



## O'Malley Clan Association Monthly Newsletter

### This month's highlights

- Happy Easter from The O'Malley Clan Association
- Michael J O'Malley and the Connemara Pony
- Birr Castle picking up awards
- Celebrations for Eri Mountbatten O'Malley
- Grace O'Malley, Still causing controversy
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- About the O'Malley Clan Association
- New Membership structure for the O'Malley Clan Association!

### Happy Easter from The O'Malley Clan Association

Happy Easter to all of our O'Malley family and friends around the world from Chieftain Tom O'Malley and all of us here at The O'Malley Clan Association.

We hope you all enjoy the Easter eggs, and have a great long week-end of celebrations.



# 2022

O'MALLEY CLAN GATHERING  
24TH TO 26TH JUNE  
NEWPORT • IRELAND

Mark it in your diary, we look forward to meeting up



O'MALLEY  
Ó MÁILLE

The Event Booking  
Link is on the clan  
website and LIVE,  
[www.omalleyclan.ie](http://www.omalleyclan.ie)  
It's time to plan that  
trip to Mayo at the  
end of June

## Michael J O'Malley and the Connemara Pony



One hundred and ten years ago a Connemara man, Michael O'Malley made an amazing journey to Olympia in London where he introduced the world to the Connemara Pony.

Michael O'Malley left Rosmuck in Connemara 110 years ago with two Connemara Ponies and made the long journey to London where he introduced the unique breed to the world. In recognising O'Malley's contribution to the Connemara Pony 10 years ago on the centenary of his journey, the Connemara Pony Breeders' Society erected a commemorative plaque in Rosmuck in his memory.

The erection of the plaque coincided with the Connemara Pony Festival which takes place in Clifden for a week every August. A native of Rosmuck, O'Malley took great pride in the native Connemara Pony and following its deterioration due to the introduction of unsuitable sires, he urged that steps be taken to revive the old breed.

His journey to London and his subsequent appeals helped raise the profile of the native Pony and in 1923 he helped form the Connemara Pony Breeders' Society.

### Legend of the Connemara Pony

The harsh landscape of Connemara where the breed first became recognised as a distinct type, gave rise to a pony breed of hardy, strong individuals. However, the origins of the Pony are unknown but much speculation exists about how they came to the west. There is an opinion they developed from Scandinavian ponies that the Vikings first brought to Ireland. Another source was likely the Irish Hobby, a now-extinct breed established prior to the 13th century. Legend, however, says that galleons from the Spanish Armada ran aground in 1588, and the Andalusians on board were set loose. The Spanish horses bred with the native stock, refining the local ponies.

Whatever their origin, today, Connemara Ponies are bred worldwide in Ireland and Britain, as well as on the European continent, North America, Australasia and South Africa.

### Historical Introduction: The Michael J O'Malley Legacy

Michael J O'Malley was born in Rosmuck, Connemara, Co. Galway in 1884. He took great pride in his native Connemara Pony and was among those present at a meeting of the Connemara Pony committee, held in

## Michael J O'Malley and the Connemara Pony

Clifden on 15th November 1911, when a description and definition of the Connemara Pony was drawn up. An attempt to form a Society failed, but Michael O'Malley was passionately determined to promote his beloved, Connemara Pony.

In June 1912, Michael O'Malley, Joe Welsh and two Connemara Ponies (the stallion, Irish Dragoon, and mare, Eileen Alanna) travelled the long journey from Rosmuc, the heart of Connemara, to the National Agricultural Hall (now called Olympia) in Kensington, London to take part in the 1912 World Exhibition of Breeds. His untiring efforts to raise awareness of the breed were well rewarded as his ponies were much admired. The hardships of the long journey had been worthwhile.

