

Tinteán

THE AUSTRALIAN IRISH HERITAGE NETWORK

No 14, December 2010

PRINT POST APPROVED PP 336663/00047

Who was Barcroft Boake?

Bill Refshauge

The Irish recession

Anne Enright

THANK GUINNESS IT'S CHRISTMAS!



**\$7 PINTS OF GUINNESS FOR THE
ENTIRE MONTH OF DECEMBER
MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM ALL
THE CREW AT P.J.O'BRIEN'S**



**CELEBRATE THE FESTIVE SEASON AT P.J'S
CHECK OUR WEBSITE FOR OUR FUNCTION PACKAGES**

**EAST TERRACE, ADELAIDE
SOUTHBANK, MELBOURNE**

**LAKE ST, CAIRNS
MELBOURNE AIRPORT**

KING ST, SYDNEY

WWW.PJOBRIENS.COM.AU

Tinteán No 14, December 2010

Tinteán is a publication of the Australian Irish Heritage Network

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

Email info@tintean.org.au

Web tintean.org.au

Published four times per annum

ABN 13643653067

ISSN 1835-1093

Editor: Liz McKenzie

Deputy Editor: Felicity Allen

Poetry Editor: Meg McNena

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.

Views expressed in the articles, letters and advertisements are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Australian Irish Heritage Network or of the editor.

Cover

Newgrange, by
www.flickr.com/photos/chad_k/

Contents

Regulars

- 2 **Letters:** Infelicity, Don't blame the spud, Lessons from Ireland's schools
- 3 **Editorial:** Newgrange revisited, *Peter Kiernan*
- 4 **News:** National Day of Action, Economic gloom, Fluctuating football fortunes
- 8 **What's on**
- 12 **Bolg an tSoláthair / Odds & Ends,** *Val Noone*
- 13 **Irish language:** A village in County Clare, *Bearnaí Ó Doibhlin*
- 14 **Music:** Gentlemen, choose your weapons please... *Stuart Traill*
- 28 **Poetry:** *Oritsegbemi Emmanuel Jakpa, Michael Gallagher, Bob Morrow, Neil McCarthy, Maireid Sullivan*

Features

- 10 Celtic Club awards for Melbourne and La Trobe students
- 17 Moral Therapy in HMS Anson, *Anne McMahon*
- 18 Sinking by Inches, *Anne Enright*
- 20 Who was Barcroft Boake? *Bill Refshauge*
- 21 A Bush Poet's tribute, *Frances Devlin-Glass*
- 22 Of migrating fish – and men, *Curtis Quelle*
- 24 Irish Catholics and Australian Politics, *Brian Galligan*
- 25 How do you pronounce 'lyreacrompane'? *Mattie Lennon*
- 26 Crime does not pay, *Ruth Dwyer*
- 36 Toytowns of Literature: the UNESCO Kiss of Death, *Gerry Feehily*

Reviews

- 30 *Brooklyn*, Colm Tóibín, reviewed by Frances Devlin-Glass
- 31 *Singing Saltwater Country: Journey to the Songlines of Carpentaria*, John Bradley, reviewed by Frances Devlin-Glass
- 32 *Joe Holmes: Here I Am Amongst You*, Len Graham, reviewed by Helen O'Shea
- 33 *Sinners, Saints and Settlers: a journey through Irish Australia*, Richard Reid and Brendon Kelson, reviewed by Felicity Allen
- 34 *Anzac Cove to Hollywood: the story of Tom Skeyhill, master of deception*, Jeff Brownrigg, reviewed by Eileen McMahon
- 35 *The Ship of Seven Murders: A True Story of Madness and Murder*, Alanna Hopkin & Kathy Bunney, reviewed by Felicity Allen

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: Frances Devlin-Glass

Vice-President: Peter Kiernan

Secretary: Bob Glass

Treasurer: Patrick McNamara

Committee Members: Felicity Allen, Catherine Arthur, Liz McKenzie, Debra Vaughan

Letters

Infelicity?

As I read your editorial for the September 2010 issue, an infelicitous sentence caught my eye. Far be it from me to question the reportage in either the *New York Times* or *The Guardian*, let alone *Time* itself or *The NSW Nurses' Association News*, but your editorial on Ireland's economic problems is apparently based thereon and tells us that 'across the country ordinary families in rent arrears ... are being evicted'. It goes on to say: 'Scenes enacted today at the hands of Irish [County] Councils match anything done during 19th century British rule.'

I venture to suggest that such an extraordinary claim should be backed up with a little more hard factual detail, or is *Tinteán* going tabloid on us?

Chris Mooney, Pascoe Vale South, Vic.
Felicity Allen replies: *This evaluation arose from a case where a wife returned from her shift as a nurse to find her family being put out on the street. She had received no notice of an eviction and had no reason to expect any as she and her husband had been paying the rent, but had not yet caught up on arrears to the Council. In protest she climbed onto the roof of the house and threatened suicide. It took the police seven hours to talk her down, when she was so distressed she had to be hospitalised. I would suggest that scenes like these are certainly comparable to those under British rule.*

Don't blame the spud

I nearly spilt my pint when reading the latest issue of *Tinteán*. There on page 27 was the headline, 'The Potato Famine'.

May I respectfully point out that, while the potato blight was a primary factor in the terrible events to follow, the use of such an anglophilic descriptor to describe the Famine fails to recognise that the ultimate causes of loss of life and homeland were the actions and inactions of the British Government. All other crops were in plentiful supply but were refused to the poor and needy. The British refused to supply any aid after October 1847 and failed to stop the considerable food exports from Ireland.

I might also point out that the figures given in the article by Carolyn Hirsh are rather on the low side. Most historians quote a number between 800,000 and

Adventures in O'Connell Street

Tinteán's Peter Kiernan and Joan, his wife, recently travelled to Ireland, in particular to visit their son, Ben, the celebrated genocide scholar, who has a residence in Co Kerry. It seems that when Peter was not presenting himself as a archaeologist and providing information to unwary tourists at the Skellig Rocks, he was taking issue with other professional tourist guides, as the following exchange with Lorcan Collins, his Dublin guide, suggests.

Peter's note:

I remember your tour in Dublin on Sunday 5 September last, as it was clearly the best ever of such tours. You just may remember me as the old man from Oz who questioned your passing unceremoniously the statue of William Smith O'Brien. It was a sensitive moment for me as I had made a pilgrimage to remote Maria Island off the east coast of Van Diemen's Land where William was dumped in solitary confinement because he refused to swear that he would never try to escape. And I admired his writings so much. (But he should never have recommended that tenants seek permission to fell landlords' trees, as you so clearly explained.) Peter, my son, and I really were inspired by the whole experience of your 1916 tour.

Lorcan's reply:

It is very kind of you to write and I do remember the two Peters. So sorry for ignoring Smith O'Brien. To be honest I do often give him some time but for some reason that day I gave him a miss – selective historical analysis etc. I do like O'Brien but, you know, I prefer John Mitchel any day, or Fintan Lalor – now there is a couple of boyos we could well do with having around today to stimulate the hoi polloi into ejecting this government.

If you come back in 2016 I shall personally and privately meet you at Smith O'Brien's statue. Do you know that part in *Ulysses* concerning the statues as the lads come up O'Connell Street? The first statue they meet is Smith O'Brien on O'Connell Bridge and then they meet O'Connell himself. The statue was later moved as it was in the way of the trams!

At *Tinteán* we know enough of Peter to suggest that if he happened to be looking for a new career he is sufficiently well informed as to be able to take up a career as a Dublin tourist guide himself. We look forward to a report of his 2016 visit to Ireland.

1 million for Famine deaths and up to 1.5 million emigrating as a result of this tragedy.

Robert O'Byrne, Shoreham, Vic.

Lessons from Ireland's schools

We can learn more than economic lessons from Irish history.

In my visits to Catholic and Protestant schools in turbulent Belfast in the 1980s as a psychologist, I was often told that their segregation contributed to the continuation of the conflict. In Abbotsford in Melbourne where we lived in the 1950s, the children still had religious wars between Catholic and Protestant, attending different schools. This antagonism ceased as immigration filled State, Catholic and Protestant schools with children of all religions as well. Now the Australian Government is funding segregation,

which the Catholic and Protestant main-streams will regret supporting, thinking it is in their own interests. It is not, as the government pays for segregation of children into dozens of religions and sects, many hating each other. Some rely on the government funding to survive.

Valerie Yule, Mount Waverley, Vic.

Valerie is a great great granddaughter of Ann Barrow, who at age 17 came to Australia from the orphan asylum in Mallow, Co Cork, on the Pemberton in 1849. Her name is among those who are commemorated on the Famine Rock at Williamstown. Ann married Samuel Phillips who had been sentenced to death for allegedly stealing 40 shillings worth of brassware at age 15. The sentence was commuted to transportation to Tasmania. His son became a mayor of Brunswick. See also Táin, April 2003.

Newgrange revisited

After four weeks of August sunshine in Co Kerry, my wife and I returned to Dublin early in September 2010. In torrential rain, we toured Co Meath to visit Newgrange. We found the new Brú na Bóinne Visitor Centre well and truly established. Dozens of buses and their passengers were directed and guided. It is now an outstanding tourist project of the highest quality.

I start by offering the reader a summary of facts that explain the painfully protracted discovery and understanding of this major Passage Tomb, now known as Newgrange.

In 1142, a Cistercian Abbey was established on the banks of the Boyne and a 'new grange' (or outlying farm) was developed by the monks. This land included the tomb and so the name 'New Grange' became the label.

In 1699, the first known mention of the site was made by the Welsh antiquary Edward Llhwyd who wrote, 'I also met with one monument in this kingdom, very regular; it starts at a place called New Grange near Drogheda, and is a mount or barrow, of very considerable height, encompassed with vast stones, pitched on end, round the bottom of it, and having another, lesser, standing on the top'. And, 'The entry into this cave is at bottom and before it we found a great flat stone like a large tombstone, placed edgeways, having on the outside certain barbarous carvings, like snakes encircled, but without heads'. Twenty-five years later, Sir Thomas Molyneux, visited New Grange and wrote on it in his 'Discourse on Danish Forts' (1725). There appears to be no further literature on New Grange over the next hundred years. However, visits by tourists kept building up.

In 1837, William Wilde first visited New Grange and wrote a treatise 'The Beauties of the Boyne and its tributary the Blackwater' now available online. It is a meticulous history and scientific study of the Boyne area and pages 187-203 are devoted to New Grange under the chapter headed 'Danish Forts'. What Wilde saw of New Grange was a heap of stone and dirt collapsed into rubble but local farmers had exposed the entrance into the passage way. Millennia of piled up earth and stone and trees and grasses had concealed the tomb. Astronomical devices and features were in no way discernible. The roof-box and its stones and lintels so meticulously designed to let the winter solstice dawn-sun shine into the inner chambers was completely engulfed in the vast accumulation of earth and stone. Wilde's book has superb etchings, the outstanding one, by Connolly, being of the great vertical stones making up the inner chambers and the domed roof (which has never leaked!).

Wilde had little conception of the age of New Grange and confused it with Viking tombs. Then, in 1905, a photo of the entrance to Brú na Bóinne was published in 'Celtic myth and legend' by Charles Squire. It is a dramatic photo and illustrates, startlingly, the collapsed mound that Wilde had come across and which faced the Professor of Archeology at Cork University, Michael J. O'Kelly in 1962 when he undertook its reconstruction. Professor O'Kelly and his workers cleared the site, reconstructed the tomb and its surrounds using existing material and local stone, quartz and granite. He rebuilt it according to the findings and measure-



From *Celtic Myth And Legend* by Charles Squire, 1905

ments calculated from his detailed research on this and many other tombs in Wales, Brittany and Spain. His aim was to get as close to the original as could be envisaged. The climax of this story is the discovery, by O'Kelly, of the roof-box and its purpose. Over 5,400 years ago, the forerunners of the Celts built this astronomical masterpiece and its function is described by O'Kelly.

From his observations made at the dawn of the winter solstice on 21 December 1969 he records:

At exactly 9.45 a.m. (BST) the top edge of the ball of the sun appeared above the local horizon and at 9.58 a.m. the first pencil of direct sunlight shone through the roof-box and right along the passage to reach across the roof chamber floor as far as the front edge of the basin stone in the end-chamber. As the thin line of light widened to a 17cm band and swung across the chamber floor, the tomb was dramatically illuminated and various details of the side- and endchambers as well as the corbelled roof could be easily seen in the light reflected from the floor. At 10.04 a.m. the 17cm band of light began to narrow again and at exactly 10.15 a.m. the direct beam was cut off from the tomb. For 17 minutes therefore, at sunrise on the shortest day of the year, direct sunlight can enter Newgrange, not through the doorway, but through the specially contrived narrow slit which lies under the roof-box at the outer end of the passage roof.

Newgrange, as it is now spelt, was built 1,000 years before Stonehenge, 500 years before the pyramids. Standing in the pitch black of the inner chamber, whilst our guide re-enacted, with clever lighting, the winter solstice performance, one was overcome with bewilderment as to how such 'primitive' people could have made such calculations five millennia ago, before any written language was developed. Many millennia ago, those early Irish made discoveries as to the seasonal cycles, the heavenly movements and used that knowledge to survive. Only a Darwin could appreciate the prolonged period of time required over which people could digest and interpret the change of the seasons, the movements in the firmament and its bodies, the rhythmic growth and flowering of flora and crops.

I close with a beautiful passage from Claire O'Kelly, the widow of the hero of Newgrange. 'We cannot identify the builders in terms of race or dynasty but we can say that they were stone and not metal-users, they were farmers and stock-raisers, they believed in the supernatural, they observed and studied the heavens, they had forces at their disposal capable of undertaking large and complex works and had the engineers and architects and craftsmen capable of directing them.'

Peter Kiernan

News

National Day of Action

The purpose of the National Day of Action [in Ireland] on Friday, 17 September 2010, was to highlight the importance of the arts to Irish society and to the Irish economy. It was coordinated by the National Campaign for the Arts, an umbrella group representing organisations across the whole spectrum of the arts. In the paranoid atmosphere of cutback, withdrawal, and disengagement by those making economic decisions for the country, artists of every discipline feared that the meagre investment by the state in the arts would be severely undermined, and so mounted the National Day of Action.

The Irish Writers' Centre spearheaded the campaign for the writers and presented an event that was rich in symbolism. The Garden of Remembrance is across the road from the Centre in Parnell Square, Dublin. It was opened in 1966 to commemorate all the visionaries who created the Irish state and forged the Irish identity. To acknowledge the central role of writers in this national project, the Chairman of the Writers' Centre, Jack Harte, laid a wreath in their honour at the Children of Lir monument in the Garden.

The visionary writers of 1916 were very obviously in mind, Pearse and Connolly, MacDonagh and Plunkett. But Harte broadened the scope of this ceremony to embrace a much wider contribution to the creation of the Irish identity, mentioning Francis Ledwidge, for example, who died fighting in the British Army during the First World War, and the Gaelic poets of the 17th Century who had to salvage the soul of Irish culture from the total collapse of the infrastructure that supported it up until the Flight of

the Earls. At the ceremony Liam Mac Uistin recited his poem dedicated to such visionaries, which is emblazoned in gold lettering on the back wall of the Garden. And a young piper, Maitiú Ó Casaide, provided music on the uilleann pipes.

After the ceremony in the Garden of Remembrance, all returned to the Writers' Centre, where short pieces from fifteen writers of earlier generations were read in succession. All were from dead writers whom people felt contributed significantly to our cultural identity and to our status as a major literary nation, people like Benedict Kiely and Michael Hartnett, Kate O'Brien and Mary Lavin. There was the enhanced symbolism of Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin reading from her grand-uncle, Joseph Mary Plunkett, and Lucile Redmond reading from her grandfather, Thomas MacDonagh.

While arts groups from all over the country mounted demonstrations associated with their particular disciplines, the Irish Writers' Centre mounted an event that captured in a symbolic way the centrality of the arts, and of writing in particular, in moulding our cultural identity.

For further information on the Irish Writers' Centre and for access to Jack Harte's speech in the Garden of Remembrance, go to www.writerscentre.ie

Economic gloom (1): recession

Ireland's recovery from the deepest recession of any euro zone country has come as a quick and unexpected end after the Irish government announced that national output dropped in the second quarter of this year. After posting an increase in growth in the first three months, the new data showed that the former 'Celtic

Tiger' sank into a double-dip recession in the northern spring.

The relapse put additional pressure on Dublin's unpopular government, which had previously insisted that its tough budget cuts were helping to stabilise the economy. GNP fell 0.3 per cent in the second quarter after falling 1.2 per cent in the first quarter, but was down 4.4 per cent on the second quarter of 2009.

Sources: *The Age*, *Guardian*, September 2010

Economic gloom (2): slash-and-burn budgets

When the rest of the world was dusting down their copies of Keynes's *General Theory* to justify fiscal stimulus packages during the global financial crisis, the Irish embraced austerity. Seriously. The government in Dublin announced not one but three slash-and-burn budgets that took the axe to the public sector and welfare entitlements. Unemployment has tripled; emigration of talent has resumed. But it was deemed to be a price worth paying. The aim was to reassure the financial markets that the government was serious about cleaning up the mess from the colossal boom-bust of the property market.

However, the budget cuts have impaired the economy's ability to grow. The government wants to slash the budget deficit from 12 per cent to less than three per cent by 2014, which would be tough even if the economy was growing. But when the economy is shrinking, the government is in effect running hard simply to stand still, hence the call for even greater austerity to mollify the markets. Ireland is perilously close to permanent recession and deflation, from which the

THE 12TH LAKE SCHOOL OF CELTIC MUSIC SONG AND DANCE



Koroit January 2-7 2011

Tuition: Fiddle, flute, uilleann pipes, button accordion, tin whistle, bodhran, Finger style guitar and song accompaniment, DADGAD Guitar, Guitar basics, ukelele, mandolin, harp, five string banjo, singing, Irish set and sean nos dancing, Song writing, Irish Language, Slow Session, Maity Swallow Ceildhe Band, Kids Program, Youth program and James Joyce Ulysses Reading Group. Featuring: Paddy O'Neill Award Band, Lake School Tutors Band, Grand Ceildhe, 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 Connolly (harp), Peter Daffy (Guitar Basics), Lucinda Clutterbuck (Animations), Nick Martin (Kids Whistle), Jeremy Meagher (James Joyce Ulysses Reading Group) and Therese Supple (Art Exhibition)

\$175 per adult, \$100 children under 16, Family ticket \$485 (prices inc GST). Contact Felix 0413 801 294 felix@bushwahzee.com www.lakeschool.bushwahzee.com

only way out may be default. The lesson from Ireland now is: how not to do it.

Sources: The Age, Guardian, October 2010

Economic gloom (3): Anglo Irish Bank

Anglo Irish Bank's heavy exposure to property lending, with most of its loan book being to builders and property developers, meant that it was very badly affected by the global financial crisis, a deep recession and the bursting of the Irish property bubble in 2008. In December 2008, the Irish government announced plans to inject €1.5 billion of capital for a 75% stake in the bank, effectively nationalising it. When the stock exchanges suspended trading in Anglo Irish's shares, its final closing price of €0.22 represented a fall of over 98% from its peak.

Bailing out the bank could now cost €35 billion (\$A50 billion) and that rescue has threatened to push the country into insolvency. The massive bill, plus the cost of helping other banks, is expected help push Ireland's public deficit to a record 32 per cent of GDP this year. That would be the largest deficit for a euro zone member since the single currency was created in 1999, and comes amid mounting investor concern over Ireland's ability to control its huge public debt and deficit, amid similar fears over Italy, Greece, Portugal and Spain.

