



**International Headquarters**  
**PO Box 1716 • Morristown, NJ 07962**  
**Tel: 973-605-1991**  
**[www.iaci-usa.org](http://www.iaci-usa.org)**

Welcome to the latest edition of the IACI e-news.

Founded in 1962, the IACI is the leading Irish American cultural organization. The IACI is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) not-for-profit national organization devoted to promoting an intelligent appreciation of Ireland and the role and contributions of the Irish in America.

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## *A Letter from Al Moran*

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Gerard Moran, an American who resided in South Carolina, appreciated the friendliness of the Irish, but he had a less than favorable view of the constantly wet and raw weather of the west of Ireland. Moira Moran, who was prettier and more positive than her middle-aged uncle, merely adjusted to the never-ending rainfall by carrying an umbrella and by wearing boots. The two foreigners entered the front door of the Loughrea, Galway home of the late Professor Al Moran as the neighbors' dog barked at them as was his annoying custom.

Moira shook-off her umbrella and left it in the hallway as she entered the parlor to take on the ancient heating system. She was becoming adapt at the twisting and pulling of the right levers of the contraption to generate heat. Gerard, still rather depressed after his late uncle's funeral, went into the study to get on with the awful duty of packing items away for home and pitching the rest into the rubbish bin. The grimness of the October day didn't do anything to lessen the old man's darkening mood.

"What are you doing, Gerard?" Moira called from the front of the house.

"I'm just clearing out more of Uncle Al's things in the study, Moira," responded Al.

The sound of his niece's voice and the sense of her presence made Gerard feel somewhat better. It was nice of her to fly from Michigan down to Greenville to join him on the long flight up to Newark, New Jersey and then eastward across the Atlantic Ocean to Shannon Airport where they had been picked up by Uncle Al's new Irish mates, Paddy Murphy and Barry Fahy. In many

ways Gerard was much like his Uncle Al: a man of letters, books, old photographs, mementoes from around the world and autographed baseballs.

Gerard had just opened up a desk drawer full of old letters when Moira entered the room and came up from behind him. She had hardly known her great-uncle Al, but she had had a life-time relationship with the man who was sitting at the desk and lost in his thoughts. She loved her Uncle Gerard in the way that he had loved his Uncle Al. She felt the old man's grief. He turned to look at her with that smile she had always loved. She impulsively reached for his broad shoulders and briefly massaged them as she gently asked, "would you like some tea, Uncle Ger?"

He turned around enough to be able to pat her hand as he responded, "that would hit the spot, sweet heart." The two exchanged an affectionate smile but left it at that because the Moran family had never been ones to share their feelings since they had fled the Irish potato famine for the flat farm lands of the American Midwest during the year known as *Black 47*. Uncle Al had been the only one of their exiled Irish American clan to return to live in Ireland: and this was only when he was an old man ready to die, retired from the Liverpool Art College, and after he had buried Ginny, his beloved wife in English soil. He was too old to resume his life in the United States and England had become washed out and dead to him without his wife, so Al Moran had found himself in a remote and peaceful village in the outer reaches of Ireland.

Gerard started to read a letter that Al had addressed to his brother Adam. The postscript was dated 1959. The item belonged in the family archives because it was fifty-eight years old.

*Dear Adam:*

*I am ready to get cracking at my new teaching post at the Liverpool Art College on Monday. To kill some time on Saturday I went into a pub very near to my new digs, as the English say, and I saw a band that called themselves the...*

*October 21, 1959 Liverpool, England*

Professor Al Morn, a newly appointed lecturer at the Liverpool Art College, was behaving just like a cocky American tourist that night, entered *Ye Old Grape Pub* like it was his own castle and that he was the lord of the manor. He was a rather handsome devil of a man with a proud beard to adorn his healthy and hearty face. His bulk, height and appearance of prosperity set him apart from the clientele. He became a bit annoyed when he wasn't waited upon immediately as the bartender gabbed away in a loud voice with some other customers. The Yank kept his composure long enough to hear the bartender addressed as "Squire Clancy."

"Squire Clancy, is it?"

