STILL GOING STRONG

TIARA members have shared stories and research tips and expanded their family genealogies into the past and outward into the present.

Members have been involved with other genealogical groups, contributed to local history, and maintained active participation in TIARA. (SEE PAGE 3 FOR MORE DETAILS)
The President’s Message

On a recent trip to visit family on the west coast, my flight was delayed while we waited for a truck to arrive to de-ice the plane. While I did not wish for this necessary procedure to be omitted, sitting in a middle seat on the plane at the gate for an hour seemed interminably long. I have a different perspective of time as we celebrate a TIARA anniversary. Thirty-five years ago, the first TIARA meeting was held on January 14, 1983.

What? Is it really ten years since TIARA’s 25th anniversary gala one-day conference and five years since TIARA president Mary Choppa proposed organizing a national Celtic Connections Conference? Yes and this biennial event has become a national landmark for Irish and Celtic family history education. Partnering with ICSI, successful conferences have been held in 2014 and 2016. This year’s two-day conference, “Pathways to Our Past”, features many international experts as well as nationally known speakers. Topics will cover Irish, Scots-Irish, Scottish, and Welsh genealogy, culture and DNA. For information on the conference program, conference registration or lodging see Page 13 or visit http://celtic-connections.org/

Over the last five years, TIARA has also been active in other areas. In collaboration with the UMass Boston Healey Library, faithful Forester volunteers have continued to meet twice a month at the TIARA office to index the post 1935 MCOF mortuary records. Having indexed about 9000 records, they will soon have an index up through 1945. TIARA volunteers have also been assisting UMass Boston with a project whose goal is to document and preserve the stories of over 1100 police officers who took part in the 1919 Boston Police strike. Background information on each police officer is found by locating census records, vital records, obituaries, etc. Unlike the Forester project, volunteers do not need to be local so if you want to get involved, visit http://blogs.umb.edu/bpstrike1919/.

Cover Photos: 2011 TIARA trip to Belfast: Mary Choppa
National Library of Ireland: http://www.docbrown.info/docspics/dublinscenes/dspage02d.htm
Hill of Tara, 2008 TIARA trip: Marie Ahearn
Cover Design: Kim Downey
Recent TIARA events have included a writer’s workshop and a writer’s group. This past year TIARA began Fàilte Fridays opening the office a few hours before the monthly meetings held at Brandeis. TIARA members are welcome (fàilte) to stop by the office to research in the library, watch recordings of past lectures, and meet and network with other members.

What an eventful history! TIARA is more active and exciting than ever because of TIARA volunteers. As we celebrate TIARA’s 35th anniversary we also look to the future. Soon many of our meetings will be available to all our members via on-line video. The trip committee has organized research trips to Ireland in past years and plans are in the works for more. Thank you to our many, loyal members who make TIARA possible and who will lead us into the future.

Virginia Wright, Co-President
president2@tiara.ie

Milestones for TIARA since founding 1983
- 3865 members since 1983
- members in 33 states, 3 countries
- ~350 programs for members; open to the public
- 140 newsletters
- Forester records in database 35,000
  - 9000 indexed by TIARA volunteers since 2011
- 3 Celtic Connections Conferences
  - Co-sponsored with Irish Genealogical Society International (Minnesota)
- Projects
  - Foresters
  - 1919 Boston Policemen’s Strike Project
  - American Cousins Project
  - Cemetery Projects
- Membership in Related Organizations
  - Federation of Genealogical Societies
  - Massachusetts Genealogical Council
  - New England Historic Genealogical Society
  - New England Regional Genealogical Conference
- Involvement / participation in conferences / events with other genealogical groups
  - Archives & Special Collections, Healey Library, UMass Boston
  - Back to Our Past Conferences
  - Irish Cultural Centre of New England
  - Massachusetts Society of Genealogists, Inc.
  - New York Family History Conference
  - National Genealogical Society
- New TIARA Web Site 2018 (projected assets)
  - Available to public
  - Easier to navigate
  - Upcoming Events feature
  - Members only section
    - Videos of TIARA Lectures
    - Link to past issues of the TIARA newsletter

(Continued on Page 12)
“If the bellhop uniform fits, the job is yours.” In the spring of 1941, Helen Steele Loughlin wrote these words to her brother, Bob Steele, a student finishing his junior year at Notre Dame University. Helen urged Bob to make the trip from South Bend, Indiana to seek summer employment at Wentworth-by-the-Sea, a resort hotel in New Castle, New Hampshire.

Newly married, Helen had left Chicago to follow her husband back to his home state of New Hampshire. Homesick for her own midwestern family, Helen looked forward to the possibility of having her brother Bob nearby for the summer.

Bob was ready for adventure and traveled a thousand miles to find it. Bob was introduced to a summer job (the uniform fit), a new area of the country and a girl.

Bob had never been to New England. Family trips took place in the west - Colorado and Wyoming. Bob’s shoreline was Lake Michigan. Having grown up just outside Chicago, Bob had seen his share of large buildings and wealthy neighborhoods. None of these experiences would have prepared this midwestern boy for the grandeur of The Wentworth-by-the-Sea.

When Bob arrived at his sister’s house in Rye, New Hampshire, he found a small seaside community of modest homes. The scenery changed when he traveled over the bridge from Rye to New Castle. A huge edifice dominated the skyline. The four-floor hotel stretched 800-feet along a bluff overlooking the Atlantic.

