

Dear Members,

Thank you for your wonderful support of our events in 2017. You helped to make them most successful.

On a sad note we farewelled our much loved inaugural chairperson Tom Power OAM, who died on 28 December 2017. Without Tom, there would be no monument to the Great Irish Famine in Sydney. It was back in 1995, during her state visit to Australia, that Irish President Mary Robinson suggested that the Irish diaspora remember those who died or were forced to emigrate as a result of the Famine. A committee was formed and Tom was elected chairman. After much deliberation and discussions with Sydney Living Museums (then Historic Houses Trust), the memorial was born. The members and committee of GIFCC will miss his wisdom, guidance and friendship. Rest in peace Tom.

Please put **Sunday 18 March** in your Diary as the GIFCC has been invited to have a stall at The Green Quarter, the Entertainment Quarter, Moore Park, from 12 noon for St Patrick's Day celebrations. This promises to be a fun-filled family day with music, dance and lots to eat and drink, so come along and enjoy the festival.

FUNDRAISER FOR OUR FAMINE REFUGEE SCHOLARSHIP



For history fans we will be holding another story telling night at History House, headquarters of the Royal Australia Historical Society, 133 Macquarie St., Sydney on **Friday 6 April starting at 6pm**. Special guest this year will be Evelyn Conlon, popular Irish novelist, who wrote the evocative novel, *Not The Same Sky*.

Tickets are \$40 each and include Evelyn's talk, a light supper and drinks. It will be a lovely opportunity to meet other members and have a chat over a cup of tea or a glass of wine.

Tickets are available for purchase online at Eventbrite:
https://fundraiser_evelyn_conlon.eventbrite.com.au

Tickets can also be purchased on the night at the door but please bring cash as credit card facilities are not available. The book will also be available for purchase for \$25.



Our raffle, including the Rockdale City Heritage Soccer Shirt which has been signed by five Socceroos, will also be drawn at this fundraising event, so see you there on 6 April.

Funds raised will go towards the Great Irish Famine Refugee Scholarship to support a refugee student at Western Sydney University.

Photograph of Rockdale City Heritage Soccer Shirt. Courtesy of Evelyn Conlon

AN ORPHAN FROM GALWAY



Harriet Cassidy, from Galway, arrived on the ship *Thomas Arbuthnot* in 1850.

Harriet was one of 130 orphans from this ship who travelled from Sydney to Yass by dray to gain employment. The surgeon superintendent of the ship, Charles Strutt accompanied them and we know about the journey because of his wonderful diary.

In 1852, Harriet married store owner John Ronald Paul and they had six children, before John died in 1868. Harriet later married Bernard Blake, also from Galway. Blake was the grandson of Sir Valentine John Blake who owned the 16th century Menlo Castle in Galway, Ireland. They had two children before Bernard died from measles aged 33. Harriet died in Melbourne, aged 52, in 1859. The photo, taken in 1859, is of Harriet, her first husband John Paul with their fourth son James. This story is fascinating because of

Harriet's second husband's link to the Blakes who were one of the original 12 tribes of Ireland.

GIFCC AGM 2017

The AGM was held on November 27th. Total attendees were eleven. Perry McIntyre chaired the meeting in the absence of our Chair, Trish Strong, who was in Belfast. Perry presented Trish's Annual Report. Irish Consul-General, Jane Connolly, attended and conducted the election of the 2018 committee. The following committee was elected:

Chair: Trish Strong; Vice-Chair: Perry McIntyre; Treasurer: Breda Drumgoole; Secretary: Trish Power; Committee members: Martin Folan, Joan Leach, Eva Millington; Peter O'Connor; Suzanne Holohan.

DONATIONS and BEQUESTS

We remind you to consider a tax-deductible donation to our outreach programmes, the Mamre Fund and UWS Refugee Scholarship. As well, your donation (non-tax-deductible) to the GIFCC to support our on-going costs is always welcome.

In addition, we invite you to consider making a **Bequest via your Will**. We are currently developing a Bequest Brochure.

For information, please contact us at: contact@irishfamine.org.au

A friendly reminder that your **membership** is due for renewal on 1st July 2018

Please email details to following address: memberships@irishfaminememorial.org .

Our next **Annual Gathering** of Descendants & Friends

Sunday, 26th August at 12.30 at Hyde Park Barracks, Sydney

Warmest regards

Dr Patricia (Trish) Strong Chairperson, [GIFCC chair@irishfaminememorial.org](mailto:GIFCC_chair@irishfaminememorial.org)