

# *Tinteán*

THE AUSTRALIAN IRISH HERITAGE NETWORK

No 1, August 2007–Dec 2007

PRINT POST APPROVED PP 336663/00047

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*Tinteán* is a publication of the Australian Irish Heritage Network

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Published four times per annum

ABN 13643653067

ISSN 1835-1093

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Views expressed in the articles, letters  
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Network or of the editor.

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# The Australian Irish Heritage Network

Membership is open to all with an identification with Irish heritage. It was founded in 2007 to continue the spirit and work of Val and Mary Noone. One of its activities is to put out the magazine *Tinteán* (meaning hearth in Gaelic).

The AIHN office is in the basement of the Celtic Club. We express our thanks to the Club for its generosity. People are welcome to drop in. However the office is not staffed full time. Check first.

Thank you to Ciaran Mara and Orica Ltd for supporting the AIHN with the provision of office furniture.

And thanks to the Irish ambassador Mr Máirtín Ó Fainín, for much encouragement.

This association aims to build the social, cultural, sporting, historical and literary consciousness of Irish-Australians. Attention will be given to family history, but also the big themes of exile, diaspora and settlement. There will be a continual study of the political and economic evolution of the Ireland, and the contribution which Irish-Australians have made to Australia. The intention is to explore and celebrate the playing out of the Irish heritage in Australia.

Towards our objectives we will produce publications, put on social and educational events; use the internet; offer awards for service; issue cultural and political comment, raise funds for worthy causes; research and record our heritage.

# Letters

## Notes of encouragement...

Thank you for the invitation to become a foundation member of AIHN.

**Catherine Herrick, Flemington, Vic.**

All the best with the venture.

**Denise Doyle, RSM, Altona, Vic.**

Congratulations to all of you for carrying the baton on. All the very best to the editorial committee.

**Mary Dowling, Travancore, Vic.**

I wish you great success in your new venture.

**Frances O'Kane Hale, Yarrowonga, Vic.**

Looking forward to the first issue and beyond.

**Brian Dacy, Ringwood, Vic.**

## ...and notes of praise

I do hope that the enclosed donation and subscription will help in some small way with the launching of AIHN. I miss receiving *Táin* and will look forward to receiving *Tinteán*.

**Michael Sexton, Clifton Springs, Vic.**

We are very pleased and happy to learn that you are starting *Tinteán* magazine. We would like to wish all concerned every success in your new venture and we hope that it gives us the enjoyment that we had with *Táin*. May god bless each and everyone with *Tinteán*.

**Peg & Gerry O'Connor, Yea, Vic.**

May everything go successfully for you, as *Táin* did for Val Noone and Mary Doyle.

**Peg Cockram, Frankston South, Vic.**

My late mother, Marie Boyce, enjoyed reading *Táin* and I am sure that she would join me in wishing you all well in the future.

**Marcia Boyce, Warrnambool, Vic.**

I am writing to express my delight that several interested Irish Australians are going to carry on the great work done by Val Noone and Mary Doyle in producing our own national magazine. It would have been a great loss to the Irish Australian community and I hope that *Tinteán* is widely supported.

**Catherine Arthur, Camberwell, Vic.**

Congratulations for starting *Tinteán*. I am glad to see the good work of Val Noone and Mary Doyle being carried on. My ancestors came from Co Tipperary in the 1850s and settled around Kyneton and Bendigo. Thanks again for taking this initiative. Best wishes to the editorial committee.

**Donal Dwyer, Canberra, A.C.T.**

## Wild Geese Day

Congratulations on your important decision to continue with the work of publishing an Irish heritage magazine – an important part of making Irish Australians more aware and proud of their Irish heritage. I am keen to see plenty of Irish history articles and book reviews in future issues of *Tinteán*.

I am pleased to support any Irish heritage project. I am in the process of forming the Irish Breeds Dog Club, with the intention of promoting the Irish dog breeds. Would you be interested in publishing some material on the Irish dog breeds?

I believe one important aspect of Irish history that has been kept 'secret' from the Irish diaspora in the dominions is the story of the 'Wild Geese'. The incredible achievements of hundreds of thousands of Irishmen in the service of Spain, France, the Austro-Hungarian empire, Russia and the USA should be made known to young Irish Australians – and perhaps even celebrated each year on 11 May, the anniversary of the battle of Fontenoy in 1745.

Wild Geese have provided a president of France, two prime ministers of Spain, numerous generals and field marshals for continental powers, colonial governors in the Spanish empire, and political and military leaders in the South American wars of independence, e.g. Chile's Bernardo O'Higgins. Many of the most talented British generals have been Irish.

In conjunction with the traditional Irish Steeplechase horse race event held at Mornington each year on the third Sunday of May, I am organising an annual Celtic Festival. 2007 was our first year. Steeplechasing, invented in Co Cork in 1752, is another Irish export to the world.

I wish you all the luck of the Irish with your important Irish heritage publishing venture.

**Michael Doyle, Dromana, Vic.**

*Dromana is also the name of a Fitzgerald castle in Co Waterford.*

## The big questions...

Congratulations all for the brave endeavour of getting *Tinteán* out. I used to get in the bath, take up each new issue of *Táin*. I would re-heat the water till I had got from the front to the back. I can't quite explain the charm Val's mags had for me.

Particularly I loved the quirky. The fate of Ned Kelly's horse became quite important to me. Did it really have 'Kate' tattooed on its shoulder? Was it really ridden around the Kew area?

Of similar interest was the provenance of Captain De Groot's sword. How come it has turned up in a descendant of the Captain who lives in County Wicklow? Won't it be reclaimed by some historical museum in Australia?

The other night I met a man in a café who was a Donohue. There was a myth in his family, he said, that they were descended from Bold Jack Donohue, the outlaw from Castlemaine. He asks if *Tinteán* can help them to establish the truth or not of this. They do not have much to go on, however they do think that they look a little like the death mask of the outlaw. Does anyone know about the Bold Jack Donohue? Did he have any progeny?

**Gerry Fahey, Castlemaine, Vic.**



# The Australian Irish Heritage Network

"In 1883 the *Sydney Morning Herald* pronounced, '... an Irish Australian is a creature of whom we cannot possibly conceive. He is or he is not one of us ...'"

Quoted by Patrick O'Farrell, in his unfinished study of sectarianism *Double Jeopardy*.

How Irish is multicultural Australia? What has the Irish heritage contributed to this country? What does an Australian Irish Heritage Network have to explore and celebrate?

The *7:30 Report* (June 17) ran a story about the Greek cafes that were ubiquitous in Australia's country towns and suburbs for most of the latter half of the 20th century. The proprietors of these cafes cooked what they thought of as Australian food for their customers, but Greek food for their own families. They were inclined to sneer at the food their customers preferred. It was a time when even spaghetti was a novelty.

One never sees programs like this about the Australian-Irish Diaspora.

We were preparing an application for a grant from the Australian Government to help us set up our AIHN. A question required us to indicate whether we were indigenous or not. Of course we answered no.

These two snippets of Australian life provoke some questions.

Should the Australian-Irish be considered as just one strand of a multi-cultural society? Or have we been here so long, and are now so integrated that we are indeed 'indigenous' within Australian culture?

Our flowering as mainstream in this culture is indicated by a quick list. From our ethnic origins have come the Kellys, Paul and Ned; the Murphys, Graeme and Lionel; James Gleason, our greatest Surrealist and Murray Gleeson, Chief Justice; the Brennans, poets Christopher, and CJ, as well as priest, Frank; the Joe politicians, Scullin and Lyons; the novelists, Joseph Furphy and Thomas Kenneally; the Bourkes, Governor and explorer; the horse jumping Hanrahans; sportsmen: the Darcys and the Murphys; the Sheedy, Dyer and Sheehy. This list is both wonderful and embarrassing. How many politicians like Edith Lyons, Susan Ryan, and indigenous leaders like Lowitja O'Donoghue, should and will be added? Who have been the Australian Irish female leaders?

## Tinteán - the hearth

Yes, that is our name.

Believe us, it was not selected after a bolt of lightning inspiration! Rather, it was a result of a very tortuous process within the founding committee, undergoing a democratic, vigorous but elegant debate. Of course we had to go through all the painfully obvious choices first and inevitably dismiss them: The Shamrock, The Tricolour, Fáilte, Four Green Fields and so on until someone called a halt.

On another tack, we all agreed that it would be very desirable and appropri-

ate to have a name that was resonant in some way of our prestigious predecessor, Táin, meaning a gathering. This struck a sympathetic chord with everyone.

Then, one of us, erudite and gentle and with genuine credentials, proffered that there was an Irish word that struck a note in keeping and resonating with the beloved Táin or Gathering and that word was Tinteán (pronounced Tintoyne), meaning the hearth.

We were told of an old Irish saying: "Níl aon tinteán mar do thintéan féin."

These familiar names and the teeming millions of unknown Australian-Irish, convicts, orphan girls, and policeman have transformed life on this continent. Although names like Murphy and Kelly have little exotic multicultural flavour within Australian society today, The Australian Irish Heritage Network is interested in every single one of them and their stories.

For recent Vietnamese or Lebanese migrants, our names are just part of the mainstream Anglo culture. But for those of us, thinking about Ronald Ryan, prepared for the gallows by John Brosnan, such names still carry a particular excitement. Paul Keating had a vision of the future of republican Australia, grounded in reconciling its past and located in the Asia/South Pacific. But, to

his passions, ideas and language, he brings an Irish creativity and insouciance. Don Watson, in a fascinating passage in his memoir of the Keating years, draws parallels between the operating methods and discourse of Ned Kelly and Keating. Could a prime minister of any other than Celtic stock have delivered, with such a reservoir of personal passion, the Redfern speech about reconciliation?

Did Sydney Nolan invest elements of Irish history into his epic series of Kelly paintings?

Perhaps we can debate the claim that the penetration of a dominant Anglo culture by the Irish from below, transformed this place and built a society which would welcome subsequent immigrant groups.

So we in the Australian-Irish diaspora live with ambivalence.

We treasure our ethnic inheritance. We frequently travel back to our island home of origin, Ireland, and continue our deep affection for it. But we are also proud of the contribution we have made to Australia. We are both enthralled by its evolution, and continually deepening our sense of belonging to and caring for this continent.

This provides the program for the AIHN: - the exploration and celebration of the lives of the Australian-Irish. AIHN is registered as a not for profit incorporated association. Hopefully anyone who identifies with a love of both Ireland and Australia will naturally join. The organization will organize events, this magazine, high quality chat, research, - hopefully building community and identity in the process. **Terry Monagle**

"There's no hearth like the warmth of your own hearth". All around the table repeated the name.

Some negative aspects were mooted, corruptions such as Tintáin and even Tintin, and similar word associations. But 'a Gathering' the 'Hearth' and the gentle relationship of the two titles caught the imagination of all.

A quick vote and we were away. And "Tinteán" it is and we do hope you like it. So now lets all gather around the hearth.

**Peter Kiernan**

# News



The Havingsten arriving in Dublin  
Werner Karrasch  
©Vikingskibsmuseet i Roskilde

## Vikings say "Sorry"

In Dublin recently to celebrate the arrival of a replica Norse longboat, the Danish Culture Minister, Brian Mikkelsen, apologised for the destructive raids and massacres wrecked on the Irish by his Viking ancestors over several centuries in the first millennium. "In Denmark, we are certainly proud of this ship, but we are not proud of the damages to the people of Ireland that followed in the footsteps of the Vikings," Mr. Mikkelsen said.

The first Viking raids occurred in about 795, attacking the wealthy monastic establishments on remote islands. By 841, Vikings had established Dublin as a fortified winter settlement. Irish history claims that the Vikings were defeated and expelled from Ireland by Brian Boru, High King of Ireland at the famous Battle of Clontarf in 1014, but in fact they were absorbed into the traditional culture of Ireland over several centuries.

The reconstruction of the replica longboat, The Havingsten, was based on a vessel found on the bottom of Roskilde Fjord in 1962. The original vessel is believed to have been built in Dublin in 1042. The Havingsten sailed across the North Sea this summer with a volunteer

crew of 65 men and women braving the primitive conditions and will undertake the return journey during the next northern summer.

Source: *The Age* 17/08/07

## Fastest in the World!

After almost two centuries of declining population, Ireland is now the "fastest repopulating small country in the world". The 2006 census has revealed that the total population of Ireland is now 4.2 million, up by 322,645 on the previous census. It is estimated that by 2032, the population will be the same as it was before the devastating 19th century Famine.

Most of the increase has been the influx of migrants from Eastern Europe, mostly from Poland (there are now 63,276 Poles living permanently in Ireland) but with a significant number from Africa, mostly Nigeria. In some small districts 52% of the residents are non-Irish. The mayor of Portlaoise, in the Midlands, is Nigerian, Rotimi Adebai. There are many advantages to the steady increase in population. Unlike most other western nations, Ireland's population is not ageing – the median age is 33 – thus the country is escaping the problems besetting most other ageing Western European nations (and Australia). And the rising population can only benefit and sustain the remarkable economic growth of the past decade or so according to Dublin economist Eunan King.

There are of course disadvantages caused by such unprecedented growth with the entire infrastructure, housing, roads, health care et al feeling the pressures of increased demands. But the new Minister for Integration, Conor Lenihan said that Ireland and the Irish were committed to sharing and developing its new wealth with the new arrivals.

Source: *The Age* 21/08/07

## Melbourne Writers' Festival

Another Melbourne Writer's Festival has successfully concluded. Amongst the plethora of activities, seminars, workshops special events and a range of writers, famous and obscure, academics, ordinary folk, two events were of particular interest to Tinteán readers.

Peter Behrens' historical novel *The Law of Dreams* has already won the Canadian Governor General's Award for English Fiction and is shortlisted for the Commonwealth Writer's Prize.

Peter Behrens spoke at the Celtic club on the 2nd September to a rapt and enthusiastic audience.

Val Noone was a keynote speaker

with Humphrey McQueen and overseas celebrity A.C. Grayling in a presentation sponsored by Overland magazine, "The politics of atheism", on September 1st. It was a lively and stimulating discussion and no doubt the ideas raised will reverberate with participants for many months to come.

## Bloomsday Coup

Bloomsday Melbourne was very happy to secure Irish Embassy financial support for the 2007 Bloomsday activity – "Grooming the JeJeune Jesuit" and seminar held on Bloomsday the 16th June at Newman College. It's a first. The Australian Embassy has funded the group in the past to go to Ireland but there has never been support from the Irish government before this. The grant enabled the group to pay the theatre director more than they otherwise could have afforded. Both "Grooming the JeJeune Jesuit" and the seminar were a great success.

## Gerald Butler in Melbourne

Gerald Butler, one of the most well known and popular set dance teachers in Ireland, visited Australia for the first time from the 25th August to 2nd September.

He conducted classes in many venues including Richmond, Collingwood Flemington and Ivanhoe. This year, the famous "An Ceili Mor" weekend - a fantastic fun filled weekend of set dancing and craic, enjoyed by dancers from Sydney, Adelaide, Canberra, Ireland and further afield - organized by Fay and Morgan McAlinden in Port Fairy at the end of August for many years, was held in Melbourne to take advantage of Gerard's visit. Great fun was had by all!

