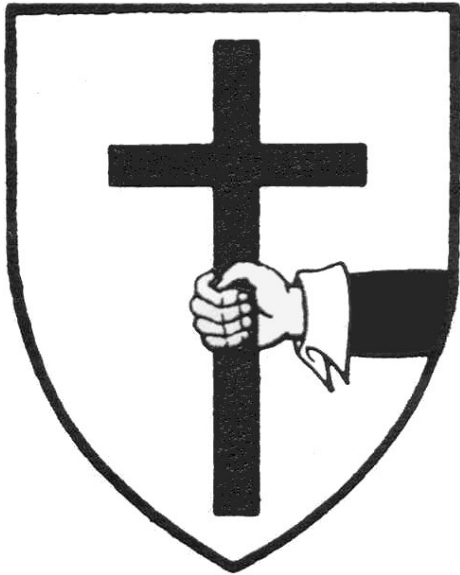


Ó Domhnaill Abú



O'Donnell Clan

Newsletter No. 34

Winter 2005



On the Rock of Doon during the 2005 Clan Gathering

2005 Clan Gathering

Launch: The O'Donnell Clan Gathering 2005 was formally launched on the evening of the 6th May 2005 in Donegal Town. Present was the Clan Association committee, other members of the O'Donnell Clan, representatives from the local Community Chamber, local businesses, tourism trade and our very special guests, Daniel O'Donnell and his wife Majella, over 60 people in all. After speeches from representatives of the various bodies, the 2005 O'Donnell Clan Gathering was officially launched by Daniel O'Donnell. Afterwards, all retired to enjoy a lovely buffet. It was great of Daniel to take time out to be with us and, of course, a crowd is always guaranteed wherever Daniel appears. Daniel was presented with a copy of *'The Life of Aodh Rua O Domhnaill.'* by L. Ó Cléirigh

Day 1: For us, the local committee, the last few days before the opening were hectic. With so much to be done that couldn't have been done sooner, we ended up working 16 hours a day. The final day arrived and from early afternoon we were busy in the hotel arranging photos and genealogical charts, laying out and pricing merchandise and tickets etc. As the time for the opening neared it became evident that there were more attendees than we had expected. This caused a bit of difficulty for the few hours until everyone had received their tickets etc.



Nuala, far right, opening Gathering '05

The official opening took place in the Castle and once again we are grateful to Dúchas for the use of the building and to the Irish Army for providing a colour party. One of our own members, Vincent O'Donnell (not me), played bagpipes. Several people spoke, Nancy O'Donnell represented our Chairperson Anne O'Donnell who was absent due to a family wedding. Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill officially opened the Gathering. Then we returned to the Central Hotel where we continued with some music provided by Henry O'Donnell, wife Sinéad and a few other O'Donnell friends. It was decided not to have a lecture on opening

night as we found in the past that it's just too much. People were allowed to mill about and look at merchandise and displays. 139 people registered that night. It was 3.00 am when we (my wife Annette and I) got to bed.

Day 2: At 10.00am we departed for Rosstown Franciscan Friary for Mass. We traveled in two of Feda O'Donnell's coaches. Summer Masses in Rosstown are always well attended but places had been kept for us and they, the Franciscans, made sure we took an active part in the ceremony. It was explained who we were and why we were there. It was Red Hugh O'Donnell (died 1505) who provided for the Franciscans when his wife brought them to Tyrconnell for the first time. After Mass the community presented every one of us with a gift, very thoughtful of them. Lucius Emerson, a local historian, gave a talk in Spanish that lasted for 20 minutes



L. Emerson with the Spaniards

outlining all the connections between Ireland and Spain. At the age of 96 his legs were a bit shaky but he refused to sit. He stood with his back to a wall while he delivered his talk. Two months later he died. What a great man!

From there we traveled to Creevy where Mr. Emerson gave a presentation on the ill-fated Spanish Armada that was wrecked around our coast in 1588. After a light lunch we joined the Donegal Historical Society in one of their 'field days' where we

heard from Anthony Begley about the O'Donnell/Ballyshannon connections. Then we returned to Donegal Town to board the waterbus for a trip around Donegal Bay. We just had enough time to eat and refresh before Eunan O'Donnell's lecture on 'Red Hugh and his Times.' A wonderful presentation by a great historian. Another 3.00am bed time.

