



GIFCC NEWSLETTER No 10

June 2020

“PAST, PRESENT and FUTURE”

GIFCC celebrates 25 years!!

Dear Members and Supporters,

The many weeks of social distancing and travel restrictions we have endured have provided a time and opportunity for a variety of activities such as the “3 R’s” - Reflecting, Reading and Research. We have also had to find other ways to do the things we really need to do. The GIFCC has held its last two committee meetings on-line, thanks to WhatsApp and Zoom. We have kept in touch with the wider community on our Facebook page and through Le Cheile via Zoom organised by the Irish Consulate in Sydney for the benefit of Irish Community Organisations. One major benefit is the huge amount of help this community has provided to those hit hard by loss of jobs due to Covid-19 shutdowns. This work has been led by the Consulate and the Irish Support Agency. The GIFCC made a donation of \$500 to the ISA’s Covid-19 Appeal. [*See below how you can help by making a donation*].

Your Committee

The committee continues to meet on Zoom; our last meeting took place on Saturday May 30th; we are still not able to access a meeting room at Hyde Park Barracks Museum as we did prior to its closure in 2019 and now due to Covid-19.

We have continued to promote the need for new and younger people to join the committee. There are two (2) vacant seats on the Committee which we need to fill. In addition, our Treasurer, Breda Drumgoole, has been very ill in hospital and has recently started chemotherapy. We do not know when or if she will be able to continue as an active member. In order to share the responsibilities, Dawn Wong is assuming the position of Secretary held by Trish Power during the last 4-5 years.

If you would like to join the Committee, please contact Dawn at:

secretary@irishfaminememorial.org. You would be welcome to ‘sit in’ on a meeting (or two) prior to making a commitment. We would especially like more descendants to become involved. If you have any kind of committee, secretarial, internet, website, database, membership, or event management experience, we would LOVE to hear from you. An interest in Irish Famine history, or simply history, would be a bonus. Otherwise, a calm personality and a sense of humour will be helpful.

N.B. We will continue our meetings via Zoom for the foreseeable future.

Please note: Dawn Wong is a descendent; please see her orphan profile in Newsletter No 9 – www.irishfaminememorial.org

Memberships

Membership renewal for the coming year is due on July 1st.

Please note an increase in the Annual Membership Fee to \$10 pa

The Membership Application/Renewal Form can be downloaded from the website:- www.irishfaminememorial.org and is attached to this Newsletter as well.

In order to lighten the committee's workload, we are currently considering upgrading our website to enable on-line membership applications and renewals.

Honorary Auditor

The GIFCC is an Incorporated Association and, as such, is required to have financial members and have the accounts audited annually by an appropriately qualified accountant. Our previous long-serving honorary Auditor was Brendan O'Connell who retired last year at the grand age of 90. We are searching for someone to follow in Brendan's footsteps. It is not an onerous task. If you or anyone you know would be happy to take on this role, please get in contact by email:- contact@irishfaminememorial.org

N.B. The GIFCC's Constitution is included in this newsletter for your benefit and information. The Constitution guides what we do and how we do it and is a legal document required by NSW Govt.

Commemoration 2020

Our **2020 Annual Commemoration** is scheduled for **Sunday August 30th**. This will be the **GIFCC's 21st Commemoration and the 25th Anniversary of the GIFCC, founded in 1995** We have consulted with SLM to ascertain whether it will be possible to hold this event; at this stage restrictions to such events are still in place; we are considering how we might hold a modified Commemoration and provide digital access. **WE WILL KEEP YOU INFORMED via our Facebook PAGE and on our WEBSITE**

Facebook – the Great Irish Famine Facebook page is proving to be an excellent platform for exchange of news and information and a major point of contact between descendants and the GIFCC. We encourage all to Like and use this facility but also connect with us by becoming a GIFCC Member.

Vale
Dr Jack Munday AM



It is with great sadness that we report the death of Dr Jack Munday, former Chair of the Historic Houses Trust (now Sydney Living Museums). Jack was Chair of HHT during the planning, construction and unveiling of The Australian Monument to the Great Irish Famine and a fervent supporter of the GIFCC until his recent passing. We extend our sincere sympathy to Jack's wife, Judy.

