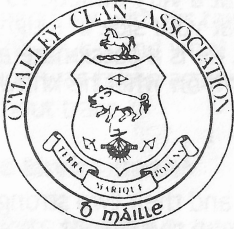


O'MALLEY CLAN NEWSLETTER

Peter McGee
Chieftain

Sheila O'Malley Mulloy
Tanaiste

Gerry O'Malley, Guardian Chief



40th O'Malley Clan Rally

Saturday 27th June and Sunday 28th June 1992

Our Chieftain, Peter O'Malley McGee of Newport, invites all O'Malleys, together with their spouses, relatives and friends, to join him for two days of celebration at our annual rally.

Saturday 27th June

- 2 p.m. Unveiling at The Mall, Castlebar, of bronze sculpture, by Peter Grant, of Manannán Mac Lir, presented by Helen Hooker O'Malley to the town of Castlebar in memory of her late husband Ernie O'Malley.
- 3 to 5 p.m. Civic Reception by Castlebar Urban District Council at Marsh House, Newton, Castle.
- 7 p.m. Annual General Meeting of the O'Malley Clan Association in the Parochial Hall, Castlebar Road, Newport.
- 8.30 p.m. Chieftain Peter O'Malley McGee's Reception at Parochial Hall, Newport. Entertainment will be provided by local musicians.

Sunday 28th June

- 10 a.m. Mass in Burrishoole 'Abbey' (two miles north-west of Newport, to the south of the Achill road, signposted), by kind permission of Revd. Éamonn Concannon, P.P. In case of inclement weather Mass will be transferred to St. Patrick's Church, Newport.
- 1 p.m. Annual Clan Luncheon at the Breaffy House Hotel, Breaffy, Castlebar (two miles from Castlebar on the Balla Road). Entertainment will be provided afterwards.

Peter McGee's mother, Kathleen O'Malley was born on one of the islands in Clew Bay - Inniscuttle. She went to school on the mainland - or, as they say on Clare Island, "the parish abroad" - by boat.

In the article, GERRY O'MALLEY, talks about her son, Peter, Chief of the Clan.

Peter McGee

Peter McGee is a big man. He stands about 6' 3" and weighs in at a very athletic 15 stone. You feel, instinctively, that he'd be a good man to have at your side in a tight corner. But Peter McGee is big in more than the physical sense. He is a passionate and fearless campaigner for what he feels is right. And he stands firm on what he knows are unpopular causes.

Newport

Peter McGee is 49. He lives in Newport with his wife, Maureen, and their two strong teenaged sons, Colum and Daragh. He worked as an engineer with the ESB for 22 years. Three years ago he took early retirement and set up his own business as sports gun dealer and fishing tackle merchant.

That move was typical of the man. All his life he had been devoted to outdoor activities ... to fishing, shooting and sailing. Like the man in Danny Kaye's old song, "Civilisation", he saw no good reason why he shouldn't spend 52 weeks of every year doing what others could only manage for their fortnights' holiday.

Sportsman Extraordinary

Peter McGee's record in his chosen sport - handball - is phenomenal. He won his first Senior All-Ireland Championship Medal in 1962 and his last in 1984. In the twenty-two year period he captured no less than 18 Senior All-Ireland titles. He is co-holder with the legendary John Joe Gilmartin of Kilkenny - of a record 10 Handball Singles All-Ireland titles and has played international handball and racquet ball with greater success than any Irishman living or dead. He represented his county, Mayo, for 27 straight seasons.

In 1979 he set up the MCGEE INTERNATIONAL HANDBALL INVITATIONAL which - now in its 13 th year - has become the biggest handball event in the country. The four-day programme of serious sport and even more serious socialising attracts 70 or 80 of the world's best players to Newport, Co. Mayo. The athletes come from the U.S. and Canada, from the Continent of Europe as well as from all over Ireland. Invitations to participate are much sought-after ... as I discovered when an interprovincial player friend of mine learned that I knew Peter McGee.



Peter McGee
Chieftain

Controversy

The early years of the MCGEE INTERNATIONAL HANDBALL INVITATIONAL include an episode which says something about its founder. In only its second year, the Gaelic Athletic Association, through its subsidiary The Irish Handball Council, were dissatisfied with some of the arrangements for the western event and tried to disqualify athletes who took part. Instead of tugging the forelock and retiring respectfully with his tail between his legs, Peter McGee took on the might and power of the GAA ... and won! The athletes supported him, the event took place and no action was taken against them. Official opposition to the annual gathering vanished without trace.