Gerard who lives in Co. Roscommon has been teaching set dancing all over the world for many years. He has won 9 All Ireland dance titles. We are looking forward to his return!

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# Bolg an tSoláthair

## Assimilate to what, Terry?

Terry Lane, writing in the *Sunday Age*, (8/7/07) criticised Prime Minister Howard's sudden concern for the welfare of Aboriginal children, but concluded, however, that "realistically, there is no alternative to assimilation". Really? Many Australians of diverse backgrounds affirm Australian citizenship without assimilating to a one-shape-fits-all Howard culture. What then does Lane want us to assimilate to?

## Two Geraldines write family history

Discussions about where Australia is going, family historians, who are usually women, emphasise the importance of knowing where we come from.

Geraldine Rush (nee Cotter) has written a family history, *Green Grow the Rushes*. Roger Robert Rush and Esther Rush nee Madden came to Adelaide in 1855 and later to Melbourne.

Geraldine Rush has also written about her own ancestors *From Hopes and Dream*. She began by quoting Henry Miller, "The purpose of life is to remember." One of her forebears was Edward Riley who was in the 40th Regiment of Foot at Eureka.

A strong point of Rush's family history is her attitude to the future. Her last sentence sums up her views: "As some of us look back on decades past, many more are looking to the future with eager eyes and minds."

Another family historian, Geraldine Robertson, has recently published a memoir written by her great-grandfather Thomas O'Brien (1845-1921), *History and Personal Incidents of My Life*. Born in Milton Malbay, County Clare, O'Brien was a member of the RIC before emigrating with his wife Bridget nee Coleman. He became well known as an athlete, hotelier and magistrate. Copies are available from Geraldine Robertson, 21 Hilton St, Clifton Hill, Vic 3068, or geraldin@alphalink.com.au.



Diarmuid et al

Val Noone

## Diarmuid Murphy, storyteller

"Jim Hewitt and I want to bring Diarmuid Murphy around for a cuppa. You'll find his stories interesting," Tom Rigg said to me.

Born in Cork, the youngest of 11 children, Murphy joined the RAF, migrated to Australia and worked with the RAAF. All the while he remembered stories about his father's part in the Irish War of Independence. He kept copies of favourite Irish-language texts such as a 1920's copy of *Scéal Shean Dúin*. I was honoured to hear Diarmuid's stories. Diarmuid and his family have produced a booklet of family history.

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## County delegations to diaspora

Over the past year, Wicklow and Clare, have taken official steps to build links with the Irish diaspora in Australia.

Wicklow county jail is exceptional for its attention to the history of convict transportation. In 2006, Councillor Andrew Doyle led a team of officials to Melbourne and other centres. Liz and Peter Rushen of South Gippsland kindly hosted a day for them where they met the state National Party leader Peter Ryan. The Melbourne stage of the visit was also very successful.

In April this year, Councillor Flann Garvey of Clare County Council, led a delegation to Clare in South Australia to celebrate 21 years of twinning between the two Clares. Joe Small who was instrumental in setting up the special relationship, toured with the visitors. The Irish Embassy hosted a reception at the Celtic Club.

Future delegations would benefit from more planning. Australian groups could be more involved, ensuring the benefits of such exchanges are available to a wider audience.



John Murray & Bishop Freir

Val Noone

## John Murray and the Anglican bishop

On Australia Day 2007, the Melbourne *Herald-Sun* published a letter from John Murray which contained the line: "To hell with Australia's colonial flag with the butcher's apron in the corner." For decades, Murray has been writing and leafleting on Irish and Australian republicanism.

When Anglican Archbishop Philip Freier was installed at St Paul's cathedral on 15 December 2006, Murray was picketing the entrance. In a friendly exchange with the bishop, Murray told Freier that one of Murray's in-laws had made the bishop's robes!

## Hugh Anderson at 80

Hugh Anderson, an outstanding folklorist and historian, turns 80 this year. He has written about 100 books, including *The Story of Australian Folksong*, illustrated by Ron Edwards and first published in 1955.

Anderson also publishes history and folklore. His Red Rooster Press recently published *The Mounted Butchers*, a compilation of songs, verses and parodies from Eureka.

Anderson has published a 24-page guide to his publications. Copies are available from Hugh at 38 Canning Street, North Melbourne 3051.

Val Noone

*“Congratulations to the Bishop, priests, and the people who have raised this temple. Congratulations to the people of Crossley for their generosity and self-sacrifice, and I pray that God’s blessing and the blessing of St. Brigid will rest upon them, their children and their children’s children.”*

Sermon by Archbishop Mannix at the opening of St. Brigid’s Church, Koroit, June 28th 1914.



*After Completion of Building of the Crossley Church, 1914.  
 McCluskey, Bill O’Connor, Mick Maguire, Joe Carter, Jim Carey, Sandy Carroll, Con. Conway, Joe Dren-  
 George Green, Paddy Bushell, Paddy Griffin, Bert O’Neill.  
 Jack Maguire, Bill Dwyer, Jack Broderick, Paddy Broderick, Jim McInerney, Pat German, Bill Ryan,  
 Jack Lane, Paddy Butler.  
 E. Deague, Dan German, Joe Antoon, Paddy Wall, Pat Costello, Ned Cullen.*

# Buying back our past

Overlooking the Southern Ocean, on the rim of a dormant volcano in South West Victoria stands the Church and Hall of St. Brigid’s.

The Church and Hall of St. Brigid’s in Crossley are in the process of being sold by the Parish of Koroit. It is an “inevitable” outcome due to dwindling congregation numbers and high maintenance costs.

The Friends of St. Brigid’s was formed in February 2006 to retain these culturally significant buildings within and for the community. The decision by the Church to sell the site precludes a continuing relationship between the historic buildings and the community, so funds to buy back the buildings, already paid for by our ancestors, must be raised or these representations of our cultural heritage will be lost to private ownership.

The local Catholic community bought the State School and surrounding land from the State in the 1870’s to build a new school on this land. This is now the Hall. The community had wanted to build a church and so they raised all but £250 (kindly donated by the bishop) of the £6000 needed to pay for this spectacular building. The church was completed in 1914 and consecrated by Archbishop Mannix with a ‘full house’ in attendance. After the service, Archbishop Mannix was greeted by local people who knew him and his family in Ireland.

The Church was built and paid for with the hands of members of the local community. One local farmer donated the land and other farmers donated small sums of money until the church was paid

for. Many baptisms, weddings and funerals were celebrated in the church. Also, the infamous Crossley Dance, where the majority of young people in the district paired up and were later married in the Church next door was held in the hall over many decades. A quick look at the photo of the men, who helped with the building of the church, reveals the names of the families who still live in the area today.

Most of the Irish community in South West Victoria came from Ireland during or after the Famine, looking for a new beginning. They were able to acquire small lots of land in Killarney, Illowa, Koroit, Crossley and Tower Hill. Here they grew potatoes and onions and earned a modest living. The largely Irish population and how ‘like Ireland’ the area is strike anyone who travels to this area even today.

To honour these ancestors, the community would like to see the Church developed into an Australian-Irish Cultural and Heritage Centre. We want to retain our hall as a multipurpose facility for community groups and gatherings. We believe this would continue the spirit of community, faith, and culture for which the church and Hall were built.

The biggest issue for our community is finding money for its acquisition. The Friends of St Brigid’s have spent the last twelve months fundraising. So far, we have raised \$10,000 in cash and \$20,000 in funding for the buildings. We have another \$27,000 in funding yet to be approved, as well as an application for \$30,000 for a feasibility study on the precinct, which also has yet to be approved.

We have been told that the buildings are to be sold very soon. So what do we do? The community must have the chance to buy these buildings if our history and heritage are to be maintained. We need a guarantee that the Parish of Koroit will give us first option to buy the buildings. We need support from other community organizations. We need people to write letters, tell rich friends, or help in any way that they can. If 600 people raised \$500 each, it is achievable!!

Our Church and Hall are not just buildings. They represent the struggle of our ancestors to establish a new life in a foreign country. They represent the importance of education, recreation, and socialising to our ancestors and the current community. These aspects of community life should not be so easily forgotten and discarded just because we can afford to jump in our cars and drive the extra distance to a major centre. Community is not a collection of houses. It is people engaging in each other’s lives, supporting each other, just being there for each other.

To lose these buildings to commercial enterprises would be to lose our connection with our ancestors. Our community would be damaged, possibly beyond repair, both socially and spiritually.

**Teresa O’Brien**

*Teresa O’Brien is Secretary of The Friends of St Brigid.*

*If you would like to help out, make a donation or find out more information, please contact our Secretary, Teresa O’Brien on 03 55697239 or goanna@westvic.com.au*



# Saving the Hill of Tara

Australian tourists arriving in Ireland usually head quickly to the Hill of Tara. Many have soaked up the atmosphere of this ancient site. But now a major free-way is under construction to run across the foot of The Hill. The construction has unearthed further major archeological sites. Visiting Australians, not to mention the Irish themselves, often suggest that Ireland's roads need to be improved. But in pursuing this objective is the Irish Government about to destroy the Hill of Tara and the Gabhra Valley, one of the most important sites in Irish, and world, archaeology?

## A Sacred Site

The Hill of Tara has been regarded as sacred for thousands of years, through pagan and Christian times. It was the principal site of Irish ritual Kingship. The god Lug claimed kingship of the Tuatha De Danaan on top of the Hill.

CuChulainn's head and right arm are said to be buried there; Cormac Mac Art built Skryne [originally Achill] when he lost an eye and could no longer live at Tara; the last battle of the Fianna, the Battle of Gabhra, took place in the valley where Cormac's son was killed and buried; King Laegaire confronted St Patrick at Tara. In 1527, O'Cochoibhair performed a symbolic shoeing of his horse there, and in 1599, Aodh O'Neill, recognized as a national leader, held his celebratory assembly on Tara. The power and authority of the site was drawn on in 1843, when Daniel O'Connell addressed over one million people, affirming: "We are standing upon Tara of the Kings... This was emphatically the spot from which emanated every social and legal authority by which the force of the entire country was concentrated for the national defence".

## A previous threat

The last threat to Tara was around 1899 to 1901, when the British Israelites, believing the Old Testament Ark of the Covenant was buried there, gained permission to dig on the Hill. In protest, W.B. Yeats, George Moore and Douglas Hyde wrote to the Times in London: "Tara is, because of its associations, probably the most consecrated spot in Ireland, and its destruction will leave bitter memories."



## Modern Archaeology

The modern idea of archaeology is to "preserve by record". Under the nightmare logic of economic rationality, anything that might be discovered is to be measured and photographed, then buried in bitumen.

A huge wooden henge, the size of 3 football fields and named The Lismullin Henge, was discovered when the Minister for Heritage and the Environment, Dick Roche, turned the sod on the construction site. Despite being placed on the World Monuments Fund's list of the 100 most threatened sites, the Irish government's response was to ignore the European Union's warning that to proceed was illegal under European law.

## Widespread Protests

Significant opposition has come from the influential media - The Irish Times and The Sunday Tribune - and 320 leading academics, writers, and worldwide archaeological organizations have issued a statement deploring the proposed construction. Hopes rose when John Gormley, a successful candidate from the Green Party which campaigned solidly on the re-routing of the M3, was made Minister for Heritage and the Environment. They were quickly dashed when he declared, that his hands were tied.

But anger and desperation have only served to fuel the determination of those who fight on. Protesters have braved the bulldozers. Six were arrested including Dr Muireann, NiB, teacher of Irish studies at University College Cork. A petition of over 50,000 names has been gathered and presented. A "Love Tara" march proceeded down O'Connell Street. Protest songs by Irish and Australian rock bands have given voice to the gathering momentum of outrage. Vincent Salafia, of TaraWatch has taken the fight right up to the highest courts in the land, and is now leading the appeal to the European Union Commission. *Mary Kenneally*

## Timeline

**1999:** The Government launches the National Development Plan. Five motorways are to be built from Dublin to the Border, Galway, Limerick, Cork and Waterford.

**2000:** Meath County Council and the NRA propose a motorway replacement for bypasses of Dunshaughlin, Navan and Kells.

**2002:** The NRA publishes the proposed toll scheme.

**2003:** An Bord Pleanála approves the construction of the motorway.

**2004:** The National Monuments Act, promulgating the "preservation by record" of national monuments, becomes law. Test-trench digging begins.

**2005:** The Minister for the Environment, approves the construction of the motorway. Full excavations begin. EuroLink Consortium is named as the successful tender.

**2006:** Vincent Salafia loses his challenge to the National Monuments Act in the High Court. He appeals to the Supreme Court, but withdraws after High Court costs of 600,000 euro are awarded against him.

**2007:** In January a Toll hearing is held in Navan. Meath County Council is among the objectors. In April, An Taisce mounts a legal challenge to the toll scheme, which the High Court dismisses. An Taisce appeals to the Supreme Court. This case is still outstanding. In May scuffles break out between conservationists and construction workers on the site.

## Current State of Play

AN BORD Pleanála must now decide if the discovery of a national monument means that the M3 road scheme is now different to the one approved in September 2003. If so, planners would have to seek fresh approval for the route, leading to huge delays in delivering the motorway.

# Grooming the JeJeune Jesuit

## Behind the Scenes of Bloomsday

Bloomsday in Melbourne Inc. is a year-round cottage industry. It explores the Joyce phenomenon ever more deeply, debates with him, challenges the notion that 'Joyce is too impenetrable for the ordinary punter' (as the press routinely moans), and entertains and informs patrons who are Bloomsday addicts, some since 1994.

The intention to approach the Jesuits at Newman to do a Bloomsday focused on Joyce's Jesuitry was discussed at a La Porchetta in Victoria Street around midnight on Bloomsday 2006. Joyce gave up his Catholicism, but always claimed to be influenced by the Jesuits. We wondered why he acknowledged this, and what he might have taken, discarded or transformed from his Jesuit education. The Jesuits generously gave us permission to use Newman College, Joyce being

regarded nowadays as a prize product of their educational curricula. It wasn't always thus. Indeed one of the earliest Jesuit supporters of Joyce did so from the relatively safe distance of Xavier College. However Prof. Peter Steele, S.J., and former Jesuit Prof. Greg Denning, and (one time Jesuit trainee) Richard O'Sullivan, were prompt in accepting invitations to give seminar papers.

Jesuits around the world supported the enterprise. We went looking for two Joycean fictional characters, based on real Jesuits, who turned up in Melbourne. One was Fr. John Conmee, the Irish Provincial of the Jesuits (and an habitué of both *Portrait* and *Ulysses*), who toured Australian Jesuit schools and wrote unflatteringly about the two Sydney schools (St. Aloysius and Riverview). The search for the missing document continues. The other character, Fr. Frank Browne, a gun photographer, who helped to populate *Finnegans Wake*, almost ruined Xavier financially. There are references to Fr. Conmee in *Ulysses*, but he receives the most intense treatment in *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*.