"A Yank, is it?" asked the aproned man behind the bar with a gummy smile. "I'm running behind me time because the tart who helps me out is running late as is her usual custom."

Al attempted to digest the near-gibberish of the Liverpool dialect as he studied the draught beers labels in front of him. In frustration he took a peak at the drink in the hand of the person standing the closet to him and pointed at it, declaring with Catholic conviction, "I'll take one of those black beers."

"On this side of the pond the natives call the black beer *Guinness Stout*."

"Is it an English brand?"

"Ireland, mate," Clancy said as his jaw dropped at this Joe's ignorance, "but, then again, there are some who say that Liverpool is the capital of Ireland because there's more Paddies here than in any other city outside of Dublin....and New York."

"I'm from Chicago," said Al, hoping to steer the conversation back towards him.

"Here's are Ginny Browne just now."

Al turned around and for a moment he was afraid he would fall off of his stool; for Ginny Browne, who was all decked out in the most current fashion from London, (green parka, knee-length boots and black netted tights) was a living doll! She brushed back her reddish auburn hair as she flashed Al an elfin smile. She exulted the confident of a beauty queen who realized all male eyes were upon her at that moment: even the ones with dates. She was made to order for Al Moran: tall, leggy and busty. He hoped she had green eyes like the incubi legend in medieval literature.

“The ferry boat ride across the bloody Mersey River was slower than ever this evening because of the crowded deck, the choppy waves and the...”

“Never mind the weather forecast, lass, I’m glad to see you because this local is filling up rapidly.

Al was distracted by the noise of the band setting up their gear for their nightly performance on a makeshift stage. He frowned when he saw the electric guitars and amps being plugged in by three scruffy and pimply teenagers clad in black leather jackets and tight blue jeans. The educated American had no use for Elvis Presley, rock and roll or teenagers. A fourth young man, the drummer, arrived and began to arrange his kit. Al must have been staring and frowning for too long, for one of the Teddy Boys returned his stare and frown. To avoid a show-down he turned his attention back to the activity up the bar.

“Ginny, love, meet a real live American right here at the bar,” said Clancy, waving to Al, adding,” but he isn’t Buddy Holly or Jerry Lee Lewis.”

“Buddy Holly is dead but you’ll do nicely,” Ginny said coyly, putting out her slender hand for a shake.

“I’m Professor Al Moran newly arrived to the Liverpool Art College direct from Chicago,” puffed Al.

“I’m a student at the *Arty*,” she proclaimed.

“The *Arty* is the Liverpool Art College in lay man’s terms, Yank,” said Clancy, placing a foaming brown drink in front of the visitor.

The American almost gagged on the rancid brew, but he knew all eyes were upon his reaction. He took a long, brave swallow.

“That’s the most delicious thing I’ve ever tasted,” he lied between clenched teeth.

“It tastes better across the Irish Sea.”

Al was shook-up to find the defiant rocker right next to him and sizing him up with a bold look.

“Clancy, I’m buying the musician’s drink,” stated Al, tossing a fiver upon the bar in hopes of defusing any nastiness on the part of the rocker.

“Hello, Johnny, I sure hope you and the lads are in tune tonight...for a change,” tossed in Ginny, sensing Al’s unease.

“Ginny, me darling, you’re looking beautiful tonight...if a bit like a drowned rat,” returned Johnny, ignoring the man who had sprung for his drink. “I admit the lads are talentless losers without me merits.”

“Listen to the dole boy,” hooted Clancy.

Johnny tilted his almost empty pint glass towards the hapless Yankee and asked with a sneer, “who’s the square, Ginny?”

Al felt himself shrinking downwards into his stool by the force of the young man’s bluster. He had to fight off an impulse to slug the guy in the face with his fist.

“Play nice, Lennon; he’s our new professor at the *Arty*,” explained Ginny.

“John Lennon is one of your lot, professor, and I don’t envy you one bit,” laughed Clancy, moving further away down the bar to avoid any in-coming fireworks.

“Which part of the colonies do you hail from, mate?”

“I’m Professor Al Moran from Chicago, Illinois.”

“You say you’re Al Capone from Chicago.”