The Environment

*"Ill fares the land to hast'ning ill a prey
Where wealth accumulates and men decay.
Princes and Lords may flourish or may fade.
A breath can make them as a breath has made.
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride
When once destroyed can never be supplied".*

- The lines from Goldsmith's "Deserted Village" are among Peter McGee's favourites. A modern-minded, forward-looking man, he is conscious of the dangers for society and environment where policies are dictated by greed, thoughtlessness or political expediency. He is Chairman of the Newport Angling Club, a member of the Tourism Committee and a supporter of the Sea Trout Action Group (STAG). He comes near to fury when he describes the demise of sea trout by sea lice which come from the development of fish farming in the area. And, a few days after I last saw Peter, The Irish Times carried a report which said that the Central Fisheries Board "could not accept" a denial by the Irish Salmon Growers' Association (i.e. the fish farmers) about sea lice infestation and "accepted" the case put by STAG.

"My Killarney"

As we drive around the environs of his beloved Newport ("my Killarney"), on narrow roads through a dramatic lake-filled landscape, his enjoyment of the scenery is offset by the sight of hay bales left out for the sheep ... an indication that the excessive sheep population has completely denuded the mountain of grass.

- Did you ever think you'd see the day when hay had to be left out in bales, in summertime, for mountain sheep? The whole mountain is completely bare of vegetation. The people who are doing this are responsible for more harm to the environment than any gold miners ... and all for the sake of the headage payments!

Changes

"The beauty of this world has made me sad.
This beauty that will pass.
Sometimes my heart is shaken with great joy
To see a leaping squirrel in a tree
Or a red ladybird upon a stalk
Or little rabbits in a field at evening
Lit by a slanting sun."

For someone whose work is, to a large extent, tourist-dependent, Peter McGee takes a very jaundiced view of mass tourism. Some years ago there was a gloomy forecast that the Irish would, in time, become a nation of gillies and waiters. With the distinct possibility that we will soon have nothing left to hunt or fish and with the proliferation of golf clubs, that prognosis might be that we are well on the way to becoming a nation of waiters and caddies.

Optimist

If the picture that emerges is of a Cassandra-like figure, forecasting gloom and despondency, let me quickly correct such an impression. Because nothing could be further from the truth. Nobody has a greater sense of fun than Peter; nobody is more optimistic by nature. That he can organise a large party, without fuss or panic, with a "not-to-worry" attitude, has been a source of wonder to, among others, the American athletes who compete in his annual handball weekend. What these men don't realise is that Peter's natural flamboyance conceals a highly-developed talent for organisation, with meticulous attention to detail. By the time this goes to print, I am prepared to bet that Peter will have given further evidence of this ability in a rip-roaring Chief's party in Newport on Saturday, June 27.

Peter McGee's favourite book is "Wild Sports of the West", written more than 150 years ago by Hamilton Maxwell. It is set in the West of Ireland, from Connemara up to Blacksod Bay and the Mullet Peninsula. The book divides naturally into two parts: first there is the discourse on hunting, shooting and fishing in the area, with detailed description for the devotee of how to tie flies etc.; then there are the sociological passages, telling of the life of the people. Peter McGee is doing everything one man can to ensure that, by preservation of the former, the conditions for the latter will be improved and enriched. For all our sakes, let's hope he succeeds.

HAIL TO THE CHIEF!

"THE REAL GENIUS OF IRELAND LIES IN HER ART AND CULTURE"

In this article, GERRY O'MALLEY, Guardian Chief of the Clan, discusses this and describes the part played by the Clan System and the Brehon Laws in the period usually called, "Ireland's Golden Age".

Ireland was the first nation north of the Alps to produce a whole body of literature in her own speech.