Some scenes were a dream to script and wrote themselves – the pandybat, Christmas dinner and Cranly scenes. Much harder were those treating the maturing but affectionately mocked psyche of Stephen Daedalus. Much of the success of these scenes would depend on having a director who could help our lead actor develop the comedy in what is potentially a serious role, and portray his key confrontations (with women), matters of the psyche rather than of realism. Brenda Addie, who had worked with us as a director in 2006, had found work in Coventry (UK), and recommended Karen Corbett as her replacement. Both collaborations have served our ends brilliantly, as the emphasis from the start has been on the playability of a literary text which is not always amenable to such adaptation.

Knowing we had a blokey cast with few women, and that some patrons would be less than familiar with the intricacies of Catholic rituals, penitential practices and Jesuitry, we imported a chorus of nuns – a completely un-Joycean manoeuvre. The nuns personalities were crucial: Sister Concepta, (who might as easily have been named *Attracta*), played by Roisín Murphy whose vocation is dubious as a result of her melting sentimentalism, created a frisson with the strong minded Mother Superior (Deirdre Gillespie). Renée Huish had to play against her political grain as Dante, the Parnell-hating nationalist and zealot.

Our young Joyce from the 2006 production (Liam Gillespie) was unavailable for the role as Stephen Dedalus, so we turned to Niall McCann, a professional actor who trained at the Gaiety Theatre School in Dublin. Karen drafted in a talented Honours student of hers, Claire Haywood, who combined acting and dance skills in the style of Pina Bausch. She created Stephen's fantasies of women – a child-lover, a prostitute and a muse. Engaging a cellist, Francesca Mountfort, and a singer, David Adamson, to ably support these high, almost wordless moments of transformation, proved to be critical aesthetic decisions.

Bill Johnston, who relishes acting with a passion taught us that even pandy-





### JeJeune Jesuit performance

*Frances Devlin-Glass*

battering and corrosive sermons on hell can be complicated by concern for the 'dear little boys' and can make their imaginative investment in language speak volumes. Many patrons reported being transported against their will into a past they'd have preferred to have kept repressed, and some, including one of our speakers, Greg Dening, spoke feelingly about the brutalities as well as the riches of Jesuit, and more broadly, Catholic education of the past.

For the first time in 2007, Bloomsday in Melbourne received funding from the Irish Government, which the group used to pay its theatrical director, Karen Corbett. Thank you to Martha McEvoy and Ambassador Martín O'Fáinnín for successfully putting the case for funding to Dublin on our behalf.

As yet, the theme for 2008 has not emerged, but re-Joyce, we will.

*Frances Devlin-Glass*

## Legendary and fictional Joyce

### *Joyce and the Jesuits*

Lecture by Professor Greg Dening

16/06/2007

Professor Greg Dening analysed Jesuit spirituality in Joyce's time. He carefully distinguished between orthodox Jesuit culture and the Irish-Jesuit culture that we knew in Australia. "Stephen Dedalus is... those of us who have experienced both the brilliance and horror of a 'Jesuit education'"; and he described the various epiphanies Stephen underwent, through his extreme guilt of sinfulness, his engagement with his soul and then with the world around him. Joyce detailed analytically and brutally the course of Stephen's maturing. Dening repeatedly balanced the experiences of Joyce's own and his character's agonies. He stressed the ethnographic vision and theatricality of Jesuit spirituality, which is clearly illustrated in *Portrait*. "Theatre presents us with the dredge of life and we walk out into the foyer having got the plot". This was the genius of Joyce but it grew out of aspects of his Jesuit background and in particular the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius with its emphasis on scene-building as a meditative tool – "the creative imagination of faith... it is a dancer of the eye and mind engulfed in mystery and if ever there was a dancer of the eye and mind it was James Joyce". Dening pulled no punches in his condemnation of those times at Clongowes and his own personal experiences at Burke Hall.

Then Professor Richard O'Sullivan opened with a revealing quote from the biographer Frank Budgen; "You allude to me as a Catholic. Now for the sake of precision and to get the correct contour on me, you ought to allude to me as a Jesuit". O'Sullivan set sail on a brand new historical discovery of a Joycean nexus to Australia in the person of Fr. John Conmee S.J. who welcomed the six year old Joyce to Clongowes in 1888. Conmee was possibly related to Joyce's mother's family, the Murray's. As Irish Provincial, he visited the Jesuit Australian Mission in 1907 and reported critically on St. Patrick's and Xavier in Melbourne, and St. Aloysius and Riverview in Sydney.

Conmee figures in *Portrait* and in *Ulysses* as a fair man. Another connection was Fr. George O'Neill S.J., Joyce's English teacher at UCD, who came to Australia in 1923 and taught at Corpus Christi in Werribee. In 1945, "He was the first Jesuit in the world to break the public Jesuit silence on the topic of James Joyce": 'I have introduced to college life a very small boy destined to regrettable celebrity as the author of *Ulysses* and put a Catholic choir-book into his little hand'".

Finally, Fr. Peter Steele S.J. read his own 'Joycepoem,' (see page 21) a picture of Dublin, Joyce in that city, and the language of Joyce that grew out of his location there. Steele had stayed several times at Belvedere, Joyce's Jesuit school in Dublin and originally the mansion of Lord Belvedere: "I know nothing of Lord Belvedere's personal proclivities but I somehow imagine that he might have cocked an ironic eyebrow at the lap-dancing establishment which is now next door to his former abode - the finest private house in the Dublin of his time; not that Joyce himself could not be tykeish enough at seeing the insignia of privilege subverted". He too emphasized the importance of the Spiritual Exercises in the Jesuit repertoire and their focus on incarnation and sensory particularity, all Joycean techniques. In his poem Steele uses the phrase "zones of the imagination": "You and I and all of us are together here in this room, but no two of us are present to it in the same way... similarly, and particularly in *Ulysses*, what might be called Joyce's filamental attention to Dublin keeps changing, with the result that his Dublin, in one way so discernibly stable, is in another endlessly mutable". He closed with his own lines: "Singer of flesh and its withering, mind and its fall,/there are worse places to be than this one" – 'this one' being potentially Dublin, or our battered planet as a whole, or the world which is that book. And he also claimed that the portrait of Joyce in Belvedere does him proud, but suggesting "if you really want to get to know him, the thing to do is to read *Ulysses* again".

*Peter Kiernan*

# The aftermath of terror

Civil disturbances in Northern Ireland between 1969 and 2001 left 3524 people dead and many more injured. Terrorist movements aim to change attitudes and behaviours but their tactics can cause mental health problems amongst the injured, their loved ones, and bystanders. These can include post-traumatic stress disorder as well as anxiety, depression and substance misuse.

Predicting who will be affected by trauma is difficult. Few people in a single traumatic event, such as the attack on the Twin Towers in New York, will develop serious psychiatric problems. Protective factors against developing these problems can include previous exposure to trauma, availability of family support and religious faith. Most research has been concerned with dramatic single events, rather than the cumulative effects of 32 years of anxiety and trouble.

Now that armed conflict in Northern Ireland has been set aside, people's mental well being might be expected to improve, but mental health consequences of long term conflict persist. The Northern Ireland Health and Well Being Survey (2001) found that over one-fifth (21%) of adults affected by the conflict had signs of mental ill health. Unlike other European countries, suicide rates have risen.

Active participants may cope well with the emotional consequences of both their actions and their sufferings as long as 'the struggle' seems justified. But when the conflict ceases, or its purpose has become less clear, breakdowns in relationships and mood disorders follow and the risk of suicide increases. Mental health consequences for participants in civil

wars closely resemble those experienced by army soldiers.

Health services alone cannot meet the needs of people affected by violence. The Bamford Review of Services in Northern Ireland advocated a whole systems approach to mental well being. It suggested teaching resilience in schools and promoting mental health through faith communities, arts facilities and leisure services. Treatment services for mental ill health should consider the contexts where the need for treatment arose.

While many people need treatment for the psychological aftermath of the conflict, little is known about how to provide it successfully. Using cognitive behaviour therapy, Duffy, Gillespie and Clark treated 58 people in Northern Ireland whose chronic post-traumatic stress disorder was due to terrorism. Cognitive behaviour therapy teaches people how to stop negative mental states – like the 'flash back memories' typical of post-traumatic stress disorder. Therapists work with patients to isolate the thoughts, beliefs and memories that cause the most distress and to design the most effective ways to deal with them.

People in the treatment group improved considerably – not only in their illness, but also in their ability to function at work and deal with other social concerns. During the study (twelve weeks), the control group's symptoms did not change. These results give hope that helping people to overcome poor mental health due to long exposure to civil conflict can succeed.

*Felicity Allen*

*Based on BMJ 2007, 34, pp. 1121–2 and pp. 1147–50.*

## Bernie Brophy observes Northern Ireland

The Brehon Law Society was set up by Irish-American lawyers in 1978. Its primary focus is the monitoring and eradication of violations of human rights and civil liberties in Northern Ireland. For the past 10 years, the Society has sent observers to Northern Ireland to attend, observe and report on the Orange and other loyal order parades in Nationalist neighbourhoods of Northern Ireland because of the increasing violence surrounding these parades.

As a member of the committee of the Brehon Law Society in Australia, I agreed to act as an Observer at the parades in July 2007. The Observers included lawyers from New York and Rome and several American human rights activists.

In addition to observing a number of the parades, the Observers met with the Police Service of Northern Ireland, Public Prosecution service, the Northern Ireland Office, the Minister for Social Development, members of the Parades Commission, Politicians, the Police Ombudsman as well as Nationalist and Unionist community based organizations.

This year the parades occurred

largely without incident as the Orangemen were not allowed to proceed down the Nationalist Garvaghy Road. There was dialogue and agreement between the residents and Orangemen in other controversial areas, lessening tensions. Loyalist paramilitaries (concerned about government funding being cut off from various Loyalist community projects) were not involved in violent activities.

Supporters of the Orange marchers who walked alongside them were drinking alcohol and a number of them behaved menacingly towards Nationalists. The police ensured the Unionist/Loyalists kept moving but did not enforce the law which forbids the public consumption of alcohol.

In view of the progress being made in the Peace Process through the sharing of power between the Democratic Unionist Party (led by Ian Paisley) and Sinn Fein (led by Martin McGuinness) in the Legislative Assembly in Belfast, as well as cross-community activities, there is a more positive attitude prevailing in the North.

It may be a generation or more before

sectarianism is buried in Northern Ireland. The numbers of Catholic students at Queen's University has increased substantially because of a successful emphasis on education in the Republican community. Catholics are now obtaining more jobs and the Loyalists are resentful about that. However, some members of their community are moving away from criminality, seeking to obtain a better future for themselves and their children.

One of the other "live" issues is the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). Sinn Fein and the Police Service have just commenced negotiations to ensure that the Republican community will eventually be able to rely on the PSNI to enforce the rule of law in Republican/Nationalist areas. There is considerable distrust on both sides. But there is also a realisation that the people are entitled to a police force which, will deal fairly and justly with the Republicans.

For me, this has been a valuable opportunity to revisit Belfast and see the progress being made with the Peace Process.

*Bernie Brophy*

# Hello! Is there anyone there?

## A search for the Irish-born manufacturers of colonial Victoria

Frankly, my decision to seek out, and hopefully recount the stories of early Irish manufacturers in Victoria, received rather lukewarm reactions. Friends asked, “Were there any?”, Scots businessmen told me, “It will be a very thin book”; and academics warned that, “The outcome will be neither long nor spectacular”. The Irish contribution to Victoria’s politics, law, education and medicine is well documented – as is their disposition to hotel ownership – but for the most part, they have been stereotyped as hewers of wood and drawers of water. Historians have largely overlooked or ignored the manufacturers’ existence. There have been few biographies, and sparse comment about them in the dictionaries of biography. With questionable confidence, based more on anecdotal comment than hard evidence, I began the search with a handful of brief personal histories and extracts (usually edited by the men themselves) from nineteenth century publications such as *Bendigo and Vicinity*, and *Australian Representative Men*, and the few biographies by historians.

It is helpful of course, to know exactly what you are looking for before setting out to find it. Thus, terms such as ‘Irish-born’ and ‘manufacturing’, required definition. There is no ambiguity about ‘Irish-born’; it excludes my grandfather O’Neill who was born on a British vessel on the way to Victoria, and leaves no opening for eminent manufacturers such as Hugh Victor McKay and John Hare Furphy who were born after their Irish parents arrived in the colony. ‘Manufacturing’ is a more tricky word. An apparently clear definition such as ‘the transformation of materials or components into new products’ leaves some wobbly edges. A book is ‘manufactured’, but is a newspaper primarily a news service?

A bibliographical net was needed to locate and garner the fragmented information concerning our barely visible Irish industrial pioneers. The mesh was fashioned with biographical registers of parliamentarians and Irish immigrants, trade journals and advertisements, Victorian and regional histories, industry and business histories, and governmental hearings and reports of industrial enquiries. A host of minor publications, and conversations with librarians, archivists,

regional historians and local residents, and the valuable responses from manufacturers’ descendants to public appeals for information, completed the process. Dossiers were created for each candidate, into which every skerrick of information about the person was entered. Some of the dossiers swelled to formidable proportions; many barely achieved one line.

Common characteristics appeared as the number of dossiers grew. For example, the manufacturers retained a deep affection for their native land, but were loyal to their land of adoption. Unlike many other nineteenth century immigrants who, having gained wealth from commerce or gold, retired to their native countries, the Irish manufacturers integrated into and contributed to colonial society. Well over half of them devoted much time to civic and philanthropic work. Many were appointed Justices of the Peace, eleven sought parliamentary roles, and twenty-two became town or city councillors and often served terms as mayor or chairman. Interesting family stories also emerged. Take, for instance, the Breheny clan. During the past 140-odd years, at least twenty-three members from five generations of this family pioneered, developed, managed or worked in other roles at breweries across Australia. Twenty of them were brewers. Another Irishman, James Reilly, continued his forebears’ tradition after he arrived in Victoria in 1869. He, six of his sons and their descendents built mills and processed grain in the Goulburn Valley and North East Victoria for nearly a hundred years.

The counties of birth, religious denominations, and dates of birth, migration and death sometimes were elusive, but the most critical problem was determining if a colonial manufacturer was born in Ireland. If a birthplace was not mentioned in the source material, and subsequent enquiries could not unearth the information, the manufacturer was excluded – even if his name was Michael O’Keefe or Patrick Reilly. The details of ‘possibles’ remained in a ‘birthplace-unverified’ dossier, awaiting confirmation or dismissal. No doubt, there were Irish-born manufacturers, without an obvious Irish name, who escaped detection.

It was soon apparent that the manufacturers’ achievements and behaviour

would be almost meaningless unless placed in their social and economic environments, and if possible, connected to their antecedents. This additional, but absorbing, activity significantly expanded the research, and the size of the published work as it includes what is virtually a potted history of industrial development of Victoria during the nineteenth century. Initially, about two years was considered a reasonable time for completion of the project. It was almost four years before the publisher received the manuscript. The paper trails grew with the research, but also twisted, turned and led to unexpected locations – and down many blind alleys. Sometimes, trails crossed: an Irish printer in Ballarat prepared a lithograph of a compatriot’s mill in Benalla; Irish machinery manufacturers compared and criticized each other’s products in published letters; Irish employees of an early Melbourne brewer, also from Ireland, set up their own regional breweries. There were many research days of barren effort, and others of serendipity when truffles of information were scattered over the desk: perhaps a diary entry, a sparkling newspaper comment, an illustration or a catalogue entry.

