

Irish Kennedy Heritage Group



Lackeen Castle

The mission of the Irish Kennedy Heritage Group is to research, preserve and disseminate the history of the Irish Kennedys.



Chief Rody Kennedy

Mailing List No.88 Dec. 2022

Fáilte

Rody Kennedy, Rearcross R.I.P.

An unfortunate thread is beginning to show itself in our newsletters. The most recent one began with the news of the passing of our Chairperson, Donnchadh O Cinnéide. This time, unfortunately, we bring the sad news of the death of our Chief, Rody Kennedy. Rody was steeped in Irish Kennedy history, tracing his Kennedy ancestry back through the generations on both his father's and mother's lines. He hosted the first Kennedy Clan gathering in his Angelsey Lounge in Rearcross in 2011. In 2014 he was inaugurated as Chief of the Irish Kennedys. Rody took on the role in his quiet unassuming manner, greeting and welcoming all Kennedy visitors with a warm smile and firm handshake. Despite being involved in everything that was happening in Rearcross, he always took the time to chat and trace with visitors over a cup of tea (or stronger) and a plate of sandwiches. Together with his wife Ann he proved a most genial and welcoming host. His passing, after a very short illness, has left a huge void in the lives of many as shown by the huge turnout of mourners at his funeral. It was fitting that Rody's final journey from Rearcross was on a horse drawn carriage, reflecting his life-long love for horses. Our sincere sympathy to Ann, sons Tommy and Darragh, Rody's brothers and sisters and his wide circle of relations and friends.



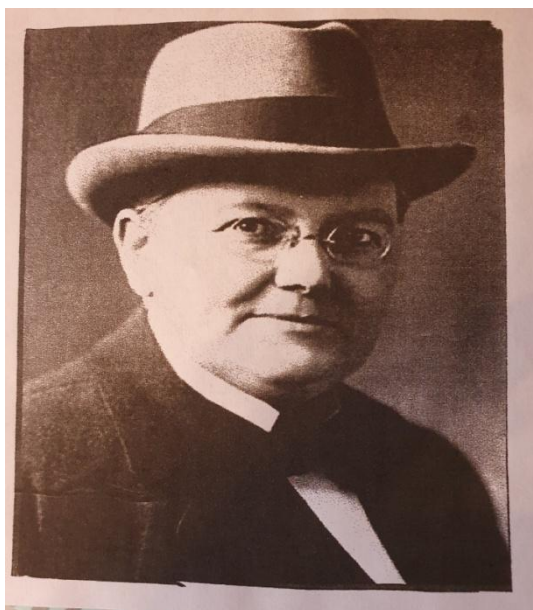
Síocháin síoraí duit, Rody.

Centenary of Irish Free State

The Irish Free State officially came into existence 100 years ago in December 1922. A provisional government had been governing the country since Jan. 1922. A civil war between pro-treaty and anti-treaty supporters had been on-going for much of 1922 and was still raging as the Irish Free State came into existence. Michael Collins who had been one of the leaders of the War of Independence and who was a member of the delegation that had negotiated the Treaty with the British was its most notable casualty. The war was to drag on well into 1923 bringing great disharmony into families and communities throughout Ireland. Now 100 years later we have the modern political representatives of the opposing

factions,(Fianna Fail and Fine Gael) co-operating seamlessly in a coalition government . Maybe time does heal after all.

From an I.K.H.G. point of view it is worth noting that Hugh Kennedy S.C. was the first Attorney General and first Chief Justice of the Irish Free State. Hugh was born in Dublin - his mother, Mary Kennedy was born in Co. Tipperary.



Hugh Kennedy S.C. First Attorney General of Irish Free State.1922-1924.

Irish Kennedy Clan Gathering 2023.

You can expect an update on plans for Clan Gathering in next newsletter. Early July 2023 remains the target.

Family History of Joe Kennedy, Callan, Co. Kilkenny.

Joe Kennedy has been an enthusiastic member of the I.K.H.G. Joe has done a lot of work researching his family history and has been kind enough to share the fruits of his labour with our members. For those outside Ireland, Callan, Co. Kilkenny is in the south-east of Ireland forming a triangle with the towns of Waterford and Wexford so may be of particular interest to those with ancestors from those areas.

My Kennedy family story. (Joseph Kennedy).

