Queensland Irish Association
Newsletter
October 2026

Irish librarian booked his place in Brisbane history

O'Donovan Library

QIA visitors to Queensland Parliament House on 30 September found out about another major Irish influence on colonial Queensland. Denis O'Donovan from Kinsale, County Cork, was the fourth Parliamentary Librarian of Queensland. Apparently a dark horse in the race for the appointment, he held the position for 28 years from his appointment in 1874 till his retirement in 1902.

During his tenure, in conjunction with a joint Parliamentary Library Committee, the Parliament amassed a collection of 32,000 volumes, catalogued by O'Donovan in three volumes using his own system. What is now known as the O'Donovan Library is located on the public gallery level of the Queensland Parliament House in the middle between the chambers of the Legislative Assembly and the 1922-abolished Legislative Council.

Thanks to Mary Allen Corbett for organising the trip to Parliament and to librarian Ruth Nitkiewicz for a fascinating insight into the collection.



QIA Members visiting the O'Donovan Library at Parliament House on September 30. More photos on page 11. Picture: Mary Allen

Tigh Gaelach Ladies Dining Club

The Tigh Gaelach Ladies Dining Club met for its monthly lunch on Saturday 26 September at Easts Rugby League Club at Coorparoo. While I don't have the right combination of chromosomes for the event, President Michelle Fitzpatrick was kind enough to invite me in line with my desire to meet with all sections of the QIA.

A couple of stalwarts were away (it was AFL Grand Final day) but it was a pleasure to meet members (including a cousin) for a chat beforehand, lunch and a raffle to finish the day. The discussions had were very wide-ranging and highly entertaining.

Tigh Gaelach, which translates as Irish house, has been meeting for 39 years now. If you are interested in joining or finding out more about Tigh Gaelach, contact Michelle Fitzpatrick at mitchfitzpatrick@hotmail.com.

Hunt for new QIA premises

The QIA is actively seeking premises for a new home. A Property Sub-Committee, led by Vice-President Paul Hogan and comprising QIA Board members and other Association members with various forms of property experience, have inspected two properties in recent months as well as submitting an Expression of Interest in The School of Arts in Ann Street being advertised by

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Calendar

11 October 2026
Brisbane Celtic Festival, Moorlands Park, Auchenflower. 8.45am to 3.35pm. www.ccaq.org.au

16 - 19 October 2026
Irish Film Festival Australia at Palace Barracks, Petrie Terrace. irishfilmfestival.com.au

5 November 2026
QIA presents Samhain/Halloween Irish ghost tour of Toowong Cemetery, in association with Haunts of Brisbane and Friends of South Brisbane Cemetery. 7.15pm. Tickets: fosbc.au/tours/night-tours/

8 November 2026
Annual Irish Community November Remembrance Mass at 11am in St Joseph the Worker Church, Labrador.

14 November 2026
QIA Annual General Meeting, Wests Rugby Union Club, Sylvan Road, Toowong. 10am for 10.30 start.

14 November 2026
Queensland Irish Choir Christmas Celebration Concert. Hills Church Auditorium, 79 Queens Road, Everton Hills. Doors open at 1.30pm, show starts at 2pm. Tickets: www.qldirishchoir.org

12 December 2026
QIA Christmas Party, Wests Rugby Union Club, Sylvan Road, Toowong. 12pm.

16 March 2027
QIA St Patrick's Eve Dinner, City Hall, Brisbane.

17 - 18 April 2027
Queensland Manx Viking Festival, Allpass Parade, Shorncliffe. www.manxvikingfestival.com

First Friday of the month
Queensland Irish Association Pipe Band play at Friday Irish Sessions in Gilhooley's, Brisbane. See www.facebook.com/QIAPB.

Second Wednesday of the month
Tara Hall Dining Club, The Ship Inn, Sidon Street, South Brisbane. Contact Secretary Roger Thornton rjthornton8@bigpond.com or 0408 878 938

Last Saturday of the month
Tigh Gaelach luncheon at Easts Leagues Club, Coorparoo between February and November at 11am. Contact President Michelle FitzPatrick on mitchfitzpatrick@hotmail.com or 0403 384 223



QIA Director Mary Allen Corbett was Guest of Honour at the Darling Downs Irish Club Annual Dinner in Toowoomba in September. She is pictured with Club President Gerry McCann. The dinner was addressed on the history of the Irish in Toowoomba by Dr Maurice French AM.

Queensland Irish Association

Annual General Meeting



Queensland Irish Association Members

Join us on Saturday 14 November 2026

from 10am for 10.30am start at

Wests Rugby Club, Toowong

for our

Annual General Meeting

Wests Rugby Club, Sylvan Road, Toowong

Irish librarian booked his place in Brisbane history

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the Brisbane City Council.

The search is subject to strict parameters. Any property has to leave the Association with an adequate reserve of funds available for contingencies. The property also has to be self-supporting through tenancies, which will limit the space for Association activities. Location and accessibility for members are also criteria.

New premises will not be as large or as grand as Tara Hall was – the resources of the Association won't allow it. And, as has been repeated many times since the Association came out of administration, the QIA is not operating a hospitality business. A new home will allow for smallish gatherings and the display of the library and historical artefacts accumulated during the Association's 128-year history.