The central buildings, capped by towers, included facilities for 600 guests: bedrooms, dining rooms, parlors, a billiard room and a ballroom. “The Ship” was an additional wooden structure next to a salt water pool. This nautical themed building contained dressing rooms, a bar and a theater. There was a bath house on the shore for guests who preferred a swim in the ocean, as well as a nine-hole golf course and tennis courts. Dormitory buildings for employees were set back from the main buildings. In contrast to the opulent furnishings of the hotel, employee dormitory rooms were sparsely furnished - a bed, dresser and chair. The slightly larger rooms were reserved for professional staff. “Pros” were full time workers who traveled the resort circuit: Wentworth in the summer and Florida or North Carolina in the winter.

The pros, along with some experienced local workers, guided the college students as they learned their new roles.
One of the pros would have trained Bob in the Wentworth “code of conduct”. An employee manual written just after Bob’s period of employment began this way. “The Wentworth-by-the-Sea is one of the world’s great resort hotels. This reputation is achieved because of location, facilities, sports and climate, but primarily, the reputation is achieved because of the excellent service to the guests which the Wentworth has maintained over a period of years.....Your job is important regardless of what you do. A guest arrives at the Wentworth expecting a high degree of attention.”

Bob’s salary was largely dependent on tips. The employee manual reminded staff that "guests coming to this hotel expect to tip"... but "inferior service will not secure a tip" As a bellhop, Bob was one of the first staff members to greet a guest and was expected to be cordial without stepping over a specified line. "Wentworth guests may expect and will receive quiet, intelligent and self-effacing service from all employees."

Who were the guests that expected a “high degree of attention” and “self-effacing service”? During the 1940s the Wentworth was described as a “restricted” hotel. This term was used to describe a hotel that was restricted to a non-Jewish clientele. The Wentworth catered to a wealthy white Protestant clientele.

The first black patron would not enter the Wentworth dining room until the 1960s. It was also during that time period that a Catholic presence was noted for the first time as Sunday Masses were offered in the ballroom.

Management and guest expectations would have guided my father’s experiences during his time “on the clock”. What was his life like after work hours? Employees didn’t have access to all the guest amenities but they did have their own day room and store. They were allowed on the tennis courts and golf course when there were no guests playing. A beach near the clambake pit was available for a quick swim. If a group of employees had more time off, a truck ride was provided to nearby public beaches. It was during one of these excursions when Bob met Catherine Reardon.

Catherine Reardon and her sister Mary Elizabeth were students on break from Emmanuel and Radcliffe Colleges. They were also experienced waitresses when they arrived at the Wentworth-by-the-Sea. The sisters had spent the previous summer working at the Bay of Naples Inn in Maine. In 1941, Catherine and Mary Elizabeth traded that lakeside summer setting for the New Hampshire coastline. Catherine secured the job of relish girl in the Wentworth dining room. “She was the prettiest girl who worked in the dining room: because of her beauty she was raised a notch above waitress level to that of relish girl - singled out to float through the room to charm guests with her radiant smile and fresh pastry in the morning and assorted relishes in the evening.”

The bellhop waited for his opportunity to meet the relish girl. It happened on the beach. According to Bob, it was love at first sight. According to Catherine, it was bewilderment - why would this man choose to wear cowboy boots to the beach? In later years, both Bob and Catherine would tell their own versions of the meeting. Bob wrote of approaching the “tanned goddess on a blanket chatting with friends.” After a few pleasantries, he asked Catherine if she would like to go to Old Orchard Beach to hear Big Band drummer, Gene Krupa. Catherine accepted the invitation.
Catherine later confessed that she didn’t really want to go on that first date but couldn’t think of a polite refusal.

On that first date Bob and Catherine joined other Wentworth friends. On the drive to Old Orchard, Bob’s friend, Sport, drove at breakneck speed and frightened everyone in the car. Despite this inauspicious beginning, there was a second date and many more. Bob wrote about time spent with Catherine and the rest of the gang - Sport, Henry, Johnny, Mary, Woody, Mimi, Chris, Tommy and Whit. There were walks on the beach and time spent at Ladd’s, the joint down the road. Bob remembered “much beer drinking, fried clam eating and general hilarity.” When they walked back to the Wentworth, Bob and Catherine lingered behind the rest. The mile long walk back to the hotel was the “beginning of the romance.”

The romance continued when Bob and Catherine returned to college. There were many letters and occasional visits including Bob’s attendance at Catherine’s junior prom at Emmanuel. This was a true test of love as Bob hitchhiked all the way from South Bend, Indiana to Malden, Massachusetts carrying a tuxedo! This happy occasion would be a contrast to times to come. Bob finished his senior year and entered the army just months after Pearl Harbor was bombed. Uncertainty and worry would dominate the correspondence of the then engaged couple.

The Wentworth-by-the-Sea entered its own period of uncertainty and literal darkness. Situated only miles from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, “the giant white hotel was too convenient a target for German U-boats. The Wentworth was "dimmed out" for two years as huge artillery gunners at New Castle and Rye military forts searched the waters and the sky for enemy craft.”