In the 18th century a branch of the Irish Kennedy 'clan' was established in the Windgap area of West County Kilkenny adjacent to the County Tipperary border. From what documentary evidence we have it was probably early in the century. An old tradition in the family states that two Kennedy brothers moved to the area after a dispute with their landlord in County Wexford. This tradition further states that the Poulacapple, Mullinahone, Co. Tipperary families are descended from one of the brothers, and the Kennedys of the Callan, Co. Kilkenny area like myself are descended from the other. My father, Robert Kennedy, and other members of the family always claimed that our ancestors came from the townland of Meallaghmore in the Parish of Windgap. Co Kilkenny.

What is interesting about this tradition is that the two Kennedy brothers settled on lands owned by the powerful Ormonde Butler family, overlords of much of counties Kilkenny and Tipperary. The Ormonde Butlers were owners of much of the ancient Kennedy clan lands of Upper and Lower Ormonde in County

Tipperary at that time. After the confiscations under Cromwell in the 1650's and the defeat of the Catholic Jacobite forces at the battles of the Boyne and Aughrim in 1690/91 the Kennedy's were dispossessed of most of their lands. Many continued to live as tenants in their former areas while others were dispersed all over Ireland and beyond. Because several branches of the Ormond Butlers remained Catholic they facilitated the settling of some of the dispossessed Kennedys in their areas. Perhaps this is the reason why the two brothers settled in the Windgap area.

How to reconcile the tradition of the two brothers coming from County Wexford with the confiscation of their ancestors lands in North Tipperary is not impossible to imagine. Historian and author Brian Kennedy in his well researched book, *the dispersal of the Irish Kennedys*¹, states that there was a considerable movement of the 'Kennedy clan' via the River Suir into County Wexford in the late 17th century. Brian details how this movement occurred. Moreover tradition is something that can never be dismissed, for it nearly always contains a large kernel of fact buried within it.

The earliest documentary evidence we have of the Windgap area Kennedy's is a land lease for 33 acres and 2 roods made by Walter and John Butler of Kilkenny City to William Kennedy and John Cleary in 1773². This land was situated in the townland of Meallaghmore. The lease was for 31 years at a yearly rent of £38-10-06. William Kennedy signed the lease while John Cleary made his mark.

On the 20th of June 1812 Robert and Patrick Kennedy, along with four other farmers took out a land lease in the townland of East Frankfort for 175 acres 3 roods and 25 perches from the Rt. Hon. Walter Butler, Earl of Ormonde and Ossory at a yearly rent of £203-17-2³. This townland is adjacent to the townland of Meallaghmore.

In the Tithe Applotment Books of 1828 for the townland of East Frankfort⁴ Patrick Kennedy was assessed on 29 acres 3 roods and 10 perches of land, while Robert was assessed on 14 acres 2 roods and 25 perches.

In the Griffith Valuations of 1849⁵ for the same townland Thomas Kennedy had a house, office and 50 acres and 34 perches of land. Patrick Kennedy had 10 acres 2 roods and 15 perches of land. Patrick also had a house and offices on land jointly farmed with a Patrick Dalton. Was Patrick the same Patrick and Thomas the eldest son of Robert? Seems very plausible, but remains to be proved.

There are no Kennedys listed as having any land or buildings in the townland of Meallaghmore in either of these two major surveys. Obviously they were there earlier as we saw in the 1773 lease, and Kennedy families have lived and farmed there subsequently.

My Callan Kennedys

Today there are at least a dozen Kennedy families living in the Callan area who are directly descended from one of the Windgap Kennedys. That progenitor was Robert Kennedy (1817-1867).

Robert was born in the Parish of Windgap, Co. Kilkenny. Who his parents were, or in what townland he was born, we cannot ascertain for certain, mainly because the Windgap Parish Registers for Baptisms and Marriages begin in 1822, and he was born before that date. Tradition within the family states he came from the townland of Meallaghmore. As we already mentioned no Kennedy family is listed in that townland in the Tithe Applotment Books of 1820's. So what if anything does that mean? As stated above Kennedy families lived in the nearby townland of East Frankfort, Windgap in 1812, one of whom was named Robert Kennedy. What was he to our Robert? Without a doubt he is relevant. Was he or Patrick our Roberts father? The important fact here is that Robert is the key 'link name' within the Callan Kennedy families right up to this day.