This is not a simple exercise. My own recent experience of selling and buying a home confirms in my mind that you have to kiss a lot of frogs before you find the handsome prince/beautiful princess. (One of the real estate agents preferred the metaphor of having to pan a lot of dirt before you find the gold nugget.) Special thanks are due to Paul and the Association members who are working through the many questions associated with the property search.

AGM 14 November

Property strategy and many other issues will be reported at the Annual General Meeting of the QIA which will be held at Wests Rugby Union Club commencing at 10.30 am.

Further information, including the annual report of the QIA, will be distributed in the near future.

QIC Christmas Celebration



QIA President Graham Moloney attended the Tigh Gaelach Ladies Dining Club lunch at Easts Leagues Club in September. Picture: Graham Moloney

I hope that many members will make a day of 14 November (as I intend to) and will attend the Queensland Irish Choir's Christmas Celebration commencing at 2pm at Everton Hills. The program is on the QIC's website (www.qldirishchoir.org) and all is set for a splendid afternoon of music and song.

Tickets are $27 for adults and free for children. Bookings can be made through the Choir website.

Irish Film Festival

The 2026 Irish Film Festival is nearly upon us again and the QIA is proud to again be a sponsor.

In Brisbane, the Festival runs from Friday, 16 October to Monday 19 October at the Palace Cinema at the Barracks at the top of Caxton St. The full program can be seen on the Festival's website (irishfilmfestival.com.au).

As well as the screenings, a number of documentaries will be available online. I'm particularly looking forward to two historical documentaries – one about Daniel O'Connell and one about James Connolly.

Graham Moloney,
President,
Queensland Irish Association.

Contact us

We welcome content from Members and friends in this newsletter.

If you have news or an article you would like to see included, email the editor, our public relations officer Mary Allen, at mary@queenslandirish.com.au

You can also reach us through our website, www.queenslandirish.com.au, and on our social media pages.

Another great way to interact with QIA is by joining our Facebook group, Queensland Irish Association Friends and Supporters.

Editor and designer: Mary Allen.

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Back to Limestone tells history of Ipswich



Guest speakers at the conclusion of the conference and, right, Michael Pick speaking on Character Houses of Ipswich. Pictures: Margaret Stacey



by Margaret Stacey, Life Member, QIA

Back to Limestone History Conference
Organised by: Royal Historical Society and Irish Historical Society on Saturday September 5, 2026.

Chairman Stephen Sheaffe AM welcomed all to the Limestone Historical Conference.

A variety of speakers were on the program, starting with Lynda Maybanks: Welcome to Country & Healing, including Remembrance and Truth-Telling on Yagara Country.

This was followed by Pat Comben: Logan in Ipswich, and Roger Ford speaking on Commandant Logan.

Teresa Harding, Mayor of Ipswich, welcomed the visitors, supported by Councillor Marnie Doyle, who was born in Ipswich.

Hugh Taylor spoke about Coal Mining in Ipswich and Greg Hallam about the Railway in Ipswich, including the first train from Ipswich to Grandchester.

David Hamill gave glimpses of "Early Ipswich through my Ancestors", including the 1838 Ipswich penal settlement. Limestone was mined to be used in concrete in buildings with sandstone. We heard of the coal fields, with the Tivoli Formation being 50–60 million years younger than the Marburg Formation. Rhonda Collier's and Swanbank were just a few of the large mines. Dinosaur footprints were more prevalent in the Rosewood and Walloon coal mines.

Another session with Michael Pick covered character houses in Ipswich, the restorations keeping the original features or changing the building, and roof lines of workers' cottages.

Geoff Thompson presented "Bleak House, the house that moved twice". This was followed by Heather Clark presenting "The History of Dance in Ipswich".

Trevor Foote presented the Cribb & Foote story – the large department store that saw many changes and, unfortunately, burnt down. Margaret Nicol gave a presentation on her ancestor George Thorn Snr – "The Father of Ipswich" – and the part he played in the development of Limestone.

We heard of the British Colonial Office asking for a militia to be formed and how to get officers and volunteers, as well as the importance of roles and equipment. Daniel Low Choy spoke of the Colonial Military in May 1960, with Cavalry Volunteers, Rifle Corps and Infantry.

I was born in Ipswich and found that the conference brought back many memories of life in Ipswich, places and people I knew. The Woollen Mills, North Ipswich Railway Yards, Timber Mills and, of course, the mines. My grandparents brought their young family from Scotland to Ipswich and settled in Brassall.

I heard of people in the early days who travelled from Brisbane to Ipswich by rowboat, and I don't think any of us could say how long the trip took. We know that they stopped for lunch on the way, before continuing the rowing to "Limestone". Then there was a coach (horse-drawn) that travelled to Brisbane.

Queensland Irish Association

Toowong Cemetery Samhain ghost tour



Queensland Irish Association
with Friends of South Brisbane Cemetery
& Haunts of Brisbane
invite you to

Samhain Irish ghost tour of Toowong Cemetery

on Thursday, 5 November
from 7.15pm to 9.30pm

Prices: Single bookings $20per person/$15 per concession
Friends of South Brisbane Cemetery and Coffin Club members: $10 per member
Group bookings (four or more people) $15 per person

Tickets at https://fosbc.au/tours/irish-samhain-toowong-cemetery/

Ages 12 and up. This tour will involve two to two and a half hours of walking/standing.
Bring comfortable, enclosed shoes and clothing suitable for the weather.
Meet at the main entrance to the cemetery, corner of Milton Rd and Frederick St. Parking available in cemetery.



