

CUIMHNEACHÁN AN GHORTA MHÓIR

2016 International Great Hunger Commemoration

Philadelphia, PA October 6 - 9

Presented by the Irish Government's Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht
Hosted by The Irish Memorial, Inc.

Event Overview

Host Committee:

Honorary Co-Chairs:

Barbara Jones- Consul General of Ireland
James F. Kenney- Mayor, City of Philadelphia

Managing Committee for the Irish Memorial, Inc.

Kathleen McGee Burns, President
Robert M. Gessler, Vice President
John F. Donovan, Sec./ Treasurer
Francis J. Moran, General Counsel
James J. Coyne, President Emeritus
Kathleen M. Sullivan, Past President

Academic Advisor

Christine Kinealy, founding director of Ireland's Great Hunger Institute

Mission

- To provide a forum for the latest critical thought on An Gorta Mor, The Great Hunger or as oftentimes referred to as The Irish Famine
- To promote the establishment and expansion of Irish Studies Programs throughout the Delaware Valley
- To celebrate the rich and diverse nature of the Irish Community
- To establish a virtual repository wherein a multi-media representation of the presentations of the symposium can be accessed going forth in time

Program

We will provide a four day event featuring panels that will appeal to our target audience, i.e., academics, administrators, students as well as the general public. These events will be enhanced by a general celebration of all things Irish and Irish American.

Promotion

- Promote the event through our website, social media, print media, email and advertising.
- Target promotion primarily to the Delaware Valley (PA, NJ and DE) while including the major U.S. Irish Cities on the east coast.

Irish Memorial Site Activities

We plan to set up a performance stage that will operate during the entirety of the festivals. It will feature musicians, dancers, actors, orators, a potpourri of Irish Culture. One of the groups, we have invited is the Usiloquy Dance Troupe. In 2014, they performed their original piece, 'Ragas and Airs' which twins traditional Indian dance with traditional Irish music. They have updated the piece for 2016.

Confirmed Academic Participants

Rebecca L. Abbott, Professor of Communications, Department of Film, Television and Media Arts, Quinnipiac University

Caroline Callery- Co-director, the Irish National Famine Museum at Strokestown Park

Honorable Patrick F. Dugan, Judge, Municipal Court

M. Pauline Hurley-Kurtz, MLA, RLA, ASLA- Temple University, The landscape architect who designed the Irish Memorial site

Christine Kinealy, PhD, Academic Advisor to the 2016 Great Hunger Symposium, Director Ireland's Great Hunger Institute, Quinnipiac University

Jason King, PhD- University of Limerick, Developer of The Digital Irish Famine Archive

Joseph R. Marbach, PhD, President Georgian Court University

James Mullin- Co-Author, New Jersey Famine Education Curriculum

James J. Murphy, PhD, Director Emeritus, Villanova University's Irish Studies Program

Maureen O. Murphy, PhD- Hofstra University, Professor of Curriculum and Teaching, Director of the Secondary English programs and Co-Director of the undergraduate Irish Studies minor

Brendan O'Leary, PhD- Lauder Professor of Political Science University of Pennsylvania

Rosina Ryan, PhD, Adjunct at LaSalle University, Teacher and Director of the Irish Heritage Program at LaSalle College High School

John A. Walsh, illustrator and graphic novelist

William E. Watson, PhD- Immaculata University, Chairman, Department of History, Director of The Duffy's Cut Project

Additional participants pending

Thursday, October 6, 2016

10:00 AM- 12:00PM

Hibernian Hunger Project Event

Location: TBD

Description: The Hibernian Hunger Project is a national project of the LAOH and the AOH that was formed in Philadelphia. In the past we have held "cook-ins" where we have prepared up to 10,000 meals for various shelters, schools, age related charities, etc. We have committed to helping Sister Mary Scullion, Director of Project Home and are now working out the details for what works best for them.

2:00PM- 4:00PM

Student and Educator Session: Documentary Viewing and Q&A with Rebecca L. Abbott
Professor of Communications
Department of Film, Television and Media Arts
Quinnipiac University

Documentary - Ireland's Great Hunger and the Irish Diaspora, narrated by Gabriel Byrne
Location: Ritz East - 125 S 2nd St, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Ireland's Great Hunger and the Irish Diaspora is a documentary that presents not just the potato failure that led to mass starvation, death, and emigration in Ireland, but the historical, social and political circumstances that made what is misleadingly called the Great "Famine" almost inevitable. The documentary, which is narrated by actor Gabriel Byrne, views the history of An Gorta Mòr partly through the eyes of descendants of those who survived it, and also descendants of those who fled during it through the Canadian quarantine station at Grosse Ile, Quebec in 1847, and those whose maternal ancestors emigrated to Australia under the Earl Grey scheme, 1849 – 52. The documentary is filmed and edited by Rebecca Abbott and co-produced by Liam O'Brien, both of Quinnipiac University's Film, Video & Interactive Media Department.

