THE IRISH GENEALOGICAL QUARTERLY

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A Message from the President

Here we are in an early and far too cold winter. Frightful to think that this could be the "new normal" for the upper Midwest: longer and harsher winters. Time to turn our attention to indoor pastimes, perhaps genealogy?

We all have those mystery ancestors, the ones we cannot quite trace back no matter how hard we try. This holiday season has me thinking about my great grandmother Mary Maguire whose early life remains maddeningly elusive, her too common name and its varied spellings being just part of the problem. From the later census data I knew she was the daughter of Irish emigrants; I knew she was born around 1860 and lived in coal country in Pennsylvania; I knew she was widowed young and remarried a James Gilroy. It wasn't until I found her obituary that I discovered she had died in Syracuse, NY. So that explained the futility of searching for her death record in Pennsylvania!

From the Monday December 1, 1919 Wilkes-Barre Times Leader (Wilkes-Barre, PA) page 18:

"*The funeral of Mrs. Mary Gilroy who* ***died at Syracuse while visiting relatives,*** *was held from the home of her daughter, Mrs. Joseph Garrity, 91 Lawrence Street, this morning at 9 o'clock. A high mass of requiem was celebrated at St. Aloysius church at 9:30 o'clock and was largely attended. There were a number of floral offerings. The pall bearers were:* ***Don Savage****, John Connell, Thomas McTague, Michael Fisher Francis and Michael Quinn. Rev. Thomas Ahern was celebrant of the mass and internment was in St. Francis cemetery at Nanticote."* (emphasis mine).

Ah!! Clues. Clues are marvelous. It was much easier to find Mary Maguire's death record when looking in the right state. Her NY death certificate reports she was born in PA July 25, 1867 and names her parents as James Maguire and Mary Macort. She died Nov 29, 1919 after becoming ill on Nov 27; cause of death was "acute inflammation of the gall bladder". Hmmm... late November, "*visiting relatives*", gall bladder attack... doesn't that sound like too much rich food at a Thanksgiving meal? And indeed, Thanksgiving was on November 27 that year, the day she became ill.

There was one more clue on that death certificate. The informant was D L Savage, same name as one of the pallbearers at her funeral. His address matched the one where she was staying when she took ill. And this informant knew Mary well enough to provide her birthday and her Irish parents' names. And well enough to hedge on her last name! (There had been the unfortunate 1905 incident wherein her second husband shot her son, my grandfather... but I digress.) On the death certificate, Mary's name is entered with the surname from her first marriage and then this is struck out and replaced with Gilroy. The entry for spouse shows her first husband's name, then this is also struck out and replaced with "unable to learn". (I suspect understandable issues with her second husband. Though he was the one shot, my grandfather apparently was more forgiving, as the 1909 funeral for his convicted stepfather James Gilroy took place from his home.)

Back to 1919 Syracuse, who are the "relatives" Mary is visiting at Thanksgiving? And how does D L Savage, the informant and pallbearer 15 years her junior, fit into her life? I traced this Donald Lambert Savage and his wife Agnes Carey from Syracuse back to Rhode Island and found no obvious connection to any Pennsylvania Maguires. Further research is confounded by there being far more Savages out east than I had ever imagined. And worse, in the serial censuses Donald cannot seem to make up his mind whether he was born in Canada, New York or Maine, whether he did or didn't naturalize in Rhode Island, and whether his mother is Irish or Canadian. So I cannot figure out this Maguire-Savage connection... are they cousins?... aunt-nephew? Was Donald's mother a Maguire? Perhaps his father, more consistently identified as Irish, was part Maguire. Would chasing down and purchasing Donald's vital records bring answers? How far does one chase a lead that may or may not mean anything?

Looking again to Pennsylvania censuses in her younger years, there are many Mary Maguire/McGuire possibilities, but none with parents James and Mary. Perhaps her birth year is way off, more than even the 7 year discrepancy posed by the death record. Perhaps her parents used their middle names on the census. Perhaps there was a death or a remarriage or a move out of state. Or another one of those too common errors in the census data or in its indexing. How many of these many Mary Maguires in

the census do I consider? Again, how far to chase a lead that may or may not mean anything?

Unsure, I push away from the computer and turn my attention back to holiday preparations. I may never solve this puzzle and find my great grandmother's birth record or her 1870 census record. I do know I will think of Mary Maguire again at Thanksgiving, wondering what "family" she was visiting in 1919 when she died. And I expect in a few months I'll try again to learn more about her.

You are not alone in your grappling with brick walls. I suspect we all have at least a few.

Meanwhile on behalf of IGSW, I wish you and your loved ones a very happy and safe holiday season. And I wonder if our descendents 100 years from now will be trying to figure out how we spent these holidays.

- Kris Mooney

Spanish Arch, Galway City, 2008

NEWS FROM THE WEB

by Mary Kay Kuhfittig

UPDATE ON RELEASE OF IRISH CIVIL REGISTRATION RECORDS

Last June complaints were made regarding posting of civil registration data on <www.irishgenealogy.ie> The site was taken down after complaints of privacy violation. It has since been agreed that the site may be online again provided it only shows data on births more than 100 years old, marriages more than 75 years, and deaths more than 50 years.

