

The Shamrock



O hEidirsceoil Clan E-Bulletin

June 2009

Edition 2

Mora na maidine dhuit - From The Chieftain

When we (as in Natalie) published our first O'Driscoll newsletter, *The Shamrock* in February, the Clan Gathering seemed months away and it was. And now, in just a few weeks, we'll be in Baltimore. My request for information for this second edition received a significant number of articles. Hopefully I remembered to send all the ones I received along to Natalie. Thank you everyone who got in touch.

You will find the agenda for this year's Gathering in this edition but I caution that it may change slightly between now and June 25th. As the date moves closer, check the website at <http://www.baltimore.ie/baltimorefestivalswestcork/odriscoll.html> for the latest version.

I also urge everyone to check this website, <http://www.skibbheritage.com/> and take time to familiarize your-

selves with the Centre and its activities. The Skibbereen Heritage Centre was chosen this year to host the first National Famine Memorial Day. That speaks volumes for the role that Skibbereen and the surrounding communities, including Baltimore, had forced on them by the Great Hunger.

I hope everyone takes time to read Eamon Lankford's article on the Cape Clear Museum, and that those of us attending the Gathering make a point of visiting the Museum during our day trip to Clear Island.

Lastly, as I complete my term as Clan Chieftain, I want to thank the Baltimore 2000 Committee and the citizens of Baltimore for their hospitality that makes our annual family get-together such a grand party. I hope that every O'Driscoll, Driscoll, Driskell, and all those, regardless of surname, that have O'Driscoll blood, have

the opportunity to attend a Gathering or at least visit Baltimore and the Islands, because once you do, you will know why so many of us make the trip every year.

Health and long life to you all, cousins! May your glass be always full and your heart ever light.

Bruce Driscoll
Clan Chieftain



Cork roads funding slashed by further €400,000



FUNDING for Cork's roads, which was cut by almost "2.5 million last month, has been slashed by a further "400,000.

Fine Gael Cllr John Buttiner said the cuts will force city officials to tear up a list of road improvement projects agreed last December based on projected funding supplied by central government.

Councillors across the city's six electoral wards agreed at the time to essential roads resurfacing, footpath renewal, improvements in public realm and enhanced public lighting.

But it emerged last month that the city's 2009 roads budget -

which had been estimated last December at "6.9 million - has been cut by "2.7m to just "4.2m.

That decision has thrown the future of the Cornmarket Street revamp into doubt. A "1m fund-set aside to advance the project was slashed to just "41,000.

The city's regional traffic management fund was also slashed from "790,000 to "90,000.

The latest cutbacks are in the National Roads Authority block grant for the upkeep and maintenance of primary routes in the city.

Mr Buttiner tried to quiz city officials on Monday on the nature of the cuts,

and how they will impact on agreed projects. But officials remained tight-lipped.

He called last night for engineers in the council's roads directorate to bring forward a new programme of work based on the current project grant.

"This information should be made available before polling day so that the people of Cork are aware of the true nature of cuts being imposed on the city," he said.

Despite the cutbacks, city officials have given assurances that a "500,000 upgrade of the St Luke's junction on the north side of the city will not be affected.

Do you know any Irish News? Have you seen any great (or bad) Irish Films, read any Irish books, or listened to any Irish music that you would like to tell us about? Being attuned to the culture of Ireland is a great way to keep in touch with our familial roots. Please feel free to tell us what you think about all things Irish!

Irish Movie Review—The Magdalene Sisters

In *The Magdalene Sisters* (2002), director Peter Mullin examines one of Ireland's more recent tragic and disturbing episodes in the history of a country that has seen more than its share of tragedy and turmoil. Exposing the true story of a system where bad girls some of whom may have done nothing more than behave flirtatiously, could be locked away for an indeterminate number of years with no chance for appeal. Mullin follows the experiences of three such unlucky souls. Through the eyes of these young women, cast out by both society and their own families and sent to one of Ireland's Catholic-run Magdalene Laundries, Mullin unfolds a stirring tale of the hardships, forced labour, humiliations and endless abuse these women suffered at the hands of the Nuns

and Priests who were charged with their care.

