

A large, gnarled tree with a stone cross in the foreground, set against a blue sky. The tree is the central focus, with its thick, twisted trunk and dense green foliage. In the foreground, a stone cross stands prominently. The background shows a clear blue sky and a distant horizon line.

# Tinteán

THE AUSTRALIAN IRISH HERITAGE NETWORK

No 8, June 2009

PRINT POST APPROVED PP 336663/00047

**An innate right to land**  
**Kevin Cahill**

**The life and times of Arthur Calwell**  
**Mary Elizabeth Calwell**



Bloomsday in Melbourne Inc. presents  
***Wilde About Joyce***

A theatrical entertainment \$30  
Queen's Hall, State Library of Victoria

**Bloomsday – 16 June 2009**

**1.00pm and 8.00pm**

with **David Adamson, Paul David Goddard,  
Justin Batchelor, Jason Cavanagh, Lou Endicott  
and Glenn van Oosterom.**

**Directed by Brenda Addie.**



**One day only.  
Book early!**



**In addition, at The Celtic Club**

**Seminar, 3.15pm**

- Betrayal in Joyce
  - Joyce and Homosexuality
- \$20 incl. afternoon tea.

**Dinner with Wilde**

**5.30 for 6.00pm**

\$40 incl. two-course dinner and  
entertainment

Mr Joyce, in Purgatory  
one can lose one's *time*  
delightfully, but one can  
*never* lose one's way.



**Bookings Essential:  
Bob Glass (03) 9898 2900  
(All three events \$85)**

More details at:  
[www.bloomsdayinmelbourne.org.au](http://www.bloomsdayinmelbourne.org.au)



Living  
the Arts



State Library  
of Victoria



The Celtic Club  
Melbourne  
Established 1917

# Tinteán

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Tinteán is a publication of the Australian Irish Heritage Network

PO Box 13095, Law Courts,  
Melbourne, 8010  
Tel 03 9670 8865

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#### **Editor:**

Liz McKenzie

#### **Deputy Editor:**

Felicity Allen

#### **Business Manager:**

Rob Butler

#### **Advertising:**

Rob Butler, tel 03 9670 8865

#### **Production:**

Andrew Macdermid

#### **Other workers on this issue:**

Peter Kiernan, Frances Devlin-Glass,  
Bob Glass, Catherine Arthur, Meg  
McNena, Kate Clifford, Rob Butler,  
Don McKenzie, John McMahon,  
Maureen Pollard, Elizabeth Benfell

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letters and advertisements are  
those of the contributors and not  
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editor.

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## The Australian Irish Heritage Network

### **Objectives**

The Australian Irish Heritage Network aims to build the social, cultural, sporting, historical and literary consciousness of Irish Australians and to explore and celebrate the development of Irish heritage and culture in Australia.

### **Principal Activity**

As its first priority, AIHN produces the literary magazine *Tinteán* (meaning hearth in Gaelic and pronounced 'Tintawne' – the fada on the á giving the syllable the dominant stress and the 'augh' sound, as in 'taught'). The focus of the magazine is to build and explore the Australian Irish identity. The magazine welcomes material which explores the big themes of exile, diaspora and settlement. It also encourages the telling of the micro-stories that express narratives of individuals and families. There will be a continual study of the political and economic evolution of Ireland, and of 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 – past, present and future.

### **Activities**

As well as the magazine, AIHN plans to conduct social and educational events; disseminate news and information via the internet; offer recognition for service to literary and historical endeavours; issue cultural and political comment; and research and record our heritage.

### **Membership**

Anyone identifying with Irish heritage is welcome to join.

### **AIHN Committee 2008–2009**

President: Peter Kiernan

Vice-President: Frances Devlin-Glass

Secretary: Bob Glass

Treasurer: Patrick McNamara

Committee Members: Felicity Allen, Catherine Arthur, Rob Butler, Don McKenzie, Liz McKenzie



# Letters

## Environmental omissions

In *Tinteán* issue 7, the reviewers of *Golden Years, Grounds for Hope* presented a laudatory coverage of the book, and dealt at length with social and religious dimensions of the 1950–1960s Newman Society phenomenon at the University of Melbourne, but they failed to deal with an important strand in the book – earth-consciousness. Greg Denning’s intentions that the book should embody a contemporary direction entailed a major section dedicated to an ‘earth’ (and environment) theme.

The reviewers fail to mention this pivotal reorientation towards a new religious consciousness. Neither do they acknowledge anthropologist-historian Denning’s attempts to introduce us to deep-time dimensions of culture and human formation. Nor earth scientist Jim Bowler’s introduction of the same theme including reference to aboriginal perspectives. Nor engineer and naturalist Geoff Lacey’s exposition of the significance of local natural settings. Nor this writer’s urbanist attempts to bring to light Newman Society awakenings from the 1950s and religious explorations on human-nature themes from around the world. None of these did the reviewers find worthy of mention.

Are we to make of these absences that human-dominant perspectives still prevail in the face of what writers like Fr Sean McDonagh and Denning are seeking to bring to our attention? And in the face of what he and many others call irreversible threats to the future of life on earth? I hope not, but I fear so.

**A (Len) Puglisi, urban environmental planner, Melbourne**

*Len Puglisi reviews a book on climate change by Fr Sean McDonagh at p 36*

## St Patrick’s Day at Hilliers

My compliments to Patrick McNamara et al for their great article in the last issue of *Tinteán* on the St Patrick’s Day March of the 1950s. I was a marcher in those days. Like the principal author, I was also persuaded to assist in lessening the overcrowding in St Patrick’s Cathedral for Benediction by electing to forego this celebration in favour of a milkshake at Hilliers in Collins Street with some girls from Kilmaire. It was

on this occasion that I literally met my match and my life was organised, for the better, from that date.

How things have changed! Today, no march, and a St Patrick’s Day breakfast masquerading as a party political event.

**Robert O’Byrne, Shoreham, Vic.**

## More Connecticut connections

I found *Tinteán* issue 6 very interesting regarding the Connecticut connections.

The reference to Thomas Kelly could possibly concern a local of the same name who died in 1898, aged 75, but whose daughter went to the USA in the 1890s and never returned.

But more interesting was the reference to the Drum/Maher families. It is over 60 years since I met Michael and Effie, and also Elizabeth (Drum) Maher of the Minyip area. In fact, a daughter of John and Elizabeth Maher married my wife’s brother, Vincent Delahunty, and two Drums, of whom Michael was the uncle, married into the Delahunty family, my wife’s cousins – a real circle of relationships.

Also in that article is a photo of a Maureen Delahunty of Connecticut in about 1850–60. A Daniel Delahunty, my wife’s relation, went to America, so with this in mind I will contact Neil Hogan of the Connecticut Society. You never know.

**Ewan Neeson, Casterton, Vic.**

## Brinn, Liddy and Ryan

Dia dhíbh/G’day.

I am one of the broadcasters on the Irish Program 4EBFM 98.1 in Brisbane and it was my turn to broadcast the program on Saturday, 14 March 2009.

Apart from playing the agreed pre-recorded message (contra deal between *Tinteán* and ourselves), I gave a brief overview of the contents of *Tinteán* issue 7.

I was saddened to read the poem ‘Ger Brinn Dies In Australia’ by the poet John Liddy. I knew both growing up in Rathbane, Limerick City, though they were a couple of years younger than I. I was unaware that the late Ger Brinn was living in Australia, let alone that he had died in some tragedy. The poem doesn’t really provide details of the timing or circumstances of the sad event.

When I lived in Melbourne in the 1980s, I was involved with the Welfare Bureau and a few weeks ago called in to see Marian O’Hagan when I was in Melbourne for a conference.

I was aware of the tragic death of another boyhood friend in Melbourne (Richie Grace, active in the GAA Keysborough) through a trench collapse in the late 1980s or early 1990s and the fate of other friends or sons of friends who came to grief whilst living or visiting here.

Keep up the excellent work of *Tinteán*!

Slán go foil/Cheers.

**Noel Ryan, Brisbane, QLD**

## Literary Limerick

Go raibh maith agat mar an ‘Tinteán’. Tá sé go sármhaith.

I have sent around your subscription form so hopefully some friends will take it up.

You might be interested to know that the *Limerick Journal* brought out a special Australian issue some years ago. There are sure to be articles of interest for your readers.

I am very glad my poem reached one or two in Australia and I would like to contribute again to your journal sometime. Just say the word.

Beir Beannacht.

**John Liddy, Limerick**

*Interested readers may contact Sheila Deegan at the Limerick Corporation at [artsoffice@limerickcity.ie](mailto:artsoffice@limerickcity.ie)*

## The Early History of Kells, Part One

A 30 minute DVD dealing with the founding of the monastery at Kells, St Colmcille, the Book of Kells and the coming of the Vikings. It is a high quality professional production, narrated by local historians. It was launched in Kells on 7th December 2008, and produced by Kells Media Productions, a small voluntary local production company.

Available for €15/\$25 (incl. postage).  
Further information from: Danny Cusack,  
7 Canon St, Kells, Co Meath, Ireland;  
[dcusack@diginet.ie](mailto:dcusack@diginet.ie)

# Patrick Finucane Conference 2009

Pat Finucane was a busy and successful criminal lawyer practising in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

On Sunday 12 February 1989, Pat was having his evening meal with his wife Geraldine and his three children then aged 9, 13 and 17 when a gang of armed men burst into his home and executed him in the presence of his family. A total of 14 bullets entered his head, neck and torso; one bullet to his head was shot from a range of 15 inches. The Ulster Defence Association, a loyalist paramilitary group, claimed responsibility for the murder.

In 1993 I met Pat's son Michael, in Belfast. He was trying to draw attention to his father's murder and to the fact that no one had been charged over his death. He asked for my support. He was then studying law. He is now a solicitor practising in Dublin and his younger brother John, is also a lawyer, practising in Belfast.

I am a Committee member of the Brehon Law Society of Australia which among other things, looks at the abuse of civil rights in Northern Ireland. I was invited by British Irish Rights Watch to attend a conference on Pat's murder.

British Irish Rights Watch is a civil rights organisation operating out of London. It is an independent non-government body that monitors the human rights dimension of the conflict and the peace process in Northern Ireland. To mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the murder of Pat Finucane, the group arranged a conference at Trinity College, Dublin on the weekend of 14/15 February 2009.

The conference celebrated Pat's life and legacy. He was an innovative and inspirational lawyer. His family has campaigned for an independent public inquiry into Pat's murder and law societies and human rights groups throughout the world have echoed this call.

Approximately 200 people, including lawyers and civil rights activists from Northern Ireland and the Republic, England and the U.S.A, attended the conference. Also in attendance was Gerry Adams, Sinn Fein M.P. from West Belfast.

Speakers included Geraldine Finucane, Pat's widow; Canadian former Supreme Court Judge, Judge Peter Cory; leading British human rights lawyer, Michael Mansfield Q.C.; the former U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, Param Kumaraswamy; Mike Ritchie, The Director of the Committee on the Administration of Justice, Northern Ireland's foremost human rights group; Justice Treacy, a Judge of the High Court in Northern Ireland; and John Ware, a distinguished B.B.C journalist who uncovered the role of Military Intelligence and R.U.C Special Branch officers in the murder of Pat Finucane.

In 2001, Judge Cory was asked by the British Government to inquire into the circumstances surrounding Pat's murder. After an inquiry lasting 23 months he found that from the material he examined there was 'disclosed sufficient evidence of collusion to indicate that there should be a public inquiry.' This recommendation has not been acted upon.

Param Kumaraswamy conducted an investigation in 1995 in Northern Ireland and was convinced that the police were systematically harassing defence lawyers. He believed that Pat Finucane's death undermined the rule of law in Northern Ireland. He was concerned that there was no judicial inquiry into his death despite assurances given to him by the British PM



Michael Finucane and Bernie Brophy

*Bernie Brophy*

Tony Blair. He also discussed the failure of the British government to provide protection for Rosemary Nelson, a lawyer who was murdered by a Loyalist car bomb in March 1999.

Leading English barrister, Michael Mansfield Q.C. said there could be no lasting peace in Ireland until there is justice and justice must be built upon the full disclosure of the truth. He outlined the drive by the British Government to keep inquests out of the public eye. The Inquiries Act 2005 allows the Home Secretary to issue 'restriction orders' on an inquest, enabling the withholding of evidence from the Coroner. It is a transparent attempt to conceal the role of Government security agencies and the political establishment's role in 'controversial' killings.

Another speaker, Peter Madden, is a solicitor practising in Belfast and Pat Finucane's law partner. He has been acting for the Finucane family. He outlined the latest developments in the quest for a public inquiry into Pat's death. He said, 'We will find out who killed Pat Finucane and, especially, who ordered it, who is accountable'.

The high profile speakers were all impressive in their single-minded determination to obtain answers to the question as to whether the British Government was complicit in the killing of one of its own citizens.

Pat Finucane studied law at Trinity College Dublin and as an undergraduate had played soccer for the University and was captain of the University Club. On Sunday 15 February 2009 a game was played in his honour and following this a bench overlooking College Park was dedicated to his memory

But the fight for a public inquiry into Pat Finucane's death goes on.

*Bernie Brophy*

# What's on

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## National Celtic Festival

Friday 5 - Sunday 8 June 2009

Celebrate the double birthday bash at Portarlington

For the seventh year, Portarlington will host the National Celtic Festival. Back in 1759 Arthur Guinness first signed the lease on the St James' Gate brewery in Dublin, from where that famous 'black liquidation with the froth on the top' has poured forth ever since. That same year, on the other side of the Irish Sea, Robbie Burns was born.

Burns, 'Ploughman Poet', became the voice of Scotland's humble rural folk, penning such classics as Auld Lang Syne, My Love is Like a Red Red Rose and the Ode to Haggis.

For Guinness' 250th, a concert celebrating all things Irish is planned, with snippets of different performers, including international headliners, with dancing and every different style of Irish music.

The festival will honour Robbie Burns with a more traditional format celebrating the Scottish bard's work through a host of different performers including singers, dancers, pipers and musicians.

A world class line-up of performers will hit the stages at Portarlington's welcoming venues, including The Ol' Duke, Celtic Club, the new improved Wine Bar, Parks Hall and the Village stage, set amongst the Celtic Market.

The international acts include Derek Warfield with his new band The Young Wolfe Tones, soloist Gavin Moore, and the hot young Irish group, Gráda.

The line-up for 2009 also includes: Bhan Tre, Braemar, Catherine Fraser & Duncan Smith, Claymore, Dalriada, Dram, Eilean Mòr, Gibb Todd, Liminality, Maria Forde, McAlpine's Fusiliers, Melbourne Scottish Fiddle Club, Oriol Glennen, Red Cat, Saoirse, Siobhan Owen, Squeebz, Trouble in the Kitchen, The Fiddle Chicks, The Message, Wheelers and Dealers, Zeptepi, as well as dance troops, choirs, pipe bands and much more.

The National Celtic Festival presents a diverse workshop program that offers the chance to dive in to the Celtic experience and learn a new skill or try something new, such as speaking Gaelic, unleashing your inner Lord of the Dance, or playing the bagpipes.

Contact:

Rochelle Smith 0409 995 638 rochellejsmith@hotmail.com  
Una McAlinden 0403 192 631 director@nationalcelticfestival.com  
or www.nationalcelticfestival.com.au

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## Irish Studies Association of Australia and New Zealand

### 16th Conference Ireland and the Irish Antipodes: One World or Worlds Apart

Thurs 9 – Sun 12 July 2009

Massey University, Wellington, NZ

Contact: Dr Brad Patterson, brad.patterson@vuw.ac.nz  
Victoria University of Wellington, PO Box 600, Wellington, NZ

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## Bloomsday in Melbourne

### Wilde about Joyce

Annual festival to celebrate James Joyce  
Tuesday, 16 June 2009

#### Program:

1:00pm and 8:00pm: Theatrical entertainment, Wilde about Joyce,  
Queen's Hall, State Library of Victoria  
3:15pm: Seminar, Celtic Club, Melbourne  
6:00pm: Dinner, Wilde at the Celtic Club

Bob Glass 03 9898 2900 www.bloomsdayinmelbourne.org.au

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## Reading Circle

### Ned Kelly – Hero or Villain?

Celtic Club, Melbourne  
2:00 – 4:30pm, Sunday, 14 June 2009  
This is a **FREE** event

The Celtic Club's Cultural Heritage Committee has established a Reading Circle program to promote literary discussion and interest in our Australian Irish heritage.

All club members and other interested persons are warmly invited to join the Reading Circle.

For further information contact:

Phillip Moore 03 9850 4468 mrphillmoore@aol.com  
or Helen at the Celtic Club 03 9670 6472

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## Celtic Soiree

### Winter Solstice Celebration

7:30pm, Sunday, 5 July 2009  
St Carthage's, 123 Royal Parade, Parkville

- The program, in the Celtic Tradition, will feature:
- Aaron Searle's Liagan Trio, with Irish, Scottish, Cape Breton, Quebecois music & song
  - Catriona Devlin, sharing the poems of Robbie Burns in the Celtic Spoken Word tradition
  - Mary Torpy Duo, Irish & Australian folk songs and modern composition

Entry fee: \$15pp (\$10 concession): pay on arrival

Proudly sponsored by the  
Melbourne Celtic Club's Cultural Heritage Committee.

Co-ordinated by Beris Heasley & Marlene Shanahan  
tel: 03 9670 6472 fax: 03 9670 5153  
www.celticclub.com.au info@celticclub.com.au

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## Lake School

### 11th Lake School Launch

Saturday, 4 July 2009 Mickey Bourke's Hotel, Koroit

The 11th Lake School of Celtic Music Song and Dance will be launched on Saturday, 4 July 2009 at Mickey Bourke's Hotel, Koroit. The induction of Paddy Fitzgerald as a Legend of the Lake by Mary Fiorini-Lowell (Mary Bourke) will be featured.

Dennis Taberner, Margie Brophy and Christine Meagher will also be inducted as Life Members of the Lake School.

The Paddy O'Neill award band, Dram, will perform.

The 11th Lake School will be held from Sunday 3 – Friday 8 January 2010.

Contact: Felix Meagher 0413 801294  
felix@bushwahzee.com www.lakeschool.bushwahzee.com

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### Mary MacKillop Mass

Saturday 15 August at 7pm  
Central Hall, Australian Catholic University,  
18 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy

The Music Glenelg Festival Singers and the Box Hill Chorale, in association with the choir of Australian Catholic University and the Royal Melbourne Philharmonic Orchestra, present the Melbourne premiere of the 'Mary MacKillop Mass', a new work by Australian composer Nicholas Buc celebrating the life of Mary MacKillop.

Contact: Bob Glass on 98982900 www.boxhillchorale.org.au

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### Kilmore Celtic Festival

Friday 26 – Sunday 28 June  
Saturday all day: Non-stop live Celtic music  
Sunday: The Celtic Banquet

tel: 03 5781 1711 www.kilmore.info/celticfestival

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## Irish History and Culture

### Shamrock in the Bush

St Clement's, Galong  
Thursday 6 – Sunday 9 August  
www.shamrockinthebush.org.au

### Irish History Circle

8:00pm, each 3rd Monday, Celtic Club, Melbourne  
Dan O'Connor 03 5938 6326 danoc@netspace.net.au

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## Australian Irish Welfare Bureau

### Afternoon Tea & Dance

2:00pm–5:30pm  
Last Sunday each month at the Celtic Club, Melbourne

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## Donegal Association

### Dinner Dance

Saturday, 20 June 2009  
Celtic Club, Melbourne  
John Rodden 0410 595 495

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## St Patrick's Festival Committee

### Christmas in July

Saturday, 18 July 2009  
Janet Hallal 0407 887 992

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## Australian Catholic History Society

### Conference: Catholics in Australian Public Life since 1788

9:30am – 5:00pm, Saturday, 12 September 2009  
Catholic Institute of Sydney, Strathfield

John Luttrell 02 9752 9513 jluttrell@cis.catholic.edu.au

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## Melbourne Irish Studies Seminars

### 2nd Semester 2009 Program

6:15pm, Tuesdays as per schedule  
Newman College, Melbourne

Contact: Dr Philip Bull p.j.bull@latrobe.edu.au

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## Australian Irish Heritage Network

### Stand By!

The Australian Irish Heritage Network will be hosting a theatre night at the Celtic Club for all Tinteán subscribers and AIHN members on Wednesday 7 October 2009 at 7:00pm.

The star of the night will be Rod Quantock, about whom nothing should be said.

Issue 9 of *Tinteán* in early September will have final details. Please make a note of the date in your diary now.

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# News

## State pays €700,000 to teach Irish in colleges overseas

Universities across the globe are being grant-aided by the Government to get more people speaking Irish. From Poland to the Czech Republic and across the Atlantic to North America, third-level institutions are receiving a total of €700,000 this year to promote Irish. In all, more than 40 universities and other third-level colleges are benefiting from the grant aid to support and develop the teaching of Irish abroad in 2009.

The largest single sum (€231,000) has been granted to the Fulbright Commission – the official cultural exchange program between the Irish and US governments.

Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs Eamon Ó Cuiv said that the Ciste na Gaeilge Subsidiary Fund for Third-Level Institutions, which was established in 2006, was assisting institutions around the world to provide Irish language and Celtic studies programs.

The programs offered an excellent opportunity to present the Irish language to the academic community worldwide, he stressed.

‘They will give the Irish language equal status to other European languages being taught abroad. In addition, many students who study Irish in their own countries continue their studies here in Ireland. It is wonderful to see students from all over the world attending courses in the Gaeltacht,’ the Minister added.

Meanwhile, just under €700,000 was paid out last year to families in the Gaeltacht who are fluent in Irish.

Sceim Labhairt na Gaeilge provides for a grant of €260 per household in the Gaeltacht where Irish is the spoken language. The children are tested by inspectors from the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs. If their level of spoken Irish is up to scratch, the household is awarded the full grant. Where an inspector believes there is potential for the required standard to be reached within three years, a grant of 50% is awarded.

**Brian McDonald, Dublin**

*(Monday April 20 2009)*

## Irish Australian of the year 2009

The Australian Irish Welfare Bureau first

made an award for the Irish Australian of the Year in 1984. Its winners are chosen for their tireless voluntary work and commitment to the Irish and broader communities.

From a very strong field, the recipient of the award for 2009 is Jim Leonard.