On his return from Olympia, Michael J. O'Malley set about trying to revive the breed. He wrote the first of many letters to the Irish Farming World titled "A Plea for the Connemara Pony" in which he deplored the deterioration of the Connemara Pony due to the introduction of unsuitable sires, and urged that steps be taken to revive the breed. He hoped to raise awareness of the Connemara Pony. Between November 1912 and July 1913, a total of twenty letters were published in the Irish Farming World, concerning the Connemara Pony. Thankfully, these letters have been preserved and published by Pat Lyne.

Eleven years later, The Connemara Pony Breeders' Society was formed on 12th December 1923, with Rev. Father C.J. White as President and Michael J. O'Malley as Honorary Secretary. Throughout his life, Michael J. O'Malley strived to preserve, promote and improve the Connemara Pony. Michael J. O'Malley is a figure well known to historians of the Connemara breed as the man most responsible for the setting up of the CPBS and the eventual salvation of the pony as a distinct breed.

*In the spirit of Michael J O'Malley and to commemorate the initiative and passion displayed in his pioneering visit to Olympia with two Connemara ponies, an annual award is given to an International (someone outside of Ireland) owner, or breeder, who has selflessly promoted the Connemara Pony during their lifetime. Recent winners of the Michael J O'Malley Award include breeders from Australia, Sweden, and the UK.*

Thanks to Emer Gunter





## Birr Castle—Picking up Awards



*Lady and Lord Rosse, with Grainne O'Malley, Lorna Shannon and Shane Hollywood with a cake to mark the celebration.*

### Birr Castle Demesne named in top tourist attractions in Ireland

THE team at Birr Castle Demesne took some time out to celebrate being listed as one of Ireland's top ten visitor attractions for 2022. Birr Castle Demesne was fourth in the visitor attraction section of the Irish Independent Reader Travel Awards 2022.

Speaking about the Awards Pól Ó Conghaile, Travel Editor said "As things takes a turn for the better, we're celebrating not just the lights at the end of the tunnel, but the lights that have helped us through the tunnel — Ireland's breathtakingly resilient tourism and hospitality industry."

Grainne O'Malley, Birr Castle Demesne Manager said "It was wonderful to see the efforts of the terrific team, who kept everything going over the past couple of years, being rewarded. Thanks to everyone who voted for us. It is hugely appreciated. This accolade comes on top of all of the other Awards won by Birr Castle Demesne in recent years including being named in 2021 by the Lonely Planet list as one of the top eight hidden treasures in Ireland for visitors and also being named by Lonely Planet as one of top ten most child-friendly castle estates in the world in 2019."

On your doorstep, Birr Castle Demesne is one of Ireland's most intriguing destinations and a must-see for anyone with a passion for photography, botany, wildlife, nature, education, science, engineering, astronomy, and heritage. Beautifully framed within a 120-acre demesne, this 17th-century castle is home for the past 400 years to the Parsons Family, who are celebrated for their remarkable scientific and engineering feats, including the world-famous Great Telescope (1845). A self-guided adventure of endless discoveries includes 10 kilometres of scenic walks, rivers, waterfall, a lake, one of Europe's finest plant collections, Science Galleries with the world's oldest intact dark room, the world's tallest box hedge, forest bathing, trails and Ireland's tallest treehouse! [www.birrcastle.com](http://www.birrcastle.com)

## Birr Castle—Picking up Awards



*Views of the Castle and the famous telescope at Birr*





## Celebrations for Eri Mountbatten O'Malley & Family

### Celebrations in order!

Dr Eri Mountbatten-O'Malley (FHEA), eldest son of the late Grace Mountbatten (O'Malley) – and grandson of Major Hamilton Joseph O'Malley-Keyes, a member of the O'Malleys formerly of Ross House, Newport, Co Mayo - recently passed his viva voce and was awarded his Doctorate for his thesis entitled: 'Human flourishing: a conceptual analysis'. He will celebrate and officially graduate in the summer of 2022 but you can access his research [here](#). Eri has had a diverse career in sales and hospitality management, advice, advocacy, social policy research and campaigning, and recently academia. He works for Bath Spa university (Bath, Somerset) as Senior lecturer in Education policy in the School of Education supporting undergraduate and postgraduate students through their studies. He has spoken internationally about his research over recent years and continues to speak at a number of high profile events and conferences this year, including, for example, at University College in London, University of Winchester, University of Edinburgh and Oxford University. You can see his work profile [here](#).



