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Ó Máille



O'Malley Clan Association Monthly Newsletter

This month's highlights....

- Hello from our new Chieftain, Denise O'Malley
- Get in touch and share your O'Malley Heritage!
- We sit down for a chat with Denise O'Malley—Our new Chieftain!
- FROM—Four Families and Me, Paul McLoughlin, Part III-Chalices!
- Ellen O'Malley-Dunlop, tells us about another Ellen!
- Nora O'Malley reports on a huge algae bloom off Vancouver!
- Meghan O'Malley making a career that fits.
- The O'Malley crossword!
- The O'Malley Clan Association Needs You! Join Today!!

A hello from our new Chieftain!!

At the final event of our O'Malley Clan Gathering in Westport in June, Grace O'Malley handed over the reins to Denise O'Malley, when Denise was inaugurated as our new O'Malley Clan Chieftain for 2025-2026. Denise, from Clare, and living in County Limerick, has been attending O'Malley Clan Gatherings for many years, and has in recent years joined the organising committee in putting everything together to make our Gatherings ever bigger and better.

We sat down with Denise for a chat, so check out that interview inside!

Remember, we're all off to Clare for the O'Malley Clan Gathering next June, 26th to 28th. Keep an eye out on our website and newsletter for details



Get in touch, and share your O'Malley Heritage!

Have you got an article or old photographs that you'd like to submit for future editions of "O Maille" The O'Malley Clan Association Newsletter.

We'd love to hear from you wherever you're based around the world. Old photographs and stories to go with them, old letters, family trees or just an article that you'd like to share with the rest of the clan. Drop us a line and We'll get right to it!

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A Chat with our new Chieftain—Denise O'Malley

Hi Denise, so we're looking forward to Ennis, County Clare in June 2026 already, but Westport this year was a great Gathering weekend, wasn't it? What were the highlights for you?

From start to finish, it was a wonderful weekend. I'd like to thank Chieftain Grace and her family for a fantastic Gathering. I have big boots to fill. There were so many highlights for me over the weekend. The Chieftain's Reception was a great way to meet new O'Malley's and catch up with old friends and family.

The Bus Tour was amazing; it was great to visit two of Grace O'Malley's Castles and especially Rockfleet Castle. In 1949 a group of O'Malley's got together to fund the renovation of Rockfleet Castle. When the renovations were completed in 1953, over 500 O'Malley's got together to see the restored Rockfleet Castle, and our 1st ever O'Malley Clan Gathering was held. The last highlight of the Gathering in Westport '25, was my inauguration. What an honour it was to be surrounded by so many of the previous Chieftain's, friends, family, and my Husband John Kelly. To have my Fathers Chieftain's badge pinned on me, was such an honour and very bittersweet.

So how has the first few weeks of being Chieftain been? How does it feel, being the boss? *It has been a busy couple of weeks. I've hit the ground running. I've been on different Clan Committees for several years now and I know what is expected and how crucial timing is. We plan to launch the booking site for next years Gathering earlier in the year this year. So, it's all hands-on deck. I think my Superpower is organizing things, I just love it, so being Chieftain and the 'Boss' gives me free reign on how I want to organize our Clan Gathering weekend in Ennis '26. My second Superpower is to listen and learn from our Council of Chieftains. They have all organized their own Gatherings and know all the pitfalls of planning a three-day weekend.*

Take us back to the start, When did you first hear of The O'Malley Clan Association? *When I was just 4 years of age, my father Michael was elected as Chieftain of our Clan at just 30. At that time, my father was the youngest Chieftain ever elected. To this day, he is now the second youngest Chieftain. His cousin Declan O'Malley, Dublin, remains the youngest. The Clan Gatherings have always been a huge part of my extended family over the years. I have attended Gatherings on and off for over 40 years.*

Who is the 2025-26 O'Malley Chieftain? Tell us a bit about yourself.

My name is Denise O'Malley Kelly. I've lived all over Ireland as a result of my Dad's job. The longest County we've lived in as a family, is in County Clare, going on 44 years. My Mother and two brothers are still living in Clare. In my family home growing up, my Mother was from Westmeath, Dad



Above: New Chieftain Denise, with from left, Brother, Ken O'Malley, Denise's Mum Kay O'Malley, and Denise's Husband, John Kelly



Above: Former Chieftain, and Denise's Dad, Michael, pictured in recent years with the Chieftain's Staff

A Chat with our new Chieftain—Denise O'Malley

was from Laois, myself and my brother were born in Galway and my youngest brother is a Clare man. I am the oldest of the three of us. I married John Kelly in December 2012 and I moved to West Limerick. We lovingly restored our 1880's family home and I live there with my husband John. I am the eighth member of my family to be Chieftain of our Clan. Two Granduncle's, my Father, four Cousins and myself. It is a great honour to represent the Clare Island /Rathdowney O'Malley's once again. Our Gathering in Ennis '26 will mark the 50th anniversary of when my Father Michael was elected.

Is there anything in particular that you'd like the O'Malley Clan Association to focus on during your tenure? Any ideas for events during the year leading up to Ennis 2026?

Our online reach to O'Malley's from all over the world is going from strength to strength, thanks to the very hard work of our Tánaiste Don, on all our platforms. I would like to see more of our mailing list of O'Malley's become Clan Association Members. This gives you the right to vote for your next Chieftain of the O'Malley Clan and to have your say and vote on other business at our AGM. I would love to see more children and young adults attending our Gatherings. Children are the future of our Clan. We will hold a couple of fund raising events during the year, to help cover costs of our Gathering. I would like to see as many Clan members attend these events as possible.



Above: Denise & her Dad on her wedding day in 2012.