Jim has a passion for ensuring that his community is a better place to be, by assisting those less fortunate – the old and frail, senior citizens, local schools and kindergartens

Jim is a model for what the Australian community hopes every immigrant would be – prepared to work and determined to make a go of it in his adopted country. He is an outstanding example of the community-minded immigrant who, once settled, looks after other new settlers. The maxim that ‘a stranger is only a friend that one hasn’t met yet’ aptly applies.

Jim’s generosity is well known in Ireland. Travellers know that on arrival they will receive a warm welcome – not only an invitation for a meal, but also accommodation until they find work, then help with finding permanent accommodation. In a three-year period 16 people have resided in this ‘home away from home’.

A gentle unassuming Irish Australian, Jim is fiercely proud of his heritage. He emigrated from Mountcharles, Co Donegal, in 1968. Jim and Pam Fitzgerald married in Melbourne in 1971. Jim still sounds as if he arrived yesterday. Pam recalls, ‘When he arrived I couldn’t understand a thing that he said; in addition he was deaf in one ear and didn’t hear with the other.’

For many years as the Youth Chairman of his Lions Club, Jim devoted himself to organising Christmas camps for underprivileged children. He served on a steering committee to establish a local Blue Light Disco that has now been running for more than 16 years. When the viability of the St Vincent de Paul conference in Diamond Creek was threatened, Jim took over as President and assisted in building up an active branch. Jim also volunteered at the Austin Hospital, Parade College, Wattle Glen Primary and the Diamond Creek Community Fete.

He is a founding member and President of the Donegal Association, a non-

profit organisation that arranges events in the Melbourne Irish community, with the proceeds being donated to worthy causes, including the Welfare Bureau. The Donegal Association float in St Patrick’s Day processions was an enjoyable sight.

Typically in the unhappy circumstances of the recent bushfires, a family of five who lost everything found a safe haven at the Leonards’ home.

May the good work continue.

**Marion O’Hagan**

## Friends of St Brigid’s, Koroit

The Friends of St Brigid’s received a courtesy phone call from a local real estate agent, to advise that a notification to declare a five week tender process for the sale of St Brigid’s Church and Hall in Crossley would appear in the *Warrnambool Standard* on Saturday 16th May. A meeting of members of FOSB or anyone from the wider community who might be able to assist in the Tender process was held on Monday the 18th May at the Crossley Hall at 8pm. It is vital that these buildings are kept in public hands and not sacrificed for private development.

For further information please contact FOSB secretary, Teresa on 0355687239 or 0437363572 or goanna@westvic.com.au or go to our website: web.me.com/goanna/FOSB

## Roll in the IMF

The average debt for every adult in Ireland is €54,000. People are scared for themselves and for the future of their children.

People are angry that an incredibly massively overpaid and featherbedded public service is escaping real pain. Teachers on a salary of €63,000 euro (€75,000, if you include pension) object to making a higher contribution to their pension and pay a levy on their salary. Senior State workers earn at least €54,000 above the European average, some earn double the European average. The pay scale for the Librarian in The National University of Ireland in Galway is €123,000 to €158,000. (€41,000 is the equivalent at California State University) Instead of tackling the problem our government is exacerbating it by borrowing to pay the bill. As unemployment soars it



seems that the government can only think of crippling middle income earners with taxes and levies, punishing the disadvantaged by removing support, destroying confidence and incentive and then blaming international forces for the problems.

Painful as it would be perhaps the answer rests with the International Monetary Fund taking over and implementing change such as:

- Drastically pruning the Public Service (but not front line workers such as nurses and Gardai);
- Cutting Public Service pay;
- Abolishing Quangos;
- Abolishing the Health Service Executive. Much more efficient Public Health Service models exist;
- Abolishing the Social Partnership between Government and Unions;
- Abolishing the Senate and cutting the number of Dail seats to about a third.

The young people of Ireland have courage; they have ability, education and the will to make Ireland great. All they need, and deserve, is a climate of hope to fire their incentive.

It is time for change.

*Joseph Murphy, Dublin*

## The passing of Frank Costigan Q.C.

It was sad to read of the death of Francis Xavier Costigan on the 13 April 2009. He had a long career of some 53 years in the law and was a leader and prominent barrister for much of it. He leaped into prominence when Malcolm Fraser appointed him as Royal Commissioner to investigate the Painters and Dockers Union. In carrying out that much publicised and high pressure task, he demonstrated his high intelligence and fearlessness, exposing corruption, greed and abuse of power. Bottom of the harbour schemes were revealed for the first time but not the last as we now know. Frank was a soft-spoken, courteous man of sharp intellect and subtle sense of humour. He maintained, with dignity, the marked and esteemed tradition of the strong Irish influence on the Melbourne Bar, originating from the very earliest colonial times, through the building of our magnificent Supreme Court (based on the design of the Four Courts in Dublin) and demonstrated by so many

barristers and judges in Victoria of Irish origin. Frank's passion was for social justice and his influence was far-reaching, nationally and world-wide and has left a substantial mark. He will be sadly missed indeed.

*Peter Kiernan*

## St Kevin's goes to Glendalough

St Kevin's College, Toorak, in its latest newsletter 'Omnia', reports on a visit to Ireland by its Years 10 and 11 students. 22 boys and 4 staff left in early December last year to visit Ireland and play International Rules football against schools there. Starting off in Dublin, they played St David's CBS, Artane which they narrowly won 34-32. They crossed to the west coast to play three of the best Gaelic Football schools. In Tuam, Co Galway, they lost on a waterlogged pitch to St Jarlath's 18-30. After touring south through Connemara, The Burren, the Cliffs of Moher and Killarney, they played Tralee CBS Co Kerry and lost 41-51. The last game was played in Cork against Cloáiste Chríost Rí (College of Christ the King) at the Nemo Rangers Football Ground under lights. They played their best football but against the best opponents and went down 58-81. After more travelling and a visit to Edmund Rice's original school at Mt Sion, and of course to Glendalough, the St. Kevin's team returned home before Christmas.

This trip was such a success that plans are in place for regular visits to Ireland.

*Peter Kiernan*

## The Life And Works Of Vincent Buckley

A celebration of the life and Works of Vincent Buckley was held on Sunday March 29<sup>th</sup>, at the Celtic Club's Cultural Heritage Committee. It was a rare opportunity to hear readings of the exceedingly fine poetry and writings of Vincent Buckley [1925 – 1988], together with recollections of his life, by those who were close to him.

One of Australia's finest poets, Vincent Buckley was born in Romsey in 1925, educated at St Patrick's College, East Melbourne, and at Melbourne University where he would eventually have a personal chair in literature.

His poetry speaks of both his Irish and Australian heritage, and matches in its

breadth and power, the profound experiences of the landscapes, traditions and events that were his life.

Among his other writings is 'Memory Ireland', exploring his reminiscences and reactions to contemporary Ireland, especially the Hunger strike between March and October 1981.

His poems on this horrific episode are acknowledged as the best written on the subject, and were read at the unveiling of the memorial plaque to the 'Hunger Strikers' by Martin McGuinness at Trades Hall, Melbourne.

*(See Morag Fraser's speech at the launch of 'Journey without arrival' on page 38 Ed.)*

## Marie Feeley

It is with considerable sadness that we learned of the passing of Marie Feeley on 13 May last. Marie has been responsible for the advertising in *Tinteán* and, prior to that, undertook a similar role for *Táin* magazine. Despite failing health, she remained as energetic as ever and never lost her enthusiasm for this role.

She will be sadly missed as part of the team at *Tinteán* and our sincere condolences are conveyed to her family.

## Attributions and omissions

The Editor would like to apologise for the omission of the following attributions to the article 'A magnificent man' p17 – 18 in Issue 4 contributed by: Richard J Sullivan, writer and historian from Asheville, North Carolina, USA and Ann Butler, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA who supplied the magnificent photographs. Many thanks to both.

# Golden Years Grounds for hope

Edited by Val Noone with Terry Blake,  
Mary Doyle and Helen Praetz

Over fifty contributors argue that their youthful ideals of more than fifty years ago are still relevant to our present concerns about the future of the earth and the human race.

[www.rainbowbooks.com.au](http://www.rainbowbooks.com.au)

# Victorian Premier honours the Irish diaspora

On the eve of St Patrick's Day, the Premier of Victoria, the Hon John Brumby MP, held a reception for the Irish community in Melbourne. The venue, the Sir Redmond Barry Room on the 46th floor of the ANZ building in Collins Street, was most spectacular and, as the Premier alluded to in his speech, quite appropriate as it was named for an early Irish Australian, one better known for being the judge who sentenced Ned Kelly.

Attending with the Premier, was the

Minister for Sport, James Merlino, in his capacity as Minister Assisting the Premier in Multicultural Affairs. The MC for the evening was George Lakakis, the Chairperson of the Victorian Multicultural Commission.

In a relaxed and entertaining speech, the Premier referred in detail to his Irish ancestry, of which he was obviously very proud and knowledgeable. He was particularly delighted that his daughter had chosen to continue her university studies at Trinity College Dublin. He and his wife, whose Irish ancestry is stronger even than his, were looking forward to paying her a visit in Dublin later this year.

The Irish Ambassador, Máirtín O Fainín, was an honoured guest. Thanking the Premier for his generosity in acknowledging the Irish community, the Ambassador commented that for, a period in the second half of the 19th century, Irish immigration to Victoria exceeded that of

all other immigration combined – which terrified the establishment of the day. He noted the vibrancy of the Irish community in Victoria, clubs, welfare agencies, language classes, dancing schools, Irish music outlets and community groups, the Irish studies programs at the Melbourne and La Trobe universities, and the Irish community radio programs. He observed the function was being held in the shadow of St Patrick's Cathedral, outside of which stand the statues of Daniel O'Connell and Archbishop Daniel Mannix – further reminders of the contribution of the Irish.

In conveying the sympathy of the Irish people to the people of Victoria at the appalling death and destruction of the recent bushfires, he presented a most generous donation of \$28,000 to the Victorian Bushfire Appeal.

It was most reassuring to see the Irish diaspora in Melbourne.

*Rob Butler*

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John Brumby, the Victorian Premier, with Máirtín O Fainín, the Irish Ambassador at the St Patrick's Eve reception



Patrick McNamara with Patrick McNamara at the St Patrick's Eve reception



# Irish government Minister Ó'Cuiv & St Patrick's Day

On 18 March as part of its 2009 celebrations for the feast of St Patrick, Melbourne's Celtic Club held a reception attended by representatives of Melbourne's Australian Irish community to honour Eamon Ó'Cuiv, the visiting Minister for Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs in the Irish Dail and, may we add, the grandson of Eamon de Valera.

President Seamus Moloughney welcomed the Minister and assured him that he could not have visited a more appropriate centre in Australia than Melbourne's Celtic Club. He recited the very significant presence of the Irish influence and diaspora here and thanked the Minister for his government's encouragement and assistance in so many diverse ways. He made a presentation to the Minister.

Deirdre Gillespie then spoke in appreciation of the invaluable work

done by Minister Ó'Cuiv in the promotion and preservation of the Irish language. She delivered her speech in fluent Gaelic assuring him that effective work was also being done in Australia in that regard.

The gathering was then privileged to hear an Irish lament sung by the well-known Mossie Scanlon. It was an appropriate and moving interlude, beautifully performed by a consummate professional.

Finally, Minister Ó'Cuiv responded, firstly in Gaelic (even non-Gaelic speakers were entranced) thanking all present for the warm welcome which he found overwhelming and universal throughout Australia. He described his dedicated and persistent interest in the Gaeltacht portfolio he held and he was pleased to report on the significant success he was achieving in the promotion of the Irish language in Ireland and overseas.

He expressed sympathy to the people of Victoria for their suffering and losses through the bushfires and in a very moving gesture, made a presentation to President Moloughney: it was a folder containing letters of sympathy, comfort and support from primary school children of Roscommon to the children of the Kinglake Primary School. It was a dramatic and fitting end to this very uplifting reception.

*Peter Kiernan/Patrick McNamara*



The Club President and the Minister who presented the letters of the Roscommon children



Minister Ó'Cuiv with Eugene O'Rourke and Eamon Naughton

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# A step backwards in technology

A reader has pointed out that the sheet-musicdirect.com service mentioned here in our last issue is now available from Cranbourne music. They don't have in-store terminals that you can play around with, instead you have to ask at the counter and they will do the search on your behalf. But it is a start and I have always found Cranbourne music staff to be very helpful. They also have a city branch not too far from the Celtic Club, so pop in and say hello.

Another reader has asked if there is a way round the 'printing at home' pitfalls referred to in last issue's report about online music scores. Isn't this altogether a bit risky?

The safest way is of course to use the in-store service that the music shops are plugging. They are obliged to provide you with exactly what you pay for so any printing problems are theirs not yours. Doing it at home from a website overseas has the potential to go wrong very occasionally but when you weigh this against the often cheaper cost, most people would agree you can still come out ahead.

One enterprising chap suggested printing to a file and saving it, like a pdf, but the scorch viewer won't allow that, so you have to send to a printer. But having done that, you are then free to scan your new purchase back to a pdf and store it on a backup drive. My own music collection is gradually being converted this way. It's very useful for traveling and makes it much easier to find things in a hurry.

Another reader wonders about Digital Rights Management (aka DRM) which is a real pain when dealing with downloaded music. Can you get around it? And can it be done legally?

The story is that DRM was designed to be an inherent part of the new digital music formats and is intended to discourage wanton copying of copyrighted material. It acts as a limit on the number of copies you can make and the devices that you can copy to. It will also prevent you changing file formats in an attempt to pull a fast one. Of course it should be clearly stated here and now that trading in unauthorized copies of copyrighted material is illegal in every jurisdiction and that even swapping files with your friends constitutes "trading" in the eyes of the music business.

But suppose you are not interested in file swaps and just want to enjoy your own property. The short answer is you are quite free to remove DRM restrictions from your own legally acquired music, usually downloads, and the resulting files will then be much easier to move around the various playback devices that you own. It's a bit fiddly but I can vouch that it works.

Here's a short case study. My mobile phone has a feature that allows me to to find, purchase and download music in a variety of genres. I found some old tunes that I had been looking for since school days (would you believe Diamonds by Jet Harris and Tony Meehan?) and went ahead. Result is my phone now has them but in a special format which can only be played on the phone itself. No chance of listening to them in the car. But at the same time the phone company also have a website where I can download free copies of my legit purchases to computer. These, along with just about anything else available nowadays for online distribution, are provided in WMA format and so have been DRM'ed in order to put a limit on your future options.

To get around this, you actually need to go a step backwards in technology. The simplest way is to write the files to CD using something like Nero Express. This has to be done on the same computer that you used to do the download because that's where the DRM licences will now reside and you need them for this initial step. Be sure to write them as audio. But once the music files are stored on disc as normal CD audio they are effectively out of the DRM domain and can then be ripped back to mp3, or any other format, using something like Mediamonkey. The snag is that not all of the tags survive the journey and you will probably have to re-enter some artist and title information.

So it's not a set and forget process, you do need to do some typing but your final result may well be worth it.

And finally – who is she? SBS viewers will have noticed a dark haired young lady with a very strong Ulster accent promoting life insurance in the 5 pm timeslot. At one point the voiceover says "if you die". Shouldn't that be when and not if? But she looks good on TV and the accent is a breath of fresh air. For sheer chutzpah though, it's hard to go past Tempo Holidays advert for 8 days Self Drive Ireland priced from only \$1,432. Looks like good value until you find the small print that says, "*vehicle not included*" Some would consider that a self drive holiday can't happen without a vehicle but obviously the folks at Tempo know better.

In our next issue: two roads in Belfast are as different as chalk and cheese but still managed to produce a pair of singers who would hit it big in the fifties. Maybe you still have some of their records?

*Stuart Trill*

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# Bolg an tSoláthair / Odds & Ends

## Melbourne heirloom now on the web

As many readers know, researching the story of Irish and Gaelic culture in Victoria in the 1800s feels like working at a 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle without the overall template and with half the pieces missing. And that's the case even after so many excellent family histories have been written in the past ten or twenty years.

One piece in the puzzle, although most of the adjoining bits are still out of sight, is the library of the exceptional Bullengarook-born Gaelic scholar Nicholas O'Donnell (1862-1920), which is housed at Newman College at Melbourne University. A gem among the 400 books in his collection is a hand-written copy of an ancient Irish saga called the *Táin Bó Cuailnge*, or *The Cattle Raid on Cooley*.

Somewhere between 1862 and 1900 an unusual Irish migrant arrived at the docks in Melbourne, we do not yet know that person's name, carrying in their luggage not just clothes and utensils but also this manuscript, one of the last hand-written copies of the *Táin Bó Cuailnge*.

In 1903 Nicholas O'Donnell bought the bound volume from John Casey of Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. O'Donnell surmised that Casey, "a fair Gaelic scholar", had brought it to Melbourne but was not certain. It is a leather book of over 250 pages with a gold title on the cover, bound by Francis Guy of 70 Patrick Street, Cork, and dated 1 March 1862 by the scribe Joseph son of Michael Óg O'Longan.

You can now see every page of this heirloom on the website of the Irish Script on Screen project based in Dublin. The website is [www.isos.dias.ie](http://www.isos.dias.ie), go to

Collections and then Australia.

The *Táin Bó Cuailnge*, which dates from the 700s, although the oral version would be older, is a series of tales of heroes, battles, betrayals and magic. Central to the story is Cú Chulainn, an Ulster warrior who defeats an army sent by Queen Maeve of Connacht to capture the legendary Brown Bull of Cooley.

During the centuries of English rule, copies of this and other stories were made by skilled scribes, often with great difficulty, and then the tales were read in groups around the fireside. Scribes and their manuscripts were a crucial way of passing on Gaelic culture until late in the 1800s when the Irish, though still under foreign rule, gained improved access to printing, and manuscripts were less necessary.

The extraordinarily detailed photographs shown on the net were taken by Lee McRae of the University of Melbourne, while the highly professional web pages with commentary have been prepared by Professor Pádraig Ó Macháin of the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies.

'This manuscript was made by one of the last of the professional Gaelic scribes, Seosamh Ó Longáin (1817-80). He belonged to the third generation of a family of traditional scribes from Co. Cork, who generated a prodigious amount of Gaelic manuscripts, particularly in the 19th century. Seosamh himself was responsible for the production of in excess of 100 manuscripts,' writes Ó Macháin.

This new level of global publicity for a piece in our jigsaw has been arranged by Angela Gehrig, director of the Newman-St Mary's Academic Centre. Allan and Maria Myers funded the centre while Gerry Higgins funded the special room

for the O'Donnell collection.

I would be delighted to find out more about John Casey: does anyone know about his descendants or relatives?

## Other developments at Newman College

For nine years now, under the leadership of Professor Elizabeth Malcolm, Newman College has been hosting the Melbourne Irish Studies Seminar series. On St Patrick's night, Professor Cormac Ó Gráda of University College Dublin, an outstanding economic historian, opened up distinctive angles on Irish history by drawing on poems, songs and folktales in the Irish language.

In April Julia Kühns, a German-born scholar based in Scotland, spoke in detail about the various manuscript versions of the saga of Cú Chulainn's death. She was surprised to learn that a manuscript on this very topic was held in the Nicholas O'Donnell library.

In a quiet and generous ecumenical move, Rev Robin Boyd has recently donated a couple of hundred books to the O'Donnell library. Robin is a Presbyterian minister from Ulster who made a major contribution to the ecumenical movement in Australia and Ireland. After working with the Church of North India he became Director of the Irish School of Ecumenics.

Robin and his wife Anne are retiring to Edinburgh and since his eyesight is giving him trouble he offered his books on Ireland to those in Melbourne who might make good use of them. His collection is strong on the dramatic developments between the churches in Ireland over the past 40 or so years and includes some rare booklets and working documents.

*Val Noone*

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# Miscellany

Since my short news item on Clerical Child Abuse Allegations in the March issue of *Tinteán* the Archbishop of Cloyne Dr. John Magee has resigned. I contacted Fr. Michael Mernagh, the 71 year old Augustinian priest who walked 300 km from the Cathedral in Cork to Dublin's Pro Cathedral as an act of atonement for the sins of the church.

Fr. Mernagh works in the Liberties in Dublin's South Inner City. He is also the founder member and Project Co-Ordinator in Ireland of the Resource and Development Foundation of South Africa's Western Cape, an area with a population of 6 million that is experiencing a major crisis of absolute poverty, massive unemployment, aids, drug abuse, crime and violence.

He has published numerous papers on social inclusion and community development in Ireland, Africa and Europe, including The Final Report of the Irish Government pilot schemes to combat poverty (1975 – 1980) We met at the South Inner City Community Development Association Centre in the Liberties. I remarked that meeting him in Meath Street, is like returning home after 60 years, I grew up in Inchicore, not far from the Liberties, my mother shopped in Thomas Street, and I went to St. James's Christian Brothers Secondary School.

Fr. Mernagh has just returned from South Africa where he spends three to four months each year. I asked him to tell me a little about his work.

'The aim of the Foundation is to promote social inclusion by means of training, education, capacity building and giving people life skills.'  
'Very similar to the work you do in the Liberties?'

'Yes! Our Association has been going for 26 years reaching out to the disadvantaged in society. We have a social development programme which supports young people, who, as it were, have fallen through the net. The programme includes capacity building and training to give people life skills. We do sports, catering, welding and woodwork.'

'I'd like to talk about your Walk of Atonement. It attracted massive media coverage and huge support from the public and the hierarchy. Despite the enormous pressure to resign Bishop Magee clung

to office until 9<sup>th</sup> March. On television, in January, on the Late Late Show Pat Kenny asked you, why, when we have had previous cases of abuse, this episode affected you so deeply?'

'My answer to Pat was that this must be the lowest ebb in the history of the Catholic Church in relation to abuse. It was the most distressing and frustrating because this time there was no excuse. We had all the guidelines in place. These are the same guidelines that the hierarchy, including Bishop Magee, were party to formulating. So for someone not to put their own guidelines in place in a protective manner was very hard for me to accept. Jesus said, "Woe to you who scan-

**“My call for a  
new moral order  
has to start at the  
very local level  
of the parish”**

dalise my little ones. It would be better for you that a millstone were put around your neck and you were drowned in the depths of the sea". That's why I decided to walk the walk rather than just talk the talk.'