Oisín Mistéil, Eleanor O'Brien and Moe Dunford in Báite. Picture: Supplied

Irish Film Festival unveils biggest-ever program

From gripping dramas and powerful documentaries to fresh new voices shaping Irish cinema, the Irish Film Festival Australia (IFF26), sponsored by Queensland Irish Association, returns from October 8th until November 15th 2026 with its biggest program in 12 years.

IFF26 will showcase a record 18 films and documentaries, including 13 Australian premieres, alongside a vibrant program of Irish and Irish/Australian short films.

Screening across five Australian cities and online nationwide, this year's festival offers audiences an unmissable window into contemporary Ireland, celebrating the stories, people and places that continue to shape the country's distinctive and beloved cinematic voice.

2026 program highlights include the Australian Premiere of Chasing Millions, Galway Film Fleadh award winners Trad, Horseshoe and Girls & Boys, and IFTA nominees Báite (The Drowned), Fréwaka (Roots) and Testimony.

Festival Director Dr Enda Murray says, "Our Irish storytellers are conquering the film world and I'm delighted to bring a slice of that to Australia.

There's a new generation of Irish musicians smashing out tunes in Trad while Declan O'Rourke's sublime music forms the basis of Almost With You. There's laughs galore in Chasing Millions but we also deep dive into our recent tragic history with Testimony. Manchán Magan brings some ancient wisdom to the party with his spell-binding Listen to the Land Speak and the Irish language continues its rebirth of cool with Báite (The Drowned) and the folk-horror hit Fréwaka (Roots) among 5 Irish language films.

From the cliffs of Donegal to the streets of London, this year's festival brings the best of Irish culture to Australian audiences."

For the first time in the Festival's history, an official Irish/Australian feature co-production will open IFF26 with its Australian Premiere on opening night. The darkly funny, fast-moving comedy caper, new feature film, Chasing Millions, throws a specifically Australian spotlight on the infamous 2004 Northern Bank heist in Belfast.

Neatly tying in Irish-Australian connections, the film's lead character, Diana, an Australian police wom-

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Irish Film Festival unveils biggest-ever program



Ag Taisteal Siar. Picture: Supplied

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an with Aboriginal / Irish heritage, becomes mixed up in the investigation into the audacious bank heist while trying to track down her Irish family in Belfast. The film's Australian star, Madeleine Madden (grand-daughter of civil rights activist Charlie Perkins) is of Aboriginal and Irish heritage, and the soundtrack was written by Australian rock and folk legend, Jim Moginie (Midnight Oil).

The Irish Embassy in Canberra will also mark the 80th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Ireland and Australia by presenting CHASING MILLIONS at the Opening Night of the Canberra season on Friday, November 6th.

The festival will also showcase the new Australian/Irish feature Almost With You (starring famed Irish singer-songwriter Declan O'Rourke), and celebrate rising young stars of Irish music and film in Trad (starring Game of Thrones' Aiden Gillen and Bad Sisters' Sarah Greene) and Gealtra, award-winning Director Brendan Canty's documentary about Cork's famous Kabin Crew. Our classic retrospective is the seminal Irish feminist film Hush-a-Bye Baby, Margo Harkin's multi award-winning debut feature from 1990, featuring the first film appearance and soundtrack from a young Sinead O'Connor.

IFF26 will present a dedicated session of Irish-Australian short films, screening in cinemas in Sydney and Melbourne as well as online. This collection showcases stories shaped by the interweaving of Irish and Australian culture, through their producers, directors, actors, or themes. Spanning comedy, LGBTQ documentary, and music, the program highlights a new generation of Irish-Australian filmmakers expressing their heritage in cinematic terms.

Spanning powerful drama, thought provoking documentary, dark comedy and edge-of-your seat horror, the IFF26 program delves into the stories that have shaped Ireland and the contemporary voices redefining it today.

Audiences can also look forward to Gala Opening Nights in each city, complete with live Irish music and complimentary drinks, plus exclusive behind-the-scenes access through Q&As with Festival Director, Dr Enda Murray and select filmmakers and cast.

FESTIVAL DETAILS

In Palace cinemas 8 October – 9 November:
Sydney 8 - 11 Oct - Palace Moore Park, Opening Night party 8 Oct

Brisbane 16-19 Oct - Palace Barracks, Opening Night party 16 Oct

Melbourne 22 - 25 Oct - The Kino, Opening Night party 22 Oct
Perth 30 Oct -2 Nov - Palace Raine, Opening Night party 30 Oct
Canberra 6 - 9 Nov - Palace Electric, Opening Night party 6 Nov
Online across Australia 8 October – 15 November via digital screening partner, ACMI.
Tickets: www.irishfilmfestival.com.au
Cinema tickets from $16. Online tickets from $10.

FESTIVAL PROGRAM

CHASING MILLIONS
Australian Premiere.
Cinema Exclusive.

A comedy heist film inspired by the 2004 Northern Bank robbery in Belfast as veteran Northern Irish Detective Crayford (Christopher Ecclestone) and ambitious Australian Police officer Diana (Madeleine Madden) investigate the biggest bank job in British history. Theatrical release 19 November.

