



O'Malley Clan Association Monthly Newsletter

This month's highlights....

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- Tribe101 App Launch is imminent!
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It's June, so all roads lead to Limerick for the Gathering!

June has arrived, so it's time to get ourselves organised and get along to the Annual O'Malley Clan Gathering!

There are still a few places left at some of the events, so get yourself booked in, whether its for our fabulous Charity Concert in Abington Church on Friday 28th June, or for a fun walking tour around Limerick city on Saturday 29th June. There's also a few spots still available at the Annual Clan Luncheon at The Strand Hotel on Sunday 30th June. Get it done today, and we'll see you in Limerick at the end of the month. We'll have a ball. Click on the image below for details



The new Tribe101 App launch is imminent!

Within the next few days the new Tribe101 app will be available on the App Store and on Google Play.

With this fabulous app, developed by our booking partners over at Tribe101 you'll be able to have your event tickets on your phone, chat before, during, and after events with other members, and share your experience!

Keep an eye on our Social Media channels for details shortly



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O'Malley Clan Gathering 2024—Programme of events

Friday 28th June



2:00 pm: The O'Malley Olympics: Fun and games for kids of all ages!

Venue: Tinnatarriff National School, Cappamore, Co Limerick. **Eircode V94 E670**

For O'Malleys and all of our friends too! The more the merrier! Among the events will be a Tug of-war demonstration, a 3-legged race, an egg-and-spoon race, an obstacle course, a bouncy castle, a penalty shoot-out competition, a hang tough competition and more. There will be light refreshments too!

5:00 pm: Chieftain's Reception and History talk

Venue: Hayes' Bar & Sliabh Feilim Room, Cappamore, Co Limerick. **Eircode V94 XKC8.**

Welcome to the 68th annual O'Malley Gathering from Chieftain Nano O'Malley McMahon.

Collect your 2024 combined name badge/ tickets from the information desk.

On the 100th anniversary of the US recognition of the Irish Free State in 1924, Professor Bernadette Whelan will give a talk entitled: 'Leaving for America: Rituals of Packing and Departure', examining the intense impact on the social, psychological and emotional lives of those who left and those who stayed behind. Bring along your family tree to display and compare with others.

The Clan Shop will be open with O'Malley books, coffee mugs, ties, key rings, pin badges etc.

Also, the entries to "An O'Malley I'd love to have met" will be available in booklet form.

Hayes' Restaurant will be open all evening for those who want to get something to eat ahead of the evening festivities!



O'Malley Clan Gathering 2024—Programme of events

St John's Church, Abington, Murroe V94 N230

8pm Concert by The Sliabh Feilim Singers with special guests, in aid of Cappamore Day Care Centre and Milford Hospice, Limerick. Ensure that you have your badge/ticket for admission to the concert

Hayes' Bar & Sliabh Feilim Room, Cappamore 10pm

Back to Hayes' for an evening of Irish music and dancing,. Watch the experts and then try your hand at some popular favourites like "The Siege of Ennis" Family Trees and Photos will still be on display too!



Saturday 29th June

Bus Tour to Ardnacrusha Hydroelectric Power Station

Ardnacrusha Hydroelectric power station was built in the 1920s, shortly after Irish independence. At the time, it was the largest construction project in Europe. Pioneered by Dr. Thomas A. McLaughlin, later Director of the national Electricity Supply Board. He was married to Limerick woman Olwen O'Malley. Bus pickup points as follows. Ensure that you have your badge/ticket for the bus tour.

Murroe: Holy Rosary Church . Eircode: V94 PY97. Bus departs at 9:15 am

Cappamore: St Michael's Church. Eircode: V94 PFP2.

Bus departs at 9:30 am

Strand Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick. Eircode V94 03F2. Bus departs at 10:15 am

A light lunch will be provided after the tour and then the bus will drop those on the Walking tour in William Street near Mother Mac's pub before continuing on to the Strand Hotel, leaving there at 2:00 pm for Murroe and Cappamore.



O'Malley Clan Gathering 2024—Programme of events

Saturday 29th June

2:30 pm: Limerick Distilleries and Breweries Walking Tour

Meeting Point: Mother Macs Pub, High St., Limerick. Eircode V94 W8X
Led by Michael McMahon, joint proprietor of Mother Macs, formerly the O'Malley – owned Round House, the tour will visit the sites of former distilleries in Limerick, as well as Limerick's leading Treaty Brewery and will finish back at the former Round House, (Mother Mac's) for a complimentary drink.



Evening Events

6:30 pm: Bus to Bunratty

Meeting Point: Strand Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick. Eircode V94 03F2.

