



# THE NEWSLETTER OF THE MUSEUM OF NEWPORT IRISH HISTORY

Published by the Museum of Newport Irish History  
P.O. Box 1378 Newport, RI 02840 (401) 848-0661

VOLUME 29

Spring 2010

## MUSEUM ANNUAL MEETING APRIL 25<sup>TH</sup>

The Annual Meeting of the Museum was held on Sunday afternoon, April 25th, at the Hibernian Hall, Wellington Avenue, Newport. Following the business meeting a supper and social were held. Forty-three members were in attendance to elect the 2010-2011 Officers and Directors. New directors elected were Deborah Donovan, Rev. George B. McCarthy and Jack McCormack. Retiring from the Board were Michael Curran, Ned McGrath and Bob McKenna. A complete listing of all Museum officers and directors for 2010-2011 may be found on page 2.

The membership also approved a new fiscal year budget as presented by Treasurer, Deanna Casey. In addition, new membership fees were announced, as approved by the Board. The new annual membership fee schedule, effective immediately, is: Individual \$15; Family \$25; Business \$50. Individual and Family "Life" Membership fees are \$150 and \$200, respectively. All fees represent a small increase from the prior levels, which had been in effect for the last ten years. (Note: As of May 2010 the Museum has 363 memberships, representing over 400 individuals, as many are Family memberships of two or more persons).

President Arnold thanked the outgoing board members for their service and summarized the past fiscal year's activities, including the expanded Michael F. Crowley Lecture program of six talks, and the very successful first "Irish Eyes are Smiling" gala to benefit the Interpretive Site Fund, held at Salve Regina University's Ochre Court on February 27. A poster listing all gala sponsors and donors was displayed, a copy of which may be found on page 5. The generous support of these donors and event attendees enabled the Museum to raise over \$14,000 from this event. Arnold announced that the second "Irish Eyes" benefit gala has been scheduled for Saturday, February 26, 2011 at Ochre Court.

Arnold then summarized the Board's initiative to secure a location for the Museum's planned interpretive center. He discussed the Board's efforts to obtain a location within Fort Adams State Park, in particular the mule barn site, then disclosed the recent decision by the Board to instead use an in-town, "store front" site as the best alternative to achieving the objective of establishing an interpretive center in the near-term. A business plan and budget will be established to proceed with an interpretive center in a store front-type location in the next year using the basic plan developed by the Newport Collaborative Architects for the Fort Adams mule barn site. This decision was driven by the fact that adequate start-up funding to properly utilize the Fort Adams free-standing mule barn structure is not to be forthcoming soon, and it would be

several years before the Museum could achieve a presence at that site. Additionally, the long range plans of the stewards of the Fort, the Fort Adams Trust, while encouraging for a more open facility (which might allow for an interpretive site within the confines of the fort enclosure itself), are still four to five years off. The Board's decision allows the Museum to have a visible, walk-in site in the short-term, but does not preclude a move to a larger site at Fort Adams at some future point.

To close the business meeting the Museum's new professionally produced DVD titled "The Early Irish" was previewed. The video is essentially a history of the Barney Street/St. Joseph Cemetery and the several church structures built there from 1828-1850's. The film was produced with assistance from Salve Regina University and Video & Vision of Newport. Plans for distribution of this educational video to historical societies, schools, etc. are under development.

Following the video showing members then enjoyed a fine supper prepared and served by Chef Alan and his staff.

# MUSEUM OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS ELECTED AT APRIL 25, 2010 ANNUAL MEETING

for 2010 - 2011 Terms (Mar. 31, 2010 - Apr. 1, 2011)

**President:** Vincent Arnold  
**1st Vice President:** Mike Slein  
**2nd Vice President:** William Coffey  
**Treasurer:** Deanna Casey  
**Secretary:** Maria Carroll

**Board of Directors:**

- John Booth
- Joseph Brady
- Louis Burns
- Shannon Buss
- Elliot Carter
- Deborah Donovan (*new*)
- Thomas Gill
- Steve Lepley
- Rev. George B. McCarthy (*new*)
- Jack McCormack (*new*)
- Joseph McEnness
- Patrick Murphy
- Rick O'Neill
- Harry Winthrop

**Ex-Officio Board Members:**

- President, Ancient Order of Hibernians,  
Division #1, Newport
- President, Ladies Ancient Order  
of Hibernians, Newport
- President, Newport Irish Heritage Association

**Honorary Board Members:**

- Hon. Kathleen Connell
- Hon. J. Joseph Garrahy
- Hon. David Roderick
- Robert McKenna (*new*)

**Director Emeritus:**

- Margaret Ahearn

# BARNEY STREET CEMETERY UPDATE

Museum Awarded Grant to Fund Spring Cleaning

Early on Saturday, April 10 eight hardy Museum members and friends met for the annual "spring cleanup" at the Barney Street Cemetery. Bearing rakes, shovels and hoes, Carolyn and John Booth with granddaughter Izzy Booth, Skip Carney, Ed Murray, Bob Finn, Robin Bosworth and Dan Oakley, worked to tidy up the cemetery for the warm weather weeks ahead. As we go to press, the purple irises planted by Jack MacCormack last year are in full bloom at the front stone posts, accented by an abundance of greenery from the day lilies, which will burst into bloom around the entire perimeter of the iron fence shortly.