THE DROWNED / 'BÁITE' (2025)
Cinema and Online
(Irish with English subtitles)

A woman's body is found under the waters of a lake in Connemara, and the arrival of a detective from Dublin is the last thing Peggy, the owner of Casey's Pub, needs as she tries to save her business and her family. Best Irish Language Feature Film at 2025 Galway Film Fleadh, Best Original Score at 2026 IFTAs. Nominated for Best Director, Best Script for Film, Best Actress in a Lead Film Role at 2026 IFTAs.

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Irish Film Festival unveils biggest-ever program



Hush-a-Bye-Baby. Picture: Supplied

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TRAD (2025)
Cinema Exclusive

From their home in the Donegal Gaeltacht, gifted fiddle player Shóna McAnally and her talented little brother Mickey take to the road with a troupe of wandering musicians, on a cross-country journey of adventure, romance, and musical exploration on Ireland's Wild Atlantic Coast. Starring Megan Nic Fhionnghaile, Aiden Gillen (Game of Thrones), Sarah Greene. Audience Award at the 2026 Galway Film Fleadh. Nominated for Best Actress in a Supporting Film Role at 2026 IFTAs (Sarah Greene).

GIRLS AND BOYS (2025)
Cinema and Online

On Halloween night in Dublin, rugby player Jace meets aspiring filmmaker Charlie at a college party.

Both attend Trinity, but their worlds couldn't be more different. Charlie is trans, her circle full of queer artists and creatives, while Jace sticks with the more straight-laced camaraderie of his rugby teammates.

When the party is suddenly shut down by the Guards, the two find themselves alone in the streets of Dublin. As they wander the city, sharing secrets, dreams, and fears about life after college, a surprising revelation from their shared past threatens to upend their fragile connection. Jace must confront not only his past, but the social identity he's long taken for granted. Best Independent Irish Film at 2025 Galway Film Fleadh.

HUSH-A-BYE BABY (1990)
Cinema and Online

Set in Derry in 1984 against the height of The Troubles and featuring the first film appearance and soundtrack from a young Sinead O'Connor, this coming of age film follows Impressionable Irish teen Goretti Friel (Emer McCourt) who begins a romance with an older boy named Ciarán (Michael Liebman). In love but naïve about such practical concerns as birth control, devoutly Roman Catholic Goretti ends up with an unwanted pregnancy. When Ciarán is jailed by the British army, and shows little desire from prison to uphold his parental responsibilities, the pressures of unanticipated motherhood begin to unravel the 15-year-old teen's emotional stability. Bronze Leopard for Best Actress (Emer McCourt) and Prize of the Ecumenical Jury at the 1990 Locarno Film Festival.

WHITETAIL (2025)
Cinema Exclusive

Jen has carried the guilt of a tragic accident since her teens – now, her past is catching up. Set in the lush, isolated forests of southern Ireland (filmed in Counties Kerry and Cork), this psychological drama-thriller directed by Dutch filmmaker Nanouk Leopold premiered at the 2025 Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF). Nominated for Best Feature at the Chicago International Film Festival.

HORSESHOE (2025)
Cinema and Online

Four estranged siblings return to their crumbling family home in the West of Ireland after the death of their father where they attempt to navigate inheritance, grief and long-buried grudges. But their time together unearths far more than expected – including secrets that just might shatter what little bond remains between them. Blending razor-sharp dialogue with raw emotional depth, the comedy drama is anchored by powerful performances from Carolyn Bracken (Oddity, The Gone, You are Not my Mother), Lalor Roddy (That They May Face the Rising Sun), John Connors (Cardboard Gangsters, Love/Hate), Mary Murray (Love/Hate), Jed Murray (Love/Hate), Neill Fleming (Kin), Eric O'Brien and Caroline Harvey, with an original score by acclaimed Irish composer Anna Mullarkey and music from John Francis Flynn.

Best Debut Irish Feature at the 2025 Galway Film Fleadh. Nominated for Best Director and Best Actress in a Lead Film Role at 2026 IFTAs.

ALMOST WITH YOU (2026)
Cinema Exclusive

Irish singer-songwriter Brendan Kelly (Declan O'Rourke) arrives in the coastal town of Albany, Western Australia, for the final leg of his Australian solo tour. Haunted by his brother's recent death, Brendan is a man adrift, touring half-heartedly, refusing to sing his most iconic song, and emotionally retreating. With an uncharacteristic 5 days off in Albany before his next show, Brendan finds himself at a precipice of unraveling further. Here Brendan meets Sarah (Chloe Hurst) a quietly resilient, elusively charming and grounded local woman with her own painful history,

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Irish Film Festival unveils biggest-ever program



James Connolly addressing workers in the US, from James Connolly: We Only Want The Earth. Picture: Supplied

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something that draws them together. Their connection is immediate, and unfolds over songs, quiet conversations, and moments of shared loss. The film features 10 of Declan O'Rourke's songs and a score by Luka Bloom.

ROOTS 'FRÉWAKA' (2024)
Cinema Exclusive
(Irish with English subtitles)

Haunted by a personal tragedy, home care worker, Shoo, is sent to a remote village to care for an agoraphobic woman who fears the neighbours as much as she fears the Sídhe – sinister Irish fairies who she believes abducted her decades before. As the two develop a strangely deep connection, Shoo is consumed by the old woman's paranoia, rituals, and superstitions, eventually confronting the horrors from her own past. Roots/Fréwaka is one of the best folk-horror tales to come out of Ireland. Best Original Music at 2025 IFTAs and Audience Award at 2025 Haapsalu Horror and Fantasy Film Festival. Nominated for Best New Irish Feature at 2024 Cork International Film Festival. Best Cinematography at 2025 IFTAs and Best Irish Film at 2025 Dublin Film Critics Circle Awards.

