Wilkie. Henrietta was the niece of Scottish artist Sir David Wilkie via his brother James and James' wife Dorothea Briscoe, daughter of Anglo-Irish landed gentry. Henrietta according to family lore ran off "with the Irish stableboy" – the inconveniently named Patrick Smith – and it's their daughter Isabella Smith that my line is descended from.

Part of what I love about genealogy is learning the stories of the people who came before me in a literal sense – it's not just learning about general history (which I also love) but makes history personal. The events happening around my ancestors affected who they were and the choices they made, just as current events shaped us, and I love gaining a better understanding of their lives through my research.





The editor's assistant, Dearbhla Ní Shíodhacháin, ÓBrien Street Park, Ceann Toirc, County Cork.  
(Photo: Pat Sheehan)



*Scan with  
your phone  
to view IGSI's  
website.*



**Sin é!**

**(That's it!)**



**Sméar Dubh  
(Blackberry)**