Post war brought marriage, family and responsibility for Bob and Catherine. They produced six children including the author of this article. The Wentworth-by-the-Sea resumed operation. It was reopened and continued to function as a resort and conference destination for over 30 years. During the 1980s the hotel entered a period of decline, was shuttered and sections torn down. It was during this period that we adult “children” were driven by “the giant haunted house.” We had a hard time imagining this as the setting of my parents’ romance. Stories of the courtship seemed at odds with the decrepit hulk.

In 2003, the Wentworth-by-the-Sea was rescued, refurbished and reopened. Not long after the reopening, we children took parents, Bob and Catherine, to lunch at the hotel. My parents wandered through rooms and commented on what was saved and what was lost. There were the spaces for guests and those for the workers. As we took the tour, we all wondered – what would have happened if the bellhop uniform hadn’t fit!

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A Dream that Sustained Them
Libby Gaffney #2311

Every Sunday, for most of World War II, my grandmother wrote to her four sons serving in the military. She wrote newsy bits of the family and of their hometown of Danvers, Massachusetts. Although the boys were serving in different parts of the world, she somehow was able to correspond with them with regularity. We are very lucky to have many of the letters that the boys sent back home to their mother. In these letters, they spoke often of their childhood vacations spent in Maine, and the halcyon days enjoyed there. The beach property was owned by their Aunt Alice who was married to an Irish immigrant, Edmond O'Rourke, Jr. The O’ Rourke families came to this country in 1865 from Clogher East, Dromin Parish, Limerick. The Gaffneys had emigrated from the adjoining parish of Bruree a few years earlier. My ancestor, John Gaffney, married Mary Combagh and Edmond O'Rourke, Sr. married her sister, Hannah Combagh. Both Combagh sisters emigrated to Danvers, Mass. from Howardshead North, also a townland within the Bruree Parish, Limerick, Ireland. Danvers was somewhat of an enclave of Irish immigrants. In fact, one of the main areas of downtown was called "Little Dublin" because of the large number of Irish residing there.

Nana Gaffney kept her boys apprised of their brothers whereabouts and sent them clippings from the local newspaper. They were part of a big extended Irish family and news of their siblings, aunts, uncles, neighbors and cousins filled the pages of those letters. Every occasion, however mundane, was reported to them by my grandmother -- things that seemed so inconsequential in terms of what each of them was dealing with -- a broken vacuum, a special birthday dinner, report cards of the younger siblings. Yet it seemed that the boys in the service received that information with great interest and enthusiasm.

L to R: Cousin Jim Ambrose, Gerard, Jim and Bob Gaffney during WWII.

L to R: Jim, Rardy, Tom and Bob Gaffney in Maine
When Edmund Combagh died in 1928, Alice became the sole owner of the Maine property. The boys loved everything about Aunt Alice's place in Maine—particularly, the ocean, the fishing and the boating. In their letters, they expressed the wish to return home and buy a property that would afford them similar experiences. They dreamed of a life without the chaos of war and the peace that a rural life would bring. From a 1945 letter: “It seems almost impossible to visualize the wonderful day when once again we will all be freed of the fetters of fear and the horrors of war but when it comes I'll never cease thanking God for bringing all of us through - scarred maybe but comparatively whole”

In the correspondence, the family often discussed buying a place in Maine when the war was over. If it couldn't be Maine at least a place away from the abomination of war. One of the boys wrote to his father: "I think those of us in the Army look forward, at the present time, to a place which will allow us to get the maximum amount of peace and solace that only a quiet countryside can give". Sadly it was never his.

My father, Jim Gaffney, was in Patton's Third Army, Uncle Gerard Gaffney was also in the Army, Uncle Tom Gaffney served in Africa and in France and Bob Gaffney was a tail gunner in the Army Air Corps serving in the Pacific. When Bob learned of his brother Jim being wounded, He tried to express how he felt about the war and his brother's injury: "the great distance that separates Jim and the implacable circumstances of war makes everything seem almost impersonal and certainly helpless. So low however has our so called great civilization fallen that the creation of sinister and deadly weapons and the unscrupulous accumulation of dollar bills puts an individual on a pedestal of greatness -- no matter what the individuals inherent moral characteristics might be. Consequently such insignificant individuals as you or I must be swept along on this mighty tidal wave of destruction and furthermore have no choice in the matter. This trail of devastation will, I fear, carry on long after the last shot has been fired"

By the time it was over, the war had certainly taken its toll as war always does. Bob, quiet, introspective, and brilliant by all accounts, was shot down in his B29 on his 23rd mission -- just shy of his 25th mission -- the mission which would have brought him closer to his dream as his crew was only required to do 25 missions. He was the one brother who wrote most fervently about the horrors of war and his desire to recapture the simplicity and peace of those summers on the Atlantic shore. There never would be another Maine summer for Bob.

My father lost his leg in a battle just outside of Metz, France and spent a good deal of time in hospitals in England and the US. Gerard made it home safely and Tom, although he suffered a serious head wound, also returned home. The dream of those happy summer times that had sustained them throughout the war were now crushed by harsh reality for the boys.