6:00PM- 9:00PM

Public Session and Opening of Conference
Location: Ritz East - 125 S 2nd St, Philadelphia, PA 19106

Welcome: Kathy McGee Burns, President Irish Memorial
Opening Remarks: Mayor James F. Kenney, Mayor of Philadelphia, Honorary Co-Chair
Irish Government Representative
Professor Christine Kinealy, PhD, Academic Advisor to the 2016 Great Hunger Symposium,
Director Ireland's Great Hunger Institute, Quinnipiac University

Documentary and Q&A
Reception- Light Hors d'oeuvre

Candlelight March to Site
At Site- Traditional Musicians

Friday, October 7, 2016

9:00 AM- 11:30 AM

Hunger on Trial: An Activity on the Irish Potato Famine and Its Meaning for Today, with Hon. Patrick F. Dugan, Judge, Philadelphia Municipal Court, and various attorneys

Location: Philadelphia Court Room

Authored by Bill Bigelow, Curriculum Editor - Rethinking Schools magazine and author or co-editor of several Rethinking Schools books: Bigelow lives in Portland, Oregon, and has taught high school social studies since 1978.

Overview: By Mr. Bigelow: *"Somewhere back in school, I learned about the 19th-century Irish Potato Famine: More than a million people starved to death when blight hit Ireland's main crop, the potato. The famine meant tremendous human suffering and triggered a mass migration, largely to the United States. All this is true. But it is also incomplete and misses key facts that link past and present global hunger. Beginning in 1845, blight did begin to hit Ireland's potato crop, which was the staple food of the Irish poor. But all other crops were unaffected. And during the worst famine years, British-ruled Ireland continued to export vast amounts of food.*

In approaching the potato famine in my global studies class, I wanted students to see that hunger is less a natural phenomenon than it is a political and economic phenomenon. In 19th-century Ireland, food was a commodity, distributed largely to those who had the means to pay for it. I designed a trial role play to highlight the "crime" of famine and to encourage students to reflect on responsibility for that crime. The Irish Potato Famine lends itself to this teaching strategy, as students could plainly recognize the enormity of the famine, but the causes for the Irish suffering were not self-evident and required more consideration.

Each group, was charged with the same crime, but for different reasons: You are charged with the murder of one and a half million Irish peasants who died in the famine years of 1846 and 1847. These were needless deaths. Even without the potato, there was more than enough food produced in Ireland during those years to feed everyone in the country and still have plenty left over. The action—or lack of action—taken by your group led to untold misery. You are to blame."

The groups: British Landlords; Irish Tenant Farmers; Anglican Church; British Government and "Political Economy"- The System of Colonial Capitalism

11:30 AM

Leave for Irish Memorial then proceed to Irish Center

12:00 PM- 2:00PM

Luncheon

Featuring Irish Foods (something besides Ham and Cabbage) with traditional Irish Music, Dancers and a poetry and/or prose reading. Additionally we will present and tell the story of the "Famine Pot" owned by the Irish Memorial, Inc.

Friday, October 7, 2016

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2:05 PM- 4:05 PM

Irish Center

Panel A (Aimed at Educators and Administrators)

Teaching the Great Hunger Curriculum

Maureen O. Murphy, PhD- Hofstra University.

Professor of Curriculum and Teaching, Director of the Secondary English programs and Co-Director of the undergraduate Irish Studies minor in HCLAS. She has served as Interim Dean of the School of Education and Health and Human Services (2005-2008), the University's Dean of Students for more than a decade and acting Chair of the Department of Curriculum and Teaching. Murphy was the Director of the Great Irish Famine Curriculum Project for the New York State Department of Education. The Great Irish Famine Curriculum (2001) won the Project Excellence Award from the National Council of the Social Studies in 2002. She has served as Vice-President of the New York State English Council. A past president of the American Conference for Irish Studies and a past chair of the International Association for the Study of Irish Literatures

Additional Panel Members: James Mullen, TBD

Panel B (Aimed at Students)

The Graphic novel, 'The Bad Times: An Drochshaol'

Christine Kinealy, founding director of Ireland's Great Hunger Institute

John A. Walsh, illustrator and graphic novelist,

"The Bad Times" tells the tale of the Great Hunger, from the point of view of three teenagers and their dog, Cú, from Kilkee, County Clare in the west of Ireland.