Bus departs at 6:30 pm sharp. Ensure that you have your badge/ticket for the bus and that you know where to meet the bus for the return rip to the Strand Hotel after the banquet.

7pm Pre-dinner drinks at the pub in Bunratty Castle Folk Park. Eircode: V95 WP63

Assemble in Mac's pub in Bunratty Folk Park for a pre-dinner reception. Then walk over to historic Bunratty Castle for a group photo in front of the castle, followed by an evening of food, wine, music and entertainment from the famed Bunratty singers. There will be a prize for the best mediaeval costume! Those who have booked Children's tickets will be served a children's menu. Ensure that you have your badge/ticket for admission to the banquet. *(Note: The Dining Hall at Bunratty Castle is on an upper floor accessed via a stairway, and no lift is available unfortunately)*



O'Malley Clan Gathering 2024—Programme of events

Sunday 30th June

Annual Clan Mass 11:30am, St Munchin's Catholic Church, Limerick, Eircode: V94 HW54

The Guardian Chieftain, Chieftain, Tanaiste, and former Chieftains will be led by a piper into the church where Canon Donogh O'Malley will celebrate the annual clan mass. St Munchin's Church was designed by architect Joe O'Malley in 1920 and is situated across the road from Limerick's



iconic Treaty Stone. After mass, local historian Dr Liam Irwin will give a short talk on the events leading up to the Treaty of Limerick in 1691, before we assemble around the Treaty Stone for a group photo of all present.

Annual General Meeting

1pm Strand Hotel, Limerick

O'Brien/Wogan Room, Strand Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick. Eircode V94 03F2.

Guardian Chieftain Ellen O'Malley Dunlop will chair the AGM of the O'Malley Clan Association, which will include reports from the officers and the election of a new Tanaiste. All O'Malleys are welcome to attend, but only Clan Members are entitled to vote.



2pm Annual Clan Luncheon & Inauguration of new Chieftain

Venue: City View Suite, Strand Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick. Eircode V94 03F2.

Lunch on the 6th floor of Limerick's Strand Hotel with panoramic views of the city, followed by the inauguration of our new Chieftain, Grace O'Malley and the singing of Óró Sé do Bheatha 'Bhaile

In association with Limerick City and County Council, our principal sponsor

Our other sponsors include: Randridge Don O'Malley Consulting Engineers, Limerick; Denis J O'Malley B.E. Consulting Engineers, Murroe, Co Limerick; Garry O'Malley Windows, Kilmallock, Co Limerick; O'Malley Butchers, Tipperary and Arachas O'Malley Griffin Insurances, Limerick.



A Fishing Story—Micheál Ó Beirn

A story of a day of fishing in Connemara many moons ago, (taken from The O'Malley Journal 2000)

Our happiest holidays in those days were spent on our Uncle Tommie's farm in the heart of Connemara in the beautiful Maam Valley; home of the O'Malleys of Kilmilkin. My mother and Aunt Eileen were born and reared there.

Brendan was my first cousin 'over' from Clifden and I was 'up' from Galway. Our uncle was not married then, and I suppose he left us to enjoy ourselves as we pleased, and we did just that as fishing was our life at the time.

Our rods were home-grown; two sturdy bamboo sticks from behind the summer house, picked with great care and cut to size. The line ran through a few wire hoops fixed to the rod with a short length of gut and a hook at the end. That and a small jar for bait was our fishing equipment. Our bait was a worm, preferably a lively red worm.

Our greatest and most memorable day was, without doubt, the day we fished our Finney River. We set off early that morning with all our gear plus a ham sandwich and a jam sandwich each; our rods on our shoulders like a pair of Huckleberry Finns setting out on a day's adventure.

When we got to the river we had the usual argument as to whether we should fish above or below the bridge. There were several good pools well-known to my cousin. So that was that. He seemed to have an instinct which pool was worthwhile. The difference in our fishing technique became very obvious from time to time. His was the delayed tactic as if he knew where and when his bait was about to be swallowed. And when that happened like 'Fabius Cunctator' he waited further until the time was ripe to strike. By then, I would have cast and recast with nothing to show for my effort. Once I learned the art of delay, I caught my first fish of the day, and from then on, they arrived at regular intervals.

Brendan took one bank, and I took the other and we worked away to our hearts content enticing beautiful



A Fishing Story—Micheál Ó Beirn

brown trout out of the water and onto our bank. It struck me how unfair it all appeared taking advantage of these beautiful creatures, but then I dismissed such ideas when I thought how the Lord himself had been up to his neck with his apostles in the same business. In fact, they gave them no choice they just hauled the fish aboard in a net without any line or bait.