Ennis June 26th to 28th 2026. It's going to be a great weekend! Any little hints of what you're thinking in terms of events over the Gathering weekend in 2026? *The structure of the Gathering every year, is pretty similar, its all about fun and friendship and meeting up. I'm planning to showcase the very best of what Clare has to offer. Traditional Music and Dance from Clare is world renowned. There is a bus tour planned to show the beautiful sights and historical places of interest in Clare. We've partnered with the Temple Gate Hotel in Ennis. This will be our Hub Hotel. All events will be held here, with the exception of the bus tour. There will be Guest Speakers, speaking about the historical places of interest in Ennis and it's surrounding areas, and we'll have an update on our "Finding Grace" DNA Project.*

If someone out there was wondering what the O'Malley Clan Association was all about, and was thinking about joining up, what would you say to them? *We are a Clan Association. We are going from strength to strength since 1953. We are O'Malley's from all over the world that get together every year on the last weekend in June, to promote the love of our heritage and our family name. We are working constantly on growing the organisation, and are always ready to welcome new members!*

The O'Malley Clan Association has been going strong for over 70 years, with modern communication making things easier in some respects, how do you see the next 70 going? *I see our Clan Association going from strength to strength. Since 2019, we have partnered with Tribe101. They have created an online booking platform, with the help of our Guardian Chieftain Brendan, which has made planning our Gathering weekend so much easier. With this innovation and several online platforms, managed by our Tánaiste Don. Don is doing amazing work on reaching out to O'Malley's from all over the world. We now have a mailing list of over two thousand. Our future is bright, as we have a Council of Chieftains, made up of past Chieftain's who will ensure that our O'Malley Clan Association will be around for our future generations.*

FROM “Four Families and Me” - Part 3

FAITH

McLoughlin (himself) here again. With the approval of the esteemed editor of this newsletter, (who do you think puts it out?), and new Tánaiste, Don O'Malley, I have inserted a part 3 in what may now be a four part series. Part 1 told of the voyages of the Four Families (McLoughlin, McSweeney, O'Malley, Fusz) to America. Part 2 traced my 20-year pursuit of all things related to the Four Families – St. Patrick ~462 AD to Pope Leo XIV 2025 via a nod to Pope Leo XIII. (The July newsletter was rightly devoted to the 2025 Clan Gathering.) Last will be their story Four Families and Me. Part 3 is about three Chalices and their significance. They deserve their own part. In many respects they are the linchpin, the most important contribution to this writing because, like tombstones, they are hard and fast and inscribed. (I learned, in fact, there are few 'objects' left over from those ancestral days.) They link past and present, Ireland and America, Americans and Irish. If only (spoiler cliché) these chalices could speak. They do in fact speak quite simply and eloquently of a faith that was at the foundation of lives even if obscured by the turbulent issues of the day. And with a phrase in common that immediately defines/connects them. In display or usage each in its own way is as relevant today as when it was made:

The De Burgo – O'Malley Chalice 1494

The Viscount Mayo Chalice 1635

The McSweeney Chalice 1640

My ancestral pursuits, as you might recall, started in 2005. I learned of the McSweeney Chalice in 2010 and cradled it in my hands in 2013 at St. Joseph's Seminary of the Archdiocese of New York. Ten years later it would meet its O'Malley match in Mayo. I was introduced to the Viscount Mayo Chalice and the Viscount himself, if you will, at the



2022 Clan Gathering visit to Ballintubber Abbey. The 1st Viscount Mayo, Theobald or Tibbot-ne-Long Bourke, Grace O'Malley's second son, is buried there. The Chalice is in the sacristy by his tomb.

The third discovery was more recent, two months ago. A distinguished professor emeritus of Colorado history and a colleague in the Denver Historical Society was in the process of deaccessing his library of over 4,000 volumes. He would kindly pass along books on Eire.



Above: American & Irish overlooking the Rockies



Above: The McSweeney Chalice at St Joseph's Seminary, New York.

Below Left: The tombstone of Lord Mayo, Tibbot na Long

FROM “Four Families and Me” - Part 3

One such book was *Early Irish Art*. To me it was like entering Tutankhamen’s tomb, only I was not the first.

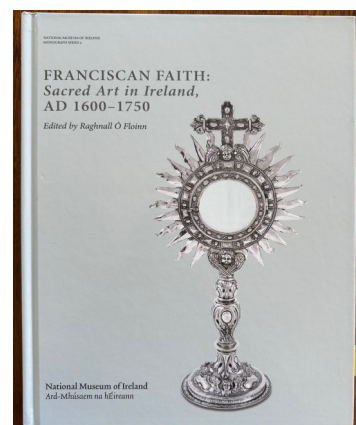


Left:: Early Irish Art, Right: The De Burgo-O'Malley Chalice



Recent correspondence with Mr. Alex Ward, Curator of Dress and Textiles, Art and Industrial Division, NMI, Collins Barracks revealed that the De Burgo – O'Malley Chalice was included in the NMI publication, *500 Years of Irish Silver* by Ida Delamer and Conor O'Brien, (Wordwell/NMI; 2005). I dimly recalled a spontaneous, uninformed visit to Collins Barracks in 2019. I had stumbled upon the very end of a decade-long exhibition *Franciscan Faith: Sacred Art in Ireland 1600-1750* put on by the National Museum of Ireland – Decorative Arts and History. I bought the Monograph.

Disappointed that it made no mention of the McSweeney Chalice (not Franciscan) although it did mention the De Burgo chalice in the text, I corresponded with the Editor, Ragnall Ó Floinn. I learned of the rarity of such chalices in North America. He knew of only one other Irish Chalice in North America and that in the Catholic Diocese of Quebec – dated 1633. It was made by Mary, daughter of Maguire, wife of Brian Oge O'Rourke for the Franciscan friars of Donegal. Recently a relative of Maguire tried to repatriate it back to Ireland, but to no avail. Ó Floinn confirmed that the McSweeney Chalice was indeed special if not unique.