And the result. Time has obliterated the records of some Irish-born manufacturers’ careers and the existence of others. However, references to one hundred and forty-two Irish-born manufacturers gleaned from journals, official records, family memorabilia, and newspapers and books (despite the occasional exaggeration and conflicting reports) provided glimpses of their lives and work and contribution to Victoria’s community and its industrial development. The Irish participated in most sections of Victoria’s manufacturing industry during the nineteenth century. Their ‘manufactories’ produced lollypops to locomotives, flour to footwear, and beer to billiard balls. These industrial pioneers come from most of Ireland’s thirty-two counties; they were of differing socio-economic levels, ethnic heritages and religious denominations. Although in total, they were less than proportional to Victoria’s Irish population, their individual contributions and collective legacy to its industrial, social and civic life deserve recognition.

Keith Pescod

# The Irish Catholics of North-West Melbourne



The north-west of Melbourne developed separately from the rest of Melbourne – Moonee Ponds Creek is the dividing line. These suburbs became a sort of world of their own, as people did not usually move out of them. If you made money in Essendon you moved to Strathmore, not to the south-eastern suburbs. So the rest of Melbourne doesn't know much about of these suburbs – they have lower social visibility and mobility.

Maps of Irish Catholics in Melbourne show them settling first in the inner suburbs, but when they moved out, it was mainly to the north-west. These suburbs had the highest Catholic proportion in Melbourne, and this was reinforced after the second world war with the addition of Catholics from Italy and Malta, and from Poland, Ukraine and the Baltic states.

After the second world war, the federal electorate of Maribyrnong, which included Essendon and surrounding suburbs, had the highest proportion of Catholics in Australia. Essendon council figures in the 1970s demonstrate this: it was 40% Catholic (much higher than the national average), Church of England was 17% (low), and other Christian 23% (high). The Catholic national average at the time was about 23%, and Church of England 28%.

## North Melbourne

We know Irish immigrants to Melbourne usually boarded first at Emerald Hill (South Melbourne), but the place of employment for many was the North Melbourne area, also known as Hotham and West Melbourne. Here there were a number of important employment centres, all connected with transport: Spencer Street railway station, the market in Victoria St, the Newmarket stockyards, the Metropolitan Meat Market in Courtney St, North Melbourne, and Flemington racecourse. Connected to these were associated industries, like tanneries, abattoirs for the meat and allied trades, horses for transport and racing stock, and drays

for transporting building materials for roads, sewerage and houses as Melbourne grew. The north-west suburbs were characterized by these trades, rather than, say, manufacturing industries, which were in the inner east and later the south-east.

People in the transport and livestock trades moved out northwest as they successively set up homes in Flemington, Ascot Vale, Moonee Ponds, Essendon, North Essendon and Glenroy, as the stock and station agent Harry Peck's book *Memoirs of a Stockman* shows. Kirk's Horse Bazaar moved out from the city to north Essendon. The Irish, being poor immigrants, often with rural backgrounds, naturally gravitated to these trades. Our family and our Ascot Vale cousins, the Spillanes, were typical Irish Catholic families starting in the later 19th century at the labourer, not proprietary level, but gradually rising in the social scale. There were other trades in the north-west suburbs, but these were the most noticeable.

## Moving Out

There is a further, earlier dimension to this story. It's a story of moving in to Melbourne, as well as moving out. In transport terms Melbourne is accessible only to the north and west – there are three great roads to the hinterland, the Ballarat Road to the west, the Sydney Road to the north and Castlemaine-Bendigo Road, called Mt Alexander Rd, to the north-west bisecting the other two. The rest of Melbourne is blocked by hills and forests to the north-east and east, and by the bay. The north-west area therefore became the hub for transport to and from the hinterland and interstate. Livestock brought to Melbourne to be sold came in by walking, by train or by truck through this northwest salient. Just outside the suburbs, properties were used for agistment, the last chance to feed up the animals before the final walk into Newmarket.

As the Irish Catholics moved out to



**Port Melbourne Premiers 1897**

*Terry Monagle*

Essendon and beyond, they eventually met up with an original, much earlier Irish Catholic settlement of farmers around Keilor, such as the Dodds, Foxes and Hogans, all old Keilor families. When my grandfather Patrick Morgan bought the 'Niddrie' property (now the Essendon airport) in 1900, he first went to Mass at St Augustine's Church, Keilor, the nearest Catholic Church. The natural link and orientation was to Keilor, rather than to the suburbs of Melbourne. Later St Monica's, Moonee Ponds became the family's parish church, then later on St Teresa's, Essendon.

## Great Houses

As the Irish moved out beyond Essendon past the suburbs they also met Protestant Irish, Scots and English landlords and their great houses. There were mansions in the suburbs e.g. Travancore at Ascot Vale (which got its name from the family selling horses to the British army in India), and McCrackens at Strathmore, but further out there existed a ring of comfortable farms with great houses (at Bulla, Tullamarine, Keilor, Sunbury, Broadmeadows, Cragieburn, and so on) where those who had made money and had some social pretensions wanted to set themselves up as landed gentlemen on comfortable properties outside a large city, as they had seen wealthy people do at home in the British Isles. Brewster and Foster were early Protestant Irish, as was William Pomeroy Greene at Woodlands, Oaklands Junction. Other large houses included Taylor's Overnewton, McDougall's Arundel and Big Clarke at Rupertswood at Sunbury. The Catholic founding home at Broadmeadows had originally been one of these grand houses. The property 'Niddrie', begun in the early 1860s, was a minor example of this type.

The McCrackens ran hunts starting from the Lincolnshire Arms Hotel in north Essendon, and around 1890s the Melbourne Hunt Club operated from

Oaklands Junction. It's hard to realize it today, but this was a 'snob' area of Melbourne then, because other areas didn't have these broad acres, or broadmeadows. Ultimately these properties didn't succeed as farms because the fields are dry and full of stones, scotch thistles and tussocks. The Aborigines called the area 'dutigalla', treeless plains.

The famous Australian writer Rolf Boldrewood was a relative of the Greenes of Woodlands, and in Old Melbourne Memories he remembers an early steeplechase there with his Protestant Irish relatives and friends. Then he adds: 'In this connection came Tom Brannigan, an active, resolute, humorous young Irishman. He was stud groom, and a model retainer during the first years of the settlement of Woodlands'. So there were Irish Catholic workers on these farms, and Irish small farmers at Donnybrook, Ballan, and the Romsey area.

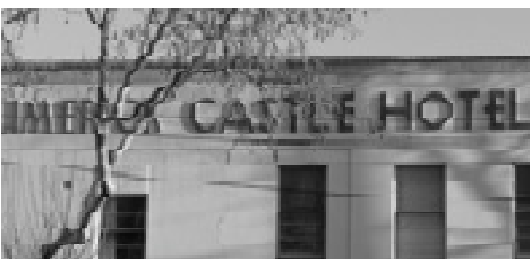
## Three Families

Patrick Morgan came to Melbourne as an uneducated Irish farm worker from County Louth with nothing. He worked as a navvy on construction sites, then bought drays, moved into transport and small construction, building laneways, gutters, streets, and finally sewers, some under the Yarra, under contract to the MMBW, and became moderately wealthy. For the first two decades of his life in Australia he lived as a bachelor in various North Melbourne boarding houses, mixing with his fellow Irish immigrants. His business partner Patrick McGrath came from West Meath only 10 miles way from his home in Ireland. My grandfather educated himself at evening classes, had a love of learning and in 1900, after two decades of hard work and at 45, married his partner's daughter, Catherine McGrath, aged 20, and brought the 'Nid-

drie' property as a family home, but also as a vertically integrated investment, as horses and oats were raised there for his business. He knew Archbishop Mannix but was not entirely a supporter; coming from a part of Ireland with strong English influence, he admired the British Empire for its progress and organising abilities, and so didn't fit the anti-British Irish stereotype.

Our Spillane cousins were an Irish Australian North Melbourne family who started at the Melbourne Meat Market, and graduated to being wholesale butchers over three generations. My uncle John Spillane went to CBC North Melbourne, and eventually bought a large house with extensive grounds, 'St Ives' in Ascot Vale. The Morgan and Spillane families had enough money to visit Irish relatives and kept up contact by letters. They sang 'The Mountains of Mourne', 'Cockles and Mussels', and 'It's a long way to Tipperary', and were conscious of Ireland, not as a place of persecution, but as an amiable country, but with lesser prospects than Australia. My grandfather subsidized his family back in Ireland, and bought out sisters and cousins and settled them here.

My wife's family were also from North Melbourne, but they got there by a different route. Irish Catholics with the family names of Hearn, Hehir, O'Donnell and Livingston (a converted Scot), they moved from Maldon after gold and their small farm failed, and arrived at North Melbourne during the 1890s depression, a typical move at the time. They were closely connected with Dr William Maloney, the local Federal member in Labor politics, and himself the illegitimate son of Big Clarke of Rupertswood, and an Irish Catholic North Melbourne lass. My wife's father graduated through the CYMS to be an ALP branch secretary



and union official, and then after the split to be a DLP branch secretary. One part of the family moved to Kensington while working in the railways.

### Social Composition

The Irish Catholic families of the north-west suburbs were dutiful, respectable and hard working, by no means Brendan Behan types. Senator Frank McManus was a typical example in personality – formerly a school teacher, direct, basic, without frills. The northwest suburbs had a large number of influential Evangelical churches, puritan, low church, wowerish, and the Catholics in some ways assimilated to the Methodist image – many rarely went to a pub or the races, in spite of proximity of the horse racing industry, there was no wild behaviour, no singlets at the table, there were a large number of unmarried aunts and uncles at family gatherings, women wore fox furs like Dame Nellie Melba, respectable even if lower middle class.

Before you tried anything, you were taught to ask in your mind: what would people say? what would people think? It was not a Catholic ghetto, but though we mixed with others, Catholics also kept tightly together, wholly caught up in spiritual and moral world deriving from Catholicism of a traditional kind – an endless round of novenas, retreats, emphasis on the final things, worry about sin, personal prayers, embracing a collective mind of some considerable antiquity. Tribal habits of mind persisted, even though we were not living a tribal life.

### Sectarianism

I went to school at St Bernards CBC Moonee Ponds with the Tobin family, who told me their family laid out the bodies of their fellow Irish in North Melbourne who were too poor to pay for funerals during the great depression of the 1930s, and so they got into the funeral business. Uncle Phonse Tobin was president of the North Melbourne Football club as it, like Collingwood, was a predominately Catholic club, so Catholic its club history has been written by a priest, Monsignor Gerry Dowling. In contrast the Essendon team, dominated by Essendon Baptists-St Johns, with John Birt, a lay preacher, Ken Fraser and

Ken Fletcher, had surprisingly, given the demographics, few Catholics in it in the 1950s, though later contemporaries of mine at St Bernard's like Paul Doran and Kevin Egan made the firsts. The brothers told us in the 1950s that the Essendon City Council was allegedly Mason-controlled and perhaps anti-Catholic, and wouldn't allow CBC Monee Ponds to use the Essendon Football Ground for weekly sports days. But sectarianism was generally mild.

In the mid 1960s three out of the four Labor Federal parliamentary leaders, Senators Pat Keneally and Nick McKenna, and Arthur Caldwell, were all Catholics from this part of Melbourne – the other was Gough Whitlam. Senator McManus and Bob Santamaria were also prominent. They were all from the same stable, CBC North Melbourne, except for Keneally who was from South Melbourne, which had a Catholic Tech. My father and his brothers went to CBC North Melbourne and knew these politicians as acquaintances, rather than as political friends or enemies. CBC North Melbourne was founded after 1900, and St Bernards CBC Moonee Ponds in 1941 for the same group of Irish Australian Catholics who had moved further out. St Aloysius North Melbourne and St Columba's Essendon were equivalent Catholic girls schools. The brothers were mildly anti-British: we were told not to admire Churchill who had sold out Australians in both world wars. Australian nationalism was stronger than Irish nationalism, though the penal law injustices in Ireland that led to hedge-schooling (and to the Christian Brothers) were frequently mentioned. Catholicism, of the moral and anti-Communist variety, was the dominant influence, not Irishness.

*Patrick Morgan*

*Patrick Morgan is currently a Fellow of the State Library of Victoria, editing two volumes of the writings of the political activist B. A. Santamaria for publication by Melbourne University Publishing.*





# Taking away the punch bowl

## The sub-prime crisis

What, at first glance, may seem like an obscure corner of the US mortgage market (sub-prime loans specifically) has caused much angst in global financial markets in recent times and this deserves some comment.

Usually, when there are periods of stress in financial markets, commentators look for similarities with the past. The technology bubble around the turn of the century involved leverage and a belief that this time things are different. Leverage – the use of debt – has been a big factor in some financial markets in recent years. The growth of hedge funds has contributed to increased leverage: most ‘alternative’ asset managers borrow, sometimes heavily, in an attempt to increase investment returns. Financial innovation – increasingly sophisticated derivative markets in particular – have aided and abetted this process.

By now, many people will have heard of esoteric financial instruments called collateralised debt obligations (CDOs). This new asset class was created to allow different types of investors to get involved in the US mortgage market, theoretically in a way that minimised risk. Via a form of financial alchemy, vetted and approved by debt rating agencies, sub-prime mortgages were packaged into CDO structures and sold as high-quality assets. Odd as this may seem – sub-prime means precisely that: the original borrower has a less than spotless credit rating – there is actually nothing wrong in principle with this type of structuring. It’s clever and legitimate.

Leverage requires stability. In personal terms, the ability to repay debt depends on the stability of one’s income. In investing terms, leverage requires stability in the underlying assets you borrow against. A period of unusual stability in recent years compared to historic norms (a “bubble of stability?”) led some to borrow greater amounts than was prudent based on asset values that in a historic context were risky, but had not been over recent times.

Although there is still some debate about why things turned sour, the general view appears to be that the culprit has more to do with the sheer amount of leverage in the system: a relatively small rise in default rates (often simply in the form of late payments) has had consequences magnified to extremes. There are suspicions that some

mortgage loans weren’t just sub-prime – money was lent, allegedly, to people who had no hope whatsoever of paying it back. But the main issue seems to have been massive leverage – sometimes leverage on leverage.

Investors around the world have borrowed enormous sums of money and lent it to some people in the US who don’t seem to be able to pay it back. We have seen Australian and German investment funds in precisely this situation, not just traditional mortgage lenders in the US. Investors in CDOs have often borrowed lots of money to do so. When their investments go bad, they may not be able to repay their loans. The people who made those loans have every reason, in this environment, to begin to wonder whether they are likely to get their money back.

Eventually, this will be sorted out. Central banks are clearly determined not to bail out foolish lenders, but are equally determined that sound financial institutions are not harmed. More importantly, the job of the authorities is to make sure that a financial problem does not become an economic one. Provided the world’s central bankers are up to the task, this crisis will eventually pass. The main risk seems to be that central banks, having now taken away the punch bowl, might let their guests die of dehydration. This is a worry, but would amount to very poor central banking – something that we have not seen for many years. There is a macro story playing out and we think that the outcome will not be as dire as currently priced into many assets. The crisis will pass and opportunities will present themselves between now and then.