So I continued with what I was doing. We spent several hours longer moving down river adding to our stock. We decided we had caught enough. Brendan had three sizeable trout and one large one plus a few small ones. I had three good size trout and a few small ones as well. So we lay back on the soft green bank, looked up at the clear blue sky and ate our ham and jam sandwiches.

We got up when we had rested and set about threading a line through each fish in our catch with the larger ones in the centre. We tied each catch around our waists, wearing the bigger fish to the front and set off. When we reached the road we took off our sandals to enjoy walking barefoot on the powdery road. There were no tarmacadam roads in those days. We slung our sandals around our necks and headed off for Kilmilkin.

The first we saw of them was the white dust from a car somewhere near the old school house; cars were few and far between at the time. As it approached we stood up on the grassy verge to let it pass. To our amazement it stopped. It was a large open touring car. Two knickerbockered anglers got out. We could tell they were fishermen; their tweed hats were alive with fishing flies of all colours, besides, the back of the car was full of fishing gear. They congratulated us on our fishing harvest and walked right around to see the full extent of it. We guessed they were English by their accents. One of them asked us what baits we used and we both replied 'worms'. This seemed to surprise or amuse them. His friend then asked 'may we buy some of your catch?' Before we had time to say anything he produced two £1 notes and handed one to each of us. They selected my cousin's four biggest fish and my three biggest. He gave my cousin an extra half crown and explained that they had taken an extra trout from him and it was also the largest fish. This did not upset me in the slightest because I knew very well that only for Brendan I would not have as many fish as I did. He had spent his time restraining me from striking before the fish had time to examine my bait. They thanked us again, jumped back into the car with their day's catch and disappeared towards Leenane in a cloud of dust. From there to Kilmilkin we whistled and sang, with one stop before Walsh's pub to put our sandals back on for fear someone from Kilmilkin might spot us. We nearly got stuck in the front stile in our rush to tell our news. Our Uncle Tommie was sitting on the front lawn sorting some papers. We showed him the money, told him what happened and showed him the balance of our catch. He looked at the pair of us, laughed, shook his head and said 'well upon my word'.

A few days later he met two visiting anglers from England who told him their 'fishing story'. They were on their way back to the hotel with nothing to show their wives after a day's fishing when they had the good luck to meet two young peasant lads who sold them the best of their catch. And so their reputation was restored. We never heard what our uncle said to them on that occasion.

Life After Grace—Clan to Clan—Sheila Mulloy

An article by Sheila Mulloy from The O'Malley Journal 2000

The beginning of the seventeenth century was a period of declining fortunes. Amid a morass of shifting patterns in Irish landownership. At this stage it paid well not to support Irish rebels, if not actively to oppose them, and we get the beginnings of a move towards the government side on the part of those Mayo O'Malleys who had survived in positions of power and status.

The old Irish Lordship was at an end and English tenure, administration, and justice were to replace it.

Seventeenth century documents give an inkling of what was happening to the fortunes of the O'Malley family in the Barony of Murrisk. We note that in the inquisition of 1607 Owen O'Malley is described as Chief of his name,

but his heir Edmund appears to have inherited under English law, and was probably never inaugurated as Chief of the Clan. According to a grant made in 1617, Edmund was now the tenant under the crown of two castles, and 15,000 to 20,000 acres in the Barony of Murrisk. This probably represented much more security for him personally, although lacking the prestige of an old Irish Lordship of a much larger territorial area. We also note that other O'Malleys are mentioned as owning property in the area, so that there is a certain amount of levelling taking place. Here in addition, we have our first encounter with an outsider, in the person of Christopher Garvey, whose family were to become large landowners in the district.

The next important document is Straffords Inquisition of 1636. Again, we find a diminution of Edmund's property, and a list of 34 other O'Malleys who now own land in the district. This incidentally, is probably the same Edmund referred to in the grant of 1617. Another feature of Staffords Inquisition is the number of outstanding mortgages which were a feature of the period, when the landowning families found the transfer from the Irish to the English system of landownership overstretched their resources. These financial difficulties gave the opportunity to the wealthy Galway merchants, with the help of their skilful lawyers, to acquire property throughout Galway and Mayo.

