

# *Tinteán*

THE AUSTRALIAN IRISH HERITAGE NETWORK

No 13, September 2010

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Reflections on the  
Saville Report

A Hidden Gem – Kells  
Bay Gardens Co Kerry



# Tinteán

## Australian Irish Heritage Network

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## Tinteán No 13, September 2010

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

Email [info@tintean.org.au](mailto:info@tintean.org.au)

Web [tintean.org.au](http://tintean.org.au)

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**Editor:** Liz McKenzie

**Deputy Editor:** Felicity Allen

**Business Manager:** Rob Butler

**Advertising:** Rob Butler

**Production:** Andrew Macdermid

**Printing:** Arena Printing  
2-14 Kerr St Fitzroy Vic

### Other workers on this issue:

Peter Kiernan, Catherine Arthur,  
Frances Devlin-Glass, Bob Glass,  
Meg McNena, Kate Clifford, Patrick  
McNamara, Don McKenzie, Elizabeth  
Benfell, Debra Vaughan.

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### Cover

A soaring gum tree in Kells Bay Gardens  
Co Kerry  
Photographer: Billy Alexander

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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

President: Peter Kiernan

Vice-President: Frances Devlin-Glass

Secretary: Bob Glass

Treasurer: Patrick McNamara

Committee Members: Felicity Allen, Catherine Arthur, Liz McKenzie



# Letters

## Peter Lalor: truly a leader

Sean Ua Cearnaigh's article, 'The Lalor brothers: hemispheres apart' (*Tinteán*, June 2010), warrants comment. In a short, simplistic view of Peter Fintan Lalor, the author chooses to ignore or is unaware of important facts about the Lalors of Tenakill.

Cearnaigh states that Peter's father, Patrick Lalor MP, was only concerned about the emancipation of Catholics and the return of the old parliament in College Green. Does Cearnaigh believe that these were not important issues of that period? He fails to credit Patrick Lalor's writings during his parliamentary term, which confirm his strong attention to the needs of his local constituents in Leix and his determined and frequent agitation for justice for the poor. He was known as 'no friend of the Tories'. I suggest that Lalor's local constituents are better able to say whether he was a democratic or not.

James Fintan, Patrick's eldest son, did not share his father's repealist ideas and proudly embraced a more radical approach to reform in a mire of injustice. Much of the tension that developed over a long period between father and son was not primarily over their respective methods of reform. It is also wrong to say that none of the siblings was sympathetic to James Fintan's political views. William, Thomas, Jerome and particularly Richard remained close to their eldest brother, particularly in his hours of most need; and through those difficult times father Patrick was also very supportive of James Fintan.

Cearnaigh also makes no mention of Richard Lalor's strong social justice agenda while in parliament.

There is no doubt that the successful and well educated brother Peter Fintan, in the relative freedom of Australia, would neither have involved himself in the diggers' uprising nor accepted leadership in an armed rebellion had he not carried the deep influence of his father, Patrick, and particularly of his brothers, James Fintan and Richard. Similarly, later generations of Lalors in Australia carried forth a strong commitment to justice and reform thanks to the spirit of Peter Lalor.

No reformer lives a lifetime without sometimes disappointing fellow radical thinkers. On occasions contemporary heroes of justice and peace like

Archbishop Desmond Tutu disappointed the victims of apartheid like Father Michael Lapsley by what he said or failed to do. The great Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador too was sometimes criticised by Central American revolutionaries. Peter Lalor was no different. Let us never forget that, like Oscar Romero, Peter Lalor's acceptance of leadership at Eureka Stockade was a public acknowledgment that he was prepared to give his life for democracy. And even if he did nothing else in life surely he deserves a better tribute than that given him by Sean Ua Cearnaigh.

**Peter Lalor Philp, Fish Creek, Vic.**

*Peter Lalor Philp is a great great grandson of Peter Fintan Lalor.*

## Shared schools in NI

Thanks for *Tinteán*, which arrived here yesterday. What a handsomely produced magazine! It must take a great deal of work to put together something of this quality.

Reading Adrian Little's piece on NI made me think of the integrated education movement. Their efforts to address the 'cultures of sectarianism' that sometimes seem like indelible stains on the place seem far more effective than political manoeuvring. Jonathan Bardon, author of the excellent *A History of Ulster* (1992), has recently published a fascinating book: *The Struggle for Shared Schools in Northern Ireland: The History of All Children Together* [ACT]. (ACT is the parents' group that started the whole thing off.) A couple of months ago I wrote an essay review of this and found the book a fascinating and heartening read. The first integrated school opened with only 28 pupils in 1981. By September 2009 there were 61 such schools, located all across the country, with a total enrolment of over 20,000 pupils. Amazing! There is still a long way to go but I suspect this is moving things in the right direction.

A lovely comment of Dr James Doyle, Catholic bishop of Kildare and Leighlin in the 19th century, sums up the integrated education movement's philosophy:

I do not know of any measures which would prepare the way for a better feeling in Ireland than uniting children at an early age and bringing them up in the same school, leading them to commune

with one another and to form those little intimacies and friendships which often subsist through life.

Thanks again for your review of *Words of the Grey Wind*. Though there are still some small encouraging signs of interest, the risk with this kind of writing is always that it disappears without trace, so I am very appreciative of efforts to alert potential readers to the book's existence. Fingers crossed the AJIS will run a review in due course, whether of *Words* or *Irish Elegies* – or both!

**Chris Arthur, Lampeter, Wales**

## Miscellaneous commendation

Congratulations on *Tinteán* 12. It was an entertaining issue right through from Frances Devlin Glass's 'Sunderings' to the interesting piece by Bernie Brophy on Brehon Law.

The opening paragraph of 'The Macabre, bizarre, grotesque and absurd' by Celia Scott certainly compelled attention and I enjoyed Evelyn Conlon's 'The meaning of missing'. I look forward to the promised future stories from this writer. The inclusion of a short story is a welcome departure for *Tinteán*, which, I hope, will become a regular feature of the magazine.

The pictures in 'Murals in Belfast: time for change' really caught the eye. I agree with Bill Rolston that it would be a great shame if the sting were pulled from this art form.

More than the variety of subject matter, what strikes the reader about this issue is the freshness imparted by the diversity of writing styles, which will surely widen the magazine's readership appeal.

**Joe Murphy, Dublin**

## The diaspora in Queensland

I have been given a copy of the *Tinteán* and I am very impressed.

Your article 'Hidden Ethnicity' really grabbed my attention. I am a Queenslander and Australian with a strong Irish background, with Malone (1890), Tobin (1853) and Adams (1836) ancestry. I am a member of the Queensland Irish Australian Support Association and have been a member of the Queensland Irish Association since 1973. Over the years, I have spent time in Ireland, particularly in May for the horse racing at the Curragh, Co Kildare, and I have been able to find Queensland

relations for friends at Newmarket on Fergus, Co Clare, my homeland, in particular for the O'Leary family.

My ancestors did their bit for Queensland and Australia. My mother, Mollie, was one of the unsung heroes of the bush (called the 'Bush Battlers' during the war) and in 1995 received a lot of publicity and several awards. Her story was in the Hall of Fame in Longreach and is now in the Heritage Village in Barcaldine. My father served in WWII and his brother Tom, at 18 years, served in WWI, both in Gallipoli and at Flanders.

Between 1862 and 1864, Bishop Quinn of Brisbane had 7,000 Irish imported to Queensland, under his own migration scheme [Queensland Immigration Society]. As detailed in Rosamond Siemon's *The Mayne Inheritance*, most went to the Darling Downs region. Bishop Quinn seems to have been a law unto himself. This large import of Catholic Irish was not so popular in some quarters. Perhaps his mistake was to suggest that Queensland

should be known as 'Quinnland'.

I do love your Law Courts address. Now a Justice of the Peace and a Courts volunteer, during my working life I did nearly 20 years around the courts, where I met a lot of very interesting people, on both sides of the law.

Thank you for very entertaining reading. I am looking forward to more of *Tinteán*, so full of interesting articles.

*Rita Malone, New Farm, Qld.*

### Hibernian orphan girls

I refer to various recent stories in *Tinteán* about Irish famine orphans, Irish orphan girls and the Famine Rock memorial at Williamstown, Victoria.

Not all of the 307 Irish females on the ship *Pemberton* were famine orphans. In January 1849, 21 female orphans, daughters of soldiers from the Royal Hibernian Military School (1765-1924), Phoenix Park, Dublin, volunteered to emigrate to Australia. Herein lies a fascinating nugget of Australian history.

The Hibernian girls were described as well-nourished and healthy young

people, as reported in the *Sydney Morning Herald* (1965). They were between 12 and 20 years. Two of their number were trained governesses. All the Hibernian girls had been taught trade skills and were literate. They became teachers and monitors to their fellow Irish passengers during the long voyage. They taught them to read, write and the four elements of arithmetic: addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Theirs was a wonderful achievement.

The *Pemberton* arrived at Port Phillip on 14 May 1849 where a depot had been prepared and a clerical committee of Anglican and Roman Catholic clergy and lay people awaited their arrival. The Hibernian girls had used their time on the *Pemberton* to render a great service to their fellow travellers during the voyage and, in small measure, helped prepare them for their new lives in Australia.

*Art Cockerill, Cobourg, Canada*

See also reference to the Royal Hibernian Military School on A W Cockerill's website: [www.achart.ca](http://www.achart.ca)

# Grand Irish exhibition for Canberra in 2011

## Irish in Australia: 1788 to present

The National Museum of Australia is developing a major exhibition on the Irish in Australia from European settlement to the present time.

The exhibition will open at the National Museum situated on Canberra's Acton Peninsula on 17 March 2011 (St Patrick's Day) and run through to July 2011. It will later travel to Dublin, Ireland.

The exhibition will cover the Irish presence in Australia from the day in January 1788 when a small number of Irish convicts, marines and officials walked off the transports of the First Fleet to the continuing arrival in our own time of young Irish backpackers.

Through exhibits and objects, the exhibition will tell of free and assisted migration, journeys, arrivals, settlements and of the subsequent careers of settlers as farmers, industrialists, pastoralists, writers, lawyers, teachers, academics, politicians and sports people.

A project team with prominent Irish-Australian historian, Dr Richard Reid, as the senior curator has been assembled to prepare the exhibition. The team has forensically scoured all corners of the land and researched archival treasures to track down objects of interest as manifestation of Irish settlement in all its forms.

Highlights will include:

- Great objects, large and small. A two-tonne, two-metre high anchor from the wreck of the immigrant ship *Nashwauk* will recall the night of terror in 1855 when 207 young Irish women struggled through the surf to safety on Australian soil. The armour of the all four members of the Kelly gang will be brought together under one roof.
- Sounds of the fiddle, flute, accordion and 'bodhran' (Irish drum) as musicians, singers and dancers celebrate another great Irish contribution to Australian culture – music, song and dance.
- Displays highlighting the role of such well known characters as the Kelly gang, Peter Lalor, leader of the Eureka rebellion, and ill-fated explorer Robert O'Hara Burke.
- Displays reflecting the imposing presence and influence of leading churchmen, including Patrick Cardinal Moran and Archbishop Daniel Mannix, and the roles of the orders in Catholic education.
- A database of more than 30,000 Irish convict arrivals in Sydney between 1788 and 1840, that will allow visitors to find their own convict ancestors, or simply to explore the nature and origins of New South Wales' Irish convict immigrants.

# My father's journey around Archbishop Mannix

**Reading Brenda Niall's account of Father Hackett and of his association with Archbishop Mannix rekindled for John Pratt of Canberra memories that his father, Osmond Pratt, had recounted years ago of his connection with the Archbishop.**

I enjoyed reading Brenda Niall's *The Riddle of Father Hackett* and subsequently musing over the puzzle of his excision from Ireland at the height of its turbulent times. Even more I enjoyed the account of Fr Hackett's association with Archbishop Mannix in those years that so much involved the Catholic Church and its members.

My father joined the British Army on the outbreak of WWI and served with distinction in France. During leave in 1917 he married his childhood sweetheart, Kathleen Alice O'Donnell, in Cardiff, returning to the war after the briefest of honeymoons. After the armistice he elected to make the army his career, serving in the British Army of occupation near Dusseldorf in Germany, extracting reparations as victors are wont to do.

When Ireland and its troubles appeared on the scene his regiment was reinforced and despatched to the Isle, landing at Cork Harbour in August 1919 and entraining for Buttevant, north of Mallow. From there it was a five-mile march in sunny weather to Ballyronare Camp, the wartime training camp of the British Army's famous 16th Irish Infantry Division. For these soldiers but recently out of years of savagery in the horrifying devastation and destruction in Belgium and France, the peace and beauty of the sleepy Irish countryside made a deep impression, most of the troops, my father included, seeing Ireland for the first time. "Trim fields of a most wonderful green, deep woods, old castles, wonderful mansions and cottages, a picture of beauty not easily forgotten," was my father's observation. He loved the local names - a village called 'Old Two-pothouse'!

There was little or no trouble in his area and these battle-weary soldiers settled down to an idyllic interlude in country life, a rarity in soldiering. My father got leave to return to Cardiff and bring his wife, Kathleen, and baby daughter, Mary, to a rented house in Doneraile on the Awbeg River. A famous son of the town who died in 1913 had been Canon

Patrick Sheehan, author, preacher and philosopher. Now, the parish priest was Canon Barry who at 83 years of age still rode daily. On his ordination 60 years before, the Canon had followed the norm of laying down a cask of the best Cork Distillery whisky, topped up each year with the oldest blend he could find. My father, an accomplished horseman, often rode with him, afterwards enjoying a warming tot with the charming old priest.

The arrival of a new Commander-in-Chief for Ireland in April 1920 changed things; he decreed that operations in the vicinity of Cork were being pursued with an absence of vigour, a view that bemused the troops, blithely unaware that there was a war on! The colonel was relieved of his command and the troops

**“Personally, if I had my way, I'd put the Pope, Mannix and the whole bloody lot of them on a bonfire and burn them all!”**

were replaced with men from almost every regiment in England. Worst of all, families were ordered home to Britain and all personnel ordered into camp. These now changed times were difficult enough for any Catholic soldier, as both their fellow soldiers and the local Irish viewed them with a degree of suspicion.

The new colonel was a martinet who combined that characteristic with a virulent anti-Catholicism, an unfortunate issue for my father, the only Catholic officer in the battalion. The area of operations of the battalion included Cork. When Archbishop Mannix departed from New York disdaining Britain's prohibition on his visiting Ireland, Cork was the SS Baltic's first port of destination. On the evening of Mannix's anticipated arrival, my father was the duty officer at Ballyronare Camp. After his rounds, when joining his brother officers already at dinner in their mess, he was aware of something untoward as all eyes turned

to him as he entered. He approached his commanding officer to make the customary salutation but as he did so, that officer addressed my father saying, "By the way, Pratt, if Mannix lands, you're detailed to arrest him; you're the same tribe, aren't you? Personally, if I had my way, I'd put the Pope, Mannix and the whole bloody lot of them on a bonfire and burn them all!" The mess members, well aware of their colonel's sectarian bias and my father's Catholicity, greeted this outburst in meaningful silence.

For my father, this was the culmination of weeks of exasperation at his colonel's offensive manner. He told him that he, the colonel, was a blackguard and that he wouldn't stay in the same room as him, and he turned and left. The near-apoplectic colonel placed him under close arrest, confining him to his room and relieving him of his duties. Next day, however, the colonel had assessed his own indelicate position and let my father know that if he apologised before the assembled mess members, he, the colonel, would drop the issue. Sensing his superior's uncertainty, my father refused and demanded a court martial, an irritating distraction for the British Army in the awkward circumstances then pertaining for Britain in Ireland. This was not wise as the Court found my father guilty of unbecoming conduct, severely reprimanded him and reduced his seniority. So dashed were his hopes for a military career.

After leaving the army in 1923, my parents and their then three daughters migrated to Australia. Over the years, six more children were added to the family. My father died in 1975, twelve years after the death of the Archbishop whom he had neither seen nor met but whose journey intersected a critical one of his own.

**John D Pratt, Hawker, ACT**  
*Osmond Philip Pratt (1891-1975) joined the British Army as a Bombardier in December 1914, served in Egypt and Aden, was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Machine Gun Corps in February 1917, was awarded the Military Cross in June 1917 at Bullecourt, and was mentioned in despatches in May 1918. He subsequently served in France, Germany and Ireland. He was recalled to commissioned service in the AIF in 1939 and retired from service in 1945.*

# Dr James Thomas Griffin (1929–2010)

James Thomas Griffin, scholar, teacher, tenor, polemicist and raconteur, died of cancer on 9 May 2010. When he died of cancer he had been anxiously trying to finish his last major work – a biography of the late Archbishop Daniel Mannix.

He had written more than 100,000 words, all but the last chapter. A month before, he telephoned me from his home in Canberra: ‘Mate, I’ve run out of energy. Can you come up and help me put it together. Do you mind being my amanuensis?’ He loved words like *amanuensis*, partly for display but also for nuance and to reflect his love for the richness of English.

I spent four days with him and his wife, Helga, taking notes of what he wanted to say. He felt passionately that the many biographies of Mannix were under-researched and too deferential and that the public record of this most famous and revered of Melbourne’s Roman Catholic archbishops should take greater note of his human blemishes, while acknowledging his ecclesiastical achievements, charisma, and the widespread admiration in which he was held by Victoria’s Catholic community.

Griffin had written 8000 words on Mannix for the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. He drew attention to uncomfortable aspects of the archbishop’s past which he felt had been avoided or downplayed by earlier biographers – for example that Mannix’s younger brother had abandoned Catholicism and become an outspoken atheist. ‘I would have thought’, Griffin said, ‘that this should have shed some light on family nurture’.

When Catholic critics objected that Griffin’s *ADB* entry had tried to cut the archbishop down to size, Griffin responded: ‘Well, if it’s the correct size, what’s the problem?’

Griffin was born in Warrnambool, the son of a Gallipoli and Somme veteran who had died prematurely when Jim was less than a year old. Jim and his brother Dan were reared by their mother Annie and her parents.

When the family moved to Melbourne in the mid-1930s, Jim attended a parish school in St Kilda and later De La Salle College, Malvern. He proved to be an outstanding if unusually confident and assertive student. He went through school and university on scholarships.

At the University of Melbourne he studied the subjects which remained the passions of his life – history and English, along with singing. He had a fine lyric tenor voice – and a remarkable repertoire of classics and popular songs – which he was happy, indeed keen, to display along with his learning, wit and storytelling which enriched the family’s social occasions for more than half a century.

Jim married Helga Girschik in 1956 at St Peter’s Basilica in Rome where Jim had a clerical post in the immigration section of the Australian Legation.

Having had an early period as a teacher at Xavier College, the position was offered to him again on his return from Italy. In the following 11 years he developed a reputation as an inspirational teacher. The present Archbishop of Melbourne, Denis Hart, and the former Deputy Prime Minister, Tim Fischer, were among his pupils.

In 1968 he accepted an invitation from the Professor of History at the fledgling University of Papua New Guinea, Ken Inglis, to take a history post. Between then and his ultimate retirement, Griffin spent 15 years in PNG during two periods, becoming a mentor to local students, many of whom became national leaders. His

writings warned of imminent civil unrest in Bougainville. He became Professor of Extension Studies at the University of PNG in 1980, establishing in Bougainville UPNG’s first of several regional Studies Centres. Later he was Professor of History. In 1991 the university appointed him Emeritus Professor.

As head of the Department of General Studies at the Townsville College of Advanced Education in 1976-79, Griffin also involved himself in indigenous rights issues as well as initiating a Diploma of Performing Arts.

Having been intermittently a senior research fellow in Pacific History at the ANU, in 1991-94 he became a principal analyst, Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, in the Office of National Assessments, the intelligence body within the Prime Minister’s Department.

In his retirement Griffin wrote a biography of John Wren with the purpose of correcting the impression created by Frank Hardy’s novel *Power Without Glory* that the criminal character of John West was a true representation. Griffin found Wren not guilty with the exception that, in his early twenties, he had run an illegal totalisator.

At Jim’s wish, he was buried with his father in Warrnambool Cemetery after his funeral service in St Christopher’s Cathedral, Canberra. Jim is survived by his wife Helga, their six children Justin, Gerald, Denis, Anthea, Cathleen and Gabrielle (the first, James, died after birth) and seven grandchildren Julian, Laura, Patrick, Priscilla, Uriel, Sam and Giovanna.

**Paul Ormonde**

*Journalist and author, Paul Ormonde, is a friend and a working colleague with James Griffin on the Catholic Worker for many years.*

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# News

## Literary scholar appointed to chair in Modern Irish Studies

The University of New South Wales (UNSW) has announced that Professor Rónán McDonald, a leading Samuel Beckett scholar, literary critic and historian of Irish modernism, has been appointed as the Australian Ireland Fund Chair in Modern Irish Studies.

Professor McDonald is the Director of the newly established John Hume Institute in Global Irish Studies based in UNSW's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. The Institute is the result of the first Australian partnership with University College Dublin, which established the original John Hume Institute in 2007. A native of Dublin, Professor McDonald was most recently Director of the Beckett International Foundation at the University of Reading in the UK and has extensive teaching experience in the field of Irish literature.

The Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, UNSW, Professor James Donald, expressed his pleasure that the chair has been established in a way that enhances UNSW's research capacity and at the same time consolidates a partnership with the original John Hume Institute at University College Dublin. The funding of the position was substantially boosted by the estate of the late Sue Lomasney who endowed a sizeable amount to UNSW and to the establishment of this chair in particular.

The new Institute will conduct research on modern Irish history, culture and politics and aims to foster understanding of the Irish diaspora and its contribution to the making of modern Australia. Professor McDonald said that Ireland maintains an exemplary status – it was the first country to decolonise, to become a free state and to experience partition. Historically and politically Ireland is of comparative interest, globally. Part of his work will be to understand what 'global' in Global Irish Studies might mean. With national boundaries becoming more and more porous, the Irish nation is less geographically fixated than it might once have been.

## Irish Language School Sydney

Every year adult speakers and learners of the Irish language get together in Sydney on the Queen's Birthday long weekend to practise and improve their Irish lan-

guage. This year, 70 keen speakers came together again when the Irish Language School Sydney (ILSS) hosted the Eighth 'Scoil Gheimhridh' or Winter School at Kensington.

On the Friday night, Siobhan Kelly, the Vice Consul of Ireland in Sydney, opened the school. The Consulate has been a generous, long-term supporter of the Winter School. Dr Val Noone delivered a paper on the Irish language in Australian poems. During the weekend Mahesh Radnakrishnan spoke about his research on the Australian-Irish language experience whilst Fr Micheal O'Suilleabhain led a tour to the memorial to the 1798 Uprising at Waverley Cemetery.

