



CANADIAN IRISH MIGRATION PRESERVATION NETWORK

CIMPN/RCPMI

PROUDLY PRESENTS

An Lionra

(A NETWORK)

#1 MARCH 2024

Message from the President

Dear Friends and Fellow Irish Heritage Enthusiasts,

I am delighted to introduce the inaugural newsletter from the Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network (CIMPN)! Our network has worked hard to preserve the incredible legacy of Irish migration in Canada. We've made significant progress toward our goal, and we're excited to share our journey with you through this newsletter.

Respectfully yours,

Kelley O'Rourke



Our Mission

The CIMPN is dedicated to commemorating the rich history and significant contributions of Irish migrants to Canada. Our mission includes keeping Irish ancestral stories alive, celebrating the extraordinary contributions of Irish immigrants throughout Canadian history, preserving historic Irish cultural landmarks in Canada, and strengthening the bonds between Irish descendants and the global Irish community to encourage the study and continuation of Irish history for generations to come!



'It's More than Drinking Beer. Wearing Green and Parades.'

By: Laurie McKeown

Many of our Irish ancestors arrived in Canada speaking only Gaelic. We remember and honour them through our efforts to preserve our history and Irish heritage. March 17, 2024 - As you celebrate St. Patrick's Day today, remember the reason for the season. While raising your glass of Guinness or Jameson and among the many sláintes, remember the generations of Irish immigrants who laid the foundation for the celebrations of today.

Even though it's a day to celebrate Irish heritage, it is also a day to remember our historical past and the values of our migrant relatives. St. Patrick's Day has recently been criticized for propagating Irish stereotypes, for promoting excessive drinking and for ignoring the cultural and religious significance of the day.

Irish immigration to Canada began as early as the 17th Century, with the numbers increasing significantly in the wake of the Irish famine. The Great Potato Famine, known as The Great Hunger - La Gorta Mor (1845-1852), resulted in one million Irish men, women and children perishing at the hands of starvation and disease while another one million emigrated to escape this fate. They traded in one tough life for another.

It is hard to imagine the struggles these families endured. Coming from horrendous conditions in their homeland to being transported on coffin ships, only to find themselves in quarantine stations and fever sheds in a foreign land. Landmarks, such as the Black Rock in Montreal, are a tragic reminder not only of the numerous losses of life but of the hardships they endured to get here.

Dr. Gearóid ÓhAllmhuráin, Principal of the School of Irish Studies at Concordia University, brings to our attention that when we remember our Irish ancestors who came across, we remember and think about all displaced immigrants. The 'Irish experience' in the 1840s represents the new immigrants of today. In the last few decades, we still continue to experience global displacement.

St. Patrick's Day is a day of commemoration and a day of remembering the Irish immigration experience. So celebrate and pay homage to where they came from, but never forget the history of how and why they got here.

Happy St. Patrick's Day! Sláinte.





Lá fhéile Pádraig sona dhuit! Happy St. Patrick's Day!

May you always have walls for the winds,
A roof for the rain, tea beside the fire,
Laughter to cheer you, those you love near you,
And all your heart might desire.



Upcoming Events



The United Irish Societies of Montreal
will be holding its annual
St. Patrick Day's Parade
on March 17, 2024



The St. Patrick Society of Montreal will
be holding its annual Luncheon on
March 15, 2024

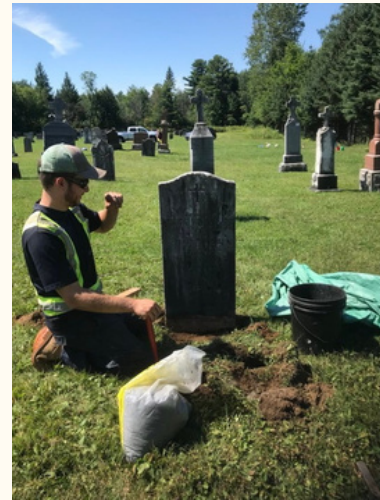
**LET US KNOW WHAT EVENTS ARE HAPPENING
IN YOUR COMMUNITY!**

CONTACT US

CIMPN EVENTS COMING SOON

SAINT- COLOMBAN CEMETERY WORK

Restoration work in the Saint-Colomban Cemetery resumes this spring. Stay tuned for more information about progress updates and volunteer opportunities.



GALWAY CONFERENCE PRESENTATION

The CIMPN will be speaking at the 2024 annual conference of the Canadian Association for Irish Studies at the University of Galway, June 5-7 2024. Stay tuned for our presentation entitled *Mapping and Genealogical Profiling of Irish Cemeteries in Canada: A Preservation of History for Future Generations*.