LISTEN TO THE LAND SPEAK (2025)
Cinema and Online

Recently deceased, much loved Irish author and commentator, Manchán Magan, explores the profound knowledge and wisdom contained in Ireland's landscape in this visually breathtaking journey which unfolds through the seasons – from Imbolc/Brigid's Day to the Winter Solstice – along rivers, mountains, and ancient mythical sites. He reflects on how this wisdom can help us rebuild our relationship with nature today. But it also becomes an unexpectedly personal story as Manchán realises that there is a serious illness within himself that makes him see this history in a whole new light. Best Cinematography at 2025 Galway Film Fleadh. Nominated for Best Feature Documentary at 2026 IFTAs.

TESTIMONY (2025)
Cinema and Online

Testimony tells the story of an extraordinary group of women, supported by the activist organisation Justice for Magdalenes, whose battle to hold the Irish government accountable for the abuses of the Magdalene Laundries, Mother and Baby Home institutions and forced family separation, takes them all the way to the United Nations. Nominated for Best Documentary at 2026 IFTAs. Best Irish Film and Best Documentary at 2025 Dublin Film Critics Circle Award.

THE LIGHT KEEPER (2026)
Cinema and Online

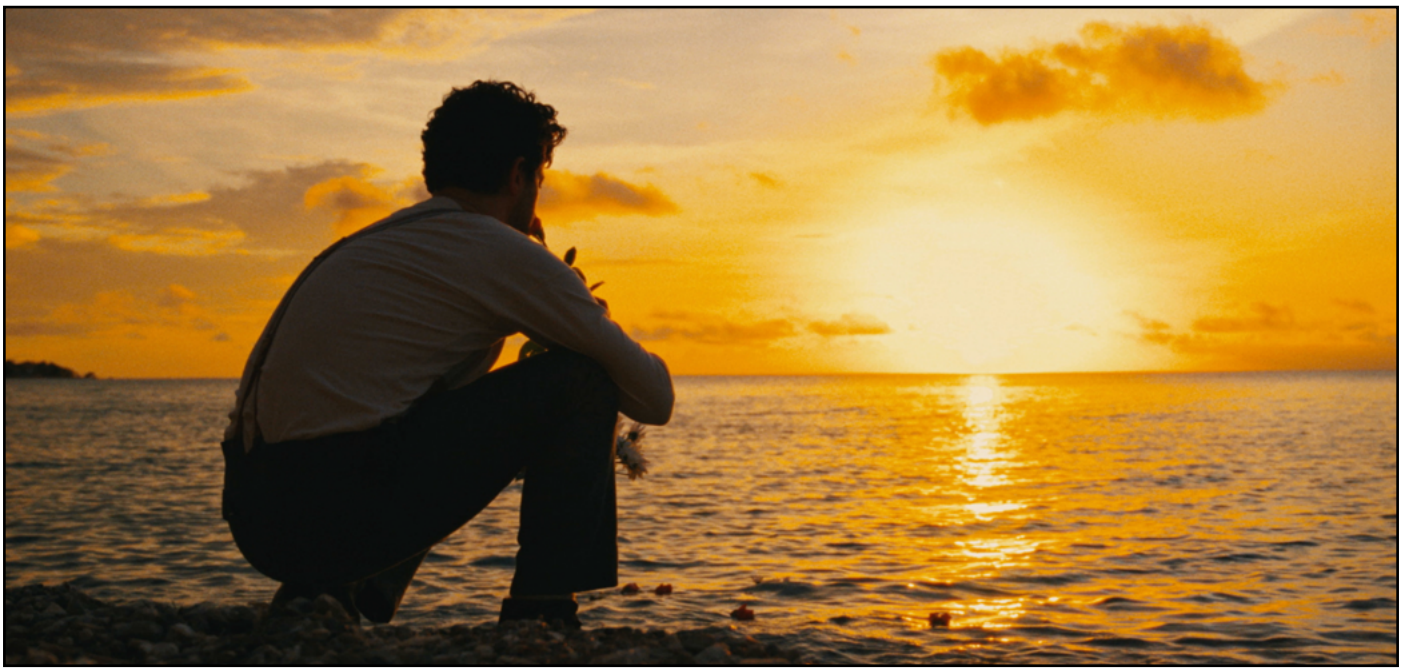
Ireland, 1924. Seamus Og MacGrianna (Dominic Cooper) is a lighthouse keeper whose elaborate rituals keep him rooted in the past – tending the garden of the house where he used to live and rowing out to sea every morning, hoping to hear the call of the fabled Each-Uisce - an evil shape-shifting water-horse But Seamus' carefully constructed world is blown wide open by three people who change the course of his life forever: Edith (Sarah Gadon), the mysterious American, whose quest for closure ignites something in him; Father MacGabhann (Aidan Quinn), the hard-line priest who makes it his mission to start a battle of wills with a man who has nothing to lose; and Maire (Sarah Bolger), the housekeeper whose unconditional love can no longer protect him from himself.