Those attending were Australian-born, Irish-born and Sri Lankan-born. They all shared a love of the Irish language, its history, its sounds and its links with Irish heritage. They are taking action to keep this noble language alive in Australia, by speaking it. Many will continue their studies by attending weekly classes, like the classes the Irish Language School Sydney holds each Monday at the Gaelic Club in Sydney (and similar classes in other Australian cities). Anyone who wants to keep Irish language alive is welcome to join the classes. Contact ILSS at [www.IrishLanguageSchoolSydney.org.au](http://www.IrishLanguageSchoolSydney.org.au).

## Ewen Baker: legend of the Lake School

On Saturday, 3 July 2010, over 100 Irish music lovers gathered at Mickey Bourke's Hotel in Koroit to witness Shane Howard, the local rock and songwriting icon, induct Ewen Baker as a Legend of the Lake School of Celtic Music, Song and Dance. Shane recounted Ewen's life and music career, including his gigs with Archie Roach, John Schumann and Amy Saunders, and presented Ewen with a photo portrait to hang alongside the Legends on the hallowed walls at Mickey Bourke's.

The Lake School Legend event was inaugurated in 2003 when the then Irish Ambassador, Declan Kelly, inducted Galway-born accordion player Billy Moran. Declan Kelly famously said of the night, 'It was my best night in Australia. People like Billy Moran are the real ambassadors, I just pick up the cheque.'

At the function, Felix Meagher, the Program Director, launched the 2011 Lake School program and welcomed

Cath Connelly (harp), Peter Daffy (guitar basics), Lucinda Clutterbuck (animations), Nick Martin (kids' tin whistle), Jeremy Meagher (James Joyce reading group) and Therese Supple (art exhibition) to the program.

The evening also featured a performance by Shanachie, the Lake School's fourth Paddy O'Neill Award-winning band, and an Irish music session that lasted till the wee hours.

## Recreational rioting in the summer marching season

In the 'Thunderer' column of *The Times* (15 July 2010), in the wake of the recent spate of riots in Northern Ireland, Andrea Catherwood, a Belfast-born broadcaster, writes that 'recreational rioting' is the summer 'must do' in parts of North Belfast. It is a firm fixture on the social calendar. This year it has been dubbed 'Euro Disney for rioters' because some participants were but eight or nine years old. Friends capture the action on mobile phones and upload it to social networking sites. Catherwood asks what is the solution to 'the marching season' that rekindles sectarianism every summer?

These children were born after the Troubles, yet a key legacy of those Troubles still shapes their young lives: they are still educated separately. Imagine, Catherwood thunders, if all of the children of Birmingham were segregated at age three on the basis of ethnicity or religion, and educated separately until age 18. Can you imagine the outcry, she asks? 'Educational apartheid.' It would be demonised and abolished.

Catherwood notes that the only three integrated schools in North Belfast are all heavily oversubscribed. She asserts that the blame for segregated schools lies at the door of Northern Ireland's politicians: Unionist and Sinn Féin leaders are equally guilty of maintaining the status quo for their own political ends. While acknowledging that integrated education is not a panacea, she insists that it must be part of the solution. Surely it is better for these kids to meet in the playground with a football rather than in the street with a petrol bomb?

In support, E P Gray of Edinburgh writes (16 July 2010) that the education system must support mutual understanding, not segregation. Gray suggests that the problem will only increase as more



faith schools are set up and that we are approaching the stage where the right of the individual is at risk of undermining, not improving, society.

### The return of looted treasures

In the *Irish Post* (12 May 2010), Andrew Quirke, writing from Weston Favell, Northamptonshire, UK, asks why the Irish Government had failed to send a representative to Cairo to the recent conference of countries which are seeking the return of their national treasures looted by colonial armies?

The Egyptians are seeking the return of the Rosetta Stone and countless other Egyptian treasures looted by European armies and now in European museums. The Greeks are seeking the return of the Elgin Marbles stolen from the Pantheon in Athens and other Greek treasures now in British Museums. The Italians also seek the return of all Italian treasures stolen from Italy and now in museums and collections.

Quirke complains that there was no representative from Ireland to demand the return of the many items stolen from Ireland over the centuries of British occupation. The British Museum has large numbers of Irish treasures, some of which are never even displayed due to lack of space, he asserted. The Crozier of Clonmacnoise and other treasures should not be in a British museum but be displayed in an Irish college where it can be seen in its correct setting. Also the Annals of Innisfallen, stolen from the Abbey in Killarney and the owners murdered by Cromwellian forces, now languish in the Bodleian Library in Oxford where no Irish eyes can see them.

British libraries are also full of Irish treasures looted over the centuries and Irish political representatives are too embarrassed to even ask for their return, Quirke fumes.

### Churchill's plan to invade Ireland

In *The Sunday Times* (21 March 2010), Marc Horne writes that in 1940 Lord Craigavon, the Northern Ireland prime minister, wrote to Winston Churchill to ask that Scottish and Welsh divisions be used to overthrow the Irish government. Claiming that Eamon de Valera, the Irish prime minister, had fallen under Nazi influence and that a cross-border invasion was needed to oust him, Craigavon,

a staunch unionist, advised that a military governor should be then be appointed for the whole of Ireland with his HQ in Dublin. Craigavon also advised distributing propaganda leaflets in Gaelic and English to persuade the Irish that the Celtic regiments were there to defend them.

Horne was reviewing Ian S Wood's new book, *Britain, Ireland, and the Second World War* (Edinburgh University Press). Wood, a renowned student of World War II, is the author of two studies of Winston Churchill and also wrote *Ireland during the Second World War and God, Guns, and Ulster*, a history of paramilitary Loyalism. Wood's new work is based on information from newly recovered primary sources that were previously classified files held at the UK National Archives at Kew and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland in Belfast.

While Churchill dismissed Craigavon's proposal, the government later prepared detailed plans for an invasion of southern Ireland. Field Marshal Montgomery, the hero who defeated Rommel's forces in north Africa, noted in his memoirs that he was told to prepare plans for the seizure of Cork and Queenstown in southern Ireland so the harbours could be used as naval bases.

Wood writes that British forces could have taken control with very little difficulty, but it would have an absolute gift to the IRA who would have launched wave after wave of guerrilla attacks. Occupying Eire would have been an extremely messy and costly undertaking.

Although Eire was neutral throughout the war, de Valera later provoked fury in London by offering his condolences to the German ambassador in Dublin on the death of Hitler. The taoiseach had spurned Churchill's earlier offer of a united Ireland, in exchange for entering the war on the allied side, fearing it would lead to another civil war.

### Fr Cyril Hally (1920-2010)

Father Cyril Thomas Hally, a much loved and respected priest and missionary of St Columban's Mission Society, died at Mercy Place, Parkville, Melbourne, on 18 May 2010.

Born in Temuka, New Zealand, Cyril Hally left New Zealand in 1939 to enter the Columban Mission Society seminary in Essendon. On 2 July 1945, he was

ordained in St Patrick's Cathedral by Archbishop Daniel Mannix.

The Columbans' foundation was to take the Gospel into China and it was there that Fr Hally expected to spend his ministry. But it was not to be. Within a few years of his ordination, the communist revolution saw the suppression of foreign missionaries.

Fr Hally's life revolved around centres of higher learning. He was chaplain to Asian students in Lower Hutt, New Zealand, until 1948 when he was sent to Rome to study Canon Law. After gaining his licentiate in 1951, he was appointed to Japan. He was soon recalled to the staff of the Columban seminary at Wairoa, from where he also became part-time chaplain to Asian students in Sydney. In 1961 he was appointed to Lower Hutt again but in 1963 left New Zealand to study linguistics at Georgetown University in Washington, DC. Subsequently he was sent to Ireland to St Columban's seminary at Dalgan Park, Co Meath. It was here that during Gregorian Chant classes he started to lecture students on the social context of mission and the challenges of the rapidly changing world they were facing. In 1966 Fr Hally was appointed to the *Pro Mundi Vitae* program in Brussels.

In 1971 he returned to the Australian-New Zealand Region and in 1972 was Secretary to the Australian bishops' National Catholic Missionary Council. In 1979 he moved to St Columban's seminary at North Turrumurra and for many years was Director of the Pacific Mission Institute. He was prominent in the ecumenical peace and justice group, *Pax Christi*. In 2002 Catholic Earthcare Australia inaugurated the annual Cyril Hally Lecture on ecology in his honour.

Those who met Fr Hally were impressed by his sharp intellect, lifelong indefatigability and abiding spirituality. When describing the Church's mission in the contemporary world, Fr Hally used the word 'enculturation' to explain the openness and respect which missionaries should take to the indigenous cultures people they will live with. Though he never became a missionary in China, he helped prepare missionaries now working in many parts of the world to 'read the signs of the times'.

*With thanks to St Columban's Mission Society*

# Shamrocks grow better in the bush

Invoking as its motto W B Yeats' words, 'There are no strangers here; only friends you haven't yet met', the 18th Shamrock in the Bush seminar was held at St Clement's Retreat and Conference Centre, Galong, NSW, on 5-8 August 2010. Nineteen speakers and about 100 delegates attended.

The seminar is held annually at St Clement's, originally the homestead of the pioneer pastoralist, Ned Ryan, and more recently a minor seminary for the Redemptorist order. About half of the delegates were from Canberra and environs. Other than a small international contingent and one or two from each of Darwin, Brisbane, Adelaide and Melbourne, the remaining delegates were from Sydney and elsewhere in New South Wales.

Convened by the Canberra historian, Richard Reid, the seminar was once again most competently managed by Cheryl Mongan who has recently taken up a managerial role at St Clement's, some would say to ensure the continuity of the Shamrock seminars. Fr Brian Maher, a co-founder of the seminar and the current patron, was fortunately able to overcome a recent bout of ill health to confirm his attendance.

The keynote address was given by Mark McKenna, currently of the University of Sydney and shortly to take up the Keith Cameron chair in Australian Studies at University College Dublin. His paper discussed C H Manning Clark's travels in the mid 1950s, particularly in Ireland, as background to the origins of his *A History of Australia*. It was during this period that Clark seriously contemplated Catholicism, observing it in practice, but ultimately unable to take it up formally. Noting Clark's copious retained annotated papers and his prodigious output, McKenna observed that he inhabited the intriguing space between belief and doubt, and lived to be remembered, always with an eye to eternity. Dr McKenna's biography of Clark is to be published in March 2011.

The seminar was honoured by the visit of Dr Fintan Vallely, musician, writer, lecturer and researcher on traditional music who explored the issues of scope, breadth, passion, canon and change arising from his recent revision of the encyclopedia, *Companion to Irish Traditional Music*.

Richard Reid and Brendon Kelson took the opportunity to have Frank O'Shea launch their new work, *Sinners, Saints and Settlers: a journey through Irish Australia*, a publication of the National Museum as it prepares for its forthcoming *Irish in Australia* exhibition. Reid and Kelson have put their exhibition research travels to good use in producing a volume of interlinked stories and pictures to explore the place that the Irish and their descendants have carved out for themselves in Australia's history.

Stephen Utick lamented the vicissitudes of Charles Gordon O'Neill who, after a successful career in Scotland, New Zealand and New South Wales as an engineer, politician and St Vincent de Paul Society pioneer, ended his days in destitute circumstances in Sydney's Rocks area. Jennifer Harrison discussed the colourful career of Fr Patrick Dunne in eastern Australia during the second half of the 19th century, whilst Monica Sinclair traced the history of the Sisters of Mercy in the Diocese of Maitland.

A native of Kenmare, Co Kerry, Frank O'Shea related some particularly ferocious aspects of the Irish civil war in which his family was intimately involved and told how Kerry people were ultimately

bonded together through the fortunes of their singularly successful GAA football team. Anne Maree Whitaker drew out comparisons between the 1798 rebellion in Ireland and the 1804 Castle Hill rebellion, whilst Bill Fegan described the circumstances of his great grandfather, William Joseph Fegan, who in 1917 fell victim to the War Precautions Act and was silenced in Darlinghurst Gaol in a most vengeful way by the military agents of Prime Minister Hughes.

Again this year the presentations were wonderfully complemented by music and verse from the seminar's resident minstrel, John Dengate, who, to summons inspiration, took early morning walks through the St Clement's gardens, as the sun rose to burn the frost off the grass and take the chill out of the crisp Galong air.

As well as the official 'Wearing of the Green' dinner on Friday evening, entertainment included a concert on Saturday evening with music provided by the visiting Dundalk flautist, Fintan Vallely, and a group of local fiddlers and other musicians, more wonderful renditions from John Dengate, recitals of verse by Frank O'Shea and a stirring address from Jack Waterford, Editor at Large of *The Canberra Times*, on the issues confronting the Irish and Australian churches.

Over time Shamrock has become so popular that bookings are usually filled as soon as they open and the demand for places usually exceeds supply. The 2011 Shamrock will be brought forward slightly to coincide with *Irish in Australia* exhibition in Canberra, which is expected to generate even greater competition for places. Book early.

*Patrick McNamara*



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# Lessons from Ireland's economic crisis

As readers and writers of the journal of Australian-Irish heritage, it behoves us to consider the recent history of Ireland as we might learn from what went wrong. Certainly we should all hope not to have to learn the hard lessons of the current Irish economic experience. That Ireland is in economic meltdown is well known, though the causes are disputed and the chosen cure is drastic, some say misconceived.

Ireland is now, *per capita*, the most indebted country in the Economic Union with a budget deficit higher than Greece – how on earth did it come to this? Many people assume that Ireland's economy collapsed as a result of exposure to the American financial crisis, and for similar reasons, yet hardly any of the causal factors of the US crisis are found in Ireland. There are some common features, notably a huge real estate bubble followed by a severe bank bust only contained by a massive bailout at the taxpayers' expense. The complex financial dealings, though, are missing. Ireland's economy did not fall prey to collateralised debt obligations or credit default swaps. The ultimate cause of the Irish collapse was simple, old-fashioned excess. Banking executives loaned to borrowers whose ability to repay was questionable and the taxpayers have wound up paying for their decisions; a classic case of the privatisation of profit and the socialisation of loss.

Are there other features in common with the American experience? In a recent paper, Irish economists Connor, Flavin and O'Kelly have suggested four:

- irrational exuberance,
- inflow of cheap money,
- freedom to take risks and
- 'regulatory imprudence'.

In both countries, property buyers and financiers exuberantly convinced themselves that real estate prices would continue to rise. Money flooded in – in Ireland's case largely from Germany: the same country which is now grimly insisting that other countries balance their budgets – and pay Germany back – at any cost at all to their own citizens. Bankers were free to take risks, and most Irish bankers have their fortunes intact, because the government bailed them out. The major factor though was 'regulatory imprudence' which means that the people who were supposed to ensure the banks obeyed the rules did not do their jobs. There were many reasons for this system failure in Ireland. The regulators overlooked some excesses because

the country was trying to attract yet more foreign investment, others because the country is very small (like Australia) and bankers and property developers had close, in some cases blood, ties with members of the ruling political parties.

Over-riding all four common features was a commitment to free-market fundamentalism; the doctrine that regulation of any kind is unnecessary, that the market will correct itself and that the government's job is to stay out of its way. Certainly this ideology gave regulators an excuse to ignore mounting risks rather than tackling powerful bankers. Fortunately Australia had independent agencies to protect consumers and enough stored capital for a stimulus program; Ireland had neither.

So what do those words 'the taxpayers have wound up paying for their decisions' mean in Ireland today? The government took on Anglo-Irish Bank's debts, to prevent a run on the banks. Spending the taxpayers' money doing that instead of on a stimulus package stalled the economy; particularly construction. Once so dynamic that it attracted thousands of workers from countries as far away as Poland, construction has virtually stopped. Many others, right across the job spectrum, can no longer find work; 326,000 people claimed unemployment benefit in January 2009. Unemployment opened the door to the grim grey trio of emigration, eviction and disease. The fierce Celtic tiger was supposed to have banished them as St. Patrick did the snakes, but they were only lurking in the shadows.

Emigration is back with a vengeance; this year's population outflow was estimated at 40,000 people or 2% of the workforce. Traditional sports and cultural activities, once flourishing, now suffer as players go overseas, as so often before, for work. Always a major source of loss of vigorous young people, emigration now strikes hard among highly educated, dedicated public sector workers such as nurses, teachers and police who are taking massive cuts in pay and conditions in an effort to balance the budget. All Ireland's 2009 nursing graduates went to England after a British government recruitment drive. The Irish public have lost the money spent training them, the opportunity to have decent home and hospital care and, often, their children.

Across the country ordinary families in rent arrears, due to job loss and pay cuts,

are being evicted. Scenes enacted today at the hands of Irish Councils match anything done during 19<sup>th</sup> century British rule. Ann Moore, a nursing home worker in south Dublin, sat on the roof of her house for six hours trying to thwart the bailiffs but was eventually coaxed off and taken to hospital. Her home was promptly boarded up – in a country where 300,000 homes stand empty. The Moores had struggled to catch up with their arrears of €10,000 by paying the Council €50 per week as well as €100 rent, but that made no difference when an example was wanted. Ann's husband, Christy, so ashamed of losing his home, said 'just finish me off, shoot me, put a bullet in my head'. He also said that only fear stopped people rising up against the corrupt politicians and bankers.

Loss of health care workers opens the door to disease. The Cowen government has also decided that it cannot afford to pay for herpes virus immunisations for young girls. The risk of cervical cancer is preferable to an unbalanced budget. People aged over 70 have an automatic right to a health care card, which is under threat. The right to the card will not mean much if there are no funds for nurses or disability workers to deliver services.

Only 10% of voters have confidence in Cowen's government and most pollsters believe that Fianna Fail will be crushed in the upcoming polls. There are more ominous possibilities, with Irish unions calling for a general strike and warning of a 'doomsday situation' unless a recovery plan acceptable to all parties is put in place. Peter Bunting, of the Irish Council of Trade Unions, pointed out that all of the sacrifices so far have fallen on low paid workers. Only one-fifth of the €560 million loaned to developers by the Anglo-Irish Bank has been repaid as yet, by people whose identities are still protected, though it is thought that their fortunes remain intact.

Until recently 'lifeboat Australia' sailed successfully over troubled financial waters, but there are now signs that we may not remain safe from the world's troubles forever. We need to be aware of the causes and effects of the recent economic crises, partly to avoid them as far as possible but partly so that, as a nation, we can support attempts to ameliorate the problems or at least deal with them more fairly than seems to be the case now.

**Felicity Allen**

Sources: New York Times, Time, The Guardian, NSW Nurses Association News.

# What's on

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## Irish Studies Seminars

Tuesdays, 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm,  
The Oratory, Newman College, Melbourne

Tuesday, 31 August 2010

**Dr Kevin Molloy (SLV)**

*Irish Readers and Collectors in Victoria: Edward Hayes, John O'Shanassy, Nicholas O'Donnell and William Alexander Osborne*

Tuesday, 21 September 2010

**Jonathan O'Neill (ANU)**

*Language, Heritage and Authenticity: Nicholas O'Donnell and the Construction of Irishness in Australia*

Tuesday, 12 October 2010

**Dr Louis de Paor (National University, Galway)**

*Liam S Gógan: Irish-Language Poet and 1916 Rising Veteran*

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## Conference of Celtic Studies

The Seventh Australian Conference

29 September - 2 October 2010, The University of Sydney  
After a welcoming reception on Wednesday evening, academic sessions will continue from Thursday morning to Saturday afternoon, followed by a conference dinner on Saturday evening.

**Contact: Professor Anders Ahlqvist** [aahlqvist@usyd.edu.au](mailto:aahlqvist@usyd.edu.au)

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## Lake School of Celtic Music Song and Dance

The 12th Lake School: 2-7 January 2011, Koroit, Victoria  
The summer home of Celtic music in Australia

Tuition: Fiddle, flute, uilleann pipes, button accordion, tin whistle, bodhran, finger-style guitar and song accompaniment, DADGAD guitar, guitar basics, ukulele, mandolin, harp, five-string banjo, singing, Irish set and sean nos dancing, songwriting, Irish language, slow session, Maity Swallow Ceildhe Band, kids' program, youth program (Lake School newspaper, animations, photographic exhibition and recording program) and *Ulysses* Reading Group

Featuring: Paddy O'Neill Award Band, Lake School Tutors Band, Grand Ceilidhe, Song Writers Concert, Singers Concert, Blackboard Concert, House Parties, Spud Poets Award, Youth Concert, Illowa Ceildhe, Billy Moran Memorial Welcome Session and Art Exhibition Launch.

Introducing: Cath Connelly (harp), Peter Daffy (guitar basics), Lucinda Clutterbuck (animations), Nick Martin (kids' whistle), Jeremy Meagher (Joyce Reading Group) and Therese Supple

**Contact: Felix Meagher 0413 801 294**

[felix@bushwahzee.com](mailto:felix@bushwahzee.com) [www.lakeschool.bushwahzee.com](http://www.lakeschool.bushwahzee.com)

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## Celtic Club, Melbourne Forthcoming events

7:00 pm, Friday, 8 October 2010

**The Celtic Club's 123rd Anniversary Celebration  
Presentation of the Dr Michael O'Sullivan Award**

Music with Pat McKernan, complimentary supper for current financial members.

7:00 pm, Thursday, 4 November 2010

**Cultural Groups Annual Combined Dinner**

Guest speaker: Martin Flanagan (The Age),  
in discussion with Shane Howard.

7:00 pm, Friday, 3 December 2010

**Annual Eureka Commemoration Dinner**

Guest speaker: Stuart Macintyre, Laureate Professor of Historical Studies, The University of Melbourne.

**Contact for all events: Helen or Kim, 03 9670 6472**

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## Maldon Folk Festival 2010

The 37th Festival

29 October - 1 November, 2010, in historic Maldon, Victoria

The wide variety of music includes traditional folk, bluegrass, Celtic, blues and roots, country folk, contemporary and world, with performers from all over Australia.

There will be instrument, song and dance workshops; bush poetry events; theatrical and themed presentations and dances, including a Bollywood dance party; an instrument maker's exhibition; and a dedicated kids' venue with music, craft activities and circus skills.

Maldon has more than 20 venues operating in its wealth of historic halls, churches, pubs and cafes, plus the natural amphitheatre of Mount Tarrangower, home to the legendary Guinness Tent, the Tarrangower Wine Tent and a small village of food stalls, kids' marquee, session tent and our main outdoor stage - with bush camping nearby.

Includes: Celtic favourites - Claymore, Damian Howard with the Ploughboys, Wheelers and Dealers, and Saorse; high energy bands - The Currency, Sol Nation and Spot the Dog; quality blues and roots - Daniel Champagne, Rhys Crimmin and Rosie Haden; bluegrass - Appalachian Heaven and Uncle Bill; world music - Dya Singh, Acequia and The Woohoo Revue; renowned contemporary performers - Shane Howard, Nick and Liesel, Rory Faithfield, Stiff Gins, and Tiffany Eckhardt and Dave Steel; vocal groups - Pablo and Shaking the Tree Choir; traditional favourites - Danny Spooner, Dave De Hugard and the Gay Charmers Old Time Dance Band; Ragtime Jazz - Jan Pestion.