THE McCABE LIST

In 1822 the Irish government came up with a scheme to establish Irish paupers in Upper Canada. Peter Robinson was appointed to head the project, and he arranged transportation for 2500 in two groups, one in 1823 and a second in 1825.

In February, 1829 a British parliamentary committee was facing criticism from those who characterized the experiment as one of privation and misery. To combat the criticisms the committee circulated a questionnaire to the emigrants asking for their views on the question.

John McCabe, a Northern Ireland genealogist, found one of the questionnaires while researching in the British Public Record Office. It listed about 700 Irish families who were in the area of Bytown (later called Ottawa) on February 5, 1829. The respondents were men working on the Rideau Canal.

The list is valuable for researchers since it asked for the county, parish and townland of origin, who came with you, the number of male and female children and names and addresses of relatives still in Ireland.

The response was positive, with emigrants indicating willingness to reimburse the government for transportation of their relatives still in Ireland.

LINKS TO THE HISTORY OF THE IRISH IN CANADA

<http://gail25.tripod.com/untold.htm> gives links to articles covering Irish immigration in different areas of Canada. Some articles cited are not online, but those that are appear to be a rich resource.

IRISH HISTORY BOOKS ONLINE

The great thing about 19th century books is that they are well out of copyright, and can be read online or downloaded to a computer or tablet.

<tinyurl.com/maedozl> is a gateway to classic books on Irish history, biography, travel, and folklore.

<familysearch.org> has digitized over 1500,000 books from its collection. They are full text searchable.

MAJOR UPDATE TO 1861 CANADIAN CENSUS DATABASE

The 1861 Canadian census database, released in 2013, is online at <bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1861/Pages/about-census.aspx> After its release it was discovered that records were missing and some misplaced on the site. 133,0000 entries have now been corrected.

Changes include records for the cities of Hamilton, Kingston, London, Ottawa and Toronto, previously misplaced, and many more, too numerous to mention. So If you have searched this site previously, it's time to look again.

If you find an entry that appears to have been incorrectly transcribed, there is a link to report your concern, and the Library and Archives Canada will investigate and correct, if deemed necessary.

The 1861 is not the only census available on this site; there are a total of 15 census databases to explore.

BRICK WALL SOLUTIONS

Genealogy in Time magazine has published a list of "The 50 Best Brickwall Solutions," located at < http://tinyurl.com/c9lthc6> Actually there are 52 suggestions under categories of names, geography, local records, and migration, death, family, military records, and general.

DIGITIZING OUR NATIONAL ARCHIVE RECORDS

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) holds over 12 billion pages of records. David Ferriero, US Archivist, has proposed the herculean task of digitizing them and making them available online. A strategy was begun in 2008, and has resultd in 230 million scans, still a long way from 12 billion.

A new strategy has been rolled out in which NARA will collaborate with other organizations and institutions. Mr. Ferriero's comments on the plan may be seen at
< http://blogs.archives.gov/aotus/?p=5717> A full description of the NARA plan is at
< http://www.archives.gov/digitization/strategy.html>

PERSI NOW SEARCHABLE ON FindMyPast.com

The Periodical Source Index [PERSI] , a feature maintained by the Allen County Library of LaFayette, Indiana, covers over 2.5 million names and topics from thousands of publications. It is now being featured on <findmypast.com> where it is free to search . If you want a more detailed entry or digitized content, there is a fee. As always, you may order a full copy from the Allen County Library for $7.50 for up to six articles, plus a photocopying charge of 20 cents per page. Their order form is located at <enealogycenter.org/pdf/ArticleRequest.pdf>
PERSI may also be accessed through HeritageQuest.com, which is a site provided to public libraries. Some libraries give home access to patrons. Milwaukee Public Library [MPL] is one of them. Anyone with an MPL card can find it at the library website, <mpl.org>, and click on "research," then "databases."

FamilySearch.com has a guide to using PERSI, found at <http://tinyurl.com/kcjqp7r>

CURIOUS ABOUT DNA?

<http://tinyurl.com/mkdrl3g> leads to a collection of multiple YouTube sites featuring information on DNA. The site has basics for beginners, information on family group and surname projects, localization to subregions in Ireland and Scotland, and much more.

IRISH DIRECTORIES ONLINE

Cork: <http://tinyurl.com/lb64tro> This site has many directories for both the city and county of Cork, ranging from 1787 to 1945.

Belfast and Ulster: <proni.gov.uk/index/search_the_archives/street_directories.htm>
Directories here range from 1819 to 1900.

Clare: <clarelibrary.ie> has 10 directories for the county.

Dublin: <http://books.google.com> Slater's Directory of 1846 (for all of Ireland) and Thom's for Dublin in1850 and 1857

<www.failteromhat.com> has several directories:

Richard Lucas's *Directory of Cork City 1787*
Holden's *Triennial Directory Cork 1809*
Pigot & Co's *Provincial Directory of Ireland 1824*
Postal Directory for Cork City and County 1842
Pettigrew and Oulton's *Dublin Almanac 1842*
Slater's *Commercial Directory of Ireland 1846*
Guy's *Postal Directories for Cork City and County 1914*

FindMyPast.com, also has a large collection of city directories. This is a site requiring payment. They have recently added over 86,000pages of Irish directories. See over 256,000 new wills and probate records as well as over 86,000 pages of Irish Directories and Social History records.