RIP Jack

Commemoration Ireland

Ireland's 2020 Commemoration was re-located from Galway to the Famine Memorial in St Stephen's Green, Dublin. It was streamed LIVE. A simple but very dignified ceremony was attended by the Irish Govt Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Josepha Madigan TD, and several other dignitaries. You will find a report and video at www.rte.ie

Speaking on the day, Minister Madigan said: *"In her poem Quarantine, the late Eavan Boland movingly evoked the efforts of a loving husband to support his wife with the last of his strength: "She was sick with famine fever and could not keep up. He lifted her and put her on his back." The heroes of the Famine that we honour today also sought to lift and carry those who fell or could not keep up. That same human spirit of caring and self sacrifice that is embedded in the caring professions across the world is being seen again today as we see our modern day heroes face up to the task of caring for those affected by Covid-19. We honour and respect these modern day heroes and value their courage. Perhaps we can best show our appreciation for these modern heroes and those of the Famine Era, by adhering to those small acts of heroism we are called upon to perform in response to the Covid-19 pandemic to come through these testing times as our forebears once did."*

Following the ceremony, an on-line international mini-conference was held; *Trish Power represented the GIFCC*. The theme was "Heroes of the Famine" and speakers included Rebecca Abbott and Christine Kinnealy from Quinnipiac University in the USA. One of the heroes featured was Paul Edmond Strzelecki, well-known in this country for his exploration and naming of our highest peak, Mt Kosciuszko. A booklet about Strzelecki's humanitarian work in Ireland is available from Kosciuszko Heritage Group www.kosciuzkoheritage.com

PLEASE NOTE: *"Melbourne and the Irish Famine", a commemorative booklet publ.1998, reprinted 2011, edited by Dr Val Noone, is available from Val, PO Box 51, Fitzroy, VIC 3065- \$10 incl postage.*

HYDE PARK BARRACKS MUSEUM

The Museum re-opened Thurs – Sun on June 4th. Due to Covid-19, visitor numbers are limited and entry is half-hourly; it is therefore necessary to contact SLM Bookings, T: 02 8239 2211, E: bookings@slm.com.au; or: www.sydneylivingmuseums.com.au [Allow 90 mins for the full tour]

We encourage EVERYONE to visit the Museum at the first opportunity to see the new high-tech, interactive exhibition show-casing the significance of the building from early colonial Australia to the present, and its role in housing various categories of immigrants, many of whom were Irish.

The GIFCC is extremely proud of its achievement in establishing the Australian Monument to the Great Irish Famine at this World Heritage Site and maintaining an active involvement with the Museum via our Annual Commemoration for the past 20 years. This achievement would not have been possible without the support of many people, organisations, The Irish and Australian Governments and YOU, our Members and Supporters!

Irish Orphan Girl - Mary Dunphy

My great grandmother was the fourth child of Simon Dunphy and Margaret Dunphy (nee Morrissey) who were married in the Catholic Church in 1809 at Ballinakill, Queens Country, now called Laois. Their children were Thomas b.1810, Pat b.1812, Rose b.1815 and **Mary** who was baptised in Abbeyleix in 1829.

When the Great Famine struck, Mary and her mother went to Abbeyleix Workhouse. Mary's father had already died. There is no record of the other children. When the opportunity to emigrate to Australia came along, Mary was accepted to travel to Port Jackson on the "William and Mary" which left Plymouth in July 1849, arriving in the colony of New South Wales on 21st November 1849 along with a number of female orphans. Mary is listed as being aged 18, was Roman Catholic and could neither read nor write.

Mary was housed in the Hyde Park Barracks, Sydney, travelling later to Goulburn where she was hired to work at Ryans Vale Farm as a needlewoman.

In 1852 she married James Atkins, a shepherd from Springfield Farm, originally from Carlow in Ireland. Their first two children were born in Goulburn. James then took up his trade of shoemaker as the family moved to Metong in the district of Cooma, then to Maharatta and Bombala. Twelve children were born in all.

The third youngest, Mary Atkins, born in 1868 was my grandmother. She married Adam Oliver whose family were Presbyterian Scottish migrants in 1887 at Burrenbooka near Bombala. They had nine children and lived and worked in Delegate Station near the village of Delegate. Annie Oliver who was my mother, was the second youngest child of a family of eight girls and one boy. These children were the first to have an education as free education began in 1901. (cont.) Annie travelled to Sydney to go to business college and, in 1929, married Malcolm Green, son of English migrants. Two children were born, Joan (me) and John, my brother.

Malcolm became hotel manager at the Campsie Hotel; Annie was the bookkeeper. I lived with my parents and brother John until my marriage.

So I had English, Scottish and Irish roots. I am afraid that the Irish culture did not feature in my life as it had all been forgotten by my forebears in their struggle to establish themselves in their new country.

Joan Leach (nee Green) 2020

Thankyou Joan. If YOU would like to submit YOUR orphan girl story, please send to:- contact@irishfaminememorial.org

GIFCC Outreach Programmes



Appeal for the Great Irish Famine Refugee Scholarship at Western Sydney University

Remembering the Great Irish Famine
by supporting current refugees



Great Irish Famine Refugee SCHOLARSHIP APPEAL

Next August we will award our third Scholarship to a female refugee student at Western Sydney University as well as the Annual Prize. PLEASE help us support these young people in their endeavours to achieve success in their new country.