Below Left: Eri with his Son Benjamin and Daughter Beatrice



## Grace O'Malley still causing controversy....in Dublin



Dublin City Council has defended its policy on mural art, which has included prosecutions for unauthorised works. It comes as a new mural of Grace O'Malley goes up without permission as a result of commercial sponsorship. The 18m by 12m mural of Grace O'Malley on Aungier St was painted by Kathrina Rupit, who is originally from Mexico.

She says it is a modern interpretation of the medieval figure, with a pen and book as weapons instead of the sword. The work was organised by Subset, an art collective who have been previously prosecuted by the city council for unauthorised murals of David Attenborough in Portobello and another in Smithfield, entitled Horseboy.

A member of Subset who did not want to be identified read out a prepared statement beside The Grace mural which included the lines "to anyone struggling with fear, worry, stress, anxiety, panic, addiction - shout out to you. Every day that you struggle means you're still fighting. Fighting a good fight, for a good cause. Yourself. We're the fighting Irish for a reason, believe that". It is understood that Subset paid the owners of the wall on Aungier St for its use. The company Grace O'Malley Whiskey provided sponsorship to the artists involved. Brand Manager of Grace O'Malley Whiskey, Heather Clancy, admitted that the mural was unauthorised but argued it was a risk worth taking to help the arts world, which had a rough time over the past couple of years.

"We wanted to go against the grain and do something Grace O'Malley would do," she said.

In a statement Dublin City Council said that murals require planning permission, but it had worked with street artists, including Subset, to facilitate such installations in the past. It pointed out that it had granted 35 such planning applications last year and currently authorised murals can be seen at Stoney Road in Fairview as well as City Quay and Pearse St in the city centre.

There are legal walls in Finglas and a project involving ten artists in Grangegorman.

Subset also painted an officially sanctioned mural on the ESB building in Temple Bar in December 2019.

Martin Harte of Temple Bar Company, who has worked with street artists, said regulation is needed, especially when murals are covering entire buildings which can be listed and where commercial sponsorship is involved. A prosecution against Subset by Dublin City Council is due to go ahead in the District Court in June.

## “Cloch le Carn” on Des O’Malley

### Cloch le Carn, New Documentary on Des O’Malley

The son of Des O’Malley has revealed the personal cost of his father’s high political office on his family, and said the politician never wanted to be taoiseach.

In an RTÉ documentary on the towering figure in Irish politics, the Progressive Democrats (PD) leader is described as the “greatest taoiseach Ireland never had” by his former Fianna Fáil colleague Máire Geoghegan-Quinn.



The episode of *Cloch le Carn* looks at O’Malley’s remarkable career, beginning with his appointment, in the midst of the Arms Crisis of 1970, as one of the youngest justice ministers in the history of the State. But his stratospheric Dáil rise — which saw him appointed to the portfolio at the age of 31, just two years after he was first elected — took a toll on the family life of the father of six.

His son, Dr Eoin O’Malley, said his father had a constant threat hanging over his life as the minister behind the Offences Against the State Act and the Special Criminal Court.

“My family were more deeply affected by it than most because my mother was from Omagh in Tyrone, and her father’s bar was bombed twice, directly because of who my father was,” he said.

He recalls how his father had to carry a gun on his person during this period at the start of the Troubles. “My older sisters were being brought to school by armed gardaí,” he said.

“There was evidence of attempts on his life and so he had to carry guns, which seemed kind of ridiculous to us because he was a very slight man who didn’t seem like the type that would be able to handle a gun.”

He had been catapulted into politics at the age of 29 when his uncle, Donogh O’Malley, died suddenly, leaving his seat vacant in Limerick.