The book of Survey and Distribution for County Mayo shows the changes that came about in landownership from 1636 to 1703. The name Edmond O'Malley appears as being a large property owner in 1641, but only three subsidiary O'Malleys are mentioned. However, worse was to come, for all have vanished in the aftermath of the Commonwealth, Restoration and Jacobite War, as shown in the relevant column in the book. They have been replaced by Lord Mayo (Bourke), John Browne and others. This shows that there was some involvement on the part of the O' Malleys in both the rebellion of 1641 and the Jacobite War of 1689- 91. We know that Lord Clanricarde complained in January 1641 that his islands of Clare and Boffin



Life After Grace—Clan to Clan—Sheila Mulloy

had been taken by the O'Malleys. Later, in 1648, it was reported that Edmund sent his son, Captain Thomas O'Malley, "with his full company" to Owen Roe O'Neill, "with his letter of recommendation to his coosn Neyll, assuring his Lordship that hee was for him, both sea and land"

Captain Tadhg O'Malley was involved in the defence of Innisboffin, which was the last, but one, place in Ireland to surrender to the Cromwellians on 14 February 1653. He was given as a hostage on that occasion for the fulfilment of the agreement made between the two sides. Some O'Malleys were also involved in the Jacobite War, and significantly, Owen More O'Malley of Burrishoole, was to join the Williamite side shortly before the Treaty of Limerick in 1691. Captain Tadhg O'Malley of Belclare, however, remained faithful to King James and lost some land to the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam as a result.

In the eighteenth century the leading O'Malley families seem to have been the two families of Belclare and Cahernamart. The other O'Malley families for various reasons lost their importance, but the chief reason for the survival of the Belclare and Cahernamart lines seems to have been their conformity to the Established Church in the course of that century. This, of course, was happening all over Ireland, and explains the enormous change in landownership from Catholic to Protestant hands which took place at that time.



The Battle of Ballinamuck

At the beginning of the century we find Tadhg O'Malley, head of the Belclare line, who has been mentioned above, still in possession of much of his inheritance, but holding it under the Protestant Archbishop of Tuam. At the same time Captain Owen O'Malley of the Cahernamart branch was tenant of another large portion of the ancestral lands, under the Brownes of Westport. In this way the O'Malleys retained some status and property into the nineteenth century, when they were one of the very few Old Irish families to sit on the Grand Jury.

Both of these O'Malley families profited from matrimonial alliance. Captain Owen of the Cahernamart family married Martha Browne, daughter of George Browne of the Neale about 1675, and it is this alliance which is recorded on an armorial slab at Murrisk Friary, which has the three Browne lions impaled with the O'Malley arms. Captain Owen held twenty quarters under Colonel John Browne in the barony of Murrisk, while his son George who lived at Rosmindle, held Browne lands in the baronies of Burrishoole and Carra. Owen's grandson, Owen of Milcum, leased land from the Bourke, Bingham, O'Donnell and Browne families. Owen's great-grandson was Sir Samuel O'Malley of Kilboyne and Rosehill. The title was granted in 1804, as a reward for his help in suppressing the 1798 rebellion. His son Sir William died without issue in 1900. Meanwhile, Sir Samuel's second cousin George of Spencer Park, Castlebar, joined the British army, fought at Castlebar in 1798, and at Waterloo in 1815, where he was twice wounded and had two horses shot under him. In 1830 he was

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appointed lieutenant-colonel of the 88th Connaught Rangers, and was finally made a major-general in 1841. He died in London in 1843 in his 63rd year, when 'the remains of this distinguished and lamented officer' were brought to Westport Bay in the Brig Mary, and interred in the family vault at Murrisk.

Fraser's Magazine in the course of an obituary notice reports that in 1814 only 200 out of 700 men of the 44th had survived the battle of Bergenop-Zoom, so that at Waterloo the regiment was largely composed of recruits. 'When the French fire opened, many of them took to ducking from the shot. The officer then in command, Colonel O'Malley—a man of mould, and not of fiction—cried out, "steady, men! When you see me duck, you may duck; but the first man that ducks before I do, I'll cut him down!" "By Japus", said an old grenadier, "that's pleasant!—but if they wait till the Colonel ducks, they'll wait till the cows come home."

It was a different story with the Catholic side of the family, where some close relatives of Sir Samuel and General George namely,

Colonel Austin O'Malley and his brother Joseph from Burrishoole and Captain James O'Malley and his Brother Alexander from Eden Park near Knock, were prominent among those who joined the French in 1798. Captain James' Father was Alexander O'Malley, a loyal Catholic magistrate. After the battle of Ballinamuck the two brothers were captured and sentenced to death. The younger brother Alec was pardoned but asked to be allowed take the place of his older married brother. The request was refused, and James, better known as Seamus Bán, was hanged, and is the subject of a well-known Irish song *An Caipín Máilleach* (Captain O'Malley). His name is on the 1798 monument at Knock.

