



Michael F. Crowley Lectures

Fifth and Final Program of the 2017-2018 Series ~ Our 16th Annual

The Irish in Newport - Building a Community St. Mary's Church: The Great Collection of 1881

Guest Speaker: Dr. Kurt C. Schlichting

Tuesday, April 24, 2018 ~ 6:00 p.m.

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

In the most recent U.S. Census survey, 81% of the adult population self-identified a specific ancestry and 10% wrote that they were "Irish." For Newport County the Irish percentage was 24% and for Newport 27%. How did the strong sense of identity among the Newport Irish persist over generations in the face of anti-Irish sentiment in the 19th and 20th centuries, an identity that continues today?

St. Mary's Church anchored the Irish community. The magnificent church building, dedicated in 1852, and its school required the financial support of the parishioners, many of whom were recent immigrants, working class, and not wealthy. In 1881, the Pastor, Fr. Philip Grace D.D., organized the "Great Collection of 1881" and published a 27-page report listing parishioners by name and address, the amount pledged, and what they actually contributed.

Linking the "Great Collection" names and addresses to the 1880 Census data provides a fascinating view of the Newport Irish in the period after the Civil War. On what streets and in which houses did they live? What were their occupations and how generous were their contributions to the "Great Collection of 1881"? A \$20 contribution may seem modest today, but if you worked as a laborer for \$1 a day at the Fall River Line shipyard on Washington Street and earned \$24 dollars a month, working 6 days a week, the contribution represented a month's income.

KURT C. SCHLICHTING is the E. Gerald Corrigan '63 Chair in Humanities & Social Sciences Department and a Professor of Sociology at Fairfield University (CT). He is the author of *Grand Central Terminal: Railroads, Architecture and Engineering in New York* (Johns Hopkins U. Press, 2001), for which he received the 2002 Best Professional/Scholarly Book: Architecture & Urbanism Award from the Association of American Publishers. This book was the basis of "Grand Central," an *American Experience* documentary on PBS, for which Dr. Schlichting served as an academic advisor and was an on-screen interviewee. His most recent book, *Waterfront Manhattan: From Henry Hudson to the High Line*, will be published by Johns Hopkins University Press in May 2018. Dr. Schlichting received his bachelor's degree from Fairfield University and his master's degree and a doctorate from New York University. We welcome Dr. Schlichting for this, his fifth talk, for the Museum of Newport Irish History.

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

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED

Email/Computer Users: Please visit www.NewportIrishHistory.org, click "Lectures" page, then click on the link to Reserve, under the listing for the Apr. 24 lecture. You will receive an immediate confirmation via email.

To Reserve by phone: Please phone Ann at (401) 841-5493. Be sure to leave your name, phone, # in your party.

Museum Members – \$5 donation **Non-members** - \$20 donation, applied to a 1-year Individual membership.

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