Heartfelt and moving, this film is told entirely from the viewpoint of the young women, verified by personal accounts of the women who finally managed to leave the facilities. While offering a frightening view of what actually happened, no attempt is made to define or explain the possible motivation behind the actions of the Magdalene Sisters or the Priests involved in the scandal. Mullin has chosen his actors well as the main characters are well-developed and portrayed with an intense yet sympathetic style. This movie will, at times, break your heart, enrage you, and leave you wondering how it could be possible that the Magdalene Laundries managed to continue

into the mid-1990s before steps were finally taken to shut them all down.

By Marilyn and Shauna Driscoll.

Rating: 4 shamrocks out of five!



The Magdalene Sisters (2002)

Based on True Events

Winner . Best Picture, Venice Film Festival

The Young Achiever Award Goes To...

Congratulations to 11 year old Daniel O'Driscoll from Llandaff, Cardiff, Wales, son of Don and Angela O'Driscoll who not only captained the winning team in his Under 11s rugby side recently, but also won a poem writing competition in order to become the Bard at his recent school Eisteddfod! Daniel's poem, entitled Feelings is below. We could have another Shakespeare or Brian O'Driscoll in the making!

Feelings

Sadness is a rain shower, inside your head,
 Brought on by pain and death and dread.
 It brings tears like diamonds to your eye,
 Causing you to weep and cry.

Love whispers secrets in your ear,
 Meant for only you to hear.

It brings loving kisses to your heart,
 Then hits you with a poison dart.

Happiness beams like the morning sun,
 It urges you to have some fun.
 It's the essence of purest glee,
 The happiest thing in history.

Anger is a dragon breathing tongues of flame,
 Forcing you to play its evil game.
 Boiling inside destroying control,
 Ripping your conscience, leaving a huge hole.

Excitement is a huge bouncy ball in us all,
 It's always been there never small.
 It makes you ignore doom and gloom,
 And quickly run around the room.

The most confusing thing on earth is stress,
 It comes and ravages, making a mess

Destroying order in your mind,
 Like an anarchist of the supernatural kind.

Greed always just needs more,
 Grabbing with its selfish claws.
 Ripping things away from us,
 Causing terrible havoc and fuss.

Fear is that bump in the middle of the night,
 Creeping up behind you, dealing a huge fright.
 Biting away your confidence leaving you afraid,

It takes all your courage and makes it fade.

A horrible thing is the feeling of guilt,
 When promises are broke and blood is spilt.
 It makes you ache and makes you sick,
 And forces you to apologise quick.

With all these feelings whirring round our heads
 It's a wonder we're not all in coffins, stone dead
 But without our feelings what would we be
 Ask someone else just don't ask me!



Another Reunion!



The Iowa Driscoll Family Reunion from 2007. The theme was "Hawaiian Luau". This year's reunion will be held June 13 & 14 with the theme "Pirate Party".

The descendents of John and Catherine (Donoghue) Driscoll will gather on June 13 & 14, 2009 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa for their family reunion, which has been held for over 70 years. The family now gathers every two years instead of every year at Daniel's Park in Cedar Rapids. This year's theme is Pirate Party! Many attend wearing pirate garb. Prizes will be given for the best dressed Pirate. Estimated attendance is 100+ Driscolls!

Cousins Reunited

Did you ever hear the one about the Englishman who didn't meet his cousins until he was 81 years of age? No, it's not a joke. This actually happened to John Driscoll of Yorkshire, a regular visitor to the annual clan gathering in Baltimore, when he recently made a relatively short car journey to Leicestershire. The background to this extraordinary first meeting is as follows.

John's dad Timothy left Ireland a few years either side of 1920 and eventually settled in Yorkshire, England. It is believed his family thought he had gone to America so quite how & why he ended up in exotic Yorkshire, isn't known! Whatever the reason, he seems to have lost contact with his siblings (he was one of

seven) at this time apart from his brother, Jack, who made his way to Australia.