“I’m actually related to Bugs Moran, who was Al Capone’s number one enemy during Prohibition.”

“So now you’re Bugs Bunny, is it,” snorted John Lennon, purposely misunderstanding the wanderer. “How do you like your carrots, Bugs: cooked or raw?”

“I prefer my carrots far away from idiots like you!”

John Lennon had finally been put in his place, so he shrugged his shoulders and turned his focus upon Ginny Browne.

“Care to make me knees tremble before we go on, Ginny, me love. It’ll be good for your soul to provide some warmth for a starving artist like myself.”

“We’ll have none of that filthy talk in this place, Lennon,” snapped Clancy, throwing the lad a sharp warning look.

“None of that chat with your Cynthia due here at any moment,” Ginny said in triumph.

The rag tag lads on the stage were getting as annoyed as the audience waiting around for the show to go on. One of them clanged the strings on his guitar.

“John, stop being cheeky,” one of them called out. He was a pretty boy with dark hair and a bass guitar in his hand.

“It’s time for some Chuck Berry,” pitched in the one who had clanged his guitar. He was very gaunt and serious-looking.

“Let’s earn some pound notes,” said the drummer, putting down a drum roll.

“I’m finished with me drink just now, Paul, George and Pete,” said John, slamming down his glass and departing by bumping purposely into Al.

“I buy the guy a drink and he still behaves like an a……..!”

“He’s all that and more, professor,” agreed Clancy, pulling another drink for Al.

“He’s talented and handsome; those two things will carry you far here in Liverpool,” put in Ginny, giving Al a hungry look.

Al didn’t know whether to zoom in on Ginny Browne or the four lads up on the stage. The band was noisy and undisciplined but they had good harmonies and they made up for their lack of talent with effort and joy. He found himself enjoying their act in spite of his negative feelings about their leader.

“Not too bad,” Al decreed to Ginny as she replaced his empty.

“You seem a bit jealous, professor,” she said with a whipping lash. “I suspect you’re the one in dire need of a knee trembler.

Al was caught off guard by the sudden attack. He blushed a deep crimson as Clancy and those at the bar laughed with glee at his puzzlement. Ginny was well-known for her sass and brass.

“I’m only having you on, professor,” she said gently.

“Taking the piss out of people is more popular than football here in Liddy.”

“This drink is on Miss Browne, dutiful art student,”

Al wasn’t used to any woman or man as forward as Ginny and John; he had entered into a brave new world where hurt feelings didn’t get you very far.

“What’s a knee trembler?”

“One day…maybe soon…you’ll discover what it is.”

Clancy returned just in time to head-off the heightened sexual tension between the barmaid and the tourist. Ginny took the opportunity to escape by delivering drinks to a faraway table.

“She’s something else, professor. I’ve known her since she was a kiddo. She’s always been different from the other girls. More...free! Just mind your head about her, especially when that character Lennon is hanging about the place. She’ll slain you both with one arrow.”

“I wouldn’t dispute you on that, Squire Clancy.”

Al put Clancy’s words into his personal archives as he turned back to the stage. He knew some of the songs but several of them may have been originals penned by John, Paul, George and Pete. He found himself tapping his foot to the rhythm. John and the cute one both were incredible vocalists for an English pub band. He acknowledged that this band had raw talent that needed to be culled.

“Two weeks ago the lads were the Quarry Bank Boys, last week they were Long John and the Silver Beetles and this week they’re posing as the Beatles with their own unique spelling,” quipped Ginny, half in jest, half in respect. “They’ll be over directly to beg you for lager.”

“I’ll buy them all a drink,” said Al, digging into his pocket for more dosh.

“Here is the Yank!” broadcasted John as he and his fellow band members trooped over to Al during a lull in the action. “He’s the famous Bugsy Malone, Paul.”

“That’s Bugsy Moran...I mean, Al Moran. Professor Moran, actually. Nice set, guys.”

“Cheers, Professor Moran,” said Paul, lifting his drink up in a salute.

“Lend me a fag, eh,” pestered the gaunt one.

“They call them cigarettes, George,” corrected Ginny.

“Spark me too,” put in the fourth one. “I’m Pete Best the drummer.”