The documentary delves into the deep love Des had for his wife Patricia, but the demands of his ministerial career meant he spent most of his time away from his six children, although his wife travelled between their homes in Dublin and Limerick to take care of her husband.

“He was a pretty old-fashioned man who didn’t know how to make a cup of tea or do anything of use,” Eoin said.

“They bought a house in Dublin in 1978 or 1979 and so she used to have to travel up and down to change sheets and cook dinners and to do all the basic stuff that he just wasn’t able to do. They used to talk on the phone every night. She was in Limerick, and he’d ring every evening and I think he leaned on her.”



## **“Cloch le Carn” on Des O’Malley**

Dr O’Malley, associate professor of politics in DCU, talks honestly about the man he describes as an “old-fashioned Irish father”, who was absent for much of his childhood. “He spent very little time at home. Growing up, we might have seen him once a month.”

His PD colleague Mary Harney said the Limerick politician was acutely aware of his absence from his family. “He would often say to me, ‘You know my children grew up without me being there,’” she said.

In the documentary, Eoin also speaks with pride of the principled stands his father took during his career, which saw him expelled from the Fianna Fáil party for refusing to vote against a bill to liberalise the sale of contraceptives.

In a famous speech in the Dáil at the time on following his conscience, O’Malley said he would not follow the party line and oppose the bill as he would “stand by the Republic”. “In many ways, what I would be most proud of was his bravery, that he was willing to stand up to people at times when it was probably difficult. He was unusually brave,” Eoin said.

Dr O’Malley also believes his father — who reluctantly set up the Progressive Democrats on the encouragement of Harney — never wanted to hold the highest office in the nation.

“He had a very high opinion of himself, but I don’t think he really had that much interest in actually ever being taoiseach and was always happy to be number two to somebody he trusted,” Eoin said. “He just simply didn’t trust Haughey and I presume the feeling was mutual.”

He believes his father was uncomfortable with his fame as the head of the Progressive Democrats when the party was first formed in 1985.

“He was probably at the height of his fame,” Eoin said. “You were a teenager walking around. Everywhere you went you saw posters with your father, ‘Dessie Can Do It’, going into meetings where you had thousands of people cheering him like he was some sort of deity.

“He was very reluctant, he hated it. He just didn’t really enjoy that sort of thing and you can see his face, he’s kind of like, ‘Oh God, do I have to really do this?’

“To get 14 seats in that election was remarkably good. It denied Haughey his majority, which my father felt was job done to some extent.” Harney revealed his initial anger at her suggestion that they go into government with Haughey and Fianna Fáil when they won a disappointing six seats in the next election in 1989.

“I was speaking at the count in the RDS and I floated that idea and Des wasn’t very happy with me at all. In fact, he was very unhappy,” she said. His son remembers his father was “cursing and shouting” but came around to the idea: “I think eventually he realised that her analysis was probably right.”

Geoghegan-Quinn reveals how O’Malley felt let down by the electorate when he ran for the European Parliament but was defeated by Pat Cox in 1994.

“I think Des believed he had served his country well in the Dáil, with his own party and Fianna Fáil, as a representative of the people of Limerick and of Munster. And at the end of the day, they had abandoned him.”

But he never lost an election and went on to win a seat in 1997 for the 10th election in a row. The Arms Crisis and the aftermath played a major part in his political life, but Harney doesn’t believe it defined the politician, who died last year at the age of 82, four years after the death of his beloved wife in 2017.

“I think he will be remembered as someone that was principled, somebody that had great courage, who was prepared to take on the status quo. A man that genuinely did stand by the Republic.”

***‘Cloch le Carn: Des O’Malley’, RTÉ One, Tuesdays at 7pm, and also on the RTE Player***

## The Captain Boycott Connection

From *It Was News to Me* by Charles J. O'Malley, 1939, Pages 25-26 Bruce Humphries, Inc Publishers Boston (out of print) .....

"One of the noted characters who visited my native village was Captain Boycott, whom I knew very well. He was agent for some estates in Mayo and Galway and lived the greater part of the time on the Island of Achill near my home.