At any rate our Robert Kennedy married into the Shelly family and farm at Ahenure, Callan. He was married on the 31st of January 1851 to Elizabeth Shelly (1825-1898) daughter of John Shelly and his wife Ellen Walsh. John and Ellen had no son and heir. They were very pleased with Robert who is described

by the Callan historian Thomas Shelly, a first cousin of John's, as a ".....very good man named Kennedy....".

Robert and Elizabeth had five children; Patrick, Michael, Bridget, Ellen, and my grandfather John. Patrick inherited the farm at Ahenure. Michael married and lived in Newtown, Co. Kilkenny. Bridget never married and lived in Ahenure all her life. Ellen emigrated to America, and for some reason unknown was never heard from again. A family mystery. It is believed she went to Philadelphia.

We know very little about our Robert from Windgap who unfortunately died at the age of 50 in 1867 a year after his father in law John Shelly. He is buried in the Shelly plot in the old graveyard of Kilbride near Callan.

My grandfather, John Kennedy(1856-1911), married Mary Maher (1870-1952) of Clonygarra, Callan in 1891and moved into the family farm.

Mary was the only child of Edmund Maher (1813-1893) from Bawnavorona, Mullinahone, Co. Tipperary and his wife Johanna Finn (1832-1912). (Mary was a school monitor in Mullinahone in her early life and later was a midwife). Johanna had inherited the farm at Clonygarra from her brother Michael Finn, a childless widower, who died in 1890.

John and Mary had eleven children one of whom was my father Robert Kennedy.

John died in 1911 from pneumonia which he contracted after attending the fair of Carrick on Suir. He got a wetting and stood for a time before an oven in a bakery there to dry out a little, causing him to develop a chill which developed into pneumonia. Mary had to rear a large young family on her own. A tremendous and most generous woman.

My father Robert Kennedy (1902-1999) married into the farm and family of my mother Alice Cuddihy (1912-2000) of Moonarch, Callan in 1942. They raised a family of seven children, 5 boys and 2 girls, namely Edward, John, Maura, Patrick, Robert, Alice, and myself.

Our lovely sister Maura died in 1994 of breast cancer. Thankfully the rest of us are hale and hearty.

'Big Bob' as my father was known was a member of the IRA and was involved in the Irish War of Independence (1920-21) taking part in several military engagements. He joined the new National Army in early 1922 but changed to the Republican side when the Civil War (1922-23) began in late June of that year. (He retained a proud military bearing right into his nineties).

As a result of being on the losing side in the Civil War he found it difficult to get employment, and consequently, emigrated to America in 1927 with his brothers Mike and Pat.

They worked at several jobs in the New York/New Jersey area such as in construction, dock working, and farm work, and eventually returned to Ireland with a good sum of savings.

What is fascinating about the above story is the way three direct generations of my Kennedy family 'married into' farms. Not being the eldest sons, and so not inheriting their parents land, they did not give up their love of the land and take up another career or emigrate permanently. In many ways they mirror the Kennedys of Ormonde from whom they are descended in their tenacity to stay on the land.

Joseph Kennedy.

REFERENCES.

1. Brian Patrick Kennedy - The Dispersal of the Irish Kennedys across the Irish Republic from North Tipperary.
2. MS 48,369/27 Ormonde Papers in the National Library of Ireland.
3. MS 48,369/28 Ormonde Papers in the National Library of Ireland.
4. National Archives of Ireland - Tithe Applotment Books.
5. County Library, Kilkenny - Griffith Valuations.



Joe Kennedy with his Dad Big Bob at a Commemoration service at Kilmainham, Dublin 1997
Many thanks to Joe for sharing above with us.

IRISH KENNEDYS BOOKS

Brian Patrick and his oldest son, Terrence Brian, are working on another book that will dramatically change the perspective on the history of the Irish Kennedys. They are collaborating on writing a new book “Our Irish Kennedy Y-DNA Roots – Early northern Tipperary origins in the first millenium”. There were Kennedys in North Tipperary earlier than Cinneidi, stepfather of Brian Boru. The following passage is from the new book:

The science of Y DNA provides a startling fresh perspective on our Kennedy family resilience and origins. Not only does it provide a new way of looking at the diverse nature of what constitutes being a Kennedy but when combined with extant historical records it provides a new and rich understanding of Kennedy connections and origins in Northern Tipperary in the first millennium that date back well before the birth of Christ. This new baseline also allows further insights to be drawn from our current understanding of the family history in the second millennium.