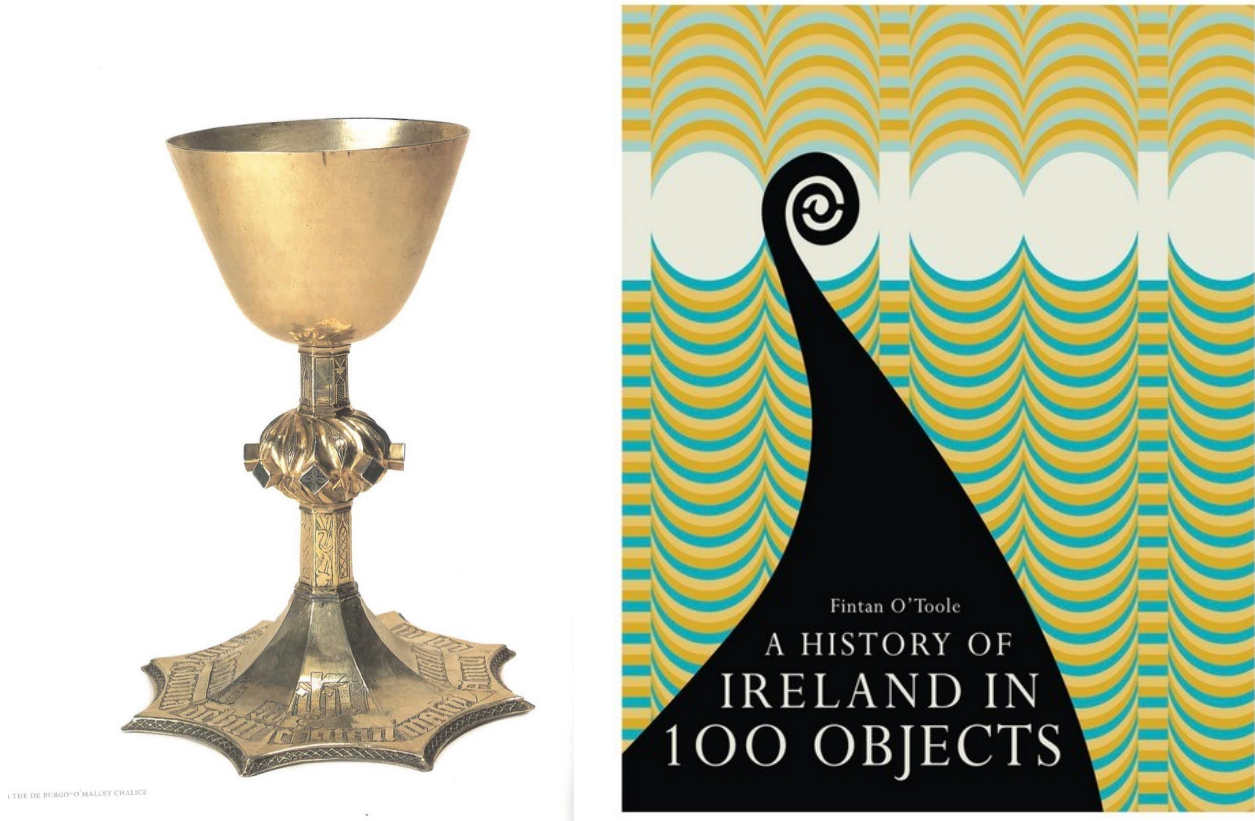


Above: “The Monograph”

Left: The chalices on display in N.M.I. Collins Barracks

FROM “Four Families and Me” - Part 3

A final recognition of the significance of the De Burgo – O’Malley Chalice is reflected in its inclusion in *A History of Ireland in 100 Objects* by Fintan O’Toole (Royal Irish Academy; 2013). Its place in Irish history now secured, the chalice can be added more directly to the story of Grace O’Malley.



Above Left: The De Burgo-O’Malley Chalice as featured in “A History of Ireland in 100 Objects”, and above right: The cover of the book.

(It is important to note that Anne Chambers makes mention of both the Viscount Mayo Chalice and the De Burgo – O’Malley Chalice in *Granuaile, Ireland’s Pirate Queen*. This writing does not pretend to carry the weight of her scholarship on Grace O’Malley nor the chalice studies undertaken by various scholars at the National Museum of Ireland. Without their work this could not have been written. The three chalices only serve to connect the Four Families in America and Ireland by their objects of devotion.)

FROM “Four Families and Me” - Part 3

CHALICES

The De Burgo – O’Malley Chalice 1494

Thomas de Burgo et Grania Ni Malle me fieri fecerunt Anno Domini MCCCLXXXIII

Thomas de Burgo and Grania O’Malley **caused me to be made** A.D. 1494

O’Tool’s *History of Ireland in 100 Objects*: “The surname de Burgo (later ‘Gaelicised’ to Bourke) is that of one of the great Anglo-Norman warlord families in Ireland. Grania Ni Malle, obviously Gaelic, is a relative of Grace O’Malley, likely a grand aunt. The de Burgo presence in Ireland dates to the late-twelfth century when William de Burgo was granted land in Tipperary by Lord John, the future King of England. William’s son, Richard invaded Connacht and took control of it in 1235. Vicious infighting among various claimants to the de Burgo lordship gradually weakened it. Connacht was effectively lost to Anglo-Norman control, and hence to the English government by 1350.” “Anglo-Norman landholders melted, as the chalice shows, into Gaelic upper-class society. In this sense, the chalice symbolizes the revival of the Gaelic aristocracy and the retreat of the Anglo Norman colony. Many of the major Anglo-Norman families resulted from marriages to high status Irish women.” Anne Chambers writes that Granuaile’s second marriage in 1567 to Richard Bourke was “not the first O’Malley – Bourke marriage” an obvious reference to that commemorated by the De Burgo – O’Malley Chalice. (Author’s note: Marrying an O’Malley woman was, and still is, a means to advancement.)



Above: The inscribed base of the De Burgo-O’Malley Chalice



Left: The full illustration of the De Burgo—O’Malley Chalice

F R O M “ Four Families and Me” - Part 3

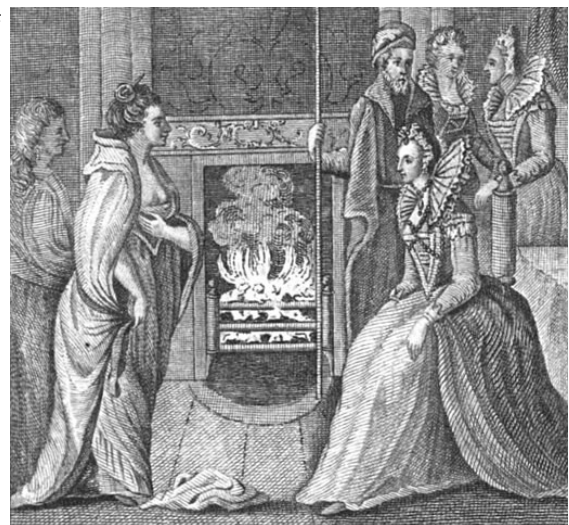
The Viscount Mayo Chalice 1635

*Ora pro animab(us) Dni Theobaldi Vicecomils Mayo et uxoris ejus Meow ny Cnochere qui **me fiery fecerunt** pro Monisterio be Mureske. Ano Dni 1635* Pray for the souls of Theobald Lord Viscount Mayo and his wife Maud O'Connor, who **caused me to be made** for the monastery of Murrisk in the year of our lord 1635