## Quarter ended 30th June 2007

Global equity markets generated another quarter of positive returns, despite another volatile period for investors. For the first part of the quarter, markets continued to rally from the sell-off recorded in February/March when concerns about the global economic growth outlook and rising US sub-prime mortgage defaults weighed heavily on investor sentiment. In broad terms the economic backdrop remained robust globally, with stronger than expected data emerging from the US. This initially added more fuel to the equity rally while at the same time causing further weakness on global bond markets. After a flat return in the first quarter



**Pat Lardner, Regional Director – BIAM Australia**

of the year, the S&P 500 Index generated a gain of 5.8%, driven by a much stronger than expected rate of earnings growth among America’s leading companies.

In a similar manner to what happened in the previous quarter, the amount of newsprint used in covering a drop in equities threatened to overshadow what was a quarter of healthy returns for equity investors. Germany’s stock market gained 16% in the quarter, taking its year to date gain to over 20% as the country’s companies benefited from global demand for its industrial, auto and technology goods.

*Pat Lardner*

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# Gráinne & 100 others at Sydney winter school

During our winter school of Irish language at the Chevalier conference centre in Sydney, a big storm damaged much of the central coast of New South Wales. I have never seen Sydney so wet, cold and windy as it was this Queen's Birthday weekend.

As Mary and I scurried in out of the rain, we met Joan Moloney and Eamon Naughton who were too busy drawing our attention to the fluent Irish of four-year-old Gráinne O'Connell to commiserate with us about the weather. Gráinne speaks Irish to her father Mark who has taught at national gatherings and Dutch to her mother Ingrid. In an interesting development, she speaks English to her baby sister.

Talking of linguists, Mary and I were lucky to share the dinner table with Boston-born Bill Foley who, though Professor of Linguistics at Sydney University, was a participant in a beginners' class for Irish. Bill, internationally known for his knowledge of Polynesian languages, is now turning to the language of his forebears. Who knows what benefits his involvement may bring to the Irish heritage in Australia.

## After centuries of decline

A highlight of the 2007 weekend was the extended, enthusiastic participation by the new Irish ambassador, Máirtín Ó Fainín. From a family steeped in Gaelic culture, Máirtín, a fluent speaker, recalled his official work on behalf of the Irish government, liaising with community figures in Northern Ireland about the language issue, during the negotiations that led to the Good Friday Agreement. Irish now has official status in Northern Ireland and Máirtín quipped that many developed their skills in the "jailteacht", the longer a person was in jail the more their Irish improved.

Máirtín commented also on the success of TG4, the Irish-language television station in the Republic. He argued that the recent recognition of Irish as an official language in the European Union is a mark of progress after centuries of the language in decline.

"I praise to the skies those who organise this weekend," the ambassador added. The Irish diaspora has always played a part in the revival of the language and the same is true today, he said.

The organiser of the weekend was Marcos de Faoite who thanked the people



Joan Kav etc, Micheál monument

Val Noone

assisting him, in particular, Tomas de Bhaldraithe, Donnchadh Ó Caoimh and An tAthair Micheál Ó Súilleabháin. Following their fifth successful winter school, that team have stood aside while Eilís Hurst, Seán Curran and others have volunteered to organise the 2008 event which promises to be another sell out.

## Scots and Irish

About 100 participants attended the Irish language school and another 27 the Scots Gaelic classes. The regular Sunday-night concert featured both traditions. Moreover, Pamela O'Neill offered elective classes in Old Irish, the 1500 year-old language which is the parent of both Irish and Scots Gaelic.

I was in an intermediate class which was fortunate to have Colm Ó Boill as teacher. An effective method he used was to give half a story to one half of the class to read and the other half to the others, then pairing people up to sort out, through Irish, the whole story. His game of "Who Am I?" featured Kevin Rudd. The clue I got was, "Nuair a bhí mé óg ní teach a bhí againn ach gluaisteán".

Barney Devlin and Peadar Daley from Canberra directed another hilarious performance of their Van the Man comedy series. Teacher Peadar Ó Boill from Falls Road, a graduate of Queens University Belfast, currently living in Newcastle, had a few worrying days with floods around his home. His talk was about the growth of the language in the North with special praise for the families who set up an Irish school 40 years ago on Shaws Road. Whenever I refer to books on international language revival in the twentieth century, this group is singled out for their achievements.



## Around the country

On Saturday afternoon we pooled news about Irish, Scots Gaelic and Welsh language education across Australia. There are regular Irish classes in Adelaide, Melbourne, Canberra, Wollongong and Sydney. In Brisbane there have been no Irish language lessons since last September but a few students continue to study together. The Canberra group won a \$5000 award from Glór na Gael and so two teachers will be going to Ireland. Sydney groups meet in two or three different places and have recently put out the first issue of their newsletter. The Melbourne group usually runs a summer school and is fortunate to have a base in the Celtic Club, a library, a website and a newsletter. Their next Daon-scoil will be 6-13 January 2008.

Each year, when the school finishes, there is an optional outing with Fr Micheál Ó Suilleabháin to the 1798 Memorial at the grave of Michael Dwyer in Waverley cemetery. Micheál has written a booklet about this intricate, grand, didactic and unique 100-year old monument. The trip to Sydney is worth it to hear him explain many points of Irish and Irish Australian history. Nearby is the grave of Fr Ted Kennedy, well known for his solidarity with Aboriginal people while he was parish priest of Redfern.

The minutes taken by Eilís Hurst of the reports from each State show that all groups are having difficulties, yet all present spoke with joy and enthusiasm about the Irish language, music (two harpists were a stand-out feature of the event this year), literature, and history. In the face of ongoing claims that the language is a lost cause, the 2007 winter school nurtured a sense of community among those who enjoy the Gaelic aspect of Australian Irish heritage.

Val Noone

# An Téamh Domhanda

(Páipéar beag chun diospóireacht a spreagadh sa rang)

An cheist is mó atá i mbéil na ndaoine i láthair na húaire ná an 'téamh domhanda'. Ach cad is brí leis an bhfrása seo? Is frása nuachumtha é ar ndóigh. Ciallaíonn sé go bhfuil an domhan seo againne ag éirí níos teo gach bliain, go bhfuil na farraigí ag dul in aoirde de réir a chéile agus muna mbeimid go léir múchta leis an teas beimid ag teitheadh roimh an taoide i gceann scór nó dhá scór bliain. An bhfhéadfadh é sin a bheith fíor? Má tá, cá bhfuil an fhianaise, agus cé hiad na daoine atá á dtabhairt? Cén fá go bhfuil rud mar sin ag dó na geirbe ag an rialtas i mbliana agus gan aird ar bith á thógaint acu air roimhe sin?

Ar ndóigh, tá dhá insint ar an scéal:

Deirtear ar thaobh amháin go bhfuil staitisticí na haimsire á bhailiú le breis agus céad blian anuas agus ní féidir iad a shéanadh. Fógraítear go bhfuil téamh domhanda ag tárlú, gan aon agó. Ní hiad na 'Glasaigh' amháin atá ag tabhairt tacaíochta don taobh seo anois ach tromlach de eolaithe na timpeallachta a bhí páirteach sa chruinniú mór i dTokyo le déanaí, an cruinniú as a dtagann an 'Tokyo Protocol'. De réir mar a thuigeann an dream úd an scéal, tá An Astráil agus tíortha eile sa 'Chéad Domhan' ag déanamh scrios ar an ozone layer le droch-gáis áirithe. Sin iad na 'carbon emissions', a thagann ó thionscal agus ón dtráchtáil. Maidir le na droch-gáis céanna, ní bheag an díobháil a dhéanann na gluaisteáin príobháideacha ach an oiread. Toisc na fianaise uile, dar le lucht tacaíochta an argóint seo, níl aon leathscéal ag rialtas na hAstráile anois gan iarracht a dhéanamh stad a chuir leis an méid gás a scaoiltear isteach san atmaisféar.

Ach tá taobh eile ann [taobh na sceipteach b'fhéidir] a deireann gurb é príomhchúis an raic atá ar siúil ná an dúil atá ag na meáin chomarsáide i ndíospóid. Agus d'fhéadfadh diospóireacht mar seo leanúint gan freagra sásúil ar feadh b'fhéidir leathchéad blian eile. Anuas ar sin, dar leis an lucht amhrasach, beidh Toghchán againn níos déanaí sa bhliain agus tá cúrsaí eacnamaíochta ag dul ar aghaidh chomh maith san nach bhfuil ábhar mór conspóide ann níos mó idir na páirtithe móra polaitíochta. Dá bhrí sin cuireadh i leith na polaiteoirí nach bhfuil ach 'an timpeallacht' agus 'téamh domhanda' agus a leithéid fágtha leo mar cnámh spairne. Bíonn an aimsir de shíor ag athrú a deirtear, agus beidh go deo. Cuimhnigh go raibh Aois na nDíonasár ann ar feadh tamaill fhada nuair a bhí an domhan i bhfad ní ba theo ná mar atá sé anois. Tar éis sin tháinig an Oighear-Aois inar mhair an cine daonna i bplúaiseanna gan rian de na háiseanna teicneolaíochta acu agus atá againn sa lá atá inniu ann, agus mar sin de. Sin an Nádúr duit, a dhuine!

Bíonn an argóint á phlé mar sin thuas sna meáin agus timpeall na tíre. I ndeireadh na dála táimid ag braith ar na saineolaithe, iad siúd a chaitheann a saol ag déanamh stuidéar ar chúrsaí aimsire agus an timpeallacht. Nach fuath le eolaithe agus daoine sa saol acadúil, a hainmneacha a chuir le páipéir nó prótócol ar bith atá bréagach? D'fhéadfá a rá gur cúis leo ceist na timpeallachta a bheith ann mar gheibheann siad carn mór airgid chun taighde a dhéanamh uirthi ó bhliain go bliain, agus gan amhras a mbeathaí a thuilleamh as. Ach nach féidir a chuir ina leith go bhfuil an taobh eile ag fáil tuarastail deasa ó comhluchtaí idirnáisiúnta chun chuir i gcoinne Tokyo?

Ní féidir liom é seo a críochnú gan focal scoir:

Má tá an ceart ag lucht diúltaithe ní tharlóidh tada, agus i gcionn 20-30 bliain beidh saineolaithe na timpeallachta ina gceap magaidh ós comhair an domhain. Ach muna bhfuil an ceart acu beidh muintir Port Melbourne agus St Kilda faoi uisce. D'fhéadfadh muintir Springvale nó Langwarrin a bheith ag díol suíomhanna cois farraige ar phraiseanna deasa.

*Criostóir Ó Maonaigh,*

*The author, Criostóir Ó Maonaigh, teaches Irish at weekly classes run by Cumann Gaeilge na hAstráile (Irish Language Association of Australia). Criostóir wrote this article on global warming to encourage debate in his class.*

*For more information about classes and the Cumann contact the President Deirdre Gillespie on 0423 080 677 or go to [www.gaeilgesanastrail.com](http://www.gaeilgesanastrail.com)*

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The Australian-Irish Welfare Bureau is a non-profit voluntary organisation whose aims are to assist, where possible, any person or persons in the Irish community of Victoria or any person who may be associated with the Irish community who is in distress.

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# Radio matters

## Celtic Radio

Readers with good memories may recall that the reasons given when SBS dropped the long running celtic programs were two-fold: (a) they could not squeeze in the new aspirant groups within the existing number of radio channels and broadcast hours; and therefore (b) the only way they could make room was to drop something. So we got the short straw. At the time, it was carefully worded in the SBS annual report as a "launch of a new program schedule" with the added explanation that they were "forced" to ditch us. Sob, sob.

Roll on to October 14th 2005 and Darling Harbour. Communications minister Helen Coonan pops up smiling at the annual radio industry conference to announce the staged rollout of Digital Radio spectrum (read more channels) with plenty of space for all comers and even with free allocations, incurring only a small admin charge, for existing broadcasters (read SBS). This is meant to induce a rapid take up and get the whole shebang rolling and no doubt boost Ms Coonan's own stature.

So are the Irish leaping for joy at the prospect of regaining our wee program?

Sadly no-one in the Irish community that I spoke to knows for sure or even seems to care any more. And SBS are quietly distancing themselves from the whole affair with a dry "we do not comment on future". Industry insiders say that if SBS does anything it will be for those established groups already on air, which of course now excludes us. Having forced a new status quo upon us they intend to make sure it sticks. But the local Greek media took a different tack and even had the Minister on their front page the following week.

## Eureka 147

Coincidentally the digital broadcast standard selected for Oz actually had some Irish involvement in the design stage. It came from a technical consortium in Europe, where its known as Eureka 147. This is not some rare earth metal but just happens to be the hundred and forty seventh project undertaken by the Eureka group of boffins. It was chosen in preference to rival systems from Japan and the US. In fact the US offers two systems known as XM and Sirius both of which are subscription services (ie an activation fee and then a monthly hit on your credit card). The signals are broadcast from a geostationary satellite and can only be received in the mainland US. So even Alaska and Hawaii miss out. Probably not a great loss to them because the 120 odd channels are "national" and as such totally devoid of any serious localised content, except for some traffic and weather reports for about 10 major cities. Think Pay TV without even the pictures. This could partly explain why customer

figures have steadfastly failed to reach targets and even car manufacturers are now less than enthusiastic about continuing to offer these radio sets in new cars. But one thing they do have is "foreign language channels" and in the US that means only one thing. Buenos dias amigos.

## Irish Digital Radio?

Back to local matters. Could the Irish community here step into the breach and get our own digital broadcasting licence? A question which could be neatly paraphrased as "how deep are your pockets?" New entrants to the local radio market will still have to cough up big for an allocation and the digital setup costs alone are sizeable. As well as that, playing music incurs ongoing APRA licensing fees. Then again where would we get enough broadcasters, and could we even contemplate running a 24/7 operation? Not insignificant questions (with due apologies to George Orwell) but with a reportedly huge percentage of this country claiming some degree of Irish ancestry and with Irish pubs now choking our capital cities, do we exist as a real community group or just as a convenient brand name for whatever someone is selling?

Worse still, are we just kidding ourselves and living off old glories with our Joseph Locke '78's and dusty framed pictures of de Valera?

Stay tuned as they say.

**Stuart Trill**

*The Director of SBS Radio, Paula Masselos, is hosting a series of Community Consultations and you're invited. Come and share your thoughts on SBS Radio services now and into the future. Location details of next meetings to be announced soon on SBS website.*



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# Joycepoem

No bad eminence this, Lord Belvedere's  
hill, and the house, a Jesuit perch,  
from whose broad upper window I watch the city.  
A minutes trail downslope, and your Centre  
Offers decorum, celebrity and pamphlets-  
as though to mime, so late in the piece,  
The Church you couldn't stand. A swing on the heel  
would take your ghost through a modern thicket –  
the buffed-up-bar for cubs of the Celtic Tiger  
Some corner shops, their dust in amber,  
boom of construction, a placard for lapdancing –  
to museums of seeing, writing, saying,  
and the little park from which by night or day  
The Children of Lir rise for the dead.

