



Michael F. Crowley Lectures

Our Third Program of the 2016-2017 Series

George W. Potter and the Providence Journal's 1950 Irish Pilgrimage

Scott Molloy, Ph.D.

Wednesday, November 30, 2016 ~ 6:00 p.m.

International Tennis Hall of Fame ~ Special Event Room
194 Bellevue Avenue, Newport*

A local labor activist once said that the Providence Journal hated unions like the Devil hated holy water! You could easily have substituted “Irish” for “unions” at almost any time in the newspaper's long history. But there were a couple of exceptions. Alfred Williams, a Civil War era reporter, eventually became the paper's editor in the Gilded Age. Remarkably, Williams sympathetically covered Irish nationalism, visited Ireland, and collected Irish artifacts and literature. Incredibly, he even printed some works by the greatest of Irish writers in the Journal.

In 1949, around the time RI Congressman John Fogarty proposed withholding post-WW II Marshall Plan aid to Great Britain if Ireland remained divided, the Journal dispatched another reporter, George M. Potter, to report on the Emerald Isle. Potter became smitten, like Williams before him, and wrote a series of newspaper articles that became a book, “An Irish Pilgrimage,” in 1950. Potter would later pen one of the most influential books about Irish immigration, “To the Golden Door.”

Learn about the Potter trip and what he had to write. And discover the Journal's reason for dispatching him in an attempt to lionize the earlier editor and preserve his collection of “All Things Irish,” which was ultimately donated to the Providence Public Library.

SCOTT MOLLOY is Professor Emeritus at the University of R.I., where he was an award-winning professor at the Schmidt Labor Research Center. He previously drove a bus, was a union activist, and was chief of staff to a U.S. Congresswoman. He earned his doctorate in American History from Providence College. A prolific writer, Molloy wrote, *Trolley Wars: Streetcar Workers on the Line* (U. of New Hampshire, 2007) and *Irish Titan, Irish Toilers: Joseph Banigan and Nineteenth-Century New England Labor* (U. Press of New England, 2008), the latter the topic of a past lecture for the Museum. Dr. Molloy was inducted into the R.I. Labor History Society Hall of Fame as well as the R.I. Hall of Fame. Scott Molloy, who holds dual U.S.-Irish Citizenship, was recently elected Grand Marshal of the Providence St. Patrick's Day Parade 2018. We welcome him for this, his fifth speaking engagement with the Museum.

~ A reception with light hors d'oeuvres will be held following the lecture. Cash Bar ~

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED: Please call or e-mail Ann Arnold at 401-841-5493 or tpm1@earthlink.net
Museum Members – \$5 donation **Non-members** - \$20 donation, applied to a 1-year Individual membership.

* Wheelchair Accessible via elevator to 2nd floor. All enter via Hall of Fame archway