

Museum of Newport Irish History

April 17, 2020

Dear Fellow Members,

On behalf of our Board of Directors, I wish you and your family all the best during this challenging time. With so many of last month's Irish Heritage Month activities cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis, we eagerly anticipate the time we can again gather at a Crowley Lecture or other event.

If you did not have a chance to read our most recent e-news of Mar.22, in which we announced numerous event postponements, you may access it [HERE](#).

We all seek to **remain engaged** during this time when in-person gatherings are prohibited and we are under "Stay at Home" orders. To that end, please peruse the below ideas, which we hope you'll find of interest.

As always, please feel free to contact me directly should have any questions or concerns. We look forward to resuming our activities and seeing you again as soon as possible.

Slán agus beannacht (stay well),

Mike Slein,
President, Board of Directors
farmags@cox.net
(401) 855-5097 - mobile

Tip #1 - Enjoy a Crowley Lecture from home

We videotape many of our Crowley Lectures and upload these to our YouTube channel. You may access a dozen past presentations, including Q&A, by visiting our website "Lectures" page. Click the below button, scroll through the list of past lectures, look for the "*Click here to view a video of the presentation*" link, click the link, turn up the volume and enjoy!

LECTURE VIDEOTAPES

Tip #2 - Pursue Irish Citizenship



Did you know?

If you have at least one grandparent who was born in Ireland you are eligible for Irish Republic (dual) citizenship and then can obtain an Irish passport.

Museum member and past Crowley Lecture guest speaker on this topic, **Barbara (Lepley) Roy**, is offering her assistance as you consider pursuing the process. To learn a bit more click [HERE](#). If you'd like to reach out to Barbara for her advice and assistance, reach her by clicking the below button.

Contact Barbara re. Irish Citizenship

Tip #3 - Virtually Visit our Interpretive Center

In March, WJAR NBC 10 visited our Interpretive center, hosted by Museum President, Mike Slein. In case you missed the terrific segment, which we shared via our last e-newsletter and via Facebook, check it out below:



Virtual Tour with Channel 10

Tip #4 - Enjoy Irish Storytelling at home

We previously shared that the performance by wonderful Irish storyteller and singer, [Helena Byrne](#) (pictured below), which was to have taken place on May 15 in Newport, has been postponed until the fall. However, you don't need to wait until fall to enjoy Helena's story-telling and singing. Helena is offering to her fans around the world performances live-streamed, directly to your living room. These are via group chats, so you can also entertain family and friends while maintaining social distancing. To learn more, visit her webpage by clicking the below button.



[Online Storytelling & Irish Song](#)

Tip # 5 - Enjoy Irish Music each week



Many of us miss gathering with family and friends at the Irish music "sessions" hosted by [The Fastnet Pub](#) and other venues around the state. Hopefully, our pubs and restaurants will be reopened soon. In the meantime, you can still enjoy the best in traditional Irish and Irish-inspired music each Sunday morning at 8am on **1540 AM**

WADK's ["The Irish Hour"](#) hosted by Museum member, [Rick Kelly](#). The station's website includes a full library of Rick's past shows you can enjoy anytime, on the Irish Hour Podcast page. Check out the below links:

[Irish Hour podcasts](#)

[WADK Website](#)

Tip # 6 - Help provide details re. an old photo featuring past Irish mayors of Newport

The below photo, believed to have been taken at Hibernian Hall in Newport, shows four past mayors of Newport, all of Irish descent. The men are identified below, along with the years they served as mayor. Three of the four are deceased. Shown, left to right, are:

Dennis F. Shea, Jr. (1965-1971)
(deceased Dec. 22, 2001)
Humphrey J. Donnelly, III (1971-1981)
(deceased Mar. 6, 1997)
Robert McKenna (1988-1994)
(deceased Jan. 15, 2012)
David Roderick (1994-1996)

We believe the photo was taken between 1994 and 1996, when Dave Roderick was mayor and before the death of Humphrey "Harp" Donnelly, the first of the three to pass away. This is also before the renovation of Hibernian Hall, re-dedicated in February, 2005, which today looks very different than the below photo, inside and out.