**Contact: [www.maldonfolkfestival.com](http://www.maldonfolkfestival.com)**

Tickets discounted if bought prior to 30 September.



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## Melbourne Festival 2010

Sinéad O'Connor adds to the Irish flavour at this festival, performing at the finale on 23 October.

### *The Beckett Trilogy*

14-16 October 2010, Arts Centre Playhouse, Melbourne  
The Gare St Lazare Players, an Irish theatre company, has adapted three of Samuel Beckett's works, *Molly*, *Malone Dies* and *The Unamable*, into a three-hour performance.

For the last 15 years, director Judy Hegarty Lovett, actor Conor Lovett and The Gare St Lazare Players have worked together to bring nearly 20 Beckett titles to audiences around the world.

### *First Love*

19 October 2010, Performing Arts Centre, Bendigo  
21 October 2010, Entertainment Centre, Warrnambool  
23 October 2010, Arts Centre, West Gippsland  
The Gare St Lazare Players will perform Beckett's novella as part of the Festival's regional tour.

### *Seven Songs to Leave Behind*

Finale, 23 October 2010, Sidney Myer Music Bowl  
Sinéad O'Connor with Velvet Underground founder, John Cale, and award-winning indigenous performer, Gurrumul Yunipingu, accompanied by Orchestra Victoria, together with Ricki Lee Jones, Meshell Ndegeocello, Shelli Morris, Dan Sultan, Urusla Yovich and the Black Arm Band's Leah Flanagan.  
In performing a song that each would like to leave behind, each of the seven acts will reflect on themes of spirituality and mortality.

**Booking for all events: Melbourne Arts Centre 1300 182 183**  
**[www.melbournefestival.com.au](http://www.melbournefestival.com.au)**

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## Irish in Australia: 1788 to Present

Opens St Patrick's Day, 17 March 2011

National Museum of Australia, Acton Peninsula, Canberra

The exhibition will portray the story of the Irish diaspora in Australia as one of its major overseas destinations. Significant historical artefacts from public and family collections - agricultural, domestic, family history, titles, photographs - from all around rural, provincial, and metropolitan Australia and from Ireland will be displayed.

The exhibition will run through to July 2011 when the 18th Australasian Irish Studies Conference will be held in Canberra, to coincide with the exhibition.

**Contact: Richard Reid, National Museum, Canberra**

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## Famine Rock's Orphan Girls' Commemoration Day

2.30 pm, Sunday, 21 November 2010

As Winter sunlight highlights the white sails of the yachts fringing the Rock, we look forward to Spring's celebration of the Irish Famine Orphan Girls' arrival in Port Phillip Bay, carried by six ships: from *Lady Kennaway*, 6 December 1848, with 191 orphan girls, to *Eliza Caroline*, and 236 girls, her journey finally ending at the Geelong Depot, 31 March 1850.

The annual gathering on November's second last Sunday, sunshine or rain, meets at the Famine Rock, The Strand (cnr Stevedore Street), Williamstown.

All are invited to enjoy the music (uilleann pipes, fiddles and tin whistles) and readings of verse and diaries, then afternoon tea at Breizoz Crêperie, 139 Nelson Place.  
Descendants especially are welcome.

**Contact: Debra Vaughan 03 9397 6619**  
**[debonairdv@inet.net.au](mailto:debonairdv@inet.net.au)**

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## Connolly Association Radio Program

09:30 every Saturday - 3CR [855 AM]

Delivers Irish nationalist and republican news, current affairs and comment. Charts the involvement of modern Melbourne's community in Irish politics and affairs. Examines local issues for their implications for the local Irish community, as well as the broader Melbourne community.

**Contact: Jim Cusack 0407 521 432 [www.3CR.org.au](http://www.3CR.org.au)**

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## Celtic Folk Radio Program

09:00 every Monday - 3CR [855 AM]  
Community Radio, Melbourne

**Contact: Anne McAllister 0423 397 051 [www.3CR.org.au](http://www.3CR.org.au)**

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## Melbourne Irish Community Radio Program

11:00 every Saturday and 18:00 every Sunday - 3ZZZ [92.5 FM]  
Supported by the Melbourne Irish community and coordinated by Eugene O'Rourke, the program covers Irish music, news, interviews and Irish language items

**For inclusion in the *What's On* column, please submit items to [editorial@tintean.org.au](mailto:editorial@tintean.org.au)**

# Bolg an tSoláthair / Odds & Ends

## Saville Inquiry welcome but lets key people off

Thirty-eight years after British soldiers in Derry killed 14 people in the Bloody Sunday massacre of 30 January 1972, the Saville Inquiry has found that, in the words of the British prime minister David Cameron, the shootings were 'both unjustified and unjustifiable'. The 5000-page report costing £191 million over 12 years, which was released on 15 June, has been welcomed by families of the victims.

The victims of Bloody Sunday were unarmed and innocent and their names have been cleared. *RM* news service reported that Tony Doherty, whose father Paddy died when paratroopers opened fire, said the victims had been vindicated and the Parachute Regiment disgraced.

To loud applause outside the Guildhall in Derry, Doherty addressed thousands who had gathered to hear the conclusions of the Saville Inquiry. Massive pictures of the murdered protesters were carried aloft on banners and a minute's silence was held to remember the dead.

Despite its strong findings, the Saville report lets off lightly key people in positions of authority in Northern Ireland at the time. Saville has singled out the commander of the troops on the spot, Lieutenant Colonel Derek Wilford, for particular blame, perhaps as a way to take the spotlight off those higher up the chain of command.

In an atrocious finding, Saville said that British prime minister of the day, Edward Heath, and the Northern Ireland head of government, Brian Faulkner, could not be held directly or indirectly responsible for the deaths and injuries. Major General Robert Ford, commander of British land forces in Northern Ireland at the time, who on the day told his troops, 'Go on the Paras! Go and get them!', is also let off.

As Tommy Graham commented in *History Ireland*, 'This raises two equally appalling vistas: either Bloody Sunday was planned from the top or the Paras were an undisciplined, and lethal, rabble.'

## Long campaign

The thirteen killed on Bloody Sunday were Patrick Doherty, 31, Gerald Donaghy, 17, Jack Duddy, 17, Hugh Gilmore, 17, Michael Kelly, 17, Michael McDaid, 20, Kevin McElhinney, 17, Bernard McGuigan, 41, Gerald

McKinney, 35, William McKinney, 26, William Nash, 19, James Wray, 22, and John Young, 17. John Johnston, 59, was shot twice and died six months later. Some fourteen were injured.

The 20,000 who marched that day were part of the campaign for civil rights in Northern Ireland. A central demand of the march was for an end to the British government's policy of internment without trial.

Relatives and supporters have waged a difficult campaign for four decades. In Australia, groups all over the country marched at the time, and some followed through on the details. The outcome is a credit to persistent efforts from many quarters.

## Murray Sayle, now 84, remembered

A week after Bloody Sunday, Australian journalist, Murray Sayle, wrote a report which said basically the same thing as the Saville report. With Derek Humphry, Sayle wrote a detailed article for *The Sunday Times* which showed that the British army planned an aggressive operation. Harold Evans, the editor of the newspaper, sought the advice of Judge Widgery (in charge of a cover-up investigation) and refused to publish Sayle and Humphry's report. Their suppressed report was finally published in *London Review of Books* in 2002.

When the Saville report was released in June this year, Hamish McDonald, Asia-Pacific editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*, went to visit Sayle, now 84, in a nursing home in Ashbury, NSW. He found him stricken with Parkinson's disease but interested in world affairs.

Referring to the cost of the Saville Inquiry, McDonald remarked that Sayle and Humphry got it right 'for the cost of four nights in a crummy hotel and money for beer and fish and chips', and, in contrast to the British government's 38 years, they had their article written by the Thursday of the week the massacre happened.

## Derry, Amritsar and Afghanistan

Memories of Bloody Sunday are important in their own right, and they also offer us the occasion to remember struggles of other peoples around the world, some past, some present. Looking backwards, Tommy Graham said: 'We have been here before'. He linked the British Army's role on Bloody Sunday with a comparable



**Derry, on Bloody Sunday before the shooting started: 20,000 marching against internment**

event in India, 'the Amritsar massacre of April 1919 when, in a ten-minute shooting spree, 379 Punjabis were killed and about 1500 wounded by British forces.'

Hamish McDonald linked his analysis of Bloody Sunday with contemporary military interventions. He finished his article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* by asking why an Asia-Pacific editor should write about Bloody Sunday and then answered his own question: 'Because the 'counter-insurgency' methods built up by the British Army in South Africa, Kenya, Malaya and other places – much copied and applied in places like Afghanistan and Kashmir – can be dangerous and counter-productive, especially when accountability is removed with the help of compliant judges and cowed media editors.'

## Wisdom of 150 years ago on Afghanistan

In Dublin in October 1842, Thomas Davis, then 28, wrote an article for *Nation* magazine on the English army in Afghanistan, which is worth recalling in the context of discussing why British, American and Australian soldiers are fighting in that country.

Davis, a brilliant young Irish revolutionary, had done a lot of research on a war the British were fighting in Afghanistan at the time. He indeed published a series of five articles in *Citizen* asking 'Who are the Afghans? and why should Irishmen fight with them?'

As John Molony shows in his marvellous book on him, Davis judged that the Afghans were fighting to expel foreign invaders. He argued that another enslaved nation such as Ireland had either to unite with the Afghans or at least refuse to assist in suppressing their liberties, otherwise there can be no hope for nations. Looking back on Bloody Sunday is a good time to point out the need for a negotiated settlement in Afghanistan, as in other places of war.

**Val Noone**



# Vicipéid – an Chiclipéid Shaor

Wikipedia is a collaborative online encyclopedia which is available for free to anyone in the world to read and contribute to. There are versions of this invaluable resource available in over 250 of the world's languages. Irish is one of these languages. However, the contribution to the Irish Wikipedia is minimal and it needs to grow.

Ni chreidfeá an méid duine nár chualariamh faoin Vicipéid, nó 'Wikipedia' mar a ainmnítear í i mBéarla. Is Chiclipéid í atá le fáil ar an idirlíon. Ní hamháin ciclipéid digiteach atá i gceist anseo afách, ach ceann saor ina chomhscríobhann na léitheoirí na hait a fheictear ann. Anois, tugtar breis is 68 milliún cuairt ar an suíomh idirlín gach uile mhí!

Tá an suíomh Vicipéid ag dul ó fheabhas go feabhas ó chuireadh tús lei i mí Eanáir 2001 i San Diego, sna Stáit Aontaithe. Ar dtús ba í Vicipéid Béarla amháin a bhí ar fáil ach de réir mar a chuaigh sé i méid, tháinig méadú ar na ciclipéidí i dteangacha eile agus i láthair na huaire tá Vicipéid le fáil i mbreis is dhá chéad seasca teangacha agus ag fás atá an uimhir sin.

Ó am go chéile, léirítear inní i measc an phobail ó thaobh caighdeán na nalt de ós rud é gur féidir le duine ar bith cur lei. Ní gá bheith buartha afách, mar tá eagarthóirí ann a dhéanann athmheas orthu gach lá ó gach cearn den domhan.

Bunaíodh an t-eagrán Gaeilge tamall maith ó shin. Tá níos mó ná 10,000 alt scríofa san eagrán luachmhar sin. De réir statistící Vicipéide, tá timpeall is céad scríbhneoirí Gaeilge ag cur lei go coitianta. Ón tús, bhain níos mó ná 7,000 cuairteoirí úsáid as an t-eagrán agus ní mór dom a rá nach mbíonn sé ach ag méadú. Éacht iontach atá ann go deimhin. Ach léiríonn statistící Vicipéide éagsúla rud eile dúinn. Ar liosta na Vicipéidí, de réir an méid ailt atá le fáil, i gcomparáid leis na teangacha mionlacha eile, nílimid ach ar uimhir 93 ar an liosta de na suíomh is gnóthaí. Cuid de na teangacha atá níos airde sa liosta ná Waray-Waray, Gujarati, West Frisian, Low Saxon, Rupuarian agus Asturian! Ceist beo atá romhainn anois ná cad ina thaobh go bhfuil Vicipéid na teangacha neamhaithnide seo níos láidre agus níos toirtiúla ná cuid na Gaeilge?

Bíonn deacrachtaí go deimhin ag baint le lucht léitheoireachta Vicipéid. B'fhéidir go bhfuil easpa eolais ag an



bpobal maidir le Vicipéid, nach bhfuil an suíomh go mór i mbéal an phobail Gaeilge. Chomh maith le sin, is dóigh go mbraitheann cuid de na hait ar sean eolas a thagann ó ghlúin go glúin agus is annamh a scríobhadh síos í ar an gcéad dul síos gan tagairt ar ailt a scríobh ar ríomhaire! Ní mór a rá, leis, nach mbíonn bealach isteach chuig an gcorás teicneolaíochta ag gach éinne afách.

Nó seans go mbíonn imeachtaí eile á dhéanamh acu – i gcomparáid leis na mílte a théann ar facebook gach lá, is beag duine a dhíríonn isteach ar Vicipéid!

Ach ar deireadh thiar thall is cuma cén áit sa domhain a bhfuilimid ag maireachtaint, cé gur ciclipéid atá ann, ba chóir go mbeimid in ann cur le marthain agus fás ár dteanga ar an idirlíon agus an t-eolas a chur ar fáil do dhaoine eile.

Tá an ciclipéid bunaithe ar bhogearraí "Vici" agus tá sé an-éasca d'úsáideoirí dul i dtaithí air. Tá sé mar coinníoll bunúsach go bhfuil duine ar bith in ann alt a scríobh. Má tá suim agat in ábhar *ar bith*, cuardaigh alt faoi sa Vici agus cuir leis má fhaightear 'bearna' ann. Muna bhfuil alt ann, deis deas agat alt nua a chumadh. Ná bí amhrasach faoi d'eolas féin a thabhairt don domhan agus bain sult as do chuid teanga féin!

*Teresa Lynn*

<http://ga.wikipedia.org/wiki/Priomhleathanach>

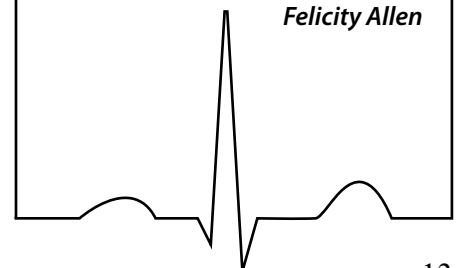
## Wordwatch: Corrigan's sign

Named after Sir John Dominic Corrigan, this sign describes an abnormal pulse caused by failure of the heart valves to close properly. Common in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, due to damage to the heart valves from infections, Corrigan's sign is fortunately now rare. John Corrigan (1802-1880) was born in Dublin, the son of a poor dealer in farm machinery. He was educated at Maynooth which had places for secular students at that time. The attending physician so impressed him that he decided to study medicine and became apprenticed to the local doctor – than normal medical training.

He set up private practice in Dublin in 1825, but also held many public appointments. These brought him into contact with Dublin's poorest inhabitants, giving him many opportunities to observe diseases of the heart and lungs. He became well known as a hard working and generous doctor during the Potato Famine. Despite an honorary MD from Trinity College, his application to become a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians was blocked, possibly on religious grounds. He circumvented the opposition and in 1859 became the first Catholic President of the College and was re-elected four times.

He also entered politics and was elected as a Liberal Member of Parliament in 1870. In this position, he campaigned for education reform in Ireland and for the early release of Fenian prisoners. His advocacy of temperance and Sunday closing of hotels antagonised both his constituents and the large alcohol distillers. Corrigan was made a Baronet in 1866 for his services to education.

*Felicity Allen*



# Miscellany

*I met Mervyn Ennis, on a lovely July evening, at his family home in Saggart. We sat in the garden overlooking two acres of land that Mervyn and his wife Margaret are developing as family allotments. I asked Mervyn when he first took an interest in writing.*

It's hard to believe, Joe, that not so long ago Tallaght was a small rural village of only 352 people. When development got under way and Tallaght started to expand, myself and two friends founded a newspaper "The Tallaght Echo" as a local vehicle for the people of the area. I think that it was then that I first took a serious interest in writing. The pace of development in Tallaght has been absolutely astonishing. Tallaght has rapidly evolved into the modern town you see today. The population has grown to 200,000 and the "Tallaght Echo" is still going strong.

*You've also made many other contributions to creative writing as a member of The Virginia House Creative Writers Group and you inaugurated the Dean Swift Creative Writing Awards in 2005 with the aim of encouraging creative writing.*

Feedback from the Virginia House Group is very important to me. It helps me to fine – tune my work and particularly to edit out anything superfluous. In poetry less is often more. Even one unnecessary word or a word in the wrong place can make a big difference.

I'm happy to say that, in only five years since its inception, the Dean Swift Awards attracts writers of a very high calibre from all over Ireland and, such is the standard of the entries that each year the judging gets more and more difficult.

Many of your poems deal with family reminiscences of strong characters who have made a big impact on your life like *Me Ma* and *The Tattoo*.

My grandmother and my mother both came from generations of no nonsense women who lived life to the full. They each had a hard row to hoe but each of them possessed a great *joie de vivre* and exercised great influence amongst family, friends and in their community.

*Your experiences as Head Social Worker with the Irish Permanent Defence Forces took you to many of the world's trouble spots such as Lebanon, Liberia and Kosovo and I understand that it is this experience that informs your war poems where you underline the total futility of war. Can you tell me a little about these experiences?*

Yes. We Irish are were fortunate that we don't have a colonial past and as such we are often very welcomed where others like the British, the Americans or indeed the French would not be welcome and also because of our history in being the underdog.

When Irish troops are returning home we work with them preparing them for the stress of the re – entry phase of coming home. The stress of lads who have been on active service and who have become used to a very regimented way of life over a six month period. We help them to leave whatever happened behind or at least come to terms with it, and learn to live with it, so that they don't come home and dump it on their families. At the same time we make them aware that when they come back

their families may have changed. Their kids will have grown a bit and we try to encourage them to work out any difficulties they experience rather than tough it out.

*I suppose it's one thing to be coming back from a place where our lads were involved in peacekeeping and where it was relatively peaceful and it's another thing entirely to be coming home from a war zone.*

In the early stages of Kosovo and Bosnia the lads would have witnessed conflict and turmoil. A lot depends on what area you go to. I was in Lebanon three times. The first time I was there

it was to familiarise myself with the life of a soldier on the ground. The second time I went was when four lads, whose average age was nineteen, were killed. These lads were killed on Valentines Day 2000. Two of us went out do bereavement work. The challenge of bereavement work is to help these lads, who thought they were invincible and who suddenly find that four of their comrades are dead, to deal with their feelings and emotions. *Such an event must change their lives.*

It does of course, but then again if four lads in a football team were killed in a car crash it would change the lives of the others in the team. Or, in a fishing community, if a boat went down and four fishermen were drowned it changes life in the community. But such happenings are part and parcel of life.

We try to get the lads to open up, to get in touch with their emotions and discuss what's happened with their comrades because they get great help and support from each other.

*Why did you go out on the third occasion?*

Before we closed down the mission we brought the families out so that they could see where their sons, their daughters or their fathers died. That was part of the healing process. It was very, very tough but it was very much worthwhile and also very beneficial. This visit was just after 9/11. It was in October in a war torn Muslim country. Some of the Lebanese families were very thankful to the Irish soldiers. The Lebanese people are a great people with languages and they could speak Irish. They would say "Conas ta tu" and "Conos ti" and use phrases like that. What was funny was that they had picked up the different accents of the lads from the Southern Brigade, the Western Brigade or the Eastern Brigade. The Arabs where the Cork lads were spoke with a Cork accent and where the Dubs were they spoke with a flat Dublin accent.

*I found the very same thing when I was living in Hong Kong. I found Chinese people speaking with a Scottish accent and there were other guys talking with an unmistakable Brooklyn accent and of course there were many who had a strong Irish accent. You've written many poems about the futility of war and its effects on people. I found Flanders Poppies particularly moving. Is this based on a real person?*

Two fields away there is a little river that flows through Saggart. There was a man from that area whose name was Kelly. He served in the Boer War and in the First World War. Seemingly he drank a bit and he used to go missing and the neighbours would find him sitting on the riverbank with his feet

**'Even one unnecessary word or a word in the wrong place can make a big difference'**



**Mervyn Ennis, poet**

*Joseph Murphy*

dangling in the water and a faraway look in his eyes and they would say that he was away with the fairies. That's where the idea came from. There is another idea that I was trying to bring in. Soldiers are often seen in a rather brutal way but there is a tremendous sensitivity in soldiers that I see as a social worker. I had the idea that he had brought his friends home in the poppies that he had sown around the garden. Then every year the poppies came up they would remind him of fallen comrades and the futility of war.

*We both know that war is just an industry fuelled by the untrammelled greed of unscrupulous arms manufacturers who incite conflict and then sell arms to both sides. Mervyn, I'm sorry. We could talk all night but I'm afraid that I'll have to leave it there because we've run out of space. It's been a pleasure talking to you. Thank you for your time and for sharing these insights with us.*

My pleasure Joe.

*Sin a bhfuil go fóill ó Seósamh Ó Murchú. Slán agus bean-nacht.*

**Joseph Murphy**

## Flanders Poppies

At first glance there is no trace of a house,  
just a low lying wall.  
On further inspection granite sills appear  
as capstones, then flowers of a one-time garden,  
purple peony roses, orange and red poppies.

Once through these windows  
children saw strange men fashion pike heads  
from steel, then sharpen them  
on a large mill wheel: saw them leave  
shouldering their pikes, never to return.

Deaf John, the last of the line,  
fought for fifty two months  
under the butchers apron.  
No one could fathom why he, a Shinner, joined,  
and joined a highland regiment,  
to be used as cannon fodder.  
Bidding 'Good bye to all that'  
he returned home from the 14-18 conflict,  
having survived the illness of war,  
the carnage of shell blasts,  
boot, butt and bayonet,  
but condemned to a life of external silence,  
eardrums in constant recoil to forgotten fusillades,  
of battles and battlefields that never ended for him.

He'd gathered a tobacco tin of poppy heads in Flanders  
and scattered them round his garden  
in memory of fallen comrades.  
Each May a bouquet of friends visited  
red and orange poppies,  
four leaf and six leaf opening like a star.  
Neighbours who saw him by moon light  
sitting crooning among the cattle  
at the bend in the river  
agreed there was no malice in deaf John,  
he's away with the fairies since the great war.  
But it wasn't fairies he was away with.  
His minds eye vividly recalled the experiences of war,  
the slaughter, the hardships, the waste,  
the friends and the horses lost.

At first glance there is no trace of a house,  
Just a low-lying wall and an overrun garden,  
a riot of poppies each May.