Their cousin Colonel Austin was one of the most prominent of the Irish leaders. He was a noted duellist, and his friend Miles Byrne, who afterwards fought with him in France, writes 'he feared no danger and fighting seemed to him a pastime.' Both brothers survived the battle of Ballinamuck and its aftermath. Joseph died in Ireland in 1804, while Colonel Austin escaped to France after the battle in a fishing-boat. In France he received a commission of captain in the Irish Legion. There were frequent reports of his secret return to the Burrishoole neighbourhood, but he does appear to have been there in 1805.

He returned to France and resumed his military career, fighting in the Napoleonic campaigns in Germany, Spain and Portugal. In 1812 he married the daughter of the French commander of an island off the coast of Holland. Within a few years his sight began to fail and he had to retire from the army. He created a minor sensation in the neighbourhood of his birthplace when he was permitted to return from France in 1836 in a bid to regain his property at Burrishoole. He brought an order at the Mayo Assizes in 1836 against his sisters for the enforcement of the terms of his father's will. There was a further hearing at the Co Chancery, Dublin, in 1842. Here he appears to have been successful but was apparently debarred under the Statute of Limitations. This rather pathetic figure from another era 'was treated with marked courtesy by court, jury and counsel', wrote Mr. & Mrs. Samuel Hall. According to tradition he is buried at



General George O'Malley

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Burrishoole Friary. Colonel Austin's son Patrick had a distinguished career in the French army, becoming Brigadier-General for his conduct at Magenta under Marshal MacMahon. Later he became military commander of the district of Marseilles. Forced to retire in 1868 because of ill-health, he died the following year and is buried in Montparnasse.

Here we see foreshadowed a change which was coming in the fortunes of the Catholic Irish. The harsh measures of the government in suppressing the rebellion of 1798, followed by successive famines, brought about the downfall of the landlords, and a social revolution which was to give the Irish tenant farmer security of tenure and a fair rent.

As regards the Belclare O'Malleys, Charles and his five brothers died in exile, rather than serve under William and Mary of England. Tadhg, son of Charles, was a captain in the army of James II at the age of sixteen, and remained in Ireland after the Treaty of Limerick in 1691, when he made strenuous but mainly unsuccessful efforts to recover the family property which had been forfeited under Cromwell and William. However, his son Loughlin conformed to the Established Church about the year 1718, and proceeded to lease land from the Brownes and Cuffes, so that by the end of his life he was farming about 1,700 acres.

Loughlin's great-grandson was St. Clair, who died in 1847 and achieved some notoriety as agent to Lord Lucan. St. Clair's brother Charles (1798-1849) joined a dragoon regiment and became the model for Charles Lever's Charles O' Malley, an Irish Dragoon, and was considered the best horseman in Mayo. He eventually became a Q.C. (Queen's Counsel) and practised successfully at the Irish Bar until his later years, when he suffered from physical and financial troubles.

Peter Frederick, Q.C., younger brother of St. Clair and Charles, migrated to England where he was to become Recorder of Norwich. An accomplished mathematician, he wrote for both Fraser's and Blackwood's magazines. The mainstay of his impoverished relatives, he acted, according to his grandson Sir Owen 'as a sort of banker or Father Christmas to all the family'. His son Sir Edward Loughlin O'Malley (1842-1932) had an equally illustrious legal career. In turn Attorney-General for Jamaica and Hong Kong, Chief Justice of Straits Settlements and British Guyana, he was finally Chief Judge of H.M. Supreme Consular Court for the Ottoman Empire.

Sir Owen St. Clair O'Malley, K.C.M.G. (Knight Commander of St. Michael and St. George), son of Sir Edward, came to live at Rosyvera, which is about four miles from Newport, in 1948. This distinguished diplomat had served in the British Foreign Office from 1911, and had been accredited in turn in Peking, Mexico, Spain and Hungary. He was Ambassador to the Polish Government in exile in London from 1943-45, and Ambassador to Portugal from 1945-7, when he retired. His wife Mary was a well-known novelist writing under the name of Ann Bridge, while his daughter Jane was to become secretary to the Royal Irish Academy.'

Having refurbished and enlarged the house at Rosyvera, which had formerly belonged to the Stoneyes of Rosturk castle, Sir Owen next turned his attention to that other habitation on his property, the beautifully-situated tower house of Carraig an Chabhlaigh or Rock-



Sir Owen St. Clair O'Malley

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-fleet, which stands at the north-western corner of Newport Bay. This typical residence of an Irish gentleman from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century with its four storeys in a square tower, had witnessed many stirring scenes especially during the tenure of the turbulent Grainne Ni Mhaille Uf Fhlatharta de Burca, to give her her full title, for this fifteenth-century castle had been Grainne's principal residence after her second marriage to its owner Riocard an Iarainn, about the year 1566. The redoubtable Grainne had driven off a seaborne expedition sent from Galway in 1574 to punish her for her attacks on shipping using that port. She retired there after Riocard's death with 'all her own followers and 1,000 head of cows and mares'.



