



*The Irish Ancestral Research Association, Inc.*

## *25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion*

*July 12, 2008*

*The LaCava Center at Bentley  
175 Forest Street, Waltham, MA*

## **PROGRAM**

8:30 am – 9:30 am	Registration, breakfast, exhibits
9:30 am – 10:30 am	Welcome TIARA's History – Marie Daly DVD Presentation – Judy Barrett
10:30 am – 11:00 am	Break, Viewing of Exhibits
11:00 am – Noon	1 <sup>st</sup> Lecture Set
Noon – 2:00 pm	Lunch <b>Guest Speaker</b> - David Barry, Irish Consul General
2:00 pm – 3:00 pm	2 <sup>nd</sup> Lecture Set
3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	Marie Daly – Pre-1800's Irish Research
4:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Brian O'Donovan – Irish Traditional Music & Song: The Backdrop to Irish Culture at Home and Abroad - Musically Illustrated

## **LECTURES – 1<sup>st</sup> Set**

- A. Irish Nationalism & Early Irish Film: Creating a National Identity – **Speaker: Morgan Lake Adams**
- Using film clips, Morgan will examine the fascinating relationship between cinema and Irish nationalism. The first sympathetic film images of the Irish and their history were created by Americans in the 1910's. As nationalists realized the power of cinema, they looked to film to help define a unifying national identity while still under British domination. The British viewed Irish films with suspicion or outright hostility, invoking their powers to censor.
- B. Preservation of Photographs – **Speaker: David Mishkin**
- Learn what causes photographic deterioration, how it can be retarded and the proper ways to store photographs and albums. Discussion on photographic enhancements and restorations; what they are and how this process can improve your photographs.

## LECTURES - 2<sup>nd</sup> Set

- A. The Changing Face of Caitlin ni Houlihan: The Status of Irish Women Since Independence – **Speaker: Catherine B. Shannon**

The coming of independence in 1921 did little to expand rights & opportunities for Irish women. Dr. Shannon outlines the political, economic and social forces that eroded the status quo. She will also focus on what was achieved in the era of second wave feminism and what challenges remain for contemporary Irish women before they achieve the equal citizenship promised in the republic's founding document in 1916.

- B. Preservation of Modern Imaging Systems – **Speaker David Mishkin**

Lecture/slide show discussing the problems in preserving videos, CD ROMS and color photographs and what you can do to help preserve those family images and events.

### 3:00 pm LECTURE

#### **Pre-1800's Irish Research – Speaker: Marie Daly**

TIARA Founder Marie Daly explores the availability of pre-1800's resources for Irish research. You just might be surprised!

### 4:00 pm LECTURE

#### **Irish Traditional Music & Song: The Backdrop to Irish Culture at Home and Abroad – Speaker: Brian O'Donovan**

Brian will examine the history, social context, and development of music and dance in Ireland and through the Diaspora; illustrating the pain of emigration, slow airs and laments, songs of rebellion, the unbridled joy of reels and jigs, lullabies, and the influence of the Irish on vaudeville here in the U.S.

## *Our Speakers*

### *Morgan Lake Adams*

Morgan Lake Adams is a fourth year doctoral candidate in the history program at Boston College. Her areas of interest include Modern Ireland, the British Empire, Gender, & the Atlantic World. Her dissertation examines the interactions of Irish and French Canadian immigrants in nineteenth century Maine mill towns.

### *David Barry*

David Barry has been the Consul General of Ireland to New England since 2005. Originally from County Tipperary, he earned a Bachelor of Commerce degree from University College Dublin & his MBA at the University of Warwick in the U.K. His Diplomatic Corps assignments have included London, Belfast, Austria, Ethiopia and South Africa.

### *Marie Daly*

Marie Daly is a Past President & co-founder of TIARA. She joined the staff of NEHGS in 1987 & is currently Director of Library Services. Marie received a B.S. from Northeastern University & an MPH from Boston University. She has been researching, lecturing, and writing about Irish genealogy since 1976.