There is a link to over 550 historical directories of Ireland at <http://www.swilson.info/dirdb.php> These cover free as well as paid sites.

THE KABRISTAN ARCHIVES

An Irishwoman, Eileen Hewson, concerned about deterioration of graveyard monuments, has made it her project to record inscriptions in Ireland. She has done extensive traveling, and her search has included European memorials in India and Sri Lanka.

She is the founder of The Kabristan Archives, an organization formed to find and preserve memorial inscriptions, some of which have disappeared. The website is: <kabristan.org.uk> The site also offers some publications.

THE FORGOTTEN IRISH OF AMERICA'S CIVIL WAR

A new twitter account, #ForgottenIrish seeks to draw attention the great number of Irish men who fought in our Civil War. A weekly entry will proceed county by county, highlighting these forgotten men. These entries will be found online at <https://storify.com/irishacw>

The first entry, on Cork, reminds us that more Cork men served in the Civil War than in World War I.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS INDEXING PROJECT

A small group of volunteers are working on a project to make available online an index of all names from Ireland's Registry of Deeds. Facing a task of indexing millions of names, they have as of this October recorded 158, 823 names out of 18,924 Memorials. Anyone may contribute to the project. Instructions are given at the home page at:
<http:freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~registryofdeeds/

This page also gives instructions on how to search the database.

IMAGES OF KERRY AND CORK CEMETERIES, 1720-2014

<www.kerryburials.com> features photographs of 99.9% of Kerry cemeteries, which is about 200 cemeteries. It is searchable by name. This is an ongoing project with daily updates.

IRISH ROAD MAP OF 1777

Taylor and Skinner's *Maps of the Roads of Ireland Surveyed 1777* is online at: <http://tinyurl.com/lkurczq> This book begins with an index of Dublin roads measured from His Majesty's Castle Gate to the Market House of the towns. The index shows the route of the road and gives the distance in both Irish and English miles. Another index covers routes from one Market House to another. Maps indicate churches, castles, gentleman's seats, rivers, lakes, etc. The front page gives abbreviations and symbols used.

IRISH ARCHIVES RESOURCE

Irish Archives Resource [IAR] links archival collections and services in both Northern Ireland and the Republic. Located at <www.iar.ie>, it links access to 34 places, including the National Archives and Museum, Trinity College Archives. University College Cork, Derry City Council and Museum Service, St. Patricks College, Maynooth. It is planned to increase the number of collections to 70.

The archive doesn't show images of actual records, but gives descriptions of resources available.

NEW BOOK REVEALS EXTENT OF FAMINE DISTRESS IN CORK

Local historian, Donie Murphy, has written a book on his investigations into the many famine stories he had heard growing up. The book is *The Great Irish Famine*. Much of Murphy's research comes from letters published in Cork newspapers of the time. These letters describe local distress in Kilmeen, Ballydesmond, Boherbue, Kiskeam, Knockclarig, Brosna, Rockchapel, and Mallow.

A letter published in the *Cork Examiner* on February 16, 1848 reported that although there were 4 workhouses in Kanturk, 400 people were waiting for admission. Another letter, of April 21, 1847, mentioned that the town of Mallow was experiencing 50 funerals a week. Those laborers able to walk sold off their holdings and walked to Queenstown (Cobh) to emigrate. An article published in the *Corkman* on October 25, 2014 gives more details. It appears at: <http://tinyurl.com/lqvck66>

NEWSPAPER OBITUARIES

FamilySearch.org is partnering with GenealogyBank.com to place U.S. obituaries online. This will comprise more than 1 billion records from 100 million newspaper obituaries dating from 1730 to the present.

Volunteers are needed—-many, many volunteers. To volunteer go to <https://familysearch.org/campaign/obituaries>

ARCHEOLOGICAL TREASURE FOUND

A large hoard of 17th century treasures has been found at Rathfarnham Castle in Dublin. Workers attempting to install an elevator in one of the towers made the discovery under the floorboards. Among the items are a Cromwellian armor breastplate, musket balls and gun flints, coins dating to 1602, glass and porcelain items including a Chinese export tea set with some perfectly preserved tea leaves. There were costume items, jewelry, shoes, buckles, and even a folding toothbrush. Pictures of some of these item are at < https://www.storehouse.co/stories/o7eg3-a-hidden-hoard>

The castle was built in 1583 for Archbishop Adam Loftus. Archeologists believe the items belonged to his descendant, Lord Adam Loftus (1625-1691)

IRISH QUOTE

I heard for the space of an hour and twenty minutes, some thorough Protestant doctrine, and the Popish superstitions properly belabled. Does it strengthen a man in his own creed to hear his neighbor's beliefs abused? One would imagine so; for though abuse converts nobody, yet many of our pastors would seem to think they are not doing their duty by their own fold unless they fling stones at the flock in the next field.

William Thackeray, on his visit to a Co. Meath church

IN MEMORY

Donna Glover Franklin, Wisconsin the daughter of Bob and Judy Towne

Hazel A. Franseen, Siren, Wisconsin Charter Member

William McManus "Bill the Hugger, Shorewood, Wisconsin Charter Member

We extend our sincerest sympathy to the families of the deceased and to all members of IGSW who have lost loved ones this past year.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.