TRAVELLING BACK 'AG TAISTEAL SIAR'
Online Only
(Irish with English subtitles)

Ag Taisteal Siar explores the rich

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Irish Film Festival unveils biggest-ever program



The Lightkeeper.

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musical heritage of Ireland's Traveller community, a driving force in Irish music for many generations. Featuring intimate interviews and spellbinding performances with Kathleen Keenan, Sarah Dunne, Sharyn Ward, Niamh Dunne and Steo Wall, among others, and alongside original poetry written by Martin Warde. This documentary uncovers a legacy long overlooked but deeply embedded in Irish cultural identity. As Steo Wall says, "People are slowly understanding the impact Travellers have had on Irish music and culture."

BURIED ALIVE 'BEO FAOIN BHFÓD' (2025)
Online Only
(Irish with English subtitles)

In 1968, Mick Meaney was buried six feet under the London soil in a simple wooden coffin. Hundreds came to see his burial and toast Mick on his way. The thing was, Mick was not dead. He was competing in the world record competition for 'Longest Time Spent Buried Alive'. Incredibly, Mick was not the first. Our story begins in 1920s California and ends with a Dutch nun buried under a fairground in Skegness. Using never before seen archive, animation and interviews with the people who personally knew Mick, this story is brought to life through the eyes of his loving daughter who grapples with her father's bizarre legacy. A fascinating time capsule about the lives of Irish navvies in London in that period.

DANIEL O'CONNELL: THE EMANCIPATOR (2025)
Online Only

Born on Ireland's west Kerry coast in 1775, Daniel O'Connell rose to become a powerful lawyer and advocate as well as visionary statesman, emancipationist and champion of human rights whose legacy continues to be felt today. To mark the 250th Anniversary of O'Connell's birth, this powerful new documentary offers a fresh exploration of the life and enduring impact of one of Ireland's greatest figures inviting audiences to reflect on how his vision for justice and democracy continues to shape our world.

JAMES CONNOLLY: WE ONLY WANT THE EARTH (2025)
Online Only

An iconic presence on the landscape of Irish socialism and republicanism, the name of James Connolly looms large in the trade union movement and wherever radical left-wing politics are espoused. The film places Connolly's radical ideas and many political achievements against the landscape of the contemporary world as well as documenting his more prominent role in the 1916 Easter Rising.

WILD BUNCH 'Gealtra' (2025)
Online Only
(Irish with English subtitles)

Set in the vibrant heart of Knocknaheeny, this documentary by Brendan Canty (Christy) follows a group of teenagers from The Kabin Studio, a youth-led creativity hub, as they embark on a journey to explore their identities through music, poetry, and the Irish language. Under the mentorship of renowned rapper and spoken word artist Séamus Barra Ó Súilleabháin, the young participants dive deep into their personal histories, cultural heritage, and the power of creative expression. Best New Irish Feature at 2025 Cork International Film Festival.

LOVE LANE UNITED
Online Only

Facing job loss and a best friend's emigration, Benny forms a ragtag Sunday league football team to cling to the past, sparking a messy romance with his housemate, Laura, only to confront heartbreak and fading hope on and off the pitch. A raw, funny and heartbreakingly honest portrait of life in your mid-20s, when standing still feels safer than moving forward. Audience Choice Award at the 2025 Louth International Film Festival.

QIA visits O'Donovan Library in Parliament House





At the QIA visit to O'Donovan Library were former QIA President Jeff Spender and QIA President Graham Moloney with librarian Ruth Nitkiewicz, far left, and, left, Isla Corbett and her mother, QIA Director Mary Allen Corbett with a portrait of librarian Denis O'Donovan, who is related to them through their maternal line.







Queensland Irish Association

Christmas Party 2026



QIA invites Members and Friends to an Irish entertainment Christmas Luncheon

Saturday, 12th December from 12 noon at

Wests Rugby Club, Sylvan Rd, Toowong

Entertainment by Tom Kimmet
Good food and beverages available
FREE entry and all are welcome!

RSVP to Mavis Williams on (07) 3849 8271

Run in Irish girl Órla's memory at Scarborough

by Mary Allen, Director, QIA

An Irish family in Queensland is bringing the community together this November to honour their three-year-old daughter and raise funds for families affected by childhood cancer.

Run For Órla will take place at Scarborough Beach Park on Sunday, 15 November 2026, in memory of Órla Shealy, who died from childhood cancer last November.

Órla was the daughter of Una and Eamonn Shealy, an Irish family living in Queensland. Her parents describe her as funny, adventurous and cheeky. She loved running, swimming, dancing, muddy puddles, playgrounds, Paw Patrol and butterflies.

In April 2025, just 19 days after the birth of her baby sister Éireann, Órla was diagnosed with terminal cancer. The cancer had begun in her lungs and spread to her brain. Despite everything her family and medical team did for her, she died aged three.

Her parents say that while they cannot change what happened, they can continue to tell her story, say her name and turn their love for her into something that helps other children and families.

That is the inspiration behind Run For Órla.

The inaugural event will feature a 10km run at 6.30am, followed by a children's fun run at 8am and a community and family morning with music and activities.

The event is raising funds and awareness for Camp Quality, which supports children and families affected by childhood cancer. Camp Quality also gave Órla's family opportunities for happiness, normality and precious time together during a difficult period.

The Shealys hope Run For Órla will be a day of family, community, music, laughter and togetherness – things Órla loved.