**Mervyn Ennis**

*'butchers apron' an Irish Nationalist term for the Union Jack from the 1880s to 1900s.*

*'Good bye to all that' Robert Graves 1895-1985 autobiography in which he depicts the horrors of the First World War.*

*'Shinner' a member of Sinn Fein – Gaelic for 'we ourselves alone'*



# Transnational Ireland: migration, conflict, representation

Under the auspices of the Irish Studies Association of Australia and New Zealand (ISAANZ), the 17th Australasian Irish Studies Conference was conducted at Queen's University, Belfast (QUB), on 1-4 July 2010. About 65 delegates, including 35 speakers, attended. The speakers included 18 Australians, four New Zealanders, six from the UK, five from the Republic of Ireland and two internationals.

Plenary sessions were led by Claire Connolly (Cardiff University), Stuart Ward (University of Copenhagen) and Keith Jeffery (QUB), and also by Richard Reid (National Museum of Australia), who outlined the objectives, scope and preparation for the *Irish in Australia* exhibition to be held in Canberra in 2011.

The general conference papers were presented in parallel streams, which are intended to ensure opportunities for all of the papers offered to be presented but which provide frustrating dilemmas for delegates when attractive topics are scheduled against each other.

On the general theme of 'Transnational Ireland', Jennifer Harrison discussed the role of Henry Jordan, dentist, missionary, politician, journalist and immigration agent, in promoting immigration to Queensland in 1860-67, whilst Elizabeth Malcolm examined aspects of migration and mental health in the cases of Ireland and the Irish diaspora during 1840s-1970s.

On the theme of 'Women, Marriage and Family', Siobhan McHugh spoke on the topic of mixed marriage, family fatwas and the myth of Anglo-Celtic Australia, analysing Protestant-Catholic marriages in Australia in the 1920s-1970s, which had been the subject of her recent successful ABC Radio National series.

Liz Rushen discussed marriage options for Irish women in colonial Australia. A recurring theme for immigrant women was their propensity to marry the convict of their choice. When an immigrant sought permission to marry a convict, she tended to emphasise his skills, personal qualities and ability to provide 'protection' for her. Yet there were many free settlers able to provide these attributes, with the added attraction of freedom.

The colonies were presented as places of employment possibilities and viable marriage opportunities. Of 1,400 Irish women who migrated to New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land on specifically chartered ships in 1832-1837, marriages have been located for half, of which 51%



**From left: Peter Gray, Brad Patterson, Elizabeth Malcolm and Kathryn Patterson at the launch at QUB of the papers for the 16th Australasian Irish Studies Conference (Wellington, 2009).**

were to convict men. Rushen concludes that these women gained some increased respectability through their marriage in a climate that valued the status of married women. The number of women who sought marriage to convicts reveals the desirability of the married state, despite the fact that the women would be taking on the status of their husbands. The frequency of formalised marriages would also suggest their readiness to establish family networks and enjoy the status of homemaker in colonial communities.

Under the banner of 'Moving Lives: the World in Ulster, Ulster in the World', Richard Davis considered the Australian Orangeman's 19th century dilemma of whether to march or not to march, Perry McIntyre studied the lives of Ulster family men transported to New South Wales whilst Di Hall has discovered some mysterious behaviour by some Ulster Protestants in conflicts in regional colonial New South Wales.

Speaking to the theme of 'Ireland, Empire and Colonial Identity', Peter Moore considered the career of Robert Torrens as effectively the chief executive of the British Empire whilst Jeff Kildea reported on his continuing research into the life and times of Hugh Mahon, an Irish-Australian patriot.

On the theme of 'Identity and Cultural Authenticity', Anders Ahlqvist traced course of Celtic Studies at the University of Sydney from 1959, when it began in the English Department, through its introduction in 1979 to the History Department, to 1987, when the Centre for Celtic Studies was established. In 2005 the Foundation for Celtic Studies (launched in 1987) arranged funding to establish the Sir Warwick

Fairfax Chair of Celtic Studies. Courses now on offer include Old Irish, Middle Welsh, a general introductory course in Celtic Studies, Modern Irish and Modern Welsh. The First Australian Conference of Celtic Studies took place in July 1992. The Seventh Conference is scheduled for 29 September to 2 October 2010.

The conference took time to note the recent passing of Jim Griffin, a conference stalwart for many years. The occasion was marked by a beautiful rendition of 'Carrickfergus' by Siobhan McHugh.

On Saturday afternoon, attendees were conducted on an extensive bus tour of suburban Belfast, replete with its murals and including the once great dock area, now all but deserted, but undergoing the transformation often seen in the old inner industrial areas of major cities. For its troubles, the tour bus arrived in the Shankill Road, which was comprehensively decorated with Union bunting, just in time to tag on to the tail of the march (it being the beginning of the marching season) to celebrate the 94th anniversary of the achievements of the 36th (Ulster) Division, which was made up of members of the Ulster Volunteer Force, at Thiepval in the 1916 Anglo-French offensive during the Battle of the Somme.

On Saturday, 3 July 2010, ISAANZ held its AGM at QUB. The principal office-bearers, Elizabeth Malcolm (President), Brad Patterson (Vice-President), Frances Devlin Glass (Secretary) and Philip Bull (Treasurer) were re-elected unopposed. The meeting accepted the offer of Richard Reid to arrange for the 18th conference to be held in Canberra in 2011 to coincide with the *Irish in Australia* exhibition.

**Patrick McNamara**

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# The enduring legacy of Bloody Sunday

On 15 June the verdict of the Saville investigation into Bloody Sunday was eventually handed down. After twelve years, following the commitment of the Blair government to open a new inquiry into the events of 30 January 1972, the tortuous process of re-examining this iconic day in the history of the 'Troubles' was finally released. In so doing once again the story of Bloody Sunday was reopened, retold and, for the people involved, relived. The past in Northern Ireland is constantly revisited and reconstructed through narrative processes of living and remembering but the Saville Inquiry had the symbolic imprimatur of the British government to provide a story that was not beholden to an unwritten presupposition that the events of the 'Troubles' were merely normal problems of law and order.

The story of Bloody Sunday has been told and retold, articulated and disputed many times. It seems odd to mention the facts again but the sheer longevity of the Saville Inquiry is testimony that the stories of Bloody Sunday had to be told again. Moreover, the vestiges of legitimacy that invested certain 'official' accounts with a greater authenticity than those of others – namely the victims and their families – needed to be stripped away. This would always be an arduous task for the Saville Inquiry but there can be little doubt that, despite continued disagreements about Bloody Sunday, the events of that day have been given rigorous exposure in a way that was never the case with its predecessor, the Widgery Report in 1972.

To make this clear, we need to address the story once again. The basic events are well rehearsed. On the day in question an anti-internment rally through Derry was attacked by soldiers from the Parachute Regiment. Amid claim and counter-claim about IRA activity in the area on the day, the soldiers shot thirteen unarmed protesters. The Widgery Inquiry was set up to investigate the debacle and produced a report that the victims' families have always construed as a whitewash. The army was exonerated and the growing perception among nationalists that the army was merely furthering the aims of the unionist government in Stormont in persecuting the Catholic minority was reinforced. Given its official status, the credibility of the Widgery Report gave sustenance to the army's account of the events of Bloody Sunday and sent a sharp message to nationalists that justice in

Northern Ireland was one-sided.

The Saville Inquiry has painstakingly reinvestigated these accounts of events and found diametrically opposed results to Widgery in describing the killings as 'unjustified and unjustifiable.' In so doing it has redressed the widely discredited findings of Widgery and provided appropriate legitimacy for the story that was often told but never properly 'authenticated', that of the victims. The families that had their loved ones taken away from them so brutally on Bloody Sunday must deal with a new way of making sense of the events. The official story now verifies their long campaign to vindicate their families and removes the slurs against them and it has proven to be a much more substantial comfort than many of us could imagine. The victims' families received the report with relief and magnanimity and were widely praised for their measured response. For those of us who were not there, the specific reactions of the families cannot be a matter for conjecture. It is for them to make sense of the deaths of their loved ones and their subsequent castigation by the British government, the army and the Widgery Report.

But victimhood in Northern Ireland is multi-faceted and views regarding where we go from here reflect this pattern. The story of Bloody Sunday also provides broader reflections on the 'Troubles' and its victims: the people who lived through and whose window on the world was tarnished by the environment they found themselves in. This was a world where the British government presented themselves as honest brokers innocently refereeing the warring ethno-national communities in Northern Ireland. Of course, this vindicated the British presence and construed the problem as purely internal to the Northern state. Few people on the ground honestly believed it and yet it was trotted out as the truth. The great service of the Saville Report to Northern Ireland more generally is that it makes clear the banal falsehoods that underpinned the dominant presentation of the 'Troubles'. It points directly to the fundamental role that the British state had in the context of Northern Ireland and in so doing undermines the account of events that seeks to pathologise sections of the community in Northern Ireland. As Saville makes clear, 'What happened on Bloody Sunday strengthened the Provisional IRA, increased nationalist

resentment and hostility towards the Army and exacerbated the violent conflict of the years that followed.'

Thus, the direct victims of Bloody Sunday must negotiate their loss and revisit their way of dealing with what happened in the past and what it means for their future. That is a matter for them and no-one should be so presumptuous as to instruct them on the correct course of action. But for the rest of Northern Ireland, the significance of Saville is symbolic – the British government has at long last recognised some of its responsibility for the 'Troubles'. The acceptance of wrongdoing on Bloody Sunday is the tip of the iceberg in terms of the broader responsibility for the terrain of Northern Ireland. Rather than seeking to attach blame to every event which took place, this is an opportunity to take stock and to recognise that pathologising the people who comprise Northern Ireland does not help in explaining the structural circumstances which gave rise to the 'Troubles'.

The real importance of Saville is that the British government has expressed culpability for Bloody Sunday and recognised that it was not a neutral umpire in the conflict. In blowing open the myths of Bloody Sunday, the Saville Report has legitimised alternative readings of the 'Troubles' and the ultimate injustice – that one of the key players accepted no responsibility – has been laid to rest. Plotting the future in Northern Ireland is a difficult business and the pathway to peaceful co-existence is pock-marked by the events of the past. But, at last, at long last, the arrogant high-handedness of successive British governments in exonerating themselves has been laid bare. The victims of this hubris were both sides of the community in Northern Ireland and it is to David Cameron's credit that this time there was no attempt to provide a positive spin on Britain's role. For this development alone we have good reason to thank Lord Saville. Beyond the direct significance for the victims' families then, the Saville Report provides a much sounder basis for conflict transformation because the real cards are on the table where most people believed they should have been all along.

**Adrian Little**

*Adrian Little is the Head of the School of Social and Political Sciences at the University of Melbourne.*

# The Writers' Centre in the 'City of Literature'

**Jack Harte, founder and current Chairman of the Irish Writers' Centre, recalls how it all began ... and how it all began again**

On Monday, 26 July, on the plaza outside the Grand Canal Theatre, Dublin's Lord Mayor, accompanied by Ireland's Minister for Sports, Culture, and Tourism, announced that Dublin had been granted the designation 'City of Literature' by UNESCO. It joins an elite band of Melbourne, Edinburgh, and Iowa. The vista of modern architecture in Dublin's newly developed docklands was an appropriate setting for the announcement, because the designation recognises the vitality of Dublin's contemporary writers as much as it honours the great figures of its past.

In Dublin the past and the present cohabit very comfortably. You cannot walk along Sandymount Strand without the ghostly figure of James Joyce shadowing your every step, until you are confronted by the corporeal figure of Seamus Heaney taking his constitutional along the promenade. The streets of the Liberties that vibrated to the indignation of Jonathan Swift are warmly celebrated in the poems of Thomas Kinsella.

Dublin is a city of literature to its marrow. Joyce claimed it could be re-built as it was in 1904 from the pages of *Ulysses*. If a city has a soul, then certainly Dublin is the creation of the very writers to whom it has given birth. And in that continuing cycle, the modern city has been producing new generations of writers who have been re-interpreting and re-inventing it in fiction, drama, and poetry.

This might suggest an idyllic relationship between the writers and the city, or indeed the state, but it would be a misleading suggestion. The concrete support for writers and the infrastructure we have tried to create has been niggardly, and even that is now under threat because of the economic cutbacks. The Irish Writers' Centre was the first to feel the black wind of recession when it had its state grant withdrawn completely in 2009.

Ironically, it was the recession of the 1980's that provided the impetus for the establishment of the Centre. At that time there was almost no infrastructure to support writers and writing, other than the newly established Poetry Ireland, and the writer was expected to starve in his garret

or get a 'real job' to support himself. My 'real job' at the time was as principal of a second level school, and I had been an active organiser in the Teachers' Union of Ireland. The dismissive attitude to writers annoyed me intensely, and I was itching to unionise them. When the Government launched the Social Employment Scheme to take some people off the dole queues, I recognised an opportunity. Schools were identified as suitable employers under the scheme, so I took on two unemployed writers, one to be a Writer-in-Residence at my school – the first in the country – the other to do research for me on the possibilities of writing as a profession. When we had collected the names and addresses of the leading hundred writers in the country, I issued an invitation to them to join the proposed Irish Writers' Union. Most of them joined, and the Union became a reality in 1986.

My next objective was to establish the Writers' Centre so that the Union and other literary organisations would have a base as well as a venue for literary events. There was an election in 1987 and a new government, the famous 'Hairshirt Government', was formed with Charles Haughey as Taoiseach. He had a genuine interest in the arts and kept that portfolio in his own Department, appointing the writer, Anthony Cronin, as his special advisor. Cronin was a member of the Union, so I was optimistic of making progress.

I gave them a respectful time to warm their seats, then phoned Anthony Cronin. His first words were, 'Before you open your mouth, Jack, the message is that there is no money for anything'.

'No I'm not looking for money, Tony, but I have an idea that I want to discuss with you,' I replied.

'Ok, provided you are not looking for money, I'll be happy to meet you.'

We met and I outlined my proposition to him. At the time the state owned many old Georgian buildings in the centre of Dublin. They had been occupied mainly as very unsuitable offices by the Civil Service. However, because of the recession, the Civil Service was shrinking and vacating many of these buildings. Some were of historical significance and, even though the state didn't have the resources to maintain them, they were reluctant to sell them. Anyway there was no demand in the market for them at the time. I told

Anthony Cronin that I wanted one of those buildings to set up a Writers' Centre.

He looked at me for a moment, then his face lit up, and he replied, 'That's a great idea.' He cleared it with the Taoiseach within days.

During the following weeks we examined every vacant building belonging to the state, but the Office of Public Works, who were responsible for them, kept discouraging the project. It was as if they would prefer to leave them until they fell down.

I approached the playwrights, the translators, and the children's book authors, all of whom were organised outside the Union. They agreed to participate in the project. When the national lottery was launched later in 1987, I applied for a grant and got £100,000 from their first distribution of funds. The purpose of the grant was to restore or refurbish the state building we were to receive.

But when no suitable state building was emerging, Anthony Cronin suggested that I should think of using the £100,000 to buy a building on the open market. So I began looking again, and was offered a church, a school, even a hotel. Almost every Georgian house was within our purchasing range. However, I had my heart set on one in Ely Place, but the vendor would not budge from his asking price of £105,000, and I could not raise the additional five thousand until it was too late. Such were the times.

It was then I discovered that Matt McNulty, the Director of Dublin Tourism, was pursuing a project to establish a Writers' Museum in Parnell Square. I talked with him. He had a lease on two buildings, numbers 18 and 19, that had been the College of Marketing and Design. One of them, No 18, was very large, enough to meet their needs, so we could have No 19 if we invested the £100,000 in its renovation. The deal was done, and in 1991 the Irish Writers' Centre and the Dublin Writers' Museum opened their doors, side by side.

Anyone who has visited either of these buildings will have been stunned by the splendid Georgian architecture, the meticulously restored interiors, but above all by the wonderful location. Perched on the hill overlooking the Garden of Remembrance and O Connell Street, they complement the Hugh Lane Gallery and the Gate Theatre as a foursome of cultural



**Irish Centre Founder and Director, Jack Harte at the Irish Writers Centre Dublin** *Jack Harte photographer*

institutions on this historic square.

For five years I had spent every spare moment on these projects, and I decided that it was now time to stand back. My day job was becoming more demanding as was my growing family. During that period I hadn't written anything but letters, proposals, memos, reports. So I de-activated myself as an activist. However, when the Irish Writers' Centre was facing closure last year, as a result of the withdrawal of the state grant, I could not stand idly by. I re-joined the Board and took over as Chairman in September.

The immediate object was simply survival. Four of us from the Board signed personal sureties with the Bank so that we could discharge the debts. All the paid staff had been made redundant, so I recruited a team of volunteers, all young graduates waiting for jobs to materialise out of the recession, and they applied themselves with enormous enthusiasm to the task of mounting a programme of activity and keeping the door open from early in the morning until late at night. We expanded the Board and launched a

membership scheme to engage as many people as possible in the development of the risen Writers' Centre – so far we have recruited over two hundred. The writers of Ireland have rallied to our cause and have given readings to raise money for the Centre. On one night we had Seamus Heaney and John Banville reading for our capacity audience of 100 – we could have filled Croke Park, but the symbolic value of those two great writers reading together for the first time at the Centre was far more valuable.

In order to campaign more effectively for better resources for literature, we have joined forces with six other organisations in Literature Alliance. Although not purporting to be a representative organisation, the Alliance's seven constituent bodies do cover a wide span of activity: Publishing Ireland, Children's Books Ireland, Irish Copyright Licensing Agency, Ireland Literature Exchange, Poetry Ireland, Munster Literature Centre, and the Irish Writers' Centre. The Alliance is being listened to, and recently we were granted a hearing by the Oireachtas Select Committee for Sports,

Culture, and Tourism.

So, the resurgence of the Irish Writers' Centre is very much under way. The designation of Dublin as a UNESCO City of Literature will help our cause enormously. A City of Literature that would let its Writers' Centre die? Unthinkable. At least I hope so. It is my hope that the designation will be a spur to a new phase in the development of literary Dublin, and that we will be given the resources to embark on this wonderful new project. We must set about developing an international network of associates to promote literature across frontiers. Above all we must start by forging links with the other Cities of Literature, Iowa, Edinburgh, but above all with the city of Melbourne where generations of Irish emigrants have found a home.

**Jack Harte** was born in Killeenduff, Co Sligo, and lives in Dublin. His recent books are the novels, *In the wake of the Bagger* and *Reflections in a Tar-Barrel*, and the story collection, *From Under Gogol's Nose*. His next, *Unravelling the Spiral*, a book on the sculptor, *Fred Conlon*, is due out this autumn.



# A 'fair go' in Australia

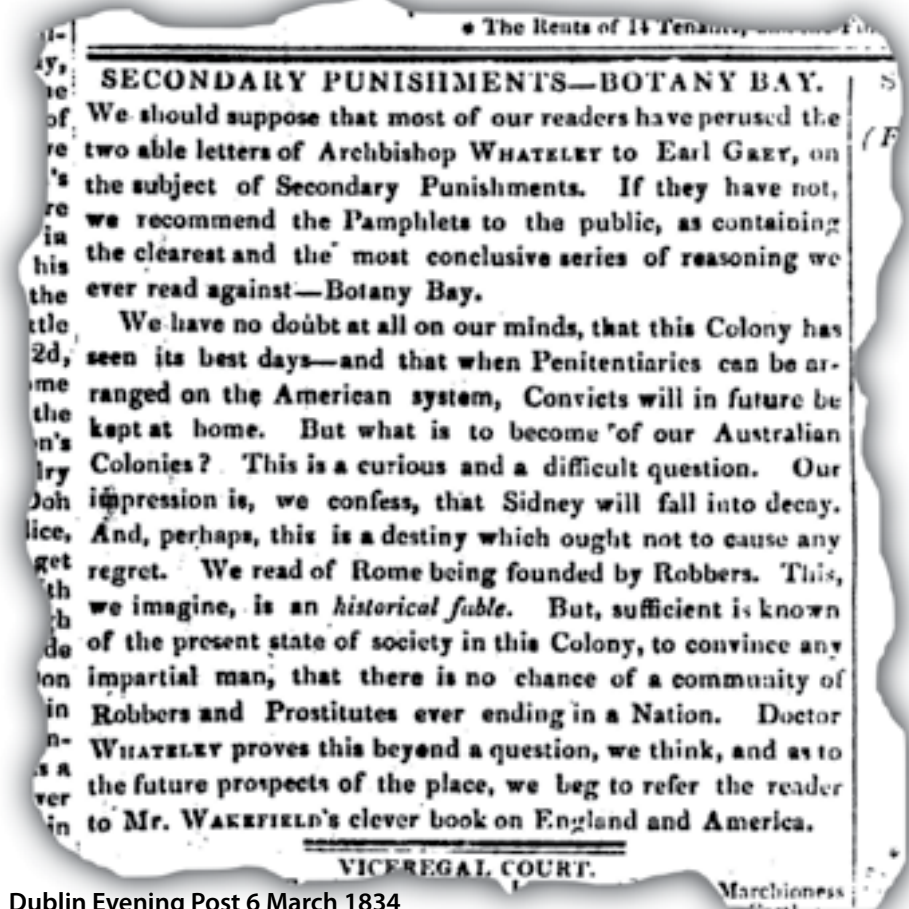
Today we are a nation of over 20 million people from every corner of the world. Forty percent of us – an enormous proportion – either come from another country or at least one of our parents did.

Australia is universally recognised as one of the world's most successful civil societies: prosperous, peaceful and well ordered. The concept of a 'fair go' and accepting people for what they are is deeply entrenched in the Australian psyche and has been of enormous benefit in the workings of a cohesive society.

Australian egalitarianism and the spirit of a 'fair go' evolved from the convict era and the early settlers. Those who arrived here first, either willingly or unwillingly, had little to offer other than their skills and a chance to 'give it a go'. Prior to the 1860's, very few people came to this country with significant capital backing and/or professional skills. We should be justifiably proud of the nation we have become.

We have been extraordinarily successful in absorbing people from every corner of the world in a remarkably short time span. As recently as 1950, less than two generations ago, 96% of us were of Anglo-Celtic origin or were ethnically more British than Great Britain is today. Here in our own state of Victoria, Governor David de Kretser came from Sri Lanka, former Premier Steve Bracks' ancestors hailed from Lebanon, and a recent Lord Mayor of Melbourne John So was born in Shanghai.

Typically, initial suspicions and objections to new arrivals have usually quickly dissipated and those who have come here have successfully assimilated; there is no doubt the Australian ethos of a 'fair



Dublin Evening Post 6 March 1834

go' gives new migrants the opportunity to prove themselves, settle in and be accepted. The American Consul General in Perth in a speech a few years ago quipped 'I come from the Melting Pot and came to the Melted Pot!'

However, no society is flawless and we must be acutely aware and wary of insidious attacks and undermining of the best features and characteristics of our society. There are indicators that our sense of easygoing tolerance, giving people a fair go and accepting others for

what they are, may not be as generous as it once was.

Former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser, to his great credit, allowed the 'Boat People' from Vietnam, Cambodia and elsewhere in South-East Asia to come here and encouraged his fellow Australians to accept them. Now we can see how many of their children are dominating the VCE scores, are the cream of many university courses and are rapidly rising in all realms of Australian life.