Above Right: The Viscount Mayo Chalice, and Above Left: A close up of the inscription on its base

Theobald or Tibbot-Ne-Long Bourke was the son of Granuaile. He died in 1629. The chalice was commissioned by his wife and now stands in Ballintubber Abbey beside his tomb. According to Chambers “Murrisk Abbey would have featured largely in the lives of the O'Malley chieftains, being situated close to Belclare. It is perhaps likely that Granuaile may have been baptised and married there, and many of her ancestors and descendants lie buried beneath its now roofless walls.” The Viscount Mayo Chalice reflects another important, perhaps the most important, event in the life of the Pirate Queen. A purpose of the visit with Queen Elizabeth I in 1593 was to plead, in Latin, for the release of her son, Theobald, who was imprisoned in London. But for that release and his success in his own right over the next thirty-five years, Theobald would not have become 1st Viscount nor have a chalice made for him.



Above: The meeting of Granuaile and Queen Elizabeth

FROM “Four Families and Me” - Part 3

The McSweeney Chalice 1640

*Orate pro anima D. Danielis Swynye Sacerdolis Lismorensis Dioecesis qui **me fieri fecit** Å 1640* Pray for the soul of Father Danielis Swynye, a priest of the diocese of Lismore **who had me made** in the year 1640



Above Left: The McSweeney Chalice, and Above Right: A close up of the inscription on its base

Much has been made of the fact that the McSweeney Chalice arrived in America in 1896 in three pieces, bowl, stem and base. This was to avoid detection when traveling from place to place during Cromwell's 'days of blood' when mass was celebrated clandestinely on Mass Rocks in and around Cork. It was first used at the consecration of St Brigid's Church in Lower Manhattan where Msgr Patrick McSweeney was pastor. McSweeney had worked to retire the debt used to build the church, a requirement for consecration. Archbishop Corcoran saw fit to combine and regilt the chalice perhaps to remove any vestiges of its humble beginning. The Chalice was also used at St Brigid's in Crosshaven in the hands of Dean Denis McSwiney. He sent it to his cousins in America representing the transition of the Faith and clergy to the new land.

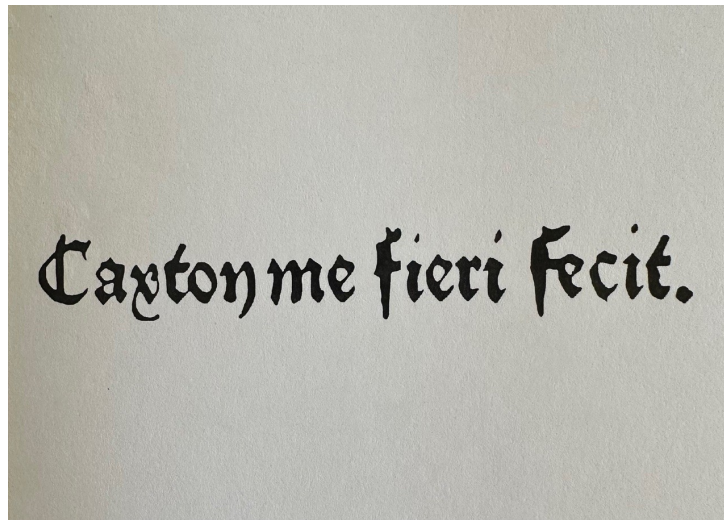
The Chalice was donated by Fr Edward McSweeney, Patrick's brother, to the Museum of the Archdiocese of New York at St. Joseph's Seminary on the Centennial of the Archdiocese in 1908. Unlike the chalices in Ireland, the McSweeney Chalice is used on many occasions celebrating Irish heritage. Each year it is on the altar for the Cardinal's St Patrick's Day mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral. Far cry from the roughhewn rocks of Munster.

In isolation each chalice has its own story. Taken together they tell a history of Ireland and America, Irish and Americans. That's Part IV.

F R O M “ Four Families and Me” - Part 3

me fieri fecit

None of the learned books or monographs reflected on *me fieri fecit*. They would reference it in passing, but never gave its provenance or significance. It was the first thing that caught my eye when holding the McSweeny Chalice in 2013. I pursued its meaning and from whence it came but only in the sacristy of Ballintubber Abbey in front of Theobald's tomb would I truly appreciate it. The phrase was so unusual yet seemingly ubiquitous.



William Caxton is thought to be the first person to introduce a printing press in England in 1476. He was the publisher of Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* in 1485. To protect its publication as being by him, he ended the book with the catchall phrase ***Caxton me fieri fecit***. It was subsequently used as a form of protective copyright for over 300 years. The fact that it found its way onto the base of the De Burgo – O'Malley Chalice nine years later only shows its swift adoption, although more to pay homage to the benefactor than protection for the silversmith.

POSTSCRIPT

The McSweeny Chalice held the Blood of Christ in the sacrifice of the mass for centuries. Since Danielis Swynye *me fieri fecit* in 1640 the chalice had been in McSweeny priestly hands for over 250 years, first in Ireland and then in America. Irish faith and Irish character took root in America and Irish clergy had a defining impact on church and state particularly in New York. To this day the McSweeny Chalice used in the mass is an ecclesiastical reminder of that impact. The Viscount Mayo Chalice and the De Burgo – O'Malley Chalice are different. They are secular commemorative vessels, almost trophies. But as much as they may serve to honor two distinguished O'Malley ancestors, those same people chose to be immortalized on an ecclesiastical vessel adorned with a depiction of Christ's passion and death on the cross. Belief, as we know it, may have been very different, but by their Faith is how they will be remembered for all Nme.