Timothy didn't talk a great deal about his life in Ireland but he did speak fondly of his younger sister Agnes whose name he had tattooed on his arm and after whom he named his only daughter. Unbeknown to Timothy, his sister Agnes actually emigrated to England herself in 1938 and settled in the Northamptonshire area. It is a touch sad that Timothy & Agnes spent around 25 years living not more than 90 miles away from each other without ever knowing it.

Fast forward to 2004 and John's grandson Paul wrote a 'blind' letter to

the farm near Drimoleague where Timothy had lived as a boy. Paul & John were both surprised and delighted to receive a reply from the current occupant Finn who is, in fact, John's second cousin. This led to a meeting between John & Finn in 2005 and this was to be John's first ever meeting with a relative from his father's side of the family. Unfortunately further attempts to track down any first cousins remained fruitless and John & Paul were resigned to the fact that it just wasn't going to happen.

Last year however, one of Agnes's daughters, Margaret, accompanied by daughters of her own, arrived at Skibbereen Heritage Centre looking for information on Agnes's

family. A copy of the 1901 census return for the family was quickly found at which point the staff realised the family connection with Finn at Drimoleague and a meeting between Margaret & Finn was arranged. Finn duly furnished Margaret with all the information he had on Agnes's family, including Paul's contact details, which ultimately led to John meeting his cousin Margaret & her sisters Elizabeth & Catherine on 2nd May 2009. Surely setting some kind of record for a first meeting between cousins!??

Now that contact has been re-established between these two branches of Agnes's & Timothy's family, there won't be quite as long to wait for the next reunion. John will be making the trip to Baltimore again this year, accompanied by his grandson Paul, while Margaret will be attending the gathering for the first time with her daughters Monica & Julie.

The newly discovered cousins would like to give special thanks to Finn & the Skibbereen Heritage Centre for their help in making this reunion possible.

Paul Driscoll
UK



From left to right: Elizabeth, Catherine, Margaret and John

Clan Celebrations

A BIG CONGRATULATIONS TO...

...Con "Fada" O'Drisceoll (who launched last year's Clan Gathering) was named as the Irish language television TG4 channel's Composer of the Year and received his award at a gala event held at Wexford Opera House, Easter Sunday, April 4th, 2009. This event was televised live nationally in Ireland.



...Mary O'Driscoll of Victoria, Australia who will be celebrating her 100th birthday on the 28th July 2009! A huge Happy Birthday from all the Clan on this very special day.

...Matt and Nicola O'Driscoll for their beautiful baby girl Neve Isobel O'Driscoll, born October 30th, 2008. Pictured here with her lovely big sister Megan Frances.



ō To proud parents Daniel and Maricel O'Driscoll, and first time grandparents John and Betty O'Driscoll of Victoria, Australia, on the birth of Megan Andrea O'Driscoll on 30th March, 2009. Pictured below, with her great-grandfather Bill O'Driscoll, grandparent John & Betty. Parents Daniel and Maricel below.



ō to parents Kristina and Benjamin Aylor, and grandmother Pamela Driskell Aylor, on the birth of Leila Josalyn Marie Aylor on 16th May, 2009.



Subjugation of Belarus by a Canadian "Pirate"



This is my Canadian hat made of badger, says Jonathan Driscoll showing his fur hat. Apparently it became a Canadian hat only when he arrived in Belarus as in Canada he called it a Russian hat.

Historian, knight, 'bad guy'.....

It's pretty complicated for Jonathan to tell about himself in only a few words. He started as a student of European history. This was followed by a lot of absolutely different things in his life. Now, at 29, he studies Russian in Belarus, attends medieval clubs, and is planning of leaving for Estonia to take part in a film shooting.