Day 3: Independence Day. All on board the two coaches at 10.00am. and traveled through 'The Gap' to Letterkenny. First stop, Conwal Graveyard, resting place of Godfrey O'Donnell, one of the great O'Donnell Chieftains, died 1258. On then to Lifford to hear about Manus O'Donnell (21st Chieftain). Afterwards we had lunch and moved on to the Genealogical Centre in Rathmelton. Here we had an hours talk on researching genealogy. From there we moved to Gartan, birthplace of Saint Colmcille (Columba); one of our clan. Here also lie the remains of Manus a' Phíce, Manus O'Donnell a hero of 1798. Having heard all about it we were treated to afternoon tea by our chairperson Anne O'Donnell. Waiting for us now was the highlight of the day – the Rock of Doon, inauguration site of the O'Donnell Chieftains. And what a beautiful day it was? The countryside looked so splendid and luscious. Vincent O'Donnell played the pipes, the flags of Spain, Austria and Ireland waved in the breeze; the Clan flag is usually carried.



Having returned from the Rock of Doon

When everyone was back safely on level ground we assembled for our first group photo. Then it was off to Letterkenny for dinner in the Gleneany Hotel. We arrived back in Donegal Town at 11.15pm exhausted. All but a brave few headed for bed.

Day 4: At 10.00am all assembled at O'Donnell's Castle, Donegal for a tour of the castle and to hear its history. Before leaving we had a treat. MariaAnna O'Donnell from Madrid and her cousin-in-law danced a Spanish dance (a form of Flamenco). We wondered if this dance had ever been performed within these walls before. Perhaps by Spanish visitors to the castle in the days of O'Donnell supremacy but



Lady Eldon & Siobhan

hardly by an O'Donnell. We then made our way to the ruins of old abbey built in 1474 by Red Hugh O'Donnell and where so many of the great O'Donnell Chieftains and their families are buried. A laurel wreath was laid as near as possible to the spot where we believe Red Hugh is buried. Siobhán Ní Dhomhnaill (sister of Nuala and Fr. Hugh) and Lady Eldon of the Austrian branch did the



Eloisa & MarieAnna

honours. Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill read Red Hugh's obituary as written by the Four Masters, a Franciscan friar from Rossnowlagh led us in prayer, a lament was played on bagpipes and the ceremony ended with all singing 'O'Donnell Abu'.

At 2.00pm we gathered in the Central Hotel for the 'Open Forum' where many issues were explored and discussed and many opinions and suggestions put forward. The 'Open Forum' is always an interesting part of the Gathering as it provides a platform where anyone can ask questions about anything, suggest anything, criticize etc. Vincent and Eunan O'Donnell chaired the meeting and dealt with questions.

8.00pm We assembled for the Banquet. About 120 attended. A salmon sponsored by Michael McGinley, Teelin, was ceremoniously carried into the banqueting hall led by Vincent O'Donnell playing O'Donnell Abu on the pipes. Local actor Brian McLaughlin dressed as Red Hugh followed and recited a toast to the



Our Red Hugh

salmon 'King of Fish' (Red Hugh was also called the 'King of Fish' as he exported large quantities to the continent). The starter was, of course, a seafood platter in memory of the man whose death we were commemorating. After dinner toasts were made to Austria, Spain, Ireland, absent friends and, of course, to the great O'Donnell Clan. The whiskey was sponsored by Tyrconnell Whiskey at the request of Frank O'Donnell. A Tom O'Donnell in Australia recently began distributing the same

whiskey 'down under'. As part of his promotion he circulated thousands of O'Donnells re the merits of this wonderful drink. He also added a little note about our Clan Association and

the Clan Gathering. As a result we had a number of Aussies present. So Tyrconnell Whiskey got much mention during the night. Presentations were made to several people and afterwards we danced and sang the night away. After the music stopped many seemed in no hurry to leave. Around 5.00am the hotel staff seemed anxious for us to leave. So we did. The birds were singing as I got to bed.