This dream became reality when at a meeting in the Railway Hotel Westport, in March 1949, the O'Malley Clan association was formed for the purpose of collecting subscriptions for repairs to Carrigahowley Castle. The appeal to the loyalty and pride of the clan evoked a generous response from O'Malleys in all parts of the world, and fired the imagination of the general public. It was clear that the West was awake and more especially the O'Malleys. Probably the first post-war appeal for help with the restoration of a national monument, it was fitting that it should have originated among the members of a clan still living on their ancient territory. These were ordinary people making an extraordinary effort. After four years' hard work on the part of the local committee, the newly-restored castle was the scene of the first Annual Rally on Sunday, 13 September 1953. The O'Malleys are a race of survivors, and the annual rally still goes on, having taken place without a break for forty-eight years.

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And so the clan is back again to the spirit of the fourteenth century when it was described by Sean Ó Dubhagáin as 'a tribe of brotherly affection and of friendship'. This may not be a strictly true description of us in the past, but we now meet in the spirit of fellowship and goodwill at our annual rallies, at which we elect someone among our number to lead the clan -'primus inter pares' (the first among equals). Strife and rivalry are forgotten and the future of the clan is secure.



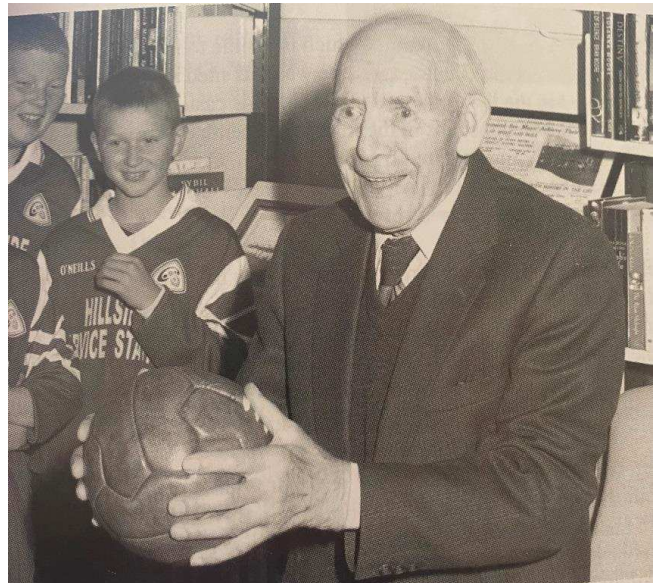
The Pirate Queen in Newport, Co Mayo

Sheila Mulloy was O'Malley Clan Chieftain in 1992, and became Guardian Chieftain of The O'Malley Clan in 1997, a position which she then held until the year 2000. She wrote and lectured extensively on seventeenth and eighteenth century history, and was editor of *Cathair na Mart*, the journal of the Westport Historical Society.

Seamus O'Malley— The man who led the way

A Voyage Around My Father, Maire Finnegan, (O'Malley Journal 2003)

My fondest memory of my father in his later years is of him sitting by the window, painstakingly thumbing through his cherished copy of Roget's Thesaurus. He never gave up until he found the solution to that last remaining crossword clue! His diligence, patience, and perseverance never ceased to amaze me but of course these qualities epitomised his approach to all challenges presented throughout his long life. "Whatever is worth doing is worth doing well" was his motto.



Seamus O'Malley was born on a farm in Drumhill in 1903, the third oldest of eleven children. The family later moved to Lavally and he attended the Christian Brothers Primary and Secondary schools in the local town of Ballinrobe. Having passed the scholarship entrance exam to St Patrick's Training College in Drumcondra, he qualified as a teacher and took up his first teaching post in Kildare, where he remained for four years. It was with the Lilywhites that he had his first football outing at senior level. However, the west beckoned, and he returned, first to Carna, and then to his beloved Mayo, where he settled in Claremorris and taught successively in Shanvaughera, Meelickmore, Seefin, and Coillmore National Schools. He was highly regarded as a dedicated, enlightened, and conscientious teacher. Mar bhall de Chonradh na Gaeilge bhí an teanga go líofa aige, agus chothaigh sé grá don Gaeilge I mease na ndaltaí. His legacy was acknowledged by many past pupils who attended his funeral.