SAINT-COLOMBAN IRISH HERITAGE DAY

SAVE THE DATE!

July 6th, 2024

At the Saint-Colomban Cemetery in Saint-Columban, Quebec.

Join us for a fun and educational day for the whole family to celebrate their Irish heritage. More details coming soon.

Everyone Has A History: Your Heritage and Why It Matters

By: Laurie McKeown

Where do you come from? Why did your ancestors move and why did they choose that particular place to live? How and when did they get there? So many questions but too few answers. In 1825, James Skelly of County Westmeath was offered a land grant in the Seigneurie of Lake of Two Mountains from Father Jackson of the Sulpician Order of Montreal. Like many of his fellow Irish countrymen, Skelly and his family suffered from severe poverty at the time. Deciding to stay put in his homeland, Skelly's three sons accepted the land grant and left for a better life in Quebec. A few years earlier, in 1823, William McManus left his Irish home in County Tipperary for Lower Canada.

For these Irish immigrants, crossing the Atlantic was a hazardous trip, a potential tragedy waiting to happen every day during those long seven weeks. The ship went as far as Quebec City, and from there, they had to find their own way west along the St. Lawrence River. Steamboat companies, bound for Montreal, loaded up their boats with up to 200 men, women and children.

At the end of this weeks-long voyage, they disembarked in Lachine to avoid the rapids and continued on foot the rest of the way. Their arduous journey wasn't over yet. Both the Skelly brothers and McManus would now have to find room on another steamer or large river raft to continue their journey up the Ottawa river.

The day would be spent travelling on the water, and at night they would sleep on the riverbanks. The Skelly brothers would disembark just past what is now Oka and make the long trek north on foot to St. Columban.

McManus would have started his 30 km walk at St. Andrews, headed for wooded vacant land behind the Argenteuil seigneurie, which would eventually become the town of Gore. The terms of the land grants often stated that in the first year an acre had to be cleared and a log home built. A tremendous undertaking with only an axe.



Bush Farm near Chatham circa 1838

**The way an early homestead
might have looked**

Source:

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bush_Farm_Near_Chatham,_ca._1838.jpg

This was just the start of their new life in Canada. The decision to leave Ireland, to leave behind family and friends, must have been very difficult. It is hard to imagine being in a foreign land with an unfamiliar landscape, an unforgiving climate and formidable wildlife. Like so many Irish that came here in the 19th century, this a very common story.

Why do we need to know the past? Learning the stories behind names and dates teaches us about our personal history and explains how ordinary people lived within historical moments. We need to value our heritage and pass it on to future generations with a little bit of ourselves attached to it.

Do you have a similar ancestral story? Please share it with us. Send your story to: laurie.mckeown@cimpn-rcpmi.ca



Media Corner

Books

HILL SEARCH: THE ROBERT CORRIGAN STORY BY STEVEN L. CAMERON

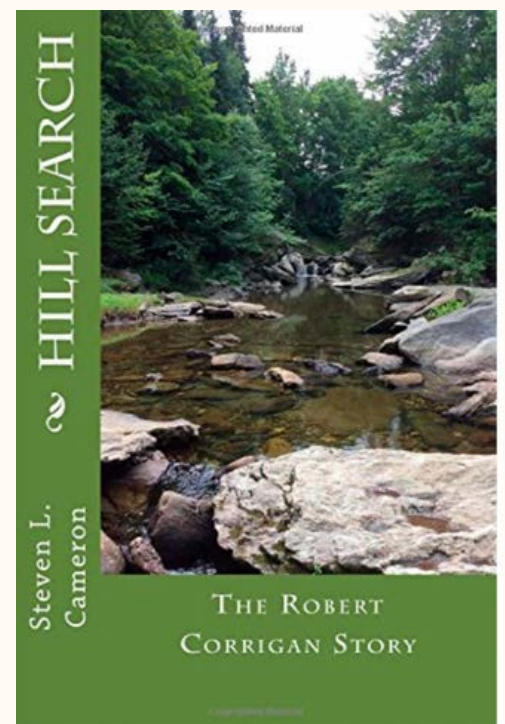
This non-fiction book tells the story of the 1855 murder of Robert Corrigan in the early days of settlement while reflecting on the 'times' within which he and the Irish settlers lived: armed Orangemen on the roads, Ribbonmen in the hills, a body snatching, a lost cemetery, intimidation, and more...Sounds like somewhere in Ireland, but no, it's mid-1800s Quebec!! This account tells the real story of what actually happened, introducing new characters and facts to the 'telling'. A new look at a lost treasure!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Co-founder of Coirneal Cealteach, an Irish Heritage group in Ste. Agathe de Lobiniere, QC., Steve is passionate about preserving the history of the area's early Irish settlers.