'This scandal has had a very negative impact on young people at a time when the Archbishop of Dublin Diarmuid Martin is appealing for vocations while, at the same time he is preparing us in advance for what will be a shocking report on clerical abuse in the Dublin diocese which is due to be published later this year. The question is how do we go forward from here? What do we need to do?'

'Before I answer that question I think that it is important to look at the priest in history. From the priest on the run, the priest on a pedestal, to the priest who is now almost in the gutter.

The Irish people put the priest on a pedestal where he became almost untouchable. He was never challenged in any creative manner. Because he was never challenged about things like say, alcoholism people covered things up. People became afraid to ask the questions

that their heads and their hearts were telling them they should ask. The priest in Ireland became institutionalised and it is that kind of unhealthy situation that has led to an awful lot of what we are faced with today. You don't have to look very hard to see that the whole of morality has broken down. You only have to look at the corruption in economics, the banks, the developers, and the government to see that it pervades the whole lot. There is a need for a new catechesis of Christians, a whole new moral order.

When the priest in Wexford was abusing children on the altar and some families complained they were ostracised. The Garda files disappeared. I asked myself, How did this happen? Simply because, in a small parish that calls itself a catholic community, there was no form of real, responsible, Christianity. The Gardai were members of the parish and were not going to go against the parish priest. The families were afraid to go against the priest. People are not taking on their personal responsibility as Christians. Until this happens the abuse will continue at the local level.

I've had calls from around the country telling me that abuse is happening now. Teachers, and I'm not talking about the clergy, are abusing children physically and sexually. In one instance, parents, in desperation, withdrew their children from the school. They were ostracised in the parish. My view is that until people honour their vocation as Catholics to exercise their personal authority whenever they see wrongdoing or abuse it will continue. My call for a new moral order has to start at the very local level of the parish.'

'I agree but I have to ask where does the process start? It would mean an absolute upheaval.'

'Yes! There is going to have to be an upheaval. But it starts with you and me Joe. We were reared to pray and obey; we were never reared to think for ourselves, to be independent thinkers.'  
'OK, but where does the start of independent thinking come from?'

'The Gospel. The Bible. The Prophet Micah (Michaels) tells each and every one of us, "This and this alone the Lord asks of you, act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with your God." If, as individuals, we act justly we will have a totally



different world society. If we love tenderly we would have caring loving non – abusive relationships. If we were humble we would say “Yes! I’m a sinner I cannot judge others.” That’s where atonement starts. But it has to start at the local level It would require for older people a whole new understanding of their Christian vocation.’

*‘Where do we go from here?’*

The problem in Ireland is that we are all in denial at the moment. We are in denial about many things but particularly about clerical child abuse. The first step is recognition of that fact and then to come out of denial. Then we must start re-educating ourselves and ask ourselves, what am I? And what am I called upon to do as a Catholic and as a Christian? It has to start at the parish level. At the moment everything is left to the parish priest and he is left all alone. Even so called parish councils are still leaving everything to the parish priest. It is really terrible that people are just not taking on their responsibilities.’

*‘There is plenty of food for thought here Father and there is an enormous amount of work ahead of us all.’*

I think that that’s true Joe.’

*‘I just remembered something. There is a flipbook on a shelf in my hall. It’s one of those books where you turn over a new saying each day. It’s called Senior Moments and today’s saying is Aging is not for sissies. Well it occurred to me it could just as easily say Christianity is not for sissies. This has been a most interesting talk. Thank you for your time.’*

‘You’re welcome Joe.’

*‘By the way Father, I’ve just visited Wicklow Goal where a lot of United Irishmen were incarcerated before being shipped to Botany Bay. They have a Wanted poster for Michael Dwyer the 1798 rebel and in a list of prisoners a John Mernagh is listed alongside Michael Dwyer. Is he any relation?’*

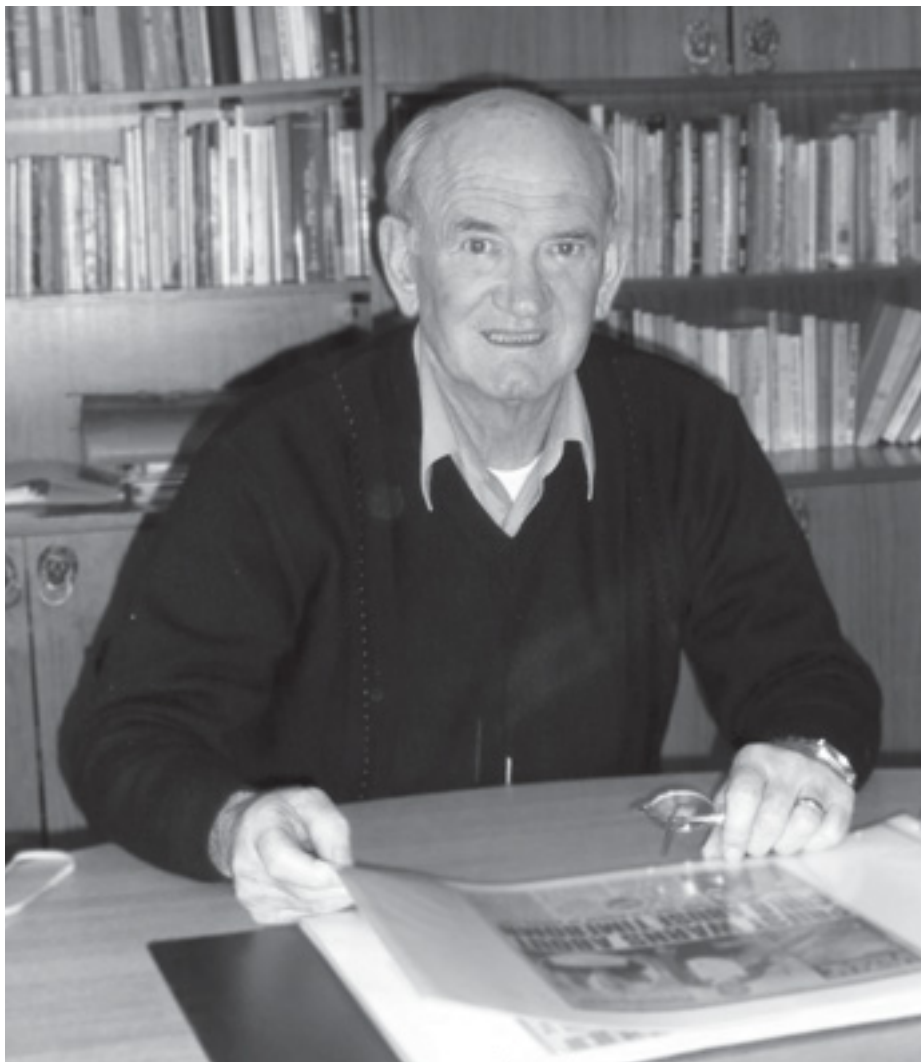
‘He is indeed. He is one of the heroes most sidelined by history but that’s another story!’

*‘Yes indeed it is and maybe we can take it up another time. Thanks again Father.’*

Sin a bhfuil go fóill ó Sheosamh Ó Murchú. Slán agaibh go léir.

Happy Bloomsday everyone.

**Joseph Murphy, Dublin**



**Fr Michael Mernagh**

*Joe Murphy*

## About Joe

Joe Murphy who was born in Dublin now lives in Dunlaoighaire with his wife Anne. A retired consultant engineer Joe became interested in *Tinteán* when one of our committee sent him several issues of the magazine. He was impressed with the quality of a publication produced by a group of volunteers and phoned our editor Liz McKenzie who invited him to become our Irish Correspondent.

Joe and Anne have three children, Yvette, Brendan and Joe and two grandchildren, Marco and Cormac. His hobbies are oil painting, photography and gardening and since retiring has joined two creative writing courses. He is a published and successful writer in his own right.

Having trained in London Joe has worked in Africa, Scotland and



Hong Kong. He and Anne have also visited Australia, America and Asian countries.

We appreciate his well researched and well written articles and look forward to receiving them. We wish Joe and his family all the best.

**The *Tinteán* Committee**

# The Red Ribbon Agitation

In the Bendigo Gardens, directly behind the Art Gallery and Café, there are two rocks beside the pathway.

There are bronze plaques on each, commemorating this Agitation which is not well known and not recorded in many history reference books and literature.

On the first rock, on the left in the illustration, the inscription recites:

On Saturday 27 August 1853, after their massive petition against the hated licence fee was rejected by Governor La Trobe, ten thousand indignant Bendigo diggers gathered for a well-organised protest meeting. To show their defiance they decided to wear red ribbons. Near this spot, their leaders negotiated a temporary solution with the Bendigo authorities. But the underlying conflict about injustice remained. It erupted tragically in the Eureka Rebellion of 1854 in Ballarat.

‘Political deliberation is the poor man’s right arm. It brought the Magna Carta to the barons, Catholic Emancipation to the Irish and triumphal repeal of the Corn Laws to the people of England. Surely it would bring democracy to the people of Victoria.’

George Thomson, Chartist and Leader of the Red Ribbon Movement. August 1853.

These plaques were placed on 28 August 2006 by the Ballarat Reform League Inc. in association with the Bendigo Historical



The rocks commemorating the 1853 Red Ribbon Agitation

Society with the assistance of the Vera Moore Foundation.

On the second rock, there is a picture of Government Camp Bendigo, June 1853. This watercolour is by Ludwig Becker, courtesy of the Mitchell Library, Sydney.

*Peter Kiernan*



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# Craiceann Geal – Croí Marbh

In this article Bearnáí Ó Doibhlin writes about the series 'Craiceann Geal – Croí Marbh' (White Skin – Dead Heart) which was broadcast recently in Ireland on the Irish language channel, TG4. The series explores the story of Robert O'Hara Burke and his ill-fated journey across inland Australia in 1860.

Craoladh an tsraith 'Craiceann Geal – Croí Marbh' ar TG4 ní ba luaithe i mbliana, agus go bhfios dom ba é seo an chéad uair riamh a craoladh clár as Gaeilge faoi eachtra éigin i stair na hAstráile. Tá ceithre eipeasóid sa tsraith agus is é Dermot Somers an láithreoir. Tá clú agus cáil ar Somers mar dhreapadóir agus mar scríbhneoir, i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla.

Sa tsraith leanann Somers an turas taiscealaíochta a rinne an tÉireannach Robert O'Hara Burke ó chósta go cósta na mór roinne thiar sa bhliain 1860. Ní théann Somers ar chammaill ná ar chapaill, mar a rinne an Búrcach, agus ní thógann a thuras ach mí go leith. Tá trua ag Somers don fhear a sháraigh a phríomh dhúshlán ach a cailleadh go tubaisteach ar a bhealach ar ais.

Roimh agus le linn an achair ó Melbourne go dtí an Mhurascaill, cuireann Somers agallaimh ar shaineolaithe áitiúla. Ina measc tá Michael Cathcart, an staraí as Ollscoil Melbourne, a bhí ina láithreoir ar an tsraith Astrálach, 'Rogue Nation' ar na mallaibh. Labhraíonn sé freisin le Graham Clarke i bPáirc Náisiúnta Mungo agus leis an tráchtair Bundúchasaigh, Mark Sutton, faoin radharc a bhí ag muintir Bhundúchasaigh na tíre ar an dtaisceal agus ar ar tharla dá mhuintir dá bharr.

Léitear sleachta as dialann an Bhúrcaigh, as na litreacha a scríobh sé agus as an óráid a thug sé sular thosaigh sé ar a thuras. Tugann na sleachta seo léargas dúinn ar mheoin an fhir agus é ar a thrasnú cáiliúil.

Cé go bhfuil meas ag Somers ar an tsithiúlacht agus ar an acmhainn a bhí ag Burke, is léir go n-aontaíonn sé le tuairimí na saineolaithe thuasluaite nach raibh an

cháilíocht chúig ag Burke le bheith i gceannas ar an taiscealaíocht. Mar a deir duine amháin acu, ceapadh é de bharr go raibh aithne aige ar na daoine cearta ar Chumann Ríoga Victoria agus go raibh an cúlra ceart aige: tógáil uasal agus traenáil mhíleata.

Sa chéad eipeasóid, 'Tost na Dúchríche', pléann Somers cúlra an Bhúrcaigh, a rugadh agus a tógadh in oirthear na Gaillimhe. Leanann an eipeasóid an turas chomh fada le Menindee, achar a thóg 56 lá mar gheall ar chinntí éagsúla míchearta a rinne an Búrcach. Sa bhaile sin rinne sé cinneadh tubaisteach eile: an grúpa a scoilt.

Sna trí eipeasóid eile leanann Somers an bealach a thóg an turas taiscealaíochta cáiliúil ó thuaidh agus ansin ar ais go Coopers Creek. Bhain siad an áit seo amach naoi n-uaire ró dhéanach le haghaidh tarrthála.

Chomh maith lena thuairimí faoin mBúrcach, tugann Somers a bharúil dúinn ar chúrsaí reatha áirithe san Astráil. Ní dóigh leis gur caitheadh go cothrom le Bundúchasaigh na hAstráile le linn an turais taiscealaíochta ná ó shin i leith. Déanann sé tagairt arís is arís ar an damáiste don imshaol a tharla sna ceantair intíre ó aimsir an Bhúrcaigh mar gheall ar an iomarca innilte ar thalamh tirim, agus an iomarca bhrú ar na haibhneacha.

Thaitin an tsraith go mór liom agus bhain mé úsáid as sleachta san ard rang abhus in Canberra, cé nach mbíonn caighdeán an taifeadta ró-ard nuair a íoslódáiltear cláir ar mo ríomhaire glúine. Is mór an trua é nach mbíonn na cláir a chraoltar ar TG4 le díol ag an gcainéal – ach sin scéal do lá éigin eile.

*Bearnáí Ó Doibhlin*

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# Dublin's Hero Priest

On 1 September 1917, the Ulster Presbyterian newspaper, *'The Weekly News'*, in its obituary of Father Doyle wrote:

'God never made a nobler soul. Fr. Doyle was a good deal among us. We could not possibly agree with his religious opinions, but we simply worshipped him for other things. He didn't know the meaning of fear and he did not know what bigotry was. He was as ready to risk his life and take a drop of water to a wounded Ulsterman as to assist men of his own faith and regiment. If he risked his life looking after Ulster protestant soldiers once, he did it a hundred times in the last few days ... The Ulstermen felt his loss more keenly than anybody, and none were readier to show their marks of respect to the dead hero priest than were our Ulster Presbyterians.'

Born at Dalkey, County Dublin in 1873, the youngest of seven children, Father Doyle was ordained a Jesuit priest in 1907. He volunteered to serve as a military chaplain in 1914 and was appointed to the Royal Irish Fusiliers in 1915. He first experienced battle in France, where he was caught in a German poison gas attack. He ministered to the soldiers with total disregard for personal safety. Willie was mentioned in dispatches and was presented with the 'parchment of merit' of the 49th Brigade.

In May 1916, he luckily escaped death:

'I was standing in a trench, quite a long distance from the firing line...talking to some of my men when we heard in the distance the scream of a shell...What really took place in the next ten seconds I cannot say. I was conscious of a terrific explosion and the thud of falling stones and debris. I thought the drums of my ears were split by the crash, and...I was knocked down by the concussion, but when I jumped to my feet I found that the two men who had been standing at my left hand... were stretched on the ground dead, though I think I had time to give them absolution and anoint them. The poor fellow on my right was lying badly wounded in the head; but I myself...was absolutely untouched, though covered with dirt and blood.'

In August 1916, he participated in the gallant combat of the 16<sup>th</sup> Irish Division in France. His description of Leuze Wood is striking:

'The first part of our journey lay through a narrow trench, the floor of which consisted of deep thick mud,

and the bodies of dead men trodden under foot...and on the half-rotten corpses of our own brave men we marched in silence...Half an hour of this brought us out on the open into the middle of the battlefield of some days previous. The wounded...had all been removed, but the dead lay there...just as they had fallen. Good God, such a sight!... Some lay as if they were sleeping quietly, others had died in agony or had had the life crushed out of them by mortal fear, while the whole ground was littered with heads or limbs, or pieces of torn human bodies. In the bottom of one hole lay a British and a German soldier, locked in a deadly embrace...Another couple seemed to have realised that the horrible struggle was none of their making, and that they were both children of the same God; they had died hand-in-hand. A third face caught my eye, a tall, strikingly handsome young German, not more than eighteen. He lay there calm and peaceful, with a smile of happiness on his face, as if he had had a glimpse of heaven before he died. Ah, if only his poor mother could have seen her boy it would have soothed the pain of her broken heart.'

In December, 1916, Willie was transferred to the 8th Battalion of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers. Willie's concern for the men shines through his letters and diaries.

'I found the dying lad...tightly jammed into a corner of the trench. Both legs were smashed...so his chances of life were small. What a harrowing picture that scene made. A splendid young soldier, married only a month, lying there, pale and motionless in the mud and water with the life crushed out of him by a cruel shell. The stretcher bearers binding up his broken limbs; round about a group of silent Tommies looking on and wondering when will their turn come.'

Willie was awarded the Military Cross in January 1917, though many believed that he deserved the Victoria Cross for his bravery. He narrowly escaped death several times, before he was killed by a shell in 1917, at the Irish positions on Frezenberg Ridge. He was recommended for the D.S.O. (Distinguished Service Order) and the V.C. (Victoria Cross). Sadly, he 'disqualified' himself by being an Irishman, a Catholic, and a Jesuit. He is commemorated on the Tyne Cot Memorial.

*Michael Doyle*

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# The continuing saga of the Irish economy

In the last issue of *Tinteán*, the economic situation in Ireland gave cause for concern, but there was still debate about whether the country was truly facing a crisis. Doubt has now fled. Finance Minister, Brian Lenihan said on the 7<sup>th</sup> April that the country faces a 'very grave national crisis'. Housing prices have fallen by up to 50%, and bank shares by 90% while unemployment has hit 10%. In 2008, the economy recorded the worst full year performance on record. Gross Domestic Product had fallen by 7.5% compared to the previous year. As in Australia, Irish consumers are putting the brakes on the economy by cutting back their spending, possibly because they anticipate losing their jobs. The Irish deficit has now reached 13% of Gross Domestic Product; four times the European Union's limit and the country's credit rating has been downgraded.

This is a sharp contrast to the booming economic growth typical of Ireland in the last fourteen years, but critics have argued that this growth carried within it the seeds of the present downfall. In the late 1980's the 'Doherty & Nesbitt School

of Economics' (named for the favourite pub of Dublin's political and business elite) laid the foundations for the Celtic Tiger state. They cut taxes, reduced import duties and embraced foreign investment. Low interest rates led to a housing bubble, a full employment economy, increased immigration and a bank lending spree. Housing's share of the Irish economy reached 14%; the highest in Europe. Developers like Sean Dunne became public figures. Some banks had allocated over 60% of their loans towards property. When interest rates began to rise in Europe, banks stopped lending, leading to the sudden fall in asset prices. The government now has a €23 billion hole in its finances.

The Irish government has responded to the crisis by attempting to impose a pension levy on 350,000 public sector workers. The levy could cost public servants between €1,500 and €2,800 per annum. The government has defended the plan saying they are no longer in a position to meet the public service pay bill. This proposed move led to a huge protest march in Dublin on 21 February,

2009 when 100,000 people took to the streets. The protest was organised by the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), with representatives saying that they were looking for a 'better and fairer way of dealing with the crisis' Sally-Anne Kinahan, Secretary-General of the ICTU was quoted as saying their priority was looking after the interests of ordinary people rather than those of big business or the wealthy. A protestor at the march objected to being subject to cutbacks when he had children to support and had done nothing but go to work and do his job.

Writing in *The Irish Times*, Fintan O'Toole strongly agreed with him, describing the latest plans to provide more money for the banks, pay cuts for the masses, cuts to social welfare, taxes on low-paid workers and means tests on pensions as 'Everything except an attempt to ensure those who have benefited most should take the most pain.' He commented that this formula is a political broadcast on behalf of the party of the rich.

Compiled from *The Irish Times*, *The New York Times*, BBC News and Reuters.

*Felicity Allen*

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# PM disputes Ireland's patron saint

The Prime Minister, Kevin Rudd, was the guest of the Queensland Irish Association at its 2009 St Patrick's Eve Dinner. In attendance as an honoured guest was Eamon Ó Cuiv, the Minister for Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs in the Irish Dail and the grandson of Eamon de Valera.

The Prime Minister enthusiastically welcomed Minister Ó Cuiv to Australia. The Queensland Association was honoured to welcome the Minister to Brisbane, where his grandfather, Eamon de Valera, had been hosted in 1948. The PM said that the Minister was especially welcome because of his grandfather's rich lineage, because he had embraced the group half a century earlier, and because of the great friendship which exists between the Irish Republic and the Commonwealth of Australia.

Mr Rudd noted that it is customary on St Patrick's Day for politicians to lay claim to their Irish ancestry. Pretending to eschew blarney, he proceeded to claim to be a direct descendent of St Kevin, which of itself, he said, is problematic given that St Kevin founded an ancient monastic order. 'St Kevin is much misunderstood,' he continued. 'There is a reasonable school of thought which says that indeed St Kevin, and not St Patrick, should be Ireland's patron saint.'

'Others could commend St Kevin's virtue, the sheer piety and poetry of his name. A poetry so deep and so broad and so rich that Dame Edna herself has written that it is impossible for anyone reputable, let alone a Prime Minister, to be possibly called Kevin.' He announced that he had formed an International Society of Much Misunderstood Kevins, with Kevin Costner as patron. He advised Minister Ó Cuiv that there would be no official objection from the Antipodes if, upon his return to the Irish Republic, he took up this view as something of merit in discussions with the Church in Ireland and with the Dail, and chose to change the name of the patron saint of Ireland.

Returning to the ancestry theme, Mr Rudd said that his maternal grandmother, Hannah Cashin, was the daughter of Irish parents, Owen Cashin and Johannah Maher, who arrived in Brisbane in 1887 from the small parish of Ballingarry in Co Tipperary. Ballingarry looms large in the history of the 19th century, being the town in

1848 where the Irish national tricolour of green, white and orange was first unfurled by the Young Irelanders – in dramatic scenes, where instead of the rebels taking siege in a local house, the police had to take siege because they did not have the numbers. Facetiously Mr Rudd noted that the leader of that rebellion, William Smith O'Brien, was punished with the one thing worse than death by hanging – transportation to Australia!