Al sipped beer and smoked with the four Beatles. He was surprised that he enjoyed their company. He was even taking a shine to John Lennon, the apparent leader of the gang.

“Beware, Professor Moran, about Ginny Browne. Aye, she’s a firecracker, but firecrackers have a tendency to explode in one’s face. She’s too much for one man, or even one nation,” intoned John.

“I’m sure your Cynthia would love to hear your lyrics about Ginny,” teased Paul.

“Have done with it, McCartney, as the professor is going to be real nice to us tonight,” announced John, waving his empty glass. “More lager, if you please!”

“I’ll get this one, John, and for the professor as well,” said Paul, reaching into his probably empty pocket.

“My treat...Paul.”

John Lennon received a refill and wandered off to chat up a nearby bird. Was she the often-mentioned Cynthia, he wondered? Al suspected otherwise. He turned his attention to the friendly young man standing next to him.

“John does what he wants to and when he wants to. It’s not easy being in a band with him, but he has something nobody else in Liverpool has in them. He’s going to the top, sir.”

“He probably has the biggest ego in this old port city.”

“Nope; he has number one ego in the United Kingdom....and he has the talent to back it up.”

“You lads are really good. Look, I’m not sure if it would help, but I know a talent agent in London. He’s a talented guy and he might be able to help you boys out. His name is Brian Epstein.”

“Is he a Jew?”

“He might be,” growled Al. “Is that an issue?”

“Not at all, mate,” said Paul quickly putting in, “as long as he doesn’t dislike us for being Irish Catholics from Liverpool. The bloody Jews, Irish, Scots and Welsh are all brother Celts in blood!”

John returned to the scene of the crime. He staggered as though he was roaring drunk.

“Ho, Ginny, dear! Crack out the camera. I want a snap with my dear friend, Professor Al, my proffy from the *Arty!*”

“Say cheese, John and Al!” commanded Ginny, flashing away *October 21, 2017 Galway, Ireland*

...Beatles.”

Gerard slowly shook his head as he put the letter down on the desk, exclaiming, “Uncle Al, you really were full of bull...!”

“Tea is now being served,” Moira said cheerfully as she shuffled into the study with two steaming mugs of tea.

“What b.s!” Gerard finished his declaration.

The old man greedily gulped his hot drink as the young woman had her eye caught by something inside of the desk drawer.

“What’s that, Uncle Gerard?” she said, pointing a finger at a photograph that was inside of the envelope that Al had extracted the letter from.

Gerard pulled out the ancient picture and held it up for viewing y both of them. Their eyes widen with amazement before they exchanged shocked looks.

“It’s Uncle Al,” started Gerard.

“And John Lennon,” finished Moira.



# **Ireland's Greatest Harper and The Star-Spangled Banner**

by

Raymond D. Aumack

Did Turlough O' Carolan, the great Irish harpist and composer, generally recognized as the last of the Irish Bards, write the music for the Star Spangled Banner? He certainly wasn't commissioned to write such music. However, he did compose over two hundred songs that were sung with the lyric poetry of his time, most of which he also authored. The Music of the Star-Spangled Banner closely resembles the meter of a song written by O'Carolan in 1723, "Bumper Squire Jones." This was a particularly popular song, sung in America in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. If it wasn't composed as a drinking song, there is no reason why it couldn't have been used as one.

If you are looking for direct evidence that O'Carolan wrote the music that drove the lyrics of Francis Scott Key to eventually become the American National Anthem almost a half century after his death, you won't find it. You will probably find that the music of his song, "Bumper Squire Jones," a very popular song with same melody and meter as the Star-Spangled Banner.

## **The Life and Times of Turlough O'Carolan**

O'Carolan was born in 1670 in the village of Nobber, County Meath, where his father was a blacksmith, a farmer, or both. The family moved from Meath to Ballyfarnon, County Roscommon in 1684. In Roscommon, his father took a job in one of the "great houses," the MacDermott Roe family of Alderford House. Mrs. MacDermott Roe gave Turlough an education, and he showed talent as a poet. After being blinded by smallpox at the age of eighteen, Carolan was apprenticed by Mrs. MacDermott Roe to a good harper, whom she had earlier engaged to teach O'Carolan to play. After three years of training, at the age of twenty-one, he was given a horse, money and a guide, he set out to travel Ireland and compose songs for patrons. His starting point was the network of the MacDermott Roe's and subsequently expanded to the "great houses" of Ireland.