Ironic hunter, you'd bag it, every morsel.  
Stalker of streets, scuffer of pavements,  
dawdler on bridges, prowler by close and parade,  
You bought the place for habitat  
And made it all domain. And now you share it,  
wary as every but hungry still,  
With Lilliput's master, the tangle-hearted Swift,  
your better at scorn, your brother in laughter,  
a singleton like yourself in the press of the crowds.  
By O'Connell Street, by Stephen's Green,  
by Dolphins barn, Kilmainham, and Phoenix Park,  
you're out with your wits about you for game,  
while the rain of matter falls from one soft day  
to the next, and you drink as though mortal

A moody harlequin, you dander the banks  
Of Anna Livia Plurabelle, tracing  
now the lozenge of furious red, and now  
sable's badge of your being unseen –  
feral and brilliant, come of a darker selvage  
than took the Florentine aback  
and sent him God knows where. Your golden thread  
is the tainted stream itself, the walks ravines,  
the mouth of your mind as fluent as the traffic  
by Trinity's walls. A one-man-fugue,  
you move by cadence, interval, revision:  
by climax deferred, and silence courted.  
Everything melts, as though to the Grand Canal  
commanded and lost, measure by measure

Gulls have come over Parnell Square, to raise  
'the screaming practice of their peace'  
and newly-landed Americans are shuttling  
in and out of your shrine, a cane  
someone's caduceus come down in the world,  
a guidebook feathered in winter sunshine.  
Singer of flesh and its withering, mind and its fall,  
there are worse places to be than this one,  
your portrait in honour a floor below me, the air  
shivered with fragments of light reflected  
From window and doorface painted in carnival, and  
your foxing spirit here for a term  
becoming again and again the flambeau it carries,  
dear dirty Dublin a thing of fire.

Peter Steele

## Spoil

After the war is over,  
if I still have legs,  
I will dance you, my love,  
in a shady park,  
if we still have trees.

After the war is gone,  
if I still have eyes,  
you will be first and last  
of all I want to see,  
if we still have choice.

After the war is over,  
if I still have arms,  
I will lift you up  
into a brighter day,  
if we still have sky.

After the war is gone,  
if I still have dreams,  
I will spin them for  
you on lazy blankets,  
if we still have a home.

Meg McNena

(Winner 2006 Amnesty International Freedom Writers Award)

## Radio Days

Smells assail me still.  
The heat of pungent peat  
coaxing smouldering dampness  
from warm wet woollies, draped haphazardly  
on miscellaneous knobs and chairs.  
The whiff of crackling rashers or acrid cabbage  
and the permeating soothing smell  
of scones and soda bread and Mother.

The Taoists have a god for every room.  
In our house the Kitchen God sat square and squat  
on the old deal dresser, (vying impassively  
for our minds and hearts and souls  
with the Real God hanging on his smoke hued cross above)  
spewing electromagnetic waves woven into words  
as Bearla or gaeilge but often beyond  
our literal or metaphorical understanding,  
tumbling into our cosy kitchen life  
the fearful tragedies, wretched disasters,  
incomprehensible holocausts of a world distraught.

But sometimes blissful peace prevailed  
when, childish squabbles quashed,  
our ears were wooed by the deep sonorous tone  
of the Story Teller, filling our heads with  
images of wily fox and silly chooks and faithful hound  
while we filled our mouths with googie egg and soda bread.

One moonlit summer night, the high pure tenor notes  
Of John McCormick's "Angels Guard Thee"  
soared through time and space and dust motes  
searing my heart with a memory of my now dead father.  
I sat down and wept  
for him, for me and all that might have been.

Liz Mara

# Convents and connections

In July I traveled for two weeks in Ireland with the principal of a Melbourne school owned by the Presentation Sisters. I had been principal there before her. We were keen to follow the story of the Presentation Nuns in Ireland; to spend some time with my colleague's relatives in Belfast; and to visit Mullingar in County Westmeath from whence my maternal great, great grandfather, Patrick Martin, was transported to New South Wales.

The weather was cool and damp but the people were their usual warm selves.

In a small museum in Dublin an exhibition told the story of Theresa Mullally, who worked with the poor of Dublin as Nano Nagle did in Cork. The two women corresponded and Theresa visited Nano in Cork. The followers of these two inspiring women began the Presentation Order as we now know it. At the museum we found an Old Testament quote, "Those who instruct many to justice will shine like stars for all eternity." As my colleague and I have a relationship with the Presentation Sisters in Australia through Star of the Sea College, Gardenvale, we found the quote very significant. The Presentation Sisters came to Gardenvale from their convent in Kildare, having first set up the school at Mt Erin in Waqga Wagga New South Wales. Star of the Sea College was founded in 1883 and has for almost 125 years been keen to "instruct many to justice".

Guided by Br Bede, a Presentation Brother, who suggested we call him Paddy like everyone else, we visited the original convent founded by Nano Nagle in Cork and attended Mass where she worshipped at St Finbarr's Church. Morning tea of scones with all the trimmings, one of several we had in convents in Ireland, was followed by a tour of the South Pres Convent. We visited Nano's Parlour and then spent time in the Heritage Room, looking at many relics of the foundress. Her grave was a special place and it was obvious that many people have a strong connection with her. This convent and school have also been transformed into homes for the poor.

In the afternoon we traveled to Nano's birthplace, Ballygriffen near Mallow, where the Sisters have turned her family land into an eco friendly conference centre. At the end of the day Paddy took us to May, who is 94 years old and the most positive person



At Nano Nagle's tomb; The jaunting car Rosalie Jones

I have met. If we had done nothing else in Ireland but meet her, we would have had a rich trip indeed!

A ride in a jaunting car in Killarney fulfilled a lifelong ambition since watching "The Quiet Man". We went from Galway to Belfast via Sligo and visited the grave of W.B Yeats at Drumcliffe. So much of my life has been influenced by the Irish!

From hospitable Belfast we traveled to the Giant's Causeway to fulfill another great ambition of mine. I have a grandson named Finn! At the Milltown Cemetery, we found a fresh rose on the grave of Bobby Sands. I was surprised at my heartache to witness the graves of the hunger-strikers and also conscious that the July 12 marchers had, for the first time, agreed to negotiate about future marches. Perhaps Bobby Sands' day has come at last and Robert Emmett's epitaph may finally be written.

On our way back to Dublin we visited the courthouse at Mullingar from whence Patrick Martin was sentenced and sent for transportation to New South Wales in 1834. "Lots of Martins in the area", I was told as I tried to imagine the young man who would eventually make a life for himself in the new land, once granted his freedom and given property at The Oaks, near Camden in New South Wales.

It was my fourth visit to Ireland and, once again I found so much to see but, more importantly, so much to experience in this wonderful land that Time may have Forgotten, but from whose clutches no one of Irish extraction can ever escape.

Rosalie Jones

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# St Patrick's Day, Then and There

When I was growing up, St Patrick's Day was marked as a day to wear green and eat green good with secondary focus on learning about the great man himself, particularly as I attended a primary school named after him.

From a religious occasion, it became an excuse to go on a pub-crawl with friends around Carlton, wearing something green and, for those inclined, alcohol with an Irish label.

Being in London on a working holiday this year, I wanted to see if London could attract the same crowds expected for Dublin for what is billed as one of the top five parties in the world. London's version meant events scattered around the city the Sunday before. With the green of the shamrocks generally swallowed up by the usual sombre colours, it was difficult to tell there was an event on unless you were in the middle of it. But there were distinct traces of Irish self-promotion where stalls were set up in Trafalgar Square to encourage punters to visit Ireland, in Leicester Square little girls gave Irish dancing lessons, and Irish food in Covent Garden. An Irish voice said behind me, 'This is very Irish,' as I queued for salt beef in a bagel at a stall. On a bitterly cold day in London, the crowds were largely sheltering from the cold in nearby Irish pubs.

Even the hail couldn't keep the crowds away in Dublin. Young men sat on street signs along O'Connell Street to get a view of the parade. If you wanted to risk a browse in a tourist shop, you needed patience while a shopper browsed in an aisle built for one person. Enthusiastic girls were wearing Irish-themed g-strings on the outside of their jeans and the colours green, white and orange were everywhere. Pubs were packed with sociable Irish and tourists from all over were eager to attempt Irish dancing and sing along to the Corrs and U2.

Aussie guys challenged each other to have the most texta marks on their arms, as one mark equalled one Guinness; they lost 2 marks if they threw up. Amazingly, the locals seem to have adapted well to the no-smoking ban in Ireland, without the huddled groups of smokers outside



buildings that is usually the case in Melbourne.

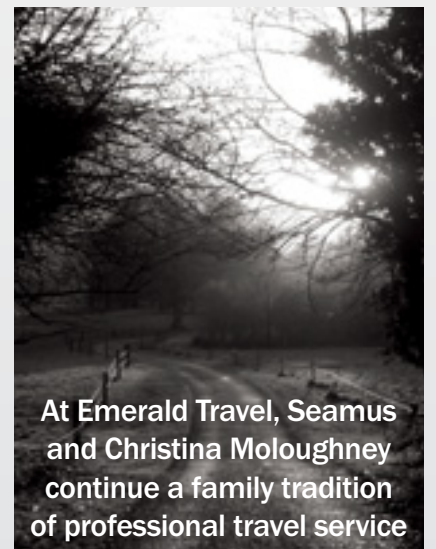
But this year the big drinking effort didn't stop the next day though, Ireland were playing England in the rugby and again the pubs were packed. To show my support, I was wearing the same feather boa in Irish colours as the day before and was twice told by middle-aged Irish men, 'It's not St Paddy's Day, you know'. It seems it is only acceptable to wear the tri-colour on St Patrick's Day, even in a Dublin pub watching Ireland play England. There were no fights, just more celebrating when Ireland won. Once again, the struggle was to find a pub in Temple Bar with cheap drinks and room to move. Even the buskers gained a decent audience. Inviting, charming and full of stories, St Patrick's Day is Dublin at its best.

*Leah D'Astoli*



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# Ancestral lands revisited

On a recent visit to UK and Ireland, researching a story about our ancestors, we spent some time in the north of Ireland, including the six counties under British rule. Dublin airport Immigration saw us surviving the usual insult of joining the long queue for Australians and Americans of Irish blood, while lines of Bulgarians, Poles and other EU citizens proceeded without delay through a number of other gates.

My great-great grandmother, Catherine Meghee, came to Australia in the early 1850s from Northern Tipperary, near the Co. Offaly border. Her family likely originated from around Lough Dergh, on the borders of Donegal and Tyrone. I was aware of a site of pilgrimage, St Patrick's Purgatory, at Lough Dergh but nothing had prepared us for its magnificence. Rather than a small island with perhaps a small cairn, as I'd imagined it, Station Island is of some two acres with a Basilica and large monastic buildings. Unfortunately, we were unable to visit the island without participating in the three day pilgrimage. Our tight itinerary saved us from going barefoot and living on bread and water.

We spent several days in Belfast as I wanted to see just how it was today when, to the world at large, the days of sectarian violence have apparently disappeared. A Black Taxi tour through the Shankill and Falls Road areas soon conveyed that little had changed in the city's working class areas. Teenagers built bonfires in the Unionist areas, in preparation for the 12th July celebrations of the Battle of the Boyne. Judging by the height of the stacked pallets and other material, the paintwork of nearby houses would have certainly been blistered when the fires were lit.

One of the prominent murals in the Shankill commemorates a local hero, known as Top Gun Bobby. The local community adorns this memorial with wreathes on Armistice Day. I was informed that he had never been near a fight in his life and had died in

his early thirties from a drug overdose! On the Nationalist/Catholic side of the wall, the houses next to the wall seemed neater and newer, albeit with caged back yards to deflect missiles. Of course, this Clonard area, through which we drove, had been rebuilt after being burnt out in the violence of the latter part of the last century. It also had a Memorial Garden to the 83 people from Clonard, both IRA and civilian, who had lost their lives in the conflict. The murals on this side of the wall were more numerous and eclectic, with one featuring George W Bush as "America's Greatest Failure". Our driver tried to appear objective and unaligned but his cover was "blown" when he received several cheery greetings as we crawled in traffic along the Falls Rd!

Our short visit to Belfast disheartened us. Although, much of the more affluent population, whether Protestant or Catholic, lives and works side by side, the existence of 17 high walls which divide Unionist/Protestant from Nationalist/Catholic working classes, can only perpetuate sectarianism. Children, on both sides of these walls grow up in an atmosphere of hatred for those on the other side and I wonder just how peace can last in these circumstances.

From this divided city, we drove to the land of a number of ancestors in South Armagh, around Newry. Merlyn Rees, the Northern Island Secretary, branded this area as "bandit country" in 1975. It was reputed to be the most dangerous posting anywhere in the world for the British Army, during the recent occupation. The deadly effectiveness of the IRA thereabouts forced the British Army to ban land transportation for its troops in the area, so helicopters accomplished all movements. It is very peaceful today, as it also appeared four years ago when we visited. Yet prominent IRA signs and Republican flags throughout the area indicate past conflict, albeit in what is officially British Northern Ireland. We've only known it for its beautiful countryside and its ancestral significance. The

charming villages of Meigh, Forkhill and Crossmaglen today belie the fact that they were once the sites of such violence. We've enjoyed visiting them and researching where ancestors lived and farmed. We stopped at the church and graveyard in the hamlet of Dromintee, to visit graves of many ancestral relatives. The obligatory tri-colour was flying in the corner of the cemetery and beautiful floral arrangements adorned all the graves. It is hard to imagine this as anything other than an area of peace, until you read about the recent Troubles and recognise the predominant surnames in the graveyard as being those of the IRA volunteers of the area. The Three Steps pub in Dromintee that we know well, was the site where the British SAS undercover agent, Capt Robert Nairac, was last seen being bundled into a car. His body was never found.

So, what's the future for this part of South Armagh? In the absence of occupying troops, our observations over the last few visits indicate that this area has found peace at last. Unlike Belfast, it is hard to imagine otherwise. It may well be so because the population is uniformly Nationalist. No doubt, the cross-border smuggling still goes on and farms divided by the border still enjoy the fuel excise advantages, although specific British legislation has inhibited the traffic of black market fuel. In the past, EU subsidies of £8 per pig allowed enterprising individuals to drive lorry loads of these animals back and forth across the border, leaving from a farm gate on one side and entering the same property from another gate on the other side. Others chased grain subsidies with lorries full of sand with a thin layer of surface grain. No doubt, there are still loopholes which allow other financially attractive smuggling schemes. But, the overwhelming impression is one of stability and calm.

So it was goodbye to another visit to Ireland, the final indignity coming when, later in the trip, Bank of Northern Ireland pounds were initially queried as valid currency by ignorant staff in English service centres! I provided a short, albeit blunt, history of British occupancy of our ancestral land and this, together with the intervention of a supervisor, finally accomplished our purchases.

*Robert Butler*



# The most vulnerable group afloat

*Quarantined! The 1837 Lady Macnaghten Immigrants*  
Perry McIntyre and Liz Rushen,  
Sydney: Anchor Books, 2007, 214pp

This book is about one ship and its 444 passengers and crew, who left Cork Harbour in early November 1836 and, after a passage of nearly 4 months, arrived in Sydney Harbour in late February 1837.