Sources: The Age, Agence France-Presse, October 2010

Economic gloom (4): enthusiasm and hope have collapsed

After the Rising of 1916, WB Yeats famously wrote of how 'a terrible beauty'

had been born. He was remarkably prescient in his language – a new State would be born in less than a decade. How unfortunate it is then that a new 'terrible [political] failure' means Ireland is now poised to commemorate 1916 as a vassal state of the ECB, the IMF and the British bond market.

We are becoming a dispossessed people. This sense of dispossession is not just confined to our homes, careers or any real connection with the future lives of our fleeing adult children. Instead, the failure of the elite is stripping away the natural enthusiasm, hope, entrepreneurship and, in some cases, the actual will to live of our people.

It is bad enough that we live in a collapsed economy. What is even clearer is that Ireland is now also a failed political entity. This is epitomised by the contemptuous decision to withhold details of the four-year plan. This is a chilling indication of how the terrible political failure has created a system of political and administrative leadership that increasingly resembles that of a small, none too efficient, fascist state.

As our elite speak a language that is without meaning about adjustments, fundamentals, capacity for sacrifice and export-led growth, the Irish tragedy is that the occupying power consists of our own political and public sector elite. Perhaps the most appalling reflection on the failure of Ireland's leadership is that the most honest commentators on the real state of our economy are the bond traders, for they have weighed, measured, sifted and seen through the spoof.

In Easter 1916, Yeats observed that 'too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart'. The same, of course, can also occur to a country. Like Weimar

Germany, a nation increasingly feels that, having been stabbed in the back, its people and resources are being cannibalised to protect a small vested elite from a hostile outside order. We are surely at the point where the public is now entitled to tell the Government to 'publish your four-year plan and be damned, for even citizens have rights too'.

John Drennan, Sunday Independent, November 2010

Casement's dream

In his 'Bookmarks' column in *The Age* (23 October 2010), Jason Stegar writes that unless you speak Spanish, you will have a bit of a wait for the new novel of Mario Vargas Llosa, this year's Nobel Prize winner. *El Sueño del Celta* will be published next month but will not appear in English as *The Dream of the Celt* until early 2012.

It is about Sir Roger Casement, the Irish British consul, who exposed the appalling treatment meted out to the Putumayo Indians in Peru. Casement later became an active Irish nationalist and was eventually hanged for treason in 1916 by the British.

Historian's 'harrowing' time

Tinteán's overworked scribes have every sympathy for Dr Desmond McCabe, the historian who has so far been paid €367,870 to write a book on the Irish Office of Public Works (OPW) and is to receive a further €39,000 despite failing to deliver the manuscript eight years after it was commissioned.

In 2002 Dr McCabe was contracted by OPW to write its history within two years at a cost of €76,000. When the initial deadline

Dignity ~ Gentleness ~ Understanding

These are the qualities often referred to in the many thank-you letters received from our clients' families.

Secure Pre-Paid Funeral Plan

Providing Melbourne's Irish-Australian Community with personalised funeral services at reasonable prices.

Chapel and Office located at
187 Queens Parade, Clifton Hill 3068

LONERGAN FUNERALS

Phone: 9489 8711 or email: lonergan.raven@gmail.com

NCALFS/209

passed, it was agreed to extend the contract by two more years, paying him €39,234 a year. But the new deadline of January 2006 was also missed. In May 2005, McCabe wrote to OPW advising he would need a further year and a half, claiming that the 'sheer scale' was the 'fundamental reason for the slippage'. An extension was granted until September 2007.

But in January 2007, Dr McCabe told OPW he could not meet the new deadline. This time the deadline was put back to September 2009. This deadline also passed without work being completed. In February this year, McCabe said it 'would be impossible to complete the writing by the end of 2011'. OPW said this was 'unacceptable', adding that the book would be published by the end of 2011.

Dr McCabe recently broke his silence on the furore, describing the last couple of months as 'harrowing'. At *Tinteán*, 'harrowing' is not the word for it. We well understand the frustration of forever being overburdened with onerous workloads and set impossible deadlines

by a thoroughly insensitive editor. And as for the €39,000 per annum: there is absolutely no sign here of a single cent of any of that.

Source: Irish Independent, November 2010

Fluctuating football fortunes

It has been a season of mixed fortunes for Irishman Marty Clarke, who after 46 games with the AFL football club, Collingwood, returned to Ireland at the end of season 2009 in pursuit of an All-Ireland Gaelic football title with County Down. He was cruelly denied his plan when Down lost the grand final by one point to Cork.

His decision to return also meant that he did not share in Collingwood's resounding victory in the 2010 AFL Grand Final.

More recently Clarke represented Ireland in the international rules series against Australia in matches in Limerick and Dublin. Australia won both games and thus the series, with aggregate points of 102 to 92. In the series Clarke's misfortunes multiplied when the opposing Australian coach,

Mick Malthouse, who was Clarke's former coach at Collingwood and thus well aware of his capabilities, consigned Liam Picken to tag him and halt his effectiveness.

Malthouse who has said that Clarke could have made the side he took into the 2010 AFL finals is said to have been keen to have him rejoin Collingwood next year, but as the club did not make a submission to get him back under the new leave-of-absence rule, speculation that he will return next season has nosedived. To return now would mean navigating through the unpredictable open draft system.

Perhaps Clarke has unfinished business in County Down?

Sources: The Age, Herald-Sun, AFL website

We were wrong

In issue 13 (September 2010), we incorrectly attributed a comment piece relating to 'A "fair go" in Australia' to Anne McMahon. The News item from the 1836 *Dublin Evening Post* was supplied by Dr McMahon.

Marrying Out program wins GOLD

Siobhan McHugh's radio series based on oral histories of mixed marriage, *Marrying Out*, first broadcast on ABC Radio National almost a year ago, recently won a GOLD medal in the prestigious New York Festival of Radio. Here Siobhan describes her feelings about the series and its recognition.

It is a wonderful testimony to the power of these stories that this quintessentially Australian series clearly moved and engaged people from many different countries and cultures. It won in the Religion category, against stories ranging from issues in the Middle East to Canadian indigenous spirituality. It also won a bronze medal in the History category – up against productions from all around the world, though the gold medal was taken by another ABC Radio National Hindsight program, *Shutting Down Sharleen*.

To me, this award clearly shows the power of oral history ON RADIO, to connect us to our shared humanity. There is nothing like the human voice to convey intimacy and emotion. That was apparent to me earlier this year, when I gave a keynote address at a festival in, of all places Iran, about my 1987 series on the building of the Snowy Mountains Scheme. My trepidation dissolved as I saw how the assorted secular and religious people present could so obviously identify with stories of culture clash, missing home and family, bonding together in the face of danger and challenge – it didn't matter that it was an Italian talking about being in Cooma, his emotion was universally recognisable.

I also got to present the mixed marriage interviews at the 17th Irish-Australasian Conference in Belfast in July this year – it was amazing to be speaking about sectarianism literally as the bonfires were being built for the marching season! Staffs from the Ulster Folk Museum and other academics present were fascinated by the stories. Most had no idea that these issues had taken on new life in Australia, often with such virulence.

I will be including all these thoughts in my thesis which is actually now more about the power of oral history – on radio – than about mixed marriage itself. It's led me down a long road! To think some said when I started out that surely 'this Catholic-Protestant stuff' was irrelevant now!

Not in Front of the Altar and Between Two Worlds, the two programs in Siobhan McHugh's ABC Radio National Hindsight series, *Marrying Out*, were reviewed in *Tinteán* issue 10 (December 2009). The National Library of Australia will be archiving the original interviews, as a record for future researchers.

The New York Festival details, with the radio programs, are at: www.newyorkfestivals.com/news/radio2010winners.html

Irish economic news

Following mild mid-year optimism about growth in the Irish economy, the latest quarterly economic figures came as a rude shock. Both the gross domestic product (GDP) and the gross national product had fallen. Even the Bank of Ireland's chief economist was surprised by these poor figures, having expected some growth. The impact of this news on the bond market is shown by the fact that Irish government bonds must pay 4.25% more than German government bonds for investors to take them up. Against a background of general European slowdown, German bonds are seen as the safest and Irish bonds as the most risky. Being forced to pay high interest rates on bonds makes it harder for the Irish government to borrow money to deal with its debt. These factors have led Moody's rating agency to comment that it may consider downgrading Ireland's credit rating.

The cost of bailing out the banks has now risen to €45 billion overall with the Anglo Irish Bank alone accounting for 75.5% of this. Trinity College econom-

ics professor Brian Lucey expressed some reservations about the sum of €45 billion being the 'final figure', pointing out that there had already been at least four 'final figures' for the Anglo Irish bank alone. He expects that the true costs of the bail-out will prove to be even greater. Nevertheless, the current cost means that the budget deficit is now 32% of GDP and will cost individual taxpayers €22,500 each. Ireland's next door neighbour, England, has only needed to provide 6% of her GDP to bail out failed lending institutions.

To deal with the sudden deterioration in the financial situation, the Irish government will need to rewrite its budget, already condemned as austere, to make much deeper cuts. Former Finance Minister, Ray MacSharry pointed out that 'There are only three big areas of spending – health, education and social welfare – and I believe there will have to be a 10pc cut in all these areas over the next two years.' (Irish Independent 7.10.2010). He also suggested cutting ministerial salaries and further reducing

the numbers of public servants. Another possibility would be seeking emergency help from the EU and the IMF as Greece (with much lower debt levels) did in May this year. Ireland has persistently denied speculation that it may need emergency help and last week the government said it was fully funded until June 2011.

Whether cutting spending is the correct approach to a faltering economy is hotly debated in economic circles, but it seems that this will be the solution Ireland will try to implement. It is unlikely that Brian Cowen's government will survive any more bad economic news. According to the Irish Times' opinion polls, Cowen's approval rating in September, 2009 was 15%; the lowest ever reached by a Taoiseach and it stands currently at 19%. The next election may well see the first Labour government of Ireland as it has taken voters from both Fine Gael and Fianna Fail to reach 35% support.

Felicity Allen

Compiled from: The Irish Times, The Independent & BBC News.

Irish poet who looks to tradition

The Irish-language poet and academic, Louis de Paor, University College Galway, has returned to Melbourne for a short stay. On 12 October, he spoke at the Melbourne Irish Studies Seminar (MISS) series on another Irish poet, Liam S Gógán who was from the 1930s to the 1980s more widely read than he is today. de Paor is working on a critical edition of his work.

de Paor's pen-portrait of this poet revealed him to be a rather fractious and eccentric man of many parts – a tweed-wearing, monocle-managing scholar. Often contemptuous of his own compatriots, he was, notwithstanding, a practical patriot who worked behind the scenes as an IRB operative for the Rising, seeking funds for arms from German-Americans (because he had a fine contempt for Irish-Americans), and spent three months in jail in Frongoch as a result. He was a curator of antiquities at the National Museum of Ireland and in

that capacity travelled on the Continent and in America, soaking up other literary traditions.

As a language scholar, Gógán was important, writing poems that harkened back to the 18th century bardic tradition rather than to the vernacular peasant Revivalist tradition. He believed that much of the richness of Irish had been attenuated by the turn to the vernacular in the 19th century. He was a travelling teacher of Irish for the Gaelic League for a time. Curriculum makers frequently featured his poems in their syllabi, until the last 30 years when his literariness as a poet meant that his poems were seen as too challenging. He also wrote a series of occasional poems for a variety of national and transnational causes, but Louis felt that the quality of these was often in question. He published six volumes of poetry in his lifetime and they span the Revivalist, Modernist

and Contemporary styles of poetry.

At question time, de Paor made clear that he thinks that Gógán's work has value in broadening the scope of what's possible in poetry in Irish by linking it to other continental traditions and a strand of literariness which was discounted during the nineteenth century.

Gógán also made an important contribution to the enlargement and revision of Father Dinneen's dictionary in the period 1923–1927 (published by the Irish Texts Society), which became necessary when the plates were destroyed by fire during the Rising. He perhaps should have been given more credit for that than he usually gets, according to de Paor.

This was the last of the MISS seminars for 2010, but the program for 2011 is under development already. Details will be posted in the new year on www.isaanz.org/events.

Frances Devlin-Glass

What's on

Annual Eureka Commemoration Dinner

7:00 pm, Friday, 3 December 2010
Celtic Club, Melbourne

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

Contact: Helen or Kim 03 9670 6472

Daonscoil 2011

A residential course in the Irish language
9-16 January 2011, Lake Dewar Lodge,
Myrniong (near Bacchus Marsh), Victoria
Registration from 2:00 pm, Sunday, 9 January 2011.

This one-week residential course in the Irish language caters for all levels from beginners to fluent speakers.
Rates: Weekly – Adult \$490, Child (up to 15 years) \$245; Daily – \$100

Contact: Deirdre 0405 210 149 feedback@gaeilgesanastrail
Please contact the Cumann if you need a map.

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 James Joyce 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
www.lakeschool.bushwahzee.com

BrigidFest 2011

Sunday, 6 February 2011, Celtic Club, Melbourne

Brigid's spirit down under
Australian Celtic stories and music
With Maria Forde, Cath Connelly and Greg Hunt
Including BrigidMart for books, Brigid crosses

Contact: Helen 03 9670 6472

Exhibition: 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.

Contact: Richard Reid, National Museum, Canberra

Melbourne Theatre Company

The 2011 program is bookended by two Irish plays.

5 February – 19 March 2011

Martin McDonagh's *A Behanding in Spokane*

Despite the title, it is said to be 'scant on stage horrors'. McDonagh, a youngish Irish playwright, has an eye for the dark and surreal, and is able to wring comedy out of it.

12 November – 30 December 2011

Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*

Geoffrey Rush as Lady Bracknell, with Bob Hornery as both the butlers.

Contact: MTC 03 8688 0800

Scoil Gheimhridh Sydney 2011

The 9th Scoil Gheimhridh
10-13 June 2010, Kensington, NSW

The Scoil Gheimhridh, or winter school, brings adults together from across Australia to learn and polish up their Irish language skills. Suitable for all levels, from complete beginners upwards. Language classes plus talks, dancing, music and singing.

Contact: Éilis Hurst 0424 718 538 eilis@internpode.on.net
www.IrishLanguageSchoolSydney.org.au

18th Australasian Irish Studies Conference

7-9 July 2011 (tentatively), Canberra

An interdisciplinary conference with contributions from areas of history, migration studies, sociology, politics, literature, the arts, gender, geography, anthropology and economics.

Contact: Richard Reid, National Museum, Canberra

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

Celtic Folk Radio Program

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

Contact: Anne McAllister 0423 397 051 www.3CR.org.au

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

Australian Irish Welfare Bureau

Afternoon Tea & Dance
14:00–17:30 on the last Sunday of each month at the
Celtic Club, Melbourne

Contact: Marion O'Hagan 03 9482 3865

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 over the 225 years 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 tour Australia and is expected 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. An 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 suits 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.

Audio-visual displays highlighting the roles and careers of such well known characters as the Kelly gang, Redmond Barry, the judge who sentenced Ned Kelly, 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.

National Museum of Australia nma.gov.au

For inclusion in the *What's On* column, please submit items to editorial@tintean.org.au

Celtic Club awards for Melbourne and La Trobe students

On 20 August 2010, Irish history students who submitted the best three essays in courses taught at The University of Melbourne and La Trobe University during 2009-10 were awarded prizes at the Celtic Club, Melbourne.

The 2009 annual Mary O'Donoghue Prize at The University of Melbourne was presented to Tom Kearney, the inaugural 2010 Celtic Club Prize for Irish-Australian history at The University of Melbourne was presented to Carly Godden, while the 2009 Celtic Club Prize for Irish history at La Trobe University was presented *in absentia* to Fatma Abdulrahman.

Professor Elizabeth Malcolm and Dr Dianne Hall (Melbourne), and Dr Jennifer Ridden (La Trobe) presented the prizes. The Celtic Club President, Seamus Moloughney, congratulated the winners.

Professor Malcolm noted that it was ten years since she had taken up her position, the Gerry Higgins Chair of Irish Studies, which was established in 2000 as a result of very generous donations by the Higgins and Myers families. Reflecting on that milestone, Professor Malcolm said that a variety of Irish courses were taught, stretching from the medieval period up to the present day. She took the opportunity to pay tribute to her teaching colleagues, Di Hall, Val Noone and Bill Anderson, describing it as a wonderful experience to have worked with such fine scholars and teachers, and also people with a real passion for all things Irish.

Quality over quantity

At present Melbourne is running three courses at second, third and fourth year levels, dealing with both the history of Ireland and of the Irish in Australia, and teaching about 130-140 students each year. Conceding that is not a huge number by modern standards, Professor Malcolm said that she valued quality over quantity and, after reading many hundreds of essays during the past ten years, she thought the University was having considerable success in producing quality students. She was delighted that the Celtic Club recognises this quality through its prizes.

Professor Malcolm recalled that one of James Joyce's characters in *Ulysses* famously described Irish history as a nightmare from which he was trying to awake. On the basis of the essays that she read in the last decade, Professor Malcolm rejected the concept of giving students nightmares. On the contrary, she said that students who have not been to Ireland speak of wanting to go there and those who have been tell of wanting to return. Professor Malcolm suggested that tourist boards and travel agents should be subsidising Irish studies as teachers have obviously been providing them with a good deal of business. Professor Malcolm said that she had enjoyed reading the essays and she congratulated the authors on their excellent work.

... extraordinarily
good fortune in having
excellent library and
archival resources ...

Dr Dianne Hall commented that one of the great pleasures of teaching Irish history has been reading the final research essays of students in both the 'Ireland Down Under' and 'Modern and Contemporary Ireland' courses. The quality of the research and writing reflects engagement of the students with the broad area of Irish history and also the extraordinarily good fortune in having excellent library and archival resources in Melbourne.

Topics on which students have written in recent years at The University of Melbourne include the Irish at Eureka; Irish rebels in Australia and the United States; the iconography of gravestones, statues and buildings in and around Melbourne; St Patrick's Day celebrations; church buildings, such as St Patrick's Cathedral and local churches; emigration from Ireland; the Northern Ireland Troubles; and Irish-Australian Catholics and politics, particularly the DLP.

In winning the O'Donoghue prize, Tom Kearney wrote an original and stimulating essay on the way in which the inhabitants of Port Fairy (formerly Belfast) have viewed and marketed their Irish heritage since the 19th century. In her essay on Irish Catholicism in colonial Victoria and the building the church of St John the Baptist, Clifton Hill, Carly Godden wove information about the building of the Clifton Hill church into a study of the ambitions of Archbishop James Goold for his Irish flock in late 19th century Victoria.

Dr Jennifer Ridden of La Trobe University thanked the Celtic Club for its generous support of Irish history at the university by sponsoring the prize, and for supporting activities in many other ways. La Trobe has a long and proud tradition of Irish studies built up over forty years by Philip Bull and others. With Philip about to retire, Dr Ridden has taken up the task to foster interest and study in Irish history at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels.

La Trobe teaches sections on Irish history in a number of broader undergraduate courses, including those on early modern and modern European history, and in more specialised comparative courses. The dedicated Irish history course focuses on the key issues and events of the 19th century between the 1798 Rebellion and the Easter Rising, and encourages students to consider how the major issues and events effected different social groups. This year Philip Bull took a specialised honours-year course in late-19th century Irish history and a number of postgraduate students are researching in Irish history.

Student interest growing

Dr Ridden noted that student interest in Irish history is growing steadily and shows no sign of waning. While some students seek to find out more about their Irish family backgrounds, many others have no Irish links at all.

In her prize-winning essay, Fatma Abdulrahman considered whether 19th century Ireland should be considered



L to R: Celebrating the prizewinners: Seamus Moloughney (President of the Celtic Club), Tom Kearney (University of Melbourne), Jennifer Ridden (faculty, LaTrobe University), Carly Godden (LaTrobe University), Elizabeth Malcolm, Di Hall (both on the faculty, University of Melbourne), Philip Moore (Convenor, Cultural Heritage Committee, Celtic Club).