For almost fifty years, O'Carolan journeyed from one end of Ireland to the other, composing and performing his tunes at the "great houses" of the land. One of his earliest compositions was about Brigid Cruise, who was the first of the greatest loves of his life. Brigid was the teenage daughter of the schoolmaster at the school for the blind attended by Carolan in Cruisetown, Ireland.

In 1720, O'Carolan married Mary Maguire, the daughter of a family in one of the "great houses:" he visited. He was then 50 years of age. Their first family home was a cottage on a parcel of land near the town of Manachain (now Mohill) in County Leitrim, where they settled. They had seven children, six daughters and one son. In 1733, Mary died. Very little is known about Mary or the O'Carolan children. Their son was apparently the executor for his music

Turlough O'Carolan died on March 25, 1738. He is buried in the MacDermott Roe family crypt in Kilronan Burial Ground near Ballyfarnon, County Roscommon. The annual O'Carolan Harp Festival and Summer School commemorates his life and work in Keadue, County Roscommon.

### **Music and Style**

O'Carolan's music and style can be best described as eclectic. His classical compositions reflect European traditions and style similar to the great Irish Traditional classical composers. He also composed what we would call popular songs, similar to the top forty songs we hear on our radios. He also wrote songs that he called *planxties*, a word that he made up. These were songs of flattery and praise for friends and for the people of the homes he visited. These endeared him to his wealthy clientele. After all, a man has to make a living.

The Irish language was the first language of all of Ireland. All save one of his poems is in Irish. While he could speak English, it was, at best, a broken English. As far as I can tell, only one of his songs was written in English. As beautiful as the translations of his poetry are in English, they cannot communicate the lyrical rhythm that made his poetry and his music special.

There were traditional Irish harpists of his time who were faithful to the ancient Gaelic traditions. Some of these great harpers were still living with the last notable dying in 1792. While they appreciated O'Carolyn's traditional compositions, they had a certain disdain for his popular work. He may have been the first of the great crossover artists. In our day that describes the folk artist that includes rock or jazz in her or his repertoire.

### **The Man Himself**

Biographer, Bridgid Haggerty, writes, "When Turlough O'Carolan died at the house of his patron Máire MacDermott Roegin 1738, his former music-pupil Charles O'Connor recorded his passing in sadness: 'Saturday, the 25th day of March, 1738. Turlough O'Carolan, the wise master and chief musician of the whole of Ireland, died today and was buried in the O'Duignan's Church of Kilronan, in the sixty-eighth year of his age. May his soul find mercy, for he was a moral and religious man.'"

Mrs. MacDermott liked the boy and saw to it that he was educated. Observing that he appeared to have a talent for music and poetry, she also arranged for him to have lessons on the harp. When he was about 18, he was stricken with smallpox which left him completely blind. However, this handicap did not stop his studies, and after three years, Mrs. MacDermott gave him a harp, a horse, a guide, and the money to launch a career as an itinerant harper, playing for patrons throughout the Irish countryside.

His first patron was George Reynolds of County Leitrim who suggested that Carolan - as he was known to himself and his friends - try his hand at composition. With this encouragement, Carolan composed 'Si Bheag, Si Mhor,' which means 'Big Hill, Little Hill,' and refers to a site in Co. Meath where, according to folklore, two battling giants were turned by a wizard into two hills. To this day, the tune is still closely associated with Carolan, the composer. Thereafter, Carolan composed tunes for most of his patrons, usually putting them together on his journeys.

But what of the man himself? Various sources say that he was cheerful and gregarious, enjoyed

ludicrous stories, practical jokes and, according to one biographer - Donal O'Sullivan - he was an excellent backgammon player. As with many harpers of the time, he also drank a great deal, and he had a temper.