I imagine, in the midst of the noise and carnage surrounding them throughout those horrific times, they had found solace in the images of the ocean and the fishing trips they loved so much. However, the complexities of rehabilitation, marriage, children and employment dashed the dream of their summer vacations in Maine. Despite the challenges of post war life, the
three surviving boys tried to recreate the peaceful atmosphere of Maine and the healing properties of the ocean. Jim acquired a summer place on the ocean in Ipswich, Rardy found his home near the ocean in Salem, Mass. and Tom, after a long career in the foreign service, retired to Maine -- very close to where they had their wonderful summers. Although their dream of sharing those Maine summers again after the war was never realized, I believe the memory of those summers that had brought them some peaceful moments during the horrors of World War II remained with them throughout their lives.

For genealogists, I would like to mention an excellent resource. As three of the boys had graduated from Harvard, I was fortunate to learn that Harvard kept a record of the service of the graduates. My grandmother filled out the forms religiously. The archivist at the Harvard Library helped me find the correspondence of the Gaffney boys during their years in the service. I even saw the form filled out by Franklin Roosevelt where, in his own hand, he penned out his address -- 1600 Pennsylvania Ave and his rank -- Commander in Chief!

The Great Famine Voices Roadshow in Boston

Come share your family memories and stories about their emigration from Ireland to Boston.

The Irish National Famine Museum at Stroketown Park and Irish Heritage Trust are working in partnership with the Burns Library in Boston College to bring the Great Famine Voices Roadshow to Boston from 4 to 8:30pm on April 11th. The purpose of the Roadshow is to bring together Irish emigrants, their descendants, and members of their communities to share family memories and stories of migration from Ireland to Boston, especially during the period of the Great Hunger and afterwards. The stories will be gathered for the Great Famine Voices online archive.

The Roadshow will feature short talks about the Irish National Famine Museum in Strokestown Park and the Great Hunger by the leading expert in the field, Professor Christine Kinealy from Ireland’s Great Hunger Institute at Quinnipiac University. The event will also include an exhibit of the Burns Library’s Famine related holdings, along with a beer, wine and cheese reception after 5:30 pm. A forum will be provided for Bostonians to share their memories and stories of migration, and to strengthen their sense of ancestry and historical and current Irish connections. The Roadshow will also travel to New York, New Haven, Philadelphia, and Toronto. If you would like to share a family memory or story, please contact Dr Jason King (faminestudies@irishheritagetrust.ie). More information about the Irish National Famine Museum at Strokestown Park, the Great Famine Voices Roadshow and details for a reply will be posted at http://www.strokestownpark.ie/
Our “Aunties”  
Marian Huard #764

A grandmother is often one of the most significant persons in a child’s life. Now, imagine having three “grandmothers” living in the same small house with their younger brother. To my four younger siblings and me, these three women were “The Aunties” — Helen, Annie (Margaret Anne), and Alice.

Helen, born 1884, was the third of nine children of my great-grandparents, John and Ellen who had emigrated from Ballyconneely, in Connemara, around 1880. Helen and her siblings grew up in the North End of Boston on Henchman and Commercial Streets and later lived in Charlestown before finally settling in Medford by 1920.

Helen’s life changed drastically in 1927 when she was chosen by her mother to move in with her newly widowed brother, Daniel, and his 4-year old son and 3-year old daughter, my mother. This newly re-formed family moved into a small bungalow on Wolfe Street in West Roxbury, where Helen continued to live for the next thirty-five years.

After Helen, there were two other sisters who died before the age of three, and then Annie, born 1887. While no occupation is listed for Annie in 1910, Annie can be found in the 1930 census described as a “forelady” at a candy shop, which supports my mother’s description of her as a supervisor.

Alice was born next, in 1889. The 1940 census indicates she attended two years of high school. In 1910, Alice was working as a saleslady in a department store and by 1920 she is recorded as a telephone operator, her profession until retirement in the 1950s. She worked for New England Telephone and Telegraph and rose to the position of supervisor by 1930. Probably as a result of this stable position, she was able to purchase a summer cottage in Scituate in the 1930s, which would be enjoyed by the extended family until the mid-1960s.

When my siblings and I started coming along in the 1950s, Annie and Alice had joined Helen and my grandfather in West Roxbury. Alice and my grandfather were retired and, looking back, it seems the three aunties and my grandfather focused all their attention on our mother and us.

To us as children, they were a constant in our lives. They lived 15 minutes away in West Roxbury, a drive that my mother could probably have done in her sleep. We were either dropped off at their home for the day (either in twos or occasionally four of us), or all or some of them would be picked up by my
father and brought to our home. They were our primary caregivers, after my parents.

My siblings and I refer to them all the time, and love reminding each other of our many memories. Some of our favorite memories involved our times with them in Scituate.

The annual move from West Roxbury to Scituate was a big event. The car rides themselves were memorable. Imagine the three aunts in the back seat of my mother’s station wagon, each with a child on her lap (Car seats and seat belts were not yet used). My mother, brother and grandfather were in front, and after my youngest sister was born, I was in the way back with the luggage. It was challenging trying to follow the adult conversations in the car, especially when they felt the need to resort to pig Latin.

Once we arrived, it was necessary to “open up” the house for the summer, which included moving furniture to the porch, and installing the screens. Both my brother and I recall returning with our mother from a grocery trip to the harbor and coming upon Annie, in her 70s, up on the roof of the porch, installing the screens on the upper windows. Even as a young child, it seemed remarkable, and alarming. Obviously, Annie was very determined and resourceful.

Alice always planted geraniums, and tended the houseplants that she brought from West Roxbury.