Not only was his grandmother from a town of rebels, her family was deeply entwined in an Irish factional fight between the Shanavests and the Caravets, which raged across Tipperary through most of the 19th century. Observing that one in five Irish convicts transported to Australia came for political insurrection, the PM claimed that most of them later joined the ALP. With republicans, secessionists, murderers and faction fighters all in the family tree, Mr Rudd had felt himself destined for a career in the Labor Party.

In a poor attempt to give the discussion some balance and standing proud of his mother's Irish heritage, Mr Rudd spoke briefly about his father's side of the family. An entirely different story: 'English, lumpen Protestants – the lot of them,' he said. On his father's side, he had identified no less than seven distinct convict lines: crooks, forgers, highway robbers, the lot – which by contrast portrays his mother's Irish forebears as a picture of respectability and tranquillity.

Mr Rudd observed that the roll call of Australian history is thick with Irish names, whether in politics, in church, in business or in the wider community. He noted that the roll call in Australia includes at least six of his predecessors at The Lodge – James Scullin, Joseph Lyons, John Curtin, Francis Forde, J B Chifley and Paul Keating. In these challenging times, he encouraged all to call forth those great Irish Australian virtues and quality of pride, of tenacity, of fortitude in the face of adversity, of struggle, of faith, and of an abiding good humour in the face of adversity. Great Australian qualities. Great Irish qualities.

**Patrick McNamara**

*This is an edited extract of the Prime Minister's speech to the Queensland Irish Association in Brisbane on 16 March 2009. The full text is available on the Prime Minister's official website.*

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# Poetry

Neil McCarthy is an Irish poet based in Vienna. He has published poems in numerous journals around the world and been a guest speaker in many cities including Melbourne, NY, Budapest and Prague. He has published three short books of poetry and has toured Europe with Irish musicians as part of his show 'The Voice & The Verse'.

## Worry about it tomorrow, do.

1.

Today, I found myself sitting on  
some steps  
    opposite a gay sauna  
    on La Trobe Street,  
penning postcards and lying  
through my teeth;  
but the steps were a good  
    place to view the 'Batman  
Building roaring above Elizabeth  
Street and the  
    steadfast flow of commuters  
of whom I am now jealous.

2.

Two years ago in Shanghai,  
I saw buildings as big as  
my ambitions.

Today, I was unsure whether these  
buildings speaking to me were saying  
"Go find a job" or  
"Go find a god".  
Worry about it tomorrow, do.

## The farthest I have ever been from the sea

They can talk of Thailand as if nobody's ever been,  
of Bondi Beach as if it were deserted, uninhabited,  
of Boston, Cuzco and Rome like they were villages  
just down the road, out past the Statoil Station, the  
cemetery, keeping going until you pass Harney's Tavern  
and there, 2 km shy of the proposed new by-pass that  
will never happen, is the rest of the world.

The rest of the world is East Berlin to some, motionless  
in mid-Eighties madness, black and white politics  
mapped as colours in a Weetabix School Atlas handed  
down seven times, each with a different covering of  
our mothers' worst wallpaper.  
The rest of the world happens on TV, in newspapers,  
in other people's photos, tales and grievances and then,  
one day, it will catch you off-guard.

February 2006, and I sit reading Chekhov in a Korean  
restaurant in Melbourne, remembering Russia and the  
time I stepped off a train in Krasnoyarsk – the farthest I  
have ever been from the sea; and thinking about distance,  
and years and Ireland, and realising that what I've just  
written won't matter a shit on my return, when I see  
again the smile on my sister's face and my nephew  
fetches his dinosaurs to play.



# The Irish War of Independence through Australian eyes

**The Australian writers Joice Nankivell and Sydney Loch lived and worked in Ireland in 1920-1 during the Sinn Fein-Black and Tan war. The Lochs kept in touch with both sides, as they had a contract to publish a book on the current Irish troubles, but became sympathetic to the Irish cause. The following account of their time there is taken from pages 63-7 of Joice's autobiography *A Fringe of Blue* (William Morrow and Co, New York, 1968), to whom acknowledgement is made.**

In Australia I had been friends with Sydney Loch, author of *Straits Impregnable*, one of the best books on the Gallipoli campaign. We decided to get married, and during the final eighteen months of the Sinn Fein war in Ireland we went to Dublin as freelance journalists. The Rogers, some of my cousins living in England, thought I did not know how dangerous Sinn Fein was, and they said no one could write the truth without losing their lives. This was not true. Sinn Fein was too well aware of the value of any publicity to interfere with any but the most noxious journalists. And in those days newspapers were not ruled so much by political gangsters as now, and journalists occasionally aimed at accuracy.

Dublin fascinated us, and we were soon on friendly terms with everyone. There were colossal figures in those days. AE (George Russell), called the Hairy Fairy, because of his power to contact fairies; Maude Gonne; Countess Markiewicz, more beautiful than the dawn; Yeats; Henry James; Douglas Hyde; Erskine Childers; Sarah Purser, the church-window painter; and Jack White, the eccentric son of George White of Ladysmith fame. They all lived in Dublin and gave the richest colour to life.

We had an apartment in a house in Ely Place. It had been George Moore's house. It was opposite Dr Gogarty, who sported a most impressive red beard. I never knew such a beard could exist. He had the illusion that he was a marked

man, and under the great beard and over his shoulders he wore what his wife called his 'disguise', an immense black cape which drooped from his shoulders to his feet. Sometimes he forgot his disguise, and then his wife would be seen hurrying with it after his striding figure.

We went to AE's Hermetic Society, which was held at the same hour on the same day each week. People who joined AE's circle were never invited to do so. Their first appearance was always due to chance; but most of them went over and over again. It was like being washed in a river of wisdom to listen to him. He was bigger than other people in every way. Huge, rugged. A better discoursesman than writer, and the words that poured from him pure poetry. He was simple and was prepared to be interested in everyone's point of view, however uncouth and floundering their ideas might be. Our first appearance was due to taking shelter in his doorway during a scrap between Black and Tans and Sinn Feiners. Bullets flew, the door seemed to open of itself, and we slipped inside. He was in the middle of a talk, and he motioned us to seats without stopping his river of words. We sat enthralled, while he discoursed on the idea that Christ and the devil were opposite sides of the same entity. He afterwards published an essay on this subject, but it was not as warm, and alive, and human as the discourse. Hours spent in AE's company seemed the only sanity in a period of madness.

We had a terrible landlady, with the worst characteristics of the worst Irish. She was a hider of arms for the lesser lights in the Sinn Fein movement, for naturally she would never have been trusted by the people in power. We had an upstairs apartment, and a Mrs Fitzgerald the lower. Mrs Fitzgerald meant nothing to us, except as a rather nice, very overworked neighbour. She had three large children and a baby. One day in a fit of confidence the landlady boasted that the husband was the fifth most important man in the Sinn Fein movement, the Minister of Propaganda.

He was very much on the run. We never saw him come and go. Finally he was arrested in the house in a sudden night raid by Black and Tans, and he disappeared behind barbed wire for the rest of the Sinn Fein war.

A few minutes after he was arrested Mrs Fitzgerald ran into the sitting-room with her baby. I was guarded by a Black and Tan. She popped the sleeping baby on the sofa and asked me to keep an eye on him if he woke. The baby slept until the raid was over. His short life had been one long raid. In came Mrs Fitzgerald and I picked him up to hand to her. He crackled with papers, any one of which would have been sufficient to hang his father had they been found. The glance of caution she gave me was not one to be treated lightly!

About two weeks later the house was raided again and weapons were found under the bed of our landlady. If arms were found in a house all men were arrested, and so Sydney, and the old serving man, O'Connor, were thrust into armoured lorries and disappeared to Dublin Castle. Mrs Fitzgerald proved herself a tower of strength and took hold of the situation. She dragged from the unwilling landlady the fact that the arms belonged to her son who was an officer in the British Army, like the sons of so many Irish patriots. Wires were sent to him by a lawyer whom I hired, and, after he had officially claimed it as his personal property, Sydney was released. O'Connor clung to him like a drowning man and was so pathetic that Sydney refused to leave until he was released too.

They had a grim week in the most filthy conditions, which we felt was unnecessary, as the Irish question had gone on for centuries, and Dublin Castle had been used as a political prison for most of the time.

In spite of the difficulties I loved Ireland. There was good trout fishing which Sydney indulged in occasionally, there were witty, delightful people. AE sought and found fairies on the mountain tops. He painted them. We were invited to his

house sometimes on Sundays, to look at his paintings, smoke herb cigarettes, and drink herb tea. Therefore we can be said to have hobnobbed with fairies too. AE sold his paintings by the amount of paint and canvas used, and we always regretted not buying one, although we needed nothing to keep the 'Hairy Fairy' in mind.

We gained greatly in prestige by Sydney's incarceration in Dublin Castle, and I was the only one of our group who had not been jailed. This I found most shaming. I remember one woman telling us that she had hung a bomb on the throne of England! Her desire to be invisible was so intense that she was sure that she had become invisible in actual fact, and she walked boldly past the guards to the throne room; past the policeman on duty in it, who appeared to be asleep on his feet, and she hung her bomb and walked out without being noticed at all. The policeman woke up and removed it before it had time to explode! How attractive they all were! Jack White with his beautiful Spanish wife lived opposite us in Ely Place. Jack White had started a colony of love in Donegal, which he tried to persuade all his friends to join. His theory was that if he could only fill it with a mixture of Irish and Japanese he would bring together the two spiritual poles of the earth, and their union would bring peace. He travelled the country preaching this, his worldly goods on a donkey, which carried a huge placard with the words: TO HELL WITH THE CATHOLICS on one side, which he would display in Northern Ireland, and: To HELL WITH THE PROTESTANTS on the other for Southern Ireland.

There was Dickey Bird who walked into a shop one day and bought and paid for a ham, which he requested the shop keeper to leave hanging on the hook in the shop. He attached a label to it, and took a receipted account. He said he would call for it later in the day. This he certainly did. He leapt through the door into the crowded shop, thrust the customers aside, jumped at the ham, tore it down and fled, with the entire population

of the shop streaming after him shouting: 'Stop thief!' Sinn Feiners and Black and Tans forgot their differences. They joined forces and ran! The police ran! Traffic stopped! He was finally caught on the doorstep of his own house.

'It's my ham' he cried indignantly, as he produced the receipt for it. 'My ham! What are you doing? Can't I remove it when I like!'

There was the man who travelled all day on top of buses with a fish hook and line, and fished for hats. There was the priest who took us cock-fighting in the very early dawn on Sundays, before he went to mass. There was polo in Phoenix Park every Saturday during the season. There were killings, and funerals and grave diggers' strikes; and everyone either filled with tragedy, or very gay.

The country was wonderful to wander in. There was poteen-running in Antrim and Donegal, for it was during the 'dry' period in America. Many a night I watched the barrels of poteen rolled down the slopes into the surf, and fished up into small rocking boats that carried them to the ships waiting out at sea. I stayed at Cushin-dun on the Antrim coast with Mrs White and watched the scene from her cottage windows. When the wrack came tumbling in were the chosen nights and the stout army of wrack gatherers saw the barrels safely into the boats. Coast guards patrolled, but they always turned up too late and found only the wrackers hip-high in rolling surf.

Estelle Simpson stayed with us. How delighted we were. We toured Ireland in her car, and bathed in that icy part of the sea called the Gulf Stream.

We were present at the first meeting of the Dáil (Irish Parliament). Sydney was arrested at it by Sinn Fein vigilance officers, because he looked English; but Desmond Fitzgerald, released from behind barbed wire, vouched for him, and he was returned to his seat.

The old man who lived next door gave a great guffaw when we set out for the Dail, 'Now the Irish have their Free State, all the patriots will meet in the

Rotunda and tear each other to bits!' he shouted after us.

How right he was, and how quickly they did it! The gentle Erskine Childers who had worn himself to a shadow working for them was the first to be 'executed' by firing squad. Michael Collins, their military leader, was assassinated at the Dublin Horse Show.\*

We saw the British Army withdraw. The old flower-sellers covered their heads with their aprons and wept. They rocked to and fro wailing as they did at wakes, or the funerals of murdered British officers: 'Ach, the two eyes of them! Innocent as daisies! What will we do now? Ach their innocent eyes!' And the street 'streelers' wept, and the shop keepers. And the old houses, already so full of ghosts, tucked more ghosts under their turbulent roofs, for all Irishmen love a battle, and they had truly loved the plotting and the blood-letting, and the excitement of their immediate past. 'The Sod of Turf', that underground dive where conspirators, journalists and others went to droop their heads over good food, and plot in whispers, was closed. The Irish affair was over. No more headlines! Never, never again! Potato cakes and dressed crab could be eaten elsewhere.

We packed up to leave.

**Joice Nankivell Loch**

*Contributed by Patrick Morgan*

*\*The mistake about Michael Collins*

*– who was shot in West Cork – was a result of confused radio reports in the aftermath of his assassination.*

*The Lochs published a book-length account of their time in Ireland Ireland in Travail (1922). They worked for the rest of their lives helping war refugees, first in Poland after the first world war, and then in Greece of the rest of the lives, except for the second world war when they were evacuated to the Middle East. Joice Nankivell Loch became one of the most decorated Australians ever, being awarded eleven medals by various governments for her work in settling refugees. A biography of her, Blue Ribbons Bitter Bread, was published by Susanna De Vries in 2000.*

# Who owns the world?



The following two-part article is based on extracts from Chapter 8 of *'Who owns the world'* by Kevin Cahill, to be published by Mainstream Publishing, Edinburgh, Scotland in 2009. (See the review *'Invigorating old ideas'* by Mairéid Sullivan, p 41 in *Tinteán Issue 7*)

## 'Quia Emptores'

A beautiful place in summer, the Irish winter is as unforgiving as it is in any other part of northern Europe. Without shelter and stricken by the potato blight, a million or more starving and sick Irish peasants perished during the Great Famine of the 1840's. The main culprits in Ireland for this enormous tragedy were the landlords and the law. The law that denied land ownership to the peasantry, *Quia Emptores Act of 1290 AD*, is still on the Irish statute book.

It is this basic feudal law, restated, which placed the actual ownership of all physical land in the hands of the Crown. Subsequently this law was placed in the hands of the Irish Free State, thus making all 'land owners' in Ireland tenants of the State, having to pay rent in contradiction of their alleged status as 'freeholders'. The underlying principle in *Quia Emptores* also underlaid the Acts of Settlement which evicted the native

Irish 'landowners' and substituted English and Scottish settler landowners in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The basic argument in law was that the Irish 'landowners' were mere tenants of the Crown, and the Crown could dismiss and evict its tenants, legally, as indeed it could, under *Quia Emptores* and associated laws. The completion of the dispossession of the Irish peasantry, and the exemplification of the dangers inherent in bad laws, were the anti Catholic penal laws of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century which denied the Catholic peasantry any form of tenure on the grounds of their religion. It allowed landlords to evict people 'at will' even if they had just paid the cash portion of the rent. So was the stage set for the famine deaths, by statute, – as all land was owned by the Crown, the people were deprived of any right of redress when they were evicted and lost their only means of livelihood.

To be a citizen is to have the innate right to obtain and own land. There is a direct connection between the first human right, the right to life, and the right to land, which is seldom raised, especially by lawyers. To make the right to life functional, three other attached and inseparable rights have to be considered. The right to life itself has no meaning if not accompanied by a right to water, to

food and to shelter. It is this last attendant right, the right to shelter, which brings us to the most basic connection between basic human rights and land. Shelter, to be meaningful, has to be secure. A bunch of branches that provides cover for a few days serves no meaningful purpose in lives that are meant to endure for decades. The securest form of shelter is a hard built home, owned outright by the person or family living in it. The right to secure shelter accompanies the other two attendant rights to the right to life and is inseparable from them because in most practical situations, water and food will not keep you long alive, if you have no shelter. The Irish Famine of 1845-1847 is one of the grimmest examples of why the first right and its three attendant rights must be pursued and considered together. The common perception is that the million or more who died at the time of the famine, died because the staple food of the peasantry, the potato, failed due to blight. Here, however, is how an eyewitness to the famine, an American journalist, Henry George, saw it.

When her (Ireland's) population was at its height, Ireland was a food exporting country. Even during the famine, grain and meat and butter and cheese were carted



for exportation along roads lined with the starving and past trenches into which the dead were piled.

There was no actual shortage of food in Ireland during the famine. There was plenty of water. But note where Henry George found the peasantry, on the side of the road – shelterless, or in the ditches – dead. The Irish peasantry, about 98% of the then population of Ireland, were not permitted to own land, or even to have secure tenancies. They were slaves. They were on their patch of land, in their hovels, at the will of their landlord. By law. When they could not feed themselves due to the potato blight, and could not supply the feudal due of labour as well as cash rent to their landlord masters, they were turned out on the side of the road, by law. By law, their hovels were torn down and they were hunted out of what shelter they could find in holes in the ground. The law permitted landlords to drive food past the dying, and have no responsibility, in law, for the consequences. The law was not an ass. It was a murderous obscenity.

It is worth quoting Henry George's final comment on the famine.

The potato blight might have come and gone without stinting a single human being of a full meal.

## Background

When the third British Empire created Dominion status for Canada, Australia and New Zealand, in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century it forgot its neighbour, Ireland. It was part of Britain, a part of the foundation stone of the first Empire. To let Ireland go the way it was clamouring to go, out of Empire and into a Republic, was unthinkable to the Imperial bureaucrats even though the Irish were in a state of perpetual rebellion for independence. Then, right in the middle of World War 1, on Easter Sunday morning 1916 even while 150,000 Irish men were fighting in the trenches for the Empire, a small group of Irish men and women staged an unsuccessful and profoundly unpopular, armed uprising in the Irish capital, Dublin. The fighting ended before the week was out. The leaders of the rebellion were executed by firing squad, an act that initiated a profound change in Irish public opinion, eventually leading to the creation of a Free State within the Commonwealth in 1921. The first Constitution of the Irish Free State followed in 1922.

Two things had convinced the Irish

that independence without possession of the land itself by the native people was meaningless. The first was the criminalisation of the entire native population by the penal laws in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, enforced by law by their own local landlords and against which they were powerless. The second even more traumatic event was the Famine and the vast toll it took on the native population, in lives and in emigration. It remained vivid in the minds and memories of virtually the entire native Irish population at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Nothing did more to persuade the Irish that only the possession of their own land in their own hands and having their own government could protect them from legally created disasters like the Famine.

## Ownership of land in Ireland in the 21st century

The position of land ownership in Ireland is unique. Between 79% and 82% of all Irish homes are privately held in freehold tenure. This is the highest level of private home ownership in the developed world. All farmland is privately held. This leaves the Irish Government as the formal owner of the woodland of 1.1 million acres, of 210,000 acres of the 2.9 million acres of peat bogs and of its own urban buildings. This is, at most, 7.5% of the country. In practical terms 85.5% of the Irish population have *de facto* ownership of about 92.5% of the country. Based on private home and private farm 'ownership', 92% of the population have a stake in privately held property. Irish private 'landownership' is higher than the USA, where private home ownership stands at about 70%, and private farm sole ownership stands at about 67% with the Federal Government owning 33% of the USA. In Ireland most land 'ownership' is in the form of 'freehold'. Those with a 'freehold' believe that they have actual ownership of the physical land their home stands on, and the building itself. Likewise for farming families and the land and buildings they hold 'freehold'. In this they are mistaken.

## Correcting a feudal error – a misunderstanding of 'freehold'

The reality is that the Republic continues in law as a feudal state. The State owns all land as feudal superior. This situation is fixed in the current Irish Constitution of 1937, as amended. The constitutional position is articulated in statutes, some going back to the early occupation of the country by the English in the 13<sup>th</sup> century.

Those statutes were adopted by the State in its first constitution in 1922. The Irish State, as the successor to the original feudal superior, the Crown of England and Great Britain, owns all the land (and buildings) in the country. What individuals and families hold, not own, is an interest in an estate in land, in fee simple.

The purpose of the feudal system and its structure of land laws was to preserve the position of the Crown or monarch as the sole owner of the 'physical' land and to ensure that the bulk of the population did not own land. The feudal system imposed on England by William the Bastard (of Normandy) in 1066, was illegal according to the laws of the time. It was theft. All subsequent feudal land law was created to protect this theft, and to keep the stolen land in the hands of the Crown and out of the hands of the population. It was an immensely successful endeavour. The English Crown, the successor to William the Bastard, owns all land in England and UK territories. The Crown's British subjects, 70% who are 'freeholders' are not owners of land, but feudal tenants of the Queen. As recently the second Domesday in 1872-1876, only 2% of the Irish population even had the status of feudal tenants. The remaining 98% of the Irish population owned nothing at all, not a blade of grass. They were not feudal serfs. They were slaves.

The people who risked and gave their lives to create the Irish Republic, did not do so in order that they and their children might have '*an interest in an estate in land, in fee simple*'. They fought and died for absolute allodial ownership, even if they had never heard of the word. The men and women of 1916 did not line the windows of the GPO shooting and shouting "*Give us an interest in an estate in land!*"! Perish the thought. They fought and died that their people might be full property owners and landowners in their own country, that they might be true citizens, in the real sense of having personal, legal possession of the sole final guarantee of survival, land. No one planned and took part in a rebellion against English rule in order that the freeholders of Ireland should be serfs of the Irish State nor that it should be their landlord.

**Kevin Cahill**

*In Issue 9 Kevin Cahill will look at the Irish Law Reform Commission of 2004 which is examining needed changes to the Irish Constitution including changes to laws pertaining to land ownership in the Republic.*

# St Mary's: vigilantes or archbishop in control?

The parishioners of St Mary's South Brisbane are in debate, a multi-vocal affair, with their Archbishop, John Bathersby and Priest, Fr Peter Kennedy. Whether the outcome of this debate results in the creating of a viable 21st century version of Catholicism, as the proponents for Peter Kennedy argue, or victory to the hierarchy in reasserting its legitimate power over orthodox theology and liturgy, is yet to be seen. Whether the matter of Peter Kennedy's 'insubordination' and its attendant consequences can be separated from the intentions of many of his parishioners to remain in the Catholic communion, is also unclear. The situation in early May 2009, as this article is written, is fevered to say the least.