The name "Boycott" has been used to designate a method of coercion or opposition to any commercial or political aspect of life. How the term originated may be of interest.

Boycott was known in my youth as "a man of a very quarrelsome, arrogant, and presumptuous disposition." His hand was raised against everybody's and everybody's hand was raised against him. The employees of the estates he supervised disliked to work for him, and for good reason.

A cousin of mine, Marten Patten, was employed by him on an estate at Achill Island. On day Martin was working in a field and on leaving there did not close the gate which had been partly ajar and was blown open by the wind. Boycott noticed the open gate and learned that Martin had left for home, some three miles away. Boycott sent a messenger to request Martin to return. When Martin got back, tired after his day's labor, Boycott awaited him near the gate, which he ordered Martin to close. This Martin did and then trudged back three miles to his home never again to return to his disagreeable employer. For a slight infraction of the rules this seemed a rather severe punishment, but it became the direct cause of the origin of "Boycott". Martin was the first man to refuse to work for him.

Boycott came to our village every Tuesday to buy supplies and usually drove a tandem of horses. The people had become very indignant over his many exactions and they decided that nobody would supply him with goods. He tried every store in town, without avail. He threatened to prosecute the storekeepers, but each one told him to go ahead.

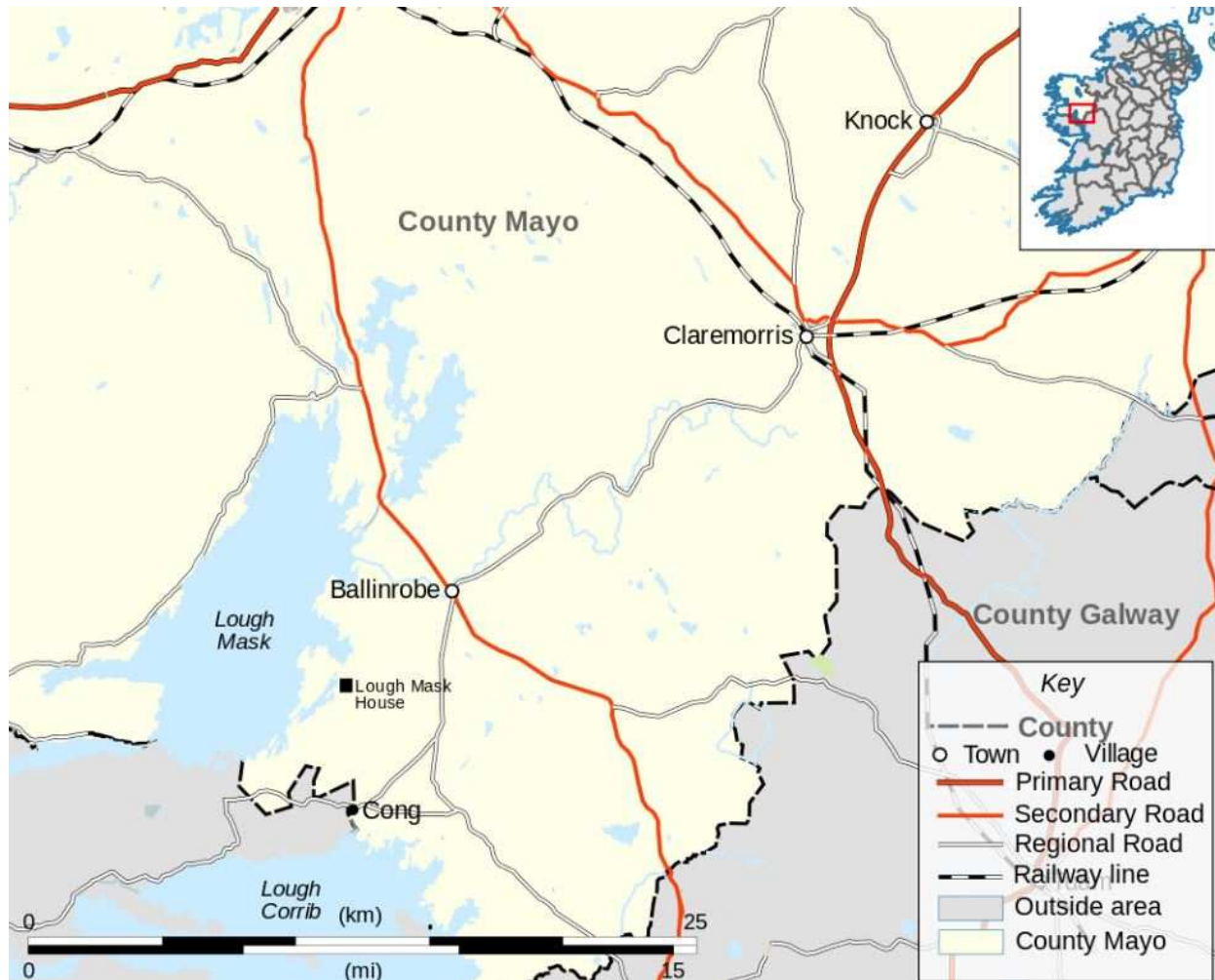
Conditions became so disagreeable for Boycott that he left Mayo and moved to an estate on Lough Mask in Galway. However, the news of his very arrogant traits of character had preceded him to Galway. People there, like those in Mayo, refused to have any dealings with him.