Ellen O'Malley Dunlop tells us about Ellen O'Malley Camps

In May this year I travelled to Trinidad to fulfil a life time ambition to visit my first cousin Ellen and to attend her granddaughter's wedding. Ellen is the oldest of my first cousins on my father's side. She is the daughter of Tony O'Malley and Mary Fenlon. Ellen has been a very active member in Trinidadian society in the Arts, especially Theatre, Education and Therapy. She's married to Mike and over their 60 plus together they raised their 5 children. All the family have forged their own lives now in Trinidad, California, Ireland and Africa. Ellen continues her connections with Ireland returning most years to visit her brothers Tomás and Shaun and their families in Carlow.

As a child I looked up to Ellen as a role model as she always appeared to be a fearless woman (sometimes fearsome), who knew her own mind and pushed many boundaries. She is definitely a woman in the mould of our illustrious ancestor Grace O'Malley. Even now in her 87th year she continues to work with young people in theatre and has an ongoing relationship with many of the prisoners with whom she worked, in the maximum security prison in Arouca.

During my time with Ellen we had many chats. She told me that when she met Mike in Dublin all those years ago she hardly knew where Trinidad was but she remembered a song her father used to sing to her mother which was called Minnie from Trinidad ... "She wasn't good she wasn't bad .."

Writing about herself some 10 years ago for a local magazine on the occasion of International Women's Day we get a good insight into Ellen and her views in her own words;

"(I am a) feminist whose heart and soul reverberates painfully at the clear, mounting, unrelenting evidence of the horrors inflicted globally on children and women. I am an activist-artist no longer involved in marches or demonstrations. Age and restricted mobility enforces a different kind of activism. The former passion that fuelled my experiences with the disenfranchised and disempowered, has morphed into something different: compassion.

Trinidad is my home. I arrived on 1 January 1966 with my Trini paediatrician husband and two children. By the time I had three more children I had founded the Housewives Association of Trinidad and Tobago (H.A.T.T) and established the Trinidad Tent Theatre company.

I had also experienced and fallen completely and passionately in love with the Trinidad Carnival ethos, .



Above Ellen & Mike with Lorcan, Sara, Aaron, Simone, and Gillian

Ellen O'Malley Dunlop tells us about Ellen O'Malley Camps

though I could only watch these yearly celebrations from the side-lines with children in tow.

To cut a (very long) story short, I began to envisage ways to incorporate the J'ouvert traditions – mostly marginalised to make way for a more “Bikini” style mas – into a “local” personal and group developmental training process. I began with the young inexperienced actors in my Tent Theatre Company.

Over time the process developed further through interaction between the techniques of ritual, carnival, and theatre as well as the insights of restorative justice, mediation and transpersonal psychology. This interactive process I call *Carnival Theatre*. The aim is basically change and transformation through “right relationship” and “best communication” practices – first intra-personally and second inter-personally. I moved beyond theatre circles to work with groups like women single heads of households, various NGOs, government ministries, community groups and businesses.

My present focus is on a project at a Maximum Security Prison in Arouca, Trinidad, with a group of long-term and lifer inmates. This group have experienced many faith-based or other correctional training programmes, as well as having many years “under the belt”. Like my old age self, they look to continue a spiritual journey towards self-realisation and individuation grounded through very practical and communally useful components that will contribute to the reduction of anti-social behaviour and social conflict in Trinidad and Tobago.

At the same time the group seeks to move from rigid institutionalisation by seeking “official” recognition for their many contributions through outreach collaboration with other “official” programmes in the prison. As we say in Trinidad, they “takin’ in front” and challenging the institution to catch up. They want to turn the *Carnival Theatre* process into a self-sustaining programme that they – the present participants of the programme – as facilitators, can roll out for

other identified long term and lifer inmates. Looking back over more than fifty years activism I am truly grateful that I was able to inspire many groups and individuals to try to become the best possible versions of themselves. As I interacted with Trinidadians young and old, female and male – the most creative and loving people on the planet – I was and continue to be, inspired to “keep on trucking”.

Or, as we say here, “always to make as if...”



Above: Dad Tony, Mum Mary, Ellen, Baby Shaun, and Tomás



Above: Our Grandparents on their wedding day in 1910. John A O'Malley, formerly Clare Island and USA, and Ellen Whelan, Rathdowney, Co Laois.

Ellen O'Malley Dunlop tells us about Ellen O'Malley Camps

The following is a resumé of her achievements over the decades:

She has been in the theatre since 1967 when she joined Nobel Laureate Derek Walcott's *Trinidad Theatre Workshop* and worked as an actor, adapter (Stage, T.V, Radio), script/continuity & costumes (Film)

The Seventies

She co-founded (with Cynthia Alleyne) the *Trinidad & Tobago Housewives Association (H.A.T.T)*.

She set up a production company (*All Theatre Productions*) and helped rebuild and establish the *Little Carib* as a theatre space with a technical and administrative infrastructure.

The Eighties

She inaugurated the experimental *Trinidad Tent Theatre Company*, which attempted to create a style and theatrical form suited to the resources and the realities of the Caribbean. In Ireland she co-founded the *Irish Goodwill & Right Relationship Centre* (while reading Theology at Trinity College Dublin where she secured a Masters Degree).

She led the participants at the *World Conference on New Psychologies & Psychotherapies* (Findhorn, Scotland) in an exploration of national symbols, celebrations and rituals – the aim – to make conscious the possibilities for re-visioning, for personal development and transformation inherent in ritual, theatre and performance art.

In 2000 she founded and became first artistic director of St. Lucia's *Téyat Toutafé* and in 2004 she co-founded and became artistic director of Trinidad's *Brown Cotton Tent Theatre Ensemble*.

Both St. Lucia's *Téyat Toutafé* and Trinidad's *Brown Cotton Tent Theatre Ensemble* worked and trained out of a tent with aims and objectives akin to the *Trinidad Tent Theatre Company*.

All her work has been geared towards the development of a more creative and expressive mode of being and for better inter-personal relationships – right relationship through best communication practices.

Towards this end she established *EMERJ Associates* a company working out of a restorative justice philosophy dedicated to human enrichment, empowerment and transformation.

In June 2011 *EMERJ Associates* and *Brown Cotton Tent Theatre Ensemble* merged to become *Brown Cotton Outreach* (incorporated as a not-for-profit NGO).

Ellen O'Malley—Dunlop



Left: The two
Ellens in 2025,
and Right: Ellen
O'Malley—
Camp's
Grandaughter
Bianca, and her
Husband,
Nicholas



Meghan O'Malley—Forging a career via the scenic route!

