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The O'Malley Clan Chieftain's Regalia

Chieftain's Regalia and The Inauguration of an Irish Chieftain

I got the following information from Sheila O'Malley Mulloy (RIP) who was an amazing former Chieftain and Guardian Chieftain of the O'Malley Clan Association. Sheila was a historian and she did a lot of research on the Clan system in Ireland.

The Chieftain's Regalia

Our Chieftain's staff is an impressive piece of regalia. As this was an essential element of the Irish Chieftain's inauguration up to the seventeenth century, it was decided in 1987 to continue the tradition and to have a similar item of the installation of our chieftains. The task of making the staff was entrusted to Wayne Harlow (RIP). Wayne was the multi-talented husband of our former Chieftain Kitty O'Malley Harlow. He chose a five foot length of holly wood (which took a long time to source), two inches in diameter, and carved it most artistically with designs. On top we have two O'Malley boars confronting each other and below them O Máille is executed in raised lettering along the length of the staff. On top there is a Celtic ornament with a horse on one side and a Galley on the other – these elements were taken from the O'Malley coat of arms.



To add to the Chieftain's regalia in 1994 a hand-woven cloak was commissioned by former Chieftain Mary O'Sullivan (Molly RIP) and presented to the Clan. The cloak was woven by Beth Moran, of Ballytuohy Loom Clare Island, and the natural dyes were created from the plants and flowers of the island.



The O'Malley Clan Chieftain's Regalia

The Inauguration of an Irish Chieftain

The great historian John O'Donovan in his *Genealogies, Tribes and Customs of the Fly Fiachrach (1844)*, after a thorough examination of the best available sources, writes: *We may infer that the following conditions were generally requisite to constitute a legitimate installment of an Irish Chieftain:*

1. That he should be of the blood of the original conqueror or acquirer of the territory and free from all personal blemishes, deformities and defects and be of fit age to lead the clan to the field.
2. That the greater part of his sub-chiefs and freeholders should declare in his favour.
3. That the inauguration should be celebrated at a remarkable place in the territory appointed of old for the purpose, where there was a stone with the impression of two feet, believed to be the size of the feet of the first captain, chieftain or acquirer of the territory.
4. That the hereditary historian or chronicler of the territory should be present to read to the Chief about to be installed the heads of the law relating to the conduct of the chieftain and that the latter should swear to observe those laws and to maintain the customs of the territory inviolable.
5. That after taking this oath, the chief laid aside his sword and other weapons, upon which the historian of the district, or some other person whose proper office it was, handed him a straight white wand as a scepter and an emblem of purity and rectitude, to indicate that his people were to be so obedient to him that he required no other weapon to command them.
6. That after receiving this straight white wand, one of his sub-chiefs put on his shoe or scandal in token of obedience, or threw a slipper over his head in token of good luck and prosperity.
7. That after the foregoing ceremonies were performed, one of his sub-chiefs pronounced his surname without the Christian-name in a loud voice after whom it was pronounced in succession by the clergy according to their dignity and by his sub-chiefs and freeholders according to their respective ranks. After this the chieftain turned round thrice forwards and thrice backwards, in honour of the most holy Trinity, as the Irish still do all good things, and to view this people and his territory in every direction; which being done he was the legitimate chief of his name.

(From O'Malley records 1988.)

Of course the O'Malleys have a policy of equality and in the spirit of our illustrious ancestor Grace O'Malley (Granuaile) we would add 'she' to the 'he' in the inauguration rituals.

Professor Ellen O'Malley Dunlop, Clan Guardian Chieftain



The O'Malley Clan Gathering 2019

Chieftain Brendan and the O'Malley Clan Association invite you to...



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The O'Malley Clan Gathering 2019

65th Annual O'Malley Gathering Limerick City - 2019



Friday June 21st

3:00 PM - 4:30 PM
Limerick Courthouse,
Merchant's Quay

6:00 PM onwards
Istabraq Hall
Admission: Complementary

Walking Tour

Walking tour of Historic Limerick, led by Dr. Liam Irwin, distinguished historian. Maximum of 25 people. No charge but must book.

O'Malleys in Public Life Exhibition

To be opened by the Mayor of Limerick. Hear how O'Malleys have featured in the arts, politics, sport, music, and other fields.

Saturday June 22nd

10:00 AM - 3:30 PM
Pick up at Strand Hotel &
Cappavilla Village (UL)
(Exact locations TBC)
Admission: €25

4:00 PM - 6:00 PM
Strand Hotel
Admission: Complementary

7:00 PM
Strand Hotel
Admission: €35

9:30 PM - ~12:00 AM
Strand Hotel
Admission: Complementary

Bus tour of Limerick and its surroundings

Programme to be announced. Lunch included.

O'Malley Genealogy Workshop

Learn the essentials of genealogy research. Bring your O'Malley family tree & find out new connections. Learn about the O'Malley DNA Project and how to capture oral history.

Dinner

Enjoy a three course meal in the rooftop Harris suite of the Strand Hotel, with spectacular views over the Shannon river and Limerick City.

Chieftain's Welcome Evening

An evening of traditional music, song and dancing with an official welcome by Chieftain Brendan O'Malley. (attendance is complementary but please book your place to ensure we have enough space).



Sunday June 23rd

11:00 AM - 12:00 noon
St. Mary's Church,
Athlunkard Street

1:00 PM - 4:00 PM
Hunt Museum

1:30 PM - 2:15 PM
Hunt Museum

2:00 PM
Hunt Museum
Admission: €27.50
Under 12's: €15

O'Malley Gathering Mass

Special O'Malley Mass celebrated by Canon Donough O'Malley.

Family & Kids' Events

Watersports, archery, kids' events (entertainment, face painting, music). (Runs in parallel with AGM and Lunch)

Annual General Meeting

All members are welcome to attend and discuss ideas for the year ahead.

The Gathering Lunch

The highlight of the weekend! Chieftain's awards, Fundraising Raffle, Inauguration of new chieftain 2019-2020.



Book now to avoid disappointment.

Tickets and accommodation can be booked at special rates through:

<https://www.ireland101.com/booking/start/omalley>



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The O'Malley Clan Association aims to reach out to O'Malleys from all around the world and foster links between the O'Malleys around the globe and the clan at home here in Ireland.

The Clan Association formed in 1953 has been connecting O'Malleys around the world in The US and Canada, Britain, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, South America, and anywhere else you can think of for over 60 years now.

We hope with our new website, and newsletter, that We can go from strength to strength in our aim to connect all the O'Malleys around the world.

The O'Malley Clan DNA Project on Family Tree DNA

The most common queries we get at The O'Malley Clan Association are queries in relation to helping to trace peoples ancestors in Ireland. As we all know, written records can only take us so far, (if you're lucky you'll get back to the early 1800's or late 1700's).

Many of the Irish Census Records and other historic documents were destroyed during the early part of the 20th century and as a result it can be very hard to trace ancestors back beyond the 19th century. Church records are a help, but can be patchy at times.

One way of narrowing down the search is through DNA testing. The O'Malley Clan Association is involved in a project with Family Tree DNA to test as many O'Malleys as possible to try and expand our knowledge of our roots as much as we possibly can.

There's a specific page for the project on the Family Tree DNA website:

<https://www.familytreedna.com/groups/omalley/about>

Check it out, there's lots of info there, and administrators also for any questions.