The voyage was of course only one of thousands made to the various Australian colonies during the 19th century; and indeed, the *Lady Macnaghten*, which was launched in 1825, had made a number of previous voyages and would make more after 1837. A prospective reader might therefore wonder why the authors have chosen to write about this one particular voyage. Well, the answer is that this was a tragic voyage, which led to a Board of Inquiry, a good deal of official correspondence and numerous newspaper reports.

As the authors explain, the passengers, who were around 90 per cent Irish, reflected the end of one form of assisted migration and the beginning of another. There were 80 single women on board, who were the last group sent out under a scheme begun in 1833 to supply women to a colony whose population was nearly 75 per cent male. But as well, there were 58 families on the ship, reflecting the start of a new scheme to encourage family migration. Families of course usually include children and, given the large families of this period, there were many very young children on board. Unfortunately, however, those who organised the voyage had not sufficiently appreciated the problems of conveying infants half-way round the world.

The authors indicate that probably no voyage to Australia since 1788 had included so many young children as passengers. Yet, as Helen Woolcock has said in her study of migration to Queensland later in the century: children are the 'most vulnerable group afloat'. The *Lady Macnaghten* was overcrowded according to the regulations of the time: not overcrowded in terms of the adult passengers or the crew, but overcrowded in terms of the children under 15. Of the passengers some 46 per cent were children.

Overall 17.5 per cent of the passengers died, either during the voyage itself



The authors and the reviewer

Liz Rushen

or at the quarantine station on the North Head of Sydney Harbour. This was an extremely high figure for the time. But the death rate among the children under 7 on the *Lady Macnaghten* was truly horrifying: it was fully 44 per cent. And of the adults who died, most were women and most of them were the mothers of young children.

They died from infectious and contagious diseases that were very prevalent in pre-famine Ireland: diarrhoea, measles, scarlet fever, whooping cough, typhus and TB. The first child died of scarlet fever only 4 days into the voyage, which suggests that some were infected before embarkation. The ship was overloaded with cargo, and bad weather confined the passengers below decks for most of the first weeks after leaving Cork. In these cramped, unhygienic conditions disease ran riot, especially among young children and babies. Adults doubtless had developed some resistance – and the first adult didn't die until 2 months into the voyage. But even many of them became ill. Of the 30 crew members, for instance, all except 2 were sick at various times. Only one died, but he was the

ship's surgeon – although the cook was swept overboard and drowned. A truly unlucky ship, it would appear.

Around this sad core story, which they tell in a short but moving narrative, McIntyre and Rushen have built an elaborate structure of appendices, lists and tables, which take up most of the book. All the passengers are listed and, as well as their experiences during the actual voyage, we are told a great deal about their backgrounds and their subsequent lives in Australia. The book is well organised, because, after reading about the voyage at the beginning, one can then go on to explore the passengers more closely, as both individuals and families, over many decades. The last survivor of the voyage, who lost her mother and baby sister on the *Lady Macnaghten*, didn't die herself until 1924.

This is a dramatic and often pathetic story, very well told, with a wealth of detail to delight the heart of any family historian and the academic apparatus necessary to satisfy even the most demanding professional historian.

Elizabeth Malcolm,  
University of Melbourne

## A warm romance

*The Flowers of Ballygrace*  
Geraldine O'Neill  
Orion Trade, London 2006



Geraldine O'Neill's fourth novel, *The Flowers of Ballygrace*, is a warm, easily read romance about an Irish widow, her son and daughter finding love and their place in a changing world. Local idiom flavours the dialogue to give a strong, authentic tone. The characters meet obstacles and grow in awareness but in rather predictable directions. The front cover asks, 'Can falling in love set you free?' The novel does not really address this.

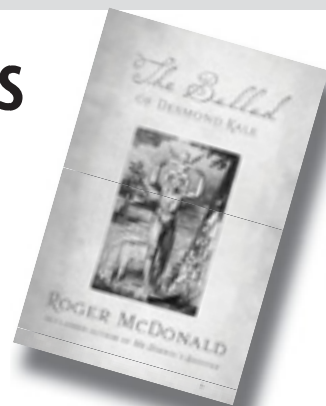
The book's jacket is attractive, but its picture of a modern girl compounds disparities I found in the narrative about time-setting. On Page 69 we learn that it is late 1950's. Earlier mention of half-crowns, maypole dances, paper drinking-straws and keeping milk cool in a bucket vividly captures bygone days. However, jarring contemporary references upset trust in the scene-setting and story-telling. After a dance the heroine, Kate, "could feel that she was not altogether firing on four cylinders." The family has no car or licences and in fact, "cars never come to their part of the canal." So, this engine metaphor is out of sync. Kate offers visitors tea or coffee. Irish households I visited in the 1970s when I first returned there offered only tea, no coffee. Having white and red wine for guests in country homes, shopping with carrier bags and 'faffing about' misrepresents the era also. The brother's love interest's hair colour also varies without dye. On Page 9 Noelle has "beautiful red hair", five pages later it is strawberry blonde, then red again, auburn and eventually light red. Overall slips in time and detail cloud characterisation and reader confidence in the author's research and attention.

Yet, I enjoyed seeing women in this novel tackling the 1960s with more self-determination.

**Meg McNena**

## A host of characters

*The Ballad of Desmond Kale*  
Roger McDonald,  
Sydney: Random House, 2005



The title, *The Ballad of Desmond Kale*, certainly has an inviting ring to it, conjuring up images of exciting adventures. There are Irish connotations to the notion of a life celebrated in balladry that might prompt you to begin reading this book.

But if you think the author will deliver a rousing ballad about the adventures of Mr. Kale, you will be disappointed. The eponymous hero rarely features in this lengthy tale. Admittedly, he makes a striking appearance in the opening chapter. It's the early years of the colony of New South Wales. Kale, an Irish convict, has just received a flogging and is on his way back to Toongabbie. But the escorting trooper and an officer of the garrison, Tom Rankine, are in cahoots with the prisoner and they engineer his escape. Not, as might be anticipated in such tales, for Kale to become a bushranger, but – wait for it – to take charge of a mob of quality merino sheep.

Afterwards, we see very little of Kale. The novel is set in an area well beyond the fringes of settlement where he tends his flock. We learn that he's from a Protestant family of wool breeders but where he comes from in Ireland or why he has ended up in New South Wales is not revealed. Kale's Irishness seems little more than a label, a convenient icon of defiance in a British colonial society. McDonald's knowledge of Irish history is suspect since he mentions that 'Kale threw in his lot with radical Fenian Catholics' – forty or fifty years before the Fenian movement was founded!

The tale of his escape and the inability of the troopers to locate him become the subject of a new ballad back in Sydney town, sung in Irish. At least McDonald is sensitive to that detail of colonial history. But none of the lines appears in the text, although they celebrate Kale's prospering in the wilderness. He becomes a symbol of hope for the unfortunate convicts left behind in Sydney and Parramatta. Still, the title of the book led this reader to expect a fuller treatment of 'ballad' and 'Desmond Kale'.

The author is much more interested in the Rev. Matthew Stanton, closely modelled on Samuel Marsden, long reviled in Australian folklore as 'the flogging parson'. Stanton is the book's major figure,

a complex and fascinating character. He is equally committed to flogging convicts as Marsden was, especially Irish ones, and is obsessed with finding out who assisted Kale to escape. He's also obsessed to ensure that the escapee does not breed better merinos than himself, since his principal goal in life is to be the premier sheep breeder in the colony. He does have some interest in religion, of the evangelical variety, and harbours an unsuccessful goal of converting the Aborigines to Christianity. The author is at pains to show a softer side to him as well, especially in his affection for Dolly, his wife, and for his adopted 'son', Warren, who happens to be Kale's grandson.

An historical saga needs a host of characters and locations, and *The Ballad of Desmond Kale* has plenty of both. From the governor, Sir Colin Wilkie (modelled on Macquarie, I assume), down to Patrick Lehane, a sly informer, we get a cross section of colonial society. The tale moves from New South Wales to Yorkshire to London and Rio de Janeiro before all the loose ends of the plot are wrapped up back in the colony where settlement is gradually reaching Kale's territory. There's plenty of drama along the way to keep the reader enthralled.

This novel is as encyclopaedic about wool. McDonald once worked as a shearer and has published a non-fiction book about his experiences. He became fascinated with wool culture in Australia and, as the list of acknowledgements shows, he has not neglected his research on the subject. He was surprised that such a significant industry had never featured in a novel and so decided to remedy this deficiency. Where better to set such a novel than at the beginnings of the industry in the early nineteenth century?

*The Ballad of Desmond Kale* is not always easy reading. It was sometimes hard to get into, with complex sentences demanding close attention. But it's well worth persevering with and would repay further readings.

**Frances Devlin Glass**

# Manufacturing Victoria

## *The Emerald Strand*

**Dr Keith Pescod: Nineteenth-century  
Irish-born Manufacturers  
Australian Scholarly Publishing**

It's a book with a distinctly green cover. And why wouldn't it be? After all, it reveals the real-life stories of the contribution of Irish immigrants to Victorian manufacturing from the nineteenth century.

But there is the distinct possibility that the likes of Dugald McDougall, a founder of the Sands and McDougall empire or Henry Upton Alcock, of billiard table fame, may not have shared in the author's decision to wrap them in green. They and others in the book came from distinctly Protestant Irish backgrounds and lived in an era when Irish rebellion was not far below the surface, whether back in Ireland or out in the far flung colonies.

But surprisingly there is no obvious recording by Pescod of disharmony between the Irish of nationalist backgrounds, and those of the era who were not too far removed from their Scottish Planters of Ulster and Anglo Irish ascendancy.

Rather this is a scholarly book that looks subjectively at these early pioneers of Victorian industry. They were ambitious to succeed, whether as brewers, distillers and wine producers (and there were plenty of those), flour millers, engineers and founders, printers and stationers (enter Dugald McDougall) or fine coach builders or furniture manufacturers. Henry Upton Alcock would surely have argued that one of his billiard tables was as fine a piece of household furniture in a Victorian mansion or gentleman's club as could possibly be found.

The book tells of success and failure; of empires won and lost; and of the simple march of time and the melding of one company into another by mergers and acquisitions, to form what today are some of the biggest manufacturers in the country, and, in the case of Carlton and United Breweries, the world.

Henry Collis Boyd adopted the shamrock as his brand of ale. From County Limerick he settled in Victoria in 1864 and built a considerable business. He traversed the Irish divide as an amiable and kindly employer of Irish immigrants, though remained tremendously loyal to the British Empire. His son, who later ran the business, Lieutenant Charles



Boyd, served with fellow Victorians in the Boer War.

His speech on the capture of Ladysmith from the Boers included... "Irish blood mingles with English and Scotch to water the dry soil. This is a glorious day for Ireland as it is for her partners in Empire. It is sometimes thrown in the face of Irishmen that his country is not loyal to her Gracious Majesty. How can Loyalty be better proved than by dying for Queen and country? We belong to the big united family of the nation, and are loyal to the family."

On the other hand there were those like Peter Jageurs, born in Tullamore, Kings County (Offaly) in 1835. A descendant of a German officer, his grandfather married a Catholic in Ireland and he grew up in that faith. Jageurs arrived in Melbourne one year before Boyd. He became a leader in the stonemasonry industry and would go on to represent the green side of Irish politics in the colony of Victoria, but it was his son Morgan who took up the cause far more vehemently both in word and deed, designing the tableau for the Irish rebel Robert Emmet's Centenary at the Exhibition Building in 1880. He was also involved in the founding of Melbourne's Celtic Club. The Jageurs & Sons business closed in 1932.

But if the reader expects to find much more in terms of politics, Pescod has not delved that far. Rather he has concentrated on what was achieved, and it was considerable.

It's an interesting read. You can't help feel a need to know more about the personalities behind these people, but should the author have gone that route it would have been a huge tome, and a mammoth piece of research.

He should be congratulated on the research he did to bring to light the contributions of the Irish to Victorian manufacturing, which today remains the engine room of Australian manufacture. The Irish helped make it so. No matter from which side of the divide they came.

*Norman Fay*



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## Of mountain men

Peter Behrens, the respected North American writer, visited Melbourne for the 2007 Writers' Festival. He appeared at Melbourne's Celtic Club on Sunday, 2 September, to read from his book, *The Law of Dreams*, winner of the Canadian Governor General's Award for English fiction and shortlisted for the Commonwealth Writers' Prize.

The recipient of a prestigious Stegner Fellowship at Stanford University, Behrens was born in Montreal, Canada, and lives in Maine, USA. A fiction writer, essayist, and screenwriter, Behrens has published a collection of short stories, *Night Driving*, and written four feature screenplays. His short stories and essays appear in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Saturday Night*, and *The National Post*; his fiction is anthologised in *Best Canadian Stories*, his non-fiction in *Best Canadian Essays*. *The Law of Dreams* is his first novel.

*The Law of Dreams* is set in 1846 in Ireland, with the potato blight ravaging the fields and people dying of hunger. Fergus O'Brien, his parents and sisters – subtenants of farmer Carmichael – have lived their entire lives on the 'shoulder bog' of Cappaghbaun Mountain on Carmichael's farm.

A prosperous farmer on the estate of an absentee landlord, Carmichael considers that part of his farm 'good for nothing but mountain men and their potatoes'. The Irish-speaking mountain people are allotted a small patch for potatoes, which, along with what they can hunt, is their principal sustenance.

Carmichael is told to eject the mountain people, tumble their cabins, and use the land for grazing livestock. In the opening scenes of Behrens' novel, Fergus' family, already suffering from the Black Plague, resists evacuation. Only Fergus survives. Survival means the workhouse. But he quickly escapes, joining the Ribbonmen, a gang of thieves, mostly children, who live in the warren of trenches cut in the bog by generations of peat collectors.

Impelled by the law of dreams, Fergus' strategy is to keep moving. He is often required to do hard, cruel things to survive. In Behrens' novel, Fergus travels far from home. Danger is constant. Behrens plunges the reader directly into a vein of history that haunts the ancestral memory of millions in a new millennium.

*Reader's Feast Booksellers has copies of The Law of Dreams available for sale.*

# In yer face

*The Pillowman*  
Martin McDonagh,  
Melbourne Theatre Company

McDonagh's theatre is confrontational. He is obsessed with the cruelty that lurks in the everyday, a violence which can erupt and have consequences which, in conventional moral terms, are well outside the norm. The son of Irish migrants to Britain, he is best known for *The Beauty Queen of Leenane* (1996), a play that has had several professional and non-professional productions in Melbourne, and has enjoyed extraordinary success in London with productions performed in seven years.

*The Pillowman*, for all its ferocity, has a tender heart. It is the tale of two brothers, Katurian (played intelligently by Joel Edgerton), a great storyteller (his surreal tales are as dark and as lurid as the Brothers Grimm), and Michal, older but slow. Dan Wyllie played this role credibly innocently. The dependent dim-witted brother relishes Katurian's good stories and has enough wit to denounce the ones that don't work so well. However, the stories entice him to enact them, without fully understanding the consequences of his action. The functional brother is falsely accused, because of his writing, of being the murderer.