Meet Meghan O'Malley

She has travelled a “winding road” to carve out the career she has built for herself

Meghan, thanks for joining us, excited to have you contributing your stories and insights. What did your parents do right and how has that impacted you in your life and career?

“Show up like it’s opening night.”

Boston, MA in the 1990s, I’m 12 years old, the epitome of glamour in my crushed velvet, midnight-green babydoll dress and a new leather choker. My parents took me and two of my five siblings to see Phantom of the Opera downtown. We sat somewhere that felt, to me, very close. Close enough that I was completely pulled into the magic of it all (that chandelier!), and also aware of how much work it took to make this magic on stage.

I remember sitting there, listening to Christine sing, thinking, “How do they do this every single night? Sometimes twice a day? What if they’re tired? What if they have a headache or want to see their friends or had a bad day?” I leaned over and asked my dad some version of that.

He didn’t look away from the stage when he answered me, “It doesn’t matter how they feel,” he said. “This is their job. Their sacred responsibility. Someone in this audience tonight saved up for this, maybe for a long, long time, maybe all of their money. This may be the only time they’ll ever see a Broadway show. And that person deserves a performance like it’s opening night. Every time.”

I didn’t have words for it then, but those words landed. That moment is seared in my mind. That no matter how many times you do something, for the person experiencing it, it might be their first time. Their only time. And you owe it to them to show up like it matters. Because it does.

That’s stayed with me. Not just in how I meet each client as a divorce coach and lawyer-mediator, but in how I’m choosing to build the work itself.

As an entrepreneur, I carry a second responsibility, not just to be present within the system, but to imagine something better. I’ve seen too many people come through divorce feeling gutted, not only by their loss, but by the process itself. They’re overwhelmed, unseen, and worn down by a machine ill-equipped to handle something so vast.

So I ask myself constantly: How can I do this differently? How can I create a path that is more human, more intentional, more healing? How do I build something that doesn’t just check legal boxes, but meets people at the emotional and logistical heart of this transition?

What my parents did right was never about one big lesson, but about a hundred small ones like this. Moments where they showed me, not told me, what it looks like to really be present. To take your role in someone else’s story seriously. And now, that means showing up for the person in front of me and showing up to change the stage itself. To rebuild the experience so that no one walks through it feeling like they’re just another case file.



Meghan O'Malley—Forging a career via the scenic route!

Because for them, this is the show. This is the one they'll remember. And my sacred responsibility is show up like it's opening night, because for the person sitting across from me, it probably is.

Great, appreciate you sharing that with us. Before we ask you to share more of your insights, can you take a moment to introduce yourself and how you got to where you are today to our readers.

Divorce sucks. So I'm here to make it suck less.

Hi! I'm Meghan, a divorce coach, lawyer-mediator, and entrepreneur on a mission to completely change how women move through divorce and how the system around them supports (or doesn't support) that process. For most of my life, I've been drawn to the moments people usually try to avoid – the messy, scary, complicated seasons where everything is changing and the way forward isn't clear. I love people. I love their stories. I love helping them make sense of big, hard things and feel strong and grounded again in the process.

But how I got here? That's a winding road.

I'm a double-barred lawyer who said, "nah not for me." And decided to cook in people's homes. I worked as a private chef, eventually building own company and selling it during the pandemic. I loved those years of food and people, and yet knew... I wanted more. I pursued other passions – yoga teacher certification, nutrition, coaching, MBTI, mediation, domestic violence advocacy, and mind-heart-somatic modalities. I've always been a little obsessed with what makes people tick, what helps them grow, and how we can navigate change with intention and humanity.

Somewhere in the middle of all that, I also spent two years as a corporate trainer for Edible Arrangements. For 98 out of 104 weeks, I traveled. Every. Single. Week. I flew with just a few magazines (electronics? What electronics?), and I'd always feel this little thrill of curiosity when I boarded: Who am I going to sit next to? Who will I meet or talk to or learn something from? Yes, I know this sounds downright horrifying to some, but I loved it. Luckily, I also have pretty high EQ and a solid "read the room" radar, so I could tell when my seatmate wanted absolutely nothing to do with me. Fair. But most of the time, people opened up. Those chats, sometimes brief, more often long and winding, reminded me how much people want to feel seen, and how often all it takes is someone willing to really listen.

I'm also the oldest of six kids (five women + a bomb sister-in-law), and my sisters are my heart. Growing up in a loud, close, chaotic, loving family taught me everything about empathy, boundaries, and resilience. My love for women runs deep. I think we're powerful and brilliant and capable of remaking the world. And frankly, we need to. Because so many systems, especially around family and divorce, were built without women in mind. And we're still expected to navigate them as if that's not the case.

As a divorce coach and lawyer-mediator, I work with women who are navigating divorce, whether they're still deciding, just beginning, or already in the thick of it. I help them understand their options, make grounded decisions, communicate with confidence, and move forward without shame. I leverage my legal and mind-body expertise to offer a mix of insight and emotional support, because divorce isn't just a legal event, it's a life event.



Meghan O'Malley—Forging a career via the scenic route!

As a founder and entrepreneur, I'm building a new way to do divorce. One that centers the human experience. One where women feel seen, held, and supported in their power. I'm working to shift a system that can feel cold and transactional into one that is thoughtful, compassionate, and built with real lives in mind.

I believe that my magic is the dynamic mix I bring – legal expertise, deep coaching experience, a serious love of people, and a whole lot of entrepreneurial grit. I tell clients, "I speak lawyer and human." I'm not just here to guide people through the system. I'm here to change it.

What I'm most proud of is that I've finally woven all the parts of me, the law, the kitchen, the yoga mat, the airport conversations, the coaching, the sisterhood, into something real. Something that feels like purpose. And more importantly, something that helps women take back their power, reclaim their story, and build a future they're excited about.

What's a lesson you had to unlearn and what's the backstory?

That success has to look a certain way. Tidy, linear, and impressive on LinkedIn.

