

THE TERMONER

EDITION 6, Spring 2018

NEWSLETTER OF THE CLAN MCGRATH



A Clan of Finte na hÉireannn 2018



OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF MCGRATH CLAN GATHERING 2020

Welcome to the sixth edition of the official newsletter of the Clan McGrath and what a packed publication we have for you this season. Firstly and most importantly for our society members and our wider campaign to promote the International McGrath Clan Gathering 2020. The gathering will be centred in the beautiful Irish lake-land area of Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh and will explore the historic and cultural sites linked to the McGraths of Ulster in the counties of Donegal, Tyrone and Fermanagh. The Clan McGrath has played a major role in the ecclesiastical and political history of the area as the

hereditary Coarbs or Termoners of the ancient pilgrimage island of Lough Derg. The alliances with the other major Gaelic Clans will also be explored including the Clan Maguire of Fermanagh, the O'Neills of Tyrone and the O'Donnells of Donegal. Many events have been confirmed or are in planning and will include the best of Ulster hospitality food, music, heritage, culture and clan. The Gathering can only be successful with the involvement of our wonderful Clan Society. the Cumman Chlann Mhic Craith, and you are encouraged to become a member and support the activities of the Clan Council.



Our Clan Society.....

By birth, adoption or marriage you are already a member of the Clan McGrath as a right of your heritage. However, we are obliged by the Executive Council of Clans of Ireland to maintain a list of registered members. Our membership list is also a great way for us to continue to develop and promote our Clan connections. Registered membership is **FREE**. To receive regular updates on Clan activity and for further information contact:

info@clanmcgrath.org
www.clanmcgrath.org
facebook.com/clanmcgrath

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JOIN THE SOCIETY TODAY:

To register as a member of the Clan McGrath Society please email: info@clanmcgrath.org and provide the following information:

1. Your Name
2. Your mailing address.
3. Your email address
4. Location and details of your earliest known McGrath ancestor.



SUPPORT OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE...

The Clan McGrath Society / Cumann Chlann Mhic Craith operates two official Facebook pages. The links to these pages are as follows:

www.facebook.com/clanmcgrath

www.facebook.com/mcgrathclangathering2020

Our Clan McGrath Facebook page has now over 1100 followers and is updated daily. Our McGrath Clan Gathering 2020 Facebook page keeps you up-to-date with developments. Please logon using the links above and LIKE and SHARE our pages. Help spread our Clan network.

LIKE & SHARE, LIKE & SHARE, LIKE & SHARE, LIKE & SHARE.....TODAY !!!

LÚNASA, SPIRIT OF FOLK FESTIVAL 2017



The 12th August 2017 saw the celebration of the festival of Lúnasa, Spirit of Folk Festival at the ancient site of Tullahogue in Co. Tyrone. It was the first festival to be held at the fort for over 400 years. This hillfort was the traditional inauguration site of the O'Neill Chief, the last being Hugh 'The Great' O'Neill. The Clan McGrath were welcomed by the organisers of the event, *The Clans of Ulster*. Who afforded us the opportunity to promote the McGrath Clan Gathering 2020.

Guests were welcomed by the Celtic God Lugh and by guardians of Tullahogue, the Clan O'Hagan, played by actors from Craic Theatre and Arts Centre.

The Crowds that gathered to enjoy the festival were

greeted with beautiful sunshine, traditional falconry displays by the Northern Ireland School of Falconry, historic re-enactments thanks to the Oireas Historical Services and a great archaeology dig organised for the children. There were also many opportunities to share in the heritage of the site. The festival also welcomed many and varied arts and craft stalls including Red Horse Crafts, Parklane Rocks, Celtia Jewellery, Dara Byrne Jewellery and Billie's Coin Rings.

A festival wouldn't be a festival without fun and music and there was no shortage during the day and into the evening with the entertainment provided by local comedian Paddy McDonald and music by

Back West. The concept of the Lúnasa, Spirit of Folk Festival was developed and designed by the Clans of Ulster and supported by the O'Neill Country Historical Society and financially supported by the Mid-Ulster District Council as well as private donations and the amazing army of volunteers who brought it all together. A huge thanks go to everyone in the Clans of Ulster for inviting the Clan McGrath of Ulster to participate in the festival, we thoroughly enjoyed it and look forward to next year.



THE MCGRATH CLAN GATHERING 2020 UPDATE.....