So these will then be added to the impressive list of publications by Brian already available.

In the meantime “The Ryans of Ireland”- from their origins in Uí Dróna and Uí Cheinnselaig is now available from the bookshops listed below..

Internationally all books can be obtained via “The Irish Kennedys” web page at <https://theirkennedys.weebly.com>

The Irish Kennedys books may be obtained in Ireland from:

Chief Rody Kennedy’s Bar and Shop. Rearcross. Tipperary. Ph. 062 79104

The Bookworm Bookshop. THURLES. Tipperary. Ph. 504 22257.

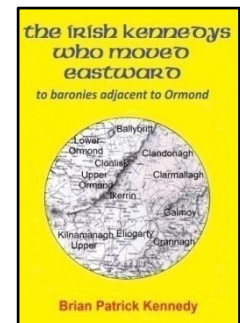
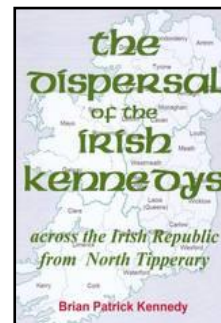
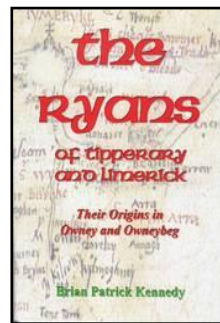
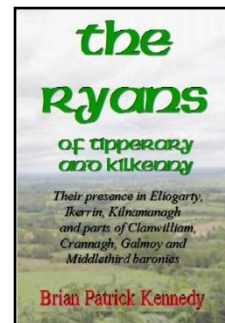
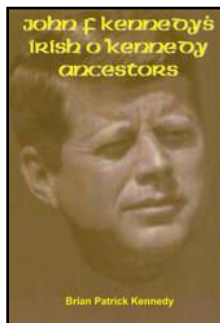
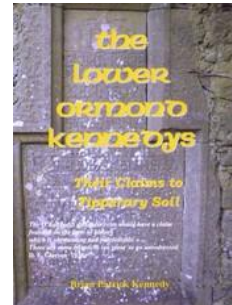
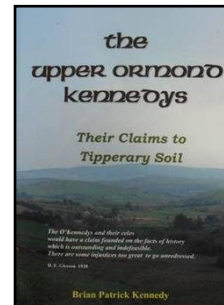
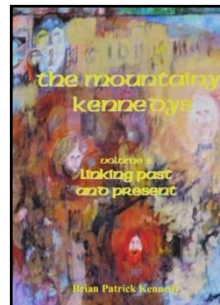
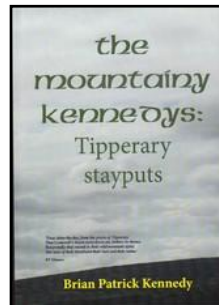
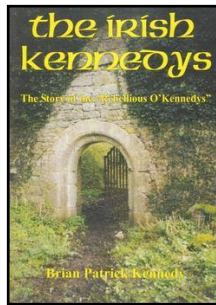
The Bookshop. NENAGH. Tipperary

The Kennedy Homestead, DUNGANSTOWN. Wexford. Ph. 051 388 264

Phyllis Kennedy, Garnafana, TOOMEVARA. Tipperary. Ph. 067 26069

Alan Hanna's Bookshop, 270 Rathmines Road Lower, DUBLIN 6

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Data Protection Regulations.

You may have heard that the Data Protection laws are changing within the E.U. (possibly worldwide, not sure) from 25th May 2018 with the introduction of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation). If at any stage, you no longer wish to receive newsletters or other communications from the Irish Kennedy Heritage Group please email me and I will delete your contact details from the database. We only hold your contact details so that you can receive information on I. K.H.G. news, meetings and events.

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PREVIOUS NEWSLETTERS

In order to make all earlier editions of the original mailing list generally available, Sean Kennedy has kindly volunteered to publish an **Internet Blog** that will provides appropriately edited posts in order from the first issue. You will find the Blog if you click on

<https://tikhg.blogspot.com>

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<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtsQKz-VAUw&feature=youtu.be>

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