'colonial' or not. This very difficult topic asked that she disentangle a heated and many-faceted historical debate, which is not merely academic but which has modern political and ideological implications. With careful analysis and passion com-

bined, Fatma considered the arguments in the light of several historical case studies. Her capacity to balance the various demanding elements of the task and to chart a course through detailed historical analysis greatly impressed her readers.



PIERCE BODY WORKS

*Had an accident?
Not your fault?*

- We can look after the paperwork
- VACC Accredited
- Replacement cars available
- Fleet and Private work
- Authorised Insurance Repairer

81-85 Gadd Street, Northcote Victoria 3070
P 03 9482 4007 **F** 03 9482 6644 **M** 0412 348 876
E info@piercebodyworks.com.au **W** www.piercebodyworks.com.au

THE IRISH PROGRAM

Éistigí

RADIO 4EBFM

**Saturdays:
12.30pm–
1.30pm**

**South-East
Queensland
on 98.1FM**

**The world on
4eb.org.au**

**(07) 3240 8600
irish@4eb.org.au**

Bolg an tSoláthair / Odds & Ends

Celtic Studies boost in Sydney

The week after the first Grand Final, my wife Mary and I travelled to Sydney for the seventh Australian conference of Celtic Studies. Thanks to sustained effort by community and philanthropic groups, Celtic Studies has been taught for many years at Sydney University. Now, for the first time, the department has a professor, namely Anders Ahlqvist, whose presence is making a difference.

From Wednesday 29 September, we joined a hundred others listening to and discussing forty plus talks on Irish, Scots, Welsh, Cornish, Manx and Breton history and literature. A key organiser of this conference was Pamela O'Neill who will be known to readers of this magazine. Participants came from Australia, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, USA, and Scandinavia. As happens with academic conferences, some speakers concentrated on technical details without giving attention to the meaning and relevance of their findings. Overall, however, it was a resounding success. For me, who spends a lot of time researching the Irish in Victoria, it was an intensive four-day course which offered me a broad view of different but related worlds.

From Dublin, Harvard, Edinburgh and Swansea

Fergus Kelly from the Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies, the most famous scholar of our day on the Brehon Laws of ancient Ireland, addressed the first of four plenary sessions. His topic was the place of women in Irish law in the seventh to ninth centuries AD and he gave details of Brehon laws on marriage covering dowries, love potions, unsatisfactory cooking, poor dress making, impotence, infidelity and so on. Kelly argued that, in the face of high death rates from war and disease, the ancient law placed great emphasis on procreation. In this context he cited a ruling against *airiudad coimperta*, the 'prevention of conception'. The laws assumed most marriages were arranged but also provided for marriage by personal choice. As I understood Kelly, the laws promoted monogamy but had complex and seemingly fair arrangements for divorce.

Catherine McKenna from Harvard University, the second keynote speaker,

spoke about the scribes and patrons of the fourteenth-century who put together a collection of Welsh stories called the Mabinogion. The four best-known of these mythical tales are called the Four Branches. McKenna argued that the Welsh writers of those days were up-to-date on developments in French literature and were adapting some French romances to throw new light on native Welsh texts.

After Irish law and Welsh tales, William Gillies from the University of Edinburgh took the third major address into the area of Scots Gaelic poetry of the 1700s. This was the century of Bonnie Prince Charlie and the defeat of the Scots by the English under Butcher Cumberland at Culloden in 1746, the clearances, and displacement of small farmers by sheep. Moreover, in the 1760s, Gillies recalled, James McPherson wrote English-language books of supposed ancient tales by Ossian, thereby stimulating revived interest in ancient tales. Gillies' main argument was that the Gaelic poets adapted to the social collapse, and survived: he read us interesting lines of nature poems and religious verse.

Welsh literature came to the fore a second time for the last of the four plenary sessions. Helen Fulton, a graduate of the University of Sydney, now professor of English in Swansea, Wales, spoke on how medieval Welsh writings have been more highly regarded for their Welsh spirit than later writings. You will not be surprised to learn that she argued that Welsh nationalists were working from literature to build a sense of Welsh nationhood. Fulton traced the influence of Matthew Arnold and Nora and Hector Chadwick but stressed the role of Welsh writer Thomas Parry.

An ancient grammar and Fr Rankin's dictionary

Nora Chadwick (1891-1972), author of the Penguin best seller, *The Celts*, came to conference attention in another important way during an optional tour of the rare books collection at Sydney University's Fisher library. Chadwick's amazing collection of Celtic materials is there: I'm not sure how that happened.

One of her books on display had a special connection to Anders Ahlqvist,

the intellectual leader of this conference. This was a facsimile edition of the 1390 AD Irish manuscript known as the *Book of Ballymote*. Ahlqvist's international reputation is built in part on this edition and commentary of a crucial section of that manuscript which deals with grammar. In brief, the text called *Auraicept na nÉces* (pronounced something like our-a-kept na nay-kuss), or *The Scholar's Primer*, dates back to the 600s. The *Primer* records early sophisticated studies by Irish scholars of the grammar of the Irish language, and includes explanations of the ancient Ogham way of writing Irish.

Another find for me in that rare books collection was an 1828 Scots Gaelic dictionary with the signature on it of Father Ranald Rankin (1811-63) of Moidart. Rankin came to Victoria in 1855 to minister to the Scots Gaelic-speaking Catholic community, following a petition to the bishop by lay groups. By the way, Mary McKillop's family, as mentioned in this column a few months ago, was part of that group. One of the conference participants, Malcolm Broun from the Scots Gaelic association, had bought Rankin's dictionary secondhand and donated it to the library.

On another personal note, three members of the Old Irish study group at Melbourne University gave papers at the conference: Julia Kuhns on Scottish and Irish manuscripts of the tale of Conall Cernach's revenge for the death of Cuchulainn; Katrina Burge on Old Irish terminology for Viking and Irish violence; and me on an overview of Irish language usage in Victoria since European settlement. Conference papers ranged over many topics and plans are under way to publish a selection of them.

To understand English, study Celtic

In the latest issue of *Australian Celtic Journal*, Ahlqvist summed up the importance of Celtic Studies in our day this way: 'The case for Celtic influence on early English is strengthening. The time has come for acknowledging that this has certain important implications. One is that most histories of English are deficient. Many handbooks of English simply ignore the existence, past and

A village in County Clare

Bearnaí Ó Doibhlin recently spent two months in Ireland and in this article he discusses the terrible impact of the global financial crisis on Ireland by focusing upon its impact upon the village in County Clare in which he spent a large part of his stay.



Professor Anders Ahlqvist and an ancient Irish grammar book: the full history of English language must include a Celtic substratum

present, of the Celtic languages in the British Isles; others mention them, only to proceed to affirm that they exerted little or no influence on English. This obviously is no longer good enough.

‘There is a further implication for Celtic Studies. It is now manifest that English has become the world’s most important language of communication, for almost every conceivable domain of human endeavour. It follows that it is in everyone’s interest for it to be cultivated well and studied diligently and accurately. However, a full picture of the history of English can no longer emerge without reference to Celtic. In other words, for the study of English to flourish, that of Celtic must do so too. Every university teaching English language on an academic level therefore needs to offer Celtic Studies as well.’ Anders said that there are signs that linguists are listening, which ‘bodes well for the future’.

Val Noone

Le blianta fada anuas tá muid ag filleadh ar Éirinn gach trí bliana le seal a chaitheamh leis na seanghaolta agus seanchairde, agus gach uair tugaimid faoi deara na hathruithe a tháinig ar an saol thall idir ár gcuariteanna. Bhí a fhios againn sular fhill muid i mbliana go raibh cúrsaí eacnamaíochta sa seantír ag dul in olcas le tamall anuas, ach níor thuig mé féin a dhonacht is atá geilleagar na tíre go dtí gur chaith mé tamall ag maireachtáil ann. Agus gan a bheith maíteach, bhuaíl an smaoinemh mé arís is arís eile go bhfuilimid an-ádhúil sa tír seo ó thaobh chúrsaí eacnamaíochta de.

Cé gur chuir muid corradh is sé mhíle ciliméadar ar chloig an chairr a bhí ar cíos againn i rith na cuairte, chaith muid am go leor i dTuaim Gréine, sráidbhaile in oirthear Chontae an Chláir. Tá Tuaim Gréine go díreach taobh le sráidbhaile eile, an Scairbh, agus is í cearnóg na Scairbhe an t-ionad siopadóireachta agus gnó ag an gceantar. Tá droch-thionchar an chúlaithe le feiceáil go ríléir sa chearnóg.

Bhí trí ollmhargadh sa Scairbh trí bliana ó shin agus iad go léir in iomaíocht ghéar lena chéile, ach níl ach ceann amháin acu fós ann. Anuas air sin, tá siopa na gcrua-earraí, ceann amháin den dá stáisiún artola agus an óstán dúnta. Fiú tá ceann amháin de na tithe tábhairne dúnta, cé go bhfuil go leor eile fós ann! Tá cuid de na foirgnimh ina raibh na gnóthaí thuas folamh anois agus an chuma orthu go bhfuil siad tréigthe.

Ní hamháin go bhfuil na poist go léir sna gnóthaí thuas cailte, ach tá cuid nach beag de na gnóthaí atá fós ann ar oscailt ar bhonn páirtaimesire. Tá na fostóirí iontu ag obair uaireanta níos lú dá bharr sin, nó tá na húinéirí ag déanamh iarrachta gach gné a dhéanamh iad féin.

Anuas air sin, tá an seanscéal i dtaca le heisimirce mar gheall ar chúrsaí eacnamaíochta le sonrú arís sa cheantar. D’fhreastalaíomar ar bhainis i dTuaim Gréine le linn na cuairte agus labhair muid le daoine óga go leor ann atá ag cuimhneamh ar dhul ar imirce de bharr nach bhfuil fostaíocht ar fáil ina bhfód dúchais. Mheas siad go bhfuil aon duine dhéag as an bparóiste beag seo ar a laghad in áiteanna éagsúla sna Fritíortha faoi láthair de bharr nach bhfuil siad in

inmhe aon obair a aimsiú sa bhaile.

Mar a bheifeá ag súil leis, is iad na daoine óga atá ag fulaingt is géire mar gheall ar an gcúlú, ach tá seandaoine go leor in Éirinn freisin a mheasann nach go hiomlán gan mhaitheas an taithí seo. Mar a dúirt duine amháin de na col ceathracha liom go neamhbhalbh, tá an t-am istigh le tamall anuas go mbeadh an ceacht seo ar fáil do ghlúin nach raibh ainnise acu riamh. Bhí seisean den tuairim nár thuig an ghlúin seo gur chóir ullmhú don ‘lá báistiúil’ agus dá bhrí sin ní raibh leisce dá laghad orthu dul i muinín an fhéich le haon ní a ba mhian leo a cheannach. Anois, dar leisean, níl siad in ann íoc as a bhfiacha agus tuigeann siad an réaltacht!

Mar a luaigh mé thuas, rinne muid taisteal go leor le linn an tseala thall agus gach áit ar thug muid cuairt uirthi chuala muid agus chonaic muid an scéal ceannainn céanna.

An méid sin ráite agam, caithfidh mé a rá nár mheas mé go raibh spiorad na ndaoine in Éirinn cailte, in ainneoin an chruatain reatha. Chuaigh sé i bhfeidhm go mór orm go minic go raibh misneach na ndaoine le sonrú go ríléir, fiú sa sráidbhaile ina rabhamar ag stopadh. Dála go leor áiteanna eile ar fud na tíre, tá muintir Thuaim Gréine bródúil fós as a sráidbhaile agus tá an coiste pobail logánta ag obair go dian chun an chuma is fearr a chur air. Bhí bláthanna ildathacha le feiceáil sna spásanna poiblí agus ar crochadh ag na tithe, agus gach lá bhí daoine áitiúla ag obair ar na faichí poiblí. Is léir nach raibh sé ar intinn acu maide a ligean le sruth in ainneoin na ndeacrachtaí reatha.

Agus mise ag scríobh an phíosa seo, tá a fhios agam go bhfuil oibríthe na hÉireann, i gcomhpháirt lena gcomhghleacaithe i dtíortha eile ar fud na hEorpa, i mbun feachtais i gcoinne na bpolasaithe atá beartaithe ag na rialtais iontu le dul i ngleic leis an ngéarchéim eacnamaíochta. Níl aon amhras ach go bhfuil tréimhse dhona i ndán d’Éirinn, go háirithe dóibh siúd atá ag bun an dréimire sóisialta. Is dócha go mbeidh muid ag filleadh ar Éirinn i gceann trí bliana eile agus tá súil agam go mbeidh cúrsaí níos fearr inti faoin am sin.

Bearnaí Ó Doibhlin

Gentlemen, choose your weapons please...

Rolling Stone magazine regularly features polls of the best this that and the other but my eye was drawn to the '100 greatest guitarists of all time'. Many styles are represented on the list including rock, blues, jazz and even folk but no classical or 'world' music such as flamenco. You can view the complete placings at <http://goo.gl/KIor>.

Even with ample room for a strong international showing, many commentators have criticised it for being too US-centric, something I agree with. The selection criteria were unspecified but you would expect to see as a minimum (a) a strong body of work over a substantial period and (b) evidence of innovation or influencing many others, and then probably (c) stepping out from a band/sideman role to become a respected artist. All this, of course, in addition to the requisite technical chops.

I would have liked to see Gary Moore and Rory Gallagher listed as both are well qualified on all the above grounds but only one Irish name is evident. The Edge at number 24 gets the benefit of the citizenship doubt because he moved to from England to Dublin at age one. Likewise the one Australian name, Angus Young at number 96, was born in

Gary Moore

LivePict.com



Scotland but grew up here. On a different note (sorry), two women (one Canadian, one American) get a placing but otherwise it's a male preserve. Maybe they'll do an update and look further afield.

Meanwhile over at the Gibson Guitars website Russell Hall has compiled a page devoted to the 10 best albums ever featuring Dual Lead Guitar. To Gibson's credit many acts listed are not normally associated with Gibson instruments and so it can be read as serious discussion, untainted by marketing ploys. There is enough commentary on the page to explain the reasoning behind the selections and a jolly good read it makes too. <http://goo.gl/WmVm>.

Anyone who lived through the seventies will remember the dual lead concept, although musical styles have moved on. Some claim that it was *Wishbone Ash* who started it off and they feature on the list with their third album *Argus* (1972), containing the single *Blowin' Free*. Nonetheless I recall a few similar outfits on our side of the sea at around the same time. They had varying degrees of musical proficiency but none survived as performing units mainly because Ireland then had no clubs outside Belfast or Dublin where fresh ideas could be road-tested, so the great migration to London continued unabated. Back on the 10 best, and music fans will be pleased that our very own Thin Lizzy was included.

Never mind that by the time *Jailbreak* was recorded they had moved onto a world stage. It's ok that the guitar work was handled by Brian Robertson (b. Glasgow) and Scott Gorham (b. California), because our Phil still wrote the songs and provided a pounding bassline, and Brian Downey on drums held it all together. Anyway, Scotty had the good sense to be born on St Patrick's Day so he always got VIP entry at Dublin airport whenever they saw his US passport.

I saw many *Thin Lizzy* lineups over the years, even the very early phase when they had Eric Wrixon on keyboards, but for sheer musical chutzpah and technical proficiency the Robertson/Gorham dual lead lineup was hard to beat. Their later history and Phil's untimely death are well documented but the period from mid 1974 to 1978 was a golden age in the band's fortunes. The band's live performances through the late seventies had more excitement than you could poke a stick at and overall it was a happy period

when critical and commercial success ran in parallel.

What made the dual lead setup so good and why are people still documenting it over thirty years later? It's no secret that solo guitarists can become self indulgent when let loose, other musos sometimes refer disdainfully to it as woodling, and that trend started to wear a bit thin by the mid seventies. Solos had to become shorter and more focussed, but two players, working directly off each other, could unleash a continually changing stream of new ideas. Half the time competing and half the time supporting but all the time keenly listening *to each other* and the audience sensed it right away. In a live show the interplay across the stage added a new layer of excitement, with even the odd splash of theatrics to round out the package. Truly, the whole could be greater than the sum of the parts.

The Gibson website does not rank the 10 entries overall. To download them and prepare a musical feast for listening to on your next drive to Sydney you will need at least 12 discs as two of them are double CD sets. In addition, the *Argus* is now available either in its original form, or as a deluxe edition with a bonus disc of BBC radio one live performances. This has mostly the same songs but a gap of years between the recording dates shows how they have stood the test of time. Alternatively, a mere two gigabytes on your mp3 player will see you through your road trip into nostalgia.

For the curious at least one name appears prominently on both the Rolling Stone and the Gibson lists. You might think that a guitarist with massive solo credentials but who also was acclaimed as part of a dual lead setup sounds a bit improbable in the showbiz world but this guy was definitely the business; Duane Allman, no 2 in the solo list, and also acclaimed for his work alongside Dicky Betts in the *Allman Brothers Band – Live at The Fillmore East*. For good measure he duetted with Eric Clapton on the *Layla* album, which is also listed.

Coming up next issue: Dubliner Neil Hannon is well known for his work with The Divine Comedy and their latest offering *Bang Goes The Knighthood* is out now. Part theatre, part pathos and with a liberal helping of satire. A full review will appear in our next issue.

Stuart Traill

Australian Irish Heritage Network

for lively and critical writing about the celebration of Ireland's heritage in Australia

SUBSCRIBE TODAY TO



Only \$55 per year
(4 issues)

*Australian Irish history • books • CDs • genealogy • travellers' tales
politics • family history • reviews • sport • current events*

Just fill in the form below and post it to:

Australian Irish Heritage Network, PO Box 13095, Law Courts, Vic, 8010

Yes, I want to become a member of AIHN

\$5 _____

Yes, I want to subscribe to Tinteán (four issues per year)

1 year: \$55 _____

Concession (1 year): \$40 _____

Overseas Airmail (1 year): \$75AUD _____

Yes, I wish to make a donation

\$1000 _____

\$500 _____

\$250 _____

\$100 _____

Other _____

TOTAL: \$ _____

Please find enclosed my cheque made payable to **Australian Irish Heritage Network** for \$ _____

I have transferred the total amount of \$ _____ to the AIHN bank account:

BSB: 083 256 Account: 87 481 3344

In the *Remitter Name* or your *Transaction Description* field, please remember to **include your surname**.

Please charge my credit card: Visa Mastercard

Amount: \$ _____

Card no: _____ Expiry date: ___ / ___

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode _____

Phone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

Please send your order to: Australian Irish Heritage Network
PO Box 13095, Law Courts, Vic, 8010



Australian Irish Heritage Network
PO Box 13095, Law Courts, Vic. 8010
+61 3 9670 8865
info@tintean.org.au

Dear Readers and Friends,

Tinteán magazine is the journal of AIHN, which is a not-for-profit organisation established to encourage the growth of the social, cultural, historical, literary and sporting consciousness of Irish Australians. *Tinteán* is reliant for its production on the work and support of volunteers, readers and writers and, in particular, of subscribers, donors and advertisers.

If you are already a subscriber, donor or advertiser, thank you for your support.

If you are reading a friend's copy of *Tinteán*, please consider subscribing. Subscriptions are the lifeblood of magazines such as ours. Without them, the efforts of our volunteers will be in vain.

So we are asking you for help, please. If you write on the form below the names of people who, you think, might be interested in subscribing to *Tinteán*, we will post them a free copy.

To advise us of just one or two prospects will be fine. If you have a longer list, that will be most welcome also.

Very many thanks.

The following might be interested in receiving a free copy of *Tinteán*:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Suburb: _____

State: _____ Postcode: _____

Please complete this page, tear it out and post it to *Tinteán*, PO Box 13095, Law Courts, Vic. 8010.