Anne McMahon

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# Generations

As a great grandson of a Fenian from Co Tipperary named John Cleary, who lost his job as a London customs officer because of his activities, I find Tinteán to be of great interest. My father was one of the London Irish who went to sea and joined an Australian coastal shipping company founded by an Irishman – John Burke Ltd. Like so many Australian shipping companies ‘Burkes’ no longer exists alas.

Dad’s sea-going followed a tradition of his mother’s family, the McGarrys. Dad’s maternal grandfather, Peter McGarry was also a customs officer on the London docks. Many men in the McGarry clan made their living on the sea. They were everything from stokers to ships’ officers. One of my father’s brothers came to Australia in 1928 and ran a trading schooner in the central Pacific before gaining his overseas master’s certificate in 1938. My uncle’s ticket was endorsed in steam and sail as he had served on the barque *Panir*; a German vessel taken by the British after WW1. Uncle Charlie skippered American oil tankers to the Persian Gulf during WW2.

My father and three brothers were involved in IRA activities in London after WW1. One of them, an accountant, settled in Dublin, apparently in connection with his activities. After De Valera nationalised British insurance companies during the economic war, Ted Cleary worked for Irish Assurance Ltd. He was one of the IRA honour guard who watched over Terence McSwiney’s casket in 1920. My father told me that when he was in port in London, he joined in with the crowds continuously reciting the Rosary outside Brixton prison as McSwiney lay dying.

My mother’s paternal grandparents, Matthew Carroll and Ellen Carroll (née McKenna) were the first Europeans to settle at Petrie’s Creek (now Nambour) in 1870. My grandfather was the first European child born in Nambour. Matthew Carroll was born in Philipstown (now Daingean) ‘at the eye of the turmoil’. He went to Glasgow for work and met Ellen McKenna from Co Monaghan. They married and had a son Matthew, my great-uncle. The Carroll’ migrated to Queensland in 1866, accompanied by Ellen’s brother Charles and sister Rose. Ellen and Matthew lived at first in a shanty at Moolodah Heads (now Alexandre Headland) when Matthew found work from William Pettigrew, a pioneer timber merchant. Charles married and settled in Stanthorpe. Rose married Humphrey Moynihan and I know several of her descendants, some third cousins.

My maternal grandmother, Margaret Howley from the Burren, landed in Maryborough as an indentured domestic servant in 1883. Working at Carroll’s Nambour Hotel she met my grandfather, Jack Carroll the blacksmith. After my grandfather died my grandmother spent the rest of her life with my parents’ family. She informed me there was such a thing as an Irish language and she could speak it. She taught me my first words of Irish but I am ashamed to admit I have forgotten most of them.

Nanna’s sister Kate and two brothers, Mick and Jim, followed her to Queensland. Kate married George Nixon an Australian of Irish Protestant parents. Her family were all Catholic although George did not become a Catholic until late in life. Two of my second cousins,

Pat and Michael Nixon, are members of the Queensland Irish Association and Pat is a member of the Tara Singers which every year sing at the bi-lingual Irish and English Mass at St Stephen’s Cathedral on St Patrick’s Day.

George Nixon told me that during the Irish War of Independence, Irish societies in Brisbane would hire river steamers to take sympathisers up the Brisbane River to the picnic grounds at Mandalay where activities were held to raise funds for the cause. On these excursions, my great aunt Kate would give out the Rosary in Irish. From my memories of aunt Kate, she would have been in her element ‘giving out’ the Rosary. She was a bossy old biddy – a born leader.

Well, I must have exhausted your patience by now. Unlike three of my sisters who travelled to the UK and Ireland, I have never done so. At seventy six years of age it is unlikely I’ll be going overseas now. I married late, my wife being sixteen years younger than me. Our son is a journalist. Next March, he is to begin studying in international relations at Waseda University in Tokyo. Steve has stayed with our cousins in Dublin and we have had several of our overseas cousins visit us. My wife is intrigued that both sides of my extended family maintain contact over so many generations. Only twelve months ago, we enjoyed the company of first cousins twice removed who come from Dublin. Four years ago we hosted Father John Glynn from the Catholic diocese of Brentwood Essex, whose mother was a first cousin of mine. The Irish are better at networking than the Masons!

*Denis Cleary*

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# Poet and Priest

A poem well-known in the early years of the twentieth century was 'The Day I Rode to Gaffney's Creek, Beside the Goulburn Water'. One stanza runs:

The sun rose o'er the towering hills,  
And shot its golden quiver;  
And down the gorges twinkling rills  
Ran to the welcoming river;  
The lyre-bird whistles through the trees  
Whose forest shades protect her,  
And wattles flung unto the breeze  
The god's own native nectar;  
The mute lips of the muse it stirred,  
And song again it brought her,  
The day I rode to Gaffney's Creek,  
Beside the Goulburn water.

It was written by Fr J J Malone, an Irish priest of the Melbourne Archdiocese noted for his literary interests as poet, essay writer, journalist, editor and thinker.

James Malone was born in 1863 at Dunbrin near Athy in the south-west corner of County Kildare. The Barrow River nearby, which he considered his spiritual home, was the inspiration of many of his Irish poems. After attending school at Shanganamore near his home, he went to a Christian Brothers College. He graduated from the University of Ireland and completed his studies for the priesthood at All Hallows College, where many priests for the missions, including Australia, were trained. He was ordained in 1889 by Dr Walsh, Archbishop of Dublin. In Ireland he was known for his literary interests.

After arriving in Melbourne at the end of 1889, he was chosen curate at Kyneton. Then in the 1890s he was successively a curate in Melbourne parishes. Being better educated than most priests and an accomplished writer and public speaker, he was picked out for special duties. For example, when Archbishop Carr laid the stone at the opening of a new church, St Paul's in Brunswick in 1894, Fr Malone was invited to give the occasional sermon, though he had been a curate for only a few years. He delivered a sermon on the history of the church at Mansfield in 1899, perhaps the stimulus for his poem on the Goulburn River at Gaffney's Creek.

During his time in Melbourne Fr Malone was active in literary affairs, with poems published in Ireland and Australia, and articles and lectures on literary matters. He was an early specialist on 19th century Australian writers, publishing

pamphlets on the poets Henry Kendall and Adam Lindsay Gordon.

He was made a parish priest in 1901, a fairly rapid promotion, and held three posts over the next half century. The first involved a move to the country to Daylesford from 1901 to 1913. Here he built a new wing on to the Daylesford Convent and constructed two new churches in his parish. The church at Yandoit was on a 90 acre paddock – Fr Malone said that 'it must be about the smallest church in Victoria standing in the largest churchyard'. He took holidays at Lorne, whose seascape became for him a source of poetic inspiration similar to the Barrow River in Ireland.

During his appointment at Daylesford he took a year's sabbatical overseas in 1906-7, when with a group of priests he visited Egypt and the Holy Land, returning to Australia via Ireland and the United States. While on this trip he wrote accounts of his travels for each issue of *Austral Light*, a Catholic magazine with wide literary and social interests. These articles proved so popular that they were issued in book form as *The Purple East* in 1910, with a preface by Archbishop Carr. In this book Fr Malone discusses a wide range of topics, revealing himself as a well read, curious and engaging personality. He believed the Gael was naturally more religious in temperament than the Saxon, who was more practical and efficient. Though opposing British rule in Ireland, he thought the British had brought freedom and prosperity to many of their other colonies throughout the world. While in Daylesford he wrote Australian Catholic Truth Society pamphlets on 'Indifference in Religion' and on 'St Francis Xavier', a symbol of Australia's mission to Christianise Asia.

In 1913 he was made parish priest of Clifton Hill, where he built the Clifton Hill presbytery and persuaded the Christian Brothers to open their boys' college there. During this period his literary and publishing activities increased. In 1914 his book *Wild-Briar and Wattle-Bloom*, collecting poems published over the past 25 years, was published. The title expressed his dual devotion to Ireland and Australia. Poetic themes included love of Ireland, Kildare and the Barrow River; his feeling of exile in Australia, but his embrace of Australia as a new free land; his love

of rural Victoria and his dislike of city life. He wrote occasional poems on St Patrick's Cathedral and the Eucharistic Congress in Sydney in 1900. The next year his book of essays on Irish and Australian poets *Talks about Poets and Poetry* was published. All three of his books were published by Linehans and printed at the Advocate Press. He became Managing Director of *Austral Light* when Monsignor Phelan was appointed Bishop of Sale Diocese.

During the turbulent years of the first world war, he went in print on a number of occasions supporting Dr Mannix when he was under attack. Malone, who was not naturally interested in politics, moved to the Sinn Fein position of forcibly opposing British rule in Ireland. By the end of the war he had over-extended himself and had health problems. He asked Archbishop Mannix to be relieved of his demanding Clifton Hill post, and was transferred to the easier position of parish priest of Ashby (West Geelong) where he became a revered figure. He took another year's sabbatical leave overseas in 1927-8. Special celebrations were held in 1939 on the 50th anniversary of his ordination. When he died in 1948, he was the senior priest of the Archdiocese, with 60 years service as a priest. At his requiem Archbishop Mannix, who was born in the same year as Malone, said:

Father Malone was a man of rare gifts, of deep and wide culture and great learning. A versatile writer, he gave a distinction and charm to almost any subject he touched. He was a poet of no mean accomplishment. He was a preacher of rare distinction, with an unlaboured flow of natural eloquence that always filled his churches and charmed and enriched his hearers. Yet with all his gifts he was a simple, natural, humorous, kindly, hospitable man. He was loved even for those foibles and eccentricities which sometimes give distinction and charm to those more highly gifted than their fellows.

**Patrick Morgan**

*Acknowledgment is made to Fr Linnane's A-Z List of Priests and Bishops held by the Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission.*



# A piece of Down-Under Up-Over

In the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century a voyage from Ireland to Australia took upwards of three months. On outward journeys the cargo was made up primarily of free settlers and convicts as government sought to maximise emigration to the colony. The cargo on the return journey could be of a haphazard nature when being arranged locally at the discretion of the ship captain who would be acting loosely on the instruction of the owners. It is easy to imagine that a member of one of Ireland's leading merchant families was able to influence the selection of ballast or cargo.

Following an apprenticeship in Tralee young Richard Blennerhasset served as ship's doctor on a number of voyages during the 1880s. He fulfilled his shipboard duties proficiently and took a keen interest in shipboard life and the responsibilities of the captain. He had an inquisitive mind and his contemporaries noted his interest in botany and his especial fascination with ferns.

During the forenoon watch on the afternoon of 22 April 1889 the schooner *Phrontis* anchored in a small bay on the east coast of Van Diemens land. She had sailed from Sydney a week previously and had made excellent time but Captain Ferguson had been forced to jettison a quantity of cargo due to infestation. Therefore, as the ship was riding high he was obliged to replace the lost weight. He organised a ship's boat and commissioned it under the ship's surgeon to source additional ballast. Ashore, the surgeon decided lumber would be the most suitable replacement and he tasked his crew to fell a number of trees. During his time ashore he indulged his botanical passion to record a number of plants. He was very taken by a number of trunked ferns with massive fronds growing profusely throughout the area. On leaning against an eight foot specimen, he was surprised to feel it shift under his weight. He summonsed a seaman and together they levered the plant to the ground. Its roots were shallow and unlike anything he had seen before. The rich foliage though was reminiscent of the ferns of his native Kerry, and perhaps already an idea was germinating.

He quickly decided that these plants would make ideal ballast. His work-party harvested a number of these plants and removing the lightweight fronds,

the trunks were ferried to the ship and stowed aboard. As the second dogwatch was concluding, everyone had returned to the ship and the captain declared himself satisfied. The Bosun called 'All hands', the anchor was raised, sails unfurled and the *Phrontis* was homeward bound.

Toward the end of July that same year the *Phrontis* anchored off the small quay at Kells Bay. Blennerhasset had exercised his influence in pursuit of the idea that had struck him half a world away. Having discharged and sold most of its cargo in Cork, the ship was bound for her home port of Tralee. This stop-over at Kells Bay was solely in pursuit of the young Blennerhasset's strange idea. The trunks were hauled from the hold and ferried to the quay, which was less than half a mile distance from the family hunting lodge. Blennerhasset also discharged himself and made his way to the house. From there he arranged the transportation of the logs by donkey and cart to the grounds of the house where previous generations of his family had, in common with many of the gentry of the Victorian era, established a garden. During the following weeks of summer they were planted in a cleared area both behind and within the formal walled garden. They presented a strange sight; the bare dark trunks without foliage, standing like remnants of a scorched landscape. They aroused much comment among the workers of the estate and the small local community, with the prevailing consensus being that the strain of madness within the family had reappeared.

Richard heard the whispers, smiled, reclined in his lounge chair and waited.

Had the young doctor lived until today or even ever existed at all, it is eminently possible that he would view the gardens as his proudest achievement. The imported ferns have colonised the already spectacular landscape of the valley to an extent that would have delighted the fictional doctor and amazed the sceptical locals. Their integration with local species and their colonisation of their surroundings is truly a botanical wonder. They have even created their own microclimate. The gardens left the Blennerhasset family during the 20<sup>th</sup> century and changed hands a number of times. Each change of ownership had advantages and disadvantages but fortunately each owner appreciated

and nurtured the strange legacy left by the introduction of the Australian tree ferns. There were additions and losses, the Irish climate took its toll, but to visit the gardens today and wander in the area now known as the Primaeval Forest is a singular experience. Tasmanian visitors have testified to its uncanny similarity to parts of their island. A visit must cause any discerning person to reflect on the accident of life that has brought into existence these wonderful gardens.

The current owner, Billy Alexander, is a noted pteridologist and has committed to making the gardens more accessible to the general public and ensuring a sustainable future for them. To this end he has worked sensitively and decisively to recover from the ravages of time and nature as much of the decipherable original plan as possible. In 2006 the work started when a group of enthusiasts carefully began the excavation of the walled garden. In 2007 the magnificent river walk was cleared and opened. A statement of intent was also made that year with the planting of Ireland's biggest palm tree, a 14m *Jubaea chilensis*, specially imported in a challenging logistical operation. Recently a number of lakes and a waterfall have been completed to showcase the plant collection.

To complete the restoration of the original walled gardens is a key priority, subject to the availability of funds. The continued development and enhancement of the Bamboo Glade will add a new dimension to the gardens. The planting of Himalayan, Chinese and Chilean woodlands has been pencilled in for one of the newly cleared areas. A two hectare site has been set aside to host a 'trees of the world' arboretum. The future viability of the gardens and the sourcing and collection of these plants is dependent on the support and encouragement of the visiting public.

These gardens are one of the hidden gems on the Ring of Kerry, five kms north-west of Cahirciveen. If you are lucky enough to be visiting the county, make a point of visiting them and you will not be disappointed. They are evidence of the multi-faceted long and mutually beneficial history of communication between Ireland and Australia and they afford a wonderful space to reflect on the strangeness of life.

Eoin Ó Cuirc

# Souls of bronze

**1997** The mirror-flat Liffey reflects the structures and activity on its shore in the chill Dublin afternoon, as it has for centuries. Today, workers mingle along the quay in their lunch hour. They see two copies of the Custom House, one on the quay, and the other, less distinct, in the water.

**1847** At the docks, near the Custom House, a myriad of masts is replicated in the still water of the Liffey, but the shore ripples with activity. Sparks spit on the cobblestones from the hooves of draught horses as they haul carts loaded with bags of grain to the dock. Lines of men heave the grain into holds of London bound ships, to bake fresh English bread. Long lines of men, women and children cram into other ships, bound for the New World, to escape starvation in their own country.

**1997** On the quay stands a memorial to those who died in the potato famine of 1845-1849. Seven bronze statues of gaunt men and women, followed by a dog, depict a family walking alongside the river. It was crafted by Dublin sculptor, Rowan Gillespie, and presented to the city of Dublin. The effect of the famine is strong in the figures, taller than they should be, starvation cut across faces and bodies. They are led by a woman, the mother? Her hands are crossed over her breast, as if she is already in her coffin. Close by are two men, her sons? They carry rough-wrapped bundles. Like the first figure, they look upward, toward heaven perhaps, but in despair.

Tourists wander past. Some stop, one weeps.

**1847** Catherine leads the way, bare-footed, like her children. She looks toward heaven and prays to the saint she is named for, Catherine of Siena.

'Oh Saint Catherine, in your mercy, allow us to reach food and safety before more of us die. Help us reach the tall ships they say are ahead. Take us over the sea from the vile prison our land has become.'

She clutches the family bible to her breast, as she continues to pray.

'Jesus and Mary, take the soul of my beautiful Clare to heaven with you. Cradle her in your arms. Feed her with love.'

Catherine wipes her eyes on the sleeves of her filthy rags. Joseph, her eldest son, moves closer to her. A harsh sob escapes as pressure builds in his throat.

An English soldier on horseback passes the small group, and Joseph snarls. He wants to kill them. He clenches his bruised fists. He fought so hard last week when they evicted the family from their cottage.

'You're behind in your rent,' the leading soldier had shouted, beating on the door with a long baton. Joseph would have killed him with his fists, but his mother threw herself in front of him.

'They'll hang you, they'll hang you,' she screamed. No-one died then, as the family scabbled together the last few bundles of things. The soldiers herded the family out. When Catherine dropped to her knees in front of the four whitewashed crosses, where her husband, Joseph, two sons and a daughter, lay dead from starvation, a soldier's baton hit her. Joseph leapt forward again, and Catherine screamed, 'No, no, Joey, they'll hang you.'

Sean, the next son, carries their only valuables. Always practical, he grabbed the silver cross and candlesticks from the mantel before the soldiers saw them, and shoved them under his shirt. Their father could never sell them, as no-one in the village

had either money or food.

If we just can reach the ships, he thought, as he clutched them tight, they might pay for our passage.

**1997** The heads of the next two figures in the sculpture are bowed. They are young, a boy and a girl, walking close together. They appear unable to hold themselves erect. The boy carries a bundle in his arms.

**1847** Patrick and Mary, the red-haired twins, have always been inseparable, and they walk close together. Patrick carries the food they've scrounged along the way: rotting cabbage leaves, a couple of apples, some shreds of salted meat, and bread with patches of blue-green mould. It's a small bundle. Mary, stumbling sometimes, keeps going by watching Patrick's feet, and moving hers in time with his.

'Keep walking Mary.' He says constantly. 'Our mother's prayers will find us favour with the good Lord. We *will* be saved.'

Father O'Reilly always said that Patrick was well-suited for the priesthood, since his faith never faltered.

**1997** The last figures in the sculpture seem younger than the rest. A boy, whose legs appear unsteady, carries the seventh figure, a girl, across his shoulders. A thin dog is behind the group, its head and tail drooping.

**1847** Kevin, the youngest son, carries Clare's body over his shoulders. Although she isn't heavy, starvation has seen to that, Kevin staggers under her weight.

'I must stop, Mother,' he calls.

Here is a stream. They all stop and sink into the softness. Kevin lowers Clare's body to the ground and sits close by. He doesn't want to stop, but must. I have to get her to a priest; I must make sure a proper mass is said for her; she must be buried in consecrated ground. The thoughts whirl in his head.

'Now,' Patrick says, 'we must eat.' He passes around chunks of bread, and hands an enamel mug of water, dipped from the stream, to his mother. The skinny dog forages in the undergrowth for the rats that keep it alive.

'We'll have to eat the dog,' Patrick suggested a few weeks ago. Catherine couldn't. The dog was a legacy of a more prosperous past, when the family ate well, and the children attended a hedge school.

Rested as well as they are able, the family straggles on.

'Jesus, Mary and St. Catherine,' Catherine cries out as she falls to her knees. The others look ahead at the waving masts crowding the sky in the distance. They walk faster now, strengthened by hope. As they approach the ships, they stop at a soup kitchen, the only one they've seen since the village one closed months before. A woman takes beautiful Clare gently from Kevin's arms; the family sits at benches, and hands pass around bowls of meaty soup. Even the dog has a dish. Catherine's tears cannot stop. A priest approaches her, and holds her hands in his. He prays as she weeps.

**1997** More than one million people either died of starvation during the famine years or managed to emigrate to Australia, the United States, and Canada. The British abandoned the Irish and let them perish when the Government closed the last soup kitchen in October, 1847.

Carolyn Hirsh



# The Potato Famine



On Custom House Quay next to the River Liffey in Dublin a memorial to those who lost their lives in the potato famine of 1845-1849 has been erected. It's a group of six bronze statues of sad starving men and women, followed by a skinny dog. The statues were crafted by Dublin sculptor, Rowan Gillespie and presented to the city in 1997. The statues depict a desperate family walking alongside the river, perhaps to reach a ship that might carry them to another country to enable them to survive. The effect of the famine is strong in the thin bronze figures, taller than they should be, but so thin, with starvation cut across their faces and bodies. The elongated nature of the figures becomes more pronounced as their shadows lengthen during the hour I sit and look at them.

Their faces are despairing, beyond sad or angry. The three figures in front, two men and a woman, are looking up, toward heaven perhaps, but without hope. The woman in front has her hands crossed over the small bundle she carries clutched

to her breast, crossed as if she is already in her coffin. The heads of the other three figures and the dog are bowed. They are too exhausted to hold themselves erect. Four of the figures carry bundles in their arms, a few possessions perhaps, while the figure at the back, a teenage boy, seems to stagger as he carries the body of a young girl across his shoulders. The feet of the six figures are bare and their clothes are rags.

More than one million people either died of starvation during the famine years or managed to emigrate to Australia, the United States or Canada. Two of my great-grandparents were among those who reached Australia, but others of my ancestors perished.

As I continue to sit, the sun sets and dusk descends on the scene. I've been there a long time watching the sad statues and thinking of my own roots.

**Carolyn Hirsh**

*Photos from flickr.com/photos/infomatique*



# Thomas A Fitzgerald, OFM: An Irish Language Advocate in Sydney

In the early years of the last century, Sydney boasted some dedicated Irish language enthusiasts, all working in their separate ways to further the old tongue. They included such stalwarts as Albert Dryer of Bavarian and Irish extraction, William Burke of Paddington and the Franciscan priest and author Thomas A Fitzgerald.

During my childhood on a small farm beneath Tipperary's Galtee Mountains, we were often visited by a travelling widow woman named Mrs Ormond, herself a native of Kerry. She was not strictly a traveller, as she resided in the local village of Ballyporeen, but being very poor and having much spare time on her hands, she liked to visit her neighbours. A genial and friendly soul, she was warmly welcomed everywhere. My parents were always glad to see her. In the course of her travels she was sometimes given books which their owners, no readers themselves, wished to discard. These, in turn, she presented to friends whom she knew liked reading. My mother always received some of the better titles, for which she, in return, gave Mrs Ormond eggs, bottles of milk and sometimes a few pence.

On one occasion Mrs Ormond gave us a handsome hardback book called *Four in Hand* published in 1924. A delightful book it was, full of charming stories and sketches, some of them set in Co Tipperary and one of them relating the fortunes of a fictitious character from our own parish. The author was Thomas A Fitzgerald. OFM.