Though he was the first of his family to enjoy third level education, he never forgot his farming background. As a child he was expected to help with farming chores during school holidays and was very much aware of the necessity of the meitheal for seasonal farming events like haymaking and turf saving. The concept of co-operation and of serving the wider community was the guiding principle which informed his adult life. This was best exemplified by his sterling and unbroken service for sixty four years as secretary to the St Vincent de Paul Society. He rarely missed the Monday night meeting and many poor and elderly residents had occasion to welcome his regular visits. His commitment was fuelled by a deep religious faith and the family were justifiably proud when in 1992 he was presented with the Benemerenti Medal for outstanding service to the Church and related activities.

Other local organisations also received the benefit of his wisdom and sound judgement. A lifetime member of Claremorris Golf Club, he was involved in early negotiations with Lord Oranmore and Browne for the acquisition of land for the club. He was secretary for over forty years and also served terms as Captain and President. His routine after his retirement from teaching was a daily round of golf with friends after morning mass. Much to the alarm of his family, he insisted on driving to the golf club himself, even into his late nineties! He was also a trustee of the Town Hall Redevelopment Committee and for many years

Seamus O'Malley— The man who led the way

helped out with the weekly bingo fund-raising sessions. As he grew older, my mother constantly worried about him walking home alone with the nights takings!

Aside from community involvement, there was plenty of time to indulge his great passion for fishing and gardening. Many happy hours were spent on Lough Mask with his lifelong friend John Colleran, their patience occasionally rewarded by landing that elusive brown trout. Summer holidays in Enniscrone were spent fishing and golfing. His garden was his pride and joy, and he was especially proud of his organically grown vegetables and the blackcurrant and gooseberry bushes, which provided enough jam for the year. At Dad's funeral mass, the celebrant, Fr Cunnane, recounted a lovely story about the time he called unexpectedly to the family home and became very worried about Dad's mental capacity when he found him in the garden crushing eggshells underfoot! However, Dad reassured him by explaining that egg-shells were cheap and effective composting material. Ecologically aware, nothing was ever wasted and he was environmentally friendly long before it became the fashion.

But, of course, it was as the Captain who led the Mayo Senior Football team to their first ever All-Ireland Championship success in 1936 that he is best remembered. He had previously won National League and Connacht Championship medals with the County, and actually came out of retirement to play in 1936. He often related the story of travelling through the night with the Sam Maguire Cup as he had to teach the morning following the glorious victory. A fair in Claremorris delayed the taxi, so he only had time to snatch a quick breakfast before heading off to school in Meelickmore with Sam on the back of his bicycle. The pupils were thrilled to have their photograph taken with the cup. After retiring from play he very active in promoting the interests of the GAA.

Indeed, he uniquely was already Secretary of the Mayo County Board at the time of the All Ireland and subsequently held every office in the South Mayo Board, and in his local Claremorris club, working tirelessly and selflessly to foster the enthusiasm of young players. To show its appreciation of his lifelong commitment, the GAA named the new stand in the Claremorris pitch in 1999 after him. Speaking at the opening, the then President of the GAA, Joe McDonagh, paid this tribute, "In Seamus O'Malley, Claremorris has one of the GAA's greatest members of all time, and a man that every county in Ireland would be proud of and like to have" Dad's phenomenal memory made him an ideal interviewee by local and national media, and we are fortunate that his memories are recorded on tape and video.

Despite the accolades bestowed on him, he remained modest and unassuming, a devoted Father, and Grandfather. He loved family gatherings, especially when they ended in a sing song when he was always ready to entertain the gathering with "Queen of Connemara" or "Cruacha Glas nah Eireann". Proud of his family name, he and family members attended many of the early O'Malley Clan Rallies. A loving and loved husband for over sixty years, he was supported in all his voluntary efforts by my Mother, who cared for seven children as well as teaching full time. He reciprocated her generosity by his gentle, tender caring for her when her health began to fail. A man of great dignity, moral integrity, and compassion, he enriched all of our lives, and the lives of all who knew him. Gura móide teaghlach Dé a anam uasal!



Ward O'Malley & the polo fields

“Eighty Years Young”

Ward O'Malley, who must be the oldest player in Ireland, tells Caroline Stern about his long polo career, (from The O'Malley Journal 2000).

There is an old saying that the only crime in Ireland is to be dull, the origins of this are unknown, but it has certainly never been applied to Ward O'Malley. As his eightieth birthday falls at the end of the polo season, the American expatriate must be one of HPA's most active seniors.



Anyone at Whitfield Court Polo Club can vouch for his fearless play, which makes men fifty years his junior think twice about contesting the line. He served under General Patton, which may have influenced his umpiring. He dances exhaustively at polo balls, and recently appeared on Irish television thundering past a nervous presenter sent to try out the game.