ABOUT COIRNEAL CEALTEACH

GET THE BOOK

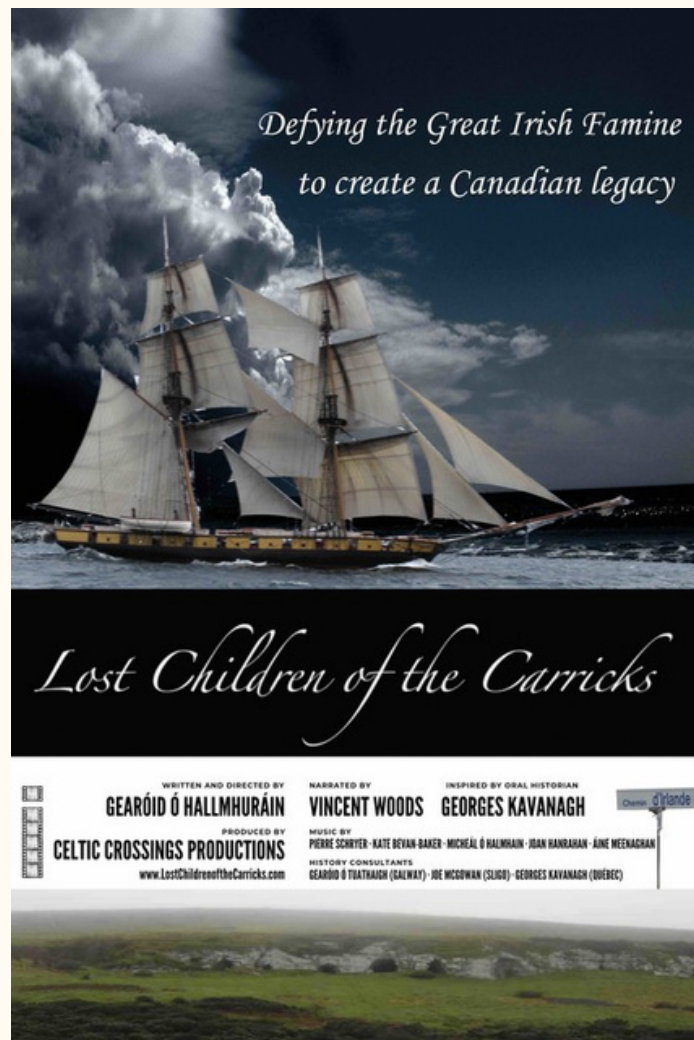


Films

LOST CHILDREN OF THE CARRICKS

"The Lost Children of the Carricks" is a timeless story of emigration from tragedy and exodus to acceptance and integration in the New World. Filmed on location in Canada and in Ireland, the film traces the horrific journey of Patrick Kaveney, Sarah MacDonald and their six children from Keash in south Sligo to Québec's Gaspé peninsula, where their ill-fated coffin ship the Carricks sunk in May 1847.

VIEW MOVIE



➤ Written and directed by Gearóid Ó hAllmhuráin.

➤ Produced by Cecilia McDonnell, Celtic Crossing Productions

Presentations

**PRESENTATION TO THE
NEW BRUNSWICK GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY:
MIRAMCHI BRANCH
OCTOBER 24, 2023**

[VIEW THE PRESENTATION](#)



QAHN's 2024 Heritage Talks presents: "Stone by Stone: The Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network and Irish Cemetery Restoration, Preservation, Education and Genealogical Research," with Kelley O'Rourke, Laurie McKeown, and Fergus Keyes



**PRESENTATION TO THE
QAHN HERITAGE TALKS:
FEBRUARY 13, 2024**

[VIEW THE PRESENTATION](#)

CIMPN YouTube Channel

**CHECK OUT OUR SERIES OF YOUTUBE VIDEOS
ON HEADSTONE CLEANING AND REPAIR**



How To Clean Headstones / Comment nettoyer une vieille pierre tombale

107 views • 3 months ago



Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network

This video is one in a series of short videos, to help guide people on how to clean and repair cemetery headstones. T1

[VIEW VIDEOS](#)

Meet our team...

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The Canadian Irish Migration Preservation Network
is a not-for-profit organization
dedicated to the preservation of Irish heritage

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