Amen

IMPORTANT NOTICE PERTAINING TO IGSW MEETING FEBRUARY 2, 2015

Archivist William Fliss from Marquette University will unveil a pilot project that provides online access to genealogical resources from the Gesu Parish records held at Marquette's Raynor Library. This pilot website will contain digitized records from St. Gall's Parish, which consolidated with Holy Name Parish in the 1890s to form Gesu. Archivists at Marquette have digitized the 2-volume Death Register (1850-1894) from St. Gall's as well as the parish's Publications Books which contain weekly pulpit announcements from 1855-1894. Fliss will describe the site's creation and demonstrate how to navigate it. He hopes to encourage genealogists to help improve the site, particularly by identifying names that might have been transcribed incorrectly. The site will be set up to receive feedback from visitors. Hopefully this pilot project will lead to the digitization of other records from Marquette's Gesu Parish collection that might be of interest to genealogists.

Report September IGSW Meetng Speaker Jane Anderson

At the September 8th meeting of IGSW, we were privilaged to hear the former Executive Dirctor of Milwaukee Irish Fest present stories from her many trips to Ireland. Over a period of some thirty years Jane was truly the Irish Fest Ambassador to Ireland.

Diplomates. Politicions, Ireland's Presidents, Artists, Craftsmen, Authors, Musicians, and Dancers were all contacts that Jane made which in turn has resulted in the unique people that has been an important part of Irish Fest.

Many unusual, sometime funny experiences happened during these trips to Ireland. Jane took them all in stride and related them to her audience in such a way that we almost felt that we had been there with her.

IGSW Roundtable October 6, 2014

"Wait, *how much* is that coffee?"

The cost of doing genealogy keeps rising, and it's now a big business. What changed?

Roundtable Moderated by Michele Patin

Remember when a cup of coffee cost 35 cents, and it was bottomless? Those were the days! Over the years, that cup of coffee has cost more and more due to inflation, growing demand and commodity prices. But something big changed in the late 80s. Coffee became a subculture, not just a morning habit. Our appetite for coffee changed. And then came .... Starbucks. Even if you don't know what a "PSL" is, you've felt the effect on your wallet. The expansion of chain and local coffeehouses has transformed coffee tastes, variety and prices forever.

Can we draw a fair parallel with the world of genealogy? Time was you plunked down a few bucks to order a roll of microfilm at your local LDS Family History Center; or paid 20¢ a page for photocopies from the Allen County Public Library; or simply copied information by hand — for free — from a vital record or deed at a county courthouse. Are those days gone forever?

Now, some of us are blithely paying *more than a dollar a day* to feed our genealogy habit. Ancestry.com "World Explorer Plus" is currently $33.17/month (minimum six-months). Rootsireland.ie now wants $24.08/month for a year's access (see below!) *What's a girl to do?*

Staggering recent changes at these two important commercial websites — Ancestry.com and Rootsireland.ie — make this a good time to ask, "Is the price of my habit too high?"

Ancestry.com, the granddaddy of them all

Ancestry is the largest for-profit genealogy company in the world, with a global reach and literally billions of records online. As of as of June 30, 2014, the company had *2,109,000 subscribers.* Ancestry.com went public in 2009 (trading on NASDAQ as ACOM). But in October 2012, Ancestry.com was acquired — for about *$1.6 billion* — by a private equity group (Permira Advisors LLP) along with two top executives of Ancestry.com itself.

On June 5, 2014, Ancestry.com announced it would retire five websites it owns on September 5, 2014 (later extended to September 30, last Tuesday), and would discontinue its Y-DNA and mitochondrial DNA testing programs. Prior to the announced termination date, users of the five websites were given an opportunity to export their information (or download their raw DNA results) for personal safekeeping. One of the websites, Genealogy.com, is still extant; it is marginally functional and the content now read-only, including GenForum and user family pages. Another of the websites, MyCanvas.com, was slated to be retired; but in August, Ancestry.com announced it had found MyCanvas a home under new owner, Alexander's. MyCanvas photobooks and projects will be transitioned there, and also still available at Ancestry.com. As for AncestryDNA, autosomal DNA tests continue as part of the company's offerings, but the Y-DNA and mtDNA tests are no longer sold. More worrisome, Ancestry.com stated that *it will destroy the original DNA samples for those tests.* (See: http://blogs.ancestry.com/ancestry/2014/06/12/comments-on-y-dna-and-mtdna-tests/) Yes, that means if you have a now-deceased relative who submitted a swab years ago, you can no longer hope to one day upgrade their test sample for better results. Stunning. Makes you think you should start reading the fine print.

Speaking of fine print, Ancestry.com is perhaps even bigger than you think it is. Since its inception, Ancestry.com has owned or acquired the following websites:

- MyFamily.com (retired September 30, 2014)
- MyCanvas.com (launched in 2006 as "AncestryPress;" under new owner in August 2014)
- Rootsweb.com (Ancestry.com funds Rootsweb and owns the domain & servers; still free)
- Genealogy.com (retired September 30, 2014; most content is archived but now read-only)
- FamilyTreemaker.com and FamilyTreemaker software (acquired 2003)
- Footnote.com (acquired 2010, re-branded in 2011 as Fold3.com with a military emphasis)
- Progenealogists.com (acquired 2010; same URL, now "Ancestry Progenealogists, Inc.)
- 1000memories.com and "Shoebox" app (acquired 2012, now integrated into Ancestry.com)
- Archives.com (acquired 2012)
- Newspapers.com (launched in 2012)
- FindAGrave.com (acquired 2013, now a wholly owned subsidiary, but still free)

Ancestry.com also has an extensive affiliate program which allows cross-marketing from other organization's web sites, with commissions accruing to affiliates based on membership feeds. Some Ancestry teasers you see are not random pop-ups but sanctioned, profitable ad leaders.