As an Irish family living far from home, Una and Eamonn say the Irish community in Queensland means a great deal to them and are inviting QIA members and the wider Irish community to take part.

You can register, walk, volunteer, bring the family, donate or simply come along to support the Shealy family and remember Órla.

Run For Órla
Sunday, 15 November 2026
Scarborough Beach Park, Queensland
10km Run: 6.30am
Children's Fun Run: 8am
Community and family morning: following the runs

Find out more and register at runfororla.com.

Run For Órla – turning love into action, hope into purpose.



QIA seeks new Honorary Librarian (and assistants)

by Graham Moloney, President, QIA

Expressions of interest are being sought from QIA members to serve as Honorary Librarian of the Association or as members of a Library sub-committee.

The previous Honorary Librarian, Luke (Cyril) Kennedy retired from the position at the end of 2024 after 12 years in the role.

The library of approximately 5000 books and manuscripts, 500 CDs and 150 DVDs is currently in storage. As the QIA actively searches for a new home, there is an urgent need to prepare the collection for display and access.

This would be the work of more than one person. The Association hopes that there will be a number of bibliophile members who are interested in re-establishing and caring for the library, including one who might take on the role of Honorary Librarian.

The only mandatory qualification (under the rules of the Association) is that the Honorary Librarian must be a National member of the QIA.

The library is catalogued using the Dewey decimal system. While experience around libraries would be an advantage, members should not be discouraged from nominating as Honorary Librarian or a member of the sub-committee. Most of the Honorary Librarians and the volunteers who assisted them, with some notable exceptions, have not had library qualifications or experience. Cyril Kennedy's view is that most people can pick up an understanding of the Dewey decimal system fairly quickly.

A computer database of the collection has been partially completed. One of Cyril's ambitions was that the database would eventually be accessible online.

The future of the library however will very much be in the hands of the Honorary Librarian.

Expressions of interest can be forwarded to enquiries@queenslandirish.com.au. Expressions of interest for Honorary Librarian should include information about any relevant qualifications or experience. Members interested in assisting as a volunteer and member of the Library sub-committee only need forward their name though any additional information would be welcome.

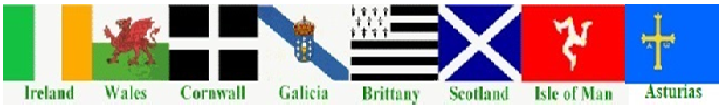
Celtic Council of Australia (Queensland) Inc
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BRISBANE CELTIC FESTIVAL

Moorlands Park, Auchenflower, Brisbane

Sunday 11 October 2026 8.45am to 3.30pm



WHAT'S ON

Celtic Music and Dance from the Eight Celtic Nations,
Massed Pipe Bands
Kids Celtic Games
Tartan Clothes, Kilts: please wear yours
Prizes: Best Celtic Dressed Man, Woman, Boy & Girl
Australian Scottish Community Qld Inc - International Tartan Day

FREE ADMISSION

WHAT TO BRING

Hats, Umbrellas, Chairs/Blanket, Water and Picnic Lunch if desired.
Light Refreshments available from food vans on site. Variety of vendor tents.

HOW TO GET THERE

Train: Auchenflower Train Station
Bus: Coronation Drive, such as routes 444 or 445. Get off at a stop near Land St or Wesley Hospital
CityCat Ferry: Get off at Regatta Hotel



Standing Stones
Celtic Nations Monument

Information contact

CCAQ President:
Mavis Williams CyC
email:
mkw.pinklady.dua@hotmail.com
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BRISBANE CITY

Author Derek has an Irish Eye on Australia

Due out at the end of 2026, Australian Eye: Stories of Brisbane and the South East is the third book by Brisbane-Irish author Derek Barry.

Derek was born in Waterford and moved to Australia in 1988. After many years working in IT in Melbourne and Brisbane, he became a journalist in 2009 and worked at newspapers in western Queensland. From 2016-2022 he was the editor of the North West Star in Mount Isa and served on the board of Mount Isa's Irish Club. In 2022 he quit to work full time on a non-fiction book called Swordplay: The Times and Life of Thomas Francis Meagher.

The wealthy Waterford-born Meagher was sentenced to death for high treason for his involvement in the 1848 Young Ireland rebellion before it was commuted to life transportation to Van Diemen's Land. He escaped to America where he became a public speaker and also worked as a lawyer and newspaper publisher.

In the civil war he raised the New York Irish Brigade and served as its brigadier general in many bloody battles. After the war he became Acting Governor of Montana Territory but died mysteriously in the Missouri River, his body never found.





Below left, Derek Barry looking happy after running this year's Bridge to Brisbane a few weeks ago, and, above, the book covers of Swordplay and Irish Eye. Pictures: Supplied

Meagher's remarkable story took several years to wrangle involving journeys to Ireland, Tasmania, New York and Montana. Swordplay was published in February 2026 and launched at the Meagher Tricolour Celebrations in Waterford in March 2026.

In December 2025 Derek published Irish Eye: Stories of Waterford and the South East, a series of stories which he said was "a love letter" about his hometown and the surrounding region of Ireland. It had chapters on Clonmel, Dungarvan, Tramore, Kilkenny, and authors Raymond Chandler and Lafcadio Hearn's links to Waterford.