### *David Mishkin*

David Mishkin received a B.S. degree in photography from Rochester Institute of Technology in 1969 & graduated from their Photographic Preservation seminar series. He has presented lectures on preserving photographs & documents for over ten years. David has written several articles in photographic, genealogical & historical publications. He completed two terms as the President of NERGC & currently serves as Exhibitor Co-Chair for the 2009 Conference.

### *Brian O'Donovan*

Born in West Cork, Ireland, Brian O'Donovan has lived in the Boston area for the past 28 years. He is a well-known broadcaster in the USA with WGBH in Boston. His weekly three-hour radio program, A Celtic Sojourn, is heard throughout New England. Brian is also a festival producer & concert promoter working extensively in the folk/Celtic music genre. He is the managing partner of Connections Ventures, LLC, a media & entertainment company in Cambridge, producers of live events & festivals, including the new Irish Connections/ICONS Festival.

### *Catherine B. Shannon*

Dr. Shannon is currently Professor Emerita of History, Westfield State College. She received her B.A. from University of Toronto, an M.A. with Honors from University College, Dublin, & her Ph.D. from University of Massachusetts. She has worked as a Secondary School History Teacher & as Professor of History & Director of Irish Studies & Honors Programs at Westfield State College. She is a Past-President of the Eire Society of Boston & the Charitable Irish Society of Boston. She is a long time member of the Executive Board of the American Conference for Irish Studies.

## *President's Message*

It's an honor to be involved with TIARA, especially as we celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Recent planning sessions have revealed that there were originally 11 members when the group began in 1983. It has grown steadily over the years, and we are proud of our 600 strong members. The board is always looking for ways to reach out to our members, whether they be in Boston, New England or some other part of the USA (not forgetting our members in Canada and Ireland as well). With the help of our members, we've been able to make this goal a reality. Keep your ideas and suggestions coming!

I would also like to thank the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee for their hard work and dedication. David Collins, Bob Gallagher, Susan Steele and John Thompson stepped up to the plate to work on the last 2 newsletters, including the special anniversary edition. Susan, along with Judy Izenberg, Connie Koutoujian, Greg Atkinson, Kathy Roscoe, and Past Presidents Marie Daly, Judy Barrett, Janis Duffy, Sheila FitzPatrick and Bernie Couming, all added their talent to the Reunion event.

So, Happy Anniversary TIARA!

May our members always be as selfless, dedicated and giving as the ones celebrating this year!

*Mary Choppa*

## *TIARA'S SUCCESS STORY*

The celebration of TIARA's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the success of the organization are due to the excellent **leadership** of its officers and the efforts of the many hard-working **volunteers** over those years. In fact, the phrase, *TIARA volunteers*, borders on redundancy, because every function carried on by TIARA depends, completely, on the efforts of its member-volunteers. That fact is attested to in nearly every article of our anniversary newsletter.

Activities ranging from providing meeting refreshments, book sales, workshops and conferences, Ireland research trips, the newsletter, the Foresters Project, the library, and innumerable other tasks, are completely dependent on volunteers and are a testament to the spirit of TIARA and the leadership of its officers. It is this that makes TIARA a great organization.

At the 2006 FGS conference, a conferee was so impressed by the presence of so many TIARA members that he asked, "How many are paid staff?" When he was told, "None, everyone is a volunteer" he was *awed* by such spirit.

It is easy to find a list of the volunteers. Just look at TIARA's membership list. Virtually every name on the list serves in some voluntary capacity.

*Submitted by the TIARA Newsletter Editor*

## TIARA Officers 1983 - 2008

### *Presidents*

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Katherine Keough  
Joseph Howley  
Sheila FitzPatrick  
Bernard Couming  
Judith Barrett  
Janis Duffy  
Mary Choppa

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Sylvia Zalla  
Janis Duffy  
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### *Web Manager*

Dennis Ahern  
Mary Choppa  
Carolyn Jack

## AN CAPALL BÁN

An Capall Bán is an award instituted by TIARA, The Irish Ancestral Research Association, to honor those of its members who have served the association with outstanding dedication and who have contributed singularly to its mission. An capall bán translates from the Irish as, the white horse. The white horse of Irish mythology is seen as something truly special, with great powers and the ability to cross between worlds. The image is one of beauty and strength, full of purpose and meaning.