Above: Charles Cunningham's cartoon representation of Captain Boycott in *Vanity Fair*



## The Captain Boycott Connection



Above: The area around Lough Mask

Boycott died in 1897 reformed, penitent, and chastened by sorrows. From the arrogant, presumptuous individual whom I knew in 1879-80, it was said he became a lovable, kindly man.

But the name "Boycott" still survives, a linguistic epithet used today all over the world as a threat to right a wrong or correct an evil. The Irish created it, and many times regret its modern applications."

*At first I read this story with some skepticism. Only after using that modern fact checker, Wikipedia, did I appreciate, once again, that Gramps had the names and dates right. Martin Patten may have been a cousin once or twice removed, and he may or may not have been the "first man to refuse to work for Charles Boycott", but the Patten name is certainly associated with Achill Island: there is a monument to Thomas Patten (1910-1936) in Dooega.*

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[o\\_malley\\_clan\\_association](https://www.instagram.com/o_malley_clan_association)

*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.*

## O'Malley Clan Association Membership Restructure

Firstly Thank you to our valued Newsletter Subscribers for your support for Ó Máille, the newsletter of the O'Malley Clan. Your subscriptions have helped to fund the ongoing efforts of The O'Malley Clan Association to forge links with The O'Malley Clan throughout the world, by helping us host The O'Malley Clan Association website [omalleyclan.ie](http://omalleyclan.ie). For the past 7 years, we've been sending this publication exclusively to our valued Newsletter subscribers, every month.

As part of our drive to expand the O'Malley online community, we'd like to make it available to a wider audience, so the Council of Chieftains have decided to send it free of charge to everyone on our wider mailing list, starting with the December 2021 issue. Of course our Subscribers are on that mailing list too! So you'll still receive your monthly issue of Ó Máille into your email inbox.

We're also announcing a new approach to formal membership of the Clan. In appreciation for the support of our Newsletter Subscribers up to now, we have awarded our existing Newsletter Subscribers formal membership of the O'Malley Clan Association until the expiry date of their current subscriptions to the newsletter. At that point, we'll send an email to the Subscriber inviting them to renew their membership. We hope all of our current Newsletter Subscribers will do so and will continue to be valued members of the O'Malley Clan Association for many years to come.

If you've any queries in relation to the newsletter or your clan membership, please don't hesitate to drop me a line by email to [omalleyclanireland@gmail.com](mailto:omalleyclanireland@gmail.com)

Regards

Don O'Malley

O'Malley Clan Association