Moral Therapy in HMS Anson

Between 1844 and 1850 a unique reformatory experiment involving Irish female convicts was put in place in Hobart Town. Some 1465 Irish female prisoners who arrived on ten transports undertook six months primary probation in HMS *Anson*. The hulk was moored four miles up-river on the Derwent. The treatment method adopted was moral therapy.

By 1841 the female Houses of Correction in the colony were overcrowded while a ratio of six males to one female existed. There was strong pressure to increase women's numbers. As the change from assignment to a probation system for females was being finalised, a protégé of Elizabeth Fry arrived as matron on board the English female convict transport, the *Rajah*. Her presence stimulated Lady Jane Franklin to write a long-promised letter to Elizabeth Fry on 3 August 1841 in which she deplored the 'wretched condition' of the female convicts. She wrote that additional funds were required for their maintenance and greatly increased accommodation was needed, as were plans for a proposed penitentiary with qualified staff.

Elizabeth Fry, with her British Ladies' Committee, which had the ear of Lord Normandy as Home Secretary, took action. Excerpts from the correspondence were supplied to Viscount Stanley, Colonial Secretary, as he was putting the probation system for female convicts in place. His response was a substantial outlay of funds, plans for the new penitentiary and expert staff. He also ordered the re-fit of the decommissioned 1724-ton war ship HMS *Anson* for use prior to the completion of the penitentiary.

The staff appointed from England were Philippa Bowden with her husband Dr Edmund Bowden plus officers and service personnel. Philippa Bowden was ex-matron of Hanwell asylum where a treatment method known as moral therapy, or non-restraint, was used. It had also been adopted at Middlesex prison. Moral therapy or *traitement moral*, was codified in eighteenth century France notably by Phillippe Pinel (1745-1826) at the Bicêtre and Salpêtrière. The method came into prominence in Britain after being adopted by the Quakers, William and Samuel Tuke, at their York Retreat (1796-1914). Its use spread to Ireland to the Connaught District Lunatic Asylum

which was opened in 1833. Basically the method took the form of face-to-face correction by trained, carefully disciplined officers in a tranquil setting. When applied in a correctional institution moral therapy emphasised work together with efficiency and orderliness of conduct with the aim of routinising socially acceptable behaviour in the inmates.

The method proved controversial in the colony. Settlers such as Louisa Meredith, who hired domestics from the *Anson*, saw an 'almost miraculous' transformation in the women's behaviour. Local penal officials, however, were always hostile but powerless to interfere as the program was funded from London. The comptroller of convicts, J. S. Hampton, a firm believer in the necessity of punishment, rejected the approach. He conducted a sustained campaign through Lieutenant Governors Eardley-Wilmot and Denison and the Colonial Office to have the establishment disbanded.

In fact, moral therapy was a unique reformatory approach to the treatment of female convicts. It was the first coherent system of behavioural adjustment adopted since Lieutenant Governor Arthur's time when, during the late 1820s, he had commissioned the Cascades Female Factory and the orphan schools, both of which used punitive methods of discipline. Moral therapy was humane, non-invasive and, in its application, it did not seek to humiliate offenders. Importantly the women, while in the *Anson*, were protected and kept safe from the risks, as well as the sexual exploitation, licentiousness and drunken behaviour which characterised many in assignment.

In the *Anson* there was a strict daily routine of work, exercise and leisure. The women laboured at carding and spinning wool, hat and shoe making, sewing and laundry. They were supplied with clothing plus a uniform which was worn as they took their twice-daily exercise on deck and when singing in the choir. These routines were intended to be the public presentation of the females as women deserving of respect. The necessary Victorian distinction between the public and the private persona had been carefully negotiated by Philippa Bowden as dress and decorum were

integral to the women's reformed image.

The great majority of the Irish in the *Anson* were illiterate and some spoke only Irish. Most were unskilled, being described mainly as general servants. They had little knowledge of domestic routines as many had laboured in the fields. Some were ill-socialised whose behaviour was often unruly. Others were hostile to authority as well as to any form of containment although only two women absconded from the *Anson* during its six year history. Many of the females, who were deported for Famine crimes, had lived in self-sufficient rural communities in the west of Ireland where they were unfamiliar with a cash economy. They were an impoverished group whose possessions were the prison clothes they wore. A benign transition to life in the colony therefore seemed beneficial.

Dr Bowden died suddenly in September 1847 and, during 1848, Philippa Bowden took leave to visit her ailing brother in London. During her absence, the decision was taken by Hampton and Denison to close down the *Anson*, ostensibly to save costs. Mrs Bowden was not informed. Earl Grey acceded to their judgement on 15 February 1849. The hulk was towed down river and served for another year before it was dismantled in January 1851. The penitentiary was never built.

The *Anson* establishment had provided a clean, orderly, well-managed environment which emphasised reform rather than punishment. With Philippa Bowden's firm direction, the women were trained in cleanliness, decorum, work skills and basic literacy. On completion of their primary probation, they were matched with trustworthy employers instead of the less scrupulous settlers, as had been the case previously for Irish female convicts. This was a noteworthy improvement from the earlier problems of hiring the women direct from the ships. At that time, Stanley had described the difficulty of finding *any* placement in respectable situations for such women as 'notorious'.

Anne McMahon

An Irish convict on the Anson was Catherine McMahon, my great great aunt.



Sinking by Inches

Last year, the Society of St Vincent de Paul spent €6.1 million giving people in Ireland food. This year, requests for food are up 50%, calls in general are up 35% (in Dublin 50%), and 25% of callers are new clients, many of whom contributed to the charity at the church gates last year. These new clients are people who, 'like the rest of us', as volunteer, John Monaghan, says, 'were living on 110% of their salaries'; this year, the working situation has changed, and they cannot manage their usual debts, mortgage, car, credit card. Monaghan is worried about the effect of the recent budget on welfare recipients who, he says, will lose between €22 and €43 per week. Many cuts are aimed at the young, carers, and parents of young children. Families have already lost their Christmas bonus and some now cannot meet winter costs for heat, lighting and clothes.

This time last year the sky was falling, and then it didn't. You wake up after the credit crisis and pat yourself down, and find everything the same, more or less, as it was before. Twelve months later, you look back to see that the sky did not fall so much as sink by inches.

Maybe Ireland does recession differently from other countries. We have a long and proud history of poverty; I don't know if that helps. When I was growing up, you never asked another Irish person what they did for a living, and you never turned a beggar from the door. These are lyrical and dangerous clichés, of course (though incidentally true): Ireland was by no means a classless society. Even so, I see differences from other countries in the play of rage, entitlement and delight around money: who has it, who deserves it, who gets cross.

The banking crisis of September 2008 played out over the winter. The bail-outs were so large, 3 billion here, 3.5 billion there, that the mere €179 million loaned

by the speculator's friend, the Anglo Irish Bank, to its own directors seemed almost acceptable, for being easy to understand. Usually, to get the truth in Ireland, you need a tribunal. The figures were so dizzying, the truth so quick and appalling, it was quite an exciting time. In the week of the big snow, the first in February, the country was beautiful, still and full of dread. It wasn't until the thaw that emotions became ordinary again and fear – the shouty, panicky kind – set in, with people on the radio fighting about public sector pay, and media personalities crying for Ireland on national TV.

For a while, it got quite personal. 'Fuck them,' says a friend about the public sector. 'They're not losing their jobs, they're not losing their pensions. Fuck them.' My entire family works in the public sector. During the boom, the worst you could say was that they were a bit boring. I don't think they have done anything wrong. I find myself shouting back at her.

I talk to my children about the meaning of the word 'downturn' and try to teach them a little about the concept of 'tactfulness'. It isn't very successful. As far as I can see, boasting is a developmental stage: at six and eight they are hardwired for it. Fortunately they are as likely to boast about a bag of crisps as about new tiles in the bathroom, so there is perhaps no need to tread carefully. Still, there is uncertainty everywhere. You don't know how people are doing, or how to ask. In April an emergency mini-budget takes the first cut out of public sector wages and though these things are discussed in the media they are not mentioned at family gatherings. Conversation in the street and outside the schools is fretful, but general. In May, news of redundancies began, and you nodded and said nothing. These are young, highly qualified people; there is no need to panic. In the shops, the sales come early and often. An assistant

in Dundrum shopping centre nearly begs me to buy a cardigan; she looks at me and says: 'It's no fun anymore.'

Home from holidays in July, the taxi man says that the flights from Italy and France are the only ones worth meeting; the package holiday 'is dead'. Things happen more slowly to the middle classes. We are not so much an income bracket, as a speed.

In August, my husband takes two weeks' unpaid leave, much of which is spent in the office. Along Dublin's affluent coastline people seem to be doing all right, though there are dark stories of tracker mortgages gone wrong and bank loans not coming through. People get credit in a completely arbitrary way: it may depend on the bank's balance sheet as you walk in. On the property websites, nothing sells. A few prices come down, but not many, and not by much. People will not believe what happened, or they will not give in to it. The hairdresser says to me: 'But it was too mad, really. Don't you think? It just went too far.' This sense of relief is echoed by others; the excess is over, it's like getting back on a diet, regaining control.

I don't see much control. I see tenacity, disbelief, hope, but I am not so sure about control.

Part of the deal between the government and the banks is that home mortgage foreclosures should be held off until the mid-2010. The big guys, too, know all about holding tight. A bill establishing the National Asset Management Agency, which will take over the toxic debts of the six major banks, is not passed until November, by which time their debts are more toxic than when the percentage price was first established. Everyone is afraid, now. Everyone I ask knows two or three people who have lost their jobs, and any number who are stuck in houses they don't want to live in for the rest of their lives, some of them with partners

they no longer love. The teachers ask for no Christmas presents this year because, they tell the children, they 'can't carry 30 presents home all at once'. Then they stage a one-day strike.

By the second budget of the year, in the middle of December, everyone is ready. It is hard to say when reality hit. October, maybe? I remember people who left for Australia 18 months ago, and wonder how they knew. It is hard to say how people are affected, if they still have a job – perhaps it takes a while for them to realise it. The ones who understand it best are in their twenties and thirties, living in negative equity with long commutes into Dublin, and they are too overwrought to put up much of a fight. Even then, in a radio discussion about new housing estates that litter the countryside, unfinished, derelict, unsold, a woman insists that her estate is 'lovely', that it 'has streetlights' and 'is not dangerous after dark'. A year and a half after house prices began to fall, it is still utterly unacceptable in Ireland to talk your property down.

Pundits divide the boom into two phases; in the first, timing, demographics, geographical position, the EU, the US, tax breaks for multinationals, an educated workforce, the global boom, hard work, good luck, low income tax and the blessed relief of the peace process all made for a well-earned increase in the Irish standard of living. This brought us to 2001, after which corruption, clientelism, feckery, free-marketeering, land re-zoning laws and endless tax incentives gave us the builders' boom, which turned into the speculators' boom, when Irishmen bought in London, Bulgaria and Berlin, most of these international mortgages fuelled by the debts of young people panicked into buying a house at a price that was increasing every day they delayed. This was made easier for everyone by a government that liked to say 'yes', and increased public spending beyond revenue expectations, every good year and a few beyond.

In the middle of 2007 a Romanian taxi driver told me he was returning to Bucharest because 'the building site is dead.' All his friends had gone. His wife had a new baby (called Seán), and this was why he would be the last to leave. I don't know why nobody listened to this guy. In May 2007, the pre-election rheto-

ric dealt with worries about the economy, and each party, helpfully, promised an increase in public spending. By summer the property market had halted, a fact no one wanted to notice. Then Lehman Brothers fell, and this was so clearly not Ireland's fault that the brief opportunity to talk about what was our fault was lost. I understand the denial at the end of the boom; what worries me is the denial that made it. From 2001 to 2007 it was not

**Things happen more
slowly to the
middle classes.
We are not so much
an income bracket,
as a speed.**

allowed to be off-message about the Irish economy or the housing market. You would barely be published. Your article would end up in the middle of the supplement, unflagged.

In 2007, the Economic and Social Research Institute published a report by economist Morgan Kelly which charted the post-boom fall in house prices in 40 different economies. A fall in house prices does not normally pull down the rest of the economy, but Ireland's case might be special, given that house-building accounts for 15% of Ireland's income – three times more than usual. It was included, without comment, as a link on the RTE news website one morning. I sent it to my nephew, who is studying economics. He said he had already read it. I never met anyone else who had. It was no fun being informed, either then or later. People don't like you for it, and why should they? Kelly was made a figure of fun. He was accused of economic 'contagion'.

One of the strangest feelings, living through a housing boom, is that you are rich or poor not because of the money you earn, but when you started earning it. It is not effort, but luck. This was part of the panic that drove Irish people to buy overvalued houses towards the end of the boom; it was the feeling that we were running up a down escalator and had to grab hold of whatever we could, to stop being swept away. There is little pleasure

in buying a house. For a while, house auctions were a blood sport in South Dublin. There were women who spent their lives going to them, to get high on the smell of money and other people's pain. It was like living in a casino: the insanity of the sums involved; that blank, ecstatic misery on the faces of the people who won.

Telling the truth then was not just boring, it was taboo. It might even be unclean. Careless talk costs jobs. If the bubble burst it would be your fault for calling it a bubble, because, at the end of the day, it's not an economy, it's a mood.

I am not a Freudian about this money shit, especially these days when it is so notional, so rarely handled. I do think money is a magical substance, which makes the phrase 'frozen desire' a little too ... frozen, for me. These days I play with the idea of money as mother's love; her body, her attention, the blessing of her gaze. It is the thing you fight your siblings for, because to be poor is to be unloved. But money changes when you multiply it by millions of families, and that is the shift that I can not understand.

What does well in a downturn? Security systems, fast food, medical supplies. It has taken Ireland more than two years to get real. The private sector discovered it in 2008, but in 2009 the public sector learned what a €3 billion, followed by a €3.5 billion readjustment in the national finances does to your pay cheque, your grant, your welfare slip. 'And remember, kids,' says the chat show host at the end of the annual *Toy Show* on television, 'Manage Your Expectations.'

On 12 December, everyone in Smyths toyshop in Bray is on the phone, either to the Internet or to a spouse. It looks the same as any other year – maybe a bit quieter – but if you bump into someone you know in the aisle you do not stay to see them weigh one piece of plastic tat against another, or how long it takes them to decide. The place is full of buggies. I love these children with their wise eyes: the ones who are allowed to see it all, because they are still too young for Santa Claus.

Anne Enright's last novel, The Gathering, won the Booker Prize in 2007. The Tinteán team would like to thank the London Review of Books and Anne Enright for permission to reproduce this article which was first published in January 2010 at www.goo.gl/bh3k5

An Irish Leader

Who was Barcroft Boake?

In December 1890, Charles Stewart Parnell, at the pinnacle of his power as leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party in Westminster, lost control of the party. Katharine O'Shea had been Parnell's mistress for years. When her husband sued for divorce Parnell was named as co-respondent. In the ensuing 'scandal', with the support of the Catholic hierarchy, anti-Parnellites vigorously fought and won three bitter and violent by-elections. Parnell himself was physically abused and assaulted. In June 1891 Parnell married Katharine, further alienating some of his Catholic support. It was the end for him: he died on 6 October 1891.

One young Australian writer, Barcroft Boake, drafted a poem, now known as 'An Irish Leader', about his fall. It seems to have remained in draft and was only recently rescued from his papers and published for the first time.

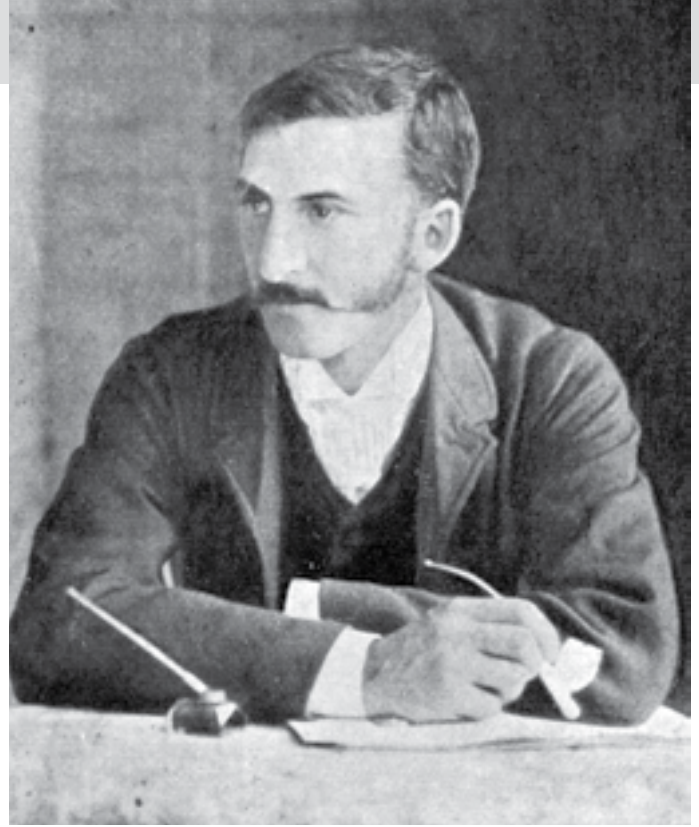
Boake had been born in Sydney in 1866 to an Australian-born Anglican mother and an Irish Protestant – but lapsed – father. Boake senior, also named Barcroft, grew up in Dublin. He was apprenticed at fifteen but absconded to England where he found work with a photographer. He returned home aged eighteen. The family did not know what to do with their young tearaway, so he was despatched to the Colonies to the care of an older brother in Melbourne. The young man became a photographer. He had considerable talent and was head-hunted to Sydney by Freeman Brothers. There he married and struck out on his own. Young Barcroft was their oldest child. Father and son both wrote verse, often together.

Boake senior prospered largely because of his considerable artistry. His montage of the New South Wales soldiers returned from the 1885 Sudan Expedition (now in the War Memorial in Canberra) is highly regarded. A striking family portrait, many of his miniatures and *cartes de visite* are still in good condition, a sign of the quality of his work but he seems to have lacked skills as a businessman. His successful business collapsed at the beginning of the 1890s Depression.

Young Barcroft grew up in Sydney and on leaving school trained in plan drawing and joined the Survey Department, later taking a job as assistant to a surveyor working at Adaminaby in southern New South Wales. He loved the bush and camp life; so much so that he vowed to return to Sydney only to visit. He also found the love of his life in Adaminaby. He felt he could not marry her then because his job was only temporary but he promised to return with a pocketful of money and, like all young men in love, he wrote poetry.

When the survey party broke up, Barcroft stayed in the country, working for a time as a drover bringing cattle down from the Diamantina in summer but, when his boss absconded with four months' wages, he was left penniless. In May 1890 he took another job as surveyor's assistant, this time based at Wagga. Here he turned his poetic skill to writing for the *Bulletin*, with considerable success. They published his best known piece, *Where the Dead Men Lie*, in December 1891.

He was a quiet, reserved young man, by nature introspective, utterly uninterested in surveying. He preferred thoughtful company rather than an invitation to the pub or to the Big House, but he had many friends. At Wagga they included Dr O'Connor and his family.



Dr Morgan O'Connor had migrated from England in 1859 and first practised in Yass. He was created a Papal knight in 1874 for his services to the Catholic community. He and his family – there were four girls, about Barcroft's age – later moved to Wagga where he remained for the rest of his life. Barcroft had been invited to the doctor's place, "Connorton", for Christmas 1890. He wrote home that 'Dr drove Mrs O'C into Wagga for Mass. I promised to go, but the Doctor's Surgery was so delightfully cool that I stayed and talked to him instead of going to Church.' Evidently the young writer and the old doctor had formed a close bond. It is hard to imagine that they did not talk about the problems Parnell faced.