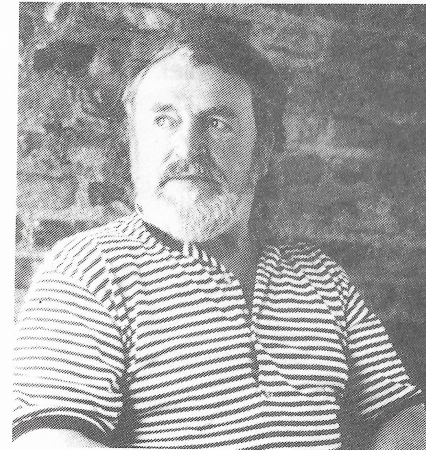
The beginning of the clan system - which we celebrate and commemorate at the annual Rally - was also the beginning of Ireland's Golden Age (the 8th century A.D.) The cultural unity that existed in the country as a whole was all the more remarkable because of the absence of political unity. It is evidence of the fact that the *asodana* (the men of art) constituted the most important element in early Irish society. They could travel freely throughout the country. They were all originally druids.

Christianity

With the triumph of Christianity the druids, as such, disappeared. The poets gave up their pagan and magical functions but otherwise they continued to enjoy the full privileges of their predecessors. The bardic schools, in which pupils had to learn prodigious amounts of poetry by heart, continued up to the 17th. century. Ireland in the Middle Ages was in a unique position in that learning and literacy were not the sole preserve of the Christian clergy. The poets were the true bearers of the ancient Celtic tradition.

The Brehon Laws

The Brehon Laws and the clan system were the mainstays of Irish life during Ireland's Golden Age. The brehons (judges) were men learned in traditional law, which enshrined a very old Indo-European social system. The Brehon Laws find their closest parallel in traditional Hindu law. The Brehons maintained that their laws represented



the laws of nature. They were adamant that Christianity might add to it but could not subtract from it. They even defended polygamy on the grounds that it was practised by the Old Testament patriarchs.

Gerry O'Malley
Guardian Chief

Irish Society

Irish society at that time was rigidly stratified. There were slaves, labourers, workmen, lower grades of entertainers, freemen and nobles. Rank depended on wealth as well as birth. Learning was also a qualification. The learned classes were equated in rank with the aristocracy, as were the Christian clergy. It was possible for one of the unfree classes to acquire franchise by following a skilled trade. Smith, physicians and harpers were classified as freemen.

Irish law had a maxim: a man is better than his birth.

All freemen were landowners. The economy was simple, an agrarian one. Coined money was not used. The basic unit of value was a **sead** (a young heifer). A higher unit was a **cumal** (a female slave), reckoned to be worth 6 **seads** (There were similar units in ancient Greece and the Latin word for money, **pecunia**, comes from **pecus**, cattle).

An elaborate interplay of patronage and loyalty, along with fosterage, resulted in mutual responsibility which, in a small rural community, ensured a reasonable measure of law and order in a society that had no police force and where the state was not involved in law suits. It was a very personal way of co-existence which seemed to suit the Celtic temperament.

Some aspects of Irish Society at the time:

- * fosterage of children (usually returned to their parents at the marriage age -14 for girls, 17 for boys)
- * distraint of cattle to recover damages
- * ritual fasting as a method of asserting one's rights (cf. Gandhi)
- * marriage (divorce was legal in Ireland until the 12th century)
- * hospitality - whoever comes to the door must be fed and cared for, with no questions asked.

The pivotal unit of Irish Society was the joint family (**fine**). The **fine** was responsible for the misdeeds of its members. It bore the duty of blood vengeance in the case of a killing. In practice, a sum of money, or its equivalent, was acceptable. The worst kind of crime was the killing of one's own kin to gain the chieftainship. To try and avoid this a **tanaiste** was elected during the lifetime of the chief.

The English

Gaelic resistance to English domination was based on Chieftainship and Tanistry. The Irish dynasty was virtually unkillable. Once when Piers Bermingham fought with his neighbours, the O'Connors of Offaly, he had the chief, his two brothers and 29 of his leading men killed at a banquet to which he had invited them. But because eligibility for the chieftainship went to four degrees of kinship there were sufficient O'Connors left for the sept to survive. Incidentally, for his perfidy Bermingham got £100 reward from the Dublin government and a stirring ballad, in English, praised his bravery as a "hunter-out of the Irish". In the eyes of the law, Irish Chieftains were felons and outlaws.

So, the English wanted desperately to smash the Brehon Laws and the rule of Tanistry. The Statutes of Kilkenny (1366) stated that 'all mere Irish living under Brehon Laws' were "in servile condition". In the 14th century stringent laws were enacted by which the English were forbidden "to practise fosterage, marriage with Irish or to use Brehon Laws or entertain Irish minstrels, poets or story-tellers".