Aussie O'Donnells

Days 5-9: Most attendees took it that the main part of the O'Donnell Clan Gathering was now over and so departed for home or to travel to other parts of Ireland. However some remained and took part in the activities of the last 5 days. These events were not organised by our Clan Association but rather by the local Community Chamber and those who stayed around agreed that they were quite enjoyable. There were 2 more O'Donnell related lectures, Irish dancing and music, an art exhibition and a concert.

For us, the organizing committee, it was an exhausting nine days but when it was over and we looked back we were pleased with ourselves, so much so that we had a night out together. We always evaluate the success of our Clan Gatherings by the following 3 criteria – firstly, did most of the attendees enjoy themselves; secondly, financially did we break even or make a little profit; and thirdly, and most important of all, was the organizing committee on speaking terms when it was all over? The answer to all three in this case was an emphatic 'Yes.' A big 'Thanks' to all involved. *Go raibh mile maith agaibh go léir.*



At Rossnowlagh

Jahrgang O'Donnell

In the year 1736 and at the age of 21 Connell O'Donnell (g.g.g.g. grandson of Manus O'Donnell, 21st Chieftain) left his home near Dromahaire in Co. Leitrim and joined his uncle Count Andrew Hamilton in Austria. Many young men who were not prepared to take English oppression did likewise. They are remembered as the 'Wild Geese.'

Connell, known on the continent as Karl, commenced his career in No. 7 Kurassier Regiment during the Turkish War . Rapidly rising through the ranks he was Colonel Proprietor of the O'Donnell Regiment from 1756 to 1771. He was awarded the Grand Cross of the Military Order of Maria Therese in 1761. He became Commanding Officer in the Netherlands in 1762, Counselor in 1764, Inspector General of Cavalry in 1765 and finally, Privy Councilor and Governor of Transylvania in 1768. He died without issue in Vienna - a veteran of 18 campaigns – on March 26, 1771.

Each Cadet Class graduating from the Maria Theresian Military Academy of Weiner Neustadt (60 Km south of Vienna) take as patron one of the great Austrian military heroes and this year's class took Karl O'Donnell. Hence they became the 'Jahrgang O'Donell.' Note - the surname in Austria has been spelt with one 'n' since 1853 as the result of a misspelling in a patent granting the title 'Count.'

The Jahrgang O'Donell took a keen interest in the O'Donnell, Donegal and Irish background of their patron and so many Austrian/Irish events took place during their four year course culminating in a week-long trip to Ireland at the end of August gone by. During that week the 67 cadets along with several senior officers including Major Douglas O'Donell Count von Tyrconnell were hosted by the Irish Army and travelled around visiting scenic and historic sites but the highlight was their visit to Co. Donegal.



While guests of the 28th Infantry Battalion in Finner Camp they were taken to some of the interesting sites of our county such as Bunglass, Rock of Doon and Glenveagh. A very impressive ceremony was held at Donegal Castle where after an oration by Major Douglas O'Donnell, a plaque commemorating their visit was unveiled by Major Douglas O'Donell and Major Norbert Sinn, Commandant of the Military Academy.

Their trip ended with a dinner in Finner Camp at which members of the O'Donnell Clan Association were special guests.

One week later the passing-out took place at the Military Academy. It was a two day affair with much pomp and ceremony. The Jahrgang O'Donell did much to give it an Irish and an O'Donnell flavour. Two pipers were 'imported' from Ireland, Private Willie Coffey from the Army Barracks at Lifford and Vincent O'Donnell, Inver secretary of the O'Donnell Clan Association. The O'Donnell flag was ceremoniously carried during all ceremonies and the two pipers provided all the music including the march past in the main street of the town where over ten thousand watched including



insignia

the President, Heinz Fischer and the Minister for Defence, Gunter Platter. A stamp with the Jahrgang O'Donnell badge was issued on the day and even the Irish whiskey had a special label bearing the O'Donnell arms and motto.