Several anecdotes colorfully illustrate these characteristics. One such story is that a doctor who advised O'Carolan to stop drinking for a period of time. O'Carolan began to feel worse instead of better. He then found a doctor who gave him the opposite advice, whereupon Carolan's spirits immediately became 'lively and cheerful'. He composed the following verse, translated from the Gaelic:

*He's a fool who gives over the liquor,  
It softens the skinflint at once,  
It urges the slow coach on quicker,  
Gives spirit and brains to the dunce.  
The man who is dumb as a rule  
Discovers a great deal to say,  
While he who is bashful since Yule  
Will talk in an amorous way.  
It's drink that uplifts the poltroon  
To give battle in France and in Spain,  
Now here is an end of my tune-  
And fill me that bumper again!*

Another story told by biographer Grainne Yeats relates the tale of Carolan and David Murphy (who was harper to Lord Mayo and once played before King Louis XIV of France). Murphy told Carolan that his tunes were like "bones without beef". Carolan thereupon dragged Murphy kicking and screaming through the room. While Murphy screamed Carolan remarked, "Put beef to that air, you puppy."

The prevailing criticism of O'Carolan is that he was not a great performer. Since the quality of his music is well-documented and his harp skills acknowledged by the great harpers of Ireland, the criticism must be directed at his singing and his showmanship. His music and harp-playing obviously were at the center of his fame and the songs of flattery and praise that he wrote for his patrons, most of whom were wealthy and powerful helped build his popularity. His legend, his music, his poetry, his musical skills with the harp, still live almost three centuries later.

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Donal O'Sullivan

Bridget Haggerty

## Irish Sports Trivia

What sport takes place at a velodrome?	Cycling
What is the name of a bicycle that has two riders?	Tandem
What is the first name of the Jamaican Olympian whose nickname is 'Lightning Bolt'?	Usain
What is the word used to describe a sailing or rowing sports meeting?	Regatta
What is the name of the fast-moving type of boat that sits on two hulls?	Catamaran
Which swimming stroke wasn't developed until the 1930s?	Butterfly
What wasn't introduced in basketball until 15-20 years after the invention of the sport?	A hole in the basket. A stepladder used to be used.
What is the surname of the brothers who won Ireland's first ever medal in rowing at the Rio Olympics?	O'Donovan
What name is given to rowing with an oar in each hand, as opposed to rowing with both hands on a single oar?	Sculling
Who is the Irish Paralympian and Galway university lecturer who has been dominant in world C3 cycling Time Trials from 2014-2016?	Eoghan Clifford

## ON THIS DAY IN IRISH HISTORY

April 22

1671 - An English Navigation Act prohibits direct importation of sugar, tobacco and other produce from the colonies to Ireland; act expires in 1681 but is renewed in 1685 and extended in 1696

1918 - A general strike takes place throughout Ireland against the British government's attempts to introduce conscription

April 23

1014 - The Dublin Norse and the king of Leinster, with Viking allies from overseas, are defeated by Brian Boru's army at Clontarf. Brian, now an old man, is killed. This thwarts the potential domination of Ireland by the Norse, but they are well established in the coastal towns, and will continue to have a major influence. Máel Sechnaill succeeds Brian as high king

1918 - The Military Service Act 18 April threatens conscription for Ireland: there is a one-day general strike in protest (except in Ulster) on this date

1961 - A census shows the population of Northern Ireland is 1,425,642; an earlier census on April 9 shows the population of the Republic to be 2,818,341

April 24

1596 - Pacificatie of Ireland drawn

1913 - Large supply of guns from Germany are landed at Larne for the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)

1916 - On Easter Monday, the Irish Volunteers and Citizen Army seize the General Post Office (GPO) in Dublin and demand Irish sovereignty

1993 - A massive IRA bomb rips through the City of London, killing one and injuring more than 40

1998 - The Ulster Defense Association and Ulster Freedom Fighters' Inner Council - the North's largest loyalist paramilitary group - backs the Stormont Agreement, saying it secures the state's place within the United Kingdom

April 25

1185 - Henry II sends his son John to Ireland; John lands at Waterford on this date to assert control over Hugh de Lacy, but he fails to achieve this. Henry still suspects that de Lacy wants to be king of Ireland