In the Irish myth of Tir na nÓg, the Land of Youth, Ossian, a Fianna poet and warrior, leaves Ireland with the beautiful Niamh, daughter of the King of the Land of Youth. They travel magically on the back of a white horse over the sea and into the sunset to her father's land. After many years pass Ossian asks to see Ireland one more time. The magical white horse is summoned to take him across the sea. They pass through storms and time to the land of his birth; but all he knew has of course changed. He was warned never to step foot on the Irish soil for if he did he would not be able to return to the Land of Youth. By accident his foot slips, he falls, and his feet touch the ground. As this happens the great white horse turns and disappears into the mists leaving Ossian aged and a stranger in a land he no longer recognizes.

Our Irish ancestors are the descendants of the myth makers and also of those who listened by fireside to these tales recounted in Ireland's ancient tongue. Members of TIARA hold a special place in their hearts for their ancestral homeland. With great purpose and meaning they strive to connect with a past hidden by time and circumstances. TIARA exists to help family researchers do just that, discover their ancestors.

There are today no magical white horses to help us in our genealogical pursuits, but there are those who have dedicated themselves quite singularly to building and growing a TIARA organization committed and able to helping family researchers connect with their roots. TIARA's present international renown and highly regarded stature within the genealogical community are in no small part due to the dedicated service of the outstanding TIARA members chosen to receive this award.

## *Member Displays*

- Marie Ahearn** – “Researching Estate Records” - ancestor names found in lease books
- Maureen & Kathleen Beruba** – “McGreavy Family” – highlighting research & presentation of family history to extended family
- Mary Choppa** – “How Did I Get Here?” - a photo family tree
- Janis P. Duffy** – “Family Connections” - family photos and documents
- Nancy Fennessey** – “Fennessey Sept DNA Project” - searching for common ancestors
- Bob Gallagher** – “She Said She Was Born in Coothall (Co. Roscommon)” – how George Handran and I traced her family to Clegna and Coolayde
- Carolyn Jack** – “Joseph Oliver Connors” – born in poverty in Tewksbury Almshouse in 1892, Joe made a life for himself
- Beth McAleer** – “Patrick McAleer & Ellen Heary: from Tyrone & Longford to Boston” – photos & documents
- Mary Ellen Radziewicz** – “Worcester Irish Research” – work being done by Worcester researchers
- Kathy Roscoe** – “Discoveries” – uncover the feelings behind your family history
- Kathy Sullivan** – “Family Ties: Richard, Hannah & Mary Ann Dealy” – researching sideways can help you move back
- Margaret Sullivan** – “A Matter of Honor” – the search for images of fallen Boston policy officers for National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial
- John Thompson** – “Thompson-Dolan Families” – history of these families in the US
- Joan Winters** – “They Stayed on the Land” – recent photos of family still living in “ancestral” home

## *Foresters Project*

In 2002, TIARA’s President, Judy Barrett met with members of the Catholic Association of Foresters (CAOF), a fraternal life insurance society founded by Irish immigrants in Boston. It was organized in 1879 as The Massachusetts Catholic Order of Foresters (MCOF) and renamed CAOF in 1960.

Ever on the alert for undiscovered records, Judy contacted John Anderson, the High Secretary-Treasurer of the CAOF. Judy and TIARA Vice President Janis Duffy were given a tour of the CAOF basement repository with original records dating back to 1879! Judy and Janis knew at once that these insurance policy applications and death benefit disbursements would provide rich source material for family historians.

After the 2003 pilot project scanning some of the records, Susan Steele joined Judy to present the ideas to membership and the first group of volunteers was formed.

In 2004 the CAOF made plans to sell their building and move to smaller quarters, leaving behind the older MCOF records to be shredded! Janis Duffy immediately initiated a search for storage space. Thanks to Joan Chaisson, a fellow member, we found office and storage space in the basement of the Auburndale Post Office.