## History and Geography of St Mary's

Even before this contretemps, St Mary's is and has been one of the most popular and viable parishes in Brisbane, attracting between 800 and 1500 liberal, middle-class, professional people from all over Brisbane and further afield especially since July 2008. The Parish (or more correctly, Mass Centre) has a different history, consistent with its present 'clientele'. The church is located on the south side of the river. Before Expo 88 and gentrification, this was a highly industrialised locale close to South Brisbane station and what used to be the goods and interstate rail terminal. It's also close to Boggo Road jail. It was in a flood-prone section of the mighty Brisbane River and not a desirable place to live. Poor people settled there.

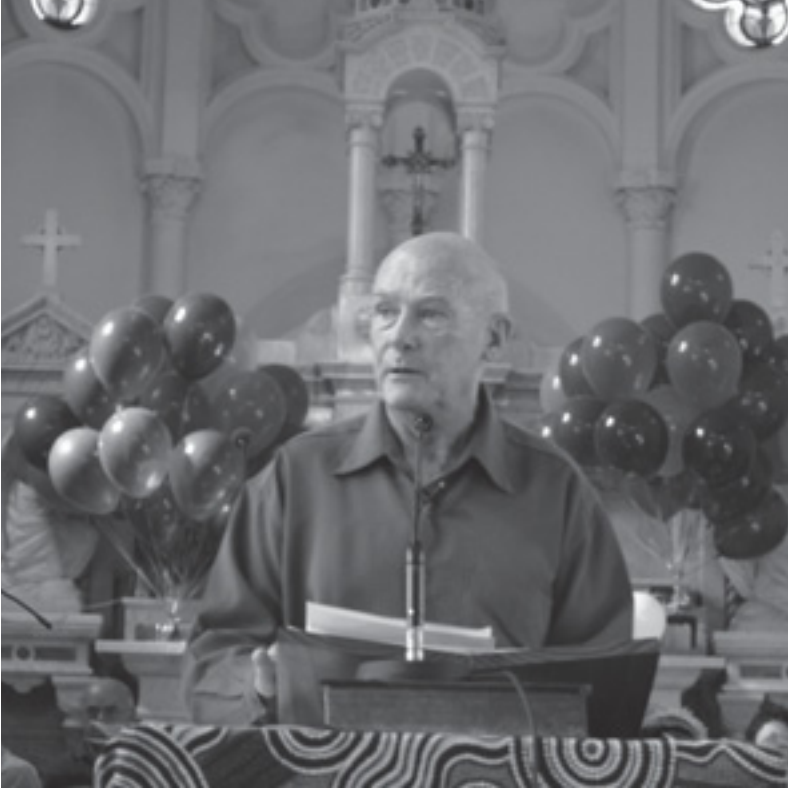
One of the earliest curates, an Irish priest Fr Paul Keating, boasted a BA from Queen's College, Dublin, an unusual qualification for the period. He was at St Mary's for only seven months, dying of pneumonic influenza in 1919, aged just 26. In that short time, he was active in setting up the first Catholic college, St Leo's, at the University of Queensland (originally on Wickham Terrace). Another famous Irish-Australian connection with the parish was Mary McKillop whose sisters were invited by the Mercy nuns at All Hallows to staff the school. She lived and taught there for 15 months in the early 1870s. References to Peter Kennedy's 'Irishness' are often mentioned in the overblown media accounts of the stoush with John Bathersby.

## Mission to Migrants and the Marginal

St Mary's historian, parishioner Maggie Boyle, stresses how multicultural the parish has always been, its inclusive credentials are deep. Lebanese Christians (David Malouf grew up in the area), ministered to by Fr Khoury, worshipped there until they built their own church in 1935, and successive waves of Dutch, Lithuanian, Slovenian and Polish migrants came to the Church in the early 1950s. Nearby Musgrave Park has been an unofficial 'home' to Aboriginal people. Dennis Walker, son of Oodgeroo Noonuccal, has initiated a Sacred Treaty Circle and been given space for an icon in the church grounds. It is this openness to all comers that attracts today's more middle-class and better-educated parishioner.

Peter Kennedy's social justice credentials, and those of the St Mary's community, are unquestioned by those opposed to him. As prison chaplain for nearly three decades, he recognised that he alone could not meet the needs of prisoners and encouraged the community to participate in the development of Catholic Prison Ministry, which still operates today under the auspices of Centacare. He concerned himself not just with prison visits, but also with educating prisoners and worrying about what happened to them on release. Their practical needs for shelter, food and work, and their education while in jail, were part of their rehabilitation as far as he was concerned. Kennedy was able to inspire and foster new thinking about how their needs and those of their families were met.

At St Mary's Church, many homeless, indigenous, and mentally ill people share the space with more affluent parishioners at Mass. Fr Peter's followers talk of acts of kindness, such as bringing the drunk, mentally disturbed, or vagrant into the church, encouraging his middle-class parishioners to interact with them. In 1993, the Jubilee Year of St Mary's, community members initiated and committed 10% of parish income to establishing a collective response to social justice and Micah Projects Inc. was formed as a local, not-for-profit organisation in 1995. With the outsourcing of social services by government, it also concerns itself with homelessness, support for young parents, mental health and disability. It offers support for those who have been abused in faith communities and church



and state run institutions. In 10 years, the Esther Centre, an activity of Micah Projects, has responded to 3000 complaints about abuse by clergy, and by people in church and state-run institutions.

Peter Kennedy, sincerely believing he is doing what Pope Benedict enjoined, 'Everyone has a place in the Church', attends gay unions although he does not solemnise them, and welcomes Rainbow coalition activists into his church. His tolerance and support of this group is unwelcome to Cardinal George Pell who has actively refused, and requires his priests to refuse, communion to people flaunting their gay preferences. Kennedy's supporters protest that this is untheological, that only God can make such discriminations.

Women are another group marginalised by the Church, though it increasingly depends on them for minor sacramental functions such as distributing communion. Kennedy's opponents make much of the fact that he allows women to 'preach'. Homilies given by women with something to say are not an unfamiliar phenomenon in many Catholic churches around Australia, but it is noted in South Brisbane.

### The Role of Vigilantes

Groups of right-wing Catholics under the leadership of Richard Stokes, who have severe misgivings about Vatican II, have been collecting evidence of practices of which they disapprove, in churches around Australia for a decade and have been sending their reports to Rome (their website *Stones Will Shout*,

[www.stoneswillshout.com](http://www.stoneswillshout.com) and their Newsletter, *Into the Deep*, give a sense of their preferred model of church). The reports tend to be edited versions of disputed liturgical forms and expressions of theology, plus video clips of liturgy and photographs. One such photo was of an alleged Buddha in the church at St Mary's. Kennedy argues it is a statue of a monk praying, and not the Buddha, and has a place in the church as an ecumenical gesture towards the Buddhist group that has met there for 10 years on Monday evenings. The issue of the statue seems to be more Stokes' concern than the Archbishop's who was recently feted by Rome and the Australian government for his ecumenism.

Kennedy is accused of:

- allowing priest *and people* to speak the words of consecration at mass;
- allowing women to preach;
- not using vestments while saying Mass;
- using gender-inclusive language ('In the name of the Creator, the Redeemer and the Sanctifier') for baptisms thereby rendering them invalid in the eyes of the Church;
- playing down the divinity of Jesus in his liturgies and expressing his doubts about such matters as the Virgin birth to the media, though he is not accused of preaching this within his church;
- indoctrinating his flock by making social justice the key issue in his preaching.

Kennedy may be less interested in theology than in social justice, and the

**Fr Peter Kennedy speaks to the community prior to the Sunday morning procession from the Church to the Trades Labour Council Building**

*Tony Robertson*

**Members of St Mary's Community gather around the Easter Cross prior to the candlelight procession out of the Church to their new home at the Trades Labour Council Building**

*Tony Robertson*

debate with him may be Stokes' more than Bathersby's.

The vigilantes' actions raise several questions. Are two different ways of being in the Church mutually exclusive? How central is dogma, theology and set liturgical forms in the life of the Church? Are experiments/deviations to be permitted or managed/punished? Is any experimentation with Liturgy tolerated/tolerable?

### The local concern

Those parishioners I have spoken to reveal a broad spectrum of support, and intelligent critique, of Peter Kennedy. Some are worried, even anguished, about being considered 'out of communion with Rome' when they believe they belong; others are incensed that the media stoush has derailed the 'real' issues of their spiritual lives at St Mary's. More than one expressed disquiet at the phenomenon of the 'celebrity priest' and worried that without him the movement would be unsustainable. There is real debate among the ordinary parishioners about how similar to or different the forms of worship





actually are from more traditional forms of Catholic liturgy. One expressed concern that St Mary's had become a Catholic-inflected Hillsong, a liturgical 'circus', and worried about the attempt to revive 70s excitement, especially by remobilising songs like 'We shall not be moved'. That such Catholics can be committed and also qualify their support, is important in such a debate. Perhaps the most useful aspect of the controversy was the revivification of such debates and the owning of them by parishioners.

### The hierarchy

Archbishop Bathersby has been seeking change at St Mary's since 2004, but censoring of other social justice initiatives have been continual since the mid-1980s. The vigilantes' complaints to Rome have gained traction in the last two papacies. Archbishop Bathersby – previously a target of their complaints – could no longer avoid taking action against Fr Kennedy, once, but tragically no longer, a close friend. The two men have confronted each other, but the Archbishop, rather than meeting with the parishioners, has conducted his business by letter. The threat in a letter in March 2008 to the congregation, of not only sacking Peter Kennedy but excommunicating those who follow him, was received by parishioners with disquiet. In an attempt to calm the situation, mediation was mooted. But the choice of Ian Callinan, the former SC and High Court Judge with known conservative tendencies, was not acceptable to Fr Kennedy. Again, by letter, Kennedy was formally sacked and ordered to surrender the keys of the church to Dean

Howell, the successor appointed by the Archbishop on 21 February. He resisted. A formal process of negotiation, but not mediation as the terms were not mutually agreed upon, eventually took place with the Parish Council on 27 March 2009, in the absence of both Fr Kennedy and the Archbishop. The 'agreement' reached with representatives of the parish is that the keys were relinquished, and Dean Howell took over on 20 April 2009. Kennedy has established a 'church in exile.'

### The Role of the Media

Fr Kennedy's easy social relations, his sureness about his ministry, his willingness to seek publicity for what he sees as a prophetic mission contrasted with Archbishop Bathersby's avoidance of publicity and lack of media savvy has created an atmosphere in which mutual respect cannot be guaranteed. The media have played up the drama and dumbed down the nuances. Headlines shouting: 'Defiant priest plans Mass after sacking' and 'A Church collapsing without foundations' don't help. The debate as the media (and the hierarchy) portray it, is heavily polarised. (Christopher Pearson of *The Australian* mocks what he calls 'cafeteria' Catholicism – the selective adherence to those aspects of faith which are congenial and ignoring the rest.) Only the ABC has attempted a full and fairly objective coverage (Encounter, 15 March 2009: [www.abc.net.au/rn/encounter/stories/2009/2511007.htm](http://www.abc.net.au/rn/encounter/stories/2009/2511007.htm)). Fortunately, websites are helping disseminate a more nuanced and surprisingly open record. St Mary's website ([www.stmaryssouthbrisbane.com](http://www.stmaryssouthbrisbane.com)) is exceptional, and put into circulation much

### Fr Terry Fitzpatrick leads the Eucharist for St Mary's in Exile at the Trades Labour Council Building Tony Robertson

documentation on all sides of the debate. The Church tends to use fora such as the liberal *Eureka Street* ([www.eurekastreet.com.au](http://www.eurekastreet.com.au)) in particular, Frank Brennan's piece, [www.eurekastreet.com.au/article.aspx?aeid=12611](http://www.eurekastreet.com.au/article.aspx?aeid=12611)) and the more orthodox *CathNews* ([www.cathnews.com.au](http://www.cathnews.com.au)). Some of the best commentary I have read is the thoughtful blog from ex-parishioner and religious studies academic, Michael Carden, who addresses the liturgical issues critically (see [michaelcardensjottings.blogspot.com/2009/02/election-time-in-queensland.html](http://michaelcardensjottings.blogspot.com/2009/02/election-time-in-queensland.html)).

The power differential between hierarchy and so-called maverick priest does not help the matter. Fr Kennedy is not alone in preaching an Australian version of 'liberation theology' and social justice. Increasingly those priests who align with him are speaking out. They put their livelihoods – they are professional pastors who do not want to be sacked – and their parishes – who do not want to lose them – at risk, if they do so. How many priests can Australian dioceses afford to lose? What are the implications of bringing in, (as is happening), priests from the Philippines and Africa, however well trained, in terms of closeness to their parishes? These are complex issues of power, neo-colonialism and culture, and how the hierarchy manages this symptomatic event is crucial. What is the price of change in the Catholic Church?

Watch this space.

*Frances Devlin-Glass*

# Brigid and her sisters

## Religious women in medieval Ireland

We don't know as much as we would like about women in early medieval Ireland, including St Brigid, although there are many theories and stories about her. Most historians accept that many of the stories that survive about the fifth-century Saint Brigid were stories that had previously applied to a goddess Brigid, in a process of gradual conversion from the old pagan religion to the new Christian one. The conversion period, symbolised by the stories of St Patrick, but representing a long term project involving many missionaries, was one where women were keen participants. So Brigid's story is in many ways representative of the enthusiasms of early medieval Irish women to take up a life path that did not include political and dynastic marriages.

We know that from the hey-day of early medieval Irish monasticism between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries, until the establishment of Anglo-Norman control in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, Brigid's monastery at Kildare continued as an important political and monastic centre. The abbesses of Kildare were mentioned in the Annals, signifying both their high birth and their important political standing.

Early medieval monasteries and convents were not like the stone-built structure of the later medieval period in Ireland. Monasteries were in many ways physically similar to secular settlements. They were generally round with internal divisions where the different functions of the community were carried out. The nuns would have lived in small huts, some alone and some in groups. These huts would have been grouped together, but there was also a tradition of single huts for prayer, and private devotions. The central communal building would have been the church. Based on the evidence of surviving churches and of archaeological research, many early ones were small, made of wattle and wood and probably only big enough for the officiating priests and a small group of devotees to be inside. The rest of the community, more junior nuns and important lay visitors, would be outside. Other churches, like Kildare, were larger if references to the number of people who they could accommodate are accurate. We have a very good description of Brigid's church at Kildare – it was probably rectangular in shape, tall and contained three chapels separated by walls of

planking which were painted with images and hung with curtains. A cross wall separated the altar from the rest of the church, and on either side of it lay the shrines of St Brigid and her bishop Conlaed.

Control of Kildare was crucial to success in the brutal world of 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> century Leinster politics. Three times during the late 11<sup>th</sup> and early 12<sup>th</sup> century battles were fought at Kildare between rivals for the kingship of Leinster, and as consequences women from the family of the winning side were installed as abbesses. On at least two occasions these were associated with the rapes of the abbesses to render them ineligible for office.

During the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century there was a widespread and effective Irish religious reform instituted by among others St Malachy of Armagh in collaboration with his great friend St Bernard of Clairvaux. There was great religious enthusiasm and once again the women were deeply involved. It was at this time that many new religious houses were founded for women, including Clonmacnoise, Co. Offaly and Kilcreevanty in Co. Galway. Other convents survived into the post-12<sup>th</sup> century period – Killeevy in Co. Armagh is one. In other instances convents were refounded in the 12<sup>th</sup> century on the same land as older convents. One of the markers of an old pre 12<sup>th</sup> century convent is its dedication to St Brigid, while conversely one of the markers of a totally new foundation or a foundation that totally swept away older houses was dedication to either the Virgin Mary or continental saints. So there was St Mary, Clonard in Meath established by the Ua Mael Sechlainn in 1140s as a double house and Killone or Church of St John established in Co. Clare by the Uí Bhrain the early 13<sup>th</sup> century.

Part of the colonisation process that occurred after the Anglo-Normans arrived in 1169, was the establishment of new religious houses including houses for women. Some of the older Gaelic houses survived in Anglo-Norman areas, with a change in patronage and staff and acceptance of continental rules, usually Augustinian. Kildare was one such survivor although only by losing its position as the most important convent in Ireland. So the convent of Kildare survived, but with nuns with English names. Finally in 1447 during

a troubled period when there was great unrest by resurgent Gaelic lords against the English crown, Christine Holby, a nun of Kildare, fled to Exeter where she applied for permission to be enclosed as an anchoress. Kildare is not known to have housed nuns after this.

There were other new houses established where all the known nuns and abbesses had English names, and some where the names of the nuns changed from Gaelic Irish to English at the same time as the areas were occupied and colonised by the English. In the west of the country there was a healthy network of convents for women who were all Gaelic Irish – Killone, Co. Clare where there were Uí Bhriain, Kilcreevanty, Co. Galway, with the Ua Conchobair family, in the north Killeevy also survived under Gaelic leadership of the O'Hanlons.

So the time lines for women's monastic houses in Ireland are that there were three great flowerings of enthusiasm and foundation of monastic houses – the initial conversion period from the 5<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> centuries and then the religious reform period of the mid-12<sup>th</sup> century, followed by a third wave of foundations and re-foundations associated with the arrival of the English or Anglo-Normans. In all these broad movements, women were involved and arranged to have family resources transferred to religious causes while other women enthusiastically joined in. It must be remembered that the women who joined these communities as nuns were of the aristocracy – being a nun was work that could only be done by women from families who could afford for them not to be involved in the day to day survival of farming and producing and caring for the next generation. So when we look at the magnificent remains of the medieval Irish church, we have to remember that women were there as well as men. These were Brigid's sisters: nuns and abbesses, vowed women and pious lay women who lived, worshipped and worked according to their faith.

**Dianne Hall**

*University of Melbourne  
An edited version of her address for  
Brigidfest 2009. Dianne's book, Women  
and the Church in Medieval Ireland,  
c1140-1540, was published by Four  
Courts Press in 2003.*

# No more memoirs

**The single most important pioneer-settler family in Papua Guinea during the Australian administration, which ended in 1975, was the Collins-Leahy clan, one or two generations removed from their Kilkenny and Limerick County-born forebears. In the first of a two-part series, Australian journalist and author Chris Ashton recalls his long association with successive generations of Leahys.**

In the early 1960s Richard Leahy put to me that the Irish, though capable of extraordinary feats, were fatally flawed by their capacity for self-destruction. The story of Ireland bears this out. Here sporadic sectarian and political strife continue long after the rest of Christendom has called it quits. But Richard, the eldest of five children of Jeanette and the late Mick Leahy (1900-79), was talking of the personal rather than political; of his Irish heritage on his father's side as distinct from his mother's Anglo-Saxon heritage.

In search of gold in 1930, Mick led the first of several expeditions into New Guinea's mountainous interior. He discovered hitherto unknown grassland valleys inhabited by vigorous warrior tribes numbering hundreds of thousands. Realising the enormity of his discovery, he kept meticulous diaries of subsequent journeys, not least his encounters, whether cordial and hostile, with tribal warriors. His expeditions, numbering up to 100 men, porters, cooks and armed guards, recruited from coastal tribes, were resupplied by air-drops of provisions or by light planes landing on make-shift strips. Mick taught himself to operate a Leica camera and 16-mm Bolex cine-camera, bequeathing a pictorial record, probably unequalled anywhere else in the world, of first contact between European interlopers and hitherto unknown tribal peoples.

In 1935 with his younger brother Dan he found alluvial gold in payable quantities. It was no El Dorado but sufficient for a living. The following year he and Dan, with his diaries and films and photographs, toured Britain, Ireland and the US, his achievements honoured by eminent geographical and exploration societies in public lectures, medals and citations.

Mick was the eldest of nine children of an Irish immigrant couple who settled in

Toowoomba in southeastern Queensland in the 1880s. His father Daniel was a railway clerk, a Catholic from County Limerick; his mother, Ellen, nee Stone, a Protestant from County Kilkenny. By 1926 Mick and his brother Tom had a small trucking business. Gold was discovered that year in the New Guinea Highlands at Edie Creek, precipitating a gold rush which, in frenzy if not in scale, echoed its fabled predecessors in California, Australia, South Africa and Alaska. Mick read of it, dashed off a note to Tom ceding him their two trucks, withdrew their joint savings and boarded a ship for New Guinea. In the years following three other brothers, Paddy, Jim and Dan, joined Mick in New Guinea, either prospecting for gold or working sluice mines to fund future expeditions.

When Japan invaded New Guinea in 1942, Mick's brothers enlisted in the Australian New Guinea Army Administrative Unit, a civil arm supporting Australia's armed forces in reconnaissance behind enemy lines, recruiting tribesmen as porters and rescuing European civilians. Incensed at the notion of serving in non-commissioned ranks under government patrol officers—in Pidgin English *kiaps*—lacking his own experience, Mick offered himself to the US Fifth Air Force which accepted him as a special adviser with the rank of honorary colonel.

The Japanese invasion changed how Australia viewed its Pacific Island territories. To safeguard it against further incursions from its near north — the Communists took power in China in 1949—successive federal governments invested massively in infrastructure—roads, airstrips, patrol posts, schools, hospitals—and recruited thousands of Australians to staff them.

The New Guinea Highlands of those early postwar years offered rich pickings. Dan and Jim Leahy planted the first coffee; Jim was the first to harvest it commercially. In their wake from Queensland came thirteen teenage nephews initially to work for one or another uncle before striking out on their own. 'Old' Tom, the one brother who remained in Queensland, contributed five sons, as did his sister Molly Collins, while two other Leahy sisters provided three sons to the Leahy diaspora.

According to Professor Donald

Denoon, former Director of the Australian National University's School of Asian and Pacific Studies, the Collins-Leahy clan was 'the most important Australian family in Papua New Guinea during the Australian era' and 'the leading Australian pioneers for at least two generations.'

In December 1960 Richard invited me to join his family for Christmas. We flew to Lae, New Guinea's principal mainland township and from there drove fifty miles by a winding dirt road through tropical rainforest, crossing broad, fast-flowing rivers, always climbing until, at 4,000 feet, the jungle gave way to steep, open grassland.

Here was Zenag, the homestead and farm Mick had built following the war. With a fleet of US army-surplus trucks bought at the war's end, Papua New Guinean drivers were delivering farm produce — milk, vegetables, eggs, poultry, pork and beef — to shops in Lae, and in Wau and Bulolo, in the foothills of the Highlands.