Supplies for this work were funded by a \$90 grant from the Aquidneck Island Land Trust's Merritt Neighborhood Fund. Weed & feed fertilizers, trash bags and lime were purchased and used for the work. The Museum was among eight recipients of grants for 2010 which were awarded to local groups whose projects represent Peter Merritt's vision of "fostering a greater sense of community and connection to the land through small scale land conservation and beautification projects". This was the second grant received by the Museum for maintenance of the cemetery in as many years. For more information about the Merritt Neighborhood Fund please visit: [AquidneckLandTrust.org](http://AquidneckLandTrust.org)



Volunteers at work on April 10. To the left, behind the cemetery can be seen the back of the Newport Historical Society headquarters.

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## CEMETERY HISTORY: Honora Pyne (d.1835) Descendant Confirmed

Museum genealogist and historian Patrick Murphy, ever diligent in ferreting out Newport Irish historical facts, learned that a man from Maryland by the name of Pyne had inquired about Honora Pyne, who is buried in the Barney Street/St. Joseph Cemetery. In March of this year, Pat contacted the Reverend Fredrick W. Pyne of Adamstown, Maryland, who is the great, great, great grandson of Honora Pyne. Pat provided Reverent Pyne a copy of Honora Pyne's death announcement from an 1835 issue of the *Newport Mercury* and a current photo of her gravestone. The *Mercury* announcement documents that Honora Pyne died on August 21, 1835 at age 69. The obituary includes the fact that she was the widow of John Pyne, who died and was buried in Charleston, South Carolina.

Reverend Pyne was delighted to confirm the final resting place of his great, great, great grandmother, and provided the following history on his branch of the family, via e-mail to Patrick Murphy:

*This branch of the "Ancient Tribe of Pyne", had come from Devonshire (England) to Ireland, and thence to South Carolina. After the death of their father all of the girls married northern men and moved to the north. The remaining son, Smith Pyne, was sent to Eton Collage (England), returning to New York City in 1820. There he attended Columbia, where he earned B.A. then an M.A. degrees and was ordained an Episcopal priest, serving in several parishes, including Christ Church in Middletown, Connecticut. His*

mother, Honora Pyne, must have been visiting Newport when she died.

While numerous individuals have claimed they have ancestors buried in the Barney Street Cemetery, Pat Murphy believes this to be the first documented case where descent could be proven. There are fewer than 30 documented individuals buried in the St. Joseph/Barney Street Cemetery, though it is thought there may be more undocumented burials.

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## NEW ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM KICKS OFF THIS SUMMER

This summer, the Museum will work with interns from Roger Williams University to record family histories and personal reminiscences of Newport County residents of Irish descent. While the Museum has many such recordings in its library, both oral and video-taped, we hope to significantly increase this excellent resource of historical information on the Irish immigration in Newport County. Those who would like to participate may provide additional information such as photos and other ephemera, and should be willing to sign a release statement so that their story can be made available to all. Anyone who wishes to participate in this program please e-mail Vince Arnold at [vjarnold@cox.net](mailto:vjarnold@cox.net) or phone him at 401-847-2890.

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## SAVE THE DATES FOR THESE UPCOMING EVENTS

- June 5 - At press time, final plans are being made for the 8th Annual Steak Fry at Hibernian Hall, which benefits the Museum. We anticipate another sell-out and a great time to be had by all.
- July 15 - Special Summer lecture by Barbara (Lepley) Comwell Roy at the La Forge Casino Restaurant. Learn how you may obtain an Irish passport and dual citizenship if you have at least one grandparent born in Ireland. See flyer with details inserted in this newsletter.
- October 7 - 8th Annual Michael F. Crowley Lecture Series kicks off. Details to follow.

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## WE WELCOME THESE RECENT NEW MEMBERS

(recorded since March 2010)

### FROM NEWPORT:

Michael & Helen Brennan  
Patrick & Deborah Donovan  
Kiki Finn  
Marion L. Galvin  
Mary Lou Grimes  
Stephen Lipman & Nancy Isherwood  
Christian McGovern  
Jarlath & Rosemary O'Carroll  
JoAnne & Peter Ritchie  
Barbara A. Shea  
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### FROM MIDDLETOWN:

Amey F. Cardullo  
Anna Duffy

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Ronald A. Moore

### FROM ELSEWHERE IN RI:

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Brennan, Cumberland  
Patricia Healy, Bristol

### FROM MASSACHUSETTS:

Paul Beard & Sue Brennan,  
West Bridgewater  
Kevin, Gabriel, Brooke &  
Blaire Brennan, Sudbury  
Stephen, Donna, Sean &  
Timothy Brennan, Bridgewater

### FROM ELSEWHERE:

Michael, Cynthia, Michael,  
Kathryn & Virginia Brennan,  
Mary Ester, FL



Many Thanks to the following Generous Donors



to

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**Feb. 27, 2010 Benefit for MNIH’s Interpretive Site Fund**

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Shannon Buss, MNIH Director  
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## JOIN THE MUSEUM OF NEWPORT IRISH HISTORY AND SUPPORT YOUR IRISH HERITAGE



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