His work around Wagga ended in December 1891 and Barcroft returned to Sydney. It was a disastrous time for the Boake family. The photography business had collapsed; Barcroft's brother-in-law had lost his job. His sisters, one of whom he hoped would go to University, were chafing for better-off families. Young Barcroft was unable to find any work. He became seriously depressed. About this time he received a letter from Adaminaby that upset him: 'I hear that my best girl is going to be married'. A few days later, on 2 May 1892, he disappeared. His body was found a week later. He had hanged himself.

AG Stephens, Boake's first editor, claimed that 'had fortune favoured, Boake (he) might easily have won recognition as the foremost poet of Australia' but, while the best of his work is good, it is seldom outstanding, and there is little development over time. He was a competent and honest young writer whose writings may still be enjoyed. He really did love the bush and bush life.

He was observant, with a good ear for language use. He was the first to use in his writing the now dated expression 'Jimmy Woodser', someone who drinks alone. He also seems to have been the first to use 'Waltzing Matilda' in a story written in December 1891 that remained unpublished among his papers.

With an Irish father and a close friend who was a Papal knight, it was perhaps inevitable that Boake would be drawn to Parnell but the warmth of feeling and his admiration for the fallen statesman are his own.

Bill Refshauge

Bill recently published Barcroft Boake: Collected Works, Edited, with a Life (Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2007).

A Bush Poet's tribute

Probably no political figure has been so robustly and eloquently defended in modern literature as Parnell. Irish writers of the calibre of Yeats and Joyce, both for different reasons, wrote politically committed tributes to Parnell but this was some time after the events, after a period of intense heroicisation of Parnell into a hero and martyr of the Irish 'Home Rule' cause during the 1890s. It is all the more remarkable that a minor Australian poet (most famous for the ballad, 'Where the Dead Men Lie') defended the 'uncrowned king of Ireland' in the period before his death.

Boake's poem about Parnell, until recently unpublished, exists in manuscript form in the State Library of Victoria. Boake's career was brief. He died by his own hand at the age of 26 in 1892. The poem was written after the O'Shea divorce proceedings in late 1890 but before Parnell's untimely death (6 October 1891). Elizabeth Malcolm suggests it may have been written in response to the violence engendered by the by-elections of 1890-1.

It is an unusual poem in Boake's corpus. He, like Furphy, was a writer, from the *Bulletin* stable, and like Furphy, a first generation Irish-Australian. They were much more committed to defining themselves as Australian rather than as Irish-Australian writers. Irishness was not something that seems to have mattered at all to Boake. So the effusive praise of Parnell is unexpected, and perhaps unusual in his circle. It is far from being his best poem, and remained at his death unrevised and not offered for publication.

How unusual it is as an expression of political support for Parnell is made clear by a survey of representative articles written about Parnell in the Australian press at the time. The mainstream (Protestant-dominated) newspaper accounts of Parnell demonstrated scant respect for him, even after his death.

After the scandal of the O'Shea divorce became known, the *Melbourne Argus* republished copy from the London press delighting in the disarray and factionalism within the party, and cracking juvenile jokes about making a new flag from the mistress' underwear:

A new banner, constructed out of the petticoat of Mrs. O'Shea; the green flag of Ireland, with its sunburst and harp, was to be set aside, and replaced by the sign of a fire-escape. (22 January 1891)

After his death, the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 14 November 1891, pontificated gleefully:

Death, often dramatic in its effects, has excelled itself this week. On Monday afternoon ... came news that Mr. Parnell had died... Parnell, obstructionist to the last, dies in the evening of the very day that Mr. Smith breathed his last, and in the newspaper press the columns of appreciation and criticism of the stormy career of the Irish chief jostle into comparative obscurity the decent lamentation over the bier of the amiable First Lord of the Treasury...

The *Maitland Mercury* of 13 October 1891 delivered a number of backhanded compliments and came out as censoriously as the Catholic hierarchy in Ireland against his personal morality, and mobilised racial stereotypes:

he was the captain of a race proverbial for impulsiveness, for want of disciplined temper, for wildness and unreason in speech and action. Of course he possessed certain commanding qualities. He was courageous; he was determined, indeed inflexibly obstinate; if he was no orator, he was a speaker who used no superfluous word and who made every sentence tell... What more he might have done cannot be even conjectured. For one series of shameful acts came to light of that secret private life which he led.

The Melbourne Argus, of 21 November 1891, reprinted trivial-

An Irish Leader

Deposed insulted yet uncowed he stands
Knitting pale brows and clenching nervous hands
The uncrowned King who gave a nation laws
Views his life wasted in a thankless cause.
Before a jealous party's blatant din
He boldly comes to answer for his sin.
Friendship grows pale, opposing factions prate,
While virtuous patriots leave him to his fate.
Backed by a wavering few he fronts the fray
While in his presence none dare disobey.
Like curs that, yelping at the lion's heel
And grown incautious, mighty vengeance feel;
So from afar these pigmies hurl their darts
With spite & hatred in their treacherous hearts.
'No more you lead us, traitor!' is their cry.
'Traitor in what?' so comes his stern reply,
'Not to that man so dead to our shame
Basely conniving to befoul his name;
Not to my country; nor to you, foul brood
Of serpents, shewing thus your gratitude.
Why should you be the first to cast a stone,
Have you no sins, no crimes you dare not own?
Why for one fault should I pay such a price
While titled England wallows in her vice?
Why should fair play, Britain's boast and pride,
To me alone of all men be denied?
I still shall battle though the world may jeer
When Ireland calls Parnell must answer here'
Thus was the fiery challenge boldly cast
Before the world with courage unsurpassed
And Ireland's Tribune stood before them all
A leader mighty even in his fall.

Barcroft Boake (1866-92)

ising material from the *Pall Mall Budget*, the major organ for the moral purity campaigners: they alleged Parnell was cold, exceedingly nervous, a loner, a hopeless orator, superstitious, and the gossip columnist provided voyeuristic detail of fluctuations in his weight in his final illness.

Despite his achievements in Westminster, Parnell appears to have had few friends in Australia willing to defend him publicly or in print in the troubled period after his loss of support in committee room 15. The Catholic Irish *Advocate* (Melbourne) hedged its bets a little, drawing a discreet veil over the latter part of his career, but was largely supportive of his achievements (10 and 17 Oct. 1891), and the *Bulletin* used the occasion of his death to praise him as a leader greater than Daniel O'Connell, but also to make fun of moral purity campaigners and especially the Catholic Church. It is perhaps noteworthy that in tilting at both of these groups, the unnamed *Bulletin* writer uses imagery similar to that in Boake's poem, and Irish-inspired imagery:

[Parnell] had committed the unpardonable sin of offending a religious body which, preaching forgiveness, never forgives the man who breaks its canons, and he had outraged the dense stupidity of the British mind. The GULLIVER of Irish unity was held powerless by the meshes of the net woven by a myriad Lilliputian malignities. (17 October 1891, p.7)

Boake's poem might have found a home in the *Bulletin*, which had already published many of his poems, but for whatever reason, Boake did not offer it for publication.

Frances Devlin-Glass

Of migrating fish – and men

That night he found himself with a pint of Guinness in his hand while he stood by the bookshelf looking through the titles of his favourite writers, invariably fellow Irishmen. When he was in the mood for poetry there was Yeats and Seamus Heaney. Other times called for a dose of Beckett's black humour or there was the battle of reading Joyce, especially once he moved to the third or fourth pint. He had tried modern Irish writers such as Frank McCourt or Dermot Healy but they lacked the aura of those that had made the name of the Irish story tellers. The greats spoke to him of home, regardless that his parents had emigrated to Australia when he was six and since then he'd only spent two months in his native land. When he grew up he'd read Australian writers including those of Irish descent, but the spines of those books the bottom shelf had probably glued shut.

He moved through the room with his half full glass and copy of *Finnegan's Wake*, a book he'd often read but was yet to complete. He slid open the glass door and stepped onto the balcony. His long sleeves were rolled up so that the evening sun lit up the exposed golden hairs on his forearms. He leaned against the wall and began reading through the central character's thoughts and dreams on a single night. Each time he turned the page he looked up and thought about the home he'd built and its surroundings. The balcony was designed so that the height of the hill on which it was built allowed for a view cross the valley. The tall eucalypts that hugged the hills gave perspective to the windswept cleared lands. A trail of eucalypts, wattles and small scrubs demarcated the stream that ran through the middle. Cattle grazed in fenced paddocks. The gleam of dry grasses in the fading sunlight indicated this was a dry continent, not the green fields for which he longed. The harsh sun and dry heat he'd despised since he was young were magnified because the climate also affected the fish.

The Australian Rainbow Trout arrived in Australia in 1894. The preferred habitat is cool, well aerated water found in waters with fast flows and gravel bottoms, and in deep lakes. The breed is usually more successful in lakes where its diet of freshwater insect larvae, crustaceans, snails, small fish and wind-blown terrestrial insects is better supported. In rivers, the preferred rush of water often occurs in shallow areas where fish are more vulnerable and food is scarce. When spawning, the female constructs a nest in gravel to deposit its slightly adhesive eggs. The combination of fast flowing water, gravel beds and water temperatures required for successful spawning are rarely found in Australian rivers. Thus the current levels of these fish rely heavily on the Victorian and NSW fisheries agencies that release approximately five million salmonids (family of fish including Rainbow Trout) annually.

The Rainbow Trout is a native of the west coast of North America where it can reach over a metre in length and eighteen kilograms in weight. In Australia it is rare to find fish larger than sixty centimetres and five kilograms. Lake Purrumbete once held the world record with a three-year-old fish reaching eight and a half kilograms. These growth rates no longer occur there because an increasing redbfin population competes for food and space. Additionally, the small native fish, Galaxiids; the staple diet of the Rainbow Trout no longer occur in as large numbers.

He returned from shutting the property gate signalling the end of a slow day's business. At the top dam he took handfuls of feed pellets from a large bucket and threw them into the dams. He watched the debris of a Yellow Box stripped away by a gust of

wind. To him the tablelands vegetation personified the nation's population – there was no taming them, and if you tried to tidy up after every tree, or mentor every person, there would be no end. The sound of gravel under a car's wheels was unexpected. 'Err,' he sighed looking at his watch knowing an hour of work was required before he'd be ready to greet a visitor. Not that Niall Bell had many non-paying visitors to the farm and that suited him fine. In fact, he moved from the top dam to the centre dam hoping he'd hear those wheels slide around the bend on their way off the property. As a handful of feed splashed across the dam a high pitched scream came from the homestead, a scream that he recognised. Instantly, he dropped the bucket and started lumbering along the path.

On the approach to the homestead he could see a fortyish female body. It had been let go to the extent that the shape it had been a decade earlier was unlikely to be recovered. That only made him want to reach her more quickly. His shape too had spread which affirmed to him his place in the life cycle – past his prime and no longer trying to keep up appearances.

'Sis, Sis,' he yelled between puffs.

When he reached her, he hugged her while gasping for air. Finally, he released his grip, took a stride back and looked at her.

'Holy cow, Jessie. What are you doing here?'

'I've been in Sydney for business. I managed to keep a day free so I could visit.'

'A day you say. Does that mean,' he looked at his watch, 'one evening?'

'And tomorrow.'

'Wow, you didn't tell me you were going to be in Australia.'

'Sorry, but I didn't want to until I knew I could see you. The day only became free this morning so I got in the car and drove.'

'From Sydney! You must be worn out.' He took her by the arm, 'I'll make you a cuppa and you can have a lie down.'

'That's alright. You finish what you're doing and I'll get my bag from the car and wait inside.'

'Ok, but I won't be long.' With that Niall jogged to where he'd dropped the bucket feeling some of the energy of his youth had returned.

Galaxiids are the largest family of fish in south-eastern Australia. There are about twenty types of Galaxiids here with about fifty species worldwide in New Zealand, Patagonian South America and South Africa. Climbing Galaxiids are a large, elongate species; the trunk is almost tubular and with a large head. Their lower jaw is shorter than the upper and they have well developed canine teeth. They are generally fifteen to seventeen centimetres. Aggressive upstream migration and ability to climb vertical waterfalls, hence its name, make it a very capable fish, well adapted to its environment. It can attach itself to damp rock surfaces using its pectoral and pelvic fins and wriggle upward with lizard-like movements. They are found in coastal drainages from Sydney south and west to Adelaide and are widespread in Tasmania. In lakes, Rainbow Trout predation has reduced their numbers.

Jessie stood in the living room looking at a large framed photo of a Rainbow Trout on the wall. The dark spots on the head, back, belly and across the dorsal fins and caudal fins made it a prime specimen, as well as the pink streak running from gill cover to the caudal fin, inspiring the name. 'Don't go to too much trouble,' she called then moved toward the desk placed in front of a window

originally giving the view of dams. A pair of English Elms planted when he'd set up the farm, meant that view was now obstructed. A letter on the desk took her attention. She skimmed through it then looked toward the kitchen desperate to make sure she hadn't been seen. She took a brochure from the desk and quickly moved away.

'There's four special moments in any child's life: first tooth, first step, first bike, and most importantly catching their first trout. Don't let your child miss out and by capturing the moment with your camera, both you and your child will remember this special day for the rest of your lives.'

'I like this,' she said entering the kitchen.

'Seems to work, along with the website, the big sign out front and the network of local businesses that display the brochure. It's you scratch my back I'll scratch yours, round here. You either carry loads of their brochures and make subtle suggestions to visitors or, of course, you can offer a fresh fish to buy shelf space for your brochures and better still recommendations.'

'Are you still having trouble with the competition?'

'Mick Lawler? Put him out of business a few years ago. Don't worry, I knew what I was doing setting up downstream. Why would you want to drive another eighty kilometres just for the same deal? Got nasty for a while when he saw what was happening.'

'Oh.'

'Don't blame him. His family has lived in the region for ages. What he's done now is set up a bed and breakfast come resort with onsite trout fishing. Reckons people love throwing in a line only to find that, what do you know! The fish are on the bite. Has a bag limit so you pretty much get free fish for staying there. He even comes and sees me for restocking.'

'That sounds like a good business.'

'I don't think so. He's borrowed up to the hilt. Might be his last chance of making a go of that farm.'

'But you're doing well?'

'Not really. The margins in trout farming are really low. It's a poor return on investment.'

'You don't have stay here you know.'

'I know I don't have to. I want to.'

'Mum's been talking about you a lot lately. She's always saying that when you were a boy it was you more than the rest of us that struggled to fit in. How you had to fight every inch of the way to get by at school.'

'And she didn't help by interfering all the time.'

Jessie didn't speak at first when she did her eyes had moistened, 'She really misses you, you know. We both do. Of course, she's too stubborn to ring and ask herself. Her asthma's worse than ever and she might not have much time left.'

Niall's eyes were on the floor, 'And.'

'Would it be that hard to move over and live near us?'

'It would, way too hard.'

'Why? What keeps you here?'

'Well, there's the fish.'

'So you didn't join Mum and me in the UK all those years ago because you fell in love with trout?'

'There's something about them, their way, their battle with the elements. Seems I can relate to them better than I can relate to people.' He looked at his watch. 'It's ready.' Niall moved to the oven, opened the door and presented a large baking tray on which a steaming trout was garnished with a sprig of thyme.

'That looks good.'

'It is. They say trout is overrated as a dish. But they also say the Irish are mugs, so what would they know?'

Early next morning a car arrived. Niall greeted a young boy and his parents. 'Bet you'd like to catch a big fish, wouldn't you, son?'

The boy smiled. His father had a rod in his hand. 'How does it work?'

'It's ten dollars per rod, then fifteen dollars per kilo and I'll clean whatever you catch.'

Niall led them down to the walkway and pointed, 'The big fish are in the top dam. The middle dam has the medium size fish and there's babies down the bottom. Remember, you have to keep what you catch.' He watched them move toward the dams, then turned and walked to the car park where his sister was loading her bags in the car, 'It's been great to see you, Sis.'

'I know, you've said so a number of times. I'd like to say how well you've done for yourself. It's disappointing that you're not making much money.'

'When I think of the work that went into this place. First there was diverting water from the stream through to the raceways just to get this thing up and running. And then I designed the ponds so they'd have shade and be able to support the fish. All that only to find there's hardly a quid in it.'

'You can always get out. You've always said how you hate living in this harsh land with its hot and dry conditions.'

'It's not that easy. With the way things are around here at the moment, I'd be lucky to get much more than half a million for this place and that wouldn't buy much over there.'

'I'm sure you'd get more than that.'

Niall blushed. 'It's not only the money. This place is the only thing I've ever had that's mine. I did all this myself you know.'

'The price will drop further if it gets much dryer around here.'

'You never know if the right offer came along maybe some day I will sell. Till then, I'll hang in.'

At the top dam the boy hooked one. He handed the rod to his father who swore as the four-kilogram trout he was reeling in came to the surface.

'We can't eat all that. I told you he said they'd be big,' said his wife watching her husband land the fish, place his boot on it, tear the hook clear and kick it into the water. Then he whispered, 'Let's move to the next one before we get sprung.' His boot kicked the smear of blood that marked the dirt.

The sun was sinking over the hills. Niall leant against the wall with a pint of Guinness in one hand and his copy of *Finnegan's Wake* in the other. He thought of James Joyce who, although Irish, lived most of his life abroad. He listened to the breeze in the trees, the call of the rosella overridden by the rousing song of a kookaburra. While placing his mug and book on the table, he felt inspired and assured. He slid open the door and moved into the living room stopping in front of his desk. While he scanned through the letter of offer from the real estate agent, the arrogant seven figure sum refused to be ignored, which added to the thrill he felt as he took the letter and tore it. Once he'd dropped it into a bin, he moved in front of the Rainbow Trout on the wall. That fish had never asked to come here, but once here it made what it could of what was on offer.

Curtis Quelle

The author was a Jaguers Award finalist in 2010 for fiction.

Irish Catholics and Australian Politics

One of the defining characteristics of Australian politics for much of the twentieth century was strong Catholic support for the Australian Labor Party. In mid-century opinion polling, for example, 70% of Catholics said they intended to vote Labor compared to only 40% of other denominations. More pronounced was the sectarian divide in party organisations, parliamentary representation and political leadership. In the 1930s when Catholics comprised about 19% of the population, Labor prime minister Jim Scullin and more than half of his cabinet were Catholic. Between 1901 and 1980, 36% of parliamentarians in the Commonwealth parliament were Catholic. There were hardly any Catholics on the Liberal side. The same was true for state politics. When the Gair Labor government in Queensland split in 1957, virtually all the cabinet were Catholics. The Catholic premier Vince Gair and many others left the Labor party to form the QLP, but the Catholic deputy premier John Duggan stayed on as Labor leader. Catholics have been disproportionately influential in the New South Wales Labor party and governments, and significant in other states. Of course up until the latter decades of the century most Australian Catholics were from an Irish background.

One of the enduring platitudes of Australian politics is that Catholics were disproportionately poor and working class, and so supported the Labor party that represented the poor and working class. This overlay of religion, class and politics provided a neat explanation and was surprisingly widespread among political scientists and historians, as well as commentators and average punters.

Like many stereotypes, however, it relied upon selective evidence, blatant bias, and sloppy scholarship. Many simply repeated the nostrum that the bulk of Irish Catholic migrants and their Australian descendants were working class. More careful scholars like political scientist Dick Spann of Sydney University noted in a 1961 essay on the Catholic vote in Australia that Catholics 'seem to have been more highly concentrated amongst the poor; at any rate, this was a widely-accepted stereotype'. The stereo-

type was challenged by the eminent Irish/Australian historian Oliver MacDonagh who bothered to look at the 1933 census, the only one before 1960 that correlated religion and income. This showed that Catholics at 19% of the population comprised 18% of the middle income groups; 15% of the top income group; with 20% of the bottom income group, and 22% of the non-income group. Although the variations at the top and bottom are noteworthy, they are small; and the middle

The reigning Protestantism of the non-labour parties included anti-Catholic and anti-Irish strains

sectors anchor a notable sameness.