1707 - Thomas Erle, MP for Cork city, commands the centre at the Battle of Alamanza and loses his right hand on this date; David Dunbar, later MP for Blessington, is wounded and captured in the same battle, and John Upton, later MP for Co. Antrim, distinguishes himself

1861 - William Ford, who crossed the Atlantic from Ireland by steerage, marries fellow country woman Mary O'Hern. Their son Henry Ford, pioneered the mass manufacturing of the automobile

1918 - Irish Labour Party declares one-day strike in protest over conscription act

Anglo-Irish agreements on defense, finance and trade (25 April) end the 'Economic War': the 'Treaty' ports are ceded by Britain; the Irish Government pays £10 million to settle financial claims; both sides repeal penal duties on imports

1938 - Anglo-Irish agreements on defence, finance and trade end the 'Economic War': the 'Treaty' ports are ceded by Britain; the Irish Government pays £10 million to settle financial claims; both sides repeal penal duties on imports

1946 - Birth of Peter Sutherland; in 1981, he becomes Ireland's youngest ever Attorney-General in the Fine Gael-Labour coalition government. In 1997, he becomes chairman of BP and when BP merges with Amoco in 1998 he becomes non-executive chairman of the new company. BP Amoco has a market value of about \$40 billion. Sutherland is also on the boards of ABB Asea Brown Boveri Ltd., Investor AB and Eriksson. He is chairman of the Overseas Development Council in Washington and the recipient of numerous honorary doctorates and awards in Europe and America.

1976 - About 10,000 people attend the Easter week commemorative rally at the GPO, convened by the Provisionist IRA, despite government prohibition

1998 - The first ever mass demonstrations against immigration laws and racism take place in Dublin, Cork and Limerick. At the same time, protests are staged by Irish people outside embassies all over Europe and the United States. Dublin edges close to a standstill as more than 1,000 protesters march from St Stephen's Green to the GPO

April 26

1718 - Thomas St Lawrence, 13th Baron of Howth, receives £215 14s 1 1/2d for the expense he incurs in building a quay at Howth for landing coals for the lighthouse

1745 - On this date, John Allen (3rd Viscount Allen), former MP for Carysfort, kills a dragoon in a street brawl. 'His Lordship was at a house in Eustace Street. At twelve in the night, three dragoons making a noise in the street, he threw up the window and threatening them, adding as is not unusual with him a great deal of bad language. The dragoons returned it. He went out to them loaded with a pistol. At the first snapping of it, it did not fire. This irritated the dragoon who cut his fingers with his sword, upon which Lord Allen shot him.' The wound occasions a fever which causes Lord Allen's death on 25 May

1756 - John Ponsonby is unanimously elected Speaker of the Irish parliament

1784 - Death of Nano Nagle, 'God's Beggar', founder of the Order of the Presentation Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary

1808 - Benjamin Burton, son of William Burton (former MP for Gowran and Co. Carlow) fractures his skull in a fall from his horse while hunting but, having apparently recovered, goes out again with the hounds and dies from 'brain fever'

1895 - The trial of Oscar Wilde for homosexuality, then a crime, begins at the Old Bailey

1916 - Francis Sheehy-Skeffington, writer, suffragist, pacifist and patriot, is apprehended while trying to stop Easter Rising looting and is later executed by the British without a trial

1999 - Former Supreme Court Justice, Hugh O'Flaherty, confirms he will give a full and frank account of his role in the Philip Sheedy affair before the Oireachtas Committee on Justice, Equality and Women's Rights

April 27

1696 - Act 'for encouraging the linen manufacture of Ireland': Irish linen gains duty-free access to the British market on this date

1739 - Lord Barry of Santry is tried by his peers in the parliament house for the murder of his former servant Laughlin Murphy in August 1738. They unanimously find him guilty, but recommend him to the royal mercy. The Lord Lieutenant endorses this plea, and Santry is pardoned under the great seal on 17 June. His estates, which had been forfeited for life, will be restored in 1741