Donate by:

1. Direct debit at: <https://give.westernsydney.edu.au/gifcscholarship>

or

2. By

cheque, made payable to Western Sydney University, posted to:

Ray Villarica

Office of Advancement Western Sydney University Locked Bag 1797
Penrith NSW 2751

MAMRE: *We continue our association with Mamre Plains Refugee Support Centre to whom we released \$50,000 last year to assist with extension of their creche and to establish an education programme for refugees, Project Afriq. N.B. The Mamre Fund remains open for donations.*

Tax-deductible donations can be made by direct debit to:

*Catholic Care Social Services Donation Account BSB: 067 950 Account: 000040
Identifier: GIFCC & your phone number & name*

Please advise the GIFCC when you make a donation to the Mamre Program by sending an email to contact@irishfaminememorial.org.

Details about Mamre and the WSU Scholarship Appeal are also on the GIFCC website under 'Make a Donation'; please consider making a tax-deductible donation to these worthwhile Programmes.

www.irishfaminememorial.org

Macquarie University History Honours Prize:

The 2020 recipient of this award has been chosen. Due to COVID-19 precautions, the Award Ceremony scheduled at the University on March 24th has been postponed until later in the year.

BEQUESTS:

A reminder that, should you wish to make a bequest to the GIFCC, we can provide you with a form to instruct your solicitor with regards to including a bequest in your Will. Please request the form by emailing: contact@irishfaminememorial.org



APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP
of the
GREAT IRISH FAMINE COMMEMORATION COMMITTEE
(Incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 2009) www.irishfaminememorial.org

NAME.....
(*please print clearly*)

ADDRESS.....

.....State.....Postcode.....

EMAIL.....Phone.....

I hereby apply to: 1. Become a Member []
(*Please tick one*)
 2. RENEW my membership []

of the above-named Incorporated Association. In the event of my admission as a member, I agree to be bound by the Constitution of the Association.

Are you an orphan descendant? YES [] NO []

If YES, Orphan's name:Ship of arrival:.....

or NO [] Please indicate your area of interest:-

Genealogy [] Historian [] Irish community [] Other [].....

.....
Signature of applicant **Date**.....

Membership is \$10 per year payable for the year commencing July 1, 2020

Amount paid:- Membership: \$.....Donation: \$.....Total: \$.....

Please indicate payment by:

1. Cash: []
2. Direct transfer to GIFCC CBA account: []
 BSB 062 030 Account 1001 3868
 Reference: your name
3. Cheque payable to Great Irish Famine Commemoration Committee []

Please **email** completed form to memberships@irishfaminememorial.org OR **post** to:
GIFCC, PO Box 209, Roseville NSW 2069

GIFCC CONSTITUTION

The GIFCC is an Incorporated Association governed by the Associations Corporation Act 2009. Our Committee and our Members are bound to comply with the requirements of the Constitution. The Constitution was reviewed and updated in 2016 to comply with new requirements. *Should you wish to read the complete document, please email your request to secretary@irishfaminememorial.org*

Please read the following extract from the Constitution:-

Objectives

The Association is a non-profit organisation established to pursue the call by the former President of Ireland, Mary Robinson, (1990-1997) on her visit to Sydney in 1995 asking for “all Irish communities to remember the Irish Famine and strive to alleviate poverty in the world today.”

The following key objectives were established by this association to:

1. Provide on-going support for the Irish Famine Monument in partnership with Sydney Living Museums, the custodian of the Irish Famine Monument in Sydney.
2. Build a Database of information on the famine orphan girl refugees with the overall purpose of assisting Australian descendants and the Irish diaspora to trace their roots in Ireland and connect lost family members. The Irish Famine website and database facilitate engagement with the descendants of the Irish Orphan Girl famine survivors and the dissemination of their stories.
3. Host an Annual Commemoration to honour the Famine victims and those who survived and created a new life in Australia; the Commemoration takes place at the Irish Famine Monument, Hyde Park Barracks on, or around the last Sunday in August, the anniversary of its unveiling (1999)
4. Support Outreach Programmes designed to assist current refugees. These objectives include:
 - Irish Famine Memorial Fund-Mamre – to provide financial support for Refugee Services at Mamre House, St Mary's, NSW, managed by Catholic Care Social Services, Diocese of Parramatta
 - Great Irish Famine Refugee Scholarship – raise sufficient funds for a scholarship to assist a female refugee studying at Western Sydney University.
 - WSU Annual Prize – fund an Annual Prize for a female refugee student at WSU
 - Irish Famine Memorial Prize – presented to a Macquarie University History Honours student for a thesis or essay.

Note:-

The Constitution was instituted when the GIFCC became an Incorporated Association following the establishment of The Australian Monument to the Great Irish Famine (aka:- the Irish Famine Memorial, Sydney) in 1999.

Please note, we welcome your contributions to the Newsletter and your feedback. Write to secretary@irishfaminememorial.org All enquiries or information regarding the orphan database should be directed to contact@irishfaminememorial.org