Then there are the stormy partnerships. Ancestry.com had made access free on computers at LDS Family History Centers, but this licensing was terminated in 2007 (inauspiciously on St. Patrick's Day). Access was later restored at Family History Centers in 2010. The partnership arrangement then expanded in February, 2014 when FamilySearch announced a new agreement with Ancestry.com along with two other commercial sites, giving LDS Church members free access to these sites. Ancestry.com also has a partnership with ProQuest LLC to bring the Ancestry Library Edition to public and academic libraries, archives and classrooms. And Ancestry.com partners with NBC for its "Who Do You Think You Are?" television series.

Indeed, "Who do you think you are?" is a question some angry Ancestry.com users are asking lately, feeling bullied by unexpected changes and rising subscription rates. Beyond the inevitable grumbling about pricing, this year there has been heartfelt outrage as some much-used and beloved genealogy toys have been taken away. Surely such reaction was not unexpected at the head office in Provo, Utah. What was unexpected was something that happened shortly after the five-website "retirement" announcement on June 5th: a crippling "DDoS" (distributed denial-of-service) attack on Ancestry.com servers which began Monday, June 16th, 2014.

A DDoS is an attempt by a third-party to make network services unavailable to intended users by flooding targeted web servers with requests exceeding bandwidth, or by consuming CPU processing time making legitimate business use impossible. Ancestry.com reacted swiftly to the disruption, but the main website was unusable for three days, and functionality was less than 100% for many days more. FindAGrave.com and Rootsweb were among the afflicted sister sites, as was the USGenWeb project, which shares servers as part of Rootsweb. The company assured customers that no genealogical content was affected, nor was personal data or private information compromised. No perpetrators have been alleged. But these "site issues" were why the five-website "retirement" date was extended 25 days by Ancestry.com. (see: http://blogs.ancestry.com/ancestry/2014/06/04/ancestry-com-focuses-on-core-offerings/)

The question is, was that DDoS attack on Ancestry.com cyber-retribution for the service changes announced ten days earlier? Or was the timing a bizarre coincidence? *Hmmm.*

Rootsireland.ie, the mother of Irish church records

If the above developments gives you a chill, things may be getting even chillier.

Rootsireland.ie is the largest online database of Irish family records, including holdings of births, marriages and deaths/burials from parish registers in all counties except County Carlow, part of

North Cork and Dublin counties and all of County Kerry. (Parish registers for much of the latter are *indexed and searchable for free* at Irishgenealogy.ie.)

On September 24, 2014, RootsIreland.ie announced sweeping changes to its pricing structure, reflecting abandonment of its former "pay-per-view" credit-purchasing system in favor of a subscription model. Yet searching by name has become more restricted. Reaction has ranged from shock and anger to a wary "wait and see what develops."

This is not the first time big changes were made at Rootsireland.ie. Index searches used to be virtually unlimited and free; this was changed in April 2012 so that "free" searches frustratingly only returned a raw total of results by record type. (See John Grenham's despondent reaction at: http://www.irishtimes.com/blogs/irishroots/2012/04/08/oh-no-not-again/). *So, what's next?*

What can we do?

If you're like me, a self-confessed addict of genealogy (and coffee), these issues are unsettling. I enjoy my coffee; I will pay a lot for a good coffee; but I will not pay *whatever price is asked.* Can we be pro-active about our cherished hobby, too, and if so, what steps can we take? Our roundtable will discuss defensive approaches for obtaining value, and precautions for keeping information in our own hands. Here are three suggested alternative courses of action to start:

KEEP CALM, AND CARRY ON

- **If you're using commercial genealogy sites on a nearly daily basis, you are probably getting a good deal.** Sure, that skim cappuccino costs a whole lot more, but it's delicious and satisfying, right? The big commercial sites like Ancestry.com and Rootsireland.ie deliver a breathtaking number of records to your desktop. *Now, be sure to maximize your return by using all the features and functions you're paying for.* Review your subscription regularly to confirm you're getting the best rate, and watch for coupons and discounts.
- **But... play it safe with your own data.** Protect your family tree by *building and storing it offline with reliable software,* and back it up often. If you use FamilyTreeMaker, you can sync that easily with your tree on Ancestry.com (the genius of vertical integration!) Guard your personal and financial information: *change your password often.* Read the fine print in your the "terms & conditions" of service. Your vendor isn't kidding when they say they can alter the terms of service at any time. Understand that for most commercial sites, the act of uploading your "user-provided content" also grants the vendor an implied, uncompensated, unlimited and transferable license to publish and re-sell your content. For this reason, *think carefully about what you share,* and make certain that everything you post online is *duplicated in your own research log or notes* to ensure you can never lose access to it.