Now, many years later, I still possess the book and would not part with it for riches. It has never, alas, been reprinted and copies must now be as rare as gold dust. Over many years I searched in vain for information on Thomas Fitzgerald. Who was he? Was he, perhaps, a Tipperaryman? That he had spent some time in Australia I deduced from reading *Four in Hand*. Some of the book's finest pieces, among them features on Robert O'Hara Burke and his comrades, Cardinal Moran and Peter Lalor, left me in little doubt as to Father Fitzgerald's residence 'down under'.

Recent research has unearthed some very interesting facts regarding Father Fitzgerald, author and patriot. He was born in Callan, Co Kilkenny, in 1860. Entering the Franciscan Order, he was ordained in the late 1880s. He ministered for a couple of years in Dublin, then was sent by his Order to Sydney, Australia where, apart from a few vacations in Ireland, all his remaining years were spent.

Although he seems to have been a fluent Irish speaker from youth, his interest in the language did not really begin to blossom until some years after his arrival in Sydney. As the 19th cen-

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ture drew to a close the city was witnessing something of a Gaelic revival.

Eugene Ryan, an ardent Irish language enthusiast from Co Tipperary, owned a much patronised hotel in George Street, Sydney. This hotel was the headquarters of a Gaelic revival movement. Here language classes, traditional music and song sessions, conversation circles and, even, card games were all conducted exclusively through the medium of Irish. Sadly, with the death in 1903 of Eugene Ryan at the early age of 42, the Gaelic movement in Sydney lost much of its momentum. It was left to enthusiasts like Father Thomas Fitzgerald and William Burke, neither of whom had known Eugene Ryan, to carry on the good work. Among Father Fitzgerald's activities was the promotion of the Fáinne, the gold emblem often displayed by Irish speakers on their jackets, usually as a

means of recognition and an invitation to converse 'as Gaeilge'. He was, in fact, the leader and spiritual director of one of the largest Fáinne groups in the city. His love of the Irish language was matched with his desire to see Ireland regain her freedom. Writing of his connections with Pádraic Pearse, leader of the 1916 Rising, Patrick O'Farrell in his book *The Irish in Australia*, had this to say; 'The Franciscan priest TA Fitzgerald had become a convert to the cause of the Gaelic language'. In 1909 he had translated from the Irish some of PH Pearse's Connemara stories for publication in the Sydney Catholic Press. At that time Pearse himself had revised the stories in proof form and, either then or later – 1914 or 1915 – Fitzgerald had met Pearse in Ireland. In either of those later years, Fitzgerald, together with William Burke of Paddington in Sydney (a 'thorough Irish-Irelander') had attended a banquet to commemorate the break-up of Pearse's St Enda's College in Rathfarnham. (Fitzgerald observed: 'those patriarch patriots like the Hon John Meagher and Bernard Gaffney, and many others from Australia, would have been delighted at the scene'.) Fitzgerald published the Pearse stories in book form in Sydney in 1921 and remained lyrical about Ireland's achievements and future. 'Gaelic Ireland is a new and glorious Ireland ....'

Father Fitzgerald also wrote a much acclaimed handbook illustrating the most effective ways to learn and teach the Irish language titled *Stepping Stones to Gaeldom*. His translations of Pearse's stories were issued in book form shortly before his death. Sadly, he did not live to see the publication by The Talbot Press of *Four in Hand*.

His tales of Ireland and Australia are delightful and very readable. He was, at all times, a tolerant and liberal man who hated injustice and bigotry. He championed the causes of the native aboriginal Australians time and again. Writing in *Four in Hand* of the fortunes of John King, only survivor of Burke and Wills' ill-fated expedition, he had this to say:

King was then the only one left – a

# If I lived in Galway...

solitary man in nature's wildest sequestration. He fell in with the Blacks. The kind-hearted aboriginals treated him well. This is one of numerous instances recorded in reliable history of the noble qualities of the Australian Blacks when white men were at their mercy and in dire need. The aborigines of Australia have never been cruel except when wronged and vilely treated by their alleged superiors – the white men. Their reprisals have always been caused by gross injustice and inhuman treatment. They are by nature inoffensive, gentle, hospitable and kind-hearted.

It must not be imagined that all of Father Fitzgerald's judgements were correct. His essays on Cardinal Moran (*Four in Hand*) would be disputed by many. Despite his praiseworthy work in regard to the celebrations of Saint Patrick's Day in his diocese,

Moran was scarcely the prince of Irish patriots as depicted by Fitzgerald. Today he would be rightly regarded as an ultra-cautious conservative who had little regard for the Irish language so deeply cherished by Fitzgerald. Again, Father Fitzgerald's description of Peter Lalor as 'the founder of Australian democracy' is, to say the least, ludicrous. What can one say of the following: ('Four in Hand' p. 143) 'The nation holds his memory dear as the great champion of the cause of labour, as the hero of the Eureka Stockade, as the Founder of Australian Democracy'?

Apart from his faulty assessments of Lalor and Moran, Father Thomas Fitzgerald was a man of clear judgement. Sadly, this patriotic Irishman died in Sydney on 18 May 1921. The Dublin-based Irish language paper *Misneach*, in its issue of 16 June 1921, carried an account of his life and labours.

My information on Father Fitzgerald is, to say the least, somewhat sketchy. Where is his grave in Sydney? Perhaps some reader may be in a position to enlighten us.

*Sean Ua Cearnaigh*

'If I lived in Galway...' thought Esther as she walked through the Darling Gardens, 'I'd live in a two storey house with a red door and red geraniums growing in the window boxes. I'd build a glass extension on the back of the house to get as much sunlight as possible. The house would always be warm and dry and welcoming.'

She crossed the road and walked passed the elderly people's home, nodding to the man on the front veranda, who winked at her every morning.

'I'd marry a man who wears checked shirts' she reflected, '...and our children would have Old Testament names and I would paint with them and bake cookies and heaven only knows who'd cook the meals. Maybe we'd have fish and chips quite regularly.'

She waited at the intersection at Queens Parade for the green man... he took his time...

'Perhaps I would learn to speak Irish,' she thought, '... or at least understand it, but I would never grow bored of the lilting accents of my neighbours and the people in the street.'

Her tram rolled past. She'd missed it... she wasn't late yet though...the green man made his welcome appearance. She crossed the road.

'I'd live in the old part of Galway, not the new; perhaps on Nun's Island, so I could walk through the old city centre at my leisure, buying second-hand books at Charlie Byrne's and dark fair-trade chocolate from Oxfam and furnishing my house with oddities from St Vincent de Paul's curiosity shop and bits and pieces of vintage furniture I'd pick up in France. It would be eclectic...' Esther sat down at the tram stop and wrapped her jacket more tightly around her.

'...Of course I'd go to France! We'd fly around Europe and the U.K on cheap flight deals, travelling simply and lightly and learning all the time... different languages, different cultures, different landmarks, different histories, different pilgrimage sites, different aspects of humanity, and different people to love...

...And in the winter we'd fly home to Australia; maybe we'd

have Christmas there every second year. We'd thaw out and love our relatives and swim at the beach and eat pavlova ...mmm... and BBQs and teach the children Aussie Rules Football and visit all the friends we'd left behind. Ah! We'd miss them all year long – but some friends are best loved at a distance...'

She thought of her house-mate Bobby. She'd miss him. No doubt he'd forget to bring the bin in again tonight. The tram rolled into sight. Esther climbed aboard, validated her ticket and took a seat. Once she was comfortable her mind drifted again...

'If I lived in Galway,' thought Esther, 'I think I would be a poet. The rivers and the swans and the brooding evening sky lend themselves to inspiration and deep, truthful revelations. Maybe I would be a lyricist and we could live all year off the proceeds from one good song, or wrote the words for greeting cards while the children were at school.'

She looked at the sparse and ugly gardens out the window. Winter in Clifton Hill - no great love of gardening to be found here.

'And I would grow peonies and roses and sun-flowers and bulbs,' she thought '... and mow the lawn with a manual mower and we'd have a worm farm to recycle our food scraps and possibly a turtle or maybe a dog.' The tram filled up with businessmen and school kids and women who looked as inspiring as a microwave dinner. Esther was squashed close against the window by a fat man, who apologised. She smiled at him. She loved apologisers.

She escaped back to her imaginary home life in Galway, '...We'd watch movies on cold nights in the winter and read stories aloud to the kids. And have warm baths and large fluffy towels and drink hot chocolate and sweet, milky tea.' It was her stop. There was Carol, from accounting, getting off just in front of her. Carol would want to talk about Benjamin from IT. Esther sighed as she stepped off the tram to join her, smiling courageously as the dream faded '...If I lived in Galway' she thought, 'this is how it would be.'

*Michelle Collins*

# Irish language in Australian poems

What follows is the text of a talk given in both languages at the Irish Language Winter School, Kensington, NSW, on 12 June 2010.

At the past two winter schools, Colin Ryan, Mary Doyle and I have talked about building up Sunburnt Gaelic, *Gaeilge Ghriandóite*, that is, an Australian approach to the Irish language. In 2008, we looked at possible words in Irish for distinctively Australian things; and in 2009 we discussed the earliest surviving Irish language in print in Australia. In this talk, on the same theme, we look at the use of Irish language in Australian poems.

## Long oral tradition, few in print

The first poems (many of which were songs also) of Irish Australia were brought from Ireland and recited or sung by heart among the convicts, soldiers and officials in the early years after 1788. Several of the Irish ones you will know, *Eibhlín a Rún*, *Éamonn a' Chnoic* and *Róisín Dubh*.

In 1910, Nicholas O'Donnell reported that in Victoria many older men from Munster could recite the long poem, 'Aighneas an Pheacaigh leis an mBás' - 'Controversy between Death and the Sinner', or at least parts of it. Other poems in Irish have come into the country with new arrivals or through books and letters all along.

But in this talk, we will focus on what was written and printed in Australia. One source deserves special mention, Colleen Burke and Vincent Woods' collection of the poems and songs of Irish Australia, entitled *The Turning Wave*. Of the thousands of poems produced in Irish Australia over the past two hundred years about nine were written in Irish on specifically Australian topics, seven of them by Louis de Paor. There may have been others but they are lost. This talk deals with fragments in nineteenth-century Australian poets, a macaronic poem, Gaelic influences in some well known poets, and the Irish-language poems of Fionán Mac Cártha, Louis de Paor, and my co-author Colin Ryan.

## Phrases in early Australian poems

During the 1800s some Australian poets used Irish phrases in English-language poems. The first published poem by a woman in this country, A. Stanhope Gore's, 'Eathlina's Lament' from Hunter's Hill in 1825 includes the line, "Saol fada, oh Erin, Erin go bragh/ Long live Ireland, Ireland forever". A few years later, Eliza Hamilton Dunlop of the Hunter Valley, famous for supporting Aboriginal people and transcribing their songs, wrote a migrant's lament, 'Go Dia Leat Slán', praying for God's blessings on Ireland.

Port Phillip newspapers printed poems, again using Irish phrases. In 1848 GFK's 'An Exile's Farewell to the Land of his Birth', praised "Hibernia, ma cushla ma chroi/ Ireland, the love of my heart" and concluded with "Sweet Erin Mavourneen, slan leat go bragh/ sweet Ireland, my dear, good health to you forever". Such snippets of Irish remind us that in the 1800s some places in Australia were *breac-Gaeltachtaí*, places of mixed Irish and English speech.

## Maurice Stack's macaronic poem

The most striking example we have of a *breac-Gaeltacht* is from Bendigo. Tom Culhane reported that "Fr Maurice Stack

of Listowel, the first priest ordained in Melbourne, ... was sent to the Bendigo goldfields, as most Irish miners knew only Irish. When he landed in Bendigo, two bullies from the Protestant miners gave him twenty-four hours to leave the diggings. All the Irish rushed to his aid and two of their party, Seán Higgins and Dan Fitzgerald, a Glin man, beat the two bullies." A collection was made for Fr Stack, some of it in raw gold, and the following Sunday he responded with a macaronic poem from the pulpit, that is a poem with alternating Irish and English lines. It began:

Lán doirn d'ór ó Thadhg Reaskavalla  
and twice as much more from the two rakes of Mallow;  
dhá unsa dhéag ó Dhónall Ó Braoin,  
who has strayed far away from his native Asdee ...  
A full fistful of gold from Tim from Reaskavalla  
and twice as much more from the two rakes of Mallow  
Twelve ounces from Donal O'Brien  
who has strayed far away from his native Asdee ...

The use of mixed Irish and English in poems and songs was common in Ireland then and Stack's poem is evidence of that culture continuing in Australia.

## Gaelic influences in Pitt, O'Brien and Buckley

Three of the most famous Irish Australian poets, Marie Pitt, John O'Brien and Vincent Buckley referred to the Irish language. Marie Pitt's well-known poem about the women and children of men killed in Tasmanian mine accidents is entitled, 'The Keening'. John O'Brien, whose *Around the Boree Log* was published in 1921, used Irish words. Some he gives meanings for but he includes a surprising number without translation, as Dymphna Lonergan has analysed in her book, *Sounds Irish: achushla, alannah, boreen, colleen, keerschuch* [céirseach/blackbird or hen], *gosson, spleodar* [exuberance], *spree* and *shamrock*. He judged that his Australian audience of the 1920s knew those words.

Vincent Buckley addressed our issue directly in 'Two Half-languages', and said, among other things:

I've lost it all, the sound  
of their blood, the nose-pitch of their voices,  
the rustle of their God, the music  
inside me, once steady as a millwheel.

The Irish language is lost to many Irish Australians and Buckley was right to name the loss he felt, but his and the other poems show that the loss has not been total.

## Writing in Irish by Mac Cártha and de Paor

During the twentieth-century Fionán Mac Cártha in Amby, south central Queensland, and Louis de Paor in Melbourne, Victoria, wrote dozens of poems in Irish. These two poets are exceptional in Australian literary history, and of the two de Paor wrote much more about Australia.

While Mac Cártha, a native of Roscommon, lived 37 years in Queensland, his published poems are about Ireland and universal themes. Even in his, 'Lá in Astraoile [sic]' he confesses:

Mé ag féachaint na sléibhte, 's mé ag cuimhniú ar Shligeach.  
As I survey the mountains I'm dreaming of Sligo.

Thus, he called his book of Irish poems, *Amhráin Ó Dheireadh an Domhain*/ Songs from the end of the world. Mac Cártha migrated to Australia but his mind and soul never got here.





**Louis de Paor, a poet who lives in Galway, is coming to Australia later this year**

### Exceptional voice of Louis de Paor

Louis de Paor, from Cork, who lived in Melbourne's northern suburbs between 1987 and 1996, has an outstanding place in Irish Australian writing. While he writes mostly on universal and Irish themes he has published in Irish seven poems which explicitly table Australian places and realities such as Port Arthur, the digger-ido, and summer in Coburg. His poem on the stolen generation, 'An Dubh ina Gheal/ Assimilation', has a memorable opening:

Nuair a d'fhúadaigh na póilíní a mhac  
 d'fhágadar rian a mbataí geala  
 ar a chabhail chéasta  
 is lorg a mbróg tairní  
 buailte ar a bholg brúite ...  
 When the cops took his son  
 their bright batons left their mark  
 on his broken body,  
 the nails on their polished boot  
 pierced his skin ...

Moreover, some of his universal or Irish poems have Australian influences. Nonetheless, de Paor is, of now, a poet of Irish places and people. We look forward to a visit from him later in the year.

### Eileen Begley longing for Australia

On her all-Irish CD, produced in Ireland in 1992 after she returned for family reasons, Eileen Begley sang a poem about feeling lonely away from Australia. Entitled Cian, which means loneliness and is also the name of her son, the poem includes these lines:

Scaras led chóstai buí coiréalach'  
 Gan gean ar mhalairt spéire:  
 Cloisim trím neal do mheallach uaigneach  
 Mo thriall dtí d' dhraiocht ó dheas.  
 I left your yellow, coral coasts  
 Not heeding foreign skies;  
 In dreams I hear your lonesome call  
 I'm drawn south by your spell.

This is the reverse of Stanhope Gore's Lament of 1825: Begley wants to come home from Ireland to Australia.

### Colin Ryan's lyrics

One of the authors of this talk, Colin Ryan, who publishes the electronic newsletter, *An Lúibín*, writes lyric poems on universal themes. In 2007 the Dublin-based magazine *Feasta* published his poem entitled Cogar:

Cogar mé seo, a dúirt sí, leis an té nach raibh ann  
 an teach ina thost is na héin calctha sa chrann líomóide  
 an guth ar tí labhairt is an scéal a thabhairt chun críche chun  
 go mbogfadh an saol arís  
 d'oscail an doras is scaipeadh gach focal na héin ag éirí gan  
 torann ag crochadh na craibhe leo.

Tell me, she said to the one who wasn't there:  
 the house in silence, the birds sitting stiff in the lemon tree:  
 the voice about to speak, to bring fulfilment, so that the world  
 could stir once more:

then the door opened, with every word scattered, the birds  
 rising soundlessly, bearing away the bough.

This is one of those rare achievements, a published poem written in Irish in Australia.

### An audience is waiting

In summary, English-language poems of Irish Australia show traces of Irish language influence; and there are a handful of poems in Irish directly about Australia by Mac Cártha, Ní Bheaglaoich, Ryan and mostly by de Paor. We would welcome your help in finding other Australian poems in Irish.

For those who want a body of writing in Irish about Australia there is a long way to go. Nonetheless, there is a new generation coming and we hope that we will hear and read new poems in Irish about the peoples, places and experiences of Australia. The future of the Irish language in Australia depends, among other things, on poets amongst us writing in the traditional tongue about the here and the now.

**Val Noone and Colin Ryan**

# Poetry

## The Tattoo by Mervyn Ennis

My Granny never wore a tattoo.  
No, she didn't wear  
her husband Sean's name  
in Chinese on her shoulder blade,  
but she loved him  
in sickness and health,  
reared his seven children  
through difficult times,  
with nothing to support them  
but calloused knees  
and a scrubbing board.

My Granny never wore a tattoo  
of a pod of dolphins  
or a cluster of swallows  
over her ankle,  
but she had a height and depth  
of knowledge on life.  
She was a herbalist  
when only the smell of ether  
pervaded chemist shops,  
and when soaps were either  
Life Buoy or Sunlight  
she knew how to make her own..  
Long before health food shops  
filled with aromatic odours  
scented candles, essential oils,  
vitamin supplements,  
she knew the benefits of a  
clove of garlic, spring nettles  
or a bowl of porridge,  
"Its like a poultice inside you  
it protects you all day long"

My Granny didn't wear a Celtic tattoo  
on her shoulder  
but she hid guns under a brood hen,  
fed patriots on the run  
during the Tan war.  
She cried "up Dev  
sang Kevin Barry  
but said Connolly was me darling.  
He loved the poor of Dublin  
when all we had was bread and tea  
if we had that"

She never had a tattoo  
of a Tasmanian devil  
on her inside leg.  
But she told us of Van Demons Land  
when Tasmanian devils were governors  
and guards on transportation ships.

"You could be flogged  
to within an inch of your life

never mind starved to death  
by them bastards."

She didn't wear a tattoo  
of a crucifix on her forearm  
but she had a deep spirituality  
she worked daily miracles  
to feed her own,  
and any less fortunate  
that might call.  
No one was turned from her door.

No granny didn't wear a tattoo  
but she left an indelible impression  
on all that met her,  
and those that remember her  
do so dearly,  
and if they didn't  
devil the bit she'd bother.

## The Usual Place by Meg McNena

(In memorium for Terry)

Who sips your latte in Bellair Street,  
pads your footprints with leathered soles,  
fills your chair with fidgets and creases,  
talks your pride of daughters, spindled by  
the thirteenth fairy, uninvited to the gathering  
of oak-shouldered sky and a skein of clouds?

Who takes your view of a red-brick station,  
while city-bound trains unburden pavements  
and rush a year of days to the end of the line  
without so much as a buy your leave or return  
and never a backward glance for the straggler,  
who likes to take time, not have time take him?

Who grins at the waiter you called by name,  
elbows our table with a rock, paper, scissors hold  
on a stilted face? Who drains your glass infused  
by the Horn of Africa, sinks a tree's yearly fruit  
in his week of traded coffee and pays three coins  
for a kiss that empties gardens? Who sips your latte?

*Meg McNena is a published and awarded Melbourne poet and playwright.*

## Me Ma by Mervyn Ennis

She was a gas auld one, me mother.  
A seasoned traveller,  
and an international bingo player.  
Loved a flurry on the one armed bandits,  
and a fair judge of an auld nag,  
though she safe bet on the jockey and trainer.  
She relied as much on their pedigree,  
as on the sire and dam of the horse.  
She'd knit or crochet furiously,  
licking her lips like a lizard on active service,  
while she sussed out their form.  
*Now there's a great horse*  
She'd say peering mischievously over her glasses  
with the delight of an angler displaying her catch of the day,  
*he stood me well in Galway two years ago,*  
*has great stamina. He'd run for Ireland.*  
*The owner must have something up her sleeve*  
*to slip him into Aintree with no weight handicap.*  
*Whoo! It's worth a little wager with those odds,*  
*God! it would be a sin not to.*  
She equally brought racing into her spiritual life.  
While reciting the rosary in the church  
there was never the assumed prayerful dead heat,  
but she was always a length or two ahead of the faithful,  
dashing with *Mary full of grace*  
or rejoicing already at *glory be,*  
while the other sinners  
were only pleading for prayer *at the hour of our death,*  
or whimpering about *a world without end.*  
When I enquired, what she lamented most in life?  
or what pilgrimage she'd liked to have made?  
meaning Lourdes or Fatima or Rome  
she replied in feeble but firm voice,  
with a little Parkinson's nod,  
*Oh I'd love to go to Vegas to play the tables and slots,*  
*do you think I'll ever get well enough to go?*

**Mervyn Ennis**, from Saggart, Co Dublin, has had poetry recognised in Irish and British awards and in Irish, English and Italian publications. The form ranges from traditional to performance poems, from reflections of a frugal, rural childhood to experiences as Head Social Worker in Irish military peacekeeping arenas, where he has seen the futility of war.