The Scituate cottage had three very small bedrooms, and one bathroom. My grandfather would sleep downstairs on a cot, and everyone else would share beds upstairs. There would be two to three sharing a double bed, and two in a single bed. We were advised that the toilet was not to be flushed at night unless absolutely necessary, which was a puzzling rule, especially with so many sharing this one bathroom. I would never have connected this plumbing mystery with the boggy, malodorous area in the back yard that I always tried to avoid.

Most days, we would walk down the street to the very rocky beach. For many years, the town of Scituate has removed the rocks that collect on the beach during the winter but in the 1960s and earlier, Sand Hills beach was a rocky one. The adults seemed to accept this challenge, but stumbling along over the rocks was challenging for little feet trying to make it to the occasional area of sand. But, once there, we had a wonderful time, playing with our tin pails and shovels, ignoring the coldness of the water, and exploring at low tide.

We still visit that beach at least once during the summer.

Later in the afternoon, after we had left the beach for the day, it was not uncommon for Alice to take one or more of us on a walk to a local farm stand for fresh vegetables. Alice was a great walker, and wouldn’t hesitate to head off on her mission. As I recall, we often lagged behind.

Dinner would be around the round pedestal table in the small dining room. I recall lobster dinners where we were instructed in the art of properly eating a lobster, leaving no morsel behind. Another meal that my younger siblings recalled included steamed periwinkles, which had been collected in a pail at the beach by Alice. The lasting impression was a gritty one. Alice also spoke of eating dulse—an edible seaweed. I have wondered if these two food choices from the sea might have been passed on from her parents, who grew up on a similar rocky coast in Connemara, and might have relied upon dulse and periwinkles as part of their food source.

Memories of evenings include card playing, and listening to the gravelly voice of Cardinal Cushing reciting the rosary over the radio. There was a screened front porch with glider and rocking chair that everyone enjoyed.
Sundays we would walk ten minutes to a small wooden chapel for Catholic Mass. Much of the immediate community would be attending as well. The chapel was in the midst of a residential area and just up the street from the beach. For many families, this was important as not everyone had a car.

The end of summer brought the annual Labor Day parade in the Sand Hills section of Scituate—enjoyed by residents and visitors since 1926—where we looked forward to cotton candy and candy apples, as we watched the floats and fire engines pass by. My brother recalls being sprayed by water from the fire trucks.

Alice sold the cottage in Scituate in the mid-1960s, and after that time we would go on day trips to Scituate with Annie and Alice, as Helen had died in 1962, and my grandfather in 1967. One summer day in particular which had a special importance was August 15—a Catholic feast day. On that day, the aunties would always wish to put their feet in the water at the beach, as it was believed to have curative properties on that day. In the later years, my mother would bring the aunties to the area around the Scituate lighthouse where they could sit on a bench, and she would bring pails of water up from the ocean for their feet.

It is not clichéd to say that Helen, Annie and Alice added much richness and love to our lives. It is evident in how often we speak of them, and the memories that we cherish, especially those in Scituate. Their lives were long, and significant to those who were touched by them.

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**Photo submissions to Newsletter**

Photos submitted with articles to the TIARA Newsletter should be taken at a high resolution setting on your camera.

If you use your iPhone to copy another photo or document, send it to yourself as an email and send it ACTUAL SIZE. Do not decrease the size or resolution before submitting it to the newsletter.

If you are spending valuable time copying documents or photos, use a regular camera set to high resolution so you can easily read enlarged versions of the document when printed. If the lighting is dim you may need to use a small tripod to prevent blurring.

Thank you.
Mary Coyne, Editor
The Celtic Connections Conference (CCC) 2018 will be the third genealogy conference co-sponsored by Irish Genealogical Society International (IGSI) in partnership with TIARA (The Irish Ancestral Research Association). Conference dates are August 10 – 11 (Friday & Saturday) in Auburndale, Massachusetts.

This year’s conference expands the number of lecture tracks from three to four at a time. Outstanding international and national speakers will present lectures in the areas of Irish, Scots Irish, Scottish and Welsh genealogy, culture, DNA and new and exciting ways to interpret and discover your ancestral roots.

While a few of our speakers have participated in a previous conference with us, their topics are new. And we welcome eight new presenters. The Celtic Connections Conference list of presenters for 2018 is as follows. Full information on their topics is located on the conference website, www.celtic-connections.org

Fiona Fitzsimons is a founder of Eneclann and is active in the genealogy community on both sides of the Atlantic. She is a regular contributor to Irish genealogy journals and workshops as well as to television genealogy shows.
- Irish Church Records Education and Occupational Records

RockStar genealogist, John Grenham, comes back for a third appearance at the conference. He is the author of Tracing Your Irish Ancestors and Clans and Families of Ireland, and his website, www.johngrenham.com
- Things You Didn’t Know You Didn’t Know About Irish Genealogy
- Valuation Office (Ordnance Survey, Pre-publication Records, Griffith’s and Revisions)

He has written for The Septs in past years as have some of our other speakers: Kyle Betit, Nora Galvin, Donna Moughty, and David Rencher.