After the festivities all 67 officers left the Academy to take up their new posts in various parts of Austria. But the Irish connection has filled them with a yearning to return and experience more; much more of what Ireland has to offer. All promised to return soon again to the land of their patron.

As the March-past ends the Jahrgang O'Donnell put away their sabres and the O'Donnell flag.



Below is an e-mail I received (27th Sept. '05) from Frank O'Donnell UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative. Frank attended the '05 Gathering and it was he who was instrumental in procuring Tyrconnell Whiskey for our toasts. He is currently working in the Ukraine.

Dear Clansfolk!

See below... no known relative of mine, but maybe of yours?! But on my old stomping ground..

Meanwhile I hope to meet the Irish under 17s football team who play in Ukraine's Dynamo stadium this week!

Best regards from Kiev.

Frank

U.S. Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues in Belgrade



Ambassador Edward O'Donnell, Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues at the U.S. Department of State, is to emphasize the importance of fighting anti-Semitism, intolerance and every form of hatred and intolerance, on Monday during talks with officials in Belgrade, Belgrade media reported over the weekend.

O'Donnell, who arrived in Belgrade on Friday, announced that the second topic of his meeting will be restitution, i.e. the adoption of legislation on the return of nationalized property to private owners and all religious communities in Serbia and Montenegro.

O'Donnell visited the Jewish synagogue in Belgrade on Friday, accompanied by U.S. Ambassador in SCG, Michael Polt. Addressing the press, he pointed out the importance for the issue of the holocaust to be included in school textbooks, stating that awareness among youths recalls memories of the victims, but also serves as a reminder of what hatred and intolerance have led to, Belgrade press reported on Sunday.

(For more do a search for "Ambassador Edward O'Donnell")

The following is an e-mail I received from John McCavitt, author of The Flight of the Earls (mentioned in ODA33) –



Treasury's O'Donnell is new head of civil service Press Association Wednesday June 15, 2005

The Treasury civil servant Sir Gus O'Donnell has been appointed cabinet secretary, it was confirmed today. Sir Gus succeeds Sir Anthony Turnbull as the prime minister's key Whitehall aide and head of civil service. His ties to Gordon Brown have provoked suggestions that the appointment is intended to provide a smooth transition of power if Mr. Brown takes over as prime minister. The mandarin will take up the post, which brings a salary of up to £264,250, over the summer.

(For more do a search for "Sir Gus O'Donnell")



Brigid O'Donnell from Annagry, Co. Donegal, who celebrated her 100th birthday early Oct. gone by. Hale, hearty and fit as a fiddle, Brigid walks to the local shop (I mile) every morning and carries her shopping home in a shopping bag as she did in her youth. She, then, tidies the house before the arrival of her 'home help'. Blessed with a great memory, she is visited by many locals with questions about their ancestry.



Gabriel Johannes Graf O'Donell von Tyrconnell

der uns am Mittwoch, dem 24. August 2005 im 83. Lebensjahr,
nach einem erfüllten, glücklichen Leben verlassen hat.

so read the sad announcement last August. Gabriel O'Donell, the most senior of the Austrian branch had passed away. My memories of Gabriel – a great story-teller with many great stories to tell, a man who loved fun and nature and above all, probably the most generous person I've ever met. He visited Donegal on several occasions and was proud of his O'Donnell and Irish background. He always had a great welcome for any Irish who visited his wild-life park - Wildpark Hochkreut (not far from Salzburg) We sympathise with

his wife, Ulrike, son Douglas, daughter Elizabeth and extended family.

Sa Ghlór go raibh a lóistín.

Douglas, now the most senior of the Austrian Branch, runs the wild-life park which is visited by thousands daily. The same Maj. Douglas accompanied the Jahrgang O'Donell on their Irish visit and had the privilege of unveiling a commemorative plaque at Donegal Castle. This stone plaque is to be permanently placed within the castle in memory of the occasion.

Count Douglas is married to Countess Aimee Csaky (see ODA24) and they have two sons, Kilian and Douglas. (visit . <http://www.wildpark.co.at/index.html>)



Lucius Emerson R.I.P.

