

THE MUSEUM OF NEWPORT IRISH HISTORY
P.O. BOX 1378
NEWPORT, RI 02840



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THE MUSEUM OF NEWPORT IRISH HISTORY

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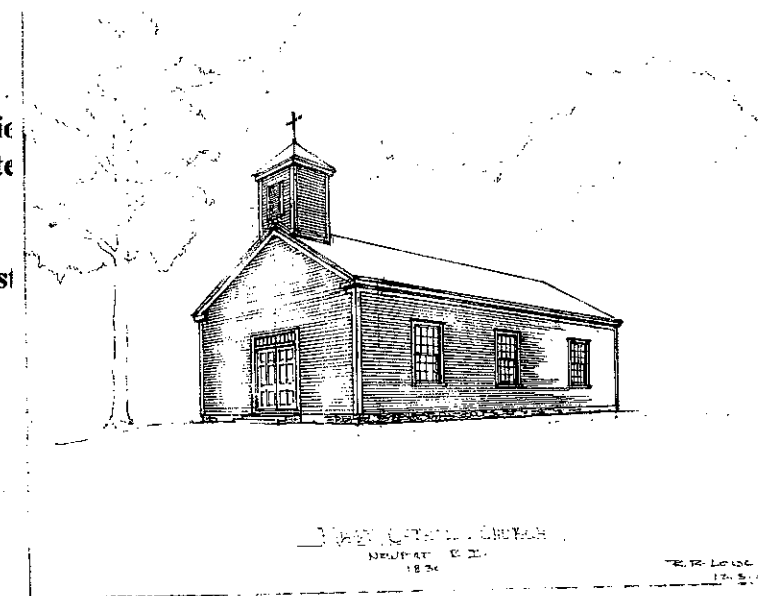
UPDATE ON #19 SHERMAN STREET

It now appears that the owner of #19 Sherman Street is preparing plans to convert the structure into condominiums. At one time in late 2001, the Museum and the owner had submitted plans to the Newport Historic District Commission which would have enabled the Museum to save the core parts of the old building which we feel must be the original St. Joseph Church which was located on Barney Street. The owner has the permission of the City to proceed with that work if he so chooses.

However, all is not lost, as they say, as the Museum of Newport Irish History has received a grant from the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission and the Heritage Harbor Museum to complete --" a close examination of the building-- for the purpose of ascertaining the building's original structure and form--the study will test the theory that this building is the original Trevett schoolhouse ,built in 1809 and subsequently adapted for use as St. Joseph's Church 1828-1838".

The analysis of the building requires the skills of an architectural historian and a vernacular architectural historian who will produce a report including photos, drawings and analysis of the composition of the structure. The report will surely add to our knowledge and historical heritage of the building and the site.

Architect Richard Long has worked many hours researching and documenting this old building and he has produced a sketch of how he envisioned the building appeared in c.1830, two years after it was acquired and adapted as a church.



Architect Richard Long's sketch of St. Joseph's Church on Barney Street as he envisions it would have appeared in 1830.

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Mail to: The Museum of Newport Irish History, P.O. Box 1378, Newport, Rhode Island 02840

The Irish in Portsmouth

The Portsmouth Historical Society asked the Museum of Newport Irish History to give a talk to the Historical Society's meeting Monday, April 15th, 2002 on the Irish in Portsmouth (and Newport County). The author spent many hours reviewing available records at the Portsmouth Library, Portsmouth Town Hall, and the Newport Library to prepare for this talk.

Documents reviewed were: 'Vital Records of Rhode Island' 1636-1850- James Arnold; 'Historical Cemeteries of Portsmouth'-Kohl, 1989; the early 1990's survey of Portsmouth cemeteries; 'Civil and Military Lists of Rhode Island'-R.I. State document; The Federal Census for the years 1790 through 1860.; 'Historical Tracts of the Town of Portsmouth-John Pierce, Sr., 'Irish Families--' Edward MacLysaght, and the Portsmouth Town Meeting Records-- 1890-1948. and 'The Early Records of the Town of Portsmouth', and 'Pioneer Irish In NewEngland-O'Brien.

The earliest listing of an Irish name is probably that of a Joseph Martin, who was made a constable in June, 1673. In 1697, according to O'Brien, John Heffernan married Mary Bockaway in Portsmouth.

In the 1700's a number of Irish names are recorded, including a Patrick Flannigan who was married in 1727, and a Mary Dunn, married the same year. Other Irish names recorded in the 1700's are Martin, Healy, Hartagan, Bennett, and a number of Browns and Smiths.

Obviously, there were just a few Irish in Portsmouth during this period, and a few Irish names can be seen in records and census listings into the mid 1800's. The difficulty in using Federal census information (until 1850) is that *only the names of the heads of the 'household'* were listed. As an example, for the 1830 census the total Portsmouth population was 1,642, yet only 270 names were listed. A Donnelly, a Burke and a Brown were listed, but if a person were only a laborer, that name did not appear. And as the Town was essentially an agriculture community, workers on the many farms simply were not listed. In contrast, Newport during this time listed many more Irish names since, as a small city, the Irish were shown as business operators, etc.

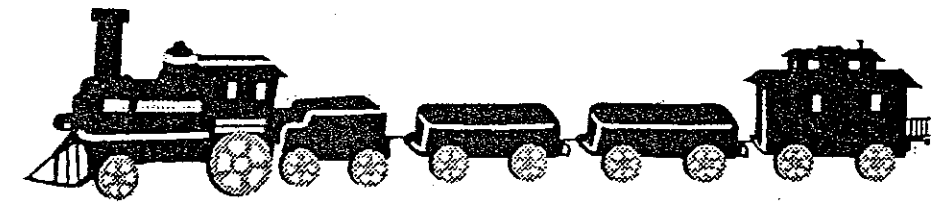
In the 1850 census there are some 70 Irish names, and for the first time, the occupation of individuals was shown. This census lists 10 men who were miners-- no doubt in the Portsmouth Coal mines so nicely described in John Pierce's book. The miners were Daniel Harrington, Tim Devine, Daniel Murphy, Charles McCarty, and another Harrington, along with Sullivan, Wilcox, Lowery, and Newman. All were listed as born in Ireland. John Pierce's Book, 'Historical Tracts of the Town of Portsmouth', indicates that the miners were from Allihies,

FROM THE MUSEUM LIBRARY

The Museum's library has been enhanced through the generous donation of a number of fine books on Irish history by member Peter Farrelly. They include "The Irish at Bunker Hill" by Michael O'Brien (1st edition), "Ireland Since the Union", by Justin McCarthy, (1890), and "The Soul of Ulster", by Ernest Hamilton, MP. (This is interesting "Ulster" reading- c.1917). The Museum has also acquired several good old 'standards'- "Irish Families" by Edward MacLysaght, and "The Story of The Irish Race", by Seumas MacManus.

UP COMMING EVENTS-- SAVE THE DATES!!!!

**Our Annual Sunset Train Ride on the Old Colony
Thursday, May 23rd-- 6:30Pm-- Flyer to follow**



**A new event cosponsored by the Ancient Order of
Hibernians--- AUGUST 24TH-- A SPECIAL EVENT WITH
SOME GREAT RAFFLE ITEMS!! -- DETAILS TO FOLLOW,
BUT SAVE THE DATE -SATURDAY, AUGUST 24TH.**