After Christmas I flew to the Eastern Highlands to stay with Jim Leahy on his coffee plantation, Erinvale. Each Sunday the nephews, most with the surname Collins or Leahy, with their own businesses — trade-stores, plantations, long-haul trucking or timber-milling — gathered for lunch and business-talk.

I was a mute spectator to fierce discussion as to the processing and export of coffee bought from Highland villagers; to acerbic appraisals of government officers, business associates and rivals to the clan's commercial interests. By turns charming or cantankerous, Jim assumed the mantle of clan patriarch, a role he relished.

I treasure memories, then, of truck journeys through the New Guinea Highlands; of wide grassland valleys girded by high mountain walls, of tribesmen adorned in Bird of Paradise headdresses, torsos shining with pig-grease and armed with spears, stone-headed axes, bows and arrows, emblems of their warrior status. (Never mind that the *kiaps* had by then virtually stopped tribal warfare). No less than the grandeur of the Highlands, gatherings of the Leahy clan offered me a glimpse of a world quite unlike my own. I was 19, and I was agog.

The following summer I returned to



New Guinea to work for Jim, first as a plantation assistant, then as a caretaker coffee manager in the Western Highlands. I was farm-bred though I knew nothing of coffee. From the nephews I learned the rudiments of plantation management and mastered Pidgin English.

When in 1969 I started as a journalist in Sydney, Mick and I began to correspond regularly. His 20-odd letters, which I hold still, are courteous, with details of his children at school or university or starting their own businesses. But his central prime concern was the role I could play in adapting his memoir for publication.

16/2/69: I have written up an account of our wanderings from 1930 to 1935 and as a sort of insurance against being summarily kicked out of here on the say-so of some of the present-day do-gooders and visionaries inciting the locals to what they are pleased to call independence, I am trying to have it published in America where I imagine it would be worth enough to educate the youngest and see Jeanette and me over old age, but I have been unable to find a publisher so far. All the diaries and what I consider the most comprehensive photographic record of a white man's first contact is in the National Library in Canberra should you get up that way and have time to look it over. I will keep you posted as to the fate of my MS in the United States. I should hear from them soon. The world has forgotten about the white man's contact with Stone Age people and is not interested either.

4/6/69: My main reason for starting to rewrite the whole account is the uncertainty of our POLITICAL FUTURE up here. I thought and still think it may become a 'breadwinner' if I could salvage enough from here to see the kids educated and us 'out'...If you would not mind your name being associated with some of my

opinions on New Guinea natives in particular and the Negroid people in general. You would also be near enough to Canberra to delve into the negatives they have and the diaries if needed and select what you consider the appropriate material. I could send the MS to you right away if you would like to have a look over it.

In awe and admiration of Mick, I accepted his invitation with the innocence and optimism of youth. No one meeting him for the first time could doubt his force of personality, inscribed in his face, his eyes, his deep, melodic voice and his passion as he spoke of his adopted country. Alarm bells were ringing ('If you do not mind being associated with some of my opinions...') to which I was deaf.

My reading of his diaries held by the Australian National Library persuaded me that his story, properly edited and illustrated, would find a publisher. Selecting the most vivid passages from his diaries, I compiled a leaner, tighter memoir, and with archival photographs, approached successive publishers.

By 1969, with the prospect of winning government after 23 years in opposition, Federal Labor Party leader Gough Whitlam was arguing that Australian rule of Papua New Guinea was morally untenable, and pledged himself, if elected, to grant immediate independence. Something I imagined would evolve twenty years was suddenly at hand. In 1972 I left Sydney to work in Port Moresby contributing to the *Australian Financial Review* and to the weekly *National Times*.

My search for a publisher open to Mick's memoir continued. But he was right. The world, it seemed, no longer wanted stories of first contact. Only Jacaranda Press, a publisher committed to Papua New Guinea, voiced cautious interest, conditional on changing the balance to more pictures and less words. This I did but Mick was not happy.

19/4/72: I think it has been too 'edited' to the point where it is not much more than a lengthy caption for the photographs you have. I am not happy about it as final account of our explorations in this country.

Suddenly I was *persona non grata*, guilty, in Mick's words, of 'bowdlerising' his memoir. It was as if someone I admired suddenly struck me in the face. There was no formal agreement or question of compensating me for my time. Fearful that I might pursue unauthorised publication of his memoir – the notion never occurred to me – he directed the National Library to attach to his diaries and photographs a covering note forbidding me, by name, from further access.

At Mick's behest, Richard flew from Lae to Port Moresby to reclaim his father's manuscript, the rolls of borrowed negatives and National Library photographs. As he left he said, 'This is all very embarrassing.'

Mick died in 1979. In the early 1980s husband-and-wife filmmakers Bob Connolly and Robin Anderson produced a documentary film, *First Contact*, the story of Mick's 1930s expeditions. Blending his film and photographs with the recollections of his surviving brothers, Jim and Dan, and with Highlanders, it secured an Oscar nomination for Best Feature-Length Documentary. In their book, *First Contact*, Connolly and Anderson quoted Mick's nephew, Bob Fraser:

I was saddened by the way Mick kept going on and on about the injustice of the Administration, the stupidity of the kiaps, the lack of discipline in the community and the fact that they'd [the Australians] all be kicked out on their arses, that the country was too good for the people in it, that they were going to ruin it and slide back into barbarism. There was some sort of mental block. I think he sat there at Zenag and brooded so much that in the end he started to believe what he was saying. He was listening to the news eight or nine times a day. He had an *idée fixe*. It was disappointing to go there because he never stopped fuming about it. When he did stop fuming he was his old charming self.

I vowed never again to collaborate in anyone else's memoir.

*Chris Ashton*

# Calwell: committed to Christian humanitarianism through social justice

## Influences, Insights and Implications

**In the first of two articles, Mary Elizabeth Calwell discusses the life and times of her father, Arthur Calwell, and reflects on the importance of his religious convictions in his personal life and political career.**

Many Australian historians write political history with minimal recognition of how religion in varied forms has shaped individual politicians' priorities and values. Few have understood how liberal and socialist ideas have been interwoven with strong or weak religious commitment and what that has meant for political decision-making. Without understanding how important such religious convictions were for Arthur Calwell, his political significance would be seriously misunderstood.

Studies of Australian Catholic laity are relatively rare despite their importance in politics, the professions, public service, trade unions and sport. Calwell asserted it was important to distinguish between what is fundamental and what is accidental. Calwell and B A Santamaria were exponents of very different understandings of what it meant to be a Catholic layman. That was a national issue from the 1950s to the 1970s because of the impact of their theological struggle on the identity and fortunes of the Australian Labor Party and Calwell spurned the secrecy of 'The Movement' that damaged the Catholic Church's credibility.

Arthur Calwell was born in West Melbourne in 1896. His mother died at the age of forty in early 1913 leaving seven children. His Anglican father was later a Superintendent in the Police Force responsible for a third of Victoria. Arthur Jnr was educated by the Mercy nuns and Christian Brothers at St Mary's School and later, St Joseph's College, North Melbourne. Calwell stated: 'It was the grounding we received in Christian doctrine and in secular learning by so many of our teachers that was most important for our future.' With three other boys, he won a half scholarship to St Joseph's College

in 1909 and all passed the equivalent of year 12 and entered the Public Service. One was Matthew Beovich, later Catholic Archbishop of Adelaide. Calwell joined the Victorian Public Service in 1913. He wrote that in that era it was difficult for any Catholic to get permanent employment in a bank or commercial life. At that time, Archbishop Mannix came as Parish Priest to West Melbourne. By 1918, Calwell was President of St Joseph's Old Boys, Secretary of the Young Ireland Society and a delegate to Victorian ALP conferences.

He recalled poverty in West Melbourne:

It was a dreadful situation and it impressed me so much that I became a socialist quite early in my life and I used to walk to the Public Library and read whatever literature I wanted to read and it was always of a radical nature... I became convinced that socialism was the only answer to the evils of capitalism... mankind is fallible and peccable so we'll never have a perfect society...

The ALP was committed to socialism and its interpretation was accepted by the Catholic bishops in 1905. The Blackburn Interpretation introduced at the 1921 Federal Conference by a Catholic and future Prime Minister, James Scullin, was recognised by Coadjutor Archbishop Michael Sheehan of Sydney in 1930.

Calwell's first political memory was of being taken by his mother and aunt to hear Dr W Maloney whom he succeeded as Federal ALP member for Melbourne 36 years later. He wrote:

My political interest was stimulated and my opinions formed when I attended meetings on the Yarra Bank and in the Socialist Hall... I did not have, and never have had, any difficulty in separating my religious beliefs and my political thinking, and in

following both according to my conscience.

Speakers included feminists Adela Pankhurst and Vida Goldstein. Calwell wrote that Fabian socialists 'did much to mould labour in this country... the only party that puts the interests of Australia first at all times.'

His strong sense of Australian identity and Irish, American and Welsh family heritage gave him a commitment to a democratic society in which church and state were separate for their mutual benefit. He considered democracy to be not necessarily a just system but the best available. In the 1950s, he analysed values of America's founding fathers in annual articles for *The Age* Literary Supplement. In the article on Lincoln, he identified the *Songs of Songs* as an example of biblical influences on his writing.

Religious books from his youth included *A Course of Instruction for Catholic Youth* by John Gerard SJ, *Meditations for Lay Folk* by Bede Jarrett, lives of Augustine, Joan of Arc and Therese of Lisieux and writings of John Henry Newman. Among other books were those of Kier Hardie, Fabian socialists, descriptions of nationalist struggles, Prince Peter Kropotkin, Edward Bellamy, Robert Owen and Charles Dickens. Calwell read widely throughout his life, spoke and wrote Irish fluently, some French, some Mandarin and promoted Australian literature especially as Minister for Information and as a member of the Commonwealth Literary Fund.

He believed the ALP that represented the underprivileged must have unity, discipline and loyalty. In 1931, as the youngest Victorian President, he was responsible for the expulsion from the ALP of a Minister, and later, a former Minister and former Premier. He helped many desperate people during the Depression of the 1930s. He initiated action that led to the Victorian Country Party assuming office with Labor support in 1935. As a Victorian Treasury Officer, he was author of three Government reports concerning

unemployment, widows' pensions and industrial life assurance. He had contributed as a union leader, as Campaign Director for the Federal Member for Melbourne from about 1925 and, from 1939-1945, as a Melbourne City Councillor.

As Federal Member for Melbourne, he declared his electorate was probably the most cosmopolitan in Australia, deplored the treatment of Aborigines and urged that Asian residents be naturalised. As Chairman of the Aliens Classification and Review Committee he enabled many Jews, Italians and some Germans to be released from internment. As Minister for Information he supported decisions of his subordinate, the censor, thus earning the permanent enmity of newspaper owners. Calwell established the Broadcasting Control Board, insisting that the ABC give appropriate time to religion.

At a Catholic Communion Breakfast in 1944, Calwell elucidated his commitment to Christian humanitarianism implemented through social justice in a nation free from ancient antagonisms. He said the highest value should be placed on spiritual values for Australia to survive as a nation that promoted equality of people before the law, social justice and the enrichment of society by enabling people to fulfil their potential by education. Communism had failed to take root. He believed people should be encouraged to marry and have children in security and the country would have to pursue a policy of immigration. We should be ready to defend our country and flag and Australia must have a soul, spirit and an anthem dedicated to Australia.

He wrote to Chifley declaring his determination to develop a heterogeneous society: a society where Irishness and Roman Catholicism would be as acceptable as Englishness and Protestantism: where an Italian background would be as acceptable as a Greek, a Dutch or any other.

As first Australian Minister for Immigration he enabled survivors of the Holocaust to come here, the biggest number proportionately outside Israel. Calwell stated Australians could not hold this continent for ourselves and our descendants unless we greatly increased our population needed for defence and economic expansion. He declared: 'any immigration scheme can only succeed if it has behind it the support and goodwill of the Australian people.' Under existing legislation, our doors were open to anyone from Britain, continental Europe and America. He observed that activities on religious and racist grounds by persons with ulterior motives:

cannot be too strongly condemned...and make for the creation of discord and bitterness that is harmful at home and abroad.

He transformed Australia [as] the first person to amend the *Restrictive Immigration Act* that removed some restrictions on Chinese residents. Labor defended this act in general because of the earlier experience that employers would import workers to undermine working conditions. Australia was commended for accepting single mothers and Calwell encouraged churches to provide chaplains for assisted migrants and ensured his Department paid them at Reception Centres.

He believed in the separation of church and state in a religiously pluralistic society free of ancient animosities and asserted the right to comment on Church decisions as a layman and as a politician to reject their right to intrude officially into politics. The situation was complicated by the Vatican principle prevailing in the nineteenth century, influenced by European history, of the 'thesis' that made the Catholic state the ideal and the 'hypothesis', the compromise under which Catholics lived in a non-Catholic state. Calwell wrote that his arguments and quarrels with certain churchmen all concerned the jurisdictional or organisational sides of the church. He quoted Mt

22:15-22 and Section 116 of the Australian Constitution. He wrote that, when Constantine became a Christian, the early Christians exchanged a perfectly good religion and accepted in return a set of imperial garments. In 1946, he objected to the Vatican on behalf of a group of Catholic laymen about some activities of Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Panico.

Australian communism declined to about 5,000 members by 1950. In the 1940s, 'Movement' supporters and others tried to identify Labor's Socialist Objective with communism and Calwell stated: 'It is the cupidity and stupidity of capitalism that has spread communism.' He published a pamphlet *What the Popes Have Said on Capitalism, the Employing Class and Trade Unions* quoting papal encyclicals, statements by Mannix and some French cardinals, the Melbourne paper, the *Catholic Worker*, and Catholic commentators, Maisie and Barbara Ward. In 1950, he outlined his long involvement and that of the ALP in opposing communism and quoted from Pius XI: 'The great scandal of the nineteenth century was that the workers of the world were lost to Christ.' Santamaria's identification of his 'anti-Communist' activities with the Catholic Church led to the revival of the perception that the Catholic Church, as distinct from Santamaria, wanted to control an Australian political party.

#### **Mary Elizabeth Calwell**

*The author is the daughter of Arthur and Elizabeth Calwell. After graduating from the University of Melbourne with a BA degree she was employed in the Reserve Bank and the Australian Public Service. Later she enrolled at the United Faculty of Theology, an Associated College of the Melbourne College of Divinity and awarded a BTheol, TheolM and DTheol by the College of Divinity.*

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# A politician who divides opinion

*Redmond: The Parnellite*  
Dermot Meleady,  
Cork University Press, Cork, 2008

On the fiftieth anniversary of the Easter Rising in 1966, the three major railway stations in Dublin – Amiens St. Station, Kingsbridge Station and Westland Row, were renamed after three of the great figures of the Rising – Connolly Station, Heuston Station and Pearse Station respectively. So why in a review of a biography of John Redmond do I prattle on about railway stations in Dublin – have I gone completely off the rails? Well, no, at least not entirely, I am making a point, perhaps a somewhat laboured point, that when Yeats wrote in his famous poem ‘Easter, 1916’ that everything in Ireland was ‘All changed, changed utterly’ he was not indulging in a flight of poetic fancy but rather simply and memorably describing the impact that the Rising had on Ireland. Where all this relates to John Redmond is that he – through the sad, indeed tragic, impact that the Rising had on his life and political reputation – personifies this change more than any other important political actor of the time.

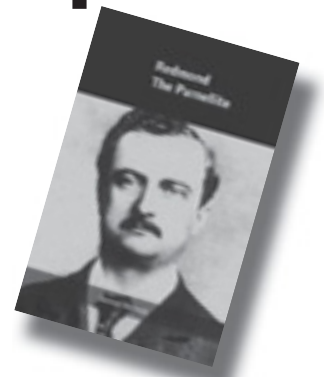
If you ask any Irishman or indeed anyone who takes even a passing interest in Ireland and her history ‘What do you think of John Redmond then?’ they will, almost certainly, if they have heard of him at all, tell you that they consider him an English lickspittle, a recruiting Sergeant for the Empire, an Imperialist bollocks, a traitor who caused tens of thousands of young Irishmen to throw away their lives in WW1 and other even more colourful and damning epitaphs that have no place in a publication that can be read by young and impressionable minds. There are, I gather, a few statues of Redmond in Wexford his home county (interestingly in 1956, Eamon de Valera attended a ceremony in Wexford to pay tribute to Redmond on the centenary of his birth and later had a stamp issued in Redmond’s honour), but it is true to say that he has been without honour in his own country – a country in which at the lofty peak of his career he was the national leader, a man as respected and revered as O’Connell and Parnell.

Meleady at the start of his lengthy biography – and be it noted it is the first of a projected two volume study and examines this life only up until 1900 – makes

the telling point that Redmond has ‘managed the difficult feat, over the almost ninety years since his death, of becoming at once a neglected and a controversial figure.’ Given that there has been no full length biography since Denis Gwynn’s study in 1932 (although there have, of course, been political commentaries), his argument regarding Redmond being neglected has some force and it is certainly true that he remains a controversial figure. Meleady himself makes it very clear that he believes that Redmond’s reputation has suffered from Republican inspired pro-physical force analysis and that in the light of recent Irish political developments in relation to the laying down of arms and power sharing in the north-east, Redmond’s Westminster-based non-violent Home Rule strategy deserves to be revisited with more positive eyes. Meleady, it is clear, has a political agenda (we all have), but he at least is commendably forthright in stating exactly what his ‘revisionist’ agenda is.

Redmond didn’t have a great deal of luck in his life but he has been lucky in his most recent biographer. Meleady has a compelling passion and enthusiasm for his subject and the energy and skill that he has devoted to researching this biography is impressive and laudable. The book is sensibly and effectively structured and Meleady’s writing is never less than clear and is often very good indeed. He has a good eye for telling quotations and although the handful of photographic illustrations are rather poor this is more than made up for by the truly splendid contemporary cartoons.

Despite the author’s enthusiasm and dedication, Redmond is presented in this volume as being in some ways rather cold. Redmond’s public life and in particular his political career is presented in impressive detail (including a fascinating description of the ten months he and his brother William spent fund-raising in Australia in 1883) but Redmond the man remains somewhat elusive. This isn’t a criticism of the author, as Redmond was a notably reserved and private man and there is a paucity of private correspondence, personal as opposed to political writing, or intimate memoirs about him from family or close friends. Although a noted orator Redmond was a quiet man and unlike most politicians who favour the ‘Hail fellow



well met’ and relentless kissing of babies, Redmond never smiled in public. After reading this volume one might sometimes wonder if he ever smiled even in private.

Having said this, it is clear that Redmond was not only a dedicated, hard working and extremely effective Irish Nationalist politician and leader, but also a man of great personal integrity and substance. It is impossible not to be impressed by the total and passionate loyalty and support which Redmond displayed towards his friend and mentor, Parnell, during the Kitty O’Shea divorce scandal. It is also worth noting that, despite grave political differences, Redmond campaigned for the release of physical force Fenian prisoners, including Tom Clarke of 1916 fame. Still waters run deep.

The author of this fine and important study presents a strong case for a re-assessment of Redmond and his political strategy – in much the same way that Tim Pat Coogan’s biography of Michael Collins led many people to take a more positive view of Collins. This is not to say, however, that one is wholly convinced by his analysis. There are good, indeed compelling, reasons why the men and women who opposed Irish involvement in World War One and who were ‘out’ in 1916 have been lionised and exalted. I look forward to the second volume of this biography which will follow Redmond from 1900 till his death in 1918 (there is a short preview chapter at the end of this volume briefly outlining these post 1900 years), the years of his great triumph and ultimately his great tragedy when in his last few years Irish politics was indeed changed utterly and Redmond became seen by many of his fellow countrymen as at best yesterday’s man and at worst a traitor to the national cause.

**Bill Anderson**

*Bill Anderson is a freelance historian and teacher.*

# The Last Salon of Lady Wilde

As a fundraiser for Bloomsday in Melbourne 2009, which will explore the influence of Oscar Wilde upon James Joyce, the Bloomsday in Melbourne Committee in February produced two performances of an original theatrical entertainment.

Audiences were invited to participate in the imagined final salon of Lady Wilde, noted in happier days for her brilliant conversation and ability to attract literary, musical, artistic and social luminaries to her 'at home' gatherings in Dublin and London.

Graeme Anderson and Frances Devlin-Glass' script used artistic licence to bring together Lady Augusta Gregory (Anna Teresa Sheer), Rudyard Kipling (Ted Reilly), Bram Stoker (Bill Johnston), Enrico Caruso (Rod Baker) and Lily Langtree (Di Silber), allowing dramatic interchange of conflicting ideologies and clashing devotion to causes, and ranging freely over the wide intellectual, anthropological, philanthropic and patriotic interests of both Lady Wilde and her husband, Sir William.

In the role of Lady Wilde, Deirdre Gillespie conveyed strongly her still imposing presence, fierce commitment to Irish nationalism, impassioned support of the oppressed, including women and the poor, and indomitable but nevertheless fragile spirit in the face of severe personal adversity.

It is 1895. Lady Wilde has fallen upon hard times. She is a widow, her husband, Dublin's leading eye and ear specialist, having died twenty years earlier. She is living in penury and her notorious son, Oscar, is currently suffering in Wandsworth Gaol, convicted for sodomy.

Lady Wilde bears a sense of guilt for

her role in Oscar's downfall and disgrace, having encouraged him to pursue his ill-judged suit against the Marquess of Queensberry. She struggles to convince herself that 'two years are not so long', although the audience's knowledge that they will prove long enough to break Wilde's health and spirit, and he will live only two years after his release, lends added poignancy to her words.

So it was indeed a final word from Lady Wilde, the script giving her voice to articulate her strongly held anti-British sentiments and to read in suitably declamatory style three of her poems, published in *'The Nation'* under the name 'Speranza' and little known to modern audiences. Salon attendees were treated also to snippets of Irish folklore, Kipling's 'poetic' espousal of the dominance of the English Empire, Gilbert and Sullivan's musical parodies of both Oscar Wilde and his mother, and Hilaire Belloc's poem unjustly implying Sir William was mercenary in his dealings with the poor. Most interesting was the excerpt from 'Dracula', a reminder that *fin de siècle* world weariness, smacking to modern eyes of effete male wilting, was a stance fashionable at the time among artists and writers, regardless of sexual orientation.