Preparations for the McGrath Clan Gathering 2020 are well underway. The Clan McGrath Society has been working tirelessly to bring together a draft program of events that will provide you with an outstanding cultural experience focusing on our shared heritage and ancestry. Our venue will be the ancient ancestral territories of the Clan McGrath of Ulster in the Counties of Donegal, Fermanagh & Tyrone and our venue will be the magnificent and historic town of Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, ancestral seat of the Clan Maguire and more recently location for the G8 summit in 2013. The Gathering will focus on bringing you to the heart of your heritage and your past. For more information visit our website at: www.clanmcgrath.org

CLAN McGRATH

INTERNATIONAL GATHERING 2020

History
Heritage
Culture
Clan.....

#mcgrathgathering2020



25 - 29
JUNE 2020



Organised by:
The Clan McGrath
Society of Ulster

Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, N. Ireland

www.clanmcgrath.org

SAINT BRIGID AND THE FIRST DAY OF SPRING

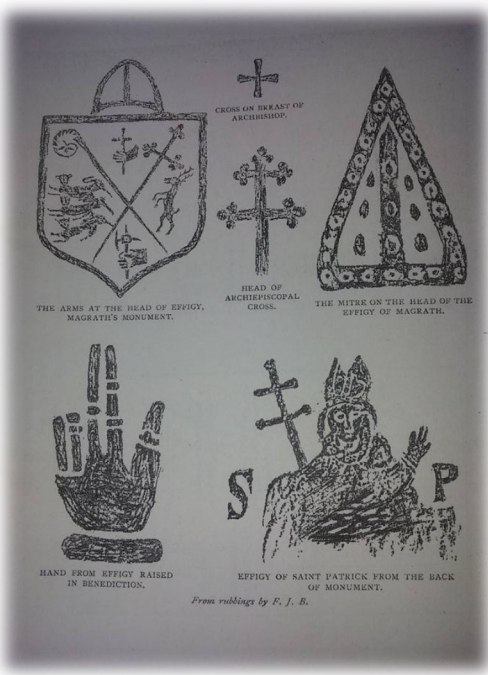
Lá Fhéile Bríde, a happy St. Brigid's day, 1st February the first day of Spring according to our ancient traditions, but how has this festival, so aligned with the seasons, agriculture and fertility come to be associated with the feast of a Christian saint? Saint Brigid of Kildare or Brigid of Ireland (*Irish: Naomh Brid*) is one of Ireland's patron saints, along with Patrick and Columba. She is sometimes referred to affectionately as 'Mary of the Gael'. Early Irish scholars agree that she was born in 451 AD, the daughter of a Chieftain named Dubthach whose fort was on the hill of Faughart, just outside Dundalk, Co. Louth. Her mother was Brocca, a Christian Pict slave who had been baptised by St. Patrick. However, there is

some debate over whether she was an real person. Brigid shares her name with an important Celtic goddess and she shares many of the legends and folktales and customs that were originally associated with the goddess, including sharing the same feast day. Some scholars suggest that the saint is a Christianisation of the goddess, others that she was a real person who took on the goddess's attributes, taking the ancient figure of the mother goddess and grafting her name and functions onto her Christian counterpart. One such important custom that remains imbued with ancient powerful symbolism is the St. Brigid's Cross (*Irish: Crosóg Bhríde*). The cross made from reeds is woven by hand. Although there are

variations in style, the cross shape remains. There is an obvious Christian symbolism but the cross may have had an older function as a fertility symbol. To this day, the cross is given to newly married couples and in Irish homes it will often hang above a door way, so those passing underneath may have the blessing of fertility. According to tradition, around 480 AD Brigid founded a monastery at Kildare, on the site of a pagan shrine to the goddess Brigid, served by a group of young women who attended an eternal flame. Brigid is often, as in the picture right, seen with a reed cross and the eternal flame. For the faithful Brigid is still an important, if flexible symbol of an early Irish Celtic form of Christianity.



IMAGES FROM THE PAST—ARCHBISHOP MAGRATH'S TOMB



On the left is a wonderful collection of rubbings from the tomb of Archbishop Miler Magrath which is located in the Cathedral Church of Cashel on the Rock of Cashel. The tomb itself if placed against the wall of the main body of the cathedral and is currently under cover as the monument undergoes some very important restoration work. When completed, Miler's tomb will again be on full view to the visiting public. The Rock of Cashel was the seat of the High Kings of Munster, although there is little structural evidence of their time here. Most of the buildings on the current site date from the 12th and 13th centuries when the rock was gifted to the Church. The buildings represent both Hiberno-Romanesque and Germanic influences in their architecture. The tomb of our infamous ancestor