I spent most of my life feeling a little out of step with everyone else. I was that high-achieving girl in the advanced classes (the ones you're seeing a lot of memes about right now!) On paper, great. But under the surface, I felt like I was constantly fighting myself. Why couldn't I study for hours like everyone else seemed to? Why would I start a project and then somehow end up sitting on the floor of my closet reading a book? Why did I struggle with depression for much of my adulthood? Why did the thought of working at a law firm make me feel like I was going to spontaneously combust from despair?

For years, my inner monologue was brutal. I'd look around at my classmates (and I've had a lot of classmates) and watch them climb clean, linear ladders into impressive titles and senior leadership roles. Back at home, in my mind, I felt like I was zigzagging between law, coaching, yoga, entrepreneurship, food, back to law, wondering why I couldn't be like them.

It wasn't until my early 40s that I was diagnosed with ADHD, and with this diagnosis came a powerful game-changer – self-compassion. I now had language and context for things I'd struggled with my entire life. The finger-rubbing while writing papers, the inability to sit still and focus the way others seemed to, the deep loathing of structure and rote tasks, all of it started to make sense. Even more powerfully, I confronted my shame. My harsh, inner voice, lacking the self-compassion I center my divorce work on. I began to see how much of that self-criticism came not



Meghan O'Malley—Forging a career via the scenic route!

from who I was, but from trying to force myself into a mold that was never made for me.

The lesson I'm unlearning is that success doesn't have to follow someone else's script. That the goal isn't to look good on paper. The goal is to feel whole and aligned and alive in my life. That staying true to myself, especially when it doesn't look how people expect, is the most important thing. And also, let's be real, the damn hardest thing.

My inner critic is still there and never plans on leaving, but I have the language, tools, and self-compassion to soothe her more quickly. I'm learning to define success in ways that matter to me – building a business with meaning, helping real people, being a safe place for others who are navigating their own nonlinear paths. And finally giving myself permission to belong exactly as I am, brain quirks and all.

Any stories or insights that might help us understand how you've built such a strong reputation?

Authenticity, eagerness, openness. A willingness to be "uncool" and to show up as I am, weirdness, quirks, and all. To admit when I don't know something, to care deeply and visibly. And above all, acting generously in spirit and in action.

We're living in a world that's truly speeding up by the minute. The pressure to deliver faster results, in shorter timeframes, with smaller investments, is everywhere. This ethos may work in some industries, though I remain skeptical. I've found that in the work I do of supporting people through deeply personal transitions like divorce, lasting impact comes from something slower and more human – connection.

Deep, genuine connection is the foundation of my reputation. Real connection builds trust and creates safety. It lets people know I mean what I say and will act by my words and values. And I know that over time, that trust and connection ripple outward. The more rooted I am, the more my work becomes recognizable. Not because I'm shouting, but because people feel me.

I've also had to learn that I'm not for everyone, and everyone isn't for me! That lesson alone has been freeing. When I stop trying to appeal to everyone and start investing in the relationships that truly align, everything blooms.



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Thanks to CanvasRebel

Nora O'Malley tells us about algae blooms off Vancouver!

Algae bloom turns coastal waters off Vancouver Island tropical blue

The turquoise blue waters are so bright you can see them from space.

Some West Coasters say it reminds them of herring spawn. Others say it mirrors the milky blue of glacial waters or the warm palette of a tropical lagoon.

The phenomenon taking place off the coast of Vancouver Island is called a coccolithophore bloom, and according to researchers at Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) Institute of Ocean Sciences in Sidney, B.C., it's been happening more frequently since the heat waves and El Niño events that started in 2015.

"These blooms usually follow an intense heat or warming event," said Moira Galbraith, a DFO zooplankton taxonomist, in an email.

The turquoise blue waters are so bright you can see them from space. DFO researchers have been following the bloom for several weeks via Sentinel Satellite pictures from the Copernicus Program, the Earth Observation component of the European Union's space program.

"From the pictures you can see the bloom developing along the coast, especially Nitinat Lake," said Galbraith. Coccolithophores are a non-toxic microscopic protist, a type of phytoplankton with a calcareous shell made from a little sphere of calcium carbonate.

"This material is reflective, making the water appear blue/white as it reflects the sunlight through the water. Extensive blooms occur when the surface waters become quite warm and nutrient-depleted," Galbraith said. The DFO scientist explained that coccolithophores are mixotrophs; they ingest carbon dioxide via sunlight (photosynthesis) to produce oxygen as a byproduct and will eat other phytoplankton.

"This makes them able to take advantage of nutrient-poor, warm water with poor water mixing. Most blooms start in an embayment or inlet with restricted circulation," said Galbraith.

Laura Griffith-Cochrane, a marine biologist and the executive director of the Ucluelet Aquarium, says her team hasn't seen any behavioural changes amongst the fish that reside in the catch-and-release facility. Visitors can see the bloom up close from within the tanks.

"It's so, so tiny. We can't filter it out. Whatever is happening in the harbour is happening in (the aquarium). But it's also a great food source for a lot of organisms, so it's not a bad thing. A lot of our filter feeders are really stoked," she said.



Above: A satellite image shows the tropical blue algae blooms off Vancouver

Nora O'Malley tells us about algae blooms off Vancouver!

The water used in the Ucluelet Aquarium is drawn from right outside in the Ucluelet harbour. Each day, the aquarium filters 250 gallons per minute into their exhibits.

"We have noticed our dissolved oxygen levels have decreased, probably because in the process of making their little plaques they're using oxygen molecules as well," said Griffith-Cochrane of the phytoplankton. "A lot of the things that are eating them are feasting right now [and] are also using quite a bit of oxygen as well. We haven't seen the dissolved oxygen levels go to a point where we should be concerned."

"We are connected to the ecosystem. What happens out there happens in here. It highlights that responsibility that we have to take care of the whole space that we share with everybody. I think a lot of people forget about that when they are living in places where they can't see those connections as easily," she continued.

Unlike some toxic algae blooms that can be harmful to marine life and human health, Griffith-Cochrane says coccolithophore is "one that we don't have to worry about for our health."



Above: Ucluelet Harbour looks like Hawaii without the palm trees these days thanks to a special algae bloom.

When the bloom dies off, the calcium carbonate sinks to the bottom of the ocean, removing some of the carbon from the surface waters into sediment, according to DFO. The White Cliffs of Dover along the coastline of England, for example, are chalk-coloured as a result of the calcite made from the remains of coccolithophores.