The section of the otherwise economical script devoted to Sir William's antiquarian and anthropological work was overly lengthy, as was Lady Wilde's reading from her collection, 'Ancient Legends of Ireland'. Oscar Wilde was imbued with, and brought a finer sensibility to, his parents' love of Irish folklore. Although undeniably Speranza's night, it was a pity this proudly devoted mother did not choose instead to read one of her son's lyrically haunting and less didactic

stories.

Kevin Lo's virtuoso performances on violin and flute, and Rod Baker's powerful tenor voice and original compositions, were just part of a wealth of stirring music enlivening the salon. The audience's spontaneous participation in singing 'A Nation Once Again' was a popular highlight.

The entertainment provided insight into the life and thought of a flawed but feisty woman and the philandering spouse she much admired. It indicated where seeds were sown of Oscar's brilliant but tragic trajectory: his sharp wit, facility with language, bravura and flamboyance in performance, iconoclastic and subversive instincts, and fatal misreading of the power of the law and the consequent shift in the tide of public opinion.

Whereas his father 'scientifically' examined and recorded the nature of ancient Irish tribes, Oscar turned his mercilessly penetrating eye and pen to dissection of the mores and appearance of the English upper class. Whereas his father outraged public morality by fathering illegitimate children and being the (dubiously successful) subject of a court case, Oscar, through his writing and consciously adopted persona, sought to challenge the established order and to flirt dangerously with notoriety (lie with panthers) in the process.

'The Last Salon of Lady Wilde' gave a sense of the larger political and public context within which the personal tragedy of the Wilde family was played out. The salon was pervaded by a note of underlying sadness, made more acute by audience awareness of greater grief impending.

*Ellie Kenealy*

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# The Churches and Climate Change

*Climate Change – The challenge to all of us*

Sean McDonagh

The Columba Press, Blackrock (Dublin), 2006, reprinted 2007

Sean McDonagh appears to have three main aims for this book. The first, as the sub-title suggests, is a call to everybody to act to avert irreversible damage to life-systems on the planet. For McDonagh, there are no hiding places, and especially not for the churches whose record on climate change, as he describes at length, is spasmodic, and overall, pretty ineffective. His urgings for action are persistent and convincing.

Two aspects affecting motivation can be highlighted here. One is the meaning of 'urgency'. It's easy to be lulled into inaction by predictions of ill-effects from warming changes stretching out to say, 2050 or sea-level rise by 2100, and so on. By contrast, McDonagh explains that some events in nature can be very sudden. For example, he reports on the 'Younger Dryas' of 12,000 years ago, and in the words of scientist-writer Peter Fisher: 'after a hesitant couple of millenniums of warmer conditions, the cold was back with a vengeance, turning western Asia and Europe into ice empires. This event, dubbed the Younger Dryas (after a plant that suddenly reappeared in Scandinavia), returned the planet to cool and dry conditions in the space of a few decades, with the average northern hemisphere temperature plummeting 7 degrees.' (Cold comfort in climate change January 6, 2007 – SMH.) 'Abrupt', and perhaps unforeseeable events, cannot be discounted. So no comfort in thinking that any dangerous changes are a long way off.

On the role of the churches: McDonagh would not be surprised by the conclusions of Steve Douglas. After looking in depth at how the churches' follow-up on some of their fine statements of commitment to 'care for the earth', Douglas concluded that there was a very disappointing lack of action: 'little inspirational praxis has occurred'. ('Is "green" religion the solution to the ecological crisis? A case study of mainstream religion in Australia', Australian National University, Ph.D thesis, 2008.)

A second major aim of the book is to set down what we know of the science of climate change in as precise, comprehensive

and readable fashion as McDonagh can muster. Clearly, he succeeds. This is a helpful text that unpacks the intricacies of the science, making them accessible for readers prepared to pause for an elucidation of many of the basic descriptions of the earth's complex functions. In a chapter, he looks at the views of some of the main dissenters and opponents of the global warming position in a way that's detailed and satisfyingly fair.

Two words of caution here: The first is that because the science of global warming is developing at such a break-neck speed, no one should think that he/she is on top of all aspects. As McDonagh makes clear, the degree of certainty is now so strong that global society's reaction must be decisive and now. But, for example, in the last few days as a random selection, some of the headings that have come across my desk are: 'Rich nations revise up greenhouse gas problem'; 'Tracking bigger wave action'; 'North Atlantic climate shift see-saws on South'; 'Droughts may lay waste to parts of US'; 'Bush fires release huge carbon load'. So 'keeping up' with at least some of the emerging analysis is an important part of commitment to action.

Another word of caution: In considering personal responses from each of us, it will be necessary to tread carefully. Sure, as McDonagh describes, we are facing peak oil scenarios, and sure, people living beyond a second source of transport provision (other than the car) may find it hard to travel from their houses. Indeed, no new housing development should be placed where there is not an alternative mode of transport within a reasonable distance, but that's not the end of the story. Huge swathes of extensive housing already exist. So this situation must be addressed for the problems, but also for the benefits these areas and housing provide. Cramming housing on to small blocks, for example, has proven in many cases to be a very poor option. Green space and the opportunity for more en-natured, personal surrounds can be an important asset in bringing people to a fuller sense of their dependence on the environment: fruit and vegetable growing; urban forest and biodiversity settings; access to companion animals; and so on. These are benefits that a more positive view of the extended suburbs will build on and laud.

A third aim of the book is also well served. In his words: 'As a result of

insights gained from ecological theology, we Christians must realise that ethical behaviour must no longer be confined solely to our relationship with God and other human beings. It must also extend and include our relationship with all creation' (p.175). So we are not here talking about a take-it-or-leave-it 'global issue', or 'problem'. Quite clearly, for Christians, they are addressing something at the deepest levels of theological, spiritual, moral and prophetic significance. The sentiment mirrors Paul Collins' writing in *God's Earth*, 'We need to turn back to the natural world itself from which we sprang, and we have to re-interpret our religious and cultural experience in the light of our interaction with that natural world. So, at heart, this book is about the deep theological, human, and cultural shift that contemporary ecology inevitably implies.'

Global warming is one consequence of an exaggerated human-centred view of life on earth, and McDonagh, like Collins and contributors to the Golden book (see letter to editor by author of this review), are at pains to set that distortion aright.

Often historians and others take comfort in the fact that there have always been people to cry 'apocalypse now!' Such commentators might like to dismiss global warming proponents as in that class, but they need to take account of the contemporary context – the new bio-physical force at large, namely, humanity – 6.5 billion and growing, drawing down on earth systems for their consumption at an unprecedented rate, and using technologies of huge power – these are all dimensions that McDonagh alludes to. He forces on us the question, is climate change the headline announcement telling us that all this is too much for the planet's continuance in conditions conducive to humanity's and all of living nature's prosperity.

There is much more in this book which is perceptive and helpful (for example, McDonagh does not spare the mainstream economic growth mantra of our times, and presents an incisive analysis of alternative technologies, such as nuclear power). So the book fills a gap at a level between 'highly technical scientific' on the one hand and 'simplistic overstatements' of the science of global warming on the other. Neither bland nor obtuse, it is well worth reading.

Len Puglisi

*Urban environmental planner*



# A shimmering social tapestry of Corkonia

*The Cork Anthology*  
edited by Seán Dunne  
Cork University Press, 1993

I'd strongly recommend this anthology to travellers to Ireland, to anyone with Cork connections and indeed to hibernophiles. It scintillates with contrasting colours, textures, periods, personalities, landscapes – and mindscapes. This mix of genres and timeframes (which coincides with the end of the Civil War) has an emphasis on social history, and a build-up in the final section of history with Michael Collins and Terence MacSwiney. Did Cork not have any history since 1921?

Although women are not overly represented (only 15% of the writers are women), many pieces concern powerful women. This includes the Hag of Beare (Earth-Mother of west Cork, one-eyed and storm-tossed) with plentiful memories of her adventures before taking the veil. She sits not far from Spenser's bride, for whose safety the settler was prepared to overlook (and demean) the existence of many a Corkman. The woods might have echoed 'hymen, hymen' on her wedding day, but they were not native voices. Such Anglo-gentry were excluded from the lives of such personalities as Patrick Galvin's Aunt Bridget, 'who had faith in children', and Frank O'Connor's mother, who survived many exploitative foster-carers and a Catholic orphanage (with nuns kind and cruel). Her large family was farmed out after the death of a loving father and a mother's consignment to the workhouse.

Cork County boasted the most fertile soil in Europe, and attracted generations of settlers along the Bride, Blackwater and the Lee from the sixteenth century. There are numerous accounts of the gentrified world of the Big Houses, and an amazing account from two perspectives of Elizabeth Bowen's friendship with her remarkable housekeeper (Sarah), whom Molly Keane knew well by the name Molly O'Brien (undoubtedly the same woman). These accounts of an ordinary lower-class woman by two of the gentry are significant, and they aid in understanding the complex interdependencies between rich and poor, Catholic and Protestant, and the upper class and their servants. Molly Keane makes a strange statement about Elizabeth Bowen's recreation of her family over four centuries:

There is an eerie shiver in

Elizabeth's absolute acceptance and understanding of the lives of her Bowen predecessors... it is as though she laughed with them, wore their clothes, ate such food as they did, shared the same sunshine and belting rain through the same high-paned windows. She was possessed. How she rid herself of the possessive power of this house is an even stranger mystery than the strength of that possession. (p. 313)

A priceless work of literature is Eibhlín Dhubh Ni Chonaill's lament for her husband, Art O'Laoghaire, assassinated in 1773 for refusing to sell his horse for five pounds. The penal laws at that time dictated that a Catholic sell it to a Protestant for that price. He had just beaten the High Sheriff of Cork in a race. I heard it first from that consummate thespian, Professor John A Murphy, over Art's grave one evening in June 1983. It sent a shiver down my spine because it was, and still is, such a sensual poem. What astonishes me about Eilís Dillon's translation is its domestic tone. Could this be the result of being translated by a woman? Nonetheless, it is a truly superb elegy.

There are many surprises in this volume. An example is Arthur Young's tree-planting tour of Mitchelstown, Ireland, in 1780 to replace trees felled by Henry Tudor for his navy. The peasantry (described as being almost barbaric) and tenantry were given thousands of trees *gratis* and those who planted and tended them were paid extra for their pains.

Father Prout's jolly verses about Cork, as a centre of trade, allow one to revel with him with Cork's links (via the sea) in exotic places such as Cadiz and Bot'ny Bay.

Eilís Dillon's glimpse into life as a Catholic professor's wife and warden at the Honan Hostel (University College Cork in the 1940s) is quirky. Her organisational abilities at housekeeping were exceptional. She ran a hostel for 50, apart from providing a full life for her three children (including a nurse). Not only did she manage the house-staff, she also restored the Gothic vestments designed by the Dun Emer Guild. Furthermore, she skillfully negotiated the prurient interests of the President, Alfred O'Rahilly, in the 'morals' of his female charges. Additionally,

she foiled his murderous plan against her beloved cat, Tadhg. This was O'Rahilly's revenge on her husband's resistance in Academic Council. Her comment that 'University College, Cork, was like a convent run by a mad reverend mother' (p.112) seems an apt summary of that weird, ceremonial, cloistered lifestyle, where a form of terrorism existed alongside string quartets, gorgeous vestments, and incense under the leadlight windows.

Derek Mahon's poem, 'garage in Co Cork', makes light of its social history, as it transforms petrol pumps into an old man and his wife, while 'the virgin who escaped his dark design/Sanctions the townland from her prickly shrine'.

I particularly enjoy the effect that one anthologised extract has when placed alongside another that speaks to it, often dialogically. Academic and middle-class, Eilís Dillon's piece sits alongside Seán O'Faoláin's shabby, genteel, bobby family, and that alongside Isabel Healey's reminiscences of being a farmer's daughter, three miles from Cork in the 1950s. Turning now to Eilís Dillon's books for children, written presumably during her time at Honan Hostel. Her memories of Christmases in Cork's Munster Arcade, and of festivals like St Pat's Parade and visiting musicians at the Cork Opera, is elaborated upon by David Marcus's fictionalisation of a visit by the Carl Rosa Opera Company during the Civil War. The practice was for the town to meet the actors at the railway station and escort them to their hotel. For this, they were rewarded with songs from the shows the company was rehearsing. These events sound truly magical. Marcus dramatises what it was like in the 1920s, not knowing whether or not the celebrities would arrive because of the uncertainty of communications. This company brought a much relished taste of Europe to Cork, and Marcus's viewpoint is that of a Jewish Corkman.

The contrasts depicted in this anthology between wealthy and impoverished make the extracts that deal with the Famine, which come late in the collection, excoriating. The scale of devastation in Cork is made to seem overwhelming by such fine chroniclers as N Marshall Cummins and An tAthair Peadar Ó Laoghaire (translated by Ó Céirín).

Snap up the remaining cheap hardbacks. You won't regret it.

*Frances Devlin-Glass*

# Protagonist and antagonist in the intellectual ferment

*Journey Without Arrival, The Life and Writing of Vincent Buckley*  
John McLaren

**On 11 February 2009, John McLaren's biography of Vincent Buckley was launched at the University of Melbourne by Morag Fraser. By courtesy of Morag, printed here is her address to launch the work.**

About halfway through John McLaren's biography of Vincent Buckley (a man, a poet and teacher we all of us here, I think, knew to one extent or another, and whom we valued, or cherished in our various and complex ways), John quotes Vin quoting another complex character that many of us also knew to some degree. Picture it: Vin is in Cambridge, where he attends F R Leavis's lectures. John notes that Vin remembered Leavis with pleasure and affection. But it is what Leavis first said to Vin and what Vin remembered that caught my breath. It wasn't a piece of erudition; it wasn't a critical aside. Vin remembers that Leavis spoke to him 'about the largeness of the fenland skies'.

That serves for me as emblematic of what both men gave to those who knew them, read them, were taught by them: an awareness of scale that one might call sacred, of the openness of the skies, the promise inherent in nature, in life. Characteristic of Leavis that he should note the particular, the fenland sky. Leavis, after all, knew that expansive flatland, those fens, that broad cast of light; he had grown up with them. Characteristic too that the poet Vincent Buckley should respond to that specificity, that authenticity of noticing.

Largeness: that's what John captures in this biography of Vincent Buckley. And it is largeness, metaphysical/spiritual as well physical that haunts one's memory. Almost paradoxical largeness. I'm surely not the only person here to have had the experience for months, maybe even a couple of years, of seeing Vincent Buckley as the large figure behind a lectern, just head and shoulders, like a generously

contoured bronze bust, but nothing static about him, with that resonant voice, and then been surprised at the delicate slightness, almost a daintiness of feet and gait of the man who stepped out from behind all that formal structure. I was too young and too daunted—18 years old and 13 years of convent schooling behind me—to do much more than dumbly note that largeness at first.

And I confess to a certain residual diffidence about my standing here tonight. I am conscious that so many of you are so much better equipped than I, you knew the man intimately, loved him. And even with John's manuscript in my hands I felt a reluctance to broach the life of someone who has mattered deeply to me but whom I knew as a student knows a teacher: intensely but at a proper, almost generational distance. Turning over the sheets last week I wasn't sure how much more I wanted—or needed—to know about a man who had already served and nourished so many minds, like mine. And there was a queasy revival of that inhibition about biography that the Melbourne University English Department so successfully inculcated in its students of the 1960s, an inhibition I thought I had thrown off in the 1970s in a desperate urge to understand more about Samuel Beckett. Irishmen, and Irish Australians—they're a life's study, all the more so to one descended from a Scot.

But the inhibitions evaporated as I read. John McLaren's biography of Vincent Buckley has left his subject with fit privacy and dignity. That may sound paradoxical. Privacy—how can it be preserved when so much of Vin's life, his own words, his most intimate correspondence, his conflicts, are here, in these pages, for strangers to read? But Vincent Buckley was a public man as well as a private man. Poets take that unretractable step—they are by vocation, and perhaps by temperamental inclination, accountable. And I asked as I read, as a kind of litmus test, if one would, if I would, mind a related kind of exposure. The answer was—no. So much of this

biography is hard-wrung self-revelation in any case, given in Vin's poetry, in his critical writing, his self-deprecating, often searing, and endearing letters. Or it is the revelations of those who loved Vin, who truly knew him, or who honourably fought him, contested his views, used his to test their own. What is written here is always directed towards understanding, of the self, and of what matters.

Privacy, integrity and dignity are not violated by this kind of honesty. It's impertinent psychologising, ill-informed speculation or misrepresentation, or just stylistic and intellectual afflatus that violates or traduces what one would keep safe, or hold precious in personal life. So I thank you, John, for telling us so much about Vincent Buckley without ever telling us too much. And for collecting and shaping Vin's own words into such an eloquent apologia.

There is much here—grandeur, the mundane, the contentious, the familiar—for Vin's friends and old students to reflect upon, to rejoice in, wince at or remember fondly. That goes pretty much without saying. But this is also fascinating and important social history—of events, of intellectual, social, political and religious movements. We here might remember them but they call out too for scrupulous recording. The biography speaks volumes about the way we regard and used to regard, Australian literature. It interrogates our waves of nationalism, literary nationalism, modernism, Vin's own passionate and conflicted attachment to Ireland, and what that meant for his own shifting, questing identity, his sense of self.

The biography, in focusing on a particular, but central life, also illuminates many sides of the political conflicts of the 50s, 60s, and 70s, and beyond, and gives them their specifically Australian cast and colour. In here you can track our debates about communism, democratic socialism, Catholicism, hear the passions played back to us, remember the participants. I was raised a Catholic, but I married into what you might call

'the other side', in religious and political terms so I vividly remember my father-in-law, Camo Jackson, philosopher, agnostic and passionate fellow traveller, turning scarlet—almost volcanic—as he sat reading Vin's *Cutting Green Hay*. But I don't find Camo misrepresented in John's account of those times. He is there as he should be.

They *were* extraordinary times, and for students and lovers of literature they were high times indeed. Without getting into a fight tonight about any of the familiar flashpoints: philology v literature, the function of criticism, Leavis, prac crit, critical theory, the self, the author, etc etc etc, I can confidently assert that very little of the poetry, the drama, the fiction and prose that engaged both students and teachers at Melbourne at that time, has dimmed in memory. We had *such* riches, *such* abundance laid out before us, examined, given context, enjoyed, recited, proclaimed, declaimed, remembered. What else can I say except that I wish my children and the many hundreds of English students that I have since taught, could have experienced those times, shared in that bounty. Just as I wish that my children could have gone to a university where Catholicism, Christianity, was abroad and so at home in the world. John quotes Edmund Campion's account of those times:

I was there when these papers... were given at Newman College and still recall the brimming hopes and experiences of those days. Here was a Catholicism which did not turn away from its own time, its own culture or its own country; it was a humanism which took seriously the achievements and frustrations of humanity, not thinking that religion had all the answers if people would only listen.

Vin was of course right in the centre, protagonist and antagonist in those times, in that intellectual ferment.

That is another distinguishing feature



of John's biography of Vin: it gives space and scope for those debates, about poetry, about politics, about religion, debates that we should revisit, not for nostalgia but for relevance, for wisdom, to broaden our sense of our history, and to sharpen the way we argue and analyse. And there is such a bracing liveliness in what John records; instance Gwen Harwood being wicked (as she so often was), toying affectionately with Vin as she sends him poems or disguised and coded broadsides; James McAuley being savage, Alec Hope Delphic, and Vin himself—so vivid, magisterial, vulnerable, so human.

I have an abiding memory: after the third, or was it the fourth year [Chris Wallace-Crabbe tells me fourth] Poetry Seminar exam, I walked down the Old Arts Corridor to the end and on an impulse, one I shall never regret, I knocked on Vin's door. He looked up, that great head behind the desk on the other side of the room, my formidable teacher, and in that familiar voice, asked me, his undistinguished student, with

that hallmark sincerity 'Was the paper alright?' Oh yes. Oh yes. It was alright. If I'd failed every question it would have been alright, because I'd been there, I'd listened, and I'd learned things new that opened up the skies for me, and for so many of my fellows.

Thank you, John, for doing justice to a man who was so large in our lives and can now be large for generations after us; thank you for never boxing him in; never making him a saint; never patronising him by pretending that he was any more or any less than he judged himself to be.

And now it is my humble but also my very great pleasure to declare John McLaren's *Journey Without Arrival, The Life and Writing of Vincent Buckley*, launched.

**Morag Fraser AM**

*Morag Fraser is Adjunct Professor in the Philosophy Program in the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at La Trobe University and a former editor of Eureka Street*



# Glendalough: The mother lode

*The Life and Times of Glendalough Mines*

55 min DVD

Glendalough Mining Heritage Project  
Committee & Keith Malone Video  
Productions

[www.glendaloughmines.com](http://www.glendaloughmines.com)

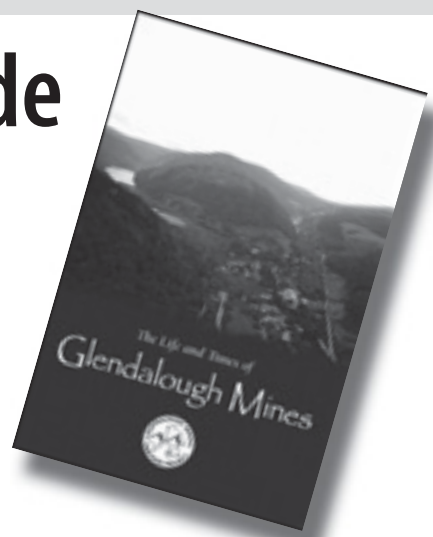
Glendalough hardly needs an introduction as the site of the ruins arising from the establishment of a monastery by St Kevin, in the sixth century. What is less well-known, however, is that the valleys of Glendalough and neighbouring Glendasin were the sites of mining activities for over 150 years.

Commencing in 1809, mining of lead and zinc, and to a lesser extent, silver, provided employment for the inhabitants of this area. This level of this activity ebbed and flowed over almost 150 years with the mine finally closing in 1957. Of note to Australians, is that part of this mining lease was named Van Diemen's Land, because of its remoteness.

Surprisingly, given the hazards of mining and the absence of modern protective

and safety measures, there were only three fatalities recorded over the period of operation.