Archbishop Miler Magrath dates from around the time of his death in 1622. Of particular note is the heraldic shield located at the head of the tomb effigy, which features the main elements of the commonly know McGrath coat of arms. You will note the McGrath arms interwoven with that episcopal arms of the dioceses of Cashel. This is represented by the crossed Crook and Archiepiscopal Cross that resembles a sword. On top is a Mitre. This is the earliest known depiction of the McGrath Coat of Arms and is the personal arms of Archbishop Miler Magrath. Also of note is the figure of St. Patrick identified by the letter's SP and the hand raised in benediction. For more information on Cashel visit: <http://www.heritageireland.ie/en/south-east/rockofcashel/>



CLAN MC GRATH
CLANN MHC CRAITH

GATHERING OF THE CLAN MC GRATH 2020 DONEGAL, FERMANAGH & TYRONE WWW.CLANMCGRATH.ORG



Historic & Cultural Tours, Living History Display,
History & Genealogy Presentations, Clan Parade,
Book Launch, Clan BBQ, Clan Council Meeting &
Elections, Clan Memorial Service, Music, Clan Ball
& Much More...

For more information:

Email: info@clanmcgrath.org

IN HISTORY—A LETTER TO LORETTA YOUNG

Rev. Aedan McGrath SSC, born William Aedan McGrath, was an Irish Columban and became notable for his work as a missionary priest in China which eventually led to his imprisonment and expulsion following the Communist take over. Born in Dublin, but with parents from Ulster. He entered the Missionary Society of St. Columban and was ordained a priest in 1929. During WWII, McGrath stayed with his Chinese parishioners during the worst days of the Japanese occupation. In this letter McGrath writes to US movie star Loretta Young to relay her unknowing part in protecting the Chinese community he served during the occupation.

**Singalong Street, Manila, Philippines
March 8th 1999**

Dear Loretta

You have no reason to remember me, but I have many reasons to remember you and your name, because you name as a famous film actress, and as one working for the Church (especially with Father Peyton), helped to solve one impossible problem I had in my parish in China about 1939. I was then about 30 and am now 94! But I did have the good fortune to meet you in Hollywood when visiting there..... I even knelt beside you in the Chapel during Benediction, and we did have a little chat.

I am a Columban Father (and you may have met some of them in Los Angeles), I have spent most of my life in China. (My heart is still there). About 1939 the Japanese forces which came through Nanking—and behaved badly there—then proceeded to my area, and all young women had reason to be frightened.

My Bishop was poor and I never had a church or house, but I lived where I could here and there. On the approach of the Japanese, the women in the town were terrified and appealed to me to protect them—the only foreigner in the town. I told them I had no house and no money. They replied: “We don’t need your money and we will find you a house” - which they did with a wall around it. But I was at a loss what to do and could only beg the thousand or so women who fled to the house to beg God to do something.

On the morning after the entrance of the Japanese I went down to the General to beg protection. He refused to see me and the interpreter only laughed at me. I felt all was lost and I returned to my house with the bad news. On the way (God’s ways are strange), an ordinary soldier called me to have a chat. (He wanted to practice his poor English.) I grasped at this straw. I told him I was a priest with refugees, women. The nearby soldiers became very excited as they could not find the women anywhere. When this man heard my story he left me and I would say that he returned to the General to say that there was an Irish priest in the town and was warned by him to be careful after their bad name in Nanking.

He returned and asked me to bring him to the Church premises. At first sight he saw hundreds of women and was amazed. (I still had not an idea what to do.) I brought him to my little room where there was an old broken gramophone. He remarked: “You like music?” I replied: “Yes I like music.” Then he asked: “You like movies?” I replied that I did. His third question was vital “You like Loretta Young?” I replied that I did like Loretta Young, and that she was in fact a personal friend of mine.

That was that—he got so excited and laughed hysterically and kept repeating “You know my Loretta Young—a friend of yours!” He really lost control of himself. It was evident that he admired your movies and you particularly, and it took some minutes for him to become calm again.

He asked me for a big sheet of paper and Chinese ink and brush. He wrote two or three large characters and then from his back pocket took a Red-Seal and stamped the paper and said: “Put that on the gate, and if you ever get anymore trouble send up the boy to bring me down.” Several times he came and solved my problems.

He was the one Japanese Officer who could have done that for me. I have always considered it a miracle.

Dear Loretta, that was the end of my trouble. Those women could not leave that house for six



Rev. Father W Aedan McGrath
1906—2000

I replied that I did like Loretta Young, and that she was in fact a personal friend of mine.