Why did Catholics disproportionately support the Labor party? The explanation given by Judith Brett is simple and elegant: 'they were not made welcome by non-labour'. Catholics supporting the Labor party is the flip side to Protestants supporting the 'non-labour party' in its various guises from Fusion to Liberal to Nationalist to United Australia, and back to Liberal under Menzies post World War II. This latter phenomenon has received surprisingly little attention among scholars who have been mainly concerned with Labor narratives. The role of religion in shaping Australian politics has been widely neglected in favour of overblown class analysis. By bringing religion back in and focusing on the non-labour side, Judith Brett pretty much resolved the issue: 'the identification of Catholics with Labor is in good part the result of the Protestantism of the non-labour parties which made them inhospitable places for Australian Catholics'.

The reigning Protestantism of the non-labour parties included anti-Catholic and anti-Irish strains. Moreover these were often associated with the early Labor party's collective attributes: Catholics were subservient to Popery and so were also prone to accept the collective discipline of the Labor party. Labor's early success in forming majority governments

at the Commonwealth level and in New South Wales in 1910 forced the non-labour parties into an opposing Fusion. Although they soon adopted party discipline themselves, the anti-labour leaders railed against the party discipline and the pledge of its parliamentarians to vote the party line adopted by the early Labor party. Individualism was more the preserve of non-labour and Protestants.

At times, such as during World War I and the conscription debates, Australians were divided over British imperialism and a more independent Australian nationalism. In promoting the war effort and providing yet more troops for trench warfare in Europe, Labor prime minister Billy Hughes was opposed by many in the Labor party, including those from Irish and Catholic backgrounds. Having lost two national plebiscites over conscription and the support of his own Labor parliamentary caucus, Hughes led a block of erstwhile Labor members into a new Nationalist party and government formed with the Liberals. Hughes split the Labor party and divided the nation, spruiking an exaggerated imperialism spiced with nasty sectarianism. Archbishop Daniel Mannix of Melbourne, an arch Irish Catholic, was the perfect foil to Hughes and reinforced an exaggerated image of Irish Catholicism that shadowed the Labor party in Victoria until the 1955 split.

In more normal times, political differences were less polarised and the mix of religion and politics less toxic. Catholic Labor leaders tended to downplay their religion and treat it as a private matter, as did Ben Chifley, for example, who was a much admired Labor prime minister from 1945 to 1949. The exception in the 1950s was the Movement spearheaded by Catholics fighting Communists for control of the Labor movement, especially in Victoria, that led to the disastrous 1955 Labor party split and the exodus of many Catholics from the Labor party. Once again, Irish Catholicism was part of the political brew with Archbishop Mannix still presiding over the Catholic church in Melbourne. Most influential, however, was a distinctly non-Irish Catholic Australian, Bob Santamaria, who, although an admirer of Mannix, brought his own brand of Catholic

action and cooperative thinking to ginger up Labor Catholic activists.

If the Labor party attracted much of the attention as the party of high drama, ideological infighting and disastrous party splits, the anti-labour parties did much of the governing at the Commonwealth level. In doing so they normalised a sense of Protestant ascendancy that they and their followers liked to think of as mainstream. As Joan Rydon has summed it up: 'These parties are seen as respectable and waspish. As the parties of the status quo and the people who have "arrived", they have reflected the Protestant ascendancy.'

In 2010 Australia has moved way beyond the sectarian divide between Protestants and Catholics that was so significant in the early and middle decades of the twentieth century. Catholics are now the dominant religious group due to massive postwar migration of Italians and other European Catholics. The Liberal

Coalition front bench has a disproportionate number of Catholics. Catholics are more diverse and multicultural as is the Australian nation. The Irishness of those with an Irish background has diminished.

So it is surprising to find a writer of note dragging out the old Irish Catholic stereotype, as Blanche D'Alpuget does in trying to denigrate Paul Keating in her recent political biography of her husband and hero Bob Hawke. Here is what D'Alpuget has to say about Keating (Labor prime minister 1991-1996) who defeated Hawke (Labor prime minister 1983-1991):

Keating had plenty of rough edges, for in his bones he had the Irish Catholic anger of how it hurt to be pushed to the margins of society for generations, to be humiliated into second-class lives—deprived, even in egalitarian Australia, of a place at the table in matters of social importance.

(*Hawke: The Prime Minister*, p.65)

This is truly astonishing for its ignorance of Australian, and particularly Labor party, history. Irish Catholics were never pushed to the margins of society for generations and humiliated in second-class lives; in fact, they were just as affluent as others across the broad middle range of Australian society, and only somewhat underrepresented at the high and overrepresented at the low income ends. They were not deprived of a place at the table but rather exercised disproportionate power and leadership through the Labor party. Nor for that matter was Keating rough at the edges, but a more polished politician than Hawke. D'Alpuget's stereotyping of the Irish Catholic intimates an old fashioned and unpleasant bigotry that is rare in modern Australia.

Brian Galligan

The author is Professor of Political Science, University of Melbourne

How do you pronounce 'lyreacrompane'?

It was the Wednesday after Writers' Week in the mid eighties. I went into Lynch's Coffee Shop in Listowel with my wife and young son. There was one other customer there, a talkative Kerryman, with a lived-in face, smoking a Meerschaum pipe. The soft tweed hat, good quality casual apparel and general demeanour spelled *cosmopolitan*.

The voice I recognised from Radió Éireann. I had fallen in love with the compositions of Sean McCarthy, singer, songwriter and raconteur when first I heard an off-key rendition of *Red Haired Mary* after-hours in a West Wicklow pub.

Now, having met the man face to face I wanted to do something to further promote his work. I compiled and presented a programme, *The Songs of Sean McCarthy* which was broadcast by RTÉ Radio One. In the course of research I learned that he left home at 14 and walked to Limerick to join the Irish army. He was, of course, turned down. He was later conscripted into the British army and became, in his own words, a 'reluctant soldier.' He ran the Crubeen Club, at Clapton Junction, in London,

worked on building sites, sang, told stories and wrote 164 songs. And when he got married, aged 48, he described himself as a 'happily-married bachelor.'

I unearthed the stories behind the now familiar songs, most of them sad. (Ewan MacColl once asked him, 'why does somebody have to die in all your songs?') *In Shame Love In Shame* was written to try and rid himself of the anger brought about by society's attitude to a tragedy in his own family.

The inspiration for *John O' Halloran* was a chance meeting with an old toil-worn Kerryman in the Mother Redcap in Camden Town. *The Key Above The Door*, encompasses the titles of the works of Maurice Walsh with whom Sean shared a profound sense of place', Maurice said. 'A place acquires an entity of its own, an entity that is the essence of all the life and thoughts and griefs and joys that have gone before.' And Sean was in total agreement with that sentiment. *Shanagolden*, written in a Manhattan high-rise apartment was a story heard in a Limerick field 25 years before.

Researching the life, times and work

of the man who described himself as, 'a Kerry bogman, who could not spell, typed with one finger and had no idea where commas went', created a mountain of source-material.

So, through a mixture of ignorance, arrogance and a genuine desire to see the life and works of Sean McCarthy portrayed on the stage I wrote a play called *And All his Songs Were Sad*. If I were to say, 'It lay in a drawer for years,' that would sound plausible – if clichéd. The truth is I sent the script to countless theatre companies. Eventually I got an email from the Pantagleize Theatre Company in Fort Worth, Texas to say they were putting on the World Premier of 'my play' to launch their European Master Series on 20 March 2010 and later they ran it from September 16 to October 03.

My script, including stage directions, must have been all right, because I only got one trans-Atlantic phone-call during rehearsals. It was from Richard Blake, the Technical Director; a Texan actor had asked *him* how to pronounce 'Lyreacrompane.'

Mattie Lennon

Crime does not pay

Breaking and entering at 'Erinagh' the home of Michael O'Grady of Hawthorn

In 1868, goldsmith, Julius Hogarth accepted a commission from Walsh Bros., jewellers, to manufacture a silver centrepiece for presentation to the Irish-born the Hon. Michael O'Grady, Councillor and Mayor of Hawthorn. He is remembered for generosity toward his fellow countrymen and his contribution to Melbourne's Roman Catholic community, for which he received a Papal Knighthood.

His house, *Erinagh*, sat in five and a half acres of garden on the corner of Riversdale and Glenferrie Roads, Hawthorn. On the night of 6 March 1870 O'Grady retired through the French window of the library. Not a sound was heard in the darkness. The following morning, Norah Cooney, the house servant, observed that O'Grady's centrepiece was missing. Detective Daly was informed of the robbery. Some days later, a known offender was observed approaching a pawnbroker's shop in Swanston Street. Detectives Daly and Christie waited and then gave chase. The offender and two others were subsequently arrested and charged.

The *South Bourke Standard* of 25 March 1870 reported the case which opened on 22 March. John Mannix was charged with stealing a silver centrepiece and other goods from the dwelling of the Hon. Michael O'Grady, Glenferrie Road, Hawthorn. Detective Daly conducted the prosecution. The prisoner was undefended.

Michael O'Grady had seen the centrepiece on 6 March. The despatch

box from the Board of Education and the holy-water stand, which were produced in court, were both recognised as being those from his library. On the Sunday evening when he had entered *Erinagh* through the French window of the library he had not locked or bolted it behind him. This window, through which the drawing-room could be entered, was open on the following morning.

‘It's no odds,
I'm cooked.
I shall plead guilty.’

The next witness was Julius Hogarth, goldsmith. On 14 March he had accompanied the detectives to a barber's shop and dwelling in Madeline Street, Carlton, to assist in a search. A zinc bucket in the yard containing gravel similar to that used in melting gold and silver was found. He had washed grains of silver from it. On the mantelpiece of the shop were two boxes each containing silver melted into little lumps. The contents of the larger box he recognised as parts of the testimonial he had made for Walsh Bros. Hogarth had sealed the packets of evidence when found and now identified them as his own workman-

ship. His sketch of the piece was also tendered as evidence.

James Kelly, a cabman of Collingwood, told the court that the accused jumped into his horse-cab just after noon on the 11 March and ordered him to drive 'quick to the top of Swanston Street'. Mannix ordered him to turn into Victoria Street, then jumped out and disappeared down the first right-of-way. He had seen the cab with the three detectives who were following him. Kelly saw Mannix reach into his pockets and throw something into the gutter. He searched and found a lump of silver. After being arrested, the prisoner was conveyed in Kelly's cab to the barber's shop in Madeline Street, then to the detectives' office, and finally the lockup.

Detective Williams had seen Detectives Daly and Christie call a cab to pursue the accused and had joined them. The detectives jumped out of the cab and cornered the accused. He saw Daly arrest the prisoner in the right-of-way. The search at Madeline Street for the remainder of the centrepiece resulted in the prisoner declaring 'You may save yourself the trouble; the other portion is not run down, but is planted, but not on the premises.' Williams took up one of the pieces of silver. 'You have been cutting up this with an axe and a piece of the axe is broken into the silver.' A broken axe, found at Madeline Street, was produced. The accused had replied, 'It's no odds, I'm cooked. I shall plead guilty.' These statements had also been made in the hearing of Detectives Daly



QUINN CIVIL PTY. LTD.

TELEPHONE: 5940 2955 FAX: 5940 2956
7 Purton Road, Pakenham VIC 3810
PO Box 202, Officer VIC 3809
info@quinncivil.com.au www.quinncivil.com.au

Infrastructure Solutions in Engineering Construction...

Civil Contractors specialising in:

- Water, Wastewater and Drainage
- Roads, Subdivisions and Gas
- Low Impact Explosives
- Rock Excavations

and Christie.

Detective Williams stated he had known the prisoner for the last nineteen years in Melbourne. Mannix had come from Sydney and was then without occupation. He had previously been incarcerated for uttering a forged cheque for 500 pounds on the Bank of Australasia, and severally for stealing and robbing with violence. The court then adjourned. On the application of Detective Daly, the prisoner was remanded for a week.

On 24 March Detectives Williams, Daly and Christie arrested George Lindley and Robert Bitson. They were identified as being implicated in the robbery by James Henry Lang.

The court sat again in Hawthorn on 29 March. John Mannix, was remanded. George Lindley and Robert Bitson, were charged with being concerned in the robbery of the centrepiece from the dwelling of Michael O'Grady.

The first witness, Frederick Walsh, told the court that about eighteen months previously he had received an order to manufacture a centrepiece, valued at 200 guineas, to honour Michael O'Grady. Julius Hogarth and others carried out the order. Walsh himself delivered it to Michael O'Grady's dwelling. A photograph was tendered as evidence. It was recognised as the centrepiece of O'Grady. Walsh then identified the silver figure produced as part of the piece. Julius Hogarth, recognised the figure and leaves produced as of his own manufacture.

Witness Constable James Brennan had found the stand of the centrepiece, a bundle of clothes, the despatch box carrying O'Grady's name, the holy-water vessel and other articles in a paddock a short distance from O'Grady's dwelling.

James Henry Lang, a watchmaker, stated that the three prisoners were known to him. On the afternoon of 9 March, Mannix had shown him a gold watch and asked the value of it. Lang had pronounced it to be a very good one. Mannix then asked if he would repair the watch the next day at Madeline Street. Lang agreed. The following day Lang went to Madeline Street, took the watch from Mannix and examined it with his eye glass. The main-spring was broken. Then Lindley, carrying a bundle, and Bitson entered the house through the back door. The latter produced a lump of silver and asked if Lang would buy it. Mannix said he would guarantee that it was all good silver. Lang refused the offer at four and six an ounce. The following day Lang returned to repair the watch and found the shop and dwelling locked. He was informed that Mannix had been arrested. At the detective office Lang identified Lindley and Bitson as having been in the company of Mannix at Madeline Street.

The last witness, Detective Williams had found the silver leaves and figure in a cavity above a large window in Mannix's dwelling. The three prisoners were committed for trial in a higher court.

This trial at the Bourke General Sessions took place on 4 April 1870. Mannix was convicted of receiving stolen goods, Lindley and Bitson for burglary and robbery. All were sentenced to five years imprisonment with hard labour. John Mannix, alias King, alias Sampson, a Londoner who had emigrated on the *Hastings*, had already been in Pentridge Prison for the best part of seventeen years. Standing five feet four and a half inches, he bore the marks of flagellation on his back. The London dyer Lindley was a habitual offender and had experienced solitary confinement in Pentridge. Robert Bitson, a tailor from Sydney, had previously been found guilty of offences in Victoria

Unfortunately Hogarth's drawing appears not to have survived. Neither has the photograph from which Frederick Walsh identified pieces of the stolen centrepiece. From the evidence, a reasonably clear description of the piece emerges. The testimonial of silver, mounted on a plate glass and wooden stand and covered with a glass dome, consisted of three draped figures, probably female, partly gilt, one representing Ireland, the second Victoria and the third Friendship. The leaves were, in all probability, of the native tree fern.

This valuable centrepiece, made by Julius Hogarth to honour Michael O'Grady, once stolen and melted down, can never be claimed as a family heirloom by the descendants of O'Grady.

Ruth Dwyer

READ IRELAND

The only Internet Bookstore dedicated exclusively to Irish interest books

Our aim is to make every book of Irish interest readily available to all customers – local and global. The Read Ireland online database contains the most comprehensive and up-to-date catalogue of Irish Interest books available.

We have been selling books for over 33 years and guarantee fast, efficient and friendly service for all customers.

www.readireland.com

Poetry

Renvyle

i. m. Oliver St. John Gogarty

You side-tracked Kylemore,
Ballinahinch, and Inisbofin,

Glassilaun strand and Sky Road
near Clifden, places salted
with fuschia, and bogbean,

to build your sea-grey house
a hundred or so years ago.

Leaning on a birch trunk,
lost in your whisper to the wind,
the legendary song of Renvyle,

the wind of my coming,
the coming of the yet unborn.

I want to tell you, from afar
I've come, here, and now.

The Train

It sounds the way a stomach does on emptiness.
A voice says that the train serves,
Mullingar, Longford, Carrick-on-Shannon,
Ballymote, and Dublin.

We pass a house burnt down by fire,
with no flower bed, no gate.
Stories of previous lives leak out
from the smoldering charcoal foundation.

It will take well-polished ply boards to hide.
We pass a crumpled land of deep sunny grass
that reels into the sky's throat.
There cows dwell on silence.

Inside, the passengers are speaking or sleeping.
Empty cups and sugar papers are on the tables.

Oritsegbemi Emmanuel Jakpa was born in Warri, Nigeria, and lives in Ireland. His poetry has been published widely, including *The Diagram*, *Echoing Years*, *Barnwood*, and *Edison Literary Review*. He has been nominated for Pushcart Prizes three times and received the 2008 Yeats Pierce Loughran Award.

Stick on stone

We knew each other only as men
Emigration saw to that:
Him in London, me in Achill
Me in London, him in Luton.
Even living together, we remained
Strangers in a rented room,
Speaking, not talking,
Robbed of our relative roles.

Sure, there were memories -
One golden Dukinella day
When Mick, the Yank, called;
We straddled a low stone wall,
Talked of Wimpy and McAlpine,
Roads and bridges,
Digs and pubs;
The boy was man!

A lunchtime booze in Wandsworth;
Three of us now living in London,
Yet chatting only the once.
Inheritance was split, spoils divided,
Unequally, but with good humour,
Padraig was always his favourite – and mine.

Nights in Castlebar hospital
After the emigrant's dreaded summons:
"Come now, while he still knows you"
Between the awkward silences,
Came words of stuttered support;
And he survived - again and again.

I almost made it, that last time,
Got to Westport before news
Of our final silence.
Now, as I walk in Dromawda,
His gnarled stick, a stolen spoil,
Taps the unsaid
On the tarstone road.

Michael Gallagher was born on Achill Island, Co. Mayo in 1941. His father worked on English building sites and returned to Ireland each spring to cut turf and expand the family. Poetry, short stories and non-fiction have been published in Europe and America and he won his year's Michael Hartnett viva voce competition. In 2000 he returned to live in Ireland with his wife, after forty years in England, where their family still lives.

Roots

My people's provenance:
Mum from Moree,
Dad from a little dairy town near Byron Bay.
My childhood lands were just as clear:
one block, fifty by one-fifty, outer Sydney,
free access to the beach, suburban footpaths
and a paddock of kikuyu grass.

Until, one drowsy afternoon at my grandmother's house,
the bottom of a wardrobe yielded up a dusty Bible,
heavy in my hand. On the flyleaf,
'John Morrow, Omagh,
Tyrone, Ireland,
1861'.
I was a Morrow; who was he?

The dust cloud from this detonation billowed,
in its folds, dimly apprehended shadows,
forebears never mentioned around the dining table.
My grandparents' generation was not when we began.
My family didn't start from here at all.
I had no idea where Omagh, Tyrone was.
Who was I – were we – really?
What was our place?
Blast debris fell. Fragments settled.

Famine Grave – Roscommon

A footpath threads through pines
to a rough-cut limestone slab,
coffin-sized,
set on moss.

Coins, mint-bright,
a cross of twigs
bound with fresh leaves of grass
rest on the stone
below which nine lie buried.

Lost, outside time, I finger
the uncertain thread, spider silk,
which binds me to my ancestors,
wonder that it held
through those starvation years.

I leave a coin and pray
for those who died,
give thanks for the survivors,
and set the candle of my prayer
to drift out on the river of the wind.

Bob Morrow grew up in Sydney, lived in S.E. Asia and USA and in 1981 settled as a teacher in Melbourne. His poetry began while discovering ancestors in Ireland. His poems often explore family, belonging and place. A keen body-surfer, his time divides between the city, bush and a Bass Strait beach.

Between now and my uncertain exit

Between now and my uncertain exit, there
are probably ninety-nine poems I will write
and one, please God, that I will never be
entirely satisfied with.

This would be the one about your jacket,

the one that was too heavy to carry and
ended up on a park bench in North Beach,
Christmas come early to the homeless man
quickest out of the blocks.