OR... GO COLD TURKEY, AND LOOK FOR A FREE LUNCH

- **Cancel your subscription(s) and find happiness elsewhere:** You may be surprised to see how much data behind the Ancestry.com paywall is available free elsewhere. For example, many books and directories are available at Archive.org, HathiTrust.org or the BYU library (http://lib.byu.edu/collections/). There is also significant overlap between Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org collections — the latter being, of course, *free to all.* Unfortunately, this cold-turkey approach simply won't work with Rootsireland.ie — which has a unique stranglehold on the all-important church records for most of the island.
- **... And spend your genealogy dollars locally, by supporting libraries and societies:** Some content sold online is curated by repositories which retain rights to original records and make the same content available through their own paid memberships or research-by-mail.

Examples include content on Ancestry.com from its partner The Historical Society of Pennsylvania; or the "Wisconsin Pre-1907 Vital Records" Ancestry.com collection which is searchable at www.wisconsinhistory.org. *By supporting original record-holders, you sustain local history.* Family History Centers and many libraries offer free public access to commercial genealogy sites, too, remember. Support them with your patronage.

OR... STRATEGIZE AND USE A "HOP-ON, HOP-OFF" APPROACH

- **Purchase a short-period subscription for commercial sites and do your research in rounds:** If you can change your mindset away from "all-access, 24/7," and are willing to organize your research deliberately, you can buy, say, a one-month subscription and concentrate your efforts in 30-day periods. For example, as a non-member or registered guest, you can search Ancestry.com for specific records. Some results can be viewed for free. For those results in member-only collections not available elsewhere, make a list and consult these when you next activate a short-term membership. Awkward — but cheaper.
- **But be careful of auto-renew!** Most commercial sites have clever ways to entrap you. Your credit card will be stored when you register, and your membership automatically extended *if you do not cancel a certain number of days before* expiration. Buyer beware!

Have you been adversely affected by rising prices or changing business practices in the commercial genealogy world? Have you found creative ways to rethink how you do your research or make expenditures for family history? *Share what you know at our roundtable!*

Online References:

Ancestry.com company history:
http://corporate.ancestry.com/about-ancestry/company-info/company-history/
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancestry.com

Ancestry.com 2014 changes and some reactions:
http://blogs.ancestry.com/ancestry/2014/06/04/ancestry-com-focuses-on-core-offerings/
http://www.legalgenealogist.com/blog/2014/06/08/why-ancestry-why/
http://hayesgreene.blogspot.com [See especially the interesting mundia "honeypot" 6/23 post and the 6/19 post re the DDoS and its odd collateral effects.]

The June 2014 Ancestry.com DDoS:
http://news.softpedia.com/news/Ancestry-Services-Crippled-by-DDoS-Attack-447427.shtml
http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2459760,00.asp
http://www.dailykos.com/story/2014/06/18/1307928/-Ancestry-com-DDOS-Hubris-Invites-Nemesis
http://blog.familytreemagazine.com/insider/CategoryView,category,Ancestrycom.aspx [See 6/18 post]

Rootsireland.ie, its history, predecessor organizations and partnerships:
http://www.rootsireland.ie/index.php?id=aboutus

Rootsireland.ie (IFHF) new subscription options:
https://rootsireland.ie/ifhf/subscribe.php

FAQs, blogs & press coverage of Rootsireland.ie September 24, 2014 announcement:
http://rootsireland.ie/ifhf/subscription-faq.php
http://www.irishgenealogynews.com/2014/09/rootsireland-introduces-subscription.html
http://blog.eogn.com/2014/09/26/rootsireland-ie-adds-subscription-options/

The Future of IGSW

A Round Table discussion October 2014

Rich Gibson

An October 2014 Round Table devoted to the topic of IGSW's future resulted in lively discussion and somber reflection. Succinctly, the future of the Irish Genealogical Society of Wisconsin is uncertain. Ironically this comes at a time when a recent N Y Times article ranked genealogy as the second most popular hobby worldwide, after gardening.

The IGSW formed in 1995 as a result of persisting interest voiced at consecutive Milwaukee Irish Fests. Patrons requested a society to support education and activities related to Irish Genealogy.

Changes in demographics, finances, and society pose challenges to our organization and to other cultural groups. Once robust organizations such as the French Canadian Wisconsin Genealogical Society have folded.

Our discussion touched on multiple issues including:
- How can we reverse our declining membership?
- How will IGSW stay relevant in the age of Internet based research?
- We are an ethnocentric organization that spans roughly three generations in its membership. How do we address different generational preferences in information and communication? e.g. print formats vs. Facebook/Twitter.
- How do moves by organizations (e.g. Ancestry) to claim ownership over information affect us?

Our Round Table was not dour or glum. Ideas were generated that can enhance the unique activities of IGSW and support the organization's viability. These included:
- Highlight our resources and talent that helps people break through their brick walls.
- Continue to develop our Internet website, regularly xxx user friendliness.
- Commit funds to obtaining access to unique information for research.
- Re-engage past members with genealogical expertise.
- Explore partnering with other Irish genealogy research groups and with local Irish interest groups such as ICHC.
- Continue solicitation of ideas from members for improving IGSW.

In short, no small list of ideas for an organization built and sustained by volunteerism, ideas that can help carry us through an uncertain future.

