



Museum of  
Newport Irish History

30 Years  
— 1996-2026 —

## Second talk of our 25th Annual Lecture Series

*Our 2026-2027 Series is made possible by generous gifts from those listed below*

### *The Irish Famine Immigrant Experience in North American Quarantines*

*Guest Speaker:*

**Loretto Horrigan Leary**

Tuesday, October 20, 2026 at 6:00 p.m.

Wyndham Newport Hotel

240 Aquidneck Avenue, Middletown, R.I. 02842

and Live-Streamed via Zoom

Irish Famine immigrants did not simply arrive in North America; many first endured quarantine on islands, fever hospitals, and medical inspections, with some never leaving. They died on site and remain in the burial grounds associated with the quarantines.

This presentation examines the human experience of Famine migration through sites such as Staten Island, Grosse Île, and Deer Island, where hunger, disease, survival, public fear, and memory shaped the immigrant journey. From overcrowded ships to quarantine wards and mass graves, these sites reveal how the Great Hunger, a hunger to survive on foreign shores, persisted across the Atlantic.

**LORETTO HERRIGAN LEARY** is an Irish historian, researcher, public historian, and freelance journalist from Portumna, County Galway, now based in Connecticut. She is a PhD candidate in History at Trinity College Dublin, where her research examines sites of collective memory associated with the Great Irish Famine in North America, with a particular focus on mass burial grounds, memorial landscapes, monuments, and contested public memory. Loretto serves as Co-Chair of the Connecticut-Ireland Trade Commission. She has curated exhibitions, developed educational programs, and collaborated with museums, universities, historical societies, artists, government agencies, and Irish diaspora organizations to advance understanding of Irish history and its enduring global legacy. A former Language Arts teacher and experienced public speaker, Loretto is committed to making history accessible to broad audiences. In 2026, she developed “The Great Irish Famine: History, Diaspora, and Global Legacy,” an online public history course through Alison.com, introducing learners to the history, memory, diaspora, and global legacy of the Irish Famine. Her research interests include the Irish Famine, collective memory, commemorative landscapes, monuments, migration, burial archaeology, heritage, and public history, with a particular emphasis on how societies negotiate difficult pasts through memorialization and place. Her writing has appeared in *History Ireland*, *The Irish Echo*, *Irish Central*, *Celtic Life International*, Australia's *Irish Scene Magazine*, *The Connacht Tribune*, and *The Wild Geese*. She has delivered lectures and presentations in both the United States and Ireland on Irish history, famine memory, and public commemoration. Through both her scholarship and public history work, Loretto seeks to bridge academic research and community engagement, contributing original scholarship that explores how memory, identity, and heritage continue to shape contemporary society. We welcome Loretto for this, her first talk for our members and guests.

***Doors open at 5:30 p.m. Light hors d'oeuvres & Cash Bar available.***

The \$10 Lecture Fee is payable at the door in cash or by check to “MNIH.” No fee/\$0 for Zoom participation.

#### **Reservations Required for In-Person and Zoom Participation**

To reserve, visit [www.NewportIrishHistory.org](http://www.NewportIrishHistory.org), click “Lectures,” then the appropriate link to reserve under the Oct. 20 lecture listing (In-person *OR* Zoom). You will receive an email confirmation. If you do *not* see it, check your spam folder. The talk will be videotaped, and a link will be available on our website’s “Lectures” page afterward.

**Questions/Assistance with Registration:** Contact Ann Arnold at (401) 841-5493, (917) 270-3372, or [tpm1@earthlink.net](mailto:tpm1@earthlink.net)

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