There are plenty of interesting facts of Johnny's biography as he introduces himself to new friends. For example, he is a descendant of pirates! Real pirates! His Irish ancestors were simple seamen and occasional pirates. The Driscoll family heraldry sports a black galleon. Once, during a Christmas trip, Johnny even visited the village of Baltimore, Ireland, where his descendants celebrate a Gathering of the Clan every summer. Johnny's passion for history

caused his choice of future career. He completed courses in both European history and the History of Science in Halifax, Canada. After his courses he spent one year in Europe, working in the U.K., travelling in Eastern Europe, and surfing the medieval clubs in Germany. On his return to Canada he finished his degree, drove across Canada from the east coast to the west, and worked in jobs unrelated to his study of history. Then, on the spur of the moment he decided to join the army. Instead of the 9 years of his original contract he spent only 3 years, the last year of which, once he had made the decision to leave the military, he spent acting in the role of 'bad guy' or a 'victim' during military training sessions.

Over time, a new thought entered Johnny's mind: to study the Russian language. He thought it would be useful in his travels and possible future business endeavours. To fulfill this new dream he could have gone to either Moscow or Kiev, but in the end he chose Minsk. First, because he felt the city was safer and secondly, he found there are many more medieval clubs in Belarus than in Russia or the Ukraine. I think most Belarusians have no idea of the high quality of medieval clubs here. I'd like to shoot a documentary about them but the main problem is that very few people of the community speak English he says.

When John arrived in Minsk last summer he didn't know any Russian and could do hardly anything without the help of his English speaking friends. Even so, he had little trouble communicating since he was surrounded mostly by students and other young people. In the process, his Russian has become better.

The thing that strikes me most in Belarus is women's fashion he says. Women in Canada are more relaxed in their dress. And I'm still astonished that the most popular haircut for Belarusian guys is to cut it like Dima Bilan [a popular Russian pop singer who is most frequently seen sporting a 'bullet-like' hairstyle]. It's considered very unstylish in Canada.

As for Belarusian cuisine, the only thing John can say is that it's very specific. He says he doesn't have to eat but instead eats to live. He has no favourite Belarusian dishes except for the barbeque here.

John has not yet been to either Russia or the Ukraine so is unable to compare Belarus with these, but he finds Eastern Poland somewhat similar to our state. As a historian, the main difference he found is that the historic buildings in Poland are in better condi-

tion than in Belarus.

Currently Johnny is working as a teacher in a language school, studies Russian at the Linguistic University, and travels within Belarus and abroad from time to time. He plans to leave for Estonia in the summer then on to Kamchatka, or maybe Nicaragua or not. Who knows? There are so many things on Johnny's list of life projects. He decides on a plan of action then something may happen that points him in another direction. He is always ready for 'Plan C'.

Maybe I'd decide to continue some project in Belarus he says. This is a very interesting country. Sometimes I think that nothing is possible here, then something will happen to make me think that this is a country where everything is possible. Very strange. Johnny sums up his feelings about Belarus. Anton Trafimovich Initially published as a profile in a Belarus newspaper.



**O' DRISCOLL CLAN MID-SUMMER FESTIVAL
JUNE 25TH ~ 28TH.**

Thursday 25th

6.30 P. M. Evening trip to Loughine on Cailin Oir with Captain Ted OqDriscoll
9.00 P.M. Traditional Session in %The Algiers Inn+

Friday 26th

2.30 P.M. Trip to Heir Island on Mystic Water with Captain Vincent OqDriscoll. Walk on Island and talk by local Historian.
7.00 P.M. Registration of Clan members and heritage talk
9.00 P.M. Official opening of Clan Gathering by Chieftain %Bruce OqDriscoll+
9.30 P.M. Music by %Rubicon+Celtic Rock Band in The Square

Saturday 27th

11.00 A.M. Trip to Cape Clear on Naomh Ciaran II with Captain Ciaran OqDriscoll On arrival the Clan will be met by Mary OqDriscoll and taken to Cotters Bar for refreshments followed by a talk on the history of Cape Clear.
Then the Clan, accompanied by Jeff Oliver will visit the local museum.
After this lunch will take place in %Ciaran Danny Mikes+followed by music for the afternoon.
Ferry departs Cape Clear at 3.00 pm or 6.00pm
4.00 P.M. Traditional Music in The Square by Baltimore Beginners.
9.00 P.M. Music by %Open the Taps+ in The Square.