The play is highly interpretable and open to a variety of readings, but for me, the main focus seems to be the human hunger for stories, the more pathological and violent the better. Perhaps the most vicious of these everyday stories is McDonagh's version of the story of the crucified Christ. In this play, it is made the more horrific by being played by a small girl who desires to be Christ and to be crucified in the same way. The audience is not spared this horror. The director, Simon Phillips cast a little person, Rima Hadchiti, because one could not cast a child in this role. It is a chilling scenario and one that must be familiar to any parent who has struggled to explain to a child the gap between the gentle Jesus of the nativity and the atrocity hung out to die on a cross.

What makes the play even more electric is that the need for such violent stories has a rational explanation. All of the violent killers, whether the main character who kills his parents out of love for his abused



*The Pillowman*,  
Melbourne Theatre Company

brother, or the police killers themselves, have tales to tell of being tortured by parents who exercise power illegitimately.

The play was given a very powerful staging by the Melbourne Theatre Company at the Merlyn Theatre, Malthouse. The interrogation room was plain and grey and threatening, but lighting and skilful set construction allowed it to transform into a bizarrely expressionist set out of a book of fairytales, with angular doors, glass coffins, and woodland effects, enhanced by lighting effects. The two sets of parents, doubled, wore the same outfits, but they were made different by lighting effects, and they were like villain illustrations gesturally and in terms of their makeup.

Despite the grimness of the subject-matter, we laughed, the more in the second half, partly out of shock. Having been involved closely recently with a production of Synge's *The Playboy of the Western World* for Bloomsday, I recognized with a start the combination of violence and dark comedy. This play updated it, forcing us to look in Caliban's mirror, but it also had a heart. The brothers' love for one another, and the deep respect for storying and its capacity to externalize what is dark and treacherous in the human heart humanized what could have been pornographic. I did not enjoy the violence, but I found the play's exposé of the hunger for sensational violence revealing.

Frances Devlin-Glass

# Writing and playing Mary O'Hara

## *Harp On The Willow* Ensemble Theatre Production

Melbourne theatregoers were delighted with Malcolm Cooke's production of the *Harp on the Willow*, based on the life of Mary O'Hara the well known Irish harpist, in March 2007, written by playwright John Misto.

Misto became aware of Mary's fascinating life when his mother gave him a copy of her autobiography *The Scent of the Roses*. He knew he had the makings of an unusual play but contacting Mary was much more difficult than he had anticipated. He eventually found her in Nairobi, Kenya, where her husband Dr. Padraig O'Toole was teaching African children, while she was working with street children and young AIDS sufferers. There was much to-ing and fro-ing on the Internet and Mary eventually gave permission for the play to be written. She provided fascinating details of her life on the condition that she never had to read or attend the play. This gave Misto the dramatic liberty he needed although most

of the drama was factual).

Mary's part was ably taken by Marina Prior and Lucy Maunder and although not a musical as such, there were plenty of musical items throughout the performance. These were mainly the traditional and folk songs played and sung by Mary which delighted her many fans during her performing years from the 50's to the 80's. At the time, her accompaniment of her beautiful voice on the Irish harp was unique. Harp playing had been banned in Ireland for several centuries under British rule – in fact, one could lose one's head for playing the harp! – and Mary was one of the first performers to resurrect it in post-war Ireland

Mary's unusual life – playing and singing with the harp, the sad loss of her first husband, Rhodes scholar and poet, Richard Selig, her entering and subsequent leaving the Benedictine Abbey after 12 years, provided John Misto with a great storyline for a play. The play proved such a success that Malcolm Cooke is planning to take it inter-state and possibly even worldwide.



Mary O'Hara and cast members of the Ensemble Theatre Production *Harp On The Willow*

Michael J Wilkie, MADPR

Melbourne was particularly fortunate in having 72-year-old Mary present for the whole of March. Together with her husband, Padraig, she was available after each performance to sign CDs, DVDs etc, and answer questions about the play.

For those who attended, it was an unique experience. If you missed it this time, and should it return to Melbourne, do yourself a favour and go – you will not be disappointed!

Catherine Arthur



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# Dermot Keogh at MISS

*The Catholic Hierarchy and the Easter Rising 1916*  
Lecture by Dr Dermot Keogh at Newman Oratory  
27 May 2007

On Tuesday 29 May 2007, at Newman College, Melbourne, Dermot Keogh, professor of history at University College Cork, gave a detailed lecture about the latest research on the Irish uprising of Easter 1916.

Keogh talked especially about what he has uncovered in Vatican archives about explanations for an unusual silence of the Catholic bishops: in 1916, in contrast with other occasions when they condemned armed revolt, the bishops did not issue a condemnation of the uprising.

The bishops saw the uprising as the work of extremists from a secret oath-bound society, normally a matter for them to repudiate. Yet they did not make their usual decree against such activities.

The failed military rising threw the Catholic clergy into turmoil. Some bishops of course did condemn it; others changed their minds in the light of the brutality of British repression, executions, detention and so on. But the official meeting of the Irish Catholic hierarchy did not issue a condemnation of it.

Keogh cited relevant personal influences. For instance, Father Michael Curran, secretary to Archbishop William Walsh of Dublin, was a nationalist whose position developed over time. He helped by making links, passing on information and so on. Curran, for instance, followed closely the final moves toward armed insurrection which followed the funeral of O'Donovan Rossa on 1 August 1915. Similar roles were played by Monsignor Michael O'Riordan and Father John Hagan, rector and vice-rector of the Irish College in Rome.

It is relevant to note, says Keogh, that key figures in the church leadership were already uneasy with aspects of John Redmond's leadership of the Irish party, for example, possible partition.

## Count Plunkett mission

Keogh draws attention to a remarkable revolutionary development in March 1916. A Dublin establishment figure, Count George Noble Plunkett, joined the secret armed revolutionary group, the Irish Republican Brotherhood. Count Plunkett was sworn in by his son, Joseph Plunkett, poet and man of letters, a key organiser of the Rising, and one of those later executed by General Sir John Maxwell.

Count Plunkett then went to Germany with messages for Roger Casement about the date of the Rising, the shipment of arms and so on. Keeping that part of his mission secret, Count Plunkett went on to Rome for an audience with Pope Benedict XV. His aim was to stop the Vatican condemning the Rising and to stop the Vatican directing the Irish bishops to condemn the Rising.

After digging in Vatican archives, Keogh has uncovered many details about the Plunkett mission. However, he believes that the Plunkett mission alone does not explain why the Pope and bishops did not condemn the Rising.

The severe British response and the groundswell among the general population swung some bishops and priests into a frame of mind where their long-held ambiguous feelings about



At Newman College: left to right, Liz Pearce, whose hospitality triggered the 1916 lecture, Pat McNamara, business manager of Tinteán, Professor Dermot Keogh, Professor Elizabeth Malcolm, Dr Philip Bull  
Val Noone

the British government turned into sympathy for the rebels, Keogh argues.

The bishops meetings of June and October (their regular meeting dates) would have split had anyone tried to push through a condemnation, Keogh says. By then a majority of bishops were agreeable to the "advanced nationalism" of Bishop Edward O'Dwyer of Limerick.

## Outstanding new book

Keogh comes down on the side of those who believe that the Rising of 1916 did change Ireland utterly. The Catholic bishops had a good nose for change, says Keogh. Hence they saw that a major change was happening and trimmed their sails accordingly.

In 2006, on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the Rising, Keogh joined with Gabriel Doherty and others to organise a successful conference in Cork of the most up-to-date researchers on the topic. Keogh and Doherty have now collected the papers from the conference in a marvellous book called *1916: the Long Revolution*, published by Mercier Press this year.

This book has many implications for the discussion of not only Irish politics but also the politics of the Irish in Australia. It deserves fuller review on another occasion.

The Keogh 1916 lecture was another in the series known as the Melbourne Irish Studies Seminars (MISS). The lecture was hosted by Elizabeth Malcolm, the Gerry Higgins professor of Irish studies at Melbourne University.

This was a late addition to the 2007 program. Keogh was in Sydney for six months at the University of New South Wales but came to Melbourne to visit friends, Liz Pearce and Brendan Power. They invited my wife, Mary Doyle, and me to join them for a meal, and we passed on word of Dermot's visit to Elizabeth Malcolm. The resulting lecture was one of the most outstanding we have had.

Val Noone



# Childhood revisited

*Mise Éire*

Séan O’Riada,

Issued by Gael Linn Dublin 2006

A shiver runs down my spine. My scalp tingles. The mournful opening cadence of Sean O’Riada’s score for *Mise Éire* seems to penetrate my very soul. I am transported back to my childhood, to a cavernous theatre in Dublin where I sit with hundreds of my fellow students who like me have been brought here, willingly or not, to watch this iconic film. We are as sophisticated as any other suburban students of 1960. Television sets do not yet dominate our living rooms and our lives, but we have grown used to the cinemascope technicoloured grandeur of Hollywood in our cinemas. Yet as the mellow notes of the French Horn (a revolution in itself – Irish music was usually played only on native instruments in local pubs!) are heard over the image of a grainy, grey, fluttering flag bearing the legend “Irish Republic” a hush falls over the assembled throng. For the next hour and a half (85mins) we are spellbound as our history – drummed into us in school through texts and teacher talk – comes eerily, dramatically, dynamically to life. People and events, until now just names to be memorised and regurgitated in exams, become real and relevant. A new generation of Irish patriots is born!

Now almost half-a-century later, I’m watching *Mise Éire* again. This time I’m ensconced in my comfortable armchair, half a world away from that long ago, far off venue. The grainy black and white reproduction of the DVD is in no way enhanced by the digitalised, high-definition functions of 21st century technology! But the magic of that event and the events portrayed in the film, sweep over me. I am again enthralled.

The narrative, I now realize, is driven by what was available on the 300,000 feet of 35mm film pertaining to Ireland in the early 20th century, accumulated by George Morrison, the director, from the National Library archives as well as from all over Britain and Europe. While the narrator tells us that many Irishmen volunteered to join the British Army in response to a widely publicised and persuasive recruiting campaign,



Aftermath of the 1916 Rising

Archives

several scenes juxtaposed WWI trench warfare with the Irish Volunteers drilling – the first time in two centuries that Irishmen were openly carrying arms. There is no verbal comment by the narrator on the rightness or otherwise of volunteering for the British Army but the visuals clearly state the message – why fight in France when your own country needs you? Much of the early footage concentrates on the roles of Jim Larkin and James Connolly in rousing Dublin workers to strike against British injustices and eventually to form the Irish Citizen Army. Countess Markievicz attains almost celebrity status as she appears in several guises: as one of the founding member of Cumann na mBan; as foundress of an organization, similar to the Scouts, for poor boys in Dublin; as an unwavering supporter of Connolly and the ICA and in one of the longest sequences of the film, her triumphant and tumultuous parade through the streets of Dublin after her release from Aylesbuury prison. Maud Gonne (wife of John McBride one of the signatories of the Proclamation who was shot by the British) also rates several mentions, but on the whole, the “Celtic Twilight” of Yeats et al and even the Revolutionary Council, including Eoin MacNeill and Pearse, do not figure prominently in the narrative, although this could have been due to the lack of any available film of their activities

rather than an intent to downplay their role in the dramatic events. There was certainly plenty of filming of events in the North with the formation and arming of the Ulster Volunteers and the nefarious political activities of Sir Edward Carson. And thanks to British Army archives (as well as some clandestine footage) there are comprehensive scenes of the destruction of Dublin buildings during the Rising itself, including the iconic scene of Nelson on his Pillar surveying the demolished GPO – looking at them makes one wonder how Dublin recovered so quickly and so well.

But almost every scene creates a frisson of recognition and excitement. Eamonn de Valera actually laughing (something we, as schoolchildren thought him incapable of!) after his victory in the Clare by-election; the Asgard at Howth with its cargo of arms for the Volunteers; the gun volley at the graveside of O’Donovan Rossa; the heady crowd scenes in Dublin when the Volunteer prisoners were released from English prisons. And last but not least, almost the last shot of *Mise Éire*, a symbol of future hope and ultimate victory, the iconic image of a vigorous Michael Collins on the hustings during the 1918 General Election campaign, when a Sinn Féin victory began to make possible the realization of the dream of an Irish Republic.

Liz Mara

# About us

# Tinteán



When Val announced to his unruly “editing” committee, meeting to discuss Issue 44 that it would be the penultimate edition of *Táin*, there was an instant and terrible silence. Surely he was joking?

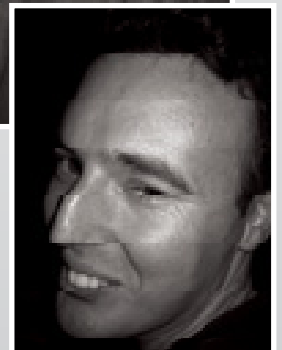
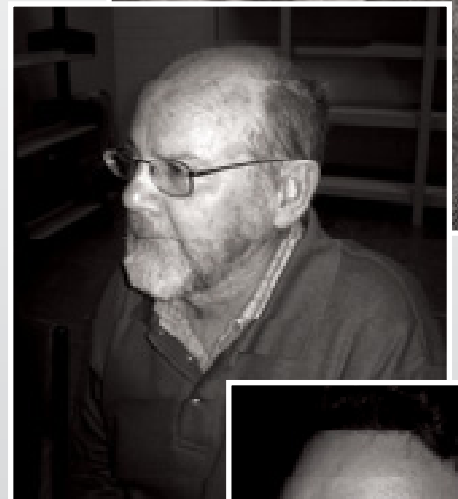
Of course, our first concern was for Val and Mary and their decision which we acknowledged we had to honour. But it didn't take too long for our concern to focus on ourselves. What would we do without *Táin*? An unimaginable void opened up before us. Perhaps, someone gloomily suggested, we could form a kind of social group and meet in an Irish pub at regular intervals? Or just continue to have the “editing” meetings without having to produce a magazine?

Or – a radical idea indeed – how about we started our own magazine, a, hopefully worthy, successor to our beloved *Táin*?

The Committee members have lots of things in common apart from our commitment to enjoying ourselves at *Táin* editing meetings. We are all of a certain age (not just the women!) with all the attendant joys (grandchildren), sorrows (losses), anxieties (children) and health issues which go with advancing age and wisdom. What we didn't have was a clue about running a magazine! So armed with ignorance and tremendous optimism and enthusiasm we set out to climb the mountain.

We are intensely grateful for our mountain guide, young Andrew Macdermid, who above and beyond a sense of indulging old people, has designed and laid out the magazine. His rare patience and good humour have been much in evidence. Thanks Andrew!

So here we are, not too much older but definitely wiser and maybe more importantly, still friends!



Missing: Frances Devlin Glass and Felicity Allen

Editor Liz McKenzie

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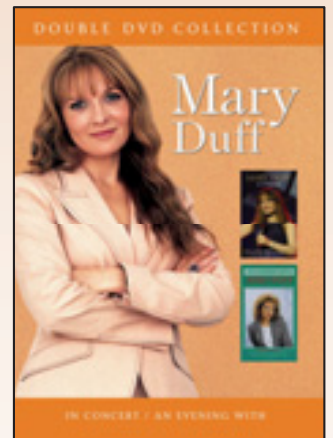
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