Irish Place Names

A presentation by Bairbre Ni Chiardha

Our November 3, 2014 IGSW program included a presentation by Bairbre Ni Chiardha that was memorable and informative. Bairbre is the relatively new head of UWM's Center for Irish Studies, a Galway native who specializes in Irish language and culture. She is delightful and dynamic, and effortlessly conveyed to us much information about the Irish language. She noted that while the Irish language is often referred to as 'Gaelic', the language is actually called Irish. Just as the language is called Spanish in Spain, English in England, French in France, etc., it is Irish in Ireland. Makes sense.

Bairbre opened with making a few comments, startling us until we realized she was speaking in Irish. Having given us a taste of the language's sound, she then transitioned to English. We learned first that the traditional Irish language has only 18 consonant letters - k, v, w, x, and y are among those letters missing. Therefore many words must "make do" with alternate spellings, e.g. 'Maidhc' for Mike, 'Neili' for Nelly, 'Bhearonica' for Veronica, 'Suileabhain- for Sullivan, etc. There are 5 vowels, but their use and sound can change with addition of an accent.

One challenge in research is that there can be spelling variants specific to a family or region, e.g. 'Sile', 'Sighle' or 'Sidhle' all can be Sheila. There is also widespread use of idiom that can be unique to a household. Irish people in the past might speak among family in way akin to a private language, using more conventional phrasing further from their home. Letters written to family in the 1800s may include such unique idiom.

The grammar of spoken Irish becomes even more complicated because of the 'evocative case' used when speaking to someone. The letter 'A' is inserted before the name, and the letter 'h' is inserted into the name. So in addressing Bairbre, one says "A Bairbre" which sounds like "warbrah". Or addressing Patrick/Padraic, one says "A Phadraic" which sounds like "Forrick". There clearly is great room for error in transcriptions based on what one is hearing.

Prefixes are used to specify family relationships. Say we have a man named Ciardha. His daughter is identified by a prefix Ni and again the insertion of the letter 'h', e.g. our speaker's name is Bairbre Ni Chiardha. His wife would

use the prefix Ui: Ui Chiardha, while a son uses Mac: MacChiardha. The ubiquitous prefix O' used before Chiardha would convey membership in the clan of Ciardha, though sometimes the O' can indicate clan membership as Mac does. Sometimes a person's first name is followed by their father's name then their grandfather's name, then the clan: Meaiti Jo Sheamuis O'Fatharta would be Matty, son of Joe, grandson of Seamus of the Flaherty clan. This could generate hypotheses very helpful to the genealogist faced with a tangle of persons with a common surname.

Most place names in Ireland have some connection to people, events or features of the land. There are common prefixes to townlands that refer to topographical features such as:

Bally = homeland
Kil = church
Rath = fort
Carraig= rock
Lis= fort
Dun= rampart
Ceann = headlands
Gleann = glen or "glawn"
Gort= field
Muilean= well
Mallish = temple

We practiced finding the Irish core in common place names, e.g. Donegal = Dun na Gall. A good reference for further information on place names is the book **Irish Place Names** by Diedre and Lawrence Flanagan (Gill & Macmillan 1994) or the website **www.logainm.ie** (Click on the green box marked 'Tuilleadh eolais', then select English at the top right of the next page.) The site has excellent articles and translation tools.

For help with the Irish language, Bairbre recommended the website **www.breis.focloir.ie** which provides Irish-English and English-Irish translations as well as pronunciation, a very handy reference.

For those of you able to read Irish, Bairbre highly recommends a new website **www.tuairisc.ie** which documents and celebrates all things Gaeltacht.

We ended the program with questions, and Bairbre offered insights about some place names that had eluded members. She ended with inviting us to partake of offerings by the UWM Celtic Studies program, noting that tuition is free for seniors.

- Kris Mooney

National Library of Ireland to make its collection of Roman Catholic parish registers available online in summer 2015

That sound you hear? It's Joshua's trumpet blast, and a lot of brick walls will come tumbling down soon.

The reason?

The National Library of Ireland (NLI) recently announced its plan to digitize its microfilm holdings of Roman Catholic parish registers — and make them available online, for free. A target date of summer 2015 is set for the launch of the service on a dedicated website.

Yes, go back and read that paragraph again. Online. Free. Next year. Happy Christmas!

Like many of Irish heritage and of genealogical bent, I was stunned to read this news, broken by genealogist John Grenham in his "Irish Roots" column for *The Irish Times* on December 1. As Grenham put it, "These records are... the single most important source of historical Irish family information, one of the greatest legacies of the Catholic Church to Ireland."

The NLI holds microfilmed records for 1,091 Catholic parishes, comprised mainly of registers of baptisms and marriages, covering the period of 1880 back to as early as the 1740s. The NLI has apparently already completed much of the work of digitization of the films, representing approximately 390,000 individual pages of images.

Colette O'Flaherty, Keeper of Archival Collections at the NLI and Chief Herald of Ireland, characterized the effort as: "the most ambitious digitisation project in the history of the NLI, and our most significant ever genealogy project."

To understand the scope of this undertaking, you can download complete lists of the parish registers held in microfilm at the NLI in PDF form at http://www.nli.ie/en/parish-register.aspx The lists are arranged by diocese name, and show the parish, register (baptism, marriage and occasionally burial), dates covered, and film number (P.xxxx, where P indicates the film is a positive.) It is these films that are being digitized to be made freely available online next year.