Kyle Betit, of Ancestry Progenealogists, was a presenter at the first conference in 2014.
- Using Canadian Records for Your Irish Research
- Irish and Irish Immigrant Societies and Their Records Using Ancestry DNA

David Rencher is Chief Genealogical Officer for FamilySearch; he has been a professional genealogist for 40 years and has been a contributor to past issues of The Septs.
- Introduction to Irish Internet Sites
- Chasing the Poor and the Landless
- Mining the Destination Data

Nora Galvin has held many leadership positions, and is editor of the journal, Connecticut Ancestry.
- Mapping Your Ancestral Home in Ireland Using Google Earth

Donna Moughty is author of the Quick Reference Guides for Irish Research and a genealogy blogger (Moughty.com).
- Seeking Your Scots-Irish Ancestry
- Strategies for Finding the Origins of Your Irish Ancestors
- Irish Civil Registration and Church Records - It’s a New World!

Marie Daly, of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, is the author of the recently-published Genealogist’s Handbook for Irish Research.
- Transatlantic Genealogy: Linking American Ancestors to Ireland

Bruce Durie, Shennachie (Genealogist and Historian) to the Chief of Durie, is the author of Scottish Genealogy. This is his second appearance at CCC.
- Scots Migrations to Colonial America
- Scottish Records You Cannot Get on Ancestry.com
Maurice Gleeson is a major name in Celtic genetic genealogy. He has organized DNA Lectures for "Genetic Genealogy Ireland" in Dublin and "Who Do You Think You Are" in the UK since 2012.

- Adding DNA to Your Genealogical Toolkit
- Using Autosomal DNA to Find Cousins and Break Through Brick Walls
- Using Y-DNA to Research Your Surname

Chris Paton runs Scotland’s Greatest Story research service and The GENES Blog, and is author of several Unlock the Past genealogy guide books.

- Down and Out in Scotland: Researching Ancestral Crisis
- Irish Records Online
- Using PRONI for Northern Ireland Research

Audrey Collins, Family History Specialist at The National Archives U.K., is co-author of Birth, Marriage and Death Records.

- There and Back Again
- Tracing Irish Ancestors in the National Archives - in England
- Birth, Marriage and Death Records in the National Archives - in England

Darris Williams is the only person currently accredited by ICAPGen™ for Wales. He was a co-founder of the FamilySearch wiki.

- First Steps in Search for Welsh Ancestors
- Next Steps in Search for Welsh Ancestors
- Mapping Your Celtic Ancestry: by Surname, by DNA, by Place

John Schnelle has conducted extensive research into Irish land valuations, early agricultural science, and mid-19th century farming. He created www.townlandvaluationtranslator.com website.

- Townland Valuation Translator

Christine Woodcock is a genealogy educator with an expertise in Scottish records; she authored Tracing Your Scottish Ancestors, a special edition magazine for Internet Genealogy.

- In Search of Your Scottish Ancestors
- Step AWAY From the Computer
- Military Men, Covenanters, Jacobites: Historic Events That Led to Mass Emigration

Further details about the presenters and their topics are posted on www.celtic-connections.org. Check the website for registration information, as it is scheduled to be available in January 2018.

The conference will be held at the Boston Marriott Newton hotel, 2345 Commonwealth Avenue, Auburndale, MA 02466. You should make hotel reservations at the conference rate through the link on the Lodging page of the CCC website.

As with our prior two conferences, we encourage members to sponsor a lecture to honor ancestors. Details for that are on the Sponsorship website page and as inserts in this newsletter.

Please join other IGSI and TIARA members at the conference, where great learning and fun will be had by all!
Insights on the Famine era lives of Irish women who were tenants of the Mahon family at Strokestown and the names of a handful of them come from a chapter written by Dr. Ciarán Reilly in a new book, *Women and the Great Hunger*, co-edited by Christine Kinealy, Jason King, and Reilly.

The chapter is titled “Nearly Starved to Death: The female petition during the Great Hunger”. The information is derived from letters – that is, petitions – that the women wrote to their landlord seeking help for themselves and their families to survive the disastrous famine confronting them. The petitions often were written by the women themselves in their own words. Reilly compares petitions from two different places: Strokestown’s Mahon estate and the estate of the Lucas-Clements family in Tullyvin in County Cavan.

He notes that the two estates “were experiencing differing fortunes.” Landlord Clements resided in his home whereas the landlord in Strokestown had died in 1836 and for a time the estate was managed by “uninterested and inactive land agents.” Reilly pointed out that a cholera epidemic in 1832 saw the wealthy fleeing Strokestown, leaving it deserted for weeks. He cites subdivision of land as a main factor leading to the Strokestown district’s poverty as well as overpopulation. Such circumstances affected the nature of petitions to the landlords.

This review will focus on what Reilly is able to tell us about the tenant women who lived in and around Strokestown and their personal plights during the famine that led them to seek help from their landlord. Historian Margaret Kelleher, in a review of the book, commented on this paper:

“The recent focus of Famine studies has usefully shifted from the national to the regional; now it moves to the family: not only the fate of family structures but also what occurred within families.

“Significantly, this lens of gender studies combines the domestic and public spheres – the personal is political – and engages with the most elusive and challenging dimension of Famine writing: to detail and do justice to the lives of those most directly affected.

“A good example of this is Ciarán Reilly’s essay on ‘the female petition’. Reilly illuminates the lives of the cottier class, who were decimated by hunger and disease, through a study of petitions written by or on behalf of women from the Mahon estate in Strokestown, Co Roscommon, and the Lucas-Clements estate in Tullyvin, Co Cavan.”