In 2005 TIARA negotiated ownership of the MCOF records and began planning a series of “packing days”. Initial procedures were set up and Susan Steele & Carole Sullivan were enlisted to oversee the packing of almost 300 boxes. Thirty volunteers worked one Saturday a month from January to August, sharing space with the occasional rodent visitor!

File drawers were hauled up 2 flights of stairs & the records were placed into archival boxes, loaded into a van and driven to the office. The office was filled with about 240 boxes and a U Haul storage unit was rented in Stoughton and another 100 boxes were moved to that location.

Marge McDonnell & Carlyn Cox joined Susan & Carole to form a steering committee to map out project plans & consult a lawyer on privacy restrictions. We were advised to follow federal privacy laws using a 1930 cutoff date. After several months the finding aid was reconstructed, separating 1880-1930, totaling 16,000 insurance policies.

After initial sample scanning determined this process to be too time consuming, the committee investigated microfilming & digitization. After receiving estimates from several companies, the TIARA Board voted to allow the Genealogical Society of Utah (GSU) to digitize the 16,000 policies of members who died between 1880-1930.

Work was begun on a spreadsheet to identify policy data for the 1880-1930 group. By April, 2007 all 16,000 policies were entered on the spreadsheet. By June 2007 two edits had been completed, and a third edit is in progress.

In 2006 a pilot program for research requests was made available to TIARA members. As of March 2008 over 300 individual searches had been conducted & more than 85 Forester ancestors were reunited with their descendants.

Currently the project is getting the records ready for digitization, which should begin late in summer of 2008 & will take about a year. At the end of the digitization phase, both TIARA and GSU will have a copy of the digital images of all 16,000 policies. The GSU images will be placed on familysearch.org, but it may take several years before this process is complete. TIARA is looking into placing our spreadsheet on our own website and will continue to fill research requests for TIARA members. The next set of records to be released will begin, for deaths from 1931-1940.

Another step in the process involves finding a permanent repository for the paper records once digitization is complete. To that end, we have had several meetings with representatives from Boston College.

Current President, Mary Choppa and other TIARA Board members have helped create opportunities for Foresters publicity as well as supporting the day-to-day operation of the project. We have had informational tables at the Irish Cultural Centre Festival, Mass Genealogical Council Annual Meeting Seminar and the Lifelong Learning Institute at UMass Boston. We have given presentations at TIARA, the Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference and the Boston Public Library Family History Series. In May 2008 we will have our first international presentation at the Associational Culture Conference in Maynooth, Ireland.

The TIARA Board joins a group of over fifty members who have contributed thousands of volunteer hours to the Foresters Project in the last 5 years.

Dedication, energy, stamina, creativity, problem solving techniques, humor and good fellowship – all traits of the Foresters Project volunteers – THANK YOU ONE AND ALL!

*Susan Steele*

## *TIARA ACTIVITIES*

### **15 Reasons Why It's Great to be a TIARA member**

Monthly speakers on Irish history, culture and genealogy

Exciting projects at the forefront of genealogy research, ie Foresters

Workshops on a variety of subjects

Conference participation and discounts for our members

Irish Cultural Centre of New England ICONS Festival genealogy tent

2009 Genealogy Conference at Sea

Research trips to Ireland, complete with your own personal experts in various fields

TIARA website – filled with wonderful content, sure to inspire

TIARA books – members receive a discount on some of the best genealogy and history books available in this area

International recognition of TIARA

The TIARA library – available for member research

The TIARA newsletter – one of the best and most informative newsletters in the country (per our members)

TIARA's activism in keeping members informed on issues of interest to the genealogical community

TIARA's links to some of the best local, national and international groups in genealogy today

Last and most importantly TIARA members, one of the finest group of people you will ever meet

*TIARA would like to thank the  
following very generous  
donors to our  
25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion*

Marie Ahearn  
Ann S. Casey  
Mary E. Choppa  
Kathryn Collins  
Phyllis A. Duffy  
Claire Duggan  
Ann M. Evans  
Debbie Flynn  
Eleanor Fusoni  
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