As the first phase of a project to honour and preserve the memory of these activities and those who participated in them, the Glendalough Mining Heritage Project Committee has produced a very interesting documentary. The well-written narrative is enhanced by excellent photography and the use of archival film, photographs, maps, drawings and other documents. Interviews with former mine employees and several technical experts add considerable colour as they are used in appropriate selections throughout the narrative. The subjects of these interviews are relaxed and informative and provide an element of local charm to the story, as they feature some fascinating characters, often obviously resplendent in their Sunday best. Unfortunately, the overall quality of these cameos is spoilt by the fact that the interviewer does not appear to have been separately 'miked' and her voice is heard only in the background. Audio production generally

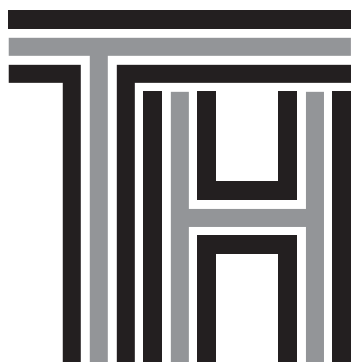


seems to have been a problem and the echo with the voice of the principal narrator seems to indicate that it must have been recorded in an empty hall. There are also some deficiencies in editing, with a few rough transitions and, in one instance, an expert commentator appears to have been mysteriously re-located in mid-sentence.

Notwithstanding these criticisms, it is a most interesting and informative production and will make a more than useful contribution to the preservation of this heritage.

*Robert J F Butler*

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# Down the decades with *The Link* and *Nuacht*

Surprised by joy – impatient as the wind  
I wished to share the transport – Oh! With whom  
But thee... Wordsworth

Patrick Kavanagh said that no one could write a comprehensive account of Irish life who ignored the Gaelic Athletic Association. Likewise, any attempt to chronicle events of the last century would be far from complete if Irish Transport Authority (CIE) was omitted.

CIE as a semi-State body was founded in 1945. From 1950 it brought out an 'in-house' magazine. *The Link* ran from 1950 and was replaced by *Nuacht* in the 'nineties'. The last *Nuacht* rolled off the presses in 2003.

Thanks to a few dedicated employees most of these publications have been rescued from obscurity. And now they are about to 'share the transport (publications)' with all on CD-ROM.

The first edition of the *Link* dated 24<sup>th</sup> November 1950 published a letter from the CIE Chairman;

'Dear Mr. Editor,

On the occasion of the first issue of *The Link*, I want to offer you my best wishes for the success of the paper.

I feel sure that you, and your colleagues who contribute, or otherwise help, will do everything that can be done to make *The Link* a staff paper which will, as its name suggests, bind together the members of our staff in all grades and in all places throughout the country.

I ask every CIE man to become a regular reader and in this way co-operate with you in developing a spirit of unity and good fellowship in our organisation.

Yours sincerely,  
T. C. Courtney.'

The Editor, Frank Finn, thanked

all contributors for, 'articles, notes, news stories and pictures which have helped me to fill this issue'.

The first issue carried articles on subjects as diverse as Charles Bianconi, the pioneer of public transport in Ireland, 'The Goats of Westport' new loading gear for loading cattle on aircraft and an advertisement from Cotts of Kilcock, 'Ireland's biggest Mail-Order store'. In June 1951 the CIE lost property department had a 'lost go-car' on its hands.

And in the small ads section of May 11 1952 you could have purchased a beautiful 3-plate electric cooker for £17.10 shillings.

When the *Nuacht* was published in full colour, it had the effect of bringing employees, with a literary bent, who were shy about their scribbles, 'out of the closet'. There is now in existence the 'CIE Writers' Group' which brought out a collection of short-stories, poems, essays and articles in 2005. The title of the anthology was, 'There's Love And There's Sex and There's The 46A' with a foreword by Professor Brendan Kennelly who described the contributors as, 'writers, keen listeners, sharp observers, constantly in touch with the foibles of humanity and, most striking of all they are gifted storytellers'. The group is now looking for people to contribute to a second collection.

If you worked for CIE and did anything newsworthy, from 'missing a free' to acting as midwife on a crowded bus, there is a good chance that you are in there somewhere. If there was a picture of, or an article about, you or yours in any of these magazines now is your chance to recapture the past.

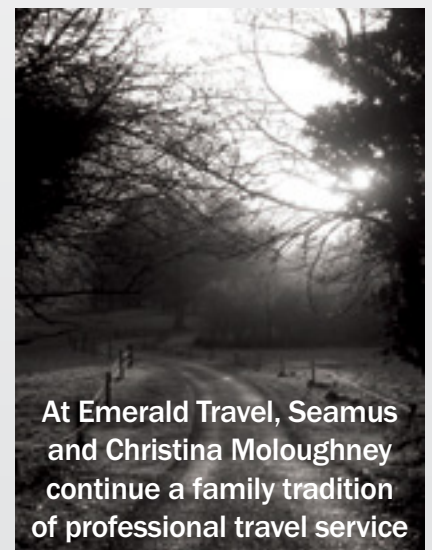
Down the decades with *The Link* and *Nuacht*, on CD-ROM available for €10 (including postage). Details from; [ciewriters@gmail.com](mailto:ciewriters@gmail.com)

**Mattie Lennon**



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## History and the Irish language question

The first of the Melbourne Irish Studies Seminars for 2009 (on 17 March) attracted a great number of people to hear Professor Cormac Ó'Gráda of University College Dublin on the question of why the Irish language is so little used by historians. He disputed the notion that there was a lack of sources, that because they were oral and to some extent formulaic, on occasion they were necessarily unreliable, and pointed to historians' laziness and ignorance of the Irish language as possible reasons. He pointed out that many more day-to-day sources were available in the nineteenth century to Scots Gaelic speakers than to Irish, and argued that its low prestige and decline had many reasons – globalisation, famine, its association with poverty, its low prestige as a language compared with English, the advantage of English for securing jobs, and the lack of official status for Irish. He also pointed the finger at the National Schools' use of English as the medium of instruction since 1834, and to the fact that the nationalist elite, the Revivalists, were English-speaking.

He made a strong case for the value of folklore sources, despite their tendency to chronological inaccuracy and 'unsafe-ness' and took many examples to illustrate the point from the Irish Folklore Commission Archive (which had a variety of incarnations, including most recently, digital archiving on the internet) with its 3 million pages of interviews, questionnaires, and photos and recordings. Ó'Gráda had himself used it extensively in his book on the Famine, and suggested various methodologies by which in which its 'unsafe-ness' might be mitigated. The patterns of informants being second – and third-hand witnesses, because of the stigma attaching to the workhouse, was also a revealing aspect of his research.

He also talked of the work of other scholars who, in using the Irish Bardic poetry of the 16th to 18th centuries, had established that far from being a tradition-bound template, and an elegiac tradition, it had engaged energetically with modernisation, not giving up hope of cultural revival, and drawing dynamically on other cultures.

*Frances Devlin-Glass  
with Patrick McNamara*

# Speak of the Dead

*Great Irish Lives*  
edited by Charles Lysaght  
London, Times Books, 2008

Contemporaneous accounts of the lives of individuals provide an important element of biographical history. They reflect the attitudes and evaluations of the time, are cloaked in the culture and beliefs of the particular period and the comments are unfettered by later discoveries about the individual concerned. They say as much about the opinions of the author as they do about the subject of the obituary.

I have some difficulty in accepting the title of this publication. The 'Lives' are a selection of 98 featured obituaries from *The Times* over the period from 6th June 1820 (Henry Grattan) to 21<sup>st</sup> May 2008 (Nuala O'Faolain). However, I'm not sure that some of these, Charles Haughey for example, would be considered as 'Great'.

The publication features a foreword by Garret FitzGerald and an excellent introduction by the editor, Charles Lysaght, which gives a useful background into the work and the difficult task that he must have had in culling these obituaries. He has certainly achieved a commendable balance in his selection. The quality of the written piece and its honest insight into the individual's life were specific criteria for inclusion, while other obituaries were omitted when more comprehensive tributes were featured elsewhere. Others were not selected if the obituary failed to do justice to the Irish dimension of the person's life, for example that of George Bernard Shaw. Lysaght has attempted to cover, in this selection, tributes to individuals from various spheres of Irish life and he includes examples from politics, religion, literature, arts, sport, business, science and entertainment. He has also endeavoured to address a gender imbalance and to recognise some who are not particularly well known.

Earlier obituaries reflected the often troubled relationships between the newspaper and Irish nationalist politics. There was no obituary ever



published for Sir Roger Casement, for example, although you will find one for John Devoy in this collection. On the other hand, later obituaries were often written with an independence from the editorial policy of *The Times*. A good example of this is illustrated in the balanced approach of the tribute to Sean MacBride which was at some variance from the vitriolic attack on him in other pages of the same newspaper at the time, completely consistent with the English attitude to an IRA principal.

The language of these obituaries changes over the years as a reflection of idiom and also mirrors the way that England saw the particular individuals. Earlier pieces are often stereotypical of the nationality of the subject with phrases such as 'though an Irishman, he was not given to verbosity' or 'typical Irishman'. The obituaries vary considerably in length and this inconsistency is prevalent throughout the entire period covered. Unsurprisingly, they are very well written and make this book most readable.

Obituaries in newspapers have the advantage of being prepared in advance, in almost every case, and thus benefit from considerable research and revision. Anonymity of authorship, always a feature of *The Times*, allows for objective and honest comment. Consequently, these reports provide an excellent picture of the life of the individual concerned and form an important part of the biographical archives and a useful part of Irish history over the past two centuries.

*Robert J F Butler*



# Feisty lady

*Pirate Queen: the life of Grainne O'Malley*  
**Judith Cook**  
**Mercier Press: Cork**

If only this book had been available in our school library! The role models it offered for womanhood were Edith Cavell (shot by firing squad), Florence Nightingale (died a spinster) and Amelia Erhardt (vanished without trace), a biography of Grainne Ni Maille (died in her bed after a full life) would have been very encouraging. No one could deny that she was an excellent role model for strong and assertive women.

Judith Cook traces the life of Grainne Ni Maille from her birth (probably in 1530) through the Elizabethan wars against Ireland. These were waged in order to extirpate Irish culture. As a noblewoman she exemplified and at times enforced that culture and so became a target for noted war criminals such as Richard Bingham. Little is known about her education, but she acquired enough Latin to negotiate successfully with Elizabeth I. Grainne acquired seafaring skills as a child by accompanying her father Owen on his trading voyages. As well as navigation and management, Grainne also learned to swear, take snuff and gamble to such an extent that she was also known as 'Grainne of the gamblers'. This early exploration ended with Grainne's arranged marriage to one of the 'Ferocious O'Flaherties' – known as 'Donal of the Battles'.

Under the Brehon laws, there were seven categories of marriage and the innocent 16 year old girl agreed to be married under the strictest of them. In the event of widowhood or divorce, Grainne would receive her dowry back, but could not inherit any of her husband's land or property. While the Brehon laws permitted divorce, they were less egalitarian than contemporary English law in denying property to the wife after the marriage ended. Grainne and Donal had two sons and a daughter. Donal then pursued his major life interest – fighting. She busied herself with her own avocations of piracy and trading, building up the O'Flaherties' anchorage and fleet, and acting as chief while Donal was otherwise engaged. Donal took a castle from the neighbouring Joyce clan and moved into it with his wife. When the Joyces killed Donal while he was out hunting, they tried dislodging Grainne from the

castle but she defended it so fiercely that it has been known as 'Caislean-an-Circa' – the hen's castle – ever since. Despite all her courage and ability, her husband's death meant that her usefulness to the O'Flaherties was over, so she returned to her father in the early 1560s, probably leaving her children behind.

She settled in the castle on Clare Island so she could consolidate her power base in piracy. By the time of her second marriage at the end of the 1560s, no vessel was safe from her. She successfully attacked a series of castles, with cannon fired from her fleet. As Cook comments, there is no precedent for her achievement. Despite attaining considerable power in her own right, Grainne would have known of the mounting English pressure on the Celtic countries and that it was unlikely that the English government would treat with a widow. She therefore decided to marry again.

Her second choice was Richard-an-Iar-rain Burke – 'Iron Richard', but the form of marriage was for 'a year and a day' after which either party could call it off. Grainne's son; Tibbot-an-Long or 'Tibbot of the Ships' was born at sea during one of her trading ventures to the Middle East. Attacked by Barbary pirates within a day or so of Tibbot's birth, she came on deck to rally the men and did so, shooting the Barbary captain.

The destruction of Irish culture continued and by 1574, Sir Henry Sidney (as Lord Deputy) turned to Mayo where the major families had not submitted to English rule. Grainne's ensured her beloved Tibbot was safely out of harm's way by fostering him to another chieftain so that he would get an education. During this time, the most famous of the Grainne legends arose. She asked the Howths for the hospitality due a chieftain according to Irish custom but these did not apply within the Pale so the doors were locked against her. Furious, she kidnapped one of Lord Howth's young sons, refusing a ransom of gold. Instead she made Lord Howth swear that from that day forward an extra place would always be set at dinner for any traveller who needed it. While the legend is widely known, the background of Grainne upholding Irish customs against English ones is not, and Cook brings this out well.

Grainne and her husbands were dangerous people and violent when crossed, but at least they killed in hot blood. The same

excuse cannot be offered for the Elizabethan soldier poets who invaded Ireland in Grainne's lifetime – Walter Raleigh, Philip Sidney and Edmund Spenser. Usually seen as gallant swashbucklers, their cruelty in Ireland was astonishing with Spenser arguing that 'Troops should tread down all before them and lay on the ground all the stiff-necked people of the land.' (p.69). All the English generals practised wanton cruelty in Ireland, starving those few peasants not killed outright. Spenser's description shows their suffering 'creeping forth on their hands, for their legs would not bear them; they looked like anatomies of death, spake like ghosts crying out of their graves' (p. 91). Raleigh took part in the cold-blooded massacre of 600 troops after they had surrendered at Smerwick in 1581 and Richard Bourke submitted to English rule and custom.

Connaught had remained quiet for a few years when Richard Bingham was appointed to govern Ireland. Described as 'cruel, harsh and cunning, out to enrich himself at all costs and exterminate the natives.' (p.104), it was Grainne's misfortune that she incurred his wrath, by outwitting him in battle. He killed one of her sons and captured her, though she was narrowly reprieved from the gallows. Cook speculates that Grainne's escape from execution on this and other occasions shows that she provided information on the Spanish fleet to the English government.

When Grainne reached 60, the Mayo rebellion had been bloodily crushed, she had lost a son and all her ships and the Bourkes of Mayo were reduced to a bare subsistence level by Bingham. At this point, she went to the top and was granted an audience with Elizabeth I to publicise Bingham's brutality. Bingham was called to account for his actions towards Grainne's male relatives. Although he denied her accusations, her sons were freed and her petition for maintenance was granted. How satisfying to deliver Elizabeth's letter in person! Unfortunately, Bingham continued his pursuit of her, allowing her none of the maintenance she sought and she vanishes from history after 1601.

Cook does an excellent job of retrieving the life of a fascinating and determined woman from the obscurity that swallows up so many heroines.

*Felicity Allen*

# Suicide rates in Ireland

Legalised in Ireland during the 1990s, suicide remains proscribed by the Catholic Church, though church burial is now permitted. The issue has become more pressing given how severely the country has been affected by the great financial crash of 2008. In contrast to most Western European countries, suicide mortality amongst Irish men, once very low, increased steadily for the past twenty years, reaching 19 per 100,000 in 2000. While suicide among Irish women rose between 1970 and 1980, it then levelled off at 4.5 per 100,000 remaining below the European average. The pattern of Northern Ireland male suicide over time has been very different with a rise in suicide rates appearing after 1994.

A role for socio-economic factors in suicide has been accepted since Durkheim's 19<sup>th</sup> century work. Large scale social changes which increase the amount of 'anomie' and reduce social cohesion will increase suicide rates, particularly in males. Anomie refers to the way people can lose their sense of belonging to a society. Increased urbanisation may increase prosperity, but weaken links with family. Deindividuation of people moving to a big city after living in a small town or village would be expected to increase suicide rates. Factors which reduce anomie such as popular wars (e.g., World War Two in Australia) are accompanied by marked drops in suicide rates. Armed conflict often increases social cohesion within each warring group and is then accompanied by a fall in male suicide rates.

Ireland has experienced profound social and economic change since 1970, changing from a predominantly rural country dominated by religious values to a more urban and secular one. Unemployment fell, female workforce participation increased and economic output rose; by contrast, the doubling of expenditure on alcohol is unlikely to have been positive. It is tempting to accept that these changes have caused the rise in suicide rates, but the explanation is not quite that simple. Lucey, Corcoran, Keeley, Brophy, Arensman and Perry (2005) examined the associations between seven socioeconomic indicators (GDP, unemployment rate, female labour force participation, alcohol expenditure, marriage rate, births outside marriage and crime) and the Irish suicide rate. No associations were found between these socioeconomic indicators and the

changing suicide rates. This was surprising as relationships between these indicators and suicide rates are well established in other countries.

Cleary and Brannick (2007) looked at the role played by beliefs and values in suicide risk, basing their work on the European Values Surveys. These are derived from interviews with people in the member states of the European Union. Cleary and Brannick commented that, since the 1970's, Irish society had become more fragmented with less clearly defined

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norms and values. Marked changes have occurred in religious practice, beliefs about family life and attitudes to suicide. Nevertheless they cautioned against the idea that all change had a negative effect on society and argued that causal relationships (between change and suicide rates) are often wrongly inferred.

Religious adherence seems to protect people against suicide. One aspect of Irish religious participation, church attendance, has changed dramatically. Church attendance has fallen from over 90% in the 1970s to around 50% at present. Nevertheless, only Poland and Malta have higher rates than Ireland. Over 91% of Irish people still say that they belong to a religious denomination and secularisation has moved more slowly than in Europe. Core religious beliefs (e.g., belief in life after death) have changed little since the 1970s. The distribution of religious belief within Ireland does not match regional variations in suicide rates. There is a clear rural/urban divide in religious belief with the rural Western seaboard maintaining a very traditional profile, yet this area has a much higher rate of suicide than Dublin – the most secular area of the country.

Attitudes to suicide changed between 1981 and 1999, becoming more acceptable in 1990, followed by a change back to a more conservative stance in 1999. Almost three-quarters of Irish people surveyed believed that suicide could never

be justified in both 1990 and 1999, so that increased male suicide cannot be ascribed to increased acceptance of it.

Other information about subjective well-being in Ireland gives a very positive picture; levels of well being are among the highest in the European Union and social capital remains stable. Cleary and Brannick (2007) argued that it was not change itself that was the problem but the differential impact of change on different social groups. Traditional areas of male employment have declined over the past 30 years while there has been large scale movement of women into the workforce. Children show the same pattern of boys underachieving in education while girls are preparing for tertiary level as found in Australia. Men still dominate the upper levels of society, but some men, notably those lacking educational and other skills, may find modern Irish society challenging and be vulnerable to suicide.

As in Ireland, the suicide rate for men aged 15 – 34 in Northern Ireland increased between 1984 and 2002 (Largey, Kelly & Stevenson, 2009). Their mean annual rate rose from 20.97 per 100,000 in 1984 – 1993 to 28.1 in 1994 – 2002. The second time period coincided with the declaration of a truce in Northern Ireland. Some otherwise alienated young men may have derived a sense of personal value from participation in the conflict. When peace was declared, their sense of self worth may have dropped. By contrast, the suicide rate among Northern Ireland males aged 35 and over decreased significantly, while the small numbers of female suicides meant that meaningful analyses could not be performed. Largey et al, commented that the fall in suicide among middle aged and older men, and the relative immunity of women was surprising, as Northern Ireland had experienced 30 years of civil conflict during the period examined. Unfortunately they had no information on the social and health factors behind their results.

Neither macro-economic indicators nor surveys of personal values offer any explanation for the changed suicide rate among Irish men, nor do they explain Irish women's remarkable immunity to it. The rise in suicide among young men in Northern Ireland following the peace mimics patterns seen in other societies where a popular war has ended.

*Felicity Allen*



# Jageurs Literary Award

***A prize for writers, honouring the great nationalist, Morgan Jageurs***

In 2005, the Celtic Club established the annual Jageurs Literary Award to honour Morgan Jageurs and his efforts in promoting Irish culture in Australia and in establishing the Celtic Club.

For 2009, the Australian Irish Heritage Network is pleased to join with the Celtic Club in sponsoring the award, with the prize money increased to \$1,000.

Born in Ireland, Morgan Jageurs (1862-1932) was a prominent Melbourne monumental mason and was first to introduce the Celtic Cross to Australia. His great memorials can be seen in cemeteries throughout Melbourne. With his knowledge of architecture he assisted in the building of St Patrick's Cathedral and St Mary's, West Melbourne.

Jageurs was a man of many enthusiasms, most of them focussed on Ireland. As well as being a founding member and President of the Celtic Club and the Victorian Catholic Young Men's Society, he was also deeply involved in the Irish Land League, the Irish National League and, later, the United Irish League. He helped form the Melbourne Irish Pipers' Club. Jageurs was a fine orator and writer, especially on Irish history, art and culture. He hosted many notable Irish visitors to Australia, including the Redmond brothers. Michael Davitt, who visited Australia in the 1890s, was godfather to his eldest son. In *The Irish in Australia* Patrick O'Farrell says of Jageurs that he 'personally sustained virtually all Irish organisations in Melbourne during his active lifetime.'

The competition for the award aims to stimulate the production of new literary artefacts with a

consciousness of the matter of Ireland or Irish-Australia – stories, one-act plays, poetry. Non-fiction is also eligible for consideration, but the judges are looking for it to demonstrate 'literariness', an awareness of the language arts for which Irish writers have justly become famous. Such writing needs to be self-conscious, artful, shaped, and hopefully innovative. Literary manuscripts that celebrate, or excoriate the culture, or take any position in between are welcome. Pieces that take risks in how they deal with the heritage have been among those that have won prizes in the past. If the medium in which the writing takes place is poetry, then the word-length can be much shorter than the nominated 5,000 words maximum.

There are few caveats on who can submit. Work that has been previously published is not eligible for submission, and contestants can submit no more than two entries per person. Winning entries will be published in *Tinteán*.

Information about entering the competition and closing dates are to be found on [www.celticclub.com.au/literary](http://www.celticclub.com.au/literary) and further information can be obtained by emailing [info@celticclub.com.au](mailto:info@celticclub.com.au)

The closing date for entries to this year's competition is 6 November 2009.

If you are aware of closet writers who think and read about Ireland and have things to say about Irish-Australia, then please bring the competition to their attention. Or if you are one yourself, this may be a chance to strut your stuff.





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