When Richard 11 came (1395), a number of chiefs made submission to him "except O'Donnell and the barbarous chieftains of the Connacht seaboard".

Henry VIII (1547) acted to suppress Brehon Law and the Irish Bards and to introduce the principles of English law. Under the new regime the Irish "enemies of the crown" did not have protection and any land belonging to a person with an Irish name was forfeit.

After Kinsale (1601), the Irish system of land tenure was replaced by English landlordism and the Irish law of chieftainship and tanistry was abolished.

The Clare Island Wall Paintings by Pat McDonnell

One of the principal objectives of the Granuaile Trust is to conserve the wall paintings in the ruined St. Brigid's church (also known as Clare Island Abbey). It is gratifying to report that considerable progress is being made.

These paintings are important because of their rarity as they are, together with Abbey Knockmoy and Holy Cross Abbey the only examples remaining in the country. They date from the 15th to 16th century. The Clare Island wall paintings are the most extensive and have the greatest variety of subjects depicting what appear to be hunting scenes of men on foot and horseback with animals, birds, trees and various mythological creatures. Although the exact meaning and symbolism of much of the paintings is not yet understood they contain what seem to be David playing his harp and the Archangel Michael. The paintings are on the original plasterwork and painted vaulting ribs can be seen on the underside of the roof vaults. Sections of the paintings not previously known have now come to notice as a result of the work and the pigments can be identified.

It is remarkable that these paintings have survived so long considering the lack of protection afforded by a ruined church and the climate of an exposed Atlantic island. Recent years showed an accelerating rate of decline and it became an urgent matter to save what remains. A three to four year programme of cleaning and conservation was decided upon by the Office of Public Works with support and financial assistance from the Granuaile Trust. The Trust held several meetings with the O.P.W. to press for the work to be undertaken and provided money for the accommodation of those working on the paintings in the first (1991) summer season of the project. It has been arranged that the Granuaile Trust will make a further financial contribution this summer.

The work is painstaking and highly skilled starting with a cleaning and removal of algae growth. An Anglo-German husband and wife team who have already completed a similar project at Abbey Knockmoy are responsible for the work. There are very few people who have this expertise and it is good to know that a back up team of Irish conservators will acquire useful practical experience.

An interesting question remains to be answered when the work is finished. Should the church be reroofed to protect the paintings or should the natural balance which has evolved over hundreds of years between the environment and the paintings remain? Clearly there will have to be constant monitoring and research to answer those questions.

What is clear however, is that the remaining wall paintings will now be saved and conserved for viewing by future generations. It will now be possible to carry out future academic research on the origins, meaning and symbolism of the paintings.

The Granuaile Trust can take justifiable pride in having campaigned for this work to be done and contributed substantially towards the cost of conserving these rare medieval artefacts on Clare Island. Both the church and the island are reputedly associated in a very special way with Granuaile and the history of the O'Malley clan.

NEWSY BITS

O'Malleys among top 100 Irishmen in USA

The monthly magazine 'Irish America' listed three O'Malleys in the March issue as being among the 'Top 100' in the United States. They included **Patrick L. O'Malley** of Chicago, **Peter O'Malley** of Los Angeles and **Shaun F. O'Malley** of New York.

Patrick O'Malley was born in Boston, spent 30 years with Coca-Cola and then in 1962 joined Canteen Corporation in Chicago as chief executive officer. He also became president and chairman, and in 1981 he was named chairman emeritus.

Peter O'Malley was born in New York and grew up talking baseball to his father who owned the New York Dodgers baseball team. Walter O'Malley moved the team to Los Angeles and in 1970 Peter succeeded his father as President of the Dodgers. Since then the Dodgers have won five National League Championships and two World Series.

Shaun O'Malley was born in Philadelphia. After graduating from the Wharton School of Business in Philadelphia he joined the Price Waterhouse accounting firm. He has risen through the ranks and has recently been named their Chairman and Senior Partner.

Leaving for America

Cormac, Máire, Conor and Bergin return to New York in July of this year having spent 12 years in Europe. Bon Voyage agus go ndeirí an bothair libh!

A New Boat

Congratulations to Chris and Kay O'Grady on their wonderful new boat which makes the trip to Clare Island even more pleasurable if that could be possible!