## White Bull of Glenninagh by Orla McGuinness

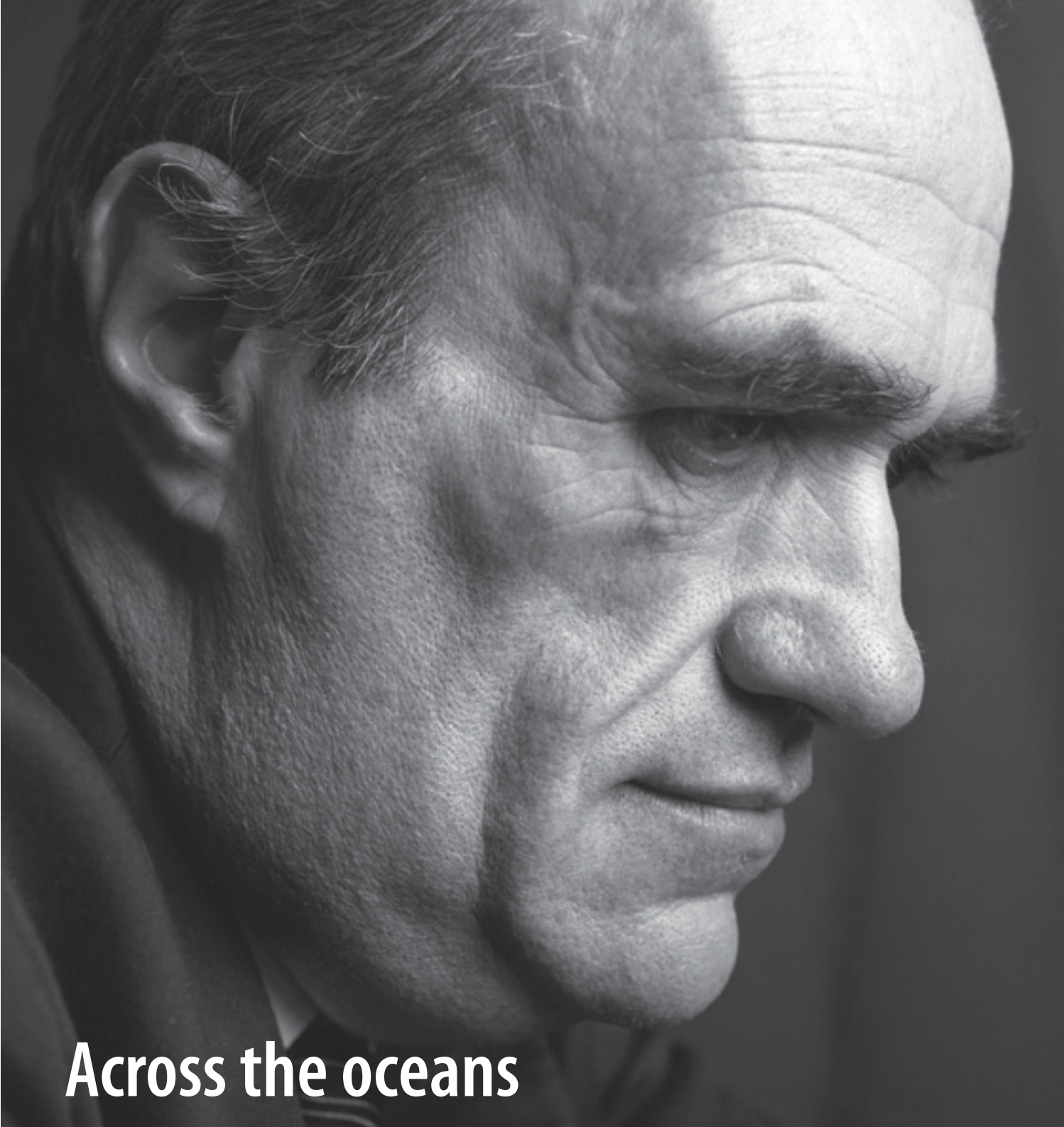
Several tonnes of prime Irish beef  
have lumbered to a halt  
outside my glass doors.  
Looking lazily at the mountain,  
enjoying it as we do, over breakfast  
he relieves an itchy shoulder  
on the edge of our weighty picnic table  
lifting it a few feet in the air,  
quite rhythmically,  
with each satisfying scratch.  
Then he turns, ambles closer,  
so close that his breath  
is a cloud on the glass  
and we can see his little pink eyes,  
and the ring in his nose  
and I wonder what to do  
if he charges his reflection?  
I tear my hair and hop around  
to the laughter  
of my demon children  
but we are saved by dirty windows  
and he turns away, bored  
tears up the ground a little.

I've seen you, you bugger  
watched you with your harem  
seen how you make them stream  
with juice  
their tails held high  
feigning disinterest as they crop grass  
all the while awaiting your onslaught.  
And I've seen your noble limping  
through your huge family  
little bull-calves born the very spit of you  
heard your roars in the night  
admired your muscles and  
your magnificence on the mountain.

So let us maintain  
a respectful distance -  
I'll stay out of your field  
you stay out of my kitchen.

**Orla McGuinness** has a degree in English literature and psychology. She lives in Co Clare and is a poet, health-worker and Reiki practitioner.





## Across the oceans

**Colm Tóibín in conversation on Ireland, America and Australia  
18 May 2010: Collins Street Baptist Church**

On a cold May night in Melbourne, there's a queue down Collins Street at the Baptist church to hear Irish author Colm Tóibín in conversation for the Victorian Writers' Centre, appearing under the auspices of The Wheeler Centre. It's a sea of overcoats and scarves, mostly female, many with greying hair. But I can't help wondering, where are all the men?

The inside of the church is stark white, the hard wooden benches giving it

an austere appearance. A towering pipe organ and two chairs like thrones are placed below the dais, forming the stage. I squeeze in next to one of the few other men in attendance, an older gentleman, who's kind enough to make space for me, otherwise I'd be without a seat.

On introduction, Tóibín's first witty comment is that it's an easy crowd that applauds you before you've actually said anything. He's wearing red half rim reading glasses around his neck, a white shirt and dark jacket, appearing to play the part of the novelist, or it could be I'm seeing him as his imagined protagonist from *The Master*, Henry James – or just

as fitting for the setting – Father Flood, his character in *Brooklyn*.

Tóibín appears relaxed in public and comfortable in the company of interviewer Michael Williams. With five novels, a string of literary awards and a portfolio of non-fiction to his credit, he should be; Tóibín is as often in demand as a critic, as he is as a writer.

Reading aloud in a pronounced Irish accent, Tóibín chooses a passage from *Brooklyn*. Central character Eilis Lacey is packing her suitcase for the journey from Ireland to America. Peering over his glasses, hunched forward, long spidery fingers wrapped around the text,

Born in Ireland in 1955, Colm Tóibín is the author of five novels: *The South*, *The Heather Blazing*, *The Story of the Night*, including two shortlisted for the Man Booker Prize – *The Blackwater Lightship* and *The Master*, and his most recent novel *Brooklyn* – winner of the prestigious 2009 Costa Novel Award. His non-fiction includes *Bad Blood*, *Homage to Barcelona*, *The Sign of the Cross*, and *Love in a Dark Time*.

Tóibín effectively metamorphoses into the master storyteller, taking us on the journey, as if we were leaving home for the first time, to embark on this adventure. He proceeds to explain his grasp of the world through Eilis as ‘a struggle with the unfamiliar’, giving the impression that Tóibín – an accomplished observer himself – still views the world with a sense of wonder.

Tóibín talks about being Irish in the same tone as he writes, with a certain sadness. As a novelist, he sees his role as one involving self-denial. Tóibín tells us he’s not prepared to indulge his ego. ‘To capture one thing that’s going on in one person’s mind’, it’s necessary to keep his politics to himself. This allows his characters to emerge. ‘The Irish people have enough people preaching to them at the moment,’ he explains.

Contrasting the Irish with the English and Americans in particular, Tóibín shares his fascination with the class structures imposed by Western society. To achieve class mobility generally means leaving one’s homeland – something Tóibín has experienced first hand. Living in New York, Tóibín missed Ireland but discovered the Irish community in America was strong. For him and others, it was a land of opportunity. Post war Australia will be similarly remembered by those who emigrated here.

Speaking positively about being an Irishman in America, Tóibín laments the treatment of Irish people living in England, who were almost always seen as second-class citizens. Evidence of that enduring British class structure will be familiar to many Australian expats in the UK. Tóibín’s father was a teacher. He came to realise that education was the key to upward social mobility, something that simply was not possible in England at the time.

Being fourth in a family of five, Tóibín often writes about things he knows from childhood and adolescence, such as leaving the cocoon of a small town and his family. ‘A lot of it is invention as well,’ he says. When his characters are timid, afraid to say what they know, Tóibín

asserts, ‘the whole purpose of the novel is to be anti-heroic.’

Following the Jamesian model, Tóibín’s writing is ‘third person intimate’, read to his audience from a detailed point of view. He wants the reader to see things through the eyes of his characters, inhabiting their world. Assuming a humble writing approach, Tóibín sees the page as an empty space to fill with someone else’s thoughts, feelings and observations, which are arguably not his own.

Tóibín is no stranger to Australian audiences. A repeat visitor, he observes we’ve had some of the same problems here with immigration and multiculturalism as in Ireland. He talks about his home country not regarding itself as a place where people wanted to come to work; they went to America or Canada instead. When migrants did come, the Irish were suspicious. They were frightened and assumed those people were coming to steal something from them. Tóibín has observed that Ireland did not handle the situation well. There are many similarities between the Irish attitude towards immigration during the Celtic Tiger and negative Australian attitudes in the early twentieth century, ones Australians are still trying to break down.

The audience laughs as Tóibín exploits the long held belief that ‘Irish charm is not to be trusted’. ‘Just watch our men for a while’, he says, ‘pretty soon, when they get drunk, a monster will emerge’. Irish priests in Tóibín’s novels don’t get up to anything nearly as salacious. His intention, he explains, is to honour their positive contribution in working with migrant communities. On Irish Catholicism, Tóibín is gentle, expressing a ‘funny old affection for holy mother church’. And Tóibín genuinely seems to believe this (not just because he’s speaking inside a church).

Looking back to his origins, County Wexford is very foreign to Tóibín. He’s learned the most away from his homeland. ‘They don’t have great food and people moan a lot,’ he says. Tóibín’s innate Irishness really came to the fore as

a teacher in an American University. He felt like the biggest foreigner there and his students were keenly aware of his difference. His face creases into a smirk: ‘They did imitations of me.’

Sharing an anecdote about glamorous US President JFK going back to his roots, Tóibín says Kennedy’s visit to a small town in Ireland gave the locals the belief that in America, anything was possible. Persecuted because of race, gender, sexuality or religion, all who made the transition from Old World to New World, whether in America or Australia, ‘are in a sense refugees,’ Tóibín declares.

Tóibín’s voluntary exile from Ireland in some ways mirrors his characters’ homesickness. It’s a feeling that anyone who has emigrated for life can relate to. ‘At some point, somewhere else becomes home. Suddenly you think you are from somewhere else,’ he says. Tóibín talks about a ‘secret history in families, of one or two leaving in each generation’. But new tougher immigration laws mean it’s not that easy to go abroad anymore. Some Irish are still coming to Australia and others are going to Canada, but the days when America welcomed boatloads of immigrants are gone.

The last time he was in Australia, Tóibín was being interviewed on the radio and picked a piece of Gaelic music to play. Tóibín hums the tune for us. A listener phoned to say her mother sang that song, and so he felt the song had made its way across the oceans. He goes on to read a piece from *Brooklyn* where an accordion is playing in the hall. The characters watch silently, lamenting how sad and sorry they will be when the song finishes.

The event finishes with question time. People still want to know more about *The Master*, about Joyce and the novel’s irresistible parallels with Tóibín. Tóibín’s coy about the subject. He touches on Joyce’s ambiguous sexuality – a man who liked the company of women more than men. I look across to the gentleman next with a little smile. We’ve certainly been in good company tonight then.

**Chris Toussaint**

*Photo: Steve Pyke*





# Joyce's Carnival of Vice

**A review of Bloomsday, Trades Hall, Melbourne, 16 June 2010**

Bloomsday is a strange phenomenon. It is a celebration of a book, often by people who have not read it, which ranges from tourism, to social gatherings, to high culture. These activities take place in over five hundred cities of the world appealing to Irish people from every county, the Irish diaspora, literati, international Hibernians, the 'stage Irish,' Pioneers, protestants, professors, 'Plastic Paddies,' and even taxi-drivers. It commemorates, not the birth or death of the author, nor the publication of the book, but a beautiful spring day in which the events of the book are set. Yet, this day might have its most trenchant manifestation in wintry Melbourne Australia.

It is said that a pub crawl based on Joyce's *Ulysses* and organised by Patrick Kavanagh and Anthony Cronin in 1954 fuelled the tourist walks in Dublin. Group serial readings enriched the universities and public houses in the USA, but the Melbourne tradition has grown into thematic playwriting, professional performance, scholarly papers, selected readings, and feasting. I don't think there is anything quite like it, and nothing which matches this explosive manifestation. Yet it is almost a best-kept secret; you could still buy tickets on the day!

In what was possibly their most ambitious and expressive program yet, Bloomsday in Melbourne Inc. tackled the voluminous 'Circe' chapter, under the heading, 'Joyce's Carnival of Vice.' Some idea of the gargantuan task faced by the script-writers may be gained from the fact that this chapter is about the length of a full novel. It is set up on the page to look like a playscript with copious stage directions, and the subject matter necessarily crosses the borders of good taste. The writing strays from objective realism, to expressionism, to surrealism, to satire, often without signposts or borders. Both the writing and the subject matter are often dark, yet there is much that is witty, outrageous, and sometimes just plain



naughty or sophomoric. The writers of the Bloomsday script say that 99% (ninety-nine per cent of the adaptation is Joyce's words, but they have had to fillet the text, concentrating on characters' speeches, for the most part eliminating the brightly-lit, chameleon-like directions and interpolations. This is a night-time presentation of 'night-town,' in a black box setting, and it has had to forsake much of the tone and kaleidoscopic panoply of the Joyce chapter. How could it be otherwise! My original reading of the 'Circe' chapter would have deemed the task impossible, but at the very least what has been achieved is a remarkable work inspired by the Joyce text.

So we approach this festival as an occasion of theatre, with a difference. The audience finds its way into the dishevelled Trades Hall building past obstructive renovations, up flights of stairs, and into a bar-room with tables, a piano, and a small platform stage. Is this where it will all happen? Old tunes are played on the piano, and an actor in make-up addresses the crowd and leads them in a robust comic ballad. We could have more of this. Then there is a hiatus as the disoriented audience members are shunted from this room to a makeshift theatre, with hard seats. The play begins, without speech or signage. The first confusing minutes are somewhat reminiscent of expressive student theatre. The program tells us that scene one is 'Ghosts and Grotesques of Night-Town.' It hardly achieves this, lacking precision or definition, though in retrospect the intention is clear. It is, of course, a prelude, from which the real play may spring. To experience this play it is necessary to set aside James Joyce's chapter, and relish the work of theatre.

Brenda Addie's production of 'Carnival of Vice' is a spectacular presentation, made possible by remarkable ensemble work, with exquisite definition and timing. Performances by Drew Tingwell as Bloom and Jason

Cavanaugh as Bello/Bella (and other roles) are outstanding, but acknowledging this must not detract from the whole cast of eight which created so many characters and such energy, with limited but well-chosen properties and costume. The Trades Hall Theatre affords little, but the economy of scenery, and the excellent lighting plot worked well. This was the kind of well-oiled performance one might hope for as a play settles into its season, but this was a first performance! It was totally satisfying, and I will return to that.

To experience  
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work of theatre.

Earlier on the same Bloomsday occasion, in the same location, there was a seminar with two excellent academic papers, one by Professor Joy Damousi on Psychoanalysis and Joyce, with particular emphasis on Freud and dream, (assuming of course that the texture of the 'Circe' chapter is that of dream,) and the other a detailed and most rewarding paper by Associate Professor Frances Devlin-Glass, on the theory of dream and surrealism in this chapter, and on the problems of sexology, edginess and shame in the text itself. It was a worthy seminar, without pretension or archness, and the discussion could have gone much longer – a valuable experience for all who attended it.

It might not be a normal part of the

reviewer's task to talk about the excellent dinner, though it was this, and the well chosen readings which accompanied it, were jolly, entertaining and most satisfying as performed by director Brenda Addie, and Dr Ted Reilly.

How does one sum up what we all experienced on such an occasion? In the past month I have been privileged to attend well-reviewed and much respected theatre in Melbourne, Dublin, London and San Francisco. Without reservation or equivocation I can say that this small professional company achieved a triumph which would be a worthy complement to any of these, even though the budget and facilities must have been limited. Secondly, I note that international Bloomsday has developed greatly, particularly in Ireland and the USA. In some cities it underwrites tourism, with many remarkable walking and reading tours. And there are college, library, pub and other locations which host wonderful serial readings or performances. But I doubt if there is to be found a more ambitious and complete Bloomsday celebration, anywhere in the world, than this social gathering, innovative and brilliant play production, erudite seminar, and delightful repast with readings.

Which leads me to finish on a note of chagrin and sadness. As a theatre person and academic, I am disappointed to find that such a script and such a production should have two airings only, on this special day of June 16, when it would be worthy of a longer run in a small professional theatre. Perhaps this outcome is inevitable for such a celebratory enterprise. But this team of writers, this director, and their talented team of actors and technical staff are deserving of more. May they go on.

*Trevor Code is a poet and an academic. He taught Literary Studies at Deakin University and at Worcester Polytechnic Institute University, and has himself run several Bloomsday celebrations in the USA.*

# Are the Irish different sexually?

**Diarmaid Ferriter: *Occasions of Sin: Sex and Society in Modern Ireland*, Profile Books, London, 2009. ISBN: 9781861979186; RRP: £30**

Diarmaid Ferriter, a social historian from University College Dublin with a reputation for being controversial, argues that Ireland was late coming into the 'carnal' mainstream, and that the thematic of sexual sin was underpinned until the 1990s in Ireland by the unquestioned assumption that 'All of us know that Irish women are the most virtuous in the world'. Imposing so much responsibility for women. The costs he documents of this national obsession are horrendous: in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, penalties for rape of a young girl child were much less punitive than for the supposedly 'unnatural' acts between consenting homosexuals, or acts of bestiality; and prostitutes wore the heavy penalties (jail or the Magdalen Asylums), not to mention sexually transmitted disease in meeting the sexual desires of the tens of thousands of British military and police, and of course, the locals, who used them. De Valera apparently cancelled the weekly issue of condoms to the Army in 1932, favouring, as the Church did, moral persuasion over physical prophylaxis. Women unquestionably wore the blame that more properly should have attached to men precisely because of a national mythos by which women were meant to control the 'unbridled' sexuality of men.

This book asks the question, 'Does sexuality really have national characteristics?' and probes the nationalist and nation-constructing myth of Irish purity. Ferriter gives himself a very broad canvas (contraception, sexual abuse and crime, incest, sexually transmitted disease, abortion, divorce, infanticide, illegitimacy, censorship, prostitution and homosexuality, and Church/State relations), so broad that one wonders that it can be encompassed in the whopping tome (running to 694 engrossing pages). Indeed, it is striking how much more dependent he is on certain genres of evidence in different parts of the book, and this leads to an unevenness of treatment of sources, though it has to be said he is aware of this historiographical dilemma. Despite the variety of aspects of sexuality he tackles, I'm pleased it is a more dispersed rather than narrow study.

It examines sources as diverse as the Quarter Sessions and Circuit Court

archives (and is mindful that they are negative and privileged insights into sexual intimacies gone wrong), memoirs and diaries, literary texts, magazines and archives of voluntary organisations. In deploying literary texts, it is perhaps inevitable that not enough attention is paid to genre and context, though they do offer the corrective of conveying some of the joy of sex. Mostly what emerges is a silence and a negativity about sexuality that was not entirely of the church fathers' making. Politicians frequently were proactive in seeking clerical advice and colluded with the silences subsequently enjoined, often to protect the national myth of purity, but also to paper over crime statistics that were horrifying by an international reckoning. Ferriter has much to offer by way of insight into the effect of the famine on land tenure, and on overcrowding in city tenements which led to sexual crime, and in particular rape and infanticide.

That there was no adequate language for talking about sex, or that shame was an effective silencer is confounded by the range of voices Ferriter presents in this book. Between 1922-1940, the birth of the Free State, Ferriter identifies a period of increasing sexual consciousness in response to rising crime statistics: books were written (and censored); government reports produced (but not debated and suppressed, never to see the light of day); and court statistics were written about (in magazines, offshore). Crimes were prosecuted vigorously and written up, in truncated form in newspapers. Astonishingly, perhaps in response to court sentences, the Christian Brothers conducted 30 internal formal trials of abusers, but in order to protect the good name of the church, none of these Brothers ever came to trial in a period when paedophiles were being convicted in the courts. These were home-grown crimes, crimes in response to peculiarly Irish circumstances, and not blameable on 'foreign contamination.' The sexual revolution had arrived tentatively on Irish shores, and the Irish response was to ramp up the Catholic moral purity campaign and articulate sexphobia ever more vigorously: the Redemptorist missions and Legion of Mary activists were key to this.

Perhaps one of the most pungent manoeuvres of this book is to track how the discourses about sexuality moved from being overwhelmingly judgemental to

more modern discourses that correlated better with international and psychologised readings of sexuality in the last two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Ferriter sees feminist discourses as having been influential, but TV chat shows, and especially the Late Late Show as even more so. Colm Tóibín is drawn upon for a memorable narrative of how in Wexford in the 1960s watching the show was a rite of passage to adulthood, and the shocked and embarrassed (and studiously silent) response of his family to Máire Mac an tSaoi's use of the term *naked* on the show. The show mesmerised, discomfited and normalised sexuality for a generation of viewers, according to Ferriter. Part of this liberalisation has been an increasing acceptance of homosexuality and lesbianism. Ferriter, drawing on the Irish Queer Archive, makes this painful journey a compelling one. Mary Robinson and David Norris get due recognition for their brave work in this area. Norris is reported as announcing to the Senate that he gave thanks that '[he] was (a) not heterosexual and (b) not a woman'.

The statistics Ferriter draws upon really helped me to understand the context in which the Ryan Commission To Inquire into Child Abuse (it began its work in 2000 and reported in 2009) operated. He cites evidence gathered by The Dublin Rape Crisis Centre's *Sexual Violence in Ireland Report*, which was commissioned by the Irish Government and published in 2002: over 1 in 20 women and 1 in 50 men were raped as children; 30% of women reported sexual abuse as did 23.6% of men. In the period 1970-2005, the most common occupational group represented in paedophilia cases was farmers. Clerical abuse, reprehensible as it is, represents a tiny fraction of these figures. Even after the publication of this report, the recommended education campaign did not happen. The Ryan Commission might achieve more in making victims aware of their rights, but there is a danger of its overshadowing the more grim statistics in the general population.

This is a truly enlightening book, well written and immensely readable. Ferriter takes a long view of Irish sexual history, provides illuminating social historical contexts, and contests a few cherished national myths. The human faces of the victims of sexual crime often spring into very lively focus. Repression and the struggle to escape it in modern Ireland make a compelling story.

**Frances Devlin-Glass**

# Surviving clerical abuse with grace

Colm O’Gorman, *Beyond Belief*,  
London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2009  
ISBN: 978-0-340-92506-5;

In the acknowledgements to his autobiography, *Beyond Belief*, Colm O’Gorman writes how his writing was, over a decade, part of a process whereby he ‘worked to reclaim my ownership of (my) history, so that now, finally my life is known to me and fits together’. Previously his life had been ‘a series of books that I’d once read’ where ‘connection to the truth of my life was once so tenuous, so detached, that I didn’t relate to it in any felt way, or even in an intellectual way’ (p.viii).