His polo career is long and chequered, and unprecedented in the O'Malley family. My mother grew up in Greenwich Village, New York, and passed on her love of riding to me. She began riding at finishing school. On the first day she read that only one bath per girl per week was allowed, but if you took riding, you were allowed an extra bath, which made sense.

My father was a friend of Bill Cody, born before the Battle of Little Big Horn. If you didn't know how to ride in those days, you walked, but he wasn't interested in horses. I read about the famous players at Long Island, including the Prince of Wales, whom my mother thought the most handsome man ever. I had sailing, tennis and skiing, so it never entered my head to play polo.

My mother wanted me to be a member of the Establishment, so she sent me off to Princeton. On my first day, I cycled to the Armoury to join the ROTC, because you could ride their artillery horses if you joined up. Cars weren't allowed at Princeton then, to stop the rich guys cruising around in Cadillacs. The sergeant told me to sign the list. Next to it was another list: 'Anyone interested in playing polo, sign here.' Times were tough in the 1930s, and I asked how much. "It's free", he said, so I put my name on the polo list, which gave me two years' indoor polo.

I studied French literature because I spoke French, although I had little interest in Racine's poetry. I was quite able to read Racine, if I chose, but I didn't choose, so I was eventually asked to leave.

Then I went to Colorado School of Mines, dreaming of the Andes, Indians, gold mines, riding mules up mountains and cowboys, which seemed more interesting than going to Wall Street and making a million. People like my Boston fellow-students just didn't go to mining school, so no one there rode, let alone

Ward O'Malley & the polo fields

played polo. Once there, I gave up drinking beer six nights a week and only drank beer one night a week, so I graduated. The day I left college I went into the army. Roosevelt had promised in three successive elections that America's sons would not have to go to war, but he turned out to be a liar.'

Describing his army career as 'innocuous', Ward served under General Patton, another polo enthusiast. 'They say he turned up at his first posting with two carloads of polo ponies, saying his father would pay for their keep. At induction camp in Indio, he used to stand us all on a boiling hot parade ground to lecture us every Saturday. We were in the Tank Corps, but he wore polished riding boots, silver spurs and ivory-handled six shooters. He had his sword made six inches longer than everyone else's, and a customised uniform. He had a tremendous chest and a bit of a belly, but he looked like Superman with the stars on his shoulders shining in the sun. One speech I remember was: "Men! Look at the man on your left and the man on your right. One of you will not come back from war alive. That doesn't upset me. What will upset me is if the one who doesn't come back hasn't killed at least six of the enemy."

Polo unexpectedly re-entered Ward's life in 1962. 'After the war, I still dreamed of the Andes, so I went gold-mining in Peru, before studying petrol geology. When I was in Tehran, the British polo team ran short of players, and the captain asked me to play. You had to be on a team in order to play, and the Americans didn't have one. I restarted my polo the same year I got married, so I guess it was a good year.'

Iranian polo was apparently in a league of its own, as he recalls: 'The Iranian army ran the polo in Tehran. You had to buy a horse in order to play, so you went to the poorest part of town, where they used them as cart horses. You paid £30 for them and, if they were no good, you sold them to the next man for £20. They were Turkoman crosses, with a little Arab, and resembled small racehorses.

There was an officers' team, and an NCO's team, but it was neither a popular nor a fashionable sport, although a few landowners' sons played. Their fathers didn't. You didn't make points socially playing there, and I guess it didn't have enough status for them.

Nobody had a handicap, because all the Iranians were great ball chasers and not team players. It was considered impolite to ride off or hook, particularly if you were against a General's son. Everybody wanted a high handicap, but they would all have had low ones. Thus nobody had a handicap, so as not to offend anyone's feelings. Polo made my ten years in the middle east much more interesting, because my wife and I met locals, not just expats.'

Before Ward left Iran in 1966 he saw a notice saying 'Come hunting in Ireland'. 'So I did just that, instead of retiring to Florida like all the other old Americans. I moved to Co. Tipperary in 1969 because, when I was a boy, I read Charles Lever's novel Charles O'Malley, the Irish Dragoon. It was about Co. Galway, not Tipp, but what the hell?'

Six years ago Ward was out hunting when a friend mentioned that he played polo at Whitfield Court, Major Hugh Dawnay's club near Waterford.

'I knew there was a polo school there, but I didn't want lessons. It had never occurred to me that there was a club and polo fields as well.' Ward now plays twelve chukkas a week at Whitfield, and intends to continue. 'After the age of seventy-five, shortness of breath becomes a problem -but, God willing, I may be good for a couple of more years.'



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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.

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