"It just falls to the ocean floor. It fertilizes the ocean," Griffith-Cochrane echoed. "I think it's pretty special. I keep anticipating that it's going to go away, and it's still here."

DFO says most fish can avoid the coccolithophore bloom, as it is only on the very surface of the water, but the bloom may irritate gills if numbers are large enough and the fish are unable to move away.

Nora O'Malley

Test your brain with a crossword on Irish Counties

Across

2. The county with Ireland's Capital City
4. Glendalough is in County
6. The opposite of Up is
7. Enniscorthy is in County
10. Belfast is in County
13. The city and county of "the cats"
16. County known as the Orchard of Ireland
17. West from the Royal County
18. Ireland's second smallest County
20. The Oak Leaf County, Up North
21. Ireland's most Southerly County
22. Ireland's smallest County

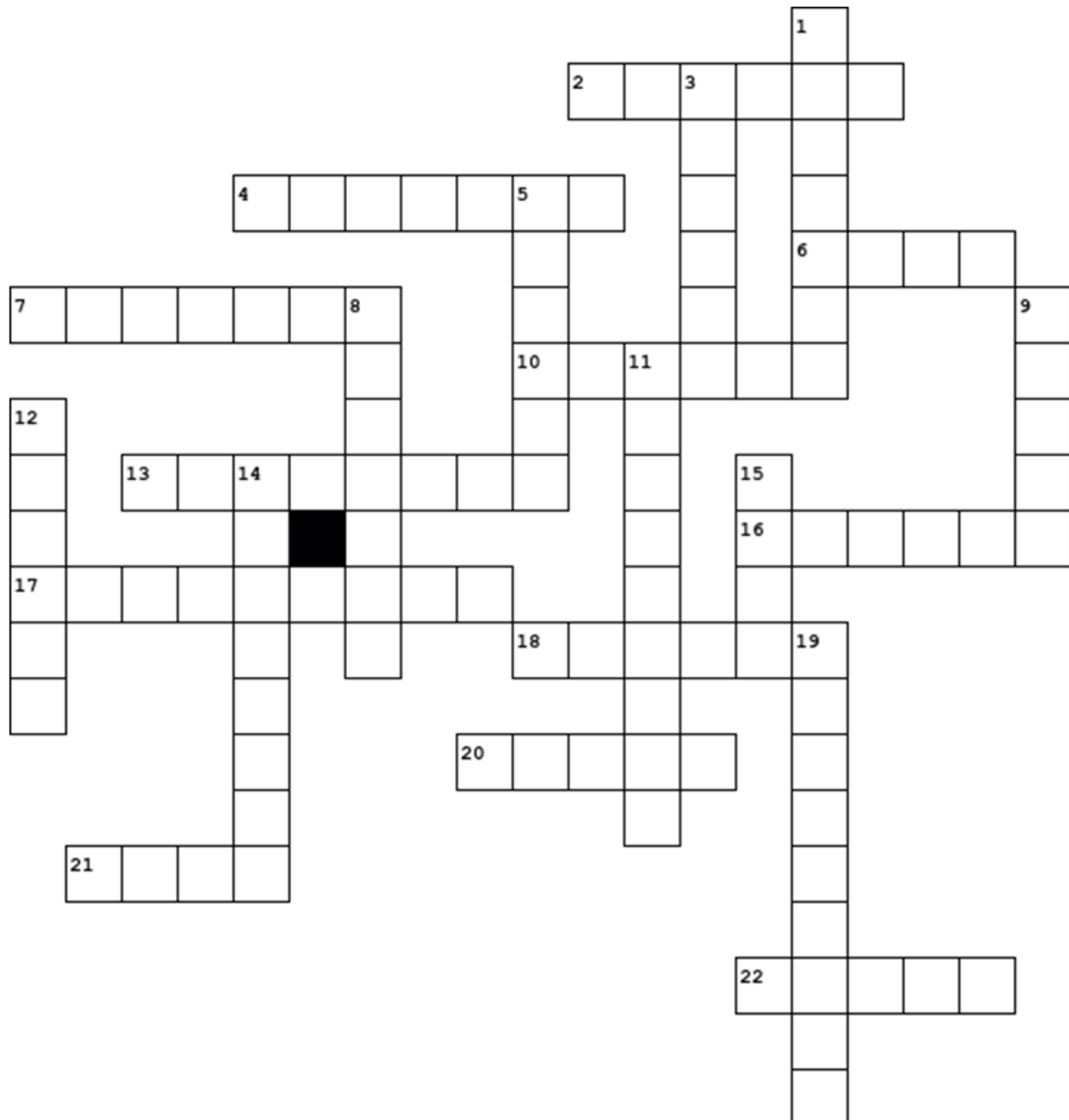
Down

1. Nickname for County Kerry
3. Clare is known as the County
5. Tullamore is in County
8. Letterkenny is in County
9. The Royal County
11. The Rock of Cashel is in County
12. Clifden is in County
14. Home of King Johns Castle
15. Clew Bay is in County
19. City and County in Ireland's South East

JUNE ANSWERS: **ACROSS**, 1 WILDE, 3 MCCOURT, 6 STOKER 8 EDNA, 9 PLAYBOY, 11 ULYSSES, 14 TRAVELS, 16 WAKE, 17 LONG, 19 BRENDAN 21 GODOT, 22 BINCHY **DOWN**, 2 ENRIGHT, 4 ROONEY, 5 KEANE, 7 STARS, 10 COLM, 12 STRIPED 13 BANVILLE 15 DANCING, 18 MARTIN, 20 RODDY.

LAST MONTH'S ANSWERS: **ACROSS**, 5 WALLABIES, 7 TASMANIA, 9 REEF 10 ADELAIDE, 12 MILFORDSOUND, 13 OPERA, 14 KOALA, 15 CHRISTCHURCH 17 CANBERRA, 18 KIWI, 19. TASMAN 20 PLATYPUS **DOWN**, 1 BONDI, 2 HOBART, 3 WELLINGTON, 4 KANGAROO, 6 EMU, 8 AUCKLAND 10 ALLBLACKS 11 SOUTHERNALPS, 16 COOK, 21 PERTH.

Test your brain with a crossword on Irish Counties





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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 70 years now.

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



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