Undoubtedly, the defining event of his life was his abuse, starting at the age of 14, by Father Sean Fortune, which continued for two and a half years (p.55). Eventually O’Gorman’s rage about Fortune’s behaviour left him, ‘seventeen and grey, bloated and depressed’ (p.67). Penniless in a Dublin where job opportunities in pre-Celtic Tiger Ireland were extremely limited, he wandered the streets, gaining a warm bed and a shower only from sexually exploitative older men. Eventually, intermittently, he found work. Simultaneously he began to acknowledge his homosexuality which led him first to Tom, to Flikkers, Dublin’s only gay club at the time (homosexuality still being illegal in Ireland in the 1980s), and then to Alan, who ‘taught me that I could love ... that sex was more than a genital act’ (p.98). Becoming restless, he left Dublin for London ‘a whole new world’, which he ‘loved from the moment he arrived’ (p.100). In time, after undergoing therapy in London, and becoming a therapist himself, he reported Sean Fortune, which led to a court case in Wexford in 1999, the establishment of One in Four (a support group for people who had suffered abuse), the making of a documentary *Suing the Pope* for BBC television which aired in 2002, and in 2003 the inquiry into abuse in the diocese of Ferns which lasted two and a half years (p.280).

O’Gorman is a consummate story teller, and his life story is infused with plenty of drama, so that the narrative is always compelling, especially when unexpected events occur. In the context of the book, the stand out example of such an event is, of course, Father Fortune’s suicide towards the end of the court case, but O’Gorman’s reconnection with his family in early 1987, and the revelation that his friend Pat Jackman had also been abused (pp.221-225), also make

for riveting reading. I defy anyone to read O’Gorman’s account of the death of his father without being profoundly moved. It is a narrative which highlights the continuing value of professional journalism.

*Beyond Belief* is also highly insightful about both Irish society and the operation of the Catholic Church. The central issues are denial and silence. O’Gorman himself acknowledges his own denial of his past for many years both, as noted above, in his acknowledgements, and on p.127 where he explores its wider ramifications:

I wasn’t alone in that denial of course. My family also remained silent about the past. That was itself a reflection of a powerful dynamic which existed in our society, a blanket denial to accept what we knew to be true, to see it openly and honestly for what it was, for fear we might then be forced to do something about it.

This manifested in Irish society in dramatic fashion: in the reframing of our conflict-ridden history so that one side became innocent of any wrong-doing while the other was reduced in the popular mind to barbaric monsters;...

Silence is central, of course, to the insidiousness of child-abuse. In Chapter 19, O’Gorman offers us a longer meditation on the many forms silence may take, having earlier discussed the struggles he faced in breaking his own silence. And again he offers important insight:

Silence in the presence of a very great wrong has a deeply corrupting effect. It diminishes and cheapens us all, and denies us the opportunity to confront that wrong and make it right. And yet, so often we stay silent in the face of abuse. If we can make it invisible and secret, then we don’t have to deal with it. (p.227)

Alternatively, we can blame everyone else, which, as O’Gorman argues in his afterword (p.307) is what the Vatican continues to do.

*Beyond Belief* has a small Australian connection. O’Gorman (pp.257-8) cites approvingly the work of Bishop Geoffrey Robinson and his 2007 book *Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church* (reviewed by Max Charlesworth in *Tinteán*, no 2), and then notes the Pope’s comments on his visit to Australia in 2008 (p.271)

This is a fine book. Read it.

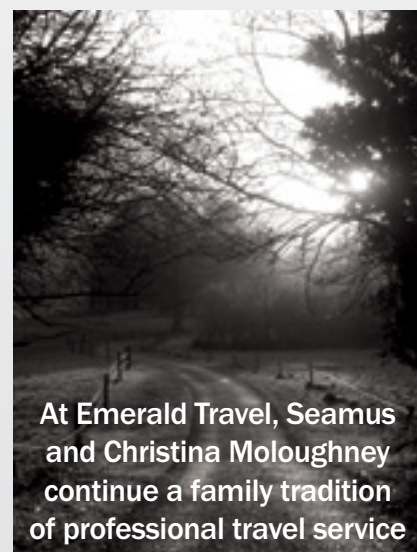
**Robert Glass**

*Bob is an occasional reviewer for Tinteán and Secretary of the AIHN.*



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# Chieftains and Ry Cooder sing up the Mexican Wars

**Label:** Hear Music, 2010 CD  
**HRM31321**  
**RRP: \$39.98 (Deluxe Bundle with DVD); \$19.98 (CD)**

The Chieftains' latest album, *San Patricio*, combines Irish traditional melodies with southwestern and Mexican songs to breed a new hybrid of Tex-Mex, Nortino music. The ancient connections between the Spanish and the Irish, and the musical souls of two modern nations, Ireland and Mexico, are movingly brought to life.

*San Patricio* features Ry Cooder as co-producer, along with musical guests, Los Tigres Del Norte, Lila Downs, Moya Brennan, Linda Ronstadt, Liam Neeson, Carlos Núñez, Los Cenzonties, and many other celebrated Mexican, American and Irish musicians and singers. The CD cover art features the legendary Mexican icon of the Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe, holding a young Irish soldier in her arms, reminiscent of Michelangelo's *La Pietà*.

## Sean O Riada & The Chieftains' Origins

Irish composer Seán Ó Riada (1931-1971) is remembered as the most influential figure in the renaissance of traditional Irish music, and the founder, in 1960, of the group *Ceoltóirí Chualann*, which included Paddy Moloney (who later founded The Chieftains) on uilleann pipes and tin whistle, Sean Potts (still with The Chieftains) on tin whistle, John Kelly on flute, and Sonny Brogan on accordion.

Seán Ó Riada was the first composer to arrange harmonies in keeping with Irish musical tradition, using traditional instruments: harpsichord, bodhrán, piano, fiddle, accordions, flute, pipes and whistles. In 1962, Paddy Maloney launched The Chieftains, with the initial line-up featuring himself (uilleann pipes and tin whistle), Seán Potts (tin whistle), Martin Fay (fiddle), Michael Tubridy (flute, concertina, tin whistle), and David Fallon (bodhrán).

They signed a record deal with

Claddagh Records, and released their first album, *The Chieftains 1*, in 1963. By the time they had released their third LP in 1971, *The Chieftains 3* (with sleeve notes in three languages), they had achieved a world-wide audience. Over the last 40 years, they've been nominated 18 times for Grammy Awards, and they have won 6.

The Chieftains are well known for their multiple collaborations with popular musicians of many genres, including Galician traditional music, Newfoundland and Cape Breton music, American Rock and Country roots music. Fans will be both informed and moved by their latest musical collaboration, which brings to public attention the unique history shared by Ireland and Mexico.

## The Fighting Irish of the San Patricio Battalion

By the end of the 1840s, the Irish Famine was in full force. While the English exported abundant crops, millions of Irish men, women and children died, and millions more immigrated, as refugees, to America. They had survived the journey on 'death-ships' from Ireland, but couldn't find employment. At the time, everywhere they went, signs were posted: 'No Blacks, Dogs, Irish need apply.'

In this unprecedented blend of Irish and Mexican musical heritage, *San Patricio* represents the story of the San Patricio Battalion, Catholic refugees from the Irish famine, who joined the army upon arrival in the USA.

## Irish Join Mexican Catholics: Mexican-American War 1846-1848

Hundreds of Irish soldiers deserted the US Army to join the Mexican side in the Mexican-American War of 1846-1848, on learning they were expected to fight Mexican Catholics. They were offered payment in land and gold and, most important, they were offered generous hospitality and respect by the Mexican people.

In the documentary, 'The San

*Patricios: Mexico's Fighting Irish*, filmmaker Mark Day states: 'In 1846, thousands of immigrants, mostly Irish, joined the US army and were sent with Gen. Zachary Taylor's army to invade Mexico in what some historians have called a war of Manifest Destiny. Dubious about why they were fighting a Catholic country, and fed up with mistreatment from their Anglo-Protestant officers, hundreds of Irish and other immigrants deserted Taylor's army and joined forces with Mexico.'

The Irish were led by Captain John O'Riley, from Galway. While held prisoner in Mexico City, Riley wrote to a friend in Michigan: 'Be not deceived by a nation that is at war with Mexico, for a friendlier and more hospitable people than the Mexicans there exists not on the face of the earth.'

## San Patricio monument

'The San Patricios were alienated both from American society and the US Army,' says Professor Kirby Miller of the University of Missouri, an expert on Irish immigration. 'They realised that the army was not fighting a war of liberty, but one of conquest against fellow





Catholics such as themselves.’

The San Patricios fought bravely, but failed to prevent the US capture of Mexico City, which led to the transfer of all lands north of the Rio Grande to the USA. After the Battle of Churubusco, 83 San Patricios were captured, and 72 were court-martialled, 50 were hanged and 16 were flogged and their cheeks were branded with the letter ‘D’ for deserter.

While the San Patricios were considered traitors by Americans, to the Mexicans they were fellow Catholics—heroes who supported them against the brutal incursions of Anglo-Protestant Americans, who pillaged, murdered, raped, and desecrated their churches in order to fulfil their ‘divinely ordained’ Manifest Destiny to expand their frontier to the Pacific Ocean. On 12 September each year, in Mexico, the San Patricios are honoured with a special commemoration. In 1993, the Irish launched an annual commemoration ceremony in Clifden, Galway, Captain John Riley’s hometown.

Mark Day believes, ‘Riley’s attitude could serve as a role model in today’s multicultural society. In fact, the parallels between the Irish immigrants of the 1840’s and today’s newcomers from

Mexico and Central America should be obvious. Historically, both groups have suffered domination from oppressors who sought to destroy their religion and culture. Both groups have braved dangerous journeys to arrive in America. The Irish crossed rough seas in ‘coffin ships’ laden with diseased and starving passengers, while their Latin counterparts continue to brave barren deserts and freezing mountains, not to mention the barbs of nativists who see them as economic and cultural threats to the so-called ‘character of America.’

That these brave young men named themselves after St. Patrick (San Patricio in Spanish) is interesting. According to legend, at the age of 16, St. Patrick was captured by Irish raiders and taken from his home in Wales, to serve as a slave in Ireland, until he escaped at age 22, to become a Catholic priest. He returned to Ireland as bishop in 431. Very little is known of his life, but legend has it that his first converts were Irish slaves, thereby linking his mission with the long struggle for personal sovereignty.

*Mairéid Sullivan*

*Mairéid is a writer, film-maker, and a composer and singer of Irish music.*

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# The eyes have it

## Poetic performance

11 July 2010, The Wheeler Centre, Melbourne (60 minutes)

*This Floating World* by Libby Hart

*This Floating World* presents a cycle of voices and image, auditory, theatrical and photographic, windblown and weathered. Ireland is the backdrop for exploring life and death, tender and fickle, the choreography of a day from evening to evening, shore to shore, North to South, here to there. The characters, creatures, elements and terrain ring their Angelus of the fall and rise of light amongst them. Two actors perform wistful, ardent and sometimes humorous poetry while Hart's atmospheric photos of Ireland are screened. The Wheeler Centre is a ritzy, central venue for literary showcasing and creative assembly.

Awarded and widely published Melbourne poet, Libby Hart, travelled Ireland and received an Australia Council for the Arts residency at the Tyrone Guthrie Centre, Annaghmakerrig, in 2008. Such international exchange fosters artistic networks and the Diaspora's voice. A foreign eye is invited to refract new form in how the land lies. In 2011 Five Islands Press will publish her book-length poem. Hart's first poetry collection, *Fresh News from the Arctic* (2006) won the Anne Elder Award and in 2003 she gained a D J O'Hearn Memorial Fellowship at The Australian Centre, University of Melbourne. Substantial credits indeed.

Teresa Bell, writer, actor and Director of the Australian Poetry Centre, chose Hart's manuscript from 80 poetic monologues submitted for adaptation to stage with the aim of 'showcasing poetry that can be heard and felt'. The result is a two-hander, minimally set

with a bench and photographic screen. It is animated by Teresa Bell, hauntingly Celtic in appearance and gesture, and Gavin Blatchford, who is a briny, powerful counterpoint to the ethereal female. Their physical interpretation augments the tone, rhythm and themes of longing and connection. The poetry draws a rich, accessible, lyrical and interwoven landscape. Yet, at times the perspective is too cursory for that tumultuous island of druids, cattle raids, round towers, creed, hunger, smuggling, clearances, jails, sirens and emigrants, especially for a nation with 'A Soldier's Song' as anthem. Hart explains in her Poet's Statement, 'Despite writing about Ireland as one entity I have made no attempt to explore its political history'. By necessity a writer draws lines regarding scope.

In the audience were poets, part of Melbourne's lively performance scene, where words, music and gesture often share the stage. The ears convey poetry to the senses and engage the inner eye. At readings, listeners often close their eyes to immerse more deeply in the beauty and cadence of vocalised images. Screening photographs of Irish landscape from Donegal to Wicklow engaged my primary visual sense and took my inner eye from the poetry and gesture. I had just visited Donegal, my motherland, and Tyrone, my fatherland, so starting projections in that part of Ulster may have distracted me more than others. However, in 1864 Alfred, Lord Tennyson said, 'Things seen are mightier than things heard'. We enter theatre, the lights are turned out on everyday reading eyes and creative vision begins. While I enjoyed the poetry, the actors' interpretation and commendable innovation, the sensory overload of photographs detracted from a deeper appreciation.

Meg McNena



The poster for the Maldon Folk Festival 2010 features a central circular logo with a figure holding a harp, surrounded by the text 'MALDON FOLK FESTIVAL'. Below the logo, the year '2010' is prominently displayed, followed by the dates 'October 29 - November 1'. A speech bubble in the top right corner says 'Early-Bird Tickets On Sale Now!'. The background is a dark, textured surface with stars. The right side of the poster lists various musical genres and activities, and a list of featured artists.

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# Eloquent yearning

**Peter Steele SJ: *A Local Habitation: Poems and Homilies***  
Newman College, Melbourne, 2010.  
ISBN: 978-0-7340-4170-8; RRP: \$39.95.

This handsome book is certainly a rich offering. Peter Steele's latest work unites his double vocation. As poet and homilist, Steele often 'visits and revisits' (to borrow his language) the same terrain: love and death, human struggle, self and community, peace and war. Yet, the title of this book is puzzling. Although the book is ensconced in Newman College and describes its local community, this book also departs to pre-industrial times, biblical and pastoral spaces, other texts, and other moments in history. It addresses not only the gathered few but also it speaks of and to the undifferentiated many.

What is local, however, as Steele alludes to via his Shakespearean title, is the writing. These are texts peculiar to a certain mind, whose shared subjects (the seasons of nature and those of the human heart), objects (crops, bread, animals) and imagery (the fountain, the plough, the cross, the flock) are the products of one thinking

place. There is a singular catalogue of metaphors; a manner of speaking; a recognisable thought process. There is even a canon of influential figures that Steele establishes—Shakespeare, Dante and St Paul are its most popular alumni. Beyond the text's habitation in this mind-space, there is also a series of habits (no pun intended). In his poem addressed to Steele, Chris Wallace-Crabbe nominates two such habits: 'your mind a dulcet Google', '...singing worlds of praise' (2). Often introduced via a parable drawn from his search engine mind, Steele's 'glorying' (138) habitually settles on the conjunction of sacred and secular; the immanence of the divine in the human. The first verse of 'Triptych' elucidates Steele's ideology: 'It's beauty first and last whatever you say, / The world edenic or in poor repair: / Angels or not, the heart begins to pray' (17). Whether poems or homilies, Steele's texts are motivated by the same sense of thankful yearning which he attributes to Paul (58-59) – a practice that, in Steele's view, is inherently Christ-like: 'we at our best are yearners: and if that is not the final story about Christ the Lord, we have nothing to say about him, at all' (59).

The poems and homilies are of course differentiated by their stylistic conventions and modes of address. What they share, though, is the presumption of a faithful reader. This is both the promise and the danger of the book. References to the Bible proliferate, and it would be difficult to appreciate this book without prior knowledge of the Bible, or without consulting the Bible as parallel text. The homilies, by design, invoke an ideal reader who shares institutional membership and doctrinal belief. Similarly, the poems assume a reader interested in Christianity, as well as in traditional poetic forms. The twelve English sonnets reflecting on Bible verses are a case in point. However, Steele as writer is much more generous than this might imply: his interests in transformation and fluency, his frank recognition of the messiness of human life, his honest work as a 'robust wordsmith' (WJ Uren SJ), are evidence of an eloquence which he praises in others' work, and achieves in his own.

**Bridie McCarthy**

*Bridie McCarthy, a Research Fellow at Deakin University, specialises in the study of contemporary Australian poetry.*

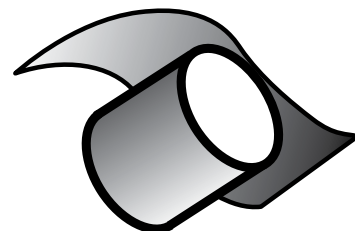


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# Talents wasted by sectarian strife

**Ed Moloney: *Voices from the Grave: two men's war in Ireland*, Faber & Faber, London, ISBN: 978057125168, RRP £14.99**

This book is the first of a planned series based on the Boston College Oral History Archive on the Troubles in Northern Ireland. The author is the coordinator of the project, involving interviews with IRA and UVF veterans. A defining rule is that no material may be released until the interviewee giving it had died and these interviewees represent the first deaths amongst the group. The two men of the title are Brendan Hughes and David Ervine – fierce opponents in their respective Republican and Ulster organisations, yet their stories, and those of their forebears frequently overlap.

Both men were born into working class Belfast communities, but to read the life history of Brendan 'The Dark' Hughes is to step back in time to 19<sup>th</sup> century destitution. Hughes' mother died young, leaving his father to bring up six children alone. As in *Finnegan's Wake*, to rise in the world, Hughes' father '... carried a hod...', but he carried his against the background of religious discrimination leading either to unemployment or work in appalling conditions. The family had hardly any furniture, but followed a weekly rota to do the housekeeping and cleaning. Separating motherless children amongst other family members was common then, but an aunt foolish enough to suggest that was thrown out of the house. Not surprisingly, Hughes viewed him as a hero and was appalled during a later prison visit when a journalist's question 'Do you think you're going to die?' reduced his father to tears. Ervine's father too, made a strong impression on him and a striking figure he must have been in the Belfast of the 50s. An engineer, he professed socialism, never attended church and told a visiting Ian Paisley to 'Fuck off!' for patronising the family. Although Ervine's father had a good trade and regular employment, he too had only had a limited education. Protestant 'advantage' was real, but strictly relative to Catholic poverty.

Both men described positive experiences with members of the other religion during their childhoods. Nevertheless Hughes was the inheritor of a legacy of direct political involvement with both parents and grandfathers involved in ear-

lier political struggles. Ervine's family, by contrast, was virtually apolitical, with him the only member to join the Orange Order. Deeper understanding of the political aspects of the religious struggle came to both men when they had already been jailed for involvement in it.

Both men joined their organisations early in the troubles, partly to defend their communities, but partly for 'a big adventure' (p.48). Hughes relates how his first weapons training came from British soldiers who were happy to sit in pubs, chatting with the locals and explaining how Self Loading Rifles (SLR) worked. The description of the chaos of 1970s Belfast given by both men is a gripping story of two communities caught up in constant unpredictable outbursts of lethal violence. Hughes catches the ambivalence of ordinary people when he describes the Lower Falls: 'this was a liberated area, where people like me would walk past the door and some old lady would come out and throw holy water around you or say prayers for you.' (p.67), but at the same time 'women would say the rosary at street corners for peace' (p.68). Ervine described how 'the bar cheered' (p. 348) when a bomb hit a Nationalist target even though the enthusiasts would never have gone out to do anything themselves.

Much of Hughes' interview describes his partnership with Gerry Adams, then its slow decay as he became disillusioned with the political ambitions of the man who had once saved his life. Hughes became Adams' Operations Officer in the Second Battalion and helped organise many operations, among them 'Bloody Friday', but later became infuriated when Adams, his commanding officer, denied that he had ever been a member of the IRA. Hughes maintained commitment throughout his imprisonment and was released in 1986 when Adams was in his third year as a Sinn Fein MP. Adams could see the need for a ceasefire if Sinn Fein was to make further political gains, but Hughes returned to a high position in the IRA. The disarray and suspicion he found led him to question Adams' motives and the decision to hold secret peace talks while the militarists in the IRA, completely in the dark, continued to fight and die for the organisation. The loss of his early ideals and estrangement from the man who had been his greatest friend culminated in the clinical depression that

gripped him during the last seven years of his life. Poignantly a photograph taken in The Maze of Hughes leaning against a young and hairy Adams was always on the wall of his flat, as if to remind him of what had been. Against Hughes' express instructions, Adams attended his funeral, but was cold shouldered. Terry Hughes described him as 'looking so forlorn...no one was speaking to him. He ... was sort of a lost soul' (p.298).

While Hughes died believing that his struggle had been betrayed, Ervine considered that the UVF had won most of what it had fought for, including a more secure union with Britain. Where Hughes died unemployed, Ervine died a successful politician who had been welcomed in Downing Street and the White House and celebrated for his role as a peacemaker. British motives in the Peace Process were regarded by many Unionists with great suspicion as they feared that their special interests would be sold out. Ervine shared this view, describing his efforts to understand the position of the British administration in the 1990s peace negotiations and finding '...the British were about as helpful as a fart in a spacesuit in terms of our explorations and deliberations.' (p.432).

After the IRA declared a conditional cease fire in 1994, the UVF followed, and Ervine got the chance, not only to travel to America but to meet its President, Bill Clinton. Ervine gives an interesting slant on Clinton's motives for brokering peace in Northern Ireland. Apart from the Irish-American vote, he wanted to free up British troops to support America against militant Islam. By the time of the Good Friday agreement, Ervine had emerged as a shrewd and capable negotiator. Telegenic, he managed to make the UVF view of the world sound reasonable and was awarded by winning a seat in the Ulster Parliament. In that capacity he acted, surprisingly, as a voice for moderation and promoted decommissioning by both sides.

The major theme of this book is of waste. Not only its subjects but the people around them had remarkable qualities and talents to offer, largely wasted by sectarianism and denial of opportunity. Striving to end the system that crushed both sides of the Northern Ireland community ultimately succeeded in changing it profoundly but at enormous ongoing cost to participants and onlookers.

*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. In 2009, the Australian Irish Heritage Network joined with the Celtic Club in sponsoring the award, with the prize money increased to \$1,000.

For 2010, the Australian Irish Heritage Network and the Celtic Club have combined again to sponsor the award, again with total prize money of \$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, with many 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. The nominated maximum word count for manuscripts is 5,000 words. If the medium of the writing is poetry, the word-length can be much shorter than the nominated 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 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 20 December 2010.

If you know 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, your entry will be most welcome.





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