1880 - The Royal University of Ireland is founded by charter

1904 - Cecil Day-Lewis, poet, novelist, critic, and Ireland's poet laureate from 1968 to 1972, is born in Ballintogher, Co. Sligo

1920 - Georgina Frost wins a legal battle to allow her to be clerk of the petty sessions for Sixmilebridge and Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co. Clare; she is thus the first woman to hold public office from central government in the UK

1923 - De Valera announces end of operations against the Irish Free State, effectively ending the Irish Civil War

2001 - Ireland's foremost literary town officially opens a permanent home for its famous wordsmiths and their works. A 19th century Georgian house, in the heart of Listowel, has become the Kerry Literary and Cultural Centre, where life-size models and audio-visual presentations help portray the personalities and output of various writers. The £1.5 million centre is appropriately named Seanchaí after the art of storytelling and in recognition of the folklore and traditions that inspire great literature.

April 28

1714 - Sir Wentworth Harman, MP for Lanesborough, 'coming in a dark night from Chapel-Izod, his coach overturning, tumbled down a precipice, and he dies in consequence of the wounds and bruises he received'

1864 - Birth of William Ellison, clergyman and the sixth director of the Armagh Observatory. On his appointment in 1918, he donates the original late nineteenth-century telescope to the Observatory - an 18-inch Newtonian reflector, made by the famous English telescope maker George Calver; for many years it is one of the largest telescopes in Ireland. During the 1920s and 1930s, Ellison and others use the telescope for observations of the planets and for taking spectral images of the stars, using a spectroscope to split the starlight into its constituent colours

1936 - The Daíl introduces a bill awarding pensions to the Connaught Rangers who mutinied in India in 1920

1998 - Some 30 years after waiting on Eamonn De Valera and literary luminaries of the day in the Great Southern Hotel in Galway, 57-year old Rita Gilligan from Bohermore is presented with an honorary MBE

by UK Culture Secretary, Chris Smith, at London's Hard Rock Cafe where she has worked as a waitress for 27 years

2000 - It is announced that 100 free bicycles will be placed on the streets of Dublin for the Heineken Green Energy Weekend. The free bicycles will be placed outside Trinity College, outside Dublin Castle and at the top of Grafton Street and will be available to anyone wishing to cycle around the city to take in the atmosphere of the Festival

April 29

1665 - Birth of James Butler, 2nd Duke of Ormonde and an ancestor of Princess Diana. The Dublin-born Irish general becomes one of the most powerful men in the Tory administration, governing England in the early part of the 18th century - from 1710 to 1714

1680 - The first stone of the Royal Hospital, Kilmainham is laid by the Duke of Ormonde

1916 - Pearse orders surrender of the Easter Rising rebels on this date. Approximately 64 rebels have been killed, 132 crown forces, and 230 civilians. 2,500 people have been wounded; the centre of Dublin has been devastated by the shelling

2001 - A monument is unveiled in Inniscarra, Co Cork, in honour of an Ulster chief who could have changed the history of Europe if he hadn't been killed in battle. Chief of Fermanagh, Aodh Mag Uidhir (Hugh Maguire) is shot dead during an ambush in 1600 at Carrigrohane before the Battle of Kinsale the following year, which sees the last struggle for an independent Gaelic Ireland fail. "Maguire was a great strategist, and some believe that had he survived, the result of the Battle of Kinsale might have been different, changing the course of European history. He was the Rommel of the 1600s," says Seán O' Ceallacháin of the Hugh Maguire Commemoration Committee

April 30

1428 - Sir John Sutton, Lord Dudley, is appointed lieutenant for two years from this date; he has some success against the various rebels

1795 - Rev. William Jackson of the United Irishmen returns from France, unaware that his travelling companion, John Cockayne, is a spy; Jackson is arrested and found guilty of high treason; he commits suicide in the dock by taking poison

1942 - Because of petrol rationing, all private motoring in Ireland is banned, and bicycle thefts soar overnight

1951 - The first demonstration of television in Ireland is held at the Spring Show in the RDS, Dublin

1970 - "B-Specials" reserves within the Royal Ulster Constabulary formed to contain violence in 1933 (but notoriously violent in their own right) are disbanded