According to O'Flaherty "Anyone tracing Irish family history will be able to access this site from anywhere in the world and search for the parish in which they are interested. They will be able to see a list of registers for that parish, and click on whichever registers they like to browse through the images...."

The NLI news was welcomed by Ireland Reaching Out (Ireland XO), which has been helping Irish Diaspora descendants worldwide trace their origins. The news will be received differently, no doubt, by rootsireland.ie, the subscription-based, transcription-only research service of the Irish Family History Foundation. The NLI development is a game-changer, and its repercussions will be felt in the genealogical community for months to come. Start the countdown clock.

Now that you've caught your breath, let's state what this development is not. First, this project pertains to *Catholic registers only,* not extant Church of Ireland records or those of other denominations, held at the National Archives of Ireland, the Representative Church Body Library, or the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) and elsewhere. Secondly, there will be *no index,* no effort at transcription, nor any attempt to enhance the register images by the NLI.

So, I will not be able to search online for my "Mary Leary" baptized in 1833 in Kilcummin. But I will be able to browse through the baptismal register for Kilcummin, Diocese of Kerry (film P.4265), locate the relevant pages for the 1830s, and leaf through to look for Mary. And I will be able to do it from my iPad in my pajamas — without traveling to Kildare Street in Dublin, without going to Salt Lake City, without even ordering a roll of film through my local LDS Family History Center.

Also, bear in mind that the online resources to be made available by NLI in 2015 will be black-and-white digital images of the registers, in the condition they appeared when they were photographed in the 1950s and 1960s. Many are damaged, faded or illegible. When I search for my Mary Leary, I expect to spend a good deal of time squinting.

Transcription and indexing is sure to follow, though, accomplished by third-party commercial ventures or by eager volunteers. Records for some parishes in Cork, Kerry, Dublin and Carlow has been available for free since 2009 at irishgenealogy.ie. (My Mary Leary is among these.)

As John Grenham aptly put it, "It is almost impossible to overstate the importance of what is about to happen. When the Irish public service gets things right, it can get them spectacularly, gloriously right."

Amen!

— Submitted by Michele Patin

RESOURCES, NEWS RELEASES AND BLOGS ON THE NLI 2015 INITIATIVE

A full guide to *all* the holdings of the National Library of Ireland, and a brief introduction about using each record type, including the Roman Catholic registers, is available at:

http://www.nli.ie/en/intro/what-we-have.aspx

December 1, 2014 article about the the NLI 2015 initiative by John Grenham in *The Irish Times*:

http://www.irishtimes.com/culture/heritage/john-grenham-irish-roots-1.2017344

Coverage by Claire Santry at the Irishgenealogynews.com blog:

http://www.irishgenealogynews.com/2014/12/its-happening-irelands-roman-catholic.html

http://www.irishgenealogynews.com/2014/12/national-library-confirms-plans-to.html

Articles in other newspapers and journals available online:

http://www.catholicnews.com/data/stories/cns/1404970.htm

http://www.irishexaminer.com/archives/2014/1202/ireland/online-parish-records-will-boost-global-ancestry-searches-300407.html

http://www.irishcentral.com/roots/genealogy/Genealogists-delight---Irelands-Catholic-Church-Records-go-online.html#

May the miracle of Christmas fill your heart with peace, love and joy

Upcoming Programs

Monday, **Jan 5, 2015** • 7:00 p.m.
Shorewood Village Center Meeting Room, Lower Level, Shorewood Public Library
Sam Colon, a steering committee member of the Milwaukee PAF Users Group (MPAFUG), will speak on how Computers can assist the Genealogist. Topics will include Programs and Apps for maintaining your family history, including those that work on your cell phone, tablet or computer.

Monday, **Feb 2, 2015** • 7:00 p.m.
Shorewood Village Center Meeting Room, Lower Level, Shorewood Public Library
Bill Fliss, Archivist at Marquette University Raynor Memorial Library will discuss a project to index early Milwaukee Church Records. Early Church records, can provide information that does not exist anywhere else, since civil records were not required until 1906.

Monday, **Mar 2, 2015** • 7:00 p.m.
Shorewood Village Center Meeting Room, Lower Level, Shorewood Public Library
"The Fifth Ward Fire and Its Aftermath,
Presented by Carl Baehr IGSW member, and a frequent speaker at IGSW meeting. He is a also genealogist, and local historian and the author of the book "**Milwaukee Streets: The Stories Behind Their Names**".

Monday, **Apr 6, 2015** • 7:00 p.m.
Irish Cultural & Heritage Center
"Night of the Roundtables"
Join us for our semi-annual night of small roundtable discussions where we can discuss topics of interest to our research. If you have any suggestion for topics for a roundtable discussion please contact any board member.

The Shorewood Village Center is located at 3920 N. Murray Ave one block south of Capitol Drive. Meeting rooms are on the lower level.
The Irish Cultural and Heritage Center is located at 2133W.Wisconsin Ave. in downtown Milwaukee just west of Marquette University in the historic Tory Hill neighborhood.
Sponsored by Irish Genealogy of Wisconsin
IGSW Programs are free and open to the public.

IGSW

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of Wisconsin

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