His third book, Australian Eye: Stories of Brisbane and the South East, is a companion piece about the region Derek now calls home. The books are linked more than by name. The earlier book had a chapter about Waterford-born John Uniacke, who accompanied NSW's surveyor-general John Oxley on his first voyage to Moreton Bay in 1823, and who gave a sympathetic portrait of life on Bribie Island before European settlement. The new book updates Uniackle's story while another chapter features the amazing adventure story that Uniacke wrote about the three castaway convicts (including Irishman John Finnegan) who got lost while sailing from Sydney and accidentally found the Brisbane River.

There are also chapters on the Irish Mayne family (most famous for the "Mayne Inheritance" of UQ's St Lucia's campus), Kevin and Eva O'Doherty (Brisbane's "Young Irelanders" who knew Thomas Francis Meagher) and the complex man who linked the Maynes and O'Dohertys: Brisbane's first Catholic bishop, James Quinn. Quinn was so successful in "importing his diocese" from Ireland, that the colony was nicknamed "Quinnsland".

The book is keeping Derek busy as it also features non-Irish elements including chapters about the region's Indigenous heritage, Brisbane's early years, stories about the magnificent Brisbane River, and the author's love for running at park runs in as many different places as possible.

The earlier books are available at ebooks.com.

The Irish story you never knew about Argentina

A Bard on the Pampas: A Story of Irish Migration to Argentina
By John A. Clancy
Immortalise, 438 pages
RRP $29.99

When we think about the Irish diaspora, Australia, America and Britain tend to come immediately to mind. Argentina is less likely to make the list.

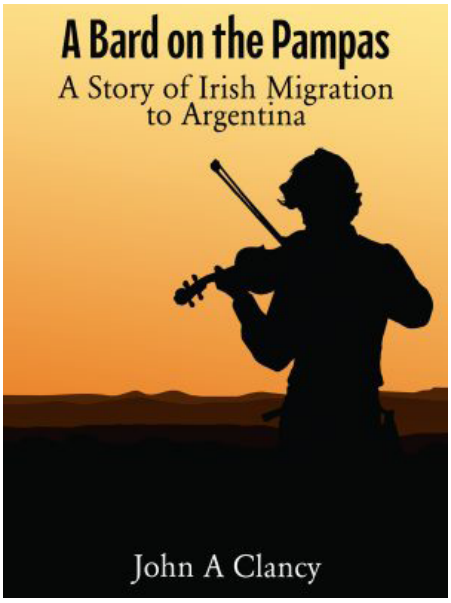
That is one of the reasons John A. Clancy's historical novel A Bard on the Pampas is such an interesting addition to the story of Irish migration.

Clancy, originally from County Kilkenny, has lived in Australia for 40 years. His interest in Argentina developed through travelling there and in neighbouring Uruguay over the past 25 years, leading him to explore the substantial wave of Irish migration to Argentina, particularly during the period from about 1845 to 1870.

At the centre of the novel is Richard Barron, the foster brother of Clancy's grandfather. Family history claimed that Richard was sent to Australia in the 1870s, yet Clancy could find no record of him ever living there. That mystery provided the starting point for a much bigger journey – one that takes Richard from rural Kilkenny to the Argentine Pampas and eventually into the turbulent history of Patagonia.

The story begins in Ireland in 1852, with five-year-old Richard seriously ill with cholera. From there, the young boy grows into an educated and musically gifted character whose interest in languages and music becomes an important part of his life.

Irish language and culture are woven into the story from the beginning. Richard learns Latin, develops a talent for the fiddle and becomes increasingly interested in languages and the people and cultures he encounters.



Music, in particular, becomes a way of carrying Irish identity across the other side of the world.

His journey to Argentina opens up an entirely different landscape and culture. He learns Spanish and develops connections with the Irish expatriate community as well as Indigenous people. Rather than simply transplanting his Irish identity into his new surroundings, Richard becomes interested in the cultures around him and the ways in which different traditions can exist alongside each other.

That theme comes through particularly strongly in the novel's musical episodes.

An Irish musical gathering on the Pampas brings together fiddlers, tin whistle players, an uilleann piper, accordion, guitars and drums, with music and dancing creating a meeting point between cultures.

As Linda Rooney wrote in her review for Tinteán, at tintean.org.au, the scene demonstrates how music could preserve cultural identity far from home, while also allowing people from different backgrounds to come together.

It is a fitting theme for a novel about migration. People may leave Ireland, but language, music, stories and traditions travel with them.

Richard eventually earns his title as the "bard on the Pampas", reflecting his growing connection with the landscape and its people.

For Irish readers, perhaps the greatest attraction is discovering a largely unfamiliar chapter in the global Irish story. The Irish did not simply cross the Irish Sea or the Atlantic. They established communities in places as far removed from Ireland as the Argentine Pampas, taking their traditions and talents with them.

A Bard on the Pampas brings that story to life through one man's journey, while the mystery surrounding Richard Barron's fate gives the novel a personal thread that connects the author's own family history with the wider story of the Irish diaspora.

Clancy has said that he intends to donate the profits from sales of the book to help children affected by the war in Ukraine through an Australian-registered charity or to the children of the Nepal disaster.

Prospective buyers can obtain the book direct from the author: Email Johnann.clancy@gmail.com OR as an alternative Ovens.town@hotmail.com. Each copy purchased will be signed by the author. Postage cost within Australia is cost of book - $25 +$10 for packaging and postage.