He will tell you a jacket will keep the shape of
your body long after you have left it –
why, then, should my mind be any different?

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

Out in a canoe (1997)

Out on the still ocean bay
just the gentlest sweep of the oar
was all that was needed to move on the water.

I was surprised at how easy it was
to tune in to the boat and the water
to feel at one with the sea.

I felt I knew this feeling from another time
How could I know when I had never done this before?
Where did this deep knowing come from?

The slow quiet pace of the canoe
was so sweet an experience,
like being with an old familiar life-long friend.

I loved the boat and the oar and the water
like a mother or a father loves their home
but how could this be? And who can tell me?

Maireid Sullivan resides in Melbourne. She has been singing traditional Irish songs since early childhood, and many of her original songs and poetry reflect on humanity's heritage of joy – particularly as reflected in Irish Celtic culture. She has recorded three highly acclaimed CDs and her songs appear on film soundtracks and compilations in the Celtic genre. She blogs, tweets, writes essays, interviews, and critical reviews for international magazines, newspapers, journals, and arts-action campaigns.

The Silence of the Lambs

Colm Tóibín: *Brooklyn*, London: Penguin, 2009
ISBN: 978-0-141-04174-2; RRP: \$22.99

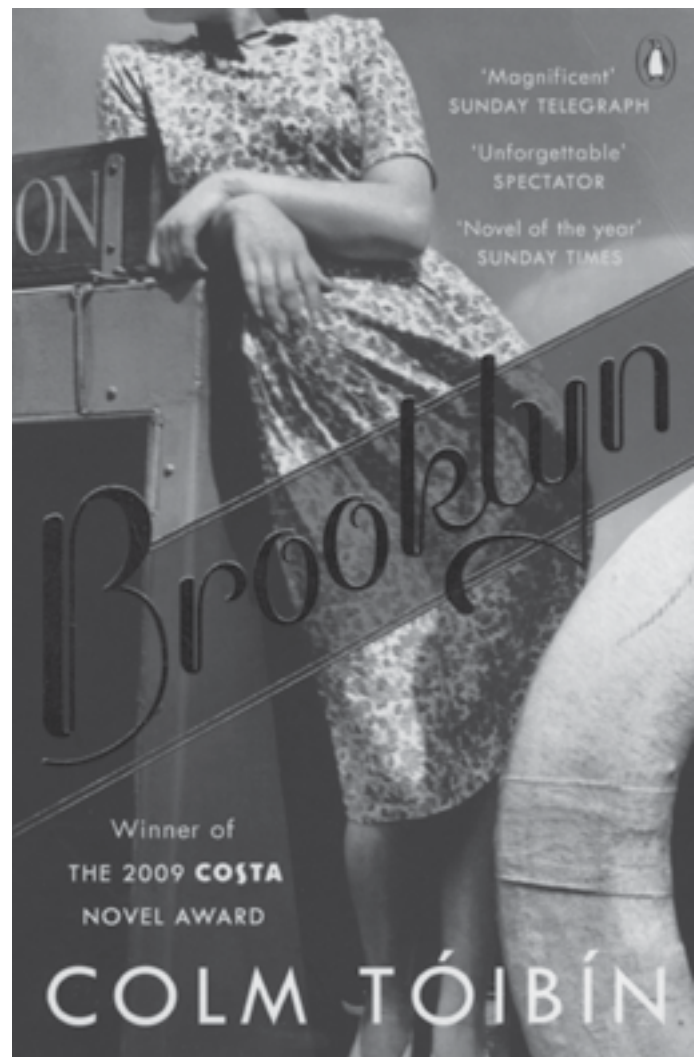
I usually enjoy Tóibín immoderately, so it's sad to report that this short novel was a tad disappointing. It's a migration novel, and at that level it works best. It is a moving account of a young woman silently pressured by her widowed mother and dying sister, who are complicit with a meddling priest, to emigrate to the US in the '50s. Eilis is a passive creature who allows herself to be quietly exported, one realises in retrospect, by loving kinsfolk who feel, without consulting her, that she will have economic advantages in New York. The silence is terrifying in this novel, and of a piece with what the sociologists tell us about emotional reticence/stoicism of the Irish. Tóibín does not spare us the anguish, and it is the more unbearable because unspoken: the girl is aware that the mother's expression is like that when she buried her husband; the child is the ghost at her own funeral. '...[They] could do everything except say out loud what it was they were thinking' (p.31).

The novel invites you into this mindset to feel its consequences. The leave taking, which breaks all their hearts, is typically stoic, and when the sister unexpectedly dies, tragic in its consequences. Something of the thinking behind this emotional impoverishment, is suggested by a passage about a pregnant girl out of the boarding house in disgrace and silently so as not to give scandal to the other girls. The landlady advises Eilis:

She's very West-of-Ireland and they're better at saying nothing than we are. So it suits her because she doesn't have to say any farewells. (p.96)

What Tóibín does best is to evoke the narrowness of '50s Ireland, its taken-for-granted moralistic rigours, and its petty cruelties. In a nightmare, Eilis shrinks from the experience of court-house days in Enniscorthy. The routine exposure of the small town drunks, petty thieves and those convicted of disorderly behaviour, in a small community, is bad enough. The seismic shocks and shame of children suddenly being taken into 'care' into the industrial schools and foster homes because they'd 'mitched from school or caused trouble or because of problems with their parents' (p.67) appals her. There is a wealth of social history and depth of feeling compressed into such a lamentable set of criteria, the more so that we now know a lot more about such institutions and the level of care on offer in that period.

Tóibín's prose is famously spare. In earlier novels, this makes for the most economical and symbolic of poetry. The crumbling cliffs of Wexford are powerfully evocative in *The Heather Blazing*, but insofar as there is poetry in *Brooklyn*, it's reserved for trivialities like nylons and the wonder of them, the furnishings of the basement room, and the flavours of Italian spaghetti. In other words, in the world with which Tóibín is less familiar, Brooklyn, the prose becomes the stuff of Hollywood cliché. The American section loses the edge of critique that I expect from Tóibín. It occasionally gathers pace and intensity, usually when he is recreating the Irish ghetto experiences of the period, as for example, the music that follows the charity Christmas lunch. Fr. Flood who min-



isters to his flock in a paternalistic and meddling manner, and who is the spring of the action of the novel, might have been foregrounded more in the interests of building tension in the American section.

Without spoiling it for those who have not read it, I found the complications Tóibín introduces in the last quarter of the novel utterly unconvincing. Eilis' silence about her American boyfriend in the face of rediscovering her transformed Irish one has been prepared for, and is not surprising. We are also privy to her growing self-confidence and Americanisation, so it comes as something of a relief when the passive girl makes her own choices at the end of the novel.

I hope that Tóibín is not losing his touch. Perhaps taking on a culture, and a gendered point of view that he's not familiar with has taken the edge off his prose. Let's hope this one is a temporary aberration, and that the Tóibín we know and love will soon burst upon the literary horizon again. The best parts of this novel reveal him to be a subtle exponent of pre-Celtic Tiger Ireland and its moral pathologies, and a fine documenter of the Irish migration to America in the 1950s.

Frances Devlin-Glass

Frances Devlin-Glass is the president of AIHN, publisher of Tinteán

Imperilled Songlines

John Bradley: *Singing Saltwater Country: Journey to the Songlines of Carpentaria*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 2010. ISBN: 978-1-74237-241-9; RRP: \$39.99

Irish-Australians who are concerned about cultural preservation will find much to think about in this book. It focuses on the songlines, the Dreaming narratives of Yanyuwa people. Old Europe has its own earth-based songlines, including Ireland's own *Táin bó Cuailgne*, available in the superb translation of Thomas Kinsella. *Táin* clearly preserves Irish oral and nomadic pre-history and cosmology. When Queen Medb 'got her gush of blood' (menstruation is a cool excuse for not meeting Cúchulainn in armed combat), it 'dug three great channels, each big enough to take a household'. Such markings out of the landscape by ancestral beings have many resonances in Aboriginal Australia, as does the concern about how much culture is lost as the languages die, and how best to preserve oral cultures that are incommensurable with western media.

John Bradley's *Singing Saltwater Country* tells the story of how he learned Yanyuwa Dreamings and culture. His was not a traditional anthropological trajectory. Arriving as a primary teacher in the Gulf town of Borroloola, he learnt language from the kids. He was slowly inducted over several decades into male language and the culture by a community that had its own plans for him. He also worked for the Sacred Sites Authority, and on a series of Yanyuwa land-claims, before becoming Deputy Director of the Centre for Australian Indigenous Studies at Monash.

What is fascinating about this book is that it might not have happened if the writer had not already been bi-cultural and had seriously good linguistic skills (he's a Sephardic Jew who as a young teenager reclaimed his family's culture, taught himself Hebrew). He is also a gifted artist. Translating songlines into visual form has been a consistent methodology, a continuing gift he brings to these Dreaming narratives. The book is preceded by an Atlas and an ongoing digital animation project. These artefacts communicate the rich cultural knowledge which songlines embody into

comprehensible form for westerners and for Yanyuwa children who are no longer able to move freely around their Country. The original drawings and maps in this book are part of its power. Maps in this edition, however, are too small, too illegible and too much detail is lost. An essential tool for understanding is compromised, but hopefully that can be remedied in subsequent editions.

This book achieves many things. First, it is a revealing insight into Yanyuwa pedagogy. How does one learn a cosmology so different from one's own? What does it really mean to say, 'land is life', or 'Aborigines belong to the land'? The words trip off the tongue easily, but what do they mean? This book takes you systematically through that process of understanding – through the pitfalls, the partial understandings which become 'portals of discovery' – the 'ah-ha' moments. It is a fascinating account of an experience-based pedagogy, not thought-down, but experience-up. Bradley was encouraged to experience Yanyuwa Country with all his senses, and then understand the sacredness of this knowledge. Like *Táin bó Cuailgne*, Indigenous songlines are not solemn in the ways of western epic. Bradley recollects a joyful process in which the sacred intersects with the ordinary and everyday.

Secondly, the book attempts to explain songlines. The ancient Irish, indeed the early modern Irish, were like Indigenous Australians in being small-territory-based and nomadic within a small compass. The colonists didn't like this and changed it often brutally. We've lost the sense of the stories which tell us what and who we and which are tied to the soil. Explaining Dreamings as a cosmology tied to specific country is the genius of this book.

Songlines are hard to grasp and even harder to teach. There is not much available that doesn't assimilate them to paper-based, de-centred (removed from the territory) forms of publication. So, even the best explications tend to be written in those contexts – the Berndts and their categories in *The Speaking Land*, A.W. Reed's *Aboriginal Myths, Legends, and Fables*, T.G. H. Strehlow in *Songs of Central Australia* and even David Unaipon's *Legendary Tales of the Aus-*

tralian Aborigines. They are all assimilated to western models in a misguided attempt to dignify them by putting them into the familiar and European generic straightjackets (myth, legend, fable, just-so story, creation myth) into which they clearly do not fit.

This book does something radically different. It focuses on one culture, one territory, the stories that criss-cross it, and that amplify one another. It takes you on that difficult journey of entering into that different cosmology and construction of reality. The web of meaning whereby land and kin and everything observable and unobservable (e.g. weather phenomena) are related dynamically, and in a spirit of enquiry, is unfolded in this work. The story of the barge doing soundings of the hole under the McArthur River, where the blue-ringed octopus with its link to the constellation of the seven sisters is set down in the Dreaming narrative, has a whole different set of meanings for Yanyuwa and westerners, which is carefully unpacked. It is potentially a story that has a genealogy that reaches back to the Ice Age – mind-blowing stuff. Ireland, the longest continuous, written European culture can boast only 1.5 millennia. Why aren't we promoting this much more ancient Indigenous culture more strongly?

This book probably won't save Yanyuwa language. But it builds a clear case about what is lost when language is lost. That's a hard story to hear, but one which must be told, and here it is told passionately. I'm a bit more hopeful than Bradley because my cultural roots are Irish and we have seen this culture retrieve its archaic traces and remake itself triumphantly in English. And Irish does still have its advocates and speakers. In the harsh daylight and reality of Borroloola's educational disadvantage, Yanyuwa people have long said that their prospering depends on the mainstream population knowing and respecting their culture. This book will certainly help that endeavour.

Frances Devlin-Glass

Frances has worked closely with John Bradley on a number of Yanyuwa projects, including the website Diwurruwurru (www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/diwurruwurru).

A Northern Traditional Singer

Len Graham: *Joe Holmes: Here I Am Amongst You: Songs, Music and Traditions of an Ulsterman, Four Courts Press, Dublin, 2010.*
ISBN: 9781846822520; RRP: €22.50

One winter's night in 1963, a young Len Graham sang 'The Murlough Shore' at a meeting of the Antrim and Derry Fiddlers. The following week Graham visited one of the fiddlers, Joe Holmes, who had asked him for the words. He discovered that the older man possessed a trove of songs but lacked confidence to sing in public. Thus began a friendship and musical collaboration in solo and unison singing at concerts, sessions and festivals, on recordings and in the company of renowned singers and musicians (an Irish distinction: 'musicians' are instrumentalists). The friendship lasted until Holmes's death — '*The Parting Glass* was the last song Joe and I sang together in Derry's Guild Hall a few nights before he died in January 1978' (p. 166) — and this book is its testament.

Len Graham is a highly regarded traditional singer in his own right; his performance career includes an Australian tour with the band Skylark in 1990. A musician who learned his first songs within the family, he has dedicated much of his life to gathering, recording and sharing the song traditions of his native Co Antrim, Northern Ireland, and beyond. Among its many pleasures, this book gives the reader insight into the creation of networks of musical friendships, and dissemination of musical texts and knowledge.

The book reproduces notations and lyrics of 80 of Joe Holmes' repertoire of songs, remembered from the singing of his mother and grandmother and supplemented by verses, variants and new songs learned from fellow musicians. Its richest treasures, though, lie in the accompanying notes which, in addition to a song's provenance, history, variants, and association with specific places and performers, include an abundance of anecdotes.

Graham's note to the song 'Laurel Hill', one of the great Ulster songs associated with the Battle of Waterloo, demonstrates his *modus operandi*:

On hearing it for the first time sung by Eddie Butcher on a radio programme ... I jumped into my car and made a bee-line for Magilligan where Eddie lived. About one hour after the programme was over I was

knocking on the front door of the Butcher home in the townland of Aughil, 'Are you the man that was singing on the wireless?' 'I am,' says Eddie and that was the beginning of another wonderful and enriching song friendship. We sang many songs for each other on that first encounter... At the end of the night, I asked if it would be all right if I brought a friend over with me on my next visit ... The friend was Joe Holmes and over the ensuing years ... I paid him a visit almost weekly. Many singers, musicians and devotees crossed the ever-welcoming Butcher threshold along with Joe and me for nights of endless songs. (p. 119)

Such friendships extended throughout the province and the island to include the finest of traditional singers, from Geordie Hanna and his sister Sarah Ann O'Neill in Tyrone to Sarah and Rita Keane in Galway, as well as famed musicians including fiddlers John Doherty in Donegal and Denis Murphy in Kerry, along with a host of up-and-coming revivalist performers. Many photographs in the book chronicle the singing festivals and informal meetings where songs were shared.

One theme that Graham does not address directly is the varying religious and social backgrounds of the singers and musicians. The nearest he gets is a note on one song's opening line, which 'varies from "When going to mass" to "When going to church", depending on the singer's religious denomination or wherever he or she 'hangs their hat on Sunday'. Joe sang 'church' (p. 83).

Recent scholarly works on the musical traditions of Northern Ireland — Fintan Vallely's *Tune Out: Traditional Music and Identity in Northern Ireland* (Cork University Press, 2008) and David Cooper's *The Musical Traditions of Northern Ireland and its Diaspora: Community and Conflict* (Ashgate, 2009) — address the nexus of music, politics and religion from very different viewpoints. In *Joe Holmes*, however, Len Graham illustrates rather than analyses the complexities of musical friendships and traditions in the early years of the Troubles. Joe Holmes was from a Church of Ireland family who kept a 'céilí house' (an open house to singers and dancers) where Travellers and musicians of any or no religious persuasion were welcomed.

Until 'discovered' by Len Graham,

Joe Holmes had performed exclusively as a fiddler, at the house dances and harvest barn-dances of his youth. From the 1950s he was a member of the Antrim and Derry Fiddlers' Association, and later a founding member of the Ballycastle, Co Antrim, branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann. This association of Irish musicians, based in Dublin but with membership throughout Ireland and in other parts of the world, has since its inception in the 1950s pursued a staunchly nationalist, socially conservative and a *de facto* Roman Catholic agenda. In Northern Ireland, however, it has served as a refuge from sectarianism for musicians across the religious divide, who maintain that 'Traditional music knows no border, nor no creed' (p. 234)

The book also includes notations of many of the fiddle tunes Joe played, and demolishes the assumption that the well-known hornpipe, 'The Home Ruler' refers to Daniel O'Connell. According to the tune's composer, Frank McCollam, 'I composed that wee hornpipe for my wife Sally — the home ruler!' (p. 234)

The final section describes rural traditions from the early twentieth century that Joe Holmes experienced, including the mummer's play he recalled in its entirety, with its cure for a wounded St George: 'hens' pens, peasy-weasy, turkey-treacle, midges-oil, the sap of the poker, the juice of the tongs, three turkey eggs nine yards long, all mixed up in a hen's bladder and stirred up with a tom cat's feather' (p. 265).

Beautifully designed and produced, the book's illustrations include historical and contemporary photographic portraits, reproductions of broadside ballads, even a facsimile of the piece of paper on which Joe Holmes had written out the words of the first song he sang for Len Graham in 1963. *Joe Holmes* has earned its place beside the classic song collections of Northern Ireland, Hugh Shields's *Shamrock, Rose and Thistle* (Blackstaff, 1981) and Sam Henry's *Songs of the People* (University of Georgia Press, 1990). Together with useful indices of tunes, songs, people, places, subjects and a bibliography, this is a rich resource, but its greatest riches are its story of a musical way of life.

Helen O'Shea

Helen is the author of The Making of Irish Traditional Music (Cork University Press, 2008).

An appetiser for the grand Irish exhibition

Richard Reid and Brendon Kelson: *Sinners, Saints and Settlers: a journey through Irish Australia*, Canberra: National Museum of Australia Press, 2010 ISBN: 9781876944766; RRP: \$39.

Preparing for the *Irish in Australia* exhibition in Canberra

This large, attractive book covers Irish contributions to Australia's history and national life organised into nine major chapters, ranging from the 'Faith of our fathers' and 'Public life' to 'Some Irish places in Australia'. Each chapter has subheadings allowing the authors to focus on particular stories. Numerous photographs appear throughout the text making it a very attractive volume.