Loretta Young - 1913 to 2000

Months, and yet no soldier dared to climb the wall or enter the compound. The gratitude of those women can only be imagined.

There were only a few Catholics amongst them but many Protestants. During that six months my five groups of the Legion of Mary were busy instructing that whole house full of women, and before they left most of them were baptised Catholics with the menfolk and families.

That was a true story in every detail.

China was full of problems, and so I did not return home to Ireland for 16 years. Of course when people asked me about China he highlight was the story of Loretta Young. How often did people ask me: "Have you written to Loretta yet?" As you can see I never got around to it. I am now 94 and still busy with the Legion of Mary all over the Philippines and Asia. Only last week an American Sister phoned me to ask if I had ever told Loretta Young. And I has to say: "I am afraid that I have neglected my duty."

"Well" she said "do it before it is too late for you."

So at last I have got down to doing something about it. My most sincere apologies for not having let you know about it—but the Lord will not forget it.

At 94 I am still healthy and able to move about the Asian countries on my work. People ask me why have I not written a book— and my same reply is that I have been too busy on my job to take the precious time for it.

May God and Mary keep you in good health and reward you here and hereafter for the miracle which your good name worked in an impossible situation.

W. Aedan McGrath



Japanese troops in China c1939.

IN HISTORY—THE ARMY OF KING JAMES II

The army of King James II contained many Irish families, not least the McGrath Clan. Contained in the book King James's Irish Army List (John D'Alton 1689), under the Chapter titled Captain Redmond Magrath, is a short biography of the Clan and their territories and the ranks of a number of McGrath's in King James's army are now reproduced here.



The sept of Magrath, or Mac Crath, was located in the County of Tipperary, also at Termon-Magrath in the County of Fermanagh, and in later time in the County of Clare, where they are spoken of in the middle ages as the chief poets of Thomond; while in the Parish of Modeligo, County of Waterford, they had a large estate, on which the remains of their castles are noted by Smith. In 1224, Simon Magrath was Bishop of Ardagh, Matthew Mac Cragh was Bishop in 1391, Donat Mac Cragh in 1428, Thady Mac Cragh in 1430 and Dermot Mac Cragh in 1480. Matthew Macraigh was Bishop of Clonfert in 1482. In the ensuing century lived Miler Magrath, a Franciscan friar of the Fermanagh line of this family. He had been by the Pope's provision advanced to the See of Down: but, having embraced the Protestant religion in 1570, he was by Queen Elizabeth translated to that of Clogher, and afterwards in the same year to the Archbishopric of Cashel, with Emly annexed, and yet more those of Waterford and Lismore by a commendatory grant, with various other substantial favours from her Majesty. He filled the Archbishopric for upwards of fifty-two years, during which times says Harris in his additions to Ware, "he made most scandalous wastes and alienations of the revenues and manors belonging to it." He died in Cashel in 1622, in the hundredth year of his age. In 1629, a Royal warrant issued, directing Lord Falkland to grant a Baronetage to John Magrath of Attyvolane, County of Tipperary, who had some year previous obtained from the Crown a grant of the Lordship of Knockorden, with divers townlands, the castle, the town, and lands of Ballyneanty, and all tithes and advowsons belonging to the premises, with courts leet and baron. The attainders of 1641 present the names of Richard and Patrick Magrath, both of Fyanstown, County of Meath; while Cromwell's Act (1652) so often cited, excepted from pardon for life and estate Sir John Magrath of the County of Tipperary, (ie the Baronet of Attyvolane), and Turlogh, son of James Mcgragh. Besides Captain Redmond Magrath, there are on this list Bryan Magrath, a Lieutenant in the Earl of Antrim's infantry; James, a Captain in the Earl of Tyrone's; Terence and John, Captains in Lord Galmoy's; another Terence was Lieutenant in Tyrone's, Miles and Nicholas were Lieutenants in Colonel John Barrett's, and Thomas was Captain in Sir Charles O'Bryan's infantry.

MCGRATH CLAN GATHERING 2020, LATEST NEWS...

CEANN FINE LAUNCHES MCGRATH CLAN GATHERING 2020 CAMPAIGN

The International McGrath Clan Gathering 2020 campaign was launched at Castle McGrath Termonmagrath, Pettigo, Co. Donegal. The 2020 Gathering will take place in our ancestral homelands of Termonmagrath, encompassing the region of Co. Donegal, Co. Fermanagh & Co. Tyrone in the province of Ulster.