If you know the date and the occasion this photo was taken please share the information by writing us at:
NewportIrishHistory@gmail.com



Tip # 7 - Learn the History of Newport's Historic Irish Cemetery

One of the Museum's most significant accomplishments since its establishment in 1996 was the restoration of the **historic Irish cemetery** located at the corner of Barney and Mt. Vernon Streets in Newport. Referred to as the "St. Joseph Cemetery" or the "Barney Street Cemetery," it was established in the late 1820s to support the first Roman Catholic parish in Rhode Island, founded to serve the burgeoning Irish immigrant population. Learn more about this site, pictured below, central to the early history of the Irish in Newport. Here are some resources in that regard:

- Check out the new page on the [Discover Newport](#) website, dedicated to this historic cemetery by clicking [HERE](#).
- Peruse a past Museum newsletter which highlighted the history of the

- cemetery and the church that once stood on the site by clicking [HERE](#).
- Watch a video produced by the Museum some years back, discussing the cemetery and the church that once stood on the site by clicking [HERE](#).
- Upon its rescheduling, be sure to reserve for the not-to-be-missed related lecture by Museum board member and local historian, **Steve Marino**, which was postponed due to the COVID-19 crisis. Lecture date remains TBD, but [HERE](#) is a link to the lecture description, which was to have taken place on March 24.
- Interested in helping us maintain and beautify this site, so important to the history of the Irish in Newport County? Please contact Museum Board Member and Chair of the Cemetery Committee, Jack McCormack, regarding volunteer or in-kind donation opportunities. Jack may be reached at johnrmccormack@cox.net



Tip # 8 - Explore other Resources

- Irish American Heritage Museum, Albany, NY <https://irish-us.org/>
- American Irish Historical Society, New York, NY <http://aihs.org/>
- The Irish American Museum of Washington, D.C. <http://www.irishamericanmuseumdc.org/>
- The Eire Society of Boston, Boston, MA <http://www.eiresociety.org/>
- Irish Cultural Center of New England, Canton, MA <http://www.irishculture.org/>
- The Irish Ceilidhe Club of R.I., Cranston, RI <https://www.riirishclub.org/dance>
- Irish Railroad Workers Museum, Baltimore, MD <http://irishshrine.org/>
- Ireland's Easter Rising of 1916 Centennial Remembrance Community of R.I. [Facebook page](#)
- Rhode Island Irish Famine Memorial, Providence, RI [Facebook page](#)
- Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York, NY <https://www.tenement.org/>
- The West End Museum, Boston, MA <https://thewestendmuseum.org/>
- Ireland's Great Hunger Museum, Hamden, CT <https://www.ighm.org/>
- Ireland's Great Hunger Institute at Quinnipiac U., Hamden, CT

<https://www.qu.edu/on-campus/institutes-centers/irelands-great-hunger-institute.html>

- **The Irish Echo** (oldest Irish-American newspaper in the U.S.), Check out the "[Roots](https://www.irishecho.com/)" section re. history/culture. <https://www.irishecho.com/>
- **Boston College Center for Irish Programs**, Boston, MA <https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/centers/center-for-irish-programs.html>
- **Glucksman Ireland House at New York University**, NY, NY <https://as.nyu.edu/content/nyu-as/as/research-centers/irelandhouse.html>
- **Center for Irish Studies at Villanova University**, Villanova, PA <https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/artsci/irishstudies/center.html>
- **Fordham University Irish Studies Program**, NY, NY https://www.fordham.edu/info/24588/irish_studies
- **Article re. other top Irish studies Programs:** <https://www.irishcentral.com/roots/top-irish-studies-programs-in-north-america-103848494-237767241>
- **Rhode Island Genealogical Society**, Hope, RI <https://rigensoc.org/>
- **New England Historic Genealogical Society**, Boston, MA <https://www.americanancestors.org/index.aspx>

Tip #9 - Like our new Facebook Page

The Museum launched a **Facebook** page in early March. Thus far, the majority of page followers are non-Museum members, so it's been a great way to increase awareness of our organizational and share breaking Museum news with friends in the community. If you use Facebook, please consider "Liking" our page and checking out recent posts. Click the below FB graphic to reach our page:



Tip # 10 - Renew your Membership Today



With the exception of those who joined recently, all those of us with Annual (vs. Life) memberships are **due for renewal at this time**. If you have recently sent in a check or renewed online, ***Thank you!*** A reminder will be going out via U.S. Mail in the next couple days. Click [HERE](#) to download a copy of this letter. In the meantime, you can renew NOW online, by clicking the below button. Unsure of your status? Please write Ann at

tpm1@earthlink.net

[Membership Renewals](#)

Share this newsletter with friends via social media by clicking the below links:



Museum of Newport Irish History

Mailing: PO Box 1378, Newport, RI 02840

Interpretive Center: 648 Lower Thames Street, Newport RI 02840

Email: NewportIrishHistory@gmail.com

[Click Here](#) for Museum Board of Directors Contact Info.

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