Sunday 28th

11.00 A.M. Mass celebrated in Sacred Heart Church, Rath by Father Martin OqDriscoll
12.00 P.M. Ferry to Sherkin Island. Visit to the Abbey followed by a gathering at %The Jolly Roger+
12.30 P.M. Traditional Music and Dancing by Ceoltais Ceoltóirí Éireann
3.00 to 5.00 P.M. Music by %Ronnie and Friends+
Kids entertainment . Face Painting, Balloon making, Mime act etc.
2.00 to 5.00 P.M. Open Day at Baltimore Lifeboat Station
3.30 P.M. Inauguration of the new OqDriscoll Clan Chieftain.

(SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

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THE SHAMROCK - CLAN CELEBRATIONS

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Welcome to the second edition of The Shamrock, an E-Bulletin for members of the Driscoll / O'Driscoll Clan. We welcome ALL your feedback. Help us make your newsletter the best it can be!

Thank you to everyone who submitted information for this edition: Jonathon O'Driscoll, Don O'Driscoll, Matt O'Driscoll, Erin (Driscoll) Feaker, John O'Driscoll, Eamon Lankford, Scott O'Driscoll, Paul Driscoll, Pamela Driskell Aylor. If you have any photos or articles of interest, please email them to me anytime.

WEBSITES OF INTEREST TO THE CLAN:

www.odriscolls.me.uk

web.netcall.com.au/~wjod/DOA/default.php

www.baltimore-ireland.com/

www.odriscoll.ie

Do you know of any others?

www.odriscoll-canada.com/

Cape Clear Museum & The O'Driscoll Collection

Cape Clear Island Museum & Archive, Cape Clear island, Baltimore, Co. Cork was founded as a voluntary organisation in 1981 by Dr. Éamon Lankford.

Objectives

- (1) Source, collect and preserve records concerning all aspects of Cape Clear island life.
- (2) Organise the collection of artefacts of folk, farm and maritime life and see to their exhibition and preservation.
- (3) Compile documentation relating to members of the worldwide O Driscoll Family.

The Cape Clear Museum is housed in the island's old schoolhouse which has been restored and equipped to hold a large collection of island artefacts and exhibition material.

The Cape Clear Archive engages in the compilation of records and documentation relating to all aspects of island life and history. As Cape Clear island is the heart of the territory which was left to the O

Driscoll's after the Battle of Kinsale 1601, the archive has a particular interest in hearing from all who are related to the Clann O Drisceoil / O Driscoll Family worldwide.

The chapter titled *O Driscoll Diaspora* in *O Driscolls, Past and Present* (2005) by Éamon Lankford, tells the story of some O Driscolls who settled and prospered in new lands around the world. The research material compiled for this book now forms the basis for the ten volumes in the O Driscoll Archive Collection which it is proposed to expand with the inclusion of family accounts from O Driscolls worldwide. Everyone related to an O Driscoll, past and present has a story to tell. The O Driscoll Collection affords one the opportunity to be permanently remembered.

The archive initiative does not have a research staff or funding, and it is therefore, not, at present, in a position to engage in family research but it will house documentation presented to it by all who wish to have their family history and heritage remembered for posterity. The O Driscoll Collection is

to be housed in Cape Clear Island Library and at Cork County Library in Cork City and will, in time, be a unique research resource, staffed by County Library personnel. Submissions can be added to at any time.

Guidelines for writing an account of your family for inclusion in a future volume of the O Driscoll Collection are presented on www.odricoll.ie

Enquiries re Cape Clear Museum / O Driscoll Collection/ O Driscoll book [O Driscolls: Past and Present, 2005] to:

e-mail: logainmneacha@gmail.com

Dr. Éamon Lankford, Cape Clear Museum Society, c/o Aras,

13 Dyke Parade, Cork City, Ireland.

See also :
www.capeclearmuseum.ie/
[www.odriscoll.ie /](http://www.odriscoll.ie/)
www.placenames.ie

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