The Roscommon petitions, Reilly found, showed “a certain level of literacy, or at the very least some formal education” and suggested they had knowledge of “how other petitions and documents were framed.” They may have picked up such knowledge from newspapers, he speculated. For instance, the writers often used the same phrasing as that adopted in petitions to parliament or in religious writing. They sometimes named someone to vouch for them or included a separate letter of reference in attempts to legitimize their requests. And the petitions not infrequently were mailed rather than delivered in person.

The women of Strokestown most often asked the Mahons for food or shelter or to stay in their homes whereas in Cavan the women asked for jobs on the public works schemes established by the government. A notable number of Strokestown petitions came from women who had been abandoned or widowed, a status which could lead them to crime or outrage due to despair. He cited widowed Mary Duignan who, in 1849, wrote for help declaring that she was...
“aged, worn, childless and friendless.” And two other women with young children – Mary Farrell and Winifred Hannelly [perhaps a variant spelling of Hanley?] – had resorted to the workhouse at Roscommon by 1851 after being abandoned by their husbands. The record said that Mary’s husband Pat had left for America. Some 200 other people who lived at the workhouse then also were tenants of the Mahons. Two-thirds of them were women and 40 percent were described as abandoned, according to Reilly.

Women around Strokestown also worried greatly that they would lose their land. “This was something which exercised a lot of worry in Strokestown, particularly in 1849 when plans were put in place to bring English and Scottish farmers to the Mahon estate.” The evictions and emigrations from the area had frightened the local people. Reilly pointed out that a Widow Stuart, who lived in nearby Tully, outside of Strokestown, said that year that neighbors had threatened to set her house afire if she paid rent to the landlord. In a footnote to her story, Reilly notes that a widow by that name also from Tully was listed in the 1847 local scheme to emigrate tenants to Canada. Withholding rent payments though had become a more widespread practice after the Ballykilcline rent strike, we know. Officials were concerned about that strike’s imitators.

The disabled and elderly needed much help as petitions from two Strokestown women demonstrated. Catherine Maguire sought aid as one who was “deaf, dumb and orphaned and destitute of friends” while Eleanor Smyth claimed hers was a solitary life, that she was nearly blind and her future was hopeless.

Among the petitions, Reilly found one by a Widow Kilmar tin who lived in Strokestown and had lost her husband and two children in the month prior to writing her plea for help. She explained that her late husband’s family was creating further trouble for her by “trying to put me out of my place.” Mrs. Kilmartin said that she had “Not a bit nor sup to give” her surviving children.

Reilly also found that all was not always what it seemed. He described the case of Margaret Ingraham of Strokestown who petitioned the landlord for aid in 1849 and repeatedly in the following years and had survived attempts to evict her. “Remarkably, when Ingraham died in 1863, she was found to have over 147 [pounds] in her possession, despite having spent much of her life petitioning for help.”

Catherine Larkin wrote in July 1850 seeking to avoid a trip to jail. In court, she’d been accused of walking “on the grass in Strokestown demesne.” She told the court that she had an infant to care for. The court’s decision in her case remains a mystery. (Continued on Page 19)
My parents were great storytellers. They knew hundreds of stories and loved to tell them. There were, however, fragments of stories which died with the older generations. This is a story of Uncle Patrick Murray that I researched in recent years.

When I was about eight years old I was eating lunch too fast and began to choke. My mother rushed to my side and forced me to cough up my food. As she shook me she yelled, “Be careful - Be careful! Don’t eat so fast! You know what happened to your father’s Uncle Patrick!”

I didn’t know what happened to Patrick so when I got my voice back I asked her to tell me about him. She was reluctant to tell me and told me to ask my father. My father wasn’t much help either. He told me that he would tell me about Patrick, “when I got older.” As time went by I forgot about this incident and neither of them ever told me about Patrick. In the 1990’s as I began researching my father’s extended family and found five men named Patrick.

One Patrick died of the Spanish Flu and another died of a heart attack. A third died of pneumonia and a fourth died of “old age.”

The fifth, my father’s great, great uncle, Patrick Murray, was much more difficult to research. I found him in a 1835 New York passenger list and in the 1840 and 1850 census returns in Albany, New York. He also appeared in several Albany city directories and the 1855 New York census but not in the 1860 census.

New York is a closed record state and the vital records are difficult and expensive to search. Many records are missing and there are no guarantees of success. The best method of research at the time seemed to be newspaper obituaries on microfilm in the Albany City Library. In the mid 19th Century there were several newspapers in Albany and deaths of Irish laborers were not always recorded. At that time these films did not circulate so I had to go to Albany to look at them.

After a day of research without success I decided to spend the rest of my limited time looking for other sources in the library’s local history room. In a few minutes I came across several volumes of a book that I had never seen before.

It was Joel Munsell’s “The Annals of Albany”. Munsell was an Albany publisher who chronicled the important events in Albany history.

Among other items “The Annals of Albany” listed those who died unusual deaths. Unfortunately, Joel’s book only went to 1858. I expressed my disappointment to the reference librarian and he directed me to Albany Morning Times an index of Albany deaths. To my delight, I quickly found a reference to the obituary of a Patrick Murray who died on January 24, 1860 by choking.