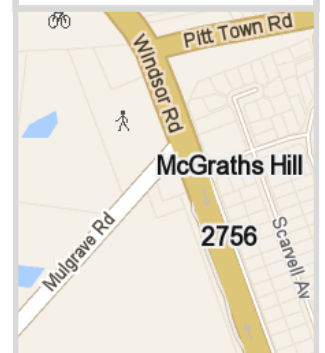
The Ceann Fine (pictured right) of the Cumann Chlann Mhic Craith / Clan McGrath Society said, "We want to make the McGrath Clan Gathering 2020 a bringing together of the McGrath diaspora from across the world. The uniquely rich and diverse culture and heritage of the McGrath Clan of Ulster has had on Irish and world history will be explored in detail. We especially look forward to exploring our Ulster ancestor Archbishop Miler McGrath, who with his kin and 200 McGrath, McMenamin and Monaghan men from Ulster had such an impact on the McGrath population of Tipperary and Waterford when he moved there to become Archbishop of Cashel. This migration has had a significant impact tight up to the present day.

From our routes in the Royal house of O'Brien, High King of Ireland, to our links through fosterage and marriage to the O'Neill Kings of Ulster, to our long history as bards, bishops, coarbs, termoners and warrior poets, you will have the opportunity to explore them all and get close to the deep, rich, ancient, complex and diverse history of Ulster. Our McGrath Clan Gathering 2020 will be based in Enniskillen, Co. Fermanagh, set in Ireland's beautiful lake-lands. Enniskillen has the very best of Ireland's accommodation and amenities. It is centrally located to explore the sites and history associated with the Clan McGrath. Please keep in touch with gathering updates via our Facebook pages and website www.clanmcgrath.org. This international McGrath Clan Gathering 2020 promises to be a unique experience like no other.



DID YOU KNOW?

McGraths Hill is a suburb of Sydney, Australia in the state of New South Wales. It is named after James McGrath, an Irish convict transported to Australia aboard the Hercules in 1802, who purchased property in the area around 1813. In January 2018 the Ceann Fine visited Australia and during his time there he promoted the McGrath Clan Gather 2020, visited a number of sites linked to the Irish diaspora include McGraths Hill. A full report on the visit will feature in the next edition of The Termoner.



FINTE NA HÉIREANN—CLANS OF IRELAND REGISTRATION 2018

Cumann Chlann Mhic Craith / the Clan McGrath Society / Clan McGrath of Ulster is a proud registered clan of Finte na hÉireann—Clans of Ireland. In 2018

Clans of Ireland was established to:

- Authenticate and register Irish Clans and historical families.
- Promote the interests of Irish Clans and historical families.
- Provide authentic and scholarly information related to Irish Clans and historical families.

For further information on Finte na hÉireann—Clans of Ireland, please visit the website on www.clansofireland.ie



“YOUR STORY
IS OUR STORY”

About Us:

The Clan McGrath and the Clan McGrath Society / Cumann Chlann Mhic Craith is a gathering place of all McGraths from every nation. We are a strictly ‘not for profit’ society and is independent from any local government or tourism bodies. We aim to use these pages and our Facebook and Twitter (links below) to share in our culture, history and inheritance. Membership of the Clan McGrath is a right of birth, marriage or adoption. Membership of the Society of the Clan McGrath of Ulster is open to all. We welcome articles for publication and submissions can be made to the email address below. We have a wealth of information on our history and are more than happy to help where we can. Your story is our story.

We are on the web:

www.clanmcgrath.org

Facebook:

www.facebook.com/clanmcgrath

www.facebook.com/mcgrathclangathering2020

Clan McGrath Twitter: @Clan_McGrath

Ceann Fine Twitter: @ChiefMcGrath1

General Enquiries: info@clanmcgrath.org

Events Spring / Summer 2018

April

14th Finte na hÉireann—Clans of Ireland Annual General Meeting
St. Stephen’s Green Hibernian Club, Dublin
Website: www.clansofireland.net

May

10th—13th O’Dea Clan Gathering, Ennis, Co. Clare.
Website: www.odeaclan.org

June

21st—24th O’Driscoll Clan Gathering, Baltimore, West Cork.
Website: www.odriscoll.ie

22nd—25th O’Mahony Clan Gathering, Macroom, Co. Cork.
Website: www.omahonsociety.com

22nd—25th O’Malley Clan Gathering, Westport, Co. Cork.
Website: www.omalleyclan.ie

July

13th—15th O’Leathlobhair Clan Gathering, Manor Hotel, Abbeyleix.
Contact: oleathlobhair@gmail.com

August

17th-18th Mannion Clan Gathering, Menlough, Co. Galway.
Website: www.mannionclan.org