The authors write in an engaging style and link disparate themes to shed new light on old knowledge. For example, the section 'The three Rs' covers the well known contribution of the Irish National School educational system to early Australian schooling, specifically that of Henry Lawson. His teacher was John Tierney whose life story was common to many Gold Rush emigrants. Although John found gold, he did not prosper as a storekeeper and returned to his original profession of teaching. The Irish National School concept was revolutionary in two ways: first, that all children should receive a primary school education (this in the 1830s!); and secondly, that children of all religious denominations should attend the same school. This daring new idea entered Australia at the behest of Irishman Sir Richard Bourke, then governor of New South Wales, and was enthusiastically accepted, right down to using the same textbooks. Reading this section, it's striking both how much and how little has changed in Australian education. While I have never taught in a building that might be carried away by a high wind, I recognised the impact of overseas textbooks:

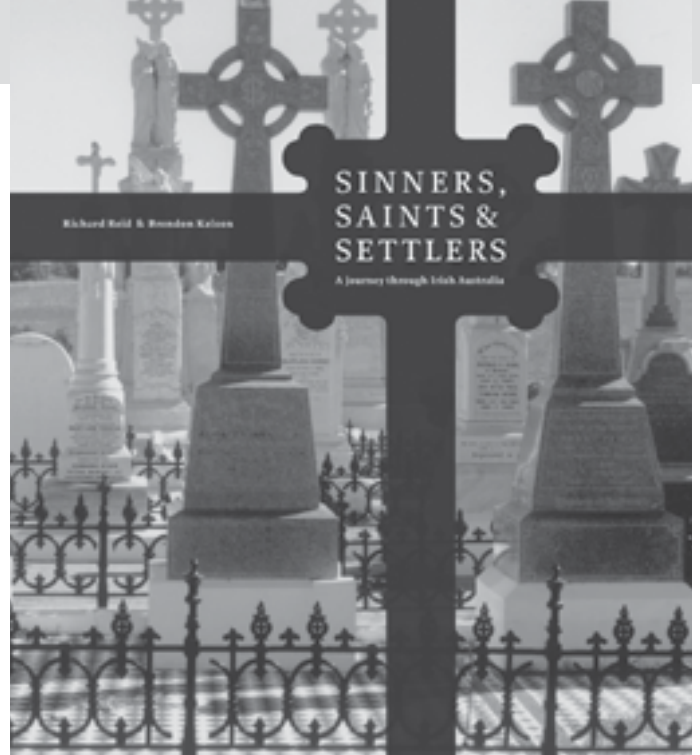
And Ireland! That was known from the coast line to Athlone:

We got little information of the land that gave us birth.

Nowadays we use American textbooks so that we have students who know all about 'Hispanics' but nothing about Aborigines, and believe the Australian constitution confers the right to bear arms.

Similarly many readers will know Lawson's 'The Captain of the Push' but may not know it was based on a real bare-knuckle contest between Sandy Ross, of the 'Orange' Push, and Larry Foley, leader of the 'Green' Push. Certainly the two groups derived from ancient quarrels, but these had become relevant to Australia following the attempted assassination of Prince Alfred by a Fenian called O'Farrell and intensified interdenominational struggles. A challenge was issued and the resulting battle for supremacy lasted 71 rounds or nearly three hours. Naturally the outcome is still debated.

Women's participation is well covered, an unusual feature in many history books. Mary Lee's fiery oratory contributed much to the cause of women's suffrage in Australia. After emigrating from Monaghan to nurse a sick son, Mary was radicalised by her work at the Female Refuge in Adelaide helping former prostitutes and single mothers. She then demanded to know, 'Could women have ever descended to such depths of misery and degradation if women had a voice in making the laws for



women?' (p.49) She was the driving force behind the Monster Petition demanding votes for women and regularly addressed large crowds when women were expected to remain quietly at home. She had a good style in crushing ripostes; to that hoary old question, 'What do women want?' she replied, 'Give them the vote and they will tell you what they want.' (p.50)

Australian religious life makes up the largest section, reminding us that Australia was not always the virtually secular nation it has become. Father Therry, crotchety founder of St Mary's Cathedral, gets his due with the most famous 'Father Therry' story of his answering the call to administer the last rites to a dying convict. When his horse refused to enter a flooded river, he called to a man on the opposite bank to pull him across 'bruised and dizzy', borrowed a horse and reached the dying man to hear, 'I knew you'd come, Father. I just knew you wouldn't fail me.' (p.87) Described by Governor Darling as 'a man of strong feelings and not much discretion' (p.89), he may just have been exhausted by his duties as one of two Catholic chaplains in the colony. The main emphasis in this section is the role of the Catholic Church in Australian education, both of boys and girls. The emotional cost to those sent out to provide this education, never to see their homeland again, is fully explored. While the authors acknowledge the violent forms of discipline used by the Christian Brothers, they point out that their education system was effective enough to propel boys to success in public examinations and ultimately the professions.

'Some Irish Places in Australia' covers such places as 'Galong Castle' built by ex-convict and squatter Ned Ryan. Kiama, where anti-Irish Premier Henry Parkes conjured up the 'Kiama ghost' of international Fenianism, is fittingly represented by its Court House. Speaking before an audience of largely Protestant Irish, Parkes claimed to have evidence of a Fenian plot to murder Prince Alfred - an inflammatory statement at the time. Koroit, and especially Mickey Bourke's hotel, is featured, although surprisingly Henry Handel Richardson is not mentioned.

Overall a remarkable achievement in bringing history to life.

Felicity Allen

Felicity Allen is deputy editor of Tinteán.

Note: Richard Reid is the curator of a forthcoming major exhibition, Irish in Australia: 1788 to Present, which will open in Canberra at the National Museum of Australia on St. Patrick's Day in 2011. It is shaping up to be a must-see event.

A blind soldier poet sees his way to success

Jeff Brownrigg, *Anzac Cove to Hollywood: the story of Tom Skeyhill, master of deception*
Spit Junction, NSW, Anchor Books, 2010
ISBN: 9780980335446

Since his death in 1932, Tom Skeyhill's name has been virtually forgotten in Australia, but the publication of Dr Jeff Brownrigg's story of his life and exploits has changed that.

It was only by chance that the author's curiosity about Skeyhill was aroused. While researching material for another book, Brownrigg found reference to verse purported to be 'from the facile pen of Signaller Skeyhill'. Intrigued by the reference, Brownrigg began a search of official documents, publicity pamphlets and newspaper articles, which unearthed the extraordinary story of Tom Skeyhill. He is revealed as a charlatan who successfully persuaded Australian and American publics of his heroism and intimacy with world leaders. Brownrigg has uncovered possibly one of Australia's most successful confidence tricksters.

As an academic, researcher and author, Jeff Brownrigg is admirably equipped to unearth the complex subterfuges and spurious claims made by the book's subject. His experience as Head of Research and Outreach at Australia's Film and Sound Archive provided the skills to accurately analyse the material and to question the authenticity of Skeyhill's claims. An Associate Professor of Cultural Heritage Studies at the University of Canberra with a doctorate in Music, English and Philosophy from the University of York, his special interests include (among others) Australian and Irish/Australian biography, sectarianism and aspects of the history of World War I. Brownrigg, who is an engaging presenter in person and on radio, was voted 'Communicator of the Year' for the Canberra region in 2010, and it is his entertaining communication skills that joins the various scraps of information about Skeyhill into a compelling and intriguing narrative.

All four of Tom Skeyhill's grandparents were Irish, and it must have been from one of these that he inherited the gift of the blarney, for how else can one explain his success based only on his own fraudulent claims. And it must have been due to the 'luck of the Irish' that his web of deceit was never discovered until it was revealed by Brownrigg's detective work; hence the sub-title, '*... master of deception.*'

Tom's paternal grandfather, Thomas Skeyhill of Galway, moved to Terang in Victoria's Western District where he died in 1901, aged 108. Tom's maternal grandfather, Hugh Donnelly, from County Down, was also long lived, dying in 1903 'one of the oldest colonists in the state'. According to Brownrigg, 'stories among Hugh's descendants suggest that he was predisposed to invent tales that usually altered circumstances to his advantage.' This attribute appears to have found its way to his children and grandchildren. Brownrigg claims that stories of 'con men' in the Skeyhill family were legion.

The book's subject, Tom Skeyhill, was born in 1895 in Terang but the family moved to Hamilton in 1902 where he attended St Mary's Convent. After leaving school at 13, Tom became a telegram boy, but having absconded with Post Office

funds, Tom showed his ability at acting and subterfuge by being found wandering, apparently demented and unable to speak or hear, a ruse by which he avoided retribution.

At the outbreak of World War I, Tom volunteered as a soldier and took part in the Gallipoli landing. While there, his reputation as a poet and reciter was established. However, 13 days after the landing, when his company was ordered to advance under fire, he claimed that an exploding shell had blinded him. Although doctors could not find any physical injury, he was invalided home.

Tom published *Soldier-Songs from Anzac*, a slim volume of verse. Such was the patriotism of the time, he sold 50,000 copies in a year and published a second volume in 1919. As a blind soldier poet with dark glasses and a cane, he joined the

Tivoli Theatre's vaudeville circuit and then the Government's fund raising and recruitment drive.

Such was his success that in 1917 he was invited to the USA to help recruitment. He exaggerated not only his part in the Gallipoli campaign and the extent of his wounds but also the number of deaths and how Anzac Cove had been 'red with blood'. He falsely described himself as 'twice wounded', supposedly having bayonet wounds, and inferred that he had fought on the Western Front. His endorsement by two USA presi-

dents led to high success on the speaking circuit. To avoid the risk of his faked blindness being discovered, his sight was 'restored', supposedly by spinal manipulation.

With the end of the war Skeyhill needed new subjects to keep his audiences (and income). He now claimed to have travelled extensively and to have met Lenin in Russia and Mussolini in Italy. Americans flocked to hear his views on communism and fascism and their future impact on the USA. No passport entries can be found to support his travel claims. Tom also claimed he was a literature student at Oxford and was a playwright with plays in production on Broadway. He never visited England and there is no record of any play by Tom Skeyhill ever being produced.

Tom's blarney enabled him to persuade American war hero, Alvin C York, to let him write his biography which was published in 1928, followed by a second book for children which was even more cavalier with the truth. It proved highly popular and is still in print today. In a 1941 film of the book, Gary Cooper played Sergeant York.

Tom Skeyhill died in 1932 from the crash of his own aeroplane at his property at Hyannis Port. His death caused a flurry of publicity in America and Australia but even in death truth was distorted, for most newspaper articles quoted exaggerated claims written by Tom himself in his own publicity pamphlets.

Eileen McMahon

Eileen McMahon was a journalist and communications executive whose children were fortunate enough to have been taught by Jeff Brownrigg.

To avoid the risk of his faked blindness being discovered, his sight was 'restored', supposedly by spinal manipulation.

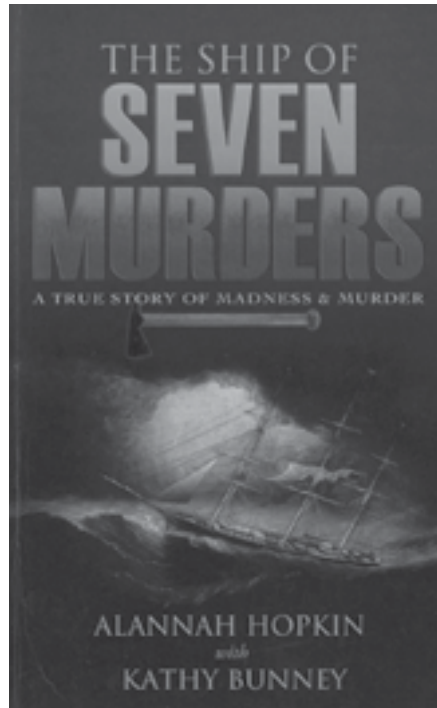
Godlike Captain Crosses the Line

Alanna Hopkin, & Kathy Bunney:
The Ship of Seven Murders: A True Story of Madness and Murder,
Dublin: The Collins Press, 2010
ISBN: 13:9781848890367;
RRP €12.99

The title sounds unbelievable, but the book reviews a long forgotten event in 19th century Ireland: the homecoming of a ship with seven crew murdered by the captain. Hopkin and Bunney give a vivid account of Cork life in 1828, with its racial tolerance and casual acceptance of child labour. They recount the *Mary Russell's* outward voyage to Barbados under Captain Stewart, ironically a man renowned for his humanitarian approach to command. The crew contained two young boys and Stewart had been entrusted with a passenger – a delicate eleven year old who made the voyage to improve his health.

The captain's exalted position on board ship in those days is well established in the narrative. Apart from strong legal protection for his authority, every captain could navigate. This ability set him apart from the crew who would not usually be able to do this. Even if they did mutiny, they would be unable to chart a passage. This knowledge imbalance was such a safeguard that Amundsen refused to take a doctor on expeditions in case a medical education conferred the ability to navigate, thereby raising the possibility of another leader. Unfortunately Captain Stewart lost this advantage on the return voyage when he impulsively gave a lift home to another sea captain, who could not only navigate, but spoke *as Gaeilge* to the crew as well.

On the return voyage the two issues gradually affected the balance of Captain Stewart's mind. While the first sign of trouble was his 'prophetic dream' of mutiny, he also rebuked Captain Raynes for speaking Irish to the crew, becoming even more concerned when a crew member asked to learn navigation – clearly assuming that there was more to his request than ambition to improve his mind. There is an ongoing tension in the story about how well founded Captain Stewart's suspicions really were, which Hopkin and Bunney do not confront. All on board denied any plan of mutiny and the survivors insisted that there had been no such plan, but



the fact is that knowledge was power. With Captain Raynes aboard, the crew had a choice that they would not normally have had.

The crew ultimately had to choose between agreeing to be murdered, by allowing the captain to tie them up, or refusing to be tied and committing mutiny – punishable by death. Most agreed to be tied, but two escaped after a struggle and hid among the cargo. Surprisingly, the ships' boys and the child passenger were spared any violence from Captain Stewart although it all took place in front of them.

The five survivors were rescued by another ship, the *Mary Stubbs*, being either too badly wounded or too young to work the ship. After an eventful journey to Cork, Captain Stewart was tried for murder. As there was no doubt that he had carried out the seven killings, the question was whether he had been sane at the time. Hopkin and Bunney give a very clear account of the medical thinking of the day and also show the low status of medicine then, with the doctors' testimony openly derided by the judge.

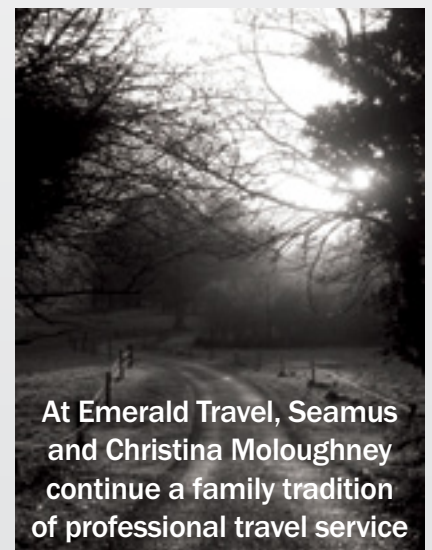
This is a very thorough account of ordinary men suddenly exposed to the full force of a loophole in the system of command which no one had thought of – what happens when the godlike figure of the captain of the ship suddenly loses his reason?

Felicity Allen



Located within the
Celtic Club building

For the best deals
and service when
travelling to Ireland
and beyond



At Emerald Travel, Seamus
and Christina Moloughney
continue a family tradition
of professional travel service

Level 3, 316 Queen St,
Melbourne VIC 3000
03 9670 9696 0419 401 584
Fax: 03 9670 7007
chris@emeraldtravel.com.au

Emerald Travel

(03) 9670 9696
www.emeraldtravel.com.au

Licence 32507



Toytowns of Literature: the UNESCO Kiss of Death

WB Yeats at the bank
[flickr.com/photos/damiavos](https://www.flickr.com/photos/damiavos)

So Dublin has been named a UNESCO City of Literature. Greeting the news, the Irish Republic's Minister of Tourism said, 'Being one of only four cities in the world to achieve the status of UNESCO City of Literature, will enable Dublin to increase its market share of tourists and attract more people to both the city and the island of Ireland.'

Indeed, Dublin is one of four cities, along with Edinburgh, Iowa and Melbourne – all English speaking – to make it onto this apparently monolingual UNESCO programme. It is hard to know where to put the inverted commas around such titles as Cities of Literature awarded by an organisation best known for sending actresses out to Darfur for famine zone photo ops, but fortunately the Minister has clarified the issue. Literature, for her, and in Ireland in general, is another article of consumption useful for generating revenues in the economic wasteland that is the actual Irish Republic.

The idea of Dublin as a city of literature, and by extension Ireland as some nurturing mother of creative freedoms, is rubbish. In the North-West region where I grew up, the only literary monument for miles, in front of Sligo's AIB, was an erection to our national poet WB Yeats, tenderly referred to as The Wank at the Bank. Sainly Oscar Wilde and I can't go on/I'll go on, Beckett mantras aside, the evidence is that Mother Ireland has smothered her artistic offspring or driven them over the Irish sea.

The embarrassing, non-Wikileaks facts prove that Dublin has always betrayed its best authors with the best in philistine contempt, muzzling Joyce, hounding Sean O'Casey and poet Patrick Kavanagh out of the country, and for those who stayed behind, sending Flann O'Brien and Brendan Behan to alcoholics' early graves. Joyce and O'Casey obviously returned the compliment. If anyone can sanitise the men who penned less than polite tableaux of slum-ridden, narrow-horizoned Dublin life in books like *Dubliners* or plays like *The Plough and the Stars* then he or she is obviously not reading the same thing as me.

'You've disgraced yourselves, again,' said Yeats to the crowds rioting at the Abbey Theatre upset at the opening of Synge's 'vile and inhuman' *Playboy of the Western World*. In the teeth of Holy Ireland sentimentality, Yeats was trying to create a national literature, but the uncomfortable truth about our national literature is that it hardly exists. Its 19th and 20th century ascendancy coincides with it still being part of the United Kingdom (albeit struggling, here and there, to be free from that colonial yoke). Nearly a century after independence, no matter what UNESCO might think of Dublin's 'Quality, quantity and diversity of editorial initiatives and publishing houses', Irish writers can only be heard, can only ever emerge if they are part of a conversation with that entity known as England, and with English

publishing houses. Basically, Irish literature can only get along if the Brits are listening. Extremely few, like Joyce and Beckett, who spent much of their lives in broader-minded climes abroad, had genius sufficient enough to speak beyond the Brits and to the world.

Leaving aside the parallel development of inner cities of Naples or Havana being UNESCO heritaged into toytowns for tourists, I simply wonder how in a Dublin literary world, 'with experience in hosting literary events and festivals aiming at promoting domestic and foreign literature' – all so redolent of caffe latte zones and buy three for two deals – filth-mongers like Joyce or a young Edna O'Brien could now thrive. My guess is they would not. The only kind of literature that a UNESCO pat on the head supports is more Banvilles and Tóibíns and Sebastian Barrys that may well satisfy middlebrow, Sunday supplement assumptions of what constitutes writing, but cannot lift it beyond that to the 'vile and inhuman' future of art.

Gerry Feehily

The London-born author lives in Paris, but holds an Irish passport for his sins. His first novel Fever was published in 2007. A Spanish edition is sold in Spain and Spanish-speaking lands. He is a full-time journalist at Presseurop where he writes the Europhrenia blog and frequently holds forth on French TV and radio on European politics.

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 and further information can be obtained by emailing 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.



CELTIC CLUB

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME

Membership, Restaurant and Function bookings
contact Helen or Kim on 03 9670 6472 or info@celticclub.com.au

Bar menu only \$12.50

Lunch

12 noon - 2.30pm 7 days a week

Dinner

Tuesdays & Wednesdays 5pm - 8pm
and Thursday - Saturday 5pm - 9pm

Shamrock Restaurant

Lunch

12 noon - 2.30pm Tuesday - Friday

Dinner

Friday 5.30pm - 9pm,
Saturday - bookings only

Function Room

Capacity 250 standing, 150 seated

Meeting Rooms

Available 7 days a week

Giant Screens, Live Sport

Setanta Sports, Fox Sports and TVN

The Melbourne Home to Celtic, Liverpool, Arsenal Supporters
and The Green and Gold Army

Free Live Music every Friday

Traditional session with the Fitzgerald Family 5pm - 8pm
followed by live band 8.30pm - late

**The Celtic Club
Melbourne**

Founded 1887

t 03 9670 6472 f 9670 5153

info@celticclub.com.au www.celticclub.com.au

316-320 Queen St cnr Latrobe St, Melbourne

The Celtic Club is a licensed club. Members should present their membership cards on request by a staff member. Non-members are requested to sign the visitors' book. Visitors and new members are always welcome. Please ask our friendly staff about becoming a member.