"One of our aims was to bring the story of the Great Hunger to a younger generation," said Kinealy, who also is a professor of history at Quinnipiac. "It does deal with famine and there is death in it, but we have created something that is very visual and historically accurate. It tells the story of this pivotal event in Irish history in a way that is accessible, attractive and authentic." <http://www.badtimesgraphicnovel.com>

6:00 PM- 9:00 PM

Philly Style Irish "Hoolie"

Location: Irish Center

This event will showcase the County Societies and the various Irish organizations that make the Irish Center their home. Additionally it will feature local musicians, dancers, Mummies organizations that have played in Ireland as well as local foods.

Saturday, October 8, 2016

10:00 AM- 12:00 AM

The Irish Memorial Site

Panel

The World's Hunger Memorials

M. Pauline Hurley-Kurtz, MLA, RLA, ASLA- Temple University, is trained as a landscape architect and horticulturalist. Her design and research interests are currently focused on memorial and healing gardens with a strong emphasis on planting design incorporating native plants. She was the design landscape architect for the award winning Philadelphia Irish Memorial project located at Front and Chestnut streets. This project has led to extensive on-going research on Irish Memorials around the world.

Caroline Callery- runs the Irish National Famine Museum at Strokestown Park, a unique visitor attraction in Strokestown. Co Roscommon in The West of Ireland comprising of Strokestown Park House, a Georgian Palladian mansion preserved with its original furnishings and fabrics. The House was the family home of the Pakenham Mahon family and is built on the site of the 16th century castle, home of The O Conor Roe Gaelic Chieftains. The Landlord Major Denis Mahon was assassinated in November 1847 at the height of The Great Famine of Ireland. It is home to the Strokestown Archives, containing 55,000 documents and home to the Irish Famine Summer School.

Jason King, PhD- University of Limerick, Developer of The Digital Irish Famine Archive in 2012. In 2015, he expanded it in partnership with the Moore Institute at the National University of Ireland, Galway; the Ireland's Great Hunger Institute at Quinnipiac University; the Irish National Famine Museum; the Montreal Irish Monument Park Foundation; the Ireland Park Foundation; the iNua Partnership; and the Irish Research Council. The purpose of the Digital Irish Famine Archive is to make accessible eyewitness accounts of the Irish famine migration to Canada in 1847-1848 that would otherwise be unknown. It also pays tribute to those who cared for Irish famine emigrants.

Additional Panel Members: TBD

12:05 PM- 2:00 PM

Lunch on their own

2:00 PM- 4:0PM

The Irish Memorial Site

Panel

Hedge School

Harkening back to the Ireland during the Penal Laws. It features experts briefing discussing ideas and then throwing it open to those in attendance to discuss.

Saturday, October 8, 2016

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10:00 AM- 4:00 PM

Doubletree Hotel by Hilton

Academic Panels

These will run concurrently with the events during the day Saturday. We are in the process of putting together a request for papers.

(This will also serve as the alternative venue in for the events planned at the Irish Memorial in case of inclement weather.)

6:00 PM- 7:00 PM

Doubletree Hotel by Hilton

VIP Reception with the Consulate General/Irish Minister

A private reception for those involved in making the Commemoration a reality; including the volunteers, committee, sponsors and presenters.

6:00 PM- 10:00 PM

Doubletree Hotel by Hilton

Event Gala

In conjunction with the Consulate General and the Irish Government, this event will feature addresses by members of the Irish Government, Host and Academic Committee Members as well as a Keynote Address.

There will be a sit down dinner, open bar and Irish entertainment.

\$125.00 per person

Sunday, October 9, 2016

10:00 AM- 11:00 AM

Mass and Blessing of the Irish Memorial
The Irish Memorial Site

12:00 PM- 2:30 PM

Closing Event

TBD

Possible GAA and or Dance Event

Possible Additional Panels

Duffy's Cut

Belfast famine Window

Great Hunger Archives and research

Asenath Nicholson- An American who ran a one-woman relief operation in Ireland 1846-1848

The Philadelphia response i.e. John Wanamaker, The Quakers

Possible Other Events

Tours (Philly and Irish [Famine churches/points of interest])

Performances of Usiloquy Dance Troupe's "Ragas and Airs". This dance suite is based on an intersection between music and folklore of the Indian and Celtic communities, expanding upon the historic connections between South Asian and Celtic heritage. Choreographically, it pairs Bharatanatyam techniques between the Indian ragas and nrithya melodic modes with traditional neo-Celtic music.

Irish Publicans/ Entertainment

Tom Keenan Photo Exhibit- Tom's picking 20 of his favorite Irish Memorial photos

Youth event/ Games or demonstration GAA