Well Done to Michael McGlynn who has received at least two awards to date, for his composition of "The O'Malley Mass" commissioned by Sal O'Malley McInerney (Chieftain 1991).

Art Exhibition: Tony O'Malley's paintings from the 1960's, on view at Kilkenny Castle.

**O'Malley Art Collection on loan to the Irish Museum of Modern Art
by Cormac K. O'Malley**

A collection of paintings and sculpture contributed by Helen O'Malley Roelofs, formerly Mrs Ernie O'Malley, to the Irish American Cultural Institute of St. Paul, Minnesota, USA, has been placed on loan with the Irish Museum of Modern Art, now housed at the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham. A preliminary showing of some of the works was exhibited at the Union League Club in New York during January of this year. Subsequently the collection was transported to Dublin. Some of the items from the collection were on exhibition at the opening of the Museum in late May '91. At some time in the future it is intended that there will be a special exhibition of the O'Malley Art Collection itself.

Mrs. O'Malley Roelofs, who is American, acquired her collection over the years of extensive travel as well as her years in Ireland where she lived from 1935 to 1950. Ever since she left in 1950, she has maintained close links with Ireland and it's Arts. The Collection concentrates on Irish art but covers a broad range, As a sculptor and photographer herself, she has tried to catch many sides of the Ireland she knew in both media, but her own works are not included in the collection.

The O'Malley Collection will be on exhibition at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Royal Hospital, Kilmainham, Dublin 8 Tel: (01) 718666. from June 23rd - October 11th 1992

Works by Jack B. Yeats, Evie Hone, Mainie Jellett, Paul Henry, Patrick Hennessy and many more.

The exhibition has been opened by An Taoiseach, Mr. Albert Reynolds T.D. on June 23rd

The O'Malley Clan Annual

This journal, now discontinued, was published annually from 1984 to 1990. It is an excellent souvenir of the rallies of those years, and contains as well articles on O'Malley history, and on places associated with the clan. Back-numbers (1985 - 1990) can be obtained for £3.40 or 6.dollars each.

The O'Malley Clan Car Sticker

This sticker in three colours is exclusive to the O'Malley Clan Association and is similar to the crest on your rally invitation. The cost is £3.50 or 6 dollars

Clan Association Badge

A really beautiful embroidered jacket badge. Price £20 or 32 dollars.

Clan Association Tie

Available in two colours - blue and green. Price £7.50 of 12 dollars.

Granuaile Symphony

A cassette of the widely-acclaimed Granuaile Symphony by Shaun Davey at the very special price of £6.50 of 10 dollars. Sung by Rita Connolly, with Liam O'Flynn, uilleann pipes and chamber orchestra.

O'Malley Mass

Composed by Michael McGlynn, first heard in Trinity College Chapel at 1990 Rally. Price of cassette £6.50 of 10 dollars.

Granuaile Biography By Anne Chambers

This indispensable history of Granuaile, the O'Malley heroine, is available at £7 or 11 dollars.

O'Malley People and Places by Sheila Mulloy

The second enlarged edition is now available. This book is an account of people, places and events prominent in clan history. Price: Softcover, £7 or 11 dollars; Hardcover, £11 or 18 dollars.

All prices include postage and packaging, and are based on current exchange rates

Post your order to:

Mrs. S. Mulloy, Carrowbaun, Westport, Co. Mayo, Ireland.

Cheques to be made payable to O'Malley Clan Association.

Name (block capitals please)

Address (block capitals please)

I/We enclose for the following items:

No.		No.	
.....	Clan Certificate @ £10 or \$16	.....	Clan Badge @ £20 or \$32
.....	Clan Annual 1990 @ £3.50 or \$6	.....	Clan Tie @ £7.50 or \$12, blue/green
.....	Clan Annual 1989 @ £3.50 or \$6	.....	Granuaile Symphony @ £6.50 or \$10
.....	Clan Annual 1988 @ £3.50 or \$6	.....	O'Malley Mass @ £6.50 or \$10
.....	Clan Annual 1987 @ £3.50 or \$6	.....	Granuaile Biography @ £7 or \$10
.....	Clan Annual 1986 @ £3.50 or \$6	.....	O'Malley People and places:
.....	Clan Annual 1985 @ £3.50 or \$6	.....	Softcover £7 or \$11
		.....	Hardback £11 or \$18

Date: Total Enclosed: 11