With the death date from this index I went back to the newspapers for January 25, 1860 and found a more complete report of Patrick’s death. The newspaper article listed his address, his family members and his place of employment.

(Continued on Page 19)
Culture, Context & Background
Read “Peat’s Place in Art”, for a fascinating article on peat’s place in our history from JSTOR. https://daily.jstor.org/peats-place-in-art/

Kay Caball’s blog on Kerry in the 19th century applies to much of Ireland. Some things to think about when looking at Irish research. http://mykerryancestors.com/kerry-19th-century/

Research Tools

DNA
Many people received DNA kits for Christmas and the results are coming in now. Lois Mackin has some tips and tricks to use when contacting your new DNA matches. https://www.loismackin.com/tips-for-dna-testers-making-your-family-trees-useful-to-your-matches/

Digging Deeper for Databases
Eileen Curley Pironti #2788

Throughout the 19th and early 20th century, the Baedeker firm published a series of travel guides covering various European countries. These guides furnished travelers with hotel, restaurant and entertainment options, as well as detailed maps. They hold value for genealogists as well, providing information such as the cost of hotels and transportation during that time and brief histories of the cities and countries covered. The company stopped producing these books after World War II, but began printing a new series in 2007. Digital copies of the early guidebooks are available at https://archive.org/details/baedeckers

D. Appleton & Company also published a series of travel guides in the 19th Century, focusing on railroad travel in the United States and Canada. The areas covered in their guides later included parts of Europe and Latin America. A number of these travel guides are available at https://www.hathitrust.org/.

Housed at the University of Maryland’s Hornbake Library is the National Trust Library Historic Postcard Collection, containing approximately 20,000 postcards dating from 1893 to 1970. A small portion of these postcards have been digitized and are available online at https://digital.lib.umd.edu/ntlpostcards. The online collection is searchable by state. For example, a search for New Hampshire postcards results in 138 matches. Some of the postcards include written messages on the back, which are interesting to read.

Theme for Summer Issue
Irish Social Organizations
Order of Hibernians, Knights of Columbus, Sodality, Church Groups, Political Organizations, Forresters, Neighborhood Groups. Were your relatives active in any of these organizations? How did the organizations influence their lives? Do you have stories, photos and documentation of their activities?

Send submissions to newsletter@tiara.ie
Coroner’s report on the death of Patrick Murray. “died by strangulation caused by lodgement of a piece of meat in his throat.”

This report also said that Patrick’s death was being investigated by the Albany coroner. Yes - this Patrick was my father’s ancestor, his great, great uncle.

At a later time, I contacted the Albany coroner’s office and received a copy of the report of the inquest into Patrick’s death. To this day, I am very careful to chew my food well and not eat too fast.

A Mysterious Death (Continued from Page 17)

Reilly values these messages from the past because they inform “on the fractured state of society” and studying them “introduces us to the world of the cottier.” It’s a class he describes as ambiguous by definition which varied from place to place. As Reilly explained though: “Cottiers usually rented a small patch of ground from a farmer and in return paid their rent in labour.” That part of the land system, he observed, led to endemic poverty which also was exacerbated by the disappearance of cottage industries, which engaged women, after the 1820s. He called the cottier class “… the largest body of [famine] people about whom we know the least.” The archive of famine time petitions “allows for a more nuanced understanding of the role and fate of females during the famine” than do other sources (such as folklore) used to tell the experiences and effects of the famine. The famine period empowered women and allowed them to take on new roles, Reilly concluded.

Editor’s Note: This story is reprinted from the September 2017 issue of The Bonfire, newsletter of the Ballykilcline Society with permission. Strokestown is now the site of the Irish National Famine Museum mentioned previously in this newsletter regarding the Great Famine Voices Roadshow. For more info on the assisted emigration from Strokestown: http://www.thejournal.ie/missing-famine-strokestown-roscommon-1437721-May2014/

Erratum

An error was detected in Life in the Shipyard article in the Winter 2017 article. The motto for the Downey diaper service in Arlington MA was “It’s tops for bottoms.”

Erratum

Nearby Starved to Death (Continued from Page 16)

Other chapters in this book from Quinnipiac University Press also should greatly interest famine researchers.

TIARA’s New Home!

Our new address is 121 Boston Post Road in Sudbury. The room is a large, bright, first floor office with space for a conference table (looking for one), office equipment and library.

TIARA will be moved during the month of March. Watch the TIARA website for details of open hours once the office is unpacked.
Upcoming Conferences, Workshops, and Events

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<th>Conference</th>
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<th>Website</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Massachusetts Genealogical Council</strong></td>
<td>Courtyard by Marriott Hotel, Marlborough, MA</td>
<td>April 7-8, 2018</td>
<td><a href="http://www.massgenecouncil.org">www.massgenecouncil.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Great Famine Voices Roadshow</strong></td>
<td>Burns Library, Boston College</td>
<td>April 11, 2018 4:00—8:30 pm</td>
<td><a href="http://www.strokestownpark.ie/">http://www.strokestownpark.ie/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>New York State Family History Conference</strong></td>
<td>Double Tree Hotel, Tarrytown, NY</td>
<td>September 13-15, 2018</td>
<td><a href="https://nysfhc.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/">https://nysfhc.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/</a></td>
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