Another great man who went to his eternal reward last September was Lucius Emerson. Lucius, mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, was a great historian and a mine of information. I often sought his advice while writing articles for *Ó Domhnaill Abú* and an entire article by him, 'Weapons of the Nine Years War', appeared in issue No. 17.
Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam.

E-mail addresses lost

Recently I had my computer 'scrubbed'. I had given instruction to save all my e-mails. However, that wasn't done and I've lost all mail and addresses received over the last eight years or so. Some contained useful information that might have been passed on through this newsletter. I would appreciate you sending me an e-mail so I can store your address in my address book.

Rome 2008

The O'Donnell Clan Association still intend commemorating the 400th anniversary of the Flight of the Earls by travelling along the same route from Louvain to Rome some time in 2008. If you're interested or able to help let me know. A useful site to watch is <http://www.theflightoftheearls.net/>

The English translation of Tadhg Ó Cianáin's account of the 'Flight' may be downloaded from <http://www.ucc.ie/celt/published/T100070/>

New Book

Red Hugh O'Donnell and the Nine Years War by Darren McGettigan was launched in Dublin on the 28th Nov. last and is due to be launched in Donegal Town in Feb. 2006.

I quote from the Blurb – ‘This book provides a new assessment of O'Donnell's career, utilizing Gaelic, Spanish and English sources, many of them previously unpublished. As a result Red Hugh emerges as a much fuller historical figure, whose contribution to the success of the Gaelic confederacy was just as crucial as that of the earl of Tyrone.’

Darren McGettigan is a graduate of UCD. While researching his PhD he was awarded a Government of Ireland scholarship in the humanities and social sciences.

Published by Four Courts press www.four-courts-press.ie ISBN 1-85182-887-7 costs €45

Round Ireland Swim

Henry O'Donnell, whose name has often appeared in my newsletters, intends to -

“Safely and successfully complete the Round Ireland Swim Expedition within eight weeks involving a relay team of six experienced, highly motivated sea swimmers from the Four Provinces Of Ireland.

Donate all funds remaining (after all bills of the Expedition have been paid) in equal amounts to the RNLI (Life Boat Service Charity) Crew Training Campaign in Ireland and the Irish Water Safety (IWS).”

If you wish to make an **offline donation** to Round Ireland Swim, cheques (crossed), bank drafts, postal or money orders (payable to **Round Ireland Swim**) can be posted to Round Ireland Swim at the address below. *(Please do not send cash by post)* Alternatively, you can lodge funds directly into the Round Ireland Swim bank account at: **Bank of Ireland, Main Street, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, IRELAND A/C No: 78294256**

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If you are lodging money directly to Round Ireland Swim bank account, please send us the receipt stub from your bank lodgment form, so that we can acknowledge your contribution. All donations, large or small, are greatly appreciated. Thank you. <http://www.roundirelandswim.ie>

Dracula: the O'Donnell connection.

The most successful horror story ever written is probably Dracula. The author, Bram Stoker, was Irish and his great grandmother was Eliza O'Donnell, daughter of Manus O'Donnell of the Newport line. Eliza is number 102c on genealogical chart No. 2 in both *Clann Dálaigh* and *O'Donnells of Tír Chonaill*, also in ODA3. The Dracula story takes place in Transylvania and as you will see from page 4 of this newsletter, Transylvania was once governed by Karl O'Donnell (122) of Larkfield line.

The following items are available for sale - Clan polo shirt (L & XL) €15; Clan ties (green or black) €12 ; Clan pennants €10; Clan cap (navy or black) €10; (1)DVD video of highlights of '05 Clan Gathering (1 hour approx.) €15; (2)DVD video of speeches, talks etc. (2 hours approx.) €10 (1+ 2 for €20); (3)CD of photos of '05 Clan Gathering (over 250) by official photographer and others €10; CD of mainline O'Donnell Genealogy (Family Tree Maker) €10 ; The 'Life of Red Hugh O'Donnell' by Lughaidh Ó Cléirigh, translated by Fr. Paul Walsh. A lovely and rare book. €50 Postage and packaging extra.